Proposal for a multiannual programme of co-operation in urban policy within the European Union

Report by the Committee on Spatial Development (CSD)

Marseilles, 6 October 2000
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Introduction

At their meeting in Noordwijk on June 10th 1997 organised by the Dutch Presidency of the European Union, the Ministers of the European Union Member States in charge of urban affairs decided to launch an exchange of views and experiences with the objective of improving the effectiveness of policies contributing towards urban development at all levels. The organisation and implementation of this was entrusted to the Committee on Spatial Development “in appropriate formation”.

During its Presidency, the United Kingdom launched the Urban Exchange Initiative (UEI), aimed at setting out, within an informal and non-binding framework, key principles for urban policies drawn from the analysis of good practices presented by the Member States. This work was continued and completed on other themes by the subsequent Austrian, German and Finnish Presidencies. Three reports were drawn up on the basis of this work and presented to the Ministerial meetings for Ministers responsible for spatial planning and urban affairs, the latest being held in Tampere on October 4th 1999. These reports have been widely distributed and the information that they contain is intended for extensive use in the future.

During this period, the Commission fed the reflection by disseminating a previous document “Proposal for debate”. This led to a proposal for the “action framework for sustainable urban development in the European Union”, presented and discussed in the Vienna Forum in November 1998. Until this day, the document has not been amended in order to take into account the proposals formulated during the Urban Forum.

In Tampere, in the presence of the new Commissioner responsible for regional policy, the Ministers, whilst concluding the UEI cycle, decided to “launch a process of operational co-operation”. To this effect, a mandate was given to the Committee on Spatial Development to “set up an informal Working Group in which the urban experts from all Member States are invited to participate with a view to formulating proposals for an operational working programme for this co-operation”.

This process is linked up with European co-operation in the field of spatial development; it constitutes implementation of point 2.1.6 of the ESDP action programme.

The Working Group was set up at the beginning of the year and has met seven times, with sustained participation by the Member States. The Commission, which took part in the first two meetings, then decided that it would no longer send a representative and withdrew all logistical and financial support for the Group. The group has nevertheless unanimously decided to continue its work.

This report proposes objectives, an approach and a content for this process of operational co-operation.
It was adopted by the Committee on Spatial Development during its meeting held on October 6 in Marseilles.
I/ Context:

- The Member States have developed for several years, even several decades, urban policies for, on the one hand bringing remedies for the problems generated by the urban development and, on the other hand, setting up the conditions of a controlled and thus sustainable urban development. Many tracks were explored. In spite of different contexts, the approaches tend to be harmonised.

- European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) was adopted and is now used as reference to the national and Community policies as regards spatial development. It gives towns and cities a central role and pleads for polycentrism.

- Community policies deal more and more with urban matters, and for regional policy the question of deprived urban areas and sustainable urban development are now at the heart of its new generation of programmes. However, implementation of the “action framework for sustainable urban development in the European Union“, presented by the Commission at the Urban Forum in Vienna in November 1998, remains largely unfinished.

- In a close future, world events will concern cities; among those, the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in June 2001 will deal with the action to be taken following the Istanbul summit, Habitat II. It would be desirable that the European Union and the Member States expressed themselves in a co-ordinated way.

- The local authorities are increasingly involved at European level, while becoming partners at the side of the States in the European programmes. There are constituted in European networks, becoming thus direct interlocutors of the European institutions.

- The prospect of EU enlargement requires a reform of EU regional and structural policy, possibly involving a stronger focus on urban development. A reference framework for urban policies will be an important tool to promote a dialogue with the countries applying for membership and the developing countries within the framework of multilateral co-operation (Habitat II).

A reform of the European institutions should accelerate construction of the Citizen's Europe, with 80% of citizens living in cities.

- The Commission has undertaken the writing of a White Paper on governance, which has to take into account urban governance.

The new stage that is beginning must allow a common approach to be formalised through new ways of co-operation, although without standardising urban policies, and Community interventions to be developed in favour of cities. Moreover, it would be convenient to systematically analyse the impact of different EU policies from the point-of-view of urban interests. This is the objective of the working programme prepared by the Urban Experts Group and adopted by the Committee on Spatial Development.

II/ Proposal for a multiannual working programme:

1 Objectives:

This work aims to:

- help Member States, the Commission and cities to give more tangible form to the main policy objectives defined at European level in response to the challenges facing cities;
construct a reference framework for national and Community policies in the urban field;
- help the Commission to strengthen and complete Community interventions in favour of cities and to improve their co-ordination;
- support and strengthen the dialogue and research on urban matters.

2. The priority themes proposed by the Urban Development Group:

2.1 A common set of priorities

The documents used for this inventory are:

- The outline of Urban policy as proposed by the Commission (DG Regio) in Vienna (November 1998; “Sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action”);
- The contribution by the Member States during the presidencies of United Kingdom, Austria, Germany and Finland under the Urban Exchange Initiative;
- The finalised European Spatial Development Perspective;
- The results of the EU Expert Group on the Urban Environment;
- The recent material produced by the Member States for the purpose of the UDG.

Based upon these documents the main objectives are described in annex 1.

Out of those objectives, the CSD accepts the proposal of a common set of priorities for the use of further improving actions at the European level that has been elaborated by the Urban Development Group, resulting from consultations with representatives of European cities.

There is a need to/for:

1. A better acknowledgement of the role of towns and cities in spatial planning (referring to the ESDP).
   Stressing the crucial role of urban centres in development and cohesion at a national and European level.
   Deal with the challenges facing small and medium-sized city regions in an increasingly global economy. This is especially important in sparsely populated / rural countries and regions.
   Improving the relationship between rural and urban areas and policies of integration.

2. A new approach of urban policies on national and community levels.
   An approach which is truly urban, global, considered and structured, with the necessary financial means, instead of the simple addition of EU measures on behalf of the various urban zones.
   Future legislation and support at the European Union level which should be more specifically focused on improving the quality of living in deprived urban areas.
   Practicable strategies which should be developed to promote sustainable urban development integrating economic, environmental, social, cultural factors in urban development.
   An urban policy which is more result- (outcome) orientated instead of the classical input orientation.
3. Support the community life in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods. 
   Empower the position of the inhabitants of these neighbourhoods. 
   Raise citizens’ awareness of urban issues and improving their participation to the policies 
   of this sector.

4. Measures to tackle social, ethnic and discriminating segregation in disadvantaged 
   neighbourhoods: 
   creating equal and comparable living conditions for people, 
   promoting a better action for the integration of ethnic minorities and fighting racial 
   discriminations.

5. Work at different spatial scales.
   Promote an integrated and balanced urban development (that is to counteract segregation) 
   so that progress in one urban area does not cause a decline in other urban areas. Urban 
   policies should address the urban territory both at the neighbourhood and city and 
   conurbation levels.

6. Partnership between the public and private sectors in urban regeneration and especially in 
   reinforcing the economic life in disadvantaged areas.

7. Diffusion of best practises and networking.
   Promote the diffusion of the results obtained by the Member States in the field of the urban 
   development issues; a network linking actors of urban policies could operate to share 
   knowledge and expertise through exhibitions, seminars, study tours and other initiatives 
   involving local and regional authorities, NGOs and any interested parties.

8. Use of modern Technology (Information Technology like Internet) to be used as a tool for 
   urban policy as regards the improvement of employment, education, transport, and social 
   cohesion.

9. A further analyses of the urban areas to deepen the knowledge of inter-linked phenomena 
   such as: unemployment, criminal rates, social services, cultural assets, environmental 
   issues in urban areas, growth and decline of an urban area, sustainable development of 
   urban areas, policies to regenerate urban areas and the comparison of policies to promote 
   the architectural quality issue in the urban development process.

These priorities can be considered as shared priorities between the Member States, having 
first consulted the representatives of European cities within the Urban Development Group. 
Not necessarily all of them have an equal ranking in every Member State or urban area. This 
depends e.g. on the local situation, specific legislation, and the progress of a national urban 
policy.

Initial work was organised by the French Presidency on the different urban regeneration 
approaches adopted in the light of the different types of urban problems concerned. This work 
has notably as its objective to illustrate the proposed method of analysis and enrichment of the 
corpus. An interim note is given in Annex 4. This work should be continued and completed 
after the French Presidency.
Moreover, some Member States have, through the impetus given by Germany and France, launched a European approach to evaluate and to promote innovative experiences of the theme “regenerate the city, master and organise urban growth”. This illustrates in an operative way a new form of possible co-operation in urban issues.

2.2 Strategic proposals

The priorities will be further developed with a strategic vision which consists in:

1. Establishing a shared awareness of the city and a common reference system. However acknowledging European differences, urban policy should be addressed to urban issues as such and not specific cities defined by size, number of inhabitants etc.

2. Establishing more permanent platforms within the EU with respect to exchange of information, learn from and disseminate the lessons of success and failures of the experiments in the framework of urban policies. There is also a need for a permanent network to link the actors of the urban development policies and to provide them with support.

3. Taking into consideration the following elements that would allow a long term and well-structured co-operation between the representatives of the Member States, the cities and the Commission, and that would guarantee an efficient and effective urban policy:

   - A long term planning of improving legislation to support a local integrated approach of urban policy.

   - A vision to be used in future debate, related to optimising the use of structural funds specific for the improvement of urban areas in an integrated way (less or no dichotomy between policies and specific rules of implementation).

   - A benchmark of urban indicators, developed in close co-operation between representatives of European cities, Member States and the European Commission, which can be used in the wider objective of measuring and monitoring urban policy in the EU.

Just recently (in Paris/Créteil on 21 September 2000) the Commission (DG Regional policy) produced a first overview of an Urban Audit in 58 European cities. It is a first methodological step in trying to obtain a level of comparison between conditions of European urban areas.

In the near future the Commission has obliged itself to further improve the comparability of this research, as to be able to create a common benchmark to be used for future urban policy initiatives within the European Union.

All these elements should be included in the recommendations that will result from the work in the co-operation framework and that will be given to the representatives of the Member States and cities, and to the European Commission.
2.3 Work of the future presidencies

In the framework of the working programme and following the work launched by the French Presidency, the future Swedish and Belgian Presidencies propose the working direction that will be exposed at ministerial level during the informal meeting of ministers in Lille.

The future Swedish Presidency has already asserted that urban issues are a priority, and thus proposed the following:

More than a third of the population of Sweden lives in metropolitan areas. People often move to cities for the wide range of culture, educational opportunities, housing forms and work they offer. The strength of the cities lies in their versatility and creativity. In order to attract investments to Swedish cities in the face of increasingly severe international competition, a highly qualified workforce, good public services and sophisticated infrastructure are needed.

Consequently, the role of the city as an engine for growth will be strengthened through the effects of regional industrial policy and metropolitan policy, and as a result of collaboration between institutions of higher education, the business sector and the public authorities in the region. The fruits of growth in the metropolitan areas benefit the whole country. This growth creates employment not just in the cities but in the countries as a whole.

During the crises of the 1990s social divisions widened. The crises and unemployment struck hardest at the more disadvantaged city neighbourhoods. The Swedish Government made it clear in its Metropolitan Bill (“A Policy for the Metropolitan Areas in the 21th Century” - 1998. The Bill was decided by the Swedish Parliament 1998) that a major concern for the future is stopping the segregation through working for equal living conditions and creating Sweden for everyone. In a world in which linguistic and cultural diversity are increasingly important, a modern, future-oriented and cohesive metropolitan policy in Europe should have as its objective the fostering and development of all positive features of a city, at same time as differences in living conditions are minimised.

One of the dominant features to large cities and their transformation by globalisation has been international migration and the demographic and socio-cultural changes it has brought to the countries of destination. Population movements are the motor of history and our task is to provide the best possible environment for that motor to function. The progress of cities and migration are dual factors that need to develop together harmoniously, providing for a respected and respectful life for all citizens. Research should be seen as a tool to inform policy and decision makers, and phrase questions in ways which could develop a co-operative process that involve reflection and willingness to tolerate and learning from a wide range of interesting practices through sharing experiences. Long-term improvements in quality of life in metropolitan areas and living conditions in disadvantaged neighbourhoods must be worked out in co-operation with the people who live there.

The Swedish Government has decided that during the Swedish Presidency - the Ministry of Culture, will be hosting an Urban Forum in Södertälje, Stockholm, 10-12 May, 2001, focussing on the above issues of urban policy development and urban social transformation in Europe.
The future Swedish Presidency will also take into consideration the implications of the second cohesion report, and will accommodate to the future position of the urban questions in the CDCR. In time with the ambitions of the workshop “Non-metropolitan areas in a globalising economy” prepared by Sweden for the Conference “Europe, urban and spatial development”, in Lille on November 2-3, 2000, the role of middle sized city regions will be in focus in the work on polycentric ambitions.

The future Belgian Presidency will specify its plans.

3 Method and timetable:

The approach adopted consists in:

On the basis of the main urban policy objectives as defined at European level, on which a consensus exists (in the “action framework for sustainable development in the European Union” and ESDP as regards urban development) (see Annex 1):

- Inventorying and analysing policies in each Member State (from national level to local level) and highlighting their strengths and weaknesses, together with aspects that could be improved and completed by Community interventions; this inventory and analysis work should lay the foundations for a machinery to ensure constant updating of knowledge on urban policies in Europe, and result in a large dissemination of this knowledge;
- Examining Community policies and particularly the urban dimension of the programming of the Structural Funds, especially on the basis of an analysis of the new programmes for Objectives 1, 2, 3, Urban and Interreg and on the occasion of the mid-term review in 2003;
- Conducting joint deliberations on the best way in which to define and link up these policies and interventions from Community level to local level, via national level, and formulating recommendations along these lines for the Member States and the Commission; it will be a question in particular of preparing for the choices that will have to be made for the new programming period after 2006 with a view to reform of EU regional and structural policy.

This approach will:

- make full use of the store of information, experiences and studies accumulated within the framework of the Urban Exchange Initiative (UEI); work which was carried out within this framework highlighted the good practices and made it possible to draw key principals for the action. These key principals must be included in the recommendations for the Member States and the Commission;
- Develop other forms of co-operation;
- take account of the work carried out or in course in other European bodies, avoid unnecessary duplication and make the best possible use of the work accomplished in order to intensify strategic debates on and exchanges of urban policies;
- involve, under the responsibility of Member States, the networks and associations of cities which are the most closely concerned partners when it comes to urban policy.

To back up this approach, priorities will have to be defined so that, working with the Commission and on a complementary basis with ESPON scheme, a network of exchanges of
experiences can be created for the benefit of the actors involved in urban development projects

In the medium term, the multiannual working programme will be continued by the successive Presidencies; it will endeavour to cover all fields of intervention of urban policies and its duration will coincide with European programming for 2000-2006.

III/ Framework for implementation of this programme:

This working programme is included in the action programme for implementation of the ESDP, under point 2.1.6, now conducted by the CSD. The context since evolved, following the change of position of the Commission. The latter proposes that work of implementation of the ESDP and, more generally, the continuation of the co-operation as regards spatial development and urban policy are led inside the Committee on the Development and the Conversion of Regions (CDCR).

The present multiannual programme proposal of co-operation aims at maintaining the duality of the process inherent to nature even of the object. Indeed, the urban policies fall within the competence of the Member States and are supported by the Community interventions. The programme of co-operation should thus be declined according to following method and in a co-ordinated way. It will consist in:

- on one hand, the Member States welcome the proposal of the Commission consisting in working within the Committee on the Development and the Conversion of Regions (CDCR) on the aspects of urban policy which are concerned with the EU regional and structural policy and more generally with other relevant Community policies. For that purpose, the Member States will make proposals to the Commission once it has specified the modalities for this work.

  In order to prepare this work, the Member States require of the Commission to set up an urban working group in which they would be represented. They also require that this work should be referred to the Commission “action framework”, of which the greatest number of actions should be implemented, in particular those which relate to the co-ordination of the Commission services as regards urban interventions. The Member States thus wish to work within the CDCR with all the components concerned of the Commission. The more general question, as the position of the ESDP question, has to be discussed in a similar way.

- on the other hand, it is equally important to deepen the intergovernmental co-operation originated under the CSD, and that has already allowed to release common working directions for urban policy. This deepening has a double objective: firstly, to enrich the work of CDCR, and secondly, to allow the Member States to continue the exchange of experiences and the evaluations of policies that they are conducting. The intergovernmental co-operation will continue on the urban topics that the Member States consider having priority, and that the EU Presidency in place wishes to handle during its period. The topics being of unequal importance, the processing of some will have to be continued under several Presidencies.

  In view of the proposals made by the Commission concerning the working modalities within CDCR, the Member States will study them and then decide what is the best way to continue this co-operation.
The results presented by the CSD will also have to be communicated and widely debated within the European bodies, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, ECOSOC, etc. This will also be done with the city networks and NGOs representing the actors involved in urban policies.
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MAJOR OBJECTIVES SET FOR URBAN POLICIES IN EUROPE

The goal of this paper is to reformulate the major objectives set for urban policies that are consensual among the Member States and the Commission. They come mainly from the action framework and the ESDP.

The objectives can be classified under the following chapter headings:

1. Giving all importance to the city in spatial development

Since they concentrate more and more wealth, population, knowledge and know-how, towns and urban regions are now, more than ever, the engine that powers development in a global economy. This ground for innovation and exchange is not, however, uniformly distributed. Moreover, spontaneous concentration phenomena tend to increase the differences and to create dangerous imbalances. Weak regions tend to weaken even further to the benefit of the richer and more dynamic ones. Equilibration policies should therefore be enforced in order to manage a polycentric development that spatially equilibrated.

1.1 To promote the extension of dynamic areas of world integration outside the central regions of the European Union. Interconnected metropolitan areas having easy international access, articulated with towns and rural areas of different sizes and enjoying good standards of global services.

1.2 To reinforce urban networks at the interregional, international and European scales, profiting from functional complementarities and thematic co-operation possibilities in order to promote common and integrated strategies of development.

1.3 To develop and intensify, transcending administrative limits, the functional relationship between cities and the rural territory surrounding them. This could be achieved, among other things, by building networks of small and middle towns in the less densely populated areas.

1.4 To promote co-operation and exchanges with cities outside the European Union, specially with those of the neighbouring countries (northern, central and eastern Europe and Mediterranean areas) and developing countries.

1.5 Support initiatives towards a greater promotion of living in cities in Europe and a stronger attractiveness of cities, particularly those suffering the most from the damages of industrialisation, in order to allow them to fully play their role as regional development centres in a balanced and polycentric urban network in Europe.
2. Strengthening prosperity and employment in cities

2.1 To create the right conditions allowing cities to profit from the growing openness of the world economy and from the development of modern technologies of information and communication. Since innovation predominates today over rationalisation, since economic efficiency is more and more based upon communications, cities tend to become the engines that power an economy dominated by grey matter, the irresistible rise of services and the growing importance of immaterial investment. Adequate town structures are therefore a precondition to the development of European countries and of the European Union as a whole.

2.2 To allow everyone to profit from the economic prosperity of cities. The rise in economic growth in Europe is reducing unemployment, but at the same time is expanding the rift between those who participate in the economic activities and those who are excluded from them. The social exclusion phenomenon, which has its counterpart in terms of spatial exclusion, is now a recurrent feature in our cities. This evolution towards a segregated city pushes the poorest part of the population towards the margins, but also makes urban communities fragile with the ensuing risk for their economic growth. Efficient economic and social policies towards cities should take the integration of the weak populations into consideration.

2.3 To promote at the same time economic development and harmonious urban development. Cities have had to adapt to the productive activities organisation changes, while dealing with the consequences of this changes on the urban areas (modification of the functional specialisation of space, brown fields, etc.). Economic partners play an important role besides governments and other parties in the management and durable development of the urban territory. Special attention should be given to the following questions: recovery and reuse of existing spaces and buildings, city inroads, shopping centres and small shops, etc.

3. Urban regeneration

The European city was built by successive layers over the last ten centuries. This city structure has been brutally questioned by the development trend of the last half of the twentieth century. The extension in the consumption of goods, services, and increasingly of information, which goes with the explosive growth of exchanges of both material and immaterial goods, has transformed urban areas and their rural surroundings. Urban spreading, perturbation of the urban structure, increase in the inequalities among areas are negative trends that should be anticipated and reversed.

3.1 To fight against urban sprawl by rebuilding the city over itself, by reintroducing abandoned areas on the market and recycling the urban heritage.

3.2 To fight against spatial segregation by interconnecting urban areas and promoting the functional mix.
4. **Promotion of social cohesion in cities**

4.1 To restore cities to their fundamental function as a place of exchange and of social and cultural mix. To that end, public policies should vigorously oppose the fracture of the social fabric with its ensuing de facto segregation which tend to marginalise the areas that tend to cumulate handicaps.

4.2 To fight against insecurity and to prevent crime. The increase in urban crime and the consequent rise of the feeling of insecurity comes, amongst other causes, from the weakening of the social link. This phenomenon reinforces the trend towards selfishness, rejection of others and suspicion towards institutions, all behaviours that threaten the democratic process in our societies. European countries become more and more sensitive to these dimensions in their urban policies in an inseparable triptych: prevention, repression, social development. The Commission has taken this dimension on board in its regional policy programmes.

4.3 To integrate immigration related populations into the city. The migratory movements in Europe in the last decades have had the city as its main destination, since it is in cities that wealth and employment are concentrated. Migrating populations which were brought to work during the long period of economic prosperity were the first victims of the economic crisis and unemployment. The rigid character of the society and also, at times, community bonding, make the integration of these people difficult. The perspective of the enlargement of the European Union and its opening to eastern Europe may well challenge the Union on these matters.

5. **Management of the urban environment according to the principles of sustainable development**

The development schemes of the last decades were often built on an uncontrolled consumption of non renewable resources (land, fossil energies) and have led to the accumulation of critical problems: polluted soils and water, industrial waste stocks, areas exposed to noise or atmospheric pollution, etc.. These problems have been made more serious still by the tendency to transfer them on the less populated or economically weaker areas, or to leave them for the next generations to solve. In order to avoid crisis situations and irreversible damage to the collective heritage, we thus have to act. Therefore, it becomes necessary to deal with the situations inherited from the past and to develop practices in agreement with the principles of sustainable development.

5.1 Put into practice systematic curative policies in order to deal with critical environmental situations. A prioritised inventory of those situations should be made, allowing them to be treated in a long term framework.

5.2 To act continuously on improving the quality of the urban environment, by giving a high priority to the restoration, the preservation and the improvement of our natural and architectural heritage.

5.3 To promote standards of development, consumption and individual behaviour drawn from the principle of precaution, and taking into account their impact on the environment on a global and long term scale.
6. Improving urban governance and reinforcing local action capabilities

6.1 To bring together the different parties around locally planned and driven projects. Whatever the political and institutional context, there is a consensus on the fact that problems should be treated globally in the framework of partnerships bringing together the authorities at different levels and with different fields of competence, bearing in mind the principle of subsidiarity.

6.2 To take the local residents on board as far as management and development of their area and city is concerned. Whatever their cultural and institutional organisation, all European countries are looking for schemes to revive local democracy by introducing a proportion of participative democracy.

6.3 To mobilise the actors in the field in a collective process bringing together the public and private actors as well as local residents. The commitment of the public actors requires a decompartmentalisation of institutional boundaries, an adaptation of intervention schemes, organisation and qualifications. Such a scheme could be an important part of the modernisation of public governance.

6.4 To develop instruments for the knowledge and shared evaluation of the problems and opportunities that European cities are facing and promote networks devoted to the exchange of experience and the capitalisation of know-how in the various fields of urban policy.

6.5 To promote or modernise and adapt instruments of strategic planning allowing to anticipate long-term impacts of urban development. To generalise good practices as regards urban development and spatial organisation, while resorting, in particular; to inciting instruments, like the “charters of quality of the city”, based on shared projects approved in public debate.
Informal Meeting of Ministers

01. At the informal Meeting of the Ministers responsible for urban policy held in Tampere on 4-5 October 1999, the Ministers discussed European Urban Policy.

02. Following the communication “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action”, dated 28 October 1998, issued by the Commission of the European Union and the Urban Exchange Initiative I, II and III, conducted by the Member States, the Ministers decided to further promote the urban dimension in relevant policies at national and European level. A need for improved co-ordination between different urban initiatives within different sectors and at all levels (EU, national, regional and local) was also identified.

03. Following the discussion of urban policy issues, the Ministers agreed to start an operational co-operation process on a series of objectives and scopes.

Consultation of the Member States

04. One of the objectives was to produce a joint informal opinion on the communication “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action“.

05. Organised as a subcommittee under the informal Committee for Spatial Development (CSD) and named CSD/UD, a group of urban experts from the 15 Member States has been set up. Each of the countries has carried out a national hearing on the document and these national statements have formed the basis for this joint informal opinion.

General comments

06. The Member States welcome the recognition of the Commission on sustainable urban development as being an important issue and field for action, and that the concept is perceived as widely as it is described (economic, social, cultural and environmental development).

07. Even though urban policy does not come under the auspices of the European Union initiatives, the approach adopted by the Commission seems undoubtedly advantageous.

08. The Member States highly welcomed the Commission’s acknowledgement of the varied impacts different EU policies have on urban development and the need for a properly considered and structured global urban approach.
The real challenge, however, is to ensure that the crucial role of towns and cities are fully and formally recognised in terms of the role they play in the implementation of different Community policies and to give weight to the European Union’s ability to support integrated actions in favour of towns and cities in close co-operation with the Member States.

09. The Member States find it interesting to see the various strands of EU policies brought together in this way and focused on four challenges for urban areas. The Member States recognise these as being of crucial importance and would not, in general, disagree with the analysis in the first part of the document, which represents a concise summary. The Member States agree, in particular, with the following statements:
- Towns and cities are the driving force of the European economy and make it possible for the Union to hold its own position in the world economy;
- Many areas of the Community policy have a substantial impact on towns and cities, which must be taken into consideration at EU level;
- Regional disparities in the EU reflect, for the most part, the relative strengths and weaknesses of towns and cities;
- The explicit recognition of the urban dimension and better co-ordination can result in achieving a more sustainable urban development and bringing about greater synergy effects.

10. Furthermore, it would be desirable that leaders of the Member States be able to identify the elements of a common approach in relation to major orientations of intended urban policy, both at EU level as at national level. The practise of the Member States leaders to present their common views at major international conferences and meetings (like in Istanbul and Nairobi) through a single channel - the presiding country - has successfully been tried and tested and should be continued and improved on basis of co-operative development of mutually agreed positions.

The status of the text

11. The text has already received a series of approvals from different bodies. The Member States’ firm view is, however, to consider the status of the text to be a reference document, internal to the Commission. The Member States seriously hope that the document will prove itself valuable as an important tool for enhancing a cross-sectoral co-ordinated view on different EU-sector-policies and the impacts these may have on European towns and cities.

12. It is especially recommendable to concentrate the attention on the relationship between existing policies and possible unintended consequences for urban areas. A review of this sort would enable a modification of existing policies.

The effect on Structural programmes

13. A positive example of the co-ordinated view is the effect the document already has had on the orientation of the recent generation of Structural programmes.

14. The Member States welcome the Commission’s initiative to move the discussion of urban issues at European level forward and they welcome the fact that the Structural Fund
regulations open up for possibilities of making funds available for improving the practice of urban development planning.

15. The Member States shares the European Commission’s view that Structural Funds should also be used for the development of towns and cities. The Structural Funds facilitate a Europe-wide exchange of experience in respect of urban development instruments, they promote urban functions within the framework of regional development processes and they provide an opportunity for tackling social exclusion and poverty in urban problem areas. In this context the Member States welcome the fact that the European Commission wishes to adopt guidelines to ensure that the financial promotion of projects by the EU is based on criteria aimed at achieving a recurrent development that is environmentally sound.

16. The Commission announces furthermore in its communication that it wishes to adopt guidelines for the use of the Structural Funds in order to promote an integrated, area-based approach to urban regeneration. The Member States take note of the fact that by issuing its guidelines “The Structural Funds and their Co-ordination with the Cohesion Fund” on 1 July 1999, the European Commission has translated this announcement into practice. The Member States call on national and regional level to co-operate with local level (municipalities and cities) eligible for funding to examine to what extent the new funding arrangements might be used. At European level, both the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) could be drawn on to fund measures aimed at regenerating urban problem areas. The combined use of these funds could make a contribution to carrying out the complex tasks in the problem areas of our towns and cities, since investment measures (ERDF) and measures focusing on people (ESF) would be coordinated with each other.

17. However, the Member States want to point out that the city should be regarded in its entirety, consisting of a multitude of characteristics which in combination with each other form the identity of the specific city. The Member States do not want to disregard that cities contain specific areas with special problems (like areas with a need for an integrated, area-based approach to urban regeneration). On the contrary they want to emphasise that other issues may be just as important to improve the city in general (e.g. green structure, traffic, urban spaces, etc.) in order to raise the general quality of the city and hence the quality of life for the inhabitants of the city.

18. The Member States want to point out that decisions on the extent to which and how urban areas feature in Structural Funds are matters of subsidiarity for Member States and their regional partners within the overall framework. Thus the Member States regard the use of the Structural Funds as sensible for solving urban development problems while at the same time respecting the principle of subsidiarity, provided this is in conformity with the Treaty of Amsterdam.

19. The Member States would therefore find it useful that the Commission, in the document itself, provided a clarification on the exact status of the document.
The content of the document

20. The urban diversity of European towns and cities is commonly seen as an asset which should be preserved. The document rightly emphasises this fact but fails to attach sufficient importance to the highly specific and fertile characteristics (e.g. local democracy, the combination of density and diversity, public places, architectural and cultural heritage, network co-operation, blue and green structures, traffic and environmental issues). A key point is therefore, the relationship between the towns/cities and their surrounding areas, as well as the need to look at the two in an integrated way as this will vary from one specific region to another.

21. It is important to place a greater emphasis on the need to combine different actions (economic development, social questions and cohesion, control of ecological balance, development and preservation of urban green structures and cultural heritage, sustainable development (brown field development, public transport, waste management, etc.) and improvements of governance) within integrated territorial programmes for local initiatives. It is within the framework of such programmes, for the most parts, that European Structural Funds must be utilised.

22. Several issues relating to urban questions now concern directly or indirectly several General Directives. In this respect the Framework document proposes interesting measures in chapter 4 under the heading “Monitoring” (the setting up of a group of experts). The Member States recommend the “experts” to be experience practitioners.

23. The Member States agrees to the need for more knowledge, know-how and exchange of experiences in order to reinforce each line of actions. The Member States consider the first three reports of the Urban Exchange Initiative to be a good start. However, practices in Member States are still little known and understood in other fellow Member States. It is therefore becoming very important to seek policies, which will help the Member States to understand one another, and in doing so, to identify best practise in different fields of action.

24. The Member States therefore recommend the Commission to contribute to the gathering of relevant information and knowledge for the mutual benefit of the Union, e.g. within the framework defined by the regulations which govern the Structural funds. The Member States furthermore recommend that the field of action for the proposed ESPON could be enlarged with urban issues in order to enhance the knowledge base especially concerning comparable data.

25. The document do not mention the INTERREG III Community Initiative. However, the Member States wish to welcome the transitional element (Strand B) which will give further opportunities for encouraging co-operation in spatial planning, including that relating to urban areas.

26. The Member States recognise that towns and cities in Europe may have different problems depending on their geographical location in Europe (North, East, West or South). The Member States find the document does not sufficiently deal with this kind of Euro-geographical related problems. These problems may be of social, cultural, political or environmental character.
The Member States would therefore recommend that attention also be paid to problems that may derive specifically from conditions being unique for special parts of Europe.

27. The ESDP deals with e.g. the question of the enlargement countries. This document rightly comments that weak traditions of local governance affect the capacity to deal with new challenges. But there is no later mention of how to build capacity for democratic city governance in accession countries. It would be interesting to know what proposals the Commission have in mind to develop capacity in this area.

28. The Member States take note of and endorse the fact that the European Commission wishes to make a contribution to the Urban Exchange Initiative initiated and carried out by the Member States.

29. With the aim of focusing on the wide range of questions and decisions relevant to urban issues, the Member States regard the proposed Working Group on Urban Affairs to be set up by the Commission and comprising of representatives from different government levels to be a suitable instrument.

30. The Member States want to express their willingness to participate in the proposed group of experts to be set up to monitor progress made on the implementation of the Framework for action. The Member States recommend a close relationship between the cross-sectoral working group and the group of experts and co-ordination / co-operation with other relevant working groups within the EU-Commission. The Member States expect the CSD to be the Monitoring and Steering Committee for these two working groups.

31. In conclusion, the Member States welcome the communication: “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for action“ and the Member States look forward to a positive co-operation in the field of urban policy. The Member States prerequisite the principle of subsidiarity to be respected in all actions taken at the European level.
ANNEX 3

REVIEW OF WORK ON EUROPEAN ISSUES

1. OECD

http://www.oecd.org

The OECD Territorial Development Policy Committee runs a work programme to research spatial planning issues common to OECD countries (29, originally based in Western Europe but now also including Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Poland, Hungary etc.) and runs workshops and conferences to disseminate the results. The current work programme is to review the nature and scale of territorial issues in member countries, assist Governments to identify appropriate responses and assess competencies and governance issues. The Committee’s secretariat is also producing three documents which may be of interest:
One is a contribution to the OECD’s report on sustainable development, looking at the role of territorial development policies.
The second will be a biennial, possibly annual, publication on the outlook for territorial policies.
Finally, the OECD is to produce a report on the ‘Future of Places’.

The Policy Committee meets biannually in Paris and has urban, rural and statistics/indicators working parties. The three themes for the Urban Working Party are:
- Regional reviews;
- Environmental issues e.g. urban degradation, sprawl; and
- Urban renaissance.

Also worth noting is the Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Programme and Committee which looks into issues like job creation, entrepreneurship and local partnerships.

Recent documents which have been produced by these Committees include:
- An International Comparative survey of strategies of redevelopment: urban brownfield.
- integrating distressed urban areas;
- the role of urban indicators;
- innovative policies for sustainable urban development - the ecological city;
- cities for the 21st century;
- strategies for housing and social integration in cities;
- best practices in local government;
- Greenland regional competitiveness and policies for remote regions; and
- local development and job creation.

The OECD, through their urban affairs group, has also undertaken a significant study on ‘Redefining Urban Governance: implementing Decentralisation at the Metropolitan level’ and a substantial report has been produced on this.
2. OECD/EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT

http://www.oecd.org/cem/UrbTrav/overview.htm

In 1995, the OECD and ECMT in their report ‘Urban Travel and Sustainable Development’ proposed a three-strand policy package that, consistently applied over the long term, showed great promise for reconciling urban travel activity with objectives for sustainable development. This package concerned the application of current best practice instruments and new innovative approaches to reduce car dependency against a backdrop of steadily increasing motor fuel prices. Coherent integration of environmental, transport, and land-use policy has proved to be extremely difficult across the range of OECD and ECMT countries.

As a follow-up to this work, ECMT and OECD have carried out a three-part project, begun in 1998, including a sequence of workshops, a survey of cities and a series of in-depth national policy reviews to examine why implementation of integrated, sustainable policies has proved to be so difficult, and how countries and cities can overcome these barriers. The project will be coming to a close over the next year. A report bringing together the findings on implementation of sustainable urban travel policies from each of the different parts of the project will be presented to Ministers of Transport at their Council of Ministers meeting in Lisbon in May 2001.

3. COUNCIL OF EUROPE

http://coe.fr/index.asp

Officials supporting the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT group) have prepared Guiding Principles on Spatial Development in Europe to present to Ministers at Hanover in September 2000. The CEMAT work provides a mechanism for encouraging central and eastern European countries and particularly the accession countries to adopt ESDP type principles in their approach to planning.

The COE's Steering Committee on Local and Regional Authorities (CDLR) (membership of which consists of senior officials from member states concerned with local government matters) provides a forum for governments to share experiences and co-ordinate policies on the legal and institutional framework for local democracy. Under its auspices a wide range of matters have been or are being considered/studied/reported on, which to a greater or lesser extent may have a bearing on problems in urban areas. Examples include:
- the role of local/regional authorities in the provision of local social services;
- the development of local democracy and citizen participation in local public life;
- the management of municipal property;
- the management and funding of urban public transport; and
- neighbourhood services in disadvantaged urban areas.

The Council of Europe through its European Committee on Social Cohesion (CDCS) is also undertaking work on the broad subject of social cohesion. This work is being carried out with the full support of the UN Secretariat, and is intended to complement the preparatory work under way within the EU. A European Conference on Social Development took place on the 17-18 January 2000 in Dublin – an EU rapporteur was present. There were three Working Groups which looked into:
the promotion of political, cultural, economic and legal environments favourable for social development;
- the promotion of social cohesion based on the strengthening and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and particularly of social rights; and
- eradication of poverty and other forms of social exclusion in Europe.

4. EUROPEAN COMMISSION

http://www.inforegio.org

There are two main documents which contain the general EU approach to urban issues: a) The EU document ‘Sustainable Urban Development – a Framework for Action’ (1998)- which includes reference to the EU’s Fifth Framework RTD (Research and Technological Development) Programme and the key action on ‘the City of Tomorrow’; and, b) the guidelines for the Structural Funds 2000-2006 – ‘The Structural Funds and their co-ordination with the Cohesion Fund’.

The Commission has funded a short-term study programme using ERDF Article 10 provisions, to look at issues, such as rural-urban relationships, that were identified in the ESDP.

Also being carried out under Article 10 of the ERDF regulations is the Commission’s Urban Audit of 58 European cities. This audit provides an assessment of the state of our cities and access to comparative information on other cities in Europe, as well as facilitating exchange between cities. The Indicators cover 5 fields: socio-economic aspects, participation in civil life, training and education, environment and culture and leisure. The Urban Audit report was published in March 2000.

Under URBAN II the Commission has proposed the allocation of 15 million Euros to a European wide network to promote exchange of experience and best practice. This should provide a database to actively promote and communicate the results of the Community initiative.

Under the INTERREG IIC programme various projects have an urban dimension, see the InfoRegio web-site for details: http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/wbpro/PRORD/prordc/Prordc6.htm

The Expert Group on the Urban Environment has set up a Working Group on Sustainable Land Use. It looks at, amongst other things, policies for reusing previously developed land (brownfield). A report is due for completion by the end of January 2001. A new innovative indicator-based monitoring initiative was launched at the third European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns (9-11 February 2000) in Hanover, Germany. By using its set of common indicators, local communities are able to monitor their progress towards sustainability, and compare it with that of other local communities.

Regional Policy Website on Urban issues
http://www.inforegio.cec.eu.int/urban/

The site provides updates on European Commission initiatives on urban issues and information on urban regeneration programmes co-financed by the European Regional
5. THE FIFTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME – KEY ACTION ‘CITY OF TOMORROW & CULTURAL HERITAGE’

www.cordis.lu/eesd/
See also DG RESEARCH in annex

The ‘City of Tomorrow & Cultural Heritage’ is the fourth Key Action under the Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development Activity of the Fifth Framework Research and Technological Development (RTD) Programme.

The overall goal of this Key Action is to support sustainable economic development and competitiveness, improved urban management and integrated planning policy, and help safeguard and improve the quality of life and cultural identity of citizens.

There are four interrelated themes under this Key Action, providing an integrated framework of medium and longer term objectives which address the following objectives:

4.1 Sustainable city planning and rational resource management, consisting of:

4.1.1 Improving urban governance and decision making;
4.1.2 Improving the quality of urban life;
4.1.3 Improving economic development, competitiveness and job creation in city centres and neighbourhoods.

4.2 Protection, conservation and enhancement of European cultural heritage, consisting of:

4.2.1 Improved damage assessment on cultural heritage;
4.2.2 Development of innovative conservation strategies;
4.2.3 Foster integration of cultural heritage in the urban setting.

4.3 Development and demonstration of technologies for safe, economic, clean, effective and sustainable preservation, recovery, renovation, construction, dismantling and demolition of the built environment, in particular for large groups of buildings, consisting of:

4.3.1 Sustainable construction and reconstruction of large groups of buildings and urban infrastructure;
4.3.2 Optimum use of urban land and rehabilitation of brownfield sites

4.4 Comparative assessment and cost effective implementation of strategies, consisting of:

4.4.1 Strategic approaches and methodologies in urban planning towards sustainable urban transport
4.4.2 Comparative assessment and demonstration of new transport technologies and related infrastructure.

The Commission makes calls for proposals for priorities under each of these themes.
The above reflects recent revision to the work programme. The next call for proposals is planned for early 2001.

6. COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Commission 4 of the Committee of the Regions examines the questions of spatial planning, urban issues, energy and environment.
Among topics of particular interest to this Commission are:
- Spatial planning;
- Communication on land-use planning and Community policies;
- Urban issues;
- Communication on urban development and development co-operation policy; and
- EU urban development action plan - white paper.

7. UNITED NATIONS


The UN Commission on Human Settlements (Habitat Initiative) is building on its years of experience to launch two global campaigns which were approved in May 1999 by the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements. The Global Campaign for Security of Tenure will address requirements for sustainable urban and shelter development, while the Global Campaign on Urban Governance will promote the goals of local democracy, equity, efficiency, security and decentralisation. The emphasis is more upon tackling issues which are a greater problem in the developing world.

The UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) is to review the progress of all countries on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as agreed at the UN Cities Summit Habitat II at Istanbul in June 1996. This review will take place in New York in June 2001 and will be known as Istanbul+5. Each country has a responsibility to report progress on the implementation of the Habitat agenda to Istanbul+5. In the case of donor countries, this will comprise both the progress made in the home country, as well as progress within international development co-operation in relation to the Habitat Agenda. It is also worth noting the Habitat best practice database (http://www.bestpractices.org), which provides case study information on:
- Poverty Eradication;
- Social Services;
- Urban and Regional Planning;
- Environmental Management;
- Infrastructure, Communications & Transportation;
- Housing;
- Land Use Management;
- Civil Engagement & Cultural Vitality;
- Gender Equity and Equality; and
- Economic Development.
Following the Global Conference on the Urban Future, URBAN21, in Berlin 4-6 July 2000, a report was prepared by the World Commission as a contribution to the Istanbul +5 proceedings. A copy of the report is available from: http://www.urban21.de/
The Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE) is the forum at which the countries of North America, western, central and eastern Europe and central Asia come together for the purpose of economic co-operation. The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has a committee on Human settlements (CHS) which is the main forum for transfer of experience in spatial planning and development from West Europe to East Europe – termed countries in transition.

Activities focus on urban renewal, housing modernisation and land administration. UNECE CHS draws up recommendations to member countries relating to human settlements policies and strategies and encourages their practical implementation through case studies and best practices.

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements Projects:


http://www.sustainabledevelopment.org/blp/

At the City Summit in Istanbul (1996), Member States of the United Nations committed themselves to implement the Habitat Agenda through policies and plans of action designed at each level in co-operation with all interested parties. All partners, including local authorities, the private sector and communities, are asked in the Habitat Agenda to monitor and evaluate their own performance in working toward sustainable urban development and adequate shelter for all.

Mission
The Global Urban Observatory (GUO) is a system of capacity building programmes and resources to help Governments, local authorities and their partner groups to monitor progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and to expand the base of knowledge for better urban policy.

Objectives
By creating a learning environment for more effective civic engagement and decision-making, the Global Urban Observatory helps Governments, local authorities and civil society:
- Collect, manage, analyse, and apply urban indicators and indices;
- Identify and adopt effective urban policies, plans and practices;
- Evaluate the impact of policies, plans and practices on urban development; and
- Share information, knowledge and expertise using modern communication technology and infrastructure.

Strategy
These objectives are being realised through a growing network of local, national and regional urban observatories (LUOs, NUOs and RUOs) and through partner institutions that provide training and other capacity building expertise. Offering guidelines, tools and technical assistance, the constituent programmes of the GUO – the Urban Indicators Programme (UIP) and the Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (BLP) – encourage existing institutions to become capable urban observatories and to work with urban policy-makers and civil society to improve the quality of urban life.
The Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) is a joint UNCHS/UNEP programme. It works towards the development of a sustainable urban environment, building capacities in urban environmental planning and management, and promoting a broad-based participatory process. The programme, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, was established in 1990.

The Urban Environment Forum (UEF) is a global coalition of cities and international support programmes working in the urban environment. The Forum is defined by the shared concerns of its members, and not by institutional linkages - it exists only to facilitate the ability of the members, individually and collectively, to achieve their goals in Environmental Planning and Management. The Urban Environment Forum holds a global meeting every two years, with regional or thematic meetings taking place in the interim period.

8. WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO/EUROPE): HEALTH CITIES PROJECT

The WHO Healthy Cities project is a long-term international development project that aims to place health high on the agenda of decision-makers in the cities of Europe and to promote comprehensive local strategies for health and sustainable development based on the principles and objectives of the strategy for health for all for the twenty-first century and local Agenda 21. Ultimately, the Healthy Cities project seeks to enhance the physical, mental, social and environmental wellbeing of the people who live and work in cities. Two phases of implementation of the project have now been completed and the new phase, Phase III, will run from 1998 to 2002. Urban health and action at the local level represent high priorities for the WHO Regional Office for Europe. Many studies and reports emphasise the growing health challenges of cities such as poverty, violence, social exclusion, pollution, substandard housing, the unmet needs of elderly and young people, homeless people and migrants, unhealthy spatial planning, the lack of participatory practices and the need to seriously address inequality and sustainable development. The Healthy Cities project in the European Region has shown the value of a holistic approach to such problems. It is an effective and popular mechanism for promoting policies and programmes based on health for all at the local level through a process that involves explicit political commitment, institutional changes and intersectoral partnerships, innovative actions addressing all aspects of health and living conditions and extensive networking between cities across Europe and beyond. Approximately 1100 cities and towns are linked with 29 national and several regional and thematic (multi-city action plans) healthy cities networks in Europe. Cities participating in the
WHO European network have developed and implemented a wide range of programmes and products including city health profiles and city health strategies based on intersectoral cooperation, community development initiatives and programmes that address the needs of vulnerable groups, lifestyles, environmental health and Agenda 21.

Phase III (1998-2002) of the Healthy Cities project is being launched simultaneously with the creation of the WHO European Centre for Urban Health within the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen. The primary goal of the Centre is to strengthen WHO's capacity to promote and stimulate action for health at the city and local level.”

9. EUROCITIES

http://www.eurocities.org

Eurocities is an association of European metropolitan cities, founded in 1986. It has a high profile and currently represents 97 cities from 26 European countries. The network aims to improve the quality of life for the majority of EU citizens living in cities and urban areas by influencing the European agenda, and promoting the exchange of experience and best practice between city governments. It carries out conferences and participates in projects and programmes such as Telecities.

Eurocities has established several specialist committees on Culture, East-West, Economic Development & Urban Regeneration (EDURC), Environment, Social Welfare, Transport, and Technology Policy. The aims of the Economic Development and Urban Regeneration Committee (EDURC), which meets a minimum of four times a year and focuses on urban development strategies, are:
- to take part in the decision making process and to influence European policy in matters concerning the economic development and regeneration of cities;
- to prepare and develop innovative co-operation projects dealing with urban economic problems;
- to promote formal and informal collaboration between the cities as well as the exchange of information, experiences and “know-how”; and
- to promote beneficial economic exchanges between members.

EDURC has been working on the following issues during 1999-2000: - development strategies of major European cities, innovation and entrepreneurship, commerce and urban regeneration, employment, and culture and urban regeneration.

Documents of interest include:
- Final report of the working party on development strategies of European cities, September 2000;
- Eurocities EDURC: a review of national urban regeneration policies October 1997;
- Eurocities, position paper on European urban regeneration policy;
- EDURC (unofficial) The ambition of the Eurocities, Charles Gachelin, January 1999, Special issue No.10 of the journal ‘Urbanisme: Urban regeneration, a European challenge; and
10. CAMPAIGN INTERACTIVE – EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND TOWNS CAMPAIGN

http://www.sustainable-cities.org/

Campaign Interactive supports transfer of knowledge and exchange of experience in the field of urban sustainability and Local Agenda 21 in Europe, thereby helping implement the concept of sustainable development. It provides central access to comprehensive and up-to-date information relevant to all those working towards sustainability in an urban context. Campaign Interactive also fosters dialogue and the exchange of experience by providing opportunities for interactive communication between local authorities, networks and other organisations through thematic discussion groups, the European Partner Search Mechanism and many links.

Campaign Interactive is funded by the Directorate General for Environment of the European Commission. It is being developed as part of the European Sustainable Cities Project in partnership with the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign, the European Commission Expert Group on the Urban Environment, EURONET and the following European networks of local authorities: Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Eurocities, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), United Towns Organisation (UTO) and WHO - Healthy Cities Project.

11. INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES (ICLEI)

http://www.iclei.org/

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) is an association of local governments dedicated to the prevention and solution of local, regional, and global environmental problems through local action. Approximately 300 cities, towns, counties, and their associations from around the world are Members of the Council.

ICLEI was launched in 1990 as the international environmental agency for local governments under the sponsorship of the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), and the Center for Innovative Diplomacy.

ICLEI's two current campaigns--the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign and the Local Agenda 21 Initiative--are supported by numerous technical assistance and training projects.

ICLEI launched a global LA 21 Initiative at the United Nations "Earth Summit" in 1992. Presently, more than 1,800 local governments in 64 countries are working with their communities to prepare LA 21 action plans. ICLEI works with these local governments to develop and test sustainable development planning and to implement specific pilot projects. Through ICLEI's International Training Centre and regional LA 21 networks, ICLEI also supports the establishment of LA 21 National Campaigns and provides training in areas such as performance indicators, environmental auditing, issue assessment, strategic energy planning, and environmental budgeting.

Parallel with the regional networks, ICLEI is establishing a system for monitoring progress in implementing LA 21 action plans worldwide.
Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) is a global campaign to slow Earth's warming trend and to improve local air quality and urban liveability. The CCP enlists cities to prepare and enact plans to reduce energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The campaign presently includes more than 175 municipalities which account for nearly 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

12. LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY - EUROPEAN GOOD PRACTICE INFORMATION SERVICE

http://cities21.com/europractice

"Local Sustainability," the European Good Practice Information Service. This guide to sustainable good practice is developed and operated by EURONET Environment Planning and Development and ICLEI, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives and has been developed with the financial support of the European Commission, Directorate General Environment, Nuclear Safety and Civil Protection

It was launched at the Second European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns in Lisbon, Portugal on 6 October 1996 and received the endorsement of the European Commission.

Through ICLEI's role as the world wide Thematic Centre for "Local Sustainable Development and Environmental Management" within the framework of the UNCHS Best Practices Initiative, Local Sustainability will serve as the European arm of ICLEI's Information Clearinghouse network.

13. EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

http://www.eea.dk/

The European Environment Agency s a central node of an extended network, the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET). The EEA aims to support sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy making agents and the public.

14. EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

http://www.eaue.de/

The European Academy of the Urban Environment aims to encourage exchange of experience amongst local government decision makers in all spheres of sustainable urban development by means of:
- conferences;
- seminars and workshops;
- publications; and
SURBAN, the database on good practice in urban development; supporting the CEM-network of Central European Metropolises.

It was set up in November 1991 by the Berlin Senat and the European Parliament, in order to facilitate the transition towards sustainable development and co-operation between the capital cities of Central Europe as well as between other European cities.

The following topic areas form the focus of the Academy's attention and efforts:
- strategies for sustainable cities;
- urban traffic and transport;
- environmentally compatible and careful urban renewal and redevelopment;
- new sustainable settlements;
- careful and climate-oriented urban planning;
- ecological perspectives in metropolitan development;
- renewal and redevelopment of inner-city derelict land;
- improvements of large housing estates;
- local government initiatives for job creation in the environmental sector.

Target groups include:
- decision-makers in national, regional and local authorities involved in urban planning;
- private sector representatives;
- non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and
- individual experts and consultants.

15. COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS (CEMR)
http://www.ccre.org/site.html

CEMR brings together more than 100,000 local and regional authorities in Europe, federated through 40 large national associations of local and regional authorities in 29 European countries.
Advocate of local authority participation and exchange in Europe, particularly through twinning.

16. URBANET
http://www.gtz.de/urbanet/

A database on Urban and Regional affairs, financed by the German Government and primarily concerned with issues around assistance to developing countries.

Urbanet is a database for disseminating and sharing urban management information among the professional and the donor communities, urban practitioners and the local government world. The database was developed as the German contribution to the third phase of the "Urban Management Programme" (UMP). The UMP was jointly initiated in 1987 by the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNHCS / Habitat) to address the main problems and issues linked to the urbanisation in the Developing Countries. The aim of the German contribution is
to improve in selected partner countries the exchange of experience in urban management and the co-operation between local/regional experts, institutions and GTZ-projects. The German contribution essentially concentrates on the provision of methods, information and positive examples of municipal management, as well as on the processing of replicable approaches of solutions.

17. CAR FREE CITIES NETWORK
http://www.edc.eu.int/cfc/index.html

The Car Free Cities Network was launched by DG Environment in March 1994 at the "Car Free Cities" Conference in Amsterdam. The first 37 member cities who joined the network at that time were committed to developing, exchanging and putting in place techniques and management methods for the reduction of the volume of traffic in cities, by actively encouraging the use of more environmentally friendly modes of transport than the car. Since then, the membership of the network has grown considerably and today, the Car Free Cities Network brings together some 60 European Cities actively involved in strategies promoting sustainable mobility towards the process of improving the quality of life. The network's main aims and objectives are to achieve a healthier environment in terms of improved air quality and sustainable urban mobility, improved traffic safety, promote more efficient use of energy in transport and offer the citizens of our cities an improved quality of life while enhancing their access to necessary destinations within a sustainable city.

18. INFOCITIES
http://www.infocities.eu.int/

InfoCities was designed by the members of Telecities - an association of over one hundred European cities. The objective of InfoCities is to evaluate the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) to deliver integrated public services, moving towards a 'one-stop' point of service delivery. The service areas chosen for the feasibility phase were education, health, transport, culture, electronic commerce and public information. InfoCities also aims to improve access to public and city services for residents, and to offer value-added services to businesses and professionals. Among those using InfoCities applications and services have been: residents, visitors and tourists using public access points (such as street kiosks and public library Internet access points), schools and other educational bodies, businesses and professional organisations (from SMEs to hospitals), households and community organisations. InfoCities has the support of the European Commission, through the Trans-European Telecommunication Networks programme.

19. INTA-AIVN
http://inta-aivn.org

INTA-AIVN is an international not for profit Association of public and private organisations, government agencies, business and individuals dedicated to promoting and improving urban and regional development. Their mission is to create, in co-operation, an international forum
INTA also has an interest in a number of European Projects. Two which might be of interest are: a) an Interreg IIc project, which is looking into the contributions of New Towns to the European spatial development perspective in the North Western Metropolitan Area; and b) in cooperation with the International Institute for Urban Environment (IIUE) INTA are looking at how to Develop the Economy from Within (DEW). DEW is a project within the framework of the programme ‘Third System and Employment’ of the Directorate General for Employment, Industrial relations and Social Affairs- of the European Commission. In this project the cities of Bath, Genoa, Gothenburg, Leipzig, Leicester, Venice and the region of West Yorkshire aim to set out a coherent vision of a sustainable local economy, to develop partnerships to help its implementation and to disseminate the experience gained widely in the EU.

INTA events include seminars/conferences on:
- ‘Tourism & the City’;
- ‘The City region in a world of Globalisation’;
- ‘The Inclusive City: cities for the world, cities for the people’;
- ‘The City as a catalyst for growth’;
- ‘Road Pricing’;
- ‘Post War Neighbourhood Renewal’; and
- ‘The Balance Between Cities’.

and, recently:
- 11-12 May 2000 (Nieuwegein, Netherlands) – “Financing New Towns Regeneration”; and

20. EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF TOWN PLANNERS

http://www.ceu-ectp.org/

The European Council of Town Planners (ECTP) is the grouping of professional town planning associations and institutes from the Member States of the EU. It is the meeting place for the profession at European level and a platform for exchanging ideas and information. Since 1985 all member associations and institutes of the ECTP have signed a Common Charter whereby they commit themselves to organising and defending the town planning profession at European level, whether practised as an independent consultant, a contract worker or an agent of public authorities. The delegates from the ECTP member associations and institutes meet twice yearly for the General Assemblies held in Spring and Autumn.

Objectives of the ECTP are:
- to enable the free movement of town planners in the member countries of the EU, through the mutual recognition of their qualifications and skills; and
- to represent and promote the town planning profession through recognising its specific characteristics, its ethics, its values and foundations in land management policy, among
the European institutions, the national political institutions, the economic and social powers and citizens.

**Athens Charter**

A new charter adopted in May 1998, to supersede that adopted in 1931. The new charter had ten sets of recommendations for the strengthening of the role of planning in issues such as social exclusion, citizen and community participation, retention of local identity along with encouragement of diversity, inclusive ICT strategies, sustainable development, economic development, urban passenger transport, and public safety.

**21. INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HOUSING AND PLANNING**

[http://ifhp.org](http://ifhp.org)

This planning professionals’ body with an institutional constituency aims to increase knowledge in housing, planning, environmental and related fields. It works through an annual congress – the latest being on ‘Urban Networks’ in Rotterdam on 10-13 September 2000. The theme of the congress reflects topical housing and planning issues and is related to the location of the congress. Past themes have included development policies for rural areas. Recent events include:

- 24-26 May 2000 (Amsterdam) – IFHP Working Party on “Multifunctional & Intensive Land Use.”; and
- 7-11 August 2000 (Porvoo, Finland) – “Critical Evaluation of Housing & Planning in the last 100 years – what we can learn for the future.”

**ANNEX – ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION DIRECTORATES GENERAL**

**DG REGIONAL POLICY** acts as co-ordinator of EU urban affairs, with input from other Commission Services. Commission Services contributed to the "Sustainable Urban Development - a Framework for Action" - it is a corporate/collegiate document.


**Activities**

Follow-up to the Communication " Sustainable Urban Development - A Framework for Action"

Services involved: ALL

Interservice group on Urban affairs

Services involved: DG REGIO and ALL

Urban Community Initiative 2000-2006 Guidelines
Interreg Community Initiative 2000-2006 Guidelines

Services involved: DG REGIO co-ordination unit and geographic desks

European Spatial Development Perspective which has urban dimension - polycentric urban system

Services involved: DG REGIO plus ALL

"Mainstreaming urban actions into regional policy - How the Structural Funds can assist" (informal guidance note)

Analysis of all Structural Funds programmes Objective 1 and 2 to identify their urban and "balanced development" contents.

Services involved: DG REGIO A1, G1, G2, and Geographic desks, plus other DGs EMPLOYMENT, AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, ENVIRONMENT

Development of exchange of experience and good practices, and diffusion of know-how.

Services involved: DG REGIO, plus DG RESEARCH, DG ENVIRONMENT, DG ENERGY, AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, and EUROSTAT

Urban Audit and Compilation of quality of life indicators
Services involved: DG REGIO plus EMPLOYMENT, AGRICULTURE, CULTURE, ENVIRONMENT, RESEARCH, EUROSTAT

DG RESEARCH

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/research/index_en.html

The Research Fifth Framework Programme (FPV) Key Action "City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage", relates to the Urban Framework for Action (FFA) as follows:

FFA Action 1: Strengthening economic prosperity and Employment in Towns and Cities

FPV Research Priority 4:

- Integrated best practices for sustainable development;
- Instruments for sustainable city planning;
- Policy relevant assessments, systems models, scenarios;
- Access to essential services and supplies;
- Supply of skilled human capital, enhanced mobility and access;
- Balanced regional development to enable co-operative frameworks between cities of different size and connected rural areas;
- Protection, conservation and enhancement of European cultural heritage;
- Pollution monitoring; and
- Integrated approaches to land-use planning and transport.
FFA Action 2: Promoting Equality, social inclusion and regeneration in urban areas

FPV Research Priority 4:

- Optimised methodologies and best practice in relation to social inclusion, health, environment, housing, access to services and essential supply;
- Improving urban governance and decision making;
- Supply of skilled human capital and effective networking between providers and users of knowledge; and
- Revitalisation of city centres and neighbourhoods.

FFA Action 3: Protecting and Improving the Urban environment and Global sustainability

FPV Research Priority 4:

- Strategies for sustainable waste treatment, disposal and re-use;
- Strategies for the reduction, re-use and treatment of solid waste with a minimum of environmental impact;
- Reduction of urban pollution and congestion;
- Greater use of collective and other sustainable transport modes;
- Niche management, assessment of transport concepts with provision of user friendly new vehicle concepts, improved vehicle and urban infrastructure compatibility;
- Comparative assessment and demonstration of new transport technologies and related infrastructure;
- Reduction of prime energy consumption;
- Sustainable city planning and rational resource management; and
- Rehabilitation of contaminated sites.

FFA Action 4: Contributing to Good Urban Governance

FPV Research Priority 4:

- Establishing best practices in the key action "City of Tomorrow";
- Increasing citizenship and stakeholder participation;
- Identifying common practices; and
- Improving urban governance and decision-making.

DG RESEARCH - Innovation programme

http://www.cordis.lu/easw/home.html

The European Awareness Scenario Workshop (EASW) Initiative was launched by the European Commission DG XIII D in collaboration with the Sustainable Cities and Towns campaign in 1994 as a pilot action to explore new possible actions and social experiments for the promotion of a social environment favouring innovation in Europe. The initiative focused on two particular fields of action which, in the opinion of experts, should benefit the most from the introduction of the European dimension:
- Assessing the transferability of best practices between different cultural and political contexts, including identification of conditions for success; and
- Identification and further development of instruments and tools to support the know-how transfer processes.

DG ENVIRONMENT

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/policy_en.htm#e

Unit D3 - Air Quality, Urban Environment, Noise, Transport
Involvement in a number of urban initiatives and subject areas, including: Membership of EU interservice group on urban affairs.

Responsibility for Expert Group on the Urban Environment, which was formed by the European Commission at the invitation of the Council by a 1991 Resolution in which it recognised the importance of the 1990 Green Paper on the Urban Environment, to:
- “consider how future town planning and land use strategies can incorporate environmental objectives;
- advise on how the Commission can develop the urban environment dimension within its environmental policy; and
- consider how the Community could further contribute to the improvement of the urban environment”.

The Group consists mainly of representatives from Environment Ministries from each of the EU Member States, and from a range of European and international organisations with an interest in urban issues. All relevant Directorates General of the European Commission are also represented in the Group.

The Group has fostered information exchange in the field of sustainable development at local level. To effectively influence the urban sustainability debate, the Expert Group and the Commission’s services have launched the Sustainable Cities Project. The Group have recently produced an interim report on progress. A final recommendation should be ready for circulation by 30 November 2000 and this will form the base for a publication.

In December 1999 DG ENVIRONMENT published a proposal for a joint decision to establish a Community framework for co-operation between the Commission and “networks” of towns and cities on “the conception, exchange and implementation of good practices with regard to sustainable urban developments and Local Agenda 21”.
Activities to be supported would include development of training and information on urban development and Local Agenda 21; exchanges and co-operation among authorities and the Commission; and analyses of problems and the effectiveness of measures to advance sustainable development. The Commission proposes to work mainly with established networks of local authorities which co-operate on particular topics within the framework of the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign.
The proposal has been negotiated in Council Working Group and will be considered by the European Parliament later in 2000.”

Developing the environment aspect of Framework for Action

Sustainable Cities campaign
Other initiatives under the LIFE programme

Sustainable Cities
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/home_en.htm

Noise Policy
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/noise/home.htm

Non-motorised Transport
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/cycling/index.htm
(Cycling handbook for local authorities)
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/cycling/cycling_en.pdf

DG ENERGY

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/index_en.html

Membership of EU interservice group on urban affairs

Developing the energy strand of the Framework for Action

Other initiatives under the SAVE and ALTENER programmes

DG TRANSPORT

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/index_en.html

Membership of EU interservice group on urban affairs;

Developing the transport element in the Sustainable Urban Development - a Framework for Action

Developing a series of transport-related benchmarks

DG JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/justice_home/index_en.htm

Main concerns: Justice, law and crime; migration and asylum issues; internal freedom of movement for EU citizens.
ANNEX 4

INTERIM NOTE ON URBAN REGENERATION POLICIES IN EUROPE

CAUTION:
In order to illustrate the proposed approach of the co-operation programme, the French delegation has proposed to start the work on the approaches of urban regeneration in Europe. As to launch this reflection, the French delegation has ordered a study on the subject conducted by four academic researchers. The synthesis below is based on their work. The note was written by academic researchers and thus it does not bind the Member States representatives of the urban development group.
In this English version, there are still problems of terminology which still have to be solved.

To accompany the return of economic growth, those responsible for urban policies in Europe are mobilising cities and districts in a new approach: renouvellement urbain (urban regeneration). The French term is obviously not used in the other languages of the European Union Member States, but according to our survey concerns are similar. We wanted to list these concerns before carrying out any joint case study work, so as to define the scope of this work.

Urban regeneration is opposed to urban renewal and, even more so, new towns. In the 1960s, the idea of new towns was to direct urban growth towards new confined sites, so as to limit the risk of sprawl whilst providing the new urban areas with a full range of public services. Areas of urban regeneration were also created to replace old districts with more modern buildings. These relatively expensive conversion processes are not in keeping with the principles of sustainable development. The districts constructed in this way on greenfield sites or cleared urban sites lack a historical heritage likely to anchor the identity of inhabitants. A generation later, they have still not become normally integrated into the urban fabric.

The promoters of urban regeneration propose to moderate the size of public urban interventions and make them more effective through more carefully reasoned choices. The question of urban regeneration corresponds better to the concerns expressed by inhabitants. However, the tendency towards urban sprawl, considered costly in terms of transport and aggressive for the environment, is accompanied by a desinvestment of certain pericentral urban areas which should therefore be revalued. The addition of new activities and the influx of new inhabitants should be organised as far as possible using the existing building stock available, which has the dual advantage of already being equipped with infrastructures and forming part of the recognised heritage.

Numerous private or public urban regeneration processes are carried out without the need for any specific intervention. However, this spontaneous urban regeneration requires surrounding buildings, roads and facilities that are already in a very good state, for which the local authorities are responsible. If all or part of a city or conurbation becomes unattractive - or even repulsive - for households and/or companies, the spontaneous regeneration mechanism no longer works. This is also the case in declining regions where the residential economy is not developing sufficiently.
Urban regeneration seeks urban continuity more than restructuring. Inhabitants and town planners refuse operations on too large a scale, require progressiveness in transformations, insist on the quality of the development and its insertion into the landscape. The authorities support operations whose success, especially their financing, depend on the role that the economic actors have: real estate promoters, companies likely to set up there, etc. This condition of public-private partnership makes it difficult for the process of urban development to be extended to small cities which do not offer sufficient opportunities to private actors.

Under what conditions can national or even European public action take over from spontaneous or locally organised regeneration? Urban renewal proceeded in zones and cut out special territories in cities. Urban regeneration, on the other hand, proposes a global vision of the conurbation, its problems as regards housing, employment and transport, the functioning of its services, the location of derelict land and other land that can be mobilised. The return of growth allows such a policy to be considered and confidence to be placed in the possibility of implementing it. The main role of the national and European bodies must be to favour the emergence or strengthening of the conurbation as a technical and political actor.

However, this policy will be even more effective if the search for a social and political consensus in favour of a tight, dense city is developed. But a large number of inhabitants prefer to live in the periphery, or are forced to live there due to property prices. This is accompanied by a wider spread of cars as ordinary consumer goods and expansion of the road and motorway networks. The free housing market seems to favour sprawl more than urban regeneration. In the peripheral municipalities which have large land reserves, promoters can offer products meeting the preferences and/or incomes of households. The central and inner circle municipalities have fewer land assets but more educational and cultural resources. Consequently, there should also be territorial and political co-operation among municipalities, and mechanisms to encourage this.

The development of a European Community area implies being able to define, on the basis of common categories, the different types of urban situations where an urban regeneration approach would be appropriate:

- small and medium-sized city centres, in the heart of rural regions;
- cities that still have derelict industrial land;
- cities confronted with the existence of social-urban wasteland or impoverished neighbourhoods.

Transborder conurbations where these three types of urban situation can be preferential places for observing the problems posed by the differences between national urban policies and experimentation with transnational actions designed through study structures or even operations at both local and multinational level.

**Urban regeneration in small and medium-sized cities**

Small and medium-sized cities have development trajectories in parallel with those of the regions to which they belong. In regional territories which are not in decline, they experience a development of the residential economy (tourism, leisures, ageing of the population in search of preserved environments), agri-foodstuffs and agro-industrial activities and a
“technopolisation” in certain cases of universities, research laboratories and associated companies.

The European model of a highly diversified urban pattern persists. The legislative shaping of urban regeneration, its transformation into a reference for planning approaches, will, however, lead professionals and associations to try to find applications for it in these situations, too. The desire to use the existing building stock or land already equipped for the installation of new urban functions or activities will guide local officials.

The technical and logistical requirements of some of these activities (commercial ones in particular) will probably lead to their being set up in urban extension areas. Urban sprawl will follow, even if it is on a small scale.

On the other hand, in these situations urban regeneration could tend to develop the **local historical heritage and the landscape environment** and make the city more attractive within the context of the residential economy. It is only a matter of following an existing policy.

Moreover, in small and medium-sized cities, as in others, new values appearing in planning will also be expressed:
- changeover in national state position from an organiser of the city to an incentiviser and facilitator, which requires training of the civil servants in local negotiation;
- predominance of ascending approaches over descending methods;
- involvement of inhabitants in preparation and follow-up;
- involvement of private players in land/or finance provision and leverage of public money;
- decentralised, partner-based definition of action programmes.

Depending on the regions to which they belong, small and medium-sized cities may not be in such favourable conditions for coping with these new responsibilities. Insofar as the European Union and the Member States do not want the depopulation of territories in decline, aid could in these cases encourage the development of the residential economy by placing greater emphasis on the value of landscapes and heritage and act as an incentive to the proper spatial integration of new residences. A special effort could be made in favour of initiatives bringing old and new residents together in local governance, developing a **hospitality economy**.

**Urban regeneration through mobilisation of derelict industrial land**

In the 19th century, localised industrial development led to accelerated and uncontrolled urbanisation. Several industrial conurbations which today have tens of thousands of inhabitants came from the merging of villages or the growth of a very small urban nucleus. Some of these cities have for a long time been merely streets of factories, dense networks of railways, rows of pits, slag heaps and workers' housing estates. Since the 1980s, these conurbations have been suffering a decline of industrial employment not offset by growth of the tertiary sector. Many sites and buildings lie abandoned, largely in the central districts of conurbations. On the other hand, new sites for activities are being developed on the outskirts, often of excessive dimensions. The economic actors are in effect seeking appropriate modern sites that have a well-kept environment and are easily accessible. This demand does not correspond to the image of derelict industrial land. Their conversion entails costs for landscaping, demolition and decontamination. Without **co-operation among the municipalities or districts** to pool their resources and co-ordinate building permits, it is to be feared that the urban stain will continue to sprawl and central locations will continue to decay.
Only co-operation among public actors, between **public and private actors** can mobilise sufficient means for urban regeneration, including the reintegration of derelict military land.

Urban regeneration is a necessity if one wishes to facilitate the transition of cities with an old industrial tradition to a service and knowledge economy. The advantages of public intervention closely involving the private sector and the inhabitants should allow:

- in the short term, exploitation of the employment, training and business potential concealed by urban interventions on derelict industrial land, rundown housing estates, public areas requiring restoration, landscaping and the planting of trees on abandoned sites;
- in the medium term, gradual reintegration of the marginalised sectors of urban regions, through the arrival or maintenance of economic and social activities and populations from the middle or upper classes;
- in the long term, the concretisation of a credible alternative to uncontrolled urban sprawl, allowing progress to be made towards sustainable urban development.

**Some possible European actions**

The European Union already intervenes in urban regeneration operations involving derelict industrial land, particularly in cities in the areas of Objective 2. Three types of action could be developed more:

- decontamination of industrial sites, where it is often difficult to apply the polluter-pays principle, which means substantial costs for the local community. The existing finance for decontamination studies or for innovative decontamination processes are only an imperfect response to the problem, which is more that of large-scale standardised treatment of the sites concerned. Needs are difficult to quantify. In any case, decontamination is not restoration to the initial state, but preparation for the new use envisaged;
- schools whose physical configuration dating back to the 19th century no longer corresponds to the type of investment in education and culture required both by teachers and by pupils and families. There is a major need for rehabilitation and reconstruction of schools and educational establishments, in order to visually symbolise the political will to open up the school to modernity at the same time as to the neighbourhood and the city;
- the development of employment: urban regeneration activities contribute towards the economic activities of the demolition, decontamination, construction, highways and environment sectors. They represent a substantial employment potential. For example, in the case of the physical redevelopment of a site, the body in charge will have to sign recruitment agreements with the construction companies and ensure that they are applied, set up vocational guidance machinery for the manpower when the works are completed, and involve local companies and designers in the submission of tenders. It seems that European financing could incorporate more training and job opportunity operations and actions linked to the physical restructuring of the area. This incorporation would help to restore the inhabitants' confidence in the future of their neighbourhood and in the development of their own actions.
Urban regeneration in “urban social wastelands”

The growth that has returned in most European metropolises seems to be accompanied by widening territorial disparities in their midst. At least four types of habitats are affected by these phenomena: large social housing estates on the edge of the city centre or in suburban municipalities, deprived central areas, shantytowns and illegal constructions and impoverished housing estates.

In the countries of Northern Europe, the urban crisis bears witness to the insufficiency of social transfers, although already deemed to be substantial, to prevent the growth of inequalities; with the appearance of mass unemployment, subsidised housing and social protection have lost some of their power to integrate the working classes. In the countries of Southern Europe, neighbourhood solidarity is less effective in its function as a safety net. More than any other vulnerable social categories, immigrant populations are liable to drift partially into exclusion. Everywhere, the current force of segregation mechanisms is leading to the creation of “pockets of poverty” fraught with threats to social cohesion.

Behind the apparent diversity of national models can in fact be seen a homogeneity of practices for the treatment of socio-spatial exclusion. This is due to local and national actors being involved in partnerships on projects for town-planning and social intervention. Intervention by voluntary organisations essentially occurs in the social field and in the short term, whilst the private sector is interested in the medium term and in building projects and vocational training. The bodies managing social housing, privatised, associative or still public, are privileged players in these partnerships. The local authorities set up and steer these local urban regeneration mechanisms.

The feature of policies to combat socio-spatial exclusion is that they carry out specific and budgetarily supplemented interventions in deprived areas. A neighbourhood of 1,000 to 4,000 households (3,000 to 10,000 inhabitants) tends to become a reference area for most revitalisation policies pursued in Europe. The indicators used to choose neighbourhoods and evaluate interventions are very similar. It is considered everywhere that exclusively spatial interventions have no lasting results for the redevelopment, including property redevelopment, of the neighbourhood. The objective of standardising the neighbourhood, making it socially similar to others, calls for interventions also of an economic nature (setting up of companies, development of jobs, vocational training) and a social nature (mixed population, cultural life, development of educational services). This complex intervention requires substantial budgetary resources and careful selection of the sites to which they will be allocated.

A new objective is asserting itself more and more: restoring the conditions for mobility of inhabitants on the scale of the conurbation, i.e. the area of employment and educational, cultural and leisure establishments. Residential mobility presupposes a better distribution of social housing over the whole of the territory of the conurbation, better financial accessibility to the private rented market or home ownership. Professional mobility requires education, training and access to the labour market and implies the creation of nurseries or recreational centres for older children. Policies aimed at access to transport at appropriate fares or better service networks are also part of this problem, as is a concern to encourage access to new technologies.
The local public services play a decisive role in these districts. The local and national authorities must ensure that adaptation to the local context is not an occasion for them to be devalued but, on the contrary, an opening-up to common law and promotion possibilities. This presupposes that the agents working in these services are trained to receive various publics, equal in rights, and that a process of reflection and reform is implemented constantly in these institutions, in order to adapt them to the continuously changing urban populations.

The resources of the local communities can be mobilised by the public services and local and national actors in certain conditions. In effect, the inhabitants of poor neighbourhoods do not have the necessary skills to maintain contact with the services and benefit from their activities. Mediation agents may prove necessary to translate not only linguistically but also culturally. The purpose of this mediation is not so much to allow communities to take charge of themselves but to provide for integration into the city and the development of reciprocal public-spiritedness. Many initiatives have been taken along these lines and have restored a certain feeling of security in neighbourhoods, in shopping centres or in the local branches of the public services.

Urban regeneration in transborder conurbations

The gradual formation of the European Union space has brought together municipalities that faced each other across frontiers and lead to new social practices. Whilst still residing in the same place where they work, people seek care or culture in the neighbouring country, in another district. These flows are not necessarily balanced in the two directions, which reveals differences in wages, amenities, facilities and services. The advantages of further unification are strongly felt and, of course, hoped for in the most favourable sense.

Differences in socio-economic levels between neighbourhoods are the fate of all urban conurbations, but they are exacerbated here. The search for greater social cohesion means that remedies must be found to the gross situation of possible tensions. A convergence in the quality of urban services, along with greater development of the historic heritage of each municipality can gradually create an urban and social continuity in these conurbations, following a process close to that observed in the world's large metropolises. This continuity can be achieved in particular by introducing transborder public transport for the whole conurbation.

Transborder conurbations could provide urban regeneration with a privileged exercise and observation framework. Conurbation town-planning agencies could be set up to study on the scale of the entire urban area industrial and socio-urban wastelands that can be mobilised for the creation of new activities and new housing, for a levelling-off of the territories in the conurbation. Urban regeneration of each site could be prepared, decided and implemented by a transnational conurbation community which, through a bilateral or European agreement, enjoys budgetary resources allocated to this type of institutional territory. At least a transnational intermunicipal association could be set up with more limited powers.

An intervention designed by a transnational agency on territories belonging to two or more different countries of the European Union would give rise to comparisons and measures for financial, fiscal and legal compensations which would allow concrete observation of the problems posed by the convergence of countries in the European Union.
In the immediate future, it would seem that the new economic and social development brought about by European unification for frontier municipalities often creates special problems for inhabitants on low incomes faced with rising housing prices that lead to transborder residential mobility. Transborder conurbations are therefore particularly concerned by the problems of social mix and housing, for which solidarity dimensions will have to be found at the level of the conurbation. They are also faced with substantial increases in flows of goods requiring new infrastructures with transnational developers.

**Proposals for European action**

Urban regeneration is primarily incumbent upon the local authorities and the partnerships that they develop with the inhabitants, private players and the services intervening at local level. The States support urban regeneration through a legislative framework, institutional reforms, tax incentives and the training of professionals.

However, common law measures could well be insufficient in cases of urban or regional decline, to which Structural Funds are already being allocated. Not only is the essential general growth dynamic for local development lacking but also it is impossible to envisage its return; it is therefore an urban and economic change that is on the agenda. In transborder conurbations too, history has bequeathed a territorial fracture that cannot be absorbed through means of common law.

It is still too early to define precise intervention criteria. An in-depth exchange of case studies among the European countries will pinpoint the blocking factors and the measures for progress that would make European financing possible. It will determine the extent of the financing to be mobilised and the characteristics of the sites to be selected.

However, some institutional conditions for this additional European financing can already be proposed:
- the existence of an elected local authority, assisted by an intermunicipal town-planning agency, responsible for the entire urban area in which the project presented is located;
- the existence of pluralistic partnership machinery incorporating private actors and associations of inhabitants in particular;
- the existence of an action programme highlighting the specific support expected from European financing.

Exchanges of local experiences, mediation on interesting examples, dissemination of the methodologies used and comparisons of institutional, legislative and regulatory modifications are already largely practised by the European Commission. This plays a fundamental role.

In particular, these exchanges could concern the steering of urban regeneration operations: definition and methods of legal, financial and technical mobilisation of derelict land; comparison of the new services and equipment introduced; methods for involving inhabitants and mediation with urban minorities; analysis of the players that are and can be mobilised in urban regeneration operations. Apart from the creation of an Internet site and field visits, particular attention should also be given to training the agents of urban regeneration.

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Document prepared by Anne Querrien (PUCA/DGUHC/Ministry for capital work, transport and housing) on the basis of studies by Herve Huntzinger (TETRA), Christophe Demazière (University of Tours), Thomas Kirzbaum (CEDOV) and Olivier Denert (MOT) for la Délégation Interministérielle à la Ville.