



PREPARATORY ACTION

EU-third countries cooperation on urban development

After the success of the RURBAN preparatory action, URBAN Intergroup members decided to submit another preparatory action entitled "World cities: EU-third countries cooperation on urban development". With the vote on the 2014 EU budget, on 20th November in plenary session, MEPs granted €2.000.000 to the international dimension of EU regional and urban policy for the year 2014 and 2015. The first actions related to the implementation of the initiative will start next year.

Indeed, the exemplary role of EU cohesion policy gained on importance for third countries all over the world. Memoranda of Understanding on regional cooperation were signed with China, Russia, Brazil and Ukraine. Further cooperation also developed with Moldova, Georgia, Chile, Argentina, Peru, South Africa, Uruguay and Japan.

Promoting the exchange of best practice between the EU and third countries

Consequently, the dialogue in the field of regional and urban policy – being one of the components of the Union's diplomatic relations with third countries – requires further support. Moreover, URBAN members consider that the cooperation with third countries should focus on certain issues in relation to the reform of cohesion policy, i.e. its enhanced urban dimension.

The aim of the preparatory action tabled by URBAN members in the 2014 budget is to promote the exchange of experience and best practice between the EU and third countries on the theme of territorial development with particular reference to urban development, urban-rural partnership and urban

cross-border cooperation.

MEPs asked for the scope of this preparatory action to include the organisation of study visits for urban policy actors, the organisation of seminars and workshops aiming at exchange of experience between EU and third countries, and illustrating innovative good practice examples of cities and towns' cooperation. They also pledged for the development and the implementation of an Internet based tool kit enabling EU cities and towns to look for a partner for cooperation in third countries in relation to selected topics.

"RURBAN" project

The "RURBAN" project initiated by the URBAN Intergroup and carried on for two years by the European Commission was concluded on October 23-25th with the publication of the report "Rural-Urban partnerships: an integrated approach to economic development" at the 9th OECD Rural Development Policy Conference in Bologna, Italy.

The report provides a framework to understand the changing relationships between urban and rural areas. It is focused on one approach that can enhance and better manage rural-urban relationships: the use of rural-urban partnerships.

It details the characteristics of these partnerships and the factors that can hinder as well as enable rural-urban co-operation.

More information: www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/rural-urban-partnerships-an-integrated-approach-to-economic-development.htm

URBAN conferences and meetings

MARSEILLE

European Capital of Culture 2013 label impacts on urban and regional development

Between September 12th-14th, members of the URBAN Intergroup participated in a study trip to Marseille (France) – European Capital of Culture 2013 – organised by the Intergroup vice-President, **Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid MEP** (EPP, France).

With more than €600 million invested (including €1.5 million from the EU) and over 6 million visitors since the beginning of this year, the label "European Capital of Culture" is already a huge success for the Mediterranean city.

The visit was a perfect opportunity not only to visit the city that holds the European annual label, but also to evaluate its impact on the urban and regional development in general. The delegation noticed that this label was a genuine catalyser for the urban regeneration in Marseille.



Iosif Matula MEP (EPP, Romania) (on the left), Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid MEP (EPP, France) and Dominique Vlasto MEP (EPP, France) (on the right) during the inauguration reception of the extended Marseille History Museum.

Jean-François CHOUGNET, CEO of the Marseille-Provence 2013 Association, deplored the fact that organisers faced difficulties to involve people from the North part of Marseille, the more disadvantaged ones living in "social ghettos".

Jean-Claude Gondard, CEO of Services of the city of Marseille, underlined that the European labelling transformed the city and boosted employment, tourism and economical attractiveness for enterprises. He stressed that it allowed speeding up investments in the public and private sector.

The delegation also visited the Pavilion M (an information and organisation centre for the Marseille-Provence 2013 program) and the new Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MUCEM), which already ranks 49th most visited museum in the world, only three months after its opening.



The new Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MUCEM), located in the former port, is one of the main achievements of Marseille-Provence 2013.



Participants to the study trip evaluated the impact of the "European Capital of Culture" label on the urban and regional development in Marseille.

During the three-day stay, participants had the opportunity to take part in the inauguration reception of the renewed and extended Marseille History Museum, located where the city was initially built 26 centuries ago. They also visited this Museum in preview with **Dominique Vlasto MEP** (EPP, France) and Deputy Mayor of Marseille, responsible for tourism.

At Marseilles City Hall, the delegation learned more on the financing of the whole program, involving the EU, the French State, the region Provence-Alpes-Côte-D'azur (PACA), the department of Bouches-du-Rhône, partner cities and private funding.

ANALYSIS

Promoting the development of the private rented market

The International Union of Property Owners (UIPI), a pan-European association comprising 30 organisations and founded in 1923, launched its "Landlords in Europe" report on November 12th in the European Parliament. The launch was hosted by **Jan Olbrycht MEP** (EPP, Poland), President of the European Parliament's URBAN Intergroup.

"The 'Landlords in Europe' report offers a thorough analysis of the private rented sector," said Mr. Olbrycht. He stressed that housing was one of the topics of interest for the URBAN Intergroup for many years. He also reminded participants that previous discussions tackled issues such as the harmonisation of the housing sector in Europe and the application of the State aid rules in relation to social housing.

The "Landlords in Europe" report is a comparative analysis that looks at the private rented market in Europe from a practitioner's point of view. It brings together details on the rental laws, tax regimes and planning policies which govern the private rented sector in twelve case study countries across the EU plus Norway. The report also shows that



The International Union of Property Owners (UIPI) presented its "Landlords in Europe" report, a comparative analysis looking at the private rented market in Europe.

Europe has a diverse rental market. It categorises countries under three categories for residential and commercial tenancies: "pro-landlord", "pro-tenant" and "neutral".

The event brought together more than 50 MEPs and representatives from the European Commission, local authorities and European stakeholders from the industry and real estate sector.

For more information: www.uipi.com/modules/wfchannel/html/Landlords.pdf

STUDY

Building a more cohesive and coherent "territorial fabric" in Europe

URBAN Intergroup members discussed on November 21st in Strasbourg the work of the EUROCITIES Metropolitan Areas Working Group over the past three years with the presentation of the MAIA report (Metropolitan Areas In Action). The report looked at a total of 38 cities from the practitioners' perspectives of collaboration in metropolitan areas.

Within these cities, 95 unique collaborations have been described. The study provided evidence of what was happening for the last years, what worked in terms of collaboration and why.

EUROCITIES pointed out in its report that administrative borders were outdated for most European cities. Thus, the total population in the continuous urban areas in Europe was on average 70% higher than the population

within the administrative boundaries of the city itself. Moreover, the functional urban areas (based on travel-to-work relationships) were even wider with an average of 2.3 times the population of the core city.

Participants to the study stressed that collaboration in these territories was often motivated by a shared sense of mismatch between administrative boundaries and the reality of development on the ground. But it was also motivated by a sense of urgency, as collaboration took time to set up and needed long-term political engagement in order to grow.

They asked MEPs to recognise and support these collaboration structures, which contribute to the European integration process by building a more cohesive and coherent "territorial fabric" in Europe.

URBAN voice in Europe

URBACT

New urban policy tools considered at Summer University

Jan Olbrycht MEP (EPP, Poland), President of the URBAN Intergroup, concluded debates on the first day of the URBACT Summer University in Dublin (Ireland), from August 28th to 30th. The second edition of the URBACT event brought together 300 partner cities and local stakeholders involved in urban policy-making from all over Europe.

He stressed the need for elected mayors to set the direction for urban challenges, leaving cities' officials the capacity to act on the ground.

Earlier the same day, Michael Ralph from DG Regio and Michael Layde, Irish chair of the URBACT Monitoring Committee, insisted on the direction of the new regulations for the structural funds 2014-2020. They highlighted the new policy tools, such as the integrated territorial investments (ITI) and community-led local development (CLLD) and the way URBACT could evolve to have a stronger focus on implementation and delivery of the future cohesion policy, as well as providing support to the Urban Development Network.

CECODHAS

25 years devoted to affordable public, cooperative and social housing

Karima Delli MEP (the Greens/EFA, France), vice-President of the URBAN Intergroup and rapporteur of the European Parliament report on "Social Housing in the EU" adopted in June in Plenary, organised on September 18th an event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of CECODHAS Housing Europe.

The event brought together representatives of the 42 CECODHAS member organizations across Europe as well as partner organizations working on the wider topic of housing at EU level.

Ms. Delli welcomed the work of CECODHAS. "Public social housing is a sustainable firewall to fight against social inequalities and it is an indispensable tool for the development of tomorrow", she said. "With the adoption of my report in the European Parliament, this year also marked the advent of social housing in the European po-

litical agenda," she added. "But much remains to be done. I count on you to make these claims do not fall into oblivion."

Participants looked back at a quarter of century of initiatives for affordable public, cooperative and social housing and depicted future challenges. **Jan Olbrycht MEP** (EPP, Poland), President of the Urban Intergroup and rapporteur on the ERDF regulation for 2014-2020 took the floor as a key actor in the social housing debate at EU level.

"It's nice to be among partners with a history of 25 years, who have not been just a passer by in the European political scene," said Mr. Olbrycht. He added: "the European Parliament is a place to work towards political decisions that shape the future of Europe and this is something we have to make clear towards the upcoming elections".



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