

Name of programme

URB-AL

2.

Budget Line

ALR/B7/310 (€7 000 000 for the first stage).
ALR/B7/311 (€7 000 000 for the first stage and €50 000 000 for the second stage).

3.

Is it a successor to any other programme(s)?

4.

General objectives

To develop direct and lasting links between European and Latin American local authorities through the dissemination, acquisition and application of "best practices" in the urban policy field.

The specific objectives are:

- to help local communities play a more active role in the social, economic and cultural development of urban areas, among other things by launching public amenities;
- to develop the structural capacities of local authorities, in particular through training;
- to foster partnership between local authorities and representatives of civil society;
- to increase the capacity for action of small and medium-sized towns (SMT) in the context of developing their international links;
- to promote good practice in European and Latin American local development while taking account of specific local features.

5.

Types of action

URB-AL is a two-stage programme.

The first stage is organised around eight themes:

- 1) Towns and drugs
- 2) Conservation of historic urban contexts
- 3) Democracy in towns
- 4) The town as a promoter of economic development
- 5) Urban social policies
- 6) The urban environment
- 7) Management and control of urbanisation
- 8) Urban mobility

In the second stage six new themes are added:

- 9) Local finance and participatory budgets
- 10) The fight against urban poverty
- 11) Urban housing
- 12) Promoting the role of women in local decision-making bodies
- 13) Towns and the information society
- 14) Citizens' safety in towns

There is a thematic network coordinated by a single local authority for each of

these themes.

All those who wish to cooperate on a given theme participate in the corresponding network. The network disseminates information to its members, organises working meetings among them and maintains contact among them. It also provides a forum for reflection and discussion on the theme.

The joint projects are designed and implemented by the thematic networks, with the participation of those members of a network who wish to address a particular aspect of a theme in more depth. Their purpose is to make use of the experience and ideas discussed within a given network, by devising and applying solutions to problems raised, taking account of the specific features of every participant.

There are two types of joint project: A and B.

Type-A joint projects basically involve exchanges of experience among participants.

Type-B projects aim to apply the results of this discussion to a town or group of towns. They are intended to put URB-AL activities on a stronger footing by producing tangible results.

The themes for these joint projects always stem from the main theme of the network to which they are attached.

6. **Start and end dates of programme**
First stage: four years (1996 - 2000)
Second stage: five years (2001 -2006)
7. **Total available budget**
First stage: Community contribution = €14 000 000
Second stage: Community contribution = €50 000 000
8. **Legal Basis for the funding**
Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92 of 25 February 1992 on financial and technical assistance to, and economic cooperation with, the developing countries in Asia and Latin America.
9. **Nature of Community contribution**
Co-financing.
10. **Level of Community contribution**
For the thematic networks:
Up to 70% of the total cost of the project for a maximum of €500 000 per network (€350 000 under the first stage).

For joint projects:
Up to 70% of the total cost of the project for a maximum of €250 000 for each type-A project and €300 000 for each type-B project.
11. **Organisations(s) which may benefit from the programme**
Local authorities of towns, urban agglomerations, provinces or regions (i.e. full members)

and

other parties working in or with the urban sector: associations, foundations, universities, businesses, trades unions, NGOs and other bodies that are active at local level (i.e. associate members: not authorised to run a thematic network or URB-AL joint project);

12.

Eligibility

- Beneficiaries must be nationals of one of the 15 Member States of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom) or the 18 countries of Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela).
- The thematic networks must have at least 50 members and no more than 200 full members (local authorities). Coordinators of thematic networks must try to achieve a balance of 60% Latin American (LA) members and 40% European (EU) members, drawn from the greatest possible number of countries.
- The number of joint project members may range from 5 (including at least 2 EU and 3 LA participants) to 15, and members must come from at least 4 different countries (of which at least 2 are EU countries and at least 2 LA countries). No more than one out of every five participants in a joint project may be an associate member. Thus a joint project with 15 members would have to include no more than 3 associate members, the remaining twelve being full members.

13.

Procedure to be followed

Proposals for joint projects are to be devised within the thematic networks to which they relate, for implementation within that network.

Proposals are then submitted to thematic network coordinators by the deadline they have set, and they in turn pass the proposals on to the European Commission after checked them. If they so wish, applicants may also, at the same time, send a second identical copy of their proposal directly to the European Commission.

Applications should be submitted using the form attached to these guidelines (Annex A), which is also available on the web at the site indicated below.

URB-AL thematic networks may submit grant applications for type-A projects three times during the three years of their existence (once a year). They may submit them for one of two deadlines for arrival at the Commission set for each year.

14.

Community sources of information

The table below provides an overview of the differences between the two stages of the programme.

First stage	Second stage
Budget	
• €14 000 000	• €50 000 000
Duration of programme	
• 4 years	• 5 years
Thematic networks	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 thematic networks • Community co-financing of up to 70% of costs for a maximum of €350 000 per network • Minimum 50 members - maximum 150 members • Duration: three years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 new thematic networks • Community co-financing of up to 70% of costs for a maximum of €500 000 per network • Maximum 200 members • Duration: three years 	
Joint projects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one type of joint project concerning exchange of experience and dissemination of good practice • Community co-financing of up to 50% of costs for a maximum of €100 000 per joint project • Minimum 5 members (2 EU & 3 LA) - maximum 25 (10 EU & 15 LA); • Preference for geographical diversity • Duration: maximum three years 	Type-A joint projects	Type-B joint projects
	Correspond, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , to joint projects of first stage	Concern practical application of exchanges of experience through tangible operations (public amenities, provision of public services, etc.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 5 members (2 EU & 3 LA) – maximum 15 • from at least 4 different countries (2 EU and 2 LA) • Duration: maximum two years • Community co-financing up to 70% of total costs 	
	Maximum Community co-financing: €250 000	Maximum Community co-financing: €300 000

For more information, see the following documents, available on the website indicated below:

- 1) URB-AL Programme Guide (second stage)
- 2) "Guidelines for applicants to Call for Proposals for the Coordination of 6 New Thematic Networks".
- 3) "Guidelines for applicants to Call for Proposals for the Coordination of Joint Projects".

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/urbal/index_en.cfm

15.

Community contact points

[Directorate-General External Relations](#)

All requests for information may be sent to the following e-mail address:

europeaid-urb-al@cec.eu.int

or the address below:

European Commission
EuropeAid Cooperation Office
Unit AIDCO/E3: Regional integration, institutional support
Building J-54
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200
B - 1049 Brussels
Belgium
Fax (0032-2) -299.36 .22

16.

National sources of information and contact points

17.

Examples of projects

URB-AL Network 3: "Democracy in towns"

The new means of communication that have appeared in recent years offer the opportunity for a better distribution of power through internationally-minded participatory grass-roots democracy. This new democracy aspires to involve urban residents in the management of their towns, using the potential of the new technologies above all for progress in human terms, as well as for economic development.

To this end, Network 3 of the URB-AL programme, coordinated by the French town of Issy-les-Moulineaux, has been leading an active discussion on the subject of democracy in towns which has involved several hundred European and Latin American elected representatives. Its activities promote the linking of the local and international dimensions of towns in daily life, so that globalisation, far from being a disruptive factor, triggers and facilitates the exchange of know-how between local authorities.

A number of the joint projects now underway originated with these encounters, including "The Internet, a tool for improving local democracy" the objective of which is to create a space for interaction between urban authorities and civil society by making the web accessible (i.e., providing public access centres) and training elected representatives and officials. Similarly, the project "National observatory of local democracy" aims to gather any ideas that can help develop mechanisms for participation in the public business of towns.

The aspiration of all citizens to acquire more control over policy-making, to protect the quality of the environment and to combat economic exclusion is also a unifying theme for the concept of democracy in towns, as is illustrated by a number of other joint projects. For instance, "Consultation as a model for enhancing democracy in towns" aims to establish methods for more active participation through techniques for consulting and coordinating the urban population, which should have an impact on the implementation of decision-making processes. In the same spirit, the objective of "School for neighbours, citizens' participation" is to create a local municipal training centre to improve the relationship between the work of the municipal authorities and the needs and wishes of the local population.

The ambition of Network 3 in particular, and the URB-AL programme in general is to develop lasting links between local authorities and facilitate the free and fair exchange of know-how. URB-AL also aspires to foster a form of decentralised cooperation in which towns become agents of international cooperation, and in this spirit Issy-les-Moulineaux is planning to set up a participative budget experiment in the near future, with the support of the Brazilian town of Belo Horizonte.