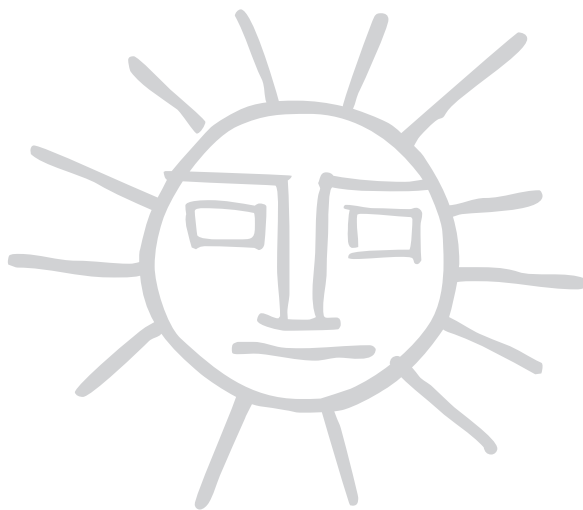# The opening of Latin American cities to the world and decentralised cooperation

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A European Union–Latin America Observatory on Decentralised Cooperation publication

## Authors

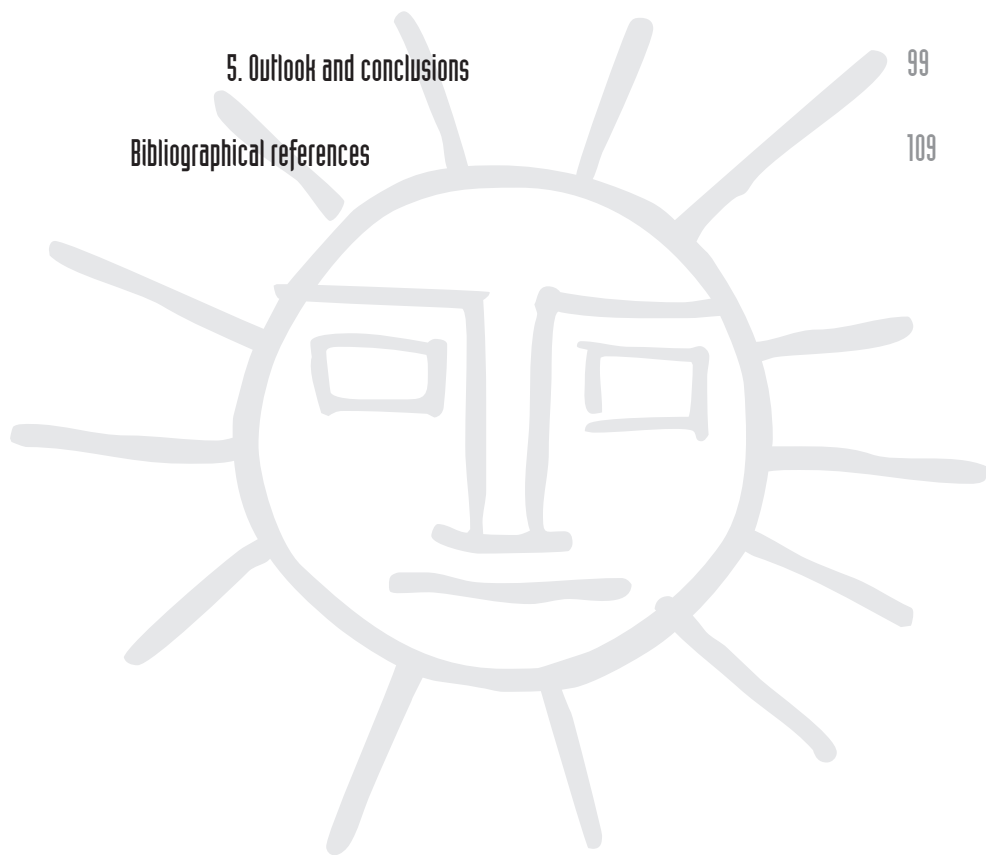Sinoel Batista
Kjeld Jakobsen
Ana Carolina Evangelista

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# Glossary of Acronyms

**CIDA** - Canadian International Development Agency

**IAEC** - International Association of Educating Cities

**IBRD** - World Bank

**IDB** - Inter-American Development Bank

**CAN** - Andean Community of Nations

**EC** - European Commission

**CEDEC** - Centre for Contemporary and Cultural Studies

**UCLG** - United Cities and Local Governments

**CIDEU** - Ibero-American Centre for Strategic Urban Development

**ESDP** - European Spatial Development Perspective

**FEMICA** - Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus

**FLACMA** - Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations

**FMCU-UTO** - World Federation of United Cities

**UNFPA** - United Nations Population Fund

**FUNPADEM** - Foundation for Peace and Democracy

**ICLEI** - Local Governments for Sustainability, or International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives

**IDECRI** - Institute for the Development of Cooperation and International Relations

**IDELCA** - Institute for Local Development in Central America

**HDI-M** - Municipal Human Development Index

**IULA** - International Union of Local Authorities

**MERCOSUR** - Southern Common Market

**ODC** - Observatory on Local Decentralised Cooperation European Union-Latin America

**OECD** - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

**UN** - United Nations

**UMP** - United Nations Urban Management Programme

**GDP** - Gross Domestic Product

**UNDP** - United Nations Development Programme

**UNEP** - United Nations Environment Programme

**RAC** - Andean Cities Network

**ROLAC** - Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (United Nations Human Settlements Programme)

**UCCI** - Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities

**UCLGA** - United Cities and Local Governments of Africa

**EU** - European Union

**UNAIDS** - The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

**UN-HABITAT** - United Nations Human Settlements Programme

**UNACLA** - United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities

**WACLAC** - World Association of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination
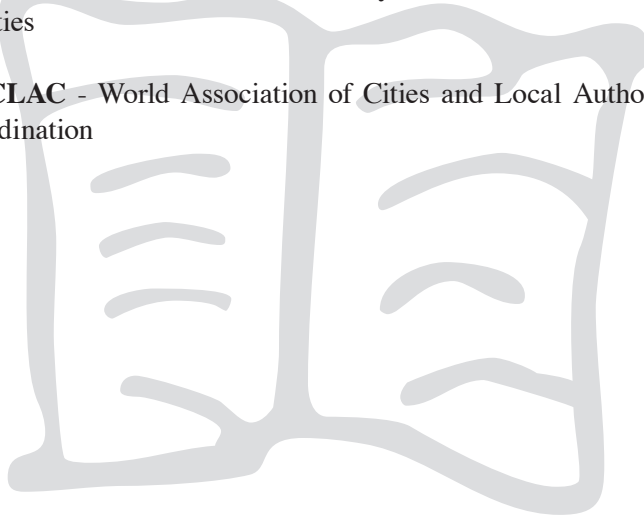
# Foreword

*"[…], sustainable development of human settlements combines economic development, social development and environmental protection, with full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms […]." (Habitat Agenda, 1996).*

A discussion is proposed in this paper of the process which favoured the policy of the international insertion in Latin American cities, in the final years of the 20th century. We call this process the "globalization of cities" and it is mainly related to the moment of inflexion of Latin American development.

Between the fifties and the seventies, Latin America experienced one of the greatest population movements in history, with the exodus of farm workers to cities in search of employment and the opportunities offered by growing industrialisation in most South American countries and Mexico.

However, urban areas were unprepared to absorb this incoming wave and jobs were insufficient to accommodate all of these immigrants and provide them with the means to make a decent living. A surplus of labour was generated, forcing workers to scrape a living by means of informal activities and to a life in tenements in the central areas or in settlements in the periphery. Vast contingents thus came into being of people who were excluded from the few social benefits provided by the social laws which were belatedly put into practice in most of the countries in the continent.

During the period of transition from the development to the neoliberal model, social exclusion increased dramatically due to the foreign debt crisis, productive re-structuring and the privatisation of major industries previously managed by the state.

The economic crisis which affected Latin American countries also contributed to the erosion of the military governments then in power. The "lost decade" of the eighties also became the decade of the return to democracy in Latin America.

A great paradox emerged during that period. The return to democracy was linked to the transition of the economic model and a political and management role was proposed which gave local governments a more important part to play, but at the same time reduced their financial capacity to fulfil this role. The new model provided no additional resources to help face the crisis. On the contrary, as an alternative it only provided a minimal state and a market economy.

This paradoxical situation encouraged local governments to develop or to increase international municipal links, as a way of finding resources and technical solutions in order to face the crisis brought about by the transition from the development model and the negative consequences of globalization. Evidence of this is provided by the treaties for Latin American subregional economic integration which fostered the creation of international networks of cities. Such is the case of the Mercociudades (Mercocities) network and the Andean Cities Network (RAC), which emerged from the formative processes of the MERCOSUR in the first case, and the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) in the second. However, it wFas mainly the large and medium-sized cities which had the capacity and resources to adopt and maintain independent initiatives in the international field.

These initiatives for the international insertion of large cities were promoted by international cooperation, by means of programmes such as URB-AL, financed by the European Union (EU). Programmes such as these also made it possible for medium and small cities to initiate processes of international insertion. These processes, which had been induced exogenously, were frequently able to survive the extinction of the networks which promoted them.

In order to study the globalization process of cities, information has been used with regard to the participation of Latin American local governments in networks and international cooperation programmes. This information was obtained from a survey which took place within the framework of this research. It has been established that there are two basic ways for local governments to participate in the international scene. In the first place, they can become affiliated to an international network, such as United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), or the Mercociudades network, among others. In the second strategy, local governments participate as partners in international cooperation projects (such as the Urb-AL Programme networks). It may occur that both of these strategies are used simultaneously by the same local government, or that, in the case of many large cities, they become affiliated to more than one network.

The survey provided information regarding the international insertion of Latin American local governments, relating it to the size of the cities and the subjects dealt with. It also served as a background for a questionnaire which was sent to the persons responsible for international relations in the municipalities, in which they were asked to give the main reasons which led their governments to develop international policies. It should be pointed out that the response rate to this questionnaire was lower than expected, which prevented a more relevant quantitative analysis of municipal

international policies. Nevertheless, the survey made it possible to obtain very useful qualitative information.

These elements were added to an analysis of "town-twinning" experiences, mainly of the larger cities in Latin America, and of some examples of decentralised bilateral cooperation agreements.

Lastly, information obtained during research was submitted to a collective discussion in a workshop with the participation of several specialists in municipal international relations; among them, representatives of Cities Alliance, from the "100 Cities for 100 Projects" Programme of Brazil, the heads of international relations of the municipalities of Belo Horizonte and Santo André, technicians from the Centre for Contemporary and Cultural Studies (CEDEC) and from the Institute for the Development of Cooperation and International Relations (IDECRI), as well as the authors of this paper.

Although there is record of international activity involving municipal governments prior to the stage of international openness, through the "town-twinning" of Latin American cities with cities in other countries, as from the nineties the process of globalization became broader and took on a completely different character. Both the European Union's decentralised cooperation programmes (such as the Urb-Al programme) and the encouragement received to form networks of cities through other processes related to regional integration, were fundamental to the globalization of Latin American cities in the mid-nineties, as stated in chapters 2 and 3.

Although the insertion of cities from the nineties onwards is frequently related to acts of solidarity, its nature is mainly political and promoted by several factors, as we shall attempt to establish in this study.

This insertion arises from what Saskia Sassen, a sociologist, calls "a new geography of power", caused by globalization (Vigevani et al. 2004), in which multinational corporations, international organisations, national States and local governments undertake new roles, functions and expressions of power.

In the specific case of the European countries which promoted a process of integration which is unique in breadth and still under construction, the "new geography" encouraged the implementation of a policy for international cooperation which included the new concept of "decentralised cooperation". This policy benefits the local and regional governments of developing countries and stems from sources of financing and management such as the European Union, as well as from European countries, regions and municipalities.

Similarly, the programmes and initiatives adopted by multilateral institutions —such as the United Nations Habitat Programme, the Urban Management Programme (UMP), or the Cities Alliance Programme (World Bank)— also provide a favourable environment for the development of municipal international relations.

These actions have been very well received in Latin America, due to the erosion of the development model and the structural adjustments advocated by the "Washington Consensus"[1], which had serious effects on municipal administrations and increased social demands on local governments.

The emergence of the new international networks of cities also contributed to this scenario, as did, particularly, the questioning of "minimal State" policies. The election of leftist municipal authorities in several Latin American countries, in particular as from the end of the eighties, led to the enthusiastic adherence to networks and cooperation programmes, on the part of several of the continent's local governments. In the end, the emergence of

common problems, even those with supra-national characteristics, tends to favour collective initiatives.

In short, the relevance of various factors as motivators of the globalization of Latin American cities will be discussed; among others: the crisis and the transition of models, the search for resources and the construction of alternative public policies, the involvement of cities in global economic processes and the search for political prominence, and the north-south cooperation offer.

# Methodology

As a basis for the structure of the empirical study's methodological strategy, the involvement was established of 770[2] Latin American cities in a network and/or international association of cities. Twenty networks and associations[3] which are of interest to Latin America were identified: the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC); United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG); the Ibero-American Centre for Strategic Urban Development (CIDEU); the Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations (FLACMA); Local Governments for Sustainability, or International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI); URB-AL Programme (Phase I: networks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, and Phase II: networks 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14; the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UCCI).

In order to illustrate the analyses in this paper and obtain basic information regarding the real situation of international relations and decentralised international cooperation in Latin America, an empirical study was carried out with the Latin American cities which have already developed, or are developing, some kind of international activity. The object of this empirical study was to sound out senior municipal employees in Latin American cities regarding the reasons which led them to develop international activities through networks of cities and municipal associations. A questionnaire[4] was devised which was sent[5] to municipal leaders in 770 cities, together with a formal communication in the name of the EU-LA Observatory on Local Decentralised Cooperation. Despite the fact that several different alternatives were provided for answering, and that the deadline for receiving the answers was extended several times, and even despite telephone calls placed to the managers in charge of international cooperation in cities,

responses were received from only nineteen cities in six countries in the continent.

These cities are: Santiago de Surco (pop. 362,100), Rímac (pop. 246,942), Pullo (pop. 2,198), Lima (pop. 6,954,583) and Ate (pop. 571,678) in Peru; Tuluá (pop. 191,100) and Bucaramanga (pop. 508,102) in Colombia; Ciudad de Guatemala (pop. 968,712) in Guatemala; Sansonate (pop. 25,600) in El Salvador; San José (pop. 313,000) in Costa Rica; Guarulhos (pop. 1,072,717), Santo André (pop. 649,331), Porto Alegre (pop. 1,360,590), Erechim (pop. 87,200) and Osasco (pop. 652,593) in Brazil; and San Salvador de Jujuy (pop. 231,229), Quitilipi (pop. 32,083), Bovril (pop. 15,000) and Olavarría (pop. 103,961) in Argentina.

In the face of these limitations with regard to information on the subject in Latin America, the low response obtained from the questionnaires in the empirical study and bearing in mind the need to interpret, measure and visualise the international activities originated by the insertion of cities into international networks and associations of municipalities, research efforts were devoted to the in-depth study of two main focal points:

In the first place, the systematisation of information on the participation of cities in international networks and associations (chapter 3, item 3.4), and secondly, the combination of the quantitative results obtained in the first stage, with the research results described in chapter 2. The second stage is described in chapter 3, item 3.6.

The systematisation of the empirical research was complemented by the results of a workshop with specialists in the field, which made it possible to draft a text evaluating and presenting a series of hypotheses on the outlook for the future role of cities on the international scene, as well as the outlook for the evolution of decentralised cooperation in Latin America.

Finally, it should be pointed out that this research focused on the international activities of local governments, and was not concerned with the international insertion activities carried out by other major actors in the life of cities, such as corporations, NGOs, social movements, universities, etc.

# 1. Cities and the evolution of their context

This chapter shows the constitution of urban population in Latin America throughout the 20th century, based on general information regarding the continent and/or regarding the six countries selected (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru), which contain 85% of the total population. In addition, as appears below, over 70% of Latin American cities with international insertion are to be found in these six countries.

## 1.1. General evolution of the urban phenomenon within a Latin American political context

### 1.1.1. Urbanization and population movements: indicators

Between the first and the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat I, held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976, and Habitat II, held in 1996 in Istanbul, Turkey), not only did twenty years elapse, but there were also changes with regard to the outlook for human settlements and the policies needed in order to provide for them.

According to the preparatory text for the second Conference, when Habitat I was held the world had a population of 4 billion, of whom 35% lived in cities, whilst at the time of the second Conference, the population had increased to 5.6 billion—45% in urban settlements, a percentage which currently slightly exceeds 50%. Despite these huge figures, Vancouver's pessimistic forecast, which said that the world's population would double in 25 years, was not fulfilled. According to those estimates, our planet would

start the new millennium with a population of 8 billion. (Lindgren Alves 2001).

Even so, the figures displayed by the UN's Global Report prepared for Istanbul, were extremely disturbing. The number of urban inhabitants in 1995 was 2.4 billion people, of whom 500 million had no dwelling, 400 million had no sanitation, 250 million had no access to drinking water and 10 million died every year as a consequence of pollution, lack of sanitation and clean water (Lindgren Alves 2001).

Latin America was no stranger to this situation. During the periods mentioned above, the industrialisation economic model for the substitution of imports had become exhausted and the countries in the region were facing the consequences of the foreign debt crisis and the adjustments recommended by the Washington Consensus.

In South American countries and Mexico, in particular, a significant movement of people took place from the countryside to the cities, between the end of the Second World War and the end of the seventies, as a result of the industrialisation of the development period, the greater number of jobs available in cities, and the reduction of employment in agriculture (see Tables 1 and 2). In addition to the search for jobs and income, other reasons for the migration were the benefits and comforts available, in theory, in urban areas, such as electricity, running water and education, among others (Gilbert and Gugler 1992).

Between 1940 and 1980, the urban population in the continent shot up from 37.4% to 65.1%, almost inverting the ratio of country and city inhabitants. In the case of Brazil, the phenomenon was even more pronounced. The urban population climbed from 31.0% to 67.1% during the same period (Table 2).

## Table 1 / Total Urban Population in Latin America and in Selected Countries (x 1000)

|  | Year | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **1940** | **1950** | **1960** | **1970** | **1980** | **1990** | **2000** |
| **Latin America** | **46.798** | **69.942** | **104.531** | **156.225** | **229.328** | **305.905** | **388.476** |
| Argentina | 9.032 | 11.679 | 15.696 | 19.113 | 23.279 | 27.954 | 32.963 |
| Brazil | 12.655 | 18.552 | 31.686 | 50.634 | 81.660 | 111.847 | 141.837 |
| Chile | 2.662 | 3.578 | 5.145 | 6.982 | 8.825 | 10.915 | 13.130 |
| Colombia | 3.300 | 5.280 | 8.438 | 12.977 | 18.281 | 24.251 | 31.516 |
| Mexico | 7.044 | 11.806 | 18.866 | 29.865 | 45.112 | 59.478 | 74.833 |
| Peru | 2.506 | 3.270 | 4.702 | 7.659 | 11.128 | 14.955 | 18.647 |

**Source:** CEPAL, 2002

## Table 2 / Urban Population in Latin America and in Selected Countries (%)

|  | Year | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **1940** | **1950** | **1960** | **1970** | **1980** | **1990** | **2000** |
| **Latin America** | **37.4** | **41.0** | **49.5** | **56.5** | **65.1** | **70.6** | **75.8** |
| Argentina | 61.2 | 65.0 | 76.1 | 79.8 | 82.9 | 85.8 | 89.0 |
| Brazil | 31.0 | 36.0 | 43.6 | 52.7 | 67.1 | 74.7 | 76.0 |
| Chile | 52.0 | 58.0 | 67.3 | 73.0 | 79.0 | 82.8 | 87.1 |
| Colombia | 30.4 | 37.0 | 50.1 | 57.5 | 64.3 | 69.3 | 76.0 |
| Mexico | 35.1 | 43.0 | 51.1 | 59.0 | 66.3 | 70.6 | 75.2 |
| Peru | 35.4 | 36.0 | 47.3 | 58.1 | 64.2 | 68.7 | 72.9 |

**Source:** produced by the authors, based on ECLAC data, 2005 and Bethell *et al*, 2005.

In spite of the alterations in the productive paradigms and the reduction of work and income opportunities in urban areas, the transfer of rural populations towards the cities continued in most of the countries in the region, although at a slower rate.

As Table 3 shows, the slow-down began during the seventies, when the current economic model began to exhaust itself, and when birth rates began gradually to decrease. Even so, in 1991, when planning began for Habitat II, about 70% of the Latin American population was already urban.

| Table 3 / Growth Variation of Urban Population in Latin America and in Selected Countries (%) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Period** | | | | | |
| | **1940-50** | **1950-60** | **1960-70** | **1970-80** | **1980-90** | **1990-2000** |
| **Latin America** | **49.5** | **49.5** | **49.5** | **46.8** | **33.4** | **27.0** |
| Argentina | 29.3 | 34.4 | 21.9 | 21.8 | 20.1 | 17.9 |
| Brazil | 44.6 | 70.8 | 59.8 | 61.3 | 37.0 | 26.8 |
| Chile | 34.4 | 43.8 | 35.7 | 26.4 | 23.7 | 20.3 |
| Colombia | 60.0 | 59.8 | 53.8 | 40.9 | 32.7 | 30.0 |
| Mexico | 67.6 | 59.8 | 58.3 | 51.1 | 31.8 | 25.8 |
| Peru | 30.5 | 43.8 | 62.9 | 45.3 | 34.4 | 24.7 |
| **Source:** CEPAL, 2002 | | | | | | |

The Latin American migratory flow took place, at first, towards the cities. Thus large urban sprawls emerged in the metropolitan areas of cities such as of São Paulo, Mexico City and Bogotá, among others.

However, when businesses began searching for other places in which to install their premises, encouraged by advantages such as lower taxes, access to larger and cheaper tracts of land, proximity to means of transport, and others, migrants turned towards medium-sized cities and at times the flow in that direction exceeded the flow towards the great urban areas.

In Argentina, for example, the migratory flow towards the Buenos Aires area changed direction during the seventies, when more people were moving out of the city than moving in. In Mexico City, this became noticeable only after 1987.

## 1.1.2. Urban problems generated by migratory movements and economic crises

These population movements gave rise to innumerable urban and social problems, as the cities were unprepared to take in large contingents of workers and their families arriving from rural areas in search of jobs in industry.

### Table 4 / Population, Urban Population and Settlements Population (x million)

|  | Total Pop. | Urban Pop. | % | Settlements Pop. | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Latin America** | 513 | 388 | 76 | 115 | 30 |
| Argentina | 37 | 33 | 89 | 11 | 33 |
| Brazil | 188 | 142 | 76 | 52.5 | 37 |
| Chile | 15 | 13 | 87 | 1.2 | 9 |
| Colombia | 42 | 32 | 76 | 7.2 | 23 |
| Mexico | 100 | 75 | 75 | 15 | 20 |
| Peru | 26 | 19 | 73 | 13.4 | 71 |

**Source:** CEPAL, 2002

Economic crises also affected Latin American cities significantly (see Table 5 regarding the evolution of the GDP in some Latin American countries).

Table 5 / Evolution of GDP in Latin America and in Selected Countries (%)

| | Period | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | 1950-1960 | 1960-1973 | 1973-1981 | 1981-1990 | 1990-2003 |
| **Latin America** | **5.1** | **5.9** | **4.5** | **1.3** | **2.7** |
| Argentina | 2.8 | 4 | 1.2 | -0.6 | 2.4 |
| Brazil | 6.8 | 7.5 | 5.5 | 2.3 | 2.4 |
| Chile | 4 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 2.5 | 4.8 |
| Colombia | 4.6 | 5.6 | 4.5 | 3.9 | 2.7 |
| Mexico | 6.1 | 7 | 6.6 | 0.8 | 2.5 |
| Peru | 5.5 | 4.8 | 3.8 | -1.7 | n.d. |

**Source:** Oliveira & Roberts in Barbosa, Barbosa and Jakobsen, 2005

One way of appreciating the social impact of these economic crises is by observing the evolution of per capita GDP. Whilst between 1950 and 1973 the average per capita GDP in Latin America grew 2.6%, after 1973 and until 1990, average growth was barely 0.5%. The figures for the second period become even more dramatic when they are linked with the period when the population growth began to slow down.

In Brazil, for example, the value of per capita GDP in 1998 was practically the same as in 1979: USD 2,500. From the point of view of economic growth and income distribution, the country stagnated for almost 20 years.

The economic crisis caused an even more disturbing phenomenon: a continuous process of de-industrialization was set in motion in Latin America, which was also based upon the productive alternatives chosen by the multinational corporations established in the region.

**Table 6 / Participation of Transformation Industries in Total Urban Employment in Selected Countries [%]**

|  | Year | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **1990** | **1995** | **2000** | **2002** |
| Argentina | 24.3 | 20.3 | 13.9 | 12.8 |
| Brazil | 18.1 | 14.9 | 14.2 | 15.5 |
| Chile | 19.7 | 16.3 | 14.7 | 14.4 |
| Colombia | 23.4 | 21.1 | 17.6 | 16.0 |
| Mexico | 20.9 | 22.0 | 22.5 | 19.6 |
| Peru | n.d. | n.d. | n.d. | n.d. |

**Source:** Barbosa, Barbosa and Jakobsen, 2005

The transformation of Latin American economies into export platforms for primary products or unfinished goods with little added value, and the expansion of services, tended to aggravate the urban problems mentioned above.

The problems referred to throughout the chapter gave rise to great demand for more and better public policies in the areas of social inclusion, housing, health, education, public transport, basic sanitation, and safety, among others. These policies are not adequately applied for a variety of reasons, such as the lack of financial resources, the absence of planning, nationally and locally centralised forms of government and a lack of properly qualified technicians.

## 1.1.3. Incentives for external actions by local government

Direct foreign investment applied correctly as well as appropriate international cooperation projects, can help to overcome these difficulties.

1

There is no doubt that the concerns and deprivations suffered by Latin American cities are a strong incentive to develop municipal international relations in order to seek external support and knowledge, and thus compensate for the deficiencies of public policies.

There is, at present, a lack of consensus as to whether municipal authorities are, basically, administrators, or political entities, a fact which at times makes it difficult for municipalities to broaden their powers. In Bolivia, for example, until the government of Carlos Meza, provincial governors were appointed, while the municipalities, although mayors were elected, depended upon the federal budget for their financial resources. In other cases, after the early nineties it was the local governments which dealt with the worst stages of the crisis, being as they were the governmental authorities who were in closest contact with the citizens. Nevertheless, they were forced to face this challenge without the power or the resources they needed.

The fact that the population's specific demands were not properly met at a national level, also reinforced the search for international insertion on the part of municipal government –the development of international relations only makes sense when it is believed that the role of the State is to instigate development and provide social welfare, and not merely be guided by the laws of a market economy.

Finally, in terms of innovation regarding municipal management structures, there are currently experiences in participatory democracy, such as "participatory budgets" as well as the creation of specific structures in order to deal with international relations. However, the institutionalisation of such policies and structures has not yet taken place in many cities.

## 1.2. The regional network of local governments in Latin America

The eighteen countries which make up the Latin American continent[6] cover a territory of 19,910,710 Km$^2$, with a population of 515 million inhabitants, of whom 44% exist below the poverty line and 18% in conditions of extreme poverty or indigence[7]. The fabric of the Latin American territory is made up of a mosaic composed of 16,240[8] municipalities (Table 7).

### Table 7 / Municipalities and Population in Latin America, by country

| Order | Country | Population | Nº of Municip. | Km$^2$ |
|-------|---------|-----------|----------------|--------|
| 1 | Brazil | 187.797.344 | 5.562 | 8.514.880 |
| 2 | Mexico | 103.263.388 | 2.451 | 1.958.200 |
| 3 | Colombia | 42.090.502 | 1.098 | 1.138.910 |
| 4 | Argentina | 36.260130 | 1.863 | 2.768.400 |
| 5 | Peru | 26.152.265 | 1.829 | 1.285.220 |
| 6 | Venezuela | 26.127.531 | 970 | 912.050 |
| 7 | Chile | 15.050.000 | 335 | 756.630 |
| 8 | Guatemala | 12.951.547 | 331 | 108.889 |
| 9 | Ecuador | 12.156.608 | 215 | 283.560 |
| 10 | Cuba | 11.230.076 | 168 | 110.860 |
| 11 | Bolivia | 9.427.219 | 324 | 1.098.580 |
| 12 | El Salvador | 6.300.000 | 262 | 20.935 |
| 13 | Honduras | 6.194.926 | 298 | 112.088 |
| 14 | Paraguay | 5.163.198 | 208 | 406.750 |
| 15 | Nicaragua | 4.357.099 | 152 | 118.358 |
| 16 | Costa Rica | 4.200.000 | 81 | 51.500 |
| 17 | Uruguay | 3.241.003 | 19 | 176.220 |
| 18 | Panama | 3.067.481 | 74 | 77.080 |
| | **TOTAL** | **515.030.137** | **16.240** | **19.910.710** |

**Source:** produced by the authors; several different sources were consulted

The fifteen countries which made up the European Union[9] in stages I and II of the Urb-AL programme (EU-15) cover a territory of 3,233,082 Km$^2$, with a population of 384,460,000 million inhabitants. The total number of poor people does not exceed 15% of the population[10]. The European territory is composed of 95,152 municipalities (Table 8).

Table 8 / Municipalities and population in the European Union, by country

| Order | Country | Population | Nº of Municip. | Km² |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Germany | 82.532.000 | 13.176 | 356.718 |
| 2 | France | 61.685.000 | 36.678 | 543.964 |
| 3 | United Kingdom | 59.652.000 | 10.679 | 243.000 |
| 4 | Italy | 57.888.000 | 8.100 | 301.341 |
| 5 | Spain | 42.345.000 | 8.108 | 505.955 |
| 6 | Netherlands | 16.258.000 | 489 | 41.526 |
| 7 | Greece | 11.041.000 | 6.130 | 131.625 |
| 8 | Portugal | 10.475.000 | 4.257 | 91.906 |
| 9 | Belgium | 10.396.000 | 589 | 30.518 |
| 10 | Sweden | 8.976.000 | 290 | 449.964 |
| 11 | Austria | 8.114.000 | 2.381 | 83.858 |
| 12 | Denmark | 5.398.000 | 271 | 43.080 |
| 13 | Finland | 5.220.000 | 446 | 338.147 |
| 14 | Ireland | 4.028.000 | 3.440 | 68.894 |
| 15 | Luxembourg | 452.000 | 118 | 2.586 |
| | **TOTAL** | **384.460.000** | **95.152** | **3.233.082** |

**Source:** <http://ec.europa.eu/comm/eurostat>

Some comparative observations regarding territory, local government and population in Europe and Latin America, may be of interest. The European continent is equivalent to 16% of Latin America in size; however EU-15 contains almost six times more municipalities than Latin America, and as far as its population is concerned, there are 1.3 times more inhabitants in Latin America than in Europe. In our view, the size of the territory and the number of inhabitants are not central elements of the asymmetries to be found between European and Latin American local governments.

With regard to the specific powers and areas of jurisdictions which are typical of local government and its capacity to finance the development of these powers, a comparison between both regions reveals profound inequalities. European local governments are far more autonomous than those in Latin America. The concept of self-government does not imply independence from regional and national government, but does entail the idea that in the field of local jurisdiction the tools and financial capacity to cover these activities are greater in Europe than in Latin America. In addition, it is necessary to bear in mind the existence of profound inequalities with regard to institutional jurisdiction among local governments in Latin America. Whereas countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Chile have set in motion more or less accelerated processes for the decentralisation of jurisdiction, in most of the remaining countries, the jurisdiction of municipalities extends only as far as "janitorial" activities: caring for public squares, cleaning and maintaining streets and public spaces, and so on.

The autonomy of European local governments with regard to the organisation and management of public policies is not related only to the definition of their jurisdictions, but also to subordination to the principle of subsidiarity[11], which is in force in most of the countries in the region, as well as in the European Union.

This places European cities in a better situation for the development of decentralised cooperation. The institutional development of the European Union is a further factor which facilitates the leading role played by European local governments with regard to decentralised international cooperation. There are programmes sponsored by the community which encourage cities to carry out activities of this kind.

On the other hand, the low institutional development of Latin American local governments, added to the incipient development of subregional integration processes (MERCOSUR, Andean Community of Nations) and the absence of encouragement with regard to the development of decentralised international cooperation activities, means that local governments must undertake these activities at their own cost and risk, or with the support of initiatives such as the Urb-AL programme.

## Notes

**1** The "Washington Consensus" refers to a series of measures for structural economic and political adjustments, recommended by international financial institutions, mainly the IMF, the IBRD and the US Treasury Department, to be applied in Latin American countries as a solution to the crisis of the 80s. Among them, are the reform of exchange rates, the reduction of external tariffs, the privatization of state enterprises, etc.

**2** This systematisation is based upon the authors' own methodology, using databases available on the networks' websites and at <http://centrourbal.com>

**3** Some of these networks (such as the Urb-AL programme networks), have discontinued their activities. Nevertheless, as they were a major influence in the promotion and stimulation of the initiation of countless cities in international cooperation activities, they have been maintained in the databases for the analysis.

**4** The software platform for the tool developed for the application of this empirical study is available at <http://idecri.locaweb.com.br> This innovation allows responding cities to consult the data and update it at any time.

**5** In order to reach all of the cities in the universe which the research study intended, all communicative options were contemplated. Respondents who were not yet Internet users (quite a few, inasmuch as many of the small cities in the region had no e-mail access), could answer via fax, and it was made clear that answers could even be written out by hand. In the case of Internet users who were familiar with web tools, the questionnaire could be filled in online, by means of the platform mentioned above.

**6** In this case, the Latin American continent configuration used by the Urb-AL programme in stages I and II was adopted.

**7** *Base Document - Network 10 - Fight against Urban Poverty*, Urb-AL Programme

**8** Systematised data based on the authors' own methodology. The following sources were also consulted: <www.mininterior.gov.ar>, <www.ine.gov.bo>, <www.ibge.gov.br>, <www.estadodechile.cl>, <www.dane.gov.co>, <www.femica.org>, <www.cubagob.cu>, <www.cepar.org.ec>, <http://mapserver.inegi.gob.mx>, <www.opaci.org.py>, <www.inei.gob.pe>, <www.rau.edu.uy>, <www.gobiernoenlinea.ve>, <www.unhabitat-rolac.org>, <www.cepal.org>.

**9** In this case, the "European continent" (EU-15) used by the Urb-AL programme, in stages I and II has been adopted (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

**10** Despite the fact that, according to the Base Document - Network 10 - Fight against Urban Poverty, the European Union considers persons to be poor when their income is below 60% of the average income estimated for each member country. This is equivalent to 55.6 million people, or 15% of the population. Income per capita is calculated on the basis of one consumption unit (family or place of residence).

**11** According to Agustí Fernández de Losada, quoting one of the fundamental principles in the draft Constitution of the European Union, which states that jurisdiction should reside, as far as possible, in the governments closest to the citizen (European Union-Latin America Observatory on Local Decentralised Cooperation, 2005: 270).

# 2. The globalization of cities and decentralised cooperation: an overview

This chapter provides a study of decentralised international cooperation. It also includes various available interpretations of the subject as well as the difficulties encountered in attempting to synthesise these interpretations into a single concept. The categories of "local government" and "regional government" are used, based upon the fact that the government of a city/region is the level of government which is most visible and closest to its citizens.

In addition, the jurisdictions of local governments are analysed, as regards their ability to carry out cooperation and international relations, in the understanding that the debate surrounding jurisdictions and capacities of local governments with regard to activities of this nature is not a new one.

Next, the international insertion of "metropolises", "medium cities" and "small cities" is examined empirically, and networks and international organisations present in Latin America are discussed, together with the insertion of cities in the networks.

At the end of this chapter, an overview of the participation of local governments, by region, in the international networks and associations of cities in Latin America is included, together with a profile of the population in participating cities.

## 2.1. Conceptual delimitations

In the opinion of the authors of this paper, Cornago Pietro (Romero 2005) describes the international activities of local governments correctly when he defines them as "the involvement of

sub-state government in international relations, by means of formal and informal contacts, both permanent and temporary (ad hoc), with foreign organisations, public and private, in order to obtain socio-economic or political results, as well as other dimensions beyond its own constitutional jurisdiction".

The involvement of many local governments in these activities has attracted the attention of scholars, who have proposed terms such as "paradiplomacy", "postdiplomacy", "protodiplomacy" or "microdiplomacy", to describe it (Romero 2005).

The concept of "decentralised international cooperation" itself, has given rise to many different interpretations. The practices described as *decentralised cooperation* have been in existence for just under two decades; they are included within the broader context of what is known as development cooperation.

In the paper, *Decentralised Cooperation, Cooperation and Methods - 1992*, the European Commission (EC) defines decentralised cooperation as:

> "a new focus on cooperative relations which seeks to establish direct relations with local representative bodies and promote their own capacity to design and carry out development initiatives with the direct participation of interested population groups, bearing in mind their interests and points of view on development".

Decentralised cooperation is one of the forms of cooperation, within a broad range of options available for development cooperation. It is based on multilateralism as well as the mutual benefit of the actors involved, and takes place by means of the association of local governments. It seeks to develop joint experiences based on lessons learned and the work potential of networks (Coronel 2005).

Romero (2005) proposes the adoption of an *operative concept*, and points out that:

> "local decentralised cooperation is a set of official cooperation initiatives for development which, under the leadership of local authorities, seek to promote the capacities of actors within a territorial base and foster more participatory development. Without denying the existence of certain practices which maintain some elements of the approach to cooperation in the form of 'aid', local decentralised cooperation is mainly based on the principles of multilateralism, mutual interest and alliances, and tends increasingly towards initiatives which add value, brought together in activities, based on the very specificity of the fields of jurisdiction and experiences of local governments".

At this point, our approach to the subject of the globalization of cities requires that we point out some conceptual considerations with regard to a city as an autonomous entity and, at the same time, an integral part of the State. The powers vested in the government of a city are the visible face, and that closest to the citizens, of the State's actions. Within the last few decades, the term which has come to be used most frequently when referring to this authority, is *local government*.

Both in Europe and in Latin America, the concept of local government as well as that of regional government are prevalent. Both entities carry out activities for the production of goods and services and maintain a link with the central State which does not exclude competition. This relationship exists in both parliamentary and presidentialist regimes, as well as in monarchies and republics. In both continents, **local governments** are usually known as *municipalities*, *district councils* or *mayoralties*, among other terms. The level of government immediately above that, may be referred to

as a *region*, *province* or *state*, among other terms, and, henceforth, will be referred to in this paper as **regional government**[12].

It is these actors, endowed with a legal status of their own, with the authority to lead and the capacity to implement public policies[13] in conjunction with the State's central powers, who are the object of study of this paper.

## 2.2. Starting points and general characteristics

One of the central themes here is the degree of jurisdiction which local governments are granted in order to carry out activities related to cooperation and international relations. The national constitutions of most Latin American countries were drafted at a time when only central governments were recognised as capable of acting in connection with a nation's foreign policy. Municipalities and regions, in unitarian as well as in federal States, do not have jurisdiction or power over international proceedings. However, in practice, these arguments are now being overcome. The decision taken by the European Commission to hold agreements and sign contracts directly with local governments for the development of activities within the Urb-AL programme, Type A and B networks and projects, provided a tremendous boost to decentralised international cooperation.

The overall features of the opening-up of Latin American local governments, according to data obtained from answers to the questionnaire[14], may be summarised as follows:

**1)** International cooperation activities began not more than twenty years ago; most of these activities have taken place over the last eight years.

**2)** The activities responsible for initiating international relations involve participation in networks or associations (*Mercociudades*, FLACMA and Urb-AL programme networks).

**3)** The main concerns include: setting up technical and/or financial cooperation with cities, particularly in the northern hemisphere; designing local economic development projects; establishing town-twinning agreements; making contact with international agencies in order to obtain resources; carrying out technical and experience exchanges; hosting international visits, and even being subjected to different influences during international travel.

**4)** With regard to institutional administrative structures, it is possible to observe that most cities carry out international relations activities within a specific administrative area. This area is usually subordinate and/or linked to the mayor's office.

**5)** As regards the size of the departments, and/or the number of professionals involved in international relations activities, most of them consist of small teams of up to five persons.

**6)** With regard to their academic education, the persons involved in international relations have trained in a variety of areas within the field of human science (Political Science, Social Science, Economics, Administration, Geography, History and Arts).

**7)** The questionnaire asked managers to provide a conceptual interpretation of *"international relations"* and *"decentralised international cooperation"*.  Answers were grouped according to the most recurrent definitions:

> a. ***International relations:*** 1) Actions and political activities carried out by local governments, individually and/or collectively, which seek international insertion and may be complementary or parallel to the diplomatic efforts of

the central government. 2) They make it possible to obtain recognition for the actions of local governments, regional governments and non-governmental organisations, in their role as new actors on an international scene which was previously occupied solely by national States. 3) They promote and facilitate financing, as well as the exchange and transfer of technology. 4) They make it possible to establish relations with other cities, countries, governmental and non-governmental organisations, in order to promote local development and technical, scientific and financial cooperation. 5) They establish municipal cooperation networks, projects and contacts in order to channel international aid and solidarity efforts in favour of local, regional and national development.

b. ***Decentralised international cooperation:*** 1) This is a permanent instrument for the administration and channelling of the financial and technical resources of countries and international organisations, in order to find solutions to common problems by establishing alliances, exchanging information, financing projects and participating in conferences. 2) It provides international support between municipalities and/or municipalities/institutions in order to finance local development projects and seek solutions to the needs of cities. 3) It fosters cooperation between municipal and supra-national institutions and/or between municipalities and organised civil society.

**8)** As regards the benefits afforded by decentralised international cooperation and relations, the following were indicated: the strengthening of the technical structure (managers) dealing with international cooperation; obtaining financing for projects; technical and information exchanges; greater social and economic development of the municipality; awareness of and contact with successful

experiences in other cities, through the exchange of technical cooperation, and the insertion of the city in the international scene.

**9)** With regard to the lessons learned, the following were highlighted: recognition of the importance of acting within networks and of encouraging the involvement of social actors in the subject; the development of external/internal communication strategies; the adaptation of the municipality's structure for the attention of projects within the cooperation agreements established, and the need to develop internal strategies in governments in order to overcome the difficulties caused by the lack of interest in some sectors with regard to the issues involving international cooperation.

**10)** As regards the outlook for international cooperation, the following concerns were stated: the need to obtain greater recognition of the importance of the role of international networks of cities, in particular those which link local governments to an outlook of political and economic integration; expectations with regard to the emergence of new and simpler instruments for international cooperation, which will allow continuity for cities already involved and ensure the broadening of its scope, to include municipalities which have not yet initiated activities; the importance of intensifying the cooperation process as well as the exchange of experiences between both Latin American and European local governments; the intensification and broadening of decentralised cooperation and horizontal relations, and the development of strategies to educate and train employees of the local governments involved, in the issue of international cooperation.

## 2.3. Motivations and instigating processes

During the study, several different inductive processes for international cooperation in metropolises, medium-sized cities and small cities, were detected empirically. Cooperation processes in

cities can be distinguished by their historical background, and will thus be referred to as international insertion processes, distinguishing between <u>endogenous induction</u> and <u>exogenous induction</u>.

In the case of major Latin American cities, their historical background, in terms of cooperation and international insertion, is prior to the process of re-democratisation and the intensification of the processes of globalization and inter-dependence. In many cases, some form of international cooperation was taking place in metropolises, through town-twinning agreements[15]. These brought about the establishment of minimal structures in municipal administration, such as the protocol to be followed for the organisation of possible visits from the authorities of the twinned municipalities, or some structures for the administration of exchanges and donations arising from the twinning.

In the face of these pre-existing "structures" and/or contexts, and with the paradigm changes which occurred towards the end of the eighties and early nineties, metropolises began to take steps to achieve international insertion. We call this <u>endogenous induction</u> –international insertion activated from within. As their administrative structures are more highly developed –because of previous embryonic experiences in international cooperation and budgets which make it possible to invest a minimum amount in salaries for technicians, trips and other expenses for the development of international relations– metropolises displayed the <u>endogenous induction</u> form of decentralised international cooperation. As examples, cities such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Bogota or Montevideo can be cited.

Nevertheless, exogenous induction processes are also significant for metropolises, and contribute to defining the profile for the international insertion of the city. These are processes by which cities are encouraged to participate in the field of international cooperation, by means of networks of cities or through different international promotion and cooperation agencies.

In the case of medium-sized cities, the factors "historical background", "endogenous induction" and "exogenous induction" relate by means of a dynamic model which is slightly different. The <u>historical background</u> aspect is not as prevalent as it is in metropolises, although some of them were already carrying out international cooperation activities, through town-twinning or specific interests.

<u>Exogenous induction</u> has played a major role in establishing international relations policies in medium cities such as Diadema in Brazil, Barquisimeto in Venezuela, or Sucre in Bolivia. When induction ceases, this type of city usually manages to maintain its decentralised international cooperation relations.

The active capacity of these cities for endogenous induction with regard to international insertion is small compared to the capacity of metropolises. Some medium-sized cities do have specific administrative structures for the development of international insertion policies, as well as a budget for such activities, which allow their local governments to take their own steps towards international cooperation.

Lastly, in the case of small cities, their <u>historical background</u> with regard to international cooperation is not significant and their capacity for <u>endogenous induction</u> is very reduced or inexistent. Thus, <u>exogenous induction</u> plays a central role in the international insertion of this type of city. International cooperation agencies, and mainly, the metropolises, via bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements or networks of cities, play a very important role. They function as instigators in the international insertion of small cities. The greatest problem is that when <u>exogenous induction</u> ceases, the tendency is for international relations to be allowed to lapse.

## 2.4. Guiding focal points

**2**

We have identified the existence of several decentralised cooperation projects currently in effect within Latin America. These projects derive from a long process involving the strengthening of local governments as accredited bodies involved in social struggles (the "Pintadas Network" project – see Chapter 4, section 4.1.4. "Noteworthy cases of decentralised bilateral cooperation"), and are acknowledged as tools for social transformation and the construction of more equitable, welcoming and inclusive cities.

Cities are established at the point at which all effects (good and bad) of macroeconomic policies determined at a central level materialise. The more democratic a society, the more frequently the local authorities must answer the social demands of those sectors of the population which have been excluded by the model of economic development which was adopted, and the more they tend to seek help in facing such problems, through decentralised international cooperation.

Without intending to display a full range of motivations, at least three main focal points can be identified at present, around which decentralised cooperation takes place. These are based on at least five instruments.

As regards the ***main focal points***, it is possible to identify:

**I.** Actions linked to the structuring of intersectorial[16], intermunicipal[17] and intergovernmental[18] cooperation policies, with the involvement of different actors, seeking to maintain strategies for human development by fostering projects in the areas of:

i. institutional strengthening, seeking to promote the political, administrative and financial decentralisation of nations in the direction of local and regional governments;

ii. the strengthening of participatory democracy, with the aim of ensuring and/or broadening social participation and control;

iii. the encouragement of actions to guide social cohesion through the struggle against poverty, the promotion of social inclusion and integration, and the adoption of affirmative policies and those which combat racial and gender discrimination.

**II.** Actions linked to processes of discovery and colonisation which often direct and establish reasons and guidelines (political, economic, social, cultural and linguistic) for their fulfilment.

**III.** Actions linked to political solidarity processes, which provide at least three reasons for the maintenance and mobilisation of cooperation of this nature:

*First-* involves the process of reconstruction of the democratic fabric of the Latin American continent, as a form of repairing the authoritarian cracks which affected the nations' structures, and which derived from long periods of military dictatorships.

*Second-* involves cooperation as a form of aid in the face of problems caused by natural catastrophes[19] and/or long periods of political, military and social conflict.

*Third-* related to the adoption of a stance on the part of European local and regional governments, in solidarity with the situation of Cuba and, more recently, Venezuela, in the face of actions promoted by some nations, in particular the USA, leading towards trade embargos and denial of access to the technology which favours development.

With regard to **instruments and methods** which sustain the multiple actions of decentralised cooperation, it is possible to identify the following: town-twinning ("sister-cities" programmes), bilateral agreements, international networks of cities, Urb-AL programme networks and direct/indirect technical/financial cooperation projects. All of these are further developed in Chapter 3.

## 2.5. Instigating elements and limitations

With regard to difficulties encountered during the development of activities, the most frequent are related to the fact that local governments usually have at their disposal only a small team of under-qualified professionals who know little about the subject. The most frequent problems related to the administrative structure include the following: the lack of a specific department, lack of government support, lack of financial resources, bureaucratic difficulties, lack of a work team, and even difficulties related to the contact between members of the international relations department and senior administrative levels.

Political-administrative difficulties related to central government, with regard to the development of decentralised international cooperation were not mentioned.

With regard to steps that could be taken to improve the links of cities with the international scene, the following opinions were put forward: the importance of strengthening national strategies in support of local development should be recognised; that is, the better a city's management structure, the better and more efficient its insertion into the international scene; guiding strategies should be developed for local governments to provide a framework for specific areas to coordinate and connect international cooperation issues; relations with international cooperation and promotion agencies should be improved and simplified, in particular in the case of credit agencies and agencies which promote the international financial system; local development support programmes should be strengthened, and exchanges sponsored by international networks of cities should be encouraged.

When researching quantitative comparisons with regard to the involvement of cities in municipal networks and associations

in the region, a question clearly emerges: what conditions foster or place limitations on the development of cooperation and international relations within local governments?

It is possible to formulate a hypothesis on the basis of the information described above. The institutional environments of national States, as well as the consolidation of activities carried out by supra-national authorities, are determining factors in the active (or passive/receptive) actions in the life of local governments.

In order to appreciate this statement more clearly, a comparative exercise is carried out in this study, of events occurring within the institutional environment of nations in Latin America and Europe, which suggests responses to motivations which affected local governments positively (in the case of Europe) or negatively (in the case of Latin America), with regard to participating in or initiating international cooperation enterprises.

Data observed up to this point of the study make it possible to confirm unequivocally the activism of European cities with regard to the development of decentralised cooperation. Excepting different interpretations of socio-economic phenomena which have taken place, and others which are still occurring in Europe, there were (and still are) three determining factors related to the prominent position of European cities in this area. Without prioritising one over another, two of these factors are related with the adoption of the principles of governance[20] and subsidiarity, throughout the launching and construction of the support basis of the European Community. The third factor is related to the creation of the European community initiative INTERREG, which secured the basis for the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)[21], whose aim is to promote development initiatives for traditionally depressed and peripheral territories.

## 2.6. Noteworthy facts

2

Decentralised cooperation between local governments can also be induced by means of appropriate policies. In order to compare the effects of these "inductive actions" on the institutional development of cities, a chronological account is given in Table 9 below, of a combination of activities which confirm their positive effects, organised in ten-year periods (starting in 1950). At the same time, some activities are included which, led by some of the nations, or by external influences (most frequently, from the United States), induced and in some cases caused severe backsliding on the path towards the institutional development of local governments in Latin America.

## Table 9

### The Fifties

| Europe | Latin America |
|---|---|
| 1951- the Council of European Municipalities and Regions-CEMR established[22]. | - There is no record of induction and promotion activities carried out by national governments for the organisation and empowerment of local governments. |
| 1953- the General Assembly of the CEMR adopts the "European Charter of Municipal Liberties" [23]. | |
| 1957- Treaty of Rome - European Community Constitution[24]. | |
| 1957- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. | |

### The Sixties

| | |
|---|---|
| 1960- European Social Fund set up (provided for by the Treaty of Rome, 1957). | 1960- Alliance for Progress[25] (a plan to provide aid to cover the basic needs of the poor population in Latin American countries) launched by the US government, in exchange for political loyalty, during its crusade against communism. |
| 1964- European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund set up (provided for by the Treaty of Rome, 1957). | - Doctrine of a National Security Platform launched by the US government. The values contained in this doctrine supported and justified the installation of several military dictatorships in the continent. |
| | 1964- Military dictatorship takes over in Brazil. |
| | 1968- Military dictatorship takes over in Peru. |
| | 1968- Military dictatorship takes over in Panama. |
| | 1969- Andean Community of Nations (CAN) created. |

## The Seventies

| | |
|---|---|
| 1971- Association of European Border Regions created. | 1970- Military dictatorship takes over in Ecuador. |
| 1973- Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions installed. | 1972- Military dictatorship takes over in Honduras. |
| 1974- Euromontana Association created. | 1973- Military dictatorship takes over in Uruguay. |
| 1975- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) created, in order to redistribute part of the States' contributions to least prosperous regions. | 1973- Military dictatorship takes over in Chile. |
| | 1976- Military dictatorship takes over in Argentina. |
| | 1979- Democracy returns to Ecuador. |

## The Eighties

1985- Assembly of European Regions (AER) created.

1985- Metropolis created; the World Association of Major Metropolises (cities with over one million inhabitants).

1985- the European Council adopted the "European Charter of Local Self-Government".

1986- the Single European Act, Title III, endorsed European Political Cooperation (the Single European Act set the basis for a true policy of cohesion intended to counterbalance the tax burdens imposed by the single market in the southern countries and other less prosperous regions).

1986- Eurocities established.

1985- Introduction of the structure and execution of the pluriannual budget to finance the European Commission's activities for the 1989/1993 period (subsequently, 1994/1999, 2000/2006 and 2007/2013).

- The eighties saw the implementation (in nearly all Latin America countries) of the recommendations advocated by the "Washington Consensus" and its neo-liberal theses. Among other guidelines advocated were: the reduction or total elimination of trade and financial barriers to foreign investment; deregulation by means of the liberation of internal markets and the defence of property rights; denationalisation via the privatisation of state corporations, with the consequent reduction of public spending, and in some countries, the decentralisation of services, which were diverted towards regional /local governments. This was a form of weakening national States to the detriment of the guarantee of full rights of citizens, since these governments lacked the financial resources to face the new demands they undertook.

1980- Democracy returns to Peru.

1982- Democracy returns to Honduras.

1983- Democracy returns to Argentina.

1989- The Atlantic Arc Commission[26] established.

1989- Interreg, an Interregional Community Initiative, created (which served as the basis for the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective to promote initiatives for the development of traditionally depressed and peripheral territories).

1984- Democracy returns to El Salvador.

1985- Democracy returns to Brazil.

1985- Democracy returns to Uruguay.

1985- The presidents of Brazil and Argentina launch the movement which led to the establishment of MERCOSUR (Declaration of Iguaçu).

1986- Democracy returns to Guatemala.

1988- Democracy returns to Paraguay.

1988- Negotiations consolidated to end armed conflict in Nicaragua.

## The Nineties

1990- Energie-Cités Network created[27].

1990- International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) established28.

1990- Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union, which for the first time approached the issue of the participation of regional and local bodies as mechanisms to reinforce and complete the democratic legitimacy of the European Union. It was also attempted to consolidate the principle of subsidiarity in order to foster greater rapprochement between the EU and its citizens.

1991- European Textile Collectivities association (ACTE) created[29].

1991- Eurotowns created (a network of medium-sized cities –between 50,000 and 250,000 inhabitants–).

1991- Galicia-North Portugal Employment Association established.

1990- Democracy returns to Chile.

1990- Democracy returns to Panama.

1990- foundations for the creation of SICA-System of Central American Integration, launched.

1990- Negotiations consolidated to end armed conflict in Panama.

1991- Southern Common Market, MERCOSUR, established.

1991- FEMICA-Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus[34] established.

1992- Mexico joined the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

1992- Negotiations consolidated to end armed conflict in El Salvador.

1993- Protocol for the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration signed.

1991- Union of the Baltic Cities crea-ted[30].

1992- Treaty of Maastricht - European Union adopted (European citizenship created).

1993- European Union Treaty entered into force. Cohesion confirmed as one of the key objectives of the Union, together with economic and monetary union and the common market.

1993- Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) adopted.

1993- Cohesion Fund established.

1994- Committee of the Regions created (a consultative body for the European Commission's Council of Ministers).

1994- Rhein-Waal Euroregion created.

1994- European Network of the Cities of Wine[31].

1995- Urb-AL Programme established.

1995- Eurocities network created.

1997- European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy[32].

1999- Introduction of the euro; economic and monetary union consolidated, and work begun on the draft European Con-stitution, whose key objective is to ensure political integration.

1999- Latin Arc Association establi-shed.

1999- TeleCities-Digital Cities Network[33] created.

Tirol Euroregion created.

1994- A proposal is launched for the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), heavily influenced by an integration model based on the de-fence of the interests of the US economy, to the detriment of others.

1994- ALIDES launched (Central Ameri-can Alliance for Sustainable Develop-ment).

1995- Mercociudades network estab-lished.

1995- DEMUCA Foundation set up for Local Development and Municipal and Institutional Development of Central America and the Caribbean (www.demuca.org).

1996- Negotiations consolidated to end armed conflict in Guatemala.

1999- FLACMA established (Latin American Federation of Cities, Munici-palities and Associations).

| | |
|---|---|
| 2002- European Industrial Regions Association[35] established.<br><br>2004- Constitutional Treaty signed, on 29 October.<br><br>2004- United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) established (the UN of cities). Born as a result of a merger between the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) founded in 1913, and the World Federation of United Cities (FMCU-UTO), founded at the start of the fifties in France.<br><br>2004- Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion established.<br><br>- European Regional and Local Authorities on Asylum and Immigration network, established.<br><br>- European Network of Intermediate Authorities for Culture and Proximity established[36]. | 2000- Puebla-Panama Plan launched for the development of the south-southeast region of Mexico (states of Campelle, Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Puebla, Quintana Roo, Tabasco, Vera Cruz and Yucatán), Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.<br><br>2000- Specialised Meeting of Municipalities and City Councils (REMI) established.<br><br>2001- 1st CONFEDELCA, Central American Conference on State Decentralisation and Local Development.<br><br>2003- Andean Cities Network (RAC) created.<br><br>2004- United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) established (the UN of cities), to act within Latin America through the representation of FLACMA.<br><br>2004- Consultative Forum of MERCOSUR Municipalities, Federated States, Provinces and Departments (which replaced REMI), established.<br><br>2005- Central American Institute for Local Development (IDELCA) established (www.idelca.org). |

**Source:** produced by the authors.

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## Notes

**12** The basic elements which, in fact, make up local and/or regional government, comprise territory, people, laws and government. By rights, their existence is only formalised by means of the juridical act which recognises them as such.

**13** Public policies related to sectors such as health, education, energy, urban mobility, the protection and promotion of human rights, environmental sanitation, public safety, international relations and cooperation, among others, make up the actions of the State in the exercise of its jurisdiction, and represent its final activities as well as the very reason for its existence and functions within modern society.

**14** These cities are: Santiago de Surco (pop. 362,100), Rímac (pop. 246,942), Pullo (pop. 2,198), Lima (pop. 6,954,583) and Ate (pop. 571,678) in Peru; Tuluá (pop. 191,100) and Bucaramanga (pop. 508,102) in Colombia; Ciudad de Guatemala (pop. 968,712) in Guatemala; Sansonate (pop. 25,600) in El Salvador; San José (pop. 313,000) in Costa Rica; Guarulhos (pop. 1,072,717), Santo André (pop. 649,331), Porto Alegre (pop. 1,360,590), Erechim (pop. 87,200) and Osasco (pop. 652,593) in Brazil; and San Salvador de Jujuy (pop. 231,229), Quitilipi (pop. 32,083), Bovril (pop. 15,000) and Olavarría (pop. 103,961) in Argentina.

**15** For further information regarding this type of cooperation, see Chapter 3, section 2.

**16** Intersectorial cooperation comprises the participation in actions and the sum of efforts among several areas of the same level of government.

**17** Intermunicipal cooperation comprises the participation in actions and the sum of efforts among several local governments, within the same nation.

**18** Intergovernmental cooperation comprises the participation in actions and the sum of efforts among several levels of government, within the same nation. Intergovernmental cooperation is more intensive and beneficial when the actions of the national bodies are guided by the principle of subsidiarity.

**19** In 1998, the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch –a category 5 storm– played havoc with the economies of several Central American countries, leaving in its wake a trail of destruction and over eleven thousand dead.

**20** For further details see "European Governance: A White Paper", published in 2001.

**21** European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), to carry out a balanced and sustainable development of the territory in the European Union. The Commission and the Member States agreed upon common territorial models and objectives for the future development of territory in the European Union. Territorial development policies attempt to achieve balanced and sustainable development. According to the deliberations of this body, it is important to ensure that the execution of three of the policy's basic objectives *(economic and social cohesion, conservation and management of natural resources and cultural heritage, and more balanced competitiveness of the European territory)* should reach all of the EU's regions equally. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/pdf/sum_es.pdf>

**22** Available at: <http://www.ccre.org/presentation_en.htm>
**23** Available at: <http://www.rediris.es>
**24** Available at: <http://europa.eu/abc/treaties>

**25** Alliance for Progress- a programme to provide economic and social aid to Latin America, set up by the United States between 1961 and 1970, clearly as a way of counteracting the effects of the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

**26** Available at: <www.arcatlantique.org>
**27** Available at: <www.energie-cities.org>
**28** Available at: <www.iclei.org>
**29** Available at: <www.acte.net>
**30** Available at: <www.ubc.net>
**31** Available at: <www.recevin.net>
**32** Available at: <www.revesnetwork.net>
**33** Available at: <www.telecities.org>
**34** Available at: <www.femica.org>
**35** Available at: <www.eira.org>
**36** Available at: <www.sigmacp.org>

# 3. Principal forms of decentralised cooperation in Latin America

## 3.1. Overview of forms or instruments

With regard to instruments and methods which to a large extent sustain the multiple actions of decentralised cooperation, it is possible to identify the following:

I. Town-twinning ("sister-cities" programmes).
II. Bilateral agreements
III. Networks
IV. Associations of municipalities
V. Programmes in support of decentralised cooperation

These different programmes or mechanisms are all very significant in the international insertion of Latin American cities, once their endeavours have provided contacts and set up joint activities between cities in different countries.

## 3.2. Town-twinning

The first town-twinnings took place in the second half of the 20th century, mainly between European cities.

There is usually a reason for one city to become another's "twin sister". There are, for example, twinnings which are based on the similar size of the cities, or on common economic activities, political affinity or similar cultural aspects. In other cases, twinnings occur when one city has taken in immigrants from another, or between port cities or cities which bear the same name.

In general, town-twinnings are approved both by the executive and the legislative powers of the cities involved. This becomes an opportunity for municipal councils to participate in the foreign policy of their cities, which is usually carried out only by the executive power.

Municipal councils in the large cities of industrialised countries usually assign part of their annual municipal budget to the development of twinnings, which is why favourable decisions with regard to new undertakings are analysed with care.

Cities with twinning experience are generally metropolises or medium-sized cities, and approximately two thirds of town-twinnings are with cities in developed countries in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and Japan. However, there are also several cases of twinnings between Latin American cities and cities in China, India, Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

Nowadays, town-twinnings or processes which must be approved by municipal councils are much less frequent. The current tendency is to enter into direct agreements between the executive powers of the cities in question, making it a more agile and flexible process when it comes to achieving the specific objectives related to exchanges, decentralised cooperation and common political action.

## 3.3. Bilateral agreements

We have chosen to refer to the different forms of decentralised cooperation carried out between cities or between regions and cities, as "bilateral agreements for decentralised cooperation".

Bilateral (and/or multilateral) agreements for decentralised cooperation are composed of ***concrete***, ***tangible*** and ***feasible*** cooperation instruments, established upon a common base of short, medium and long term intentions and interests, involving two (bilateral cooperation) or more (multilateral cooperation) regional or local governments.

Our observations throughout this study have led us to conclude that bilateral (and/or multilateral) decentralised cooperation agreements represent one of the best instruments for cooperation between one local government and another, as well as between a local government and a regional government.

## 3.4. Networks

### 3.4.1. Overview

International networks of cities have functioned as a promotional tool for the international insertion of local governments, to increase decentralised international cooperation, and as a means of widening the international repercussions of problems which local governments face. The organisation of cities into international networks acquired greater currency as from the eighties, when Metropolis[37] –a world association of cities with over one million inhabitants– was established, and increased again during the nineties with the creation of the Eurocities network in Europe and, in South America, the Mercociudades network. It should also be noted that some of the international associations of cities and local authorities were established before that time. Such is the case of IULA[38], founded in 1913, and the World Federation of United Cities (FMCU-UTO)[39], founded in 1957, which merged in May 2004 to become UCLG.

International networks and associations have different objectives and vary in scope. In the first place, there are different types of networks, according to their constitutional objectives. Some have been conceived in an attempt to intensify the regional integration process (Mercociudades) and are, therefore, composed of bodies with a well-defined territorial range: the region within a continent. Others have a specific thematic focus, such as in the case of ICLEI, which is devoted to issues related to the urban environment. Lastly, there are thematic networks founded under the auspices of the URB-AL programme, which are organised around specific subjects and problems related to local urban development, linking local communities in the EU and in LA.

In the second place, associations of municipalities are characterised by the global reach of their defence of a variety of issues of interest to local governments, as it is possible to see in the guidelines and activity reports of the UCLG.

As far as a time scale for the activities is concerned, as a rule there are no fixed limitations to the period during which activities take place. The exception, once again, is in the case of the URB-AL programme networks, which have a pre-determined timeline, since they were set up within a specific programme.

### 3.4.2. A survey of networks in Latin America

Although municipal associations existed on the continent before networks, it can be stated that both forms were given a strong boost by the combination of factors arising from the establishment of the economic blocs MERCOSUR and CAN, and from the putting in practice of the Urb-AL programme. The second of these was doubtless the more influential. This is probably related to the simplicity of its operations. This, in turn, is connected to the type of actions and issues on the agendas of the region's public administrators. Furthermore, the fact that this type of programme

takes advantage of the *"non-refundable financing"* instrument, derived from the public resources of the European Commission's programme in support of decentralised cooperation, also contributes to its success.

**a) Networks of cities linked to processes of regional integration**

• **Mercociudades** (Mercocities) Network[40]: within the MERCO-SUR, cities have sought to intensify their participation in the bloc's decisions, by means of this network. Among the organisation's aims, contained in the Declaration of Asunción[41], the proposal should be noted for the creation of a "Council of MERCOSUR Cities", called *Mercociudades* (Mercocities), in order to join efforts and resources aimed at urban development strategies in the face of the demands made by MERCOSUR. The Mercociudades network, created in 1995, currently includes municipalities in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Venezuela. Cities are increasingly taking on a leading role in the development of their own future, which is precisely the basis of the proposal put forward by the Mercociudades network: to build a MERCOSUR which will provide a common area for the society, culture, economics and policies of the countries in the region. The Mercociudades network is a political and technical initiative, central to the interests of the localities, which strengthens the activities of cities within the regional context of MERCOSUR and thus strengthens MERCO-SUR itself. In this way, the network seeks not only to strengthen the participation of municipalities in MERCOSUR, but also, at the same time, to foster exchanges and cooperation between the local governments of its member cities. The Mercociudades network has 14 Thematic Units devised in order to formulate the municipal policies to be proposed in the MERCOSUR area. These Units also divulge, analyse and systematise information regarding the specific subjects of their specialties. The Units include: self-government, management and financing, international cooperation, science, technology and training, culture, local economic development,

social development, urban development, education, gender and municipality, environment and sustainable development, strategic planning and tourism, youth, and citizen safety. The senior body responsible for deliberations and decision-making in the network is the *Summit of the Mercociudades Network*, a yearly assembly of local authorities –mayors, executive officers, prefects and heads of government–. The Executive Secretariat is responsible for presiding over and coordinating the Council's work, divulging documents and officially representing the network. The Permanent Technical Secretariat, with headquarters in the city of Montevideo, where the headquarters of MERCOSUR are also to be found, is the network's only permanent body and is responsible for keeping the institutional records, as well as for analysing and divulging information regarding the process of integration, and supporting cooperation projects.

• **RAC** - Andean Cities Network: established in 2003, its foundation reinforced the increasingly significant role of cities and local authorities within the field of international relations, mainly in the areas of decentralised international cooperation, as well as in the area of regional integration processes, particularly in the Andean Community of Nations (CAN).

**b) URB-AL Networks**

• **URB-AL Networks**[42]: The Urb-AL programme is a European Commission programme in support of decentralised cooperation for exchanges between cities in the European Union and in Latin America. Its main object is the development of direct cooperation among the different agents and local and regional governments, by means of meetings, exchanges and the transfer of knowledge and experiences. It also attempts to establish a permanent flow of exchanges between cities in both regions, with regard to issues of mutual interest. The URB-AL programme was set up in 1995 and during its initial stages, was organised in eight thematic net-

works: 1) Drugs and the City, coordinated by Santiago, Chile; 2) The Conservation of Urban Historical Contexts, coordinated by the province of Vicenza, Italy; 3) Democracy in the City, coordinated by Issy-les-Molineaux, France; 4) The City as a Promoter of Economic Development, coordinated by Madrid, Spain; 5) Urban Social Policies, coordinated by Montevideo, Uruguay; 6) Urban Environment, coordinated by the city council of Malaga, Spain; 7) Urbanisation Management and Control, coordinated by Rosario, Argentina, and 8) Urban Mobility Control, coordinated by Stuttgart, Germany. The second stage of the Urb-AL programme was approved in December 2000, with six new thematic networks: 9) Local Financing and Participatory Budget, coordinated by the prefecture of the municipality of Porto Alegre, Brazil; 10) The Fight against Urban Poverty, coordinated by the prefecture of São Paulo; 12) The Promotion of Women in Local Decision-Making, coordinated by the council of Barcelona, Spain; 13) Cities and the Information Society, coordinated by the city of Bremen, Germany, and 14) Citizen Safety in Cities, coordinated by the municipality of Valparaíso, Chile.

**c) Thematic networks not included in the European programmes**

**• International Association of Educating Cities - IAEC**[43]: began activities in 1990 as a result of the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities, held in Barcelona, Spain. At that time, a group of cities, represented by their leaders, submitted a proposal to work jointly on projects and activities to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants, by means of the active use of educational tools, in accordance with the objectives stated in the *Charter for Educating Cities*[44], approved by the congress of Barcelona. Later, in 1994, this movement was formalised in the International Association of Educating Cities, during the 3rd Congress held in Bologna (Italy). IAEC's objectives are to promote the fulfilment of the principles of the Charter for Educating Cities; encourage cooperation and specific actions between cities; actively participate and cooperate in projects

and exchange of experiences among groups and institutions with interests in common; strengthen the rhetoric of Educating Cities by means of specific and direct activities; influence the decision-making process of governments and international institutions in matters of interest to Educating Cities, and communicate and cooperate with different national and international bodies.

• **Local Governments for Sustainability (formerly, International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives) - ICLEI**[45]: founded in 1990 by local governments at United Nations headquarters in New York, ICLEI is an association of cities, counties, metropolitan governments and governmental associations, administered democratically. Its headquarters are in Toronto, Canada. Its mission is to build and serve a world movement of local governments in order to achieve tangible improvements for these localities, with a key focus on environmental conditions, by means of cumulative local actions.

• **Ibero-American Centre for Strategic Urban Development - CIDEU**[46]: an association composed of 60 cities linked by strategic urban planning (SUP). It was founded in Barcelona in 1993, in order to share the benefits derived from SUP processes. Among these benefits, the following stand out: common strategic projects, increased participation of social and economic agents, the opportunity to share and manage common knowledge and an improvement in competitive positioning which is characteristic of systems organised as a network.

### 3.5. The role of municipality associations

#### 3.5.1. Historical evolution

Nationwide municipality associations exist practically in every country in Latin America; in certain countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela and Peru there are even more than one, basically for ideological reasons. While a few large municipalities choose to join such associations, most of them prefer to develop policies on their own.

There are also region-wide federations such as FEMICA, the umbrella entity of the municipality associations in Central America, and FLACMA, which represents the rest and currently includes around fifteen national associations. Historically, both regional entities sought to develop technical cooperation projects for the benefit of their members in the different countries. This mechanism prevented the smaller towns from having a say in negotiations and decision-making. As a result, unless their mayors managed to chair the national associations and could therefore participate in international meetings, most towns had no chance to venture into the international arena through these umbrella entities.

Municipality associations began operating in Latin America well before networks were created. In fact, the activities carried out by these associations represent the earliest form of local government international relations.

The International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the World Federation of United Cities (FMCU-UTO) are the oldest city networks in the region and no longer exist as such, as they have come together to create the United Cities and Local Governments network (UCLG). IULA and FMCU-UTO were created during different time periods, and each of them entered the international arena

determined to play a leading political role in their respective areas. The disputes that arose between them, which were characteristic of politically-oriented organisations, were in line with the Cold War confrontations that drew a simplistic dividing line between those in favour and those against the Western democracy model.

The Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations (FLACMA), a division of IULA responsible for this region and currently regional representative of UCLG, is the oldest network in the continent. Though with right-wing, centre and left-wing components, it used to have a rather conservative standing and represented a plausible alternative for accessing international cooperation. FLACMA's administrative structure was based on IULA's guidelines, which were influenced by the Anglo-Saxon doctrine of "vertical" management. In other words, the "local link" referred to the "area link", which in turn referred to the "national", which finally settled the issue with the "international" umbrella entity.

FMCU-UTO started operating in Latin America in the mid-90s. The emergence of this organisation was facilitated by the fact that, for the first time in history, while adopting the same political-span matrix, several local governments elected directly and democratically throughout the region had a more progressive, left-wing vision. The World Federation of United Cities introduced an alternative to the international cooperation model advocated by FLACMA, as it devised strategies based on a horizontal approach. The Federation's dynamics, action plan and agenda were established on the basis of discussions involving the different levels of the organisation. Not long after FMCU-UTO was founded, the redemocratisation process reached practically every country in the region. As a result, the differences between both organisations, which had been caused by the Cold War and had deepened in the early stages, ceased to exist.

In the late 90s –toward the end of the century– considering multiple circumstances on the global scene, the heads of both entities began to negotiate their merge into a single umbrella organisation. Such merge materialised in 2004 through the creation of UCLG. Based on its broad representation powers and a global agenda of local government interests, this organisation eventually became the cities' spokesentity before international agencies. The "merge agenda" prompted those forces disputing the leadership in the different regions to "lay down their arms". Indeed, they soon realised the need to give up confrontation, sit at the negotiation table and jointly represent the region in the international arena through a single World City Network. They cooperated to obtain resources and strove to play an active role in the reforms of the UN and other multilateral organisations.

In Latin America member-countries negotiated their alignment with a single umbrella entity. As a result, FLACMA emerged with a broader scope of action and the power to represent every region in the continent. The "merge agenda" further prompted Mercocities and the Andean Cities Network to channel their efforts in the same direction.

The early city networks –IULA and FMCU-UTO– adhered to different criteria with regard to membership. IULA was basically a vertical organisation whose members mainly consisted of national municipality associations. Thus, many cities –and particularly the smaller towns– participated indirectly through their respective national associations. In theory, this entailed an advantage for them as they could not afford to pay the international network annual membership fees, nor could they incur hefty travelling expenses to attend international conferences or events. The chairpersons of the national associations acted on behalf of the member-cities, which were required to pay smaller contributions, and the member-cities expected to gain access to cooperation or exchange projects in

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return. In the case of FMCU-UTO, on the other hand, the cities and towns would register as members directly.

All in all, municipality networks are committed to fostering decentralised cooperation within the framework of such traditional endeavours as the enforcement of democracy, exchange of know-how, search for financial support and solidarity. Their agenda further includes local/regional development issues focused on human development. Beyond any doubt, these entities represent a major step forward as regards building cooperation and international relation strategies at local government level.

### 3.5.2. Brief survey of some municipality associations

• **United Cities and Local Governments - UCLG**[47] - Also known as the "UN of Cities", UCLG was created in May 2004 as a result of the merge of three global networks: the World Federation of United Cities (FMCU-UTO), the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and *Metropolis*. At present the global organisation "United Cities and Local Governments" is the largest international organisation of cities committed to strengthening city and local government representation on the global scene. Its *mission* consists of rerpesenting and giving a voice to autonomous, democratic local governments worldwide by promoting and defending their values, objectives and interests before the global community through mutual cooperation. Its *objectives* include supporting and reinforcing autonomous democratic local governments around the world; fostering cooperation, exchange and unity among members; ensuring effective political representation before the international community; acting as the main global source of information, training and exchange between local governments; promoting economic, cultural, professional and environmental development; fostering race and gender equality; and promoting decentralised cooperation, international cooperation, town twinning and alliances between local governments and their associations. To that end, their *duties* consist of defending,

as representatives, the role and position of local governments in the international arena, participating in the design of international policies; developing and fostering joint policies and positions on the international scene on issues of local government interest; actively collaborating with the UN and its agencies; developing initiatives and action plans based on the principles of autonomous local government and international cooperation –in particular, cooperating and developing projects involving local governments and local government associations in a decentralised manner–; and building an international platform of exchange and collaboration, so as to reinforce the capacities of the local governments and their associations. UCLG has a decentralised structure consisting of seven Regional Sections, namely Africa (United Cities and Local Governments of Africa - UCLGA); Asia-Pacific (UCLG Regional Section for Asia-Pacific); Eurasia (UCLG Regional Section for Euro-Asia), Europe (Council of Municipalities and Regions of Europe-CMRE); Latin America (Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations - FLACMA); Middle East and West Asia (UCLG Regional Section for the Middle East and West Asia); North America (UCLG Regional Section for North America); and the Metropolitan Section *(Metropolis)*. These Regional and Metropolitan Sections are *legally independent entities* that engage in their own activities at regional level.

**• Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations - (FLACMA)**[48] - Founded in 1999 as a result of political negotiations involving Latin American local government organisations and the IULA section responsible for this region, its main objectives include developing and promoting decentralised cooperation and exchange of know-how; consolidating the municipalist movement in Latin America; reinforcing democracy at local government level; promoting administrative decentralisation in its members' countries; helping improve local public services; and fostering Latin American integration. As mentioned above, FLACMA is also the UCLG Regional Section for Latin America. This dual

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role makes it somewhat "hybrid" in the sense that it is a regional entity developing part of its activities within a global network.

• **Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus (FEMICA)**[49] - Created in 1991, its members include the municipalities and the associations, unions, alliances and federations of local authorities. FEMICA's main objective is to leverage municipalities as powerhouses of development and enforcement of public policies to fight urban poverty. Its executive body consists of the Mayors' Assembly and a directing board made up of six members representing each country, who take turns to chair the board. Like FLACMA, FEMICA strives to promote administrative decentralisation in the member-municipalities' countries.

• **Union of Iberoamerican Capital Cities (UCCI)**50 - Created in 1982, its members include twenty-three Iberoamerican capitals, the cities of Barcelona in Spain, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo in Brazil, and Sucre in Bolivia. This Union is chaired by Madrid –representing Iberian cities– and a Latin American city. It has a decentralised structure consisting of sub-regional "deputy chairs" and a UCCI activity coordinator in every municipality, responsible for streamlining the exchange of information between member-cities.

## 3.6. Programmes in support of decentralised cooperation

### 3.6.1. Technical cooperation channelled through multilateral institutions

In addition to the role played by decentralised cooperation in reinforcing city networks and global integration, there are a number of noteworthy cases of multilateral institution involvement. We would like to describe three of these: The United Nations Programme for Human Settlements *(UN-Habitat)*, the Urban Management Programme (UMP) and the *Cities Alliance*.

• The *"Habitat II"* Conference held in Istanbul in 1966 –also known as the "City Summit"– introduced a series of new urban policy goals, particularly in the areas of sustainable development and poverty reduction, in a programme based on various resolutions such as the *Habitat* Agenda and the Declaration of Istanbul. This programme, which was called *UN-Habitat*, was assigned a USD 300 million budget for the 2002-2003 period.

The Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) has undertaken to implement the initiative to create Urban Observatories[51] to monitor compliance with the Millenium Development Goals and their specific objectives in urban areas. Urban Observatories represent a very useful tool for generating indicators that may in turn help adjust municipal public policies.

• The UMP, also implemented by *UN-Habitat*, seeks to strengthen the cities' management capacity and streamline their sustainable development efforts. It has four objectives: to erradicate urban povery, to improve urban environmental management, to promote participatory management at the local level, and to enforce gender equality. It has offices in Nairobi and in every region in the world. In the Latin American region in particular, its office is next to ROLAC's headquarters. The UMP programme is funded by the United Nations Developoment Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and cooperation agencies from Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Sweden. In the specific case of Latin America and the Caribbean, German and Canadian agencies also provide financial support.

In 2003, at the suggestion of IULA and FLACMA the UMP carried out a very interesting research project on anti-poverty fight policies in ten cities in Latin America. Five "cases" were selected for publication: *Sao Paulo*, *Porto Alegre* and *Icapui* in Brazil, *Montevideo* in Uruguay and *Cienfuegos* in Cuba. This project was implemented with the support of the *Cities Alliance*.

• The ***Cities Alliance*** programme was created in 1999. The idea was to develop new tools and approaches and exchange know-how, in order to improve the livng conditions of the poor in urban areas through actions in two focus areas: urban development strategies, and erradication or regularisation of slums and informal settlements. The programme seeks to improve the living conditions of at least 100 million marginalised people around the world by 2020.

*Cities Alliances'* partners include multilateral institutions such as *UN-Habitat*, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Asian Development Bank, the European Union, the governments of sixteen nations[52], the cities organisation UCLG and *Metropolis*. Brazil was the first developing country to join this programme in 2004.

When it comes to defining programme policies, local authorities' participation varies greatly. The new global network of cities (UCLG) participates directly in the coordination of the *Cities Alliance* and UMP, yet it is absent at the key instances of the main programme *UN-Habitat*. To give cities a voice, a complex consulting body was created: the United Nations Association of Cities and Local Authorities (UNACLA). Its members include government representatives of *UN-Habitat* and the various municipality networks in the World Association of Cities and Local Authorities (WACLAC).

As far as the European Union is concerned, in addition to the URB-AL Programme referred to above there is another that has been well received among major Latin American cities. Under the name @LIS - Alliance for the Information Society[53], this programme aims to promote digital inclusion and enhance municipal management through the widespread use of information technologies. Within this framework, telecentres have been set up in several countries in Latin America to implement IT-based health and education management programmes.

## 3.6.2. Dynamics and institutional processes in support of decentralised international cooperation on the part of central governments

Because this is a relatively new thematic area, the central governments in Latin America pay little or no attention to local governments' decentralised cooperation initiatives. They keep no formal records or indicators to facilitate research work in this area. Worse still, when it comes to categorising national information, they are cavalier about the decentralised cooperation activities developed by municipalities.

In most cases, obtaining data on local entities from State information management bodies not only demands expertise, but also a great deal of patience as it entails gathering bits and pieces of information. In most countries in Latin America, identifying such basic data as the full list of local governments or the population of a certain municipality can reveal the degree of (dis)order of the State information management bodies' records throughout the region. Of course there are remarkable exceptions: the General International Cooperation Bureau in Argentina;[54] the Department of Federal Matters (SAF), Institutional Relations Office (SRI), Presidency of the Republic in Brazil;[55] the Department of Regional and Administrative Development (SUBDERE), Home Office in Chile[56]; and the General Political Coordination Bureau, Foreign Office in Mexico.

The overall situation in this respect differs greatly from that in Europe, where the EUROSTAT[57] centralises information ranging from the very basic data described above to the most complex data needed by the EU nations to design and implement policies aimed at addressing public administration issues and defining international cooperation strategies.

The findings of the empirical study and the data gathered about cities' involvement in international networks and associations reveal that several decentralised international cooperation initiatives are currently under way in Latin America –most of them within the framework of the city networks and, to a lesser extent, municipality associations.

## 3.7. The extent of regional integration

Regional integration processes add to the international cooperation initiatives already underway, boosting Latin American local governments' global involvement.

**I.** The **first** reproduces the dynamics of the earliest form of international relations, the association of cities through the creation of UCLG;

**II.** The **second** draws on the effects of globalization, demonstrating that every human settlement –from the hamlet to the metropolis– can and must establish mutual relations;

**III.** The **third** capitalises the leap forward in information and telecommunication technologies, particularly the Internet, which cuts costs and facilitates networking;

**IV.** The **fourth** –and most recent– involves addressing and interpreting municipal problems within the framework of the URB-AL Programme thematic networks. From a "urbanistic" perspective, cities discover that they are capable of developing international cooperation activities. Once they gain access to suitable technologies through the Programme, they come to realise that their common concerns –pressing social demands, clashing views on social and economic phenomena and international alliance opportunities– are often the same as those found at national level.

Considering these factors, as well as national States' apathy in forging commercial and political agreements throughout the continent, those responsible for leading the processes described above might play a more significant role than national States themselves in regional integration.

Based on the experience gained, and adhering to third-sector standard practices, current and former local government leaders have undertakent to build an institutional platform for performing tasks national states have failed to carry out due to incompetence or sheer negligence. Their idea is to coordinate and finetune processes in line with human development.

A number of entities founded over the past few years aim to fill this gap. Two noteworthy examples are the Institute for the Development of Cooperation and International Relations (IDECRI) in Brazil, and the Institute for Local Development in Central America (IDELCA). They are both non-governmental, non-profit institutions, and were created with very similar objectives in mind, yet they operate in different geographic scenarios. While IDECRI focuses on the Brazilian territory[58] covering 30 per cent of Latin American municipalities, IDELCA focuses on Central America, home to slightly over 7 per cent. The latter trains and empowers local actors to undertake development and democratic decentralisation activities, thus helping achieve the political integration and comprehensive development of the States in the region.

Despite the above geographic and strategic differences, both IDECRI and IDELCA seek to reach agreements with different political and social actors in order to take joint actions. Moreover, their vision, as well as their mission, has a regionwide scope as both entities endeavour to channel Latin American integration efforts through municipalities.[59]

## Notas

**37 Metropolis** (<www.metropolis.org>) is an international association of cities with over one million inhabitants, established in 1984, during a meeting convened by the president of the Regional Council of Ile de France at the time, with the presence of representatives from Abidjan, Addis-Ababa, Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Colombo, London, Los Angeles, Mexico, New York, Tokyo and Turin. At the end of the meeting, the World Association of Major Metropolises was created. Metropolis became an international forum for the discussion of urban issues, recognised by the UN and with the status of observer at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

**38 IULA** is the oldest association of local governments, with members in over one hundred countries, in every region of the world. IULA had an active role in decentralisation and worked towards the adoption of a World Agenda for local governments. Its main objectives are to strengthen local government and promote the role of women in local decision-taking, as well as representing local governments in the fields of sustainable development and urbanisation.

**39** The World Federation of United Cities (FMCU-UTO) was set up in France, immediately after the end of the Second World War. Its principal aim was to promote friendship and cultural exchanges between European cities. Initially, this body devoted itself only to cultural exchanges and was known as *Le Monde Bilingue* (Bilingual World). In 1957 it became necessary to expand the horizon of cooperation and exchange, which was why FMCU-UTO was born.

**40** Available at: <www.redmerciudades.org>
**41** Available at: <www.redmerciudades.org>
**42** Available at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/urbal/index_es.htm>

**43** Even though it is led by Spanish cities, IAEC, as well as ICLEI, has the characteristics of a "thematic" international association of cities, as it focuses on the discussion of solutions to problems related to education. It is also a global association, since its member cities are located on several continents in countries such as Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Principality of Andorra, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo and Uruguay.

**44** Available at: <http://www.bcn.es/edcities/aice/estatiques/espanyol/sec_charter.html>

**45** The full list of partners and the details of its organisation can be obtained from Local Governments for Sustainability (formerly International Council for Local Environment Initiatives), at <www.iclei.org>.

**46** Available at: <www.cideu.org>

**47** Available at <http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/uclg/index.asp?pag=template.asp&L=ES&ID=8>

**48** Available at <www.flacma.org>
**49** Available at <www.femica.org>
**50** Available at <www.munimadrid.es/ucci>

**51 Urban Observatories** were created as a *UN-Habitat* instrument to streamline the sustainable urban development process. They host permanent discussion fora where relevant actors discuss, evaluate and monitor urban public policies. On the basis of this highly participatory practice they issue recommendations and suggest possible changes in the way governments implement policies. For more information, refer to <www.unhabitat-rolac.org/programasmundiales>.

**52** Germany, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the United States, Ethipia, the Philippines, France, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Sweden.

**53 @LIS - Alliance for the Information Society** is a cooperation programme of the European Commission that aims to reinforce cooperation between the European Union and Latin America within the framework of the information society. The programme seeks to respond to the needs of the local communities, promote dialogue on policies and regulations, and increase interconnection capacity between research entities in both regions. For further information, visit http://ec.europa.eu/europe-aid/projects/alis/index_es.htm

**54** Available at <http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/portal/seree/dgcin/descentralizada.html>
**55** Available at <http://www.presidencia.gov.br/estrutura_presidencia/scpai/assuntos_fed>
**56** Available at <http://www.cooperaciondescentralizada.gov.cl/1511/channel.html>

**57** EUROSTAT's mission is to provide quality statistical services to the European Union - "Memoirs of Eurostat - Fifty years serving Europe", available at <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal>

**58** IDECRI Statutes available at <www.idecri.org.br>
**59** IDELCA Statutes available at <www.idelca.org>

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# 3

# 4. Examples of international presence: bilateral relations and networks

## 4.1. Noteworthy cases of decentralised bilateral cooperation

While the empirical study focuses on local governments' actions within the framework of networks and city associations, another important mechanism prevails throughout the continent: bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements.

Tables 10 and 11 below list the number and distribution of such bilateral agreements between specific local and regional governments in Italy and Latin America (Table 10), and between European and Brazilian municipalities. These data are for illustration purposes only.

The largest number of bilateral cooperation agreements (between municipalities) and/or town twinning experiences in Latin America can be found in Argentina (142), Brazil (43) and Cuba (26).

### Table 10 / Town twinning and cooperation agreements between Italian and Latin American cities

| Countries | Total |
| --- | --- |
| Argentina | 142 |
| Brazil | 43 |
| Cuba | 26 |
| Nicaragua | 13 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mexico | 10 |
| Uruguay | 8 |
| Chile | 7 |
| Colombia | 7 |
| Peru | 5 |
| Guatemala | 3 |
| El Salvador | 3 |
| Bolivia | 2 |
| Venezuela | 2 |
| Costa Rica | 1 |
| Ecuador | 1 |
| Dominican Republic | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **274** |

**Source:** ACEL - *Agenzia di Cooperazione degli Enti Locati*, 2006

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If we look more closely at the specific case of Brazil, the largest number of agreements have been signed with Town Councils in France (55), followed by Portugal (50), Italy (43) and Spain (18).

**Table 11 / Town twinning and cooperation agreements between European and Brazilian municipalities**

| Countries | Total |
|---|---|
| France | 55 |
| Portugal* | 50 |
| Italiy | 43 |
| Spain | 18 |
| Germany | 8 |
| Netherlands | 1 |
| Belgium | 1 |
| United Kingdom | 1 |
| Greece | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **178** |

**Fuente:** ACEL - *Agenzia di Cooperazione degli Enti Locati*, 2006
(*) More town twinnings than cooperation agreements exist in Portugal –including Madeira Island and the Azores.

Some noteworthy bilateral agreements identified in the empirical study include:

**a)** Bilateral cooperation between the the Municipality of Osasco, Brazil and Italian and Canadian municipalities;

**b)** Bilateral cooperation between the Municipality of Ate, Peru and Spanish municipalities;

**c)** Agreements between the Municipality of Olavarría, Argentina and Italian municipalities;

**d)** Agreements between the Municipality of Porto Alegre, Brazil and Italian and French municipalities;

**e)** Agreements between the Municipality of Diadema, Brazil and the city of Montreuil, France;

**f)** Bilateral cooperation between the city of Sao Paulo, Brazil and the Ile-de-France Region, France and Milan and Rome, Italy, in addition to forty-two town twinnings;

**g)** Agreements between the Municipality of San Salvador, Jujuy, Argentina and Spanish and Bolivian cities, as well as other Argentine municipalities;

**h)** Agreements between the Municipality of Santo André, Brazil and Canadian cities, and town twinnings with Nicolau, Cape Verde, Braga, Portugal, Sesto San Giovanni, Italy, Takasaki, Japan, Nueva San Salvador, El Salvador and Vouzela, Portugal.

We should further expound on globalization experiences in some Latin American cities such as Recife, Sao Pablo and Pintadas in Brazil, and Buenos Aires in Argentina.

**a) Overview**

The city of Sao Paulo (10.4 million inhabitants) first engaged in international relations in 1989 –during Mayor Luiza Erundina's administration–. However, it was only in 2001, when Mayor Marta Suplicy took over, that an International Relations Office was created within the Municipality to develop and monitor not only international integration and/or decentralised cooperation activities, but also, and most importantly, an international relations policy. (Fronzaglia 2005; Municipality of Sao Paulo 2004b and Vigevani 2006).

Initially, the International Relations Office's five major focus points involved:

**1)** Joining international networks of cities;

**2)** Establishing contacts and engaging in cooperation projects with multilateral organisations, such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Health Organisation, the International Labour Organisation, UNESCO, *UN-Habitats*, for the purpose of obtaining non-refundable financial resources;

**3)** Implementing public policy exchange and cooperation agreements between the capital of the State of Sao Paulo and other cities, that is to say, Bilateral Decentralised Cooperation Agreements;

**4)** Attracting and promoting investments on the part of multinational companies, and widening the scope of the alliances with such companies;

**5)** Spreading around the world the successful experiences of the Municipality of Sao Paulo in enhancing public administration and developing innovative social projects.

While the above focus areas were eventually modified and extended as the Municipality institutionalised and consolidated its international relations division, the Office systematically emphasised international cooperation[60]. In fact, it actively engaged in town-twinning or bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements between cities, or between cities and regions, involving the transfer and exchange of experiences and/or technical know-how, the transfer of financial resources or both (Fronzaglia 2005 and Municipality of Sao Paulo 2004b).

**b) Bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements in place in Sao Paulo**

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While the Municipality of Sao Paulo has signed various bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements, we would like to highlight those implemented after it formally set up a specialised division for this purpose –the International Relations Office.

**1.** Osaka, Japan: Cooperattion in such areas as solid waste management and computerisation of administrative tasks.

**2.** Cities and regions in France: French cooperation comprises all of the extremey fruitful direct actions implemented with French Government institutions (the General Consulate of France in Sao Paulo, the French Embassy, the French Fiduciary Fund), as well as with such cities and regions as Paris, Ile-de-France, Provence Alpes-Côte D'azur, Lyon, Saint Denis, Marseille and Lille. Within this context, several projects were developed jointly with different areas of the Municipality: French lessons to the students in the municipal education network; diagnostic study on solid waste; Vila Buarque Square refurbishment; East-West Unity mural painting by a French artist who was also present at the 450º anniversary; hospital and emergency care management.

• Government of the Ile-de-France Region: Technical cooperation: scholarships to Brazilian graduate students involving Master's and Doctorate degree courses in France for twelve months. The selection was made by the Professional Staff Further Training Coordination Body (CAPES) in Brazil; Financial cooperation: Construction of the Sao Paulo School of Business Administration (current status: cooperation terms: signed; financial budget: approved; detailed drafting of the project: underway).

• Government of the Provence Alpes - Cóte-D'azur Region: Technical co-operation: Multimedia Cooperative.

• Municipalities of Paris and Lyon: Financial cooperation: Urbanisation and rehabilitation projects in the town centre and East District of Sao Paulo.

**3.** Milan, Italy: A further key alliance has been established with the city of Milan –Sao Paulo's first twin town–, which was present at the 2003 and 2004 editions of URBIS. This city financed the refurbishment of the Milan - Sao Paulo Fountain in Milan Square, next to Ibirapuera Park.  Technical cooperation relations have also been established between the Municipal Theatre, Sao Paulo and La  Scala, Milan. Finally, negotiations are currently underway for the construction of a Community Centre in the outskirts of San Francisco, a deprived area in the East District of Sao Paulo, with the support of the Municipality of Milan.

**4.** Other cities and regions in Italy: In addition to the above, the Municipality of Sao Paulo has  signed cooperation agreements and implemented a number of projects with other autonomous regions and local governments in Italy, including the following: Province of Turin: technical cooperation in the development of projects in densely populated districts, and refurbishment of the town centre;

Province of Prato and Emilia-Romagna Region: projects aimed at generating jobs and earnings; Tuscany Region and city of Rome: cooperation projects through URB-AL Programme's Network 10.

**5.** International Solidarity Fund of United Cities Against Poverty, Geneva, Switzerland and Lyon, France: The Fund assists the Restaurant-School Project involving vocational training for underprivileged youths.

**6.** Cities in Latin America

• Buenos Aires, Argentina: Spanish language lessons at the schools in the Municipal Education network.

• Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia: Cooperation agreement (signed during URBIS 2004) for such areas as culture, sport, institutional reinforcement, staff exchange, participation in networks, etc.

• Bogota, Colombia: The cooperation curently being negotiated with this city will address participatory governability, programmes and projects, and exchange of experiences in economic development and generation of jobs and earnings.

### 4.1.2. Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (Argentina)

**a) Overview**

The Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (13 million inhabitants), like Sao Paulo, has established a specific department for developing an international relations policy –the General International

Relations Bureau. According to Ruben Geneyro, Director General of International Relations of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires for the 2000 - 2005 period:

> "The Autonomous City of Buenos Aires has managed to implement a specific international relations policy characterised by consistency (at least during the 2000-2005 period under study). However, this strategy necessarily entailed narrowing its scope of action to just one path of development." (Geneyro 2006).

In the year 2000, when Mayor Aníbal Ibarra took over, the new city council defined two key objectives of the local government's international relations policy, which were very similar to those established by the city of Sao Paulo in Brazil: 1) to obtain results for the administration, and 2) to contribute to the positioning of the cities in the political arena. In line with the above, Buenos Aires is working on two fronts: bilateral and multilateral relations.

**b) Bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements**

The City of Buenos Aires has entered into 34 town-twinning and 40 bilateral cooperation agreements (Geneyro 2006). We would like to highlight the following:

**1.** Berlin, Germany: Full programme of cultural cooperation between both cities, and activities related to human rights and collective memory;

**2.** Milan, Italy: Programmes of cultural cooperation (between Colon Theatre, B.A. and La Scala, Milan), and economic development;

**3.** Montevideo, Uruguay: Joint actions in the area of tourism (organisation of tourist promotion workshops), culture (promotion of festivals) and exchange on communication policies;

**4.** Paris, France: Exchange in the areas of urban planning and safety;

**5.** Rome, Italy: Exchange on decentralisation policies, tourism and human rights;

**6.** Sao Paulo, Brazil: Joint activities in the areas of culture, trade and the environment;

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On the basis of these agreements special emphasis was placed on training town council staff and organising international fora as platforms for debate.

### 4.1.3. City of Recife (Brazil)

The Mayor of Recife, João Paulo Cunha, took office in 2000 and was reelected in 2004. There is no legacy from previous administrations in the area of international relations, except for a town-twinning agreement with the city of Porto, Portugal. Apparently, the cooperation between both cities was merely based on the bonds of friendship forged by their respective authorities.

During Mayor Cunha's first administration international relations were basically focused on obtaining cooperation resources, particularly through such international financial institutions as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the International Reconstruction and Development Bank (IRDB). To that end, the authorities were assisted by an adviser who worked closely with the city council. However, the municipality eventually entered into

a number of technical cooperation agreements, which were channelled through other municipal departments, and began to take part in some of the URB-AL Programme networks. In addition, the health bureau digitalised all of its activities through the programme @lis.

During Mayor Cunha's second administration the Municipality underwent an administrative reform.  As a result, an International Relations Coordination Office was established. This Office reports to the Bureau of Strategic Management and International Relations.

Activities gained momentum when Recife joined the Mercodities network, signed two bilateral decentralised cooperation agreements with the city of Nanterre, France and the Guangzhou region in China, and took part in a project for Brazilian metropolitan regions with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Recife's promising global involvement process resembles that of many Brazilian cities. Initial efforts merely focused on capturing financial resources, with hardly any investment in a rational international policy, were followed by some significant steps after reelection.  However, the relatively small office in charge of international affairs is subordinate to the second tier of the local government's administrative structure.

### 4.1.4. The Pintadas network case [Brazil][61]

Pintadas (11.254 inhabitants) is a small municipality some 250 kilometres from Salvador, the capital of the State of Bahia –one of the twenty-seven states making up the United States of Brazil–. 62,7% of the population lives in the rural areas[62] and work in family farms. There is a great deal of seasonal migra-

tion in the region and no paved access roads to the neighbouring municipalities. According to 2000 data, Pintadas falls within the category of medium human development[63] (children's mortality rate: 47,8 per 1000; illiteracy rate: 39,5%; *per capita* average income: $42,00; Municipal Human Development Index (HDI-M): 0,625). The Pintadas network, consisting of civil society entities (social, cultural and religious social organisations and credit cooperatives) was established in this remote region, with the support of the local town council and both national and interational institutions. This network provides a platform for designing, implementing, monitoring, controlling and assessing municipal public policies.

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The Pintadas network has strong links with the social movement in the municipality. Since the 1960s the Catholic Church has influenced its development. Indeed, the leaderships that emerged in those days promoted solidarity actions.

From 1999 to 2003 the Network operated as an informal platform for the various entities and the local government. At the meetings held on a two-montly basis they engaged in cooperation negotiations, seminars and workshops, integrated social projects, strategic planning and fund-raising. They fostered solidarity and mutual support amongst member institutions. The local government articulated and promoted the Network.

Participating entities are committed to improving the quality of life, the community and the environment in this semi-arid region  The table below describes the participants in the order they were created (by decade), and their respective areas of activity[64].

## Table 12 / Entities participating in the Pintadas network and their respective areas of activity

| Decade | Entity | Areas of activity |
|---|---|---|
| 1970s | Parish Church | Religious support; struggle for human rights and social inclusion; search for alternative ways to cope with the semi-arid environment. |
| 1980s | Pintadas Community Services Centre (CCSP) | Support to family farming through technical advice; design and monitoring of projects aimed at coping with the semi-arid environment; actions for obtaining financial resources and farming equipment. |
| | Rural Workers' Union (STR)[65] | Medical care and social security (INS); representative of the National Family Farming Reinforcement Programme (Pronaf ). |
| | Women's Movement (currently Women's Association) | Struggle for health and sanitation (1980s to date); arts and crafts; restaurant and bakery (2002); digital station (2003). |
| 1990s | Pintadas Rural Credit Cooperative (Sicoob-Sertão) | Local credit cooperative, microcredit and "bank". |
| | Pintadas Agri-Industrial Cooperative (Cooap) | Support to family farming - goat raising, the benefits of bovine milk. |
| | Apiarists' Association (ASA) | Support to family farming - beekeeping, environmental protection and food safety. |
| | Pintadas Family Farming School (Efap) | Support to family farming - contextualised education; site of the "honey emporium" and the "animal food store". |
| | Charitable Father Ricardo Cultural Association | Social work; reinforcement of school work; support to families and projects that generate earnings (woodworking, cabinet making, etc.) |
| | Father Sérgio Foundation (old community radio station)[66] | Currently in the process of being formally established. It will comprise an educational radio station and a television channel. |
| | Rheluz Company | Culture and youth protagonism, including a drama workshop. |

**Source:** Author's compilation.

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The Pintadas network basically aims to promote the sustainable development of the municipality. To that end, it has established various national alliances with the Federal Government, the Federal University of Bahia, the Clemente Mariani Foundation, Caritas Brazil, etc., as well as international alliances with a number of European entities - Il Canale in Italy, Peoples Solidaries in France, the Organisation for International Cooperation in Development Projects (DISOP) in Belgium and the German Social-Technical Cooperation Service (DED).

The four major European entities that support Pintadas network have created **Pintadas Europe**, which holds meetings twice a year to plan and evaluate the status of the project, the results, the use of resources, etc. The network promotes strategic interaction, and the projects demanded by the Brazilian associations are managed by the relevant institutions in each specific area: water resources, education, micro-finances and economic development, socio-productive activities for economic development.

Other foreign institutions have helped the network over the years, namely *Comunita Montana*[67], *Asociazone Voluntari per il Servizio Internationalle* and *Castel Nuovo Monti*[68] (Italy), Misionary Vehicle Asociaton - MIVA (The Netherlands), Kinder-misionwerk and Agrarian Action (Germany), and the International Rural Education Movements Association (Belgium).

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## 4.2. The presence of Latin American cities in the networks

### 4.2.1. The presence of the cities in networks and international associations in the continent

This section will discuss local governments' distribution and networking in their respective countries and throughout the various regions in the continent, according to the data in table 13 below.

**Table 13 / Participation of Latin American local governments in networks of cities**

| Country | Region | Local govern-ments involved | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Argentina | Southern Cone | 138 | 18% |
| Brazil | Southern Cone | 123 | 16% |
| Peru | Andean Region | 93 | 12% |
| Chile | Andean Region | 71 | 9% |
| Mexico | Mexico | 63 | 8% |
| Colombia | Andean Region | 58 | 8% |
| Ecuador | Andean Region | 40 | 5% |
| Costa Rica | Central America & the Caribbean | 26 | 3% |
| Paraguay | Southern Cone | 26 | 3% |
| El Salvador | Central America & the Caribbean | 24 | 3% |
| Bolivia | Southern Cone | 22 | 3% |
| Nicaragua | Central America & the Caribbean | 19 | 2% |
| Uruguay | Southern Cone | 18 | 2% |
| Venezuela | Andean Region | 16 | 2% |
| Honduras | Central America & the Caribbean | 11 | 1% |
| Guatemala | Central America & the Caribbean | 10 | 1% |
| Cuba | Central America & the Caribbean | 6 | 1% |
| Panama | Central America & the Caribbean | 6 | 1% |
| **TOTAL** | | **770** | **100%** |

**Source:** Author's compilation.

Argentina, Brazil and Peru have the largest number of local-government participants in the international networks operating in the region. Adding up the cities in all three countries, they total 354, which account for 46% of all the local governments involved in the International Networks of Cities.

If we analyse the data with the logic of those local governments participating in networks versus the total number of local governments in each of the eighteen countries in Latin America, the situation changes drastically. Thus, Uruguayan local governments boast the highest level of involvement with 95% of these participating in the international networks under study, followed by the cities in Costa Rica (32%), Chile (21%), Ecuador (19%), Paraguay and Nicaragua (both 13%). According to this criterion Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico and Guatemala are the countries with the lowest percentage of local governments involved in any kind of international activities as they all have less than 3%.

Along the same line, if we compare the total number of Latin American cities (16.240) versus the total number of local governments participating in networks or international associations, only seven hundred and seventy (770), equivalent to 4,7% of all the local governments in the Latin American continent are involved in some kind of international activity.

Table 14 consolidates and sums up the above information, adding data by country, region, number of municipalities and percentage of local governments involved in some kind of international activity versus the total number of local governments in the country.

## Table 14 / Total number of local governments in the Networks/ Total number per Country

| | Country | Region | Municip. in the country | Local gov. involved | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Uruguay | Southern Cone | 19 | 18 | 94.7% |
| 2 | Costa Rica | Central America & the Caribbean | 81 | 26 | 32.1% |
| 3 | Chile | Andean Region | 335 | 71 | 21.2% |
| 4 | Ecuador | Andean Region | 215 | 40 | 18.6% |
| 5 | Paraguay | Southern Cone | 208 | 26 | 12.5% |
| 6 | Nicaragua | Central America & the Caribbean | 152 | 19 | 12.5% |
| 7 | El Salvador | Central America & the Caribbean | 262 | 24 | 9.2% |
| 8 | Panama | Central America & the Caribbean | 74 | 6 | 8.1% |
| 9 | El Salvador | Southern Cone | 1.863 | 138 | 7.4% |
| 10 | Bolivia | Southern Cone | 324 | 22 | 6.8% |
| 11 | Colombia | Andean Region | 1.908 | 58 | 5.3% |
| 12 | Peru | Andean Region | 1.829 | 93 | 5.1% |
| 13 | Honduras | Central America & the Caribbean | 298 | 11 | 3.7% |
| 14 | Cuba | Central America & the Caribbean | 168 | 6 | 3.6% |
| 15 | Guatemala | Central America & the Caribbean | 331 | 10 | 3.0% |
| 16 | Mexico | Mexico | 2.451 | 63 | 2.6% |
| 17 | Brazil | Southern Cone | 5.562 | 123 | 2.2% |
| 18 | Venezuela | Andean Region | 970 | 16 | 1.6% |
| | **TOTAL** | | **16.240** | **770** | **4.7%** |

**Source:** Author's compilation.

Based on the above we can draw some conclusions on the cities' involvement in some kind of cooperation activities and international relations through networks and/or international associations of municipalities. The networks and international associa-

tions of municipalities considered for the purpose of this analysis are all thirteen in the URB-AL Programme, plus seven of global and/or regional scope (IAEC, UCLG, CIDEU, FLACMA, ICLEI, Mercocities and UCCI).

By crossing these data it is possible to identify 1.836 (one thousand three hundred and thirty-six) cases of local government involvement in city networks.[69]

Quantitatively, the Southern Cone represents 42% of all local governments participating in the networks; the Andean Region, 36%; the Caribbean, 13,2%; and Mexico, 8,18%. If we consider the participation of the cities and their respective countries within their regions, Argentina and Brazil together account for more than 80% in the Southern Cone. Peru, Chile and Colombia together, nearly 80% in the Andean Region. In Central America Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua have the largest number of cities involved in networks, totalling 66%.

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### Table 15 / Latin American local government involvement in Networks – by Region

| Item | Country | Number of Cities | % |
|------|---------|------------------|---|
| 1 | **Southern Cone** | | |
| 1.1 | Argentina | 138 | 17.92% |
| 1.2 | Brazil | 123 | 15.97% |
| 1.3 | Paraguay | 26 | 3.38% |
| 1.4 | Bolivia | 22 | 2.86% |
| 1.5 | Uruguay | 18 | 2.34% |
| *1.6* | *Sub-total* | *327* | *42.47%* |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2** | **Andean Region** | | |
| 2.1 | Peru | 93 | 12.08% |
| 2.2 | Chile | 71 | 9.22% |
| 2.3 | Colombia | 58 | 7.53% |
| 2.4 | Ecuador | 40 | 5.19% |
| 2.5 | Venezuela | 16 | 2.08% |
| *2.6* | *Sub-total* | *278* | *36.10%* |
| **3** | **Central America and the Caribbean** | | |
| 3.1 | Costa Rica | 26 | 3% |
| 3.2 | El Salvador | 24 | 3% |
| 3.3 | Nicaragua | 19 | 2% |
| 3.4 | Honduras | 11 | 1% |
| 3.5 | Guatemala | 10 | 1% |
| 3.6 | Cuba | 6 | 1% |
| 3.7 | Panama | 6 | 1% |
| *3.8* | *Subtotal* | *102* | *13.25%* |
| **4** | **Mexico** | | |
| *4.1* | *Mexico* | *63* | *8.18%* |
| | **TOTAL** | **770** | **100%** |

**Source**: Author's compilation

Ten out of twenty networks identified in the continent concentrate 1.364 participants, accounting for 75% of the activities developed by the cities. URB-AL Programme Network 9 stands out with 195, nearly 11% of all the Latin American municipalities involved in networks, followed by Network 10 with 160 members (9%), Mercocities with 154 (8%), and Network 12 and FLACMA with participation in the order of 7% each. At the opposite end, the remaining ten networks account for 25% of all the member-mu-

nicipalities. The networks with the smallest numbers of members are ICLEI and UCCI with less than 2% each.

As regards involvement by sub-region, the Southern Cone has 887 participants (48% of the total); the Andean Region, 625; Central America and the Caribbean, 199; and Mexico, 125.

### 4.2.2. Population profile of those municipalities participating in international networks in the continent

One hundred and twenty-five municipalities (16%) have less than 10 thousand inhabitants; three hundred and six (40%), between 10.001 and 100.000; two hundred and forty-eight (32%), between 100.001 and 500.000; and ninety-one (11%), more than 500.000 inhabitants. Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of towns (88%) have less than 500 thousand inhabitants. All of these data can be verified in Table 16 below.

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### Table 16 / Population profile of those municipalities participating in international networks in the continent

| Inhabitants | Southern Cone | Andean Region | Central America & Caribbean | Mexico | TOTAL | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Up to 10.000 | 41 | 60 | 8 | 16 | **125** | 16% |
| 10.001 to 100.000 | 134 | 109 | 53 | 10 | **306** | 40% |
| 100.001 to 500.000 | 113 | 83 | 33 | 19 | **248** | 32% |
| 500.000 to 1.000.000 | 20 | 12 | 6 | 10 | **48** | 6% |
| 1.000.001 to 5.000.000 | 17 | 13 | 2 | 7 | **39** | 5% |
| More than 5.000.001 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | **4** | 1% |
| TOTAL | **327** | **278** | **102** | **63** | **770** | 100% |

**Source**: Author's compilation

# 4

## Notes

**60** Starting from 2003, a number of additional tasks were introduced, including: 1) Participating in International Events; 2) Organising International Events; 3) Hosting Visits; 4) Forging bonds with communities of foreign origin; 5) Engaging in Award-Winning Public Policy experiences; 6) Participating in International Networks of Cities (Fronzaglia, 2005 and Municipality of Sao Paulo, 2004b).

**61** Based on a paper prepared by María do Carmo Meirelles T. Cruz, B.A. and M.A. in Business Administration, School of Business Administration, Getúlio Vargas Foundation, Prefeito Faria Lima Foundation adviser – Cepam. E-mail: mcarmo@cepam.sp.gov.br

**62** IBGE Foundation, 2000.

**63** Atlas of Human Development in Brazil, UNDP, data for the year 2000.

**64** We chose to identify the decade when the entities were originally created and began to work, rather than that when they were formally established.

**65** At the time there was just a delegation of the Ipirá Union in Pintadas. Later on, in 1986, the municipality organised its own union.

**66** Since 1999 it had promoted communication, conveyed ideas and broadcast information, yet it was closed by the police because it was not correctly registered with the National Telecommunications Agency (Anatel).

**67** 13 cities in the Prvince of Régio Emília.

**68** Italian Municipality

**69** While they are characterised as "networks of cities", some of them, such as the URB-AL Programme, admits sub-national entity participants (States, Provinces, Departments), typically in federal countries.

# 5. Outlook and conclusions

While the outlook for decentralised cooperation in Latin America can be considered  promising and favourable, there are reasons to be cautious about the time it may take for such favourable and promising elements to materialise.

1.836 cities are actively participating and spreading decentralised cooperation through networks and associations of cities throughout the region. 770 Latin American governments are involved in these activities. It should be born in mind, however, that  situations of institutional instability and outright collapse have been identified in almost every country in the continent at different points in time. Another important factor is that this research focused only on the international activities carried out by local governments, setting aside the international integration activities developed by other entities that play a significant role in the life of the cities, such as NGOs, social movements, universities, etc. Based on the data gathered in the course of this investigation, we can make **the following tentative forecast with regard to decentralised cooperation in the continent:**

**1.** Several networks of cities currently operate in the continent, accruing valuable experience in various areas of interest for local government. Thus, there is a sound instrumental basis for building a solid platform to widen and deepen decentralised cooperation in the region. Special emphasis should be placed on cities' protagonism, as well as on the exchange of successful experiences within the framework of networks and bilateral agreements (involving either town twinning or technical-financial cooperation), always

bearing in mind the need to devise and implement mechanisms to defend local governments' interests before national States and multilateral agencies.

**2.** On the basis of the data identified throughout the continent –and despite the lack of resources and the logical prioritisation of more urgent demands– it is possible <u>to hold a political debate on the need to build and develop an international relations and cooperation policy at the local level, in order to structure an agenda around four key areas </u>(detailed at the end of this chapter). The actions carried out in these four areas may help refute the simplistic claim that the only reason why Latin American cities cooperate is that they are interested in "receiving resources". In the vast majority of cases cities can actually make remarkable contributions in the course of these cooperation processes. It is true that the international relations activities developed by municipalities are primarily aimed at capturing resources to address the innumerable pressing needs in their territories, particularly, those arising from social exclusion. However, it is not correct to argue that this is the only important factor in the dynamics of the cities' international involvement. In fact, the actions referred to above represent a powerful political tool for their emergence on the global scene.

**3.** Based on the findings of the assessment of the current scenario, it is possible to assert that there is no entity/instance bringing local governments together and/or coordinating talks on issues of common interest for their own regions and others, with a view to reinforcing the actions mentioned above. Along the same line, we can further state that <u>current conditions are favourable for articulating some entities (whose origin and objectives may often differ), as a preliminary attempt to build a Latin American decentralised cooperation platform</u>. The initiatives currently underway in Central America (IDELCA, CONFEDELCA and FEMICA), the Southern

Cone (Mercocities), and those of the UCLG's agency for Latin America (FLACMA) can be articulated in this direction.

**4.** As discussed in other sections of this study, the question of financing poses a great challenge to the development of decentralised cooperation policies. As pointed out in the introduction of this research paper, the local government divisions responsible for implementing international policies have very few staff, suggesting that local or central governments devote scarce resources to this kind of activities. This assumption is confirmed by the fact that 770 out of 16.240 Latin American local governments (4,7%) are involved in some kind of international decentralised cooperation, in this particular case, through networks and associations of cities. Beyond any doubt, the lack of financing represents a major hindrance for the development of decentralised cooperation policies in the continent.

**5.** The experiences developed in several countries in the region suggest that a possible strategy for addressing budgetary constraints might be to create some kind of city/municipality entity for small and medium-sized towns, which, depending on the country, could take the form of an association, consortium, agency, etc., as a way to organise a team for the purpose of providing support and advice to different cities. This mechanism might enable them to benefit from decentralised cooperation with a small investment on their part.

**6.** In addition to the strategies referred to above, for those cities that have not engaged in international activities so far it is also necessary to gather and systematise data in the form of a "first steps" manual on how cities can organise and implement decentralised cooperation activities. Based on our findings, we have prepared a tentative small manual including, but not limited to, the information listed below70:

**a.** Conceptualisation of international relations and coop-eration.

**b.** Definition of international decentralised cooperation.

**c.** Possible benefits and obstacles involved in this kind of activities.

**d.** Infrastructure requirements for the development of such activities.

**e.** Description of the basic start-up infrastructure to be provided by the municipality in terms of human resources, facilities, equipment and support.

**f.** Overview of International Networks of Cities; URB-AL Programme Networks; direct/indirect technical/financial cooperation projects; town-twinning programmes.

**g.** List of cities, and education and research centres in their respective countries which can be contacted by local au-thorities for further details or confirmation of the benefits of international cooperation.

**7.** Those municipalities that have already engaged in these activities face a different kind of challenges. They need to <u>develop mecha-nisms and strategies for training</u> their staff in such subject areas as international cooperation, international relations, fund raising, international agreements, relations with international agencies and international agencies' operation.

**8.** According to our survey, several international bodies support the development of international cooperation activities, particularly

the World Bank through the programme *Cities Alliance*. However, Latin American cities –especially those playing a leading role in the continent– expect new modalities of international cooperation with more "city-friendly" support platforms will emerge, so that the cities already involved can continue their activities and new municipalities can also join in.

**9.** As pointed out throughout this paper, the URB-AL Programme has played a major role in boosting international decentralised co-operation in many cities in Latin America. According to the findings of the empirical research, the activities in all thirteen networks of the Programme account for 75% of all of those developed by Latin American cities within the framework of city networks. Conse-quently, the uncertainty as to whether the URB-AL Programme's third network will be launched or another programme of similar nature will replace it entails a huge loss for Latin American cities. This situation mainly affects the small and medium-sized mu-nicipalities that have recently engaged in international cooperation activities -or intend to do so in the near future.

**10.** The data gathered in the course of the empirical investigation further suggest that Latin American cities' global integration is pas-sive and reactive. What does this mean? In most cases, international cooperation operates inwards, in a manner known as "exogenous inducement", that is to say, the local government reacts to political motivations and external stimuli.71 Thus, as international and/or foreign decentralised cooperation programmes come to an end or slow down investments in a certain region, so does local govern-ments' international involvement. Just like in other public policy areas, "political will" is critical when it comes to building and implementing a sustainable international agenda in coordination with other political and social priorities of the municipality.

All too often, <u>Latin American cities' international policy is not consistent, nor does it have clear objectives</u>. Indeed, the "trial and error" method usually prevails over well-defined guidelines on the matter.

**11.** As regards the global integration of the medium-sized cities and, most importantly, the small towns, <u>international networks and multilateral agencies are primarily responsible for local governments' involvement throughout the continent</u>.

**12.** Cities' global integration, which had gained momentum over the past few years, tends to decrease dramatically, especially among those cities that are just beginning to develop activities in this direction, with the discontinuation of the URB-AL Programme or its replacement with another programme that fails to observe its priorities or anticipate and help overcome possible weaknesses. While the other international networks of cities operating in the continent are important, they have neither the scope and depth nor the ability to draw local government support. <u>Based on the information presented throughout this paper, the URB-AL Programme plays a critical role in most medium-sized and small Latin American towns' globalization</u>. In fact, 1.384 out of a total of 1.836 cities (75%) participate in one or more of the URB-AL Programme's networks.

**13.** Despite the paramount importance of the international networks of cities, we should point out the significant role of <u>bilateral agreements</u> in encouraging and defining local governments' international actions in Latin America.72

**14.** In systematising the data collected in the course of the empirical investigation, we were able to discuss together the concepts of <u>"local governments' international relations"</u> and <u>"international decentralised cooperation"</u>.

**15.** The <u>difficulties</u> encountered, which obviously hinder international activities, are associated with the poor infrastructure, the lack of expertise and  budgetary constraints.

As regards <u>international decentralised cooperation hindrances</u>, not only *budgetary constraints*, but also *political matters* count. In most cases, while it is true that resources are scarce, local governments refuse to face the political debate required to engage in this kind of activities as they believe such activities will not bring returns in the short run. Local governments often fail to address international cooperation issues with executive and legislative power representatives, and with the community as a whole. Developing an *international relations policy based at the local level* is not always viewed favourably by various sectors of society prone to reluctance and preconceptions.

**16.** <u>No structured mechanisms for training the professional staff involved in international relations and decentralised cooperation activities were identified</u>.

**17.** Nor is it easy to identify which key investments local authorities are willing to make in order to develop international policies and decentralised cooperation over the next years. While it is possible to diagnose that <u>the resources municipalities devote to this kind of activity are by no means sufficient, it is difficult to identify future investments in this sector</u>.

**18.** <u>The role played by other actors in international decentralised cooperation</u> is important indeed. Over the past years national governments and international agencies have become increasingly interested in decentralised cooperation. Thus, they have implemented decentralised cooperation support or coordination programmes. The World Bank has provided support through the *Cities Alliance.*  Other United Nations bodies worth mentioning include UMP, UNAIDS (The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), Habitat,

UNPF. Because these bodies and some central governments are focusing more and more on international decentralised cooperation, it is necessary to articulate and coordinate the activities developed by the different actors, so as to clearly define the part each of them plays in cities' globalization, and to what extent they recognise the role of local entities on the global scene.

## Focal points for the Latin American local governments' agenda

On the basis of the data gathered and analysed in the course of this study, it is possible to structure a political agenda for the local governments in Latin America around the following focal points:

**a. First:** Design local development policies to fight poverty and promote social inclusion in line with human development, within the framework of the UN Millennium Development Goals. Such policies should aim to:

> **i.** Institutionalise political, administrative and financial decentralisation processes;
>
> **ii.** Reinforce participatory democracy, seeking to ensure society's involvement and control over the government's actions; and
>
> **iii.** Foster social cohesion actions that may help fight poverty, promote social inclusion/integration and prevent discrimination on racial and gender grounds.

**b. Second:** Establish and consolidate relations, identities and actions, taking advantage of those features Latin American and European cities have in common in the political, economic, social and cultural areas.73

**c. Third:** Deepen political cooperation by:

     **i.** Jointly implementing mechanisms to reconstruct democracy and eliminate any traces of authoritarian regimes;

     **ii.** Helping deal with natural disasters and/or devastating political, military and social events; and

     **iii.** Providing political support to those decisions legitimately adopted by the population of sovereign States, which may be jeopardised by countless mechanisms inherent to globalization.

**d. Fourth:** Reinforce cooperation between networks of cities. Capitalise experience, elicit action and facilitate access to information by the less affluent cities, so as to define a sound international cooperation policy.

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## Notes

**70** In 2007 the EU-LA Observatory on Decentralised Cooperation published the first volume of "Guidelines For Local Governments' Transnational Strategies and European Union-Latin America Decentralised Co-Operation", entitiled *"Practical Manual for Globalising the City"*, in line with the requirements described above.

**71** See "Differentiation in the processes inducing globalization in Latin American cities".

**72** See the chapter on conceptualisation, particularly some cases of bilateral agreements in the continent.

**73** While at first sight this focus point may suggest Latin American cities are more likely to establish relations with their European counterparts –especially considering the cooperation modality known as "town twinning"– it is also possible to forge bonds between cities in different regions of the continent, as well as between former Spanish and Portuguese colonies in Latin America.

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