



urb-al III  
Orientation and Coordination Office - OCO

# Final report: Scope and lessons of the URB-AL III Programme

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## Introduction

After over four years of implementing the URB-AL III Programme, it is a pleasure to present this “**Final report: Scope and lessons of the URB-AL III Programme**”. In accordance with the logic, approach and objectives of the “**First report: Construction and advancement of the URB-AL III Programme**”, this publication is intended to provide a reflection on the scope of the Programme and to share lessons learned and challenges that help strengthen EU-Latin America decentralised cooperation. It is not therefore an assessment of implementation of activities and of the scope of results and objectives, but rather seeks to offer an overview of the Programme’s significance, its formation by the Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO), and the achievements of the projects, evaluation thereof and lessons learned.

While the first report covered the period from May 2009 to September 2011, this publication now deals with all the time URB-AL III has been operative. Consideration must be given to the particular aspects entailed in the search for short-term impacts in local public policies (LPP) in long-term processes. The document identifies elements that are now thought perhaps to have helped to enhance social cohesion in Latin America through LPP. As these are dynamic processes that depend not only on the specific intervention involved in the projects, they should, however, be considered trends.

In keeping with the pace of the Programme, greater focus is placed on local social cohesion, as the first period of implementation was primarily addressed to public policies. We are now therefore taking a fresh look at those elements that nearly two years ago were defined as advances, and observing how they have developed, while addressing more specific aspects of social cohesion that we were previously unable to present.

The structure of the report follows the same logic as that of the previous publication and is divided into five chapters: the first deals with the specifics and innovations of this third phase, the second tackles those elements that help build the Programme, the third focuses on encouraging and strengthening local public policies, the fourth explores the Programme’s contribution to social cohesion, and the final chapter reflects on the lessons learned, contributions and challenges of URB-AL III.

In terms of methodology, the report is based on an inductive approach that has shaped general arguments founded on observations and information collected on activities pursued within the Programme, both by the 20 projects and by the OCO. In addition to the reading of materials, nearly 100 interviews have been run with agents involved in the Programme, particularly representatives of the projects. It has thus been possible to produce a report that systematically includes the opinion and evaluation of

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participating agents and uses practical examples to illustrate achievements and outcomes.

In short, this report, which was completed in May 2013, is not at all intended to be conclusive. We therefore hope that the advances and lessons learned through URB-AL III continue to develop through the sustainability measures implemented and the dynamics established within many sub-national governments that took part in this third phase.



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## 1. Phase Three of the URB-AL Programme

URB-AL is a European Commission (EC) programme of decentralised cooperation between European and Latin American sub-national authorities that responds to political priorities and common interests of both regions. In European-Latin American decentralised cooperation, the URB-AL Programme is not simply another programme. Since it began, it has been a true pioneer in this field. It has decisively encouraged the expansion of decentralised cooperation in the two regions, has helped bring about significant innovation, both in practices and in rhetoric, and also generated and disseminated best practices in urban public policies.

The third phase of URB-AL has been structured on the basis of some of the hallmarks developed in the first and second phases of the Programme. The third phase therefore features significant *continuity* with regard to:

1. a commitment to enhancing the capacities, performance and results of local governments participating in significant public agenda matters. It is therefore still a Programme that seeks to promote the importance and the prevalent role of local government as a subject of public policies and as an agent capable of creating public value and of (co-) generating and accompanying initiatives for change addressed to improving the quality of governance;
2. a commitment to implementing initiatives complementary to existing local policies that support and enhance these and, therefore, represent and bring added value;
3. encouraging participating governments to incorporate and legitimise new issues on their agendas of public action;
4. seeking positive impacts in formulating and implementing local public policies (LPP) in the long term;
5. fostering the adoption of innovative solutions (and/or enhancing the courses of action in progress) for important issues on the regional public agenda. These solutions are generated through exchange, mutual learning and partnership. The Programme therefore remains a key instrument for disseminating and encouraging innovative approaches to policy and public management;
6. supporting initiatives that, regardless of the specific results in addressing the public problem they seek to resolve, have a direct impact on the long-term formulation and implementation of LPP;
7. direct involvement of participants in the formulation, implementation and financing of projects in order to ensure greater appropriation;

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8. institutional support to help local communities achieve sustainable results;
9. encouragement for the construction (and consolidation) of relations and networks among European and Latin American sub-national governments;
10. encouragement for the expansion and consolidation of international relations and the projection overseas of local participating communities. It therefore pledges to consolidate EU-LA public decentralised cooperation as a mode of international relations;
11. opening a door for the uptake of key resources (not necessarily material) in order to improve the quality of local public responses to citizens' problems and concerns;
12. commitment to the creation of value for Latin American and European Programme participants.<sup>1</sup> In the case of URB-AL III, the "Guidelines for Grant Applicants" of the URB-AL III Programme (page 5) clearly state that the EC aims to co-finance initiatives that are able to generate benefits (in terms of methodologies and innovative approaches to public policies) for both Europeans and Latin Americans;
13. strategic and methodological commitment to work in European-
- Latin American partnerships in order to meet the Programme's objectives;
14. commitment to thematic continuity with regard to previous phases in terms of the public policies chosen for joint work.<sup>2</sup> This commitment, in turn, has yielded a series of consequences in terms of continuity: continuity of key agents (in particular with the leaders of networks in the previous phases); numerical continuity in leadership by European local governments and some continuity in the composition of the European-Latin American partnerships;
15. laboratory for generating and testing hypotheses on public decentralised cooperation;
16. conviction regarding the existence of, and the need to support, interesting experiences of local public policies in Latin America that could become benchmarks both
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- 2 Continuity is clear in the following issues:
- The city as a promoter of economic development;
  - Urban social policies;
  - Urban environment;
  - Management and control of urban planning;
  - Control of urban mobility;
  - Local financing and participatory budgeting;
  - Combating urban poverty;
  - Placement of women on local decision-making bodies;
  - Citizen security in the city.

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<sup>1</sup> See point 5 on this issue.

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for other territories in the region and for European territories.

Despite the importance of continuity, the third phase of the URB-AL Programme has also been accompanied by a series of significant *innovations*:

1. URB-AL III not only operates in accordance with the priorities of European Union (EU) to Latin America cooperation (as in previous phases), but also works exclusively on a priority matter of the EU-Latin America bi-regional policy agenda and of respective regional agendas: social cohesion. To do so, through this Programme, the EC clearly emphasises:
  - the importance it attaches to local governments in the process of generating social cohesion;
  - the importance, and strategic commitment to added value, of decentralised cooperation and of the mode of work in European-Latin American sub-national partnerships to meet the *bi-regionally established* social cohesion objectives;
2. The objectives pursued by the Programme are substantively different from those addressed in the previous phases.<sup>3</sup> The overall

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<sup>3</sup> In PHASE I, the general objective was to “develop direct and lasting links among European and Latin American local groups through circulation, acquisition and implementation of ‘best practices’ in the area of the urban and

objective of the third phase is to “contribute to increasing the degree of social and territorial cohesion within local and regional entities in Latin America”. Its specific purpose, meanwhile, is “to consolidate or promote, in a limited number of cities and territories of Latin America and on the basis of partnerships and exchange of experiences, social cohesion processes and policies that may become reference models

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local policies”. The specific objectives were:

- “Support for specific measures for the orderly development of cities and local communities
- Creation of theme-based networks of cities or local communities from both regions
- Exchange of experts
- Establishment of common projects.”

In PHASE II, the general objective was to “develop DIRECT AND LASTING LINKS among European and Latin American local groups through circulation, acquisition and implementation of ‘best practices’ in the area of the urban and local policies.” The specific objectives were:

- “To enhance the capacity of local communities to act in the social, economic and cultural development of urban zones, including the implementation of community facilities;
- To develop the structural capabilities of local authorities, particularly through the training of human resources;
- To encourage partnership among local communities and representatives of civil society;
- To develop the capacity for action of small and medium-sized cities (SMSC) in the internationalisation of their relations;
- To promote European and Latin American ‘best practices’ for local development with consideration for specific local characteristics.”

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capable of generating debates, and of indicating possible solutions to the sub-national governments of Latin America that wish to stimulate social cohesion dynamics”;

3. creation of a Programme coordination and orientation body. The Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO) is one of the authorities responsible for shaping and guiding the Programme, and for undertaking a series of cross-cutting activities and providing services and support for Lot 1 projects.<sup>4</sup> It is intended to provide “an articulated group of activities that contribute to creating the favourable conditions for the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the Programme by interacting with Lot 1 Actions”;<sup>5</sup>
4. abandoning the idea of theme-based networking. Instead, the OCO undertakes to train and foster networks among EU and Latin American sub-national governments committed to local and regional social and territorial cohesion policies;
5. it seeks to concentrate tangible and intangible investments in Latin

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animation of networks and dissemination of results that will contribute to the Programme building from the different actions of Lot 1 will be funded under Lot 2”. This phrase clearly states that the Programme is built on what Lot 1 does. It is undoubtedly an interpretation of minimum requirements, consistent with the text on pages 7 and 15: “Lot 2- Studies, co-ordination and technical support, training and animation of networks, dissemination of results.” Page 15-6 states: “In order to facilitate this process an entity must take over the organisation of the programme, more concretely: on the one hand external support and co-ordination of Lot 1 activities, and on the other carrying out activities such as studies, co-ordination and technical support, training and animation of networks, dissemination of results”. Page 16 states “in order to be eligible under Lot 2 proposals will have to present an articulated group of activities that contribute to creating the favourable conditions for the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the Programme by interacting with Lot 1 Actions”. “Measures addressed to favour synergies, the networking of the projects and the actors of Lot 1, the identification of replicable models, joint reflection on the progress and the circulation of the results of the projects and the programme. Technical assistance for those projects that require it.”

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- 4 Internally, the Programme is structured into two lots. Lot 1 finances 20 projects that undertake measures at a local level in America and in up to 5 sectors of intervention, identified with the different dimensions of social cohesion (productive-occupational, institutional, territorial, civic and social). These sectors of intervention are very closely associated with the areas in which the Programme can improve levels of social cohesion sub-nationally in Latin America. Lot 2 meanwhile finances the Programme’s coordination and orientation body.
  - 5 The URB-AL III “Guidelines for Grant Applicants” features several descriptions of what the European Commission expects from the Programme’s coordination and orientation body. Page 6 states: “Proposal to provide co-ordination, technical support, training and



America:<sup>6</sup> “specific activities [which must amount to at least 80% of the total budget of a project] can be carried out only in the countries of Latin America” (URB-AL III Programme “Guidelines for Grant Applicants”, page 14). This restricts the sense of association among European and Latin American sub-national governments: stakeholders are not called to collaborate in common policy objectives on a basis of equal responsibility, but rather to cooperate with one another in accordance with the development of social cohesion processes and policies of Latin American sub-national governments. European sub-national governments that are partners or coordinators of projects have therefore assumed what could be defined as a more traditional role. Three possible functions, in particular, have emerged: project leaders (12 cases out of 20), conveyors of experiences or best practices for moments of exchange;<sup>7</sup>

6. unlike the experiences of URB-AL I and II, in the third phase only a

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6 This change, a product of the EU’s current cooperation legislation, influences the motives of European partners for taking part in the Programme.

7 The previous phases of the URB-AL Programme provided great impetus to a way of setting about development cooperation that extends beyond an aid-oriented approach and that incorporates the idea of mutual benefit and horizontality in partnership and focuses on seeking joint solutions to common problems.

limited number of cities and territories in Europe and Latin America (those that form the partnerships selected in 2008)<sup>8</sup> have been accepted as participants in the Programme (i.e. as beneficiaries of funding);

7. a reduction in the mobilisation of territories compared to previous phases;<sup>9</sup>
8. URB-AL III is intended to provide support for the creation and/or consolidation of some references and some benchmark Latin American local public social cohesion policies with a view to prompting fresh debate on public policies and innovative solutions to common problems in the region;
9. in the third phase of the Programme, there has been only one official announcement, which was made prior to the start of the Programme. The Programme started at the same time for all;

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8 It has been assumed since the Programme was designed that the mobilisation capacity of local institutions in the EU and Latin America that benefit from the programme will be much lower than in previous phases.

9 This can be interpreted in two ways. On one hand, it refers to the number of territories involved. In this regard, in the third phase, there are substantively fewer Programme partner territories than in previous phases, particularly the second. It also refers to the Programme’s capacity for political mobilisation. The participation component of technical personnel in URB-AL III activities is significant.

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10. in the third phase of the Programme, an attempt has been made to eliminate certain geographical biases that characterised earlier phases. Participation in the Programme of sub-national authorities from Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru was therefore encouraged. For Latin American agents the current phase is therefore more geographically balanced than the previous phases;
  11. by far most European agents meanwhile are Italians or Spanish; there has been a significant increase in the relative presence of Italian agents and a decrease in the relative significance of Spanish local presence;
  12. longer-lasting projects are being financed;
  13. changes in the profile of participating institutions and territories both at EU and Latin American level. At EU level, there has been a significant decrease in public administrations of territories with populations of 10,000 to 50,000 (17.51% in URB-AL I and II and 2.94% in URB-AL III), a significant reduction in public administrations of territories with populations of 100,000 to 250,000 (17.97% in URB-AL I and II and 8.82% in URB-AL III), a slight decrease in public administrations of territories with populations of 500,000 to 750,000 (5.07% in URB-AL I and II and 2.94% in URB-AL III), an increase in the number of groups of participating local authorities (4.15% in URB-AL I and II and 8.82% in URB-AL III), a significant increase in regional public administrations (5.53% in URB-AL I and II and 26.47% in URB-AL III). In the EU, therefore, the capacity to mobilise small territories has decreased significantly while the capacity to mobilise intermediate authorities has increased considerably. In Latin America, there has been a decrease in public administrations of territories with populations of 10,000 to 50,000 (19.43% in URB-AL I and II and 10.13% in URB-AL III), a significant reduction in public administrations of territories with populations of 100,000 to 250,000 (20.49% in URB-AL I and II and 8.86% in URB-AL III), a decrease in public administrations of territories with populations of 250,000 to 500,000 (14.84% in URB-AL I and II and 6.33% in URB-AL III), a significant increase in groups of sub-national authorities (1.77% in URB-AL I and II and 11.39% in URB-AL III), an increase in regional public administrations (3.53% in URB-AL I and II and 17.72% in URB-AL III), and an increase in provincial public administrations (0.71% in URB-AL I and II and 5.06% in URB-AL III). In Latin America, therefore, this phase of the Programme has seen an important change in the profile of several of the participants mobilised by the Programme. The two most visible are the significant

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increase in the participation of intermediate agents (as in the EU) and the significant reduction in territories with a population from 100,000 to 250,000. As a result of these developments, one of the things being witnessed is a certain discontinuity in the eminently local nature of the Programme that characterised the previous phases;

14. increase in the presence of the semi-urban and rural components in participation in projects financed by the Programme (compared to the previous phases). While in URB-AL II 117 out of 136 participants were urban-type municipalities (86%), in URB-AL III of the 74 territories intervened in Latin America, only 34 are “pure” urban territories (46%). The remaining participant territories include 9 rural areas (12%), 12 mixed territories (16%) and a further 20 territories that are hard to categorise as they are composed of small cities that have an urban function in a rural area, and often belong to associations of municipalities a significant number of which are rural. This gives rise to some discontinuity in the eminently urban nature of the Programme compared to the previous phases;
15. the greater territorial diversity in the third phase (small territories vs. larger territories, urban problems vs. rural or semi-urban problems) requires observation of the achievements within the Programme to establish

their real meaning for the different agents and to place them within the context of the nature and scale of the challenges faced by each territory. There may, for example, have been large achievements for small territories and administrations that might not be so far-reaching for larger territories and administrations. Some issues solved by one type of territory may yet have to be faced by another, etc. In short, it is a Programme in which contextual variables assume a significant role when analysing and assessing achievements;

16. an increase in the number of state capitals participating in the third phase of the Programme compared to the previous phases (four: Bogotá, La Paz, Montevideo and Quito).

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The URB-AL III “Guidelines for Grant Applicants” did not define the results expected from the Programme.<sup>10</sup> Although it neither established the Programme’s Framework of Logic nor foresaw the need for a baseline for each public policy and social cohesion project with which to help measure the Programme’s success, it did establish a series of elements necessary for it to succeed:

- *first*, participants in the Programme (i.e. the projects) should have a global view of the territory intervened while the measures undertaken should

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10 At the Programme’s introductory seminar in Brussels in February 2009, the EC presented a PPT entitled “URB-AL Programme of co-operation for urban development in Latin America and Europe.” At this presentation, the following envisaged results were mentioned:

*Result 1.* Strengthening of relations and exchange of experiences regarding social cohesion policies among a significant number of EU and Latin American cities and territories,

*Result 2.* Some LA governments, with the participation of civil society, have consolidated processes and policies that generate greater social cohesion and that have become benchmarks for other realities,

*Result 3.* Creation of networks of cities and local institutions of the EU and Latin America that share experiences and seek local and regional solutions to social cohesion problems,

*Result 4.* Establishment of conditions that allow for dissemination of the concept and of the policies of social cohesion in LA (and which provide for an optimal start-up of a phase IV).”

express a vision and a global strategy for improving social cohesion in each territory;<sup>11</sup>

- *second*, projects should only be part of the repertoire of initiatives of the public policies of a territory that are intended (implicitly or explicitly) to generate greater social cohesion. The Programme’s starting hypothesis is therefore that measures should be integrated in all public initiatives that favour the social cohesion of a territorial government and must both generate and add public value as well as help improve and enhance the quality and achievements of the public policies in the territories intervened. Given the emphasis adopted, the processes and territorial policies of social cohesion to which projects ought to make significant contributions are crucial both from an analytical and an operational perspective;
- *third*, all agents involved in the programme (sub-national governments of the EU and of Latin America) should acknowledge that their action, albeit autonomous, is not an end in itself, but only an essential tool with which to achieve the Programme’s ultimate goal of social cohesion;

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11 The EC acknowledged at the Programme’s introductory seminar that the projects chosen do not meet the established criteria. According to the evaluators, “*If the evaluators stuck to restricted criteria perhaps no proposal would be recommended for approval.*”

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- *fourth*, each participant (Lot 1 and Lot 2) should perform the measures it proposed in order to achieve its specific objectives and ensure that these measures are consistent with the Programme objectives;
  - *fifth*, the exchange of experiences among Programme participants should be encouraged;
  - *sixth*, there should be an attitude of cooperation among all the Programme agents.

## 1.1 Main impacts of the URB-AL III Programme (consolidated figures for 20 projects)

	Cumulative figure
Direct and semi-direct beneficiaries	1,791,949
Indirect beneficiaries (population of the territories intervened)	26,090,682
Territories intervened in Latin America	74
Municipalities with impact	500
Agents that have participated in the Europe and Latin America Programme	160
Public policies promoted or strengthened	131
Persons trained	23,446
Jobs created	1,613
Work on construction, restoration and recovery of sites	389

OCO / URB-AL III (OCO consolidated figures)

	Cumulative figure
<b>Number of participants in all OCO events</b>	<b>2,875</b>
Documents and declarations generated:	<b>64</b>
Methodological guides	7
Studies	7
Publications	3
Papers	26
Documents and reports	16
Magazines	5
<b>People trained by the OCO:</b>	<b>634</b>
Training measures	550
Local Leadership Platform	84
<b>Hours of training</b>	<b>902</b>
<b>Missions in projects:</b>	<b>192</b>
Technical assistance	122
Methodological missions	70
<b>Meetings:</b>	<b>28</b>
Regional Dialogues	6
URBsociAL	3
Capitalisation meetings	10
Seminars (Presentation, launch and SC)	3
Local Leadership Platform	6
<b>Media visibility and impact (data on 27/5/2013)</b>	
Videos produced by the OCO	53
URBsociAL gazettes	12
Magazines published	5
News in media and on portals	291
Visits to videos (youtube channel)	17,009
Visits to website (from 1/1/2011)	17,825

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### Collection of Studies (pdf to download)

- Climate change and social cohesion. [ES / EN](#)
- Local financing and taxation in Latin America. [ES / EN](#)
- Citizen security and social cohesion in Latin America. [ES / EN](#)
- Towards an integrated model of local economic development and social cohesion. [ES / EN](#)
- Identity and identities: potentialities for social and territorial cohesion. [ES / EN](#)
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- Evaluation of public decentralised cooperation initiatives. [ES / EN](#)
- Communicating *about/for* development results in public cooperation initiatives. [ES / EN](#)
- City strategies and local social cohesion. [ES / EN](#)
- How can local institutions cooperate with each other? From specific projects to strengthening local public policies. [ES / EN](#)
- Identifying the contributions of local public policies to social cohesion. [ES / EN](#) (in progress)



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## **1.2.- Main sectors of intervention and public policies reinforced and/or promoted by the 20 URB-AL III projects**

thus contemplate activities that can be classified in more than one dimension, as shown in the following table.

According to the URB-AL III Programme “Guidelines for Grant Applicants”, the specific objective of the Programme is to *“consolidate or promote, in a limited number of cities and territories of Latin America and on the basis of partnerships and exchange of experiences, social cohesion processes and policies that may become reference models capable of generating debates, and of indicating possible solutions to the sub-national governments of Latin America that wish to stimulate social cohesion dynamics”*.

The EC opted not to define what was understood by social cohesion by considering that “they are processes of an integral nature”. This logic prompted the establishment of five areas of intervention that identify the different dimensions of social cohesion for each of which it proposed an indicative and non-exhaustive list of priority issues.

The 20 projects of Lot 1 should therefore respond to policies and measures that fit within the following five dimensions: productive and occupational, social, territorial, civic and institutional. Far from seeking to pigeonhole projects in a single dimension, the EC approved multidimensional measures that would take in the comprehensive nature of social cohesion. The 20 projects and 74 direct interventions in Latin America

Dimensions in which projects are classified through the public policies they support or generate					
PROJECT	Productive	Social	Territorial	Civic	Institutional
Melgodepro (Alcorcón)	X	X		X	X
Institutional Innovation (Santa Fe)			X	X	X
RESSOC (Barcelona Metropolitan Area)	X	X		X	X
La basura sirve ('Rubbish is Useful', Arezzo)	X	X		X	X
Urban Conurbations in Protected Areas (Borba)	X	X	X		X
EU-LA-WIN (Emilia Romagna)	X	X	X	X	X
Tourist Borders (Frosinone)	X	X	X		X
UNE (Irún)	X		X	X	X
IDEAL (Michoacán)		X	X	X	X
Habitar Goes ('Living in Goes', Montevideo)		X	X	X	X
Prevention of Violence in Marginal Urban Areas (Pernambuco)		X		X	X
International Line (Ponta Porã)	X	X	X	X	X
emiDel (L'Hospitalet)	X	X			X
Comprehensive Land Management (Puerto Cortés)			X	X	X
Regional Integration of Border Municipalities (Lempa River)		X	X	X	X
PACEF (Sicily)	X	X		X	X
COCAP (Veneto)	X	X	X		X
INTEGRATION (Stuttgart)		X	X		X
Urban and Territorial Participatory Management (Tuscany)		X	X	X	X
Gente diversa, gente equivalente ('Diverse people, equal people', Santa Tecla)		X		X	X

\*Only the main dimensions of the projects have been marked as many of them have an impact on them all.



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## 2. Programme building: what generates Programme? How? What Programme is generated?

### 2.1 Creation of a common language to refer to local social cohesion

As explained in the previous chapter, one of the innovations of this third phase of URB-AL has been that for the first time EU priorities towards Latin America have been adhered to and focus has been exclusively on a priority matter of the bi-regional agenda: local social cohesion. This was a major challenge because the term was fairly new to the Latin American region. The EC itself in the “Guidelines for Grant Applicants” avoided narrowing the terminology down to a rigid definition and opted to interpret it as a “multidimensional” target to be achieved through an “integrated policy-mix of sectoral policies”. It was not, in other words, a specific definition but rather a dynamic and integrating notion, which featured five dimensions that brought together those issues considered by the European Commission to help generate social cohesion processes (productive, civic, social, institutional and territorial).

It was determined from the start that **projects could only contribute to social cohesion through impact in local public policies**. A decision was therefore taken to analyse, describe and disseminate both concepts: social cohesion, and local public policies in order to generate a joint conceptual umbrella among all participants and to streamline common work. The following section deals with public policies, and focuses exclusively

on the creation of a common language to refer to local social cohesion.

The first step was to draw up a conceptual **reference document** that analysed the five dimensions. The document provided the basis for joint reflection among experts and the OCO addressed to achieving a more operational and practical definition. This process identified **five components** intended to increase the degree of social cohesion (equal opportunities and inclusion, participation, legitimacy, belonging and the recognition of others) and their respective indicators with which to measure their progress. The result of this work was the creation of an **innovative methodological tool** for flexible and pedagogical identification of the contributions to territories of social cohesion through the implementation of public policies. This is why throughout the Programme social cohesion was approached from a dimensions and components approach. Implementation in the territories of this tool was one of the aspects that contributed most to generating a common language. As indicated by the Italian coordinators (Tuscany) of the project “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management”: *“the partners have been able to share tools and methodology with one another and with other projects and thus generate new spaces for interconnection. The project has also helped to clarify the idea of social cohesion by providing a new political outlook that has helped to further the institutional commitment of all partners”*.

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Further measures were nonetheless taken and these prompted a change from different outlooks to a shared vision, which ran across the universe of the project and interacted with other territories to articulate a collective language and outlook. The organisation of events such as URBsociAL, the Euro-Latin American Dialogues on Social Cohesion and Local Public Policies, Regional Dialogues and capitalisation meetings, training activities and the production, publication and dissemination of studies and methodological tools are just some examples of the cross-cutting actions that helped yield a single language and generate a sense of belonging to the URB-AL III community. Several of the people interviewed for this report have therefore expressed their opinions. According to the technical coordinators (Ponta Porã, Brazil) of the project “International Line: Union of Two Peoples”: *“URB-AL III has reinforced the project and extended it far beyond the local authorities to instil local policies with what until now have just been new words such as social cohesion. Exchanges with other local policies and learning about the experiences of other areas have been basic for adopting the concepts and the added strength of the project itself in the area”*.

The training offered by the OCO was also an exceptional tool and educational materials used by all participants yielded debate and led to agreement on ways of understanding contents of the course that referred to public policies. Of special

note was the thematic course on social cohesion, which allowed for specific exploration of terminology. According to participants on the “Diverse People, Equal People” project, coordinated by the Mayor’s Office of Santa Tecla (El Salvador), training *“enabled us to undertake an internal review of how we influence social cohesion through the public policies we are implementing in the municipality. We sometimes implement processes without being aware of how we are contributing to social cohesion”*.

The concept of social cohesion not only gave rise to debate in local or regional governments in some areas of Latin America, but in some cases was also discussed and accepted by the public. According to the coordinator of the “Institutional Innovation” project of the Government of the Province of Santa Fe (Argentina): *“Before URB-AL III there were no references to social cohesion and thereafter there was internal debate on social cohesion and the concept appeared in dialogues with the citizenry because the concept was also being conveyed publicly through presentations and in seminars”*.

While it is important to create common language with which to build joint strategies in a universe of territories associated by the URB-AL III Programme, it is important to note that this path has prompted real appropriation of the concept by many sub-state governments in the region, which now consider it important and are willing to continue

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advancing towards this goal once external assistance has ended. The coordinator of the “UNE” project in Santa Rosa de Copán (Honduras) therefore stated: “*URB-AL III has hit the nail on the head in focusing on social cohesion, as the construction of institutional capacities, of legislation and of citizenry is essential for our Central American realities*”.

Four years later, therefore, the terminology of social cohesion has permeated many Latin American regions and it is seen as a necessary process with which to achieve sustainable and equitable development. This was one of the conclusions resulting from the debate on the present and the future of EU-AL decentralised cooperation, held at the last URBsocial in Bogotá in October 2012.<sup>12</sup>

## 2.2 Creation of a shared and open outlook on local public social cohesion policies

As mentioned in the previous section, shortly after the OCO started providing technical assistance to the projects, it was observed that interventions were

only contributing to social cohesion through their impact in the LPPs that were supported by the projects. We have already observed how progress was made towards a joint and operational definition of social cohesion; we shall now analyse how the path to generating a shared and open outlook on local public policies appeared.

This involved a process conducted among experts and OCO (the same process as for social cohesion), which yielded the creation of a two-part **innovative methodological tool**: *identification of the contribution of projects to local public policies* (step 1) *and the contribution of these policies to social cohesion* (step 2). The aim was to accompany the projects in a self-evaluation test in order to yield reflection on progress achieved from the perspective of projects’ contribution to local public policies.

From the end of the year 2010 until the end of the Programme, 74% of URB-AL III territories received OCO technical assistance and were accompanied in implementing the tool. To streamline the process, three seminars were also organised in Rosario (Argentina), Florence (Italy) and San José (Costa Rica) in 2010 with a view to exploring conceptually and to further understanding of methodology.

This practice contributed decisively to the creation of a shared and open outlook on public social cohesion policies. The OCO furthermore conducted training in general public policy projects

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12 The conclusions of the debate workshop on the present and future of European-Latin American decentralised cooperation can be consulted at <http://www.urbal3.eu/uploads/urbsocialdocumentos/AportesURBALfuturoCD.pdf>

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(formulation, implementation, evaluation and sustainability thereof) and single-theme sessions on issues in which many of the territories were working (environment, gender, local economic development and citizen participation). As in the process of incorporating a shared outlook on social cohesion, the meetings and debates prompted by the OCO also made a decisive contribution to sharing, learning and discussing local public policies in Latin America.

By way of an example, the coordinator from L'Hospitalet (Barcelona, Spain) of the "emiDel - Local Development and Emigration in Latin America" project stated: *"All the activities promoted by the OCO have helped us to develop the talking points for our partners and place greater emphasis on the need for changes in how to approach public policy and in the components it should have. They have also helped create awareness that public policies that help strengthen social cohesion should be encouraged at a local level"*.

This development gave rise to one of the most innovative and important results of the URB-AL III: the change from "project" to "public policy". Indeed, throughout the programme 131 public policies have been promoted or reinforced through interventions in 74 territories.

The process has also opted for a new approach to the LPP more in line with new trends in multi-stakeholder governance and with the territorial

**approach of development** and further removed from former pyramid-shaped forms of control. Many agents began to conduct public action based on dialogue among different levels of government (multilevel and complementary), among different departments of the same administration (cross-department and integrated) and with different agents in the territory.

This new outlook meant that for the first time several projects began to work on a coordinated basis on different sectoral policies. For example, the "PACEF – Covenant on Capacity-building for Female Employment" project did so on gender and employment policies and the "RESSOC – Social Entrepreneurship and Eco-management of Urban Waste" project on the environment and employment. Another emblematic case was the "Urban and Territorial Participatory Management" project, which involved multidisciplinary teams of urban experts and professionals of the social sector from most of its territories. According to the coordinator of this project: *"there has been a change of mentality in all territories as far as multidisciplinary work is concerned, both with regard to the team structure and to the broader, more comprehensive public policy approach"*.

The citizen participation mechanisms promoted by the vast majority of the territories, the **creation of public-private partnerships**, intersectoral work meetings, **multilevel coordination areas** and the signing of border agreements

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are included within this approach. The next chapter will feature a detailed exploration of the tangible changes and advances in different projects and provide illustrative examples and reflections. It is nonetheless important at this point to recover some reflections from the projects themselves regarding the change in attitude towards local public policies.

Of note is the view of the coordinator of the project “Prevention of Violence in Marginal Urban Areas” in the state of Pernambuco (Brazil). In this territory, the citizen security policy had previously been based on a repressive approach. Cooperation collaboration prompted a shift toward prevention, with consideration for security as a human right or, in other words, a change from a paradigm of coercion to a paradigm of cohesion. According to its technical coordinator *“the project has enhanced perspectives on citizen security and as a result the Secretariat for Defence, which implements the ‘Pact for Life’ policy, has in practice achieved greater coordination with other secretariats such as those of Human Rights, Health and Education, thus showing a greater understanding of the phenomenon of security in which prevention is an essential element”*.

### **2.3 Generation of a common European-Latin American policy agenda to favour social cohesion**

Since the 1999 Rio de Janeiro Summit, social cohesion has gradually become the focus of relations and political dialogue between the European Union and Latin America. Indeed, since the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean Summit (Guadalajara, May 2004) to the present, Heads of State and Government have acknowledged social cohesion as a priority issue to be addressed by the governments of both regions. Since then, there has been political consensus on the importance of working in this line in order to overcome problems of poverty, social inequality and exclusion; problems that endanger the sustainability of economic growth and the quality of democracy in Latin American countries.

This political will was subsequently expressed in the Regional Strategy Paper for Latin America 2007-2013, in which the promotion of social cohesion is established as one of the three priority areas of cooperation between the EU and the region. This is particularly significant because for the first time a regional programme, URB-AL III, featured a political-strategic priority of the European-Latin American regional agenda. The implementation of the Programme has therefore helped to achieve one of the bi-regional priorities: promoting and reinforcing its own local social cohesion agenda among sub-state agents from both regions.



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The impetus of [URBsociAL](#), Euro-Latin American Dialogue on Social Cohesion and Local Public Policies, organised by the OCO three times throughout the Programme has therefore been significant. URBsociAL has sought to generate constructive dialogues, exchanges and lessons to be learned among the European and Latin American agents with experience in local public management intended to foster collective reflection on possible solutions to common problems associated with promoting social cohesion. The articulation and promotion of a European-Latin American strategic agenda, designed to influence the processes and authorities necessary to generate greater social cohesion in Latin America, was also sought. An annual meeting of representatives of the territorial partners of the URB-AL III projects, sub-national governments, international organisations, civil society and other cooperation agents has therefore been held.

The three URBsociAL dialogues yielded Policy Agendas, which were produced collectively during discussions and workshops by over 1,200 politicians/technicians from almost all of Latin America and from 6 European countries. After each event, several sub-national governments adhered to the three agendas that were produced: “[2010 Sitges Agenda](#)”, “[2011 Rosario Agenda](#)” and “[2012 Bogotá Agenda](#)”. Through their respective bodies of government, the signatories declared their appropriation of and commitment to local public social

cohesion policies. These included capital cities such as the City of Buenos Aires, the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima and the Municipality of Bogotá, smaller municipalities such as Grecia (Costa Rica), Mariano Melgar (Arequipa, Peru), Santiago de Surco (Peru), and medium-sized authorities such as Diputació de Barcelona, the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association and the County Council of Alt Empordà. The European Commissioner for Development likewise sent a letter of support for the 2012 Bogotá Agenda upon consideration it “reflects the ideals and objectives of the European Union and is fully coherent with the spirit of the Latin American instrument for Development Cooperation”.

URBsociAL has therefore allowed for the articulation and encouragement of a strategic European-Latin American agenda of local public social cohesion policies based on recommendations and commitments made by participants and distributed to over 6,000 agents involved in development cooperation and in public policies. For example, the most recent 2012 Bogotá Agenda was issued by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on its website while the UNDP ART Global Initiative, which influences decentralised cooperation throughout the region, has adhered it.

From the first dialogue in Sitges, at which the main objectives of the forum were launched, to Rosario, at which discussions focused on specific problems

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and experiences, and Bogotá, where attention was focused on the future, URBsociAL has been building and specifying agendas and identifying the key issues and the most appropriate methodologies with which to contribute to social cohesion. The connection between the main resulting topics on the different URBsociAL agendas and the subjects chosen to be dealt with at the six **Regional Dialogues** held in the last two years of the project (see section 2.6) is significant in this process. It is thus interesting to note how relations between the two main activities of dialogue developed by the OCO are two-way processes and provide one another mutual impetus. The Regional Dialogues have yielded materials for an agenda of reflection on and action in European-Latin American local social cohesion, while URBsociAL presents clues on the issues to be dealt with at regional level. The main conclusions arising from each Regional Dialogue can be downloaded from the OCO website.<sup>13</sup>

## **2.4. Capacity building and generating leadership to improve local public management**

Meeting the specific target of the Programme to “consolidate and/or promote public social cohesion policies” required an increase in the capacities of the agents who plan, implement

and evaluate public policies and reinforcement or generation of leadership in order to improve local public management. Many project activities were therefore designed to achieve this objective through training. At least **23,446 people** therefore took part in the training activities involved in the 20 projects.

The training addressed to technical staff, managers or elected officials of the public administrations involved (other training was oriented at citizens and specific population sectors) should be emphasised at this point. Special mention should be made of the training in the project “Prevention of Violence in Marginal Urban Areas”, coordinated by the state of Pernambuco, of 1,000 public officials in the prevention of violence and social cohesion for use in their professional work. Likewise, the project “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management”, coordinated by Tuscany, trained over 130 public officials in PPGIS (Public Participation Geographic Information Systems) from all the local partners. This training was linked to a tool for improving urban management and was given by the project coordinator partner to its Latin American partners.

Another example associated with **learning new tools** can be found in the “PACEF” project in which the governments of the Central Department of Paraguay, Bolivia’s Cochabamba region and the province of Buenos Aires in Argentina adapted the methodology “Agreement for Women’s Training

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13 [http://www.urb-al3.eu/index.php/contenido/dialogo\\_regional?id\\_menu\\_principal=119](http://www.urb-al3.eu/index.php/contenido/dialogo_regional?id_menu_principal=119)

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and Employment”, which has been implemented for years by the region of Sicily, the project coordinator.

Exchange among partners of the same project to enable them to learn from one another about new management formulas for specific issues has also been a common pattern of the Programme. One example was the meeting of members of the project “Promoting Social Cohesion and Territorial Regional Integration in the Border Towns of the Central American Trifinio Region” in Huelva (Spain). On that occasion, a group of technicians from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras took part in an internship to learn about the management of natural areas in the Huelva region in Spain. During the visit, experiences were exchanged on how to manage forest fires and on hunting and fishing, organic production, mining, tourism and cultural operations and on optimising natural resources. Mechanisms of administrative, operational and institutional management were shared with consideration for the sustainable development plans of each natural area.

Most of the projects likewise encouraged mechanisms of citizen participation that involve the public in the design and implementation of public policies. This process generated **social leadership** and increased public proximity, interest and involvement in politics, thus enhancing the effectiveness and capacity of local management. One example is the “Institutional Innovation” project in which citizen participation was an

aspect inherent in the interventions and assumed a core role therein (participatory production of the Strategic Plan and of the Santa Fe Young People’s Plan, Youth Forums, Forums of Indigenous Peoples, and citizen assemblies, etc.).

The OCO has also developed several activities associated with training and capacity building in order to increase the sense of belonging to a community and enhancing local management capacity. Training measures undertaken were divided into three large blocks: **project management** (courses addressed to technical and institutional staff of the projects), **social cohesion** (courses addressed to technical and institutional staff of the projects and of the OCO) and **leadership** (training addressed to elected representatives of Latin American sub-national governments). The OCO has run 25 training activities and three editions of the Local Leadership Platform (LLP) at which a total of 650 people took part. Approximately 100 elected representatives successfully completed the Local Leadership Platform training plan.

Training aimed at projects has encouraged networking and fostered group learning methodologies to ensure interconnection among members of each project and among the different projects of Lot 1. A direct consequence of this has been **greater exchange of experiences and an increase in the sense of belonging to the URB-AL III Programme**. Indeed, training activities yielded areas for debate based on the

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individual experiences of each territory at which similar concerns were shared with regard to the problems inherent in the implementation of these kinds of projects such as technical monitoring, political appropriation and the sustainability of the results. The focus of work has allowed for a change from the transfer of individual capacities to the development of institutional capacities. With this aim, work was simultaneously undertaken with technicians and institutional representatives with a view to involving them all in introducing innovative tools at all levels of work, and thus prompting a general perspective of the institutional changes as a means for enhancing quality, streamlining day-to-day work and improving performance by public institutions.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that in some cases the public administration that implements projects has undertaken to make sustainable the individual lessons learned about management and local leadership and maintain the project team once external assistance has ended. This is the case of the “Tourist Borders” project coordinated by the Province of Frosinone (Italy). In particular, in the Bolivian territories of San Pedro de Quemes and Calacoto the technical team remained within the municipality. According to its coordinator *“we have a planning and projects unit that was created for the project. The URB-AL has encouraged the creation of a new unit, in addition to the administrative and financial unit”*.

As regards **generating leadership to improve local governance**, the Local Leadership Platform plays a key role. This is intended to provide a site of academic excellence at which to train local leaders from the region from a Latin American perspective with the best contributions of the European experience, thus dealing with the crucial issues of governance and local public leadership.

The attended seminars (two per edition) have strengthened the proposals and debates of online activities and yielded a site for exchange and relations among the local governments that went beyond the scope of URB-AL III. This site has allowed for the sharing of successful responses from the entire region to common problems, and provided solutions that are not only adapted to each circumstance, but could also benefit other people and communities. It has also helped to increase capacity for dialogue with other levels of government and to extend the international presence of municipalities and regions and place them on the European Union-Latin American bi-regional agenda. The Local Leadership Platform was gradually consolidated as a benchmark for training elected representatives in Latin America: registrations grew from 150 in 2010 to 250 in 2012. Esther Hilda Herrera, Councillor of Ibarra and President of the Ecuador Association of Municipal Councilwomen, defined her participation on the Platform in the following terms: *“In political life, I have experienced a change in the notion of guiding, leading and contributing in the territories”*.

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The site encouraged other leaders who are not directly involved in URB-AL III and therefore provided a good opportunity to strengthen the momentum of social cohesion as a horizon in the search for more equitable and sustainable social and economic models. The best example of its commitment to the Programme lies in the approval of what is known as the [Lima Agreement](#), which was adopted during the second edition as part of an onsite seminar in the city of Lima and disseminated among all participants. By this agreement, the elected officials involved will work to encourage application of the concept of social cohesion promoted by the OCO “that includes elements such as legitimacy, participation, equality and inclusion, acknowledgement of others and belonging as areas of action of evaluable local governments”.

Completion of the three editions (600 hours of training) was followed by the creation of a network of leaders committed to public social cohesion policies in which students of the Platform work collectively online on measures intended to provide continuity beyond the end of the Programme. What is known as the “Central and South American local leadership network. Leading towards the local” focuses on local social cohesion in territories where its members are elected through the implementation of public policies that contribute to local leadership.

As is evident throughout this section, URB-AL III has enabled sub-national

**government participants to improve their management capabilities** through training activities run either by the projects or upon the initiative of the OCO. The Programme has gone beyond the universe of projects and generated new local leaderships through the impetus of the Local Leadership Platform.

## THE PLATFORM IN FIGURES

A total of 550 elected officials have registered with the initiative. Of these, 112 have been selected and 80 have completed the courses. The percentage of women participants has increased with each edition and rose from 32% in 2010

to 48% in 2012. Territorial diversity has also increased to include participants from 18 Latin American countries and regional (15%), local (75%) and district (10%) governmental levels.

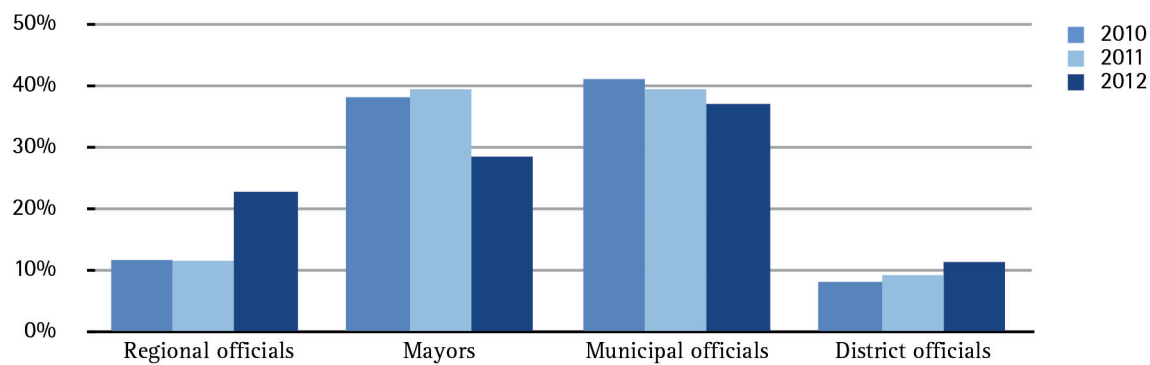


Chart 1. Profile of participants

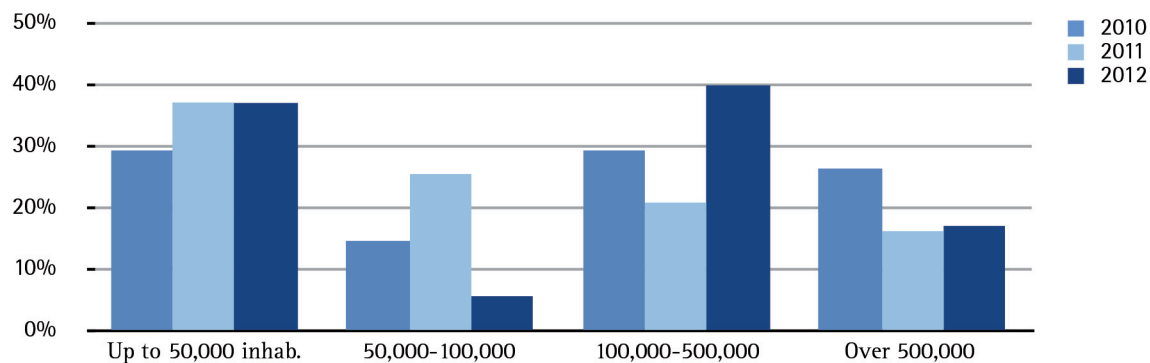


Chart 2. Population of participating territories

Source: Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO)

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## 2.5 Identification and dissemination of benchmarks in public policies aimed at promoting social cohesion

The identification and dissemination of benchmarks also features among the objectives of URB-AL III “to consolidate or promote social cohesion processes and policies, supported by partnerships or exchange of experiences, in a limited number of cities and territories in Latin America, which may become reference models capable of generating debate and indicating possible solutions for Latin American sub-national governments that wish to boost social cohesion dynamics”.

This objective provided the bases for the rules governing the Programme and thereby establishing the compulsory submission of joint projects among several partners in the expectation that the exchange of experiences among them would shape the activities to be developed. The EC therefore pledged itself to a decentralised cooperation model whereby the transfer of knowledge and mutual learning among homologues would be key instruments in partnership-based relations unlike traditional relations with an asymmetrical donor-recipient approach.

Most of the projects therefore involved activities of exchange among their partners. Initially the purpose of meetings was often to share strategies and tools with which to generate

common intervention models. The last months, in contrast, saw an extension of systematisation of experiences that in many cases became benchmarks for partners. Practices developed within the URB-AL III Programme, moreover, very often prompted the interest of other local administrations to replicate them.

### *Exchange meetings*

It was therefore for good reason that the objectives of many projects included the transfer of knowledge among partners. One such case is the “Rubbish is Useful” project. According to its coordinator in Arezzo (Italy), *“the dissemination of the model of waste management of Cuenca and Surco is one of our specific objectives. These are models we are disseminating and that appear on our website and our intention is not for them to be applied literally. Some elements are replicable in each municipality and adaptable to each context. These models, moreover, are perfectly sustainable beyond URB-AL III”*.

The exchanges have assumed different forms and have sometimes taken the shape of internships of Latin American partners in Europe, as is the case of the projected coordinated by Lempa River “Promoting Social Cohesion and Territorial Regional Integration in the Border Towns of the Central American Trifinio Region”. On that occasion, a group of technicians from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador took part in

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an internship with a view to learning about managing natural areas in Huelva (Spain).

On other occasions, learning and exchange visits have taken place among Latin American partners. This was the case of the “UNE” project, which promoted the Platform for Tourism in the Arica-Parinacota Border Regions (Chile) and Tacna (Peru) programme. This platform involved an exchange of experiences among Chilean and Peruvian partners with a view to creating a space for sharing experiences and knowledge associated with rural tourism. The mission was addressed to entrepreneurs and businessmen from Arica y Parinacota (Chile), involved a tour of two provinces of Tacna (Tarata and Candarave) and featured the participation of public institutions, municipalities and entrepreneurs who represented the Communal Tourist Boards of Camarones, Putre and General Lagos from the Region of Arica y Parinacota.

Mention should lastly be made of the South-South cooperation agreement reached by Montevideo and Pernambuco on the exchange of experiences. Following visits to both territories, the “Living in Goes” project, led by the Uruguayan capital, and the project “Local Policies on the Prevention of Violence in Marginal Urban Areas”, coordinated by Pernambuco, established a formal agreement to join the two experiences. Hence, representatives from Brazil presented their strategy to prevent violence and Montevideo

provided Pernambuco with training in decentralised cooperation through the Observatory for EU-LA Decentralised Cooperation (initiative with the Diputació de Barcelona).

### *Benchmarks: systematisation of experiences*

In some cases, projects have promoted benchmarks that have been systematised and disseminated. This is the case of the “INTEGRATION” project coordinated by the German city of Stuttgart, the results of which appeared in the publication “Sustainable Urban Development in Latin America - Lessons learned from pilot projects for the revitalisation of urban areas”. This model, the systematisation of which makes it an exportable and replicable instrument, represents a contribution to sustainable urban development in Latin America, as it proposes innovative planning exercises that can be replicated in other cities with similar urban problems.

The model will indeed be included in a publication that will serve as a guide of general action for the city of Bogotá. Bogotá also plans to implement the lessons learned from “INTEGRATION” in an ambitious urban revitalisation project. It has been agreed that experts from the project will train municipal technicians from Bogotá in tools and in the development of regulations for converting prices or environmentally impacted land. It is also envisaged that the results of these exchanges will be



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implemented in the “Extended Centre”, an ambitious Bogotá administration project that seeks to consolidate the geographical centre of the city through urban processes of urban revitalisation.

Another similar case is the “IDEAL” project, which has produced a book on the result of four years of work and lessons learned in the Programme. *“Inter-municipality: a new strategy of local governance”* provides a benchmark for building inter-municipal cooperation in Latin America by generating frameworks of reference on creative management methods for dealing more effectively with the common problems shared by conurbations and on how to respond to growing public demand for greater effectiveness, professionalism and transparency in the local public management.

Another emblematic case of generation of benchmark models was the “Rubbish is Useful” project. The experience of its partner from Santiago de Surco (Peru) was chosen by EuropeAid as a case study for dissemination. EuropeAid’s case studies were intended to show and disseminate the results and impact of the most representative projects funded by the European Union. The project, coordinated by Arezzo (Italy), pursued the improvement of urban waste management by publicising the practices implemented in Santiago de Surco (Peru) and Cuenca (Ecuador).

### *Replicability of the URB-AL III practices in other territories*

Upon completion of the Programme and therewith the implementation of projects, many received requests for replicability, either from other levels of government in their own areas of intervention or even from other territories outside the scope of URB-AL III. Many requests have been answered through agreements and covenants. One example was the “UNE” project in Honduras. The experience of the municipality of Santa Rosa de Copán provided the basis upon which the Association of Municipalities of Honduras (AMHON), which is formed by the country’s 298 municipalities, considered the need to replicate the implementation of Local Agenda 21 and promote dialogue with other regional or national authorities. Such an undertaking would certainly prompt an improvement in the quality of life of Hondurans. According to the coordinator of the Santa Rosa de Copán project, *“the experience of implementing Agenda 21 is a result of the project and now we are the first municipality in Honduras to have adopted an Agenda 21, which is now to be replicated in the country’s other municipalities through a partnership with the AMHON”*.

Another request to replicate a URB-AL III experience from outside the territories of the partners was the creation of the Tri-national Association of the Gulf of Fonseca (El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua), which was established and inspired by the *Lempa River Tri-national*

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**Border Association** project. A total of 17 mayors from the municipalities bordering the Gulf of Fonseca therefore signed the **Declaration of León**, in which a pledge was taken to establish a tri-national organisation similar to the Lempa River Association of the Central American Trifinio Region. In 2011, the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association ran several workshops and meetings in the Gulf of Fonseca region and provided advice on legal, municipal organisation and social cohesion matters. In 2012 it was also commissioned to provide advocacy for political and legal recognition of the new Association of the Gulf of Fonseca before the governments of the three countries involved (El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua).

*“The road travelled in the promotion of cross-border social cohesion by the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association within the URB-AL III project facilitated the process started in this tri-national Central American region and reflects the replicability of social cohesion and cross-border cooperation processes”,* concluded the Director of the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association.

### ***Exchange of experiences facilitated by the OCO***

Over the years, the OCO has sought to promote the exchange of experiences through different activities: Euro-Latin American dialogues such as URBsociAL, Regional Dialogues, training and the capitalisation strategy. Even while

implementing the Programme, the OCO published a methodological guide entitled *Identification, systematisation and exchange of successful experiences in local social cohesion*, which provides a methodology applicable to a wide range of profiles and processes regarding identification, systematisation and exchange of successful local social cohesion experiences.

URBsociAL by its very nature is organised into workshops that deal with different issues, its debates arose precisely from specific experiences of public social cohesion policies and it has involved a major process of exchange of best practices. From the second dialogue onwards, moreover, the OCO set about creating a specific space for this purpose known as Fair of Experiences. At the most recent meeting in Bogotá, a common area by way of a Speakers’ Corner was even provided for the exchange of experiences at which projects could publicly present their results and impact on public policies and their respective sustainability strategies.

The Regional Dialogues, a more detailed description of which can be found in the following section, have also represented a space particularly suitable for sharing specific experiences with a view to finding common solutions. According to Norman Wray, Councillor of the Metropolitan District of Quito (Ecuador), *“one of the most important things that can be generated is the exchange of experiences and conversation on what is happening in other cities, what they*

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*are doing, what has worked and what has not and finding out how they are solving the problems. This provides a more comprehensive view of problems and helps in the design of better public policies. These spaces for regional dialogue are ideally suited for this”.*

As mentioned above, all the training provided by the OCO has not only helped to generate leadership and improve local management capacities, but has also provided an intense exchange of experiences among projects and among these and other territories outside URB-AL III, as demonstrated in the Local Leadership Platform.

Special mention should lastly be made to the capitalisation strategy, which has resulted in the consolidation of a community of dialogue among public and private agents in Latin America and Europe and the establishment of synergies and exchanges outside the Programme. Its great achievement has also been its ability to identify internally the best practices developed within URB-AL III.

### *The strategy of capitalisation*

As part of the URB-AL III Programme, the OCO promoted and accompanied a process of capitalisation of best practices from among the 20 projects in Lot 1. Capitalisation allows for the generation of theoretical knowledge arising from the practice of the participating territories. It is a process

based on an initial grouping of thematic clusters through which participants exchange experiences, lessons learned and tools and select the innovative practices of greatest interest, i.e. those that are replicable. The results of exchanges in turn prompt the creation of knowledge while a reciprocal relation is established between the two moments.

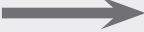
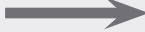
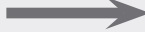
The instruments and spaces promoted with this methodology have provided the bases upon which to establish the conditions systematically to manage information and knowledge that has been produced in implementing the Programme. This task is usually postponed in the cooperation programmes and despite the high quality of many projects, they are neither known nor studied, and remain solely in the memory of their technicians without contributing to the collective knowledge of other agents and territories. Given the regional scale of the Programme and the highly innovative character of many of its projects, a process of capitalisation was established in order to contribute significantly to the dissemination of innovative practices among the local and regional governments involved.

The 20 projects funded by the EC as part of Lot 1 have taken active part in the capitalisation of best practices promoted by the OCO. Over a hundred territories involved in the Programme took part in this activity to strengthen networks and build knowledge from experience. Because of this strategy

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of exchange and enhancement of the value of the results and experiences of each participating territory, local governments were able to focus problems and benefit from a series of solutions proposed by other local governments and intermediaries, thus improving the quality of the local public social cohesion policies and effectively conducting a peer review. This is a process based on an initial grouping of thematic clusters through which participants exchange experiences, lessons learned and tools and have selected the innovative practices of greatest interest.

## The capitalisation process

October 2010	First semester 2011	Second semester 2011	First semester 2012	Second semester 2012
<p>Launch of capitalisation (Sitges):</p> <p>General themes.</p> 	<p>Thematic meetings (La Antigua, Purmamarca, Arezzo, Curitiba):</p> <p>Identification of issues of common interest among the projects.</p> 	<p>Follow-up meeting (Rosario):</p> <p>Identification of exchange initiatives.</p> <p>Presentation of capitalisation agreements to the OCO.</p> 	<p>Capitalisation agreements (León, Santa Tecla, Santiago de Surco, Esquipulas, San Salvador):</p> <p>Based on exploration of specific themes able to set trends in the Latin American context. Participation of significant external agents.</p>	<p>Capitalisation actions:</p> <p>Projects to improve public policies in progress.</p>

Source: Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO)

Although the 20 URB-AL III projects all adhere to a common objective defined by the Programme, each explores different sectors and areas of intervention issues and also has multiple locations and levels.<sup>14</sup> Given the heterogeneity

of circumstances, best practices were capitalised through **clustering**. In other words, the 20 projects in Lot 1 were grouped together in thematic clusters. The formation of the thematic clusters allowed the field of study to be narrowed down so that common practices regarding specific issues could

<sup>14</sup> Each URB-AL III project is run in several partner territories, which establishes a regional presence, while the universe of partners, furthermore, corresponds to different types of local agents or intermediaries (municipalities, asso-

ciations of municipalities, provinces, regions, departments, etc.)

be shared among colleagues facing similar challenges and problems.

Four specific clusters were formed: (1) urban and regional integration, (2) territorial competitiveness, (3) integrated waste management, and (4) cross-border cooperation. Participation in these spaces depends on the interest of each region or, in other words, although each member belongs to a particular project, these took part as a territory. Some projects therefore took part in more than one cluster.

Each of these clusters was approached from different

focuses of intervention in accordance with their sectoral characteristics. These were later used for the subsequent definition of common topics of interest within each thematic group.

Chart. Core areas of intervention of the projects by thematic cluster

<i>Thematic cluster</i>	<i>Core areas of intervention</i>
<i>Territorial competitiveness and innovation</i>	<i>Political-institution/governance</i>
	<i>Infrastructure</i>
	<i>Social capital</i>
	<i>Technology</i>
	<i>Product innovation and quality</i>
	<i>Financing of development</i>

<i>Integrated solid urban waste management</i>	<i>Political-institution/governance</i>
	<i>Environmental: global and territorial conservation of natural capital</i>
	<i>Social and cultural</i>
	<i>Economic: sustainable development of productive activities</i>
<i>Cross-border cooperation</i>	<i>Political-institution/governance</i>
	<i>Planning and horizontal governance</i>
	<i>Improving quality of life</i>
	<i>Improving integration processes</i>
<i>Urban and territorial integration</i>	<i>Political-institution/governance</i>
	<i>Community and citizen participation</i>
	<i>Recovery of degraded areas</i>
	<i>Enhancement of policies for territorial management, territorial land use and planning</i>
	<i>Social inclusion and fighting violence</i>

Institutional reinforcement was a core area of cross-cutting work in all the clusters, as they involve local governments that are ultimately seeking to improve their management and institutional capacity.

On the basis of these core areas of intervention that characterise each issue, the OCO identified a group of debates of common interest that prompted exchange and served as an initial platform for dialogue. These issues are the following:

Chart. Issues for exchange in the URB-AL III Programme process of capitalisation

Issues of common interest identified in the first Phase	Components that attracted the attention of the projects
<b>Urban and territorial integration</b>	
Instruments of land use planning	Community participation Participatory GIS
Management of degraded areas and districts	
Community participation	
<b>Territorial competitiveness and innovation</b>	
Public policies and agencies for development	Entrepreneurship Social economy
Finance for development and remittances	
The focus of production chains in local development	
<b>Integrated solid urban waste management</b>	
Waste management and social inclusion	Tariff system and institutional organisation Environmental education
Institutional organisation and tariff system	
The technical process	
Citizen participation and education	



Cross-border cooperation	
Construction and implementation of a common agenda in the cross-border region and the horizontal coordination of territorial policies	Municipal collaboration in associations (associations of municipalities)
Multi-level articulation in cross-border processes and coordination with national strategies	Inter-municipal networks and associations of municipalities in the design of public policies and projects for territorial development Cross-border associations of municipalities, transnational networks
Institutional innovation at sub-national level, the search for and experimentation with forms of cross-border institutions.	
Opportunities and methods of influence from a territorial to a national and transnational level	

To implement this exercise, the OCO organised numerous thematic meetings that addressed common issues and problems that the participating territories in each cluster requested should be dealt with and studied. At these meetings participants exchanged methods, contents and instruments relating to the selected topics. All projects participated in at least one such meeting, improved capacity for dialogue among the administrations involved in the Programme and generated a learning community based on the experiences that had emerged throughout URB-AL III.

During this process, focus was gradually placed on issues of interest. Although at the start participating territories in each cluster shared only the framework

issue, after almost two years of work and exchange the territories of each group managed to define common interests and began promoting joint activities and measures of bilateral and multilateral assistance. This process of “refining” issues of interest arose from the definition of **capitalisation agreements**, based on specific needs manifest by the projects themselves, operational ideas intended to explore specific issues of common interest.

## Capitalisation agreements promoted by the OCO

Cluster	Site and date	Issues	Territorial governments and other participating agents
<i>Urban and territorial integration</i>	León, Nicaragua 11-14 June 2012	Participatory GIS	Coopera (IT) – Punilla Valley (AR) - Puerto Cortés (HON) - León (NI) - Kadaster (HO) - Trifinio - Pernambuco (BR) - Association of Municipalities Cayaguanca (SAL), Sesecapa Valley (HON), Nororiente (GUA)
	Santa Tecla, El Salvador 18-26 April 2012	Participation models	Santa Tecla (SAL) - Ponta Porã (BR) - Trifinio Association of Municipalities - San Salvador (SAL)
<i>Cross-border cooperation</i>	Esquipulas, Guatemala 28-30 May 2012	Municipal partnerships Inter-municipal networks and associations of municipalities in territorial development Cross-border networks	Pedro Juan Caballero (PY) - Rivera (UY) - Monte Caseros (AR) - Sant'Ana do Livramento (BR) - Ponta Porã (BR) - Puerto Cortés (HON) - Huelva (ES) - Trifinio Association of Municipalities

<i>Integrated urban waste management</i>	Santiago de Surco, Peru 26-30 March 2012	<b>Tariff policies in urban waste management</b>  <b>Environmental education</b>	Oxfam Italy - Santiago de Surco (PE) - Lago Agrio (EC) - Cuenca (EC) - Gral. Pico (AR) - Prov. Buenos Aires (AR) - Tucumán (AR) - Managua (NI) - El Callao (PE) - Michoacán (MX) - Copanch'orti Association of Municipalities (GU) - Sesecapa Valley Association of Municipalities (HON)
	Florence 18-25 September 2013	<b>Technical aspects in solid urban waste management</b>	Oxfam Italy - Santiago de Surco (PE) - Lago Agrio (EC) - Cuenca (EC) - Gral. Pico (AR) - Prov. Buenos Aires (AR) - Tucumán (AR) - Sesecapa Valley Association of Municipalities (HON)
	Buenos Aires 11 April 2013	<b>Launch of the Latin American Observatory for solid urban waste</b>	Prov. Buenos Aires (AR) - Tucumán (AR) - Santiago de Surco (PE) - Michoacán (MX)
<i>Territorial competitiveness and innovation</i>	Santa Tecla - San Salvador 11-13 March 2013	<b>Entrepreneurship and social economy</b>	L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (ES) - Barcelona Metropolitan Area (ES) - Emilia Romagna (IT) - Santa Tecla (SAL) - San Salvador Metropolitan Area (SAL) - Puerto Cortés (HON) - Managua (NI) - La Paz (BO) - Mar del Plata (AR) - Canelones (UR)

The best practices proposed by participants have not been evaluated externally by experts, but instead been subject to peer review. This involves an internal evaluation of a group of territories taking part in the URB -AL III Programme, through which a practice adopted by an institution is examined (evaluated) by an institution of the same type.

Observation of the panorama of the relations fostered through the exercise of capitalisation reveals a series of measures that have become “best practices” in the URB-AL III community, as shown in the following table.

Chart. Best practices identified by the projects participating in capitalisation.

<p><b><i>Cluster: urban and territorial integration</i></b></p> <p>The <b>participatory process</b> of Santa Tecla of the “Equal People” project  The <b>participatory process</b> in Ponta Porã and Pedro Juan Caballero of the “International Line” project  <b>Participatory GIS application</b> in Havana, La Antigua, Viña del Mar, Punilla Valley and León of the “Territorial Participatory Management” project  The <b>land register system</b> in Puerto Cortés of the ITN project  <b>Multi-level articulation models</b> of Puerto Cortés (SIGIT system) and Viña del Mar (participatory GIS)  <b>Territorial planning and tax collection model</b> in Puerto Cortés</p> <p><b>External agents involved:</b> LAMMA Consortium of the Tuscany Region</p>	<p><b><i>Cluster: cross-border cooperation</i></b></p> <p>The <b>association of municipalities model</b> in Central America (Trifinio, Puerto Cortés)  Policies of <b>associative management of municipalities (cross-border)</b> in Central America  The <b>instruments of cross-border dialogue</b> in South America (<b>PARLIM</b> in Ponta Porã and Pedro Juan Caballero; <b>Border Committees</b> in Tacna and Arica y Parinacota)  The <b>local cross-border tourism development model</b> of the “Open Borders” project  A <b>cross-border statistics system</b> created by the “Protected Areas” project</p> <p><b>External agents involved:</b> the Mercociudades network</p>
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<p><b>Cluster: territorial competitiveness</b></p> <p>The training agreements of the “PACEF” project  The production development chains of the “COCAP” project  The ideas factories and laboratories for local development of the “COCAP” project  The local social development agreements of the “Melgodepro” project.  The 3 x 1 system of the “Melgodepro” project  The economic development act in La Paz of the “emiDel” project  The Santa Tecla integrated local development system of the “emiDel” Project  The system of mentoring among the local development agencies of the Province of Buenos Aires of the “EU-LA-WIN” project  The women’s social and employment inclusion systems in Mar del Plata (EU-LA-WIN project), Asunción and Cochabamba (PACEF project)</p> <p>External agents involved: Sebrae, Brazil.</p>	<p><b>Cluster: solid urban waste management</b></p> <p>The scavenger cooperatives established by the “Rubbish is Useful” and “RESSOC” projects  The tariff model of Cuenca  The environmental awareness and education campaigns of Tucumán (“IDEAL” project), Santiago de Surco and Lago Agrio (“Rubbish is Useful” project)  The inter-municipality model of Michoacán  New infrastructures for integrated solid urban waste management of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (“RESSOC” project)</p> <p>Actores externos participantes: CISPEL Tuscany, Escuela Gredos San Diego, Madrid</p>
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### *Impact of capitalisation*

From a conceptual perspective, the process of capitalisation of best practices through interest groups (clusters) proposed by the OCO of the URB-AL III Programme has involved two levels of intervention, each of which involves different agents:

- the **development community**: composed of clusters, projects as a whole and participating territories. For this community, capitalisation encouraged

the exchange of best practices among projects and among territories determined to innovate in public social cohesion policies;

- the **knowledge community**: composed of the URB-AL III community as a whole, the EC and other programme managers. For this community, capitalisation helped to verify both the effectiveness of URB-AL III methodology based on the construction of European-Latin American networks for improving public social cohesion policies and also the

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coherence of the projects financed through the Programme with debate, experiments and the most advanced practices in Latin America.

The capitalisation process has been adhered to en masse by URB-AL III Programme agents:

/all projects took part in the initial and intermediate methodological guidance meetings (Sitges 2010, Rosario 2011);

/the 20 projects took part at one or more of the four exchange meetings held throughout 2011;

/around 32 territories, active in 12 of the 20 URB-AL III projects, were involved in the capitalisation agreements reached in 2012 and early 2013.

The above data show that the proposal to establish mechanisms of exchange and capitalisation of best practices has effectively answered a need of the territories participating in URB-AL III to outstrip the limited scope of each project and broaden their perspective to other experiences.

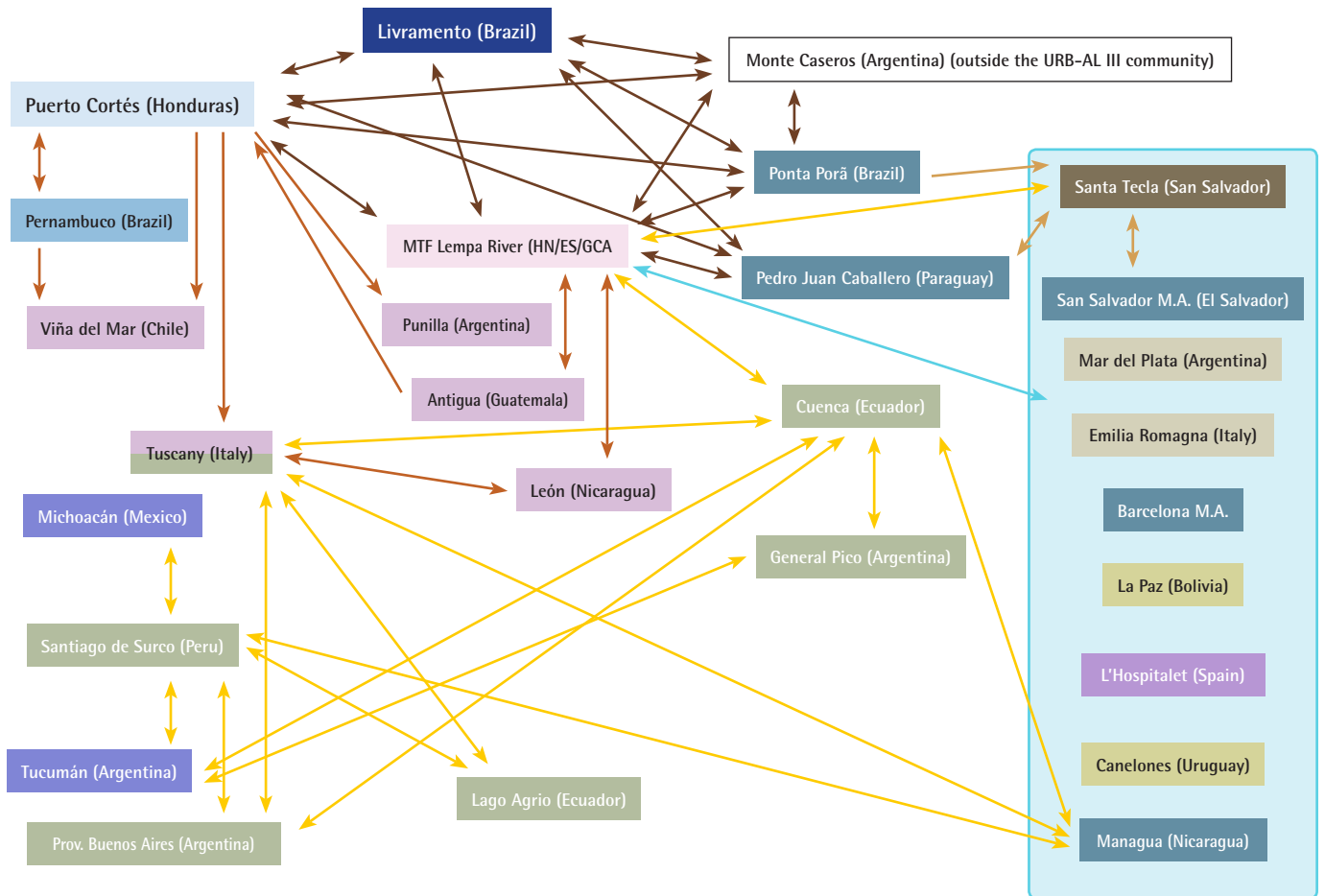
Thematic exchange, however, has revealed a certain homogeneity and proximity among clusters and emphasises that there does not appear to be –at least in the capitalisation experience run in URB-AL III– a unique profile type for the generation of exchange. In other words, practices of all kinds can be exchanged. Territories exchange what they most

need for their specific development circumstances and this seems to be the only factor that conditions the distribution of preferences among different practices.

Participation at several meetings of agents from outside the URB-AL III community has confirmed that many of the issues and contributions of projects really were consistent with ongoing debates in Latin America on inclusion and social cohesion social policies. This has been clear in almost all the areas of work of clusters, and particularly in policies of integration and cross-border cooperation, integrated solid waste management, the promotion of micro-enterprises as a means of including groups excluded from the formal market and participatory planning of the territory.

One strength of the capitalisation process is definitely the intensity of the exchanges in the different clusters. The chart below shows best practices exchange relations established at the five meetings held between March 2012 and March 2013, which involved over forty territories (some agents indicated here consist of more than one territory) and a strong correlation between priorities and interests.

Exchanges arising from the agreements to capitalise best practices promoted by the OCO from March 2012 to March 2013



PAMPA	IDEAL	Diverse People
International Line	EMIDEL	Rubbish is Useful
PREV	Urban and Terr. Part. Management	EMIDEL
Land management	Trifinio	EU-LA-WIN

- ↔ Esquipulas (Association of Municipalities and Tools of Cross-border Cooperation)
- ↔ León (Participatory Territorial Management and Application of Technologies)
- ↔ Santa Tecla (Models of Citizen Participation)
- ↔ Santiago de Surco (Tariff Policies and Environmental Education)

↔ Santa Tecla/San Salvador (Entrepreneurship and Social Economy)  
 (the circle rather than the arrows is used as discussion in this group did not succeed in defining specific exchanges among territories)

The arrow points from the applicant to the bidder

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### *Cooperation agreements beyond the capitalisation meetings*

The process run provided the opportunity to develop cooperative relations that extended beyond those formalised at the end of each capitalisation meeting. These include a certain number of “underground” agreements not included on the census taken by the OCO that, because of their spontaneous nature, represent yet another symptom of the vitality of the process implemented. This category includes the visits of the Central American Trifinio Municipal Association to the Mayor’s Office of Santa Tecla in El Salvador regarding models of participation, and those made by representatives of the municipalities of Puerto Cortés (Honduras), Ponta Porã (Brazil) and Pedro Juan Caballero (Paraguay) to the Trifinio Municipal Association regarding municipal partnerships and cross-border networks; the visit of the two latter municipalities to their neighbours in Quaraí (Brazil), Rivera (Uruguay) and Livramento (Brazil) regarding tools of cross-border cooperation; collaboration among the territories in the “Tourist Borders” and of the “UNE” project on the sustainability of local tourism networks; the cooperation agreement between Santiago de Surco and El Callao (Peru) on waste selection issues, etc.

As well as these visits, a number of projects also arose from the areas for exchange promoted. These include the urban integration project of Antigua (Guatemala) and San

Salvador (El Salvador). Mention should also lastly be made to a significant result of the collective action of the participating territories in the dynamics of capitalisation. These are the **two observatories on Cross-border Integration and Integrated Solid Waste Management Policies**, respectively, the constitution and start-up of which are currently in a phase of preliminary agreement. The Latin American Solid Waste Observatory, for example, was officially launched in Buenos Aires in April 2013 as part of an “IDEAL” project initiative. This is not, we repeat, an exhaustive list –which by definition is impossible as it refers to initiatives the projects managed independently that were not registered by the OCO–, but rather a sample of measures that point to the productivity and the “side effects” or “implicit objectives” of the capitalisation strategy adopted.

Lastly, it should be stressed that the experience undertaken by the OCO confirms the validity of extending the territorial cooperation approach to cooperation between the EU and Latin America. The EU is a successful example of formulating and implementing integrated development policies.<sup>15</sup> This experience is based conceptually on the place-based approach to development, whereby efforts focused on

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15 Of particular interest in this regard is the research *TERCO - European Territorial Cooperation as a Factor of Growth, Jobs and Quality of Life*.



### Bilateral meetings between territories and projects

Territories/projects	Territories/projects	Subject of collaboration
Mayor's Office of Santa Tecla (San Salvador)	Trifinio Region Tri-national Association	Models of citizen participation
Trifinio Region Tri-national Association	Puerto Cortés (Honduras) Ponta Porã (Brazil) Pedro Juan Caballero (Paraguay)	Municipal partnerships and cross-border networks
Quaraí (Brazil), Rivera (Uruguay) and Livramento (Brazil)	Ponta Porã (Brazil) Pedro Juan Caballero (Paraguay)	Tools of cross-border cooperation
"Tourist Borders" project territories	"UNE" project territories	Sustainability of local tourism networks
Santiago de Surco (Peru)	El Callao (Peru)	Waste selection

unexplored potential in intermediate and marginal areas is not only not a barrier to global development, but can actually expand prospects for local and national development. This approach suggests a need to concentrate on the search for mechanisms based on local capacities that promote innovative ideas through interaction between local knowledge and general knowledge and between local and external agents in the design and implementation of public policies. In conclusion, the place-based approach means that in designing development

strategies more attention needs to be paid to places and to their unique characteristics.<sup>16</sup> Programmes such as URB-AL III contain all the "ingredients" necessary for the successful development of this approach: territorial scope of the actions, coordination and governance attributed to intermediate and local

<sup>16</sup> See F. Barca, P. McCann and A. Rodríguez-Pose, *The case for regional development intervention: Place-based versus place-neutral approaches*, IMDEA 2011.

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governments, and the active participation of economic and social agents. The development of the capitalisation tool can boost both horizontal and vertical relations, strengthen the role of multilevel governance that corresponds to intermediate and local institutions and disseminate territorially limited successful experiences to a national or regional level.

## **2.6 Creation of a space of multi-level articulation to improve regional public policies aimed at promoting social cohesion**

Although the URB-AL III Programme has sought to increase social cohesion by supporting projects that influence LPP, sub-national governments often have limited leeway because of national, regional and even international agreements that affect their daily work. In order to coordinate local policies with those of other government levels, the OCO proposed creating multilevel spaces for dialogue, while at the same time accompanying projects in identifying strategies to involve them in national or regional policies.

Six Regional Dialogues were therefore organised in order to promote multilevel and multi-sector meetings on a series of issues of considerable

political significance from an approach of good public governance and local social cohesion.

Governance and social cohesion (Montevideo, September 2010), citizen security (San Salvador, June 2011), local economic development (Lima, November 2011), identity and identities (La Paz, March 2012), social innovation (Recife, May 2012) and financing public policies (Viña del Mar, July 2012) were the subjects chosen at the various dialogues held. Each meeting saw the presentation and discussion of successful experiences in one of these subject areas and sought to provide elements with which to construct a shared agenda of desirable strategic objectives.

A total of 640 agents were brought together in nearly twenty countries of Latin America and Europe. They represented different levels of government (central, intermediate and local) of the countries of the region in which they were held (Southern Cone, Andean and Central American Zone), civil society, members of international organisations and agents of multilateral, bilateral and decentralised cooperation. Special mention should be made of the participation of the EU delegations in the host countries.

The plurality of agents involved provided for contact to be established among people working the same issue from different perspectives and

“places”. This prompted the sharing of a range of experiences, measures, programmes and public policies that different agents were implementing with regard to the issue in question. The large round table format allowed for joint work to find common solutions and create partnerships among agents. According to Enrique

Gallichio, chief technical advisor of ART-UNDP (Bolivia), “*it is hard to influence social cohesion unless different levels of government are involved, as is the case at the Regional Dialogues, at which different types of agents converse in a format that prompts progress, conclusions and the establishment of agreements*”.

## MAIN KEY IDEAS OF THE REGIONAL DIALOGUES

### ***Regional Dialogue on Governance and Social Cohesion***

Building more cohesive societies requires a decentralised political framework in which the different levels of government are articulated and cooperate. It also requires the strong will, involvement and leadership of local governments.

### ***Regional Dialogue on Citizen Security and Multilevel Governance for Local Social Cohesion***

Social cohesion provides a suitable political umbrella with which to leave behind the repression-coercion approach in favour of a new citizen security paradigm, which focuses on prevention and is based on rights. The new paradigm also provides coverage so that local governments are no longer passive recipients of security policies decided and managed exclusively at central government level, but rather begin to make security decisions with a view to making progress in this area.

### ***Regional Dialogue on Local Economic Development and Social Cohesion: Challenges and Strategies***

In all the territories there are capacities that can be activated and encouraged to promote traditional and non-traditional productive resources and promote local economic development. By activating and stimulating local entrepreneurial capacities, local economic development becomes an exceptional channel with which to build cohesive territories.

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***Regional Dialogue on Identity and Identities: Potential for Social and Territorial Cohesion***

Identities can be a factor of cohesion but in practice are often factors of exclusion. The challenge for territorial governments lies in generating the conditions so that factors of exclusion generated by identities turn all a territory's identifying elements into factors of inclusion. Local public policies are thus an exceptional instrument with which to make all the identities in a territory feel part of a common project.

***RD on Social Innovation, Public Action and Social Cohesion: Challenges and Strategies***

No reference can be made to social cohesion without associating this issue with social innovation. Public authorities should refer to both issues explicitly in order jointly to construct and engage in active dialogue with the public about the future in order to generate shared innovation and social cohesion objectives.

***Regional Dialogue on Financing Local Public Social Cohesion Policies: Challenges and Strategies***

Constraints on the finance and powers of local governments are core obstacles to building more cohesive territories. Achieving this goal requires certain steps to be taken with regard to local funding and decentralisation. Planning and territorial management are tools that can play a strategic role in progress in the right direction.

As regards **support for projects in identifying strategies for their involvement in national and regional policies**, the methodology created by the OCO featured a specific section on the articulation of the project with the policies of other local governments and/or of other levels of government in the country. The tool therefore identified three main areas (insertion of the project in the public policies of the local government; sustainability and

projection of the contribution of the policy as part of the public policies of the local government; and articulation of the project with the policies of other local governments and/or of other levels of government in the country).

For most projects, **articulation responds to a strategic option** of the interventions, the links of which with higher levels of government obey the need to find ways of legitimisation,

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support and sustainability. For example, for the “Living in Goes” project, coordinated by Montevideo (Uruguay): *“the project objectives are not simply purely local; the input from different stakeholders is required to ensure viability and sustainability and to ensure the involvement of policy makers and implementers”*.

Other projects, such as the “PACEF”, sought in multilevel articulation *“validation by departmental and national levels both of its applicability and its institutionalisation”* or *“to receive government support for the organisation and financing of measures”*. In other cases the intention was to “influence national governments”, as indicated by the territories involved in the project “Promoting Social Cohesion and Territorial Regional Integration in the Border Towns of the Central American Trifinio Region”, coordinated by the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association project (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras).

Articulation was very often included in the specific objectives of projects. For example, the main objective of “PACEF” was the generation of a multilevel space. What are known as the “Agreements for capacity building and women’s employment”, generated in the three territories intervened, were in fact drafted at work meetings attended by respective sub-national governments, ministries and private agents. According to their coordinator, *“one of the elements that characterises the project, which*

*is a common denominator in the three territories and has yielded better results, has been the design and implementation of a method of coordination among levels of government and among public institutions, employers and the professional training sector”*. By way of an example, in this project of the Central Department of Paraguay the work meeting established involved institutional representatives from the office of the Deputy Ministry for Employment, the Directorate for Working Women, the Secretariat for Women of the Presidency of the Republic, from the Industrial Union of Paraguay, from different municipalities, from the General Coordinator of the Project and Director General of the Directorate of Women of the Central Government; a Technical Coordinator and a Gender Consultant.

Another case of the implementation of an innovative methodology for territories that forms part of the project’s very objectives and has yielded the signing of agreements with other levels of government, is the “COCAP”. The project gave strong impetus to the development of production in San Juan (Argentina), Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) and Misiones (Paraguay) through the development of a methodology for including social cohesion as a priority on local political agendas. It also helped to improve the skills of the economic and social institutional agents of the territories to enhance their strategic positioning on national and international markets. For example, the territory of Misiones developed a series of interactions

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with public institutions, government secretariats and private organisations. For training processes, which were organised at three different plants, agreements were specifically signed between the authorities of Misiones and IPA (Paraguayan Institute of Crafts), SENATUR (National Secretariat for Tourism), the DEAg (Agricultural Land Advisory Services - Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock) and the CAH (Agricultural Loans Facility - Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock).

It should be added that for the interventions of intermediate levels (departmental, regional, provincial), articulation at municipal/council level *“is essential in order to achieve the project’s objectives”*, according to the project “Institutional Innovation”, coordinated by Provincial Government of Santa Fe. The same applies to the EU-LA-WIN project, whose representative in the state of Paraná (Brazil) emphasised that *“the main work of the project has been multilevel governance. It has involved all levels of the public Administration –provincial, state and municipal– with the key agents of civil society”*.

As can be observed, for one reason or another most URB-AL III territories opted to generate synergies and links with other levels of government and understood the importance of this aspect as a measure to ensure greater sustainability and effectiveness in the public policies being implemented. The representative of the “RESSOC” project in Managua therefore stated: *“The success*

*of ‘RESSOC’ in Managua lies in capacity of articulation and coordination among different government institutions such as the National Institute of Technology and the Ministry of Education, international organisations such as UNDP, FAO and UN Habitat, and other, mainly Italian, cooperation projects”*.



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### 3. Towards the generation, reinforcement and consolidation of local public policies

One of the most innovative aspects of the Programme can be found in its specific objective: [...] **social cohesion processes and policies** [...]. On this occasion, URB-AL III in fact took a step forward from its earlier phases and targeted improved social cohesion through the implementation of LPPs. This advance represented an important challenge because, for the first time, a European Commission regional cooperation programme not only acknowledged the key role of local governments in social cohesion, but also highlighted the importance of local government public policies to achieve it. The Programme therefore reflects the specific nature of the agents involved (local public administrations) and invites them to undertake measures with an impact on their very nature: institutional reinforcement and improving their management and local governability capacity. Despite the consistency of the approach and its inclusion in URB-AL III award requirements, some territories did not envisage political bias in their activities as they were used to receiving support from and undertaking traditional development cooperation projects.

As the projects were progressively implemented and monitored, the difficulty in surpassing a project-oriented approach and shifting towards a policy process outlook became evident. In its role of interaction with projects designed to help meet the URB-AL III target, in late 2010 the OCO therefore created and applied a methodological initiative to explore, reflect on and reinforce the

public policies supported by the projects. This initiative, already mentioned in section 2.2 of this document (the part entitled *Step 1 of Identifying the contributions of the projects to local public policies*), has been implemented in 74% of URB-AL III territories.

From that time until the completion of the Programme, this initiative has been implemented on 55 occasions, with a view to encouraging territories to take a self-evaluation test so they could reflect on the progress made in their contributions to LPPs. It was thus hoped that the projects would adopt a different view of their measures and achievements. It is well known that evaluations tend to take project objectives as a benchmark in order to establish the extent to which and the reason why the results achieved either meet or do not meet the targets established in the initial design. The perspective encouraged by the OCO, however, both reflects and aims to establish, as a horizon common to projects, the suitability to the Programme from which they arose, the main purpose of which is to yield advances in LPPs addressed to improving social cohesion in their respective territories. Internal evaluation at halfway point thereupon prompted review, systematisation, or thorough examination so that each project could be measured with a view to extending the scope, common to different interventions, and to confirming its identity as Programme. In line with this approach, contributions to the LPPs were necessarily explored wherever projects were established to



support them: in the territories and local governments in Latin America. The focus of observation was not therefore the project defined as a consortium or partnership, but rather each of the Latin American territories involved.

In order to organise and facilitate self-evaluation, the OCO availed of a specific section of the model of 2011 Annual Operating Plan (point 2.4), organised into three main areas, namely: a) insertion of the project in local government public policies, b) sustainability and projection of the contributions of the project within local government public policies, and c) articulation of the project with the policies of other local governments and/or other levels of government in the country. To follow-up the definitions established in the Annual Operating Plans (AOPs), it also included the same section in the six-monthly project monitoring reports.

In order to obtain a Programme overview, the OCO has systematised analysis of point 2.4 of the Annual Operating Plans and Monitoring Reports of 2011 and 2012, the main conclusions of which are provided in this chapter of the Programme Report. The main result defining the process of impact in policy terms is the fact that over these years the **Programme has helped to promote and/or strengthen 131 local public policies** in a total of 74 territories where activities have been implemented. Of these, 8 themes common to partners stand out: economic development, environment, territorial planning, citizen participation,

cross-border cooperation, social and urban rehabilitation, citizen security and employment. All the public policies supported or encouraged by each partner are detailed in the publication by the OCO: [“Main achievements and impacts of the URB-AL III Programme”](#).

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To order the major advances in terms of generation, reinforcement and consolidation of public policies, this chapter is organised into the following sections:

1. Tangible changes that bring political and institutional advances generated through the implementation of projects (creation of new administrative units, regulatory advances, implementation of inter-sector meetings).
2. Possible changes in mentality regarding the definition of a public policy and appropriation by agents of the components with which to make public policies more effective (integrated and cross-cutting approaches, citizen participation mechanisms and articulation with regional agents).
3. Capacity to influence relevance and need for public policies at local or other governmental levels with regional decision-making capacity, to generate a higher degree of regional social cohesion (multilevel coordination, participation in the design of public policies of other levels of government).
4. Main sustainability measures of URB-AL III projects (political, economic and technical commitments, institutionalisation of multi-stakeholder and multi-level work meetings, territorial alliances).

### **3.1 Tangible changes that bring political and institutional advances generated through the implementation of projects**

In both documents on the systematisation of implementation of methodology *Step 1 of identifying the contributions of the projects to local public policies* (2011 and 2012), all the partners who completed point 2.4 of the monitoring and planning system expressed their conviction that they are making significant contributions to local public policies. Although in the first period it was not always easy for them to identify how interventions correspond to the specific institutional areas of their administrations, in the last year there was not only greater identification, but emphasis was also placed on the need to work on supported policies on an integrated and cross-cutting (i.e. inter-sectoral) basis. Progress was therefore made towards greater appropriation of a political process-oriented approach and an increase in more integrated political practices based on the implementation of projects. Another relevant fact is that nearly 80% of the territories indicate that the policies supported with URB-AL III measures predate the Programme, which thus indicates its capacity to articulate and reinforce itself institutionally through the measures implemented, while ensuring the measure has a greater capacity to take root and more relevance.

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### Main issues of the policies encouraged by URB-AL III projects

1. Local economic development and entrepreneurship policies
2. Environmental and waste management policies
3. Regional management and planning policies
4. Employment and migrant support policies
5. Citizen participation policies
6. Cross-border cooperation policies
7. Social and urban rehabilitation policies
8. Public security policies
9. Taxation policies
10. Institutional reinforcement policies

Significantly, around 30% of the responses analysed underline the fact that the interventions are supporting more than one policy at once, which indicates their capacity to weave together different sectors and areas from different governmental institutions.

Good rapport with local institutions can meanwhile be observed and this is something that occurs most frequently in smaller municipalities or in cases where interventions are clearly one tool (of several) designed by local governments in accordance with their plans and strategies. This is the case of the “Institutional Innovation” project, coordinated by the Government of the Province of Santa Fe (Argentina) and the “Living in Goes” project, led by Montevideo (Uruguay).

It is interesting to analyse the different levels of impact of the interventions on public policies.

Some projects have “used” the measures financed by URB-AL III to boost the results of an existing local public policy without altering the strategic planning. In other words, by providing the intervention with economic and/or human resources, they have been able to perform more measures, extend the number of beneficiaries or speed up the envisaged schedule. One example is the “International Line. Union of Two Peoples” project, coordinated by Ponta Porã (Brazil). Others have tried to prompt qualitative improvement in the policy and not simply increase its results. This is the case of the emiDel project, which managed to reinforce the local economic development policy being implemented. An example is the case of La Paz (Bolivia) through the generation of a model to manage municipal economic development and its territorial tool, the plural entrepreneurship model.

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Some have gone a step further and attempted institutional reinforcement or, in other words, increased their general capacity to undertake public policies (greater capacity to design, plan, execute and evaluate their public policies). This is the case of the “Comprehensive Land Management” project, coordinated by Puerto Cortés, which has involved the production of a land register, has provided the territories involved a Geographic Information System (GIS) and has drawn up territory-oriented development plans. Another similar case is the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association, which has helped endow the municipalities concerned with shared structures to improve planning and the planning of common public policies.

Mention should lastly be made to other types of interventions that have furthered their management capacity and attempted to improve conditions for local governance. This has involved improving relations among the local administration and other levels of government or with different territorial agents. This is the case, for example, of the “Institutional Innovation” project, coordinated by the Government of the Province of Santa Fe (Argentina).

Some projects have, meanwhile, managed to incorporate new issues on the local public policy agenda and thus their involvement in the Programme has helped to provide impetus or to start a new LPP. One

such example is the “Tourist Borders” project the pilot measure of which to create a tourist corridor among the participating municipalities involved has laid the groundwork for future implementation of a common public tourism development policy among the project partners. Another example is the “PACEF” project, which has given rise to an LPP aimed at boosting women’s employment by involving the departments that deal with issues of employment and gender. In the Central Department of Paraguay, the Offices of Human Capital are therefore an initial step towards focusing on the issue of women’s employment as one of the strategic elements to be included on the local government agenda.

To conclude, in one way or another most territories have been strengthened politically and institutionally as a result of the implementation of the projects. This highlights one of the key, innovative aspects of the Programme, which is **the shift from a “cooperation project” to a public policy process** and the appropriateness of supporting institutional reinforcement and local governability as an essential step to meeting the public’s needs. The following aspects illustrate some tangible changes that bring in such progress: 1) **the creation of new administrative units**, 2) **regulatory advances**, 3) **the institutionalisation of inter-sectoral meetings**.

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The implementation of some projects has indeed encouraged the creation of new units within executing public administrations that did not exist prior to the start of the projects. In the “Tourist Borders” project, for example, a Planning and Projects Unit has been established and will be installed in the municipalities once external aid ceases.

Another example is the “RESSOC” project, specifically in the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador, the implementation of which has prompted the creation of two new units in the Council of Mayors of the Metropolitan Area (COAMS): the gender and the social cohesion units. According to the Secretary General *“although all the municipalities have gender units, with the creation of this within the COAMS there is now more dialogue and coordination, which reinforces the scope of action of the Council of Mayors”*.

Other projects have also created new units, albeit not associated with the public policies supported but rather with the creation of a new policy line linked to **international cooperation**. This is the case of the “Local Policies on the Prevention of Violence in Marginal Urban Areas”, coordinated by the state of Pernambuco. Its coordinator therefore stated: *“the project allows for work with other ministries and other levels of government and civil society. URB-AL III has facilitated involvement in cooperation and we hope that this is a path that will continue after URB-AL III. We already have a proposal for*

*the creation of a unit of decentralised cooperation on security”* (which was indeed established in May 2013).

As regards regulatory aspects, some projects have promoted or passed new laws, as is the case of the “COCAP” project. Within this project in the province of San Juan (Argentina), a regulation was passed that made the project the legal authority to manage community funds. According to the coordinator *“this was not in the province and means the project can be directly assumed as its own by the Ministry of Economic Development.”* Also in San Juan, a draft bill has been drawn up for the creation of a financial agency as a result of the URB-AL project. According to the project coordinator *“for the first time the province will have a local agency to streamline access to credit for small farmers currently outside the finance circuit, to reduce costs and to redirect resources”*.

Another example is the “PACEF” project, specifically in the province of Buenos Aires, in which a legislative proposal to regulate the Local Gender Policy Plan has been submitted to the Chamber of Deputies of the Province. Prior to the URB-AL III project, the Plan existed but only as an outline, as indicated by its coordinator *“the project is innovating because gender legislation did exist previously but only in general principle. The current proposal will, however, specifically regulate the Local Plan and this is being developed by the PACEF team”*.

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Another project that has also advanced in terms of new legislation is the “Comprehensive Land Management” project, which has drawn up and adopted new land registry platforms in Tela, Puerto Cortés, Omoa and Puerto Barrios in different municipal councils as a new legal regulation.

Lastly, one of the most common advances in most of the projects has been the institutionalisation of inter-sectoral meetings and the establishment of mechanisms of coordination with other agents in the territory.

A good example, once again, is “COCAP” in which different ideas factories or work meetings among different agents in the three territories have been established. The ideas factories are sites for debate and the formulation of ideas that involve the main agents (administration, society and private sector) of a particular sector of production. They are intended to encourage participation and partnerships among traditionally fragmented producers, to draw up proposals and to seek solutions to common problems, which are later discussed at think tanks formed by project managers and the corresponding authorities. This new formula has met with great acceptance by both the public and the private sectors. According to one small producer, with “‘COCAP’ we have been able to share experiences among small

*producers. In San Juan we were previously very isolated, but now benefit from one another’s inputs and from sharing everyday experiences”,* while according to one representative of the provincial administration *“we initially encountered a lot of resistance; it was hard to make them understand that we could help them build and manage viable projects. But now there is a commitment on the part of the producers, who are aware of the benefits of partnerships and of working together”.*

Another example is the “EU-LA-WIN” project, which has implemented territorial agreements to reinforce social and economic networks to promote and increase the production of goods and services in the departmental and local area, and integrate resources and skills. According to its technical coordinator: *“Through the URB-AL III Programme, we have managed to encourage the involvement of all the region’s agents and of different levels of government in the planning and implementation of local development policies and tools”.*

Mention should lastly be made to the “Tourist Borders” project that in order to revitalise its territory by means of what is known as the “Andean Way” and to recognise and enhance the value of Aymara and Quechua culture, has also given rise to public-private partnerships among municipalities and territorial agents (networks of hotels, museums, restaurants, llama caravans,

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religious centres, etc.). According to its coordinator in Latin America, *“the good thing about the project is that we have learned not to work in isolation but rather to develop synergies among all the institutions and private agents in the territory; what the territory has articulated, through the project, on the basis of the Tourism and Environmental Action Plan”*.

### **3.2 Possible changes in mentality regarding the definition of a public policy and appropriation by agents of the components with which to make public policies more effective**

One of the aspects that best highlights the contribution of URB-AL III to LPPs is the shift in perception as to what a public policy is and the identification and implementation by many regions of innovative policy measures to increase local social cohesion. The practical appropriation of different aspects is therefore significant: **comprehensive and strategic management, a cross-cutting approach, mechanisms of citizen participation and the creation of regional partnerships (public and private)** the result of which is greater transparency and joint civic responsibility.

Different experiences are to be found in incorporating a more

**integrated approach.** These include the “INTEGRATION” project, coordinated by Stuttgart (Germany), the partner cities of which (Chihuahua and Guadalajara in Mexico, Bogotá in Colombia, Quito in Ecuador and São Paulo in Brazil) have created and implemented sustainable and integrated urban planning procedures on an interdisciplinary basis and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, particularly the public. Mention should also be made of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (El Salvador) and the “RESSOC” project in which there has been progress in the creation of a policy with a metropolitan scope and a more comprehensive institutional outlook (integrated strategy) that covers employment, environment and education.

For their part, partners in the “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management” project have assumed a more comprehensive and strategic outlook to the territory. According to its coordinator, *“the project has generated a more comprehensive reflection of the territory that has shifted from a notion of a one-off to a longer term, more comprehensive intervention that is also evident in a change of mentality in all territories towards multidisciplinary work, both regarding the team structure and the broader and more comprehensive approach of the public policy”*. This outlook has prompted progress in terms of cross-cutting and inter-sectoral management and the creation of mixed teams (planners with social technicians).

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The generation, impetus and/or reinforcement of consultation and citizen participation mechanisms highlights the appropriation of a public policy approach more in line with the approach of the Programme and signals a shift in mentality with regard to public policy. As it is one of the core aspects of intervention, almost all territories create or enhance areas for participation. These involve councils, forums, meetings and other bodies of coordination and deliberation. Participation is also reinforced with other mechanisms such as workshops, exchanges and sites of different kinds in which information and guidance are shared.

In some cases, even, participation is not conceived as a working method or as an accessory, but rather as a core objective of some interventions. The projects “Institutional Innovation”, “Diverse People, Equal People”, “Living in Goes” and “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management”, in which participation is an inherent aspect of and the focus of the interventions, are significant in this respect.

At a time of consolidation of Latin American democracies and of simultaneous disappointment and loss of confidence of society with public institutions and with the transparency and effectiveness of mechanisms of representation, these experiences represent attempts at “joint responsibility” of the citizenry and are likely to become new laboratories for

more advanced democratic practices. The “Institutional Innovation” project has involved the creation of a structure of instruments of citizen participation and inter-sectoral articulation that range from committees and inter-ministerial meetings to ministerial coordination and reflect a new way of managing provincial and public affairs. According to the Governor of the province of Santa Fe (Argentina), the project has encouraged “*policies that establish a hierarchy among human beings, that prioritise the value of what is public, of citizen participation and of the role of social initiatives. The key to this process is participation, and the local environment is an exceptional place for that*”.

Mechanisms of citizen participation also have brought a change in the mentality of territorial agents who have “appropriated” the instruments used, with the resulting change in relation to the local public administration and a feeling of involvement and with the legitimacy of rising levels of accountability and transparency. According to the coordinator in the field of the “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management” project in Antigua (Guatemala): “*Community knowledge in the management of public affairs can be assessed with this technique while it also ensures that the community assumes responsibility for evaluating and caring for public resources and for reinforcing identifying values. Community participation in defining local policies*



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*generates processes of empowerment, which include all population groups: young people, women, the elderly, and indigenous peoples, etc. Community leaders, in turn, are more representative and improve their lobbying capacity and advocacy”.*

An anecdotal achievement representative of the extent to which tools and mechanisms of citizen participation have been of use is the participatory Geographic Information System (GIS), the application of which in Antigua has disclosed a community of 80 people who were previously unknown in the municipality. The project has involved the new community in the local administration and now this community has been taken into consideration in local public management with the formation of a COCODES (Community Development Council).

Mention should also lastly be made to the “IDEAL” project in San Miguel de Tucumán (Argentina), which contributed clearly and decisively to citizen participation, particularly in the issue of improving environmental quality, as the involvement of families and education centres has yielded a remarkable acquisition of habits (waste separation) that enhance the environmental quality of the local surroundings and, therefore, common welfare.

The exercise of new instruments of consultation and citizen participation

therefore point to three of the components of public social cohesion policies encouraged by the URB-AL III Programme: **legitimacy, participation and recognition.**

Another of the common patterns of many partners has been articulation with agents in the territory. From a territorial approach to development, many participating local authorities have encouraged measures in which local government has emerged as a catalyst for development and a public leader with the ability to generate alliances among all the local agents. There therefore exist several forms of action: public-private agreements, creation of multi-stakeholder meetings, agreements with different institutions, etc.

As far as agreements are concerned, many have signed partnerships with universities, thus highlighting the importance of the academic world in improving technology and providing training in different fields. A prime example is the project “Regional Integration”, coordinated by the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association, which has established a partnership with the Eastern University Centre (CUNORI) of the University of San Carlos de Guatemala to ensure the development, administration and lasting duration of the Tri-national Territorial Information System (SINTET), which has allowed for shared management of information among the municipalities of each association. According to the coordinator of the institution, *“with this system new*

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*doors will be opened not only for the Tri-national Association, but also for the CUNORI, as it will be implemented as a working tool for students of education centres and formal public-private institutions who wish to obtain real and updated data on what is happening around the Trifinio region”.*

Another example is emiDel, which has recently established a university alliance for local development. This alliance involves universities participating in the project in the development of the “Local Economic Development Specialisation Course” addressed both to encouraging ongoing cooperation in preparing and training new attendees and to creating synergies for future collaboration. The partners are: Barcelona Autonomous University (Spain), San Pablo Bolivian Catholic University (Bolivia), the Latin American Center for Human Economy (Uruguay) and José Matías Delgado University (El Salvador).

Another example is the “Living in Goes” project and its work in Montevideo, which has led to the creation of an “Economic Development Centre”, a board of coordination formed by 26 institutions designed to promote strategies to increase local production and employment opportunities and strengthen links among public and private agents and institutions. The centre is located in the Goes district and is aimed at all unemployed people

who require support or advice on seeking employment and promoting entrepreneurial initiatives.

Likewise, the Agency for the Employability of Women has been established in the Central Department of Paraguay within the “PACEF” project, which institutionalises the Training Agreements resulting from the synergy of numerous agents involved in improving conditions for training and the employment of women. It is interesting here to note that the project has overcome the initial lack of trust between the public and private sectors while, according to the project coordinator in Paraguay, municipalities are currently in permanent contact with the private sector with regard to skills and training plans, etc.

Such initial resistance has also arisen in other territories, which also reveals the change of perception that public-private articulation has meant for some local authorities. Many were unaware of the potential offered by such mechanisms. This is the case, for example, of León (Nicaragua) within the “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management” project. According to its coordinator “*URB-AL III has raised awareness of the existence of urban methodologies for inclusion of private resources in public affairs, as in the case of development rights for example*”.

Although there are many further examples in the 74 URB-AL III

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territories of regional articulation practices that cannot be detailed in this report, URB-AL III has indeed provided a laboratory of innovative experiences featuring a territorial development approach much more in line with the new trends of governance that are appearing worldwide.

### **3.3 Capacity to influence relevance and need for public policies at local or other governmental levels with regional decision-making capacity, to generate a higher degree of regional social cohesion**

Although local public policies are suitable for achieving greater social cohesion in territories, they are also often distinguished by their considerable complexity and by the financial constraints of different provincial, regional or state levels of the administration. Many LPPs are therefore formed by combining state- or regional-level programmes with local government measures while trying to take into account local specificities and making the most where possible of external contributions. Local governments are thus forced to coordinate with other levels of government in order to implement their own public policies and try to influence the

policies and agendas of other levels of government by which their powers, capacities and resources are limited or constrained.

As previously noted in point 2.6 of this report, the OCO has therefore encouraged sites for multilevel coordination at which participants in URB-AL III discuss, exchange and negotiate with supra-local levels of government, the policies of which directly influence the territories. Likewise, through the follow-up and accompaniment system of projects to identify their contributions to the LPP, a specific area (the third) was designed with regard to the articulation of the project with the policies of other local governments and/or of the country's other levels of government. The OCO has therefore also been able to contribute by helping projects to achieve greater capacity for multi-level influence and to identify and systematise measures undertaken by the projects in this regard.

Many projects have indicated in their Annual Operating Plans and monitoring reports that they are running measures of **multilevel coordination** in order to **generate synergies, direct influence and participation in areas for the design of supra-local policies**. There are therefore different acts of coordination significant among which are solid waste, regional planning and cross-border cooperation projects.

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In matters of solid waste, for example, the “Rubbish is Useful” project in the territory of Surco (Peru) has enabled the region to communicate with the Ministry or Secretariat for the Environment to coordinate with national environmental management policies. In the same project in Cuenca (Ecuador), links have been established with the Ministry of Public Health to guarantee vaccinations and medical assistance for recyclers, and with the Ministry of Education for cooperation on opening night nurseries for the children of recyclers.

Another project that has had a direct impact on strengthening agreements with other levels of government is “COCAP”, in which there has been coordination in all its intervened territories: Province of San Juan (Argentina), State of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) and Department of Misiones (Paraguay). In Argentina, associations and agreements have been developed between different factories and national and provincial bodies (between the National University of San Juan and the San Juan Chamber of Information and Communication Technologies, and between the Ministry of Production and the unions involved). Likewise, in Paraguay the ICT factory has established an agreement with the secretariats of the Ministry of Production and Economic Development and with bodies from other ministries in the Province such as the Secretariat for Public Management of the Ministry of Treasury and Finance, the Technological Unit of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Systems Section of the Ministry of Education.

In terms of increased capacity of political influence, the “PACEF” project has performed significant work in Cochabamba (Bolivia), where it has intervened in the production of the draft Departmental Statute of Autonomy and has taken part in the design of Municipal Charters with a view to including a gender approach in them. The project has, in other words, taken part in the generation of tools to support the process that will regulate public policies at the level of local governments, which can then replicate a standardised version of this model through the Association of Municipalities of Cochabamba (AMDECO), which represents the 47 municipalities of Cochabamba.

Inter-institutional coordination among AMDECO, the Cochabamba Departmental Association of Councilwomen (ADECO) and the Association of Deputies and Senators (Cochabamba) also prompted active participation in the design of methodologies and tools for application in the process of decentralisation in progress in the country, in which the project is in charge of preparing the gender proposal within the Departmental Statute of Autonomy. According to the project coordinator, influence runs in two directions: from the municipalities to the Department and, on the basis of participation in Department policies, to the municipalities *“the influence of the project stretches beyond the province of Cochabamba because of the development*

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*of the departmental statute of autonomy, while active participation ensures that the municipal charters are extended to the other towns. This synergy is accomplished through inter-institutional work meetings”.*

As regards the capacity to formulate policy proposals at other levels of government, a prime example is the “UNE” project, the intervention of which in Santa Rosa de Copán (Honduras) has succeeded in influencing national policy on local economic development. Another case is the “Institutional Innovation” project, which is a member of the Federal Planning Council (COFEPLAN), coordinated by the Undersecretary of Territorial Planning of Public Investment in the Province of Santa Fe and intended to contribute to the drafting of the bill on territorial land planning. According to its coordinator, this participation is important as *“it is intended precisely to influence a model of territorial planning based on the regionalisation and decentralisation that it is intended to impact and to reinforce with implementation of the URB-AL III project”.*

Furthermore, several projects have manifested that multilevel coordination brings complementarity to LPPs and endorsement and recognition of the actions of local governments by higher levels of government. The “Institutional Innovation” project has also shown that as a result of coordination between the Government

Plan and Strategic Plan *“one of the major innovations that has occurred in terms of government management has been the establishment of a pattern of complementarity and permanent dialogue between these two instruments of planning”.*

The opinion of the coordinator of the “Tourist Borders” project should also be mentioned by way of an example: *“multilevel articulation yielded regional alliances and supports with central governments in the provision of resources to direct beneficiaries to enhance the value of tourism services and assist and accompany and provide backing to the objectives of the project”.* Of particular significance are *“the Central Government of Peru, through its Ministry of Tourism, which has been associated with the project and linked with the development of the Andean Aymara region as a whole; the Central Government of Bolivia, through its Ministry of Cultures, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism, which has supported the project partners, and also the support of the Ministry of Rural Development of Bolivia through the ‘VALE’ project, which works in coordination with the project”.*

According to representatives of this project, its implementation has even provided a starting point for a new network of relations: *“no sub-national municipality has achieved such articulation and positioning on the authorities of central government; we are being invited by our partners in central government to participate at national and*

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*international events as an example of articulation and of generation of border projects for improving their inhabitants' quality of life".*

### 3.4 Sustainability measures

Sustaining measures taken through an international cooperation programme always represents a challenge and a concern for the agents involved. URB-AL III is no exception and, furthermore, given the specific nature of its agents (local public administrations) and its goal of promoting and reinforcing LPPs to help prompt social cohesion, sustainability has been an essential aspect of the path covered. In order to help projects truly appropriate the impacts achieved and thus yield continuity when aid ends, the OCO has promoted different activities.

In training, it has provided a specific sustainability course aimed at all members the final assignment of which has been the preparation of a route map intended to establish continuity measures. Training has also been accompanied with the preparation of a manual on sustainability that has been shared with all projects and worked on therein. In addition, given the importance of the issue, the third and most recent URBsocial held in Bogotá in October 2012, focused on the continuity of the results achieved and on a search for models that will

help local governments to meet the growing demands of their citizens. Hence, on the basis of the motto "Governing locally: towards an inclusive and sustainable future", the future of decentralised cooperation underpinned the activities. According to Vittorio Tonutti, representative of EuropeAid/G2 at the closing ceremony: *"thanks to the Programme, many have discovered policy as the art of making possible what seemed impossible. These four years have seen the achievement of many specific results that can be communicated with figures. We now have to make sure these results last over time"*.

All the projects have therefore worked with a long-term outlook and have gradually established and implemented specific measures for the maintenance and continuity of the results achieved in political terms. The OCO has issued a **publication** that sets out the key measures of sustainability of each of the 20 projects. These notably include the commitments of sub-national participating governments (both in finance and in human and technical resources), the institutionalisation of the work meetings with other regional agents (private and public), of sites and mechanisms for citizen participation and the establishment of agreements with other levels of government. One example is the "Melgodepro" project in Pimampiro (Ecuador) in which approval of a byelaw of the Local Development Offices (UPE) not only prompted the

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institutionalisation of these units, but also established a commitment to their economic maintenance by the local government and SMEs. Also significant is the “Local public policies for the prevention of violence” project, the continuity of which was guaranteed by the pledge made by the authorities of the intervened territories. As mentioned previously, at the Secretariat for Defence of Pernambuco (Brazil), a specific decentralised cooperation office that focuses on citizen security issues has therefore been established. The government of Loreto (Peru) has pledged to continue promoting the Regional Programme for the Prevention of Violence and the Municipality of Paysandú (Uruguay) is working to establish a School of Citizen Security and has established a framework agreement with the Ministry of the Interior of Uruguay to institutionalise cooperation in this area.

Another example is “RESSOC”, the results of which in the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador are partly guaranteed by the integration of project staff as full-time OPAMMS (planning office) personnel. Mention should lastly be made to the creation of a bi-national association within the “Comprehensive Land Management” project, which will allow for follow-up of the commitments arising from the project. The coordinator in Puerto Cortés (Honduras) therefore stated: *“the project has enabled us to develop public social and territorial*

*cohesion policies at all political levels through which relations with the public and national institutions have been strengthened, which has culminated in the creation of an association formed by the four partner municipalities that will continue to work to monitor the results and/or products obtained”.*

In addition to the sustainability measures mentioned, some projects have also received new external financial support for their continuity. The “Tourist Borders” project, for example, the first of 20 that completed their work within URB-AL III, has continued as the “Andean Way” with financial support from the European Union Delegation in Bolivia. European Delegation funding has also been obtained in Ecuador for the “Rubbish is Useful” project in its intervened territory in Lago Agrio through the project “Lago Agrio Clean City” for the extension from 3 to 38 districts of the activities covered by the project associated with selection of waste.

Lastly, mention should be made to the Lempa River Tri-national Border Association, which has signed an agreement with PRENSANCA II, a European Union-funded programme of the General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SICA), establishing a commitment to joint work aimed ultimately at establishing a public policy for food and nutritional security in the coming five years.





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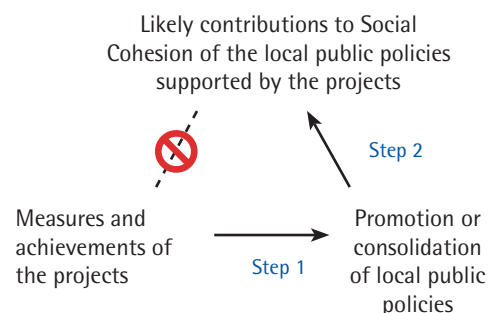
## 4. Reinforcement of local social cohesion en Latin America

Enhancing social cohesion in the 74 territories of Latin America was the great challenge launched by URB-AL III for the 20 selected projects. The OCO has thus devised several ways to help projects achieve the Programme's ultimate objective. The first step in doing so was to establish a clear, operational and agreed definition of a concept that was unknown to many Latin American agents and not very clearly defined by the EC in its award requirements. The definition adopted was: "A socially cohesive community on any scale, whether local, regional or national, depends on its members sharing a sense of **inclusion and belonging**, **participating** actively in public affairs, **recognising and tolerating differences** and enjoying a degree of **equality** in access to public goods and services and the distribution of income and wealth. All of this should take place in an environment where institutions generate **confidence and legitimacy** and where the rights of citizenship are fully exercised".<sup>17</sup>

As indicated by the words in bold, the OCO identified five benchmark components for social cohesion: participation, local government legitimacy, a sense of belonging,

recognition of others and equality/inclusion. As mentioned above, from the start of the URB-AL III, it was observed that local social cohesion could only be achieved through the implementation of public policies. It was clear therefore that Programme agents made no direct contribution to building a cohesive society, but rather indirect contributions in the form of public social cohesion policies.

This is illustrated below:



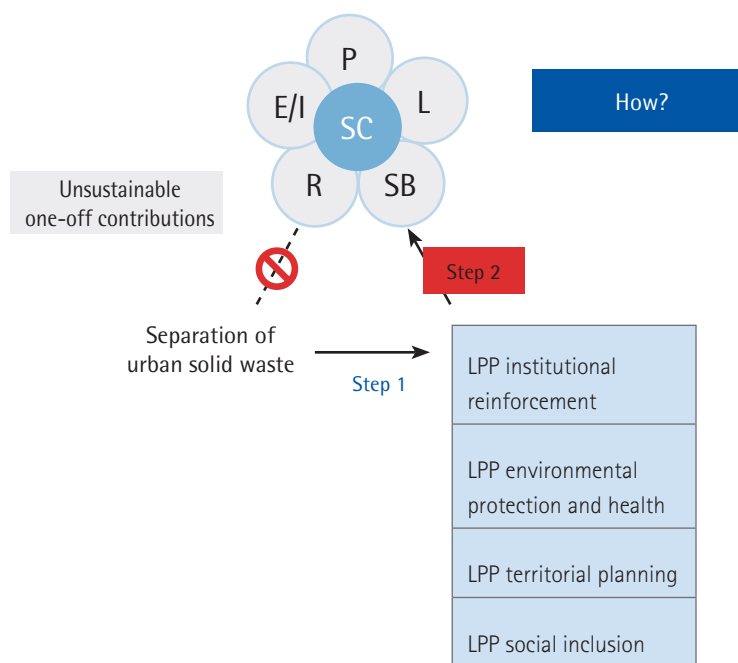
As the graph indicates, the steps follow the **monitoring system** produced by the OCO to accompany projects in achieving the specific objectives of URB-AL III. The first phase, the identification of the specific contribution of a project to the consolidation and promotion of sustainable LPPs, has been explained and discussed thoroughly in previous chapters. It is now time to **analyse and account for the results obtained in the second phase**. This, in other

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<sup>17</sup> See *Reference document of the URB-AL III Programme*, Orientation and Coordination Office, pp. 10-11.

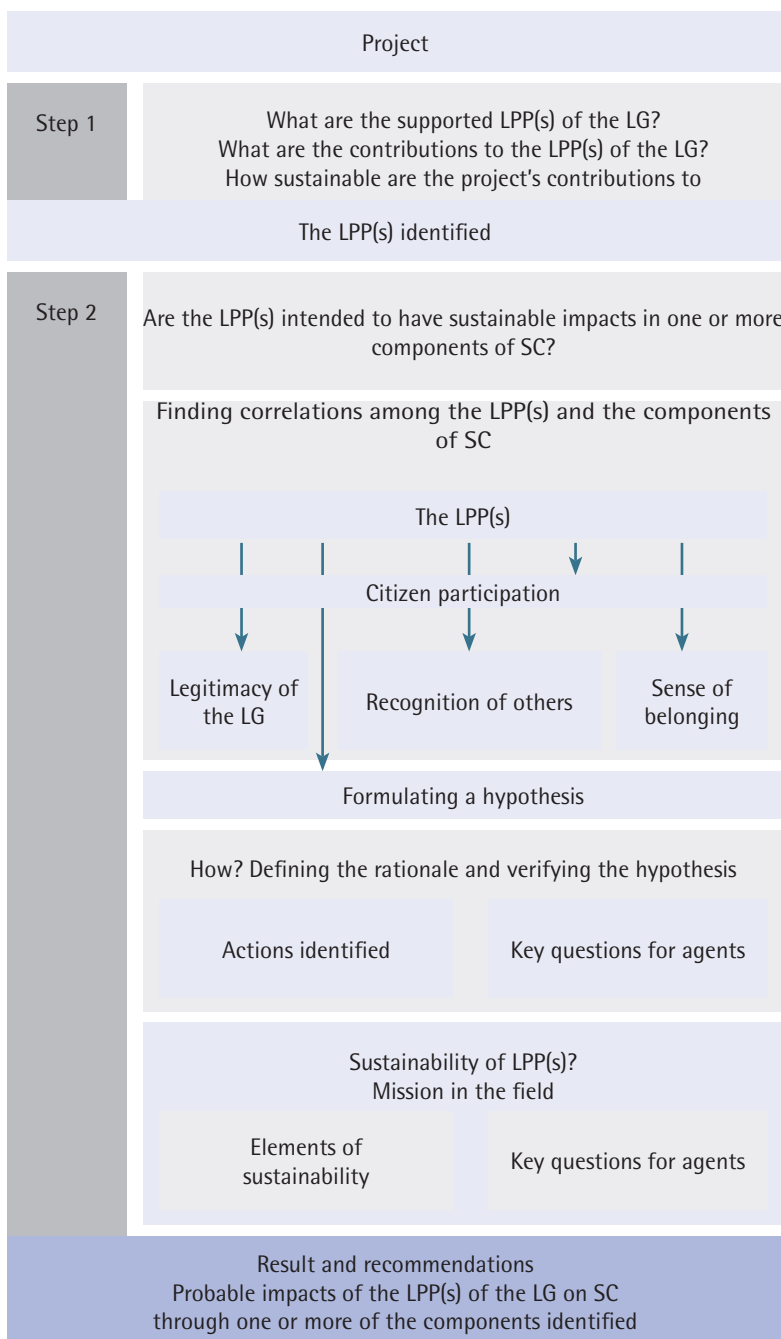
words, refers to an exploration of the way in which these public policies are oriented and intended to generate greater social cohesion or, in other words, the development and consolidation of one or more of the components that characterise it.

The logic of practice can be summarised graphically as follows:



Source: URB-AL III Programme Orientation and Coordination Office

## 4.1 Systemisation of methodology (step 1 and step 2)



Source: URB-AL III Programme  
 Orientation and Coordination Office

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Performance of this second phase required consideration of a series of hypotheses regarding the correlation between public policies and the five components, while a suite of 21 indicators were identified to “measure” whether the public policies supported by the projects were helping to enhance social cohesion. Fifteen missions of accompaniment to projects were subsequently undertaken to help them undertake this practice of self-evaluation and learning about whether the public policies supported or generated by their projects were helping to generate social cohesion.

## 4.2 Suite of indicators for each of the five components of local social cohesion

Indicators
<b>Participation</b>
Multi-stakeholder governance
Mechanism that integrates decisions by the public
Combats the negative phenomena of popular participation (cronyism, etc.)
<b>Legitimacy</b>
Capacity-building for public operators
Encourages and recognises the independence of civil society
Brings services to places of residence
Effective transparency mechanisms in public affairs
Promotes sustainable social agreements
Will to prevent and punish corruption
<b>Sense of belonging</b>
Strategic plan with future vision
Produces initiatives that strengthen the practice of shared values
Sites for coexistence
Promotion of the general interest over and above private interests
Mechanisms for mediation among sectors of the public in conflict

<b>Recognition of others</b>
Recognition and appreciation of differences
Assertive measures to favour groups subject to discrimination
<b>Equality and inclusion</b>
Increases equality of opportunities in accessing basic rights
Measures for the inclusion of specific groups
Guarantees compatibility of the development of the territory with sustainable reproduction of goods and environmental resources
Strengthens the services system in order to respond to situations of inequality and exclusion
Combats phenomena of social segregation

Source: URB-AL III Programme Orientation and Coordination Office

### 4.3 Analysis of the results yielded by the missions run by the OCO

The findings of the OCO's analysis of the results of the 15 missions should be viewed with some caution as although they dealt with a sample that covered 65% of URB-AL III projects, the 15 countries analysed only represented 22% of all agents who have implemented projects. They are therefore initial conclusions that point to some interesting trends on the path to local social cohesion.

The sample is nonetheless representative

of all Latin American contexts, of different urban or rural territories, and of all levels of local government: municipal or supra-municipal (associations of municipalities and intermediate governments that have participated in the projects). The partial nature of the indicators or components should also be taken into account (as limitations), given the difficulty in covering all aspects because of their social cohesion complexity. It is not therefore a scientific but rather a experimental analysis, which points to some significantly interesting aspects for those Latin American sub-national

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governments that wish to contribute to social cohesion in their territories by promoting LPP processes (in this case through a decentralised cooperation project).

#### 4.4 What dimensions and/or public policies have contributed most to progress in social cohesion?

Analysis has shown that contributions to social cohesion do not depend on the specific public policies implemented. It is however worth noting that those public policies with an impact more closely related to the five components have been policies of **economic and occupational development** (production dimension), and of **territorial planning and management** (territorial dimension).

Regarding policies with a **social dimension**, two characteristics can be emphasised: (1) those that work to improve access to and the quality of basic social services are not recognised by marginalised people as they cover all inhabitants as a whole; (2) because of their sectoral nature, LPPs for the inclusion of specific groups do not always generate a sense of belonging.

This does not mean they have less impact on social cohesion because flow intensity has been measured. It simply shows that LPPs in economic development and regional planning yield more diverse impacts.

#### 4.5 Through what components is social cohesion achieved?

The results of the analysis show that at least 70% of the URB-AL III projects yield contributions to social cohesion through the components. Specifically, the components most present in the performance of projects were (in order from most to least numerous): **participation** (100%), **legitimacy** (84%), **equality and inclusion** (77%), **sense of belonging** (74%) and **recognition of others** (60%).

The contribution to social cohesion through the **participation component** arose through the development of a multi-stakeholder governance system and/or mechanisms that include the decisions, opinions, needs and proposals of the interested population. In contrast, the third indicator proposed for this component (combats the negative phenomena of popular participation, cronyism) was identified in just one case. Five governments, moreover, managed to implement sustainable citizen participation LPPs that contribute to social cohesion through measures in the **civic dimension**: the regional government of Arica in Chile, (“UNE” project), the Municipality of Montevideo in Uruguay (“Living in Goes” project), the municipality of Santa Rosa de Copán in Honduras (“UNE” project), the departmental government of Antioquia in Colombia (“EU-LA-WIN” project), and the provincial government of Santa Fe in Argentina (“Institutional Innovation”

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project). With regard to the **legitimacy component**, almost all the countries analysed show they achieve legitimacy through measures corresponding to the proposed indicators. Five projects in fact perform measures that correspond to 4 of the 6 proposed indicators:

- “COCAP”: *San Juan (Argentina)* through an integrated LPP of economic development and employment.
- “INTEGRATION”: *Guadalajara (Mexico)* through an LPP of territorial planning and management to reduce imbalances.
- “Institutional Innovation”: *Santa Fe (Argentina)* through an LPP for the construction of an active citizenry.
- “Local Policies on the Prevention of Violence” in *Pernambuco (Brazil)* through the LPP developed.
- “Rubbish is Useful”: *Santiago de Surco (Peru)* (Environment and Health) through an LPP to improve access to and the quality of basic social services.

It is interesting to note that although these LPPs have different dimensions and involve different specific circumstances they have built similar mechanisms that yield contributions to social cohesion.

A sense of belonging has also been achieved by 74% of the LGs analysed, of

which two provided through 4 of the 5 indicators proposed:

- The LPP for institutional reinforcement of the “International Line” project in Ponta Porã (Brazil).
- The local public policy to prevent violence in Pernambuco (Brazil).

Almost 60% of the member territories analysed (12 of 15) yield contributions to social cohesion through the **recognition of others component** and two do so through the two proposed indicators:

- The LPP to construct an active citizenry of the “Institutional Innovation” project in Santa Fe (Argentina).
- The LPP for economic and occupational development of the “Tourist Borders” project in San Pedro de Quemes (Bolivia).

Of the 15 partner territories analysed, 14 have yielded contributions to social cohesion through the **equality and inclusion component**. Of these, 77.4% did so through one of the established indicators. One of these 24 LPPs generated equality/inclusion through the 5 established indicators:

- The LPP on territorial planning and management developed within the “INTEGRATION” project in Guadalajara (Mexico).

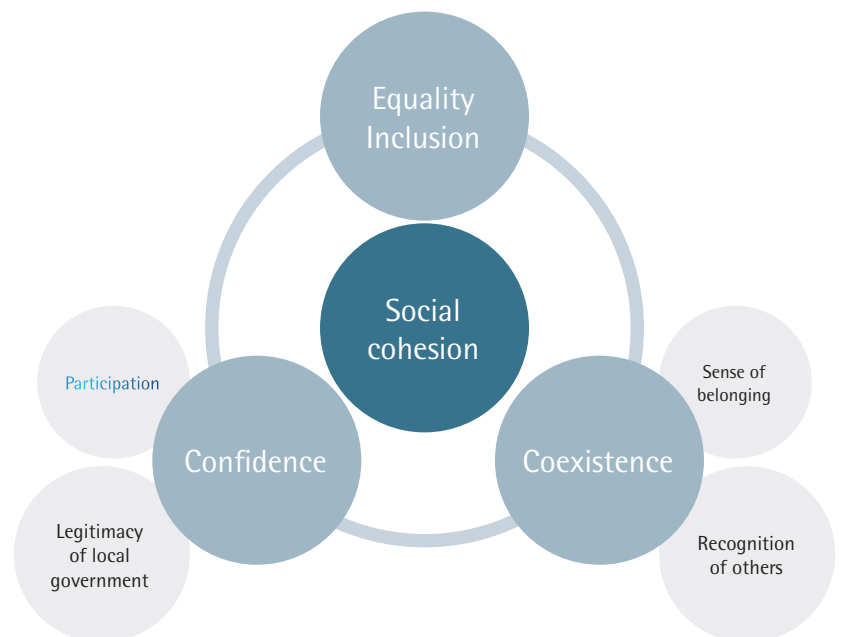


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The development of the methodology implemented was followed by the issue of a “[Methodological guide for identifying the contributions of local public policies to social cohesion](#)” intended to disseminate and spread the use of the tool in a practical and user-friendly format to any sub-state level government seeking to help to enhance social cohesion through its local public policies. The pedagogical version of the publication grouped the components into three in order to simplify the method. These were as follows:

1. Good level of coexistence within society
2. Equal opportunities and inclusion
3. Good degree of confidence of the citizenry.

On the basis of this interpretation, the URB-AL III projects analysed were found to develop mainly mechanisms to increase the public’s level of confidence.



#### 4.6 What conditions help contribute to social cohesion?

One of the most significant conclusions from the implementation of the tool and from the analysis of its results is that the projects and their partners have generated present and future contributions to social cohesion, which depend neither on the dimensions of the LPPs nor on the problems faced by the project or the type of territory or the economic and social context of the Latin

American country where the project is being run. Contributions to social cohesion arise from the design and implementation of local public policies or, in other words, from a specific way of operating, the most significant features of which include:

COMPONENTS	INDICATORS IDENTIFIED
Participation	Construction of a multi-stakeholder governance system.
	Use of mechanisms to integrate the opinions, needs and proposals of the interested population in decisions and in monitoring processes.
Legitimacy	Building the capacities of public operators.
	Promotion and recognition of the independence of civil society.
	Bringing services to places of residence.
	Effectiveness of transparency mechanisms in public affairs.
Belonging	Construction of a strategic plan with future vision.
	Production of initiatives that reinforce the practice of shared values.
	Creation of areas of coexistence.
	Promotion of the general interest over and above individual interests.

Recognition	Recognition and appreciation of differences.
	Assertive measures to favour groups subject to discrimination.
Equality and inclusion	Increase in equality of opportunities in access to basic rights.
	Measures for the inclusion of specific groups.
	Measures to guarantee the compatibility of regional development with the sustainable reproduction of goods and environmental resources.
	Reinforcement of the system of services to respond to inequalities and to inclusion.
	Measures that combat phenomena of spatial segregation.

“Multi-stakeholder governance”, “creation of mechanisms that integrate the decisions of the public” and the “implementation of strategic plans with a future vision” were the indicators with the greatest presence.

It can therefore be concluded that the contribution to social cohesion depends neither on the dimensions nor on the public policies supported, but essentially on the work methodology applied through measures that yield greater scope in one of the five components. Further information may be found in the document [“The contributions of the URBAL III Programme to social cohesion in Latin America”](#).

#### 4.7 Is there a successful path to social cohesion?

The analysis performed reveals a possible virtuous circle or successful path in the search for social cohesion: development of **integrated public policies of economic development and employment and/or of territorial planning and management** to reduce imbalances, possibly supplemented by policies to **improve access to and the quality of basic social services** and/or sectoral policies for the **inclusion of marginalised publics** yield contributions to social cohesion conditional upon:

/implementing strategic plans with a future vision that will prompt a sense of **belonging** to the territory of its inhabitants;

/implementing assertive measures to favour groups who are subject to discrimination in order to ensure they are **recognised**;

/reinforcing both the system of services to build responses to inequalities and also inclusion, and to bring services to places of residence, capacity-building for public operators with a view to increasing equal opportunities in basic rights and generating **equality, inclusion and legitimacy of local government**;

/building a multi-stakeholder governance system, mechanisms that integrate the decisions of the public, and promoting and acknowledging the independence of civil society, which generates participation of inhabitants and therefore legitimises local government.



Source: URB-AL III Programme Orientation and Coordination Office

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## 4.8 URB-AL III best practices identified

The above analysis can be used to identify experiences of partner territories analysed that carried out best practices that can act as benchmarks in search for a successful path to social cohesion. In keeping with the logic of the proposed methodology, identification was based on the components and their associated indicators:

**Participation.** Examples of scope for greater participation through the construction of a multi-stakeholder governance system and the use of mechanisms to integrate the opinions, needs and proposals of the interested population in decisions and in monitoring processes.

Territories: the regional government of Arica in Chile, (“UNE” project), the municipality of Montevideo in Uruguay (“Living in Goes” project), the municipality of Santa Rosa de Copán in Honduras (“UNE” project), the departmental government of Antioquia in Colombia (“EU-LA-WIN” project), the provincial government of Santa Fe in Argentina (“Institutional Innovation” project).

**Legitimacy of local government,** through capacity-building for public operators, the encouragement and recognition of the independence of civil society, bringing services to places of residence, and the effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure transparency in public affairs.

Territories: department of San Juan in Argentina (“COCAP” project), municipality of Guadalajara in Mexico (“INTEGRATION” project), province of Santa Fe in Argentina (“Institutional Innovation” project), state of Pernambuco in Brazil (“Citizen Security” project), Santiago de Surco in Peru (“Rubbish is Useful” project).

**Sense of belonging** through the construction of a strategic plan with a future vision, the production of initiatives that reinforce the practice of shared values, the creation of sites for coexistence, and the promotion of the general interest over and above individual interests.

Territories: cross-border municipalities in the Trifinio region (Guatemala/Honduras/El Salvador) from the “Promoting Social Cohesion and Territorial Regional Integration in the Border Towns of the Central American Trifinio Region” project.

**Recognition of others** through acknowledgement and appreciation of differences based on assertive measures to favour groups who are subject to discrimination (indigenous people, women, young people, informal workers).

Territories: the province of Santa Fe in Argentina (“Institutional Innovation” project), the municipality of San Pedro de Quemes in Bolivia in the “Tourist Borders” project.

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*Equality and inclusion* through increasing equality of opportunities in access to basic rights, measures for the inclusion of specific groups, guaranteeing the compatibility of territorial development with the sustainable reproduction of goods and environmental resources, reinforcing the service system in response to inequality and inclusion, and measures to combat phenomena of spatial segregation.

Territories: municipality of Guadalajara in Mexico (“INTEGRATION” project).

Despite initial difficulties in introducing an issue with content that was initially often seen as “Eurocentric” by Latin American agents, it can now be asserted that in most intervened territories of URB-AL III projects, social cohesion has appeared on the political agenda and measures are being taken to enhance it through local public policies.

## 4.9 Summary

Although the analysis is based on sampling URB-AL III projects, with consideration for the results of the projects and the interaction among them and the OCO, Lot 1 projects as a whole have indeed featured **the social cohesion approach in the design and implementation of the public policies supported:**

1. generation of multi-stakeholder governance systems;
2. the creation of mechanisms that integrate decisions of the public;
3. the implementation of strategic plans with a future vision;
4. increasing equality of opportunities in access to basic rights;
5. impetus and recognition of civil society.



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## 5. Lessons learned and contributions of the URB-AL III Programme

### 5.1 Lessons learned

For the first time, the URB-AL Programme had an office (OCO), which also acted as a technical secretariat to support projects and ensured the Programme's objectives were achieved, over and above the specific targets of each approved project. A pledge to a European-Latin American partnership of sub-national governments, in accordance with the objectives of URB-AL (reinforcing EU-AL decentralised cooperation) was also made. Despite the difficulties, slowness and complexity of administrative and bureaucratic processes of public administrations in managing and implementing such consortia, the approach is considered to have been successful. Indeed, the fact that the OCO was formed by local governments has prompted the generation of a European-Latin American local political agenda. Despite the different types of administrations involved, sensitivity in identifying the political and administrative issues and challenges of sub-national governments and their awareness of local institutional capacity have provided for clear and streamlined progress towards a common agenda. The initiative to create a body such as the OCO, formed by the same agents for which the Programme was intended, is therefore viewed very positively.

Similarly, the choice of subject –local social cohesion– prioritised by the European-Latin American political agenda is also considered suitable

and apt. After four years of work, the effectiveness of working with a specific cooperation programme on a priority and strategic issue of the 2007-2013 Regional Planning Document for Latin America has become apparent. Local social cohesion has indeed now been established as a policy agenda in these territories, partnerships have been generated and processes have been initiated to ensure continuity in the applicability of the subject matter as a priority issue in the cooperation relations between the EU and LA given that it remains a key issue in the region. The coordinator of the “Urban and Territorial Participatory Management” project of the Tuscany Region, Italy, therefore states: *“partners have been able to share tools and methodology with one another and with other projects to yield new areas of interconnection. The project has also given rise to clarification of the idea of social cohesion, thus prompting a new political outlook that has helped to increase the institutional commitment of all partners”*.

In line with the previous point, URB-AL III took a firm decision to generate and bolster processes and public policies and attempt to go beyond a project-oriented logic and work from a process-based perspective to ensure real appropriation of the subject matter by local public administrations. It is now evident that this lesson learned has been significant and innovative and has yielded the implementation or reinforcement of 131 public policies by the 20 URB-AL III social cohesion projects that contribute



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to social cohesion. Work from a public policy process-oriented perspective has allowed many regional agents to change their outlook from more traditional cooperation based on a short-term project. This change has been reflected in greater confidence in local institutions, which has helped to enhance their legitimacy. For example, according to the Managua representative of the “RESSOC” project: *“RESSOC has helped to generate greater legitimacy as the dynamic was previously for projects to come to the community and then disappear, whereas now we have raised medium-term expectations that they will be achieved and people now do see that they are completed, which builds trust”*. Vittorio Tonutti, representative of EuropeAid/G2 (European Commission) meanwhile concluded at the last URBsociAL held in Bogotá: *“URB-AL III has helped to build the most important legacy that the public could wish for: politicians with a passion for the common good and committed to implementing policies in the public interest”*.

Of note are some of the conclusions drawn from the workshop “Discussion on the present and future of Euro-Latin American decentralised cooperation. URB-AL III community contributions”, organised by the OCO to coincide with URBsociAL in Bogotá (October 2012). The project partners emphasised that one of the most important aspects of URB-AL III had been the shift in perspective from project to public policy: understanding and learning to make policies with a

focus on territorial and multi-level governance and issues addressed as part of social cohesion. The OCO organised this workshop to contribute to the process of consultation with non-state agents and local authorities conducted by the EC with a view to its communication on the new policy of cooperation with Latin American sub-national governments that will establish the bases for the new 2014-2020 Programme. The debate, which involved 160 elected representatives and technical personnel from sub-national governments in 25 countries (18 Latin American and 6 European), yielded the document [contributed by the URB-AL III Programme to EuropeAid for its new programme](#).

Another finding of the workshop participants was that URB-AL III demonstrated that when social cohesion policies are implemented locally rather than dependant solely on national policy, then progress is faster and more effective and efficient. The success of a decentralised cooperation model that advocates greater multilevel dialogue and a territorial approach featuring articulation with all local agents, including the citizenry and the private sector was also noted.

The impact on public policies involves another lesson that is highly significant for Latin American sub-national governments participating in the programme: institutional reinforcement and improved local governability. Indeed, one of the results for which

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there were initially neither any methodological or conceptual tools, was the improvement in local management and institutional reinforcement of local governments participating in URB-AL III. URB-AL III has therefore provided a **new way of approaching local public policy more in line with new trends in multi-stakeholder governance and with a territorial approach to development and further removed from the old pyramid-shaped forms of management.** Many agents have begun to conduct public initiatives based on dialogue among different levels of government (multilevel and complementarity), among different departments of the same administration (transversality and comprehensiveness) and with the different agents in the territory. This approach includes mechanisms of citizen participation promoted by the vast majority of the territories, the creation of public-private partnerships, inter-sectoral work meetings, sites of multilevel coordination and the establishment of cross-border agreements.

Paz Alonso, former coordinator of the project “Living in Goes” (Montevideo, Uruguay) therefore noted: *“we should highlight the comprehensiveness of intervention and the active participation of public and private agents in the territory, which ensures citizen participation and thus guarantees the project’s continuity. Also of note was the synergy between the project and the council’s public policies and articulation among different levels of government”.*

Likewise, among the conclusions of the workshop on the future of EU-Latin America decentralised cooperation, URB-AL III highlighted the importance of focusing cooperative relations between the EU and Latin America on support for public social cohesion policies, in which institutional reinforcement and improved local governance emerge as key issues to overcome the lack of sustainability caused by changes in government policies with regard to the policies supported by the projects.

## 5.2 Contributions of URB-AL III

From the time it was designed, URB-AL was intended as an innovative contribution to EU-Latin America decentralised cooperation. The results and achievements detailed in this document bear testimony of the most significant contributions, as perceived by the agents as a whole who in one way or another have participated in this third phase. This section, therefore, will deal only with those aspects that from our point of view represent **innovative contributions for dealing with the new panorama of EU-Latin America decentralised cooperation** after over four years of experience.

One of these aspects is methodology that allows for the association of specific and tangible activities (such as an urban renewal project) and institutional reinforcement measures that promote

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citizen participation, local political support or visibility of results and, above all, the shift from projects to local public policies. It therefore places special emphasis on the **methodological tools** for monitoring and reflecting on the contribution of a cooperation project to the LPP and analysis of its impact on social cohesion.

These are tools that were used and evaluated by a significant number of project partners in Latin America and were shared in common areas for use in territories not involved in the Programme. In order to disseminate these tools, the OCO produced, published and disseminated several **methodological guides** that featured work and exchange with projects and lessons learned. The guides cover a wide range of topics such as: monitoring, evaluation, communication of projects, the construction of local public policies in Latin America, the impact of these policies on social cohesion, and the definition of city strategies that incorporate the social cohesion approach. These tools appear among the new trends in decentralised cooperation that seek horizontality in peer relationships in which the specific nature of agents endows meaning and added value to the relations established among them. In other words, knowledge of LPPs and of local institutional capacity and management is what characterises the know-how and the nature of local governments and therefore, relations among them are established on an equal basis, which provides for mutual learning

and reinforcement of their capacity to act.

These are valuable, innovative tools intended politically and technically to improve relations in decentralised cooperation and their different forms of intervention. Of particular significance is the guide [“How can local institutions cooperate with each other? From specific projects to strengthening local public policies”](#), which offers a picture of the guiding principles of decentralised cooperation addressed to public policies with a view to providing guidelines on how to design, implement and evaluate an international development cooperation intervention from such a perspective.

It also provides a number of tools and practical examples on how to make the most of the specific projects in progress for the consolidation of public policies through institutional reinforcement and an improvement in the circumstances of local governance. In other words it involves the use of an existing project to advance in the proposed direction. The new models of decentralised cooperation mentioned above make more sense today than they did initially when the Programme was devised. The new international scene of crisis in Europe and of higher economic growth rates in some Latin American countries that are now considered middle and upper-middle income status (even though the region remains the most unequal in the world), of the impact of globalisation and of the unstoppable process of urbanisation,

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have speeded up the emergence of new key players in development processes. This situation and exhaustion with aid have led to a change of direction in the traditional dynamics of development cooperation and prompted a process of construction of a new international framework. The second High Level Forum (HLF-2), which led to the Paris Declaration (2005) is usually considered to be the starting point of this change.

Since then, what is known as “new aid architecture” has moved toward the goal of achieving a global “Partnership for effective development cooperation” (HLF-4, held in Busan in November 2011). The new international framework established the principles of appropriation, harmonisation, alignment and managing for results and mutual accountability, which were signed by eight Latin American countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru).

Since then, debates, consultation processes and agreements on development cooperation, plus concern regarding the expiry of the compliance date of the Millennium Development Goals (Post-2015 dialogue) and the importance acquired by the new Sustainable Development Objectives (SDO) have increased ceaselessly. Sub-state governments have taken part gradually in this process, especially after HLF-3, held in Accra in 2008, made their voices heard, and tried to

draw attention to their specific nature as local public agents.

**New trends in decentralised cooperation in Latin America and South-South cooperation** or triangular cooperation have advanced at the same time as the transfer of resources as a major tool of traditional cooperation was surpassed by other more innovative forms.

Indeed, technical cooperation, knowledge transfer, the exchange of experiences or theme-specific meetings have been gaining ground, giving meaning to and putting in practice the principles of partnership and horizontality upon which URB-AL III was formed. The Programme therefore brings a rich laboratory of experiences to EU-Latin America decentralised cooperation while encouraging South-South cooperation practices, exchanges of experiences, and transfers of knowledge and technical assistance, as evidenced by the achievements and impacts of the projects in Lot 1.

These practices also highlight the adoption of the **territorial development approach**, which is making more and more sense in light of recognition of the need for democratic governability. The role of democratically elected sub-national governments that promote public welfare must therefore be acknowledged. Working towards a common outlook and project of the city/territory forces local governments to play a key role in facilitating meetings of different

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agents and coordinating them. Local governments thus end up taking on a role of leadership in positioning their territories. Hence, URB-AL III has prompted fine examples of public-private partnerships between local administration and territorial agents and agreements between different levels of government (multi-level agreements) that **highlight the role of local and regional government as a catalyst for the region**, which brings together agents and establishes the focuses of local and regional development.

The findings of the workshop entitled “Discussion on the present and future of Euro-Latin American decentralised cooperation” therefore noted that *“at the present time of international financial crisis, URB-AL III has highlighted the success of the EC’s pledge to a more reciprocal model of cooperation based on horizontal and territorial partnerships”*. In particular it was stated that: *“a commitment has been made to the continuity of cooperation among EU and Latin American local governments that retains as its core feature public social cohesion policies while considering the evolution and shift of circumstances prompted by the new scenario marked by the crisis in some European countries and the emergence of others in Latin America, some of which have already changed from recipients to donors (Brazil for example). It has therefore been decided that the current model of decentralised cooperation should be reviewed and turned into a territorial cooperation*

*model that enhances the role of all agents in the territorial system. This option would also combine types of North-South cooperation with South-South cooperation initiatives and the formation of theme-specific networks, and would give greater prominence to Latin American local governments not only as recipients but also as drivers of cooperation initiatives”*.

Lastly, it should be stressed that all the contributions mentioned as a whole suggest that implementation of the URB-AL III Programme has helped to **generate a common language, lessons learned, collective experiences and benchmarks in local public policies that contribute to social cohesion in Latin America**. Capitalisation of processes and their achievements and the sustainability thereof provide the groundwork for the challenges to be faced from now onwards.

### 5.3 Challenges

One of the most pressing challenges to be faced once the Programme has ended is to ensure continuity and sustainability of the achievements and results attained. The most recent URBsociAL Euro-Latin American Dialogue in 2012 was entitled “Governing locally: towards an inclusive and sustainable future” for good reason. It dealt with a cross-cutting approach to continuity measures regarding the Programme’s achievements and impacts. Among other activities, sustainability strategies of all projects were presented

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and the best formulas with which to achieve them were discussed. One of the initiatives most applauded by participants was the association of local governments with territorial agents (both social and private sector agents) and with other levels of government. The benefits of the inter-municipal levels was also highlighted as a possible solution to the instability of public policies that often involve regional changes in government and the need to incorporate the continuity of policies supported, reinforced or created by URB-AL III in municipal budgets.

Another of the more immediate challenges presented by the Programme is the capitalisation of its experiences in order to publicise the achievements of each intervention with a view to encouraging new agreements among territories and prompting possible replicable experiences among URB-AL III agents. While the process of systematisation and dissemination must transcend the universe of the Programme and reach European-Latin American territories as a whole interested in implementing public policies to boost social cohesion policies from a decentralised cooperation project.

Lastly, the biggest current challenge is to find new formulas to support the continuity of decentralised cooperation programmes focused on influencing public policies and, therefore, with medium- and long-term impact. Upon mutual agreement, during the workshop on the future of decentralised

cooperation the URB-AL III community meeting in Bogotá strongly expressed the need for the continued existence of URB-AL-type support programmes in which the cooperation among territories is prioritised and facilitates relations among agents in the same region. Emphasis was also placed on the importance of combining types of North-South cooperation with South-South cooperation initiatives, the formation of theme-specific networks and the award of a more significant role to local governments in Latin America not only as recipients but also as drivers of cooperation initiatives.

In short, the challenge lies in establishing decentralised cooperation as part of the external action of local governments and defining it as an opportunity in the current context. To do so, project representatives used the latest meeting in Bogotá to draw attention to some elements that they considered were lacking in the Programme and that would facilitate decentralised cooperation relations in the future: the production of comprehensive diagnoses to identify not only the needs but also the strengths of the municipality or territory that may be of interest to other local governments. These diagnoses should provide strategic city plans featuring external action. It was also considered important to establish baselines and a strategic plan with which to optimise the activities undertaken, either through participation in cooperation projects or theme-specific networks among territories. In short, to ensure sustainability in the achievements

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of URB-AL III and EU-Latin America decentralised cooperation in general, it is essential to go beyond a project-oriented approach in order to delve deeper and explore a political outlook with a comprehensive and strategic impact on local public policies. To do so, bearing in mind that these are dynamics resulting from development cooperation programmes, moving towards decentralised cooperation articulated as a genuine local public policy is therefore essential and of crucial importance.





## 6. APPENDICES

### 6.1 List of projects and partners in Lot 1 of the URB-AL III Programme

Project coordinator	Country	Short name or acronym	Full name	Partners	Country
Alcorcón	Spain	Melgodepro	Local governance for productive development	Municipio de Valparaiso	Mexico
				Provincia de Paysandú	Uruguay
				Curahuara de Carangas	Bolivia
				Municipio de Pimampiro	Ecuador
				Cámara Municipal de San Joao de Madeira	Portugal
				Asociación AMIBE Curahuara	Bolivia
				Asociación de amas de casa por el desarrollo en Pimampiro	Ecuador
Barcelona Metropolitan Area	Spain	RESSOC	Social entrepreneurship and eco-management of urban waste	Área Met. de San Salvador	El Salvador
				Municipalidad El Callao	Peru
				Alcaldía Managua	Nicaragua
				Municipalidad Montevideo	Uruguay
				Mairie de Toulouse	France
Arezzo	Italy	Rubbish is Useful	Reduction, recycling, recovery and environmental awareness	Santiago de Surco	Peru
				Cuenca	Ecuador
				Lago Agrio	Ecuador
				General Pico	Argentina
				Municipios de Arica	Chile
				Lille Metropole	France
				Provincia de Buenos Aires	Argentina
				Oxfam Italia.	Italy
Borba	Portugal	URB-AL Pampa	Urban agglomerations in protected areas	Departamento de Rivera	Uruguay
				Município de Alegrete	Brazil
				Município de Quaraí	Brazil
				Município de Rosário do Sul	Brazil
				Município de Santana do Livramento	Brazil
				Comune di Pigna	Italy

<b>Emilia Romagna</b>	Italy	EU-LA-WIN	Welfare integrated policies	Gobierno de la Provincia de Buenos Aires	Argentina
				Secretaria de Estado da Agricultura e do Abastecimento do Paraná	Brazil
				IDEA + CISP	Colombia
				Regione Marche	Italy
				Comune di Roma – Municipio XVII	Italy
				Centro di Educazione Sanitaria e tecnologie appropriate sanitarie (CESTAS)	Italy
				Mancomunidad de la Ribera Alta	Spain
				Municipio Mar del Plata	Uruguay
<b>Frosinone</b>	Italy	Tourist Borders	Cohesion, inclusion and social development through sustainable tourism	Provincia Autonoma de Bolzano	Italy
				Comision Municipal de Purmamarca	Argentina
				Asociación para el desarrollo Social-ADESO	Argentina
				Municipalidad de San Pedro de Quemes	Bolivia
				Municipalidad de Calacoto	Bolivia
				Municipalidad provincial de Tarata	Peru
<b>Irún</b>	Spain	UNE	Inclusive and participatory local	Gob. Reg. Arica y Parinacota	Chile
				Mun. Santa Rosa de Copán	Honduras
				Mun. Zapotlán El Grande	Mexico
				Gob. Reg. de Tacna	Peru
				Castilla y León	Spain
<b>L' Hospitalet</b>	Spain	EmiDel	Local development and emigration in Latin America	Municipalidad de La Paz	Bolivia
				Intendencia Municipal de Canelones	Uruguay
				Diputación de Barcelona	Spain
				Alcaldía Municipal de Santa Tecla	El Salvador
<b>Michoacán</b>	Mexico	IDEAL	The Inter-municipality: An efficient tool for social and territorial cohesion	Mun. San Miguel de Tucuman	Argentina
				Mancomunidad Norte Paceño	Bolivia
				Mun. San Antonio Huista	Guatemala
				Alcaldía Tuma La Dalia	Nicaragua
				Asoc. Mun. Del Oriente	Mexico
				Ayunt. San Sebastian de los Reyes	Spain
				Departement Hautes Pyrenées	France

<b>Montevideo</b>	Uruguay	Living in Goes	Socio-urban regeneration and policy coordination for social integration in rundown central areas	Intendencia de Florida	Uruguay
				Municipalidad de Rosario/Santa Fe	Argentina
				Alcaldía Municipal de San Salvador	El Salvador
				Gobierno Municipal de La Paz	Bolivia
				Ayuntamiento de Bilbao	Spain
				Ayuntamiento de Santa Cruz de Tenerife	Spain
<b>Pernambuco</b>	Brazil	Local Policies on the Prevention of Violence in Marginal Urban Areas	Local policies for the prevention of violence in marginalised urban areas	Intendencia de Paysandú	Uruguay
				Gobierno de la Región Loreto	Peru
				Cesvi fundación	Italy
				Comune di Bergamo	Italy
<b>Ponta Porá</b>	Brazil	International Line	Re-urbanisation of the common space between twin cities	Pedro Juan Caballero	Paraguay
				Diputación de Málaga	Spain
				Paz y Desarrollo (Málaga)	Spain
<b>Puerto Cortés</b>	Honduras	GIT	Comprehensive land management	Municipalidad de Tela	Honduras
				Municipalidad de Omoa	Honduras
				Municipalidad de Puerto Barrios	Guatemala
				Kadaster	Holland
<b>Lempa River</b>	Guatemala	Lempa River Tri-national Border Association	Promoting social cohesion and territorial regional integration in the border towns of the Central American Trifinio region	Man Copan Chorti	Guatemala
				Man Nororient	Guatemala
				Man Lago de Guija	Guatemala
				As. Municipios Valle de Sesecapa	Honduras
				As. Municipios Trifinio	El Salvador
				As. Municipios Cayaguanca	El Salvador
				Diputación Huelva	Spain
				Región Lombardia	Italy
<b>Santa Fe</b>	Argentina	Institutional Innovation	Institutional innovation in intermediate governments	Consejo de Alcaldes del Área Metropolitana de San Salvador (COAMSS)	El Salvador
				Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo	El Salvador
				Gobierno Regional de Arequipa	Peru
				Diputación de Barcelona	Spain

Santa Tecla	El Salvador	Diverse People, Equal People	Equal existence among citizens	Distrito Metropolitano de Quito	Ecuador
				Ayuntamiento de Saint Denis (FR)	France
Sicily	Italy	PACEF	Agreement for women's training and employment	Gobernación Departamento Central	Paraguay
				Alcaldía Sacaba	Bolivia
				Alcaldía Vinto	Bolivia
				Mancomunidad de la Región Andina de Cochabamba	Bolivia
				Asociación de Municipios de Cochabamba	Bolivia
				Provincia de Buenos Aires	Argentina
				ASAEL – Asociación Aragonesa de Entidades Locales	Spain
Stuttgart	Germany	Integration	Integrated urban development	Chihuahua– Secretaria de Desarrollo Urbano y Ecología–SDUE	Mexico
				Gobierno Municipal de Guadalajara	Mexico
				Sao Paulo –Secretaria Municipal do Verde e do Meio Ambiente de São Paulo	Brazil
				Municipio del Distrito Metropolitano de Quito	Ecuador
				Secretaria Distrital de Ambiente, Bogota	Colombia
				KATE	Germany
				ICLEI Gobiernos locales por la sostenibilidad	Brazil
				Rio de Janeiro –Secretaria Municipal de Urbanismo – Instituto Pereira Passos	Brazil
Tuscany	Italy	Urban and Territorial Participatory Management	A key for social cohesion	Comunidad Regional Punilla	Argentina
				Municipalidad Viña del Mar	Chile
				Asamblea Municipal Poder Popular Centro Habana	Cuba
				Alcaldía Municipal de León	Nicaragua
				Municipalidad de Antigua	Guatemala
				Departamento Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	France
				Associazione Co.opera	Italy
Veneto	Italy	COCAP	Social cohesion through strengthening production chains	Fondazione di Venezia	Italy
				Provincia di San Juan	Argentina
				Estado do Rio Grande do Sul	Brazil
				Departamento de Misiones	Paraguay

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## 6.2 List of partners of the Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO)

Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO). Lot 2 of the URB-AL III programme	
Leading partner	Diputació de Barcelona (Spain)
Partners	International and Ibero-American Foundation of Public Administration and Policies (FILAPP, Spain)
	Municipality of Bogotá (Colombia)
	Municipality of San José (Costa Rica)
	Province of Santa Fe (Argentina)
	Tuscany Region (Italy)
	Interregional Observatory on Development Cooperation (OICS, Italy)



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## 7. GLOSSARY

LPP: local public policy

SC: social cohesion

EU: European Union

EC: European Commission

LLP: Local Leadership Platform

URBsociAL: Euro-Latin American Dialogue on Social Cohesion and Local Public Policies

OCO: Orientation and Coordination Office of the URB-AL III Programme

RD: Regional Dialogues

PPGIS: Public Participation Geographic Information System









urb-al III  
Orientation and Coordination Office - OCO

URB-AL III is a regional decentralised cooperation programme run by the European Commission, the aim of which is to contribute towards increasing the level of social cohesion in sub-national and regional groups in Latin America.

Led by Diputació de Barcelona, the URB-AL III Programme Orientation and Coordination Office's mission is to facilitate the implementation of the programme by providing technical assistance and support in the different projects in order to help achieve the programme's objectives.



Diputació  
Barcelona



REGIONE  
TOSCANA



OICS



ALCALDÍA MAYOR  
DE BOGOTÁ D.C.



MUNICIPALIDAD  
DE SAN JOSE



SANTA FE  
AVANZA



GSF



FIIAPP

