

Launch of the EU programme "Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue" (CIUDAD)

Sustainable urban development is the focus of a €14 million interregional EU-funded programme presented during a conference held in Brussels on June 21-23, 2010. Cooperation In Urban Development And Dialogue (CIUDAD) programme, funded under the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) covers 16 neighbourhood countries.

Acting on the principle "think globally, act locally", this programme will support building the capacity of local governments to address sustainable urban development issues in cooperation with the civil society. It will also encourage better partnerships between neighbourhood countries and their European counterpart at local level.

The partnerships will be strengthened through the implementation of 21 projects, worth €11 million, selected through a Call for Proposals procedure. Each project will be implemented in at least 2 neighbourhood countries and will address at least one of three important challenges (themes) for local government:

- Ensuring environmental sustainability;
- Promoting sustainable economic development and reduction of social disparities;
- Securing good governance alongside sustainable urban development.

CIUDAD builds on MED-PACT lessons, a three-year programme that began in 2006 and was designed to encourage a better mutual understanding between partners in the Euro-Mediterranean region by developing cooperation and dialogue. The Conference began by looking back at the successes and lessons learned from that programme.

The CIUDAD programme is unusually ambitious in that it promotes partnerships not only within the two regions of the EU's Eastern neighbours and the EU's Southern neighbours, but also between these regions. No fewer than five of the 21 projects will be implemented in countries of both regions. "This underscores the fact that, despite their clear cultural, socio-economic and other differences, these countries also have common challenges and a desire to learn from each other", says Jesus Laviña, Head of the Environment Sector at the EC's DG EuropeAid.

Under the global theme of sustainable urban development several projects will look at ways to better plan urban areas in order to achieve greater social integration, economic growth, and more attractive living environments. The urban environment is another common

concern, with countries in the Eastern neighbourhood more focused on promoting greater use of energy efficiency and Renewable Energy Resources; while the Southern partners tend to concentrate on waste and water management. The third cross-cutting theme looks for ways to improve local governance, service delivery and development policies by working more closely with citizens and local stakeholders

More information available on: www.ciudad-programme.eu

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