

ECTP UDG Nicosia

To: ECTP-CEU

From: Jan Vogelij

Re. UDG meeting

The Urban Development Group (UDG) met under Cypriot EU Presidency in Nicosia on 4 september 2012.

1. General

The UDG is the working group of the European Union addressing urban development issues in order to prepare the EU urban policy.

The UDG elaborates the decisions as adopted in the Leipzig Charter (2007) on sustainable urban development, which is an off-spring of the European Spatial Development Perspective (1999).

The UDG prepares the meetings of the EU Member State DG's responsible for urban development and the decisions by the relevant Ministers.

The UDG consists of a representative of each of the MS Ministries, the European Commission DG Regio, the EU Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, CEMR, Eurocities, EUKN, Urbact and the ECTP-CEU, representing the spatial planning profession.

2. Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC)

The RFSC (which in its initial phase has been inspired by the ECTP's publication Try it this Way) is in its implementation phase.

A consortium consisting of NICIS/CEMR/ICLEI has been selected as contractor for implementation.

The feedback of the testing phase in Finland and The Netherlands was positive.

The Commission DG Regio strongly supports this tool, but the countries of the EU are the owners and the UDG is the monitoring committee.

The tool, enabling to test the sustainability of urban development in specific local circumstances, aims to address middle size and small communities.

Individual countries are requested to translate the tool into their languages themselves. The application of this digital tool is on a voluntary basis.

National contacts are needed: experts helping the municipalities having questions in applying the tool.

(I proposed the French authors of the RFSC the possibility to present RFSC within ECTP-CEU's autumn meeting)

3. Information from the Commission

The increased importance of urban matters for the European Cohesion Policy is organisationally reflected. DG Regio changed recently its name in DG Regional and Urban Policy.

The organisational implications are not yet known.

4. Inclusive city

The European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) presented a background study on migration and the implications on urban developments.

This showed that although Europe does not recognise itself as an immigration area like the USA, in fact we are even a stronger immigration area.

The study distinguished between immigrant coming for temporary work, for definite settling, countries of first landing and destination countries.

The close relations with deprived neighbourhoods and vulnerable social groups are inevitable.

(The suggestion by the sociologist study that city planners do not recognise the importance of creating places where people can meet in public, was reason for me to recall and send the ECTP-CEU vision on the city as presented in new Charter of Athens 2003(!) pointing to the aspect of social connectedness)

5. Cases

Nicosia and Birmingham presented cases of inclusive city

6. Networking cities

The fragmentation of the many city networks like Eurocities, Metrix, CEMR, INTA, etc was reason to enhance coherence among those municipal organisations.

France and the Netherlands presented proposals for effective networking.

10/09/2012

JCV

Soest NL: