

## BEST PRACTICES IN DECENTRALISATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

### → Best practices sheet

Please send the duly completed form to the Secretariat of the DAL Committee, which remains at your disposal for any questions or comments.  
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#### Best practices in Decentralisation and Local Governance sheet

**Title:**

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

**Promoting organisation: European Commission, through the Orientation and Coordination Office**

**Territorial sphere: Latin America and Europe**

**Subject area:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Politics/ Law</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Environment and sustainability</b>                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Economics/ Taxation</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Capacity building/ administrative structure</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Basic services</b>      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Multilevel dialogues</b>                        |

**Start date: 2010**

**End date: ongoing**

**Summary of the initiative:**

URBsociAL is a forum for meeting and dialogue between European and Latin American stakeholders in the public and private sectors that are committed to promoting social cohesion through their work at a local level. URBsociAL is an initiative of the Orientation and Coordination Office, which was set up as part of URB-AL III, the European Commission's decentralised co-operation programme intended to contribute to raising the degree of social cohesion in local, regional and provincial ambits in Latin America. Three annual meetings of URBsociAL have thus far been held, within the framework of URB-AL III (2009-2013). The first of these took place in October 2010 in Sitges (Barcelona, Spain) and was attended by 360 people. The second was held in September 2011 in Rosario (Santa Fe, Argentina), with 500 people in attendance. The third and last one took place in October 2012 in Bogotá (Colombia) and joined in more than 300 participants.

**Relevance of the initiative with regard to the local and national context (economic, political, social, administrative, organisational context):**

The initiative is strategically important since it involves the creation of a Euro-Latin American forum for reflection, encounter, sharing, debate and the formulation of proposals concerning local public policies on social cohesion. Moreover, the URBsociAL meetings motivate the exchange and production of best practices, as well as a common strategic agenda that allows for an international and national field of influence, to foster social cohesion in Latin America.

**Objectives:**

URBsociAL has two objectives:

- To foster constructive dialogue and the sharing of experiences and learning between European and Latin American stakeholders with experience in local public management in order to contribute to promoting social cohesion in their territories.
- To promote and draw up a strategic Euro-Latin American agenda that defines and reflects the shared aspirations of these stakeholders in order to foster greater social cohesion in Latin America.

**Parties involved, distribution of responsibilities and coordination mechanisms:**

URBsociAL is an initiative of the Orientation and Coordination Office (OCO) of the European Commission's URB-AL III programme. OCO is a consortium of local and intermediate authorities with experience in the field of decentralised co-operation. Led by Barcelona Provincial Council, its members include Bogotá City Council (Colombia), the Municipality of San José (Costa Rica), the Region of Tuscany (Italy) and the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP). In addition to the OCO, the URB-AL III programme consists of 20 co-operation projects in Latin America with a direct impact on 74 territories, representing 500 municipalities.

**Impacts** (on public policy, on political culture or on social cohesion):

The outcome of the three URBsociAL annual meetings (Sitges, Rosario and Bogotá) was the approval of three Agendas covering diagnostics, recommendations and commitments to foster local public policies on social cohesion. These agendas have been distributed between almost 7,000 actors, amongst local governments, technical personnel and representatives of international organisations and networks working in the field of cooperation for development and public policies. Moreover, 17 institutions have already given support to these documents.

The "experience fairs" organized by URBsociAL experiences that have had a total of 62 stands, have allowed for the visibility of several initiatives developed by local governments in the field of public policies on social cohesion, and facilitated exchanges and mutual learning. Also as part of URBsociAL, a total of 18 papers and 13 videos refereeing to the case studies on social cohesion were published and distributed (available in [www.urb-social.eu](http://www.urb-social.eu)).

Regarding the impact of URBsociAL in the media, a total of 88 appearances was recorded, between the three editions.

**Transferability:**

URBsociAL has facilitated transferability and replication of good practices in social cohesion through workshops and experience fairs.

**Assessment (comments and lessons learned):**

URBsociAL has facilitated the construction of a common language, and the dissemination of EU-Latin American agenda on local public policies on social cohesion. It also has added value to the local management model based on multi-level and multi-stakeholder coordination and on territorial governance.

URBsociAL also facilitated the establishment of synergies and opportunities for collaboration and joint search for solutions to common problems at the local level.

**Additional documentation (a place to attach documents and web links that complement the sheet description):**

All the information on URBsociAL is available at:  
[www.urb-social.eu](http://www.urb-social.eu) and [www.urb-al3.eu](http://www.urb-al3.eu)

**Basic information on the promoting organisation (local or regional government, association of municipalities or the ministry that has led the process)**

**Name of sponsoring institution:** Government of the Province of Barcelona through the Orientation and Coordination Office

**Municipality/ Province:** Barcelona

**Country:** Spain

**More information:** <http://www.urb-al3.eu/>