

## Editorial

Conferences are the clearest benchmarks for time in organizations like ours. We are now a few months after the gathering in charming Madrid, and less than a year from the next big event of EURA, the Darmstadt conference. Have you been aware that there were 437 of us in Madrid? (Including 114 from Spain, 54 from US, 36 from Portugal, 32 from UK and 31 from Italy). We had participants from all continents (except Antarctic), although – as one should expect – over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them were from Europe. ‘Understanding City Dynamics’ – it is the intriguing title of the forthcoming conference. Meanwhile our friends in Oslo organize also a smaller workshop in May 2010. And we are also already well prepared for Copenhagen in 2011. You will find more information about all of these events within this Newsletter. May I remind you, that the Darmstadt conference is especially important for EURA, since it marks the end of a 4-years term of our Board, so we have to elect a new Board and new President of EURA.

I said that we in EURA measure time by our annual conferences, but for some time another benchmark has been our pride – the Urban Research and Practice Journal. Please feel encouraged not only to subscribe and read the journal, but also to submit your texts (papers) for publication. It does not need to be a full academic paper, you may also consider the ‘Practice Article’ section.

As most of you remember, not long ago, we moved our Secretariat from Bristol to Darmstadt. In fact, the process of transition has been completed only last summer together with the new wave of annual membership fees’ collection. And after these few months, I can say with a great amount of conviction that the transition process was smooth and our new Secretariat functions very well! Many thanks again to Hubert for managing this period, and to Marta for doing a tremendous job (also with the Newsletter preparation). We will have an occasion to thank them during the Darmstadt conference.

In the last issue of the Newsletter, we introduced a new section: city impressions. We plan to continue it in the future as well. The first impression was on Madrid. This time we have Yerevan, the capital city of Armenia. Last September I was in South Caucasus, in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan with a group of my students studying the emerging systems of local government.

And indeed, both Tbilisi and Yerevan, as well as some smaller, unbelievably charming cities (Telavi, Batumi, Dilijan, Alaverdi and many others) made an incredible impression on us. Personally, I liked Tbilisi the most, by my students selected Yerevan to share their impressions with you. I hope you will like this section.

And in the future, if you want to share your personal impressions from any city of the world, do not hesitate to submit such a text (and pictures!) to the Newsletter Editor.

I wish you a Merry Christmas quite soon, a very Happy New Year (with unforgettable New Year parties of course) and I am very much looking forward to meeting you again at EURA events, or on other occasions.

Paweł Swianiewicz  
University of Warsaw  
EURA President

## Editorial Team

Prof. Hubert Heinelt  
Dr Marta Lackowska

## The aims of EURA

- To encourage international exchange and co-operation in relation to urban research
- To stimulate and encourage interdisciplinary and cross-border urban research
- To contribute to urban policy debates

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## Conference News and Information

This section provides news and information about international conferences in Europe and elsewhere. If you have any material you would like to see in the next issue please forward it to [aura@pg.tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:aura@pg.tu-darmstadt.de).

### ECPR WORKSHOP – THE DEVELOPING ROLE OF THE COUNCILLOR IN A COMPARATIVE EUROPEAN CONTEXT: ATTITUDES, ASSUMPTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ASPECTS OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY

22-27 March, 2010, Münster, Germany

The workshop will take place during the next ECPR Joint Sessions and will be directed by Colin Copus (Department of Public Policy, De Montfort University, England) and Kristof Steyvers (Centre for Local Politics, Ghent University, Belgium).

Papers for the workshop will explore the developing and varied roles of the councillor across Europe; examine the tensions experienced by the councillor as a representative, a decision-maker and a governor of a local community and municipal institution; and, analyse how the institutional arrangements of municipalities affect councillors' varied roles. Papers will also examine the role perceptions councillors' hold of their office and the assumptions, beliefs and pre-dispositions they bring to being a councillor. Finally, they will also examine how different political, institutional and democratic arrangements and trends across Europe and the spread of new models of local democracy have influenced the development of councillors' roles.

#### Types of paper

The workshop welcomes the following types of papers:

- Theoretical papers aimed at conceptualising the role of the councillor;
- Empirical analyses of the role of the councillor, the institutional settings in which they operate and the changing context of local government;
- Explorations of the tensions between local representative democracy and enhanced public participation (or participatory and direct democracy) in local government;
- Case-study papers and papers that present a historical analysis of the developing context and role of the councillor and the institutional arrangements within which they conduct their activities;
- Methodological papers that discuss research designs, methods of data-collection and elaboration that improve the understanding of the altering role of the councillor and the effect of institutional settings on that role;
- Comparative studies (For the purposes of the workshop 'comparative' will mean: firstly,

comparisons *between* countries; and, secondly, comparison between different levels of local government, *within* countries)

Please send paper proposals by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009 to Colin Copus ([ccopus@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:ccopus@dmu.ac.uk)) or to Kristof Steyvers ([kristof.steyvers@ugent.be](mailto:kristof.steyvers@ugent.be)).

**For more information** please visit:

[http://www.ecprnet.eu/joint\\_sessions/munster/workshops.asp](http://www.ecprnet.eu/joint_sessions/munster/workshops.asp).

### DISASTER RESILIENCE – INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS FORUM

23-24 April, 2010, Pittsburgh, USA

The International Comparative Analysis Forum (ICPA – Forum) holds its seventh annual workshop in Pittsburgh on 23-24 April 2010. The theme for this event is 'Disaster Resilience – Comparative Perspectives' and the Call for Papers seeks contributions that explore innovative policy approaches to building community resilience to disaster.

Papers submitted should be in line with the Aims and Scope of the Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis (JCPA). While not all papers need to be international comparisons, they must explicitly lend themselves to inference across sectors and jurisdictions. Selected papers will appear in a Special Issue of the journal.

The ICPA Forum has similar values to the European Urban Research Association (EURA) and members are invited to consider participating in this or future ICPA forums. In addition, EURA members may wish to find out more about the JCPA. Published five times a year as from 2010, the JCPA is an explicitly comparative journal in the field of policy studies.

The ICPA has recently initiated a series of international research symposia. These aim to promote dialogue on comparative policy analytic studies.

**Abstracts** for the Pittsburgh ICPA Forum should be no more than 500 words and must be submitted to the special issue editor by **10 January 2010**. Notification of acceptances will be sent by 1 February 2010.

**For more information** on the forum and the journal please visit: [www.jcpa.ca/icpaf/calls/](http://www.jcpa.ca/icpaf/calls/)

## EURA WORKSHOP – OSLO 2010 GOVERNANCE AND CHANGE ON THE URBAN FRINGE

6-7 May 2010, Oslo, Norway

EURA EVENT

There is increasing interest in socio-spatial and socio-cultural developments on the fringes of cities. Some studies focus on the emergence of polycentric metropolitan areas, and the formation of edge cities and nodes. Other studies focus on changes in existing suburbs and the development of new suburbs and exurbs. The term 'post-suburbia' has been used to encapsulate the variety of forms emerging at the urban fringe. It is an important challenge to explore the spatial, political, social and cultural processes and implications of the changes taking place.

Development and regeneration of areas on the urban fringes increasingly takes place in a context marked by deregulation, privatization and network-like modes of coordination. Effective coordination among the plurality of governments on various levels in metropolitan regions poses particular challenges. The importance of achieving concerted action between public bodies, private sector stakeholders and civil society actors is often emphasized, but effective governance of such coalitions often proves to be problematic.

### Profile of the event

The workshop will be organised so as to allow intensive academic exchange among a limited number of participants of various disciplines. Compared to large-scale conferences, workshop participants will be expected to devote their attention to a smaller number of presentations, each for a longer duration of time. The workshop will be organised as follows:

- Peer reviewed abstracts
- Pre-arranged allocation of discussants
- All papers available for download two weeks ahead of event on designated website
- 40-45 minutes available for each paper
- High quality keynote speeches

Participants will be invited to a **guided tour** of ongoing city development in the fringe areas of Greater Oslo. There will also be an opportunity to visit the city's new landmark, the Opera house, which has won international acclaim for its architectural qualities. The Opera house is part of a large waterfront development in former harbor areas.

### Deadlines

- Abstracts: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009
- Outcome of abstract review: 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010
- Registration and payment of conference fee: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010
- Paper submission: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010
- Conference dates: 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> May 2010

For further details please see:

[www.iss.uio.no/arrangementer/gov](http://www.iss.uio.no/arrangementer/gov)

### The hosts

**The University of Oslo** is Norway's largest and oldest institution of higher education. It was founded in 1811 when Norway was still under Danish rule. Today the University of Oslo has approx. 30,000 students and 4,600 employees. Four Nobel Prize winners indicate the quality of research at the University. The department of Sociology and Human Geography is part of the Faculty of Social Sciences. The department has 66 academic staff and 11 administrative staff, and offers courses in 39 topics in Sociology and 22 topics in Human Geography. Urban Geography is one of the core areas at the department, and one of the strategic research areas is the 'Transformation in the Oslo region', including research on suburbs, suburban nodes and urban fringe areas.

**The Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR)** was established in 1967 and is home to 65 researchers spanning across the social sciences. NIBR is Norway's leading institution for research on urban and regional development. Reflecting the diversity of its staff, NIBR studies cities and regions with a focus on living conditions and social segregation, public policy and institutional development, multi-level governance, demography, business structures and clusters, spatial planning and urban regeneration. As one of Norway's environmental research institutes, NIBR uses its expertise in the social sciences to promote an integrated, knowledge-based approach to environmental challenges and issues associated with economic growth.

### UEP CONFERENCE 2010 URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION – OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO SUSTAINABILITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE 20-23 June, 2010, Boston, USA

UEP 2010 will provide a forum for knowledge exchange and discussion regarding the latest information about the unique nature of urban environments, assessment of urban environmental pollutants and their effects, and measures that can be taken to overcome obstacles for sustainability, ecological integrity and life quality.

**Abstracts** for an oral and poster presentation are invited by **1<sup>st</sup> February, 2010** on the following topics:

- Nature of urban environments
- Air pollutants, heat islands, climate change
- Soil and water pollution, storm water retention
- Ecology, biodiversity, invasive species

Organized by Elsevier, in association with the journal Environmental Pollution, the event will take place at the Westin Boston Waterfront in Boston, USA.

For further information please visit:  
[www.uep2010.com](http://www.uep2010.com)

**EUROPEAN URBAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (EUROPEAN URBAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION) – DAMRSTADT 2010  
UNDERSTANDING CITY DYNAMICS**  
24-26 September, 2010, Darmstadt, Germany

EUROPEAN URBAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

The European Urban Research Association (EUROPEAN URBAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION) in co-operation with the Urban Research Centre – *Eigenlogik der Städte* at Darmstadt University of Technology will hold its next conference on ‘Understanding City Dynamics’ in Darmstadt (Germany).

The **general questions** of the conference are:

- Do cities have choices – in a globalised world? Or: Do local politics matter? And: How to explain differences between cities?
- Do we need a (new) theory of urbanism/urbanity to understand how modern societies are functioning?

This conference calls for papers relating to one of the following themes (organized in one track each). We welcome scholars from diverse disciplines as well as practitioners.

- The intrinsic logic of the city
- Metropolitan governance and the dynamics of city regions
- City choices and strategic planning
- Sustainability: Local meanings and strategies
- How to achieve economic competitiveness and social cohesion?
- Urban design and built environment

For the information about the **host**, please see page 8 of this Newsletter.

For further information for the conference themes and the tracks, please visit the conference homepage [www.politikwissenschaft.tu-darmstadt.de/citydynamics](http://www.politikwissenschaft.tu-darmstadt.de/citydynamics)

The **abstract** submission opens **1<sup>st</sup> January 2010** and ends **31<sup>st</sup> March 2010**. Accepted papers have to be submitted until 30<sup>th</sup> August 2010.

The following e-mail account is open for requesting information and arrangements of the conference:  
[citydynamics@pg.tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:citydynamics@pg.tu-darmstadt.de)

**CONFERENCE – MANAGING THE URBAN RURAL INTERFACE STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE PERI-URBAN LAND USE RELATIONSHIPS**

18-21 October, 2010, Copenhagen, Denmark

The conference is organized jointly by the PLUREL project; ASEM 4<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Urban Forestry; Landscape Tomorrow; Danish Association of Landscape Ecologists; & Danish Architecture Centre. It is the final event of the PLUREL project: *Peri-urban land use relationships – strategies and sustainability assessment tools for urban-rural linkages* funded by the European Commission’s sixth Framework Programme for research (EC FP6 036921).

**Session topics**

- Urban-rural regions in a globalised world: driving forces on land use change
- Scenarios: futures for rural-urban regions
- Land-use relationships and the structure of the
- Rural-urban system: European and regional models
- Rural-urban land use dynamics: impacts on resource demands and utilisation
- Quality of life and ecosystem services in rural-urban regions
- Growth management and governance systems in rural-urban regions
- Locally adapted strategies for rural-urban regions: from understanding issues to finding solutions
- Sustainable multifunctional landscapes in peri-urban areas
- Economic evaluation of policies affecting land use in rural-urban regions
- Instruments and tools for Sustainability Impact Assessment
- Sustainable Urban Development in Emerging Economies
- Urban Forestry and Urban Greening in developing countries

**Deadlines**

- Deadline for **abstract submission** (submit online at <http://www.plurel.net/conference>): **1<sup>st</sup> March 2010**
- Notification of acceptance of contributions: **1<sup>st</sup> May 2010**
- Final programme: **1<sup>st</sup> August 2010**
- Deadline for registration: **1<sup>st</sup> September 2010**
- Submission of full papers: **1<sup>st</sup> October 2010**

For further details, please visit the conference website at: <http://www.plurel.net/conference>



## EURA EVENT – COPENHAGEN 2011 CITIES WITHOUT LIMITS

23-25 June, 2011, Copenhagen, Denmark

EURA EVENT

Conditions for urban development have qualitatively shifted in recent years, creating new challenges for urban policy. Urban areas are becoming increasingly dependent on one another, and the well-known boundaries between cities and towns and between urban centres and countryside are being erased. The Centre for Strategic Urban Research–Realdania Research has chosen the term ‘The City without Limits’ to conceptualise this situation, which is investigated by integration of research from architecture and planning with research from geography and the social sciences.

The conference theme ‘Cities without Limits’ will set focus on the development, management and quality of urban areas in order to improve the knowledge base for urban development and urban policy decisions. The occasion of the conference is the closure of CSUR in its current form and the conference includes a presentation and discussion of main results from the CSUR research program. The conference is organised with a number of parallel tracks including:

- The City without Limits – Concepts and Design,
- Urban Policies and Governance,
- Everyday Life, Mobility and Residence,
- Environment, Sustainability and Land Use,
- The Impact of New Economies and the City.

Papers are invited for presentation within these five themes as well as other topics.

The conference will be held in central Copenhagen where excellent conference facilities are available at the University of Copenhagen. Hotels are available at a range of price levels and the metropolitan region of Copenhagen offers a rich choice of destinations for study tours and excursions in relation to urban development, urban policy, sustainable urban development etc.

If you at this stage have any questions regarding the EURA 2011 Copenhagen Conference, please forward your questions to the official conference mailbox [aura2011@life.ku.dk](mailto:aura2011@life.ku.dk)

### The hosts

The Centre for Strategic Urban Research–Realdania Research is a Danish cross-disciplinary research centre including three institutions: the Centre for Forestry, Landscape and Planning, the Department of Geography and Geology at Copenhagen University and the Department of Landscape and Urbanism at the Aarhus School of Architecture. The Centre was established in 2004 and runs until the end of 2010 in its current form. The Realdania Foundation and the involved institutions are the main financial sources. The total budget for the whole period 2004-2010 surpasses DKK 35 million (5 million EURO). For more, please see [www.byforskning.dk](http://www.byforskning.dk).

## Last EURA conference

### EURA and UAA EVENT – CITY FUTURES '09

4-6 June, 2009, Madrid, Spain

### CITY FUTURES '09

The second joint conference of the European Urban Research Association and the Urban Affairs Association was held in Madrid during June. After the big success of the first City Futures Conference held in Chicago in 2004, the Madrid Conference lived up to our best expectations. More than 450 researchers and policy makers from four continents and 42 countries met in Madrid to discuss the future of cities around the globe, with 358 papers presented. Five key note presentations were given by the speakers from USA (2), France (1), Lithuania (1) and Mexico (1). The participants spent three days with intense work and also had the opportunity to enjoy the not less intense city life of Madrid.

The Madrid City Futures Conference introduced several innovations with respect to past EURA events. In the first place, it proposed two tracks on topics not normally presented at EURA events, one on ‘Sustainable cities and regions, climate change, resource use and adaptation’, and another on ‘Architectural, design and planning of the public realm’. These two new topics were added to the three tracks on the normally present themes about ‘Knowledge and technology in urban development’, ‘Community development, migration and integration in urban areas’, and ‘Urban governance and city planning in an international era’.

‘Urban governance and city planning’ was by far the track receiving most paper submissions, well over a hundred. Both of the new tracks enjoyed

a considerable success among participants, particularly the one on architectural and urban design, which was second in number of papers submitted. The success of the design track certainly has to do with the fact that university teaching and research in urban planning in Spain is located within architectural schools and, in addition, one of the Spanish organizing universities, the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, is home to an internationally renowned School of Architecture of considerable size.

**Table 1.** Participating countries

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
<b>I. EUROPE (25 countries)</b>	<b>335</b>
Austria	6
Azerbaijan	1
Belgium	3
Croatia	4
Cyprus	3
Czech Republic	4
Denmark	5
Finland	4
France	10
Germany	24
Greece	7
Hungary	3
Ireland	2
Italy	31
The Netherlands	14
Norway	6
Poland	12
Portugal	36
Serbia	2
Slovenia	1
Spain	114
Sweden	2
Switzerland	5
Turkey	4
UK	32
<b>II. AMERICA (6 countries)</b>	<b>88</b>
Brazil	12
Canada	10
Chili	3
Colombia	5
Mexico	4
USA	54
<b>III. ASIA AND PACIFIC (8 countries)</b>	<b>11</b>
Australia	1
China (Hong Kong)	2
India	1
Iran	1
Japan	1
Oman	1
Singapore	2
Taiwan	2
<b>IV. AFRICA (3 countries)</b>	<b>3</b>
Algeria	1
Ethiopia	1
South Africa	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>437</b>

The addition of the design track in particular brought to the forefront several interesting issues, among them the diversity of approaches, not always easy to bring together, that result from the very different mind frames and intellectual orientations that professional architects not specializing in city planning bring to a field, which in most European countries is solidly anchored in the social sciences. These discussions among different national and disciplinary traditions are, I believe, of great importance as we all work to develop a common ground for both research and teaching in Europe.

The institutional development of both the European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area can greatly benefit from the development of a common ground of understanding that can result by bringing together the different views held by designers and social scientists, which, in turn, represent to a great extent the mainstream of different national traditions of city planning and thinking in various parts of Europe.

A second innovation was the inclusion of six institutional sessions, which took place in parallel to the normal academic panels during the first day of the Conference. These sessions included representatives of the City of Madrid, EUROCITIES, the American National League of Cities, the United Cities and Local Governments, the United Nations Millenium Project, the Council of Europe, the Spanish Central Government, the Regional Governments of Madrid and Catalonia, the Association of Municipalities of Pamplona and the Migration Policy Institute. All in all they gathered 25 participants. The discussions arising from these panels by mixing policy makers, some very high ranking, with academics, contributed to the richness of the conference, as well as contributing to EURA's goal of linking research and practice.

*Inés Sánchez de Madariaga*  
Tenured Professor of Urban Planning,  
School of Architecture of Madrid

## Recent Publications

This section provides news and information about recent publications on urban issues. If you have any material you would like to see in the next issue please forward it to [aura@pg.tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:aura@pg.tu-darmstadt.de).

### **Book series URI: Urban and Regional Research International**

**Editors:** Hellmut Wollmann, Berlin | Harald Baldersheim, Oslo | Peter John, London/Manchester

**Editorial Board:** Susan Clarke, Boulder | Vincent Hoffmann-Martinot, Bordeaux | Michal Illner, Praha | Annick Magnier, Firenze

### ***Local Governance Reform in Global Perspective***

Norbert Kersting, Janice Caulfield, Andrew R. Nickson, Dele Olowu, Hellmut Wollmann  
2009, 197 pp. with 20 Tab. Softc. EUR 29,90 - ISBN 978-3-531-16953-8 (volume 12)

‘Good local governance’ reflects the dual functions of local government. On the one hand, democratic regimes gain input legitimacy by responsiveness and by being inclusive towards the preferences of their citizens. On the other hand, they achieve output legitimacy by effectively delivering public goods and services. Their governance strategies follow three major paths – ‘decentralisation’, ‘political administrative reforms’ and ‘participatory reforms’. But national contexts, actors, political culture and path dependency matter a lot. In this book, continent-wide developments are compared by using relevant country studies. This comparative approach focuses on ‘developing countries’ in Asia, Africa and Latin America, comparing and contrasting their experiences with those of European countries.

### ***Farewell to the Party Model? Independent Local Lists in East and West European Countries***

Edited by Marion Reiser and Everhard Holtmann  
2008, 296 pp. Softc. EUR 39,90 - ISBN 978-3-531-15687-3 (volume 11)

Local independent lists are a general phenomenon on the local level in many European countries – in established Western countries as well as in new democracies in Middle and Eastern Europe. The research is linked to the much-discussed phenomenon of the growing disenchantment with political parties and the sceptical evaluation of political parties on the local level. Typically, these lists understand themselves as non-parties or anti-parties and therefore assume a contra position in the local party system. The edited book aims first at developing a theoretical and conceptual framework for these non-partisan lists. Secondly, the contributions describe and for the first time comparatively analyse presence, success, organisational structure, behaviour and performance of these local actors in twelve West and East European countries.

### **Social Geography and Urban Studies' titles from The Policy Press**

All the titles below are currently available on our new website (<http://www.policypress.co.uk>) with a special website launch discount of 25%.

### ***Participatory Practice. Community-based action for transformative change***

Margaret Ledwith and Jane Springett

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847420121>

### ***Changing Local Governance, Changing Citizens***

Edited by Catherine Durose, Stephen Greasley and Liz Richardson

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847422170>

### ***Housing Policy Transformed. The right to buy and the desire to own***

Edited by Peter King

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847422132>

### ***Making Spaces for Community Development***

Michael Pitchford, with Paul Henderson

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847422590>

### ***Searching for Community. Representation, power and action on an urban estate***

Jeremy Brent

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847423238>

### ***The Well Connected Community (Second Edition)***

***A networking approach to community development***

Alison Gilchrist

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847420565>

### ***Community Cohesion in Crisis. New dimensions of diversity and difference***

Edited by John Flint and David Robinson

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847420237>

### ***Community Development. A critical approach***

Margaret Ledwith

<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781861346957>

To browse all current and forthcoming Social Geography and Urban Studies titles from The Policy Press, please visit:

[http://www.policypress.co.uk/browse\\_urban\\_policy.asp](http://www.policypress.co.uk/browse_urban_policy.asp)

## Institutional Member Profile

In this section we profile two institutional members:

- (1) Urban Research Centre at Darmstadt University of Technology, Germany
- (2) Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (YTK) at Helsinki University of Technology (TKK), Finland

### (1) Urban Research Centre at Darmstadt University of Technology

It is not only their architectural structure that unmistakably distinguishes cities like Frankfurt, Cologne, or Stuttgart from one another: Above and beyond their architectural aspects, their inhabitants and visitors are virtually able to intuit the differences between them. What is it that accounts for this specific character of a city?

This is not an easy question to answer: One thing essential to appropriately planning and further developing cities with regard to their specific features is an exact scientific analysis. The major challenge encountered here is the interplay between the wholly various disciplines necessarily involved in the task: Urban planning and regional planning, engineering, social sciences, or architecture have very different ways of looking at the phenomenon 'city'.

Since 2004 the Urban Research Centre at Darmstadt University of Technology (TU Darmstadt) has developed multidisciplinary perspectives in its scientific research on urban civilization. Some 30 professors from the fields of urban and regional planning, the engineering sciences, the social sciences and humanities, and architecture work closely together in the Centre's interdisciplinary urban research cluster.

The research is focused on one core issue: The 'intrinsic logic' (*Eigenlogik*) of cities. The concept of 'intrinsic logic' refers to the highly specific and 'typical' features as well as tacit processes at work in giving meaning to a city. It is the research interest to gain an understanding of the basic structures of cities and to render transparent relations and similarities that cities share.

One of the central methodological tools used is the comparison between cities. Alongside methods typically used in the social sciences, the Urban Research Centre at Darmstadt University of Technology makes use of approaches typically employed by urban planning as well as by the natural and engineering sciences.

The Centre is currently funded by the government of the German federal state of Hesse through its special programme to support research excellence (LOEWE) and consists of three research groups, the Graduate School of Urban Studies (URBANgrad), and a unit for the science-practice cooperation.



#### Research group A: 'Intrinsic Logic of Cities'

The concern of Research Group A, 'Intrinsic Logic of Cities', is to use theoretical means to further concretize the concept of 'intrinsic logic': What concepts and methods are best suited to research a city's intrinsic logic, and what are, potentially, the basic characteristics of a theory of cities?

The group's task is to work out the analytical framework as well as a set of conceptual categories for the whole Centre.

#### Research group B: 'Urban Environments'

Research Group B, 'Urban Environments', is concerned with investigating, within the given conception of urban research, the socio-ecological dimensions involved. The work of this research group is focused on the question of how to explain different notions of sustainability to be found in cities and to relate these notions to place-specific actor settings as well as socio-ecological conditions.

#### Research group C: 'Local Dynamics of Knowledge'

The third research group examines the importance of knowledge for urban development – or more specifically planning. The main research questions of this group are: Can specific local knowledge order relevant for urban planning be detected? How to explain the formation of these knowledge orders? To what extent and how do they impact planning decisions?



## Graduate School of Urban Studies (URBANgrad)

URBANgrad offers doctoral candidates the opportunity to start and to complete their dissertation work. All dissertation projects are closely linked with the core topic of the Research Centre.

Each candidate is supported by at least two supervisors (mostly from different disciplines). In addition, doctoral candidates are organized in working groups that are advised and supported by professors and designed to group individual dissertation projects into thematic clusters, the intention being to ensure that a continuous process of exchange is given during the overall procedure leading to a PhD.

## Unit for the science-practice cooperation

The aim of the unit for the science-practice cooperation is to communicate research findings to practitioners and, vice versa, the requirements of practitioners to the academic community. The tasks of the centre include staging regular workshops with practitioners from politics, administration, planning, business, and also organising conferences, scholarly workshops, and publications.

## Contacts

[www.stadtforschung.tu-darmstadt.de](http://www.stadtforschung.tu-darmstadt.de)

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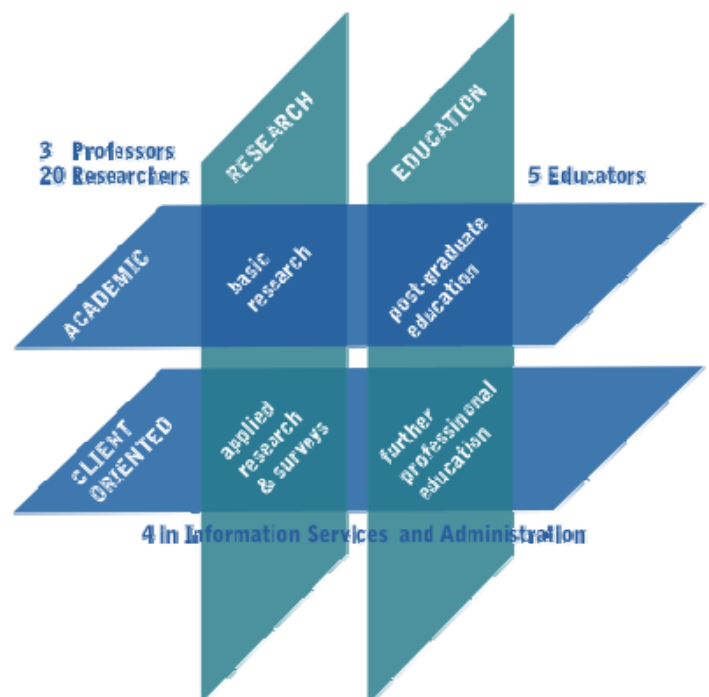
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## (2) Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (YTK) at Helsinki University of Technology (TKK), Finland

YTK – The Centre for Urban and Regional Studies was founded in 1968 as a national multidisciplinary centre for further education in urban and regional planning and urban studies. As most planners in Finland are trained in architectural and land surveying departments, YTK stands out as the only interdisciplinary hub focusing on planning education and research. Its combination of research and further training is unique in Finland, and also internationally. Over the years, it has developed an interdisciplinary research profile and functions related to post-graduate training. The picture presents the structure of the Centre in a nutshell.



Picture 1. YTK is a hybrid unit combining different functions.

As a national unit YTK co-operates closely with Finnish university departments and research institutions active in the fields of urban and regional planning and urban studies. YTK also co-operates actively with departments of its own Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, through the shared three professorships, mutual research projects, Masters and Post-graduate education and seminar activities.

### **Academic and Applied Research**

The Centre conducts both academic and applied research in its field, serving the needs of planning practice and policy development. We see YTK as a unique 'knowledge broker' between urban and regional research and practice. YTK's mission is one of engaged scholarship, that is interested not only in reflecting and theorizing on practice, but reflecting and developing theory with practice.

Our mission is reflected in practical research and development projects, which, besides their academic merits, serves societal goals shared with the public and private agencies funding our research. The same mission is an important driver in our further education activities, publishing and national information services, which are all closely integrated with our research efforts.

Important research in this decade has been conducted in the fields of environmental politics, planning conflicts, housing, public participation GIS (SoftGIS) methodologies, urban culture, social impact assessment and evaluation of programmes and policies. The Centre has also gained a status as an internationally well-known research institution and preferred research partner.

As a part of its research strategy, YTK has specified six focus areas to promote team formation, and to support project work and the continuity of research.

- Sustainable urban structure (geographical and environmental orientation)
- Urban space and housing (sociological and cultural orientation)
- Place-experience and participatory planning methods (environmental psychology and GIS)
- European metropolises and regions (governance and spatial planning)
- Partnerships and conflicts (political science and community development)
- Evaluation research (policy orientation, including impact assessment)

### **Multidisciplinary Education in Urban Planning**

YTK offers further education for professionals working in the fields related to urban and regional planning. YTK's courses are multi-disciplinary, aiming to bring together architects, land-surveyors,

social scientists, economists etc. The Centre arranges an annual expert-programme in urban planning, which is a year-long course covering various topics of urban and regional planning and research. The expert-programme is targeted at experienced professionals in urban and regional planning. The language of the programme is Finnish. In addition, YTK offers thematic courses covering topical issues in planning (in Finnish), research-based seminars (in Finnish and in English) and international summer-schools (in English).

The three professorships add the dimension of scientific post-graduate education to YTK's profile. The Centre has coordinated two Graduate Schools in co-operation with the University of Helsinki. YTK is also participating in the new Doctoral Programme of Built Environment starting in 2010, which is a joint graduate school of nine universities.

### **An Internationally Active Unit**

The Centre has built a large international network through its various activities. YTK is an institutional member in AESOP (Association of European Schools of Planning) and EURA (European Urban Research Association, <http://www.eura.org/>).

In July 2010, YTK is responsible of hosting the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual AESOP (Association of European Schools of Planning) Congress in Otaniemi with the theme 'Space is Luxury'. The AESOP congress is a major event, where planning scholars and professionals from all over Europe as well as other continents assemble to share their latest knowledge on planning research and education. For more information, please visit: [aesop2010.tkk.fi/](http://aesop2010.tkk.fi/)

YTK is also active in Nordic co-operation, mainly in NSBB (Nordic Network for urban and housing research). Within NSBB, the Centre has organised several times a Nordic urban and housing seminar, the latest in 2008 with Baltic reinforcement.

An annual Urban Planning and Design Summer School in co-operation with IFHP (International Federation of Housing and Planning) has been organized starting from 1994. YTK has also organized an Urban Studies Course annually in co-operation with the Helsinki Summer School and Urban Studies Network since 1999.

### **Changes on the Way: Aalto University**

In the beginning of 2010 three Finnish universities – the Helsinki School of Economics, the University of Art and Design Helsinki and the Helsinki University of Technology, are merging and TKK is changing into Aalto University. The Finnish government, academics and Finland's business community, which is strongly represented on Aalto's board, are hoping to create an internationally competitive, innovation-focused institution that takes inter-disciplinary working to an extreme by not only combining science, art,

technology and business expertise in an open-minded manner, but also through networking with other Finnish and international universities. Also in this new context, YTK will continue with a strong emphasis on planning education and research.

For more information, please visit:

<http://ytk.tkk.fi/en/>

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## CITY IMPRESSIONS

### YEREVAN

Frankly speaking, before the visit to Yerevan I knew embarrassingly little about the city. For the inhabitants of the post-communist countries, the association with its name is very clear: every one of us knows jokes about radio Yerevan. The overwhelming majority of them reveals the absurdities of every-day life on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain. Each of these jokes consists of a question posed by the radio listeners addressed to the studio and a response for it, for example:

1.) *Question:* Dear Radio Yerevan! What would happen if Khrushchev, not Kennedy, had been assassinated?

*Answer:* We don't know exactly, but one thing is sure: Onassis would never wish to marry the widow.

2.) *Question:* Dear Radio Yerevan! Is it true that in Moscow on the Red Square they are giving away Mercedeses?

*Answer:* True, but let's have a small revision: not in Moscow – but in Leningrad, not Mercedeses – but bikes, and they are not giving away – but stealing.

Having in mind these silly jokes, I've been waiting impatiently and curiously for a visit to the capital city of Armenia.

Even on the first evening we succeeded to catch a little bit of Yerevan's ambiance, while wandering around the main boulevard Mashtots in order to find a hotel. Despite the late hour, Yerevan was extremely busy. The patron of the main street, Mesrop Mashtots, is one of the leading figures of Armenian national tradition, as well as a saint of local church. At the beginning of the fourth century, he invented the Armenian alphabet. Several years ago the very same street was holding the name of Vladimir Lenin – the change of the patron has not taken root in the consciousness of many city's inhabitants to this day.



Fig.1. Medieval church, picture by Adam Mielczarek

Despite an extremely complicated system of characters of the Armenian alphabet, it is not difficult to get around the city – the inscriptions are spelt in all common European languages – English, French, German, Italian and, of course, in Russian. In the 70's Polish writer and foreign correspondent Ryszard Kapuściński pointed out that the 'international' character of Yerevan is in fact attributed to the significant influence of Armenian Diaspora scattered all over the world. Indeed, the global ties of this nation are not common for other countries of the post-soviet bloc. Even very cursory research indicates how deeply Armenian roots have grown in global culture. Some examples of famous Armenians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are: Charles Aznavour (act. Aznavurian), Cher (act. Cherylin Sarkisian LaPiere) or Andre Agassi (act. Agasian). Another proof of evident and strong connections of Armenians with the 'external world' is the number of airline's agencies located on almost every corner of the city.



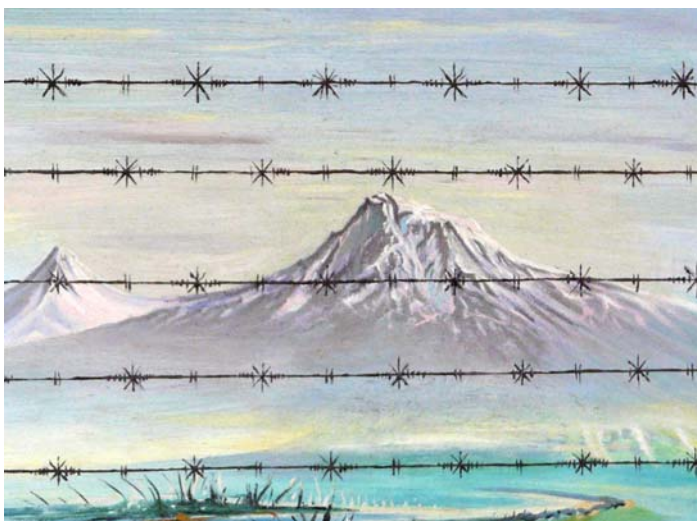
Fig. 2. Main Square of Yerevan, picture by Paweł Swianiewicz





**Fig. 3.** Plan of Yerevan by Tamanyan, 1924

Yerevan surprises with its diversity. Exclusive boutiques are neighbors to distressed and forgotten dead - ends. However, it is really difficult to get lost in the city. Its layout is very clear and ordered. This is the merit of Armenian architect Alexander Tamanyan, who just ‘invented’ the shape of the city from the basis in the 20's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even Hausemann could be envious of the breadth of Tamanyan's project and his working conditions – at that time Yerevan was quite small (less than 70 thousand inhabitants) a town located in a diverse and still largely green terrain. Tamanyan prepared a complex plan based on a wheel, with a clear net of perpendicular streets and monumental visual axis. The main idea of the project, which was intended for a population of about two hundred thousand residents, was a view of Mount Ararat from every place in the city.



**Fig. 1.** Ararat, picture by Joanna Krukowska



**Fig.4.** Cascade, picture by Adam Mielczarek

Although Ararat is no longer within the borders of Armenia, it is still a symbol of the local culture very strongly and painfully rooted in national identity. Yerevan is trying to compensate this loss by a construction of its own ‘Mount Ararat’ – a gigantic and extremely monumental investment called ‘Cascade’. The Cascade is actually a huge stairway leading to the top of the hill towering over the city. Climbing onto the entire construction takes about 15 minutes. Today there are 826 stairs – but there will be more, because the Cascade is still under construction. Tired pedestrians can relax at one of five squares with fountains and benches. Taking into consideration the deficit of water and frequent interruptions in its supply in Yerevan, numerous fountains and waterfalls seem to be if not inappropriate, even ironic.

My stay in Yerevan was short, but I already know what makes me wishing to come back there: on the one hand its worldliness and breadth, on the other an incomprehensible exoticism hidden just around the corner.

*Joanna Krukowska*

## EURA DEVELOPMENTS

We remind you of the new contact data of the EURA Secretariat.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2009 the EURA Secretariat is hosted by the unit of 'Public policy, public administration and urban research' at the Institute of Political Science, Darmstadt University of Technology.

The **new contact details** are as follows:

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