



PROMOTING EXCELLENCE  
IN PLANNING EDUCATION  
AND RESEARCH

**SECRETARIAT GENERAL**

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## **Trans-European and trans-institutional cooperation in planning education UN Habitat and AESOP European Urban Summer School**

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**The UN-Habitat represented by its Central European Office in cooperation with the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) in September 2010 (10-19<sup>th</sup>) organized the 1<sup>st</sup> European Urban Summer School (EUSS) for young planning professionals.**

### **Idea of EUSS**

UN-Habitat and AESOP want to bring together young professionals, experienced academics and practitioners from across Europe to discuss some of the most important planning issues. The Summer School aims to facilitate intra-European exchange of experiences between practitioners and academics, as well as to promote trans-European debates on and understanding of planning matters. It looks to develop cooperation between professionals, academics, politicians and other stakeholders in spatial development and management and, as a consequence, to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of Europe's citizens. It also wants to foster a debate on important planning topics.

These aims correspond to UN Habitat's focus and to the AESOP Charter.

European Urban Summer School was organized in cooperation with ISOCARP and EURA. Both institutions have declared their future involvement.

Both UN Habitat and AESOP wish to organize this event on a regular basis.

### **EUSS 2010**

EUSS 2010 was hosted by Wrocław University of Technology, Poland; future hosts will be selected through a call-for-proposals procedure.

European Urban Summer School 2010, knowing that 'old', 'past' and 'heritage' are fashionable terms, explored the question if they are also sustainable?

The impact of modern mankind on natural environment, as well as on social and economic conditions, has been widely debated. A broadly accepted view is that our – modern human beings – influence made things worse rather than better. Instead of following the view that 'old times were good times', EUSS 2010 aimed at looking for an informed answer. We have studied three main aspects of urban development – the environment, the society and the economy – in terms of comparing 'old' with 'new'; in an effort to recognise essential differences and similarities, focusing on asking good questions resulted in some reasonable answers. Also, we considered if the future could be/should be like the past.

**The environmental aspect of sustainability** has to take into consideration the new form of city, one that results from urban growth, which is commonly considered as urban sprawl. We wanted to ask the question if urban sprawl was something completely new in human settlements. Across European space we can notice many examples of 'sprawl' not connected with cities: rural residences and farming including vineyard houses and factories.

What is the essential difference between Boccaccio's rural residence around Florence in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, described in his great '*The Decameron*', and modern housing development around cities? What kind of congestion, or more generally, transportation consequences produce the modern model of spatial expansion? What kind of urban sprawl or 'expanded settlement heritage' can we find in different European countries? In



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what way the model of settlements affects climate change or ecological footprint? What is a 'good model' in terms of environmental sustainability? How to cope with quantity (urban growth) which requires new quality? Since 2007 more than half of the world's population lives in the cities – therefore these questions are important for the majority of the people on the planet. To discuss these issues we used the city of Wrocław, its agglomeration and metropolitan area as a case study of spatial development of medium-sized European city.

**Social aspect of sustainability** reflects both the quality of life and the cultural differences. We focused on the topic of social mixture and rights to space. Are our European cities balanced in terms of 'right to the space'? Are modern gated communities a 'sickness' of the city or it is only a new way of expressing power, separation and difference? Could we consider towers of San Gimignano or Bologna as the early way of this trend? This leads to the crucial question what is (or might be) private and what is (or should be) public in cities. How to translate citizens' right to the 'common space' into spatial solutions? Citizens' right to public places is also a big challenge of modern urban management.

Other aspects of this problem are cultural differences and their influence on quality of life. Do we have the right to express our cultural identity in cities? What are the limits of this expression? Do we have the right to a 'cultural takeover' of cities? Which model is better in terms of quality of life: social mix or separation? Can we identify 'urban divisions' in European cities? What are the spatial expressions of those divisions? Are we able to 'bridge' those divisions? How were things in the past?? What social mixture in Paris Balzac described in his *'Le Pere Goriot'*?

This investigation leads to a more general question whether one cultural model of an European city may exist. How might 'shared places' be arranged and attract everyone? What is the best urban policy for public spaces? We tried to learn from history, but the main area of research was 20th century housing. We analysed different models of housing developments in an effort to identify strengths and weaknesses of each model. We studied public facilities and the way they affect the quality of life.

A very special issue in Wrocław is the population exchange which took place after WW2. We wanted to ask the question if and in what way it influenced the 'use' of the city; we also analysed cultural identity and heritage in terms of 'social memory'. We wanted to answer the question whether a 'historical bridge' between past and future citizens has already been built.

**The economic aspect of sustainability** reflects the essential question if European urban heritage should be preserved, developed, or transformed. We wanted to analyse if preservation had a value itself, and what sort of value that might be: social, economic, aesthetic, spatial? Could we consider heritage and the costs of its preservation an investment? Who should pay for this? Is there 'market demand' for "old"? We discussed whether 'real' preservation of the heritage existed or whether we used heritage for our own purposes and in our own way. Consequently, we analysed if heritage was an element of transformation or an element of preservation? And what is more essential for cities – change or persistence of form? What is 'more historic'? Has 'past' been considered as a value in the past? Were there economic reasons for retaining the form of Toledo and change the form of Paris? How did new ideas (i.e. 'Garden City', 'Ciudad Lineal', 'New Towns') relate to the past? Were they 'historic' or 'innovative'?

We studied the meaning of heritage and the way it affects urban form and citizen welfare. We analysed if 'heritage' may help in creating a 'good' city in terms of quality of life and sustainability. As a consequence, we tried to define essential features of revitalisation – as a process of preserving, but also using heritage as an important part of sustainable life. Hence, sustainability in urban economics could mean not only 'pure' economic profits but 'social' profits as well.

### General Conclusions

We have received applications from all over Europe: from Portugal to Ukraine and from the UK to Israel. We even hosted one participant from Australia, two from South America and one from Asia as their recent work was connected with Europe. This transformed our modest event from European into intercontinental.

Our tutors represented both planning schools (AESOP) and planning professionals (ISOCARP).

Details including tutors profiles and EUSS2010 programme are available on the webpage [www.euss.pl](http://www.euss.pl).



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UN Habitat Warsaw Office was represented by its Head Krzysztof Mularczyk and Julia Korysheva, both of whom made a great effort helping with management issues. Prof. Anna Geppert from Univeristé Paris IV Sorbonne, Dr. Nikos Karadimitriou from University College London, Bartlett School of Planning and Vice-President of ISOCARP Dr. Dirk Engelke from University of Karlsruhe helped significantly with clarifying concept of the EUSS2010.

EUSS 2010 worked under the auspices of:

- Prof. Dr. hab. inż. Tadeusz Więckowski, Rector of the Wrocław University of Technology
- Prof. Dr. hab. Barbara Kudrycka, Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland
- Cezary Grabarczyk, Minister of Infrastructure of the Republic of Poland
- Bogdan Zdrojewski, Minister of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland
- Marek Łapiński, Marshall of Lower Silesia
- Rafał Dutkiewicz, Mayor of Wrocław,

Very special words of gratitude go to UN-Habitat, Marshall of Lower Silesia, Wrocław University of Technology and City of Wrocław, who provided funding for European Urban Summer School 2010.

The outcome of EUSS 2010 is enormous. We have got 3 reports corresponding with analysed topic from each of 6 international young professionals teams. We collected more than 20 papers from EUSS tutors. Young planners from Wrocław Development Office contributed to the EUSS producing professional maps and initial analyses for chosen case studies.

We are currently working with Judith Ryser (ISOCARP, CITYSCOPE EUROPE, Fundacion Metropoli) on editing a book presenting all this extremely interesting files, hoping that it might be available in spring 2011.

We are happy to get initial applications for hosting UN Habitat & AESOP European Urban Summer Schools in 2011 and 2012. The process of decision making has not been finished yet so planning schools across Europe are welcome to apply. All details are available via AESOP webpage or directly via the Secretariat General.

*Wrocław-London, November, 2010*