

URBAN II Evaluation

Case Study: Gijón



1.0 Introduction

The municipality of Gijón is situated in northern Spain, in the Region of Asturias, an area which has suffered from industrial decline for many decades. Gijón, with a population of 275,000 (Municipal Register March 14, 2002), is both the most populous and the most industrial city of Asturias with an urban area spreading over 27 km².

Gijón is an expanding city. Despite a fall in the indigenous city population, which has been a common factor in all Asturian municipalities over recent years, the population has been growing due to an influx of people from other parts of Asturias.

The URBAN II target area contained 26.519 residents in 2001, about 10% of the town's total population. The area is shaped by its heavy industry and the associated major transport infrastructure, with the highly industrial port of Gijón being located in the URBAN II area. Furthermore, the area suffers from problems related to a lack of proper urban planning when this part of Gijón was initially developed in the 1950s. Asturian traditional industrial activities such as shipbuilding and coal and metal production developed in the 1960s and 1970s. Subsequently, as in the rest of the continent, they went through a process of industrial "reconversion" in the 1980s and 1990's. This led to high unemployment and population losses due to the decrease of economic activity in these sectors. This had a strong negative impact on Gijón and in particular on its industrial parts, including this particular URBAN II area. This impact can be considered negative from an economic, as well as from an environmental and social perspective. Until the year 2000, these problems had not been tackled in an adequate manner due to a lack of a serious and rigorous urban planning and investment. The following indicators serve as an example of the above:

Situation in 2001	URBAN II AREA	GIJÓN
M2 of green areas/Parks per inhabitant	3.3	5.5
Unemployment rate	18.33% (30.41% women)	15.16% (23.11% women)
Households with Internet access	21.60%	25.70%

The Gijón URBAN II programme received a total of € 14.2 mln. and focused on four neighbourhoods located in the western part of Gijón (Jove, Tremañes, northern and western parts of La Calzada and the coastal area of El Natahoyo).

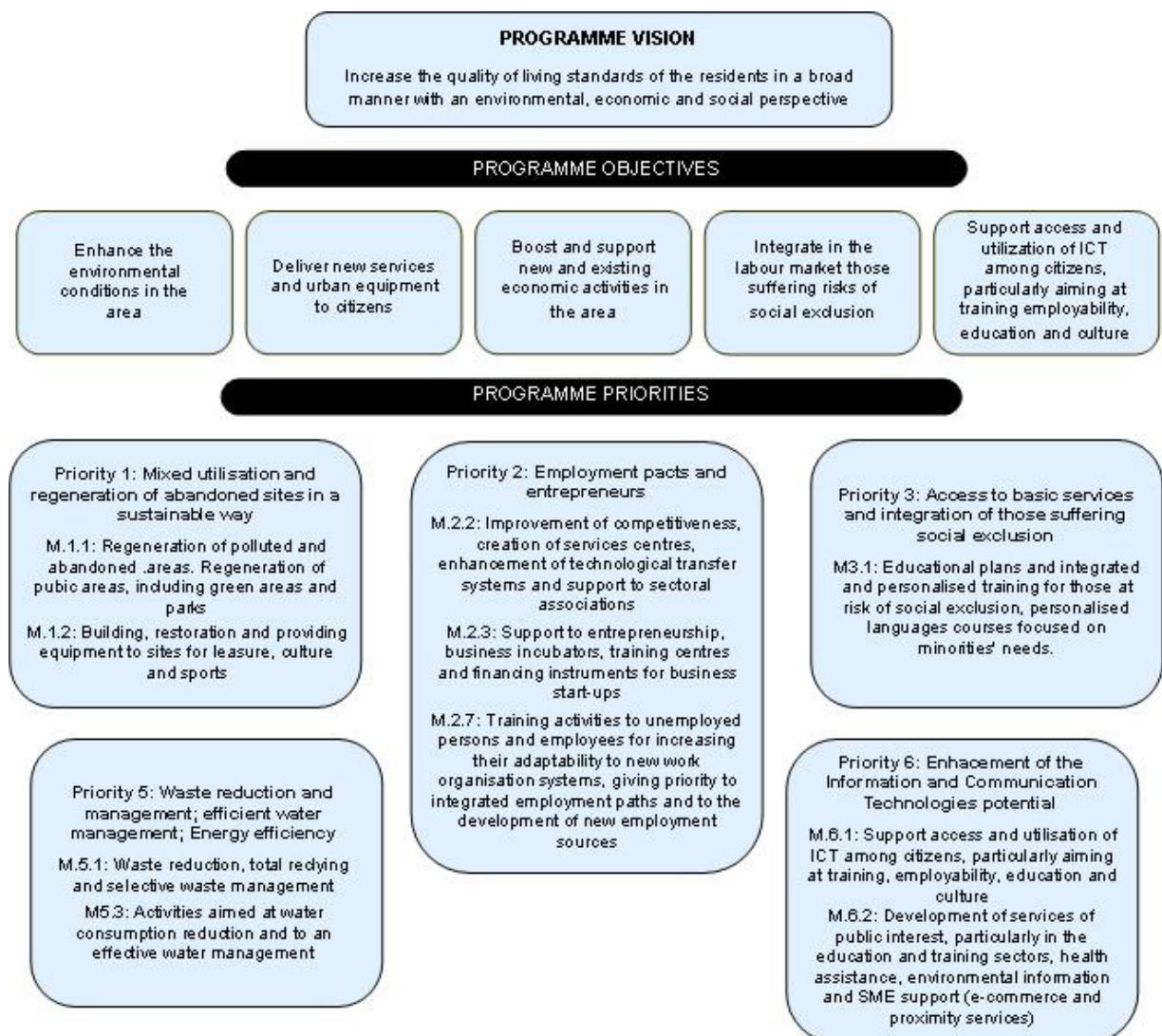
1.1 Background to the URBAN II Programme and its target area

The main objective of the Gijón URBAN II programme as indicated in the Community Initiative Programme was to "increase the quality of living standards of the residents in a broad manner with an environmental, economic and social perspective". In this way, the Programme was seeking to reach the following main objectives through an integrated approach:

- Enhance the environmental conditions in the area;
- Deliver new services and urban infrastructure to citizens;

- Boost and support new and existing economic activities in the area;
- Integrate in the labour market those suffering risks of social exclusion;
- Support access and utilisation of ICT among citizens, particularly aiming at training, employability, education and culture.

For achieving these objectives, over € 8 mln. was allocated to physical and environmental regeneration projects involving the building of infrastructure and the regeneration of public spaces. Another € 2.2 mln. was spent on boosting and supporting new and existing economic activities in the area. Projects related to social issues received € 1.6 mln. Finally, almost € 1.3 mln. was dedicated to support access to and utilisation of ICT among citizens and SMEs. The explicit aim of the ICT related activities was to narrow the existing digital divide, by facilitating broadband access to the internet and enabling residents and the business community to use it through training measures. The vision, main objectives and priorities of the programme are set out in the diagram below.



In parallel to this, URBAN II in Gijón focussed on:

- Regeneration and renovation of the existing urban environment, which was in poor condition as a consequence of intensive industrial use and needed a complete renovation;

- Improving the employability of residents in the area and fighting social exclusion;
- Boosting economic activities in the area, and;
- Reducing the existing digital divide and facilitate the use of ICT and provide broadband access to citizens and SMEs.

The Programme was managed by the City Council of Gijón (Ayuntamiento de Gijón) in partnership with over 40 entities and local associations, which played a very active role in the design and implementation of individual projects, and the continuation of project activities once the Programme came to an end. The City Council had the final responsibility for the management and effective implementation of the Programme, including appraisals, funding allocations, monitoring systems, reporting and project support.

Has this programme theory been realised on the ground?

The Programme has clearly been realised and experienced "on the ground" as the solution to the most severe and most pressing problems that this part of Gijón was facing. The Programme did not drift away from its initial objectives for the global and holistic regeneration of the urban space in the western part of the city, providing an increased standard of living for residents of the area.

All measures (economic, social, physical and environment regeneration) have been implemented according to plan and there are some cases where activities and outcomes have well exceeded the "theory" and objectives of the Programme. The actual "physical change" in some parts of the city has been spectacular, bringing new green areas and public spaces for leisure where there were previously abandoned industrial sites.

Expectations were also exceeded in terms of narrowing the existing digital divide between the Programme area and the rest of Gijón, where outcome indicators show a great penetration of ICT and broadband access in households and the business community.

2.0 The Impact of the Programme

This section deals with the impact of Gijón's URBAN II programme, looking at its direct and indirect impacts according to both programme information as well as the views of local stakeholders. It firstly looks at whether the target area has changed over the life of the programme.

2.1 How has the target area changed?

The URBAN II Programme has played a key role as a factor of change of the urban public space in the western part of Gijón (the URBAN II area), thus generating a substantial increase in the residents' standard of living. This was mainly achieved through the regeneration and renovation of industrial sites that have been converted into residential areas, new green areas and public spaces (including the building of sports and leisure centres), contributing to a general improvement of the urban environment in this part of the city.

The activities undertaken in industrial parks and in the field of connectivity, the use of ICT and new infrastructure and training, had a positive impact on the employability of residents. The business community in the area also benefited from the new services created by the URBAN II Programme.

Statistical information shows how the target area has changed through the period of the Programme in a positive way. Many of the key indicators for the entire area improved between 2001 and 2007. For instance, the unemployment rate in the URBAN II area fell from 18.3% (with 30.4% of female unemployment) to 14% in 2006 (23% female), which means a 4.3 percentage point reduction. During the same period, the unemployment rate for the city of Gijón only fell by a 3.17 percentage points (from 15.2% in 2001 to 12.1% in 2006). Thus the drop in the URBAN II area was significantly higher than in the city as a whole.

A number of other indicators also provide evidence of this positive change:

- An increase in the **population** in the URBAN II area; an increase of 1201 residents in the period 2001-2006, from 26519 to 27720 inhabitants;
- Licences for **starting new commercial activities** are an indicator for the economic activity trends with respect to the rest of the city. In 2008, it can be noted that the positive tendencies observed since 2001 continue: this is to say, an increase in the percentage of the economic activities with respect to the rest of Gijón. In 2001, 14.7% of the new "licencias" for economic activities came from the URBAN II area. In 2006, this figure had risen to 25.2%. This is especially remarkable when the fact that the URBAN II area only represents 10% of the population and 8% of the city's territory is taken into account;
- Another indicator that reveals these positive changes in the area is the actual increase in the **number of households** in this part of Gijón. There has been an increase of 19%, which translates into 1948 new homes with regard to the 9742 existing ones in 2002;
- The percentage of residents with **tertiary or upper-secondary educational attainments** rose from 20.5% in 2002 to a 33.1% in December 2004;
- Finally, the use of **Information and Communications Technologies** increased; 71.5% of the area's households have now a computer, compared to 40.8% in 2002 and 62.5% have broadband access to the internet (in 2002, only 11.5% had this type of fast internet access). In the rest of the city, 48% of households have broadband access to the internet. This translates into a 14.5 percentage point increase after the implementation of URBAN II in the area.

According to the City Council member in charge of the URBAN II Programme, "we can speak about a more significant change in the URBAN II area compared to other parts of the city due to the intensity of the investments and resources devoted to physical regeneration of the urban public spaces, together with the firm support to the local business community and the push towards a general access of new Information and Communication Technologies by both residents and SMEs".

2.2 Direct Impacts

The tables below provide a summary of the quantitative information on the Programme's outputs and results (drawn from the 2007 Annual Implementation Report approved by the Programme's Monitoring Committee in May 2008).

The system of indicators for all Spanish URBAN II Programmes was set up back in 2001 by the Managing Authority of the Programmes, the Spanish Ministry of Economy, allocating a code and a definition to every single indicator. This was done with the clear purpose of having a harmonised system for all URBAN II Community Initiative Programmes that could be easily aggregated and monitored by the management structures of the Programmes. The quantitative analysis of the indicators is complemented with a more detailed qualitative one, allowing for a more complete view of the direct impacts of the Programme in Gijón.

The tables below contain information about the Programme's performance indicators and are structured by **Programme priorities** and **Programme measures**.

Priority 1: Mixed utilisation and regeneration of abandoned sites in a sustainable way			
Measure 1.1 Regeneration of polluted and abandoned areas. Regeneration of public areas, including green areas and parks			
Indicator	URBAN II AREA		
	Target	Actual	%
Output			
Nr. of new urban infrastructures	100	155	155
Sqm of surface regenerated and new green areas	25000	37576	150
Results			
Nr of new facilities	7	4	175
Nr of new houses built	500	3052	610
Measure 1.2 Building, restoration and providing equipment to sites for leisure, culture and sports			
Output			
Nr of new infrastructures/sports centres	2	2	100
Sqm of new surface regenerated	7692	7692	100
Results			
Nr of people using new sports centres	30000	75583	251

The regeneration of the urban public space and its use by citizens has been one of the main priorities of the Programme. A clear focus was put on the creation of new green areas in abandoned former industrial parts of the city and the introduction of new utilisation patterns for deprived public areas.

An analysis of the output information for Priority 1 shows that all indicator based targets have either been achieved or exceeded with key indicators linked to new urban infrastructure, new green areas, new houses built in the URBAN II area and new sports and leisure centres built. In particular, one sports centre has been renovated and one big sports and leisure centre (Complejo Deportivo de la Calzada) has been built, responding to an old need expressed by the residents in the area. This sports centre was a priority project for infrastructure investment in the area and the impact on the area, so far, has been outstanding. Over 130000 people have used the new sports centre in 2008, and these users came both from the URBAN II area and from the rest of the city of Gijón.

Among the 37576 sqm of new green areas created, the construction of the new parks of Jove, Portuarios, and Lauredal can be highlighted. All three of them are highly appreciated by the local community and neighbours' associations.

Priority 2: Support the business activity, trade, craft sector, cooperatives and SMEs			
Measure 2.2 Improvement of competitiveness, creation of business services' centres, enhancement of technological transfer systems and support to sectoral associations			
Indicator	URBAN II AREA		
	Target	Actual	%
Output			
Sqm of surface regenerated and new green areas	10000	11263	112
Results			
SMEs assisted	110	170	154
Measure 2.3 Support to entrepreneurship, business incubators, training centres and financing instruments for business start-ups			
Output			
Projects assisted	2	2	100
Results			
Jobs created	28	12	42
Measure 2.7 Training activities to unemployed persons and employees for increasing their adaptability to new work organisation systems and the use of ICT			
Output			
No of training activities delivered	170	215	126
No of people attending training activities	3000	3332	111
Results			
No of users with improved capacity	300	591	197
No of companies involved	15	14	93

An analysis of the output information for Priority 2 shows that all but one of the indicator based targets have either been achieved or exceeded with key indicators linked to jobs created, people accessing training or square meters of business area (industrial parks) regenerated and improved. The key underachieving outputs relate to jobs created – only 12 young people at risk of social exclusion took up employment against 28 targeted.

For this priority, one of the most significant impacts of the Programme was linked to the 11263 sqm renovated in the Industrial Parks of Mora Garay and Promosa, recovering abandoned spaces, creating safe parking spaces, renovating existing industrial spaces and creating a building with capacity for hosting 16 new companies and a service centre to bring more dynamism to the business community in the park.

Alongside these measures, two projects for the development of SMEs support services have been implemented, supporting the urban park association in the creation of a web page, the park's directory, development of tailored business services, etc. All this is reported to have stimulated economic activity in the area.

Finally, many of the more successful projects under this Priority were focused on the provision of ICT training activities. From September 2003 until July 2008, training activities on ICT, electronic commerce and the use of Internet attracted an average of 600 students per year. Those training activities were tailored to the needs of the users, designing specific modules for women, shop assistants, young people, etc.

Priority 3: Access to basic services and integration of those suffering social exclusion
Measure 3.1 Educational plans and integrated and personalised training for those at risk of social exclusion, personalised languages courses focused on minorities' needs

Indicator	URBAN II AREA		
	Target	Actual	%
Output			
No of training activities	15	69	460
No of participants	1000	1452	145
No of renewed social spaces	3	3	
Results			
% of people that pass training activities tests	70	45	64
No of young people trained (increased capacity)	240	528	220

Again, an analysis of the output information for Priority 3 shows that all but one have either been achieved or exceeded with key indicators linked to training activities, capacity building and the renewal of three social spaces for project activities planned under the social component: "Centro de día para menores", "Centro de Mayores del Natahoyo" y "Centro Social Tremañes". These new social spaces host training and social activities for elderly people, young residents and for those at risk of social exclusion.

Priority 5: Waste reduction and management; efficient water management; energy efficiency			
Measure 5.1 Waste reduction, total recycling and selective waste management			
Indicator	URBAN II AREA		
	Target	Actual	%
Output			
No of new environmental facilities	1	2	200
No of meetings/companies assisted	150	135	90
Results			
Volume of solid waste recovered	1500	3334	22
Measure 5.3 Activities aimed at water consumption reduction and effective water management			
Output			
Total length of pipelines	8450	8845	104
Results			
No of beneficiaries	2782	2800	100.65
% energy consumption reduction	30	30	100

Two new environmental facilities have been built and are operating in Gijón after the end of the URBAN Programme. The Green Point (Punto Limpio) of La Calzada and a number of waste disposal points have been buried underground, hence reducing the visual effect of these facilities.

Both projects have represented new solutions towards waste disposal and have improved local plans for selective disposal of waste. The reported impact in terms of the increase in the solid waste recovered is significant. Some anecdotal evidence also suggests that the new facilities helped raising awareness of the importance of selective waste disposal and recycling among residents.

In parallel, and under measure 5.3, it is important to highlight the construction and renovation of water pipes leading to a more effective water management, a project that has had a huge impact in the district of Jove, where residents were suffering from water supply restrictions during peak demand periods.

Priority 6: Enhancement of the Information and Communication Technologies potential
Measure 6.1 Support access and utilisation of ICT among citizens, particularly aiming at training,

employability, education and culture			
Indicator	URBAN II AREA		
	Target	Actual	%
Output			
Nr. of new buildings prepared/adapted	4	4	100
Results			
Nr. of advisory activities implemented	2750	1104	40.15
Nr. of users	21000	30199	143
% of increase of centres with full internet access	400	400	100
Measure 6.2 Development of services of public interest, particularly in the education and training sectors, health assistance, environmental information and SME support (e-commerce and proximity services)			
Output			
Nr. of ICT centres for businesses	1	1	100
Results			
Nr. of participating entities	150	255	170

This Priority has contributed to the establishment of four public spaces that provide citizens with free access to the internet and host training and support activities on Information and Communication Technologies. These centres were given the name "Mediatecas" and were set-up in Natahoyo, in the Centre for Young Initiatives, in the "Escuelas de Pescadores" and in the district of Tremañes. A total of 30199 beneficiaries have participated in the different training activities that involved general courses on internet access and also more specific modules on web design or on the design of on-line training courses.

In parallel, a funding scheme was established to help households in the area to connect to the internet through broadband access and 2834 households have benefited from this. As a consequence, a major increase in the number of households having a computer and internet broadband access was recorded.

Finally, under measure 6.2, an important success of the Programme was the preparation of 255 web pages for 255 SMEs based in the industrial Parks of the URBAN II area.

To sum up the impact analysis per Priority and Measure, the Programme has performed very well in all areas of activity and has acted as a key instrument for the whole regeneration of the area of reference. The analysis of the information shows that almost all indicators have either been achieved or exceeded, some of them by a significant margin. Taking the Programme as a whole, URBAN II has dramatically improved the reference area and evidence of impacts can be found in all sectors of activity including:

- Physical regeneration & environment operations;
- New public services, facilities and supporting activities for the business community;
- Access to ICT for residents and SMEs; and
- Establishment of new social services for specific target groups.

To complement and further evidence all of the above, a number of projects which were often highlighted as having had the greatest impacts are further described below:

- **Sports Centre La Calzada:** Despite having 30 sports associations and clubs, no proper spaces existed to develop their activities. Today, the sports complex represents the central point of their

activities. A total of 130000 users in 2008 from all over the city proves the success of building the centre and of its management;

- **Physical renovation and new SME support services in the industrial park of Mora Garay:** The park was in a critical state and the project supported a plan to bring a new dynamism to the industrial park. A new building was erected in the park – containing 16 different spaces that are for hire by young entrepreneurs. The building includes office space for providing support services to the SMEs located in the industrial park. In parallel, a company directory was created, designing web pages for all the companies set up in the park or supporting those SMEs to renovate their own spaces in the park;
- **SILOE Centre for young people suffering from risk of social exclusion (Centro de día para menores SILOE):** This project was developed in close cooperation with a Foundation (Fundacion SILOE) that is very active in the city combating social problems of young people. In the centre, young people with ages that range from 6 to 17 years old, with severe social problems and families facing difficulties are supported and assisted. In some cases, and under concrete circumstances, some of these children temporary live there;
- **URBAN Green Point:** The project established the first Green Point in the city. It is a selective waste disposal and management point and, ahead of its construction, local communities and neighbours' associations were consulted and informed about the benefits this facility will bring to the area. The idea was to place the "Punto Limpio" close to households and services to communicate the basic idea that recycling and sustainable waste management forms part of our daily life and it is everybody's task and in everybody's interest. For this purpose, the Green Point included a training space to host awareness-raising and communication activities. The new service is now being managed by the regional agency for waste management (COGERSA);
- **URBAN en línea (URBAN On Line):** This project has achieved the narrowing of the existing digital divide between this part of Gijón and other parts of the city. The four public access spaces (Mediatecas) provide free access to the internet, training courses and support services. The project also established a funding scheme providing direct financial aid for broadband connections in households and for the purchase of computers by residents in the area.


2.3 Indirect Impacts

Programme managers, local politicians and stakeholders in general agreed that some of the indirect impacts of the Programme were at least as important as the direct impacts mentioned above.

The key indirect impact of the Programme is the *strengthening of the voluntary and community sector* as a great number of the projects funded were run by voluntary and community organisations. A total of 41 entities and local community associations were involved in the management and implementation of the URBAN II Programme. This voluntary and community sector included local neighbourhood associations, educational centres and foundations, youth associations, sports associations, associations for elderly people and local business associations.

The actual involvement of these organisations varied in nature and intensity according to the stage in the project cycle, and can be depicted as follows:

Activity/stage in the project cycle	Level of intensity
Planning: Involvement of the voluntary sector in programming and planning	Fair; public consultations for public funded programme preparation
Design: Joint design of concrete projects	High; local association gets involved in activity planning and allocation of resources
Implementation: support/delivery of the project	High; local association implements project under the supervision of Programme managers
Follow-up Take-over the management of the project once the Programme has come to an end	Very high; local association assumes responsibility on the project



The participation of the voluntary and community sector during each of these stages of the project cycle points to effective empowerment of these entities and has led to higher levels of capacity and expertise of the organisations involved.

To illustrate this indirect impact on strengthening the voluntary and community sector, four different examples can be highlighted:

- **Industrial Parks Business Associations of Mora Garay and Promosa.** Before the start of the Programme, these two associations were developing hardly any support activities for the the SMEs located in the parks. With the implementation of the regeneration and support services for the industrial parks, these associations are now effectively running a business support centre and activity will continue once the Programme is finished. The associations have been empowered and have gained during these seven years of implementation the necessary experience and know-how to effectively manage the industrial parks;
- **Association of elderly people of Natahoyo.** This association has learnt through the implementation of the renovation of the Centre for older people of Natahoyo how to run such a centre and it has been formally given the responsibility for its management. This association and its new role are being used as an example for the rest of the local older people associations in Gijón;
- **Two neighbourhood associations** have been given the responsibility of running two internet access and services points (Mediatecas). These neighbourhood associations got involved in the design of the training activities on the use of internet, the information campaigns and the funding scheme for the purchase of computers and for accessing the internet through broadband connections. Taking advantage of this experience and know-how, they have both become mature organisations with enough capacity to run these centres;
- Finally, the **neighbourhood associations of the Calzada district**, together with other educational centres in the area, cooperated with the municipal services in the design and implementation on the information campaigns carried out before the building of the "Green Point" for selective waste management that was placed right in the heart of this district. An effective communication campaign was regarded as equally important as the actual building of

the infrastructure. This association developed strong organisational skills that helped with awareness raising and actual use of the facility.

All these examples helped to strengthen the community infrastructure within the area and provided local entities with new competences and capacities. This indirect impact is also identified as a key legacy of the overall programme as it would continue to benefit local communities well beyond the programme's life.

The programme also had a wider impact in relation to awareness-raising of the actual needs of this part of Gijón among residents and regional stakeholders. An annual average of 60.000-70.000 letters related to the URBAN II Programme in Gijón were sent during the period of seven years, containing information on the training activities, access to new technologies, environmental affairs or on the whole regeneration process of the western part of Gijón.

Finally, another wider impact of the programme was the demonstration and public recognition of the city's capacity to implement a complex and challenging Programme such as URBAN II. During the last few years, the municipality of Gijón has received a number of awards recognising the good work undertaken in the framework of URBAN II: the 2003 Award for the Best Public Initiative in Asturias (by the national economic magazine *Actualidad Economica*); the Award APIA 2003 for the full regeneration and renovation of the industrial parks of western Gijón; and the 2004 Award for the most attractive public building in Asturias for the Calzada Sports Centre.

All these awards are seen as an indirect impact as they contribute to the city's profile and its organisational and managerial capacity. All stakeholders believe that these wider impacts will also benefit the target area beyond 2008, when the majority of URBAN funding came to an end.

3.0 Links with Other Programmes and Policies

The URBAN II Programme linked and complemented other regeneration activities and programmes existing in the city and partially affecting the URBAN II area. Three areas of synergies can be outlined that illustrate the additionality and complementarity between these activities:

- Municipal plan for the renovation of residential buildings facades and lifts: The plan has a financial allocation of five million Euro per year and the URBAN II programme was complementary to the regeneration and physical activities carried out by the municipality;
- Enlargement of the industrial port of Gijón: A big investment project of over 400 million Euro, partly funded by the EU's Cohesion Fund is currently under way. This will have a significant economic impact in the area as the volume of traffic and freight that will go through Gijón will increase. The URBAN II area is located just next to the city's port and both measures will add up to the biggest development project carried out in Asturias for the last decade.
- Gijón City Council has a plan for regeneration and renovation of industrial parks that has very clear synergies with the investments made in four industrial parks located in the URBAN II area.

The URBAN II Programme in western Gijón was the central investment effort within the overall city regeneration strategy in the period 2000-2006. Some good practices and successful stories developed under URBAN II have been taken into consideration or have acted as a reference for similar projects in Gijón and in the rest of the region of Asturias.

Three examples to illustrate this are:

- Training workshops for elderly people. The strong social component of these training activities bringing older people back to activity was the first of a number of training programmes that the social services department at the City Council of Gijón is currently developing using the model developed under URBAN II.
- Facilitating and supporting broadband internet access in households. The regional government of Asturias has implemented a funding scheme to make more households use ICT by supporting the purchase of computers and broadband connections to younger people in the region. Again, the good practice and the large impact of URBAN on this particular field influenced this regional policy.
- Gijón's economic development agency is implementing supporting actions similar to those carried out in the framework of the URBAN Programme for supporting industrial parks, business associations and services in Mora Garay, PROMOSA and Bankunion II. The City Council was not providing similar support services before the start of the Programme and the positive experience with URBAN has clearly influenced this local policy.

4.0 Factors of Success

Three key success factors have been identified:

1. The *integrated approach* of the URBAN II Programme: The actual intensity of the financial resources devoted to the Programme and the holistic objectives that were defined for it, following the City councillor's view, "made Gijón to adopt an integrated approach towards the implementation of the Programme that has proven to be a critical factor of success for the whole operation. A development path for this part of the city that had to integrate all relevant sectors and fields of activity ". This integrated approach meant in practice that:
 - Synergies between measures and projects were maximised;
 - The URBAN Programme has acted as a facilitator in the cooperation among different departments in the City Council of Gijón; this integrated approach generated a co-responsibility in the implementation of the projects by different sections or departments at the city council and also meant a smoother relationship among public officers sharing objectives and joining efforts towards the same goal;
2. The *active involvement of all relevant actors* in the design, planning, implementation and communication of the projects. The URBAN Programme is based on close contact and exchange between the authorities and potential beneficiaries. This was not only regarded as a success factor, but also highly appreciated by the local communities. Specific factors that have

contributed towards the achievement of a high degree of interaction with local communities and associations were:

- An effective communication strategy (informing all residents and actors in a timely manner);
- Shared decision-making among interested parties in the final design of the projects;
- Support to the generation of new local and voluntary associations (business associations, neighbourhood associations, social associations or older people ones).

3. *Flexibility and multi-annual character of URBAN II.* The concept of the Programme allowed for flexibility - adapting specific projects to the changing challenges and situations faced by city authorities. The possibility of tailoring projects and also re-programming was strongly regarded by Programme managers as a critical factor of success.

5.0 Level of an Integrated Approach

Gijón's URBAN II Programme promoted and implemented an integrated and holistic regeneration programme for the western part of Gijón included in the URBAN area. Impacts on social, economic and physical/environment aspects have been achieved and the Programme has followed the integrated approach promoted by the EC through the overall URBAN II.

A number of examples can illustrate the "integrated development path" developed by URBAN II for this particular area of western Gijón:

1. *Green point for waste management and disposal.* This project, funded under measure 5.1 on waste reduction, recycling and selective waste management includes a physical infrastructure construction, has an environmental objective focusing on selective waste management and includes a public space (room) where training and awareness raising activities take place. In this way, training, environment and regeneration components are brought together in one single project.
2. *Regeneration projects.* These have been characterised by synergy between economic development measures, physical regeneration actions and environmental activities. Under Priority 2, one of the most important sets of projects were those supporting and regenerating three industrial parks in the URBAN area: Mora Garay, PROMOSA and Bankunion. Action in the industrial parks started with physical and regeneration projects, followed by the support and enhancement of the services to SMEs located in the park and the organisational support to the associations running the parks. These economic development activities were further developed and complemented by training activities on ICT, internet, electronic commerce and website design. All these three types of activities have brought a new impetus and dynamism to the industrial parks and to the companies based there.
3. A third example of synergies involves the *social component, job creation, ICT support and entrepreneurship.* Young people at risk of social exclusion participated in the training activities and courses on ICT, electronic commerce and internet under Priority 6. A total of 12 students that successfully completed the training activities are now working in SMEs and business start-

ups which received assistance for the creation of these jobs under Priority 2 on entrepreneurship and economic development.

6.0 Programme Management and partnership

As stated previously, the URBAN II programme was co-ordinated by the City Council of Gijón, which holds final responsibility for the implementation of the Programme. The City Council used one of its control committees, the "Accounts Committee" (Comisión de Cuentas) to report to all political groups on the management and achievements of the Programme. It is important to note that the Councillor in the charge of the Programme was officially designated "URBAN delegate" throughout the entire life of the Programme, reporting and providing political leadership to the URBAN II Programme in Gijón.

In parallel, and as included as the Programme's second critical factor of success in a previous section of the present report, there has been a strong involvement of all relevant actors in the design, planning, implementation and communication of the projects. A total of 41 local and voluntary associations have participated in different levels in the implementation of the different URBAN II Programme's projects.

The Community Initiative Programme was very specific on the investments to be undertaken in physical regeneration and environmental infrastructures. For other priorities, bottom-up approaches were more prevalent, and projects were developed with the help of voluntary and local associations who played a fundamental role as key partners in *project design* and *project appraisal*.

Linked to the above issue was the way the programme supported the *implementation of individual projects*. There is evidence for two different approaches:

- For physical and environmental projects, the local authority monitored and supported project implementation through its technical staff; the Programme management office limited its support to the inclusion of the Programme's horizontal priorities in the projects;
- For activities related to training, economic development support or the enhancement of ICT use, local entities implementing the project needed more support from the Programme's management. Experiences gained with the first rounds of projects were used to improve subsequent rounds.

The *monitoring systems* set up by the Managing Authority of all URBAN II Programmes in Spain (by the Spanish Ministry of Economy) were seen as a key strength. They allowed the recording of all outputs and results produced by all 10 URBAN II Programmes in Spain. Local entities implementing projects in Gijón were given clear instructions on how to establish and run the systems which helped the overall programme to record all of the outputs and create robust evidence and ensure no outputs were missed. Project implementation reports were submitted to

the Programme management that had to approve them and, in the case of training activities, all seminars and courses had to distribute satisfaction questionnaires to participants.

Finally, on *communication and publicity*, following the Programme manager's view, "URBAN represented a highly effective way to communicate the EU's cohesion policy in the territory and a perfect way of entering into direct contact with 27000 people living in this part of Gijón".

Brochures and letters containing information about the Programme and its activities were distributed widely during the entire implementation phase of the Programme. In 2005 49,900 brochures on the activities implemented were distributed; this number went up to 73,557 in 2006 and, finally, towards the end of the Programme, in 2007, no less than 148,121 letters were sent by post containing essential information about the achievements of the Programme.

7.0 Sustainability and Legacy

An important question in the context of a regeneration programme with a limited time frame, is the to what extent the supported activities can be sustained and what legacy is left by the programme once core funding is exhausted.

Looking at the wider impacts, long term legacies of the programme are likely to be a stronger community and voluntary sector, a more solid community development infrastructure, higher levels of interest in Gijón, its western area and the challenges it is facing.

At project level Gijón's URBAN II programme has been very successful in ensuring that its activities continue after funding has ended. There are a range of examples of projects being followed up and continued where URBAN II funding has been replaced by other resources from mainstream organisations such as the Local Authority of Gijón or Industrial Parks associations. These examples include all infrastructures developed during the URBAN II Programme that continue to be used for the purpose initially defined. Examples include:

- the Sports Centre of La Calzada, where the "Patronato de Deportes" of the City Council of Gijón is now responsible for the management of the new resource;
- the four Mediatecas (Internet access public spaces) where the City Council and local neighbours associations are jointly managing the sites and;
- the Green Clean Point (the regional agency for waste management).

Programme Managers estimated that approximately 80% of projects funded through the programme have been sustained in one form or another. This is comparatively high and was put down to three key reasons:

- At the appraisal stage, projects had to state how the activity was going to be continued post URBAN. Without a clear plan for this, project applications were marked down.

- A clear recognition among mainstream organisations that the URBAN funded projects and its outcomes were produced to obtain the whole regeneration and a raise in the standards of living of the citizens and for that there was a proven need for projects once URBAN funds ran out
- Any individual project designed and prepared in the framework of the programme stated clearly which municipal department, local agency, voluntary organisation or association would be in charge of running the new service created or the new facility built or improved beyond the period of URBAN II.

Examples of continued ownership by voluntary organisations include:

- Social Centre for elderly people: The design of the project specifically stated that the municipal social services or the local elderly people association of the Natahoyo district would hold responsibility for the management of the centre beyond URBAN;
- Mediatecas (Internet access public spaces) where both the City Council and local neighbours associations are today, after the termination of the Programme, managing the sites;
- The industrial park association of Mora Garay is running the new business areas and services set up as a result of the Programme's activities.

However, despite its success it is worth remembering that around 20% of projects were not sustained beyond URBAN II funding. The key reason for not continuing with these actions lies in the achievement of objectives within the timeframe of the project. For instance, once the grant schemes for the purchase of computers and for contracting broadband access had done its work, and once investments have been made to close the digital divide with the rest of the city, there was no longer a need to continue with these actions.

According to the City councillor in charge of the Programme, the fundamental legacy of URBAN II in Gijón can be described as follows:

- Direct contribution of the European Union to raise the quality of living standards of the residents of Gijón;
- High visibility of the Programme and its outcomes, together with a very positive perception of the Programme among the residents;
- A very important trend towards more cooperation with stakeholders and partnership has been generated through the implementation of the Programme;
- New public services have been set up and new infrastructure has been built or renovated. These new services and equipment are being widely used by users and beneficiaries;
- The existing digital divide with other parts of Gijón has come to an end due to the implementation of URBAN;
- Significant physical regeneration of urban public spaces and industrial Parks, creating new green and leisure areas;
- Finally, a very important legacy of the Programme is the effect that social and training activities specifically focused on elderly people have had on the target group. People that were (feeling) alone are now interacting with the community and attending activities specifically designed for them. The social impact of these activities is quite remarkable and will act as a reference in the city for years to come.