



Austria: URBAN I in Vienna

“Gürtel”, with a population of 130,000, was the target area covered by the URBAN I programme between 1994 and 1999 in Vienna. With a background of high unemployment, a lack of economical activities, a high percentage of immigrants and environmental problems, the URBAN programme “Gürtel Plus” focused on economic development and job creation. The Vienna programme totalled Euro 32 million, of which the EU contribution was about Euro 10 million. One of the projects is described in detail below.

but also play a valuable security role due to their being brightly lit at night. Modern architectural structures, such as, for example, the membrane roof spanning the Loritz Square, have created new spatial links, extended the capacity of centrally located public space. Working in close co-operation with the local Office for Monuments and Sites, the architect Silja Tillner has succeeded in finding an ideal solution. The Loritz Square was redesigned in a manner that ensures its being recognisable as a central urban junction that handles big traffic volumes. The improvement of this square had a signal effect on the entire western Gürtel zone.



The URBION project

URBION (“Urban Intervention”) was one of the five master projects of the URBAN programme for Vienna. It aimed to redesign the areas’s green spaces and tram (Stadtbahn) arches. As the Gürtel forms a major traffic artery with the Vienna Underground, the arches were transformed into a boulevard of communication and culture. Restaurants, cultural institutions and educational facilities counteracted decades of neglect in this area. However, this architectural revival did not only extend to the Stadtbahn arches; additionally, green space was created by designing an attractive pedestrian zone along the Gürtel centre. The Stadtbahn stops - pearls of late 19th-century architecture - not only delight the eye of art-lovers

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The cities of Vienna and Graz benefited under the URBAN I (1994-1999) and URBAN II (2000-2006) Community Initiatives. A total of Euro 36.5 million will be spent under URBAN II (EU contribution: Euro 8.4 million).



European Commission

More information about the URBAN initiative can be found at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/urban2/index_en.htm

If you would like further information about regional policy, for example about the structural funds' interventions in other regions or about the reform of this policy, please visit this European Commission web-site:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_en.htm

Or send an E-mail or fax, or write to:

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Keyword: The URBAN Community Initiative

- ▶ The majority of European citizens live in urban areas. Cities are centres of economic growth, but can at the same time face concentrations of social, environmental and economic problems. The URBAN Community Initiative is an instrument within EU Cohesion Policy, dedicated to the regeneration of urban areas and neighbourhoods in crisis.
- ▶ The second round of URBAN ("URBAN II") consists of 70 programmes across the EU, covering some 2.2 million inhabitants. These areas often face quite severe deprivation. For example, on average unemployment and crime rates in URBAN II areas are both around twice the EU average. In addition, the proportion of immigrants is more than twice the average for EU urban areas. Finally, the proportion of green spaces - an indicator of environment and amenity - is only half the EU urban average.
- ▶ Between 2001 and 2006, the European Union will invest Euro 728 million of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) money in these areas. Adding local and national cofinancing, including the private sector, this makes a total investment of Euro 1.6 billion. Funding concentrates on physical and environmental regeneration, social inclusion, training, entrepreneurship and employment.
- ▶ A particular feature of the URBAN initiative is the high degree of involvement of the local level. In most cases the local authority is responsible for day to day implementation, advised by local community groups and in partnership with the national authorities and the European Commission. Another interesting feature is that there will be a network of the URBAN II programmes to exchange information and experience on sustainable urban development across the European Union.