



CITTA' DI TORINO



## **EUROCITIES EUROMED WORKING GROUP**

**Report 2005-2006**

*Chair: City of Torino*

## **Torino Chairmanship 2005-2006**

### **two-year period of intensive work and relevant achievements**

EUROCITIES is the network of major European cities. Founded in 1986, it includes more than 100 cities. EUROCITIES Euromed Working Group works in order to strengthen relationships between European and Mediterranean cities, through the promotion of practices exchange, the diffusion of the most efficient urban management tools, the support to local development and the training of human resources .

Torino has historically relations with the Mediterranean and has always been cooperating actively with the cities of the area. In 1999 Torino has joint the EUROCITIES Euromed Working Group and in 2004 presented its candidature together with the cities of Jdeidè for Mashrek and Mahdia for Maghreb as vice-presidents, to succeed to Bordeaux chairmanship. On June 26 in Mahdia (Tunisia), Torino was elected to the chairmanship for the two-year period 2004-2006, during the meeting in which the Mayor of Torino, Sergio Chiamparino, participated as well.

The election at Euromed chairmanship has placed Torino as leader of the other European cities within the process of involvement of local authorities in the Euromediterranean Partnership, subscribed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU and of 12 countries of the Mediterranean area (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Palestinian Authority, Lebanon and Syria, Turkey, Cyprus and Malta), on the occasion of the Euromediterranean Conference, November 28 1995, in Barcelona (whence the name Barcelona's process). The Partnership's main goal is to make the Mediterranean basin a political dialogue area that pledge for stability and prosperity, supporting social and economical cooperation (thanks to a free trade area by 2010) and bringing out human, cultural and social dimension.

Torino Chairmanship allowed Euromediterranean cities to reinforce their role within the debate on Barcelona's process, thanks to different dialogue actions, meetings with European Union's representatives and discussions between cities.

#### **EUROCITIES Euromed Working Group meetings**

During Torino Chairmanship, meetings took place in **Rome** (November 30 - December 1, 2004), with the participation of 38 cities representatives (15 European cities and 23 from the Mediterranean basin), where a conference occurred open to all the associations and Italian institutions engaged in Euromediterranean policies; in **Brussels** (April 19 2005) where, under Torino initiative, 30 representatives from 17 cities participated to a conference and discussed about EUROCITIES' document concerning "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Revision"; in **Barcelona** (November 25 2005) with 90 representatives from 39 European and South Mediterranean cities; in **Fes** (June 1 - 2 2006) with 34 representatives from 22 European and South Mediterranean cities. The final meeting in **Torino** (November 8 - 9 - 10 2006) with a special session dedicated to Lebanon and a conference on strategic plan together with the Italian Network of Strategic Cities (Recs).

#### **Training for southern cities**

During the two-year period, the City of Torino supported the realisation of training stages for technicians and politicians coming from southern cities, realised by their European colleagues.

On July from 2 to 8, City of Torino organised a training week for a delegation coming from Lebanon. Similar sessions were organised also by the City of Barcelona and the City of Bordeaux.

#### **Euromediterranean area neighbourhood policies**

On November 19, the City of Torino organised the workshop Building Partners For Partnership, concerning the Euromediterranean area neighbourhood policies. Event organised together with C.E.S.P.I. (Research Centre on International Politics), the Italian Office of the European Commission in Milan, the Italian Office of the Ebert Foundation and the C.I.E. (Piedmont's Initiative Centre for Europe).

### **Audition at European Parliament**

On April 19 2005, the City of Torino organised a meeting at the European Parliament in Brussels, in which was presented and discussed EUROCITIES document on Revising Barcelona Process. Many members of the European Parliament and representatives of the European Commission were present at the event, an important moment to debate with European institutions. 30 representatives from 17 European and South Mediterranean cities participated to the meeting.

### **Barcelona's declaration 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

On November 26 2005 in Barcelona EUROCITIES' Euromed Group political representatives participated to the "Euromediterranean cities conference, Barcelona +10", organised together with EUROCITIES. The Mayor of Torino, Sergio Chiamparino, took part to the opening session with the Mayor of Barcelona, Joan Clos. This was an important moment of confrontation between Mayors, before the meeting of Euromediterranean Heads of Government in the following days.

### **European financing: more than one million Euro of savings**

The announcement published in February within the Community programme for decentralised cooperation MED PACT foresaw that the costs of European staff assigned to projects couldn't be admitted to co-financing. The Mayor of Torino decided to intervene personally by sending an official letter to the European Commission. The European Commission admitted the Mayor's claim modifying the announcement with a corrigendum that includes the European staff costs between receivable costs. Such an amendment allowed European cities to save more than one million Euro on current spending.

### **Meeting at the European Investment Bank**

On September 12 2006, a delegation of the City of Torino and the EUROCITIES Chief Executive Officer, Mrs. Catherine Parmentier, were received in Luxemburg by the Deputy President of the European Investment Bank, Mr. Philippe de Fontaine Vive, and by the Director of the FEMIP (Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership), Mr. Claudio Cortese, for a meeting aiming at checking possible opportunities of cooperation with the EUROCITIES Euromed Working Group.

### **North West Euro Mediterranean Institute**

Within the project for the Euromediterranean Region and the Group Chairmanship, the City of Torino supported the creation of the Paralleli Institute "North West Euro Mediterranean Institute", whose head office is in Torino. Paralleli is the expression of a territorial system in which Piedmont plays the role of hinge within a wider area that goes from Milan to Genoa and southwards: Nice, Marseille and Barcelona. The Institute goal is to propose itself as an active actor concerning the improvement of the Euromediterranean partnership. Among its initiatives:

#### 2005

- July 7-8: international meeting: democracy within the Arab world
- September 5 : meeting in Alexandria with Anna Lindh Foundation and Mediterranean networks of Civil Society
- December 20: presentation of the Italian geographical society report. Italy within Mediterranean area

#### 2006

- January 20: project MIGRACTION final meeting
- January 21: conference "Paris burns. A lesson for Italy?" with the participation of Michel Wieviorka
- March 29: conference-debate with Fadwa Hussein-Feisal Hussein Foundation
- March 31: trade unions role and activities within Mediterranean area
- April 2: introductory seminar on Dialogue between civilisations
- May: conference-debate with Mustafa Barghouti
- May 26: peoples, family, rights. Law reforms in Mediterranean Africa

- June 15: presentation of the research concerning immigrants access to bank services in the district of Biella
- June 28-30: Karawan, civic caravan with Fatema Mernissi
- July: Youth Summer Camp organisation in Jerusalem
- September: participation to the Forum on Dialogue between Civilisations, organised by The Chairmanship of the Republic of France.
- October 14: Welcome Bank. Annual meeting. Ideas, projects and products for migrants banking integration
- October 17: seminar on Dialogue between Civilisations

In conclusion, it seems important to us to underline the innovation represented by the conscious choice of the City of Torino to become a true bridge between Europe, northern Europe as well, and the Mediterranean area, through a direct engagement, during these two years, and the future engagement.

Such a role of the City is on the same wavelength as the new urban development era which, thanks to the Olympic Games as well, sees a priority in the presence on the international scenario, at a political, economical and cultural level. From that point of view the cooperation with Piedmont Region and with other cities is fundamental to participate to an economic and social development process of an important area as the Euromediterranean one.

The City of Torino acted and will act to promote an active participation of other Institutions, Universities, Research Institutes, associations and, more in general, of the heterogeneous network of civil society.