

Cities Regions World



Newsletter

**The Valorisation-Recherche Québec (VRQ)
Villes Régions Monde/Cities Regions World :
an infrastructure for marketing and transferring knowledge
on urban and territorial governance
WWW.VRM.CA**

NO. 1: DECEMBER 2000

Welcome!

We are very pleased to present the first newsletter of the *Villes Régions Monde/Cities Regions World* network. It includes information on the launching of the research and knowledge transfer program, and on current and upcoming activities. The main purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to facilitate the exchange of information among members of the network.

Presentation of the Valorisation-Recherche Québec (VRQ) *Villes Régions Monde/Cities Regions World* Program

What is the VRQ *Villes Régions Monde/Cities Regions World* Program?

The Valorisation-Recherche Québec *Villes Régions Monde/Cities Regions World* Program is an infrastructure devoted to marketing and transferring research findings on urban and territorial governance. The team brings together established Québec researchers and a significant number of new researchers working on land-use planning, city management, and new urban issues. It is supported by various academic institutions and benefits from existing

research networks. Coming from numerous disciplinary backgrounds (economy, geography, sociology, urban planning, history, political science, architecture, engineering, etc.), most of the researchers involved have already undertaken research in an interdisciplinary perspective and within an interdisciplinary framework. The program targets two main objectives: 1) the development of a critical mass of researchers in order to better understand and help to better manage the issue of the competitiveness of urban agglomerations and regions and 2) the transfer of knowledge among researchers, public officials, private groups and community groups.

The program's activities were launched in September 2000. Valorisation-Recherche Québec will provide financial assistance for four years.

Partners

The programme is based on a partnership among academics, and on a partnership between academics and research users.

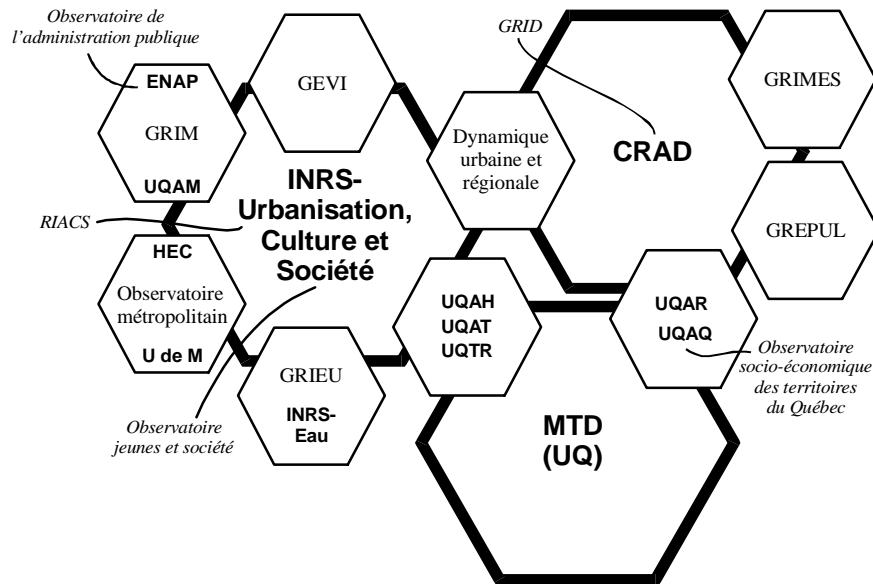
Universities

The team calls on three groups of researchers: INRS-Urbanisation, Culture et Société researchers, researchers from Université Laval's

Centre de recherche en aménagement et développement (CRAD), and Université du Québec researchers gathered under the name Mouvement territoire et développement. Most of these researchers work within established research teams such as Groupe de recherche sur l'innovation municipale (GRIM), Groupe de recherche interdisciplinaire Mobilité, Environnement et Sécurité (GRIMES), Groupe de recherche sur les infrastructures et les

équipements urbains (GRIEU), Groupe de recherche sur l'eau potable de l'Université Laval (GREPUL), Groupe sur la dynamique urbaine et régionale of the CRAD, Groupe d'étude sur l'immigration et la ville (GÉVI), Observatoire métropolitain de la région de Montréal, and Mouvement territoire et développement (MTD). Some of these researchers also head interuniversities research teams.

A network of networks



Users

A total of twelve institutional, community, and private partners have given their formal support to the program. Each user has named an associate member who sits on the user's board. This board is responsible for examining the orientations of the research program and activities.

- Québec Department of Municipal Affairs
- City of Montréal
- City of Québec
- City of Longueuil
- Union des municipalités du Québec
- Fédération des municipalités du Québec
- Union des municipalités de la banlieue de l'île de Montréal
- Association des régions du Québec
- Association des centres locaux de développement
- Fondation de l'entrepreneurship

- Centre d'expertise et de recherche sur les infrastructures urbaines

Objectives

Economic and cultural globalization, the opening up of markets, and ongoing deregulation are resulting in closer relations between regions and urban agglomerations. Our program is intended to increase our understanding of how to manage competitiveness. The main components of the heightened competition process will be examined: metropolitan employment trends, new planning and development strategies, enhancement of civic culture, sustainability and urban technical networks, and social and institutional innovations. Two fundamental questions guide our approach: 1) How can we measure and explain factors in the success or failure of competitiveness? 2) What mode of governance can increase the competitiveness of urban regions at the national and global levels?

Urban regions are at the centre of major social transformations and they will play a growing role in the world-system. Economic globalization and social and cultural fragmentation are currently redefining the role of the welfare state. At the same time, new social demands are emerging. The redefinition of territorial strategies and the implementation of new modes of governance are forcing the public sector and its partners to experiment with new approaches: their capacity to manage, in an integrated way, the different dimensions of cities and urban regions is the key to successful communities. In order to maintain sustainability, the strategic management of urban areas has to integrate multiple interdependencies and sector-based dynamics (economic, social, cultural, environmental, institutional) as well as actions taken on different spatial and temporal levels (from the local to the national, from short-term interventions to the structuring of long-term policies). In this context, the comparative analysis of ur-

ban areas is a relevant research strategy in order to identify and examine local institutional innovations that have taken up these new urban challenges.

In concrete terms, the grant will be used to produce a series of “deliverables,” each of which is characterized by its own objectives and specific methodology. However, these deliverables will all be part of an integrated process aimed at developing an INTRANET intended to improve management of the competitiveness of cities and other types of localities. This tool is therefore an institutional as well as a scientific innovation.

Themes and Deliverables

During the first year of the program, knowledge transfert activities will be undertaken in order to develop management and decision-making toolkits. These activities will be organized around five main themes:



What's New?

(This section will report on the progress of work carried out in the context of the various themes) Please take note that the web site is still under construction. We will announce its launching once it is in operation.

Upcoming Scientific Event

MAY 9-10-11, 2001

International scientific workshop
on competitiveness, INRS-Urbanisation, Cul-
ture et Société, Montréal

THEME

*The Competitiveness of Cities and Territories:
A Critical Review of Analyses and Approaches*

The management of competitiveness is at the centre of the VRQ *Cities Regions World* research program and action plan. The term "competitiveness," which includes many components – economic, social, cultural, etc.–, will be the focus of a critical review. The main objective of this workshop is to assess the relevance of competitiveness in the research framework of the *Cities Region World* program. What is a competitive city? How can we measure the competitiveness of a place? In what ways can we use this notion? What are the theoretical and practical links between competitiveness and governance; between competitiveness and social cohesion; between competitiveness and institutional innovations? This first scientific workshop will give practitioners and researchers the opportunity to discuss the concept and its implications. Both theoretical and practical aspects will be considered.

We Want to Hear From You

Please e-mail us with your comments and suggestions, or to tell us about your latest research activities (reports, publications, books, articles, seminars, colloquiums, grants, etc.)

Program Director

Jean-Pierre Collin
INRS-Urbanisation, Culture et Société
3465, Durocher
Montréal (Québec) H2X 2C6
CANADA

Tel.: (514) 499-4041

Fax: (514) 499-4065

E-mail: jean-pierre.collin@inrs-urb.quebec.ca

Newsletter Editor

Claire Poitras
INRS-Urbanisation, Culture et Société
3465, Durocher
Montréal (Québec) H2X 2C6
CANADA

Tel.: (514) 499-4037

Fax: (514) 499-4065

E-mail: claire.poitras@inrs-urb.quebec.ca

Layout

Janick Couture
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi
E-mail: revueot@uqac.quebec.ca

WWW.VRM.CA

The *Villes Régions Monde/Cities Regions World* Program is carried out by researchers from INRS-Urbanisation, Culture et Société, Université Laval, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Université du Québec à Rimouski, Université de Montréal, Université du Québec à Montréal, McGill University, Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue, École nationale d'administration publique, and École des Hautes Études Commerciales.

It is funded by the Valorisation-Recherche Québec organization
associated with the Québec Department
of Science and Technology.
