

Portuguese Network of Urban Morphology: Report

The Portuguese Network of Urban Morphology (PNUM) was established at the ISUF Conference in Hamburg in August 2010. It is the third national/regional network of ISUF to be created, after the establishment of the Nordic Network of Urban Morphology and ISUF Italia. This report describes the main activities of PNUM between September 2010 and June 2011.

Drawing on an initial framework established by fourteen researchers, PNUM currently comprises more than 260 members. Bringing together researchers from fourteen universities and institutes in Portugal, the network includes the classical core of disciplines constituted by architecture, engineering, geography, history and planning, but also disciplines not strongly represented in ISUF, such as anthropology, economics, landscape architecture, and sociology. The diversity of the network is also generational, spanning from MSc students, undertaking their first steps in scientific research, to widely-known researchers and practitioners in Portuguese urban morphology. It includes 50 members with doctorates, and its practitioners come from both private enterprises and public administration, at local and regional levels. It is most rewarding that the network has already attracted, in its first year of existence, the interest and membership of Brazilian and Spanish researchers.

Four events should be highlighted from this first year of activities. The first was the creation of a website (<http://pnum.fe.up.pt>). This bilingual website contains general information about the Portuguese Network and how to join PNUM, and information about conferences, resources, a bibliography, the constitution and the newsletters.

The second event was the launching of a first common project of PNUM; a book on the study of urban form in Portugal, mainly developed by its founding members. The first part of the book is an overview of Portuguese urban morphology, dealing with the three disciplinary backgrounds that are most relevant in the national context: historical, geographical, and architectural. The second part focuses on a set of specific morphological approaches, including space syntax, cellular automata, agent based modelling, and shape grammars. Finally, the third part explores the relationships between morphological analysis and the design of present-day cities.

The third event was the realization of the first PNUM Conference, on 'Urban morphology in

Portugal: approaches and perspectives'. It was organized by the Scientific Council of the network, and it took place at the Faculty of Arts in the University of Oporto, on 8 June. Sixty papers were divided into twelve thematic sessions as follows: i) morphological approaches; ii) morphological techniques; iii) the history of urban form – I; iv) the history of urban form – II; v) morphological elements: the street; vi) morphological elements: the street / infrastructure; vii) morphological elements: the square / public space; viii) morphological elements: urban tissues; ix) interdisciplinary perspectives; x) planning and development control; xi) urban form and sustainability, and finally, xii) the metropolitan scale. This one-day conference attracted 190 participants, and it constituted an important arena for debate on the description, explanation and prescription of Portuguese urban forms and structures. The second conference, on 'Urban morphology in Portuguese-speaking countries' will take place in Lisbon University Institute, in June 2012.

Finally, the last event was the launching of a bilingual (Portuguese and English) Newsletter, to be published twice a year, in June and December. It includes an editorial and information on research projects, publications, and participation in conferences, and the organization of meetings and conferences.

In the next year, the Network will continue to promote the study of urban form in Portugal. PNUM is the first national research network in the field of urban morphology in Portugal. In 2012 the consolidation of the Network will continue through the organization of meetings and the second annual conference, the publication of the Newsletter, and the launching of new research projects. It is our goal that the strengthening of the relationship with the International Seminar on Urban Form will be expressed by an increasing Portuguese participation in ISUF activities, particularly in the 2012 ISUF Conference, on 'New urban configurations', taking place in Delft, and in *Urban Morphology*.

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