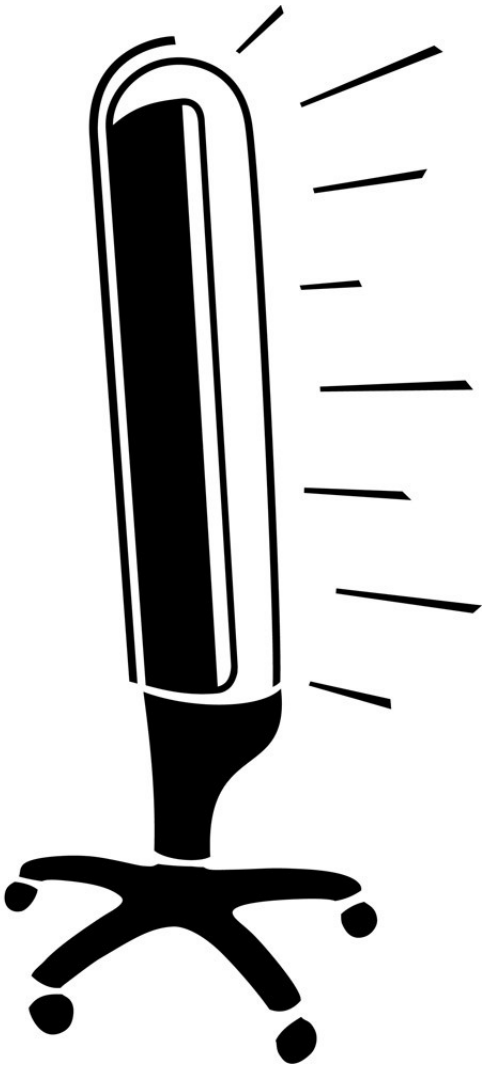
PRESS DOSSIER

URBAN PLATFORM

http://urbanplatform.citymined.org



BRUSSELS

19, 20, 21
november 2010

CITY MINE(D)

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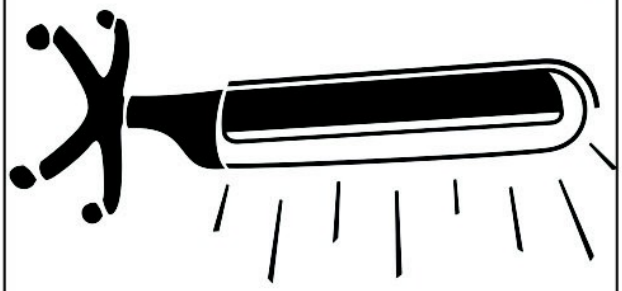
1. Short introduction

http://urbanplatform.citymined.org



URBAN PLATFORM

Taking tables outside in the street and inviting the neighbours, making things yourself and changing derelict places in urban gardens. They are all positive and creative initiatives, but they are also answers to the big challenges linked to environment, solidarity and democracy we are confronted with today.

The Urban Platform gathers 30 initiatives from 13 European cities, to exchange and show their relation to these big challenges, present their approach and inspire people to action.

movement
international connection of people who, out of necessity or desire, do projects to make the city more fun and more fair

reVERBer
the Platform's image, source of light, actor in public space

outcomes
of local actions in 13 cities (images, video, traces)

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Supported by: the European Commission, Eutrio.be, the Federal Government, the Brussels Region, the Vlaamse Overheid for Brussels, the VGC, the City of Brussels

19 NOV 2010

FRIDAY 19:00 FLAGEY 1050 BRUSSELS

DEBATE

Grand ouverture of the 3 days taking place in Flagey's famous Studio 4. A debate about what grassroots mean for people of power and influence aims to explain to a wider audience what small intiatives can do, and give them the will to act.

19:30 speakers will give their opinion on the issue of "small initiatives, big challenges"

22:00 reception + outcomes

20 NOV 2010

SATURDAY 19:00 218 chee de Wavre 1050 BRUSSELS

WORKSHOPS

Over 100 artists, activists, creators, local residents and cyclists from more than 13 cities will pool their thoughts in workshops, and will come together in the evening to talk to each other and to you.

Part I : closed workshops hosted by Brussels locals in their home

Part II : pooling of thoughts

21 NOV 2010

SUNDAY 10:00 - 22:00 218 chee de Wavre 1050 BRUSSELS

BAZAAR

or how to show and share your practice in the EU neighbourhood.
Closing day of the Urban Platform!
This is where we pass on to action.

We invite everybody with an idea, a plan, a project or an opinion to share it, state it, or apply it to the European Neighbourhood.

2. Context and objectives

Small initiatives, big challenges

For 5 years, City Mine(d) has been connecting urban gardeners to cyclists, DIY-ers to urban planners, and kitchen chefs to IT-ers through projects in public space. What these people have in common is their use of their creativity to make daily life in cities more enjoyable.

These initiatives don't exist to make money or to impose power, but they emerge according to desires or in response to local and urgent needs. At their level, they involve people removed from politics, ethical consumption or the environment, as well as activists and militants in all those fields.

The big challenges we are confronted with today, like the environment, solidarity or democracy, seem to limit us in our daily lives. Taking tables outside in the street and inviting the neighbours, making things yourself and changing derelict places in urban gardens are all positive and creative initiatives, but they are also answers to those big challenges.

In November, City Mine(d) gathers about 30 initiatives from 13 European cities, in an Urban Platform, to exchange and show their relation to these big challenges, present their approach and inspire people to action.

The Platform will take place over 3 days:
Friday 19 November: public debate in the Flagey building
Saturday 20 November: closed workshops hosted by locals in their home
Sunday 21 November: a Bazaar of initiatives, proposals, plans, opinions and activities

As a symbol, we use a motorway streetlight mounted on the legs of an offi ce chair. The creation of this object speaks of re-using materials, transforming them and sustainable development. This ecological aspect and the availability to all of its light symbolise the work of those involved. The streetlight will be present in public space during the 3 days of the Urban Platform.

The connections we've made over the past 5 years will not evaporate after the Urban Platform. An Online Community will provide a place for initiatives and groups to show their work, and see that of other at the other end of the world. In addition to this tool, a charter will be presented to the public. It describes what the initiatives have in common, will state their political aspirations and will inspire people to action. As such, the network has the potential of becoming an urban movement.

http://urbanplatform.citymined.org

3. Small initiatives from 13 european cities & big challenges

The small initiatives we are interested in for the urban forum, have a distinct local character. Their activities involve local groups en build on local knowledge and creativity. But the ideas they develop have significance beyond the local: a bicycle courier touches upon issues of mobility, an urban garden on food distribution. Also, similar projects emerge in different European cities. This proves their general usefulness, but also holds a chance to link to larger issues around democracy, ecology and solidarity.

The list below gives an impression:

Urban gardens		**Klorofil**	Brussels	http://klorofil.be/
Urban gardens	Vegan kitchen	**Le début des Haricots**	Brussels	http://www.haricots.org/
Urban gardens	Re-use of empty space	**Urbanacker**	Berlin	http://urbanacker.net/
Recycle	Exchange skills	**Foire aux savoir-faire**	Brussels	http://foiresavoirfaire.free.fr/
Recycle	Given objects	**Kunststoffe**	Berlin	http://www.kunststoffe.de/ku/default.asp
Local economy		**Workstation**	Berlin	http://www.workstation-berlin.org/
Local economy	Micronomics	**City Mine(d)**	Brussels	http://citymined.org
Local economy	Local market	**Micromarché**	Brussels	http://www.micromarche.be/
Local economy	Local market	**Hedehusene**	Copenhagen	http://hedehusene.org/marked-i-hedehusene
Urban renovation	Résistance	**Supertanker**	Copenhagen	http://www.supertanker.info/
Urban renovation	Résistance	**Krax**	Barcelona	http://krax.citymined.org/
Urban renovation		**Play the city**	Istanbul	http://www.theresponsivecity.org/2010/01/17/play-the-city/
Urban renovation	Resistance	**FSSK**	Göteborg	www.gu.se
Solidarity	Medicals care	**Clinic**	Ljubljana	
Solidarity	Welcome	**Chez Nous / Bij ons**	Brussels	http://users.skynet.be/cheznous.bijons/
Struggle for social inclusion		**de Logements Ephémère et Mobiles)**	France	http://www.halemfrance.org/
Struggle for social inclusion		**Im.ausland**	Wien	
Struggle for social inclusion	Architecture	**Echelle Inconnue**	Rouen	http://www.echelleinconnue.net/sommaire.php
Art	Education	**Kriterion**	Sarajevo	http://www.kriterion.nl/
Art	Education	**KUD Mreza**	Ljubljana	
Art	Re-use of empty space	**BOKS**	Ljubljana	
Art	Education	**Bolwerk**	Brussels	http://www.ooooo.be/indexhibit/
Art	Education	**Freiraumlabor**	Berlin	
Art	Re-use of empty space	**Contact-danse**	Milan	
New media	Participation	**e-itd**	Barcelona	http://www.e-itd.com/
New media	Accessibility	**Freifunk**	Berlin	http://start.freifunk.net/
New media	Laboratory	**Constant**	Brussels	http://www.constantvzw.org/site/
Soft mobility	Re-use of empty space	**Bicycologie**	London	http://www.bicycology.org.uk/
Soft mobility	Delivery	**Dioxyde de gambette**	Brussels	http://www.dioxyde-de-gambettes.com/
Soft mobility	Urban culture	**Brusk**	Brussels	http://www.brusk.be/

4. Toward an urban movement?

PROCESS

In 2010 City Mine(d) finishes five years of working on Krax and Micronomics[1]. Five years of interventions, jornadas, festivals etc., produced a lot of connections and ideas in many different cities. In January 2010, City Mine(d) launched an international collaboration with participants from 13 European cities around questions relating to making these connections sustainable, and can they function as a lever for small scale local projects. 200 people attended a lecture by Erik Swyngedouw in KVS at the start of this process on 29 January. In workshop-sessions, the 13 participants developed strategies of international-local collaborations and discussed the impact of such initiatives.

On 15th of May we tested the concept of an “international campaiging day” on the issue of public space. Onder the title “Be Use-less” and the slogan “we need public space”, people in Brussels, London, LA, Istanbul, Gothenburg and Amsterdam transformed (contested) public spaces in open places to picnic or debate. As such, at the same moment, but at different locations, a same issue was addressed and local initiatives supported each other from a distance.

In September, “the 13” gathered for a second time in preparation of the November Platform. This meeting took place in the Autonomous Cultural Centre Metelkova in Ljubljana (Sl) during the 17 th anniversary of the occupation of the site.

For November we propose a framework that can transform these connections and this know-how into a pubic good that can support less-privileged groups and allow successful initiatives to share their experiences. Local initiatives from all over Europe will gather for 3 days to share information, exchange experiences and forge lasting connections that can contribute to an active urban movement.

A MOVEMENT?

To avoid the risk of costly overhead or unnecessary travel, we see the international collaboration predominantly as bi-lateral and multi-lateral collaborations that refer to the same name. To support these collaborations we would like to launch, test and refi ne 2 instruments during the urban platform.

A **charter** describes the sense of belonging and inspires people to action, it organises the use of common references and states the shared political aspirations of those involved. It is not a fl ag to march or hide behind, but rather a springboard. It also shows that people who work from the bottom-up for a more equal, democratic and sustainable city are part of a larger movement.

An **Online community** will allow those involved to share thoughts and experiences with people in different countries and even different time-zones, and fi nd allies and back-up at the other end of the world. Together with E-ITD* from Barcelona we are developing a proposal that will be tested during the Bazaar of 21 november 2010.

The sum of the connections facilitated by charter and online community, could become a movement from and for people in different cities. They could use the visibility and prestige of "the international", and still have all the fl exibility of "local and small scale initiatives"

1 Http://krax.citymined.org and Http://micronomics.citymined.org and Http://www.e-itd.com

5. 19 November – DEBAT

Friday 19 November
Doors 19:00
Start : 19:30
Studio 4 of Flagey, 1050 Brussels

Debate

In response to local and urgent needs, but also out of curiosity or desire, people have always set up small initiatives. These have given rise to inventions like moving motion pictures or home computers, to new types of organisation like co-operative enterprises or micro-credit facilities, and even to new values like those promoted by the ecology movement.

More recently, the creativity and responsiveness of these initiatives, has been harnessed by politics, as well as business and research. Talk of “big society” [UK government] or “good society” [opposition], “citizenship” or “social innovation” [EU Commission] are merely different ways of using people's own initiatives in the running of the state. Companies like Nokia, IBM and Microsoft spend a considerable part of their research budget in an “open source community” they still criminalised a decade earlier as “hackers”. As recently as in 2009, Elinor Ostrom was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics for her argument that the commons – the resources we share, like air and water – can also -and maybe even better- be managed from the bottom-up.

In a very direct way, the collapse of the banking system, the threat of global warning and the rise of extreme right politics, confront us with the questions we are currently confronted with. How do we distribute wealth more fairly, how do we reduce our impact on the environment, how do we involve all concerned in decision-making.

In the debate of 19 November, we discuss the relationship between small initiatives, and these big challenges we are confronted with. We ask representatives from Politics, Research, Business and Activism to position themselves towards this question, after which they enter in debate with each other.

We have invited representatives form the UK Labour Party, the Green Party, Greenpeace, Philips and research institutions in the US and Europe.

Registration is possible on http://urbanplatform.citymined.org or info@citymined.org

6. 20 November – WORKSHOPS

Nerve centre Chaussee de Wavre 218, 1050 Bruxelles, 19:00

On Saturday 20 november 2010, over 100 practitioners, activists, artists, creators, local residents and cyclists from more than 13 cities will pool their thoughts in workshops, and will come together in the evening to talk to each other and to those interested.

Part I: closed workshops

On the basis of different themes, like the use of public space, free access to the internet, mobile habitats, urban and spatial development, cycling in the city or even health care, the visitors are allocated to small groups.

Hosted by locals from Brussels in their own home or workspace, these groups give their opinion on questions relating to their work, but through their host also get an opportunity to taste a bit of Brussels. A reflection/action workshop.

LIST OF HOSTS

MicroMarché	1000 Brussel	www.micromarche.be
Bij Ons / Chez Nous	1000 Brussel	http://users.skynet.be/cheznous.bijons
Bains Connective	1190 Vorst	www.bains.be
Ransfiesta / Lieven Soete	1080 Molenbeek	www.bruxel.org/ransfiesta
Maximalisme / Ognev Vlaminck	1050 Elsene	www.maximalisme.be
Koen Daems	1030 Schaarbeek	
Cristina Braschi	1050 Elsene	http://espace-approprie.blogspot.com
Recyclart	1000 Brussel	www.recyclart.be
Constant	1060 Sint-Gillis	www.constantvzw.org
Au Quai	1080 Molenbeek	
Poseco	1080 Molenbeek	www.poseco.be
Agence Alter	1060 Sint-Gillis	www.alter.be
Bouillon Malibran	1050 Elsene	initiatieve de quartier
Frederik Serroen	1060 Sint-Gillis	
Sophie Holemans	1000 Brussel	
Ian Dyckmans	1050 Elsene	maison communautaire
Emmanuelle Debacker	1000 Brussel	maison communautaire
Les Ateliers Claus	1060 Sint-Gillis	www.lesateliersclaus.com
Gerben Van Den Abbeele	1070 Anderlecht	
Le Début des Haricots	1050 Elsene	www.haricots.org
Globe Aroma	1000 Brussel	www.globearome.be
NADINE	1030 Schaarbeek	www.nadine.be
Brusk	1000 Brussel	www.brusk.be

Part II: pooling -

Nerve centre Chaussee de Wavre 218, 1050 Bruxelles, 19:00

The evening welcomes all participants along with movers and shakers and decision makers to the nerve centre on the Chaussee de Wavre to cross fertilise, exchange experiences and forge lasting alliances.

7. 21 November – BAZAAR

Nerve center – Waversesteenweg 218 , 1050 Brussel – 10:00-22:00

“The Cathedral and the Bazaar” (1996) is an essay by Open Software guru Eric Raymond. In it he states that computer software used to develop like cathedrals were built – by a professional expert like the master builder – but that in the future they will emerge like a Bazaar, where different approaches exist next to one another and reinforce each other.

In analogy with this vision, we close the urban platform with a bazaar. Local-international collaboration and building upon each other's projects does not happen according to a pre-designed plan of experts and professionals. The organic, the openness and the diversity make up its richness.

Between 10am and 10pm foreign and Brussels initiatives gather in a big, hands-on Bazaar of proposals, opinions and activities. Everybody is welcome to share an idea, a plan, project or opinion, to test or to apply it to the European neighbourhood. Single restriction: bring your own network, make even more connections in the course of the day and bring the 'movement of and for people from different cities” already into practice.

Do not hesitate to contact us to take part.

With 6 weeks to go there are already about 2à Bazaar projects in the pipeline. Traveling communities, the Culture Council of the City of Brussels, IT-ers … are working on their proposals. Below a list of projects [cfr 10. Long list of Small Initaitives].

8. Website

http://urbanplatform.citymined.org

The site tells you all you should know about November's Urban Platform:
what happens when, where, for whom, and by whom.

The debate is free, but please register on the site.

In the Pressroom, there is an overview of previous press coverage, a description of the Urban Platform in 8 lines and 1 page, a press dossier, and downloadable images.

For more information click Movement, Who is Who are listen, watch and read about what ahappened before.

9. Support

The European commission

'Europe for Citizens' Programme

Eutrio.be

the Federal Government

le Gouvernement flamand

The Brussels Region

the VGC

the City of Brussels

10. List of small initiatives

Update 6th of October 2010

Maison des Cultures et de la Cohésion Sociale (bxl)	MicroMarché (bxl)
Antenne de Quartier Heyvaert / Wijkantenne Heyvaert	Hedehusene (cop)
Maelbeek Mon Amour (bxl)	Bij Ons / Chez Nous (bxl)
Bij Ons / Chez Nous (bxl)	Bains Connective (bxl)
Clinic (lj)	Ransfiesta / Lieven Soete (bxl)
Elzenhof (bxl)	Maximalisme / Ognev Vlaminck (bxl)
Urban Garden Network (bln)	Koen Daems (bxl)
OKNO (bxl)	Cristina Braschi (bxl)
Klorofil (bxl)	Recyclart (bxl)
Foam (bxl)	Constant (bxl)
Play the City (a'dam - ist)	Au Quai (bxl)
City Games (bxl)	Poseco (bxl)
Cultuurraad Stad Brussel (bxl)	Agence Alter (bxl)
Brussels Kunsten Overleg (bxl)	Bouillon Malibran (bxl)
Réseau des Arts (bxl)	Frederik Serroen (bxl)
Online Community (int)	Sophie Holemans (bxl)
e-itd (bcn)	Ian Dyckmans (bxl)
Fietspunt Cyclo (bxl)	Emmanuelle Debacker (bxl)
ProVélo (bxl)	Les Ateliers Claus (bxl)
be-Dix-Tien (bxl)	Gerben Van Den Abbeele (bxl)
Woningen 123 Logements (bxl)	Le Début des Haricots (bxl)
Foire Aux Savoir-Faire (bxl)	Globe Aroma (bxl)
Café Babels (eu)	NADINE (bxl)
Brussels for Europe, Europe for Brussels (eu)	Brusk (bxl)
Bolwerk (a'pen)	Urbanacker (bln)
Boks (lj)	Kunststoffe (bln)
Dioxyde de Gambettes (bxl)	Workstation (bln)
Hekkenbrei (bxl)	Supertanker (cop)
Freiraumlabor (bln)	Krax (bcn)
Contact-Danse (mln)	Halem (france)
Freifunk (bln)	lm.ausland (wien)
Bicycology (ldn)	Echelle Inconnue (rouen)
Kud Mreza (lj)	Kriterion (sjvo)

11. City Mine(d)

City Mine(d) is an international network of individuals and collectives involved with city and local action.

By means of arts projects, campaigns and debate, City Mine(d) puts current themes from neighbourhood to the European level on the public and political agenda and offers a framework in which experience, contacts and information can be shared.

Urban and economic development are not only achieved through offi cial agencies, but also small, temporary and informal intitiatives of you and me contribute to a positive dynamic.

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