

Housing & Social Cohesion

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Keynote address

From Planning to Housing : the Way to Urban Sustainability

Pierre LACONTE

President, Foundation for the Urban Environment,

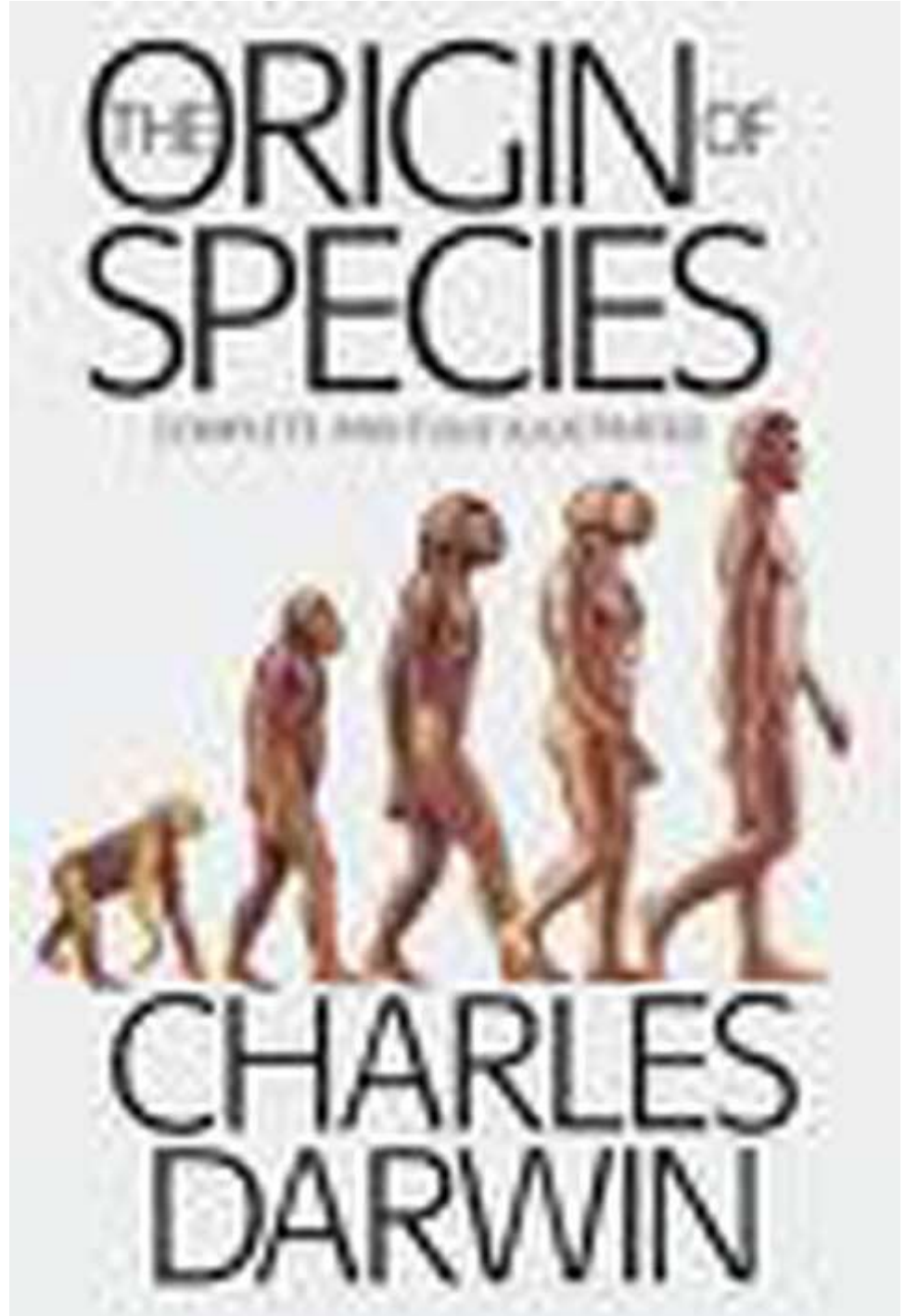
Vice-Chair, European Environment Agency S.C.

Past-president, International Society of City and Regional Planners.

I. Framework and foresights

The global framework of planning is demography.

In contrast to Maltus' wish of a population restraint **Darwin** suggested that the homo sapiens has proven his ability to conquer the planet through his intelligence and greed, but has not been able to restrain his own growth, leading to resource over-consumption and possibly to his own extinction.



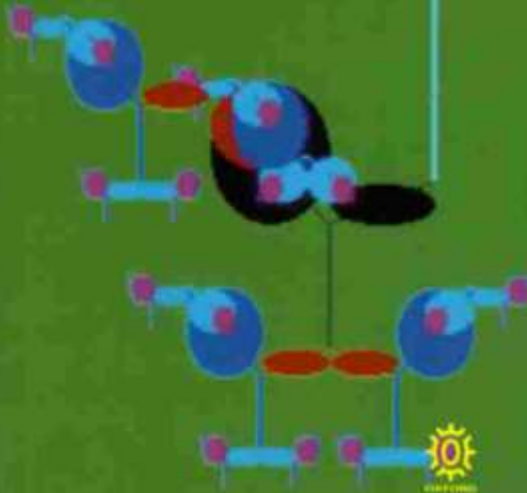
RICHARD
DAWKINS

The Selfish Gene

**new
edition**

'the sort of
popular science
writing that
makes the reader
feel like a genius.'

NEW YORK TIMES



Later researchers suggest that his very greed makes the human being give a preference to his individual interest above the survival of the species, and to individual values rather than social solidarity, of which social housing is an essential ingredient.

Individual values have thus been steadily growing in Western culture, leading to « mass individualism » and individual consumption, but manipulated by suppliers & mass media.

These individual values are the target of the consumption goods industry.



ÉGOÏSTE
POUR L'HOMME

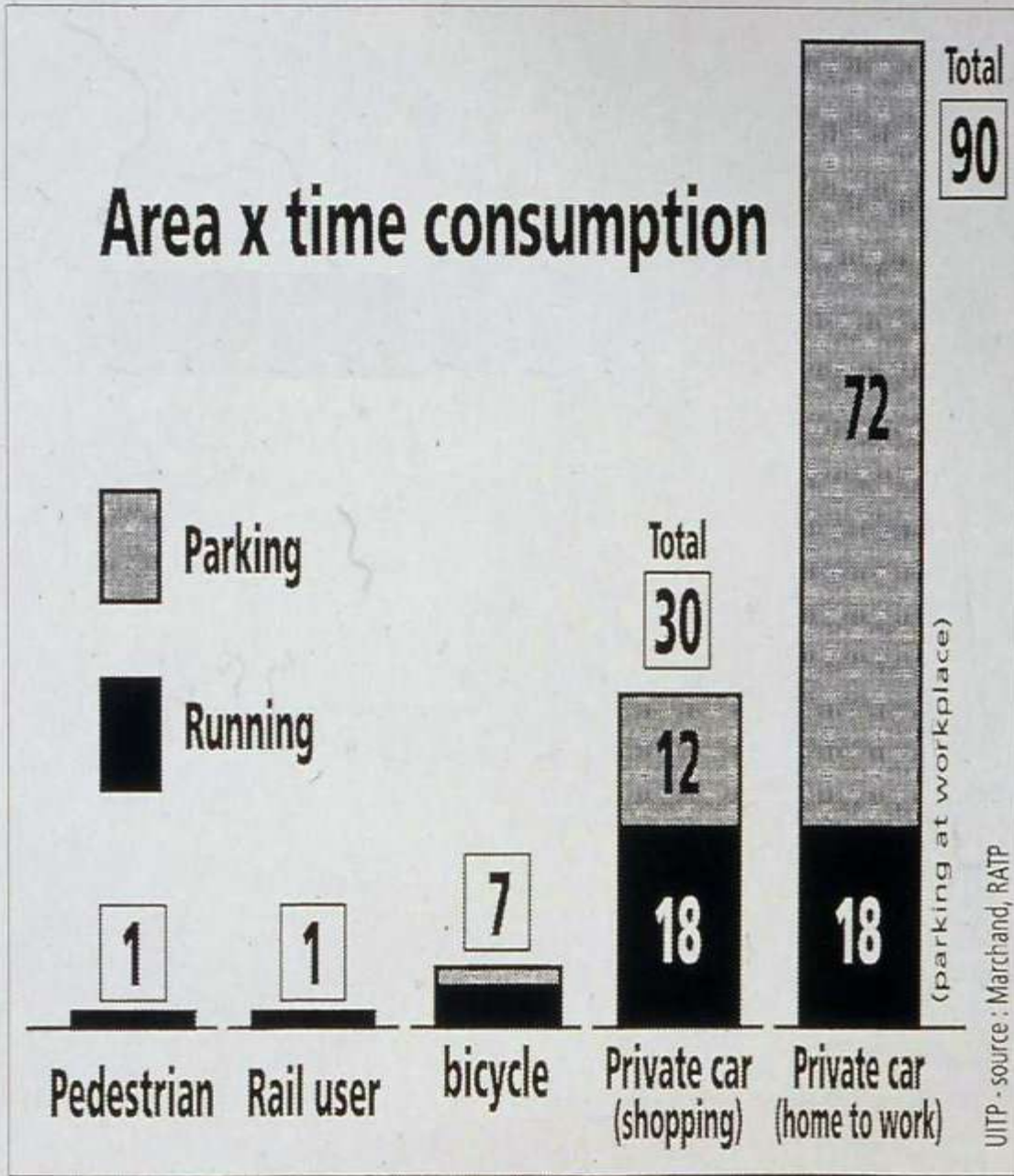
Individual consumption goods par excellence are the automobiles, as status symbols, as well as convenience and protection.

The automobile indeed enhances the individual's image.

MAN'S LAST GREAT
CHALLENGES: THE NORTH
FACE OF THE EIGER,
K2, THE IDITAROD AND THE
PORSCHE 928 GT.



Considering however the fact that the automobiles consume space not only when they run but also when they are parked, urban sprawl became a direct consequence of their successful proliferation, in the US and later in Europe.



Individual homes became the preferred model.

Are these homes affordable?

Indeed, they are, as the US example shows.

Intermediaries paid on sales have been able to sell homes to people whom they knew they couldn't pay back their mortgages.

15 million households have thus been evicted in the US, i.e. 30 million people.

Moreover, these worthless mortgages euphemistically called "subprimes" were widely exported to EU institutional investors.

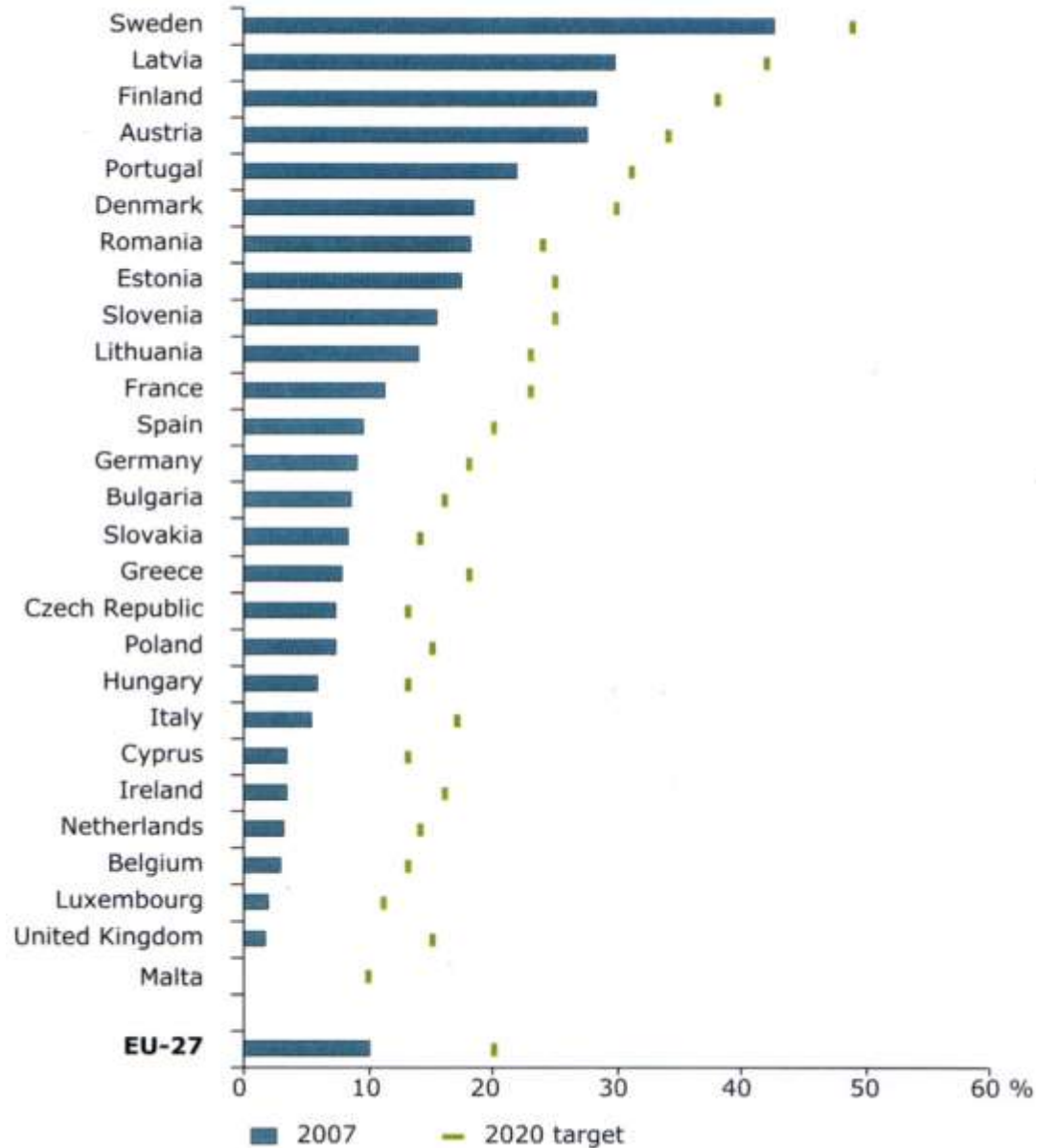
Are these homes sustainable?

Indeed they are not as they are energy guzzlers

The oil-peak will sooner or later require new policies, in the US as in Europe.



Figure 2.5 Share of renewable energy in final energy consumption in EU-27 in 2007 compared to 2020 targets (F)



Source: EEA; Eurostat.

However, the actual situation in Europe looks very much like business as usual, according to the annual Environment European Agency state and outlook report 2010 (Sweden 40% renewable energy, UK 2% and EU average 10%).

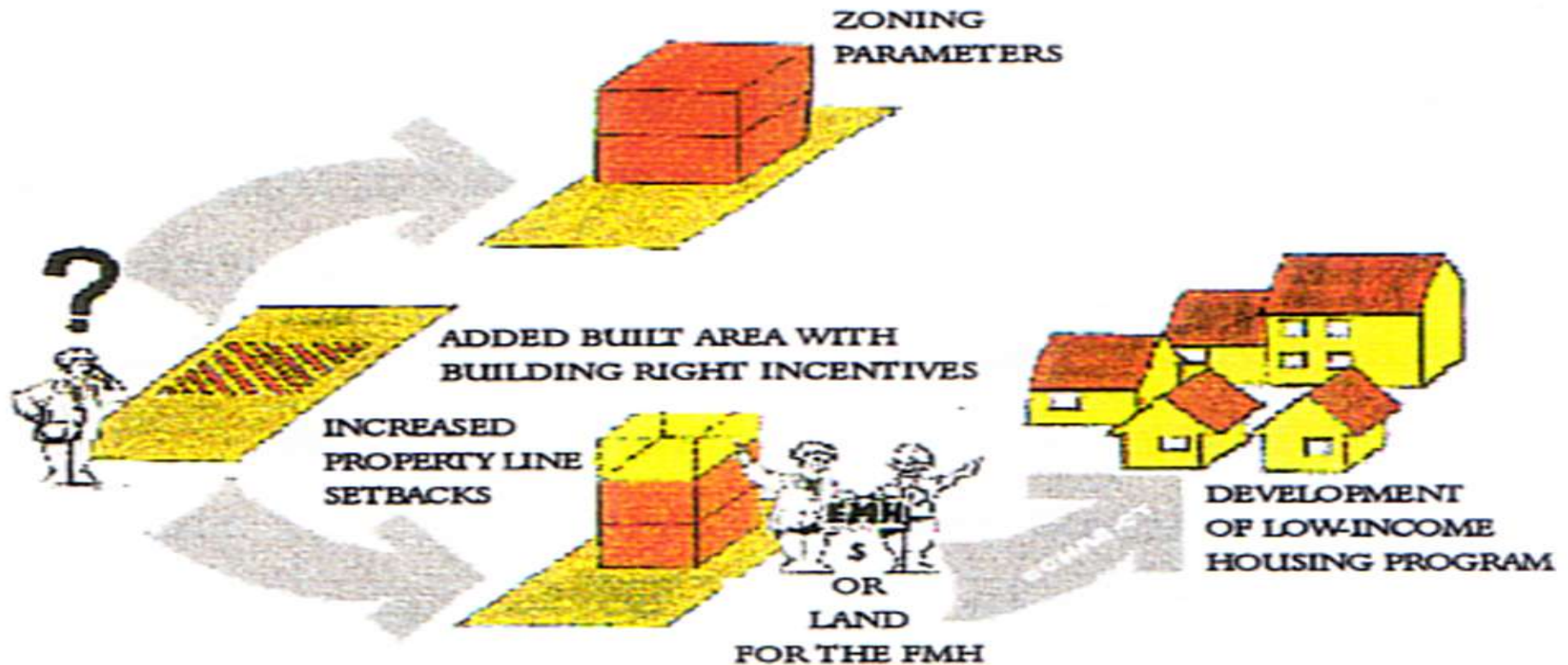
The « Toledo » intentions could and should be translated into a fund for regenerating existing buildings and urban neighbourhoods, inspired from the successful 1994 **Urban Programme**. Urban I provided 0.9 billion €, which generated an investment of 1.8 billion €. Urban II provided 0.7 billion € (see ECTP: The Role of Urban Regeneration in the Future of Urban Development - 2010).

➤ II. Some examples of possible consequence to the EU:

- **Curitiba (Brazil).** High density developments have to buy their development rights from owners in areas reserved for nature, culture & recreation. This system introduced in 1965 as a Municipal Housing Fund has proven his capacity to shape urban form and equalise land rent among owners.

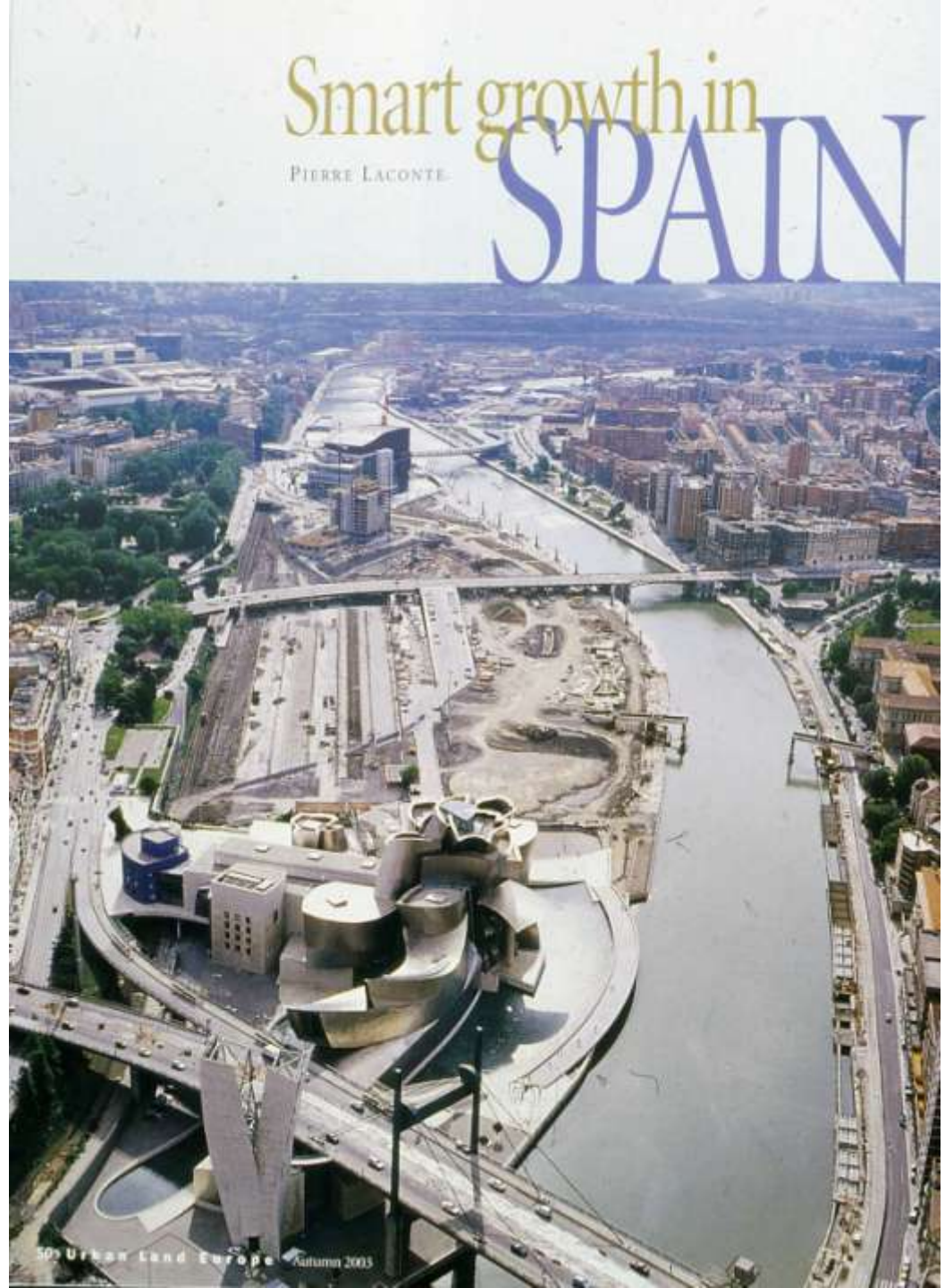


- The system has allowed preservation of existing housing, avoiding the cost of demolition/reconstruction and encouraging the preservation/creation of low-income housing.
- <http://www.ippuc.org.br>

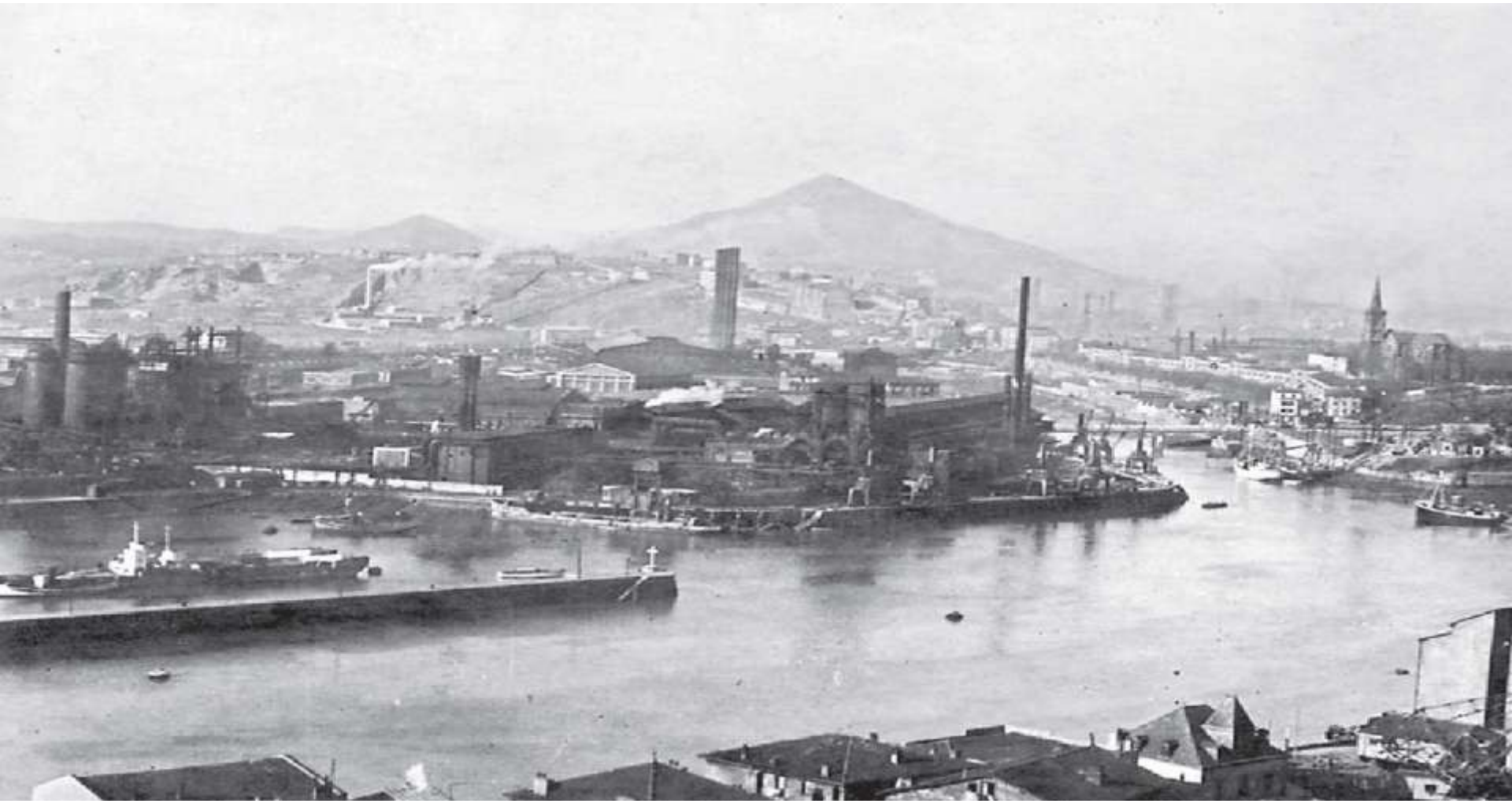


Scheme of incentives for transfer of building rights - FMH

➤ **Bilbao (Spain).** Another case of long-term governance through urban change mastery is Award-winning Bilbao. Its tool for the last 20 years has been the Rià 2000 Public- Public Partnership, upstream of any private sector involvement.



- As in old industry regions world-wide, vacant industrial land was abundant. Thanks to Rià 2000, much of it was re-used for new activities, based on services and culture, while preserving architecture heritage.



- A 35 ha area along the Rià Canal, owned by different public owners, was handed over to a public-owned consortium entrusted with its reconversion, all proceeds being devoted to new public infrastructure and urban rehabilitation.



The huge proceedings stemming from the Bilbao Rià 2000 projects have been used to rehabilitate other areas, such as Bilbao vieja, to the benefit of low-income households.



- **Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium).** The Louvain University was evicted, in 1968, from the old university town of Louvain because of language legislation. It decided to privately develop a new university town based on the Louvain model, using the university grants as equity to finance non-university investments.
- The present-day view shows the high-density low-rise development and the water reservoir fed by the storm water of the whole site, collected separately from sewage water and magnet for residential development.



- A station in the middle of the site (2006) connects Louvain-la-Neuve with central Brussels (27 km). All automobile traffic and parking take place outside the central development , or under it. The view shows the station and an underground access road.
- The slab includes storage place and parking, and a large shopping and leisure centre (2005).



- Street entrance of the station shows the pedestrian network. All streets are reserved for pedestrians.
- Affordable housing developed by the University aims at preventing a monopoly of private developers.



- This view shows an example of piazza on the slab.
- Absence of cars enhances the sense of place.



- Additional reference material :
 - « Mister Carbone » documentaries by Yves BILLY (www.arte.tv/fr).
 - « The State and Outlook 2010 » report by the European Environment Agency (www.eea.europa.eu).
 - « Smart growth in Spain » (P. Laconte, Urban Land Europe, ULI, 2003 / www.ffue.org 2003)