

BUDAPEST URBAN OBSERVATORY

The *Budapest Urban Observatory* is an interdisciplinary network focusing on the urban space and urban policies. Created with the assistance of the *Institut Français* in Budapest, and following the model of similar projects in Istanbul and other Middle Eastern cities, it aims to create a network where researchers of different disciplines related to the urban space can communicate and interact with each other and with stakeholders, NGOs as well as decision makers. The Observatory has a regional focus on Central Europe and the City of Budapest in particular but it also seeks to put in perspective the regional issues and practices and to promote international standards. It can thus both enrich regional debate and bring regional perspectives to global discourses on the urban space (in particular in the drafting, interpretation and implementation of relevant normative texts).

The Observatory is founded on the idea that in-depth urban research and good practice of urban policies are indivisible and yet they are far too often isolated from each other. Their rapprochement is necessary in order to solve the problems Central European cities and metropolitan areas are facing as consequences of deep economic, social, and structural changes in the region. Bringing together research results, the experience of stakeholders and that of NGOs offers an inter-institutional platform for enriching research on the one hand and for giving more scientific base for the daily practice of policy and decision-making.

The Observatory has been created by a cooperation of four institutions, all representing different aspects of research on urban space and urban policy. Besides Collegium Budapest, Institute for Advanced Studies, the other founding members are the National Office of Cultural Heritage; Atelier – Franco-Hungarian Centre in European Social Sciences of Eötvös Loránd University; and the Department of Urban Design of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. The *Observatoire* is currently situated in Collegium Budapest but, in the future, the other founding members will also host it for set periods.

The work of the *Observatory* is directed by Scientific Committee that is composed of the following members:

- BENKŐ, Melinda, architect, Deputy Head of the Department of Urban Design, Faculty of Architecture, Budapest University of Technology and Economics
- HOREL, Catherine, historian, Senior Researcher, Centre National de Recherche Scientifique – Université Paris I
- KLANICZAY, Gábor, historian, Permanent Fellow, Collegium Budapest; Professor, Central European University
- SONKOLY, Gábor, historian, Head of Department « Atelier » in European Social Sciences, Vice-Dean for science and research, Faculty of Arts, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest
- SOÓS, Gábor, World Heritage and International Cooperation Officer, Hungarian National Commission for World Heritage, National Office of Cultural Heritage