



## European IN-HABIT2020 lands in Colombia: the project strengthens international collaboration with Bogotá and Medellín

IN-HABIT connects Bogotá and Medellín in Colombia with European cities, exchanging urban solutions to benefit over 11 million residents while addressing challenges in inclusivity, green spaces, and public health

12 December 2024 - as part of the EU-funded IN-HABIT H2020 project (INclusive Health And Wellbeing In small and medium size cities), which aims to foster inclusive health and well-being in urban areas through innovative and sustainable solutions, representatives from the project visited Bogotá and Medellín in Colombia on November 21st, 2024. These visits are part of the project's mission to create healthier and more inclusive cities by integrating nature-based solutions, arts, culture, and technology into urban planning.



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In Bogotá, the delegation engaged with local stakeholders, urban planners, and researchers to discuss best practices in enhancing urban green spaces and their impact on public health and social cohesion. A field visit to the social and civic innovations around the ‘transmicable’ (cable car) in Bogotá showcased how local communities with help of the private sector enhance green and public areas to improve quality of life. Here, European and Colombian experts work together to emphasize shared challenges and innovative approaches to creating inclusive urban spaces. Lina Gonzalez, Deputy Director of the Habitat Secretariat, at the Bogota municipality, specifies that the fifth part of Bogota's urban area is of informal origin. It houses 33% of the population and 28% of the homes of the city. Out of those homes, 54% are of low-income families in conditions of vulnerability, and comments “The Subdirección de Barrios is in charge of formulating the PIMI Habitat, the Intervention Plan for the Comprehensive Improvement of Habitat in neighbourhoods of informal origin or in the process of urban legalization. This regulatory instrument allows prioritizing, formulating and adopting action plans in the territories with the most significant deficit from the inter-institutional articulation for the improvement of habitat.”

In Medellín, the team explored the different IN-HABIT resources, like nature-based solutions, art, human and animal bond, food, and technology in three neighbourhoods of the Comuna 9. The replication in Medellín, where the project is still in its scalability phase, is grounded in the Participatory Action Research methodology and in the Applied Neurosciences to Organizations program. This initiative seeks to advance translational neuroscience and community psychology, bringing scientific methods, technologies, and infrastructure closer to everyday life and non-scientific communities. Katy Luz Millán Otero Researcher (Luis Amigó University, Medellín), commented:” Here replication adapted its methods and integrated elements from each IN-HABIT city: from Córdoba, cultural wealth and tangible and intangible assets. from Lucca, evidence on human-animal bonds and multispecies interactions, from Nitra, the focus on functional spaces and art for community well-being, and from Riga, the relationship between humans and food as a framework for psychological”.

Here the project has reached scalability in three neighbourhoods of Comuna 9.



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Approximately 2,000 people in these areas know or have interacted with IN-HABIT through local media and digital platforms. The expected impact includes engaging over 200 children from local sports clubs, 300 young adults and their families, 100 older adults, urban dance groups, cooking teams, and artists, potentially benefiting up to 1,000 people monthly, considering the transient population in these neighborhoods.

Juan Diego Betancur Arias Senior Researcher (Luis Amigó University, Medellin) comments: “The main challenges for replication in Medellín include developing a comprehensive understanding of the research project through a participatory and localized approach, adapting the scientific and methodological elements of previous cities to Medellín’s local context, ensuring effective engagement with specific communities in Comuna 9, particularly in the neighborhoods of Miraflores, El Salvador, and Asomadera”. Engagement is the key. They both comment: “as we say in Medellín commit, I research, I manage for myself and others. I am IN-HABIT. In Medellín, we are IN-HABIT.”

The visits reflect the IN-HABIT project’s commitment to global knowledge exchange, building bridges between European and Latin American cities to achieve shared goals of urban well-being and resilience. Both Bogotá and Medellín offered inspiring examples of how inclusive urban practices can drive transformative change for healthier and more equitable communities.

For more information, visit [www.inhabit-h2020.eu](http://www.inhabit-h2020.eu).



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## About IN-HABIT

INclusive Health And Wellbeing In small and medium-sized cities (IN-HABIT) aims to identify visionary and integrated solutions to promote inclusive health and well-being in small and medium-sized cities. In each of the four pilot cities (Cordoba, Lucca, Nitra, and Riga), the project investigates how the mobilization of existing undervalued resources, such as culture and heritage, food, human-animal bonds, and art and environment, might contribute to boosting health and wellbeing, with a focus on gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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