



ORGANISATION
FOR ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT



MONITORING THE URBAN QUALITY OF LIFE IN LATIN AMERICA

September 26, 2008
Venue: Room 15, OECD
2 rue André Pascal * 75016 Paris

Latin America is the only region in the developing world where the majority of the population lives in urban areas. This process of urbanization has been accompanied by a very substantial improvement in the quality of housing infrastructure. Though much remains to be done to solve the persistent deficit in dwellings of reasonable quality, a variety of other problems, from insecurity to traffic congestion, and from lack of public spaces to severe socio-economic segregation, affect many Latin American cities. There is a need to develop criteria to prioritize policy actions in order to improve the quality of life in the region's rapidly growing cities. The materials presented at this seminar (which will be published in book form in 2009) are the result of a research project designed to fill that void.

A methodology is developed that combines the hedonic pricing method and the life-satisfaction approach to identify and value housing characteristics, as well as neighborhood amenities and services. The valuations can be used to produce quality of life indexes which make it possible to compare neighborhoods and assess the impact of public amenities and services on housing prices and on the quality of life of different socio-economic groups. The methodology is applied in pilot case studies of eight cities in six Latin American countries. The extensive policy implications of the findings range from offering criteria to prioritize public expenditures and to identify which expenditures should be paid through home taxes, to ways to target expenditures in order to tackle the segregation problems that are endemic to Latin American cities.

Agenda

9.00 - 9.15 **Opening Remarks**

Enrico Giovannini, Chief Statistician, OECD
Carlos M. Jarque, Representative in Europe, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

9.15 – 10.30 **Understanding Quality of Life**

Moderator: Enrico Giovannini, Chief Statistician, OECD

Introduction: Eduardo Lora, Chief Economist and Manager, a.i., IDB
[Background Paper](#)

Assessing Urban Quality of Life: A Methodological Approach

Presenter: Bernard van Praag, Emeritus Professor, University of Amsterdam
[Background Paper](#)

Discussant: Andrew Clark, Professor, Paris School of Economics

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee

10.45 - 11.35 **Application of the Methodology: The Case of Buenos Aires**

Moderator: Dominic Martin, UK Permanent Representative to the OECD

Presenter: Guillermo Cruces, CEDLAS, Buenos Aires
[Background Paper](#)

Discussant: Carlos Winograd, Paris School of Economics

11.35 – 12.30 **Summary of Country Cases**

Moderator: Dominic Martin, UK Permanent Representative to the OECD

Presenter: Andrew Powell, Lead Research Economist, IDB
[Background Paper](#)

Discussant: Javier Santiso, Director, Development Centre, OECD
[Powerpoint Presentation](#)

[Link to the other country cases](http://www.iadb.org/res/seminar_specific.cfm?ev_id=37&sm_id=197)
http://www.iadb.org/res/seminar_specific.cfm?ev_id=37&sm_id=197

12:45 – 14:00 **Lunch**

**How to Raise Expectations and Improve Urban Quality of Life:
The Role of Opinion Surveys and Leadership**

Moderator: Carlos M. Jarque, Representative in Europe, Inter-American
Development Bank (IDB)

Keynote Speaker: Enrique Peñalosa, Former Mayor of Bogotá

14.00 - 15.30 **Panel: Implications for Monitoring Urban Quality of Life**

Moderator: Eduardo Lora, Chief Economist and Manager, a.i., IDB

Presenters:

Andrew Clark, Professor, Paris School of Economics
Enrico Giovannini, Chief Statistician, OECD
Bernard van Praag, Emeritus Professor, Amsterdam University
Enrique Peñalosa, Former Mayor of Bogotá