



JOINING FORCES

Metropolitan governance & competitiveness of European cities

“Governance – Social Inclusion, participation, empowerment at city region scale”

BURGAS - Seminar Working Document
18, 19 & 20 January 2010



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**“Governance – Social Inclusion, participation,
empowerment at city region scale”
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PART 1

1. INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE THEME: “SOCIAL INCLUSION, PARTICIPATION, EMPOWERMENT AT CITY REGION LEVEL”

Either exclusion or inclusion is multidimensional; they are reflected through economic, social, cultural, and urban facets. Therefore, policies aimed at social inclusion need to go beyond mere sector approaches: the right to the particular public services is based on the access to minimum social standards, requires the implementation of a set of integrated policies aimed at social inclusion. The increasing spatial concentration of the disadvantaged has resulted isolation of many individuals and households from social and economic activities. This effect may be explained by different variables, like age (young, old, or especially active), ethnics, social deprivation, status of migrants, religious or other circumstances.

This social differentiation has a spatial dimension at least in two ways. First of all social exclusion is typically accompanied by spatial polarisation. This means concentration of excluded people in particular neighbourhoods of cities or urban areas. Many of traditional urban problems, like concentration of unemployment, traffic congestion, environmental problems, deteriorating housing stocks, crime and safety conflicts, marginalized groups,... have social effects and lead to rising the level of segregation and concentration among vulnerable groups. Marginalized groups may concentrate in large estates at the edge of the cities or particular more central urban areas. Poor quality of housing may be also in certain inner city areas a basis for social exclusion.

Secondly, emergence of new urban spatial forms has also effects on social relationships. Suburban development, surrounding smaller towns, and urbanization of the traditional countryside – all lead to another type of social grouping on spatial basis. This is taking the different forms: search for new places for consumption, emerging of combined urban-rural lifestyle, high tech centres, business parks, etc. These ‘elicited’ tendencies need also different governing responses.

1/ The role of governance in the issue

Government can have more power to make measurements to involve excluded groups however formal participation does not necessarily lead to social inclusion. In addition, it is difficult to follow more or less spontaneous processes with institutional solutions as answers. Furthermore framework of actions always change notwithstanding on territorial administrative borders. From this issue we want to focus on instruments and methods of participation and empowerment, more precisely the role of governance in promoting social inclusion at city region scale supported by these particular cohesive instruments.

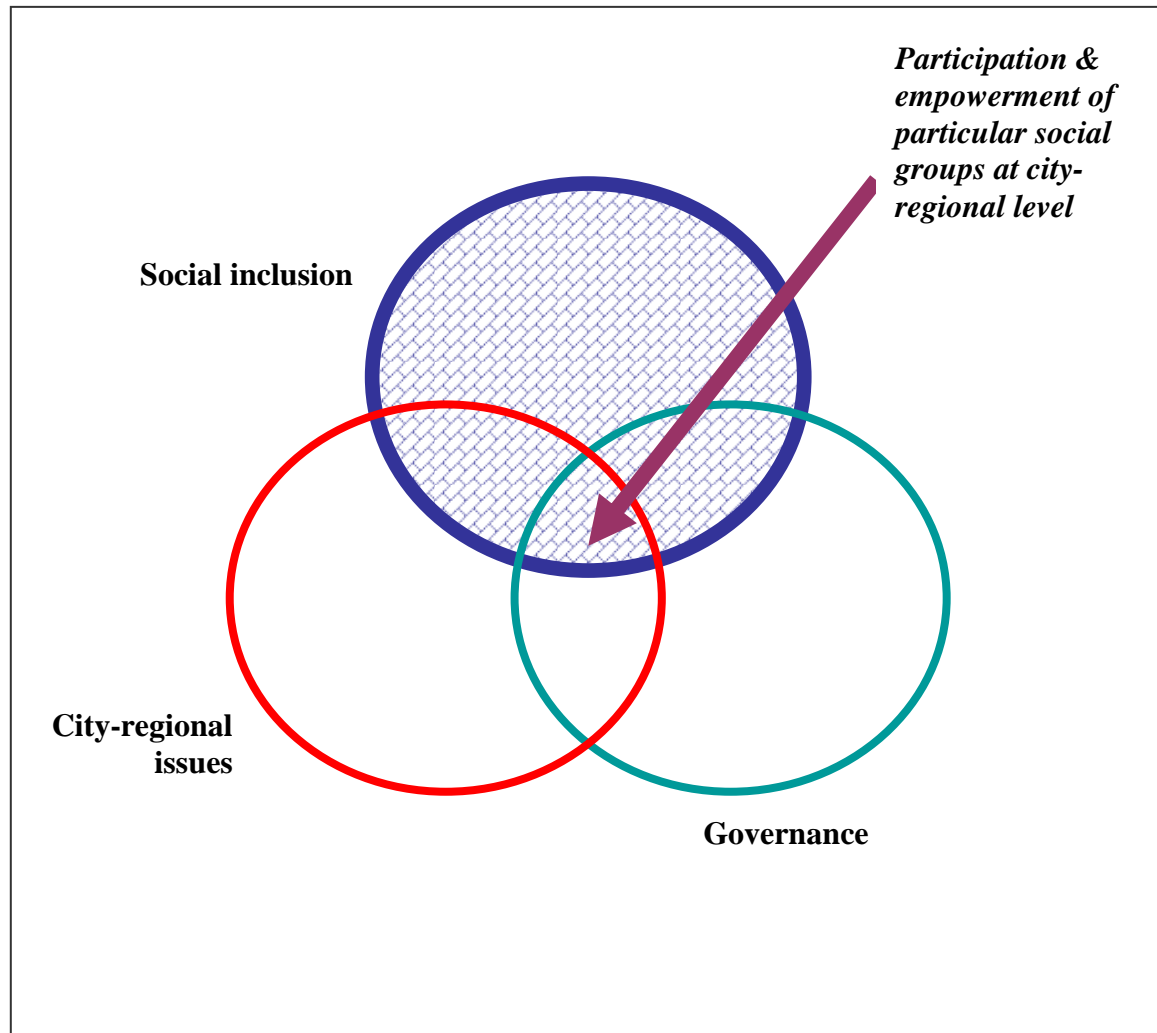
It is clear that the spatial polarization issue is at the core of the problem: is it possible, through metropolitan governance arrangements, to develop solidarity mechanisms between the poorest and the better off part of the metropolitan area? How can residents of the richest parts of the area be convinced of the necessity of setting up these mechanisms?

So, focus of our investigation in this phase *is not*

- social inclusion
- participation and empowerment

as such. Additionally, understanding of empowerment is more indirect in this project. Participation and empowerment are particular selected areas on which instruments and methods of governance should be formalized. See Figure 1

Figure 1



The issue of social inclusion is a little bit different from the topics investigated in the project so far. Compared with others (strategic planning, mobility, environmental externalities, creativity, public / private arrangements, and attractiveness) this is the only one directly linked to cohesion, in contrast with development and sustainability. Cohesion means social term in this context. Governance includes all existing forms and frameworks of civil participation, preferable non- or at least little-institutional ones.

2/ Fields of participation at city region scale

Concerning participation a distinction between two main directions should be made in general. One is remaining in the framework of a relatively passive involvement, like delegation to different bodies. The other aims at a more active, characteristically engagement process, i. e. less focusing on representation.

As far as issue-orientation is concerned especially a sector approach may be followed. In active age, social inclusion focuses first of all on facilities of job, housing, and training.

- Job-creation might be a specific field of city-region involvement, because of the relatively large capacities. This policy is connected to making incentives for SMEs and also to regional development functions of large local governments.
- Housing reconstruction and inner city development projects close together easily. On the other hand different forms of public housing can be relevant for some of the types of the discussed social groups.
- Preservation of community involvement in particular cases, notwithstanding the formal entities, units of municipalities. Methods can be different, like delegation of functions, establishment of participatory budget, programme-orientation at this semi-level, etc.
- Training is an instrument to develop competences to getting a wider scale of qualification in the labour market. Local governments and other community players may make incentives to influence activities to one or another direction.

Apart from active ages, *young and old generations*, further on *handicapped* people should face with exclusion, so policies on inclusion should focus also on their specific needs.

- Childcare is a local function which may be widened especially in big urban areas to more specific ways of provision in order to more efficiently spend financial sources. For instance programmes of leisure and culture for street children are good to prevent them from getting in more serious situations of crises.
- Social care for elderly people is also a local function in overwhelming majority of municipal systems. Coordinating solutions for larger urban areas are good to make differences in provision of services according to the specific needs and save money at the same time. Involvement of the consumers including their family is some kind of enabling way of getting public services.
- Handicapped people are also subject of special provision of public services in order to avoid their exclusion and to make them easier supplying their needs. Ability to the transport is especially relevant at city region level.

But participation at city-region scale can also be a more general issue, concerning all citizens and not only the most excluded ones; there is most of time no way of expressing people's aspirations at this scale, obviously no democratic government, but even no NGOs or other type of organisation. The constitution of a metropolitan community is therefore not easy, but essential as nothing can be achieved at this level, especially on the longer term, without a minimum support - and even commitment - from citizens.

3/ Which forms and instruments are working for participation and empowerment?

Mainly participative forms and methods are interesting and their connection to the normal local functions. We do not need to summarize traditional municipal supply of social public services, notwithstanding provision in different forms of associations in the framework of formal or informal city regions.

More informal forms and initiatives (traditional, cultural or sport events for instance) are likely to play an important role as they can help building a common identity and contribute to make the metropolitan community more cohesive.

3.1. Relevant target groups at city-regional scale

We try to specify relevant target groups as examples at city region level. They can be:

- a)
 - ethnic groups
 - national minority groups
 - b)
 - inhabitants of deprived areas
 - unemployed people
 - inhabitants of remote places in urban area
 - homeless people in cities
 - c)
 - socially deprived groups
 - elderly
 - abused children
- Etc.

Are they separation based more or less on spatial segregation in the urban area? We should focus on urban and territorial relevance of social care needs, problems, and tensions.

Is there some forms of common identity on which metropolitan arrangements can be based and get support from citizens?

Please, *describe* issues relevant from the topics of investigation in order to realization for all of us what the basic inclusion problems are in your case. *If possible, please, present data for better understanding.*

3.2 Public involvement in social inclusion

Relevant issues should be selected from the point of view of governance, in which social group, community is empowered to take part or realize public actions. Which is the target group or any other non-governmental or service providing stakeholder? Is there any role of churches, self-help groups, etc.? Introduction of operation consist of the following characteristics, at least.

What is the principle of participation in provision of specific services offering for special urban social group?

Specify institutional framework of social inclusion in particular case, if any. How widespread is the given format and in what extent are represented stakeholders from the large urban area?

What financial sources are opened? Proportion of subsidies and other additional sources would be good to estimate anyhow.

Role of city or regional government in urban social inclusion policy: who is doing what?

Please, introduce networking context, if any.

Are there any specific – good or bad examples or solutions which may be good to learn for other cities?

4/ Methodology

According to our common method in the working group, all partners are asked to prepare a brief note on their own situation. The package of information might be a basis of our discussion in Burgas or later on. Please feel free to add what you think would be important to know for all of us about your case or omit what seems to be irrelevant. As regularly, each note should not be longer than 3 pages in this format.

2. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERS

2.1. Brno

2.2. Brussels-Capital Region

2.3. Burgas

2.4. Eindhoven

2.5. Florence

2.6. Krakow

2.7. Lille Metropole

2.8. Seville

2.1. Brno

Over the years, a number of strategies and tools leading both towards strengthening and development of competencies for democratic awareness of citizens, towards the prevention of social exclusion as well as towards the promotion of social cohesion, have been created in the City of Brno at the level of municipal policies and measures. There are a number of such measures in Brno, some of them we will briefly introduce.

The efforts and goals of our city principles which determine are stated in two strategic documents – at the municipal level, it is the Strategy for Brno which fosters sound urban development within five priority areas:

- City image and internal and external relations,
- Local economic development,
- Quality of life (it is fundamental for this issue, priority Strategy pillar),
- Research, development, innovation and education,
- and the last one is Transport and technical infrastructure.

At the national level, it is the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion for 2008 – 2010 (NAPSI), a strategic document which is one of the basic documents dealing with social exclusion at the national level.

NAPSI deals with three priority areas combating poverty and social exclusion:

- support for disadvantaged people, especially in terms of access to labour market
- support for families
- and strengthening efficiency of decision-making process in the area of social inclusion policy.

We can claim that, in Brno, there are necessary measures which will help implement both the priority pillar of the Strategy for Brno, which is the Quality of life, and all NAPSI priorities.

1/ The First complex policy of the city is the Community Planning of Social Services (which directly fulfils all three NAPSI priority targets – it promotes the integration of in-any-way disadvantaged people – social and health handicaps; it supports families, especially families with specific needs, in order to prevent social exclusion of their family members. And it is in fact a good example of social mainstreaming results. That includes the implementation of the NAPSI priority objective which should lead towards social inclusion at all levels of services of general interest as well as towards partnership of all social inclusion policy players. The process of Community Planning began in Brno in 2006 and in 2009, the second Community Plan for the period of 2010 – 2013 has already been approved. It is probably not necessary to sum up all principles and objectives of the Community Planning in detail, hopefully, it is enough to say that it is a way to elaborate development policies, plans or strategies in the framework of which cities or municipalities try to persuade general public to participate, for example the community of the concerned municipality. Community Planning means, above all, a dialogue and cooperation among citizens, institutions and organizations in the city, so that everybody who needs help finds it. This help should be of high quality and should efficiently use all available resources. Approximately 250 providers, users, city representatives, and experts cooperated on the creation of the Community Plan of Social Services in Brno for the period of 2010 – 2013. These people used to meet once in a month in 8 working groups. This pattern enabled us to focus on real needs of people who live in Brno and who need help and support when coping with difficult life situations. Those were seniors, families with children, people with various impairments or citizens at risk of social exclusion. One of a number of significant outcomes of the communication with service providers and

users is, beside coordination of social services in the city, also the foundation of the Socio-info centre for citizens and the creation of a social web portal, where people can find helpful information on how to deal with their social situation. Thanks to increased availability of information and access to social services for citizens, the Socio-info centre together with the web portal will become one of the measures to prevent social exclusion.

That much about the Community Planning in Brno. Now briefly about other activities of the city in the area of social inclusion.

2/ A serious current problem of Brno is the existence of 4 socially excluded locations mostly inhabited by Romany people. Many social problems cumulate in these areas. Among most common problems, there are housing issues, long-term unemployment¹, debt and dependency on social benefits. Low education level among Romany people is passed on to the next generation and thus prevents the escape from social exclusion. Therefore, a Working group has been set up to promote the integration of socially excluded locations. The purpose of the Social Integration Working group (SIWG) is to elaborate proposals for the solution of Romany issues and policy materials. This expert group, whose member is also a Romany counsellor, consists of public administration employees, Romany community representatives and NGO employees whose activities are specifically focused on this target group. In last years the SIWG worked particularly on housing issues, the outcome will be a final report on identified weak points together with concrete measure proposals for the improvement of housing policy. The next topic will be the issue of unemployment. The final deliverable of SIWG should be a complex program for integration of socially excluded groups of citizens.

3/ A group of projects within the Integrated Urban Development Plan assigned for the Integrated Operational Program (IUDP IOP) also deals with problems of socially excluded locations. These projects will be funded from the city budget and from the European Union resources. The global objective of IUDP IOP is to increase living standards in one of the socially excluded locations in Brno. This location is in vicinity of the historical centre. A reconstruction of selected apartment buildings and regeneration of public areas will be carried out and will be accompanied by the implementation of a complex package of social programs and pedagogic social services aimed at social exclusion prevention.

In Brno, however, we also have measures dealing with other areas related to the promotion of participation and social cohesion. Briefly notes about some of them:

1/ Communication with public: the city places emphasis on communication with public, especially on voluntary communication, that means not required by law. In this respect, we use a number of tools to communicate with citizens: above all, the Information newspaper for citizens of the statutory city of Brno – The Brno Metropolitan – a newspaper distributed for free to all households and institutions in the city, followed by the city web portal and a TV program – the Brno Eye, broadcasted on cable TV. Since 2006, an information centre with focus on urban development programs – the Urban Centre – has been operating at the Old Town Hall. It offers, to those interested in Brno development issues, regularly updated exhibitions of important development projects, presentations on large-screen displays, a city

¹ According to statistical datas on the website of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was registred 17.226 applicants for a job in November 2009 in Brno. It represents unemployment rate 7,9 %. According to recent researches live in Brno approximately 15 - 17 thousands of Romanies. Half of them is depended on social benefits - what means that they are unemployed. Therefore, share of unemployed Romanies is possible to estimate at 50 - 74 % of all unemployed in Brno.

model and also discussions with citizens on given topics. Very often, we also communicate with the public via public inquiries and various representative sociological surveys etc.

2/ Brno Healthy City Office: improvement of health, quality of life, and city environment are the objectives of the international project of the United Nations / World Health Organization (WHO), entitled the Healthy City, in which Brno has already been involved for many years. This project is based on implementation of sustainable development principles, integrated promotion of health and cooperation with local community. Wide range of activities and programs promoting healthy lifestyle are carried out in the framework of the Brno-Healthy City Project. The project is jointly implemented by dozens of organizations and associations in the city. It is the inter-sector cooperation involving local community in the activities which promote quality of life in the city. That is what makes this international project so unique. In the conditions of the city of Brno, the WHO strategy Health 2000 and the international agreement on sustainable development Agenda 21 are implemented through the cooperation going on within this project.

3/ Family Centre and Family Points: It is a new project. Its purpose is to create a network of "Family Points" in the city. The central Family point was open in May. It is funded by the city of Brno and has its seat in the Family and Social Care Centre located in the city centre. It provides general counselling – including the area of equal opportunities, balance between family life and career and help for elderly and their engagement. In the centre, it is possible to change and feed a baby and there are also toys for children and plenty of information materials. By the end of 2009, 5 new Family Points should be established at individual City district offices.

4/ IN-centre: opened on 5th October 2006 thanks to the project "Public access to the broadband internet for citizens of Brno, provided by the public library". The project was implemented by the city of Brno and funded from resources of the Joint regional operational program of the European Union Structural Funds and from the city and national budgets. Its fundamental aim is to develop information and communication technologies. Through the implementation of this project, the Jiri Mahen Library provides free internet access in the central library and in the network of its branches, including the IN- centre. The IN-centre also offers educational courses focused on improving computer and information skills, in particular for disadvantaged groups of seniors, mothers on maternity leave, unemployed, and immigrants.

5/ To conclude, many new and traditional social, cultural and sport events, both at the local and city level take place in Brno. They are held for locals and for visitors and besides making the city life more attractive, there is no doubt they also strengthen citizenship and solidarity among inhabitants of Brno.

2.2. Brussels-Capital Region

1/ Institutional context

Belgium is a federal state composed of three Regions (the Brussels-Capital Region, the Flemish Region, and the Walloon Region) and three Communities. Regions are competent for economic and territorial issues. Dutch, French, and German communities are competent for individual and cultural matters, education, and linguistic issues.

Social inclusion is not a regional but a community's competence. As a Body of the regional government, the Territorial Development Agency has no valuable information about Communities' initiatives taken at regional city level about those topics, except for the insertion of the unemployed people which is a regional competence and has a city region scale development.

2/ The relevant target group at city-region scale

The main target group in the city-region scale is thus unemployed people.

Unemployment in the Brussels-Capital Region is higher than in the others Regions. The part of unskilled people is more important in the Brussels-Capital Region than in the rest of the country and the poorest part of inhabitants of the Region have a lack of training: 30% of residents have never been to the secondary school while the half of available jobs are held by people with a high school or university degree. Unskilled inhabitants from Brussels have more difficulties to find a job in the Brussels-Capital City because the work market is more competitive and they have more chances to find a job in the suburbs.

3/ The Plan: interregional mobility for workers

To cope with these problems, public services for employment and training of the three Regions signed in 2005 a cooperation agreement to promote the learning of the other official language of the country for unemployed people and encourage them to work in another region in order to foster the interregional mobility of workers. Following this cooperation agreement, an action plan was signed in 2007 between the Flemish and Brussels Public unemployment Offices to deal specifically about Brussels and its metropolitan area.

In the Brussels-Capital Region, the unemployment rate is quite high, about 20%, whereas in the Flanders Region the unemployment rate is lower, about 8%. At the moment when the action plan was signed, there were 1000 job offers in the metropolitan area of Brussels for 6000 possible candidates in the Brussels-Capital Region. The idea behind this action plan is to improve exchange of information about job possibilities in the metropolitan area for inhabitants of Brussels and promote job-dating meetings between companies located in the metropolitan area and inhabitants of the Brussels-Capital Region. After one year, it is estimated that 1700 persons from Brussels have found a job in a company located in the metropolitan area.

The stake for the Walloon agency (Forem) is to prepare unemployed people to work in Flanders. It helps them to write in Dutch their curriculum vitae, to subscribe them on the website of the Dutch agency and to prepare them to recruitment actions. Advisers in

interregional mobility mobilize unemployed people for making them training, to encourage mobility and to use the network proposed.

The stake for the Flemish agency (VDAB) is to propose jobs and make employers aware of the necessity for them to hire unemployed people for another Region. Sectors which can hire unemployed from Brussels or Wallonia are electricity & electronics (21%), building construction (14%), transports (11%), and people services (15%).

Concerning concrete actions, job-dating were organised (meeting between unemployed people and several employers of the same sector), bilingual advisers are free for helping unemployed people, and unemployed people can subscribe themselves to the website of the several public services for employment. The Brussels-Capital Region will launch a collective taxi system to allow workers who travel apart from pick hours to have an alternative to public transport to go to the business parks located in the suburbs. Moreover, additional rail links between Regions will be implemented to improve the workers' mobility. An interregional training project is foreseen for small and middle sized enterprises to encourage young actives to follow their training in another language.

The reactions are quite positive. The Economic and Social Committees of the three Regions agree with such cooperation. Social partners also agree but wish an establishment of specific instruments such as linguistic training within enterprises and better monitoring of the unemployed people. The experience of mix team in the Public unemployment Agencies (VDAB / Forem) should also be implemented between VDAB and Actiris (the Brussels' Agency) and between Forem and Actiris.

Despite those positive initiatives, some psychological obstacles still have to be removed for employers and workers.

2.3. Burgas

The concept of social inclusion in Bulgaria

The concept of social inclusion in Bulgaria has evolved for the past ten or fifteen years. In general it was related to poverty and the measures undertaken to overcome it were limited to material and financial support for those marginalized and humanitarian aid to most vulnerable. Nowadays the social inclusion is placed in the broader context of the necessity all the people, regardless of their problems or social economic situation, to take part in the public life, have access to information and services and be active participants in the decision making processes related to their own future.

Furthermore social inclusion is taken as a process the success of which depends on the creation of equal opportunities in different fields like education, health care, employment, religion, politics etc.

There are still two issues that can be brought up regarding the concept comprehension of social inclusion in Bulgaria:

- different documents, strategies, projects and initiative are still focusing on social exclusion than social inclusion which implies an approach oriented more to problems than to prevention and effective solutions;
- secondly “social exclusion” have stable age, ethnic and health parameters, which speaks for itself about structural vulnerability and addiction to exclusion on one hand and on the other – about structural incapability of the national social system to make a difference among those communities for which social exclusion is traditional.

Spatial limitations of social exclusion come as a consequence of those two implications. People constantly deprived of the right to participate in the socially significant events and initiatives sometimes form clearly segregated areas thus contributing to exclusion.

Relevant target groups at Burgas city-regional scale

Several target groups can be defined as most vulnerable regarding social inclusion and empowerment:

- the non active population - children and elderly people;
- single parents and families with many children;
- Romas;
- People with disabilities;
- Unemployed and elderly women;
- People without or low education and professional qualification.

The role of governance in the field of social inclusion and empowerment

According to article 17 of the Law on Local Self Government and Local Administration the local self government is the right and the real opportunity of every citizen and the elected institutions to solve independently all the issues of local significance.

The role of local government in social inclusion and empowerment was recognized during the recent years also through the process of **decentralization of social services provision**. Once an exclusive function of the state, now provision of social services is delegated to the municipalities which can chose between being providers by themselves or to assign the provision of certain services to third parties.

The process of decentralization created a rather complicated mixture of **structures and institutions** both at municipal and regional level engaged in the system of social care and support. The purpose of those institutions is to ensure the implementation of the national policy in the field of social inclusion at local and regional level. On the other hand the Municipality, once been delegated social functions and responsibilities, started to create structures of its own in order to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness of social services as well as transparency of the management of the public funds.

Several structures with consultative and operational functions are part of the social inclusion policy at municipal level:

- Public council for social support – mainly consultative functions in strategic planning, planning and management of social services, controls the quality of services provided, investigates and gives opinion on cases of violations of social rights. Members of the Council are representatives of institutions and key organizations active in the field of social care;
- Permanent Commission for Social activities to the Municipal Council of Burgas;
- The Ombudsman;
- “Social Activities and Employment” Department within the municipal administration.

In terms of **strategic planning** the following documents are related to social inclusion and empowerment:

- Municipal plan for development 2007 – 2013, where the social inclusion is reflected in the objective of improving quality of life;
- Municipal programme for child protection;
- Municipal programme for educational integration of children and schoolchildren from ethnic minorities.

Those documents show the effort for creating multi sectoral approach to the issue though still focusing primarily on certain vulnerable groups – young people and children.

Fields of participation at city region scale

Review of program and strategic documents shows that many fields of social inclusion remain uncovered. The initiatives and projects developed by the municipality from the recent years though show the opposite – a trend of a more integrated approach which recognizes the different dimensions of social inclusion process such as:

- **provision of a variety of social services**

Burgas Municipality is responsible for providing two basic types of social services: services in specialized institutions (Home for children without parents, Home for elderly people) and community based services (Daily centers for people with different disabilities, Burgas Business center providing vocational trainings and support for entrepreneur initiatives among vulnerable people).

- **creation of accessible and appropriate physical environment**

Friendly physical environment is considered an important part of the process of social inclusion. Usually related to the social integration of people with disabilities this component is part of the annual investment program of the municipality, as well as all the infrastructural projects funded by EU funds and implemented by the Municipality.

- **creation of conditions for active participation**

The issue is straight related to ownership of results and success. Local communities' participation is achieved basically through consultations and representative bodies but also

through active involvement in initiatives and support for organizations developing community capacity building activities.

- **building social capital and cooperation**

It has been for the last two years that a clear trend for establishing networks and partnerships with different stakeholders in the field of social inclusion can be noted. The aim of the Municipality is to share capacities and ensure better resource management in providing social services and achieving social inclusion. Two major municipal initiatives are contributing to building social capital: the financial support for nongovernmental organizations working in public interest, Public – private partnership programme for implementation of small scale infrastructural projects and the Co financial mechanism for NGO projects.

Major challenges in social inclusion policies at city region scale

The major priority issues for policy makers that need to be integrated in the social policy making process at local and regional level can be divided as follows: **deinstitutionalization**; **decentralization**; improving and guaranteeing the **effectiveness of the social support and inclusion** as well as providing **financial sustainability**.

The reform in the area of social services in Bulgaria has started with the approved changes in the Law on social assistance in 2003 when the all-round strategy for social services providing was changed. The social services were determined as activities for supporting people to lead independent life in the specialized institutions within the community. The stress falls now on the individual approach for fulfilling at greatest extend the needs of the vulnerable people. The social services in the specialized institutions have to be provided after all possible opportunities for services providing in the community are exhausted. A step-by-step action for closure of the specialized residential institutions within the Burgas region is forthcoming.

The movement towards **deinstitutionalization** is prompting local government, NGOs, and other stakeholders to mobilize and join their efforts, so that the needed support for vulnerable people living in local communities to be ensured. For that reason, simultaneously with the closure of institutions, sustainable community support services must be developed according to the individual needs of the target groups. The inmates of specialized institutions have to be provided with social services and care in family-scale housing or environment close to that in family in order they to be afforded equal opportunities for participating in social activities. The closing down of the specialized institutions is not a single act, but a process that has to be carefully planned. Whether the institution is going to be close down, reformed or restructured a special project has to be worked out in cooperation with the municipalities and geared to the local social services needs.

An actual process of deinstitutionalization has not still begun, because of the lack of alternatives of the institutionalization. Another reason for that is also the necessity for synchronization of the legislation that regulates the institution activities and determines responsibilities. *For example, at present the municipalities are at the same time a provider and an assigner of social services what suggests inequality between the providers.*

One of the main aims of the social reform is more qualitative social services to be provided to the vulnerable groups. And one of the tools of the reform is the **decentralization** – a process of transferring the strongly centralized social services offering to services providing in terms of free and competitive market. The process of decentralization is divided into two levels -

from the state to the local authorities and from local authorities to third providers in order free market services to be developed and provided. On one hand, the municipalities are given the opportunity to manage the services for vulnerable people, including people with mental and psychic diseases according to the specific needs of the population in the region. On the other hand, once they get the power for decision making, local authorities are more willing to impose power on the financial and human resources management. With a view to entrepreneurial encouragement in the social area, the mayor can assign the management of the social services to private social services providers on the basis of the principle of free and transparent competition. Unfortunately, the existing legislative framework goes ahead of the practice. The best practices are mostly an exception rather than a rule. As a whole the social services providing is insufficient and in many cases of poor quality and sporadic, what leads to social exclusion of the target groups.

The **effectiveness** of the social support supposes provision of appropriate social services and material security as well as adapting the environment so that the applying measures to be directed to the specific individual needs of the vulnerable groups and opportunities for independent life and active participation in the social life to be created. Providing of adapted transport and other technical devices would ensure accessible environment and the communication barriers would be overcome.

The social services have to be considered in their broader sense and namely an integrated and inter - sectoral approach to be applied, what means that health and educational services have to be included.

Provision of only qualitative and effective services could be beneficial to the vulnerable groups. The social services effectiveness is measured with the reached extend of social inclusion, human rights protection and the actual improving of the quality of life. The main indicator of social services effectiveness is the beneficiaries' and their families' contentment.

To implement a successful policy of supporting vulnerable groups, coordination between the institution activities at different levels is required. One hand, this is coordination between the institutions of the central power in conformity with strategic documents and financial mechanisms which determine the rules of action. On the other hand, is the coordination at operational level between the central power institutions and local structures which are responsible for services developing, planning and providing and at last effective partnership between the local authorities and the organizations operating in this sphere.

To achieving social services effectiveness the **holistic approach** has to be applied. The required social services have to be directed toward satisfaction of the complex needs of the vulnerable people while the specific of the environment is considered. The social services require flexibility – they have to be geared to the specific needs of the target groups and last but not least continuance of the support has to be guaranteed. The participation of all stakeholders in the process of local policy planning and taking into consideration the position of the vulnerable groups, their association and social services providers allows the given support and planning services to be a real answer to the needs.

The **funding** of the social services in Bulgaria is carried out both in centralized and in decentralized way. The funding resources for social services are specified in the Law on social assistance and these are as follows: state budget, municipal budgets, national and international programs, natural and legal persons' endowments, "Social assistance" fund etc. The social services which are delegated from the state activities are funded by the state budget, and the local social services are funded by the municipal income taxes.

In 2008 a system of unified funding standards for all kind of social services came into force. The system not only affords opportunities for participation of the NGOs and trading corporations in this area, but also creates conditions for greater flexibility and improving the quality of the provided services. The ensuring of stability and financial sustainability of social services requires:

1. Guaranteeing of maximum financial resources for social services
2. Improving the capacity at local level for policy implementing and coordination
3. Mechanism developing for strengthening the role of the municipalities, NGOs and associations.

However, some major financial problems connected with social services providing can be outlined.

Despite of the fact that a financial mechanism for negotiation with the external social services providers is defined in the legislation, it is not well developed. That is conducive to the inefficiency of the negotiation and prevents the developing of qualitative services.

The financial resources for social services management are mostly granted on the basis of schemes which dispose a small budget and are short-term. That contributes to financing of services which are temporarily provided and their financial sustainability has not been considered after the end of the project.

The licensing regime is extremely strict toward the social services providers. At the same time the municipalities provide social services without having licenses/registrations, required by the private providers. That is why it is not realistic to be expected quality of the services, when there is a monopoly over the decision taking, implementing and reporting of the activity.

In this respect some requirements have to be made:

- Assigning the social services of public interest to private providers – thus, the roles will be clear determined and the social services quality will be improved.
- Public-private partnerships have to be established in order the resources to be joined and more qualitative services to be provided.

2.4. Eindhoven

The theme of the meeting in Burgas is a difficult to discuss at city-region scale. The subject has not a real clear dimension within the Eindhoven region. The first focus in this paper is on social housing. The theme of the seminar is broader and certainly covers more than social housing. But there are clear links between social housing and the topics discussed during the seminar. The subject also gives a clear picture of the communication between government and citizens when it comes to the development of their immediate environment. The effects of this interaction on a local level are also noticeable at the regional level.

In addition to social housing in this paper a few examples of projects are mentioned that were picked up by the SRE at regional level over the last years: the drinking problem among young people and the housing of foreign workers.

Social housing

National context

Before WW II housing was a municipal affair with central government at arms length. This changed after the War when enormous reconstruction efforts were strongly steered by central government: the War had destroyed some 80.000 and 400.000 dwellings were more or less severely damaged. In the nineteen nineties and onward government pursued a course of decentralization toward municipalities, or privatization of local housing authorities, housing associations and of making more self-reliant.

Over the last decade the government became more aware of the fact that beyond our homes and workplaces, the street, neighborhood and district are our social community. The quality of that living environment and the way people interact with each other often determines in part their position in society. There are neighborhoods in the Netherlands in which an accumulation of problems and failures have had a negative impact on the quality of the living environment. These are neighborhoods where unemployment is high and jobs are scarce, more children leave school early, the population is homogeneous and homes are run down, public spaces are deteriorating and drug nuisance, crime, and antisocial behavior are commonplace. A long-term, intensive, cohesive, and broad approach to set up tackles these problems.

There is a national action plan drafted for a broad, cohesive 'strong neighborhood' approach AIMED at transforming problem neighborhoods within 8 to 10 years into vital living and working environments where children stay in school and unemployment - also among young people - is reduced, where employment is available close by, where the population is varied and where people enjoy living. Housing associations are social enterprises and have an important social task in this process: they invest in good, affordable housing and in the quality of the residential and living environment.

The agreements with the corporations will not be without obligation. This applies to agreements between the national government and the housing association sector as well as local-level agreements between municipalities and housing associations. At local level, municipalities can make concrete performance agreements with associations concerning investments by the associations on the basis of municipal housing concepts. Part of the increased budget for urban renewal will be apportioned to neighborhood and district budgets from which resident initiatives are funded.

A regional approach

Before the agreement with corporations the conclusion was drawn that it may be desirable for suburban municipalities to build more homes for lower and middle incomes. The main target was to achieve balance in the development and demographics of cohesive urban areas in the Netherlands.

In SRE-region the central city of Eindhoven is traditionally very dominant. The growth of Philips attracted many people to the city. Especially in the early years these were mostly laborers from other parts of the country. Notable examples are the workers from the province of Drenthe, a rural province up north. They got a little house from Philips who specially developed districts for its new workers. Later on these houses became social rented because social housing is not part the core-business of Philips. At the same time there was a noticeable movement of the management of Philips to the neighboring towns. They did not want to live in the city and built luxurious villas in neighboring villages. Especially the town of Waalre is still known as a wealthy enclave. This process has lasted over decades and led to an unbalanced distribution of social housing between the city of Eindhoven and the surrounding municipalities.

To counter this development in 2004 there was made a firm agreement between Eindhoven and the surrounding municipalities. Municipalities in the Netherlands are expected to devise land-use plans within their boundaries and to develop housing visions. The importance of land-use plans in which areas designated for housing development are determined also lies in the fact that they are the only plans in the Netherlands which are legally binding for the both the public and the private sectors. The surrounding villages are now making land-use plans in which there is more space for social housing and the Eindhoven is making space for private homes in higher price ranges. Importantly, social housing can also mean cheap property to buy. Houses sold for an amount below €194,000 are also considered to be social housing. The agreement is definitely not optional. If a municipality builds less houses than agreed up on with Eindhoven the municipality gets a fine up to €37,200 for every social house that is not built! The money goes to a regional development fund.

Social housing in Eindhoven and the surrounding municipalities (2007)

Municipality	% Social housing (rent)	% Social housing (cheap property to buy)
Eindhoven	10	9
Geldrop-Mierlo	6	7
Nuenen ca	2	2
Son en Breugel	3	2
Veldhoven	4	6
Waalre	2	6
Best	2	6

Examples of other projects

"Do not bottle"

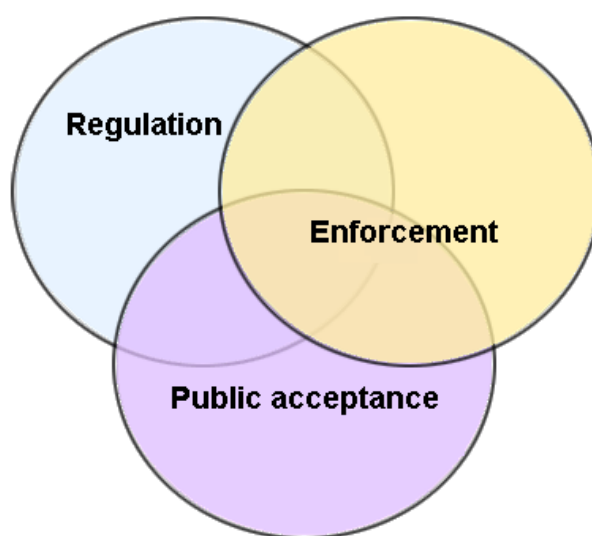
A survey held in 2005 showed that in the region of Southeast Brabant drinking by young people had grown substantially in recent years. The region scored higher than average in the Netherlands. Alcohol at a young age affects the development of the brain and is harmful to other parts of the body, provides an extra high risk of acute alcohol poisoning and increases the risk of addiction later in life with all the social consequences.

The SRE has therefore taken the initiative to address this problem and to put it on the political agenda. The SRE came up with a systematic approach of the problem under the name of "laat je niet flessen". (Do not bottle"!)

The project has two main objectives:

- 1/ Raise the starting age of alcohol consumption (the standard is no alcohol under 16)
- 2/ Decline public drunkenness. (Drunk people on the street are no longer accepted, it is forbidden to give or sell alcohol to young people)

The policy consists of overlapping core elements. First Public acceptance is important. It has to become normal again that you do not drink alcohol under 16! When people address each other this has a good deterrent. Communication is the key-solution. It is important to communicate the negative effects of drinking alcohol at very young age. In second place is bright and compliance. By regulating the sale and use of alcohol it is easier to prevent youngsters from drinking in the public domain, out of sight of parents. Final part is the enforcement of such rules by the police. There is also a public body that random checks if supermarkets or cafes are selling alcohol to young people.



Housing for foreign workers

In the SRE region, there are an increasing number of foreign workers, who temporarily work in the region of Southeast Brabant. These workers have often the intention to make a lot of money in a few months and then return to the motherland. The number of accommodations in the Netherlands for this kind of short-stay is very low. Because employees want cheap housing, there is a risk that there are bad situations: people in tents, poor caravans, containers, etc. In recent years there were some miserable conditions that lead to a lot of attention for this specific subject in local and national newspapers. For the municipalities in south-Brabant this was a good reason to address the housing of foreign workers as a regional problem.

On January 18, 2006 a note on the housing of temporary workers was published by the SRE. This document gives a clear overview of the legal possibilities. It also defines a regional policy of what is accepted and where to draw the line. For employers and entrepreneurs it is clear now what is accepted in the region. The core of the story is that temporary workers in the agricultural sector can make use of temporary accommodation (<6 months) in the countryside: residential units, mobile homes, and stay in commercial accommodation. For the other classes and if there is more work than 6 months, outdoor housing is not allowed. The Note provides solutions that can be used by the municipality.

2.5. Florence

The note on the health and social care system of the Tuscany Region hereafter presented is a mean to focus on the “Healthness societies” of Florence. Healthness societies are brand-new interesting experience of governance in social care sphere.

1/ The role of municipalities in health and social care

Before the establishment of the National Health Service (NHS), health services as well as social welfare had been provided at the municipal level. The creation of the NHS (1978) attributed addressing and planning functions to the State and left management to municipalities and hospitals.

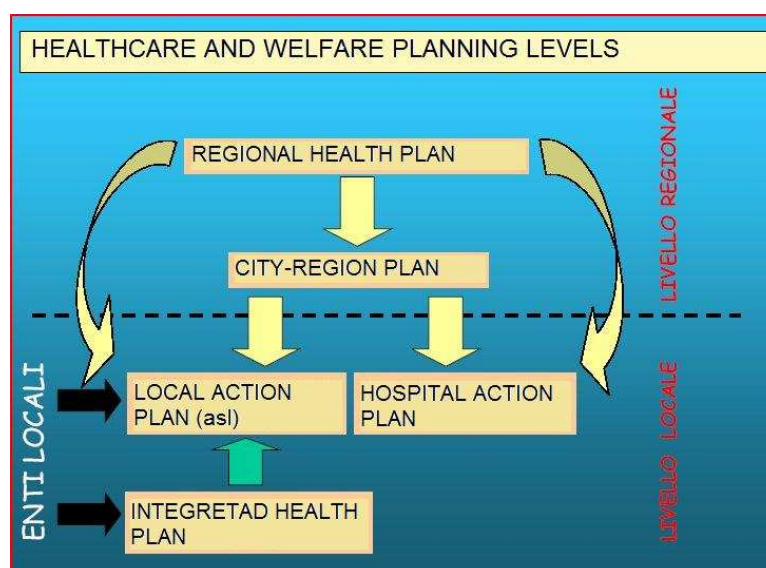
In order to improve efficiency, to reduce collusion, and especially to respond to the dictates of the Constitution, since the 90s Regions were placed at the centre of the reformed NHS. They assumed both legislative and administrative powers and, at the same time, the responsibility for healthcare system planning and funding.

While Regions became the main territorial reference in the organization and management of health services, municipalities kept competences only in social care sphere.

Since the late '90s, municipalities have established new attempts to regain competencies in healthcare and social care. Local governments are now involved in governance processes, in the evaluation of the adequacy of results achieved and, finally, they have an active role in welfare provision.

2/ The governance of healthcare in the Florentine city region

Since the new Century, governance of the healthcare and social welfare changed towards a greater inclusion of territories both in planning and in managing services. The participation to planning processes and the management function have been also extended to representative of voluntary associations, NGOs, and social cooperatives.

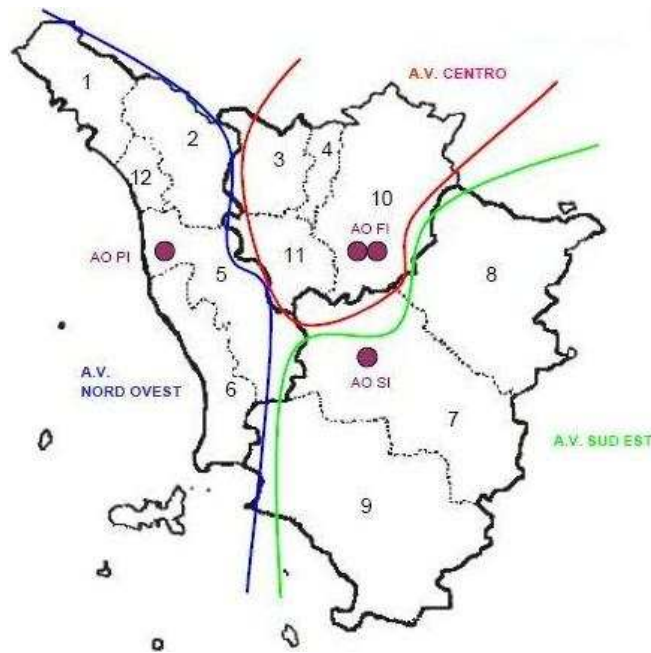


In Tuscany, since 2004, the healthcare and welfare planning is structured on two levels: one regional and one local. The Region prepares the **Regional Health Plan** and its

implementation mechanisms. The tools of health services planning at the local level are the **Integrated Health Plans (IHP)**. IHP indicates health and welfare general targets as well as standards of quantity and quality, it plans actions and coordinates funds in order to implement of regional programs.

The IHP is defined by a participatory process where public authorities discuss the plan and its tools with representatives of care facilities, voluntary associations and, more extensively, with representatives of the non-profit sector.

Among regional and local levels, the city-region level of planning is increasing its relevance. Its main task is to assure a balanced growth to the healthcare system and to enhance the contribution of professionals in the area. In the case of Florence city region, this level of planning concerns about 1,5 million people, 15 hospitals and about 21.000 employed in health and social service sector.



3/ The Healthness Societies of Florence Area

Since 2004, management of social and health services of the Municipality of Florence and its surrounding municipalities had been merged into the **Healthness societies** (the Florence metropolitan area is divided into three distinct Healthness societies). The **Healthness societies (HS)** are institutions of governance initially tested in the Florentine area and subsequently extended to all the Tuscany Region (Regional Law n.40 of 2005). These are public consortiums among municipalities and local health authorities allowing for the full integration of health activities with social-welfare activities, the governance of territorial services and, lastly, the continuity of the trail from diagnostic to therapeutic care.

The base for this institution of governance is the emergence of a new approach to care: health has anymore a matter of disease. In Tuscany and in Florence, health of citizens is increasingly understood as physical, mental as well as social wellness. Thus, wellbeing is pursued through many channels not strictly medical.

Among the functions they use to perform are those of local strategic planning (by drawing the Integrated Health Plan) and the management of healthcare and welfare activities

identified by the regional plan. At the same time, HS owns competences in controlling, monitoring and evaluating the quality of services.

HSs are pursuing two main objectives:

- 1) They encourage the involvement of local communities, social partners, and non-profit sector in identifying health needs and let them participate in the regional process of planning;
- 2) They ensure the quality and appropriateness of performance, control, and certainty of cost, universalism, and equity.

Two specific bodies of the consortium ensure these objectives: the first is the Committee of Participation that gathers representatives of users and territories; the second is the Committee for Non-Profit where ONGs and other stakeholders can have voice on the drawing of the Integrated Health Plan.

One of the main activities of the Healthness Societies is to diagnose the health status of the territory by drawing annual report. In this kind of reports HS highlights the main causes of mortality, the frequency of the different diseases and the environmental quality. Furthermore, the diagnosis use to be declined at the level of the population most at risk, including elderly, disabled, children, immigrants, and drug users. From this diagnosis, the HS is involved directly or indirectly by promoting actions of intervention.

Here after some examples of projects started by the HS of Florence:

- "The integrated system for elderly", which aims to integrate actions for frail older people and to promote opportunities for socialization, aggregation and adoption of lifestyles that would extend the autonomy of the elderly;
- The "secret mum" that promise to support pregnant women and mothers (including women in situations of extra-illegal immigration) and to prevent the phenomenon of traumatic childbirth.
- The project "Connecting Intervention Prostitution" which aims at weakens the trafficking and, at the same time, at generates awareness about the prostitutions issues.
- The project "Social Housing" through which HS tries to give special support to families or individuals who have channelled their energies to the reorganization of their life.
- Several projects oriented at promoting sport activities among citizens.

The 18 Healthness Societies already instituted in Tuscany are coordinates in the Regional Conference of Healthness Societies, which has the function of representing the local authorities in planning health and social welfare.



2.6. Krakow

There are almost 2000 nongovernmental organization in the Krakow Metropolitan Area, almost half of them operates in the city of Krakow. Non-governmental organizations functioning in Krakow Metropolitan Area, cover all areas of city life: social activity, culture, religious life, sports, social problems (many charitable organizations), the functioning of educational institutions, science institutions, promotion of entrepreneurship and other activities in the field of economy, cooperation international community.

Areas in which organizations operate in Krakow are sports organizations (104 associations and organizations), professional associations and local governments (102), trade unions (94), 93-artistic associations (93), organizations that support higher education (72), charity for the needy (68 associations and organizations). It should be mentioned also that there is significant number of organizations and associations of a very individualized nature in Krakow that is difficult to adjust to a standardized list, which shows both the immense diversity of requirements in this area, and the diversity of motivation of individuals acting in NGO sector.

Municipal authorities shall cooperate with NGOs in different extent. Based on surveys conducted in the municipalities Active citizenship in the communities included in the Krakow Metropolitan Area (informal translation from „Aktywność obywatelska na terenie gmin wchodzących w skład Krakowskiego Obszaru Metropolitalnego”) for elaboration: Human Capital in the Krakow Metropolitan Area (informal translation from Kapitał ludzki w Krakowskim Obszarze Metropolitalnym) - designated areas of cooperation with NGOs, municipalities include joint organization of cultural events, entertainment, sports, training, cooperation in the field of health, combating social problems, social welfare institution.

Highlighting the importance of assumptions of the Strategy for public consultation and to contribute to individuals, associations and organizations in all stages of the preparation and implementation of the strategy is an important signal to the non-government, though of course it is difficult to predict what shape will adopt (if indeed this is executed) the cooperation of various communities in their efforts to development of the city. Compounds which belong to the municipality include compounds river basins, the relationship municipalities in the Ojcow National Park, municipalities and counties association Malopolska region.

In the Strategy outline (The Malopolska region development Strategy for 2007–2013): Malopolska – one of the strategic objectives: states Creating Conditions for Comprehensive Social Development and High Quality of Life, with the description in the indirect objective – internally cohesive region offering equal opportunities for development. It will be implemented by the comprehensive family support programs, designed to secure adequate living conditions, and cherishing family life, and comprehensive action aimed at social and persons in danger of exclusion for material, social or cultural reasons, particularly: large families and single parent families, children and young people from problem environments, the elderly, the disabled, national and ethnic minorities, immigrants, the long term unemployed, persons leaving penal institutions and their families.

In order to observe the implementing of social programs it has been established Social Policy Observatory in Malopolska, its' main function is to be a practical utility in terms of social policy. One of the main goals is gathering information that are the starting point for further research and analysis conducted by the Social Policy Observatory.

Activities Małopolska Observatory of Social Policy arising from the set objectives of the project and be implemented at three levels:

- conducting research and analysis, in-depth diagnosis of selected areas of the social situation in Małopolska,
- integrate the available information from the area of social policy,
- facilitate evaluation of the effectiveness of solutions implemented in the area of social policy

The basic design is the sphere of investigation and analysis on the area of Malopolskie voivodeship.

Parallel with the activity of a research observatory building a system of segregation and condensation of information within the electronic library conducted in cooperation with the Małopolska Labor Market Observatory and Education. Rising and accommodation operators' assistance and social integration in the region, to facilitate their identification and contact with each other.

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2.7. Lille Metropole

SOCIAL INCLUSION

1/ Social Inclusion & Institutional context

In France, social inclusion issues (health and welfare: elderly people, the disabled and children, social services, social housing) are mainly competences shared between the national government and “départements”. Communes are also responsible for the delivery of social services. Regions have some specific competencies in Education and Training.

National State

The National State is responsible for Health, Education, Solidarity and Social protection. Specific administrations and compulsory insurance systems have been set up for decades at national level. The national government and Parliament develop policies related to: Health & Solidarity, Education, Employment, Housing, etc. (the delivery is insured either by national government officers, specific agencies and/or local authorities according to different laws and decrees).

Regions

Regions play a very limited role in social inclusion matters; their tasks in this field are mainly related to Education (lycées = higher secondary schools) and vocational training, and economic development (employment policies).

Departments

“Départements” play a major role in what concerns Social Inclusion; they are fully responsible for

- health and welfare: elderly people, the disabled and children,
- social and professional insertion for vulnerable people, including delivery of minimum income.

They are also in charge of services that have an indirect impact on social inclusion

- infrastructures and transportation: organising non-urban public transport, including school buses
- Education (“collèges” = lower secondary schools)

Communes

Communes deal mainly with Social services: managing primary schools, crèches, day-care centres, old-age homes, services to supplement the services provided by the Departments. Municipalities often gather with neighbouring municipalities in order to deliver social services through specific structures:

For examples:

- *the “SIVOM Alliance Nord Ouest” gathering 9 municipalities belonging to Lille Metropole Communauté Urbaine (Lambersart, Lompret, Marquette-lez-Lille, Pérenchies, Quesnoy-sur-Deûle, Saint-André, Verlinghem, Wambrechies and Deûlémont). A part of its missions is linked with senior people but also insertion / integration and employment.*
- *Municipalities of Roubaix, Wattrelos and Leers decided in 1997 to foster job development initiatives. The “MiE - maison de l’emploi” was thus created; that gathers in the same place different structures in charge of employment, education and training, business development in order to develop common and efficient services. The “MiE” is now one of the main components of the employment policy in Roubaix, Wattrelos and Leers.*

- *The objectives of the “Mission locale Métropole Est” are to help social and professional integration of job seekers and to fight against exclusion. The “Mission locale Métropole Est” acts in 11 municipalities (Anstaing, Baisieux, Bouvines, Chéreng, Gruson, Mons en Baroeul, Péronne en Mélançois, Sainghin en Mélançois, Tressin, Villeneuve d’Ascq and Willems) and is part of the national network of “Missions Locales”*

Associations & NGOs play also an important role in social inclusion through different formats and themes: sport, culture, help to elderly people, education, etc.

2/ Social Inclusion at the metropolitan level

So far, EPCIs (like communauté urbaine) have almost no direct competences with regards to Social inclusion. However they can play quite an important, even if indirect, role, through their competences in matters such as public transport, urban regeneration, and - in some cases - housing.

PARTICIPATION

1/ Participation & Institutional context

Most of French communes are quite small, and the local civic life is generally well developed in the country. In many – mainly but not exclusively rural - municipalities, local elections are not a matter of struggle between political parties. Even if local councillors are elected on municipality-wide lists, their relatively high number is making contacts between citizens and local councillors rather easy and frequent, except in the biggest municipalities. Participative democracy therefore started only quite recently to be considered as an important political issue in France.

Some structures facilitate citizens’ participation in the local context such as the “Conseils de quartier” at the neighbourhood scale. They have been made compulsory in municipalities with more than 80 000 inhabitants. But their creation is optional in towns with 20 000 to 80 000 inhabitants. « Conseils de quartier » have no power of decision but the Mayor and city administration have to consult them about projects concerning their neighbourhood. “Conseils de quartier” are places for discussion and reflections on the living environment, and planning in the city and neighbourhoods. Conseils de quartier’ chairpersons are elected by the City Council.

In 1999, the “Voinet” law allowed EPCIs (inter-communal bodies) to create the so called “Conseils de développement” in order to help and develop consultation and citizens participation at a wider than municipality scale. They have been made compulsory in EPCIs with more than 50 000 inhabitants.

The Conseils de développement act as advisory bodies for the EPCIs. Their tasks include providing opinions, proposals and advice on a number of subjects relating to economic, social and cultural development of the EPCIs.

The composition of the Council is relatively free. It is composed by local stakeholders in fields such as culture, economic development, non profit organisations...

The Conseils de développement must be consulted on the documents, plans and guidelines relating to EPCIs competences (planning, housing, public transport, attractiveness...).

The Conseils de développement also have the right to conduct research work and project relating to inter-communal issues at their own initiative.

2/ Citizens' participation in the Lille metropolitan area

At the metropolitan scale, some structures of empowerment have been implemented:

The Lille Métropole Conseil de développement

The Conseil de Développement was created in 2002. It is composed of 150 - not elected - representatives from the civil society (associations, trade unions, business etc) and "personalities" (academics and other experts, etc.). The Conseil de développement is providing advice and recommendations on issues that are being debated by the inter-municipal council.

It is also promoting specific development projects in such fields as culture, employment, housing market *etc.* For example, the Conseil de développement de Lille Métropole has initiated the « Forum de l'emploi » (Job Forum for the Eurometropole). The Forum aims at gathering on the same place during one day the main actors in the job market: businesses, job seekers, structures in charge of employment: Pole Emploi (France), FOREM (Wallonia – Belgium), UNIZO Zuidwest-Vlaanderen (Flanders – Belgium). The Forum which took place in Tournai in 2008 gathered 6 249 visitors, 123 companies and proposed 603 employments.

The "FORUM de l'Eurométropole Lille Kortrijk Tournai"

3 quite similar existing structures: "conseils de développement" of Lille Métropole, the one of Wallonie Picarde (Tournai) and Transforum (Kortrijk) have implemented a common structure which gathers some representatives of each conseil: the FORUM of the Eurométropole Lille Kortrijk Tournai.

The goal is to foster consultation and citizens' participation, discussion and meeting at the Eurometropole scale and with a specific cross border vision on themes such as employment, transport, culture, language, and attractiveness.

Participation processes at the Lille metropolitan area scale

In 2005, to support the memorandum of understanding of the Lille metropolitan area, 9 French Conseils de développement, have signed a charter of metropolitan cooperation to work together on specific themes. This coordination of the Conseils de développement represents the first step towards a process of citizens' participation at the Lille metropolitan area scale.

2 public events were organised in March 2006 and December 2007 to facilitate discussion between elected representatives of the Lille Metropolitan Area and representatives from the Conseils de développement.

Further to these public initiatives, there is an interesting, quite original initiative :

The Greater Lille Committee (Comité Grand Lille)

The "Comité Grand Lille" is an informal body created in 1993, which brings together some 700 business and industrial leaders, academics, artists, NGO representatives and politicians from the Lille Metropolitan area. The idea is to provide civic and business leaders with an opportunity to commonly develop strategic thinking about the future of the city region. Within the committee are discussed and promoted possible actions to improve the Greater Lille image and position as a major European centre – actions take place in such fields as culture, tourism, education entrepreneurship and international partnerships. One of the committee's first actions was to put forward the successful bid for Lille to be the official French candidate city for the 2004 Olympics.

3/ Specific initiatives: Participation & Building identity

Some specific initiatives have been implemented to foster citizens' participation in the development and transformation of the image of their region. Nord-Pas de Calais Region has a well known tradition of hospitality and citizen participation in major events that federate inhabitants. They are opportunities for citizens to take pride in showing how dynamic and innovative their territory is, offering opportunities for gracious living in which they are the main protagonists: hospitable, creative and enjoying a good time.

Two examples illustrate this dynamics:

La Route du Louvre

Lens, the biggest agglomeration of the coal mining area was chosen by the National government for the development of a new branch of the Louvre Museum. Currently under development, this major cultural facility is an outstanding opportunity for the regeneration and re-development of the coal mining area. It appears as a flagship project in the renewal of this territory. The citizen mobilisation was a decisive factor in the choice of Lens : a support group of inhabitants was created to foster the bid; 8 000 people have registered to support the project.

Once the decision taken to implement the Louvre in Lens, some local politicians, the Conseil de développement of Lens agglomeration, and NGOs decided to set up a popular event aiming at supporting the project development: "Route du Louvre", an international race (marathon) between Lille and Lens has thus been set up with support from Region Nord Pas de Calais and many local authorities (Lille Métropole, Communauté d'agglomération de Lens Liévin, Ville de Lens) but also from many local private companies.

With cooperation of these different partners, the concept of Route du Louvre (first of all a sport event) was turned into a major festive and family event. Today a lot of different hikes are proposed to reach the arrival site of the marathon. A number of cultural events (Brass bands, "Carnaval", traditional games) supported by communes, inhabitants and cultural NGO are developed around the event.

Last year, 13 000 persons participated in the event; 8 000 took part in the hikes (rides), 2 700 in the marathon and more than 2 000 in the 10 km running race.

The Route du Louvre symbolises above all the ambition of linking the two agglomerations of Lille and Lens, major components of the Lille metropolitan area. It brings together communes, inhabitants and NGOs of the region around the coming of the Louvre in Lens, and participates in the awareness of the Lille metropolitan area "reality".

Lille 2004, Lille 3000 and the « ambassadors »

Further to the success of Lille 2004, the city of Lille decided to secure the momentum that has been created by the organisation of a biannual event called Lille 3000.

Lille 2004 and now Lille 3000 require the direct participation of many inhabitants in cultural events but also in the dissemination of information in the local community and the organisation itself, to assure safety during "parades" for example. The concept of "ambassadors" was so implemented providing people with an opportunity to actively participate to the event.

In 2004, they were about 17 800 "ambassadors", for the greater part born and / or residents in the Nord Pas de Calais. They were students or employees, ready to bring their time to support the organisation.

Such a commitment quite unusual in the French context is clearly showing the availability from the local community for any effective participation process.

2.8. Seville

The context of policy-making in social issues in Seville and Spain reflects the traditional approach of this kind of issues, which are generally tackled at municipal or infra-municipal level. Basic services for the population are delivered at this scale, which also best fits for the development of public participation and social experimentations. Currently, the main social challenges which could relevantly be addressed at metropolitan level have more to do with mobility and housing.

In the meantime, at municipal level, there is a shared conscience that social exclusion situations are complex and require a comprehensive approach and, henceforth, news forms of public coordination and governance. The Action Plan for the Seville Southern District, an area which has been appointed as one of top priorities of the city's social policies, can be considered as a landmark in terms of method of public intervention.

Action Plan for the Southern District of Seville

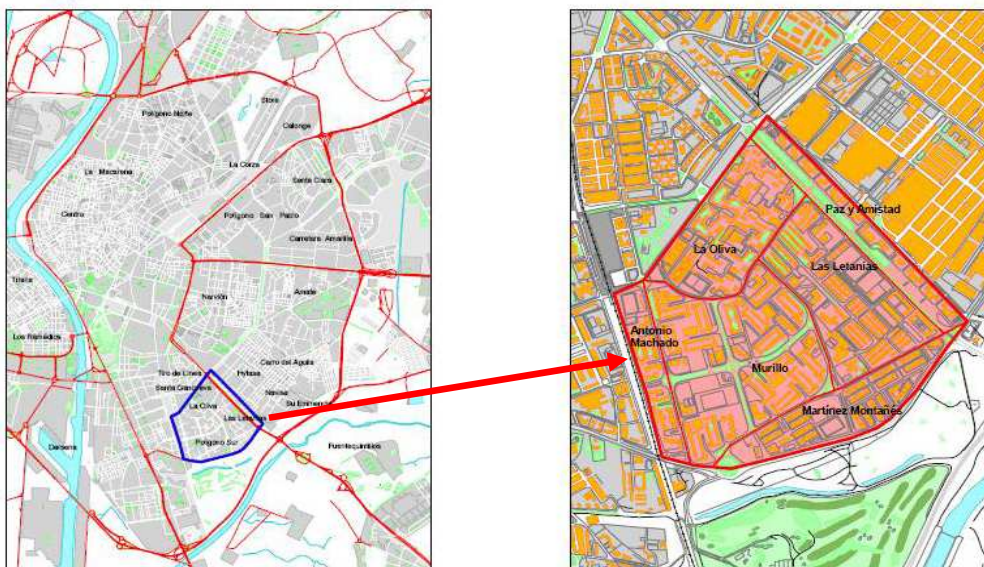
An area of social exclusion

With a population of approximately 50,000, the Southern District of Seville, developed during the 1970s and made up of 6 neighbourhoods (see map), displays long-standing characteristics of vulnerability and social exclusion:

- Urban physical features: high level of deterioration of housing, unfunctional and poor-quality open spaces, physical barriers which isolate the district from the rest of the city;
- Concentration of disadvantaged population groups (low-income working families, families from gipsy settlements) and reproduction of vulnerability factors;
- High unemployment rates and professional uncertainty (workers without contract, temporary employment);
- High school absenteeism rates, which according to the area fluctuate between 40 and 60% of enrolled pupils;
- Poor health indicators: mortality, drug dependency, AIDS infection and other infectious diseases, etc.

The Seville Southern District

Source: Plan Integral del Polígono Sur de Sevilla



The need for a new model of intervention

These socioeconomic characteristics and their persistence in spite of special initiatives carried out from the end of the 1980s made necessary innovation in terms of methods of public intervention.

The general ambition is the very transformation of the area in a large number of fields: local economic development and employment, network of social stakeholders, health, education, spatial and physical features, and cultural development. A shift was also expected at the administrative level, towards a management model of the area that should be less bureaucratic, and on the contrary more strategic, comprehensive, participatory and sustainable.

Basically, the new system should allow combining political decisions to be made at the different levels of government with the consequent plans, programs and actions, which are to be built on a proper analysis of the area's specific issues.

The Commissioner for the Southern District and the participatory system

The impulse for this "new deal" was given in October 2003 by the Regional Government with the creation of the **Commissioner for the Southern District**. The Commissioner is an organ designed to make the dialogue and coordination between the different levels of public administration more efficient. The aim is to concentrate into a unique authority the different competencies in terms of security, employment and social issues, housing, health and education in order to articulate solutions at the height of the stakes in the marginalized area. This new model of public intervention was made possible by a strong political commitment of local, regional and national public authorities.

From this point, an exercise of **participatory diagnosis and plan elaboration** was carried out:

- In addition to the recollection of socioeconomic data, a specific technical team was formed to "collect" knowledge about the district, its people, history, issues and claims, principally through interviews with neighbourhood associations;
- The elaboration of the comprehensive plan was based on collective work sessions with institutional representatives, practitioners, associations and social entities, and the very population of the district:
 - A 1,000 people participated in three technical days on the current social, economic, cultural and environmental situation of the district;
 - Other 2,000 attended thematic forums which objective was to discuss the strategic goals of the plan, the lines of action and programmes and the evaluation procedures;
 - Technical workshops focused on new forms of coordination and integration of public interventions;
 - Other meetings at political level completed the previous discussions on public-policy making.

A comprehensive plan and a participatory governance structure

The Comprehensive Action Plan for the Southern District of Seville, which was approved in December 2005, is based on 4 lines of action:

- Urban planning and community life

- Social and professional inclusion and promotion of economic initiatives;
- Community health
- Socio-educational and family intervention

On the executive level, the programming of the plan is based on the coordination of existing public resources such as:

- The local Centre for Orientation y Employment;
- Office of the Andalusian Public Land Company for the Southern District;
- Seville's municipal Delegation for Urban Planning – Southern District;
- The network of local Health Centres;
- Centres of secondary education;
- Community social services;
- Police of proximity.

However, the Action Plan has also led to the creation of *ad hoc* specific participatory and decision-making bodies:

- Thematic structures:
 - Commission for Employment and Development;
 - Commission for Community Health;
 - Commission for Socio-educational and family intervention
- Territorial structures, designed in a bottom-up approach:
 - Neighbourhood assemblies and commissions
 - A territorial commission
- On top of these two systems, a General Commission has been set up to deal with mechanisms of planning, coordination, programming, information and evaluation of the plan. It consists of technical representatives from the local, regional and national administrations, members of social and non-profit organizations and of neighbour associations.
- An inter-administration steering committee at political level (Central government, Junta de Andalucía, Municipality of Seville).

3. SYNTHESIS TO THE THEME

“SOCIAL INCLUSION, PARTICIPATION, EMPOWERMENT AT CITY REGION LEVEL”

Metropolitan developments can be characterized by issues that arise between different urban poles and inside urban areas. Inter-urban concerns are mainly linked with competition between cities and city-regional development in a spatial sense. On the other hand, intra-urban issues primarily concern the quality of life, such as security and access to basic services. Social inclusion or cohesion versus social exclusion referred very much to the latter context. However, this does not mean that social inclusion and social cohesion are not to be regarded as key issues in policies aiming at strong city-regions.

While inter-urban issues are related to spatial conflicts, influenced at least partly by national government decisions, intra-urban challenges refer to social aspects arising mainly in a bottom-up way. Nevertheless, the requirements of competitiveness between cities and social cohesion should be combined. For this purpose, different economic and social actors have to cooperate with governing actors at any levels in different flexible formats.

However, social exclusion tends to acquire a spatial dimension as market pressure leads to the concentration of the more vulnerable people in some neighbourhoods, obviously the less attractive ones. This can be an internal issue for municipalities. However, this is becoming more and more often a metropolitan issue as it is no longer between neighbourhoods in the same municipalities that this unbalanced development can be observed but between different municipalities in the same metropolitan area.

Participation in such network-like cooperation is usually based on mutual interests, exchange of resources and commitment. Different kinds of collaboration can be distinguished. The move to increase the involvement of the private sector is clear. The private sector has resources that could be used for projects. Private companies usually profit from their investments in financial terms, but sometimes only in terms of public relations. It means a willingness to invest might be looked on as a social commitment. For instance, one of the most important private partners is usually the housing association, but also private companies may be involved. Finally, voluntary and community sectors (neighbourhood organisations, trade unions, religious or non-religious social care organisations) have become involved in the governance of urban social inclusion.

Local communities have themselves sought a greater say in decision-making. At the same time, local and national governments have looked for opportunities to increase the participation of inhabitants. This attitude plays a significant part in much of the recent literature on neighbourhood restructuring. The idea is that the residents of a particular locality should transform themselves from passive to active participants; citizens are to be seen as actors, not objects. Government must not only listen to the people, but also involve them actively in all the stages of policy process. The philosophy is that, by providing such competence, the residents are supposed to be capable of managing their own lives and undertake the necessary actions for improvement. This is empowerment, which has relevance to more or less still informal city-regions.

As far as social inclusion and empowerment are concerned, some fallacies arise. Diverse participants in networks or partnerships are not democratically elected. Therefore the first problem is the lack of legitimacy, which is important from the point of view of necessary functional urban flexibility. A complex urban environment requires substantial governing

capacity; urban governance seems capable of providing it. Collaboration between various stakeholders with numerous partners in the governance process engenders knowledge. Secondly, governance structures may also generate tensions and conflicts with respect to accountability, especially in situations where there is devolution of responsibility without proper devolution of decision-making authority, competence, or budgetary power. The third problem is the less and less clear definition of what are the public functions. It is a key problem with respect to urban governance, that the borders between public and private concerns are unclear, hence a big risk of confusion about responsibilities. The same applies to different levels of government, where the further unclear demarcation may also cause problems with respect to who is to take responsibilities for what.

With respect to these complex problems, investigation of the working group focused more on the narrower meaning of social affairs, that is social care at city-regional level. However, flexible forms and instruments of governance at this level remained the centre of our interest in this way also.

1/ Lessons learned from the case of Burgas

A main lesson learned is that although responsibility for social inclusion lies mainly with cities, this problem is more than the simple provision of services at city and city-regional level. Special public institutions are working for different target groups, while at the same time the involvement of non-public sector actors is also crucial.

1.1. Institutions involved

Social community-based services are working for different target groups in Burgas, such as the younger generation, elderly people and people at risk. Some of the non-traditional institutions were presented to the working group. An ombudsman has been working for 3 years in order to guarantee equal opportunities for people in need or suffering disadvantages because of their ethnic involvement, handicapped situation, etc.

Interactive training of the Youth Parliament is delivered for the younger generation, such as the youth Forum 'My rights as a European citizen' to gain acknowledgement of the practical meaning of equal opportunities at the European level for all member states.

All the other organisational forms with consultative and operational functions at the municipal level work for provision of social services of the best quality. These structures are part of the social inclusion policy at municipal level.

Consultative fora are as follows:

- Public council for social support – mainly consultative functions in strategic planning, planning and management of social services; it controls the quality of services provided, investigates and gives opinions on cases of violations of social rights. Members of the Council are representatives of institutions and key organisations active in the field of social care;
- Permanent Commission for Social Activities to the Municipal Council of Burgas;

Operational organisations are especially:

- the Ombudsman appointed by the municipality;

- “Social Activities and Employment” Department within the municipal administration, managing initiatives for the involvement of active social groups in social cohesion activities.

1.2. Civil and private initiatives for social inclusion

There are quite a few civil and non-institutional forms of work for social inclusion in Burgas. There are especially the following:

- small business initiatives for vulnerable groups
- PPP for implementation of small-scale infrastructural projects to enhance the quality of life in neighbourhoods.
- NGOs to develop capabilities for community trust-building and the ability to participate in an active way in the solution of social problems.

An example of the latter is the National Centre of Social Rehabilitation for physically disadvantaged people. It is a national network and an important centre is working in ‘Pomorie’ for young people.

There is a 2007–2013 municipal development plan for social sector policy. The essence of it is a shift from the passive support of vulnerable groups, such as elderly, young people and those who are living in poverty, to active participation of interested groups in the provision of social care and social public services. Municipal policy is also dealing with minority problems in a relatively creative way. These issues are dealt with in many forms. Apart from the municipal strategic plan for long-term development the following relate to social inclusion and empowerment:

- the municipal programme for child protection;
- the municipal programme for educational integration of children and schoolchildren from ethnic minorities.

These documents show the efforts made to create a multi-sectoral approach to the issue, while still focusing primarily on certain vulnerable groups such as children and young people, for example.

2/ Groups of measures taken by partners

There are different forms of governance in the management of social inclusion in partner cities. Concerning instruments used, most characteristic forms seem to be as follows at city-regional level:

- making sectoral strategic planning to enhance public, private and non-governmental efforts;
- in order to implement strategic goals into this field, formal agreements are made among spatially interested public actors for solving common problems.

2.1. Sectoral strategic planning

Social inclusion is an essential part of the strategic plans cities and regions develop in order to achieve the concentration of resources and required cooperation of the different public sector actors involved. Two very interesting examples were presented by partner cities.

In Brno the complex policy of the city focuses on Community Planning of Social Services, which directly fulfils all the three national priority targets: it promotes the integration of disadvantaged and handicapped people; supports families, especially families with specific

needs, in order to prevent family members from social exclusion; strengthens efficiency of decision-making processes in issues of social inclusion.

In Florence either regional or local level welfare planning is an instrument to renew harmonisation of public competences in health and social care services, because the basic responsibility was passed to the National Health Service (NHS) in 1978. Municipalities have kept their competences only in the social sphere since then.

2.2. Formal agreements between public clients

Formal agreements

- are based on coordination of public or public and private efforts. On the other hand, the agreement is supplemented with organisational background;
- working for the same purpose: a relatively strong view of project orientation;
- which characterises both of these formats.

a) Eindhoven and surrounding municipalities made an agreement in 2004 to promote social housing with instruments of coordinated land-use planning. The surrounding villages are now making land-use plans in which there is more space for social housing, while Eindhoven gives space for private homes in higher price ranges. Importantly, social housing can also mean cheap property to buy. The agreement is not really optional. If a municipality builds fewer houses than agreed upon with the city of Eindhoven, the municipality gets a fine for every social house that is not built. The money goes to a regional development fund.

Although in Belgium social inclusion is not a regional task, but that of the (Dutch, French and German) communities, the three Regions (the Brussels-Capital Region, the Flemish Region and the Walloon Region) signed a cooperation agreement in 2005 to promote the learning of the other official language of the country by unemployed people to encourage them to work in another region in order to foster the interregional mobility of workers.

Following this cooperation agreement, an action plan was signed in 2007 between the Flemish and Brussels Public Unemployment Offices to deal specifically with Brussels and its metropolitan area.

b) The Florence metropolitan area is divided into three distinct Health Societies. The Health societies (HS) are institutions of governance initially tested in the Florentine area and subsequently extended to all the Tuscany Region. These are public consortiums of municipalities and local health authorities for the full integration of health activities with social-welfare activities, the governance of territorial services and, lastly, the continuity of the trail from diagnostic to therapeutic care. The message with HS is that social health is more complex than recovery from physical disease, but the health of citizens is increasingly understood as physical, mental as well as social wellness.

Two specific bodies of the consortium ensure the achievement of these objectives: first, the Committee of Participation, which brings together representatives of users and territorial units; second, the Committee for Non-Profit Organisations, where NGOs and other stakeholders can have a voice in drawing up the Integrated Health Plan. One of the main activities of the Health Societies is to diagnose the health status of the territory by drafting annual reports in order to promote intervention to equalize most unbalanced target groups in its territory.

c) Project orientation is a typical instrument linked to the public efforts against social exclusion in city-region matters. Some of the selected examples are the following practices of partners in the working group.

- “UVM - PUA” (Florence) that is the “Multi-dimensional assessing Unit (Unità di Valutazione Multidimensionale) – “Single point Access” (Punto Unico di Accesso): the core focus is to give a “personalised programme of assistance” to disabled or non self-sufficient people. The project aims to bring together the health and social care services through the combined participation of doctors, social workers, civil servants in assessing citizens’ needs. Thanks to this personalised programme of assistance, the disabled or non self-sufficient people go to a Single Point Access where they can get all the information and indications they need in order to receive the services they require.
- “Do not bottle” A survey held in 2005 showed that in the region of Southeast Brabant drinking by young people had grown substantially in recent years. The region scored higher than average in the Netherlands. Alcohol at a young age affects the development of the brain and is harmful to other parts of the body, provides an extra high risk of acute alcohol poisoning and increases the risk of addiction later in life with all the social consequences. On the basis of this initiative Eindhoven City-Region put the prevention policy on its policy agenda.
- “Family Points” in the city of Brno. The central Family Point was opened in May, 2009. It is funded by the city of Brno and has its seat in the Family and Social Care Centre located in the city centre. It provides general counselling – including in the area of equal opportunities, balance between family life and career and help for elderly people and their engagement.
- In the Brussels-Capital Region, it is planned to launch a collective taxi system to allow workers who travel apart from peak hours to have an alternative public transport to go to the industrial zones located in the suburbs of Brussels.



**“Governance – Social Inclusion, participation,
empowerment at city region scale”
BURGAS – seminar Working Document
18, 19 & 20 January 2010**

PART 2

1. PROGRAMME

Sunday, January 17th 2010

- 16.30** **Arrival at Varna Airport**
Common transportation to Burgas
Arrival at the hotel & registration
- 20.00** **Official dinner**

Monday, January 18th 2010

- 8.30** Meeting point: Conference Hall in Burgas Hotel
Registration at the Conference Hall in Burgas Hotel
- 9.00 – 13.00** **Working session**
9.00 – 10.30
- Introduction & presentation of the programme (Lead Partner + Lead Expert) (15 min)
 - Management of working group (Lead Partner) (15 min)
 - CityLab – 12 February 2010 (information, presentation, organisation) (30 min)
 - Work session dedicated to conclusions of the Krakow seminar (Krakow synthesis) (Lead Expert) (30 min)
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee Break
- 11.00 – 12.00
- Working session on Local Action Plan / Local Support Group: progress, etc.
- 12.00 – 13.00
- Introduction of the theme of Burgas seminar (Lead Expert) (15 min)
 - Presentation on the theme by Burgas Municipality (45 min)
- 13.00 – 14.00** **Lunch**
- 14.30** Meeting at the Conference Hall of Burgas Municipality building
- 14.30 – 17.00** **Working session - Meeting with the Local Support Group**
14.30 – 15.30 Opening by the Mayor of Burgas
- Presentations & discussion:
- Mr Tanyo Atanasov – Ombudsman, Burgas Municipality – theme of presentation to be confirmed
 - “Social institutions and community based social services on the territory of Burgas Municipality” - Mrs Maya Kazandjieva – Head of “Social Activities” Department, Burgas Municipality;
 - “Social inclusion and education – innovative solutions at local level” – “Education and Demographic issues” Directorate, Burgas Municipality.
- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break
- 16.00 – 17.30 Presentations & discussion:
- “Preventive work with children and young people with deviant and delinquent behaviour” – Mrs Desislava Vassileva – Secretary of the Local Commission on Anti Social behaviour of juvenile delinquents, Burgas Municipality;
 - “Employment and support for small business initiatives for vulnerable communities” - Mr Pavel Todorov – Business Centre of Burgas;
 - “Equal access to transport services and mobility for vulnerable people in Burgas” – Burgasbus Municipal Company.
- 20.00** **Dinner**

Tuesday, January 19th 2010

- 8.30 Meeting point: Conference Hall in Burgas Hotel
- 9.00 – 12.00 **Site visits**
- 9.00 – 10.30 Social institution for elderly people – Burgas Municipality;
 - 10.30 – 11.30 Daily Centre for rehabilitation and integration of people with visual disabilities – Burgas Municipality
 - 11.30 – 12.30 Travel to the town of Pomorie
 - 12.30 – 13.00 "St George" National Centre for social rehabilitation in Pomorie
- 12.30 – 15.00 **Lunch and site visit - the old town of Nessebar**
- 15.30 – 16.00 **Coffee break**
- 16.00 – 18.00 **Working session**
- Presentation by Joining Forces Partner 1 (15 min + questions)
 - Presentation by Joining Forces Partner 2 (15 min + questions)
 - Discussion regarding presentations from Burgas, Joining Forces partners and visits + work on conclusions
- 20.00 **Dinner**

Wednesday, January 20th 2010

- 8.30 Meeting point: Conference Hall in Burgas Hotel
- 9.00 – 12.00 **Working session**
- Conclusion and evaluation of the Burgas seminar (45min)
 - General conclusions & CityLab (1h30)
 - Preparation of the next Seminar in Brussels (45 min)
- + Coffee break
- 12.00 – 13.00 **Lunch**
- 14.00 **End of the seminar - Departure to Varna Airport**
- 17.25 **Flight to Vienna**



2. VISITS

Social institution - “Cveta and Anka Varbanovi” Home for elderly people – Burgas Municipality



The home for elderly people was established in 1999 thanks to the generous donation of the sisters Cveta and Anka Varbanovi, daughters of the famous composer and founder of the first Musical School in Burgas Varban Varbanov. It is a 32 bedded home with en-suite facilities throughout. An experienced and trained staff provides permanent residential care for physically and mentally healthy elderly people. There is a daily activities programme for physical and mental stimulation. They regularly take part in an occupational and art therapy and also participate in events provided in the home's cultural calendar.

Daily Centre for rehabilitation and integration of people with visual disabilities – Burgas Municipality



The Centre for social rehabilitation and integration provides a number of social services by professionals, working out private programs for social inclusion, education, and rehabilitation in order people with visual impairments on the territory of the municipality to live fulfilled and independent life. Some of the provided services are mobility and orientation, psychotherapy, computer literacy through audio reproducing programs, group study, cookery courses, knitting courses, work with the family, organizing of excursions, seminars, entertainment.

“St George” National Centre for social rehabilitation and education of handicapped adolescents in Pomorie

The town of Pomorie is located on a narrow cliff peninsula to the north end of Burgas gulf, near a salty lake considered by the ancient Thracians as holy because of its healing properties. Pomorie Lake is a naturally formed lagoon situated immediately to the town of Pomorie. It has a 70% salt content, four times that of sea water. It is separated from the Black Sea by a manmade dike and a sand bar. The Pomorie Lake is used for the production of salt and medical mud. It yields ooze containing curative salts and hydrogen sulfide useful in treating arthritis, radiculities, rheumatism, discal hernia, lumbago and sciatica. That is why and because of its geographical location the city of Pomorie became a famous talasso-, pelo- and climate-therapy resort.

The unique combination of a favorable sea climate with natural curative factors such as mud, lye and sea water create excellent conditions for healing, rehabilitation and prophylaxis.



The St. George Centre Project is the biggest social investment of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria in the 1999-2001 period, and it is supported by the European Union and Belgian donors. All norms and regulations for free movement of disabled people were taken into account by working out the architectural design of the Centre.

A part of the finances for the architectural design were raised at a charity concert in the UNESCO Hall in Paris. The Centre is a place for vocational training (computers, foreign languages) and rehabilitation by various specialists by means of modern equipment. In Pomorie, young people with disabilities are given the opportunity, in addition to the training and rehabilitation, to communicate, to share experience and ideas, and to spend wonderful moments during all seasons of the year.



3. MEETING WITH LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP

Summary of the presentations

Mr Tanyo Atanasov – Ombudsman, Burgas Municipality

The work of the Ombudsman institution in the area of encouragement civil participation in decision making process at city-region level was presented as well as the results of the Ombudsman administration activities. In the application of the principles of good governance can be seen the real opportunity for socializing governance, for increasing the level of participation of everyone and thus transferring power, rights and responsibilities to every member of the community. Clients Chart and standards for administrative services as well as Codes of Ethics for the civil servants were elaborated and two significant projects for promotion of citizens initiatives implemented: “My Rights as an European citizen” Project implemented by the “Children and Youth Parliament” Association and a Project for monitoring the local authorities. As a result, the citizens have an easier access to all servants in the municipal administration and it works in the conditions of a daily civil control. Problems such as Public distrust, which requires systematic efforts on the side of both administration and citizens and the necessity for improving the effectiveness of the process of management of public resources, were also identified.

“Social institutions and community based social services on the territory of Burgas Municipality” - Mrs Maya Kazandjieva – Head of “Social Activities” Department, Burgas Municipality

Presentation on the activities of the municipal Department “Social activities” was done. The department provides social services for all categories citizens on the territory of Burgas municipality. The main vision of the department is to provide qualitative and effective social services which meet the beneficiaries’ needs as well as to involve all stakeholders in the process of social inclusion and successful realization. Social and administrative activities directed to children and elderly people in risk, disabled people, people affected by violence and people with mental retardation in specialized institutions in the community are provided.

Policies and strategies for educational integration of children from ethnic minorities in Burgas Municipality, Directorate, Burgas Municipality

The presentation focused on the practices for successful educational integration of children from ethnic minorities. Projects implemented by the Municipality in this area were presented. The efforts of the municipal administration are directed to: improvement of conditions for adaptation to educational process; decrease number of drop outs; find out effective approaches for working in multi ethnic environment; provide successful professional start for young people; to promote cultural, historical and folklore traditions. One of the social services provided in the community was also presented. This was namely the “Protected house for people with mental retardation”. The beneficiaries live independently with the help of professionals. They are people who have mild mental retardation and have spent most of their lives in specialized institutions, but still have chances for social integration and resocialization. The activities undertaken in the protected house are geared to the needs of the beneficiaries, and their residence duration depends on the individual skills and abilities. The protected house is based on the model of “Small group life” and aims at building of social environment close to that in family in which the beneficiaries live as part of the society.

“Preventive work with children and young people with deviant and delinquent behaviour” – Mrs Desislava Vassileva – Secretary of the Local Committee for Combating Nuisance Committed by Minors and Under aged Offenders, Burgas Municipality

The structure and main activities of the **Local committee for Combating Nuisance Committed**

by Minors and under aged Offenders were presented. The committee is composed of pedagogues, lawyers, psychologists and relevant institutions and implements three major functions: educational, preventive and consultative. The Committee aims at including maximum number children with behaviour *problems*, bringing criminal activity of the minors under control; coping with problems of social pathologies and rendering children in risk and parents qualified assistance.

“Employment and support for small business initiatives for vulnerable communities” - Mr Pavel Todorov – Business Centre of Burgas

The main activities and objectives of Bourgas Business Centre were presented. Bourgas Business Center is a non-governmental organization committed to encouraging the development of minority communities in Bourgas Municipality by providing employment and income-generation opportunities and by fostering the development of small and medium-sized businesses. The main line of activity is focused on employment generation in economically underdeveloped areas. The Main objectives are 1. to facilitate and encourage the development of minority communities and entrepreneurship in Bourgas Municipality; 2. to assist towards providing better economic conditions to ethnic minority producers; 3. to work towards the development of the local social welfare potential for the unemployed by providing specialized professional support and facilitating the access to funds for starting and operating small and medium-sized businesses; 4. to provide producers, entrepreneurs and those willing to start their own businesses with professional business consultations and advice in the areas of production, marketing, finance, business planning, taxation, legislation, as well as the incorporation and management of a company, human resource selection and management, etc.; 5. to organize professional qualification and vocational training courses with a view to achieving a higher degree of adequacy of the workforce to the local labor market requirements;

“Equal access to transport services and mobility for vulnerable people in Burgas” – Burgasbus Municipal Company

Burgasbus is the main public transport provider in Burgas with 91.4% of all passengers transported by bus or trolleybus using Burgasbus services. Burgasbus operates a number of transport services including Urban, sub-urban, inter urban, regional, intercity and tourist services. In order the social services quality to be improved, the company politics are directed toward 1. Replacement of existing bus stock with vehicles adapted to meet the needs of elderly people and people with disabilities. 2. According to a Decision of the Municipal council, particular individual groups are allowed to buy season-tickets at reduced prices. 3. The municipal budget covers the need of the children and youngsters who visit specialized children institutions in the city 4. Service “door to door” is available. Disabled people are transported from one place to another with specialized buses, equipped with hydraulic platforms on the price of one ticket 5. Close cooperation with organizations of people with disabilities. 6. Cooperation with regional authorities of other cities and partners.





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NOS DO
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