



Building Healthy Communities

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Project partners:

Torino (Italy), Amaroussion (Greece), Bacău (Romania), Baia Mare (Romania), Barnsley (United Kingdom), Belfast (United Kingdom), Lecce (Italy), Lidingö, (Sweden), Łódź (Poland), Madrid, (Spain) and respective Managing Authorities



Healthy Sustainable Lifestyles

Second thematic workshop, Torino 3rd to 5th of March 2010

by Marco Santangelo, Lead Expert, Building Healthy Communities network

The Building Healthy Communities (BHC) second thematic workshop “Healthy Sustainable Lifestyles” will be held in Torino (Italy) from 3-5 March 2010 and will focus on the Local Action Plans that each of the ten partner cities have developed.

Each city will outline its Local Action Plan activities and outputs, highlighting specific actions in the field of health and quality of life and taking into account the diversity of approaches, needs and challenges that partner cities are witnessing. In some cases cities will be focusing on improving health services provision, whereas others are more interested in designing a comprehensive health strategy for a regeneration area or in developing actions to facilitate healthier lifestyles.

During the second workshop two elements will play an important role. First, following the debate and results of the previous workshop held in Lodz (PL) in June 2009 and of the Belfast Exchange held in September 2009 (UK), a major role will be given to the capacity to evaluate actions and projects according to the indicators and criteria jointly selected and discussed. The “Indicators and Criteria for a Healthy Sustainable Urban Development Toolkit”, the main output of the Lodz Workshop, is still – as planned – in its draft form but will be thoroughly tested and improved during the Torino Workshop.

A second important element will be represented by the active participation in the workshop of representatives of three other URBACT II networks: “Active Age”, “SUITE” and the working group “HOPUS”. The themes of the three guest networks relate closely to the ones developed by BHC and it has been con-

sidered fundamental to exchange ideas and practices that others are experiencing during this transnational networking event. These exchanges will include issues concerning the ageing European society, housing policies and other experiences from a total of 25 actors, both cities and universities.

The participation of partners from other networks is also important in order to overcome the idea of health and quality of life as something only related to disease, illness or hospitalisation. It is more and more evident, instead, that life conditions, equity and long-term perspectives need to be considered when thinking of a decent urban development.

The Torino Workshop is expected to boost the network activities and, most importantly, to strengthen the Local Action Plans in order to prepare the third phase of Building Healthy Communities, in which local plans will be tested as regards their capacity to raise funds (Structural Funds or similar European or national funding possibilities) and develop health gains.

For more information and updates on the outcomes of the workshop, please refer to the project webpage in www.urbact.eu

Good Housing – an essential contribution to a higher quality of life in cities?

The URBACT II SUITE housing project and its connections to BHC

by Heidrun Feigelfeld, Lead Expert SUITE

With or without global crisis – having a stable, good and affordable place to live is a key factor in attaining a higher quality of life. There is a strong interaction with a stable employment situation, since job loss can easily result in loss of housing, which in turn complicates the way back into employment.

Especially the public authorities carry a big responsibility and it is their duty to deal with the often expensive consequences of misguided policies. For nine European cities this was an incentive to start an information exchange in order to learn from other cities, regions and countries how integrative housing policies might be worked out.

The goal of the URBACT II Network SUITE (The Housing Project – Social and Urban Inclusion through Housing) is highly ambitious – housing programmes and measure should not only be socially sustainable, but also sustainably affordable and eco-friendly on a long-term basis. The standard follows these three corners of a sustainability triangle; each idea, however, should also be analysed with respect to the question whether it can reach the peak of a sustainability pyramid in synergy with the other qualities. In light of the basic requirement of affordability the project centres on the housing sector, which is usually termed “social housing”. We are aware that this can mean very different things in different European countries.

How is this connected to the goals of a network like Building Healthy Communities?

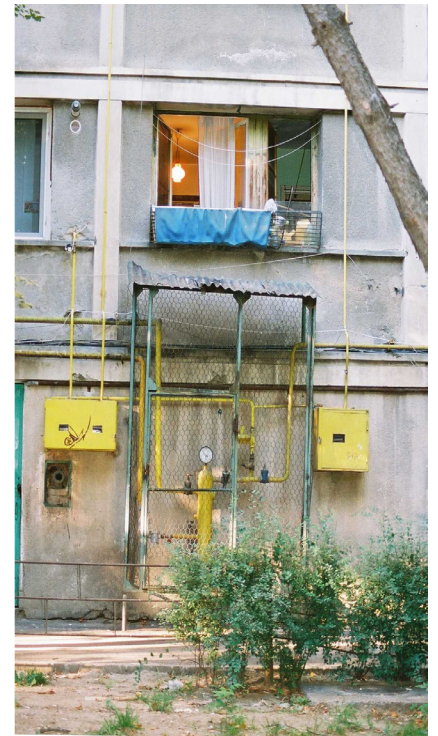
It is evident that housing can never be regarded as something reduced to just the flat or residential building. Neighbourhoods, areas and the city as a whole are just as important for the general

housing situation, which makes a holistic approach absolutely necessary. The high-quality flat as “island” in a deficient environment is of only dubious value.

This already became apparent in the discussion of the first focal point during the SUITE Project – social sustainability, where the question of social mix, its meaning, background, effectiveness and handling of such a tool stood in the center.

Furthermore, the discussion of the second focal point – economic sustainability – brought to light that the level of rent alone is not crucial, while a healthy, comfortable design of the flats at reasonable cost, as well as an affordable infrastructure of building and quarter have also to be taken into account.

The current preparations for the third focal workshop (Hamburg, 20-21 April) on environmental sustainability also show clearly that this criterion cannot be exhaustively dealt with through technical or construction measures on buildings. It is especially here that the broad spectrum of which quality of life and a healthy urban environment are composed of must come into play.



Because it is of fundamental importance to develop all this with the participation of residents/citizens, we try to strengthen their inclusion into the ULSG (URBACT Local Support Groups, which cooperate in the Local Action Plans).

All this demonstrates the evident cross linking and interferences with BHC's concepts. Our network is extremely interested in answering questions such as: Can this be measured? How can it be measured, evaluated, and which criteria can be feasible?

The two networks' convergence already dates from early projects: The first mutual interest and insight became manifest in December 2008, during the URBACT Annual Conference in Montpellier, where the two lead experts presented the projects together and discussed them with the audience.

This led both projects to be associated with the same "Thematic Pole" on URBACT's programme level - Cities and Integrated Sustainable Development - and subsequently to the development of a joint "Thematic Cloud" ("Quality Sustainable Living"). This "cloud" also includes the URBACT II Working Group HO-PUS (Housing Praxis for Urban Sustainability), which deals with the concept of "design coding" in housing, led by Sapienza University in Rome. Almost instantly, ideas for collaborative designs of products were developed.



The URBACT Annual Conference expanded the circle by joining SUITE and BHC with CONET - a network aimed at "Exploring current approaches to strengthen social cohesion in neighbourhoods" into a workshop. The lively discussion between the numerous participants clearly showed the cross linking of the different subjects and the broad acceptance for the goal of "quality sustainable living".

As you can see, there is great motivation to utilise the synergies resulting from the cross-links of these projects to better inform and inspire the respective partner cities, but also the wider URBACT community and other interested European cities. This is why it is a special pleasure for me, SUITE's Lead Expert Heidrun Feigelfeld, who has been working on evaluations and exchange about quality of life in cities for many years, to be invited to participate in the upcoming thematic workshop of BHC on "Healthy sustainable lifestyle" in Torino, Italy.

You can find more information about SUITE on the network's mini-website

<http://urbact.eu/en/projects/quality-sustainable-living/suite/homepage/> (Soon to be updated!).

Focus on Madrid Local Support Group

Interview with Ana López Valero

Ana Isabel López Valero is the coordinator of the Local Support Group for Madrid. She works for the Centre Office responsible for Urbanism and Housing at the Madrid City Council.

What are the objectives of your Local Support Group?

The local action and objectives that we want to carry out within the framework of the Building Healthy Communities network can be divided into three phases:

First of all, we would like to develop a methodology on how to better involve and engage various city departments and other stakeholders in dealing with a particular problem in a specific area of our city. The aim here is to create a tool that will allow any service to design an integrated action plan for a particular area. The methodology will include both quantitative as well as qualitative indicators.

Secondly, we want to apply this methodology in a pilot project area and see if the theoretical approach can be applied in a practical way on the ground. For this phase we have selected the Embajadores district of Madrid as a pilot area. The Embajadores district is situated in the city center and faces many difficulties such as an intense concentration of immigrants as well as a low income native population. Housing conditions in the district are sub-standard and many households are overcrowded. There is a lack of green spaces and an “unhealthy” occupation of public spaces. Furthermore residents feel insecure and face risk of social isolation. Over the past several years, the City of Madrid has undertaken different actions aimed at rehabilitation in the area and our Local Support Group will engage in this process.

Finally, in the third phase of our local action plan we want to develop a pilot action to be applied in the Embajadores Dis-

trict. We will need to secure funding for such a pilot action and we have already started looking into possible funding (either through EU funds or national funds).

So far we have completed the first phase of our local action and are entering into the second phase.

How has your Local Support Group been set up?

When we set up our Local Support Group we really wanted to create a group that represented a wide range of stakeholders that would be working closely together in finding solutions in an integrated way. Our group includes over ten different city council departments such as the department I am working for which is the Centre Office for Urbanism and Housing as well as the Department for Health, the Department for Security and Mobility, the Department for Economy and Employment, the Department for the Environment etc. In addition to the various city council departments our Local Support Group also includes the National Residents Federation, Trade Unions, the University Complutense of Madrid, and of course several local associations and two individual residents of the Embajadores district.

What challenges does your Local Support Group face?

The main problem for members of our Local Support Group is that they are overworked and occasionally find it difficult to join our meetings on a regular basis. (We try to meet at least once a month in addition to email exchanges and telephone calls). Participation in the Local Support Group is not part of our members' workload and they have to find ways of combining it with their usual work. Having said that, all members have realised the importance of these meetings and they can see the benefits that working in such a cooperative way can bring them in the long term for their own work.

At first we also had difficulties in finding a common language amongst each other. Our group consists of people from a wide range of different backgrounds such as doctors, lawyers, policemen, residents etc and it took some time for members to understand each others needs and concerns.

How does your Local Support Group gets involved in the transnational aspect of the BHC network?

So far three members of our Local Support Group have participated in the transnational workshop on indicators that took place in Lodz, Poland, last year. The subject has been extremely useful for our work: as I mentioned before our methodology which we prepared during the first phase of our project included the use of indicators and following the workshop in Poland we managed to come back with some good new ideas.

Once we got back from Poland we arranged a follow up meeting with our Local Support Group in order to discuss the workshop and disseminate all the materials that was presented. Before going to the transnational workshop we also sent to our Local Support Group members all the material that we were going to present in order for them to include any possible contributions.

For more information please contact Ana López Valero at: lopezvai@munimadrid.es

Open days event in Lidingö

The city of Lidingö organised an “open days” event for residents of its Gångsätra district. The event took place in the Högsätra school building on 26 January 2010 and inhabitants were invited to voice their opinions on a wide range of health issues such as the outdoor environment, healthy ageing and other activities in their neighbourhood.

This activity forms part of Lidingö’s wider work within the framework of the Building Healthy Communities network and the district of Gångsätra will serve as a pilot project in implementing the city’s health policy. The main focus of this policy is: improving the outdoor environment, healthy ageing and increasing physical activity of its residents.

The idea of the “open days” event was to get direct feedback from local residents about the city’s plans to improve their work on wellbeing. About 40 residents participated in the meeting and contributed with interesting ideas and suggestions on how to improve their neighbourhood. “ We have received plenty of ideas and are very happy with the outcome of the meeting” said Paula Jagric, Local BHC Coordinator.

There will be a follow up “healthy area walk” towards the end of February. That means that city officials together with the residents walk around in the area with ears and eyes open looking at the outdoor environment.

For more information please contact Paula Jagric, at E-mail: paula.jagric@lidingo.se



BHC to participate at UK Public Health Association' annual conference

The Belfast partner of the Building Healthy Communities network has been invited to present the BHC project at the next annual conference of the UK Public Health Association to take place on 24-25 March 2010 in Bournemouth. The Belfast representatives will present on the use of Health Impact Assessment to develop indicators for Health and Regeneration.

The UK Public Health Association is an independent voluntary organisation, formed by the coming together of three organisations in 1999 to unite the public health movement in the UK. As a multidisciplinary membership organisation, the UKPHA brings together individuals and organisations from all sectors who share a common commitment to promoting the public's health.

Members of the Belfast Local Support Group will present a paper at the conference entitled "Using Health Impact Assessment and health indicators to ensure regeneration adds value to health". The paper will argue that regeneration can help improve health and health equity. However often only limited data are utilised to examine whether and how regeneration actually does this.

The paper will draw from the experiences gained by the five local Area Partnerships in Belfast which have developed Strategic Regeneration Frameworks for each sector of the city. This provided an opportunity to develop health indicators relevant to regeneration.

A Health Impact Assessment workshop was conducted on the East Belfast framework with local stakeholders, which resulted in a list prioritizing health determinants and impacts. This

formed the basis for identifying a set of validated indicators for monitoring health and health equity impacts, refined in collaboration with stakeholders. The final outcome will be a flexible, conceptual model, which identifies overarching headline indicators as well as indicator subsets focused on topics covering economic, social, environmental and access issues. This will allow users to tailor the model to different projects, while keeping within the overall framework.

The final indicator set will be presented to Belfast Regeneration Office in early 2010 to inform the Office's strategy for tackling inequalities in health through regeneration.

For more information please contact Adele Keys at Belfast City Council. E-mail: KeysA@BelfastCity.gov.u

City Profile: Torino

The City of Torino is the Lead Partner of the thematic URBACT II network on Building Healthy Communities. Torino has a population of 910,941 inhabitants (2008) and is the fourth largest city in Italy. It used to be a major European political centre and, even though much of its political importance was lost by World War II, it became a major European crossroad for industry, commerce and trade, and currently is one of Italy's main industrial centres, being part of the famous "industrial triangle", along with Milan and Genoa. After decades of economic crisis the city is now facing a moment of change towards a more diversified economy and an international role.

In terms of Europe, the city is engaged in a variety of European work and in 2006, Torino was the lead partner of the Urb Health network supported by the URBACT I programme. The Urb Health network focused on an exchange of strategies illustrating how urban regeneration practice in Europe can contribute to reducing health inequalities.

The importance given by the Torino Municipality to health issues stems from the conviction that health depends on several variables: genetic inheritance, lifestyle, exposition to risk factors such as addictions, working place safety, ageing etc., and also on socio-economic characteristics such as social status, differences in education, culture, jobs and incomes, exclusion and lack of social relations. Improving quality of life and good health is not only the EU major goal, achievable by approaching it from a broad perspective; it also engages all local bodies – first of all, the municipality as it is the “closer” institution to citizens. Therefore one of Torino’s priority is the development of a functional, intersectoral and interinstitutional integration aimed at better using resources and shaping sectoral policies (e.g. as concerns education, labour market, welfare, urban planning, environment, culture, sport and leisure time) towards health in a co-ordinate way.

Within the Building Healthy Communities network, Torino is developing a Local Action Plan in one of its deprived boroughs, Barriera di Milano, in order to interact with the ongoing development process just started by the municipality. For over ten years the city has promoted and carried out studies and researches aimed at measuring and examining the differences among various city areas in terms of demographic, occupational, socio-cultural and economic structure, with the purpose of adapting urban policies to the city needs.

A recent research has confirmed that in the Northern part of the city, and in particular, in the Barriera di Milano borough, social deprivation due to the combination of several problematic factors



is still present. Barriera di Milano is progressively and ineluctably losing its identity as a city neighbourhood developed as a factory borough, but it is also an area that needs new tools for diagnosis and interventions in order to find a proper way of “steering” new and positive changes. We hope that through our work in Building Healthy Communities we will be able to introduce such new tools in particular as concerns health indicators and health impact assessment.

Since 2004 Torino also participates in the Healthy Cities Project, promoted at the international level by the World Health Organisation.

For more information please contact Luisa Avedano, BHC Project Manager.

E-mail: luisa.avedano@comune.torino.it

Quality of life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

URBACT Annual Conference, Stockholm, 24 -25 November 2010

Marco Santangelo, , Lead Expert, Building Healthy Communities network

During the Stockholm URBACT Annual Conference a workshop on the topic of “Quality of life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods” took place. This workshop has been planned to cross issues and approaches of three different URBACT projects: Building Healthy Communities (BHC), Suite (on social and urban inclusion through housing) and CoNet (strengthening social cohesion in neighbourhoods).

The workshop idea came from the fact that four out of five European citizens live in urban areas, and their quality of life, well-being and health is directly influenced by the state of the urban environment, economic and social factors. These factors, in fact, play a major role in long-term economic growth and sustainable development and this has proved to be true especially in urban areas, where these dimensions meet most strongly. In cities disadvantaged and marginalised groups are particularly at risk, so, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all, standards of health and quality of life should consider first of all the most vulnerable populations.

The workshop focused on the integration of different aspects that can contribute towards promoting quality of life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and to illustrate how housing, health, employment and regeneration can fit together to strengthen community cohesion and create high quality neighbourhoods.

Three speakers have proposed their point of view and experience to the floor: first Michele Marra, representing the Piedmont Managing Authority (IT) of the BHC thematic network, talked on how health links to all the other policies, so to link what seems a specific issue to the wider urban scenario; the second presentation was given by Angèle Lafaye, representing Nantes Métropole (FR) as partner of the Suite thematic network, who gave a speech on improving the affordability and sustainability of social housing as a pre-requisite for area based regeneration, focussing on the Malakoff area of the

city of Nantes; Teodora Tsanova, of the European Programmes and Projects Directorate of Sofia (BG) and partner of CoNet, presented their work on cohesion in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Sofia.

Following presentations a debate amongst the participants took place, focussing around three keywords: health, housing, cohesion. Three rapporteurs brought the results of the debate to the plenary and, finally, Paul Lindquist, the mayor of Lidingo (SE), a city partner of BHC, acted

as a political respondent to the suggestions that came out of the floor, giving a very interesting insight into the political side of EU projects.



The Stockholm Conference, and this workshop in particular, gave a clear picture of the necessity to bring together actors from different professional back-

grounds and places, because it clearly showed how the main problems that we are facing are very much alike and that similar attempts could benefit from external point of views. This lesson has been considered in the development of BHC activities, and during project second thematic network we have included the participation of other URBACT projects representatives (see related article in this newsletter).

A report on the workshop, by Rotraut Weeber, can be found in the URBACT website : http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/Documents/WK6_report.pdf

For more info on the Conference, see:

<http://urbact.eu/en/header-main/news-and-events/view-one/urbact-events/?entryId=4822>

Health and Equity week

From the 22 to the 26 of March, EuroHealthNet is organising a “Promoting Health & Equity Week”, throughout which the topics of health promotion and health inequalities will be discussed. The General Assembly 2010 will also take place on 23 March, 09.00-17.00. This is the annual business meeting for EuroHealthNet members and partners. Throughout this day, we will decide on the strategic development plan 2010-2014, the annual work programme (2010-2011) and elect a new board. For more details:

http://www.eurohealthnet.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=205&Itemid=247

EC and Women’s Health

The European Commission has published its report, entitled “Data and Information on Women’s Health in the European Union”. It provides a short overview concerning women’s health. The women’s health report is the first step to look into gender health aspects under different angles. The next gender report will be the “First European Men’s health report” which is currently being prepared. For the full report: http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/women_report_en.pdf

A Swedish view on Health Ageing

The Special Interest Group on Healthy Ageing, in collaboration with the Swedish National Institute of Public Health has produced a report entitled “Healthy Ageing in Europe - lessons learnt and ways forward’. The purpose of the report is to help increase knowledge about different initiatives taken in order to fulfill the recommendations on policy, practice and research from the Healthy Ageing project and to prepare for the next step forwards in the field of Healthy Ageing.

Click below for the full report :

http://www.eurohealthnet.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=199&Itemid=208

EuroHealthNet against Health Inequalities

EuroHealthNet has published a working paper outlining the data collected and indicators available at national and EU level, to monitor health inequalities and social determinants of health. The objective of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the data collected and indicators that are available at national and EU level, to monitor health inequalities and socio-economic determinants of health. It will specifically look at data and indicators with relevance to health inequities and their determinants. For the full report:

<http://www.eurohealthnet.eu/images/sdhi%20monitoring%20paper%202010%20%282%29.pdf>

EU Database of policies and good practices on mental health and well-being has been published

The EU database is compiled from policies and good practices of stakeholder initiatives, which were identified through EU-projects, work with Member States and other contacts. Three priority themes of this database are: Mental health in children and young people; Prevention of depression and suicide; and mental health in older people. For more details:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/compass_policy_en.htm

DG SANCO: Call for proposals

A Call for proposals to develop and coordinate a network of nursing educators and regulators has been published. The aim is to create a pilot network of nurse educators and regulators in order to exchange best practices and improve the qualifications of healthcare workers, healthcare assistants and lower-skilled nurses. Deadline: 31st March 2010. http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_systems/call_workforce_en.htm

EU Health Programme: A new database launched

The Executive Agency for Health and Consumers has launched a database providing information on all projects co-funded by the European Commission during the period 2003-2008. To access the database:
<http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html>

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions globally

At least 2.6 million people die each year as a result of being overweight or obese. Once associated with high-income countries, obesity is now also prevalent in low- and middle-income countries. This new fact file describes the problem and options for obesity prevention. Governments, international partners, civil society, non governmental organizations and the private sector all have vital roles to play in contributing to obesity prevention. Childhood obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century. Overweight children are likely to become obese adults. They are more likely than non-overweight children to develop diabetes and cardiovascular diseases at a younger age, which in turn are associated with a higher chance of premature death and disability.

For fact file on obesity:

<http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/obesity/en/index.html>

Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Health

From the 10 to the 12 March 2010 the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, organized by WHO/Europe and hosted by Italy, is the next milestone in the European environment and health process, now in its twentieth year. Focused on protecting children's health in a changing environment, the conference will drive Europe's agenda on emerging environmental health challenges

For more information:

http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/meetings/environment_meeting_20100310/en/index.html

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