



Building Healthy Communities

Newsletter, Issue No 6, September 2010



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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



BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES: TOWARDS OUR THIRD THEMATIC WORKSHOP

Our Building Healthy Communities (BHC) network is now in its last phase. After nearly two years of joint work the BHC network will meet in Bacau, Romania, for the third and final thematic workshop. The City of Bacau is kindly hosting the thematic workshop from 29 September to 3 October, where BHC delegates, experts, political representatives and guest speakers will focus on the theme of the use of Structural Funds in developing 'health gains'.

This cross-cutting theme focuses on building capacity within the network to use Structural Funds for developing health gains in European cities. Health is one of the priorities in the urban dimension of cohesion policy. Several Member States have made use of Structural Funds to address health issues and one of the aims of BHC is to exchange experience in this field. The Managing Authorities, which have responsibility for Structural Funds within their Member States, have helped to secure the contributions of key speakers at the workshop who will present inspiring examples of practice and lessons learned from their direct experience.

The Structural Fund theme links strongly with the previous themes explored by the BHC network. The outcomes from the first and second thematic workshops, in Lodz and Torino, will be brought together at the Bacau workshop, along with the work on health and quality of life indicators discussed in Belfast, and on the social marketing approach to health explored in Barnsley. The wealth of information and resources which the BHC network has generated will help building our common toolkit for designing effective Local Action Plans which could secure funding from EU Structural Funds and other sources.

The Bacau workshop also has another important goal which requires an active role from all of the partner cities; it is the last occasion for presenting work in progress of the Local Action Plans and for developing them to fit better with any potential funding opportunities.

DG Sanco (the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs) will be contributing to the Bacau workshop. We are also hoping to secure the European Commission's support and contribution to our final network event: the BHC Final Conference which will be held in Brussels next year.

Luisa Avedano
BHC Strategic Manager

USE OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS FOR DEVELOPING HEALTH GAINS?

As the final BHC thematic workshop approaches, it may be time to redefine the title of the workshop itself. The title, Use of Structural Funds for developing health gains, was created two years ago, at the beginning of the BHC initiative, and its redefinition is not linked to any substantial change in the topic of the workshop. What has changed, though, is that reality has downsized our expectations and a realistic view on the relation between Structural Funds and health is needed.

Marco Santangelo, BHC Lead Expert, reflects on how far the Local Action Plans developed by BHC partners can draw on EU Structural Funds for their implementation, and on how the experience gained through BHC can help partners to influence Structural Fund priorities for the next programming period.

In the current Structural Fund programming period, which runs from 2007 to 2013, health has been one of the top ten priority areas of investment. In a White Paper published in October 2007, the EU called for 'health in all policies'. Around €5 billion, or approximately 1.5 per cent of the total Structural Fund budget, has been dedicated to direct health sector investments, mainly through the European Regional Development Fund for health infrastructure (e.g. hospitals) and health services delivery. This funding has been distributed through national government frameworks and then via Regional Operational Programmes, designed to manage Structural Fund investment according to the needs and priorities of each region. The European Commission recognises that almost all of its policies have an indirect impact on health and quality of life of EU citizens, so priorities and strategies written in national frameworks and Regional Operation Programmes can promote healthier lifestyles, sustainable policies and better living conditions. But in this case there should be, at all institutional levels, a clear reference to address health in all policies and a strong will to concretely and actively do so.

The experience within the BHC network of accessing Structural Funds for health initiatives has proved problematic for two main reasons. Firstly, policies and actions that are designed and implemented at local level need to be coordinated with the relevant Structural Fund Managing Authority, and this has proved to be difficult. Secondly, when BHC started its implementation phase in late 2008 almost all the Regional Operation Programmes in Europe were already finalised, making it almost impossible for cities to influence Structural Fund programmed expenditure in their region.

In the past months BHC partner cities have worked on Local Action Plans that are designed to maximise the impacts of different policies on health and quality of life in cities, but which have rarely been able to draw on Structural Funds support. Existing priorities and strategies in the Regional Operational Plans have been 'interpreted', 'adapted' and 'imagined', links with funds other than the ERDF investigated (such as the European Social Fund), and local strategies have been tested to make the principle of 'health in all policies' real.

The White Paper can be downloaded in all languages from http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/strategy/health_strategy_en.htm
For more information on investments in health through the 2007-2013 Structural Funds see the Watson Report:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/health_structural_funds/docs/watson_report.pdf

BHC partner cities are finding different responses to this common challenge and the Bacau workshop will be a good opportunity for exchanging experience and practice. This is particularly useful in view of the round of negotiations for the next Structural Fund programming period (2014-2020), in which many of the EU actions and investments will be less linked to national and regional programmes and more to the capacity of EU territories to design coherent and effective strategies. Cities need to promote their experience, including that gained through BHC, and their direct knowledge of their territory in order to influence these negotiations, helping to ensure that the BHC approach of 'health in all policies' can be more successfully delivered through future Structural Fund programmes.

CITY PROFILE: BACAU

The city of Bacau in Romania is one of the BHC partner cities, and the venue for the network's third thematic workshop. Bacau is situated 9km North East from the intersection of two rivers, Siret and Bistrita. With 180.000 inhabitants, Bacau is the largest city of the county and one of the most important cities in the eastern part of Romania.

Bacau is now facing the challenges and opportunities of being a EU city. It is working both to upgrade the health system to EU standards, especially in terms of facilities and services, and to promote a process of urban regeneration that tackles, above all, healthy environment related problems.

Bacau is planning a multilevel action in order to deal with the challenges of environmental protection, sustainable development and citizens' healthy lifestyle. The city is contributing to the creation, at local level, of Urban Development Poles able to stimulate fast economic growth, the creation of new workplaces and which will support development in the small and medium cities, as well as in the rural areas, therefore contributing to the development of the economy in the whole region.

One of the first objectives the city wants to achieve is the implementation of the national health programmes which respond to the primary problems of public health and protection of vulnerable groups. The city aims to increase overall health and quality of life through a range of actions, including: the promotion of preventative health measures; enhancing the quality of medical services; social assistance and consumer protection. The city is also giving a high priority to environmental issues. The Municipality of Bacau has the ambitious aims of: encouraging an healthy business local environment; reaching European standards in terms of quality of air, soil, water, waste management and reducing pollution; increasing green areas, leisure areas and sport centres; regeneration of several neighbourhoods, especially in the Southern area of the city.

Bacau Municipality has no skills in Health Impact Assessment but it has good experience in using Health Indicators. The Municipality uses indicators for health and well being across six categories: demography, sickness, the work of health institutions, resources, medical and health personnel, and health expenditure. The most used are the demographic and sickness indicators. Bacau represents a good example for new Member States of an approach to urban regeneration which integrates health and quality of life issues.



Delia Giorgianni
BHC Project assistant

THE BARNLSLEY SOCIAL MARKETING EXCHANGE



The BHC delegation meets the Mayor of Barnsley, Councillor Margaret Sheard, in the Town Hall. From the left: Steve Turnbull (Barnsley), Maria Hartley (Lidingo), Luisa Avedano (Torino and BHC Strategic Manager), Tom Sheard (Barnsley), Cllr Margaret Sheard (Barnsley), Marco Santangelo (BHC Lead Expert), Antonella Cardone (BHC Thematic Expert), Karin Hjelmfeldt (Lidingo), Jecika Eriksson (Lidingo)

Representatives from the cities of Lidingo (SE) and Torino (IT), plus Marco Santangelo, BHC Lead Expert, and Antonella Cardone, BHC Thematic Expert, gathered in Barnsley (UK) on 8-10 July 2010 to learn more about a new methodology that applies marketing techniques to social issues. NHS Barnsley (the National Health Service agency for Barnsley) hosted the two day workshop and its results will be shared across the BHC network during the third thematic workshop in Bacau.

During the first day Steve Turnbull, Assistant Director Public Health for NHS Barnsley and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (and the city representative in BHC Steering Group) welcomed the BHC delegation. Kirsty Waknell, Marketing and Communication Manager for NHS Barnsley gave an overview of social marketing and how it is used in Barnsley.

Two projects were then presented to demonstrate how social marketing has been used in social policies. Alison Millbourn, Physical Activity Lead for NHS Barnsley, presented a project on 'increasing physical activity in men over 40', while Ian Morley, Arts Development Officer at Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, presented a project for promoting positive lifestyles.

The morning of day two was dedicated to the principles of social marketing. Kirsty Waknell presented the eight benchmark criteria which NHS Barnsley use for this approach. In the afternoon examples of actions implemented in Lidingo were tested and discussed taking into account social marketing principles. The participants agreed that the interesting results of this exchange could usefully become part of the final BHC thematic workshop. The rest of the day was dedicated to site visits led by Alan West from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and Councillor Jenny Platts, Cabinet Spokesperson for Adult Social Services and Health. The delegation visited the Athersley area in which two projects are implemented: the "Roundhouse Motorskills Project – Motormouth", especially for young people, and the "Romero Project", developed for the benefit of the local community.



**Marco Santangelo
BHC Lead Expert**

HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES: THE ROLE OF PATIENTS' ORGANISATIONS

Luisa Avedano, BHC Strategic Manager, considers the role of patients' organisations in giving a voice to patients within policy forums and in the development of health projects and programmes.

Over the past 20 months the BHC partner cities, through the involvement of local stakeholders in the Local Support Groups, have been working to shape their Local Action Plans, including through their work to consider the needs and views of local residents, to develop meaningful quality of life indicators, and tailoring plans to meet Structural Fund priorities. There remains a category whose voice is not often included within the wider debate on how to overcome health inequalities and offer equal treatments and opportunities - patients and patients' organisations.

Patients' organisations represent a growing part of civil society which is becoming more important in the European arena and whose role within health and quality of life policies and programmes deserves higher priority. Taking account of the perspective of those citizens who, for many reasons, have different needs in terms of quality of life, can bring positive benefits in developing local health action plans in a much more effective direction.

One of the most important umbrella organisations in this field is the European Patients Forum (EPF), whose voice is very much heard at the European level and whose lobbying position is helping to ensure a more inclusive way of designing and developing 'quality of life' projects and programmes.

EPF was founded in 2003 to provide a collective patients' voice at EU level and embodies the solidarity, power and unity of the EU patients' movement. EPF currently represents more than 40 patients' organisations. These are chronic disease organisations operating at EU level and national coalitions of patients' organisations. EPF's vision is high quality, patient-centred, equitable health care for all patients throughout the European Union. EPF facilitates exchange of good practice and challenges bad practice on patients' rights, equitable access to treatment and care,

and health-related quality of life between patient organisations at European level and at Member State level.

In the next issues of the BHC newsletter we will try to give voice to some of the EU-wide patients' organisations, to offer our readers another point of view when dealing with quality of life and health in all policies.

More information about EPF can be found at <http://www.eu-patient.eu/>

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AT OPEN DAYS 2010



The OPEN DAYS event is an annual gathering of experts in local and regional development, jointly developed by the Committee of the Regions, the European Commission and the European Parliament. Now in its eighth year, the 2010 OPEN DAYS will take place in Brussels from 4 to 7 October with a programme of around 100 seminars,

workshops and debates focused on this year's theme of 'Europe 2020: competitiveness, co-operation and cohesion for all regions'. In this article, Luisa Avedano, BHC Strategic Manager, explains how the OPEN DAYS link with the work of the BHC network.

This year the OPEN DAYS will focus on 'competitiveness, co-operation and cohesion'. The seminars on 'competitiveness' will focus on innovation, regional development and green economic growth and on results achieved by regions supported by the 'competitiveness and employment' strand of the EU's cohesion policy programme. The 'co-operation' theme will feature debates on territorial and cross-border co-operation, the European Grouping on Territorial Cooperation, and latest developments from 'macro regions'.

Within the 'cohesion' theme, seminars and workshops will explore issues of territorial and social cohesion and the question of how to better integrate different policies at the local level. It is within this framework that the City of Torino, in collaboration with the Local Urban Development Network (LUDEN, previously QeC-ERAN), has promoted a partnership with the cities of Bacau, Belfast, Gothenburg, Seville, Venice and the Starogard District (Poland) around the topic Agenda 2020: A new paradigm for local urban development. The partnership is hosting a debate in Brussels on 7 October as part of the OPEN DAYS event. The debate will feature the following panel of expert speakers:

Anneli Hulthen, Mayor and Chairman of the Executive City Council, Gothenburg, Sweden; Dirk Ahner, Director-General DG Regional Policy at the European Commission; Haroon Saad, Director of LUDEN (previously

known as QeC-ERAN); Ilda Curti, Deputy Mayor, City of Torino, Italy; Laura Leonard, European Manager, Belfast City Council, Belfast, United Kingdom.

This debate will be linked to local events in each of the partner cities, four of which are also members of the BHC network. The local events include one in Torino which will take place in December 2010 as a kick-off meeting of the Barriera di Milano Integrated Project of Urban Development. At the Torino event some of the actions already developed in the BHC Torino Local Action Plan will be presented to local stakeholders and political representatives, within the framework of an urban transformation programme funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

For the City of Torino and for the BHC partnership, the European and the local events will represent another milestone in disseminating the first concrete outcomes of BHC's work towards building healthier communities and offering a better quality of life.

HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES: A CASE STUDY OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION

Cristina Viano is a student at the University of Torino studying for a Masters degree in 'Cooperation, Development and Transnational Markets'. Cristina is focusing her Masters thesis on network cooperation among cities, with the BHC network as a case study. Here, Cristina explains why she chose the BHC network as a case study and what she hopes to learn from her research.

My purpose is to study networks dealing with themes such as urban regeneration and quality of life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and that are aiming at exchanging knowledge and good practices and also at implementing concrete local actions.

My thesis explores how distant places can profitably cooperate on managing urban issues, and the different local effects of actions developed with the influence of a complex and international set of public and private actors.

In my research I adopt a geographic perspective, considering both the network/international level (i.e. how do cities interact through networks? What kind of objectives and methods do the different networks choose? What advantages do the cities obtain in term of internationalization?) and the urban/local level (i.e. what are the local results of the projects? How do local actors interact among them and within the network? What resources do the cities acquire for their local development?).

To consider different types of cooperation, I have selected three contrasting cases: BHC as an example of a network in the European internal cooperation context, with clearly defined structure and methods; "EuroGaza", as an example of small and informal network for solidarity and decentralized cooperation among four European cities and Gaza (Palestinian Authority); "100 Città per 100 Progetti", as an example of a wide and multilevel network for coordinating international cooperation between Italy and Brazil at a national, regional and local level.

Thanks to direct contacts with Marco Santangelo and Luisa Avedano, BHC became the case that I can study in more depth. After having attended to the second thematic workshop in Torino, I also have the opportunity to be at the third workshop in Bacau and to cooperate with the Torino Local Support Group. For this reason, I decided to widen my research by sending to all the BHC partners a questionnaire about their participation in the network and the progress of their Local Action Plans. Answers to the questionnaires will give me more detailed knowledge of each city and will be useful for the interviews that I would like to carry out during the next workshop.

I think that learning about such a project from an 'inside perspective' and experiencing how it practically works is the best way to deepen my knowledge of themes such as urban policies and international networking. It is also an important chance to become more familiar with some aspects of the cooperation within the European Union, a topic that should not be neglected by students of political science.

FOCUS ON THE LECCE LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP

For the city of Lecce, the BHC project is a tool to accelerate the implementation of a new strategic development for the city and its territory. The BHC project has been introduced in the context of a larger project called "Area Vasta" (Wider Area).

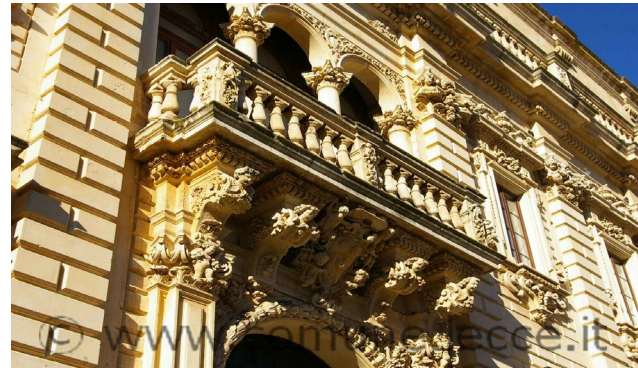
The Lecce Local Support Group was formed in March-April 2009, bringing together the expertise of more than 20 professionals including architects, engineers, ecologists, medical doctors, lawyers and others. Many of the Local Support Group members are from the public sector ranging from the smallest municipality to the Lecce Province and to the Apulia region, as well as representatives from the University of Salento, the Italian Research Councils (CNR), the Regional Protection Agency (ARPA) and others. The group has held regular meetings which led to the formulation of the Local Action Plan.

The Lecce Local Action Plan is tailored to the city context. Lecce is a city with 100,000 inhabitants, with an important historical centre and a large neighbourhood area. Among the biggest problems of the city are the lack of green areas, the absence of the concept of public space and the worrying decrease in civic sense among citizens. To counteract these negative trends, the core of the Lecce Local Action Plan comprises targeted actions for urban and sub-urban regeneration focused on the underground relocation of aerial high tension and data transmission cables. This action will be concentrated in two main areas: the historical centre, where some interventions have been already made, and the neighbourhood called "Zone 45". The results will be the reduction of electromagnetic pollution, improvement of the city appearance, and increased use of public spaces.

Once the Local Action Plan was formulated, it was agreed that the work would be carried forward by a small group of experts. This expert group comprises around 10 people from the Municipality of Lecce and the Department of Planning, environmental experts from the University and CNR as well as some external experts and representative of the Apulia Managing Authority. The expert group's work includes the identification of indicators and communications with the local population about the importance of working at a European level and on the implementation of the various stages of the project.

The group is giving a high priority to identifying relevant indicators.

The Lecce Local Support Group made a distinction between physical/environmental indicators (e.g. measurement of air pollution before and after the intervention, square meters of soil newly available, square meters of green space available to citizens), social indicators (e.g. number of people who will move to the regenerated areas, number of inhabitants who will directly benefit from the project), and economic indicators (e.g. new commercial activities).



For the future, the Local Support Group intends to develop new interventions and strategies to improve the connection between local authorities and citizens. The overall goal for the Municipality is the creation of the basis for future city planning and realisation of new strategic environmental interventions through the implementation of the methodology, based on health indicators, developed within the BHC project.

Delia Giorgianni
BHC Project Assistant

BHC PARTNERS' NEWS

News from Lidingo



Birgitta Greitz, member of the Lidingo Local Support Group, will present BHC in the Swedish National Healthy Cities Network on 6-8 October. The theme is healthy urban planning and Birgitta will present both the BHC transnational level and what the Local Support Group is doing locally. She will also present how the Stockholm region has worked with health impact assessment in urban planning. The overall goal of the national network is to work for quality and equity in public health by contributing to the development of intersectional public health action. The network actively disseminates knowledge and promotes sharing of experience.

EU NEWS

2012 to be the European Year for Active Ageing

The European Commission has proposed that 2012 be designated as the European Year of Active Ageing. The aim is to use the European Year of Active Ageing as a framework for raising awareness, for identifying and disseminating good practice and, most importantly, for encouraging policymakers and stakeholders at all levels to promote active ageing.

The EU is undergoing significant population ageing. From 2012 the European working-age population will start to shrink, while the over-60 population will continue to increase by about two million people each year. Active ageing includes creating more opportunities for older people to continue working, to stay healthy for longer, and to continue to contribute to society in other ways, for example through volunteering.

The European Parliament and Council are expected to endorse the initiative by the beginning of 2011.

Health focus in the International Year of Youth

The International Year of Youth was launched on 12 August 2010 with the broad goals of promoting youth development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Three of the eight Millennium Development Goals are health-focused (reducing child poverty, improving maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases) and health is a strong theme within the International Year of Youth framework and activities. The United Nations has invited national governments to form committees to steer activities and events in each country; civil society and youth-led groups are strongly urged to get involved in planning national actions.

A health fact sheet published for the International Year of Youth highlights that 1.8 million young people aged 15 to 24 die each year worldwide; the great majority of these in developing countries, where 90 per cent of the world's young people live. The fact sheet and more information about the International Year of Youth can be found on the website:

<http://social.un.org/youthyear/docs/Fact%20Sheet%20Youth%20and%20Health.pdf>

Global Age-friendly Cities project

The world is rapidly ageing: the number of people aged 60 and over as a proportion of the global population will double from 11 per cent in 2006 to 22 per cent by 2050. By then, for the first time in human history, there will be more older people than children in the world's population. The "Global Age-friendly Cities" project started in 2006 when the World Health Organisation brought together 33 cities from 22 countries to identify the key elements of the urban environment that support active and healthy ageing. The project outlines a framework for assessing the "age-friendliness" of a city. A core aspect of this approach is to include older people as active and full partners as cities work to identify how they can become age-friendly or more age-friendly. To become a member of the Network a city must commit to undertake a process of continually assessing and improving their age-friendliness. It is essential that older residents are involved in a meaningful way throughout the process.

Find out more from: http://www.who.int/ageing/age_friendly_cities/en/index.html

European Community Health Indicatorsé: updated public health data tool

The European Commission has revised and improved its web-tool for EU public health indicators. The EU public health indicators are sets of data providing information on health status, determinants and care in EU Member States. The indicators allow for monitoring within and comparison between Member States, and serve as a basis for policy making.

The new version of the European Community Health Indicators (ECHI) tool allows users to view and download the core indicators as graphs, maps or tables, for all EU countries, stratified by age and gender, for annual data dating back to the 1950s for some indicators.

The new ECHI tool can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/index_en.htm

Acting NOW for Better Health

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and the Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) coalition have jointly published a report on the substantial benefits to health which would result from a 30 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Acting NOW for Better Health combines a technical report on the health effects linked to emissions with a call for the EU and Member States to adopt a 30 per cent reduction target.

The EU is committed to achieving a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the 1990 level, to be achieved by 2020. This commitment forms one of the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy which was formally adopted by the European Council in June 2010. Despite strong lobbying from environmental groups to increase the reduction target to 30 per cent, the European Council has pledged only to do so if other countries commit to similar or comparable reductions, leaving the 20 per cent target in place for the time being.

Acting NOW for Better Health sets out the health benefits which would result from further reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, including reductions in respiratory and cardiac disease, and quantifies the financial savings which would result. The report includes detailed technical reports on the health impacts of a 30 per cent reduction in emissions in a selection of Member States including Poland, Italy, Spain and the UK. The report can be downloaded from:

http://www.env-health.org/IMG/pdf/HEAL_-_30_co-benefits_report_FULL-2.pdf

EU FUNDING NEWS

The next deadline for LIFE+ applications is 4 October 2010. LIFE+ funds projects in three broad areas: nature and biodiversity; environmental policy and governance; information and communication. The environmental policy and governance objective includes actions on environment and health and on urban environments.

Applications must be made to the national authorities by 1 September who will then forward eligible proposals to the European Commission. Details of national authorities for the LIFE+ programme can be found at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/contact/nationalcontact/life-plusenv.htm>

Calls for proposals to the LIFE+ programme in 2011 will be published in early 2011. Stakeholders with an interest in the LIFE+ programme should check the LIFE+ website for news of funding calls: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm>

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Newsletter

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