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Welcome to the Inclusive Cities newsletter

Dear reader,

We are half-way through an exceptionally exciting year. Our activities for the European Year for combating poverty are reaching their pinnacle. On the basis of the organised events, we will prepare our recommendations for the future of social policy to the European Institutions and the December Council. We will continue our campaign in the second part of the year.

The next edition of the ICE newsletter will be available in September. In the meantime, have a happy summer break!

The Social Affairs Team

European Commission Work Programme - what is relevant for Social Affairs?

In times of institutional change within the EU, and financial problems in its member states, the Commission proposed its work programme for 2010 and strategic initiatives for the following years.

For the fourth quarter of 2010 the European Commission announced a communication on youth employment which will look at ways of strengthening policy to overcome the impact of the crisis on young people and to ease the transition from education and training to work. The communication assesses existing tools such as EURES (European Job Mobility) and the ESF (the European Social Fund) and how to adapt these to young people.

A forthcoming green paper will launch a consultation on the best options for a European framework on pension systems and their transferability.

The Commission also announced a proposal for flagship initiatives to support the newly adopted Europe 2020 Strategy. These initiatives include “an agenda for new skills and jobs”, which is intended to help to modernise labour markets and to increase participation, and “a European platform to combat poverty” to fight social exclusion.

Once the main activities of the Europe 2020 Strategy are under way, the Commission will commence its review of the EU budget. The Commission

has already announced a European regulation reforming the ESF after 2013, the proposal for which is expected in April 2011. The aims of the ESF reform are to better align the ESF and the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in the field of social inclusion and to make the ESF more complementary with other policy instruments. The new ESF should also require less financial administration.

Further information on the Commissions work programme is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm

For more on the ESF reforms, see page 3.



European Commission President, Jose Manuel Barroso.

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European Council adopts targets for Europe 2020

The European Council adopted the “Europe 2020 Strategy” for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth at its meeting on 16/17 June.

The Council's adoption was foreshadowed by intense debate over the past months regarding the poverty reduction targets in the EU. The original proposal from the European Commission focused on reducing the number of people who are at risk of poverty in the EU by 20 million. The Council's compromise centred on how this would be assessed. Member states will now be able to choose one of three indicators to measure: people at-risk-of poverty; people living in material deprivation; and people living in jobless households.

Five headline targets were approved to measure Europe's success over the next ten years. These include the aim to raise the employment rate from 69% to 75%, particularly through

greater participation of young people, older workers and the low-skilled workers in the work-force. Migrants are also included in this, with particular emphasis placed on their better integration. School drop-out rates are targeted to be reduced from 15% to 10%. Education gets a further boost through the aim to increase the number of people entering third-level education from 31% to 40%.

In its conclusions, the European Council encouraged member states to define national targets within the European strategy and to identify their main obstacles in attaining the new European goals.

Member states have to develop national reform programmes for meeting the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy by the end of 2010, while the Commission will make proposals on the flagship initiatives, such as the European platform against poverty and social exclusion by autumn 2010.

The Council conclusions can be downloaded at <http://tinyurl.com/265njto>

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EU citizens perceive rise in national and EU poverty

One in six Europeans think that local poverty has increased in the past year and over three quarters believe that it increased nationally. Two thirds of Europeans think that poverty has increased across the EU. So finds a Eurobarometer survey on the social impact of the economic crisis, presented by the European Commission on 22 June.

One in six EU citizens had difficulties in paying their bills, buying food or paying for other daily consumer items in the year prior to the survey. Around 30% declared that it became more difficult for them to bear the costs of health care for themselves or for their relatives in the past six months.

Looking ahead, about one sixth (18%) of respondents

are not confident about retaining their job in the next 12 months and almost a half (49%) believe that they would be unlikely to find a new position if they were laid off. The survey comes halfway through the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and in the wake of the European Council's agreement to reduce the number of people living in poverty by 20 million.

The full Eurobarometer report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/245tkjt>.

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Survey indicates continued strong migration potential

A recent survey on worldwide migration intentions of more than 260,000 adults shows that if they could, 700 million adults would like to move to another country permanently. Almost one third of this group would like to move to the EU and another third to North America.

Within the EU, the UK and France are the most popular destinations with 45 million people desiring to live there. Spain and Germany are also popular destinations.

Based on the answers, a potential net migration index was calculated, showing what would happen globally if all people realised their aspirations. In Canada, the population would grow by 170%; Sweden and Spain by 80%, and the UK and the USA by 60%. Poland is one EU country in which the potential effects of migration would be negative, meaning that more people would like to leave the country than move there. The hypothetical development for most African countries would mean losses of around one third of the population; in Congo (Kinshasa) this is more than one half. It is important to note that the survey reflects aspirations rather than actual intentions.

More information on the survey on migration intentions can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/yk2q54q>

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The Future of the European Social Fund

The European Social Fund (ESF) should contribute to achieving EU policy objectives and should be fully aligned with the EUROPE 2020 strategy, according to László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Speaking during a conference on the future of ESF at the European Parliament on 23 June, the Commissioner acknowledged the ESF's significant contribution to employment and training in the EU, with over one million citizens benefiting from it annually.

The ESF could be improved upon by being more results-orientated and demonstrating its added-value. It should contribute to economic, social and territorial cohesion. For this reason, future debates have to focus on how to ensure complementarity with other funding mechanisms, such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

The European Commission will present its views on the future of European policies and instruments in September 2010. Reflecting on the upcoming discussions on the future of the EU budget after 2013, Commissioner Andor stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation with all stakeholders, including regional and local governments, NGOs, social partners and the private sector.

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The future of EUROCITIES partnership with the European Commission on Social Inclusion

EUROCITIES submitted its application to prolong its partnership with the European Commission, under the PROGRESS programme at the end of May.

If successful, the partnership will continue to support our activities in social affairs policies for the next three years. PROGRESS is the European Commission's programme for supporting networks that promote and develop EU social policy. The objectives of the new call are to improve the organisational capacity of the network, improve city participation and influence in EU and

national policy-making; reinforce advocacy and campaigning skills for supporting EU social agenda objectives, as well as supporting cross-cutting issues. The European Commission will take a decision on the future of the partnership in November.

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Cities promote an integrated approach to tackling urban poverty

An integrated approach is the best way to tackle complex problems of deprived urban neighbourhoods. These actions, however, should not be carried out in isolation but should be linked to broader development strategies to ensure coherent priorities and actions. Cities have a crucial role in implementing integrated approaches and are willing to share their experience with other stakeholders at EU and national levels.

These are the key conclusions from three thematic seminars organised by EUROCITIES and the cities of Katowice, Ghent and Budapest. The seminars were organised in the framework of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Cities represented at the seminars stressed that applying an integrated approach is often difficult due to

the fragmentation of services. The response to this is partnership work involving a broad range of actors, including local communities and NGOs. One example of an integrated approach is area-based programmes that link people-based policies (employment, education and health) with place-based interventions (housing, infrastructure or environment). These programmes cannot take place in isolation and have to be linked to wider development strategies at city, regional and national levels. This helps avoid fragmentation and isolation of initiatives and ensures the coherence of priorities and actions.

Another important conclusion is that universal approaches must be complemented by targeted interventions. Universal policies should vary in intensity depending on which segment of a society they are targeted at. This is because social

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problems are distributed across the entire society with more social problems at the bottom of the social ladder and fewer problems towards the top.

The conclusions will feed into the EUROCITIES message to the Social Protection Committee in Autumn and will contribute to the ongoing debates on the Europe 2020 strategy, the EU's key development strategy for the next ten years.

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EUROCITIES-NLAO event: 8 July

The final conference of the pilot phase of the EUROCITIES Network of Local Authority Observatories on Active Inclusion (EUROCITIES-NLAO) will take place in Brussels on 8 July.

The event will gather representatives from European institutions, national ministries, European stakeholders, regional authorities and municipalities to discuss cities' role in active inclusion.

Keynote speakers include Antonia Carparelli, Head of Unit for Inclusion and streamlining of social policies at the European Commission, who will present the future of EU Active Inclusion strategy. The EUROCITIES-NLAO European report on active inclusion will also be presented, outlining

the role played by housing and employment services in the inclusion of people furthest away from the labour market.

On the 9 July, the second phase of the EUROCITIES-NLAO project will be launched. This enlarged EUROCITIES-NLAO network will continue to operate as a dynamic information-sharing platform. Mutual learning will be central to the implementation of active inclusion strategies at local level.

Further information: www.eurocities-nlao.eu.

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Barcelona: Planning the Intercultural City

A consultation with 3,000 Barcelonans and 250 organisations, a website that received more than 17,000 hits, a Facebook profile with over 800 “friends” and intense internal coordination between different departments of the municipality are some of the participatory tools that the city of Barcelona used to develop its new intercultural plan.

The new intercultural plan was presented to the public in spring 2010 and is seen as a necessity after the share of foreign residents in the city increased from 3.5% to 17% in the last ten years. Midway between existing assimilationist and multicultural models of citizenship, the plan focuses on how to facilitate the interaction between different groups in the city. Instead of forcing people to mix, the idea is to remove existing obstacles to participation and allow people to interact with one another.

During the consultation, residents and members of local associations were asked to give their opinion on cultural diversity, to name factors that foster or hamper relations

between inhabitants of different cultural backgrounds, to identify elements shared by all Barcelonans and to name places in Barcelona that facilitate intercultural encounters.

The consultation showed that diversity is seen both as an asset and a challenge by the residents. Barcelonans believe that personal attitudes are the biggest obstacle in the development of an intercultural city, and that public action is needed to overcome this obstacle. They see the education system as a crucial place for encountering others, bearing the greatest potential to turn diversity into an asset.

In the plan, Barcelona set the direction for the city and its residents with ten “linchpins”, or strategic drivers of intercultural development. They propose, for instance, moving from isolation to communication, from stereotype to knowledge, from common interests to shared spaces and from diversity to enrichment. Each linchpin is grounded in specific goals and measures, and has a set of indicators to measure the cities achievements. New actions that are taken up in the plan include training

for city staff on non-discrimination, a school curriculum that reflects the diversity of the city, better recognition of academic qualifications and ‘anti-rumour’ agents who actively counter negative stereotypes on specific groups in the city.

The city of Barcelona announced that it will coordinate the implementation of the plan over all its districts and areas of work and to monitor the achievements based on the 116 indicators in biannual plans.

More information on the “Pla Interculturalitat” can be found at www.interculturalitat.cat. The English version can be downloaded at: <http://tinyurl.com/2by6vru>.



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Cities participate in European conference on homelessness

A number of cities from the EUROCITIES Working Group Housing, Working Group Homelessness and NLAO (Network of Local Active Inclusion Observatory) participated in a recent high-level conference on “Mutual Learning on Active Inclusion and Homelessness” hosted by the European Commission. The purpose of the event was to discuss active

inclusion strategies for dealing with homelessness and housing with a wide range of stakeholders, including European, national and local policy-makers that have implemented active inclusion strategies.

During the workshops, the city of Vienna and the city of Stockholm presented their integrated strategies

to address housing exclusion and homelessness and explained why these are important to building cohesive and sustainable societies. The conference was held in Brussels on the 5-6 May.

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Deadline	Description	Other information
30.07.10	<p>Restructuring, well-being at work and financial participation</p> <p>To cover grants to promote the development and dissemination of better expertise and capabilities among the actors concerned in the areas of anticipating, preparing for and providing a socially acceptable response when economic restructuring occurs.</p>	<p>http://tinyurl.com/32basmo Call for Proposals VP/2010/013</p>
11.08.10	<p>Pilot Project on Preventing Elder Abuse</p> <p>To support an initiative examining how existing recommendations and charters at national and European level on the rights of older people in need of long-term care and assistance can be implemented and how this process can be supported.</p>	<p>http://tinyurl.com/2vrb9c8 Call for Proposals VP/2010/015</p>
19.08.10	<p>Pilot projects on employment of persons with autism spectrum disorders</p> <p>Grants will be for projects which demonstrate innovative practices in actual employment settings in the open labour market that can help develop policies for employment and social integration of people with ASD.</p>	<p>http://tinyurl.com/34x7svr Call for Proposals VP/2010/017</p>
31.08.10	<p>Call for proposals for social experimentation</p> <p>A call for proposals seeking to promote social experimentation as a source of innovation in the social policies falling within the open method of coordination applied to social protection and social inclusion (the social OMC) in the European Union.</p>	<p>http://tinyurl.com/2vcs8or Call for Proposals VP/2010/007</p>

Date / Place	Name of Event	More information
20-21 September 2010 Newcastle, UK	<p>Working Group Homelessness</p> <p>Peer-review for cities strategies against homelessness.</p>	www.inclusivecities.eu
30 Sept - 1 Oct 2010 Newcastle, UK	<p>EUROCITIES 2010 Cities against Poverty and Social Exclusion: Child Poverty</p> <p>Organised as part of the 2010 campaign for combating poverty and social exclusion.</p>	www.inclusivecities.eu
11-12 October 2010 Brussels, Belgium	<p>Social Affairs Forum</p> <p>Meeting to discuss the outcomes from our activities during the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion. These recommendations will be submitted to the European Institutions in December. Commissioner Andor is invited to participate at this meeting.</p>	www.inclusivecities.eu

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