



# Inclusive Cities for Europe\_NEWS

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PREPARED BY EUROCITIES UNDER THE 'INCLUSIVE CITIES FOR EUROPE PROGRAMME'

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## Opportunities, Access and Solidarity in 21st century Europe - the renewed Social Agenda of the European Union

On 2 July, the European Commission has published its "Renewed Social Agenda". With this comprehensive package of proposals, the European Commission reacts to a number of developments which are changing our society, such as globalisation, technological change, demographic change, immigration and climate change. These trends have a massive impact on the social situation in Europe. The renewed Social Agenda is an effort to adapt EU policies so that they help Europe's society to cope with the changing circumstances.

The renewed social agenda is based on three goals:

- to create more **opportunities** for EU citizens, in particular through generating more and better jobs and facilitating mobility.
- to improve access to good quality education, social protection, health care and services.
- to demonstrate **solidarity** with those who are affected negatively by change, between generations, regions, rich and poor.

To achieve these goals, the renewed Social Agenda presents a bundle of 19 initiatives, including proposals for new EU legislation and a strengthening of EU policy instruments in the following fields: Children and youth, employment, mobility, health, social inclusion and social services, fighting discrimination.

One of the suggestions is a proposal for a new EU Directive on Equal Treatment. It says that discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation is prohibited by both the public and private sector in all areas of social protection. This includes social security and health care, social benefits, education and access to and supply of goods and services which are available to the public including housing. With this Directive, which complements existing anti-discrimination legislation in the field of employment, the Commission aims at achieving legal protection to all forms of discrimination in all areas of life. Amongst the further documents included in the package are a proposal for a Directive on cross-border healthcare, a Green Paper "Education and Mobility", and suggestions for re-inforcing the Open Method of Coordination for Social Protection and Social Inclusion. It also includes the first Biannual Report on Social Services of General Interest.

The EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum will discuss the implications of the various proposals and reports for cities at its next meeting in November and develop appropriate responses and activities.

[The renewed Social Agenda and all related documents can be accessed here.](#)

*This newsletter is supported by the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013). The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.*



*Dear Reader,*

*The weeks before the summer break in Brussels have kept us busy mainly due to two dates. On 1 July, the French government took over the Presidency of the European Council for the second half of the year. One of the first initiatives of the incoming President was to present his proposal for a “European Immigration Pact”. Whilst surely at first a question of national policies, the pact, and in particular its tough stand against irregular migration, will have a significant impact on cities. Over the last years, EUROCITIES has repeatedly referred to the problematic side effects of rigorous admission procedures, when refused immigrants are left without support in the cities and see no way out but illegal work. In this respect, the current proposals of the European Commission include some positive elements, such as an acceptance of the need to provide even undocumented migrants with access to services, including health and education. We expect that cities as main providers of such services are consulted in discussions on the way forward.*

*On 2 July, the European Commission presented its long announced Renewed Social Agenda, giving Member States and stakeholders a huge pile of reports, proposals and other documents to digest. Whilst it contains some rather progressive documents such as the proposed Directive on Equal Treatment and some parts of the Green Paper on Education and Migration, the general response of stakeholders in Brussels is rather guarded. However, it holds some references to the importance of local authorities in implementing and further developing EU social inclusion process. There are various opportunities ahead to raise the voice of cities in these processes, and we’re looking forward to the discussions in the various EUROCITIES Working Groups and in the Social Affairs Forum about these matters.*

*On the next pages you find a brief overview of the current debates and what is coming up. The illustrations in this edition are centred on the theme “urban glue- what holds a city together”. On this, we wish you a pleasant summer and sunny holidays,*

*Your Inclusive Cities team*

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## Recent EU Developments

*Priorities of the French EU Presidency in the field of social policy*

On 1 July, France took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Its core priorities for the coming six months are energy, including the promotion of nuclear power, climate change, defence, immigration and asylum issues and the Mediterranean Union. Although social policy is not among these main priorities, there will be several high profile events at which important issues will be discussed.

One of these issues are Social Services of General Interest (SSGIs) and the problems their providers face in Europe. To this end, the Presidency organises an event on 28/29 October in Paris with a view to raise awareness of these problems among policy makers and key stakeholders. Another important event is the 7th European Round Table on Poverty and Exclusion, which will be held on 15/16 October in Marseille. It will address active inclusion in light of the Commission recommendations and will also contribute to the preparation of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010.

During the informal meeting of the EU labour and social policy ministers in Chantilly, France (11 July), the French labour, social relations, family and solidarity Minister, Xavier Bertrand highlighted France’s commitment to relaunch Social Europe by focusing on the anti-discrimination Directive, European Works Councils Directive and workers’ mobility.

Further information: [www.eu2008.fr](http://www.eu2008.fr)

*Returns Directive adopted by European Parliament*

On 18 June the European Parliament adopted the Returns Directive with 367 to 206 votes. This new piece of legislation sets out common stages and minimum standards for procedures to follow a decision to return irregular migrants. However, the document is rather technical and does not address the issue of whether a person illegally residing in a country can be regularised or not.

The Directive foresees that a person subject to a legal decision for departure has 7 to 30 days to leave the country (the so-called “voluntary return”). For undocumented migrants not leaving the country during this

time, a maximum period of custody of six months, extendable in some cases to 18 months, is set by the Directive. For persons who were held in custody, the Directive also imposes a re-entry ban which can be effective for up to five years.

The Directive was rejected by Green and left wing MEPs as not being in compliance with principles of proportionality, fairness and humanity. The European Council on refugees and exiles (ECRE) qualified the return Directive as a step towards the codification of the "harsh practices and policies" within the EU. Referring to Europe's own history that had seen millions of Europeans emigrating to America, several Latin American leaders bashed the Directive as a barbarous and racist "directive of shame" at their Mercosur summit.

Member States will have two years to adopt the Directive. Concerning the detention periods, Member States such as France, Italy or Spain will be allowed to keep up their less rigid regulations while EU-members whose legislation does not set any limits to detention of irregular migrants such as Estonia, Finland, the Netherlands or Sweden, will have to adapt their national legislation to comply with the Directive. The Directive will not be implemented in the UK and Ireland, who had not opted in.



### *European Immigration policy: New proposals and agreements*

The summer is proving to be eventful in the field of European policy on immigration and asylum policy. The newly approved new Vice-President of the European Commission, Jacques Barrot, presented two Communications, one on immigration and one on asylum, while the French Presidency of the European Council presented its "Pact for Immigration and Asylum" at an Informal Council meeting as one of its priority projects. All three documents point in a similar direction: They stress the importance of better management of migration and better integration policies, but first and foremost, they document a further shift towards a more rigorous migration control and return policy.

### *Commission Communication on immigration "A Common Migration Policy for Europe"*

The Communication entitled "[A Common Migration Policy for Europe: Principles, actions and tools](#)" sets out common principles under three headlines that should lead to a European Immigration policy. Under "prosperity" the Communication encourages Member States to develop clear rules for entry and stay and a common visa policy; to improve provisions for integration and to monitor their outcomes. It also proposes to develop "national profiles" on labour market needs and immigration patterns in order to better match immigrants' skills with economic demands. Under the heading "solidarity", principles to stimulate exchange and cooperation between Member States and with third countries are listed. The last section, "security" foresees further development of existing measures of border control (FRONTEX, EUROSUR) and the fight against illegal immigration. Member States are also asked to avoid large-scale regularisations. Apart from these measures that mainly serve to implement stricter migration regimes, the Communication also requests EU Member States to guarantee access to basic services like education and health care for undocumented migrants and victims of human trafficking.

### *Commission Communication "A Policy Plan on Asylum"*

The Communication "[A Policy Plan on Asylum](#)" sets up a road map towards a Common European Asylum System by 2012. It suggests to amend the existing Directives on reception conditions, asylum procedures and qualification (for international protection) it proposes to develop common procedures and statuses, and a better quality of reception in the Member States. The Communication stipulates more solidarity and a better burden sharing among Member States. It also raises the possibility of having exceptions to the Dublin rules for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application. Finally, the Communication suggests creating a European Asylum Support Office to foster practical cooperation concerning asylum through training, advice and information.

### *The European Council's "European Pact on Immigration and Asylum"*

After more than half a year of preparation, at the Informal Council meeting in Cannes, on July 7, the draft of the 'European Pact on Immigration and Asylum' has been officially presented. The text is one of the central projects of the French Council Presidency. It recognises the present reality and future of migration to the EU, but at the same time underlines that "the EU has nevertheless not the means to welcome all the migrants who hope to find a better life here". It therefore defines selective migration in accordance with the (economic) interests of European Member States as the way forward.

Thus, and very much in accordance with the two

Commission Communications on Immigration and Asylum, the “immigration pact” calls for a reinforcement of border control, for a stronger cooperation with third-countries in migration control and development, and for a common European asylum system with harmonised procedures and statuses towards 2012. Also similar to the latest Commission Communication on Asylum, the paper proposes to set up a Central Asylum Office to facilitate information exchange between Member States. Finally, it calls for a case by case approach to regularisation.

This pact, which has been prepared during the last 9 months or so, has been welcomed by the assembled national ministers. This includes the Spanish and Scandinavian representatives, whose governments had criticised previous versions as being too restrictive, particularly rejecting the ideas of mandatory integration courses and the ban of regularisations. As a reaction to this, the respective parts of the pact have been eliminated from the current version of the document. All in all, the “European Pact on Immigration and Asylum” is now not so much presenting new ideas and concepts but reflecting recent European policy developments towards a stronger harmonisation, based on migration control and a greater commitment to integration. It is expected to be officially adopted at the EU Summit on 15 October 2008.

#### *Improving access to basic financial services - conclusions from the conference in Brussels, 28 May*

Today, almost 20% of adults in the EU-15 do not have a basic bank account. This share increases to 47% in the new Member States. Many more do not have access to financial services, such as credit, and have no savings.

Access to basic services, including financial services, is one of the key aspects of participation of an individual in economic and social life. Therefore, improving access to basic financial services is an important aspect of overall social inclusion policies of the EU Member States.

In order to support policy making in the field of financial inclusion, the European Commission has presented a study on “improving access to basic financial services”. It examines the levels of financial exclusion around Europe (14 countries). The analysis focuses on the relation between financial exclusion and social exclusion and also on the link between financial exclusion and over-indebtedness. The study goes on to analyse the current and potential role of financial services in the fight against social exclusion. To this end, it provides a review of various instruments available (codes of conduct, charters, financial services legislation, etc.) and discusses possible policy responses at the EU and national levels. It also discusses the possible role of the financial services sector by focusing on the notion of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The results of the study and various background materials

are available at: <http://www.fininc.eu>

#### *EU Research Platform Social Polis invites contributions*

The EU research platform on cities and social cohesion “Social Polis” is now online. Its aim is to act as a bridge between scientists, policymakers, practitioners and the general public. There are various ways for cities to become involved: You can contribute to the online Forum discussions and you can post an announcement or article. There are also small grants available to produce a paper (max 3000 €), and you can also apply for a grant to hold a workshop on a theme related to the project (max 10 000€). Proposals must focus on questions around social cohesion and involve academic and non-academic actors. Further information at [www.socialpolis.eu](http://www.socialpolis.eu).



#### *Consultation process started on Green Paper on Migration, Mobility and the EU education systems*

The Green Paper “Migration and Mobility - challenges and opportunities for EU education systems” was published by the European Commission on 3 July. The purpose of a Green Paper is to stimulate discussion and to develop policies. The new paper looks for responses to the gaps between the educational achievements of children with a migrant background and their peers. The variation of Member States’ achievements in creating equal educational opportunities for migrant children also seems to point to a huge potential for mutual learning. In the search for appropriate answers to these challenges, a main question addressed by the Green Paper is whether a Directive dating from 1977 and addressing only children from intra-EU-migrants should be updated or if softer policy tools based on communication and exchange of good

practice should be used.

The Green Paper is backed by a synthesis of research findings and statistics and provides a solid basis for further discussion. It names segregated school settings, unequal access to educational resources, the challenge of increased diversity of mother tongues, appropriate teaching skills and collaboration with parents and community organisations as key issues. It also provides an extensive list of policy responses developed in different contexts, such as magnet schools, homework centres or approaches of intercultural education.

The process launched by the European Commission is important for



EUROCITIES for two reasons. Firstly, education is one of the most important strategic resources for social inclusion. Secondly, even in centralised national education systems, local authorities play a growing role in finding innovative approaches, e.g. by opening up schools to the surrounding

neighbourhood or by finding ways to better involve parents. EUROCIITIES will respond to this consultation which is open until the end of 2008.

### *Commission publishes 5th Interim Report on Economic and Social Cohesion*

On 18 June, the European Commission published its fifth Progress Report on Economic and Social Cohesion. It consists of two parts: the results of a public consultation on the future of the cohesion policy after 2013 and an update on cohesion and growth in European regions.

The results of the public consultation show that there was a broad consensus on the need for Cohesion Policy after 2013. The submissions stressed in particular the need to further reduce the disparities between the poorer and richer regions and to reinforce the link between cohesion policy and other sectoral policies of the EU. The participants of the consultation also called for greater involvement of local and regional authorities. EUROCIITIES responded to this consultation and asked, among other things, for a chapter on urban areas in all future reports on regional policy.

The report gives a positive signal about cohesion in Europe by showing that disparities in terms of GDP, employment and unemployment rates have considerably narrowed. But the report also underlines that important differences in

regional economic structures remain and that more investment in education, training, research and innovation is necessary to help the poorer areas in catching-up.

[Please click here for a full version of the report and additional information.](#)

### *OPENCities: Openness and the competitive advantage of diversity*

OPENCities is a new European project that is being lead by Belfast City Council. It will include ten other partner cities from across the EU, as well as the British Council. The project will explore how immigration can significantly contribute to city success. It will try to answer, over a three year period, questions such as: How do we define what makes an 'open city'? What makes a city attractive to international populations? What policies would help us attract migrants, helping us become more economically competitive?

It aims to develop a common definition for openness for cities and help create an *Index of Openness*. This will in turn allow cities to carry out benchmarking and self-assessment. In the longer term the project will aim to establish an OPENCities kite-mark and create a wide network of OPENCities. The project is funded by URBACT - a European programme which aims to encourage the exchange of information and expertise among European cities on issues related to sustainable urban development. Belfast is currently finalising the cities participating in the project. So far, Madrid, Sofia, Dublin, and Vienna have agreed to take part in the initial six month development phase. Dusseldorf, Bilbao, Cardiff, Bucharest, Porto, Palermo and Poznan are possible partners for the full project beginning in October 2008.

For more information, contact Sarah Jayne Smith on +44 28 9027 0666 or email [smithsj@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:smithsj@belfastcity.gov.uk)



OPENCities



RECENT CALLS FOR PROPOSALS - DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

*Debates on Social Inclusion, in support of the reinforcement of the Open Method of Coordination on Social Protection and Social Inclusion - VP/2008/015, deadline: 18 August 2008.* For more information and documentation click [here](#).

*Projects contributing to the implementation of common principles on flexicurity in the framework of national reform programmes - VP/2008/008, deadline: 14 August 2008.* For more information and documentation click [here](#).

## EUROCITIES Developments

### *Raising the voice of cities in the Open Method of Coordination -conclusions from the national seminars*

Over the past three months, EUROCITIES has supported cities in getting involved in the preparation of the National Action Plans (NAPs) on Social Inclusion for the period 2008-2010. To this end, a series of national seminars have been held at which cities developed common positions and recommendations for their Ministries concerning priorities and governance arrangements in the fight against social exclusion. The seminars were organised in the UK (Leeds), Poland (Bydgoszcz) and in the Netherlands (Eindhoven) and their conclusions were submitted to the relevant Ministry in each of these countries. In addition, a European seminar produced recommendations that were submitted to the European Social Protection Committee, which brings together representatives of the 27 National Ministries and the European Commission.

In the UK, the discussions focused on the emergence of enclaves of poverty in inner urban areas which face multiple deprivation. The participants stressed that in order to address their problems, there is an urgent need to design well-coordinated and integrated measures.

The Polish seminar highlighted the need to better tackle the problems of long-term users of social services, as well as those related to social housing and coordination of the provision of social services between various agencies.

In the Netherlands, the seminar discussed the problems of a low take-up of welfare benefits and the need for more outreach activities by social services providers. The participants also highlighted such issues as overindebtedness among young people.

The participants of the European seminar underlined the complexity of problems faced by deprived urban areas and the need for more coordinated and integrated social service provision in these areas. The conclusions also highlighted the importance of partnerships both at the local level and between local and national level.

As a next step in this process to raise the voice of cities in the EU Social Inclusion Process, EUROCITIES will organise a Review Seminar in Brussels on 23 October 2008 at which city representatives and other experts will examine all 27 NAPs by reflecting on the consultation procedures and looking at their priorities and issues of implementation.

For further information contact [anna.drozd@eurocities.eu](mailto:anna.drozd@eurocities.eu)

### *Social Affairs Forum Steering Group reviews Forum performance*

The Steering Group of the EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum

met on 20 June in Rotterdam to review the activities of the Forum and the implementation of the Inclusive Cities Programme in the first half of the year, and to start a discussion about future priorities. For the autumn, two main SAF events are planned: On 23 October, a review seminar on the National Action Plans for Social Inclusion 2008-2010 will be held in Brussels. The aim is to see how the NAPs reflect cities' concerns and to assess the proposed governance arrangements. On November 5-7, the autumn Forum meeting will be held in Berlin in cooperation with the EUROCITIES Economic Development Forum, the theme is: "Employment policies in times of economic migration". For 2009, the Steering Group intends to keep the existing priorities (social inclusion, social services and integration/migration), whilst putting more emphasis on fighting poverty (in light of the European Year to combat poverty and exclusion 2010). The next Steering Group meeting is scheduled for 3 October in Rotterdam.

Further information: Aat Brand, Rotterdam, [a.brand@sozawe.rotterdam.nl](mailto:a.brand@sozawe.rotterdam.nl)



### *First meeting of EUROCITIES Working Group on Housing*

On 19 June, the EUROCITIES WG on Housing held its first meeting in Rotterdam. At the meeting, six cities gave an overview about their housing situation: Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, Rotterdam, Southampton and Vienna. Based on these inputs, a discussion was held about similarities and differences, and first ideas for future work of the group were raised. These included issues such as the challenges of demographic change for the housing sector, strategies to achieve affordable housing for all, prevention of poverty neighbourhoods, energy efficiency and prevention of fuel poverty. As a next step, each WG member will produce a position paper on the situation of housing in his/her city and point at priority elements of

work. A second point on the agenda was a contribution by Sigrun Kabisch of the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research Leipzig, who presented preliminary findings of a study on demographic change and urban housing markets. The next meeting of the Working Group will take place in Vienna on September 29th-30th.

Further information: Wolfgang Förster, Vienna, [wolfgang.foerster@wien.gv.at](mailto:wolfgang.foerster@wien.gv.at)

### *EUROCITIES Working Group Migration and Integration discussed social inclusion at the neighbourhood level*

At the meeting of the WG Migration and Integration on 11-13 June, experts on integration from different national and local contexts visited Dutch neighbourhoods. Alongside a site visit to the Transvaal neighbourhood in The Hague, topics such as culture-led regeneration and the Hague's approach to community involvement were discussed with practitioners from the municipality and an Imam of a Euroislam-inspired Surinamese Mosque. During a visit to Utrecht the group met "Saluti", the city's advisory council on diversity and integration, and discussed the role of the council in providing advice to the municipality. The next WG meeting will take place in Barcelona in early October.

Further information: John England, Leeds, [john.england@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:john.england@leeds.gov.uk)

### *Intercultural Cities programme: cities visit each other during summer and exchange practices on how to foster intercultural dialogue*

As part of a strand of the Intercultural Cities programme (a joint action of the European Commission and the Council of Europe aiming at fostering intercultural dialogue in cities), 23 members of the EUROCITIES network have committed to send politicians and young persons ("ambassadors") to meet with peers from another city and to share concrete practices and experiences on how to foster intercultural dialogue in cities. In May, ambassadors from Belfast met with colleagues from Berlin during the Berlin Carnival of Cultures.

This four day festival, fully inclusive of all age ranges, social backgrounds and religious beliefs, encompassed approximately 4500 direct participants, 800 000 spectators and 105 floats. The Berlin visit made it possible for representatives from Belfast to explore through a series of meetings with young participants, politicians and officers, the operational and cultural environment in which the Carnival is implemented, as well as witnessing at first hand its significance within the cultural life of the city. The Berlin visit gave the Belfast delegation an opportunity to gain an insight into how organisations prepare for the carnival and the processes they adopt. It was a visible manifestation of how young people can be brought together through art, music and dance when there is a

common purpose in so doing. It also demonstrated the fact that language is not a barrier and that creativity helps people to overcome obstacles.

Most ambassadors' visits will take place during the summer 2008. Concrete findings and policy recommendations to cities and to the European institutions will be prepared in the Autumn and presented at the final conference of the EUROCITIES strand of the Intercultural Cities programme in Amsterdam in March 2009.

[For more information please click here.](#)

### *EUROCITIES is a partner of the DIVERSITY UNITES congress in Dortmund*

The DIVERSITY UNITES congress "The Arts and Intercultural Dialogue in European cities: experiences, concepts, perspectives" will take place in Dortmund, Germany, from 3rd to 5th September 2008. The congress will present and discuss concepts, structures, models and core projects from different cities and regions in Europe. It is open to interested experts from Germany and abroad and will be held in German and English.

[For more information please click here.](#)



### *EUROCITIES prepares background study on the Role of Cities in Managing Economic Migration*

EUROCITIES has started to work on a study on "The role of cities in managing economic migration". The study will draw on work of several EUROCITIES working groups and member cities on this subject. The next joint meeting of the EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum and Economic Development Forum on 5-7 November will serve to present and discuss the findings of the study.

The search for economic opportunities has always been a driving force for mobility and migration. Within the EU, the free movement of labour is one of the basic freedoms and has a major impact on fostering economic development. This area of intra-EU-mobility entered a new stage when ten new EU Member States joined the EU in 2004 and two more in 2007, bringing a net migration of

roughly 1 000 000 people from new Member States to those EU15-countries that had lifted restrictions for entry and work. In times when political, cultural and economic boundaries, as well as spatial distances within Europe loose importance, migration also takes on new forms. For instance, it is likely that new economic migration within the EU will take a more temporary form than previous migration movements. More and more people might have various cities in which they feel at home and between which they frequently travel.

The main purpose of the study is to identify good practice in the management of economic migration at the city level in access to services and employment but also concerning the governance of migration flows. With more and more Member States gradually lifting their restrictions for citizens from new EU Member States to take up work, this exercise should be a useful tool for cities to learn from each other. Based on the European exchange of local experiences, the study will serve to develop recommendations and feed into EUROCITIES policy work.

The study will also try to capture the situation in Eastern European cities, who, so far, have mainly lost people to their own countries' capital cities and Western European cities but who may, in the mid-term, also benefit from return migration and "brain circulation".

Cities who would like to join this study exercise are invited to contact [dirk.gebhardt@eurocities.eu](mailto:dirk.gebhardt@eurocities.eu).

*Website of CONNECTIONS Project is online*

The EU funded project CONNECTIONS (Organisational Approaches to Tackling the Complexities of Multiple Deprivation at City Level) has launched its website: [www.connectionsprogress.eu](http://www.connectionsprogress.eu). On the website, you can find information about the project and its partners.

Further information: Kris Luijsterburg, EU Project Officer, city of Rotterdam, [K.Luijsterburg@sozawe.rotterdam.nl](mailto:K.Luijsterburg@sozawe.rotterdam.nl)

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## News from the cities

### *Berlin Integration Strategy - updated version*

Berlin has published an English version of its city-wide integration policy. The 50-page publication is entitled "Encouraging Diversity - Strengthening Cohesion: Integration Policy in Berlin 2007 - 2011". It names the vision, the objectives and the strategies of the Berlin integration policy, defines strategic projects and provides a set of indicators against which the integration policy can be assessed.

The [English version of the integration strategy](#) can be downloaded from the website of the Berlin Representative for Integration and Migration. There is also [more English language information](#) available on the Representative for Integration and Migration.

### *London Child Poverty Commission launches final report - Capital Gains*

In 1998, the UK Government set ambitious targets to halve child poverty in the UK by 2010, and to eradicate it by 2020. While child poverty levels have been reduced nationally, rates in London remain higher than elsewhere in the UK. Four out of ten children - 650 000 - are living in poverty in London, after housing costs are taken into account. Families are more likely to be deeper in poverty and more likely to be without a job. They are also more likely to have fewer choices about their housing and more likely to face multiple disadvantages.

In response to this challenge, the Mayor and London

Councils set up the London Child Poverty Commission in February 2006, to identify the specific causes and challenges behind child poverty in London and to make recommendations on the way forward.

After two years of extensive research and consultation, the Commission has now published its final report "Capital Gains", summarising its findings and setting out a range of recommendations to tackle this problem. The key recommendations focus on:

- Making work pay for more families.
- Improving training and development opportunities for parents.
- Services working together to support parents in finding jobs and staying in jobs.
- Improving opportunities for families in social housing.
- Changes in tax credits and benefits to reduce child poverty.
- Improving children's educational chances.
- Addressing mental health and employment issues.
- Reducing costs, for instance childcare and transport.

The Commission will be publishing an Action Plan for London later this year that will provide more detail in terms of how these recommendations will be taken forward.

Further information and an electronic copy of the report is available at: [www.londonchildpoverty.org.uk](http://www.londonchildpoverty.org.uk)



## EUROCITIES and migration: Promoting good governance under difficult conditions

The relationship between cities and migration is so close that cities without migration are hardly imaginable. Cities have always been dependent on immigration from outside in order to grow and to produce economic and social innovation. Conversely, the most dynamic cities are often the ones that attract the most migrants from all over the world while cities who are not open and diverse are doomed to stagnation and decline. Facing constantly evolving migration patterns and political contexts, a perspective on migration as part and parcel of city life, and as an opportunity for city development, has always been at the heart of EUROCITIES work on migration and integration. Since EUROCITIES was founded in 1986, the presence of migrants in European cities has developed into a general feature of each European city, also beyond the classical European immigration countries. Factors like the enlargement of the European Union as a zone of free movement, the development of common policies, e.g. in the field of asylum, but also the diversification of migration flows and the persistent need for labour force have contributed to this development. When countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece became immigration countries in the late 1980s, in particular their gateway cities attracted migrants. For instance, between 1996 and 2004, the share of non-nationals in Barcelona rose from 2% to 12%, in Athens it increased from 8% to more than 25%. In the same period, cities with a longer history of immigration, like London and Paris, have transformed into veritable “cosmopolises” whose degree of diversity was unimaginable some 20 years ago.

As a result of the further expansion of the European Union, it is very probable that Eastern European cities will take the same route. In addition to third-country citizens coming from countries like Ecuador, Morocco, Ukraine or China into European cities, the free movement of persons within the EU constitutes another vector of change. Be it for economic reasons, for educational purposes or for personal development, a growing number of Europeans are on the move and constitute another, often semi-permanent population group in European cities.

Urban areas host roughly 75% of the European population and an even higher share of the total migrant population. By now, it is common sense to say that urban areas play a key role in integrating migrants and that the local level is

where settlement literally “takes place”. In recognising this, cities provide accommodation for newcomers, support migrants’ access to decent housing and health care, foster integration in the labour market and hence actively contribute to the social inclusion of migrants into host societies. However, towards a more and more diverse population, it is often not enough just to provide special services for migrants. Instead, a lot of cities put effort into opening up to migrants and developing their intercultural competence, e.g. in the case of their services where migration and integration are often “mainstreamed”.

While recognising the enrichment and challenge that lies in their adaptation to an increasingly diverse population, the large urban areas represented by EUROCITIES are often confronted with increasingly restrictive national legislation regarding immigration and asylum. As a consequence of these policies, cities are witnessing a growing number of undocumented immigrants and refused residence and asylum claimants among their inhabitants. To guarantee a “right to the city” for these people who are deprived of any legal access to national support systems is a recurring issue for cities.

Immigration and asylum policy is still the competence of national governments, although, since the Tampere Council in 1999, the European Union is working on the harmonisation and development of a European framework concerning asylum, immigration and integration. The 2004 Hague

programme defined the catalogue of “Common Basic Principles” as a “non-binding but thoughtful guide”. It initiated a process to help Member States to judge and assess their efforts and to develop integration policy in interaction with the EU, the regional and the local level. Tools such as the “Handbook of Integration”, the upcoming “European Website of Integration” and funding schemes helped to implement this process.

In their 2004 “EUROCITIES Contribution to Good Governance Concerning the Integration of immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers”, EUROCITIES’ members not only take a firm stand against the contradictions arising between national legislation and the practical challenges of everyday life at city level, but also recognise their share of responsibility concerning the integration of migrants. They commit themselves to fight against racism and discrimination, to promote the participation of migrants and to guarantee their access to health services, education and housing. As



one key point, cities oblige themselves to establish minimum standards concerning the reception of Asylum seekers including access to education, language and vocational courses already during the procedure.

Since this key publication, EUROCIITIES has increasingly developed collaboration with EU Institutions. With the organisation of the Integrating Cities Conferences EUROCIITIES has become engaged in a partnership with DG Freedom, Security and Justice to assess the implementation of the Common Basic Principles on Integration at the local level. Furthermore, EUROCIITIES members are collecting good practices on local integration for the European Website on Integration. Another recent activity in the field is the project "Benchmarking Integration Governance" that is coordinated by EUROCIITIES. In this project, the role of EUROCIITIES as a

platform for the transnational exchange of experience, innovation and good practice is interpreted in a new way. Cities' performances in integration are systematically reviewed and compared by visiting peers coming from other cities.

Supporting cities' work on integration is also an important element of EUROCIITIES' partnership with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities under the title "Inclusive Cities for Europe". In this context, EUROCIITIES is currently putting together a study on the role of cities in managing economic migration within the EU.

In all these activities, migration is not regarded as a threat but as a stimulus for cities to develop further, and to work together to improve good governance in the field of integration and a better reception of migrants.

## Events/conferences

<b>Diversity in Mental Health and Wellbeing</b>	7-9 August 2008	Aalborg, Denmark
The Mental Health Europe Conference 2008 is inspired by the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. It will be an opportunity to see and discuss how intercultural dialogue can be used as a means to create and achieve mental health and mental well-being. Workshop themes include: the philosophical dimensions of culture and diversity for mental health and well-being, the cultural dimensions within the different health systems, cultural differences which exist in practice among professionals operating in the health, social and justice systems, and the provision of care, treatment, rehabilitation, recovery and employment for people with mental health problems from different cultural backgrounds or origins. Website: <a href="http://www.mhe-aalborg.dk">www.mhe-aalborg.dk</a>		
<b>Improving health system efficiency: Achieving better value for money</b>	17 September 2008	Brussels, Belgium
An overarching aim of this joint European Commission and OECD conference is to assess the policies targeted at increasing efficiency in health care systems and thus contributing to their sustainability in the longer term. Please click for <a href="#">more information</a> and the <a href="#">conference programme</a> .		
<b>Conference "DiverCity: European Cities for an Inclusive Society" – European Coalition of Cities Against Racism (ECCAR)</b>	18-20 September 2008	Bologna, Italy
The Conference aims at identifying best strategies for cities to combat racism and discrimination on the basis of the Ten-Point-Plan of Action, which is the key document adopted by ECCAR to promote an active role of Cities in this important task. The conference programme and organisational information are available on the <a href="#">conference website</a> .		
<b>Integrated pathways to active social and economic inclusion (European Commission workshop)</b>	8 October 2008	Brussels, Belgium
This workshop is part of the European Week for Cities and Regions. It will present examples of active social and economic inclusion measures implemented at local and regional level and will discuss these in the framework of common principles elaborated at EU level in this area. It looks in particular at approaches that tackle multiple deprivation in an integrated way, combining adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality social services.		
<b>Seventh European Round Table on Poverty and Exclusion</b>	15-16 October 2008	Marseille, France
The Seventh European Round Table on Poverty and Exclusion will be held under the French EU Presidency and will focus on active inclusion and preparations for the European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010. <a href="#">Click here for more information</a> .		
<b>Second European Forum on Social Services of General Interest (SSGIs)</b>	28-29 October 2008	Paris, France
The Forum aims at raising awareness of the importance of SSGI and problems faced by various stakeholders. It will be a mixture of plenary session and workshops, and the main topics envisaged for discussions include: challenges faced by different countries in the field of SSGI, efficiency and quality of social and health services, legal framework, the role of local authorities and user participation.		
<b>Conference on Territorial Cohesion and the Future of Cohesion policy</b>	30-31 October 2008	Paris, France
This conference organized by the French Presidency of the EU, in association with the Committee of the Regions, the European Commission and the Association of French Regions, will debate "territorial cohesion" and the future of EU Cohesion Policy after 2013.		
<b>Second European Forum on Demography</b>	24-25 November 2008	Brussels, Belgium
The Second European Forum on Demography will focus on family policies and active ageing. <a href="#">Click here for more information</a> .		
<b>Forum des Villes/Cities Forum</b>	2-3 December 2008	Montpellier, France
The Forum will focus on such questions as sustainable cities, climate change and development of tools to implement the Leipzig Charter.		

## EUROCITIES events

<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Social Inclusion</b>	<i>25-26 September (tbc)</i>	<i>Tallinn, Estonia</i>
The next meeting of the WG will focus on discussing its work programme for 2008 and 2009 as well as on local inclusion strategies in cities.		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Education and Inclusion</b>	<i>25-26 September, 2008</i>	<i>Malmö, Sweden</i>
During the first day, the WG meeting will look at Malmö Education Policy and interesting practices. The second day's discussions will concentrate on 2 reports (Pre-school Education and Unqualified School leavers) and discussion papers on Culture and Education, Adult Education and Quality of Education.		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Health and Wellbeing</b>	<i>29 September 2008</i>	<i>Bristol, UK</i>
The next WG meeting will focus on preventive strategies for health and well-being. It looks in particular at actions of Bristol City Council to promote improved health in their city. The programme explores some of the issues raised in the 'EUROCITIES Contribution to Good Governance concerning Health and Well-being' document and will give an opportunity to discuss how the ideas can be put into practice with the aim of producing a practical action guide.		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Homelessness</b>	<i>10-12 September 2008</i>	<i>Utrecht, Netherlands</i>
At its September meeting, the WG will look at the approach to tackle homelessness in Utrecht. It will also discuss the update of a comparative report on cities strategies against homelessness.		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Integration</b>	<i>Early October, tbc</i>	<i>Barcelona, Spain</i>
At this meeting the WG will, among other topics, discuss the ongoing project on "benchmarking integration governance" and discuss activities at the local level related to the year of intercultural dialogue.		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Housing</b>	<i>29-30 September</i>	<i>Vienna, Austria</i>
At the Vienna meeting, the WG will discuss cities main challenges and priorities in the field of housing. A workshop session will be held on strategies to provide affordable housing and its relation to social cohesion.		
<b>National Action Plans on Social Inclusion 2008-2010 (NAPs) – Evaluation seminar</b>	<i>23 October 2008</i>	<i>Brussels, Belgium</i>
The event, organised in the framework of the Inclusive Cities for Europe programme, will examine the NAPs from an urban perspective by looking at priority setting, consultation mechanisms and implementation issues.		
<b>EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum / Economic Development Forum – joint conference</b>	<i>5-7 November</i>	<i>Berlin, Germany</i>
The Berlin meeting of the Social Affairs Forum will be held jointly with the Economic Development Forum. It will have a thematic focus on Economic Migration and integration, in particular in the field of employment policy.		
<b>Annual General Meeting of EUROCITIES</b>	<i>26-29 November 2008</i>	<i>The Hague, Netherlands</i>
The theme of the conference and of the AGM is "Building Active Cities - modern citizenship and integrated governance". The conference will also further explore the "Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities". More information: <a href="http://www.eurocities2008.eu">http://www.eurocities2008.eu</a>		

**Inclusive Cities for Europe\_NEWS**  
is published by EUROCITIES Brussels Office.

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