



# Inclusive Cities for Europe\_NEWS

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On the Inclusive Cities web-page <http://www.eurocities.eu/content/inclusivocities/inclusivocities.php> you can now download all the reports we have produced so far, including a series of publications on demographic change, economic migration and homelessness.

## Tackling the impacts of the recession on local social policies - EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum held a political dialogue

Aware of the challenges faced by city administrations in the wake of the economic recession, EUROCITIES brought together leading politicians and city officers on June 18 for the first in a series of political dialogues on local social policies.

At the initiative of Ulf Kristersson, Vice-mayor of Stockholm and chair of EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum, this new series of debates will increase the scope of the Forum's political work. With Paul Tilsley, Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council as well as politicians from Vilnius, Malmo, Newcastle, Southampton, Gothenburg and The Hague, the event saw a series of interventions about the local impact of the economic downturn, specifically its consequences for cities' social policies.

By most accounts, the situation facing cities differs from one to the next. Dublin and Vilnius, for example, have been hit from the outset, while others, such as Malmo, which benefits from the proximity of Copenhagen, has yet to feel the full force of the recession. In contrast, the diversified economies of Stockholm and Birmingham have proved a robust safeguard against the onset of urban decline. Councillor Ivan White from Southampton touched on a common concern of all cities, when he emphasised the need to bring forward capital spending to fund major developments in the absence of private sector investment. Several representatives also remarked that better, more accurate information about apprenticeships and training programmes was essential to facilitate school leavers' transition into the labour market.

Looking closer at the social sector, there is a growing awareness among city administrations of the need to see social services as an investment into cohesion and productivity because of the expected cuts in municipal budgets. Equally important is the need to find a balance between supporting people who were made redundant because of the recession whilst still attending to the needs of the long-term unemployed. Councillor Liz Langfield from Newcastle underlined the socio-psychological consequences of the crisis, the dangers of collective frustration, increased violence and, as evident in the results of the recent European Parliament election, the resurgence of extremist parties.

Clearly there is no panacea to the economic crisis but the politicians stressed that their capacity to respond to such challenges could be improved through, for example, increased partnerships with NGOs and cost-effective service delivery and provision. A view shared by many administrations is that simplified rules to access European Structural Funds are essential if cities are to lead innovative projects that effect social change. The next political dialogue will be held in Warsaw on October 8, and EUROCITIES is currently developing a database of good practices on social inclusion (soon to be available on the internet) to further the application of our work. The results of these dialogues will shape the future direction of EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum.



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**Dear Reader,**

The last few weeks in Brussels and in EUROCITIES have been dominated by two issues: the elections to the European Parliament and the debate about the recession and recovery plans. The low turnout and the worryingly high level of extremist votes among the electorate are a clear signal to us that more and better communication about social Europe and the benefits of social solidarity is needed. Equally important are clear and unambiguous signals provided by political leaders in support of social justice and inclusion. Much of the work carried out by our members is exceptional, and to highlight their professional calibre we are collecting examples of social inclusion (through our Working Groups on Employment and on Social Inclusion) which will form the basis for a database of good practices to be launched in Autumn. Meanwhile, discussions at European level about the EU's next five year programme on migration and integration have begun, and EUROCITIES is calling for a clear recognition of the benefits of migration and a stronger emphasis on measures supporting social inclusion and intercultural dialogue. You will find detailed information about these developments and more in the following pages.

In our last edition, we asked you for feedback about the format of this newsletter. Thanks to your valuable comments, we will change the format of future editions to suit your demands for a sleeker, more readable newsletter that can be easily scanned. We are particularly pleased to see that many of you forward it to colleagues in your social departments, (if not to those in departments linked to social services) as an essential part of our mission is to reach out to a broad community of city officers.

The images featured in this edition were produced by Gael Turine ([gael@gaelturine.com](mailto:gael@gaelturine.com)) a Brussels based photographer, as part of a temporary exposition on the wrought-iron fence of the parc Royal in Brussels ([www.cestdemain.eu](http://www.cestdemain.eu)). Featuring 25 portraits of children and adults who have all recovered from cancer, the exposition looks at how their childhood experiences of the condition continue to shape their everyday lives.

For now, we wish you all a nice summer break, and we hope to see you at one of the forthcoming events.

*Your Inclusive Cities team*

## Recent EU Developments

### European Commission presents plans for employment recovery

In June, the European Commission published a Communication on a **Shared Commitment for Employment**. Its main recommendation is to support those people who have been hardest hit by the economic recession by making €19 billion of planned European Social Fund expenditure available through micro-loans. Other measures include the frontloading of structural funds and a new online 'match and map' service to help jobseekers match their skills with job vacancies throughout Europe. The proposal has seen mixed responses from Member States, who are expected to take a decision on the Communication in July. In June, the European Council adopted a regulation to revise the rules on the European Globalisation Fund (EGF). The aim of the new regulation, which will apply to all EGF requests received since 1 May 2009, is to ensure that the Fund can be used to help workers who lose their jobs as a direct result of the economic crisis. To this end, the level of co-financing from the Community budget will increase temporarily from 50% to 65%. This increase will apply to all requests submitted before 31 December 2011, extending the period during which initiatives eligible for EGF funding have to be carried out from 12-24 months.

A Shared Commitment for Employment:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=514>

### European Council adopts conclusions on social services as vehicle of social inclusion

In Luxembourg, on Monday 8 June, the employment and social affairs ministers of the EU 27 adopted their conclusions on "**social services as a tool for active inclusion, strengthening social cohesion and an area for job opportunities**". In its conclusions, the European Council calls on Member States to ensure that measures to prevent social exclusion (particularly of people furthest from the labour market) and promote inclusion through improving access to social services are among their political priorities. The Council also calls on the European Commission and Member States to continue the exchange of good practice on access to quality social service, as well as the work being carried out by the Social Protection Committee on the application of Community rules to social services of general interest. This includes the voluntary framework for the quality of social services which aims to provide guidelines on the methods to be used in defining, regulating and assessing the quality of standards applicable to social services.

## Member States agree to reform their education and training systems under new European framework

On May 14, the European Council adopted a new **strategic framework for cooperation between Member States to reform their education and training systems**. The conclusions identify both immediate priorities for 2009-11 and long-term challenges for the decade ahead. The former includes “making lifelong learning and mobility a reality, improving the quality and efficiency of education and training, promoting equity and social cohesion and enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training”. To this end, the Council also agreed on a revised set of benchmarks to measure the progress of education and training systems at European level. This encompasses targets for:

- lifelong learning for children, young adults and all individuals regardless of their employment status
- the basic skills of 15 year-olds and early education leavers in mathematics, science and reading
- participation in vocational training programmes

Future work will be undertaken in the areas of student mobility, employability and language skills. The official conclusions are available at:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st09/st09845.en09.pdf>



## Early Childhood Education and Care is a priority of the new education framework

In June, an independent report, “Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)” commissioned by the European Commission’s DG for Education and Culture was published. Borne out of a research review done by NESSE, a network of experts, the report outlines key lessons for policy makers including, among others, quality ECEC services can enhance children’s subsequent school performance and yet such services are not sufficient on their own and should be part of a wider package of investment in policies that

shape the life chances of young children. To achieve this goal, the report emphasises the need for an integrated approach to ECEC policy development with cooperation and coordination across sectors and policy fields. Since 2006, a series of European policy initiatives and events have highlighted the importance of quality ECEC.

Improving pre-primary education is now a priority of the European Commission’s strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training beyond 2010. It states that by 2020, at least 95% of children aged four or older should participate in early childhood education. The report is available at:

[http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/nesse\\_top/tasks/analytical-reports/ecec-report-pdf](http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/nesse_top/tasks/analytical-reports/ecec-report-pdf)

The Council’s conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”) are available at:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st09/st09845.en09.pdf>

## New agreement on parental leave is “significant step forward” in European social dialogue

On 18 June, a new Framework Agreement on family leave was signed by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Business Europe, the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services (CEEP) and the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME). Under this agreement, parental leave will increase from three to four months and should apply to “all workers, men and women, who have an employment contract or employment relationship as defined by the law”, regardless of their type of contract (fixed-term, part-time, temporary work, etc.). The European Commission must now examine the Agreement and submit a proposal to the European Council for implementation before August.

## Eurydice report on the education of migrant children

Eurydice, an information network on education in Europe, published an updated version of its 2004 report on the education of immigrant children. The new version of the report, “Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe”, focuses on the relationship between schools and parents of immigrant pupils, specifically the teaching of immigrant children’s mother tongue. Whilst most European countries support an intercultural approach through their curricula, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia and the Nordic countries are the only ones to provide lessons in both the pupils’ native language and the school language of instruction. The need for such practical measures is one of the report’s main recommendations which is available at:

<http://www.eurydice.org>

## European Blue Card for highly skilled migrants adopted by European Council

On 25 June, the European Council adopted the “Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment”, also known as the “Blue Card directive”. According to the Council Decision, the future EU Blue Card will offer a single residence and work permit for highly skilled people in all EU countries - except for Denmark, Ireland and the UK. Rather than replacing the various national level schemes, the Blue Card provides a complementary channel to existing national programmes for highly-skilled individuals. Since the ideas of this Directive first emerged ten years ago, the Blue Card has been significantly watered down by some Member States. In response to the reduced scope of the Directive, the European Commission recently stated that it would “clearly lag behind” its initial proposal and could therefore only be considered as a first step.

The protracted nature of these negotiations has restricted the terms of the Blue Card to the following: it offers a work and residence permit for up to four years for third-country citizens who present a valid work contract or a binding offer for a job in an EU Member State for which the salary is at least 1.5 times the national average. Potential Blue Card holders also have to possess a recognised diploma of higher professional qualifications that certifies five years of professional experience or a university degree. The application procedure for the Card is limited to 60 days, offering faster admission than most other procedures. A Card holder is entitled to equal access (with nationals) to workers’ rights, goods and services and the possibility for family reunification and immediate access to the labour market for the spouse. After 18 months, Card holders can move with their family to another Member State provided they receive an offer of employment in a country that uses the scheme. To help Card holders gain long-term resident status in the EU, they are entitled to ‘accumulate years’ regardless of where they work and live. If Card holders lose their job and are not in employment for more than three months within the first two years, they forfeit their status. It is important to note that the Blue Card does not offer the right of admission to an EU country; as an optional scheme, it provides Member States with the power to apply conditions for admission as they see fit. Some countries may, for example, set a maximum quota of Blue Cards. With the Blue Card directive, the European Union has es-



tablished the first corner stone of its European Policy on Economic Migration. The Directive on a single work and residence permit, however, is still under discussion in the Council. Member States have two years to implement the Blue Card directive into their legislation.

## European Commission publishes its thoughts for new five year framework on Justice and Home Affairs

As part of a series of texts published in early June, the European Commission has published a Communication with proposals for the new 5-year European framework programme on justice and home affairs, entitled “An area of freedom, security and justice serving the citizen”. Based on this Communication, Member States and the European Institutions will further develop this programme until the end of the year (as it will fall under the upcoming Swedish EU Presidency it is referred to as the “Stockholm Programme”).

While the Commission’s proposals show a clear ambition to align national governments to a common European approach on asylum, immigration and integration, the specific role of cities and the local level is given cursory attention. To fill this gap in policy development, EURO CITIES is preparing its response to the common framework (to be published in July).

Two of the main points raised by the Commission are strengthening solidarity as a key principle among Member States, and integrating immigration further into the Euro-

pean Union’s external affairs, with the aim of controlling migrant flows. With regard to immigration, the Commission also intends to:

- align immigration with the labour market needs of Member States and regularly assess the professional skills that the EU requires;
- set up a “platform for dialogue” with employers, unions, recruitment agencies and other actors on how to better manage migration on a practical level and advance the mutual recognition of skills between the EU and other countries and
- consolidate European legislation on the rights of third-country citizens in a European Immigration Code.

The Communication reiterates the importance of common European instruments in the joint monitoring of integration. It calls for “breaking down barriers” with other EU policies relevant to migrant integration, such as education,

culture and employment. The rather segmented approach of the European Commission to integration, specifically its policy development and funding streams is one of the problems of EU policy in this area, as EUROCITIES and other organisations have pointed out on various occasions.

With regard to **asylum**, the ambition of the Commission's agenda goes further still: by bringing more competences to the EU, the Commission proposes to create new mechanisms to enhance solidarity between Member States.

The Commission wants to see a single European Asylum procedure and a uniform European international protection status in place by 2012. From 2013, the tasks of the new European Asylum Office shall be extended to include competences for organising the distribution of asylum seekers among Member States. For the time being, the agreed tasks of the Office are only to provide information, training and expertise for Member States. By 2014 decisions on granting asylum shall be transferrable to other Member States.

The Commission proposal also addresses the issue of integrating asylum seekers, and finding solutions for failed asylum seekers that cannot be "removed". This is particularly relevant for city administrations that have been widely excluded from discussions about the Common European Asylum system so far.

In a second Communication, the European Commission provides an **evaluation of "The Hague Programme"**. The report provides an overview of the state of affairs and future challenges in justice and home affairs. More specifically, it identifies the need for a more systematic evaluation of national integration policies, in order to bring them in line with the Commission's proposal for the Stockholm programme.

In a third Communication, the Commission proposes a mechanism to monitor how Member States act upon the commitments they made in the **European Pact on Immigration and Asylum** last October. The commitments signed under the initiative of the French EU Presidency are rather restrictive and purport to: organise legal immigration based on the economic needs and "reception capacities" of Member States; support integration; control irregular immigration and conduct regularisations only on a "case-by-case basis"; expel irregular migrants; make progress toward a common European asylum system; make border controls more effective and partner with countries of origin around migration/development policies ("Global approach"). The Commission proposes that Member States produce an annual report on their achievements in these areas followed by a discussion in the June Council meeting. According to the proposal, the first of these discussions should take place already next year, in June 2010.

The **full texts** of the three communications can be downloaded at:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0262:FIN:EN:PDF>

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0263:FIN:EN:PDF>

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0266:FIN:EN:PDF>

## Expert report on the economic effects of post-enlargement mobility

Commissioned by the European Commission's DG Employment, the latest expert report on the economic impacts of internal EU mobility (post 2004) paints a mixed picture. The report indicates that the mobility of persons from new to old Member States accounted for a 0.2% (=22 billion Euro) increase in the EU's GDP since enlargement. The overall labour market effect on receiving countries was neutral, but there have been negative effects on the wages and job opportunities of low-skilled workers (in particular



for immigrant workers who lived in the EU15 prior to enlargement). In contrast, mobile workers have, on average, benefited economically from their mobility in an enlarged EU.

With regard to social welfare systems, the report shows positive effects for those countries that received new EU citizens. This is largely due to the short duration of migrant flows: migrants' contributions to welfare systems (e.g. through tax payments or long-term pension schemes) tend to outweigh the benefits they receive. Over the course of the next decade, the study foresees a slow down in net-migration from new to old Member States, not least because most Member States have repealed transitional arrangements. It will, nevertheless, account for a two-fold increase in the number of EU citizens living in another country (from four to eight million) by 2020. As a whole, the report on post-enlargement mobility concludes that the free movement of European citizens has proved to be an

economic success. The report is optimistic about the long-term effects of mobility for migrants, not least because of the linguistic skills (alongside other soft skills) that workers acquire abroad. So while the economic effects of worker mobility are rather modest, it has clearly brought Europe closer together.

Whilst the report tackles a range of questions about the economic effects of EU mobility, the recent economic downturn has brought various social issues (related to worker mobility) to the fore. For example, local authorities and NGOs stress that undeclared work, social dumping, exploitation and access to social services continue to take place. Given that this 'dark side' of enlargement is rarely addressed in Commission reports, the development of information and advice services that have the capacity to manage this form of migration need to be addressed in a more systematic way at EU level.

The final report can be downloaded at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=25&newsId=497&furtherNews=yes>

EUROCITIES' report on Cities and Economic Migration is available at:

[http://www.euocities.eu/uploads/download.php?file=Economic\\_migration\\_FINAL-RMOO.pdf](http://www.euocities.eu/uploads/download.php?file=Economic_migration_FINAL-RMOO.pdf)

**Towards a new tool for pan-European journalism?**

On Tuesday 26 May, the European Commission launched the first multilingual website, [www.presseurop.eu](http://www.presseurop.eu), to compile press articles from national dailies (including, among others, the Guardian, Le Monde, El Pais and Der Spiegel), magazines and digital media on various areas of EU activity including health, education, immigration and social trends. With articles available in ten languages (German, English, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Czech), thematic forums, online surveys and the possibility for visitors to comment on published articles, this tool will help improve the quality and practice of interactive journalism on EU affairs. The consortium, led by Courier International, intends to welcome new partners in the future and eventually translate all articles into 23 languages.

**European Anti-Poverty Network launches minimum income campaign**

On Monday 25 May, the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) launched its campaign website,

[www.adequateincome.eu](http://www.adequateincome.eu). EAPN is appealing to all individuals to sign its petition for an acceptable minimum income, which is available on the new website. Several MEPs, Solidar and the European Social Platform have already voiced their support for the campaign.

**European Parliament endorses EU Active Inclusion strategy and sees key role for EUROCITIES project**

Following the European Commission and the European Council, the European Parliament has now also endorsed the strategy of "Active Inclusion of people excluded from

the labour market". This strategy goes beyond employment-centred activation policies and builds on a combination of adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services. The European Parliament report, which was presented by MEP Jean Lambert (Green Party), makes a strong case for every individual's fundamental right to sufficient resources and assistance to live in human dignity; it explicitly asks to end asylum seekers' dependence on benefits by allowing them to work and consider the development of more legal immigration routes. The report also welcomes the initiative of the Commission to involve local authorities in monitoring the implementation of active inclusion strategies through the EUROCITIES-NLAO project and asks the Commission and the Member States to give those observatories a strong role in the future policy process. The EP

report on "Active Inclusion of people excluded from the labour market" is available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A6-2009-0263&language=EN>



## EUROCITIES Developments

**Broadening the reach of social Europe: EUROCITIES' awareness raising days**

On 16 and 17 June, EUROCITIES brought together 17 young city officers from across Europe to discuss European Social Policy. With participants from Turkey, Spain, Bulgaria, Poland, Estonia as well as Germany, Sweden and the UK, the event was an invaluable opportunity for a diverse group of officers to deepen their understanding of the EU Social Agenda and EUROCITIES' expertise and services in policy and project development. More specifically, the seminar focused on EUROCITIES' work on social inclusion, migration

and integration issues. The second day saw a series of interventions, notably from Michele Calandrino, a policy analyst at DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, who presented the European Commission's strategy to promote social inclusion. Doreen Huddart, a Councillor from Newcastle and member of the Committee of the Regions, emphasised how her work as a councillor is strengthened by her increasingly active role in EUROCIITIES. Representatives from the Social Platform and the European Roma Information Office concluded the event by highlighting the importance of civil society's engagement in the European Social Agenda. The positive feedback from all participants is a strong incentive for EUROCIITIES to repeat this event next year.

## Re-launch of EUROCIITIES' Working Group on Employment

Prompted by increasing unemployment rates as a result of the economic downturn, EUROCIITIES re-launched its Working Group on Employment and held a first meeting in June in Genoa. Focusing on how their administrations could respond to increasing unemployment rates, the participants discussed questions such as: How can job centres build mutually beneficial relationships with small and medium sized enterprises? What can city administrations do to initiate and support partnerships with all relevant agencies and actors? How can training schemes be tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable groups and to the demands of the job market? How can local authorities find a balance between supporting people who were made redundant because of the recession and reaching out to the long-term unemployed? These topics will inform the Working Group's activities over the coming year. Membership to the group is open to all EUROCIITIES' members. A next meeting will take place in early autumn. Until then, the group will be chaired jointly by the cities of Genoa and Rotterdam.

Contact: Simon Guentner, Senior Policy Officer Social Affairs: [simon.guentner@eurocities.eu](mailto:simon.guentner@eurocities.eu)

## Get involved in Inclusive Cities for Europe activities in 2010

Preparations for EUROCIITIES' activities in the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion are well under way. Our aim is to raise awareness of the urban dimension of social exclusion and to promote innovative solutions to tackle poverty and exclusion in cities. At a meeting in Brno on 20 May, a group of cities developing the campaign agreed on a draft strategy for 2010. Between February and July 2010, we will organise five thematic events in several cities across Europe. Each event will be accompanied by a research paper. The themes proposed for our activities are: child poverty, area-based approaches to social inclusion, homelessness, health inequalities, financial exclusion, digital exclusion, employment, access to culture, access to transport and fuel poverty. We are also

developing a database of good practice examples. The conclusions of all events will be put together during a final conference in September 2010 and submitted to the EU Social Protection Committee. You can still get involved in these activities: you can host an event, contribute to our research papers or submit a good practice example. For more information please contact Anna Drozd: [anna.drozd@eurocities.eu](mailto:anna.drozd@eurocities.eu).

## EUROCIITIES Working Group on Social Inclusion develops database on local inclusion policies

The EUROCIITIES' Working Group on Social Inclusion is developing a database of local inclusion strategies as a source of information which will soon be available on the internet. It will consist of three main parts: city documents on local inclusion policies, materials developed by cities in the framework of EUROCIITIES' activities and other documents relevant to local inclusion policies (e.g. studies, reports or datasets). General studies and reports related to social policy in cities will also be a feature of the new tool. If you would like to submit your city's strategy for the database, contact Anna Drozd: [anna.drozd@eurocities.eu](mailto:anna.drozd@eurocities.eu)



## News from Cities

### A loyalty card based on local ties creates a thriving social economy

Purple Turtle, Killer Strawberry, Scorpion Shoes and Lemon Balm; these are just a few of the nearly 70 independent shops in Camden Town, an increasingly quirky and unique area of North London, that have recently signed up to the Wedge Card. Launched in December 2006 by Diana Bird and her father John (founder of The Big Issue magazine), the Wedge Card has emerged as part of Camden's fervently local identity.

With over 800 shops and businesses, the reward scheme offers residents the chance to not only support their local business community, but use the card to get a half-price haircut on a Monday morning, a free espresso or a five

pounds reduction on a theatre ticket, to name but a few examples of the special offers available to holders. By giving Londoners an economic incentive to shop locally, the reward scheme strengthens the social ties of the city's many micro-communities and gives independent retailers a sustainable source of income.

## Who is involved?

Developed in partnership with business improvement districts, local councils and housing associations (including Orbit Housing and Sanctuary Hereward), Wedge has recently joined forces with Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance, Better Bankside and Camden Town Unlimited, all of which are working to improve their local areas as places to work and do business. Last year, Wedge partnered with UNIK, a loyalty card for independent shops in the Grunerlokka area of Oslo. Through this exchange, Wedge has given real value to what is sometimes referred to as the 'glocal' element of international communities: UNIK card holders can use their card at Wedge Card shops in London whilst Londoners can now reap the rewards of their Wedge membership in Oslo.

## How does it work?

These partner organisations sponsor Wedge to sign-up local shops and distribute up to 4,000 cards to people living and working in their area. This is achieved through 'shop local' days when big businesses promote sign-up events at their offices and local retailers are given Wedge Cards to distribute. Last year, Wedge partnered with South Westminster Renewal Partnership (SWRP), in a less affluent part of the prosperous SW1 area. SWRP sees the Wedge Card as a tool to provide more opportunities for disadvantaged residents living in one of London's wealthiest areas. Wedge Cards can also be bought by individuals on-line for £10, of which 50% goes to a local London charity. Charities that have received contributions so far include Kazzum Arts Project (which creates theatre and participative arts for young people), Coram's Fields (a park and playground for children in Central London), Hackney City Farm, Waterloo Action Centre (support for older people and carers) and In-Deep (which offers friendship and support to people in South Westminster).

For more information, see: [www.wedgecard.co.uk](http://www.wedgecard.co.uk)

Contact: [infowedge@googlemail.com](mailto:infowedge@googlemail.com)



## Combating domestic violence in Warsaw

Research indicates that domestic violence is widespread in Poland; one national poll estimates that 18% of Polish women are victims of domestic violence. In some areas of Warsaw, police officers have received six to seven calls reporting domestic abuse. In response to this development, the city administration has, over the last two years implemented a new domestic violence response system. The initiative, funded by an EEA Grant (a financial instrument supported by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway), is part of the city's programme to counteract domestic violence. Designed to improve cooperation between and within NGOs, government administrations and other third-sector organisations, the goal of the response system is to help identify the context in which community violence occurs, specifically the 'response problems' in Warsaw related to supporting victims of domestic violence, and analyse the impact of previous actions taken by the City and NGOs in this field.

## How does it work?

Over the last two years, the social policy department has run a series of training programmes for 750 professionals (including, among others, employees of education institutes, day-care centers, the police force etc.) to improve the knowledge and skills of practitioners in identifying early signs of domestic violence and the circumstances in which it occurs. The city administration has also created local interdisciplinary teams of aid workers to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation and prevent, identify and support victims of domestic abuse (particularly women, children and elderly). To further this process, new working procedures have also been established to improve cooperation between the city administration, the police force and NGOs working in the field of domestic violence.

Due to the success of this initiative, the city has recently begun to implement a follow-up project, "Qualified personnel - high quality services", that aims to improve the professional skills of employees working in various fields of municipal social policy. With a grant of €600,000, the focus of the project is on capacity building: city employees will undertake a range of training modules, the goal of which is to enhance both their professional abilities and linguistic skills. This element of the project will be strengthened through the opportunity to learn from practitioners working in the Norwegian Welfare system.

For more information about the project, see:

[www.przemocpodlupa.pl](http://www.przemocpodlupa.pl)

Project Coordinator: [izwolinska@um.warszawa.pl](mailto:izwolinska@um.warszawa.pl)

## Calls for Proposals

<p><b>PROGRESS - Call for Proposals VP/ 2009/010: Restructuring, Well-Being at work and financial participation</b></p> <p><b>Deadline for applications is: 1 September 2009 for activities commencing no earlier than 3 November 2009 and no later than 21 December 2009</b></p> <p>The aim of this call is to develop and support the exchange of information and learning with regard to health and well-being at work, particularly during restructuring processes.</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&amp;langId=en">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&amp;langId=en</a></p>
<p><b>PROGRESS - Call for Proposals VP/2009/005: Transnational Actions on Social Experimentation</b></p> <p><b>Deadline for applications is 1 September 2009</b></p> <p>This call for proposals seeks to promote "social experimentation" in those social policies that fall within the Social Open Method of Coordination of the European Union (i.e. the Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process). It offers applicants the possibility to develop "social experimentation" <i>stricto sensu</i>, whilst not excluding other methods of evaluation. Social experimentation enables the comparison of policy outcomes for two or more groups randomly assigned to different policy regimes.</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&amp;langId=en">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&amp;langId=en</a></p>
<p><b>Call for Tenders VT/ 2009/038: Sustainability issues - green jobs; trade and labour</b></p> <p><b>Deadline for receipt of bids is 11 September 2009</b></p> <p>The tasks are divided into two lots and bidders may bid for one or two lots. For each lot, a separate bid must be submitted.</p> <p>Lot I: Study on the "Implications of environmental challenges for employment and employment policies within the EU and at international level "(in particular climate change and the transition towards a low-carbon economy).</p> <p>Lot II: Study on "Trade and Labour - Making effective use of trade sustainability impact assessments and monitoring mechanisms"</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=625&amp;langId=en">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=625&amp;langId=en</a></p>
<p><b>Call for Tenders VT/2009/005: Support for voluntary initiatives promoting diversity management at the workplace across the EU</b></p> <p><b>Deadline for receipt of bids is 24 July 2009</b></p> <p>The main objectives of the contract are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to create and maintain a platform for EU level exchange between organisations responsible for promoting and implementing national and regional diversity charters</li> <li>2. to develop and implement a European diversity award and/or index scheme in the workplace</li> <li>3. to develop diversity benchmark data for and with businesses</li> </ol> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=625&amp;langId=en&amp;callId=213&amp;furtherCalls=yes">http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=625&amp;langId=en&amp;callId=213&amp;furtherCalls=yes</a></p>
<p><b>URBACT II Call for Proposals</b></p> <p><b>Deadline for receipt of applications: 25 September 2009</b></p> <p>The Secretariat of the EU Programme URBACT has announced a Call for Proposals for the creation of 12 new Thematic Networks and 3 new Working Groups. Projects approved through this Call will focus on fostering exchange and learning among cities and other urban players, capitalising knowledge, and disseminating good practices in the field of integrated and sustainable urban development. By setting up Local Support Groups, producing Local Action Plans, and through transnational networking, these projects will both impact local policies and link into the Operational Programmes. This Call is aimed at supporting European cities to deal with two current major challenges: the economic crisis and its consequences, and climate change and its effects. All project proposals shall refer to one or both of these challenges. In addition, project proposals must address one of the 16 priority topics defined for this Call.</p> <p><a href="http://www.urbact.eu">www.urbact.eu</a></p>

## Events/Conferences

<b>Green Streets Conference</b>	<b>7 - 8 September</b>	<b>Brussels, Belgium</b>
<p>Supported by EURO CITIES and the Committee of the Regions, this conference will bring together high-level speakers, representatives from many of Europe's regional authorities and European Commission project leaders to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. discuss the transport challenges facing Europe's urban spaces</li> <li>2. share good practice</li> <li>3. provide practical information about funding streams, suppliers and policy instruments</li> <li>4. help develop greener, more sustainable transport networks for the 21st century.</li> </ol> <p><a href="http://www.theparliament.com/greenstreets">http://www.theparliament.com/greenstreets</a></p>		

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<b>XXII CEFEC Conference: Social Firms - A New Dimension of Enterprise</b>	10 - 12 September 2009	Prague, Czechoslovakia
<p>Held under the auspices of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Ministry of Labour and the Mayor of Prague, the main topics of this conference are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social enterprise and the current economic crisis</li> <li>2. The economic and social impact of employing disadvantaged people</li> <li>3. The economic sustainability and prosperity of a social firm (promotion, business plan, marketing strategies etc.</li> </ol> <p><a href="http://cefec2009inprague.cz/">http://cefec2009inprague.cz/</a></p>		
<b>Conference on future youth policy cooperation in the EU</b>	12 - 14 September	Stockholm, Sweden
<p>The purpose of the conference is to give participants an opportunity to meet and discuss the future EU youth policy cooperation. The consultations will be based on the European Commission's communication 'An EU Strategy for Youth - Investing and Empowering', and the Member States' evaluations of the current cooperation in the area of youth policy and the European Youth Forums (EYF) shadow report. The first day of the conference will see a meeting of youth delegates, jointly arranged by the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations and the European Youth Forum (EYF). A parallel meeting will take place between representatives from EU Member States responsible for youth issues. The results will contribute to the discussions in the Council Working Party on Youth. The decision on a new framework for youth policy cooperation will then be taken by the Council on 26-27 November 2009.</p> <p><a href="http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/9/12/conference_on_future_youth_policy_cooperation_in_the_eu">http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/9/12/conference_on_future_youth_policy_cooperation_in_the_eu</a></p>		
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Annual Research Conference on Homelessness in Europe</b>	18 September	Paris, France
<p>The conference will focus on the intersection of homelessness and poverty. Mary Beth Shinn, Professor at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, will deliver one of the keynote addresses. Professor Shinn's research focuses on public policy and she has published widely on the topic of homelessness. For more information on this conference, contact: <a href="mailto:christine.lambert@feantsa.org">christine.lambert@feantsa.org</a></p>		
<b>Global Expert Meeting on Alcohol, Health and Social Development</b>	23 September	Rosenbad, Sweden
<p>The objective of the meeting is to increase awareness of the harmful use of alcohol, its social consequences and impact on the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis. The meeting will provide a forum for dialogue and allow participants to exchange knowledge of recent research in the field. In line with the work of the World Health Organisation, an overarching goal of this meeting is to ensure that the misuse of alcohol remains a focal point of the international health agenda. Citizens' panels, NGOs and other stakeholders will be able participate via digital broadcasting and the internet.</p> <p><a href="http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/9/23/global_expert_meeting_on_alcohol">http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/9/23/global_expert_meeting_on_alcohol</a></p>		
<b>Active Citizenship Conference</b>	29 - 30 September	Gothenburg, Sweden
<p>This conference, organised as part of Swedish presidency of the EU, will bring together non-formal adult education organisations to focus on their role in fostering active citizenship. Margot Wallström, Vice President of the European Commission, Cecilia Malmström, Swedish EU Minister and Astrid Thors, Finland's Minister of Migration and European Affairs are among the speakers. Citizens' panels, NGOs and other stakeholders will be able participate via digital broadcasting and the internet.</p> <p><a href="http://www.eaea.org/events.php?aid=16595&amp;d=2009-09">http://www.eaea.org/events.php?aid=16595&amp;d=2009-09</a></p>		
<b>European Culture Forum</b>	29 - 30 September	Brussels, Belgium
<p>The European Culture Forum brings together representatives from civil society, Member States and EU institutions to take stock of the European Agenda for Culture. Participants will exchange views and experience on the three strategic objectives of the Agenda: cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue; culture as a catalyst for creativity; and culture as a vital element of the EU's international relations. <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm</a></p>		
<b>European Roundtable on Poverty and Exclusion</b>	15-16 October	Stockholm, Sweden
<p>The European Round Table on Poverty and Exclusion is an annual event at which Member States, EU institutions and civil society organisations meet to discuss how best to combat poverty and social exclusion. This year, the conference theme is "Social inclusion in times of recession - new challenges for the active inclusion strategy".</p> <p><a href="http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/10/15/8th_round_table_on_poverty_and_social_exclusion">http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/10/15/8th_round_table_on_poverty_and_social_exclusion</a></p>		

## EUROCITIES Events

<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Migration and Integration</b>	16-17 September	Brussels, Belgium
<p>The Working Group will discuss the charter on diversity and equality in European Cities that is currently developed within the EUROCIITIES project DIVE. The meeting will include site visits and presentations that focus on integration policies in Brussels, specifically those that deal with the reception of newcomers and diversity in the labour market. Further information: Dirk Gebhardt, EUROCIITIES Programme Officer Migration and Integration, <a href="mailto:Dirk.Gebhardt@eurocities.eu">Dirk.Gebhardt@eurocities.eu</a></p>		

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<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Education</b>	24-25 September	Nantes, France
For information about the programme, contact the Chair of the WG, Birgitta Johansson, at <a href="mailto:birgitta.johansson.uf@malmo.se">birgitta.johansson.uf@malmo.se</a>		
<b>EUROCITIES preparatory meeting for the European Year on Combating Poverty and Exclusion</b>	24-25 September (tbc)	Brussels, Belgium
At this meeting, EUROCITIES' members will finalise their strategy for action in 2010. Further information: Anna Drozd, EUROCITIES Programme Officer Social Inclusion, <a href="mailto:Anna.Drozdz@eurocities.eu">Anna.Drozdz@eurocities.eu</a>		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Homelessness</b>	30 September - 2 October	Barcelona, Spain
For information about the programme, contact the Chair of the WG, Gerhard Eitel, at <a href="mailto:gerhard.eitel@fsw.at">gerhard.eitel@fsw.at</a>		
<b>EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum: "Cities delivering value and quality social services with NGOs"</b>	8-9 October	Warsaw, Poland
At its autumn meeting, the Social Affairs Forum will discuss effective forms of cooperation that seek to ensure high-quality service provision. Other issues such as social and health inequalities and local strategies to cope with the impacts of the recession will also be addressed. Further information: EUROCITIES Senior Policy Officer Social Affairs, <a href="mailto:Simon.Guentner@eurocities.eu">Simon.Guentner@eurocities.eu</a>		
<b>EUROCITIES Economic Development Forum</b>	8-9 October	Tallinn, Estonia
For information about the programme please contact Marie.Ranty, EUROCITIES Policy Officer Economic Development and Cohesion, <a href="mailto:Marie.Ranty@eurocities.eu">Marie.Ranty@eurocities.eu</a>		
<b>EUROCITIES Culture Forum</b>	6-8 November	Zaragoza, Spain
<p>Convening between 50-70 city representatives at each Forum meeting, the forthcoming gathering of EUROCITIES Culture Forum (ECF) is expected to see another large turn-out. The focus of the event will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mobility of artists, projects and cultural agents and art;</li> <li>2. Street art...how culture redesigns the city</li> </ol> <p>Participants will have an opportunity to take part in site visits in Zaragoza, Spain, the city which is set to host EUROCITIES' annual conference in 2010. Zaragoza City Council: <a href="http://www.zaragoza.es">www.zaragoza.es</a>; further information: Julie Hervé, EUROCITIES Policy Officer - Culture: <a href="mailto:Julie.Herve@eurocities.eu">Julie.Herve@eurocities.eu</a></p>		
<b>EUROCITIES Seminar on Inclusion and Cohesion</b>	2 November (tbc)	Brussels, Belgium
This seminar is an important milestone in EUROCITIES' work towards a proposal for an EU funding instrument to support local integrated development post 2013. At the seminar, various options for such an instrument will be discussed with experts and practitioners. Further information: Marie.Ranty, EUROCITIES Policy Officer Economic Development and Cohesion, <a href="mailto:Marie.Ranty@eurocities.eu">Marie.Ranty@eurocities.eu</a>		
<b>EUROCITIES Working Group on Social Inclusion</b>	3-4 November (tbc)	Ghent, Belgium
At this meeting, the WG will look at social inclusion projects in Ghent. It will also continue its discussion on social inclusion strategies. Further information: Anna Drozd, EUROCITIES Programme Officer Social Inclusion, <a href="mailto:Anna.Drozdz@eurocities.eu">Anna.Drozdz@eurocities.eu</a>		

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