



SAF policy update for September – October 2020

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1. Overview of events in SAF in autumn – winter 2020

Date	Event	Short description of thematic focus and format
14-16 Oct	WG Roma inclusion	Digital mutual learning on Berlin model for Roma inclusion followed by high-level political debate on the role of cities in the new EU Roma Framework for 2020-2030, opened by a keynote speech by European Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli. Read more
29-30 Oct	WG Urban Ageing	Digital mutual learning and policy debate with the European Commission to feed policy recommendations from cities into the Green Paper on Ageing.
5-6 Nov	WG Education	Digital mutual learning with a focus on sharing know-how among cities on dealing with covid-19 restrictions in schools and improving online classes during lockdown.
9-10 Nov	Social Affairs Forum online	'Cities for just transitions: Supporting local labour markets for an inclusive recovery and fair transition', with Zagreb as virtual host city and focus on the social dimension of the EU Green Deal, e.g. how the transition to a green and digital economy will affect our cities and citizens by changing local labour markets in crisis recovery time.
19 Nov	WG Housing	Latest EU updates on Renovation Wave Strategy and affordable housing
24-25 Nov	WG Homelessness	Online policy transfer of 2 mornings with a focus on Lyon Metropole's strategy for implementing Housing First. We will discover how the city implements Housing First for a variety of groups and how they enlarge the pool of housing available for this through innovative forms of housing and through involving the private housing market. Cities are invited to submit their own local challenges on homelessness for our transfer session. Register here
25-26 Nov	WG Employment	Digital mutual learning on attractiveness of jobs in care sector
27 Nov	WG Children	Digital mutual learning with a focus on the findings from the survey on child poverty in cities and good practices in preventing and mitigating child poverty and feeding policy recommendations from cities to the upcoming EU Child Guarantee. Several cities will present their good practices, such as Vienna's recently adopted Strategy for the participation of children and young people. Register here
2-3 Dec	Integrating Cities Conference	The Integrating Cities IX - Invest in local solidarity will focus on building cohesion and inclusive society at the local level, by involving and engaging communities and citizens. Register here

2. EU budget

Latest negotiations on MFF and the Next Generation EU recovery fund

- The REGI committee in the European Parliament proposed a budget for REACT EU of €54.8b up to 2024 (compared to 47.5b in the Council proposal). It is apparently an attempt at counter-balancing the €5b bridge solution for 2020 which was rejected by the European Council. They also introduced minimum share for Interreg, ESF, FEAD and YEI
- The Court of Auditors criticised the repartition of the recovery funds to the different EU member states. Indeed, the repartition key is calculated for a big part on criteria pre-COVID (GDP, population, unemployment between 2015-2019). As a consequence, the auditors estimate that it won't benefit the countries which have been hit the most. It also doesn't take into account the cohesion objectives and development levels of different countries/regions. [Read the opinion here.](#)
- The Commission created a steering board composed of Commissioners Dombrovskis, Gentiloni, Timmermans and Vestager to work on the recovery plan. They will also be responsible of following the European Semester process.
- **Commissioner Ferreira announced an increased earmarking for sustainable urban development to 8% of the next European Regional Development Fund, compared to 5% for 2014-2020.**
- There are growing concerns about the ongoing risk of funding centralisation both in National Recovery Plans and Operational Programmes, in particular a weak application of the partnership principle in the midst of this crisis. This was signalled by MEPs, Committee of the Regions and cities.

What's in for cities and how to get hold of the new funds?

In order to get hold of these new funds, cities must ensure they are full partners in the drafting of their member state plans and programmes, which is why we strongly urge you to act now at national level to ensure that the priorities for the coming years match the needs of your city. As the time is relatively short, we strongly advise you to act now! At [this link](#) you will be able to find an infographic that we prepared to help you mobilise nationally. The infographic includes information to help you start a dialogue with your relevant national authorities.

Check out our [Eurocities policy brief](#) for a comprehensive update on ESF+ and the additional funding for social investment under the EU recovery instruments. We give a complete overview on what's relevant for cities and analyse the opportunities and remaining concerns on ESF+. We take a step further and provide you practical advice on how your city can get hold of the new funds – for example, you'll find a template for an email or letter to contact your ESF managing authority (in Annex to the policy brief).

What is Eurocities doing?

- We are continuing to monitor the involvement of cities in both Operational Programmes (OPs) and National Recovery Plans (NRPs) and advocating for both stronger representation of cities and cohesion dimension of the EU budget, including in the Next Generation EU recovery package.
- We are preparing a survey for Eurocities members to better understand the level of involvement of cities in the preparation of OPs and NRPs. This survey will be sent by the end of the month, and it will provide us with evidence to support of our dialogue with the European Commission.
- We are continuing our advocacy efforts for a strong urban dimension in the EU regulation for the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), and we are working with the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions to ensure this is well covered in the EP report on the RRF regulation.

3. Stronger social Europe and implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights

Upcoming EU social policy initiatives announced in the Commission's work plan for 2021

The European Commission published its work plan for 2021, which you can [read here](#). The table below presents the key EU social policy initiatives to follow:

EUROPE FIT FOR THE DIGITAL AGE			
Improving the working conditions of platform workers	To ensure transparent, dignified, fair and predictable working conditions and adequate social protection	Legislative, incl. impact assessment art 153 TFEU	Q1/Q4 2021
AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR PEOPLE			
Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights	To ensure full implementation of EPSR	Non-legislative	Q1 2021
Communication for a new European Child Guarantee	To reduce child poverty and inequalities to ensure all children have access to basic services like health and education	Non-legislative	Q1 2021
Communication on a new occupational safety and health strategy framework		Non-Legislative	Q2 2021
Action Plan for the Social Economy	To enhance social investment, support social economy and social enterprises to start-up, scale-up, innovate, create jobs.	Non-legislative	Q4 2021
PROMOTING OUR EUROPEAN WAY OF LIFE			
Talent and Skills Package (legal migration) (incl.) Revision of the Long Term Residents Directive	Option to develop an EU talent pool		
Revision of Directive on the Single Permit	To improve in particular intra-EU mobility Rights	Legislative, impact assessment envisaged Art 79(2) TFEU	Q3 2021
Initiative on individual learning accounts	To ensure minimum harmonisation of admission and residence conditions for low and medium skilled workers	Legislative, impact assessment envisaged Art 79(2) TFEU	Q4 2021
European Approach for micro-credentials	To empower individuals to undertake training and manage their career	Legislative and non-legislative, incl. impact assessment	Q4 2021
	To widen personalised learning opportunities for all	Non-legislative	Q4 2021
A NEW PUSH FOR EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY			
Strategy on the Rights of Persons with disabilities	To ensure full implementation of the UNCRPD	Non-legislative	Q1 2021
EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child	To prepare them for full participation in democratic life, to better protect vulnerable children, to protect their rights online, foster child-friendly justice and prevent and fight violence.	Non-legislative	Q1 2021
New Proposal to prevent and combat specific forms of gender-based violence		Legislative, incl. impact assessment art 82(2), 83, 84 TFEU	Q4 2021

EP report and Eurocities amendments

The EMPL committee of the European Parliament is discussing a draft report on ‘a strong social Europe for just transitions’ (MEP rapporteurs are Agnes Jongerius and Dennis Radtke). The report calls for an ambitious new political agenda for a strong social Europe with mandatory targets and indicators for social sustainability to cover: decent work, social justice and equal opportunities, robust social welfare systems (covering universal access to decent and affordable housing) and fair mobility. This is called ‘the Porto agenda’ with 2030 targets that should be adopted at the EU Social Summit in May 2021 in Porto. The report also calls for social investment in the recovery package and, as such, specific Social Progress Plans to complement the National Recovery and Resilience Plans and the National Climate and Energy Plans for the upcoming reforms to have upward social convergence as one of the main objectives of the national recovery. The implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights is stressed to be at the same level of importance as the Green Deal. [Read here the draft EP report](#)

Eurocities formulated several amendments to make the role of cities explicit in the EP report both in terms of social policy design and implementation of EPSR but also the importance of involving cities as key stakeholders in the governance of the new EU social agenda and at the EU Social Summit in 2021. We sent our amendments to all EMPL committee members and many of them received wide support. The final vote in committee is expected for early December.

What is Eurocities doing?

- **We adopted a statement on ‘[A stronger social Europe powered by inclusive cities](#)’. Our statement puts forward 15 recommendations from cities to:**
 - Show the key role of cities in managing the corona crisis, mitigating the impacts on people and jobs and driving a fair and inclusive recovery post-covid in Europe
 - Make a strong case for boosting EU support for local level social investment and better access for cities to EU funding (especially ESF+) to meet the increasing needs for public social services and social infrastructure in cities
 - Put forward proposals on how to strengthen social Europe with a clear urban dimension, especially on urban poverty, support to children, affordable housing, migrant integration and Roma inclusion, quality jobs and skills, and local level accessible services
 - Have a clear role for cities in the governance of EU social policies
- We submitted our statement to the EU public consultation on social Europe and presented our proposals during the strategic dialogue with stakeholders and DG EMPL in October. We are calling on all our SAF members to use our Eurocities statement and have a say to the EU public consultation on social Europe, the more inputs from cities the louder our voice will be in this massive EU consultation and the better chances for our proposals to make it in the final text.

Have your say from your city to the EU public consultation on social Europe

Respond to the [European Commission's public consultation on the future of social Europe](#) until 30 November 2020. To make our voice from cities heard in this massive consultation, we encourage all our members to submit views on the [webpage of the EU public consultation](#):

- A. Upload your city pledge - we encourage all our members that already signed pledges to the European Pillar of Social Rights to upload them on the Commission website (simple upload)
- B. submit your city input for new initiatives at EU, national, regional or local level – you can select from our Eurocities statement the recommendations most relevant for your city.

- We advocated to DG EMPL to open all online national consultations with Commissioner Schmit about social Europe to invite cities as key stakeholders to this debate. We managed to get cities in 10 of the 27 consultation dialogues (BE, FI, FR, DE, NL, IT, LV, PT, ES, SE).
- We organised a digital high-level conference **'Building back better: A stronger social Europe - What role for cities?'** co-hosted by MEPs Estrella Dura Ferrandis, Agnes Jongerius and Brando Benifei on 30 September 2020. During the political debate, all speakers agreed that the European Pillar of Social Rights should be strengthened with new, concrete policy initiatives at EU level to address the current pressing social challenges especially lack of affordable housing and homelessness, urban poverty and child poverty, youth unemployment and minimum income. The speakers agreed that bringing cities 'at the table' would add real value to the EU social agenda.
- At the same event, 25 city mayors and deputy mayors presented their commitments to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights by putting principles into action through dedicated social investments. These city pledges are part of the Eurocities campaign to build 'Inclusive Cities for All' that has so far achieved 60 city pledges, representing 51 million citizens, and pooling together social investments worth over 14.2 billion EUR. We are continuing our campaign in 2020-2021.

Your city too can join with a city pledge

Our Eurocities campaign **'Inclusive cities for all: Social Rights in my city'** mobilises mayors and deputy mayors to implement the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. We continue this campaign as part of our strategic partnership with the European Commission. Join our campaign by submitting a (new) city pledge on one or several of the 20 principles of the EPSR. Get in touch with Eurocities team and we will help you in all the steps of the process

4. Migration and integration

EU action plan on integration and inclusion

By the end of this year, the European Commission intends to present an ['Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion'](#) which is linked to the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and is currently seen as part of a second package of policies under the Pact. The Action Plan is set to renew the Commission's commitment to supporting integration efforts, and follows on from the [2016 Action Plan](#) on the integration of third country nationals.

In this context, the Commission launched a [public consultation](#) to gather views on actions that could be taken at EU level to promote the integration and social inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background. The consultation was open until 21 October.

What is Eurocities doing?

Resulting from our discussions during the last WG Migration and Integration meeting and throughout this year, we have submitted our [key points](#) on funding for integration, structures for multi-level dialogue, capacity building in cities, and thematic policy priorities. This also includes several good practices from cities, in line with the questions of the public consultation.

We held a [high-level panel debate](#) on 8 October during our WG Migration and Integration meeting online. In a discussion with the Michael Shotton, Director for Migration, Protection and Visa and Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director for Social Affairs at the European Commission, city representatives discussed cities' roles in these new migration policy files and relayed their main advocacy messages. Key messages of the debate included:

- Direct and structural funding for cities, independent from national governments, remains a key priority for cities for the consolidation of existing local initiatives.
- Funding should be more flexible and support from different sources should be more compatible, and not determine policy design by its administrative logic.
- Opportunities for transnational learning and multi-level venues in which cities sit at a table with national governments and the European Commission are of strategic importance for cities and should be intensified.
- Particularly when views on migration differ radically between cities and national governments, creating funding and cooperation structures independent of national government is crucial for cities to stay involved in the EU discussions on migrant and refugee integration.

These and other points feed our policy recommendations from cities to the EU public consultation.

Takeaways from our WG Migration and Integration online mutual learning on 7-8 Oct

On 7-8 October, the WG Migration and Integration met for a digital mutual learning transfer hosted by the city of Tampere on the topic of international talent attraction and labour market integration of migrants. Tampere presented its [Strategic Programme](#) on the topic which creates a strategic, cross-sector holistic management model for internationalisation, and brings the city's local ecosystem to life. In their roles as transfer cities during the meeting, Solna and Grenoble also presented their strong measures to integrate migrants into the labour market. Solna's [Solna Model](#) on labour market integration works through strong ties to employers, while Grenoble's [Refugee Inclusion and Employment Integrated Programme](#) (RISING) builds on individualised employment coaching to ease access to employment.

These initiatives of the three cities illustrated their key role in personalisation and service orientation of labour market support beyond what national integration programmes can deliver, e.g. through individual job coaches, on-demand training, mapping and validating formal qualifications and non-accredited skills, one-stop-shops, or multilingual support. They also showed how cities are forging partnerships and initiating joined governance processes: with actors from business, university, NGO and government sectors to jointly steer talent attraction and labour market inclusion from the local or metropolitan level. Finally, it is clear from these practices that cities occupy a key role in engaging employers to better tailor employment measures and meet skills shortages, and to tackle their insecurities (red tape, insecure status, language deficits, etc.) about hiring refugees.

A [summary of the discussion](#), the [video recordings](#) and all further [documentation](#) can be found online.

Next steps on legal migration

On 19 October, the Commission published its [work programme for 2021](#), which reiterates the plan to follow up the New Pact with a number of measures on legal migration, including a 'talent and skills' package. Other elements include an action plan against migrant smuggling, as well as a sustainable voluntary return and reintegration strategy.

On legal migration, the Commission has opened a [public consultation](#) with the deadline of 30 December. This public consultation aims to identify areas where the EU framework on legal migration could be further improved, including through possible new legislation. It also invites stakeholders to propose new ideas to boost the EU's attractiveness, facilitate skills matching, and better protect labour migrants from exploitation.

Updates from our EU-funded projects on migration and integration

- **CONNECTION:**

In the coming weeks, [CONNECTION](#) partners will have their first online workshops. The City of Antwerp will be hosting a workshop to share their good practice in the area of the migrant employment. On the

agenda: a presentation of Antwerp's one-stop-shop, a project helping migrants to find a job thanks to mentoring and a phone app fostering migrant integration. A few weeks after, Paris will host its own online workshop to help other less experienced cities better understand how to develop an integration strategy. Paris will share the story of the City's integration strategy adopted in 2015 and the successes and lessons learnt its implementation brought.

VALUES: In the framework of our VALUES project, Eurocities and the city of Nuremberg are organising a high-level policy dialogue with European mayors and civil society organisations during the Integrating Cities IX Conference "**Invest in local solidarity**". The event will be held online on 2 and 3 December, preceded by a series of workshops focusing on different topics, such as labour market integration, rights of migrant children, the role of volunteers and civil society in the integration of migrants and refugees. The conference will offer opportunities for dialogue between local politicians and senior officials from Europe's major cities, representatives from EU institutions, international and non-governmental organisations, academics, refugee and migrant communities. Cities will share their best practices in integrating third-country nationals and will discuss local and European-level perspectives on the future of integration. Finally, the conference will also contribute to the wider development of the new European Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion and feed local examples into the EU policy discussions on integration. The conference is part of a series of policy events related to the **Eurocities Integrating Cities Charter process**, which started in 2010 and harnesses on cities' potential to embrace and promote diversity and integration of migrants through very concrete actions. For more information, please consult the Integrating Cities [website](#).

5. Employment

European Commission proposal for adequate minimum wages

On 28 October, the European Commission has published [The proposal for a Directive on adequate minimum wages in the EU](#). The proposal seeks to ensure that minimum wages are set at an adequate level and that it reduces the in-work poverty, help sustain domestic demand and strengthen the incentive to work. It is designed to safeguard access to employment and take into account the effects on job creation and competitiveness, including for SMEs. Workers will have access to minimum wage protection, either in the form of a statutory minimum wage or of wages set by collective agreements.

While it does not oblige Member States to set minimum wages by law, the proposal will have three lines of intervention: improved adequacy of statutory minimum wages (where they exist), the promotion of collective bargaining in all Member States, and the better enforcement and monitoring for all Member States. Find all the documents [here](#).

European Parliament votes a strong position to reinforce the Youth Guarantee

On 8 October, the [European Parliament has adopted a resolution on 'Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee'](#). The Parliament urges member states to ensure that young people who register for the Youth Guarantee schemes are offered good-quality, varied and tailored jobs, training or internships. The European Parliament points out that not all Member States have followed the 2013 Council recommendation, so it calls on the Commission to propose a Youth Guarantee instrument that is legally binding for all Member State. The Parliament also calls for more funds to strengthen the Youth Guarantee scheme for 2021-2027. Members of the Parliament disapprove with [European Council decision in July to significantly reduce](#) (from 15% to 10%) ESF+ resources under [shared management](#) earmarked to support action to boost youth employment. The Parliament is also asking for an additional requirement that all Member States (not only those with a NEET rate above the Union average) should invest at least 3% of their ESF+ resources under shared management in tackling youth unemployment.

European Parliament resolution on the right to disconnect

The European Parliament is drafting a [report with recommendations to the Commission on the right to disconnect](#). The report highlights that the digital transformation has been hugely impacting the world of work, including making it possible for work to be carried out anywhere and at any time and for workers to be reachable outside their working hours. The report highlights that the right to disconnect should be treated as a human right which is important to protect for the physical and mental health and well-being and psychosocial risk of workers. It calls for the Commission evaluate and address the risks of not protecting the right to disconnect. It also calls for the European Commission to adopt a directive to ensure that workers are able to exercise their right, limitation of working time, enable mechanism to protected workers from victimisation and other negative repercussions. Read the EP [briefing on the right to disconnect](#).

Join our WG Employment online meeting on 25-26 November

Eurocities is organising a [digital mutual learning on Lyon Metropole's good practices on increasing the attractiveness of jobs in care sector](#). Cities will have to opportunity to discuss about the potential opportunities and existing challenges on workforce shortage, working conditions, gender perspective and the relation with the employers. Register for the meeting by 23 November here: <https://wgemplcarejobs.eventbrite.com>

We are searching for good practices from cities to be presented during the meeting. The main focus should be on the attractiveness of care jobs. If you are interested, submit your application before 17 November to patricia.couti@eurocities.eu. You can find the application form here: <https://bit.ly/37Nb8Lp>.

Reports related to work and jobs in care sector:

- Study on [the gendered impact of the COVID-19 crisis and post-crisis period](#), European Parliament, September 2020
- [The Impact of COVID-19 on older persons](#), United Nations, 2020
- [Disability considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak](#), World Health Organisation, 2020
- [Care work and care jobs for the future of work](#), International World Organisation, 2018

Latest publications on employment and labour markets:

- [Eurostat publishes the latest update COVID-19 impact on income distribution](#), EPRS
- [Recent trends in female employment](#), European Parliamentary Research Service
- [Fair minimum wages in the EU](#), European Parliamentary Research Service

6. Skills

First EU strategic foresight report highlights the role of the EU's skills agenda

The European Commission has adopted its first-ever Strategic Foresight Report, aiming to identify emerging challenges and opportunities to better steer the European Union's strategic choices. The 2020 Report presents the rationale for using foresight in EU policy-making and introduces a comprehensive concept of EU resilience. In light of the Recovery Plan for Europe, the 2020 Strategic Foresight Report considers EU resilience in four dimensions: social and economic, geopolitical, green, and digital. For each dimension, the report identifies the capacities, vulnerabilities and opportunities revealed by the coronavirus crisis, which need to be addressed in the medium- to long-term. Besides the focus on digital transformation, green and climate resilience, a key focus is the link to EU's skills agenda. [Read more](#)

European Commission's proposal for Pact for Skills

The European Commission is proposing a [Pact for Skills](#) as a new engagement model for skills that will help meet COVID-19 challenges and deliver on the ambitions of the recovery pathway, the EU Industrial Strategy and the green and digital transitions. Under the Pact the industry, public and private employers, social partners, education and training providers and employment agencies will be called to work together on shared vision and actions. The Pact aims to mobilise and incentivise all relevant stakeholders to take concrete actions for the upskilling and reskilling of people of working age, and, when relevant, pool efforts thanks to partnerships.

What is Eurocities doing?

- We submitted a response to the **stakeholders' public consultation on the Pact for Skills** part of the European Commission's proposal for the European Skills Agenda.
- We will attend the [launch event of Pact for Skills](#) on 10 November 2020, during the European Vocational Skills Week.

European Parliament's resolution on European Skills Agenda

The EMPL Committee of European Parliament has drafted a [resolution on the European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience](#). The resolution highlights the need to collect updated data on skills needs and demand on the labour market and improve the system of skills anticipation to better identify emerging changes in skills needs. It calls for immediate and bold European and national measures to put digital skills at the heart of the education and training policies, making digital skills available for all, improving digital skills of teachers and trainers. It also refers to equipping schools, training institutions and universities with the technologies necessary to allow for online and distance learning.

What is Eurocities doing?

- We are preparing amendments to EP report on skills agenda to highlight the role of cities.

Latest publications:

- [Skills and jobs for future labour markets](#), EP Policy Department on Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies

7. Education

New Digital Education Action Plan

On 9 September, the European Commission published the [Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027: Resetting education and training for the digital age](#). The plan has two strategic priorities: to foster a high-performing digital education ecosystem and to enhance digital skills and competences for the digital age. The plan proposes to launch a strategic dialogue with Member States to facilitate successful digital education and make recommendations for online/distance learning in primary & secondary education. Other concrete actions proposed are to:

- Launch a Connectivity4Schools initiative and encourage Member States uptake of EU support for broadband, internet access and digital tools like SELFIE for Teachers
- Develop common guidelines to foster digital literacy and fight disinformation
- Include AI and digital skills in the European Digital Competence Framework; support the development of AI learning resources for education & training providers
- Develop European Digital Skills Certificate recognised by governments & employers across Europe

- Make recommendations on improving digital skills provision and introduce an EU target for student digital competence
- Promote advanced digital skills development; scale up Digital Opportunity traineeships and encourage female participation in STEM

The action plan includes a new European Digital Education Hub which will connect national and regional digital education initiatives and actors, and support cross-sector collaboration. Read [more](#).

European Parliament resolution on shaping digital education policy

On 7 October, the CULT Committee of European Parliament has discussed the [draft resolution on shaping digital education policy in EU](#). The committee calls for a 10% funding from Recovery and Resilience Facility to be allocated to education ask for a multi-level government cooperation to close the gap in education. It asks the Commission to work closely with Member States, local authorities and stakeholders to ensure that EU support is interlinked with national schemes, in particular to support disadvantaged groups.

What is Eurocities doing?

- Preparing amendments to EP report on digital education action plan to highlight the role of cities.

European Parliament resolution on the future of European education during the COVID-19

On 22 October, the European Parliament has passed a [resolution on the future of European Education in the context of COVID-19](#). MEPs call for increased efforts to close the digital gap in education across the EU, which has been deepened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The resolution highlights the severe discrepancies at EU level, with up to 32% of students being without access to education for several months in some member states, while for many, the lack of access stemmed from an absence of digital equipment, inadequate digital skills or pre-existing disadvantage.

Latest publications:

- [Equity in school education in Europe](#), EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
- [Shaping digital education policy](#), Research for European Parliament CULT Committee
- [Policies to support teachers' continuing professional learning](#), OECD
- [The use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) in education](#), European Parliament Research Service - Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies
- [Education in the Digital Age: Healthy and Happy Children](#), OECD
- [Teachers' training and use of information and communications technology in the face of the COVID-19 crisis](#), OECD
- [The role of labour market information in guiding educational and occupational choices](#), OECD

8. Housing and homelessness

CJEU ruled in favour of city of Paris on authorisations for short-term schemes

On 22 September, the [Court of Justice of EU has made the final decision in the Paris case for short-term renting](#) which was focusing on the use of private homes as short-term holiday rentals. The ruling shows that in case of a tight housing market, a country or a city can require authorisation to be obtained for the repeated letting of accommodation for residential use for short periods to transient clients who do not take up residence there (tourists). Combating the long-term rental housing shortage constitutes an overriding reason relating to the public interest justifying such legislation. In this way, European cities have been given a useful tool to prevent the unlimited growth of negative impacts of the short-term renting platforms.

European Parliament report on decent and affordable housing

The European Parliament [Report on 'Access to decent and affordable housing for all'](#) will be adopted in the EMPL committee in December. The final vote in the plenary of EP is foreseen for January 20201. The latest amendments can be found [here](#).

European Commission launches the Renovation Wave Strategy

On 15 October, The European Commission has launched the [Renovation Wave](#). The strategy aims to at least double the annual energy renovation rate of residential and non-residential buildings by 2030; to address investment gaps through the Recovery and Resilience Facility of which 37% will be dedicated to climate investments beyond recovery; and to increase the volume and impact of EU funding by providing more grants, technical assistance, project development support and loans and making it possible to combine them.

While affordability for medium and lower-income household, is one of the key principles, the strategy establishes the following three priority areas: decarbonisation of heating and cooling, tackling energy poverty and worst performing buildings, and renovation of public buildings (schools, hospitals, administrative buildings). The assessment of the initiative can be found [here](#).

Energy Poverty package

Part of the Renovation Wave Strategy, the Commission has published a [recommendation on energy poverty](#). The proposal includes a set of [energy poverty](#) indicators and the following guidelines:

- Reinforcement of social policy measures and energy efficiency improvements on housing in the Electricity Directive.
- Assessment of the barriers to investment in energy-efficient housing and the profile of dwellings in most need of renovation.
- Development of all policies that tackle energy poverty through meaningful and accountable processes of public participation. The measures to address energy poverty should be build closely with cities and civil society organisations and private sector entities.
- Prioritisation of measures targeting vulnerable groups though EU funding (cohesion policy especially) when tackling energy poverty
- Allocation of public funds, especially grants, for low-income households.

What is Eurocities doing?

- Eurocities adopted a policy paper on [EU's Renovation Wave Initiative - Delivered with cities and citizens](#) – the paper calls on the EU to use the Renovation Wave to address barriers to renovation for all types of buildings, including social housing, to fight energy poverty and support vulnerable groups, and boost skills for creating quality jobs in construction industry for renovation sector through up-skilling and re-skilling programmes.
- Eurocities series: [healthy, thriving and inclusive cities for citizens and planet](#) – Workshop 4 on 'Build to thrive by ensuring sustainable use and re-use of our buildings'. By tackling challenges of the pandemic – from affordable housing to energy poverty and inequalities in space – this workshop aimed to identify actions to support co-creation process in cities and re-use of buildings. Cities agreed to exchange knowledge on different financing models along with the different city standards in renovation. Crucial to the overall success of renovation as a means to tackle energy poverty will be to ensure that renovation projects contribute to each city's objectives, as well as the broader aim for a socially just transition in Europe.

Join our upcoming meetings:

- **Meeting of WG AQEECC opened to WG housing on Renovation Wave - 12 November.** Register [here](#).
- **WG Housing meeting on latest EU updates on renovation and affordable housing - 19 November.** Cities will learn about the latest EU developments on housing, the potential opportunities and the next steps for action. The meeting has a special guest – Professor Padraic Kenna, Director of the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy at the Law School NUI Galway, Ireland. He will have a keynote presentation on the status of housing and economic governance in EU. Register [here](#).
- **WG Homelessness on Housing First approach in Lyon – 24-25 November.** Since 2018, Lyon is implementing a strategy for Housing First. During the meeting, participants will learn about Lyon’s approach and implementation of the housing first model and its combination with other traditional forms of support for homeless people. France being currently in lockdown, cities will also discuss how homelessness services are adapting to this new wave of covid-19 and how continuity of support can be provided. Submit your local challenge on this question and find out more on the meeting [here](#).

Latest reports:

- [OECD recent study on housing with a chapter on the impact of short-term rental on housing](#), OECD, 2 October

Upcoming events:

- UNECE Climate change, environmental and health impacts on housing affordability, 10 November, 09.00 – 12.00. Register [here](#).
- UIA and URBACT [Cities engaging in the #right2housing final conference on Housing Fair Finance](#), 19 November, 10.00 – 12.00. Register [here](#).

9. Roma inclusion

European Commission launches a new EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation 2020-2030

On 7 October, the European Commission published its proposal for a [new EU Roma framework up to 2030](#). Taking note of the limited progress under the previous framework, it proposes a new approach:

- Adopting a more **integrated approach** by adding three horizontal areas – equality, inclusion and participation – to the 4 pre-existing sectoral approaches on education, employment, housing and health. A strong focus is on the fight against discrimination and anti-gypsyism
- Better reflecting the **diversity among Roma** people, in particular by including Roma EU mobile citizens within the same framework
- Better **monitoring the impact** of the EU and national frameworks through a portfolio of indicators and a set of objective and targets such as cutting the poverty gap between Roma and the general population by at least half.

The Commission calls on the member states to develop national Roma frameworks by September 2021 and to dedicate budget for their implementation and monitoring.

What’s in it for cities?

The communication is accompanied by a draft Council Recommendation with a dedicated chapter on the role of cities in Roma inclusion at local level. It calls for:

- Involving local authorities in the design, implementation, monitoring and review of national strategic frameworks
- Local authorities to develop or update their local action plans for Roma equality, inclusion and participation
- Better channelling of EU funds to local level and addressing funding needs of the local level
- Cities to be involved in the design and implementation of EU funds relevant for Roma

According to our first analysis, **all recommendations** mentioned in [Eurocities' contribution to the post-2020 EU Roma framework](#) were included! This is a great success of our advocacy work for a strong role of cities in the new EU Roma Framework.

What is Eurocities doing?

- We published a policy brief analysing the new framework and the role of cities
- We held a high-level political debate on 16 October introduced by a keynote speech from Commissioner Dalli who highlighted the key role of cities in making Roma inclusion a reality. Ms Dalli's intervention was followed by an exchange between deputy mayors from Barcelona, Berlin and Malmo and a representative of a Roma NGO (ERGO). Find the recording [here](#)
- We are monitoring the adoption of the Council recommendation
- We are planning capacity-building for empowering cities to get engaged in the NRIS and training on data collection with technical support from the FRA
- We will continue to organise exchange of best practices relevant for the implementation of the EU Roma framework

Takeaways from our WG Roma inclusion online mutual learning focusing on Berlin model

On 14-16 October, the working group Roma inclusion innovated by conducting an online policy transfer. Participants discussed Berlin's local framework for the inclusion of migrant Roma, its creation in 2012, the progressive evolution of the measures included in the strategy and the independent evaluation conducted in 2018-2019. One of the key findings of the evaluation process, in line with the new EU priorities for Roma equality, is to enhance activities aiming at fighting anti-gypsyism and discrimination. After an interactive analysis of the success elements and current challenges in Berlin, the participants co-created solutions for cities willing to tackle anti-gypsyism at local level and in particular reinforce the trust of the Roma people in (local) authorities.

The results of the discussions then fed into a high-level panel on the role of cities in implementing the EU Roma framework for equality, inclusion and participation (see above).

Recording is available [here](#). A report of the meeting will be shared in the coming weeks.

10. Poverty reduction policies and social services

Inequalities in the European Semester

A new study on '[Inequalities in the European Semester](#)' found that the current indicators do not reflect inequality properly. The study proposes to address inequalities by looking beyond poverty, move beyond focusing on the most deprived and lowest segments of the population and acknowledge how inequalities affect a much bigger proportion of the population, such as the need to look at the working poor, not just limit to access to the labour market as the main marker of inequality and pay more attention to conditions of those already in employment. The study proposes new indicators that:

- account better for conditions within the labour market
- don't look at inequalities only from the bottom and the most deprived (the squeezed middle)
- measure inequality in accessing social services disaggregated by household income
- account for the financial fragility of households and not just focus on national debt

Eurocities city dialogue on digitalizing social services

Eurocities brought together city experts from social services and digital services for a joint city dialogue on 22 September to discuss the common challenges and opportunities arising from digitalising social services. The participants learned from the findings of the recent survey on digitalising social services, presented by Amsterdam's city director of social services, who emphasised the positive effects for citizens, for city administrations and for the wider city, but also pinpointed that more is to be done to address the digital divide. Several cities active in the KSF working group on digital citizenship presented their good practices on improving online access to social services. For example, Ghent presented their e-inclusion programme for coaching people with intellectual disabilities on media literacy – 'Onbeperkt Mediawijs'. Recording is available [here](#).

Vienna presents good practices at Commission's workshop on empowering social services

Vienna's city director of social services, Agnes Berlakovich, spoke at the 'Empowering Social Services' session at the European Week of Regions and Cities on 8 October. She presented Vienna's current social challenges in the COVID-19 context and the good practices of integrating social services and adopting a neighborhood place-based approach. Raising awareness of our recent Eurocities statement on social Europe, Ms. Berlakovich emphasised that empowering social services can only be done by boosting social investment at local level and improving social policy governance by working with cities.

11. Child policy

European Commission launches targeted consultation on the EU Child Guarantee

Eurocities has been invited to take part in a targeted consultation until 10 November to share the views and inputs from cities to feed into the European Commission's proposal for an EU Child Guarantee. We have already shared with the European Commission the preliminary findings from our survey on child poverty in cities based on the answers from 35 cities in 19 European countries. Based on these findings, Eurocities is shaping a position on behalf of cities to ensure this new EU initiative is supporting cities' efforts to fight child poverty at local level.

The objective of the EU Child Guarantee is to ensure access for children in need to essential services, including childcare, healthcare, education, nutrition, housing and participation in cultural and leisure activities. To implement the Child Guarantee, the member states would adopt national strategies covering the period until 2030, which may form part of broader ones, in areas such as poverty and children's rights. To implement their strategy, the member states would adopt Child Guarantee National Action Plans where they would identify the groups of children, their needs, measures for addressing their needs and the financial investment needed, via national and complementary and targeted EU funding through the European Social Fund+ allocations. **Read our [Eurocities policy brief](#) for more details and our assessment of what's in it for cities and how to get involved.**

Leeds and Milan speak at the EU Forum on Children's Rights

On 29 September – 1 October, the European Commission organised the 13th EU Forum on Children's Rights. The Leader of Leeds City Council, Councillor Judith Blake and the Leeds Youth Forum chair spoke at the high-level political debate next to Ministers from France and Spain and Commissioners. Councillor Judith Blake, who also represented Eurocities Working Group on Children, used her intervention to reinforce the essential role of cities in any future strategies, as well as the role of city networks like Eurocities in ensuring that "national borders don't get in the way of our conversation about the rights of children."

At the same event, Milan shared good practices on inclusive childcare and support to children in the technical workshops. [Read more](#)

Have your say on the upcoming EU strategy on the rights of the child

The European Commission launched an online public consultation on the EU Strategy on the rights on the child. The EU strategy on children's rights will provide the framework for EU action to better promote and protect children's rights. It will contain a set of measures for the EU to implement, addressing among others: the rights of the most vulnerable children (linked to the EU Child Guarantee); children's rights in the digital age; the prevention of and fight against violence; and the promotion of child-friendly justice. You can send your feedback through the public consultation [questionnaire online](#) until **8 December**. Eurocities is working with the members of WG Children and Young People to ensure a strong voice from children in cities in this public consultation. We are encouraging all members to consult children in their city and feed the outcomes into this public consultation.

What is Eurocities doing?

- Preparing a report on cities fighting child poverty in Europe with good practices, trends and challenges from our cities and policy recommendations to feed the EU Child Guarantee
- Response to Commission's roadmap and the targeted consultation on the EU Child Guarantee

Join our WG Children meeting online on 27 November

We will present the findings from our survey on child poverty in cities based on inputs from 35 cities. Several cities will present their good practices, such as Vienna's recently adopted Strategy for the participation of children and young people. We will also have European Commission DG EAC staff sharing the latest EU policy updates on early childhood education and care policies. [Register here](#)

12. Accessibility and disability inclusion

Eurocities is conducting a survey on disability inclusion and accessibility policies at city level, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights principle 17 to input into the forthcoming European Disability Strategy post-2020. In this context, a first meeting with the Cabinet of Helena Dalli, EU Commissioner for Equality was organised in October. The cabinet confirmed the strong role cities are playing in the implementation of the EU disability strategy and expressed interest in learning more about local disability plans and their alignment with national disability strategies. The results from the Eurocities survey on inclusion of people with disabilities will be available in November, with the final report expected by the end of the year. The European Commission is also expected to publish evaluation results of the current disability strategy, with results expected in November and made available [here](#)

13. Urban ageing

European Week of Active and Healthy Ageing (EWAHA 2020) on 2-6 November

The European Week of Active & Healthy Ageing (EWAHA) looks into the most pressing priorities for an ageing Europe. The online week features a range of strategic debates and panels on health and well-being, financing and investment on which more information can be [accessed here](#)

Adapting European cities to population ageing

To capitalise on the successful [ESPON-ACPA project](#), ESPON is organising a conference week (30 November – 4 December) about population ageing together with Eurocities, AGE Platform Europe and the World Health Organisation. The week consists of a kick-off event, with a number of high-level speakers and experts, including vice president of the European Commission and Commissioner on Democracy and Demography Dubravka Šuica. The plenary is followed by various sessions on the case study areas investigated in different cities. For more information and registrations please contact masha.smirnova@eurocities.eu

14. Social economy

Eurocities survey about social economy and social enterprises in cities

Social Affairs Forum and Economic Development Forum launched a survey to collect evidence about the situation of social economy and social enterprises in cities. We want to identify the main challenges and opportunities for supporting the development of social economy and what are cities doing to benefit from them. We will look into good practices from cities to understand what works well and under which conditions, what could be improved and where are the gaps in policy provision that need to be addressed with support from national and EU level. EURO CITIES will collect valuable inputs from cities to feed directly into the European Commission initiative for the **Action Plan on the Social Economy** which will be launched in second part of 2021. We are planning to **share the results during the Social Economy Summit in Mannheim** on 25-27 May 2021. Please fill in [this survey questionnaire](#) and send **by 6 November** to patricia.couti@eurocities.eu and aleksandra.olejnik@eurocities.eu

EU social bonds under SURE

On 27 October, The EU Commissioner Johannes Hahn on Budget and Administration has announced that the European instrument for temporary Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (SURE) will place a €17 billion inaugural social bond. Find more details [here](#). The issuance has a dual tranche, with €10 billion having a majority of ten years and other €7 billion with a majority of 20 years. Read more [here](#).

European Commission's report on new technologies and digitisation for social economy

On 6 October, European Commission launched a report on [‘New technologies and digitisation: opportunities and challenges for the social economy and social enterprises’](#). It focuses on the integration of digital platforms and advanced technologies (i.e. Open-Source, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Big Data, Distributed Ledger Technologies) in the design and delivery of new/better social and societal impact by the social economy. The study shows that digital platforms and advanced technologies’ capabilities of automating and simplifying operations are opening up opportunities for the social economy in terms of increased reach and enhanced effectiveness.

Events

- European Parliament Social Economy Intergroup Public Hearing on Social Economy’s vision for a Green and Fair Transition, 10 November from 12.00-14.00. Register [here](#).
- [Social economy and Roma inclusion in times of Covid: A contribution to Europe’s Action Plan on Social Economy](#), on 17 November. Register [here](#).
- [Next Generation EU: Mobilising social economy’s potential to #BuildBackBetter](#), 27 November. Register [here](#).

15. EU Funding news

The latest **Eurocities funding forecast** with information on all open and upcoming funding opportunities for cities and the specific funding briefs is available [here](#) (after log in). Contact: Solene Molard at solene.molard@eurocities.eu

ESF Transnational cooperation Platform gets a fresh start

During 2021 – 2027, €200 million will be allocated to transnational cooperation under indirect management (while transnational cooperation will still be possible under shared management as well) to improve the transfer and scaling up of innovative practices. Eurocities was selected to be part of the new Advisory Panel on stakeholder engagement and to ensure that the capacity of cities in the

implementation of ESF-related projects is further enhanced. The Advisory Panel consists of 3 ESF managing authorities, 3 social partners and 2 NGOs.

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

Six new calls for proposal are open with deadline on 16 February 2021:

- AMIF-2020-AG-CALL-01 Developing and implementing local integration strategies through multi-stakeholder partnerships. Link to [funding brief](#)
- AMIF-2020-AG-CALL-02 Reducing obstacles and promoting access to basic services for third country nationals. Link to [funding brief](#)
- AMIF-2020-AG-CALL-03 Promoting the participation of migrants in the design and implementation of integration policies. Link to [funding brief](#)
- AMIF-2020-AG-CALL-04 Promoting complementary pathways for people in need of protection and their further integration. Link to [funding brief](#)
- AMIF-2020-AG-CALL-05 Address assistance, support and integration of third-country national victims of trafficking in human beings. Link to [funding brief](#)
- AMIF-2020-AG-CALL-06 Migrant children's transition to adulthood. Link to [funding brief](#)

Eurocities is looking at **creating a consortium to apply to call 1 on local integration strategies through multi-stakeholder approaches**. If your city is interested in joining the consortium, contact rossella.nicoletti@eurocities.eu

European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation – EaSI

A call for competence centres for social innovation is currently open with a new deadline for submission on 16 November 2020. Link to [call](#)

Horizon 2020 – Green Deal

A series of calls related to the Green Deal objectives were published with deadline on 26 January. The calls most relevant for cities and social affairs include:

- LC-GD-1-2-2020 Towards climate-neutral and socially innovative cities. Link to [call](#)
- LC-GD-6-1-2020 Testing and demonstrating systemic innovations for sustainable food from farm to fork. Link to [call](#)
- LC-GD-10-1-2020 European capacities for citizen deliberation and participation for the Green Deal. Link to [call](#)
- LC-GD-10-2-2020 Behavioural, social and cultural change for the Green Deal. Link to [call](#)
- LC-GD-10-3-2020 Enabling citizens to act on climate change and environmental protection through education, citizen science, observation initiatives, and civic involvement. Link to [call](#)

Many cities are already looking for partners. Check the partner search [here](#). [More information](#).



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