



SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR ACTIVE INCLUSION

LILLE MÉTROPOLE-ROUBAIX – SPIRAL: CITIZENS FULLY INVOLVED IN IMPROVING WELL-BEING IN THEIR AREA



SPIRAL is a new initiative by the Council of Europe. It provides municipalities and other organisations with a clear template for ensuring that citizens living in a particular neighbourhood are fully involved in deciding what well-being means for them, and in taking responsibility for the necessary actions to improve well-being. Roubaix is using the *SPIRAL* method to improve well-being for people living in Roubaix's most deprived neighbourhoods.

Many people in Roubaix's western neighbourhoods are increasingly socially isolated and socially excluded. They also experience tensions that can build up among people living in areas of deprivation. Contributing factors include long-term unemployment, illness, family break-up, and ineffective social policies that lack a holistic approach to social inclusion.

Despite the municipality's efforts to improve social cohesion and well-being over recent years, Roubaix's western neighbourhoods are in crisis. Roubaix has therefore decided to adopt the Council of Europe's new *SPIRAL* template: an innovative new approach, based on the experience of various cities, to get residents directly involved in solving the problems in their areas.

SPIRAL helps municipalities to work with citizens to:

- consult everyone involved in the neighbourhood, including residents, social welfare organisations, politicians and local businesses;
- create and agree a set of indicators to measure well-being in the neighbourhood;
- assess the effectiveness of current policies;
- determine what actions residents and other stakeholders must take to improve well-being for all, including future generations;
- agree co-responsibility for these actions and for ensuring they are carried out;
- regularly monitor and assess progress in achieving the goal of well-being.

Cities for Active Inclusion is a dynamic network of nine European cities – Birmingham, Bologna, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow, Lille Métropole - Roubaix, Rotterdam, Sofia and Stockholm – each with a local authority observatory (LAO) within its administration. Their aim is to share information, promote mutual learning and carry out research on the implementation of active inclusion strategies at the local level.

The observatories are co-ordinated by EURO CITIES, the network of major cities in Europe, and supported by a partnership between the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and EURO CITIES.



Innovation

Roubaix's use of the SPIRAL template is innovative in several ways:

- Roubaix is one of the first municipalities in Europe to use the SPIRAL method;
- SPIRAL creates a new form of partnership between Roubaix's citizens and public sector institutions, giving ordinary people a say in the goals and actions to improve well-being in their neighbourhood;
- SPIRAL's bottom-up approach gets everyone to go beyond the ties and concerns of their own group: it promotes dialogue, raises awareness of community needs, builds a shared vision of the future and ensures shared responsibility for the well-being of all.



Success

Already, Roubaix's SPIRAL project is making a positive impact in its deprived western neighbourhoods. Specifically, the SPIRAL project has so far:

- created a local co-ordinating group of 15 people;
- held consultation meetings with 166 people, in groups of eight or so at a time, from 21 single-profile groups: ranging from council housing tenants, outdoor workers and religious representatives to parents, pupils and service staff from local schools through to senior citizens and a sample of residents from a block of flats;
- identified 1,987 criteria for well-being;
- created ties of solidarity and co-operation between various, sometimes opposing, groups in the neighbourhood;
- defused some of the tensions between different groups of people;
- enabled new leaders in the neighbourhood to emerge, who are determined to continue the SPIRAL approach and improve life in their neighbourhoods;
- restored credibility and legitimacy for Roubaix's traditional municipal organisations in the eyes of the local population;
- four residents have already started a campaign to ban the use of quad-bikes in the streets, creating a petition and collecting at least 30 signatures;
- seven residents have opened a shared family garden, with help from Roubaix's environmental services.



Dissemination and sustainability

The Council of Europe's SPIRAL method is fully transferable. It can be used by any institution or administration anywhere, in order to involve citizens: on a local, regional, national or pan-European basis. It can be used to address any policies affecting community life: e.g. economic policies, town and spatial planning, health and hygiene, social affairs and culture.

At a later stage in the Roubaix SPIRAL project, Roubaix's practical experience of implementing the SPIRAL method can be shared with other local authorities across Europe.

In terms of sustainability, SPIRAL is a cyclical self-perpetuating process: after the initial cycle of consulting stakeholders, agreeing indicators, reviewing policies, agreeing actions and measuring outcomes, the cycle can begin again. Roubaix initially partnered with the University of Lille 1 to train four students in the SPIRAL consultative method. The city was then given an annual grant by Nord-Pas-de-Calais the Regional Council which funds a co-ordinator to oversee and maintain the consultation process into the future, to continue the SPIRAL process and achieve measurable improvements in social cohesion and well-being.



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For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>.

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