



Social Affairs Forum Policy update for April - August 2019

1. Key EU developments

Finland's Presidency of the Council of the EU

On 1 July, Finland took over the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU. With its motto 'Sustainable Europe - Sustainable Future', the presidency will focus on making Europe more socially inclusive. The Finnish programme especially promote a holistic approach to wellbeing and skills as the foundation for inclusive growth. This chapter aims at tackling shortages of skilled workers through a wide set of policies in favour of continuous learning, education, skills, mobility, but also an EU migration policy which would set up a system of legal entry routes. Specific attention should also be paid to young people as well as to the participation of women. The contribution of health policies is also recognised.

New European Parliament

Following the European elections, a new set of Members of the European Parliament has started to work. The chairs and vice-chairs of the different committee have been appointed in July. For the most relevant committee for social affairs, appointments include:

- Lucia Duris Nicholsonova - Slovakia (ECR member), chair of the employment and social affairs committee
- Sabine Verheyen - Germany (EPP member), chair of the committee for culture and education
- Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar - Spain (S&D member), chair of the civil liberties, justice and home affairs committee
- Johan Van Overtveldt - Belgium (ECR member), chair of the committee for budgets
- Evelyn Regner - Austria (S&D member), chair of the committee for women's rights and gender equality

Find out more about the chairs and vice-chairs of all committee [here](#) and on the website of the European Parliament [here](#).

New European Commission

In July, following meetings with the new European Parliament, incoming Commission President Ursula von der Leyen released political guidelines for the next European Commission. The document is centred on the following topics:

- A European Green Deal
- An economy that works for people
- A Europe fit for the digital age
- Protecting our European way of life
- A stronger Europe in the world
- A new push for European democracy

From a social policy perspective, the guidelines refer to an action plan for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, a digital Education Action Plan, a European Unemployment Benefit Reinsurance Scheme, a European Child Guarantee, a legal instrument for a fair minimum wage and a fair digital tax. In addition, the document puts forward that the European Semester economic policy coordination cycle should go hand in hand with social rights, climate objectives and a competitive industry, while better integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The full political guidelines document is available [here](#).

EU Budget 2020

Commission focuses its proposal on jobs, growth and security

On 5 June, the European Commission has published a draft budget for 2020. Both payments and commitments increase compared to 2019. The €168.3 billion should support European priorities including 'competitive economy and youth people' (more than €83 billion) and 'strengthening

security and solidarity in the EU'. Commitments of €2.8 billion for Erasmus+ and €117 million for the Youth Employment Initiative are foreseen. To evaluate impact of its funds, the European Commission also published a performance overview for each programme. Read more [here](#).

European Labour Authority

Bratislava to host the European Labour Authority

On 13 June, the Council of the EU selected Bratislava to host the seat of the future of the European Labour Authority. The Council also adopted the founding regulation of the European Labour Authority. It will support compliance and coordination of states on issues related to labour mobility, social security coordination and undeclared work. The ELA will also be responsible for providing information to employers and individuals in cross-border mobility situation. It is expected to start functioning at the end of this year and be fully operational by 2023 with an annual budget of around €50 million. Read more [here](#) and consult the new website [here](#).

ESF+

The European Parliament has adopted a legislative resolution on ESF+ in April. Among the key updates, the Parliament proposes to increase the overall ESF+ budget to integrate a child guarantee, increase earmarking for social inclusion, fighting poverty and youth unemployment. The report includes several amendments favorable to cities while strengthening the local dimension and the partnership principle. The full report is available [here](#) and the summary [here](#).

The European Council reached a partial general approach on ESF+ in April as well - the text is available [here](#).

The partial element is due to the fact that since the ESF+ Regulation is a proposal linked to EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), all provisions with budgetary implications or of a horizontal nature have been set aside (appear bracketed in the text), pending further progress on the MFF. These provisions include, inter alia, the overall ESF+ budget, thematic concentration where no final decision on earmarking has been made and co-financing rates for innovative actions. Interinstitutional negotiations on ESF+ are expected to kickstart in late September, with a final agreement between the Parliament, the Council and the Commission envisaged for the end of October 2019.

European Semester

On 9 July, the European Commission adopted the country-specific recommendations (CSRs) after their approval by the Council. All country received recommendations on education, skills and lifelong learning. Most countries (19) received CSRs on active labour market policies, incentives to work, job creation and labour market participation. Ten recommendations especially focus on the participation of women in the labour market. Related to this issue, 7 countries received recommendations on childcare and 15 on health and long-term care. The housing market is mentioned for 8 countries and poverty reduction and social inclusion are a focus point in 16 cases. This includes integration of people with a migrant background for 4 countries and inclusion of Roma for 4 cases. Find all the recommendations [here](#).

Migration

New AMIF regulation

On 13 March 2019, the European Parliament voted a report establishing the future Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), whose budget for 2021-2027 will increase up to €10.41 billion, a 51% increase compared to the previous financial framework. Parliament backed the AMIF with 374 votes to 260 and 49 abstentions.

This vote is very favourable for cities for a number of reasons, including:

- It recognises the role played by cities and their representative associations and strengthen the partnership principle, by asking Member States to consult local authorities in the design and monitoring of their work programmes.
- It provides a higher co-financing rate for activities implemented by local authorities.
- It provides direct access to emergency assistance for local governments.
- It earmarks at least € 30 million per year for local authorities under the Thematic Facility.

The Council is negotiating its position. Inter-institutional debate (between the Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council) will start this autumn (with the new Parliament being appointed).

European Agenda for Migration - progress so far

On 6 March, the European Commission published the report on the progress made over the past four years in implementing the Agenda for Migration. The report also identified immediate and future migration challenges and indicated the measures needed to address them.

Although the number of irregular arrivals has been steadily decreasing for the last three years, the Commission noted that the migratory pressure, especially on some member states, is not likely to diminish. Therefore, the adoption of a comprehensive approach to migration management and border protection remains crucial. Find the full report [here](#).

Implementation reports on legal migration instruments

At the end of March, the European Commission published the following reports:

- the second [report](#) on the implementation of the Long-Term Residence Directive (2003/109/EC), showing that the implementation of the Directive in Member States has progressed. However, the EU long-term resident status has not been actively promoted across the EU.
- a [report](#) on the Single Permit Directive (2011/98/EU), indicating that all Member States have stepped up their efforts to establish a ‘one-stop-shop’ mechanism. However, some legal and technical issues still need to be clarified such as visa and labour market test requirements, equal treatment coverage and issues related to the format of the permits.
- a [report](#) on the implementation of the Family Reunification Directive (2003/86/EC), revealing that Member States still have to address some challenges concerning the implementation of the Directive, specifically regarding visa facilitation, autonomous permits, more favourable provisions for refugees, the best interest of the child and legal redress.

Migration policy funding: Council sets negotiating positions

On 7 June, the Council adopted its position on the migration, border control and security funds for the next MFF 2021-2027. The agreement is a partial general approach for the 3 sectors as it does not include budget-related (part of the MFF negotiation) and issues linked to the common European asylum system (reform ongoing). The Asylum and Migration Fund is foreseen to provide support to states in the management of migration and provide tools to adapt to an evolving situation. The Council position enlarges the scope proposed by the Commission by extending the list of eligible actions and measures and increasing some limiting percentages. A higher co-financing rate is also proposed for priorities such as projects with third countries. Read more [here](#)

Migration policy: Council agrees partial negotiating position on return directive

On 7 June, the Council adopted a partial position on the directive for returning irregular migrants. Provisions on the border procedure for returns were not included in this agreement as it is under the scope of the Asylum Procedure Regulation, currently under discussion. Member states have agreed on:

- faster procedures for return decisions and appeals
- establishing obligation to cooperate for people subject to return procedure
- a list of criteria to determine the risk of absconding
- the possibility to detain third country nationals for security risks
- the possibility to return a third country national to any safe third country (in last resort)
- an obligation for States to establish programmes dedicated to voluntary returns.

Read more [here](#)

EU education agenda

New European Citizens’ Initiative ‘Europe CARES - Quality education for children with disabilities’

The initiatives defend the right for inclusive education of children and adults with disabilities. It calls for a common EU framework on inclusive education that would include early intervention



services, education and transition towards the labour market. Gathering of signatures starts on 4 March for a year. [Website](#) of the ECI (in Romanian)

Children

Commission publishes inception report of the child guarantee feasibility study

The study would evaluate the feasibility, implementation options and added value of a child guarantee. Specific focus will be put on 4 groups of vulnerable or disadvantaged children: children residing in institutions, children with disabilities or special needs, children of recent migrants and refugee and children living in precarious family situations. The inception report maps the current situation and plans for further research activity (stakeholders' workshops, online consultation). Read the report [here](#) and find out more about the workshops [here](#).

Latest developments in child and family policy in EU member states

The European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC) presented the latest developments in child and family policy in EU member states in June 2019 with focus on evidence-based policies from France, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Portugal and Romania. You can find more about each Member State initiative [here](#)

EU employment and skills agenda

Better working conditions in the EU: Council adopts a directive on more transparency and predictability at work

On 13 June, the Council adopted the directive improving predictability and transparency of working conditions in Europe. The legislation will improve information provided to workers and aims at responding to challenges such as demographic changes, digitalisation or new forms of work. It also sets minimum rights such as the possibility to take up a job in parallel, a limitation of the probationary period to 6 months and the right to free training. Read more [here](#).

Closing the gender pay gap: Council conclusions

On 13 June, the Council adopted conclusions on measures to close the gender-pay gap. Besides recognising equality between men and women as a fundamental principle of the EU, these conclusions incentivise states to improve existing measures or create new ones to ensure equal pay for work of equal value, promoting equality in education and ensure compatibility of work, family and private life for men and women. Read more [here](#).

New forms of work: Council conclusions

On 13 June, the Council adopted conclusions on new forms of work. The document focus on health and safety in a context of increasing digitalisation, robotization, use of artificial intelligence and of digital platforms. While recognising their contribution to social inclusion, the conclusion highlights the challenges these new forms of work represent for traditional work arrangements and protection of workers. Read more [here](#).

Workers in Europe in good health, but emotional demands take their toll

On 13 May, Eurofound published a report on working conditions and workers' health. Key findings include the assessment that physical risks have not increased but remain important, especially for unskilled jobs. On the contrary, emotional demands are increasing, leading to greater psychosocial risks in the work environment. These especially affect occupations that are traditionally considered as 'protected'. Read more [here](#) and find the report [here](#).

Innovation in Romania to receive European Commission support

On 9 August, the European Commission launched two programmes to support co-cooperation and innovation in Romania. A first programme of €500,000 combining the European Development Fund and funds from the World Bank, will contribute to fostering urban innovation in the country. Cities are invited to develop collaborative projects regarding among other digitalisation, education and entrepreneurship. Beyond funding, selective projects will benefit from expert advices from the Commission and the World Bank on the design of projects, the targeting of the sectors and the effective usage of EU funds. The second programme is funded under the EU's Catching Up Regions programme and aims at supporting innovation, in particular from SMEs. Read more [here](#).

Wellbeing

Work life balance directive adopted

On June 13, the European Council of Employment and Social Affairs ministers (EPSCO Council) adopted the directive on work-life balance for parents and carers, following an agreement with the European Parliament. The initiative is a key legislative advance to come out of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It aims at modernising the existing EU legal framework in the area of family-related leaves and flexible working arrangements. The new act also provides opportunities for workers to be granted leave to care for relatives who need support. You can find out more about the work-life balance directive [here](#).

Better work-life balance for parents and carers in the EU: Council adopts new rules

On 13 June, the council adopted the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers. This legislation will contribute to improving the participation of women in the labour market, notably through flexible working arrangements, paternity leave for the second parent (10 working days minimum) as well as parental leave (4 months). Workers will also be granted the possibility to take leave to care for relatives in need of support. Read more [here](#).

Urban ageing and demography

European Accessibility Act adopted

The European Council officially adopted the European Accessibility Act on 9 April. The directive aims at making various products and services in the European Union more accessible for persons with disabilities. It is estimated that more than 80 million people in the EU, affected by some degree of disability, will benefit from the new rules. Please find the final text [here](#)

Joint report on the future demographics

The European Joint Research Centre and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis launched a joint report on the future demographics of the EU. The report examines the key factors that will shape European demographics over the coming decades. By looking at factors such as migration, education levels and labour force participation, the report moves beyond traditional demographic analysis to provide a set of scenarios which reveal how these factors can shape the EU's future population and labour market. You can access the report [here](#).

Apply now to the Access City Award 2020

The applications for the 10th Access City Award are open until 11 September. Three prizes are to be distributed and up to four special mentions. The award is designed to reward cities' work in making cities more accessible for persons with disabilities and elderly people. For the first time, monetary prizes will be awarded to the winner and the two runners up (First prize: €150 000, 2nd prize €120 000, 3rd prize €80 000). Cities with over 50 000 inhabitants are eligible. For countries with less than 2 cities reaching that threshold, 2 or more smaller cities can jointly apply. Read more [here](#).

Roma inclusion

Study: Scaling up Roma Inclusion Strategies

The European Parliament published a study to promote better understanding of Roma people and their situation in the EU. The document was requested by the LIBE Committee to explore proposals for the post-2020 Rome framework. Propositions include strengthening the role of the Parliament and highlights the right to truth and justice for past and current human rights violations. More [here](#).

The European Parliament adopted the priorities of the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup for 2019-2024

A new bureau composed of MEPs from different political groups (GUE, Greens, Renew Europe, S&D and EPP) has been elected with 7 co-presidents and 2 vice-presidents. Priorities of the intergroup mandate include mainstreaming diversity in European Union policy and supporting anti-discrimination initiatives on the ground; the call for an anti-Gypsyism strategy or plan and the renewal of the National Roma Integration Strategy.

Western Balkans Countries commit for Roma integration in a new declaration

On 5 July, the prime ministers of the Western Balkans adopted a declaration on ‘Roma integration within the EU enlargement process’. In this document, they commit to increase their efforts for the integration of Roma. Besides defining concrete objectives to reduce the gap between Roma and non-Roma communities in employment, housing, education, health, civils registration and non-discrimination, Balkans states also recognise the importance of working with cities. Read more [here](#)

Resources of EU reports:

- European Commission, February 2019, [Commission’s report on the implementation of Council recommendation on ‘upskilling pathways’](#)
- European Economic and Social Committee, February 2019, [For a European framework directive on a minimum income](#)
- European Parliament, International Labour Organisation, June 2019, [Shaping the Future of Work](#)

2. EURO CITIES secretariat, social affairs forum and working groups

EURO CITIES meet with DG JUST to discuss the EU Roma framework post-2020

On 29 August, EURO CITIES secretariat met with representatives of the DG JUST-European Commission to discuss the future EU Roma framework. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss [EURO CITIES contribution to EU Roma framework post-2020](#) which has been adopted this year. We highlighted the need for adopting an integrated approach that would include all groups of Roma (including non-domestic ones) and the problem related to the lack of flexibility of the funding. We have focused on the need for cities to be involved through the different steps of the framework, from its drafting, negotiation with the different stakeholders to its implementation. The discussion will continue during DG JUST’s workshop on future policies for Roma, on first of October.

Cities continue to pledge to the EU Pillar of Social Rights

After the official launch of the campaign ‘Inclusive cities for all: Social Rights in my city’ in February at the European Parliament, cities continue to pledge to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights. Bologna became the 22nd city to sign a pledge with strong commitments on gender equality (principle 2) and housing (principle 19). Ljubljana also contributed with a second pledge dedicated to principle 17 on inclusion of people with disabilities and Poznan has pledged on the principle 19 on housing. New city pledges will be presented to SAF members and high-level representatives from the European Parliament and the European Commission during the Social Affairs Forum in October in Warsaw. Read more about Bologna’s pledge [here](#) and Ljubljana’s pledge [here](#) and have a look at how to pledge [here](#).

Interview with Sedat Arif, chair of the Social Affairs Forum and deputy mayor of Malmö

Find out more about Sedat Arif, new chair of the Social Affairs Forum in this interview and read out his vision of a social Europe. Read the interview [here](#).

EURO CITIES’ first ever Social Innovation Lab

On 25-27 March, EURO CITIES’ Social Affairs Forum took the lead on social innovation in cities through its first social innovation Lab. Over 120 participants from more than 50 cities explored through workshops, site visits and networking session how cities innovate to tackle pressing social challenges at local level. A methodology based on co-learning, co-sharing and co-creation ensured that all city delegates gained new perspectives, skills and improve their capacity to deliver on social policies. Read more about the successful event [here](#).

Meeting of the working group Smart Social Inclusion

Alongside the Social Innovation Lab, on 27 March, the working group Smart Social Innovation took the opportunity to exchange on new financing tools to support innovations in social service delivery. Interesting practices from Glasgow were highlighted through visits of the Glasgow Social Enterprise Network and presentation of the city’s Social Enterprise Strategy from 2018. Insights from the OECD and European Commission were also given on new tools for inclusive and social entrepreneurship. Read more about Glasgow Social Enterprise Network [here](#) and the Social Enterprise Strategy [here](#).



Working group urban ageing discovers Glasgow's approach to active ageing

Following the Social Innovation Lab in Glasgow, members of the working group urban ageing took the opportunity to meet and discover Glasgow's practice on active ageing with a focus on inter-generational cohesion. Through volunteering, living together, learning from each other, the project 'Generations working together' aims at actively involving all generations. Following these discussions, city delegates had the possibility to attend the ESPON 'ACPA - Adapting European Cities to Population Ageing: policy challenges and best practices' steering committee meeting.

Learning from Toulouse's inspiring practice on how to support Roma to access adequate housing

On 9-10 April, 35 city officers on homelessness and Roma inclusion from 15 European cities addressed the question of housing support for Roma during a policy transfer study visit in Toulouse. Through discussions with local policy-makers, beneficiaries and practitioners, participants discovered how to transfer some inspiring practices from Toulouse's policy to support Roma to move out of camps into adequate housing in the city. With the ambition to "do the impossible for better social inclusion at local level", Toulouse showed their innovative approach which combined housing solutions and integrated social support (including schooling, healthcare, employment, citizen involvement etc.). Four pre-selected 'transfer' cities presented their own challenges with regard to Roma inclusion and already took follow-up actions based on the advice received. Read more [here](#).

Meeting of the working group migration in Toulouse

On 9-10 April, alongside the meeting of the working group Roma, the members of the working group migration came together to discuss the integration of children and young migrants. During workshops and site visits, participants had the opportunity to discover more about Toulouse's experience on schooling of minors, enhancing the integration of young migrants through vocational education as well as integrated approach including housing, administrative support, health care, literacy etc. On the second day, city experts produced guidelines on city policies for the integration of young migrants.

EUROCITIES present to the Council of Europe good practices from cities on Roma housing inclusion

On 11-12 April, EUROCITIES was invited to present good practices from cities on access to adequate housing and prevention of eviction. This presentation was part of the Council of Europe Dialogue with Roma and Traveller Civil Society. It was a good opportunity to present findings from the report mapping the situation of Roma in cities in Europe and share examples of good practices from Berlin, Glasgow and Toulouse. Read more [here](#) and find the mapping [here](#).

Mutual learning for inclusive education at the centre of the attention in Barcelona

On 24-26 April, the WG education met in Barcelona to exchange on how to promote inclusive education and equal opportunities for all children and young people. 38 participants from 19 cities learned about the Catalan education system and its programme 'xarxes pel canvi' which gather 22 networks of schools throughout Barcelona to promote inclusive, empowering and future-oriented learning for all students. From pre-school organisation to the use of digital tools, ways to reduce inequalities and positive school leadership, city delegates had the opportunity to review Barcelona's practice using the critical friend review methodology. Read more [here](#).

Mutual learning on building accessible cities for all ages

On 12 to 14 June, the WG urban ageing and barrier free cities (mobility forum) gathered for a joint policy transfer on accessibility. Ljubljana took the participants through its innovative practice - they are silver medal winner of Accessible Cities and winner of the European Green Capital Award - that fosters equal participation in society for older people and people with disabilities. The in-depth understanding gained from site visits, presentations and discussions with local stakeholders and decision makers, as well as the knowledge from the city delegates, were used to develop a set of innovative solutions to build accessible cities in Europe. Berlin and Bologna - which presented their challenges had the chance to draft action plans etc. Read more [here](#). Watch the video presenting Ljubljana's practice and the results of the meeting [here](#).

Mutual learning on innovative solutions to combat long-term unemployment through social economy in Lille

On 27-29 May, more than 40 experts from working groups employment, smart social inclusion and entrepreneurship & SMEs met in Lille to learn, transfer and possibly replicate some of the inspiring practices of the host city. Lille Metropole presented its innovative approach of using the social economy as a vehicle for social cohesion.

The participants visited the Job Factory (La fabrique de l'emploi), which is part of a national experiment aiming at eliminating long-term unemployment by delivering basic services or goods that people in deprived areas can't afford and which could be delivered by unemployed people. City experts have also been inspired by three other practices like the Mobility Platform, the Call for social economy projects and Entrepreneurship Factory. Amsterdam, Bristol and Cluj-Napoca had the opportunity to address challenges like how to match the long-term unemployed with the labour market of the future, how to offer support for the long-term unemployed with learning disabilities and how to develop successful models of labour market inclusion of the long-term unemployed from vulnerable communities. Read more about Lille's Job Factory [here](#).

Working group housing meeting alongside the International Social Housing Festival

On 6 June, during the week of the International Social Housing Festival in Lyon, members of the working group housing had the opportunity to discuss private rent regulations and affordable housing. This event was part of the European Metropolitan Areas Forum. The main measures explored by cities are zoning of holiday/tourist rentals, introducing licenses for bed and breakfast and shared apartments, creating social housing for middle income groups in newly developed areas and coordinating housing observatories between different levels of government. In the second part of the meeting, the cities have had the opportunity to analyse different local perspectives on rental regulation. New York City and three European cities - Barcelona, Berlin and Vienna, presented how they are addressing rent increases.

Meeting of the WG Migration and integration in Antwerp

On 13-14 June, the WG migration and integration met in Antwerp back to back with the Urban Innovation Action workshop on 'the role of cities in the integration of migrants and refugees. The city presented its CURANT project on cohousing and case management for unaccompanied refugees, which adopts a holistic approach to support refugees and migrants aged 17 to 22. City delegates had the opportunity to learn and identify elements to transfer from this practice, hear about other opportunities and discuss policies and programmes established at European and international levels on migration. Read more [here](#).

Survey on the principles 11 and 19 of the European Pillar of Social Rights

On 17 July, we have launched the second survey part of the 'Cities delivering social rights' initiative for SAF members to report on policy initiatives focusing on principle 11- childcare and support to children and principle 19 - housing and assistance for the homeless. The aim is to collect data, evidence and good practices on the measures cities are taking in line with the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The survey results will feed into an analytical report of EURO CITIES to be published in October 2019 ahead of the Social Affairs Forum in Warsaw. Furthermore, the results will form the basis for the EURO CITIES upcoming 'Social Europe' statement and feed into our upcoming policy and advocacy priorities with the incoming EU institutions. Read more [here](#).

3. News from EURO CITIES members

London council launches free school meals pilot scheme

In a context of growing food poverty, the council of Hammersmith and Fulham (west London) launched a scheme to provide primary school pupils with breakfast and lunch for free, irrespective of income. This system complements the national free school meals scheme, which due to high threshold for qualification, prevents thousands of children in need to access it and creates stigma. The scheme will first apply to primary school and should be extended to secondary schools from 2020. Around 10 700 children will benefit from the pilot. Read more [here](#).



Amsterdam gets tough on B&Bs, gives youngsters housing priority

In Amsterdam, the city where homes are ‘least affordable in Europe’ according to researchers, the city has taken adopted new rules to ensure availability of affordable housing. Measures include quotas per neighbourhood for bed and breakfasts which will have to obtain a 5-year licence delivered by the city council. Strong criteria such as the obligation to live in the property will apply. Holiday rentals will even be completely banned in some areas to protect neighbourhoods. Priority will also be given to youth, nurses, teachers, low and middle income for social housing. More [here](#).

Prague to increase funding for education and take on new school employees

Prague’s city council has approved an important increase of budget dedicated to education in the city (CZK 300 million). With this added investment, the city is contributing by a total of CZK 1 billion to top up the funds from the ministry of education. This money will be dedicated to the remuneration of teachers and school staff to increase attractiveness of the position and ensure that regional differences in living costs are considered. The city already showed its commitment to education by strengthening training of teachers and introducing programmes for teaching foreign languages by native speakers. Read more [here](#)

Dublin approves affordable housing scheme

On 13 May, Dublin local authorities approved a new scheme defining eligibility criteria to buy discounted homes (up to 40%) built on municipality ground. The project aims at fostering access to homeownership for workers who cannot afford it on the traditional private market but are not eligible to social housing. Read more [here](#).

Helsinki becomes first European city to deliver Sustainable Development report

In July, Helsinki presented a sustainable development report to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum. Following New York, Helsinki is the second city taking this step and take the lead in Europe. The report highlights the measures taken by the city to promote the SDGs and evaluate the progress made in their implementation at local level. Read more [here](#).

Barcelona campaign get more people to register to vote in local elections

With its campaign ‘My city, my vote’, Barcelona has successfully managed to significantly increase registration for the local elections. This success enables both EU residents (+ 53% registrations) and non-EU residents (+49%) to have their say in local policies. One of the key action in the campaign consists of providing necessary information about the procedure in different languages (targeting especially to most important communities). Read more [here](#).

4. Upcoming events

- **WG Roma meeting - 24-26 September 2019, Braga**
The focus of the meeting will be on integrated city plans for Roma inclusion. The meeting will take the form of a critical friend review. City experts from all over Europe will discover Braga’s integrated practice and provide feedback to them before suggesting measures to scale up the current actions into a new project. Register [here](#), until 10 September.
- **WG Homelessness meeting - 30 September to 2 October, Poznan**
The autumn working group meeting will focus on ‘How cities can support new groups at risk of homelessness to move from vulnerable to resilient citizens’. The meeting take the format of a policy transfer. Register [here](#) until 20 September.
- **Autumn Social Affairs Forum meeting - 22-24 October 2019, Warsaw**
This years’ social affairs forum will focus on ‘Inclusive Cities for All: How to ensure social inclusion and well-being for all ages?’ Find out more [here](#). Register [here](#) until 4 October.
The following study visits are organised alongside SAF in Warsaw:
 - **Joint study-visit of the WG Education and Employment - 24 October, Warsaw**
Right after the Social Affairs Forum meeting, enjoy the opportunity to discuss lessons learnt from ESF projects. Registrations are separate from the SAF meeting. More [here](#).



- **WG Smart Social Inclusion meeting - 24 October, Warsaw**
Right after the Social Affairs Forum meeting, the WG Smart Social Inclusion will have the opportunity to discover the social services reform in Warsaw. Registrations are separate from the SAF meeting. More information and registration [here](#).
- **WG Urban Ageing study visit - 24 October, Warsaw**
Right after the Social Affairs Forum meeting, the study visit of the WG Urban Ageing will focus on social and digital integration of older people. Registrations are separate from the SAF meeting. More information and registrations [here](#).
- **WG Migration and Integration and ReSOMA launch event - 13-14 November, Amsterdam**
The joint event between the Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum (ReSOMA) and WG Migration and Integration will showcase the research findings on ‘building a comprehensive approach to integration funding’. Register [here](#), until 4 November.
- **WG Employment meeting - 13-14 November, Ghent**
The meeting will focus on ‘skills mismatch in local labour markets: how to develop 21st century skills?’. Ghent will present the interreg-project on skills named “Skills Navigator” and receive constructive feedback as part of a critical friend review. Registration will be launched in mid-September.
- **WG Urban Ageing meeting - 18-20 November, Ghent**
The focus of the meeting will be on mental health and inclusive housing for elderly. During this working meeting, the members will also elect the new leadership. The event is followed by the EPSON project meeting. The registration will be launched in mid-September.
- **WG Housing meeting - 20-21 November, Ghent**
- The study visit will focus on renovation and renewal of neighbourhoods ‘housing policy towards house owners and the problems of relocation and gentrification’. The cities will also have the occasion to exchange views on the impact of AirBnB on the affordable housing. Registration will be open in mid-September.
- **WG Education meeting - 27-29 November, Vienna**
The WG education members will meet in Vienna to learn from five practices on various educational stages with a strong focus on diversity, inclusion, school leadership and quality assurance. Registration will be open in mid-September.
- **EUROCITIES Annual General Meeting - ‘Cities at a crossroads’ - 28-29 November, Prague**
- **Meeting of General Directors of Social Affairs - 20-21 November, Amsterdam**
Amsterdam in cooperation with SAF EUROCITIES, is organising a meeting for General Directors of Social Affairs on the topic of inequality and segregation in European cities. This meeting will give the chance to discuss existing challenges, share expertise and identify opportunities for reflecting the local realities on the EU agenda. With this meeting we would also explore the possibilities of an EUROCITIES strategic group on tackling inequality in cities. More information will be provided in September.
- **OECD Local Development Forum in Antwerp on 10-11 December**
This December we are joining forces with OECD! Save the date for the annual OECD Local Development forum in Antwerp on 10-11 December. The forum will focus on ‘Right skills, Right Jobs, Right Places’, addressing skills mismatch, how to equip people with the right skills and successfully engaging disadvantage groups so that they can contribute to local labour markets. Find more about the event and **call for good practice** [here](#). Registration will be launched in mid-September.

Relevant EU and international meetings

- [1st Social Progress Cities Summit](#) - 17 September - Umea
- [From in-work poverty to decent work - Think European act in solidarity](#) - 25 September - Berlin
- [EU Health Programme High Level Conference](#) - 30 September - Brussels
- [European week of regions and cities](#) - 7-10 October 2019 - Brussels
- [International Youth Event](#) - 11-14 November - Gothenburg
- [OECD’s local development forum](#) - 10-11 December - Antwerp
- [European Day of Persons of Disabilities](#) - 3-4 December - Brussels



5. Project news

EUROCITIES to launch the new CONNECTION project

What is CONNECTION about?

This new AMIF project will work with 4 thematic communities of practice bringing together 22 cities from 12 member states with complementary needs and experiences to work on:

- How to develop a strategic approach to integration, participation and interaction;
- How to build a gender dimension into integration policies;
- How to build pathways to employment for migrants;
- How to design one-stop-shops as an integrated response to integration needs.

It supports 7 less experienced cities and provides them with mentoring and with implementation grants, creating 7 new policies and services which will improve the lives of immigrants and refugees. It will build capacity in further cities that are not partners in the project by inviting 8 to join the communities of practice; by providing peer-training to 80 more cities; and by developing policy guidelines and how to videos covering the four themes, which will be used by another 200 practitioners and will help to improve integration support to many more immigrants and refugees.

6. Funding news

The latest edition of the **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).

Check [here](#) the recording and presentation from our webinar on upcoming funding opportunities for cities. Contact: Anja De Cunto anja.decunto@eurocities.eu

AMIF - Asylum migration and integration fund

The 2019 work programme for AMIF has been published. Calls are expected to be launched in the second half of 2019. EUROCITIES is interested to apply. Further information should be provided shortly. For any question contact: Rossella Nicoletti rossella.nicoletti@eurocities.eu

Calls for proposals for transnational actions on asylum, migration and integration have been published with deadline next 30 January 2020.

- Topic 1: Fostering the integration of persons in need of protection through private sponsorship schemes. To the Funding [brief](#).
- Topic 2: Social orientation of newly arrived third-country nationals through involvement of local communities, including mentoring and volunteering activities. To the Funding [brief](#).
- Topic 3: Social and economic integration of migrant women. To the Funding [brief](#).
- Topic 5: Support to victims of trafficking in human beings. To the Funding [brief](#).
- Topic 6: Protection of children in migration. To the Funding [brief](#).

ROMACT

The next ROMACT call for Transnational Cooperation and Capacity building is expected to open in Autumn. ROMACT aims to assist local authorities to better integrate marginalised people, particularly their non-national Roma communities. It focuses on Roma communities and assists with the cooperation between municipalities that experience immigration as well as emigration of marginalised communities. [More information](#).

Horizon2020

The last round of Horizon2020 calls has been published on 4 July. Deadlines are in early 2020. Below a list of exemplary calls potentially interesting for the social affairs forum. Information on each call is available on the dedicated social affairs forum [page](#) of the funding forecast.

Under societal challenge 1 - Health, demographic change and wellbeing

- SC1-BHC-20A-2020: Pre-commercial procurement (PCP) for integrated care solutions
- SC1-BHC-29-2020: Innovative actions for improving urban health and wellbeing - addressing environment, climate and socioeconomic factors



- SC1-DTH-13-2020: Implementation research for scaling up and transfer of innovative solutions involving digital tools for people-centred care
- SC1-HCC-08-2020: Scaling up innovation for active and healthy ageing

Under societal challenge 3 - Secure, clean and efficient energy

- LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020: Mitigating household energy poverty

Under societal challenge 6 - Europe in a changing world, inclusive innovative and reflective societies

- MIGRATION-04-2020: Inclusive and innovative practices for the integration of recently arrived migrants in local communities
- MIGRATION-05-2018-2020: Mapping and overcoming integration challenges for migrant children
- MIGRATION-09-2020: Narratives on migration and its impact: past and present
- MIGRATION-10-2020: Sustainable practices for the integration of newly arrived migrants into societies
- DT-GOVERNANCE-05-2018-2019-2020: New forms of delivering public goods and inclusive public services
- DT-GOVERNANCE-22-2020: Citizen-centric public services in local and regional administrations
- SU-GOVERNANCE-09-2020: Addressing radicalization through social inclusion
- SU-GOVERNANCE-21-2020: Developing deliberative and participatory democracies through experimentation
- TRANSFORMATIONS-18-2020: Technological transformations, skills and globalization - future challenges for shared prosperity
- TRANSFORMATIONS-22-2020: Enhancing access and uptake of education to reverse inequalities

Urban Innovative Action

The last round of UIA calls will be launched in mid-September with deadline expected for December 2019. For this year the projects should focus on:

- Air Quality
- Circular Economy
- Demographic change
- Culture and cultural heritage

The in-depth description of each topic is already available on the UIA website.

Check [here](#) the recording of our webinar with the UIA secretariat of last 25 June.



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