



SOCIAL POLIS Newsletter - October / November 2008

Dear Social Polis Stakeholders,

I am pleased to send you the first SOCIAL POLIS newsletter which will be now issued on a monthly basis. I will be editing it with the support of Dr. Konrad Miciukiewicz and Prof. Frank Moulaert.

The newsletter will focus on the first granted stakeholder workshops, the CEG stakeholder meeting in Lisbon, the Eurocities conference in Berlin and finally on upcoming events and newly involved stakeholders.

Lead partner meeting in Milan

A Social Polis Lead Partner meeting was held in Milan on 8th of October 2008 and took stock on the proposals for stakeholder workshops (first and second call). A list of workshops that will be funded is given below. We would like to kindly thank organizers, co-organizers, rapporteurs and the many stakeholders who already have been and will be involved in these workshops. The discussion also dealt with the Focussed Research Agenda (FRA) and how to bring it forward and become more accessible to stakeholders (the FRA is available on our website) and the organisation of the next Social Polis Conference in Vienna (April 2009). Also, Lead Partner Isabel Andre from the CEG Lisbon Team raised the idea of ‘local stakeholder workshops’ and ‘focused group interviews’ which would be organised by Lead Partners. She also launched the idea of working with ‘triggers’ to involve stakeholders in workshops starting from their experience and needs.

List of granted workshops

Date	City	Title	Organiser
06.11.08	Malmö	Intercultural Competence	House of Dreams
25.11.08 – 26.11.08	Santiago de Chile	“New Covenant in building social cohesion in Latin American cities”	SUR Org & Urban and Territorial Studies Institute
11.01.09 – 12.01.09	Paris	“Think differently: Supporting local socio-economic initiatives in the city for strengthening social cohesion?”	European Institute for Solidarity based Economy (INEES)
15.01.09 - 16.01.09	Barcelona	“Global and local dynamics in cities from a gender perspective: the case of Barcelona”	Fundació Surt
10.02.09	Milan	“Which way out of the housing challenge? Participatory models meeting sustainability, social cohesion, multiethnic and gender integration”.	Alisei
10.02.09 – 11.02.09	Manchester	“Nature, social cohesion and the city”	Josh Steiner, Action for Sustainable Living Erik Swyngedouw
30.04.09 – 02.05.09	Brussels	“Micronomics”	Citymine(d)

Stakeholder workshop on 'Intercultural Competence', Malmö

The first stakeholder workshop was held in Malmö on 6th of November 2008 and focused on 'Intercultural competence' within the scope of EF3 Housing, Neighbourhood and Health. It was organised by the 'House of Dreams' (Jessica Hultzén), a non-governmental organisation helping people to fulfil their lives through cultural projects. Maria Lindbom, Development Officer at South Sweden / Region Skåne, and Mikael Stigendal, Senior Researcher at the Department of Urban Studies, Malmö University, were co-organizers. The idea was to explore the competences which young people from deprived neighbourhoods develop when growing up in a multi-cultural environment and how such competences would benefit both their integration into society and also the broader society. The debate was organised in accordance with the OPERA method: a set of precise questions is prepared in advance and is meticulously addressed and clearly answered by different working groups during the meeting. 40 participants with various professional backgrounds in addition to the young people were invited to discuss these questions which notably focused on setting up a clear definition of 'intercultural competence' among young people in deprived neighbourhoods.

Stakeholder workshop on 'New Covenant in building social cohesion in Latin American cities', Santiago de Chile

The second workshop was held on 25th and 26th of November in Santiago de Chile and dealt with a "New Covenant in building social cohesion in Latin American cities". With almost 30 participants the workshop firstly aimed at building up a network of academics, public, private and grassroots actors as an incentive for the creation of new pacts in the generation of social cohesion within Latin American cities. Secondly it offered a new perspective on social cohesion based on the reality and experiences of Latin America. A range of major issues have been addressed:

- The importance of global socio-economic and political conditions (social inequalities, fractures in the labour market, concentration of economic power by private corporations and holdings not constrained by any political accountability obligation)
- The problem of security in particular in public spaces and its effects on social and physical segregation and consequently on social cohesion
- The effects of the transformation of the labour market on vulnerable social groups (young people, Indians, migrants, young people etc.)
- The new forms of organisation and new solidarities that arise at the local level as a response to rising social and urban inequalities
- The importance of recognising these local urban movements as well as their actions (notably mobilising and protecting locally based social memories and identities)

More information on results of these workshops will be available soon on our website.

Stakeholder meeting in Lisbon

Lead partner CEG Lisbon organised its first Stakeholder Meeting on 17th of October 2008 with the aim to introduce the Social Polis platform and its mechanisms to stakeholders. The meeting enabled clarification of the role of stakeholders within the project; in particular regarding the relation between Existential Fields and Stakeholders and the gained benefits and advantages of their involvement in Social Polis. A specific way of facilitating the debate was experienced through the use of 'triggers' for the functioning of communities of practice, although the debate moved towards a more abstract level consequently questioning the efficiency of this approach. Nevertheless the debate successfully focused on Existential Fields 3 (Housing, Neighbourhood and Health) and 8 (Social and Spatial Inequalities at the Urban and Regional Level) and led to the collection of a diversified and relevant set of contributions.

Other information on actions undertaken by Lead Partners

A series of local stakeholder workshops will be organised by Lead Partners, notably in Belgium by Leuven University (to discuss the FRA, the research agenda on EF8), in Manchester (focussing on

socio-ecological urbanism). Other more informal meetings and discussions with stakeholders are being organised throughout the year.

EUROCITIES Economic Development Forum (EDF), Berlin

A Joint Meeting of the EUROCITIES Economic Development Forum (EDF) and the Social Affairs Forum held in the beginning of November in Berlin offered us the opportunity to organise a Social Polis session with a special topic on migration issues. Within the scope of the preparation of the Focused Research Agenda, conclusions were drawn on the importance of efficient indicators for measuring social cohesion and integration at a local level. Areas of research which need to be further deepened and good policy examples to be studied were identified. Overall, this meeting offered us a great opportunity to publicise our Social Polis platform and extend our stakeholder network.

We would be delighted to receive information and comments for inclusion in forthcoming Newsletters and also advice on how to improve this newsletter and communication method. Also, if you wish any relevant information to be published in this newsletter, please feel free to send it to us. To do so, you can use the website (<http://www.socialpolis.eu/>) or send us directly comments via email (socialpolis.admin@ncl.ac.uk)

Upcoming conferences (links on Social Polis website)

Date	Title
30.11.08 – 02.12.08	URBACT Annual Conference – Montpellier
01.12.08	Urban Change in Europe: the Place of Social Housing in Integrated Urban Policies, London
22.01.09 – 23.01.09	Beyond Social Inclusion: Towards a More Equal Society? CRSP conference, Loughborough University
04.02.09 – 08.02.09	Call for papers for the World Conference of Humanitarian Studies 2009, Groningen, Netherlands
20.02.09 – 21.02.09	Transnational Collective Bargaining within a European multi-level System of Industrial Relations – ULB Brussels

The next Social polis Lead partner meeting will be held in Amsterdam on 19th and 20th of February 2009.

List of new stakeholders:

Since June 2008 more than 30 stakeholders have agreed to join the Social Polis network! For further information and contact details please refer to the complete list of stakeholders on our website or, alternatively, contact your Lead Partner or a member of the coordination team.

Link to the Social Polis Stakeholder network:

http://www.socialpolis.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=164