



**SOCIAL POLIS Newsletter: November December 2010**

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**Happy New Year from Social Polis**

**At the end of the third year of Social Polis, we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy 2011. We hope the next year thanks to stakeholder and especially citizens involvement will be a better year for every inhabitant of the world.**

**Workshop in Leuven: “Prospective Urbaine”**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, the workshop “Prospective Urbaine” took place in Leuven. This initiative was organized by Social Polis, by PUCA and by Urban-net. The aim of the workshop was to discuss urban futures paying attention at the role of policies, with a focus on small-medium cities and lower-scale areas in large cities (neighbourhoods, districts). High level experts and policy makers participated to the workshop, 10 of them answering a detailed questionnaire on how to improve social cohesion in European cities. The discussion and the written material produced by the experts provided very valuable outputs. From the elaboration of these outputs a detailed report on socially cohesive urban futures will be produced.

## Social Polis European Learning event in Brussels

The 18th and 19th of November the Brussels Social Polis European Learning Event took place. Almost 50 participants from the Social Platform and representatives of European policy making communities gathered in Brussels for promoting a collective learning meeting, in which the knowledge produced in Social Polis was divulged and multiplied.

6 members of the platform presented their stories . The challenges for the future of research-practice dialogue and the difficulties emerging from reforms concerning social science and humanities at the national and European level were discussed.

On the second day possibilities for future networking between the participants were promoted. A specific session of the conference was dedicated to strengthening contacts between members of the platform with a targeted match-making activity.

You will find a more detailed documentation on the Social Polis website in due course.

We wish to thank all the participants for making this event successful.

## Cities of Tomorrow: how to make it happen

On the 20th and 21th of December the DG region organized the workshop "Cities of tomorrow: visions and models". This workshop is the second step (after a first workshop on the 28th and the 29th of June) of a reflection on the future of regional policy bringing together more than 20 European experts. The issues which were discussed included:

- models of territorial governance;
- socially innovative, inclusive and integrated models of multi-scalar governance;
- governance principles for European intervention;
- the urban dimension of future Cohesion Policy.

The presentations are available on line at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/conferences/citiesoftomorrow/programme\\_december.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/citiesoftomorrow/programme_december.cfm)

Several Social Polis members presented and discussed at the workshop. The talks will be accessible through web-streaming as of early January (same website).

## Understanding Social Science: impact report

Recently the final report on the widening of the blog *Understanding Social Science* was produced. The blog is a bilingual tool which gathers summaries and pedagogical materials with a high visual profile, including graphs, diagrams and maps, and it proves to be a good tool to reach a broad non-scientific audience. Now the blog includes sections related to 5 of the Social Polis survey papers, and includes interactivity and communication spaces, namely polls, quizzes and debate spaces.

Once updated, the blog will stay open as a self-sustaining and active tool. Our statistics prove the sustainability of the impact: the blog continues to be regularly visited and used. During the standby phase, when no new content was published and no active dissemination activities took place, the number of visits decreased but remained nonetheless regular: after the launch on January 2010 and its update on October-November 2010, visits and comments continued on a regular basis, the blog received between 250 and 610 views per month, and a total of 4.193 visits and 5 comments; furthermore, the self-corrective test has been played 320 times.

The only weakness is the very limited result of interactive sections added to the blog, showing that the passivity of Internet users is a difficult obstacle to overcome. However, it should not be overlooked that interactivity may increase in the long term, as a result of the multiplier effect of dissemination among Social Sciences lecturers and also the increasing number of links provided on other websites.

## International conference: Rethinking migration in Times of Economic Crisis in Europe

On the 9th and 10th of December, the International conference “Rethinking Migration in Times of Economic Crisis in Europe” was held in Berlin. The focus of the conference was the challenges posed by the crisis to the governance of migration and the socio-economic vulnerabilities of migrants in Europe. Different papers were discussed, ranging from comparative studies between different European countries, to historical analysis of the past big crises and to analysis at the micro level. Several issues were discussed, including migrants and labour market, voluntary return programs, European migration policies. The conference was concluded by a speech by Frank Moulaert, who related the Social Polis approach to the international migration issue, by showing how international migration is a powerful entry point to problematising social cohesion in the city.

The conference included three sections:

- What can we learn from the past? The current economic crisis in the historical and European context;
- Consequences of the global crisis for asylum and migration policies in Europe;
- Effects of the crisis on the social situation and social cohesion in European cities.

## SOCIAL POLIS Newsletter

The **SOCIAL POLIS NEWSLETTER** is published by the SOCIAL POLIS coordination Team at Newcastle University and the Catholic University of Leuven

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