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Human Rights Handbook for local and regional authorities Volume II-Social Rights

Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Monitoring Committee)

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           Congress Spokesperson on Human Rights

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[1] L: Chamber of Local Authorities / R: Chamber of Regions
EPP/CCE: European People's Party Group in the Congress
SOC/G/PD: Group of Socialists, Greens and Progressive Democrats
ILDG: Independent Liberal and Democrat Group
ECR: European Conservatives and Reformists Group
NR: Members not belonging to a Political Group of the Congress.

DRAFT RESOLUTION[2]

1. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe refers to:

a. The Declaration by the Committee of Ministers on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, adopted on 17 May 2019, in Helsinki, reaffirming that the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly, and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities carry out monitoring functions and act as guardians of human rights and democracy in their areas of competence;

b. Congress Resolution 427 (2018) "Promoting human rights at local and regional level";

c. Congress Resolution 365 (2014) on the "Best practices of implementation of human rights at local and regional level in member States of the Council of Europe and other States";

d. Congress Resolution 296 (2010) Revised and Recommendation 280 (2010) Revised on the "Role of local and regional authorities in the implementation of human rights";

e. the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 3 for good health and well-being, Goal 4 for quality education, Goal 11 for sustainable cities and communities, Goal 16 for peace, justice and strong institutions and Goal 17 for partnership for the goals.

f. The second volume of the Human Rights Handbook for local and regional authorities attached to this resolution;

2. The Congress, as part of its efforts to strengthen local and regional democracy in Europe and beyond through the promotion of a human-rights based approach to grass-roots' policy making;

3. Emphasising the vital role played by grass-roots' authorities in ensuring citizens' access to social rights, delivering social services and contributing to social cohesion:

a. endorses the second volume of the Human Rights Handbook on social rights to offer guidance to assist local and regional authorities and their administrations in fulfilling social rights, including in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

b. invites local and regional authorities and their administrations in the Council of Europe member States and other States with which the Organisation carries out co-operation activities to disseminate, promote and use this Handbook in their local and regional policies;

c. asks its Monitoring Committee, in co-operation with other Congress bodies and relevant bodies of the Council of Europe, to prepare the third volume of the Human Rights Handbook for local and regional authorities.

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2. Preliminary draft resolution approved by the Monitoring Committee on 13 November 2020 by written procedure.

Secretariat of the committee: S. Poirel, Secretary to the committee and S. Pereverten, co-Secretary to the committee.

APPENDIX

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

WHY A HANDBOOK ON SOCIAL RIGHTS?

Engaging with human rights is a key cause, responsibility and ***political opportunity*** for local authorities. Local and regional authorities have a central role to play in the promotion of human rights-based policies and in the protection of the rights of their citizens. Being close to their citizens and in the best position to understand their needs, local authorities have especially in recent years asserted themselves and have been able to offer a hands-on impact, whenever national authorities found themselves in crisis or faced a political deadlock.

The United Nations Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, in 2015, recognized in its final report that **the duties to protect human rights are shared and complementary between the national and the local level**. In many countries, the municipal functions directly related to human rights are constitutionally mandated, while in others, efforts are constantly made to mainstream human rights into local authorities' policies.

To this end, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has published the first volume of a Human Rights Handbook, which aimed at assisting public administrations at local and regional level with the task of adopting a human rights-based approach in their policy making. Volume I focused on the right to non-discrimination and how this translates in the protection and integration of the most vulnerable groups in our societies.

While all human rights are universal and indivisible, the most established way of classifying them is in generations, based on the order in which they were developed.[1] The right to non-discrimination addressed in Volume I is an integral part of the principle of equality, which in turn belongs to the so-called **"first generation" of human rights commitments**. These commitments include civil and political rights and require governments to refrain from certain activities (*in this case: to refrain from discriminating*).

Apart from these "**negative**" commitments ("refrain from"), further rights requiring a **positive** intervention of states were established in the aftermath of World War II. This **"second generation"** of rights concern how people live and work together. They are social and economic rights, guaranteeing that every person be afforded conditions under which they are able to meet their needs of education, health care, housing, work and other social goods.

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[1] https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/the-evolution-of-human-rights

This distinction between civil and political on the one hand, and social rights on the other, was followed by the United Nations with the adoption of two separate International Covenants in 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Also within the Council of Europe, two separate treaties were elaborated: the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 and the European Social Charter of 1961. However, these treaties are **complementary**, as civil and political rights have aspects pertaining to social rights and vice-versa.[2] Taking, for instance, the civil right to protection of life and safety, its strong ties with the social right to healthcare are apparent. Or the (civil and political) right to respect and protect family life may be very much interrelated with social rights of economic protection or protection of maternity.

FAKE NEWS: Social rights are secondary and subsidiary to civil and political rights.
FACT: There is no hierarchy of human rights! All rights are interdependent and interrelated. Human dignity requires more than the minimal lack of interference from the state as proposed by the civil and political rights. Social rights are therefore not just mere benefits to be granted by public authorities, but a set of rights that are indispensable for human dignity and for citizens to meet their fundamental needs!

Social rights ensure that people have their basic needs met and can live with dignity. This is crucial for the integration of people into society and for having satisfied citizens who have **trust in their political system and in public authorities**, as well as the will to contribute and give back to their local communities.

The purpose of this Handbook is to present and streamline the successful efforts to promote a social rights-based approach to policy making of local and regional authorities in Council of Europe member states.

WHY IS THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL RIGHTS RELEVANT TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES?

As has been noted by the Congress[3], local and regional authorities are, by virtue of their competences in the social field, crucial in facilitating the exercise of social rights. A recent report of the European Commission, "State of European Cities" (2016)[4], concluded that European cities are closer to reaching the goals of education and poverty reduction than towns and rural areas. Being the closest to citizens and knowing best the social challenges that need to be addressed, local and regional authorities are uniquely positioned to create people- and place-based solutions for the social needs of their citizens. Being in immediate contact with their residents, allows them to be **responsive, resourceful and inventive**.[5] Unlike at national level, where unified, one-size-fits-all

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[2] p. 19: https://rm.coe.int/improving-the-protection-of-social-rights-in-europe-volume-i-en/168097adf1
[3] Congress Report CG/CUR10(2018)02
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/cities-report/state_eu_cities2016_en.pdf
[5] http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/Cities_and_Social_Welfare_FINAL.pdf

strategies are designed, the local authorities have a much wider range of actions in their local policy making.

As authorities closest to the citizens and important service providers, local and regional authorities have indeed a prominent role to play in protecting and promoting social rights and are to implement in practice many of the standards of international treaties, such as the European Social Charter. Social rights, such as the right to housing, to protection of health, to social and medical assistance and to social welfare services, often play an important role in the day-to-day decision-making of local and regional authorities. Moreover, the rights of people with disabilities, the right of the family, children and teenagers to social, legal and economic protection, the rights of elderly persons as well as citizens' right to protection against poverty and social exclusion are often of particular concern for local and regional authorities.

At the same time, the realisation and promotion of social rights is not just a distinct and direct responsibility of local and regional authorities arising from the proximity to citizens, but also an immense **opportunity** to **achieve social cohesion**, have **happier citizens** and make their communities **attractive** and long-term **sustainable**.

When adequate social services, such as housing, healthcare, welfare and employment, are provided and protected within a community, citizens feel safer, they develop trust towards local/regional authorities and a will to stay and give back to their local community that has supported them.

When formal and informal education opportunities are provided to young people, but also people of all generations, so that they may develop skillsets that will enable them to thrive in future careers and to feel empowered, this can only be an asset for local and regional authorities. To collectively respond to future challenges, local and regional authorities will need the talents of their young people of today.

Therefore, investing in social rights is a matter of survival of local communities and should be at the centre of their efforts and projects targeted at building sustainable communities!

Social Rights Dimension of the Covid-19 Pandemic

One of the most pertinent recent examples to demonstrate the importance of the promotion and protection of social rights at local and regional level is the Covid-19 pandemic. The impact of Covid-19 on social rights has been not only significant, but multi-faceted, cutting across several social rights categories and going beyond the direct evident effects on the right to health.

FAKE NEWS: At times of a global health emergency, authorities may derogate from their obligations in relation to Social Rights.

FACT: No. There is no express permission under human rights law for States to derogate from their obligations in relation to economic, social and cultural rights during emergencies. In fact, in such circumstances, more attention is often required to protect economic, social and cultural rights, in particular those of the most marginalized groups of society. What is more, communities where the social rights of employment, housing and welfare are protected proved to be much more

resilient and capable to move quicker from a crisis mode to managing the effects and impacts of the health crisis.

Addressing economic, social and cultural rights also helps to prevent, prepare for and recover from disasters and conflicts. Studies and investigations show that systematic discrimination and inequalities in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights may cause, or exacerbate, social and political tensions leading to conflict or worsening the impact of disasters and placing obstacles on the road to recovery.

Local governments have been and are at the frontline of mitigating the effects of this pandemic. They are called to deal with the health emergency on the one hand, while limiting as much as possible the social and economic impacts. Even when jobs are disrupted, local authorities are expected to maintain basic services and find solutions to this unprecedented crisis. They also play a critical role in fostering the solidarity of communities and making it possible for civil society to come together and contribute to **community resilience**. [6]

Apart from putting the right to health of large numbers of the population in severe jeopardy, Covid-19 highlighted the **close interconnectedness of the right to health with other social rights**, such as the right to housing or the right to social security.

> "*Housing has been the front-line defense against the coronavirus*"
>
> *Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing*[7]

Throughout this health emergency, governments relied on people to stay home to prevent the spread of the pandemic. By ensuring access to secure housing, the authorities not only protect homeless or those living in informal settlements with inadequate sanitation, but they also protect the entire population, as staying home can flatten the curve of the pandemic. Quarantine and isolation were at the core of the immediate measures taken by governments. Such measures render the protection of the right to housing all the more important, and local governments are at the forefront of eviction prevention and protection of many workers who are unable to sustain their salaries or cover their rent amidst this crisis. Long-term housing solutions for homeless people remain necessary, as they will make our societies more resilient against crises and pandemics. The Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organisation in its recent 2019 Health Equity Status Report argues that *the most cost-effective means of closing the health divide is increased investment in housing and community amenities*.[8]

All in all, this crisis brought forward various challenges on the social rights dimension: How can we best protect people in nursing facilities or other settings with large number of older people? How can the increased risk for people experiencing homelessness be reduced? How can the right to education be fulfilled, even if schools are temporarily closed?

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[6] https://unhabitat.org/opinion-local-governments-are-in-the-frontline-of-coronavirus-response
[7] https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25727&LangID=E
[8] http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/health-equity-status-report-2019

Local and regional authorities have a crucial role to play, as they are the first and immediate responders, dealing with most of the shortcomings brought to light with this pandemic. They are the first ones in charge of protecting the vulnerable members of their communities. To respond to this crisis, and other similar ones in the future, local authorities should **reinforce their active learning capacities**, city-to-city communication and exchange and encourage new forms of **city-to-city cooperatio**n, on prevention, coping and recovery.

To this end, the good practices identified and illustrated in this Handbook can be a great start for mutual learning, inspiration and city-to-city cooperation.

Council of Europe Covid-19 Toolkit - https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/covid-19-toolkits

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, has issued a toolkitfor Council of Europe Member States on respecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law during the COVID-19 crisis. The toolkit is designed to help ensure that measures taken by member states during the current crisis remain **proportional** to the threat posed by the spread of the virus and are limited in time. It is available in 13 languages.
The toolkit covers four key areas:
  ◊   Derogation from the European Convention on Human Rights in times of emergency
  ◊   Respect for the rule of law and democratic principles in times of emergency
  ◊   Fundamental human rights standards
  ◊   Protection from crime and the protection of victims of crime, in particular regarding gender-based violence.

DID YOU KNOW? - International and Regional instruments protecting Social Rights

The most important human rights law is in the International Bill of Human Rights, which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**. Economic and social rights are also included in numerous other human rights legal instruments. Among the most important are:

•   Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
•   Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
•   Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
•   Vienna World Conference on Human Rights Declaration and Plan of Action
•   Conventions of the International Labor Organization (a.o. on decent work)

Apart from the international norms, there are also several important **regional documents** promoting social rights.

The European Convention on Human Rights (EHCR) and its Protocols, while essentially protecting civil and political rights, contain some provisions which are related to social rights. Moreover, several further rights laid down in the Convention and its Protocols, while not being social rights as such, also cover certain aspects of social, economic and cultural rights. As the European Court of Human Rights itself found, "[w]hilst the Convention sets forth what are essentially civil and political rights, many of them have implications of a social or economic nature" and an interpretation of the Convention may extend into the sphere of social and economic rights as "there is no water-tight division separating that sphere from the field covered by the Convention."

Two regional documents that are of particular relevance for Council of Europe member states are the European Social Charter and, for European Union member states, the European Pillar of Social Rights.

- The **European Social Charter**[9] is a Council of Europe treaty that guarantees fundamental social and economic rights as a counterpart to the European Convention on Human Rights, which refers to civil and political rights. It guarantees a broad range of everyday human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare. There are two different monitoring procedures under the treaty system of the Charter, the State reporting procedure and the collective complaints procedure.[10] To reinforce this system of the Charter, the 'Turin process' is in place since 2014, with the aim to improve the implementation of social and economic rights at the continental level. *The local and regional authorities have a particularly important role to play in this regard, as they are in a position to reach out to citizens, raise awareness and disseminate the Charter.*

  Also within the Council of Europe, the **Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)** has been entrusted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to undertake an analysis of the legal framework of the Organisation for the protection of social rights in our continent and in particular to analyse the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights and other sources. On this basis, the CDDH is entrusted to identify good practices and make, as appropriate, proposals with a view to improving the implementation of social rights and to facilitate in particular the relationship between the various European instruments for the protection of social rights.[11]

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[9] https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-social-charter
[10] The impact of the (revised) Charter which contains a comprehensive social rights catalogue is restricted by the "à la carte" system of acceptance of its provisions and the fact that only 43 of the 47 Council of Europe Member States are bond by the (revised) Charter (nine States are bound only by the original 1961 Charter, the other 34 Member States are bound by the 1996 Revised Charter) and only 15 States by the 1995 Additional Protocol Providing for a System of Collective Complaints.
[11] https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-intergovernmental-cooperation/human-rights-development-cddh/social-rights-in-europe

– The **European Pillar of Social Rights**[12] was proclaimed by EU institutions in November 2017 and it sets out 20 key principles to support fair and well-functioning labour markets, as well as social protection and inclusion. The Pillar refers to the European Social Charter notably in §§ 3 and 16 of its Preamble. The latter further clarifies that the Pillar does not prevent Member States or their social partners from establishing more ambitious standards in the field of social rights.[13]

With regard to the European Pillar of Social Rights, cities in the EU can also play an active role by contributing to a political initiative by EUROCITIES for a more socially cohesive and inclusive Europe. The initiative invites mayors to sign pledges for one or more of the 20 principles of the pillar, where the cities wish to achieve progress or to continue investing. More than 20 cities have already made pledges.[14]

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[12] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf
[13] p. 116: https://rm.coe.int/improving-the-protection-of-social-rights-in-europe-volume-ii-en/168097adf3
[14] http://eurocities.eu/eurocities/news/Join-the-EUROCITIES-initiative-Inclusive-Cities-for-All-Social-Rights-in-My-City-WSPO-B73SF3

CHAPTER TWO: SOCIAL RIGHTS – Definitions and responsibilities

WHAT ARE SOCIAL RIGHTS? DEFINITIONS

Social rights, as identified above, are **rights that ensure a minimum standard of living, housing, education, as well as reasonable conditions of employment** – all essential elements of human dignity.

1. The **Right to Education** ensures access to quality schools and to an education that is directed towards the full development of the human personality. It enables all persons to participate effectively in a free society. This right translates into the need to achieve inclusive education, to give equal opportunities to education for all, including, for example, providing alternative pathways to learning for non-traditional learners.

Challenges to the right of education include issues of diversity in urban contexts and often the unpreparedness of teachers to deal with these challenges. Another major issue is the rates of school dropout. In its "Society at a glance" report of 2016, the OECD found that in OECD countries one out of six 25- to 34-year-olds do not have upper-secondary qualification. This might result in an intergenerational **vicious circle** between childhood poverty, low educational achievement and poverty in adult life.

European cities face higher levels of **Early Leaving from Education and Training (ELET)** than their national averages and their corresponding European target rates. This represents a serious challenge, as ELET has significant societal and individual consequences, such as a higher risk of unemployment, poverty, marginalization and social exclusion. Tackling ELET means breaking the cycle of deprivation and the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality.

2. The **Right to Work** guaranties the opportunity to have fulfilling and dignified work under safe and healthy conditions with fair wages affording a decent living for oneself and one's family. It also provides for freedom from unemployment and the right to organize.

Important aspects to be taken into consideration when promoting the right to work are the possibility of vocational training, the facilitation of the transition to working life, labour standards, decent working conditions and worker's safety and health, as well as avoiding skills mismatch and providing at least the minimum required level of digital skills.

A key challenge related to both the rights to education and to work is the young population referred to as **NEETs:** people **Not in Employment, Education or Training**. This group is amongst the most vulnerable, as they can be assumed to be having difficulties in finding a job, whilst not seeking to acquire further skills via training or education.[15]

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[15] https://www.uantwerpen.be/images/uantwerpen/container23160/files/RESL%20Publication%201.pdf

In 2015, 15% of the OECD youth population was NEET – about 40 million young people.[16] Particularly important is also the fact that young people whose parents also have low educational attainment or are unemployed, are also more likely to experience inactivity, indicating the possibility of **intergenerational transmission of the NEET status**. Being a NEET can also have negative consequences for social cohesion overall, as NEETs show less interest in politics and become more disengaged. ***Therefore, reducing the number of NEETs equals to reinstating a higher level of trust, satisfaction and political interest among the citizens!***

Did you know?

According to Eurostat's Social Scoreboard indicators[17], covering all EU member states, the percentage of early leaving from education and training (ELET) among the population aged 18-24 is 10.6%, while the overall percentage of NEETs aged 15-24 years is 11.6%. These numbers may vary from one EU member state to another. The Social Scoreboard indicators have also found 23.5% of people in the EU to be at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

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3. The **Right to Housing** ensures access to a safe, secure, habitable, and affordable home with freedom from forced eviction.

Housing is a right, not a commodity and it must be considered as a right, if cities are to survive and to fulfil the human rights of their inhabitants!

The right includes providing access to habitable housing in accessible prices, as well as preventing and reducing homelessness. Local and regional authorities are best placed to establish and solve housing needs, as well as to plan and coordinate appropriate housing development.

Part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular SDG 11, is achieving safe, sustainable and resilient cities. While national governments are responsible for implementing the SDGs, local authorities also must realize the important role they have to play. In July 2018, representatives from cities from around the world came together at a session organised by UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments), where the mayor of Barcelona presented a joint declaration (Cities for Adequate Housing[18]), acknowledging challenges for the right to housing and presenting strategies for achieving solutions.[19]

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[16] https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/c665889e-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/c665889e-en
[17] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/european-pillar-of-social-rights/indicators/social-scoreboard-indicators
[18] Municipalist Declaration of Local Governments for the Right to Housing and the Right to the City: https://citiesforhousing.org/
[19] https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/right-housing-and-right-city-cities-across-world-come-together-launch-common-message

Challenges included the growth of informal settlements, socio-spatial segregation, the need for inclusive and sustainable local urban planning schemes, as well as the need for more tools for local authorities to achieve better public housing and community-driven solutions.

4. The **Right to Health** ensures the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health including access to care, nutrition, and clean water and air.

Since the World Health Organization's Constitution [20] defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, it is unlikely that universal health coverage alone would be effective in addressing health needs in a sustainable manner. *A broader social rights approach is required to fully address health inequalities.*[21]

Authorities need to implement broader social protection measures to fully ensure access to health, develop inclusive and resilient healthcare systems and guarantee the availability and affordability of healthcare for all their citizens.
For instance, a clearer focus on gender when it comes to health policies, is an aspect that will need to be developed further by policymakers. Ireland was the first country in Europe to prepare a health policy specifically targeting men already in 2008.[22]

Local and regional authorities' role in this regard is quite versatile, as with a number of tools they can improve access to healthcare and medical assistance, as well as encourage awareness raising and **individual responsibility** in health matters.

5. The **Right to Social Security** guaranties that everyone, regardless of age or ability to work, has the means necessary to procure basic needs and services.

Equal social security rights must be ensured for all citizens. Moreover, local authorities are in a position to improve the provision of local welfare or include social clauses in public procurement.

Care-giving responsibilities are also weighing down the full realisation of social rights: women are 1.4 times more likely to be NEET than young men, according to the OECD.[23] The availability of flexible and affordable childcare is therefore crucial for the promotion of (women's) social rights.

Another example is the young population. Given their patchy employment records, school leavers and young people oftentimes fail to qualify for income support. In OECD countries, only around

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[20] https://www.who.int/about/who-we-are/constitution
[21] https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/learning-from-the-pandemic-to-better-fulfil-the-right-to-health
[22] https://www.mhfi.org/menshealthpolicy.pdf
[23] https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/c665889e-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/c665889e-en

30% of all unemployed young people receive unemployment benefits, with youth poverty rates climbing higher than those of elderly.

6. Finally, **social inclusion and integration**, closely linked to the principle of non-discrimination, is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society, especially those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.[24] Prone to social exclusion are citizens with disabilities, seniors, people living in poverty or in deprived areas and long-term unemployed.

In Chapter IV of this Handbook, concrete examples of best practices of local and regional authorities in Council of Europe Member States have been identified for all of those categories.

HOW CAN LOCAL AUTHORITIES PROTECT AND PROMOTE SOCIAL RIGHTS?

For a city's resilience, investing in social capital is as important as investing in financial capital!

Under international law, there are the following minimum requirements, when it comes to human rights implementation:

RESPECT: Refrain from interfering with the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms of all persons within one's jurisdiction. As an example, when it comes to the right to health, local governments may not deprive certain communities or groups of access to health care facilities.

PROTECT: Authorities must take measures to ensure that third parties do not infringe a right, such as ensuring that children are not prevented by others from going to school.
The duty to protect can, for instance, necessitate creating safer urban environments (related to the right to housing) that reduce the risk of violence, for example against women.

FULFIL: Local and regional authorities must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of rights and freedoms.

For example, when considering the challenge of early school leavers, some policy measures local authorities may undertake in line with their responsibility to fulfill are the following:
-Early Warning Systems as a preventive measure, to detect pupils' involvement in class and general behavior.
-Socio-emotional and behavioral support
-Counselling and mentoring, including career guidance and academic support
-Listening to the students' needs, promoting student ownership of learning and putting forward flexible learning strategies

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[24] https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion

The above three responsibilities (**to respect, protect and fulfil**) were included in the Final Report of the UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee HRC/30/49 on its 30th session in August 2015, discussing the role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights.

A fourth important minimum requirement is particularly pertinent for local authorities, as has been established already in the first volume of the Handbook: the responsibility to **ENGAGE**. This includes reaching out to the citizens and raising awareness, especially given the proximity of local authorities to the populations. Apart from awareness raising measures, the responsibility to engage also includes efforts to mainstream human rights into local authorities' activities, incl. for example by providing systematic human rights training to local civil servants.

> Due to their **proximity** to their population, local authorities have a key role to play in the promotion of rights in the social field and can be **responsive, resourceful and inventive**, as will be shown by the collection of best practices in the operational chapter 4 of this Handbook!

Concept of progressive realization

As the understanding of social rights and their degree of implementation varies between countries with different political, legal and economic development, the concept of **"progressive realization"** has been established, when it comes to the protection of social rights. This concept describes a central aspect of States' obligations in connection with economic, social and cultural rights under international human rights treaties. While the ultimate goal is full realization of economic, social and cultural rights, the concept of progressive realization takes into account the available resources of authorities. It recognizes that the realization of these rights can be hampered by a lack of resources and can be achieved only over a period of time. Equally, it means that a State's compliance with its obligation to take appropriate measures is assessed in the light of the resources—financial and others—available to it.[25]

Local and regional authorities face significant challenges in their efforts to promote social rights.

The main challenges local authorities face in terms of fulfilling their role in promoting human rights are political (for example: the question of the powers and competences they possess vis-á-vis national authorities), administrative (for example: coordination between local and central government) and economic (such as limited budget, especially when it comes to the provision of local social welfare). Apart from these questions of coordination between the levels of government and questions related to budget, the world we live in today creates a variety of additional challenges that local and regional authorities are required to overcome, in order to progressively realize social rights of their citizens.

These challenges stem, among others, from today's increase of individualization and an increasing insecurity of citizens because of the **rapid changes in society and technology**, such as automatization threatening the existence of many jobs, the easy access on the overload of information or fake news. Against the backdrop of these growing uncertainties, citizens develop skepticism towards their governments and the policies these adopt, and they feel that they are not sufficiently involved in decision making processes. ***Policies putting the social rights in the forefront could help authorities in regaining their citizens' trust!***

What is more, the financial crisis of recent years also fueled a social crisis. Countries that experienced the deepest and longest downturns are seeing profound knock on effects on people's job prospects, incomes and living arrangements. Some 48 million people in OECD countries are looking for a job – 15 million more than in September 2007 – and millions more are in financial distress. The numbers living in households without any income from work have doubled in Greece, Ireland and Spain. Low income groups have been hit hardest as have young people and families

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[25] https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FactSheet33en.pdf

with children.[26] More than ever, labour market activation measures are crucial at all levels of government, including the local and regional. The problems linked to the crisis and austerity measures, while not having been created by the crisis, seem to have been exacerbated rather than caused by the crisis.[27] Especially when it comes to the provision of social welfare, public investment is crucial. However, according to Eurostat, there has been a decline in public investment due to the crisis, that left local governments as most affected (12% drop in 2015 compared to pre-2008 levels, whereas for central governments the drop was 8.1%). According to the OECD social expenditure update, the overall investment at subnational level is going down.

At the same time, particularly with regard to education and work, increased digitalization of our societies renders **digital skills** of citizens a *sine qua non* condition. With regard to the right to work, focus needs to be placed on the development of digital skills in the labour force, as well as to developing strategies to harmonise social rights with the rise of Artificial Intelligence. With regard to social inclusion, improving the digital skills of senior citizens is also crucial. Best practices identified below are a step in the right direction, but more needs to be achieved.

The emergence of new business models and the rapid demographic changes in Europe, require local authorities to remain vigilant in protecting social rights of all members of their societies. **Mobility** is a characteristic of the younger generations of European employees. This emergence of flexible non-standard forms of work leads to new risks of "grey zones" in terms of labour rights and access to welfare; therefore **flexibility** in working conditions needs to be balanced with employment security.

At the same time, Europe is facing profound changes in its population structure, with **demographic ageing** as a factor that will be of major significance in the coming decades. Consistently low birth rates and higher life expectancy are transforming our societies, marking a transition towards a much older population structure. The proportion of people of working age is shrinking while the number of those retired is expanding. According to Eurostat, this will, in turn, lead to an increased burden on those of working age to provide for the social expenditure required by the ageing population for a range of related services.[28] The share of those aged 80 years or above in the EU-28's population is projected to increase by two and a half times between 2018 and 2100, from 5.6 % to 14.6 %.[29] This requires of citizens and authorities **to significantly rethink our approach** to social rights, to protect the elderly while reducing the burden on the working population.

Finally, **the role of individual citizens** and of the interaction between the individuals and the local and regional government in promoting social rights should be highlighted. Social Rights and Policies adopted should aim at **empowering individuals, informing them of their rights, so that**

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[26] https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/OECD-SocietyAtAGlance2014-ExecutiveSummary.pdf
[27] https://rm.coe.int/improving-the-protection-of-social-rights-in-europe-volume-i-en/168097adf1 p. 20,
[28] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing
[29] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing#Slightly_more_than_three_persons_of_working_age_for_every_person_aged_65_or_over

they understand them and know how to claim and protect them. Raising public awareness, providing services that can reach even the most remote parts of a community are crucial elements for the success of social rights policies. Taking the right to education, for example, it is crucial to reach the most poorly integrated young people that lack goals and have a sense of being forgotten or having no future, as such thoughts may have serious social consequences for them including violence or criminal behaviour. It can be very difficult to reintegrate these young people back into the education system since many of them live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and experience various problems, for example drug and alcohol abuse, social difficulties, low confidence, low personal management skills or poor parenting at home. Preventing school dropout is therefore very important in securing the future of young people and preventing problems within wider society.

Awareness raising is also crucial when it comes to making sure that private stakeholders are also on board with the social rights policies. To give an example, when it comes to the right to work, many employers might initially not consider the importance of childcare facilities for their employees who are young parents. Authorities need to work on the improvement of employers' knowledge and to raise awareness among employers and other stakeholders about potential benefits and necessary investments to ensure that sustainable social rights measures are in place and many enterprises and stakeholders are involved.

FAKE NEWS: The realization of Social Rights is a natural consequence of economic growth.
FACT: Economic growth does not automatically translate to the improvement and protection of social rights, especially not when it comes to the most marginalized members of our communities. Along with growth, **specific and tangible actions are necessary**, such as ensuring physical access to schools and employment for people with disabilities or making sure the aging members of the population are not left behind by technological advancements.

Local and regional authorities should also stay in touch with the most pressing global issues, such as the challenges brought by the **rapid technological advancement** or **climate change**. Among others, these issues lead to labor market developments and changing work environments. One example of how to address this is provided in chapter IV and relates to climate protection via so-called "green jobs". Green jobs are employment and entrepreneurial opportunities that arise through any action to prevent, limit, minimise or correct the negative impact of human beings on the environment.[30] The jobs are mainly related to combating climate change, producing energy from renewable sources, reducing carbon emissions, increasing energy efficiency, waste and water management, improving air quality, and restoring and preserving biodiversity. Green jobs tend to stay local as they are not easily outsourced. The green economy has also shown to be resilient to business cycle changes. In Chapter IV we provide examples of how the cities of Zagreb and Berlin managed to integrate "greening" aspects into their social-rights approach.

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[30] http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/353-green-web_final.pdf

CHAPTER FOUR: BEST PRACTICES

In this chapter, we will look at successful examples of the human rights approach implemented by local authorities of the Council of Europe member states with regard to the promotion of the different categories of social rights we have identified above.

I.   RIGHT TO EDUCATION

1. Operation Success to fight early school leaving - Ghent (Belgium) [31]
Population: 248.358

To reduce the rates of early school leaving, the City of Ghent adopted a local strategy called 'Operatie Geslaagd' ('Operation Success') with a unique, integrated, cross-services approach, including 12 local secondary schools. The 'lessons learned' of this project are now implemented to a new project, open to all secondary schools in Ghent.

For the period 2016-2020, Ghent has adopted a plan based on 30 actions with the aim to reduce school dropout from 15 to 10%. The particularity of this project lies in the fact that it involves different local services, including employment, culture, social and youth services. It follows a holistic approach that includes both individualised features per individual student and more general aspects on the systemic level. Among the 30 actions foreseen in the plan are the optimisation of an early warning system, provision of high-quality career guidance in school, Dutch language lessons for non-native speakers and partnerships with parents and teachers. Challenges included engaging school teams to actively participate and connect to the project, as well as translating school specific priorities into a specific and concrete action plan.

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[31] https://sites.google.com/view/stay-tuned-report/partners/ghent

2. GoLearn! Leicestershire Adult Learning Service in Lockdown & for young children – Leicestershire (UK)
Population: 698.268

To continue its educational offer for all members of the community during lockdown, Leicestershire County Council has enhanced its GoLearn! adult learning platform with free distance learning courses and offers for families and primary school aged children while schools remain closed.

Leicestershire County Council's "GoLearn!" is a platform where citizens can find weekend, day or evening classes in a wide range of subjects -from digital skills to sign language or wellbeing. In response to Covid lockdown restrictions, the Council has created a new Online Learning platform for adults and families, accessible free of charge. This platform was also opened up for younger learners and the Family Learning Team have made easy-accessible resources available to parents and carers across Leicestershire who are currently home-schooling primary school aged children during isolation. To support the **GoLearn! Community**, the team has adapted the online system they use for adult learners looking for training and development, to open the platform up for younger learners. The Learning Team has published free educational resources and activities online on the **Family Learning page**. The page is open for anyone to use and family fun activities will continue to be added online throughout the summer. The council is encouraging residents across Leicestershire to take advantage of this useful resource to support children's learning.

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3. Education during COVID - City of Arkhangelsk (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 346.979

The city of Arkhangelsk developed strategies to continue the educational offer of the city during the Covid-19 emergency. Their efforts included implementing e-learning and distance learning technologies, offering methodological support on the challenges of distance education to teachers, providing pre-school institutions as "duty groups" to be attended by children of essential workers whose activity was not suspended during lockdown, and offering a wide variety of psychological, pedagogical and advisory assistance through the "Leda Center", funded by the municipality, to parents, children and educators alike.

E-learning and distance learning technologies have been implemented in the City of Arkhangelsk since 19 March 2020. In order to provide methodological support to teachers in the context of distance education, a new tab "Network model of distance education pedagogical interaction" was created on the official information Internet portal of the Department of Education within the municipality. Meetings with the heads of preschool educational institutions, general educational institutions and institutions of additional education were held in the format of conference calls. For the period of distance educational technologies, students with disabilities and students from low-income families were provided with packed lunches.

Preschool educational institutions from 30 March 2020 to present, continue to work as duty groups in compliance with the sanitary regime. Duty groups are visited by children of employees of enterprises whose activities are not suspended. In connection with special working conditions, the heads of preschool educational institutions introduced additional anti-epidemiological measures to counteract the spread of coronavirus infection: disinfecting hands of children and adults with antiseptic agents, measuring body temperature, mask usage, treating contact surfaces and toys with disinfectant solutions. In order to provide pedagogical support to parents whose children do not attend kindergarten, on the official websites of preschool educational institutions there are materials for organizing joint games and activities with the child at home, including video consultations, virtual tours, master classes, didactic games, recommendations on the prevention of coronavirus infection, and many more.

In addition, various forms of work and interaction were proposed by psychologists. Specialists of the municipally funded institution "Leda Center" in video-conferencing mode talked about how to deal with stress. The "Leda Center" provided free psychological, pedagogical, methodological and advisory assistance to parents who have children from 0 to 18 years old, including children with disabilities, as well as to citizens who wish to take into their families children left without parental care.

The efforts of teachers-leaders of distance education will be recognized with letters of gratitude from the Head of the municipality of Arkhangelsk.

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4. "Help to learn at home" campaign – Vologda (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 317.329

As all schools shift to distant learning, the municipality of Vologda started a campaign to raise funds and provide computers and tablets to children who did not have access to them, so that they can follow the online courses and not lose the educational curriculum of the year.

All schools in Vologda have switched to distant education since 6 April 2020 because of the spread of COVID-19. Complete transition to distant education in schools during the difficult epidemiological situation revealed the lack of essential devices for many students, the often poor quality of Internet connection or limited access to the Internet. The "Help to learn at home" campaign, founded by the Government of the Russian Federation, allowed for the purchase or collection of computers, laptops or tablets for schoolchildren in need to create conditions to learn remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was very important for the municipality to overcome this period with the minimum possible setbacks and losses for the school curriculum. The lists of persons in need of devices mainly included children from large families. During the COVID-19 pandemic every child in the family needs device to learn, and many parents also work remotely and therefore need computers.

Deputies of the Vologda city Duma immediately joined the "Help to learn at home" campaign. With their private funds they purchased 148 computer tablets for children who didn't have devices at home, and the same number of SIM cards with Internet access and enough credit to suffice until the end of the school year. The main goal was to provide students with access to quality distance education as soon as possible. The deputies, observing safety measures, personally delivered the devices to the students.

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5. Children, schooling and workers in schools, libraries and cultural institutions during Covid – Tbilisi (GEORGIA)
Population: 1.114.000

More than 30% of the Tbilisi Budget is dedicated to the Social Care priority. To maintain balanced nutrition among children, free lunch and dinner for beneficiaries (children) of Tbilisi Kindergartens, during Lockdown, is distributed to tens of thousands of respective families on a regular basis.

Since 2013, pre-school education became free of charge in all municipalities in Georgia. A regulation of priority enrollment was introduced, and enrollment preferences are given to children from vulnerable and disadvantaged families, including kids with special needs. In recent years the number of kindergartens in Tbilisi increased from 159 to 181 as a result of large-scale infrastructure works. As of 2020, Tbilisi municipality provides up to 62.000 children with early pre-school services, including nutritious breakfast, lunch and dinner free of charge.

The Tbilisi Municipality fully funds tuition fees at municipal Art Schools, Youth Centers, Sports Schools and Multi–Fitness Centers to support non-formal education, Arts and Sport Activities for the children from socially disadvantaged families. To support workers of this important sphere, during lockdown the salaries of the employees of the above-mentioned institutions, as well as of employees of all 181 kindergartens, 36 libraries, other cultural institutions (coaches of the Rehabilitation Sub-Program for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders), have been fully maintained by the municipality (in total: the salaries of 10.000 employees).

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6. Intercultural Projects in schools and beyond – Reykjavík City (ICELAND)
Population: 122.853

Intercultural policies are at the forefront of the Human Rights Policy in the city of Reykjavík. School education, the Reykjavík City Library and the city's cultural institutions puts emphasis on intercultural approaches.

Schools in the city work according to the Reykjavík City Intercultural Policy. Most schools in Reykjavik have put an emphasis on not only working with aspects of national culture or backgrounds, but also individual interests and those things that matter the most in each and every person's life. The Reykjavik City Library holds regular events that are designed for people of all origins. Events are held in a few of their branches throughout the city, including Breiðholt which has the highest concentration of immigrants. Immigrants are especially encouraged to organise events.

The City of Reykjavik's cultural institutions aim to open their doors to a diverse group of guests and to be a venue for fellowship, creativity and interactive cultural dialogue. Finally, the Reykjavik Department of Culture and Tourism's policy on diverse culture in the city 2017–2020 called "ROOTS AND WINGS The art of celebrating the spectrum of culture and languages" has been published to increase awareness towards the community's various cultural dimensions.[32]

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7. Länsimäki comprehensive school – Hakunila district, Vantaa Municipality (FINLAND)
Population: 11.238

With the help of the Council of Europe Development Bank -in the framework of a loan agreement approved in January2020 and signed in May 2020 between the Bank and the City of Vantaa- a school with a fresh, comprehensive approach was created as part of the social infrastructure investments of the Vantaa City Strategy.

In 2016, 44% of the 570 students in the Länsimäki comprehensive school in Hakuniladistrict spoke another language at home, and 29 different languages were represented at the school. The school is taking an innovative approach: providing new students who need it with additional language tuition and ongoing support. Special needs teachers help students with their specific challenges, and school clubs provide additional support as well as help with homework. Interpreters also facilitate communication with families.

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http://workq.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/L%C3%A4nsim%C3%A4ki-in-English-16.3.pdf

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[32] https://reykjavik.is/sites/default/files/ymis_skjol/skjol_utgefid_efni/roots_and_wings_ens_web_2018_0.pdf

II.   RIGHT TO WORK

1. Social Entrepreneurship Grant Programme – Riga (Latvia) [33]
Population: 632.614

In order to create jobs for socially excluded groups, the Welfare Department of the Riga City Council is implementing a social entrepreneurship grant programme. It is the only such grant existing in Latvia, supporting projects by giving grants that in 2016 ranged between 4000-7000 EUR.

The grants were given to social enterprises, foundations and NGOs, with the aim to stimulate job creation or to improve existing jobs for groups at risk of social exclusion. In particular, these grants support projects for creation of new jobs for unemployed people with complex needs (multiple vulnerabilities due to poverty, discrimination, low education) as well as support for employed people at risk of redundancy to help them keep and stay in work via training and up-skilling. The success was so high that Riga decided to continue the grants on a yearly basis and raise the total to €11,000.

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2. AIRE, Solar Technology for Reengaging disadvantaged youth – Berlin (GERMANY)
Population: 3.769.000

In the publication of Eurocities "Green jobs for Social Inclusion"[34] of 2015, Berlin is included with a practice that combines social and labour market inclusion of citizens while "greening" the economy: it has developed a programme to encourage young people to enter vocational training in green and sustainable technologies.

The main target groups for the programme are those who are disengaging from the educational system or lack direction about their future. By using an innovative method to reengage them, the project helps to build confidence, motivation and educational competences, and provides a route into the growing green energy sector.

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[33] https://www.investeriga.lv/en/start-up-support/
[34] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/documents/Green-Jobs-for-Social-Inclusion-practices-WSPO-9X4KHT

The Adapting and Installing Vocational Training for Renewal Energy (AIRE) network provides 15-year-old secondary school pupils in deprived city districts an opportunity to build a small remote controlled solar car model. This requires acquiring and developing a range of technical skills. A hands on, innovative and fun approach is taken to train, inspire and interest these young people, who have disengaged from the traditional education system. The project design also helps them develop personal and social skills such as time management, perseverance, public speaking and team work. To keep them motivated to complete the work and to give them a sense of achievement, finished models are showcased at local and international parades and participants deliver presentations on how they were created. The presentations are in English and are filmed and uploaded to YouTube. The project is for young people who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out, pupils with behavioural difficulties and young people with sensory disabilities.

Six schools in Berlin have participated in the AIRE project. Their experience shows that the project has helped reduce school drop-outs and reintegrate young people into society and in the education system. It also enhances their awareness of environmental issues and of what are the vocational training and job opportunities in the growing field of renewable energies.

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3. Lifelong Career Guidance Centres (CISOK) – Currently in 13 cities in CROATIA[35]
The purpose of CISOKs is to provide lifelong career guidance services to all citizens based upon the identified needs of clients – young people, adults, employed and unemployed, NEETS, students, teachers and employers. Centres are established in 13 different municipalities to provide accessible, open and recognisable services and to enhance the existing career guidance and counselling services in Croatia.

The new partnership-based CISOK model for lifelong career guidance was introduced in 2013 as a result of the IPA EU funded project "Improving lifelong career guidance and ICT support" – at first 9 CISOKs were established in 8 regions of Croatia. It is planned to set up centres in all regions of Croatia by 2022.

CISOKs provide services to clients according to their identified needs and their willingness to make decisions regarding their career. The Centre is organised according to the so-called "differentiated services model" providing different types of support, based upon the assessed needs of clients. The services provided by CISOK could include self-help services, web-based

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[35] European Social Cohesion Platform, Compilation of good practices and innovative approaches
by theme, PECS(2017)3revbis, November 2017, pp. 58-60;
https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=22341&langId=en

services, e-channels; brief assisted services (including information and advice); coaching the clients -individual case managed services, "information pages" on career guidance issues, staff training courses. For those who need more help in making career decisions CISOKs provide individual case-managed services that could include individual and group counselling sessions.

The most important success factors of CISOK are the agreed partnerships, including defined roles and responsibilities for delivering and financing CISOK services. The agreements that have been established to share information are a real strength as they help CISOKs to identify and target specific groups and plan activities according to their assessed needs. CISOK centres provide recognisable services in accordance with quality standards, at the same time allowing flexibility, depending upon specific regional/local needs -types of clients, types of services, partnership organisations involved, especially NGOs, ways of providing premises etc. Each CISOK tailors its services to local and regional needs to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose.' This means that while there is a standard model with common goals and methods their delivery and target groups can vary.

Since 2013 (and up to 31 May 2017), CISOK services have been accessed by a total of 186.428 users. In 2016 CISOKs' resources were used by 2719 NEETs, of which 2519 were active job-seekers while 200 were inactive.

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4. Future Starter Initiative / Training Works – Regional employment agencies and local initiatives (GERMANY)[36]
To assist low qualified young adults between 25 and 35 years old, German regional employment agencies and local authorities implement the "Looking for late starters-Training Works" initiative, now prolonged until 2020 as "Future Starter Initiative". The aim is fighting long-term unemployment and increasing employment opportunities of young adults, as well as improving the sensibility and the know-how of the case workers of the employment agencies on the local level for the qualification of young adults.

Low skilled people face a very high risk of long-term unemployment; low job opportunities, low pay is often associated with entrenched poverty. Developing employability, providing for

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[36] European Social Cohesion Platform, Compilation of good practices and innovative approaches by theme, PECS(2017)3revbis, November 2017, p. 33.

participation and fighting the hardening of (long-term) unemployment is a major challenge for social inclusion. The aim of this initiative was to involve 100.000 young adults in training for a primary certificated qualification, and at a later stage, to involve additional 120.000 young adults until 2020. Between 2013-2015, around 15.000 participants have dropped out and 2.500 participants have not finished their qualification because they became employed. Overall, the project involved and supported 98.735 young adults.

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5. Engaging the long-term unemployed by greening public spaces and training – Zagreb (CROATIA)
Population: 806.341

Another innovative practice in the framework of Eurocities' "Green Jobs for Social Inclusion", was presented by the city of Zagreb: the city supports employability through maintaining public green spaces. Long term unemployed people work in the city's public green spaces in exchange for education and training in fields which are in high demand in the local economy. This helps increase their competitiveness on the labour market and their chances of finding a job, while preserving and protecting the environment and green spaces around the city.

The education and training project is designed to activate unemployed people by having them work on the preservation and clean up of green spaces. In return they are entitled to attend education and training courses, which improve their chances on the labour market. The city covers the cost of the courses, which range from €400 to €1,000 per course per participant. The participants choose a programme according to their needs and interests. The courses range from elementary, secondary and high school education to vocational training.

The city of Zagreb manages the project and cooperates with the regional employment service and the local education institutions. The project is fully funded by the city. The expenses are offset by a reduction in the cost of the regular maintenance of the city's green spaces. It is therefore a win-win solution for the city and for long term unemployed citizens, while, at the same time, it is contributing to the preservation of natural spaces of the city for all members of the community.

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6. Vouchers for the provision of flexible child-minders service to workers with nonstandard work schedules – Cities of Riga, Jelgava and Valmiera (LATVIA)
Population: 632.614 (Riga), 55.972 (Jelgava), 23.125 (Valmiera)

For employers it is significant to find a balance between the needs of the company and its employees. However, child care services and reconciliation activities to ensure work and family life balance so far have not been a widespread practice in companies. The vouchers-measure is focused on introducing flexible child-care arrangements for workers of Latvian enterprises with nonstandard work schedules and further developing self-regulation or cross-section (private and public) subsidization scheme. The project, cofounded by the European Union programme for employment and social innovation (2014-2020), is implemented in the administrative territories of Jelgava city, Riga city and Valmiera city.

Finding affordable, high-quality child care is challenging in the best of circumstances. But for persons whose jobs are marked by volatile or nonstandard work schedules, child care access becomes extraordinarily difficult. These working parents, who often earn low wages and cannot rely on a consistent schedule (or pay check) or who work in nightshifts or on weekends, have few child care options available to them. Different researches show that volatile, nonstandard schedules are becoming a characteristic of low-wage employment, increasing the childcare challenges of workers who already face significant barriers to accessing affordable, quality childcare.

The implementation of this project consisted of three stages: In the first preparation and pre-evaluation stage, 7 regional seminars took place in Jelgava, Riga and Valmiera, in order to communicate the project, select the companies that would take part in the voucher measure and coordinate the project activities. In the second stage, the system of vouchers subsidising child-minders service was implemented for 150 potential recipients in the territory of Valmiera, Jelgava and Riga within a period of 10 months. The voucher gives the rights to use the purchased child-minder service not more than 20 hours per week for one employed person with non-standard work schedule and for a child up to 7 years of age. The implementation process includes permanent monitoring and consultations of personnel. Finally, in the third evaluation stage, the impacts and outcomes of the intervention are analysed, a final evaluation and presentation of the results takes place and the experience is communicated with the stakeholders and the society.

The main expected result is the introduction of a focused political intervention on flexible child-care arrangements in Latvian enterprises with nonstandard work schedules and further development of self- regulation or cross-section (private and public) subsidization scheme.[37]

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[37] European Social Cohesion Platform, Compilation of good practices and innovative approaches by theme, PECS(2017)3revbis, November 2017, pp. 86-88.

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7. Commonwealth Apprenticeship Scheme – Glasgow (SCOTLAND)[38]
Population: 598.830

In an attempt to address youth unemployment, Glasgow's apprenticeship initiative helps set up new school leavers with apprenticeships and simplifies the process of selection and recruitment for businesses.

The Commonwealth Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) is a free recruitment service to match young people - in particular school leavers – with apprenticeship opportunities. It is based on a supply and demand model engaging both employers and young people in schools. CAI supports both employers and canditates throughout the whole process of searching, selecting and applying. Glasgow launched the CAI in 2009 in an effort to reduce youth unemployment by working with both school leavers and with employers in order to identify opportunities and encourage young people to enter into apprenticeships.

On the one hand, officers of CAI engage with employers to discuss the possibility of offering apprenticeship opportunities to young people. Together they discuss potential vacancies, wage rates, provision of trainings, recruitment timetables and available financial assistance. Vacancies are then advertised on the CAI web page, with the CAI handling all administration, including interviews, communication and feedback.

On the other hand, each year approximately 5.000 school leavers are targeted through information days, CAI stands around school, and representatives at school assemblies, parents' events and career evenings. Once registered for the CAI, the young people can access the CAI website to search for vacancies. Each school leaver is supported in choosing and applying for the right apprenticeship for them through one-to-one interviews, telephone contact or group sessions. Their progress is tracked via the CAI web-based database and the CAI will intervene with additional assistance if they are not progressing. The CAI takes advantage of communication tools which are popular amongst young people, such as text messaging, email and Facebook to promote the scheme and get in touch with the candidates.

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[38] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/documents/Cities-in-action-Commonwealth-Apprenticeship-Scheme-Glasgow-WSPO-95AELB

Since 2009, CAI has helped more than 2000 school leavers enter employment through apprenticeships. The majority of apprentices have completed their programme to the full, with a dropout rate of only 9.9% recorded in 2009-2010. Since 2012, 852 businesses have been engaged in the initiative, and 97% of these employers have expressed their interest in recruiting through the CAI again.

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8. Start-up house: a one-stop-shop and cluster for start-up entrepreneurs – Tampere (FINLAND)[39]
Population: 226.696

With the 'one-stop-shop' start-up house, the City of Tampere aims to increase the number of start-ups in the city and promote the growth and internationalisation of local businesses. By supporting start-ups, the city creates an internationally competitive and attractive operating environment for budding businesses.

Until now, Tampere has been lacking local companies that would invest also in budding businesses. Such companies would make investing more transparent to new entrepreneurs. Local coaching is also more likely to lead to local investments. The city decided to initiate a project for a centrally located start-up house near the railway station, university campus and the cluster of small businesses in Pienteollisuustalo. The house will be a one-stop-shop and cluster for start-up entrepreneurs. The development of the house's business model will begin in March. The start-up house will have office space for smaller, early-stage companies and teams along with operators that promote start-up activities, such as investor, guidance and accelerator services.

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Teppo Rantanen – Director of economic policy, competitiveness and innovation

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[39] https://www.tampere.fi/en/city-of-tampere/info/current-issues/2019/03/13032019_1.html

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9. Get Ready for Work Programme - Dundee City Council (SCOTLAND)
Population: 149.320

Get Ready for Work is an 8-week (plus individual one-on-one follow-on support) employability programme which seeks to give refugees the employability and language skills to move into employment. The project was recently recognised at the 2018 Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Excellence Awards, winning a Gold Award in the "Improving Outcomes in Partnership" category.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) sessions are directly related to employability skills such as CVs, application forms, interviews, employer/employee expectations, local labour market and expected career progression routes. Drawing on the services of local authority and external partner organisations, the programme delivers training on employability, use of IT and financial capability alongside structured work experience placements and language support. The local authority has created tools for data sharing which are accessible to all partners, across statutory and third sector, allowing them to share information about progress and impact.

Learners are introduced to organisations and businesses in the city for voluntary work placements to be attended at least one day per week, in addition to course delivery hours. This gives learners the opportunity to practice their English, gain confidence in the UK world of work and to obtain an employment reference.

Employability Team staff help learners to identify additional training and development opportunities and make necessary arrangements to attend. For example, official visits to construction sites to observe health and safety practice as well as assistance to apply for funding such as ITA (Individual Training Account). Where childcare is an issue for parents and carers attending the programme, Employability staff make use of local authority funding subsidies to ensure this is not a barrier to attendance. Where a learner has a job offer but is unable to accept due to financial barriers such as travel or lack of suitable equipment, local authority funding can be used to obtain travel passes or vouchers for clothing and equipment. If further support is required post-course, the Employability Officer acts as case manager moving forward, until learner is 6 months into employment.

The local authority is working with the Dundee International Women's Centre to support women who have never worked and with colleagues from the City Council's Ezone (business start-up project) and the Scottish Refugee Council to support enterprise.

In the final week of the programme, learners and staff take part in a graduation ceremony, held in a local community centre. A senior manager from the local authority attends to present each learner with a certificate of completion and to formally welcome them to Dundee.

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https://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/hp2_get_ready_for_work_report.pdf

10. La Fabrique de l'emploi (Job Factory) – Lille (FRANCE)
Population: 232.741

The Job Factory brings together activities that are diverse and varied, with the purpose of combatting Long Term Unemployment (LTU) in Métropole Européenne de Lille. They are organised, managed and run by the employees themselves. This teamwork allows an economic model to be proposed to the inhabitants of the district.

The innovative, bottom-up participatory model of Lille is testimony to the fact that "***re-integration into the labour market is easier when the effort is focused on creating jobs for the people, rather than matching people for existing roles***" [40]. The Job Factory therefore takes a territorial approach and focusses on how to best exploit the potential, skills and competences that long-term unemployed citizens already possess.

"Create jobs for people, not people for jobs"

The "Job Factory" is a job-oriented company, working with the inhabitants for the inhabitants, trying to fill the gap of employment opportunities that did not exist in the neighborhood before. The factory recruits citizens who have been unemployed for a minimum of one year and are inhabitants in the two neighborhoods where the factory is active (Loos les Oliveaux & Tourcoing Triangle de Menin). They offer Open-ended Contracts (CDI), just as the ones offered by any traditional company, on a 35-hour basis. The employees then take on tasks based on their skills and on the local needs of the community.

So far, more than 130 jobs were created in 2 districts with high LTU rate. 5 new districts were expected to be added in 2019.

Contact:
Loos: +33 (0) 972 64 79 81

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[40] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/documents/Unleash-innovative-thinking-to-address-long-term-unemployment-city-guidelines-based-on-lessons-learnt-from-local-practices-WSPO-BMLEVV

Tourcoing: +33 (0) 972 64 79 85
infos@fabrique-emploi.fr

11. Digital Employeeship – Solna (SWEDEN)
Population: 80.950

The city's new project on Digital Employeeship, funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), aims to provide city administration managers and employees with the competences needed to use smart and efficient digital work tools.

Eurocities[41] presented this project, whose aim is to assure digital competences and increased employability for participants within the city administration, building a flexible and modern organisation. Managers will lead digitisation processes, develop peer-learning, inclusive work places and develop operations with support of digitisation. Digital competence leaders will provide support to colleagues in using digital working methods in their day to day work. Preschool and care staff will participate in e-learning classes and peer-learning.

The scope of the project is to strengthen employability and lifelong learning for working groups consisting of 80% women, mainly with low education backgrounds who in care services are to over 60% foreign born. The unions will actively participate throughout the project. Children, elderly people and people with disabilities will meet empowered staff who will deliver better quality services. Ultimately, improved digital competence will benefit citizens of all age groups.

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12. Frequently Asked Questions developed to understand COVID-19 – COSLA, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (SCOTLAND)

To help employees understand the guidelines and advice coming from the national level with regard to COVID-19, COSLA has developed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that were made available to employees. The FAQs include general information on Covid-19, explanations of safety measures and Homeworking Advice.

COSLA has developed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) jointly with trade unions to help employees understand the national COVID-19 advice. Each Scottish Local Authority has set out clearly what measures are being put in place to keep employees and service users safe. The FAQs complement the national advice including that from the National Health Service (NHS) and

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[41] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/news/Solna-s-new-project-on-Digital-Employeeship-building-competences-to-use-smart-and-efficient-digital-work-tools-WSPO-B6GDKJ

signpost to individual local authorities where the issue is more appropriately addressed at local level. This reflects also national COVID-19 Homeworking Advice.

COSLA has also published FAQs to accompany national advice on General (Non-Healthcare) Settings. This is part of wider efforts to ensure the wider workforce have access to practical guidance and necessary Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), so they have the confidence to carry out their roles as part of the whole system approach to tackling COVID-19. COSLA has issued a joint statement on PPE guidance and worked to develop a PPE distribution model. This is to ensure those who are supporting vulnerable people within their communities and all parts of the workforce have access to the PPE they need. Local Hubs will distribute PPE supplies to the whole of the social care sector where normal supply routes have not been successful and are designed to extend provision to include all social care providers, and unpaid or family carers and personal assistants.

Contact:
COSLA Brussels Office
Judith@cosla.gov.uk

- Employee FAQs:
https://www.cosla.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/14744/lgemployeefaqs27320v1interactive.pdf
- FAQs related to COVID-19 in a nonhealthcare setting:
https://www.cosla.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/16750/non-healthcaresettingfaqs17042020-1.pdf
-Extending PPE Access to all Social Care Providers: https://www.cosla.gov.uk/news/april-2020/extending-ppe-access-to-all-social-care-providers

13. Senior Enterprise Project – Dublin (IRELAND)[42]
Population: 1.388.000

This project, running between 2010 and 2014, aimed to promote greater engagement with enterprises by those aged 50+, either by setting up their own business or through investing in one. As such, it aims to challenge perceptions of older people as being counter to economic growth, enterprise development, innovation and employment creation.

The project was implemented by a transnational partnership set up between Mid East Regional Authority, Ireland (Lead partner), PRIME, (UK charity) and Inno TSD (Brittany, France). It supported those aged 50+ to start a business alone or with others. To this end, it provided advice and guidance on the administrative, financial and commercial aspects of starting a new business. In addition, the project helped in partnering an older and younger person so that an older person

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[42] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/documents/Good-practice-senior-enterprise-Dublin-WSPO-965DQT

could benefit from a young person's enthusiasm and a younger person could use an older person's expertise and experience. Secondly, the activities of the project focused on encouraging a greater level of investment by those in the older age group in businesses started by others. At the moment, Europe has quite a low level of informal investment in enterprises (4% compared to 6% in the US), that is investment made my family or friends. People over the age of 50, with their accumulated knowledge and capital, represent a good potential source of investment. Senior Enterprise also sought to set up a group of older volunteers that would use their skills and experience to provide support for 50+ entrepreneurs who had just started their business. Finally, Senior Enterprise also used the stories of successful 50+ entrepreneurs, role models, to encourage those in this age group to become entrepreneurs. Through this, they also brought the positive message to the attention of policy makers and others in positions of influence.

This project was particularly successful in raising awareness and developing and testing 50+ start your own business (SYOB) training programmes. These were the first of their kind to be run in Ireland and in France and achieved very good outcomes in terms of new businesses created.

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www.seniorenterprise.ie

14. FILUR, Intensified actions for unemployed youth – City of Stockholm (SWEDEN)[43]
Population: 975.904

FILUR supports those young people (aged 16-24) who find it most difficult to integrate themselves into the job market. The programme helps ease participants' way into the labour market and support them in their career. It is co-founded by the European Social Fund and the City of Stockholm department for labour.

The project specifically aims to develop young people's self-confidence and their desire to make a difference in their lives. The approach is one of a self-reinforcing educational programme with daily group meetings and individual support. Each FILUR lasts 12 weeks and it is based on a series of themed exercises to demonstrate the participant's progression in developing work-friendly skills and career development plans. At the end of the 12 weeks, participants prepare action plans that reflect their desired futures and FILUR provides a one-year mentorship in employment, in the context of which each participant has direct contact with a coach. The project is organised in three groups with 15 participants in each group.

Through their participation in FILUR, young people develop their confidence in the future. They feel in control and in charge of their career and empowered by the responsibility. They gain

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[43] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/documents/Good-practice-project-Filur-Stockholm-WSPO-96TBVM

valuable work experience that positively affects employability. It helps employers too, as the young people must prove that they can accept authority at work. Young people learn to create contacts within their environment and improve their communications skills. Since the traineeship mirrors the participants' own choice and preference, young people show real engagement that results in a constructive attitude.

The city itself benefits from the highly motivated individuals and builds permanent, trustworthy relationships with the private, public and voluntary sectors. Through this, Stockholm contributes to matching youth education and work experience to labour market demands.

By October 2012, 245 young people (122 men and 123 women) had participated the 12-week programme. 80.4% of the participants successfully completed the theoretical stage of psychological success and are employed or determined to start education.

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 III.   RIGHT TO HOUSING

1. Wiener Wohnen – Vienna (AUSTRIA)[44]
Population: 1.897.000

The largest municipal housing company in Europe, "Wiener Wohnen" is to be found in Vienna. It manages around 220,000 social housing units. For the city of Vienna, social housing is one of the pillars for the city's further development and its rights-based approach.

In Vienna, one in four citizens lives in municipal or subsidized housing. In order to prevent eviction, Vienna has introduced a new service – Case Management, which is based on the early intervention of the social workers for tenants at risk of being evicted (e.g. high rental debts, case of anti-social behaviour due to mental health issues, drug or alcohol abuse, dementia, compulsive hoarding etc.). Wiener Wohnen stands as an example, in the current times of crisis and uncertainty, of an approach tailored and focussed on people, showcasing political will to make housing and prevention of homelessness a priority at local level.

Contact:
Stadt Wien – Wiener Wohnen Service Center

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[44] http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/news/Highlights-from-preventing-evictions-and-homelessness-study-visit-in-Vienna-WSPO-B84LAE

Rosa-Fischer-Gasse 2,
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2. Housing pods and other housing solutions – Stoke-on-Trent (UK)[45]
Population: 270.726

In response to the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, Stoke-on-Trent City Council are working with Unitas, their housing repairs and maintenance company, and the Macari Foundation, who provide housing for people who are homeless, to provide safe accommodation for community members in need. The partnership has joined forces to transform a former warehouse into a bespoke accommodation centre; complete with innovative housing pods[46] to meet the needs of residents registered with the Macari Foundation now and in the future.

The site is being renovated to include toilet and shower blocks; kitchen and laundry facilities; and staff facilities, alongside the installation of the first 12 wooden, fire resistant housing pods. Each pod will provide residents with an individual bed and living accommodation (with television), with the added security of having a closable front door. The first tenants moved into the pods in early May 2020 and work is being carried out to add a further 12 rooms with en-suite facilities.

The council has also accommodated more than 70 individuals in a combination of local hotels and temporary accommodation, with both private and social landlords, including use of voids in its own stock. Recognising that many individuals may face additional challenges in maintaining their accommodation, the authorities are working with local partners (the police, health sector, community drug and alcohol service) to ensure these individuals get the support they need. All these support arrangements have meant that very few individuals have lost accommodation, and most are now **engaging with local services**. The council are now jointly developing a **recovery plan** to try and ensure that no one is forced to return to rough sleeping as lockdown restrictions are lifted.

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abi.brown@stoke.gov.uk

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[45] https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/coronavirus-information-councils/covid-19-good-council-practice
[46] https://twitter.com/SoTCityCouncil/status/1257360052027117569

3. 500 quarantine places for foreign agricultural workers – Municipality of Odemira (PORTUGAL)[47]
Population: 26.066

In case some of the numerous foreign agricultural workers in Odemira contract Covid-19 and need to be isolated, the municipality has devised a plan to provide up to 500 quarantine places in public facilities across the municipality.

The municipality of Odemira hosts a significant number of foreign agricultural workers and its immigrant population according to Mayor José Alberto Guerreiro is estimated between 8-10.000 citizens.[48] The municipality has prepared a prevention plan in case quarantine of some of those agricultural workers becomes necessary. Public facilities of the municipality, such as sports halls and other multi-purpose pavilions, which have the necessary dimensions and conditions to accommodate those in need, will be turned into quarantine places in case employees are contaminated and need to be isolated. The mayor is also planning the necessary steps to ensure provision of meals for the people in isolation. The spaces could accommodate up to 500 people.

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4. Social Housing for the most vulnerable in times of the pandemic – Etterbeek (BELGIUM)
Population: 48.194

Etterbeek was the first local administration in the Brussels-Capital Region to offer homeless quarantine places and the possibility to be in confinement, by requisitioning a hotel located within the municipality.

The hotel has the capacity of hosting up to 15 people while respecting the safety and sanitary regulations. Each resident had an individual room with adjoining sanitary facilities. Among the staff of the prevention service, a coordinator was appointed to ensure the proper arrival and settling of the residents. In order to ensure that hygiene rules were respected, and the risk of contagion was as low as possible, a municipal coordinator, with the assistance of the hotel

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[47] https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/portuguese-municipality-prepares-500-quarantine-places-for-foreign-agricultural-workers
[48] https://www.publico.pt/2020/03/17/sociedade/noticia/coronavirus-odemira-500-lugares-quarentena-imigrantes-1908173

manager, would carry out weekly checks of the premises to monitor the situation in the hotel. In addition to the rooms, residents received one warm and one cold meal per day.

This short-term measure was enhanced with view towards the long term move of the residents out of homelessness. Social workers would work with the residents, drawing up lists of their needs, listening to their issues and coming up with specific individualized solutions for each resident (registration in medical centre, certification of migrants etc.), to bring them one step closer to permanent housing. During the deconfinement phase, some of the residents of the hotel were granted permanent housing. Others were moved to transitional social housing and the municipality and partners are looking for long-term solutions for them. While in transitional housing, the municipality continues to monitor the beneficiaries and caters for their needs.

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5. Improving housing conditions in Roma substandard settlements through the development of urban plans, National Association of Local Authorities – Belgrade (SERBIA)
Population: 1.374.000

Roma settlements that have been the subject of processing through the development of urban plans, often share the same problems such as: unregulated ownership relations, spontaneous formation of streets and their inadequate regulation, lack of adequate infrastructure and public land/facilities. In the process of implementing the EU-funded Program "EU support for Roma inclusion – Strengthening local communities for Roma inclusion", the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, a national association of local authorities in Serbia, is offering support for the legalization of housing units, the development of urban plans, and technical documentation for substandard Roma settlements.

An open call for local governments to apply for support in the process of preparation of urban plans was published by the standing conference and the criteria for selection were defined in cooperation with the Ministry for Construction. Out of 23 applications, 11 cities and municipalities were selected and received support. The Roma community in all 11 local governments was very interested in participating in the development of urban plans - a total of 44 workshops were attended by more than 1100 participants and 11 urban plans were prepared. An outstanding example of good communication and work with the local community is the city of Sombor (population: 85.903), where all inhabitants of the Bački Monoštor settlement gave their written consent on the future parceling of the settlement.

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Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities – National Association of Local Authorities in Serbia
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6. PROJET MARIA, Temporary accommodation solution for homeless during Covid-19 –
Anderlecht (BELGIUM)
Population: 108.940

***To avoid spreading Covid-19, the municipal facility "Maria" currently offers accommodation to
35 homeless people, the majority of them coming from the West of the municipality.***

The aim of the scheme, which started in April 2020, is to offer a dignified and adequate temporary
accommodation solution to homeless people in the Anderlecht territory, enabling them to
comply with the confinement rules, in order to avoid the spread of the disease. On a secondary
basis, the authorities can take advantage of this accommodation facility, in order to set up a
process of social and administrative rehabilitation of the beneficiaries of the project, as well as
to provide emergency medical assistance with the help of social workers mobilised via various
partners, such as the Red Cross, Médecins du Monde or the public centre for social action of the
municipality of Anderlecht (CPAS).

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7. Re-let my vacant housing scheme – Strasbourg (FRANCE)[49]
Population: 277.270

***Strasbourg has developed a novel scheme enabling vacant private housing to be reintroduced
as social housing. Through support for owners of empty homes and a toolbox for rental
management, the city is creating more affordable homes for poorer households while also
promoting social diversity and sustainable development.***

Strasbourg has a high demand for social housing, driven by factors familiar to many European
cities - an ageing population, family breakdown, young workers on low wages and an influx of
refugees. Faced with 23,000 applications for social housing, the city saw mobilising vacant private
homes as a way of adding to the limited public offer. Grants were already available for
construction works and rent subsidies, but they were failing to address the root of the problem:

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[49] http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/2019_CitiesAction_Strasbourg.pdf

why so many home owners were choosing not to rent out their empty properties. In 2016, the city decided to ask this question and use the answers to develop a more holistic approach to fighting housing poverty and homelessness and tackling inequalities. The resulting Re-let my vacant housing scheme was funded by the city and supported by the National Housing Agency (ANAH). A sum of €320,000 was made available by the city to provide incentives for owners to re-let their properties and a further €15,000 for communication expenses. A part-time coordinator was recruited to run the scheme.

The scheme enables owners to claim subsidies of up to 60%, for example, for construction and energy saving works, and free assistance with additional bank loans and paperwork. They are also given a list of vetted local companies to help with everything from building work to moving bulky furniture. Owners can then get help to find a tenant if they wish, including from associations approved to act as intermediaries between landlords and tenants who find it particularly difficult to access housing, such as refugees and victims of violence. In these cases, the association takes responsibility for managing the tenancy and paying the rent. The toolbox also explains how landlords can obtain tax rebates of up to 70% on property income if they lease through one of these social agencies - and claim a bonus of up to €6,000 when their house is certified as social housing.

Two years after the scheme's launch, 10 municipalities are partners and 225 private houses have become affordable homes. Around 40% of these homes are lived in by the most disadvantaged in society. The city believes three things account for the progress it has made: its humble, pragmatic approach, its direct interaction with owners initially concerned about renting to people with limited resources and the commitment of the associations with which it works.

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8. Smart Homes Project – Bristol (UNITED KINGDOM)[50]
Population: 535.907

This project is part of the EU's REPLICATE project. Smart Homes offers residents in three Bristol districts the chance to explore how smart technologies can help save money and in turn use energy when it is most environmentally friendly to do so.

The project also offers the city a number of valuable opportunities: to tackle inequalities by ensuring citizens have the skills to use technologies that will soon be commonplace, to change behaviour so energy is used when it's cheapest and best for the environment, and to research and test smart connected solutions and gain knowledge for developing its smart city platform.

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[50] http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/2019_CitiesAction_Bristol.pdf

The city commissioned Bristol Energy Network, an umbrella group for residents and community groups interested in energy, to recruit voluntary sector organisations and local people to a community engagement group which would co-design the project. Fourteen community energy champions were enlisted to trial smart appliances, promote the project and encourage households to sign up. The whole process was deformalised: decisions usually taken behind closed doors were openly discussed and meetings made way for interactive events, engagement workshops and street corner conversations.

The project succeeded in reaching people who would normally not get involved in a scheme like this: 29% of participants live in social housing, 31% are from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and 14% are registered disabled. The project also exceeded its installation target, fitting internetconnected washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers and smart technology kits in over 150 homes, for free. The kits include smart meters and small computers enabling data to be fed back via secure virtual networks to the smart city platform. Participating households are saving an average of £55 a year and contribute to an annual reduction of 100kg in carbon emissions. An innovative residential trial is now underway. This will look at how households can save money on electricity by using energy at times of low demand, through technology that controls the function of their appliances.

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IV.   RIGHT TO HEALTH

1. Doctors of Hope – Warsaw (POLAND)
Population: 1.708.000

Warsaw operates the only health clinic for uninsured patients in the city under the name "Doctors of Hope", which began as a branch of Doctors of the World (Médecins du Monde or MdM). In 2016, 40% of all the funding came from the City of Warsaw and the province Mazovia Voivodeship.

With doctors working on a pro bono basis, the clinic provides services without discrimination to Polish nationals, EU citizens and nationals of non-EU countries in need, whatever their residence status. In 2015, they treated approximately 8,000 patients. Doctors of Hope is the only such clinic in Warsaw, and one of only two in all of Poland. Doctors of Hope is actively engaged in advocacy towards government ministries and the city to improve access to public health services for all uninsured people, whatever their status. They cooperate closely with the Polish Ombudsman,

and are a member of a civil society advisory body within the city council advising on issues of homelessness.

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01-258 Warsaw
+48 228 368 182
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2. Health Monitoring Manual – Region of Attica (GREECE)[51]
Population: 3.742.000

One crucial part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic is to make sure that all members of society have the information they need to stay healthy and follow quarantine guidelines. The Health Monitoring Manual issued by the Region of Attica (Athens) and the Medical Association of Athens has been made available online for downloading and printing.

The manual includes tips and detailed step-by step instructions to monitor symptoms, a daily 14-day calendar of symptoms and temperature to be filled out individually by citizens, as well as useful emergency numbers to contact, if symptoms worsen.

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3. Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service – Angus Council (SCOTLAND)
Population: 116.040

Angus Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service (AIDARS) is a project designed to bring together two existing substance misuse services from different statutory sectors. Nurse qualified practitioners from the National Health Service (NHS), delivering clinic based Opioid Replacement Therapy (ORT) and Alcohol Counselling using the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Alcohol pathway have been brought together with community based, social work qualified staff working with service users using a psychosocial model of intervention

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[51] http://www.patt.gov.gr/site/attachments/entipo.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2eki7VRLOddNdxbSQn5-fpMjeTAf8ANbWaDGzZtJwpNfrMd3VIcDRqkyU

and combined them into one new service that incorporates best practice from both teams in a new fully integrated service.

This project has been innovative, developing new more accessible, person centred and flexible approaches to the delivery of treatment in the community and in clinics; a holistic approach to service delivery; quick access to treatment; multidisciplinary support for patients throughout their recovery journey, detoxification and relapse prevention. The local team is delivering excellence by increasing its capacity to support service users, being more responsive to the needs of patients and meeting Local Delivery Plan Standards (known as HEAT Standards).

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alcoholdrugbbv@angus.gov.uk
https://www.angus.gov.uk/social_care_and_health/protect_someone_from_harm/mental_health_and_wellbeing/angus_integrated_drug_and_alcohol_recovery_service_aidars

4. Covid-19 related efforts of the Central Union of Greek Municipalities (KEDE) – GREECE

In the state of emergency due to coronavirus pandemic, Public Services have adjusted, in the best possible way, under the light of the new priorities that have emerged. The Central Union of Greek Municipalities (KEDE) has streamlined the efforts of authorities at the local level to cover all needs created by the health emergency.

Specifically, KEDE provided municipalities with about 500 cars to cover their needs during this coronavirus pandemic in close collaboration with car rental companies. Supplies of more than 600.000 items (worth 120.000,00 €) were provided to the municipal markets in order to cover essential needs of the population all over the country in close collaboration with "My Market Group", as well as supplies were given to cover basic needs in food for homeless people in the Municipalities of Athens and Xanthi in cooperation with the ΕΛΛΑ-ΔΙΚΑ ΜΑΣ Initiative.

When it comes to medical needs, KEDE is hosting an interactive HUB on its website.[52] This hub is used to register the needs of the Greek Municipalities. Private funding has been raised in order to cover medical needs registered at the HUB by Greek Municipalities. The solidarity Hub of KEDE has been the base of a good intermunicipal cooperation covering many fields of action.

KEDE has also cooperated with the Greek Voluntary Movement, which has reached 2.000 people. It created a platform where the municipalities could get the volunteers they needed in order to support social work locally.

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[52] https://aitimata.kedke.gr/

A special hub for inter-municipal solidarity and interaction was created on KEDE's website, which allows municipalities to register their needs in terms of social services.

Finally, the rent paid for municipal buildings was reduced, as were the contributory fees, and the platform used by KEDE for teleconferences was made available -   to the Greek Municipalities in order to hold their own teleconference meetings.

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5. Dedicated call-centre during the COVID-19 pandemic – Vologda (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 317.329

During the COVID-19 pandemic, prompt and reliable information is important for residents. In this regard, a call-center organized by the Vologda city administration started working in Vologda on 28 March 2020. Citizens can call there and ask any questions about the life of the city during the quarantine.

The call-center is open from 8.00 to 20.00, and 300 to 1300 calls are received in a day. Frequently questions of citizens are asked among others on rules of self-isolation, medical care, work of companies during the quarantine, volunteer assistance. Up to 11 operators answer the questions. All operators undergo a relevant training and have memos in their disposal on the most frequently asked questions, in order to be able to provide a competent response. In most cases, the person who asked the hotline receives an explanation immediately. If this is not possible, the question and contact details of the applicant are sent to the relevant Department for a prompt response.

From the first days of the call-center's operation, the request processing system was automated using a special program. The request is immediately sent to the competent specialist, who contacts the applicant. The completed request is reflected in the system. Thus, the program shows how many applications were completed by the end of the day, and in which direction the work should be strengthened. The main result is that the applicant receives a response within a few hours. For example, when an official request is made to the authorities, the response takes from 14 to 30 days.

The call-center will continue to operate after the pandemic. Prompt informing of the population according to this scheme can be used in any emergency situation.

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6. Home-delivery of meals and free taxi service for seniors during Covid-19 – Monaco City Council (MONACO)
Population: 38.682

All senior citizens over 70 years who are in isolation during Covid-19 may benefit from the home-delivery service of meals. In addition to the 150 meals prepared and delivered daily by the Princess Grace Hospital Centre, 150 lunches and 75 dinners are prepared in the premises of the Lycée Technique et Hôtelier of Monaco (LTHM). Alongside those efforts, Monaco's taxis have been mobilized to drive beneficiaries of the home-delivery service to medical appointments free of charge.

The home-delivery service of meals for senior citizens is the result of a collaboration between the LTHM team under the leadership of Jean-Marc Deoriti-Castellini, headmaster and 6th Deputy Mayor, and the Monaco City Council via two departments, the Senior Citizens and Social Action Service, managing the daily booking and dispatching of meals, and the "Service du Domaine Communal-Commerce, Halles et Marchés", in charge of creating the menus and placing orders of the raw materials/ingredients needed. The meals are delivered by teams of the Senior Citizens Service and Social Action, with the support of volunteers from the Monegasque Red Cross. For the citizens most in need and with the lowest incomes, these meals are covered by the Town Hall.

To accompany this service, Monaco's taxis have been mobilized alongside the Town Hall, to provide driving services free of charge to senior citizens who need to travel to their medical appointments. The Senior Citizens and Social Action Service is in charge of registering the needs and requests for the taxi service and managing the process.

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7. Mask production facilities, Disinfection Tunnel & Online Book Delivery Service during Covid-19 – Municipalities of Gaziantep, Ordu & Keçiören (TURKEY)
Population: 1.931.836 (Gaziantep), 771.932 (Ordu), 817.262 (Keçiören)

In Turkey during the Covid-19 crisis many social and humanitarian assistance projects were implemented by municipalities country-wide. Proactive measures were progressively introduced to reduce the wide spread of the disease. Below are three examples of the cities of Gaziantep, Ordu and Keçiören, demonstrating innovation, flexibility and adaptability to the global health emergency from a social rights prism.

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality supported agricultural production at local level and carried out projects for farmers during Covid-19 epidemic. As Gaziantep hosts most of Syrian Refugees in the city, the Municipality works for awareness of protection measures, personal hygiene and health awareness including among refugees. Also, Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality became the first municipality to establish a mask production facility in Turkey. In addition, Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality provided healthcare professionals with free accommodation and transport. During Covid-19 crisis management process, Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality ranks first with 18 projects in total; 10 of which protective and 8 of which are social and economic support projects.

Ordu Metropolitan Municipality designed the "Aircor52 Disinfection Tunnel" to disinfect the clothing of citizens who have to leave their homes and go to work. The disinfectant sprayed in the tunnel that was placed at the city centre and that is sensor-operated has no harmful effects on human health.

Keçiören Municipality created a "Call a Book" page over its website to enable the citizens to enter the system and borrow books from the Library. The Call a Book system was put in place to provide access to 40 thousand volumes in the Fatih Library from home. The requested books, after being placed in a bag and disinfected, are sent to citizens' homes within 48 hours.

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8. Mobile hospital for Covid-19 patients – Iasi County Council (ROMANIA)[53]
Population: 772.348

In April 2020, the president of the Iasi County Council announced that a mobile hospital with 250 beds for patients diagnosed with Covid-19 will be set up in the area of the TransAgropolis Industrial Park in Letcani, close to the city of Iasi. The new medical unit would serve the entire northeast region.

The mobile hospital was jointly purchased by the County Councils of Iasi, Neamt and Bacau, through the Euronest Inter-Community Development Association. This investment amounts to EUR 17.6 million. Iasi County councilors approved the allocation of EUR 10.3 million for the purchase of the mobile hospital for cases diagnosed with Covid-19. The County Councils of Neamt and Bacau allocated EUR 3.2 million, and EUR 4.1 million, respectively.

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[53] https://www.romania-insider.com/coronavirus-mobile-hospital-iasi

The new medical facility has a special area for medical analysis and patient testing, operating rooms, intensive care wards with 50-70 beds, and storage rooms for medical materials.

> *"The hospital can be used even after the pandemic, for campaigns or medical caravans in rural areas of the Moldova region, for any other medical emergency, or may be passed under the administration of the Inspectorate for Emergency Situations" – President of Iasi County Council*

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V.   RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE

1. B-MINCOME – Barcelona (SPAIN)
Population: 5.575.000

To combat poverty and inequality in Barcelona's deprived areas, the City Council of Barcelona and its project partners created the pilot project B-MINCOME (Barcelona Minimum Income). The innovative nature of this project lies within its unique effort to experiment with various forms of minimum income policies. It combines economic support measures with four types of active social and workplace inclusion policies: training and employment, social economy, help in renting out rooms and fostering community participation.

Named after a minimum income experiment in Canada in the 1970s, B-MINCOME puts to the test the effectiveness of different forms of policies related to minimum income. Along with the "passive" economic support measures, the active social inclusion policies help the people at the receiving end of these policies to feel more integrated into society. By guaranteeing a minimum income, the B-MINCOME project seeks to allow participants to enjoy greater freedom of action that reinforces their decision-making skills so that they can design their own strategies for progressing out of the vulnerable situations they are currently in. The project aims to create an ecosystem to fight poverty and exclusion so that, by reducing dependence on public and private

subsidies, participants can potentiate their empowerment and independence. A report of the preliminary results of this pilot project for 2017-2018 was published in July 2019.[54]

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2. Covid-19 Emergency food provision hub and warehouse – Leeds (UK)
Population: 474.632

The Leeds City Council has found innovative ways of using community facilities to promote welfare policies for their citizens in need. Amidst the health emergency of Covid, the council is using a warehouse facility as a central hub for their emergency food provision system. This facility provides a coordination point for fleet vehicles and food deliveries, while packaging food parcels in a space large enough to maintain social distancing. Between 16 March and 27 April, 10,083 food parcels were packed and provided through this facility.

This emergency food provision is available for families and individuals who are experiencing difficulties in accessing food due to reasons including financial constraints, self-isolation or being part of the shielded cohort. To alert residents to the ways of accessing this service, the council published a flyer, which includes a note on who is eligible to receive the food provision service.[55] Requests can be made for a volunteer to collect and drop off, for direct delivery to homes (with a contactless drop), or for customer collection from a local 'provision hub', including foodbanks, community hubs, third sector organisations, schools and children's centres. Local schools and their catering services are also playing a central role in helping to ensure that vulnerable children and families have access to food, including school meals. Details on the emergency food provision system, including the allocated budget, have been published in a briefing note by the Council.[56]

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https://www.leeds.gov.uk/leedsmic/local-welfare-support

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[54] https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dretssocials/sites/default/files/arxius-documents/results_bmincome_eng.pdf
[55] https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Food%20Scheme%20Poster%20Public%20Use.pdf
[56] https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Briefing%20Note%20on%20impact%20of%20UC%20and%20%20rise%20in%20food%20provision_.pdf

3. Crisis benefit grant for foreign students during Covid-19 emergency – Riga City Council (LATVIA)
Population: 632.614

The City Council of Riga, amidst the covid-19 emergency, has been particularly mindful of foreign students whose declared place of residence is the territory of the Riga City Municipality and who had to remain in Riga during the pandemic, without the means to provide for their basic needs. A grant of 128 € per person was provided to each student, after an application process to establish eligibility for the grant.

The Welfare Department of the Riga City Council has announced that any foreign students living in Riga are eligible to apply for a 128 EUR subsidy if they encounter material hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Claimants must submit a document outlining the conditions for the unexpected difficulties, along with proof of residence, enrolment in a higher education institution and bank account statement. Detailed information on the application procedure and eligibility criteria have been published in a document by the city council.[57] The grant is intended to cover basic needs. Information about the availability of assistance was disseminated through social networks and has been facilitated by Make Room[58], an NGO facilitating the inclusion of foreign students.
The legal basis for this provision of welfare to foreign students is a law issued in April 2020 by the Parliament of Latvia, which stipulates that, given the state of emergency in the country due to the spreading of Covid-19, municipalities may grant social services and assistance to target groups not specified in the Law on Social Services and Social Assistance.[59]

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4. Plan for Social Cohesion in the Cities and Municipalities of Wallonia (BELGIUM)
Population: 3.644.000 (region of Wallonia)

At a time of growing insecurity and exclusion, the Social Cohesion Plan (PCS) seeks to promote the exercise of 6 fundamental rights which fall within the purview of regional authorities: the right to a decent income; the right to health care and social and medical assistance; the right to decent housing and a healthy environment; the right to work; the right to training; the right to cultural and social development. The purpose of the PCS is to co-ordinate and develop a set

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[57] https://ld.riga.lv/files/Bukleti/ENG_for%20students.pdf
[58] https://makeroomeu.com/
[59] https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313730-par-valsts-instituciju-darbibu-arkartejas-situacijas-laika-saistiba-ar-covid-19-izplatibu

of initiatives within municipalities so that everyone in Wallonia can live in dignity, through neighbourhood-based social development and action to combat all forms of vulnerability, poverty and insecurity in the broad sense.

The measures developed under the PCS are primarily aimed at the poorest and most vulnerable groups, while at the same time involving the wider population in order to foster social diversity. The PCSs are implemented by local authorities with the emphasis on partnership with local partners and the voluntary sector. The PCS comprises 4 strands of co-ordinated action: socio-occupational integration, access to decent housing, access to health care and treatment for addiction, restoring social, intergenerational and intercultural links. The aim is to co-ordinate action and encourage networking between all the relevant players in the interests of efficiency and to involve all the stakeholders with a view to promoting shared responsibility.

The PCS is designed around a composite index concerning access to fundamental rights (ISADF) and a social cohesion diagnosis. The ISADF, introduced by the IWEPS (Institut wallon de l'Evaluation, de la Prospective et de la Statistique), measures the level of social cohesion in every municipality in Wallonia. It provides information about the local population's access to the 6 fundamental rights, supplemented by a risk factor in relation to the maintenance of social cohesion across the municipality.

The **social cohesion diagnosis**, which is carried out by local players, identifies public and/or private initiatives already under way in the local area but also public expectations and the needs to be addressed. The action plan is designed according to the ISADF and the diagnosis and undergoes a final review in which all the stakeholders are involved.

The PCS has helped to improve social cohesion so that everyone can play a part in community, political, economic and cultural life. It also ensures that citizens are able to lead independent lives and that the poorest receive support, providing them with a way out of hardship and back into society.

The program started in 2009 for five years and was renewed for 2014-2019. The Wallonian government has approved a second renewal of the plan for 2020-2025.[60]

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[60] http://cohesionsociale.wallonie.be/actions/PCS

5. "Network of Love" welfare and solidarity scheme – Mykonos (GREECE)
Population: 10.134

In line with the measures for the prevention and protection of public health against the virus Covid-19, the Municipality of Mykonos took the initiative to establish a temporary welfare and solidarity scheme, under the name "Dihti Agapis" (Network of Love), which became operational on 24 March 2020. The welfare scheme foresees the provision of necessary supplies and medicines to vulnerable residents, as well as access to all health and safety services of the municipality via a call center.

The services provided under the scheme include a registry of vulnerable residents of Mykonos unable to leave their home and residents experiencing financial difficulties. The assistance of the above groups includes covering their pharmaceutical needs as well as the provision of necessary supplies.

In addition, the scheme provides access to all health and safety services operating within the municipality. A call center and a website document the requests and needs of residents. Simultaneously, it carries out requests in order to provide the residents with any necessary documents requested. Finally, it attempts to help with any other situation, in order to assist residents, stay at home and prevent the spread of the Covid-19 (coronavirus).

This scheme runs in cooperation with the President of Π.Α.Κ.Ο. Γ. Αξιώτης (Cultural, Sports and Social Organization "PAKO G. Axiotis"), the members of the board and the employees of the organization, the scheme "Βοήθεια στο Σπίτι" ("Home Care Service"), the group MYKONOS VOLUNTEERS, as well as other volunteers that responded positively to the mayor's call.

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6. Challenge Poverty – Dumfried and Galloway Council (SCOTLAND)
Population: 148.790

Dumfries and Galloway Council's commitment has been incredibly strong in tackling all forms of poverty and its dedication to this has been reinforced through ongoing delivery of its Anti-Poverty strategy, recognised at national level by gaining the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) 2018 Gold Award for Tackling Inequalities and Improving Health. Since 2017, the local authority has committed over £4,700,000 to tackling poverty in all of its forms and funded 109 different projects, the majority of which are working together towards the reduction of child poverty within the region.

Together with the health service and third sector partners, Dumfries and Galloway Council is working for the outcome that people will be prevented from falling into poverty, supported to escape from poverty and able to live independent, safe, happy and fulfilled lives. The local

authority organises annual Challenge Poverty Weeks, a regional programme of events to raise awareness and public support, challenge stereotypes and highlight solutions to poverty.

All projects have been formulated through the local Tackling Poverty Reference Group to ensure that a step-change is achieved, and the outcomes make a real difference to the families and individuals affected, or at risk. The projects are changing the delivery mechanisms of local services, and therefore the strategic way the local authority and NHS are working. This ensures services improvement in a time of diminishing Public Sector resource.

A Child Poverty Local Action Plan is being progressed and monitored through the Children's Services Executive Group. Alignment to this group will allow the Child Poverty Local Action Plan to be reported to the Community Planning Partnership and for our annual progress report to be published each year. With the Children's Services Plan reporting to the same cycle, this will allow consistent publication of progress in relation to addressing child poverty across plans.

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7. "Force Majeure" Unemployment Allowance & Assistance for Self-Employed Citizens –
Brussels City (BELGIUM)
Population: 174.383

The Public Centre for Social Action (CPAS) of the city of Brussels has created two measures to maintain the link to social rights and provide social security and welfare measures to its unemployed and self-employed citizens.

On the one hand, a new unit of five agents was set up in the Employment and Social Economy department, to support workers who could claim temporary unemployment benefits via a simplified procedure (due to force majeure) and to support the social workers with the examination of the files of unemployed citizens who have applied to the department for assistance.

On the other hand, a new "self-employed persons unit" was created within the Mediation Service department, to assist self-employed citizens with the necessary steps for them to obtain regional or federal aid, to which they may be entitled due to the loss of their jobs or a substantial decrease in their salary due to the health emergency of Covid-19. The unit has a double function. Firstly, it processes the demands related to the Social Fund for Gas/Electricity of the Water Fund and it transfers to the housing service any requests related to rental debts. Secondly, it gathers all the information provided at federal or regional level with regard to independent workers/self-employed/freelancers and informs the social workers accordingly, so that they can then best guide citizens and respond to their relevant requests.

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8. Social-rights focused procurement – Bergen (NORWAY)
Population: 271.949

The city of Bergen spends approximately 5 billion NOK at goods and services each year; making the municipality a powerful procurer. As goods and services are part of a global market, it makes it even more important to have established routines on how to ensure that human rights are taken care of at each level of the value chain.

The city of Bergen has a procurement policy demanding that human rights, social rights and fair trade requirements are respected. This includes demands that the UN Human rights treaty, the core ILO conventions and other internatinoal and national human rights conventions should be provenly respected throughout the procurement process.

A procurement policy respecting human rights is both a value question and a challenging task to comply with. High risk products or countries are prioritised when asking for proof. The city of Bergen have established internal routines for this work. A pilot project for special follow-up on batteries for electric cars has been launched. Norway has one of the worlds highest perecentages of electrical cars per capita, and Bergen is the electrical car "capital" of Norway. A vast number of the city of Bergen's service cars are electrical. A mapping of a selected producers are ongoing. The aim is to trace the value chain back to the cobolt mines, making sure that human rights are respected at each level. The level of transparency for each producers will have effect for future contracts.

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9. Tax reductions during Covid-19 & Free Diners – Tbilisi (GEORGIA)
Population: 1.114.000

As a part of Municipal Support during Pandemic, targeted social groups of Tbilisi population received some local tax and penalty cuts.

To support jobs during Pandemic Lockdown, Tbilisi City Rent duty on Municipal land plots transferred for open cafes and restaurants has been suspended from March 1 to December 31,

2020. Some other local businesses are also subject to Local Tax Cuts. An important social support is being provided by Municipal Free Diners. Tbilisi City Municipality maintains 62 Free Diners throughout the city. These provide up to 39,000 socially disadvantaged citizens with free dinner. As Pandemic Lockdown started all of above-mentioned Free Diners introduced take-away service for the beneficiaries, as well elderly beneficiaries have the opportunity to receive food delivered at home, served by local volunteers and municipality staff specially trained by Red Cross Georgia.

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10. *What Works* – A Study Into Better Welfare Benefits – Utrecht (THE NETHERLANDS)
Population: 1.307.000

In the Netherlands, the current rules in social assistance are complicated and strict. The Municipality of Utrecht wanted to know if welfare benefits can be organised differently e.g. with less regulations and sanctions. From June 2018 to December 2019 the Municipality of Utrecht tried this out in practice together with researchers from Utrecht University. In total 752 social assistance claimants volunteered to participate to find the best way to guide people on social assistance (back) towards paid work or other forms of social participation. They were randomly divided in four groups, one with the regular regime (the control group) and three groups with an alternative intervention: (1) more autonomy, (2) extra help and guidance from the local welfare agency, or (3) the opportunity to keep a larger share of income earned on top of their benefits.

In a nutshell, the researchers found that there is potential for improving the current social assistance scheme. The three interventions show positive results that indicate increased labour market participation. More autonomy, positive attention and wider earning opportunities seem to be adjustments that are worth pursuing. Taking into account the favorable reception from participants and caseworkers, as well as the positive effects for the municipality and the national government, it seems a win-win for all parties involved to reconsider the welfare legislation in this direction. The national government is currently deliberating with the Municipality of Utrecht on these outcomes.

The study took place in Utrecht, the fourth largest city in the Netherlands with around 360,000 inhabitants. At the time the study started, around 10,000 households in Utrecht received social assistance, or roughly 6 percent of all households. This figure is comparable to the Netherlands as a whole. In Utrecht, the department *Work & Income* (Werk en Inkomen) at the municipality is in charge of executing the social assistance scheme.

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11. Police go shopping for the elderly – Pendik (TURKEY)
Population: 711.894

In the Turkish city of Pendik, the municipal police go shopping for people aged 65 and older who have to stay at home due to Covid-19. Residents can ring the police and the goods will be delivered to their homes.

Within the scope of the coronavirus (COVİD-19) measures, the "Vefa Communication Center" established for citizens over the age of 65 and with chronic illness has been put into service with

the circular of the Ministry of Interior. Serving with the cooperation of Pendik District Governorate, the Vefa Communication Center employs a team of 50 people from Pendik Municipality. The teams provide information, support and financial support to the elderly about essential needs such as shopping, medicines and hospitals. The service is also available for people with disabilities and chronic diseases, and people who need homecare.

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12. Smart Vilnius "open data policy" – Vilnius (LITHUANIA)
Population: 544.386

Vilnius's radical open data policy gives anyone access to critical data in real time. This has facilitated a clearer view of traffic and transportation options, promoting car sharing and public transport and decreasing the traffic jams.

Opening the municipality's data was one of the key priorities for a newly elected city council back in 2015. The Municipality published an open data policy document stating that if the data was not sensitive, security wise, and did not contradict with the rules outlined in the new GDPR regulations, it would be made open and available under a 'no excuse' policy.

With the mobile app Tvarkau Miesta, residents can report overflowing bins or objects blocking public roads, among other things. The application serves as a direct line of communication between the residents of Vilnius and the municipality. With all municipal data on finances, public procurement, real estate and public transport readily available to the public, Vilnius has been

actively engaging local tech talent to help create smart solutions with the aim of continuously providing new benefits to its citizens, raising its profile as an open data capital in doing so.

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VI.   RIGHT TO SOCIAL INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

1. Mob4seniors – Toulouse (FRANCE)
Population: 471.941

To address the demographic changes with 12.8% of the population over the age of 65, since autumn 2017 Toulouse has put in place the Mob4seniors project, in order to promote mobility for its senior citizens. The project included two main elements: the "Montoulouse Senior card" and the "Allô Senior service".

Seniors may be a challenge for mobility policies, given the diversity of this population and the natural evolution of behavior, as soon as they retire. The city of Toulouse created a personalised card dedicated to seniors, the **Montoulouse Senior card**, which customises the allocation of transport rights to encourage seniors to use public transport or cycling. This individual card is extended to several municipal services dedicated to seniors and social services and builds the loyalty of the senior by negotiating preferential rates for the holders of this card with private partners in the cultural field, and shops. The card provides access to the urban transport network (bus, metro, tram) as part of a solidarity-based pricing system, to the range of activities in the fields of culture and leisure, opening up many price advantages.

At the same time, the **Allô Senior service** provides personalised follow-up for seniors to stimulate their autonomy and mobility by engaging them in municipal activities offered by the Montoulouse Senior card. The main characteristic of Allô Senior is that young people may go directly to the home of isolated senior citizens and suggest options for them to travel around thanks to the MontoulouseSenior card. In this way, senior citizens become more self-confident and regain their mobility.

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https://www.toulouse.fr/web/social/seniors-a-toulouse/carte-montoulouse-senior

2. Information-sharing on Coronavirus in multiple languages – Altena (GERMANY)
Population: 18.544

Altena shares information from the government about the coronavirus with migrant communities through WhatsApp and Facebook. Information is available in German, English, Arabic and Kurdish.

Altena has implemented numerous initiatives that help promote the integration of newcomers into the community. Altena's approach involves the entire population in integration. Altena's efforts resulted in the city receiving the National Integration Award 2017. [61] Projects and programmes are not only implemented for, but also with, refugees. They actively participate and take responsibility for integration. In this way, they also give back to the community.

Part of those integration efforts is also the recent approach with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. Demonstrating how migrant communities form an intrinsic part of the city's community, the municipality of Altena made sure that necessary information provided by the government on the developments of the pandemic were made available to migrant communities through various social media platforms in 4 different languages.

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https://www.facebook.com/people/Lidasa-Integrationsb%C3%BCro/100016332369363

3. Social referral service & Operational Headquarters – Novosibirsk City Hall (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 1.625.631

The Department of Social Policy of the Novosibirsk City Hall streamlined its efforts to provide assistance and support to the most vulnerable groups of citizens - elderly, low-mobility people, large families – amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. The City Social Information Service (CSIS) coordinated its work with the Operational Headquarters, employing 138 volunteers to respond to a designated hotline and provide a variety of services, goods and medicines to the citizens most in need. This social project yielded a pronounced synergy effect when the municipal call

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[61] https://www.kommunen.nrw/presse/pressemitteilungen/detail/dokument/nationaler-integrationspreis-an-die-stadt-altena.html

center became an information center for receiving appeals, applications and requests for help. The volunteer team was an effective tool for the implementation of specific targeted assistance to vulnerable groups.

The **City Social Information Service (CSIS)** in the department of Social Policy of the Municipality of Novosibirsk has been working since September 2019. It was created as one of the key elements of a unified information system that combined data on social services of the municipality, organizations and institutions involved in the provision of social services. To reinforce the Service's efforts with the outbreak of Covid-19, the Operational Headquarters for assistance to senior and disabled was created in March 2020.

CSIS call center began receiving numerous calls from elderly and people with limited mobility in Novosibirsk with a request to purchase food, essential goods, and medicines. At peak loads, the number of calls to the CSIS reached 750 per day. To get volunteer help, a person needed to contact the hotline at 375-87-87. The Volunteers Headquarters was organized to respond to the numerous calls and it now consists of 138 volunteers working on a daily basis receiving over 60 applications from citizens per day for the purchase and delivery of food, essentials, prescription drugs. Since 18 March 2020, when the help desk switched to a round-the-clock mode of operation, call center operators received 31,809 calls, of which 10,933 were issues related to Covid-19. The built-up effective system of interaction between the CSIS and the Headquarters allows quick transfer of applications to the Volunteer Headquarters for execution. Businesses and individuals responded to the call for help from Novosibirsk. Currently there are 22 companies in the Headquarters benefactors registry, including NGOs that supply food, drinking water, and personal protective equipment to the Headquarters. During this period, charity assistance was provided by both large international corporations, federal Russian companies, and townspeople.

In this whole process, it has been a priority for the city council to ensure the safety of the volunteers, so that they are themselves protected and do not pose danger to more vulnerable members of the community. Social volunteers are required to receive medical disposable masks, gloves, disinfectants (gel, wipes). Volunteers were also provided with a badge, including identification information and a personal photo. This document, by order of the mayor of Novosibirsk, allows for free travel of Headquarters volunteers on all types of public transport. Today, the volunteer corps is provided with everything necessary for safe and quality assistance, including specific instructions on how to work in extreme conditions, which were developed and made available also online. Youth were introduced to features of working with older people and the rules for using personal protective equipment.

As of May 21, 2020, volunteers completed 3689 applications for the purchase and delivery of products, essential goods and medicines for senior citizens, people with limited mobility, large families, citizens in difficult situations, as well as citizens who are in Novosibirsk observatories. 8 operational chats were created on WhatsApp, according to the number of districts.

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4. Villa Mescolanza – City of Turnhout (BELGIUM)[62]

Population: 462.457

Villa Mescolanza is Turnhout's 'House of Dialogue' where a variety of people meet. Associations of and with people with a migrant background and other associations working on diversity and human rights issues are the 'residents' of this house.

There are regular open activities where everyone is welcome, in addition to the own activities of the 'residents'. The project has three aims: to provide a location for different associations, to stimulate exchange and meeting people and to provide a forum to ask for information and give your opinion. The project enhances the 'community feeling' and makes sure links are laid between different associations. Villa Mescolanza communicates with the local government too: it signalizes things that are not working well in the city and provides a forum for discussion on different topics. Besides the city of Turnhout, other partners involved include the Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering (Agency for Integration and Citizenship) and the Actieve Interculturele Federatie (Active Intercultural Federation).

Contact:

House of Dialogue vzw - Villa Mescolanza

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5. Accessibility of information for all citizens – City of Kraljevo and Municipality of Vračar (SERBIA)

Population: 67.142 (Kraljevo), 56.363 (Vračar)

In order to deliver timely information, which is accessible to all citizens (especially for deaf people), the City of Kraljevo and the City Municipality of Vračar, with the support of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, the national association of local authorities in Serbia, joined their capacities and showed the importance of cooperation and solidarity, especially in a state of emergency.

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[62] https://www.turnhout.be/villa-mescolanza-7

The Department for Civil Protection of the City of Kraljevo, in order to adjust the information for deaf people, established cooperation with the Office for Persons with Disabilities of the City Municipality of Vračar. Office of the Municipality of Vračar translated the information on measures introduced in a state of emergency (of importance for the citizens of Kraljevo) into Serbian sign language.

During the state of emergency, the mentioned Office provided information for deaf people and people with hearing impairment, as well as for blind and visually impaired. All information relevant to the citizens of Vračar, especially on measures to prevent the spread of Coronavirus and on the support and assistance provided by the Municipality, is translated into sign language and transferred in audio format for the blind and published on the YouTube channel of the Municipality.

Also, the Municipality of Vračar was among the winners of the Competition for best practices in the application of the principles of good governance during 2018. The awards were presented by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government and the SCTM, based on a public call, and from the funds of the Project "Improving Good Governance at the Local Level", which is part of the wider program "Enhancing Good Governance and Social Inclusion for Municipal Development – Swiss PRO", implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the SCTM. The Municipality of Vračar used their award for equality and non-discrimination for providing sensory doors and tactile paths to the renovated Health Center.

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6. Office for the integration of the Roma and Egyptian Population – Municipality of Tivat (MONTENEGRO)
Population: 14.031 (370 registered Roma & Egyptian inhabitants)

Established in 2016 through the project "RE teaching assistant and mediator", as an initiative of the Municipality of Tivat and the NGO "Association of Egyptians", the Office for the integration of the Roma and Egyptian population of Tivat provides all the necessary support to members of the RE population for the best possible inclusion in the education system, and thus all social flows in the local community.

The users of the Office's services are children, parents and teachers, to whom the associates engaged in the Office provide significant assistance in overcoming the language barrier, which is the most pronounced obstacle to quality education of children belonging to the Roma and Egyptian (RE) population.

The Office has very impressive results in the field, such as:
• all children of the RE population of school age in Tivat municipality attend primary school continuously since the establishment of the Office, without deviations and interruptions;
• providing assistance to the school's pedagogical service during the testing of children for enrollment in the primary school, with the aim of overcoming the language barrier during the meeting of both parents and children with pedagogues;
• One-day excursions are organized for students, as well as an award-winning art and photography exhibition of works called "The City of All of Us", on the topic of work and life of members of national minorities;
• Each year, the project "Preschool" is implemented for three months period, with the aim of preparing children for testing and going to school.

Office work statistics in the first year of its work were as follows: Total hours for preschoolers - 144; Total held additional classes in mathematics and native language - 82; Total additional classes held in English - 27; Educational workshops held - 36; 23 parent meetings were held; 580 parent visits were made; 1133 visits of teaching staff were made; 70 visits by the school director were made; 4 visits from the social service and 192 visits from the pedagogical service were made.

The Office was established trough the support of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Promoting Human Rights and the Protection of Minorities in Southeast Europe". Out of 36 local governments from seven countries in Southeast Europe, the project of the municipality of Tivat "RE teaching assistant and mediator" was selected as an example of the best practice. After the completion of the project in 2016, the Municipality of Tivat is providing funds for its functioning.

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7. Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls During Covid 19 – Convention of Scotish Local Authorities (SCOTLAND)

In April 2020 the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Group Leaders recognised the women and children living with domestic abuse are currently particularly vulnerable to Domestic Abuse (DA) and Coercive Controlling Behaviour, these heightened vulnerabilities resulting from public health measures to control the spread of the coronavirus.

Informed by global experience, a rise in domestic abuse and coercive control is expected to continue. As regulations begin to orientate towards recovery, it is anticipated that violence and control may become more serious and that pressures on services, including refuge, will become more intense.

It is in this context that COSLA is working for local authorities to get more support to deal with increased levels of domestic abuse and gender-based violence during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. It has recently developed new guidance in partnership with Scottish Government to help women and children continue to get the best support that they deserve.

The guidance signposts to local resources and assists decision-makers in identifying women and children at risk as well as the short, medium- and long-term steps they can take to support their recovery and wellbeing. The guidance is part of a range of measures introduced to tackle higher levels of abuse and violence, including a £1.5 million funding package for the women's aid and rape crisis network. It will help to maximise the effective protection and provision of support for those experiencing gender-based violence, both during this immediate crisis period and in the longer term.

COSLA recognises that this pandemic has heightened the risks to women and children living with domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence globally. This supplementary guidance is informed by the expertise of a broad range of committed services and partner organisations in Local Authority areas across Scotland. Working closely with colleagues across health services and with third sector specialist services, Scottish Local Government will continue to robustly seek to provide support to all victims of gender-based violence and to hold perpetrators of violence and abuse firmly to account.

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https://www.cosla.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/17762/COVID-19-Supplementary-VAW-Guidance-FINAL.pdf

8. Social integration of migrants, municipality Finlandsky district, St. Petersburg, (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 75.332

The rich diversity of cultures of the peoples living in St. Petersburg makes interethnic relationship one of the important tasks of the municipality. The education of the citizens about values and attitudes towards respect for labour migrants working in the city, the adoption and understanding of their traditions and ethnic values, strengthening tolerance – are the main aims of municipal work in this sphere. In this context, the "Welcome to Petersburg" and "Tolerance Week" are municipal projects contributing to social cohesion and integration of migrants and newcomers to the municipality.

The special municipal program "Welcome to Petersburg!" has been developed in order to adapt migrants socially and culturally. The program includes festivals of national cultures, exhibitions and concerts presenting the history and culture, traditions and customs of the peoples of Russia and the world - "Peoples are a united family", "I read Pushkin in my native language", as well as meetings with interesting people from the national diasporas at the libraries of the district. Special thematic excursions "Multi-faith Petersburg" as well as performances for children and films dedicated to the diversity of cultures of Russia are held by the municipality.

Every year, within the framework of the municipal event "Tolerance Week" municipality organizes round tables for migrants and members of their families, competitions "Dad, Mom, I am a sports family!". Booklets on the issues of harmonization of interethnic relations and the prevention of terrorism and extremism among labour migrants are published and distributed.

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9. Children Rights Scan ("Kinderrechtenscan") – Amsterdam (NETHERLANDS)
Population: 821.752

With the introduction of the children rights scan, the municipality of Amsterdam can check whether the rights under the human rights treaties are sufficiently observed in the city. If this is not the case, the municipality can act quickly.

On 10 December 2018, the Amsterdam Municipal Council made a proposal to carry out annual children rights scans to check the city's compliance with international and regional human rights treaties ratified by the Netherlands. The child rights scan pays special attention to groups of children who are extra vulnerable, such as children on the run and children living in poverty. After the children's rights scan has been carried out, the municipality draws up an action plan. The municipality then presents this action plan on International Human Rights Day. The scan is a repeatable methodology that can run on an annual or biennial basis.

The first scan was launched in 2019, when the Children's Ombudsman of Amsterdam made this first scan based on conversations with more than 100 children. The results were published in May 2020.[63] The results, available in Dutch, show that children's rights are quite well respected in Amsterdam and includes suggestions for possible improvements.

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https://www.defenceforchildren.nl/kinderrechten/vn-kinderrechtenverdrag

10. Covid-19 Volunteer corps assisting vulnerable members of the population – Vologda (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 317 329

During the COVID-19 pandemic and self-isolation elderly and disabled citizens need almost daily assistance. The volunteer corps #WeAreTogether is helping them. They deliver food, medicine, masks, packed lunch to hospitals, help to take out garbage etc. Volunteers comply with all personal protection measures (masks, gloves, sanitizer), and are pre-instructed in the prevention of COVID-19.

The volunteer corps in Vologda consists of 300 volunteers, 170 mobile teams provided with a car. Applications are received in a unified city call-center and shared among volunteers on a territorial basis. On average, it takes 40-60 minutes to complete each request, the volunteer purchases products at their own expense, and then the applicant returns them money.

In Vologda volunteers also delivered packed lunches to disabled children, from large and low-income families. These students were eligible for free school meals, but they were on distance learning because of the pandemic. In total volunteers completed about 15.000 requests. Parents did not have to get packed lunches and this approach has significantly reduced the risk of coronavirus infection.

Volunteers also helped low-income people with charity events. In supermarkets everyone could put any products for low-income families in a special cart. Then the volunteers formed sets and delivered them. Many companies in Vologda supported this charity events and they also helped the volunteers, providing them with food, gasoline, and masks.
During two months of work the volunteer corps has grown tenfold, and now this volunteer reserve is ready to also be used in different future situations if needed.

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[63] https://www.ombudsmanmetropool.nl/Nieuws-Publicaties/article/1282/Kinderrechtenscan-2020

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11. "Senior smartphones" project & psychological assistance system – Brussels City (BELGIUM)
Population: 174.383

Smartphones were distributed by the City of Brussels to senior citizens, to make sure they use the at-home services. A system of psychological support and assistance was also set up through teleconsultations, to reach the most fragile and isolated senior citizens during confinement.

In order to maintain a link to senior citizens who had given up on using the at-home services offered by the municipality, smartphones were offered to give to senior members of society the possibility of accessing virtualized front-line services during the time of the pandemic crisis.
At the same time, the Brussels Senior Citizens Aid put in place a support program via telephone and teleconsultations with professionals in order to offer necessary psychological support to senior citizens suffering with anxiety under the mandatory isolation conditions.

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12. Social Rights for young people - conflict resolution program – Kazan (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)
Population: 1.257.391

In their daily life young people may encounter various conflict situations. In order to prevent them and improve young people's wellbeing, Doverie, the Municipal Integrated Social Services Centre for Children and Youth working under the Committee on Children and Youth Affairs of the City of Kazan, has established Conflict Resolution Program that includes three main areas:

- **Peer Mediation Program for schools**

Peer Mediation Program works mainly for schools but includes other educational institutions. Within the Program, teams are formed among students involved in a conflict, as well as a teacher or a school psychologist. In those teams young people discuss the conflict together and instead of becoming passive "listeners" to school administration or teachers explaining why conflicts are bad, they become active mediators that allows them to see conflict from different perspective and learn how to negotiate, avoid and resolve a conflict. Therefore, students learn essential social skills and techniques for peaceful conflict resolutions, develop emotional intelligence and use acquired knowledge to help their peers in solving their own conflicts. The skills taught empower

individuals to build positive, caring relationships with others especially when conflict arises over differences.

The Peer Mediation Program works effectively in situations of group conflicts and bullying. Every child has the right for education. In situations where this right is violated, Peer Mediation Program helps to reconcile the conflict and restore the access for comfortable and effective education.

- **Family Mediation Program**

Family Mediation Program is an alternative practice of out-of-court conflict resolution involving a neutral mediator working family disputes. The use of mediation practice in conflict within parent-child relationships helps to gain a different perspective of the family situation, promotes acceptance of responsibility for one's life as a teenager, and helps parents build a qualitatively different behavior strategy that allows them to become emotionally closer to the child. In terms of the couple, it helps to improve interpersonal relationships, overcome gender stereotypes of a female role in a family and promote economic independence for women, and in some cases can even prevent domestic violence against women and children. Often during the mediation, participants decide to undergo individual psychological therapy, which solves an important motivational task and has positive effects on communication within families. In most cases, agreements reached as a result of a dialogue between the parties undergoing the Program, are more likely to be implemented than through a court decision.

- **Restorative Justice Programme**

This Programme works with juvenile offenders and their victims in cooperation with district courts of Kazan. The procedure is carried out at the trial stage and applies mostly for misdemeanors. This Program helps to restore the basic sense of security and solve any psychological disorders caused by traumatic experience. Restorative Justice shows positive results for young people who have completed the program as they become less likely to repeat criminal offence later.

A well-established system of peaceful conflict resolution in Kazan contributes to the development of social rights, including the right to protect the family, the rights to parenthood and childhood, and to education. The involvement of young people directly in conflict resolution as mediators-volunteers, mastering communication skills, and organizing reconciliation services in the educational and other environments empowers young people, promotes youth participation and the development of civil society.

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For questions regarding Peer Mediation Program and assistance in conducting rehabilitative mediation in criminal situations:

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21, Kulakhmetova st., Kazan, 420095, Russia.

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13. Gender Equality and Violence Prevention during confinement – Etterbeek (BELGIUM)

Population: 48.194

To react to the risk of increased violence and tensions within a household posed by confinement, Etterbeek's Gender Equality and Diversity Department distributed a variety of relevant information through their website, flyers and by offering dedicated phone numbers to victims of intra-family violence and citizens in need of obtaining relevant information, confiding or even filing a complaint.

Faced with a major health emergency, the Belgian government had to urgently adopt a number of measures that are not easy to implement and put a practical and psychological strain on citizens. Members of the community who are confined in a household together with family members with violent tendencies are endangered and exposed. To protect its citizens, including parents, women and children in need, the municipality of Etterbeek has disseminated information in various forms to raise the awareness of the populations o the different possibilities within the Gender Equality and Diversity Department, where individuals can seek help in case of violent incidents.

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https://www.etterbeek.be/archives/2020/violences-intrafamiliales-en-periode-de-confinement

14. Architecture in the service of social inclusion – Bergen (NORWAY)
Population: 271.949

The project "Building Dignity" seeks to answer the question of how good architecture can help achieve the goal of an inclusive city. The old teacher school at Landås will be rebuilt to become a center for the whole of Bergen, embedded in the local community with sports and culture. All municipal services related to integration and education for immigrants will be co- located in the centre.

Bergen inkluderingssenter is a pilot project for the project Building Dignity, where the city of Bergen cooperates with the Rafto Foundation and other international human rights organisations. The goal for the center is to emerge as an international role model when it comes to actively using architecture as a tool for an inclusive society. The goal is that all users should experience dignity when using the centre.

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15. "Café Bienvenue" and "Info-Conseil Migration" - Municipality of Montreux and Region of Vaud Riviera (SWITZERLAND)
Population: 25.984

The Café Bienvenue, as well as the integration office offer valuable insights and first steps towards social inclusion of migrant populations in the region.

The "Café Bienvenue" project is a weekly reception, supervised by professional facilitators, which enables mothers from a migrant background and their pre-school children, who do not have access to other integration offers, to leave the house, meet other women and children and speak French. It represents a first step towards integration and learning French.

Since October 2018, the municipality of Montreux, in collaboration with the SPC Vaud, has been offering collective and anonymous hotlines. These are intended for anyone living in the District of the Riviera-Pays-d'Enhaut, whether foreign or Swiss, who is looking for information related to migration. These offices have various objectives: to provide a place where people can be welcomed, listened to and oriented; to inform people about integration offers and the steps to be taken to integrate in the best possible conditions; to provide information on social insurance and foreigners' rights; to help people understand the intricacies of the administration, as well as the official letters they receive, or to offer them support in administrative procedures if necessary.

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16. Communal Integration Plan & Exchange and Support Group – Luxembourgish Municipalities (LUXEMBOURG)

Social integration policies of Luxembourgish municipalities can be reflected in two efforts: the Communal Integration Plan (PCI-Plan Communal d'Intégration) and the GRESIL (GRoupe d'Echange et de Soutien en matière d'Intégration au niveau Local), which among others assists municipalities with the process of adopting their own PCI.

The **PCI** is an instrument for municipalities to establish a strategic integration policy that is sustainable, transversal and methodical, involving as many local actors as possible. A Guide on how to build a PCI was put together as a collaboration between the Ministry for Family, Integration and the Greater Region – Department for Integration and SYVICOL (Association representing towns and municipalities in Luxembourg). A finalized PCI is available for the City of Luxembourg[64] and the City of Esch-sur-Alzette[65].

GRESIL was created following the 2nd National Conference on Integration at local level in 2017. The conference underlined the strong interest and need of Luxembourg's municipalities to network on the themes of integration and "living together". The initiators are SYVICOL, the Ministry for Family, Integration and the Greater Region – Department for Integration and the "Association de Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés" -ASTI (Association for the support of immigrant workers).

GRESIL offers municipalities a platform to meet, exchange ideas, create synergies, share information, train and support on integration at local level, it's a platform where local councils help and train each other. Especially in relation to establishing a PCI the municipalities found that the Guide can be quite theoretical and daunting for some councils. So the first couple of GRESIL meetings, which usually happen twice a year, were dedicated to breaking the guide into smaller chunks and helping councils on their way to establishing their first PCI. All the good practices and ideas that emerge during the GRESIL sessions are collected by the organisers and published in order to enable all local councils in Luxembourg to benefit from each other's experiences, even if they couldn't attend GRESIL.

Finally, a „Welcome Book" (carnet d'accueil) is published, which includes among other things the welcome brochures for all new residents that local councils have been putting together to ease the process of moving to a new town.[66]

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[64] https://www.vdl.lu/en/city/projects-and-commitments/social-action/municipal-integration-plan
[65] https://administration.esch.lu/plan-communal-integration-2/
[66] https://integratioun.lu/project/carnet-daccueil/

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CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS

*It is recommended that local authorities **take advantage of their proximity to citizens** by devising **tailored** strategies and multi-level, integrated approaches. Developing people- and place-based solutions, increasing city-to-city exchanges and cooperation, enabling citizen involvement and empowerment are crucial steps on the path towards the progressive realization of social rights at local and regional level. Most of all, the complex challenges of today require a "**nexus" thinking** and recognizing the **interdependence between different rights categories** and the need for interdisciplinary, comprehensive approaches. Finally, more than ever, local and regional authorities need to stay up to date with recent developments in technology, ensuring citizens' digital literacy and promoting green and long-term sustainable solutions to all rights areas discussed in this Handbook.*

More specifically, local and regional authorities are encouraged to:

I. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

*- **Develop** carefully targeted programs, in order to re-engage NEETs and prevent long-term inactivity.*

*-**Incorporate** deeper going policies to ensure adequate digital skills for all members of their populations.*

*- **Invest** in distance learning capacities for all citizens and ensure that they have access to the necessary technology, especially in light of recent global emergencies.*

*- **Consolidate** efforts to fight early school leaving, by adopting strategies tailored to the needs of the community, an interdisciplinary and multicultural approach to the municipal educational offers, as well as sustainable alternatives to the traditional and well-established educational paths.*

*-**Collaborate** with private sector companies, universities and private educational institutions to create projects and find ways to encourage all members of the population to enter in the ordinary educational system and to remain in education.*

*-**Monitor** the progress of vulnerable or marginalized students and offer psychological/career guidance support.*

II. RIGHT TO WORK

*-**Place focus** on socially focused start-ups and entrepreneurs, which should be given sufficient incentives to stay on these not well-established professional paths.*

*-**Promote and streamline** green jobs and jobs in the IT/digital sector, which will bring along employment opportunities for many citizens and contribute to a more sustainable future.*

-*Provide* lifelong career guidance and learning opportunities, allowing for both unemployed youth and late starters to join the labor force.

-*Centre* your labor market (re-)integration policies on a bottom-up participatory approach to build on the capacities of the long-term unemployed people and the needs of the neighborhoods in which they work.

III. RIGHT TO HOUSING

-*Keep in mind and protect* the right to a healthy environment, when it comes to urban planning and housing, along with measures against homelessness.

-*Facilitate and implement* smart housing solutions focusing on reducing the carbon footprint and sustainably protecting the climate.

-*Create and maintain* social housing facilities and solutions in your municipalities, as you will be the frontline respondents in case of another (health) emergency.

-*Offer* incentives to real estate owners to rent out their properties for social housing purposes of the municipalities.

-*Engage* existing municipal architecture for the purpose of promoting social rights and solidarity towards your citizens in need.

IV. RIGHT TO HEALTH

-*Mainstream* the use of mobile hospitals serving marginalized members of the community without access to healthcare.

-*Ensure* that the very useful and often innovative measures related to health care, which were put in place due to the global pandemic, are maintained, so that they become available to the general public on a more permanent basis. This way, the valuable lessons learned during Covid-19 will not be forgotten after the emergency has passed.

-*Raise awareness* with regard to the individual responsibility of their citizens, taking their healthcare in their own hands and adopting a proactive behavior, including for example the recent lessons learned regarding personal hygiene.

-*Keep the interdependence in mind!* In order to achieve access to health, access to housing, employment and welfare are equally needed.

V. RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE

-***Digitalize*** *your services and allow for an open data policy to enable and increase bidirectional communication and openness between you and your citizens.*

-***Promote*** *social rights-responsible public procurement, using public tenders to create job opportunities, decent work, social and professional inclusion and better conditions for disabled and disadvantaged people.*

-***Rethink*** *the procedures and regulations governing the provision of welfare benefits to the extent that your competences allow for it, so that social rights are in the forefront and citizens most in need are given the help they need.*

-***Experiment*** *with various forms of minimum income policies to find the approach that works best for the needs of your citizens.*

VI. RIGHT TO SOCIAL INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

-***Empower*** *your citizens and ensure all different voices are heard, by reaching out to your elderly populations, children and youth, people with disabilities and all marginalized groups.*

-***Support and stimulate*** *intercultural communication, empower diverse voices in your communities to be heard and to become active members of your cities, all enjoying an equal amount of rights.*

-***React*** *to increased intra-family violence or violence against women and children, speak up and take action for gender equality, by offering safe havens and platforms, where victims and people in need can confide and seek assistance.*

-***Undertake*** *mediation efforts to resolve conflicts that may arise among citizens in your communities.*

-***Use technology to empower*** *the least powerful: smartphones for the elderly, distance education tools for the most marginalized and mainstreaming the use of social media to ensure that information reaches all.*

REFERENCE TEXTS AND FURTHER READINGS

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– Council of Europe, New version of the Digest of the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-social-charter/-/new-version-of-the-digest-of-the-case-law-of-the-european-committee-of-social-rights

– Council of Europe, The Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-intergovernmental-cooperation/human-rights-development-cddh/social-rights-in-europe

– EUROCITIES website, http://www.eurocities.eu/

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– EUROCITIES: Live updates Covid-19, European cities respond to the coronavirus crisis https://covidnews.eurocities.eu/

– European Committee of Social Rights

– European Pillar of Social Rights

– European Social Charter

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