

## **Report WG migration (Eurocities) - Lisbon- 5/6 April 2017**

### **Attendees (cities)**

Amsterdam, Antwerp, Athens, Barcelona, Brno, Gdansk, Ghent, Gothenburg, Helsinki, Leipzig, Lisbon, Lodz, Madrid, Malmo, Milan, Munich, Oslo, Ostend, Riga, Stockholm, Tampere, Toulouse, Utrecht, Vienna, Zurich,

### **Other attendees:**

OECD, Open Society, DG Regio, Eurocities

### **Attendees of UIA project:**

Utrecht Launch Pad  
Core Vienna  
CURANT Antwerp



### **Agenda**

- **Updates en discussion**
  - Eurocities report on reception of refugees, anti-radicalization
  - Urban Agenda Partnership on migration and refugees
  - Action Plan on integration of the European Commission – national contact points
  - Reform of common European Asylum system
  - Relocation and resettlements
  - Easi application on fast- track integration
  - Launch of Solidarity cities initiative
  - Concept note on human rights approach to migrant integration update
  - Cities local and national level lever affecting practice and implementation of migrant integration, including asylum-seekers and refugees.
  - Refugee and migrant Integration issues in a hostile political context
  
- **Presentations:**
  - Refugee and migrant integration context in Lisbon and current practices
  - UIA: Vienna, Antwerp, Utrecht
  - Project undocumented migrants
  - Cities Grow project by Eurocities
  - DG region presenting EU funding

**Next meeting; Helsinki (October)**

## **Report**

Lisbon started the conference with a presentation about their “welcome city” campaign. They have a communication campaign with pictures from the previous refugee crisis and the crisis nowadays. Lisbon also started with a project for asylum seekers. Asylum seekers can stay for 2 months in a shelter. Social workers arrange the paperwork, get to know the refugees in person and the refugees get Portuguese lessons and a medical follow up. After 2 months the people move to a shared house where a social worker brings a visit once a week. Afterwards they go to a house on the private market.

Lisbon also has some other good practices in the new project above:

- They closed a deal with a supermarket to train 10 refugees and recruit them
- There is a skills training in university for high educated refugees

The project will follow up a refugee for 18 months. After the programme they get treated as a normal Portuguese person.

Utrecht presented the new project about undocumented refugees. Antwerp is no part of it. 8 Cities will be building expertise around this topic and will conduct policy advice in 2 years. They need 1 more city, preferably a German city.

Eurocities presented the Cities Grow project. In this project Eurocities coordinate the collaboration between 16 cities. This project want to improve the integration of refugees by economic activities (good practices). The project will produce 4 video's, 4 toolkits, 8 action plans (through 8 study visits).

## **Funding**

European Commission DG region did a short presentation about EU funding. To get EU funding a city needs a clear policy objective. From the ERDF budget 2014-2020, Greece applied but did not implemented anything with the money and Poland and Holland do not want to make use of this funding. A lot of cities are not applying for this funding.

There was an overall feeling that EU funding is often a brain drain. Meaning that a project with funding start really innovative with lots of ideas and from the minute the funding stops all plans and ideas stop and the project slowly dies.

## **UIA funding and CURANT**

The conference spend 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2 hours on the UIA grant. Utrecht, Vienna and Antwerp presented their project and answered questions from the other cities. Afterwards there was a discussion of the next calls and the cities that are going to submit a subsidy file.

CURANT had a 20 minute presentation (see attachment). Afterwards there we a few cities asking questions. The representative of DG region Andor Urmos also want to visit CURANT. Other cities asked for a network card to make contact with the project team of CURANT.

A few questions are listed here:

- How much is your investment budget?
- What happens if the cohousing is not working between the buddy and refugee?

- How did you divided the project in work packages?
- How do you do the screening and matching of buddies and refugees
- What background do volunteer buddies need
- ...

The city of Athens and Dansk want to apply for the 2<sup>nd</sup> UIA call (deadline 14 April). Athens wants to emphasise on refugees who are waiting for a long time on their recognition. This time can better be useful. Dansk wants to create a solidarity app to coordinate the civil society. The community centres are open for everyone but need to work closer with migrants.

Eurocities told that there will probably be no 3th call on the topic migration and integration. Some cities regret this and still want to apply. The difficulties to apply are 'bringing the city council on board' and 'competition between departments'. There is also a need for network between UIA cities to disseminate results and good practices. Utrecht and CURANT discussed to do 4 visits (to each project: Vienna, bologna, Antwerp, Utrecht) (1 every year). On our meeting in Brussels in June we will discuss this.

### Surprising / Interesting

Lisbon gets 3 MIO euro from the EU for relocating refugees. They get 6000 euro for 1 refugee (total: 500 refugees). They pay still 2 MIO euro themselves. Other cities were surprised about this funding. This money goes directly to national government who has to redirect it to the cities.

The Urban Investment bank wants to give loans with a low interest rate. In that matter there can be a microfinance created for migrants.

20 May there is a parade in Milan to raise consciousness around migration. They encouraged other cities to participate.

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) does research to policy outcomes, good practices and report to DG, European Commission and cities. Their website has some interesting information.

### Updates cities on migration (see extra document)