



# URBinclusion

Combating poverty  
in deprived urban areas

## Newsletter

Issue 3 – September 2018

URBinclusion is a project funded by the EU URBACT programme and it is focused on the **co-creation of new implementation solutions to reduce poverty in deprived urban areas**. Integrated strategies addressing social inclusion will be implemented by the nine partners cities composing the Network.

This project second Newsletter contains a description of:

- URBinclusion project
- Past and future steps
- Different articles presenting specific steps and partner cities actions and situations



URBinclusion First Transnational meeting in Copenhagen 26-27<sup>th</sup> of September 2017

### PROJECT PARTNERS:

Barcelona (Spain)  
Copenhagen (Denmark)  
Glasgow (UK)  
Krakow (Poland)  
Naples (Italy)  
Timisoara (Romania)  
Lyon (France)  
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**EUROPEAN UNION**

European Regional Development Fund

## The URBinclusion project

The proposal focus on different compulsory and optional implementation challenges that are shared by most of the partners

### Mandatory challenges

1. Ensuring the integrated approach in the delivery of the strategy and their related actions/projects
2. Maintaining involvement of local stakeholders and organizing decision-making for delivery
3. Setting up efficient indicators and monitoring systems to measure performance

### Optional challenges

1. Moving from strategy to operational action-plan
2. Enhancing funding of urban development policies through financial innovation (urban development funds, crowd-funding, etc.)

Socioeconomic disparities and other form of inequalities are a major issue in European cities, which hinder citizens from achieving a **decent quality of life**. The economic and financial crisis has further intensified the concentration of poverty and social exclusion in cities. European cities are threatened by the increase of **social polarisation**, which is a consequence of many parallel processes: an increasing income polarisation since the 1980s, an **increasing volatility of employment** and a **huge recent increase immigration** to Europe and its cities. These factors are complemented by a progressively **retreating welfare state** and **privatisation of services** in several countries leading to higher costs for basic needs.

It has been increasingly observed that poverty does not only create **social differences** between people and groups; it also leads to **spatial differences**. Recent independent studies have demonstrated that "the widening gap between rich and poor is **leading to social divisions and segregation** in more and more European cities. The rich and the poor are living at increasing distance from each other, and this can be **disastrous for the social stability and competitive power of cities**".

In this regard, URBinclusion Partners agree that the **level of integration and cross-fertiliza-**



Site visit, Krakow – 2<sup>nd</sup> transnational Meeting

**tion of different approaches** is crucial to determine the success or failure of the implemented policies. Specifically, the common policy challenge addressed by URBinclusion is founded on an "**area-based approach**", concentrated on specific (deprived) geographic areas, with essentially place-based policies. They do not focus on individuals but on a specific **geographical unit or a set of units**. This area-based approach is in some cases articulated, both **with a sectorial approach regarding different dimensions related with poverty** like employability, education, health care, housing, citizens' empowerment, social economy, and **with a demographic approach, regarding different social groups** like ethnic minorities, migrants, women, children, youth, elderly people, long term unemployed, Roma people, etc.

Some cities of this Network include **physical regeneration actions, linked to social inclusion measures**, mainly dealing with the recovery of public spaces and public buildings allocating social and cultural activities. Thus, **URBinclusion Partners plan to address the policy challenge through integrated strategies composed by different combinations of actions**, but always focused on the same aim: **fostering social inclusion and reducing poverty in deprived neighbourhoods of their cities**. In short, local actions included in the strategy should demonstrate their contribution in reducing poverty and improving social inclusion in the area.

## TORINO: CITY LAB FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

by Valeria Vacchiano, Tiziana Eliantonio, Fabrizio Barbiero from the Turin URBinclusion Team

**The current situation in Turin is featured by an increasing trend of economic and social suffering, which could cause effects of social exclusion and poverty of a part of the population. Within the City there are several types of poverty (economic, housing problems, cultural, educational, relational...), which need a multidimensional approach.**

As relevant for the URBinclusion project, Turin has recently approved the NOP-Metro Torino as part of a National programme supporting joint efforts and cooperation among 14 Italian Metropolitan Cities with the aim of improving urban services and social inclusion for the most fragile population. NOP-Metro is composed of more than 40 actions and some of them have been designed to develop new forms of local community development to face local social challenges in urban poor areas. The core activities composing NOP-Metro Torino - Axis 3 are oriented to: develop new social innovative services to face social local problems; support community welfare with the aim to create open/local communities of residents and local actors fostering active citizenship and giving efficient answers to local challenges; and activate generative processes of social innovation to meet social needs of the deprived areas to reduce social exclusion.



In an urban context every subject, individually or collectively, could use its capacities to respond to social problems. Professional competencies, entrepreneurial abilities, capacity of building new relationships, creative abilities could be available to promote an active participation to the local community life.

Thus, the whole society can be seen as a laboratory where social hybrid forms, solutions and unex-



pected meanings are produced representing a fertile ground for social innovation. The solutions to specific problems also produce sociability (and therefore contribute to the reconstruction of the social fabric) and new qualities (and then participate in the production of new value systems). In short, they can be considered as experiments with new ways of doing and thinking: working prototypes of a sustainable way of life (Manzini 2015).

In this framework, the city of Turin main challenge within URBinclusion project is to tackle forms of new urban poverty in peripheral areas where main problems are concentrated. The strategy is to put forward integrated initiatives based on widespread actions on the territory, stimulating the creation and the strengthening of welfare communities.

The City intends to foster the projects co-design by citizens and local actors to respond to social needs in a new and more effective way and to transform innovative ideas in services that produce social, cultural and occupational value on the long term.

The strategy enhance different issues of secondary welfare: from a concept of “conditional welfare”, with the risk to exclude the most vulnerable people, to a “generative welfare”, with an active role of citizens and the identification of new targets.

Furthermore, the City operates to design innovative legislative tools to foster the local actors to create new social models and new community projects with a high social impact.

These integrated interventions include many different actions: support of innovative social services, housing, commerce and job, school and culture, community empowerment and citizens' participation.

In the next related article, we will present different actions and projects that are ongoing in Turin.

## LYON METROPOLIS CONTEXT AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

by Corinne Hooge - Grand Lyon Project Manager

**This article shortly presents the situation of the Lyon Metropolitan Area and the its first Metropolitan Solidarity Project.**

The Lyon metropolitan area is quite dynamic and attractive. With 1.3 million inhabitants, it ranks as the third French metropolitan area and its population is still increasing. However, with a poverty rate of 15.2%, more than 195.000 people live under the poverty line. The most deprived areas are located in the South East, combining social and territorial inequalities.

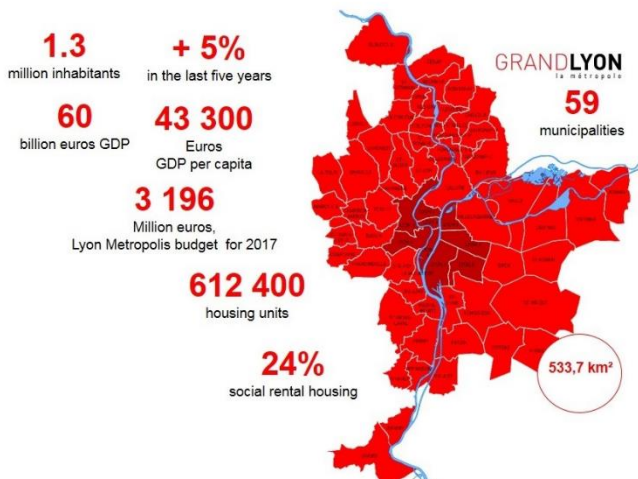
The Lyon Metropolis is an institutional innovation based on the merger of the Lyon urban community and the Rhone Department. Created by law on January 2015, it is responsible for a large number of competencies: economic development, town planning, environment and quality of life, housing and social cohesion, solidarity, education, culture and sport.

The housing strategy seeks to maintain a high level of housing construction (9.000 per year) and to implement a mixed and varied set of construction programmes (every kind of housing, everywhere on the 59 municipalities). Its objective is also to improve quality of the existing housing units and to facilitate provision and preserving housing units.

The Lyon metropolitan area is challenged by many social and territorial issues. Thus, the Lyon Metropolis adopted its first Metropolitan Solidarity Project on November 2017. This project covers a broad range of responsibilities, such as: early childhood, child protection, disabled and elderly people, health prevention and social development. It is built around 4 strategic axes and 80 actions.

Within URBinclusion, the Lyon Metropolis chose to focus on 6 actions addressing a key implementation challenge of the Metropolitan Solidarity project: how to renew social approach to better include vulnerable people among society? These actions are mainly located in two less-favored municipalities of the Lyon urban area: Saint-Fons and Vénissieux.

1. Co-producing, with social workers and researchers, a new framework for social work, in the field of child protection.
2. Training social workers, in the field of social housing, to use collective intervention and citizen participation methods in order to improve community life in social housing neighborhoods.
3. School dropout prevention with social workers intervening in schools to facilitate relationships between families and teachers.
4. Preventing energy poverty, supporting households who can not pay their energy bills to improve the energy performance of their housing.
5. Developing social clauses in public procurement in order to better promote local employment and diversify the types of jobs that are offered.
6. Fostering innovation for solidarity: the « Espace créateur de solidarités » / “space for solidarity making” offers a comprehensive social support to vulnerable families through a wide range of actions for the inhabitants of the area (social grocery, local community gardens, a recycling and upcycling shop, and a tool library).



## Social Inclusion Successful initiatives in Turin

by Valeria Vacchiano, Tiziana Eliantonio, Fabrizio Barbiero – From the Turin URBinclusion Team

**Following the previous article about the critical situations of some Turin's areas, we present some projects/initiatives that are trying to tackle some of the problems faced by the citizens and the local society.**

### PON METRO

Social Innovation Services: the main scope of this action is to enhance social inclusion in the poor areas of the City, promoting civic participation and co-producing of innovative services with a community welfare perspective.

In particular, the City of Torino will provide support for social innovation projects able to include civil society and to start urban regeneration processes in suburbs.

The City has launched a call for ideas last year for non profit sector. It offered technical and financial support for proponents of innovative ideas targeted to solving the arising social needs, that are able to create a blended value, both social and economic.

A mentoring and coaching path is starting to support the development of ideas into projects, to enhance the technical and economic feasibility and to supporting the proponents towards the following grant application phase. The tutoring activities are conceived to foster the creation of changing communities.

Civic Crowdfunding Centre: the action has the aim to encourage new forms of collective funding to support all the local social and cultural actors in order to foster the matching between supply and demand of social innovation. The City intends create a Civic Crowdfunding Centre, where teams of social innovators gain new skills to implement and to fund their projects in an innovative way.

### AxTO

The AxTO project has been selected in the framework of the call for urban periphery regeneration and safety, issued by the Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers. AxTO has planned 44 actions (material and not-material), which are now being carried out through 235 widespread interventions on peripheries.



Public space: actions refer to the maintenance of infrastructures, especially school buildings (maintenance and accordance to safety regulations, courtyard regeneration), routes and pavements, street markets, sports facilities, social welfare facilities, art and cultural buildings.

Housing: Interventions refer to the renovation of flats and completion of Urban Renovation Plan in public housing buildings. Unused buildings will increase the public properties to cope with housing emergencies, fostering social mix and avoiding concentrated disadvantage.

Commerce and job opportunities: the renovation of the former industrial site INCET – which began during the past few years with the “Urban Barriera” Program – continues with the action of AxTO - entirely financed by private investments. INCET is supposed to become the main innovative pole of the City thanks to the presence of a service hub (traditional and digital manufacturing, co-working, support for third sector's activities, socio-cultural activities, multi-religious dialogue), a platform where supply and demand for innovative entrepreneurship meet, an innovative centre on food topic (co-brewing, culinary incubator).

School and culture: the initiatives are focussed on fighting school dropout and supporting non-native Italian students; co-designing school courtyards, as a local resource; activating the ‘Library-bus’ – a moving multimedia library.

Socio-cultural production will be fostered by a public call addressed to non-profit entities. An innovative

procedure will be set up for projects' selection, organized in three phases: pre-selection, citizens' online vote and formal commission evaluation.



Community empowerment and citizens' participation: actions related to community empowerment and citizens' participation are the core of the project.

Technical and social support activities, in collaboration with the Neighbourhood Houses network and through digital platforms, are supposed to generate innovative interventions supporting individual and community empowerment, social cohesion and integration, local safety, sense of belonging of public spaces. Collaboration among citizens and institutions will be enhanced.

#### **CO-CITY (UIA – Urban Innovative Actions)**

The City of Turin applied for the first call of UIA – Urban Innovative Actions (topic Urban Poverty) with the Co-City project, and was granted a 4.125.892 € ERDF contribution (covering 80% of the project's total costs).

The partnership of the project is composed by the City of Turin (lead partner), the University of Torino (Department of Law, Department of Computer Science, Department of Culture, Politics and Society, Department of Economics), ANCI (Italian Association of Municipalities) and Cascina Roccafranca Foundation and the local network of Neighborhood Houses (nine public community centers located in different Torino Districts).

The CO-CITY project is intended to break the self-reinforcing circle of poverty, socio-spatial polarization and lack of participation. The development of an innovative, polycentric commons-based urban welfare will be supported, composed of generative communities centred on urban commons, low-cost service co-production, social mixing, and care of public spaces.

The workplan envisages the empowerment of project communities to create economic activities and inclusive growth in deprived neighbourhoods. It is supported by a toolkit consisting of a combination of:

- an unconventional legal framework, enabling the undersigning of collaborative pacts among citizens and the urban authority, in the framework of the new Regulation on collaboration among citizens and the City for the care, shared management and regeneration of urban commons (approved in 2016);
- an innovative ICT infrastructure for local social market and networking;
- management tutoring towards economic sustainability.

The City of Torino is one of the first cities in Italy that has adopted a Regulation on Urban Commons, by which active citizens (all subjects, single, informal groups, associations, etc.) can take care, co-manage or take action to regenerate the urban commons goods.

On April 2017 a public call was issued by the City for project proposals to be submitted by active citizens, with the support of the Neighbourhood Houses ("Case del Quartiere"), under 3 general categories:

- dismissed public buildings;
- underused public spaces;
- care of public spaces and green areas.

115 project proposals were submitted and assessed by the City working group on urban commons, and 54 of them were admitted to the co-design phase, which is now ongoing. More specifically, according to the 3 above mentioned categories the admitted projects regard:

- 1 former industrial site, where structural renovation needs a large investment;
- 16 underused spaces in public buildings (12 of them are schools);
- 37 public and/or green areas.

The co-design phase is expected to lead to the signature of pacts of collaboration among citizens (associations, third sector or private) and urban authorities (and school managers when needed).

## URBinclusion 2nd Transnational Meeting took place in Krakow

By Biernat Natalia and Katarzyna Gorczyca – URBinclusion Krakow team

**On 19th and 20th April 2018, Krakow hosted the 2nd Transnational Meeting of the URBinclusion project.**

The focus of the meeting was closely related to the objectives of the project, namely the fight against social exclusion and the activation and integration of residents in large urban estates. The conference was attended by representatives of partner cities from Barcelona, Lyon, Copenhagen, Trikala, Timisoara, Glasgow and Turin.



On the first day, the conference participants listened to lectures on the revitalization of Polish housing estates and the existing social problems in such areas. During the first session, representative of the Jagiellonian University presented the challenges of regeneration of large housing estates in Poland, in the context of activities that take place in Azory estate. The main social problems in large housing estate in Poland and Krakow have been presented in order to stimulate the discussions about the local context. Representatives of the Municipal Social Welfare Centre and the Municipal Centre for Supporting Social Initiatives brought the participants closer to the legal regulations and possibilities of social support that people in a difficult life situation can count on. Various forms of inhabitants' activation were also presented. The principles and scope of activities of non-governmental organizations were discussed and a new form of social participation was presented, which is given by the next edition of the civic budget.

The main policy and implementation challenges of the Azory estate have been presented to the partner cities. Meeting participants discussed possible actions and interventions that could be implemented. Participants also presented and commented on similar problems they face in their cities.

The afternoon session moved to the Azory housing estate, which was selected as a case study for the URBinclusion project. Participants visited the Senior Activity Centre and then the Local Activity Point with the planned social garden and the Society of the Friends of Children. It was the opportunity to meet the workers and members of these institutions and learn about their activities. In all these places, foreign guests were very warmly welcomed both by employees and regular visitors of these places: especially children and seniors. The final point of the meeting was the workshop on the subject of the URBinclusion project, in which the representatives of partner cities, the City of Krakow, the Senior Activity Centre, Local Activity Point, Society of the Friends of Children and street workers actively cooperated with each other. One of the topics of brainstorming was the coordination of work between various institutions to improve the living conditions on the Azores housing estate. The brainstorming activity allowed active participation of inhabitants of Azory, stakeholders and representatives of different cities which led to very interesting reflexions and discussions. For example, the details of the possible establishment of the Social Centre, which would constitute a centre integrating the residents, were analysed.

As an example of cooperation between municipal units and residents of the housing estate, the "pocket park" currently being implemented by the Municipal Management of Greenery has been shown to the participants.

The second day of the conference was devoted to issues related to the further implementation of the URBinclusion project. Representatives of all cities, creating a matrix of differences and similarities in their case studies, sought ways to solve local problems. This exchange of experience and good practices, along with the results of workshops, will allow further implementation of the project's objectives.

## Social enterprise might just be the Robin Hood we need right now

By Alicia Clyde and Ann Hyde from URBinclusion Glasgow team

**The legend of Robin Hood is world-renowned and has been at the centre of many Hollywood films. The romantic idea that he stole from the rich to give to the poor has remained a consistent part of his story. However, history books have always struggled to pin the truth of this legend down to one man doing good for the poor.**

In fact, it is more likely that his story represents the voice of a community, plagued by the inequalities of greedy landowners and high taxation. In those circumstance, it is likely that people would have celebrated the idea of a man who survived by robbing the rich in Sherwood Forest and returning to his family or community to share the haul.

Some distance from Sherwood Forest, in Glasgow this June, we hosted the second transnational thematic workshop for URBinclusion. The theme covered models of financial innovation that can help to regenerate areas of poverty in a city. At a time when local authorities are struggling to find money to cover the basics, let alone deal with social inequalities, this session was important for our network. What we uncovered was a rich treasure trove of innovative ideas throughout the city and beyond.

What we learned:

Scotland has a growing culture of social entrepreneurship with Glasgow firmly at its centre. The local authority in Glasgow has a team dedicated to the development of cooperative and other social enter



prise models; Scottish government are soon to launch

a new strategy (link is external) and already support the sector politically and Scotland has over 700 social enterprises, most of whom are supported by Social Enterprise Scotland (link is external) as members and Edinburgh will host the Social Enterprise World Forum (link is external) in September 2018.



During our two-day visit to Glasgow we discovered that similar to the Robin Hood fable, one of the most interesting components is the way each enterprise started and how each business has become sustainable. The stories we heard seemed to demonstrate that social enterprises are also becoming legends in their own lifetime.

Here are just three of the nine incredible social enterprises we heard from during our time in Glasgow:

We heard about Citrus Energy (link is external) who use the commercial energy broker model to offer energy at scale (and much better prices) to small businesses. They use the profits from their commercial brokerage to invest in services that support individuals dealing with the nightmare of fuel poverty.



This complex issue is rarely targeted correctly as governments try to tackle climate change through the development of schemes to make homes warmer but often fail to understand the issues faced by low-income households who end up paying the most expensive rates for their fuel supplies through pay-as-you-go meters and poor tariffs.

Citrus Energy works in partnership with a range of fuel providers, fuel poverty action organisations and government organisations to combat the many and challenging issues. In the last year, they have reported a surplus of £134k.

We found how the Greater Pollok Credit Union (link is external) not only work with their customers to help them to save money even when on low incomes, but how they set up their own Enterprise to save both local childcare provision and the post office. In overturning the threat of closure they kept both services and jobs in a deprived community and continue to invest the profits made from the Credit Union straight back into the community.

We learned the story of a former police officer who was disillusioned seeing the same young people reoffending with nowhere to go to get out of a cycle of crime. His organisation Together Group (link is external), coaches and trains people in construction skills, who have often only ever known a life of crime. The organisation's work has been funded through social bonds – working with an ethical bank to gather investment to the business and the cause, and using the investment gained to buy properties that the beneficiaries can be employed to refurbish.

This provides them with opportunities to upskill, but most importantly with a significant one-to-one support network to break old habits and form new networks, enabling them to break free from an engrained culture of crime. Together Group works with only a few men at a time to ensure that they each get the support they need and a job at the end of the programme. Since they began in 2011 only two people out of 100 have reoffended.



Altogether, we heard from nine diverse social enterprises covering issues such as affordable childcare, food waste and sustainability, employability and training for ex-offenders and addicts, employment and business support for Roma women, fuel poverty and motivational services for young people.

Whether they are directly attempting to have an impact on specific issues or are businesses who choose to base themselves in communities where even the smallest economic development can have a positive ripple effect, each social enterprise was created by individuals with a vision, good business sense and the potential for scale. And, like the legend of Robin Hood, the belief that profit is good – so long as it redistributed to those who need it most for a more equitable community and social gain.

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the other members of the network.*

## Steps already implemented

- ✦ URBinclusion Kick-off virtual meeting 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2017.
- ✦ Participation of member cities to the URBACT Programme Seminar on Capacity implementation in Paris on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2017.
- ✦ URBinclusion First Transnational meeting in Copenhagen on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2017.
- ✦ Preparation and improvement of the partners' cities Implementation Plans.
- ✦ Start of the preparation of cities' OIF - Operational Implementation Framework.
- ✦ Since December 2017 the URBinclusion Network website was made available for publication on the URBACT website <http://urbact.eu/urbinclusion>. Several articles were published and advertised through the URBinclusion Twitter account [@URBinclusion](https://twitter.com/URBinclusion).
- ✦ URBinclusion First Thematic Seminar in Lyon on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2018.
- ✦ Creation of an Implementation Overview Matrix, which will be used as a Network Exercise. By Mapping activities, interests and challenges, the results will be used to establish proper and efficient links among partner cities.
- ✦ Boosting the URBACT Local Groups.
- ✦ Delivery of the URBinclusion Dissemination Plan.
- ✦ Preparation of the actions / interventions of all cities to be exchanged and shared among partner cities according to their different interests and priorities.
- ✦ URBinclusion Second Transnational Meeting in Krakow on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2018.
- ✦ Boosting bilateral relationships among partner cities.
- ✦ URBinclusion Second Thematic Seminar in Glasgow on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018: Enhancing funding of urban policies by exploring financial innovation.
- ✦ URBACT City Festival –Lisbon, 13-14 September 2018.
- ✦ URBinclusion Third Transnational Meeting in Turin on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2018.

## Next steps

- ✦ Preparation of cities' Case Examples, which will focus on specific good practices and experiences, which were successfully implemented in partner cities. They will briefly demonstrate how solutions were found to the implementation challenges.
- ✦ Preparation of cities' Solution Stories, which will be described in details how problems and threats were tackled in the city and they explain how difficulties were overcome.
- ✦ Implementation of bilateral relationships among partner cities.
- ✦ Further Implementation of cities OIF.
- ✦ ULG Seminar - making co-creation and co-re-responsibility real in Naples on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of December.