



Building Healthy Communities

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Content

Health gains and Structural Funds – the third BHC thematic workshop

City profile: Baia Mare

“United we stand!” – a voice for European IBD patients

Tackling health issues in Bacău. Interview with Mr Romeo Stavarache, Mayor of Bacău

Focus on the Bacău Local Support Group

Updates from BHC multilateral exchanges

The Managing Authority role on health issues

EU news

One book a day keeps the doctor away



Project partners:

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HEALTH GAINS AND STRUCTURAL FUNDS – THE THIRD BHC THEMATIC WORKSHOP

Luisa Avedano, BHC Strategic Manager, reports from the third BHC thematic workshop, held in Bacău from 29 October to 3 November 2010.

It is not easy to summarise our fruitful meeting in Bacău. Despite an airline strike, I am pleased that the majority of delegates were able to come and contribute to the meeting with many interventions and a very positive set of Local Action Plan presentations. The Bacău meeting was the last scheduled one in the BHC project and we were all aware of the importance of sharing and discussing common achievements in order to “attack” the last phase of our Building Healthy Communities project and to start preparations for our final conference.

The main objective of the meeting was to share progress on the Local Action Plans and to find effective links between these and the Structural Fund Operational Programmes.

The chosen topic “how to achieve health gains by using structural funds” was and is the most difficult one. We started our common adventure by defining our local mapping underlining needs and potential difficulties in designing our Local Action Plans. In Lodz, more than one year ago we worked on indicators, and in Torino on quality of life. But linking our local plans with Structural Funds and the fact that BHC has been labelled as Fast Track Network was the last and most important step to fulfil our final goal. This is the reason why I found crucial the presentations made by our two guests; the representative from the Romanian Managing Authority and the representative from the Portuguese Tejo Region.

From the Romanian Managing Authority we gained a better understanding of how Structural Funds work in Romania and how they have been structured and allocated. From the Portuguese Tejo Region we were given concrete proof that a fruitful collaboration between cities and regions is possible, beside the “normal” difficulties of getting funds due to competition among cities and, what is most relevant, to the fact that Operational Programmes have been designed and approved before the launch of the Urbact II calls. The workshop in Bacău was also an opportunity to share the outcomes of our first two multilateral exchanges, with speakers from Belfast and Barnsley adding extra food for the elaboration of our Local Action Plans: health impact assessment and social marketing main principles are now part of our common platform of knowledge.

I am leaving the “local” added value as a last but not least element because I believe that the meeting in Bacău and the commitment of our Bacău friends and colleagues deserve a special place; my thanks go to Corneliu Pricope, the manager of the Local Development Agency, and to all of his colleagues. This was my second visit to Bacău and I was really positively impressed by the changes and the dynamics of the city. The visit to the elderly centre is something that will stay in my memory for a long time, in particular thanks to the quality of the presentation but also for the traditional dance performance and the kind hospitality. My last words of thanks are to the political representatives; the Mayor, Mr Romeo Stavarache and the Vice Mayor Mrs Roxana Mironescu for the effort they made to be part of the group and for the warm welcome in Bacău.

We missed our Madrid colleagues, who were unable to attend because of the airline strike. However, Madrid will host our next multilateral exchange which will focus on urban regeneration and use of indicators. We look forward to meeting in Madrid on 16 to 18 December, a further fruitful occasion for working towards the finalisation of our Local Action Plans.

Luisa Avedano, BHC Strategic Manager

CITY PROFILE: BAIIA MARE

Baia Mare is a municipality in northwest Romania only 70km from the border with Hungary. One of the largest municipalities in Romania in terms of geographic size (233km²), Baia Mare ranks 17th in terms of population size, with a population of around 150,000 people.

Baia Mare was an important medieval town and enjoyed a long period of prosperity through the 15th and 16th centuries which saw the building of St Stephens Cathedral, one of Baia Mare's best known historic landmarks, and the establishment of Baia Mare's first school, which opened in 1547.

For centuries Baia Mare's economy rested on its prosperous mining industry which dates back to the 14th century. Since the late 1980s when industrial restructuring saw the mining industry decline, Baia Mare has been forced to diversify its economy to create new jobs outside of the mining industry. The town has been very successful in this, with new manufacturing and retail developments in the 1990s and 21st century helping the area's economy to thrive.

Baia Mare's proximity to Hungary offers new economic opportunities for the future. A feasibility study has been completed for a new express road linking Baia Mare with Petea on the Hungarian border. The express road will connect Baia Mare to the Hungarian M3 motorway, and so to the entire European motorway network.

In terms of health issues for Baia Mare, the area has a number of key strengths, including a high ratio of health professionals for the local population and a great number of NGOs which are active in the health and social care fields. More challenging for Baia Mare are the lack of an integrated information system to connect medical services and suppliers, and the prospect of greater decentralisation of health infrastructure across Romania. Baia Mare's current health priorities include continuing the process of improving quality in health services; improving accessibility of health services for disadvantaged people; managing the decentralisation of some health programmes; and promoting preventative health as the main approach to health care.

Baia Mare is facing deep transformations in its physical, social and economic structure and has joined the BHC network to share new ideas on how to design strategies for sustainable development which tackle the problem of fostering an economic development process while improving the general health conditions and the city level of quality of life.



“UNITED WE STAND!” - A VOICE FOR EUROPEAN IBD PATIENTS

In the previous BHC newsletter, the BHC team continued with its task of bringing new perspectives to the debate on how to improve health and quality of life in our cities and neighbourhoods, by introducing the patients' organisations point of view with a feature on the European Patients Forum. Here, Luisa Avedano, BHC Strategic Manager, takes a closer look at one of the European Patients Forum's member bodies; the European Federation of Crohn's & Ulcerative Colitis Associations (EFCCA), a leading patients' organisations in the field of gastroenterology. Luisa explains why she chose EFCCA as the first patients' forum to be featured, and shares what she learned from her interview with Marco Greco, Chair of the EFCCA.

I decided to start with a very specific organisation for the following reasons; first of all because I realised that many “unknown” diseases are influencing EU citizens' lives as far as their own and their families' quality of life is concerned, the second because some diseases are more difficult to be presented to a wider audience and for this reason patients have more difficulties to have their voice heard and their needs claimed, the third reasons is because I am personally involved in EFCCA and this means I already know something about its work.

Over one million people in Europe suffer from inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Supporting these patients and their families, encouraging scientific research, exchanging information and increasing public awareness are the main objectives of EFCCA. Founded in 1993, the association has developed into a strong international network with more than 100,000 members from 25 European countries. “United we stand, because united we are stronger!” says EFCCA Chairman Marco Greco. “Having put together so many different experiences and backgrounds has enabled EFCCA to represent different aspects of patients' lives, also considering different cultures and approaches. This, in practical terms, has widened our vision and increased our advocacy power.”

Asked whether there are regional focal points in Europe regarding IBD illness rates, Marco Greco explains that “some areas are traditionally considered to have ‘a higher impact of morbidity’. These are the Nordic countries, the UK and, in general, well developed and industrialised areas. But progress in diagnostics and recent studies put some doubt on traditional statements concerning illness rates.”

It is clear that EU policies on health, in particular in the way Operational Programmes on Structural Funds have been conceived, offer a very narrow space for patients to claim rights and IBD in fact has to deal with disability policies in their wider sense but at a European level there is not a common approach to the illness and EU countries have difficulties in finding under the EU strategic statement “Health in all policies” a shared way of giving concrete answer to this huge and – unfortunately growing – group of EU citizens. The 25 national association members of EFCCA are thus becoming more and more important to bridge local policies and needs to the European ones, and EFCCA plays a crucial role in lobbying at the EU level and strengthening patient's position in Europe. EFCCA is run by volunteers, an aspect which brings important added value in terms of EU citizens' empowerment and participation in the decision making processes. 2011 has been chosen as the Year of Volunteering, a big challenge for EFCCA people to be heard and supported in their daily fight against the illness.



**Marco-Greco,
Chair of EFCCA**

Luisa Avedano, BHC Strategic Manager

TACKLING HEALTH ISSUES IN BACĂU. INTERVIEW WITH MR ROMEO STAVARACHE, MAYOR OF BACĂU



Mr. Romeo Stavarache, Mayor of Bacău, explains the main health issues for Bacău and how the town's involvement in the BHC project is helping to develop new approaches to some of Bacău's health challenges.

1. What are the main health issues in Bacău?

It would be a mistake when talking about health to refer strictly to medical problems. Discussions and concerns of local and central governments should focus on a much broader concept, namely "Healthy Living". From medical perspective strictly, it is obvious to everyone, and it is pointless to hide, that Bacău is not well positioned by far when comes to this chapter, except for medical services provided by private clinics and doctor offices. Moreover, unfortunately, Bacău is not discordant from the painful reality everywhere in the country, in terms of public sector health services. That is why the local government I am leading launched the first project since 1989 to build a Municipal Hospital to serve only Bacău residents, hospital equipped with the newest technical development and state of the art equipment, hospital where medical services offered will be much more improved. The investment is significant, approximately 45 million Euro, but with the launch and introduction of the Municipal Hospital in the public domain, I am confident that Bacău will be a real milestone in terms of medical services offered in the public sector.

We were speaking of the concept of "healthy life" concept that includes

medical services as well. In addition, however, a healthy life means green areas, a cleaner environment, reduced exhaust emissions, the possibility of recreation and leisure. To achieve these objectives, the Municipality of Bacău has made great strides.

2. How are you planning to solve these issues?

I would start with an example of efforts in the creation of parks and green areas. Two years ago we succeeded in building the Park of "Cathedral" downtown, a park that covers an area of 1.5 hectares and, very importantly, we managed to raise awareness of the Romanian Government at that time to fund this investment, which amounted to €370,000. Currently we are working on a second park, the Park "Olympic" on an area of 3 hectares, an investment funded by the Environment Fund - €548,000. The new general town-plan of Bacău does not allow the construction of green areas, all these measures aimed at increasing the green surface area relating to the number of population, green area that actually increased in the past six years, from 12 square meters per capita to 19 square meters per capita, the trend being to exceed, by 2013, 22 square meters per capita.

To reduce pollution, a serious problem in urban areas, the Municipality of Bacău has received this year the biggest European funding of €80 million, money that will be used to achieve this goal. Closing down the slag deposit and noxious emissions reduction by creating a new cogeneration group at CET Bacău are only two of the objectives to be achieved through this European funding. Because, I have reminded of this sector of heat supply services, I should also remind that Bacău is very well positioned at thermal rehabilitation of blocks of flats, about 100 rehabilitated blocks. Unfortunately, this programme is currently questioned as a result of government decisions to amend the legislation on co-financing this type of project.

Regarding the possibility of recreation and leisure, we have two ongoing projects financed by European funds - Rehabilitation "Leisure Island" and building of "Tamași Forest Recreation Centre", the last on an area of 300

hectares. These two projects, once completed, will significantly contribute to the improved quality of life, next to the two very important objectives that we have reclaimed to public i.e. Summer Theatre and the Olympic swimming pool.

We have illustrated some of the investments we have promoted in recent years in Bacău, investments made both from local funds and grants, investments that undoubtedly create the potential to enhance quality of life in this city.

3. What do you think about the BHC project and its effects on the city of Bacău?

The BHC project is exactly what we need to institutionalize an action plan to achieve targets proposed for Bacău residents on a healthier life and to certify a rigorous analysis of the needs of local citizens and local government priorities for the coming years. As I said, the strategic plan takes into account investments for Bacău and for Bacău residents and I am guided by the concept of “a healthy lifestyle.” I am directly interested to consult the local opinion about the future of the city and together with them, members of the Local Support Group to find new solutions to these new concepts. Of course, this project provides our city with European connections and expertise support so much needed by our project management team and I believe that it might be a good opportunity to develop local capacity to cope with new challenges. At the same time, I appreciate as appropriate and necessary the support of Turin Lead Partner and the URBACT Secretariat on funding future projects proposed by the Local Action Plan, this will fully contribute to major, local and national BHC impact.

I know that the quality of life issue is extensively discussed by EU experts in recent years and I consider this project as unique and challenging for our region and city. The project results will be certainly disseminated at national level.

4. Do you think that the BHC project could contribute to the development of the Bacău's health Plan?

The Local Action Plan will extend the programs and projects already initiated in the last six years and contributing to an improved quality of life Bacău residents and hence to the development of Bacău Health Plan. At the same time, we consider this project a relevant vehicle for the develop-

ment and implementation of other projects that will benefit local communities and will be considered priorities for the coming years. It is important for the local government to provide quality public services at European standards and to promote educational and social programs to meet the needs of disadvantaged target groups in the city and to ensure social inclusion. Last but not least, we need investment in the health, social and sport infrastructure to raise living standards of Bacău residents.

We are committed to build new places and to rehabilitate old ones in order to provide leisure areas or to stimulate physical exercise at any age, without forgetting to protect nature. Besides, the city also includes a protected area, i.e. a Natura 2000 site, for which we are preparing projects for promotion and awareness, protection and conservation of the site.

In conclusion, the alignment of environmental standards and quality of urban life to meet EU standards means mainly to improve public services in general, water and sanitation services, rehabilitation of public areas, waste management, improvement of housing quality.

5. Do you think that Bacău is getting positive results from the exchange of good practice with other BHC Partners?

Bacău is a competitive and innovative metropolitan area with a dynamic and open community that is building the new on its valuable traditions. Bacău is actively involved and will continue to build cross-sector and territorial partnerships to consolidate its pole position at regional and national level of metropolitan young and dynamic pole, relying on trade, manufacturing, research, services, sport development, traditions, the community development and support of a mix of competitive and innovative economy. Through all this, our city certainly finds bridges with other large European communities, including our partners in the BHC project. From the results of our work on this project so far, I can guarantee that the exchange of information and local experiences with other partners is beneficial and necessary for all parties. It is necessary to know each other and to develop joint working networks on various fields of activity.

For the future, I consider it appropriate to hold a meeting of the mayors of the 10 partner cities. This meeting could be the start, at least symbolically, of a joint programme of economic and cultural exchanges with relevant social implications. The time has come for European cooperation on joint

programmes locally and regionally. In support of this idea the relations between Turin and Bacău are quite good, and we value LUDEN's support in urban development programmes, local development or social and cultural impact for the partner cities.

For the exchange of good practice with other partners we are open to working on the following areas: public services, regeneration, development and promotion of cultural values and local community attachment to them, aligning environmental standards and quality of urban life to EU requirements, development of the regional and national role of Bacău, as metropolitan competitive, innovative and sustainable pole.

We continue our series of features on the work of Local Support

FOCUS ON BACĂU LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP



Groups (LSGs) with a closer look at the LSG in Bacău. Here, Corneliu Pricope, BHC Local Project Manager in Bacău, explains how the LSG works and what it plans to achieve.

1. What are the objectives of your Local Support Group?

Corneliu Pricope As local project manager I would like Bacău LSG's activity to remain viable, open and efficient, following project implementation as well as fostering discussion within the partnership. The project sustainability derives also from the constant and strong involvement of the local community and of local stakeholders to discuss and identify the city needs and to contribute to the improvement of its quality of life. The agenda of the local community should be, in fact, built through public consultation among the local government, other local public authorities, economic operators, universities, the civil society and the citizens. That is why we are pleased that "Building Healthy Communities" is piloting these consultations in Bacău, being also a premiere for Romania. Our project activities are integrated with, and complementary to, the project "Local Development Public Policies – Long and medium term strategic planning" (Operational Programme

Administrative Capacity Development). This programme, implemented in the same time as BHC, will develop a "Sustainable Development Strategy of Bacău Municipality" which will benefit from the BHC Local Action Plan (LAP). Furthermore, an interactive electronic platform – "bacainteractiv.ro" – is providing links between the public administration and the citizens and, when at its best, will host the results of Bacău LSG activity and the results of BHC implementation, including what will follow after its end. We believe that, by increasing the participatory role of local communities, we can identify more comprehensive ideas and the results that will certainly match those expected for the general interest of the city.

The electronic platform, as a modern, easy and effective means of communication, will add an added value to BHC project sustainability at local level. Regarding the impact of the project nationally, we will ask the central institutions to use the experience of Bacău to generalize measures intended to increase the quality of life and to develop quality standards for a healthier life. To this purpose, we want to complete a set of indicators to measure the impact of living conditions on individual health. The quality of life assessment in Bacău Municipality is, in fact, another main objective of the LSG members. Through BHC project we want to put in place a pilot project to cover the use of a set of European standard indicators, in order to assess the quality of life of the local community. The assessment will focus on objective and subjective indicators of quality of life, based on statistical and sociological research that will take place in the city of Bacău. We will, furthermore, make comparisons and evaluate social policies adopted in Romania and in our region.

Bacău LSG aims to identify other programmes to increase the quality of life through services provided, through urban regeneration projects of some city districts (especially through the regeneration of industrial buildings or other dismissed spaces). Finally, we want to create a new healthy environment, especially by increasing the amount of green surface available per capita.

All these objectives were formulated in our LAP. We wish that, through the LAP, we will be able to identify new programmes and priority investment projects for the city, so to constitute a support for the strategic directions of future actions for the "Sustainable Development Strategy" of the municipality.

2. Which agencies are involved in your local support group and why have they become involved?

Studying the general objectives of BHC, and knowing some of the issues the city of Bacău is facing, we have considered as appropriate the involvement of a large number of members in LSG, which ought to work in relevant fields, thus allowing to easily identifying solutions for solving problems related to the quality of life of citizens. The Bacău LSG is made up of public institutions, representatives of local businesses and of the two local universities, as well as NGOs and trade unions. LSG members appreciated BHC project theme as appropriate, necessary and “healthy” for the city life. They also highlighted that such an opportunity rarely arises and have seen in the Municipality of Bacău the main partner able to produce a change in terms of sustainable and healthy development of the community. Finally, the objectives of the different organizations involved are compatible and complementary with those of BHC, being they able to administratively, legally and conceptually join to the Municipality of Bacău in the project activities.

Bacău LSG composition:

- Public Institutions: Municipality of Bacău (beneficiary), the Local Development Agency - ADL Bacău, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Public Health, the County Department of Statistics, the Public Social Services - SPAS, the Social Centre for Elderly People, the Center for Antidrug Evaluation, Prevention and Counselling;
- University “Vasile Alecsandri”, University “George Bacovia”;
- Local Business: General Union of Industrialists of Romania - UGIR 1903 - Bacău Branch;
- Non-governmental organizations: Red Cross - Bacău Branch Association “Lumina”;
- Trade Union Organization “CNS Cartel ALFA” - Bacău Branch.

3. What has your Local Support Group achieved so far?

Since the beginning, even in BHC Phase I when the Municipality of Bacău was not officially involved having become a member in the second phase, we held regular meetings (monthly) with LSG members to disseminate information on the project and its final application, regarding the city issues. We were concerned, each of us, with the issues that each organization is facing depending on their specific activities, and to disseminate information to the Lead Partner and topic experts. The LSG has been supervising the project activities from reception of reports from the city representa-

tives taking part in the project, helping them to contribute in the project activities (especially in the validation of case studies and development of the LAP).

At each meeting we have tried to identify the best solutions for city issues, and this has been highlighted in our LAP priorities which presents both ongoing projects and projects planned to be done from now on to improve the quality of life in Bacău and to promote a healthy lifestyle for the citizens.

The work plan proposed by Bacău LSG for the project implementation phase includes:

- Information campaign and awareness;
- Monitoring and evaluation of information campaigns;
- Developing a consultation questionnaire to gain feedback on working methods and measures proposed in the Local Action Plan;
- Linking the themes of the local mapping;
- Information and prevention campaign on local priorities through existing resources and involving all members of the Bacău LSG;
- Citizens’ priorities (through questionnaires, focus groups, surveys, local analysis);
- Methods proposed to change the mentality of people on “taboo” topics;
- Mass media support and ideas on how the local media can help;
- Organizing a media campaign of the main actions of the project and its final results;
- Expanding existing services and investments (e.g. Social Policies: designing a larger number of centres on a specific area or set up new ones, etc.).

A very important point is that the LSG has expanded and strengthened to become the real ‘owner’ of the project locally. This happens through achievement or preparing the following targets:

- Participation in the development stages of the LAP, including tracking progress in all project activities, both locally and in the activities of other cities;
- Identification and validation of input factors, such as case studies and ideas generating projects for the city;
- Participation in various exchanges and presentation by co-participants;
- Regular meetings, in particular as regards the preparation of the partner contribution to seminars and work on the project;
- Comment on final results;
- Testing of certain recommendations;
- Participation in the local “web platform”;
- Acting as local project proponent and lobbying campaign for specific

changes;

- Local dissemination events;
- Communication plan with mass media to attract media attention.

Eventually, LSG acted as major project supporter and helped to mobilize the political and institutional support necessary to make sure that the LAP will lead to a real change.

LSG helped to identify (through mobilization and validation) what the city really has to offer to the BHC project as best practices, already existing instruments, trips to different locations, policies and other experiences.

LSG, with the ADL support, is helping to disseminate the project results to a much wider local audience. Through the direct contribution of ADL and of the project management team, LSG will work with the Research Institute for Quality of Life (ICCV) in Bucharest for the implementation of the research phase, the development of a set of indicators to assess the quality of life, and to complete the LAP. The collaboration with ICCV will be a major contribution to the dissemination of project results at national level and for lobbying campaigns that will focus on relevant changes nationally and regionally.

In the spirit of what was said previously, we exemplify an activity organized this year by the Faculty of Movement Sciences, Sports and Health of the University "Vasile Alecsandri", member of Bacău LSG. As a result of issues identified in BHC meetings, the University took the action "Alternatives for a healthy lifestyle" in order to make known the implications of obesity and the need to act accordingly for each individual. The target group was the overweight population of Bacău and those with predisposition to obesity.

4. What challenges does your Local Support Group face?

I think that the biggest challenge that Bacău LSG is facing is starting changes from the bottom up local level to regional and to national plan by promoting actions and projects that will directly support the individual. Moreover, each LSG member can freely express its professional ideas, in another context and more freely than when only complying with its everyday professional life. Each member of LSG wants his /her project idea to be materialized sooner or later. I think that this really defines the spirit of this project and the achievement of the sense of utility and wellbeing when you take part in decision-making processes and not others have done it for you. Of course, experience exchanges, the transfer of best practices and participation in international workshops are all challenges for a local specialist. The opportunity to meet BHC experts, to know other

ways of organization and actions of other European institutions are actual professional challenges that can contribute to the formation of each individual. It is interesting that even at legislative level public institutions are not obliged to take part in LSG. All members were present at the project's events and managers have responded positively, though representing different professional fields, different political and interest groups. Also, LSG members were faced with other challenges such as:

- different areas of activity, which implies contradictions in determining local needs and priorities;
- lack of predefined legal support for the LSG decisions;
- different priorities linked to the interests represented by member organizations of the LSG;
- lack of funding of projects proposed to be developed in the LAP.

Of course, LSG members have a set of expectations as regards the end of the project and what happens afterwards. For instance:

- Expansion of "Pensioners Club" and other similar projects in other areas of the city, including expansion of services for the elderly in projects already implemented and the development of new educational and social programmes for pensioners. All aimed at social inclusion of the elders;
- Development of social and educational programs for youth;
- Increase the average lifespan (life expectancy);
- Changing lifestyles and attitudes;
- Local community information;
- The use of the existing indicators, improved by EU (Eurostat), in the city of Bacău to evaluate the quality of life;
- Raising the standard of life and satisfaction of residents;
- Increasing local green spaces and awareness of local communities;
- Improving the quality of water, air, soil by programmes and actions to be included in the LAP;
- Decreasing domestic violence;
- Cultural and economic exchanges between project partner cities in the future;
- Transfer of best practices in cultural and social life of EU cities;
- Implementing programmes to improve the family environment and family reunification.

5. How has your Local Support Group been involved in the transnational elements of BHC and what benefits has this brought to your local work?

From the beginning we have chosen to involve a larger number of mem-

bers of the LSG, in various fields and comprehensive of the Bacău society, in the transnational exchange of BHC. Given that the project is in the final implementation phase, and that the three thematic seminars provided by the project have been achieved, we can say that our goal, namely to involve as many members as possible in the transnational exchange, has been reached. Thus, a representative of the Department of Statistics Bacău County, a representative of the Public Social Services - SPAS, a representative of the Bacău County Council (Deputy-mayor, economist by profession) and Bacău LSG Coordinator attended the first seminar regarding indicators that was organized in Lodz, Poland, in June 2009. Their participation in the first seminar proved to be very useful to our work, upon their return home. During LSG meetings, each participant came up with suggestions on how to identify indicators of the projects under the LAP, as well as with new information from project partners.

The same success was recorded by dissemination of information obtained and transmitted to those who took part in the second thematic seminar Healthy and Sustainable Lifestyles, which was held in Turin, Italy, in March 2010 and attended by a representative of the Environmental Protection Agency, a representative of the Public Health Department, a representative of Bacău County Council (deputy-mayor Roxana Mironescu) and the Bacău project manager of BHC.

Following participation in the second thematic seminar, by assimilating new information on the structure of LAPs of each partner in the project and by the support of experts proposed by the Lead Partner we were able to identify new solutions for our LAP. The exchange of experience in Belfast has entailed the participation of four representatives of Bacău LSG. The fact that the third thematic seminar Using Structural and Cohesion Funds in Developing Healthy Communities was held in Bacău, in October 2010, was a success and an essential support for the LSG members. This allowed all to participate in the direct exchange of best practices and transfer of expertise, aspects which in turn will be highlighted by the extra added value of the LAP, as well as by the completion of the project activities using the best solutions and approaches. We have considered as very positive the experience obtained at the Thematic Seminar in Bacău for the local community, the event being publicized in the local media and being well received by local stakeholders.

Personally, I believe in the success of this project and its impact on the decision makers and local communities. Currently, the Bacău community

talks about the future of the city having among its priorities measures for a better quality of life and for a healthier lifestyle. Our project has positively influenced other projects with complementary and common activities and goals, promoted by LSG members and this says a lot about the impact on various sectors of activity and what is more important, on the mentality. As I said at the beginning, with the support of the Local Development Agency - ADL, LSG members and the institution providing project management, the results of BHC will be reflected in the "Strategy for Sustainable Development" of Bacău and the LAP will bring new elements into the city's development priorities. This document will be approved by the Local Council and will be supported by public debates.

UPDATES FROM BHC MULTILATERAL EXCHANGES

Marco Santangelo, Lead Expert for the BHC project, gives an update on the BHC network multilateral exchanges on health impact assessment and social marketing

Participants at the third BHC Thematic Workshop enjoyed presentations about the BHC network multilateral exchanges (the one on health impact assessment which took place in Belfast in 2009, and the one on social marketing which took place in Barnsley in 2010).

Erica Ison's presentation on the Belfast Exchange focused on the steps that the Local Support Group (LSG) has taken to combine local experience in dealing with health impact assessment and the debate on indicators and criteria for a healthy sustainable urban regeneration that has developed in the BHC network. The health impact assessment approach has been used to develop a set of indicators appropriate for monitoring the effects of regeneration and well-being in the city of Belfast in which, since the Peace Process started, urban regeneration became an important part of the city development strategy.

Regeneration is generally considered to promote health and well-being, but the conditions of the most vulnerable groups can sometimes be overlooked. Regeneration often leads to gentrification as wealthier people move into a regenerated area and poorer ones are 'priced out' and have to move away, and to social exclusion because of lack of integration between residents and newcomers. Belfast LSG has adapted part of the health impact assessment methodology to identify potential impacts on health in one of the five area partnerships of the city; the East Belfast Strategic Regeneration Framework. The LSG selected determinants of health that will be affected if the proposals for the area are implemented, and has developed these into a series of measurable indicators. These indicators, plus community and neighbourhood based indicators, will form the baseline for a comprehensive assessment methodology that will be tested soon in all the regeneration areas and will be shared with other cities in the WHO Healthy Cities wider network.

Kirsty Waknell, from Barnsley NHS, presented the Social Marketing approach that has been adopted in many UK and EU cities quite recently. This approach regards "the systematic application of marketing and other concepts and techniques to achieve specific behavioural goals, for a social or public good". Social Marketing is an alternative to traditional health promotion, where usually messages are launched as communication campaigns and there is the hope that the "customer" chooses to act in such way, as in "Eat five portions of vegetables a day!". The Social Marketing approach is based on understanding people's needs, their behaviours and related behavioural goals to be achieved, on a reality check that takes into account experts' issues and everyday life, and the need to segment all the variables (demographic, geographic, behavioural, psychographic) that enable specific health messages to be targeted at specific groups of people.

For both the health impact assessment and the social marketing approaches, the theoretical approach was presented alongside practical examples; for example, the experience of Lidingö in using appropriate venues for the elderly illustrated an effective approach to social marketing.

More information about the knowledge exchanges can be found on the BHC website <http://urbact.eu/en/projects/quality-sustainable-living/building-healthy-communities-bhc/event/?eventid=261>

Marco Santangelo, BHC Lead Expert

THE MANAGING AUTHORITY ROLE ON HEALTH ISSUES



Dorina Melania Navruc

Dorina Melania Navruc is a Councillor and Managing Authority within the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism in Bucharest (Romania). Amongst her responsibilities, Dorina manages health and social issues. She has a strong interest in the exchange of good practice on health services delivery and promotion of quality of life in Urban Regeneration Strategies fostered by the BHC project. Delia Giorgianni, Project and Communication

Assistant to the BHC project, interviewed Dorina, to find out more about the Managing Authority's role in relation to health issues.

1. What role should a Managing Authority have within European projects such as Building Healthy Communities?

The role of Managing Authorities should be consultative and informative, to support local authorities in identifying sources of financing under the Operational Programmes, share experiences and best practice through specialist assistance.

2. In your experience, what are the biggest difficulties in healthcare in your area?

The health department has special needs regardless of region or country. I think the needs of hospital units are the same everywhere, whether we refer to equipment and facilities, workspaces, financial and human resources. A major challenge is to adapt the health insurance system to meet real needs. There are difficulties and challenges facing Romania and we hope to find viable solutions, even in this project.

3. What is being done to improve the situation? And what should be done?

The Regional Operational Programme implemented in Romania, contributes to more efficient health services by upgrading and equipping outpatient services, and by rehabilitating hospitals and supporting infrastructure development. The European Regional Development Fund can be used for infrastructure projects, and this includes medical equipment, construction or rehabilitation of hospitals and primary care clinics, upgrading equipment (diagnostic, surgical, computer, etc.), developing health services in rural or isolated communities, creating integrated emergency medical services with efficient network communications, health promotion and prevention through the media. Learning from experience, we believe that in the future it will be necessary for the Managing Authorities to work in partnership on design and action planning with Consulting and Banking Financial Institutions, to make more efficient use of the Structural Funds. The socio-economic environment should be more predictable and transparent as to apply it to health policies in the interests of citizens. Equally, more funding is needed to support ongoing investment in the health sector in line with needs and scientific developments.

4. Do you think that the health related solutions found by the partner cities of the Building Healthy Communities Project can be adapted to your area?

The key objective of the Building Healthy Communities project is to maximize the local impact of transnational exchange of experience and facilitate access to structural funds operational programmes. It should be noted that, until they become mature and until the applications will be submitted, there is a long way to go. Currently, the Local Action Plans developed are actually a kind of "project idea" with various solutions in terms of health, with the particularities and the needs of each region to which it belongs. I do not exclude the possibility to adapt solutions found for partner cities to the regions of Romania.

European Parliament approves cross-border health care rules

On 27 October 2010, the European Parliament's Public Health Committee voted in favour of rules that pave the way for European citizens to receive health treatment anywhere in the EU. This would see changes in the following key areas:

- Patients could seek medical care in another country without prior authorisation – although for hospital stays and specialised care, patients may need authorisation from their national health system;
- A country could only refuse to authorise cross border care in very limited circumstances;
- The 25 million Europeans with rare diseases would be covered under the proposed new law.

The new rules will especially help retired people living abroad, people with rare diseases, and people living near borders. Some member states are not convinced that increased cross border health care obligations will work. Poland, Slovakia and Portugal voted against the proposals in Council, and Romania abstained. Nevertheless, the proposals now have broad Parliamentary support and could become law by June 2011.

More information is available from <http://www.euractiv.com/en/health/deal-sight-eu-patient-mobility-vote-nears-news-499192>

Cross border healthcare: the patients' perspective

The European Patients' Forum is organising a one day round table event to explore patients' perspectives on the legislative proposals on cross

border healthcare. The event will take place in Brussels on 1 December 2010 and will bring together around 40 to 50 participants including policy makers, patient leaders, health professionals, insurers and health managers. Speakers will include John Dalli, Commissioner for Health and Consumers.

The event aims to develop the patients' perspective on the cross border healthcare proposals. It will generate conclusions and recommendations on this subject which will be widely disseminated to stakeholders.

More information is available from <http://www.eutrio.be/cross-border-healthcare-patients-perspective>

Reducing health inequalities from a regional perspective

A two day conference on reducing health inequalities took place in Belgium on 8 and 9 November 2010. The conference aimed to develop practice-oriented recommendations to increase the efficiency of policy measures eliminating health inequalities. The programme included speakers from the Committee of the Regions, the World Health Organisation and the European Commission, plus academic contributions from the UK, Sweden, France.

Information on the outcomes from this event is available from http://www.healthinequalities2010.be/RHN_EN.aspx

International Health Promotion Awards

The inaugural URAC/GKEN International Health Promotion Awards Symposium will take place on 6 and 7 December 2010 in Rome, Italy. The Awards aim to discover, reward and promote community and workplace initiatives that dramatically improve health. The Awards feature two categories:

- International community health awards, honour organisations committed to health promotion and education, or disease prevention;
- International workplace health awards, recognise health promotion programmes that optimise and maintain overall health in the workplace.

Nominations for the awards closed in September. Three winners will be announced in each category at the close of the Symposium on 7 December.

More information is available from <http://www.aihpa.org/>

EU Health Prize for Journalists 2010

The 27 finalists of the EU Health Prize for Journalists have been announced. There is one finalist, or team, from each member state. The winner and runners up will be selected on 20 November 2010.

The finalists' articles cover a wide range of subjects and provide gripping accounts of key health issues within the EU; from an investigation into bone marrow transplants in Greece, to the impacts of the emigration of health care professionals from Romania, and the hospice movement in Slovenia.

The articles are available in English from http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/journalist_prize/2010/winners/index_en.htm

New OECD health publications

Two recent publications from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) may be of interest to BHC partners. *Improving Value in Health Care: Measuring Quality* looks at how to measure the quality of health care. It describes what international comparable quality measures are currently available and how to link these measures to quality policies such as accreditation, national safety programmes and quality reporting.

Improving Health and Social Cohesion through Education looks at the role of education in shaping indicators of progress. The report finds that education has the potential to promote health as well as civic and social engagement. Education may reduce inequalities by fostering cognitive, social and emotional skills and promoting healthy lifestyles and participa-

tory practices. These efforts are most likely to be successful when family and community environments are aligned with the efforts made in educational institutions.

Both publications are available from the OECD <http://www.oecd.org>

EU FUNDING NEWS

European Year of Volunteering 2011

A call has been launched for flagship projects in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011. The European Commission is seeking to support one or two flagship projects per member state, in order to test and develop innovative schemes and approaches within the following themes: improving the quality of volunteering; employer-supported volunteering; mobility schemes in volunteering; volunteering as a way to fight against social exclusion; strengthening intergenerational cooperation.

Applications must come from partnerships comprising at least four partners in one or more member states, of which at least one partner must be a public sector organisation and one must be a civil society organisation. Up to €2 million is available for each project. Projects must start in early 2011 and last for no more than 12 months. The deadline for applications is 11 November 2010.

More information is available from http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1092_en.htm

One Book a day keeps the doctor away

The BHC Project is not only a way for sharing good practices on health related issues, but also a fruitful platform for sharing knowledge in its wider sense. During the last Project Workshop, the BHC partners had the idea to add this new section to our newsletter.

A space where everybody can suggest his or her favourite book.

For this reason we are pleased to present the book corner of the BHC Newsletter. We look forward to receiving your suggestions for the next issues!

Bel Canto by *Anne Patchett*

The Island by *Victoria Hislop*

Anil's ghost by *Michael Ondaatje*

The Simple life by *Ernst Wiechert*

Nudge by *Richard H. Thaler*

The professor and the housekeeper by *Yoko Oshawa*

Submarine by *Joe Dunthorne*

White Teeth by *Zadie Smith*

On Beauty by *Zadie Smith*

Eating animals by *Jonathan Safran Foer*

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Newsletter

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