



EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPROVING HEALTH, EQUITY & WELLBEING

EuroHealthNet Country Exchange Visit

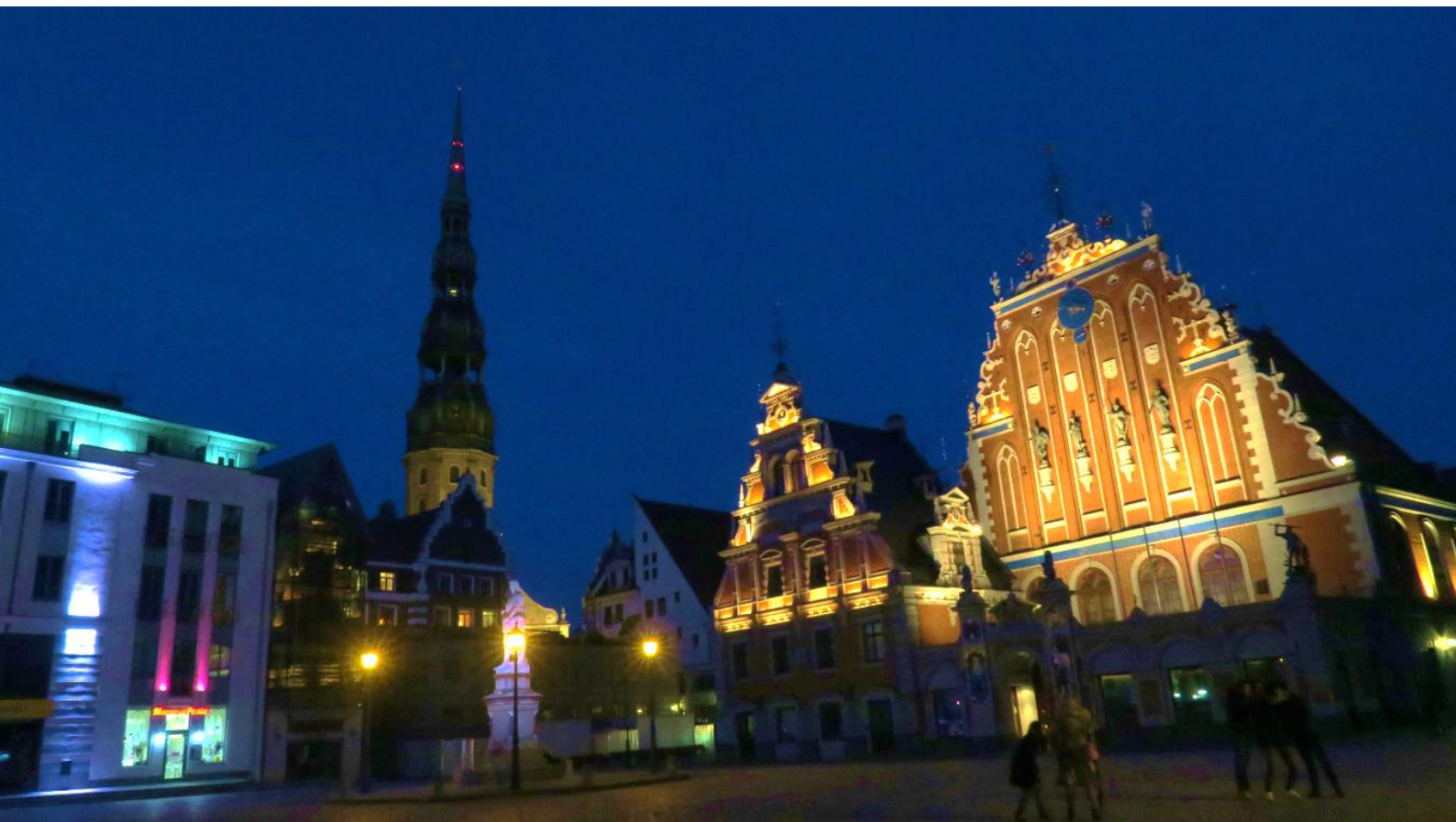
Health in all Policies: Challenges and achievements in Riga

Host: Riga City Council

Riga, 24-25 April 2017



RIGA CITY
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Introduction

EuroHealthNet, in partnership with the Riga City Council, organised a Country Exchange Visit to allow members to see the development and implementation of Health in all Policies approaches in Latvia. The visit took place within EuroHealthNet's Framework agreement with the European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion under the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).

The visit took place on 24-25 April 2017. It consisted of participation in an international Conference, a separate round table for EuroHealthNet representatives, and discussions during exemplar site visits. The International Conference on '*Health in all Policies*' on the first day brought together local partners from the Riga City and international representatives from Finland, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, as well as EuroHealthNet representatives from the Netherlands and Slovenia. They discussed how inter-sectoral policies including innovative approaches and agreements on cross-border cultural exchanges could help promote healthier lifestyles.

The round-table focused on health promotion, equity and social inclusion in the city of Riga. Representatives from the Welfare Department of the Riga City Council presented their work on social inclusion and health promotion among people from vulnerable groups. **The site visits on the second day included:**

- **The "Spikeri" Promenade**, a project of revitalisation of a degraded territory which was turned into a publicly accessible, cultural, educational, and health promoting area;
- The environmentally and socially innovative landfill of household waste "**Getlini EKO**";
- **The community centre Abelzieds**, which encourages adult people, in particular of pre-retirement and retirement age, to become or stay active.

Day one - Conference "Health in All Policies"

What follows is a brief account of the main messages expressed by the different participants in the Conference.

The Mayor of Riga, **Nils Usakovs**, was proud that Riga was part of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy Cities programme. The city had been able to invest in and implement public health policies at the local level and its Public Health Strategy recognised citizens' health as a priority. Riga implemented healthy lifestyle promoting activities through cross-sectoral cooperation via the Health Council, which brings together all departments of the municipality as well as councils and representatives of the largest corporations. Healthy lifestyles are becoming ingrained in Latvian culture. An example was the Marathon: although very few professionals participated, 10,000 inhabitants took part in the smaller 10km circuit.

In his video message EU Health Commissioner, **Vytenis Andriukaitis** welcomed that health, cultural, social and tourism policies worked together to promote health across borders. This was a type of concrete action that helped develop healthy lifestyles in Europe. Healthy tourism needs to rely on healthy cities. He congratulated Riga for having a MoU to reduce alcohol intake, and encouraged everybody to engage in healthy lifestyles. He reminded the audience of the risk factors and dangers of chronic diseases, and the need for health promotion and healthy choices.

Monika Kosinska (Programme Manager, Governance for Health at WHO Regional Office for Europe), referred in her video message to the UN 2030 agenda, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and in particular SDG 11, related to healthy cities. All goals and actions are relevant to build healthy cities and decision makers should reflect on how to (better) deliver healthy cities for the whole population and increase resilience in society, and build on the success.

Anda Caksa (Minister of Health, Latvia) talked about the importance of health for each individual and for the state's resources and economy. She referred to the concepts of Health in all Policies, but also of '*health beyond all policies*', in which the person is the centre of growth. The Ministry of Health promotes effective use of EU funds including EU social and structural funds to create conditions for recovery of citizens. She said prevention work is very important, but looking at mortality rates from chronic diseases and obesity in Latvia, there was still a lot of work to be done. The ministry has compiled best practices from national and local initiatives, but municipalities (which constitute 90% of the Healthy Cities network), know best how and what services to provide to citizens. She said funds needed to be invested efficiently, and education of inhabitants had to be considered.

Olga Veidiņa, (Health Council) explained how they had created the Health Council to promote healthy lifestyles and foster healthy thinking. All the departments of the municipality and companies participated in the Council, which met 4-5 times a year and looked at the often complex needs of persons (children, elderly people). She acknowledged that the most difficult element had been to show people that healthy lifestyle was more important than medical treatments. The Council developed cycle paths, outdoors recreation places, sports events, taking the best experience within Latvia and from abroad, which also gave them the possibility to integrate EU funds. The fact that residents were getting involved showed they were successful.

Karolina Mackiewicz (Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association) explained that health promotion and the creation of healthy lifestyle conditions were the main goals of the association. They worked with decision makers to improve their understanding of health promotion. They had supported Riga and others to join the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and had supported the establishment of the Russian National Network. They focused on practical work and projects across cities, such as:

- 'Let us be active', a project on Active Ageing for seniors in Estonia, Latvia and Finland, which was considered a good example by the EC. In Riga a Call centre was opened, volunteer seniors informed others about activities available (e.g. sports facilities, theatre,...)
- 'Empower kids' – helped children and adolescents to understand and choose by themselves 'Healthy choices, healthy diets and physical activity". They also developed a tool for teachers to give advice to target audiences.
- 'Healthier people' (Finland & St Petersburg) - a good example of Health in All Policies: Based on premature mortality data, they worked on interventions that helped address the situation.
- 'Heprogress' – to reduce social inequalities in health in the Baltic Sea Region.

Clive Needle presented EuroHealthNet's work, activities, and approaches to reduce health inequalities, combat chronic diseases and promote health for sustainable health systems. He explained how we link social, economic, environmental issues with health equity, and how we refer to them in our policy and advocacy work. He further explained that we monitor and advise developments from the EU Semester, the potential EU Pillar of Social Rights, plus EC and WHO work programmes etc., in order to inform and engage our members, States and EU institutions.

Oleg Kuvshinnikov (Russian Association Healthy cities, districts and villages) explained how the population of Russia had started to reduce some 10 to 20 years before, and how they started to create healthy environments for a healthier economy (*'If people are healthy, the economy is healthy'*). The Russian Association of Healthy cities initially started with 7 cities and addressed issues such as tobacco and alcohol intake. They looked at and selected best practices to foster healthy lifestyles, prioritising health of the family, health at work, and healthy ageing as well as investments in environmental measures and for food safety. The rate of birth went up, and morbidity rates fell.

Irena Kondrate spoke about *The Riga Initiative* for healthy tourism as an example of inter-sectoral cross-border cooperation. This initiative helped create healthy relationships also among neighbouring countries, an important feature to build economies across borders by targeting seniors, young people, and families with children. The City's task was to provide the infrastructure and environment for activities (e.g. Nordic walking) and make sure people felt included in the project. A series of activities had been developed at local level but were offered to tourists too (e.g. Riga Central Market: locals as well as tourists could learn how to buy, cook, and locally grow food).

Maksims Tolstojs (Riga Tourism Development Bureau) explained how the concept of tourism had changed across time, from active in the 70s, to unhealthy behaviours in the 90s, and to healthy tourism, including healthy activities and food, more recently. Riga has become a capital for ecological food; the *'Riga Pass'* allows people to use public transport, and have discounts in museums, events, etc. Riga organises many different sports and cultural events.

Mārtiņš Moors (Riga City Council Welfare Department) discussed how they tackle social well-being and equity in Riga by providing social assistance and arranging for the provision of social services. They cooperate with the organisation responsible for the implementation of active employment measures and prevention of unemployment. They also promote a healthy lifestyle and ensure access to healthcare. In 2016, 57% of the money for social care and housing allowance was spent on pensioners or disabled families. Allowances are also increasing towards new-borns, and since January 2016 a new type of benefit was introduced in Riga City Municipality: a cash benefit (paid dinner) for students.

Challenges are big for the Riga City Council; there is an increased demand for home care services, social care and social rehabilitation centres and an increased demand for public services in general, including night shelters, health care, and care for people with mental health. Although the number of long-term unemployed people is decreasing, the need for innovative services for this group is increasing.

Dina Viksna (Riga City Council Education, Culture and Sports Department) talked about the leisure opportunities they provided for children and young people. This had been a collaboration with other departments, e.g. the department for the environment and urbanisation. They made sure the leisure activities were promoted to all groups, including the more vulnerable ones.

Jana Grinhofa (Riga City Council City Development Department): her Department was responsible for improving Riga citizens' living environment and the adapted infrastructure. Examples included the creation of the Spikeri creative district, the revitalisation of Miera darzs, an outdoor skatepark, and of the surrounding park in Riga's "Moscow District".

Andris Morozovs (Riga Central Market) explained how the Riga Central Market had evolved from a simple market to a place where many activities were organised, for Riga citizens as well as for tourists, including cooking lessons and healthy food advice

Elga Zegele (Rigas mezi Ltd, Head of “Mezaparks” unit), described this major cultural and recreational park as also the green heart of Riga. The park offers many outdoor activities such as walks, rollerblading, bicycle paths, playgrounds, an adventure park and more.

Additional discussions took place on integrated approaches to cultural exchanges, tourism, and wellbeing. **Alla Salajeva** (Administration for Social Affairs of Cheboksary, Russia) explained how they had developed their city to provide healthy activities, a healthy environment (e.g. forests, resorts, mineral water, spas & cures) and the infrastructure that tourists needed in order to do healthy activities. **Oksana Ogorodnikova** (Gorki District Deputy Council, Belarus) gave the example of their project ‘*Gorki city - healthy city*’, and the project’s local initiative *Looking for health and new impressions on the bike*.

Finally, **Nikola Tilgale – Platace** (Riga City Council Welfare Department) talked about the initiative they implemented ‘*For healthy Riga!*’ which provides diversified and accessible health promotion and disease prevention activities (more information below during the Round-Table).

The Riga Initiative was signed by Mayor, Minister and leading dignitaries from associated states.



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EuroHealthNet, the European Commission and WHO were thanked for their participation and support.

Visiting officials and EuroHealthNet members from other states were invited to further study and contribute knowledge to the detailed aspects of social cohesion, wellbeing and economic developments during their visits and discussions in the following sessions.

Meeting of Riga City Council representatives and EuroHealthNet members' representatives on initiatives for promotion of social well-being & equity

Clive Needle acted as facilitator and welcomed all participants, thanking Riga City council for their organisation and inputs. After each introduction questions and observations were raised.

Social inclusion

Mārtiņš Moors explained the Riga City Council functions in social fields. These included social health evaluations; organising social services; and promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring healthcare is accessible.

While the number of recipients of social support is decreasing, the number of social services has increased. There are different groups among the recipients (e.g. retired and migrant people), who all have different support needs. While the state is not able to support all needs, it has improved the support given to children and parents (e.g. support to buy lunch for children at schools, support for vulnerable groups in particular).

The situation related to social care is the following:

- The number of people who receive social care at home is growing, also due to the fact that there are more disabilities, which in turn means there are probably more healthcare problems.
- The number of night shelters is also increasing. It was hidden a few years ago, but now people know they exist and can be used for the right purpose. In the past, people would not want to go because shelters were also used for people who consumed drugs and alcohol.
- The number of children who live in institutions (orphanages) has reduced and is the best result of the municipality's social support.

The main trend is an increase in the number of people who use social services (homeless, people with psychiatric problems), but a decrease in the number of unemployed and children in institutions.

School activities

D. Viksna (Riga City Council education, culture & sports) explained the school system, the different schools (e.g. some focus on sports, music and arts), and the activities that the Riga City Council supports for children and students. They include 400+ camps for student holidays, free leisure activities in the summer, educational events such as festivals, competitions, concerts, sports facilities (e.g. sports centres, fields, halls and pools, active recreation areas including skate parks, ski slopes with ski rental, free fitness coaching sessions, active leisure zones in the urban environment, etc.)

Promenade and parks

J. Grinhofa (Riga City Council environment & infrastructure), presented two projects they had implemented:

- The Spikeri promenade, which had been built in a rather decaying zone of the city, including an unsafe car park, has been transformed into a nice and safe walking area and promenade open to all. Public events took place in this area; a skating rink was accessible in winter.
- Three parks were reconstructed with European Research & Development Funds (ERDF), including sports area, playgrounds for children, skate areas, etc.

Mezapark

E. Zegele (Mezaparks) presented the Mezapark, which dates from 1901. It used to be a prestigious and state-of-the-art park, where Riga citizens came to participate in many summer and winter activities, until it fell into disrepair in the late 1990's. Since 2009 and major renovation works, the park has been able to offer a great number of recreational and sports facilities (e.g. Nordic walking, cycling, BMX tracks, swimming, etc.) and has attracted 500,000 people every year. The park is also used for a number of cultural activities and events (e.g. festivals, theatre shows, etc.)

For Healthy Riga

Nikola Tilgale-Platace presented the '*For Healthy Riga*' project, which is funded by the ESF (budget: 3.5 million EUR). The project is supervised by the Central Finance and Contracting Agency, but implemented by the Riga City Council Welfare Department. It started in March 2017 and is scheduled to be implemented by December 2019. The aim is to improve access to health promotion and disease prevention services through local, comprehensive, community-based and active physical, mental, and social health promotion activities in the territory of the Riga Municipality.

Target groups include persons in need and low-income people, people with disabilities, unemployed, population aged over 54, as well as children. The activities offered include physical activities (e.g. Nordic walking lessons and gym classes); mental health advice and activities; advice on healthy diet, sexual, reproductive and maternal health, and addiction reduction; measures to develop healthy lifestyles (e.g. seminars and games for healthy, economical and seasonal nutrition) and mental health (e.g. collective work, camps to manage children's emotions, perceptions and relationships), specialised counselling, etc. The project aims to reach around 120,000 inhabitants throughout Riga for the three-year period, of which 65,000 should belong to one of the target groups.

The municipality also performs health checks and disease prevention measures (e.g. blood cholesterol and sugar levels). In total, the Council plans over 30 different activities throughout the year, taking into account the principle of 'service close to the citizen'. It required close cooperation with other departments along the 'Health in All Policies' principles. For example, the project team collaborates with institutions who work daily with the inhabitants and can convey the message of '*Healthy Riga*' further, such as health centres, schools, NGOs, colleagues from other Council departments. Further information about this initiative can be found at www.veseligridzinieks.lv ; www.ld.riga.lv; or on our [EurohealthNet magazine](#).

'Let us be active'

Andris Izinkevics presented the '*Let us be active!*' project. The aim of this multi-city project was to reduce the social exclusion of senior people. It involved the Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association, cities in Estonia, and Riga.

Initially Riga City Council mapped the activities that were already available for senior people. Based on interviews and surveys, they identified target groups' needs and developed new activities, including a call centre (cf morning session). Seniors could call and talk about their problems or ask for information. They promoted the call centres via media, GPs and health centres. The success was measured in the number of calls received (e.g. 1,400 calls in 10 months), and through the cooperation they developed with local libraries, day care centres, and other organisations.

The challenges they encountered included their misinterpretation of people's expectations from the survey results, the fact that the newly appointed call centre volunteers had no operators' experience, and the difficulties to reach lonely and socially excluded people. In order to reach them they tried to give them information through GPs as well as home carers, who distributed cards about the call centre to the people.

A similar project '*Silver lining*' (UK), which was presented at a previous EuroHealthNet study visit, was the basis for this project, which was funded from the EU Interreg budget (€48,000 for Riga). Although the project has finished, the Riga City Council has continued the call centres. Evaluation indicators include the number of volunteers who participate in the programme and the number of calls received.

Innovation and employment grants

Juris Osis (Head of the Riga Employment, Social Work & Practice Unit) talked about the promotion of employment of socially vulnerable groups in Riga through their specific grant programme. He explained that unemployment had dramatically increased due to the 2008 financial crisis, from approx. 5% in 2008 to 12.1% in 2009, before falling back to 5% now. Approaches have been changed from universal approach to target group methods, from 'traditional' services to tailored services, and new channels such as social entrepreneurship are being explored.

The goal of their grant programme was to stimulate, initiate, or develop and implement the sustainable development of associations, foundations or enterprises that provide, create new or improve existing employment opportunities for socially vulnerable target groups. The institutions have to apply for a grant and commit to employ people from the target groups if they obtain the grant. The objectives of the programme include:

- To secure employment of citizens from socially vulnerable groups, including the creation or improvement of existing jobs;
- To implement employment opportunities according to social and business principles ensuring sustainability;
- To organise employment according to commercial business practice, i.e. producing goods or delivering services that have a demand in the market;
- To provide activities that are environmentally friendly.

Through a detailed grant application process, a quarter of applications were selected. They include:

- The Association of innovative educational and culture projects, who provide employment for people with mental disabilities to produce mobile phone & computer sleeves;
- A commercial company that rehabilitates psycho-neurological patients to produce floral soap and packaging, and artificial flowers;
- An association that creates new jobs in the timber industry (producing pieces of furniture and decorative items from recycled wood) for ex-convicts;
- A company that produces designer clothes with computer paintings.

Health Rooms

Vivita Kikule gave an overview of the health promotion work for vulnerable population groups performed by the Latvian Red Cross "*Health Rooms*". Accessible daily, services offered include health assessments, advice and referrals to health systems, including some co-funded by ESIF. New activities related to HIV and TB prevention and harm reduction are offered in collaboration with schools.

Day two - Site visits

During each visit, **Clive Needle** and **Anne Pierson** facilitated questions and discussions between organisers and EuroHealthNet participants, which are reflected later in *Learning Outcomes*.

Site visit 1: 'Spikeri' Promenade

Participants visited the results of the revitalisation project which was introduced in the Day 1 Meeting session (see above). The evidence of effective use of ERDF for integrated solutions for economic, social and health wellbeing – for the City, its residents and visitors - was clear. The promenade engages the local city inhabitants to be active and participate in health promoting activities which are easily accessible and free of charge. It is also attractive for tourists as the warehouse block is located in the historical centre, which is included on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list.

The benefits include transformation of physical activity and social behaviours, for example greatly increased cycling and inter-generational former industrial sites for cultural, social and environmental purposes.



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Site visit 2: 'Getlini EKO'

This modern, technological, and environmentally friendly landfill of household waste has been developed as a result of a large infrastructure project which rearranged a historically deteriorated and socially adverse environment on the outskirts of Riga. The site used to be a marsh, which was used as a dumping place, polluting water and soils. The landfill nowadays treats 300,000 tons of non-hazardous waste per year. Thanks to the gas processed from the household waste, the landfill produces electricity that is used to grow vegetables in a recently built greenhouse.



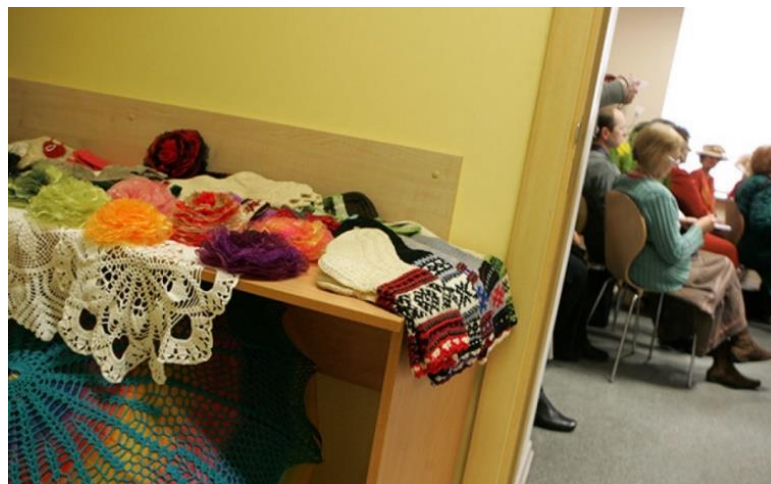
The money to finance the project initially came from a loan from Sweden, the Latvian Government, and the World Bank. It has created 100 new jobs for local people, has enhanced economic growth in the region, and promoted favourable living conditions. It has become a place for social and green education and even a popular tourist attraction. A substantial information and discussion session was provided by site operators, during which key points were considered:

- It was noted that Latvian citizens are currently not required to separate household waste; this is a national and City policy aim according to capacities. It would be interesting to follow up to learn how social, economic and health factors are calculated in such planning.
- The use of energy for growing fruits – particularly specialist tomatoes – is innovative and could be transferable.
- Learning from this initiative is being shared at EU levels, for example at www.inherit.eu, including the elements that have attracted EU co-funding.

Site visit 3: Community Centre 'Ābeļzieds'

The municipality carries out activities aimed at keeping people active and part of the community through community centres. The Community Centre 'Ābeļzieds' is an experimental pilot which may be extended in other areas given its success. The Centre targets the adult population, including people of pre-retirement and retirement ages, who constitute 90% of the nearly 9000 annual visitors. Some activities are also targeted at inter-generational integration of young people, including parents, and at providing friendly environments. The visitors include inhabitants who cannot get social services daily. The centre tries to reach in particular lonely people and helps them avoid social exclusion.

The Centre has 8 employees but aims to develop volunteer work too. With the help of additional volunteer coordinators, self-support groups have been created. This reflects shifts to person centred and independent approaches in social care. The centre offers inter alia education courses (e.g. nutrition classes in cooperation with the nearby university) as well as sports activities (e.g. boxing, Nordic walking, basketball, volley ball). Other activities include language courses and creative tasks.



How were people attracted? Community centres were not broadly advertised: they mainly relied on social workers who distributed information materials through GPs, on some information that was broadcast on the radio and TV, and on word of mouth. People come mainly from the nearby central area but also suburbs and municipalities beyond the city, showing extensive reach. Visit participants were concerned that health and care professionals should be more involved, but new concepts of independent empowerment are being tested.

Are Community Centres sustainable? The centres are funded by the municipalities and are freely offered. However, as most activities are organised by self-support groups arising from the interest of members, the centres do not need a lot of resources.

Does the centre cooperate with GPs? There is no cooperation with GPs, except to attract visitors, however older people sometimes go to the GP just to talk, the centre has taken over this role.

Have the Community Centres been evaluated? The centre runs a customer satisfaction survey once a year and is in the process of setting indicators in order to conduct an impact assessment.

Learning logs and further suggestions

The learning logs provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on the visit, on the lessons learnt and future actions, in states and via EuroHealthNet at EU levels.

Headlines for further reflection and action

Riga has launched an innovative approach to cross border integrated approaches for sustainable tourism and cultural regeneration, which offers potential win-win benefits for health improvement, social equity and inclusion, sustainable economic growth and environmental enhancements. Evidence of those impacts should be taken up and explored for transferability, for example in liaison with the Healthy Cities and Healthy Regions movements and effective use of multiple EU funding instruments.

Riga has launched innovative approaches and pilots concerning reforms of primary and acute health care, social care and community inclusion with creation of new grants, centres and methods which offer potential multiple gains in health, social, economic and cultural needs, including inter-generational solidarity, health promotion, and social inclusion. Evidence of these changes should be taken up and explored for transferability, for example in the context of EU developments in long term health and care, sustainability of health systems, microfinance developments within the EU EaSI programme and the active and healthy ageing initiative. Moreover, Riga has launched innovative approaches to integrate energy generation, waste recycling and social needs, which should be explored in the context of SDGs and UN agenda 2030, and potential transferability in terms of land use, social integration, nutrition and other potential multiple benefits, including effective use of multiple EU funding instruments.

The EuroHealthNet policy and practice visit was a valuable opportunity to experience these initiatives which can be followed up by its networking with key actors in various work strands.

Learning points

- Latvia is still strongly influenced by historic cultural and social factors, and in transitional phases of designing its own model of tackling health inequalities. This is familiar in other transitional states but a different stage to more developed economies elsewhere in the EU.
- The focus was inevitably on health and social equity promotion in Riga or nearby municipalities. It was not clear how this impacts on inequalities with and in rural populations, or with neighbouring states. This can be followed up with the Baltic Region Healthy Cities contacts (see actions below).
- Each serious organisation sooner or later needs an investment for its sustainability, development and growing. A successful health promotion programme is not realisable without strong local governmental support and participation.
- The effective collaboration of different political departments can give an important contribution to the development of the different project in the area of health care promotion.
- The idea of the four independent employment projects with a small budget seemed very good. Riga has tried to change the basic approach to work with unemployed people and it seemed they managed to do it. All four pilot projects were successful and still lived on – they offered concrete jobs for people from socially excluded groups. All these projects have a very good potential and they should definitely be expanded.
- The projects showed the innovative approach and successful examples of including vulnerable groups. Participants felt they could probably use some similar ideas in some similar projects.

- There is a real possibility to develop some employment projects, using independent investor's donations, even without governmental support.
- Take into account also other (non-traditional) partners to achieve the goals and get the best sustainable results.
- However there were just four projects cited, which offered jobs for relatively few people. As there is yet no similar intention at the national level, new investors will be needed to be able to continue these projects and expand them.
- The collaboration of governmental institutions with charities and non-profitable organisations always contribute to more effective achievement of common goals.
- Cross-sectoral networking and cooperation with the centres for social work and health centres is essential for achieving effective results in the field of health promotion and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.
- The majority of presentations about health promotion concerned young people, but relatively little was said about health promotion of retired and vulnerable groups of the population until the concluding visit to the pilot Community Centre, when interesting trends and issues regarding inter-generational work were raised.

Action Points

- The context for the invitation by Riga City council was EC encouragement for '*The Riga Initiative*', an integrated, cross sectoral approach for economic, social, environmental and health actions towards wellbeing, including sustainable cross-border tourism. During the conference it was pointed out several times how much the economic crisis had affected the economy of Latvia. In this context, the active promotion of tourism and the invitation of Russian investors seemed logical and meaningful. These were new elements to thinking of participants and for EuroHealthNet to consider.
- In informal discussions, interesting information emerged about hospital sector reorganisations in Riga, including innovative primary care and community centres integrating health with employment, social, environmental and cultural gains. An article for the EuroHealthNet magazine by Executive Board member Ineta Zirina is among suggested follow up measures.
- An overview of the general health status of the Latvian population was provided at the Conference: participants felt some preliminary information could have been useful in advance, which can be taken up in future country policy and practice exchanges.
- Similarly, better understanding of the health and social care system organisation (how responsible departments are organised) could be helpful to be set out in an advance briefing.
- Participants regretted insufficient opportunities in a short visit for deeper interaction or discussions, nor for presentations of good practice examples from EuroHealthNet members' countries at the Conference nor during the meeting session. Some questions remained unanswered. For example, they would have liked to know more about the health situation of immigrants from Eastern Europe, Roma people or other ethnic minorities in Latvia. An in-depth insight into impacts, processes (from policy to practice) and the development of integral approaches could have been more informative than introductions to several specific – and culturally sensitive-projects.
- On the other hand good networking took place among Conference participants and interesting informal discussions took place (e.g. about the Dutch recognition system).

Annex 1: Agenda

Monday April 24, 2017 - Riga Town Hall, Ratslaukums street 1, Riga	
9:30 – 10:00	Arrival and registration.
10:00 – 10:05	Welcoming and opening of the conference <i>Moderator: Haralds Burkovskis</i>
10:05 – 10:10	Video address: Involvement of European Union institutions in "Health in all policies" implementation and cross-border cooperation. <i>Vytenis Andriukaitis, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety</i>
10:10 – 10:15	Video address: World Health Organisation's initiative "Healthy tourism" – for the benefit of Healthy cities urban citizens and tourists <i>Monika Kosinska, Regional Focal Point Healthy Cities, WHO Regional Office for Europe</i>
10:15 – 10:25	Approach of Riga city municipality to public health promotion and health education – "Health in all policies" at local level <i>Nils Usakovs, Mayor of Riga</i>
10:25 – 10:35	Healthy municipalities in the new decade <i>Anda Caksa, Latvian Minister for Health</i>
10:35 – 10:50	Projects implemented by the Baltic region healthy cities promoting social inclusion <i>Karolina Mackiewicz, Development manager, Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association, WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region</i>
10:50 – 11:05	EuroHealthNet - The European Partnership for improving sustainable health, equity and wellbeing <i>Clive Needle, Senior Policy Advisor</i>
11:05 – 11:20	Creating health promoting environment as a strategic task of the municipality. Experience of the Russian association "Healthy cities, districts and villages" <i>Oleg Kuvshinnikov, Chairman of the association "Healthy cities, districts and villages"</i>
11:20 – 11:30	Signing of the Memorandum
11:30 – 11:45	Healthy tourism – Riga Initiative as an example of intersectoral cross-border cooperation <i>Olga Veidiņa, Chairman of the Social Issues Committee, Chairman of the Health Council</i>
11:45 – 12:00	Promotion of social well-being and equity in Riga <i>Martins Moors, Head of Social administration, Deputy director of Riga City Council Welfare Department</i>
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00 – 13:15	"For healthy Riga! – diversified and accessible health promotion and disease prevention activities" <i>Nikola Tilgale-Platace, Project manager at Riga City Council Welfare Department</i>
13:15 – 13:30	Opportunities for leisure activities available for children and young people in Riga <i>Dina Viksna, Deputy Director of Riga City Council Education, Culture and Sports Department, Head of Sports and Youth Department</i>
13:30 – 13:45	Environment and infrastructure. Opportunities for improvement of residents' living environment. A Case study of Spikeri creative district. Revitalisation of Miera darzs. <i>Jana Grinhofa, Head of Project division, acting deputy Head of Project management administration, Riga City Council City Development Department.</i>
13:45 – 13:55	Stories meet in Riga Central Market <i>Andris Morozovs, Chairman of the Board, Riga Central Market</i>

13:55 – 14:05	“Mezaparks – the green heart of Riga!” <i>Elga Zegele, Rigas mezi Ltd, Head of “Mezaparks” unit</i>
14:05 – 14:20	<i>Alla Salajeva, Director of Ceboksari Tourism and culture development department</i>
14:20 – 14:30	<i>Aksana Aharodnikava, President of Gorki District Deputy Council, Belarus</i>
14:30 – 14:40	<i>Live Riga. Welcome to Riga!</i> <i>Maksims Tolstojs, Board member, Foundation “Riga Tourism Development Bureau”</i>
14:40 – 14:50	Discussions. Closing of the conference.
	Reflecting on the Conference/Round table with delegates
15:00 – 15:20	<i>Promotion of employment of socially vulnerable groups in Riga</i> Mr. Juris Osis (Riga city council, Department of Welfare, Head of the Employment, Social Work and Practice Research Uni)
15:20 – 15:40	<i>Reflection and discussion on the presentation</i> Mr. Clive Needle, EuroHealthNet Senior Policy Advisor
15:40 – 16:00	<i>Health promotion for vulnerable population groups</i> Vivita Ķīkule (Riga city council, Department of Welfare, Head of the health promotion and disease prevention unit)
16:00 – 16:20	<i>Reflection and discussion on the presentation</i> Mr. Clive Needle, EuroHealthNet Senior Policy Advisor
16:20 – 16:40	<i>Project “Let us be active”</i> Andris Izinkēvičs (Riga city council, Department of Welfare, Head of the Project coordination sector)
16:40 – 17:00	<i>Reflection and discussion on the presentation</i> Mr. Clive Needle, EuroHealthNet Senior Policy Advisor
19:00 – 21:00	Mayors reception

Tuesday April 25, 2017

08:45 – 09:00	Departure to Promenade “Spīķeri”
09:15 – 10:00	Site visit No.1 – Promenade “Spīķeri”
10:00 – 10:30	Departure to “Getliņi EKO”
11:00 – 13:00	Site visit No.2 - “Getliņi EKO”
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 17:00	Site visit No.3 - Community centre “Ābeļzieds”

Wrap ups and thanks – departure to the hotel and airport.

EuroHealthNet thanked all organisers and participants for an excellent visit and hospitality. All presentations are available [here](#).



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