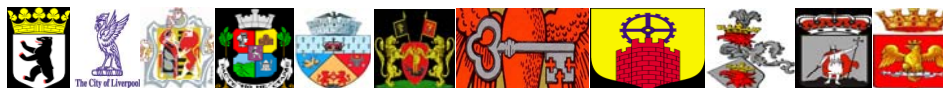


## CoNet Final Conference Berlin March 2011 The 7 Main Tasks towards Social Cohesion in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods



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## Connecting cities - building success



CoNet:  
 exploring integrated  
 development  
 of disadvantaged  
 neighbourhoods  
 to make more of an  
 impact

Dear CoNet friends, dear colleagues and guests,

A very warm welcome to everybody here in Berlin, where our CoNet project also started. I hope we will have a very interesting and animating day together.

I like this picture – it is one of my favourite CoNet souvenirs. That's what we have done, connecting cities and colleagues and building success or at least more success from our efforts. We were there, in places where poverty is extremely visible, sometimes in grey rainy weather, but we were also in places where poverty is hidden behind a façade of inconspicuous normality or colourful vitality. Of course talking about success in our field of social cohesion, that's ambiguous – in the fight against exclusion and segregation, success is hard to come by – despite many efforts and successes. In total we are still facing growing social exclusion, ongoing social polarisation and segregation in urban areas where mainly the poor live.

Integrated area based approaches are only one of the pillars of inclusion policies – for sure an important pillar. This has again been proven by the European Commission's Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion. So our aim was to explore the procedures in practice: in order to make more of an impact. How can they best be put into practice? What really works and what doesn't? How to achieve more synergies? How to improve outcomes?

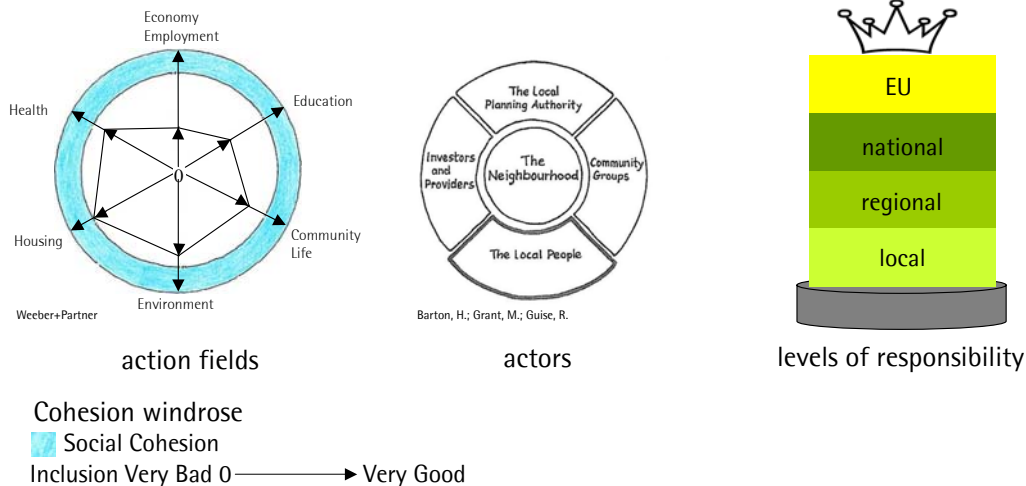
We documented the main basics of integrated area based interventions, some reflections and examples in our CoNet guide to social cohesion in neighbourhoods. It's mainly written for colleagues and involved politicians to strengthen a common understanding for working together. However I think it is also important for ourselves - the professionals in this job – to reflect on and to communicate why we do what we do.

Again many thanks to all of you who have contributed. I hope you are pleased with the result. Let me now present our findings in 7 core tasks and comment on them.

# 1 Improve inclusion in all important fields of life! Proceed as comprehensively as possible!

Social cohesion = inclusion in all important fields of life

Integrated approaches – bringing together: action fields, actors, levels of responsibility



At the beginning let me come back again to our basic understanding – and also to introduce non-CoNet colleagues to our thinking.

Tasks which belong together should also be thought about and tackled together. (Windrose) And this is best done by including everybody who is able to contribute, especially also the citizens. (Apple cutter graph) The actions of the different levels of responsibilities should be harmonised and supportive (pie). That's the idea of integrated approaches to improve disadvantaged neighbourhoods to assure impact and to share responsibility.

We won't go deeper in to the last aspect as it is the main focus of other Urbact II networks, like RegGov, whose lead partner is Duisburg.

The main task is to fight poverty and it's spatial concentration in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These also have a broad negative impact on the value of the area, the housing industry and the local economy as a whole. And all these deficiencies reinforce each other. They weaken the individuals and the city as a whole. It is because of these interactions that integrated procedures promise more success than individual measures undertaken alone.

The interrelated aspects of social cohesion and poverty and the needed interdisciplinary approach are expressed by our social cohesion windrose.

The need of involving all those who can contribute – their common potentials and responsibilities – is expressed by the apple cutter graph.

To summarise one result of the CoNet exchange at the beginning: In practice the potentials of integrated approaches and the associated synergies have by far not yet been exhausted, even when there are many excellent examples of them in the network cities. Efforts are often still too less directed towards realising interdisciplinary projects with multiple uses in all actions fields and in concerted actions from the municipality, citizens and businesses.

## 2 Include and motivate everybody able to contribute and give citizens an active role, especially also young people

### Enablers "carrots":

- ▶ subsidies
- ▶ success – proactive communication and solid strategies
- ▶ effective procedures
- ▶ fun and fulfillment by working together
- ▶ Stick: leadership and preconditions for financing



### Integrated campaign: Respect Week Liverpool



Welcome to the Speke-Garston Respect Week of Action! We will be visiting your area during the week of 9th to 16th December tackling neighbourhood issues on your behalf. This is the sixth in a programme of Respect Weeks of Action being held across Liverpool. We will work with you by taking action to deal with issues you say are a problem, such as crime and antisocial behaviour, improving job and training opportunities and reducing litter and fly tipping. Action will include enforcement, both young and older people alike. Liverpool safer, stronger, cleaner and greener.

Working together as comprehensively as possible is easier said than done. Often the cooperation between the administrative departments are the weakest link. Different housing companies and NGO's often have competitive relationships and don't trust seeing themselves in a win-win situation with the others.

"Carrots and sticks" are the well-known motivation instruments for dressage horses, but they can also be used for convincing those who prefer to stay away and act on their own. Cooperation works well if you have carrots in the form of **subsidies**. The programmes – requiring working together are great to get cooperation going especially at the beginning. A further motivator for joining forces is **success** – Jaap van Leyden stressed this in his interview. Visible convincing results – a question of good communication and good solutions based on solid doable forward thinking strategies. **More effective procedures to get things done** are also motivators in my experience, or at least the contrary – very elaborated time-taking procedures - are main motivation killers. Last but not least, **fun and fulfillment by working together** and the experience of being valued are also important enablers. But **cooperation is work** – like within a marriage – as our colleague van Ophoven in Apeldoorn put it, but when there are not enough carrots – divorce is near.

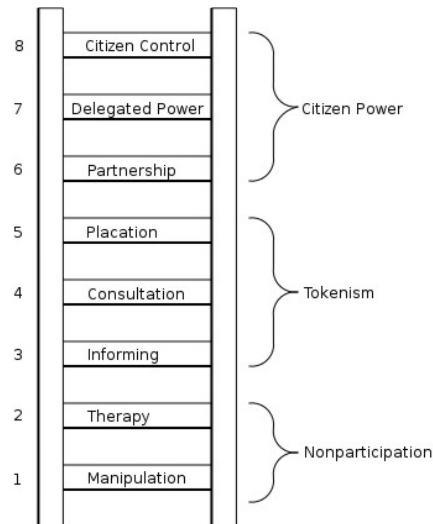
The stick is sometimes also needed, when key actors stay away and close their doors – e.g. the local school, the kindergarten, an important housing company or the municipality's educational department. Soft constraint is given by **solid leadership and financing**, which make cooperation a precondition for support. And the connected **acknowledgements also take the form of a carrot**.

These remarks highlight the necessary and very demanding professionalism to manage the cooperation procedures needed for practising integrated approaches. One main remedy is building cooperation traditions – developing cooperation routines and trust. Joint actions like the integrated campaign Respect Week in Liverpool also very much increase visibility.

Marcin Bania will tell us about setting up a lasting coordination structure for neighbourhood management in Zabrze. Apeldoorn and Liverpool have set up city wide and lasting neighbourhood management schemes, which are very interesting in order to achieve sustainability. They are especially interesting for those cities, where neighbourhood management is part of a fixed-term urban development or renewal programme, like in Berlin, Malmö or Vaulx-enVelin.

## 2 (continued) Give citizens an active role, especially also young people!

The ladder of participation,  
Arnstein, S.R.



Berlin Neighbourhood Council



Alba Iulia Future Workshop



Citizen participation is very much appreciated, often follow the idea of „the more the better“. This concept is described by Saul Alinsky's well known ladder of participation, dating from the 1960's, but is now somewhat old fashioned. But behind the façade of appreciation there is lot of scepticism and frustration, when one-sided demands, one-sided groups' interests and "not in my backyard" attitudes become the focus. Our colleagues in Neder-over-Hembeek in Brussels and we also in Berlin can very much talk about the hard job of dealing with these conflicts, when a small group or single individuals think „we are the people“. In practice we have to be very precise about how public citizen participation is linked to all the other arenas of the decision-making chain – the elected representation, administration and expertise.

On the one hand we should not overestimate the importance and impact of deliberative decision making by the local citizens outside the city council. However, on the other hand we have to object to the often heard opinion that the less educated and migrant people and youth are not interested and able to participate. When this occurs, when they stay away, participation management has failed. Mostly because of two deficiencies: Firstly the described carrots were missing. Political scientists describe: very few citizens are "super citizens", highly interested in policies and activities. Many citizens are very little interested, "political ignorants". But many citizens are characterised as "political mizers" – in German translated political "Geizkragen", potentially active citizens, who are interested if he or she feels personally concerned and sees their participation efforts as useful.

And secondly they didn't take into account that especially the less educated and migrant people rely on personal contacts for initiation. So building relationships has to be done first in citizen participation in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In contemporary democracies modes of participation should be manifold – this is the summary of political science literature and also the experience of ground level practitioners experience: Decision-making participation should be embedded in multifaceted community development activities, it can't be started from scratch.

### 3 Strengthen inhabitants' local networks and their feeling of being at home in the neighbourhood!



Public space, recyclart Brussels



Mentoring



Outreach



Public space, Alba Iulia



Co-production



Self-help groups



Volunteering events, Berlin Marzahn



Outreach - Youth



Committees

In our guide book we included an extra chapter about the benefits and the procedures of strengthening local community life and people's local social networks. Disadvantaged people on average have less social networks and they need very many of them to tackle their more difficult living situations. We especially highlighted also the importance of the bridging contacts between different cultural groups, benefiting the people's individual chances and their living together in multicultural neighbourhoods.

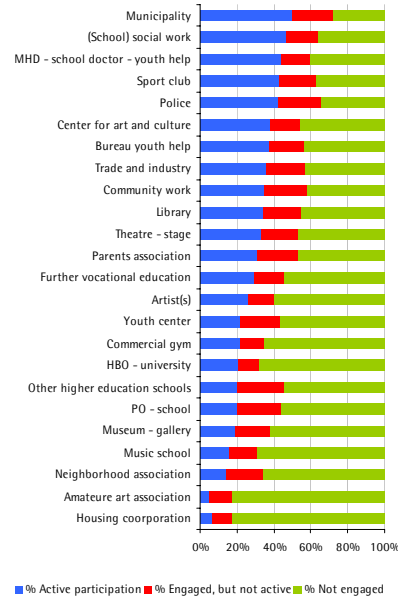
We felt this was necessary because many people and politicians think this is just nice, but not important. Those who only appreciate bricks-and mortar investments sometimes look at these efforts somewhat disdainfully. However, investing in strengthening local networks and community life has a tangible return on investment. This has again been proven by current brain, network and well-being research. It has to be seen as part of mixed welfare production within integrated approaches. In disadvantaged neighbourhoods an above average public effort in community development is needed and is part of compensatory politics. And this is not for free.

The activities in the network cities are numerous and endearing – mostly also in the opinion of residents and the media. On the slide you see the different approaches to strengthening community life: developing public space and creating good conditions for informal contacts, volunteering in organising events, mentoring projects, co-production of services, outreach, self-help groups and committees.

However, we have to communicate and document their benefits better - above all the challenge is to deploy the indispensable effort of staff well-targetedly. There is still a long way to go to concretely clarify goals – like the somewhat foggy concept of empowerment – and to clarify concepts, efforts and outcomes to ensure impact.

## 4 Open up and adapt amenities and services to the inhabitants' needs, so that also disadvantaged persons find access!

### Scheme Cooperation Secondary Brede Schools



Vaux-en-Velin - Children centre    Brussels - Ferme nos pilif

This task is a big challenge and action field for integrated procedures and different partner's cooperation. In most European countries we have considerable and expensive social, cultural, educational and sport infrastructure, and a lot of services for information, advice and support. The need and potential to bring these amenities closer to the people, to use synergies and to raise outcomes especially also for those who stand on the outside are considerable.

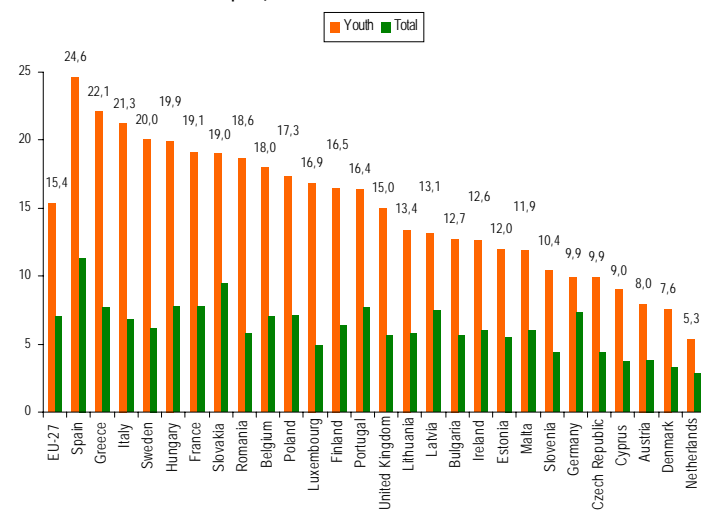
For me, it was very interesting to see which examples were especially interesting for the different countries' cities. E.g. I was very impressed by the great tradition of the Children's Centres in Great Britain, there are now more than 3,900 kindergartens, including every reasonable service cooperation or service integration from health services through to job support for workless parents. In Germany these projects are still singular solutions.

Our French colleagues were very impressed by the Dutch Brede Schools – there are now more than 1,350 Brede Schools and a well structured organisational framework - and the French said that these opened up schools are unimaginable in the French school culture – but maybe they can start doing this.

E.g. our colleagues in Sofia –and us other partners too - very much admired the social enterprise la Ferme Nos Pilif in Brussels, where disabled people, together with other partners, maintain a garden centre, a store, a tavern restaurant, sections for landscaping, gardening, and animal breeding with an ecological orientation – delivering employment for disabled people, a local day-trip destination, learning opportunities – animals, pets and ecology and a chance to overcome prejudices towards mentally disabled people.

## 5 Youth and children first – draw on their potentials and strengthen intergenerational understanding!

Youth and total unemployment rate



Europe in figures – Eurostat Yearbook 2010; data: 2008, p. 298



Sofia – School No. 92

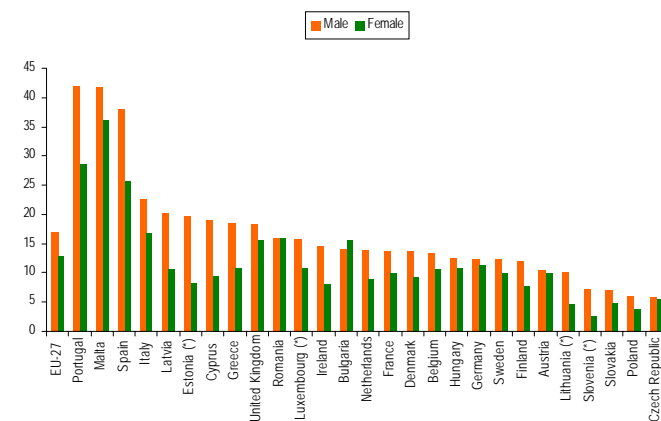
In one important action field there is especially a lot to do in order to open up and adapt amenities to the inhabitant's needs, these are the services and opportunities for smoothing the young people's path from school to career and the educational system. The well being of youth is a key to social cohesion and a more positive future in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The current situation is alarming: an extremely high youth unemployment rate especially in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods, a very high number of youths drop out of school early without a qualification, overburdened schools fighting against ongoing segregation and frustrated young people who have lost trust in their future. Because the children and sometimes also youth still have almost all of their connections in the neighbourhoods the possibilities of integrated approaches have to be exhausted to the full. However, this is still only partially the case.

The diagnoses of practitioners in the cities are very similar to those in the literature. On the one hand, the national education systems have still adjusted much too little to the ever-increasing multicultural social background of children and youth and their multilingualism. On the other hand, less school-related frustration and better educational outcomes go hand in hand with a more comprehensive understanding of learning, one which also includes practical activities, personal development and the practice of positive forms of living together. Informal learning in daily life and self-directed learning must also be understood as a part of the educational mandate. The potentials of voluntary cooperation with other local partners – supported by subsidies – are well explored within Berlin neighbourhood management and more systematically in the Dutch Brede School.

However the individual school or kindergarten is the main actor for improving the quality of education. That's why we also visited and discussed some concepts of making good schools in our guide book. To generate further success the cities and the programmes also have to put quality improvement of the individual schools (and kindergartens) in the disadvantaged areas more on the agenda of integrated approaches. Tomorrow we will visit the Rütli school – an example showing that assuring good standards for pupils is possible even in very difficult situations – when the responsible partners of the educational system, often working on the regional or federal level, will also join their efforts.

## 5 Youth and children first – .... bridging the gap from school to career

### Early school leavers



Europe in figures – Eurostat Yearbook 2010; data: 2008, p. 254, Data not uniform and (\*) unreliable or uncertain

Aged 18 to 24 years with at most a lower secondary level of education (Maximum 2 ISCED level), not in education or training. Share of the total age group.



Malmö – Young in Summer



Vaulx-en Velin – School of Second Chance



Berlin – professional training

The second big action field is the seamless transition of youth from school to professional education and employment. “Keep them busy” was the motto of the debates at last year’s Urbact meeting in Lüttich, in light of the numerous young people “on hold”.

Many good projects have been developed to accompany young people. But the help as a whole is considered confused and ineffective – in several CoNet cities. There is a lot of doubling up, highly segmented offers, little transparency and unclear responsibility to achieve that no young person gets lost.

Much-praised new governance usually doesn’t function very well. The neighbourhood organisation of a binding cooperation of schools, employment agencies, responsible services and independent projects is being worked on, so that not so many youth fall through the cracks. The roll of youth work is to some extent being newly defined in the process – however transferable results are still lacking.

The topic is complicated, the OECD has drawn up evaluations and recommendations for the different countries – it is a pity that we don’t have one more year of network exchange go into depth on these issues. However to do more than little projects, these processes have to be based on a very intense cooperation of the state, city and local level in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

**Youth:** In our guide book we included the Malmö project Young in Summer offering work experience to youths during the summer break in elderly services, child care, sports, cultural centres, civic associations and in the private sector – a multi-aim project also a promoting the inclusion of youth in local networks. . . In the disadvantaged areas social workers support students and contact employers in order to raise participation to a similar level as in the middle class areas. Summer jobs are paid about €4 per hour by the City. It is a very strategic project to support youths inclusion. It was very convincing to hear the young people talking about how they got insight into local institutions and experience of working life. There are multiple benefits such as also strengthening self-esteem and getting youth into work and also helping them to earn a little bit of money, which youth always need. And Malmö covers the costs, proof of how important the project and youth are to the city.

## 6. a Reduce segregation – **develop the inhabitants' quality of life** and undertake efforts to overcome prejudices!

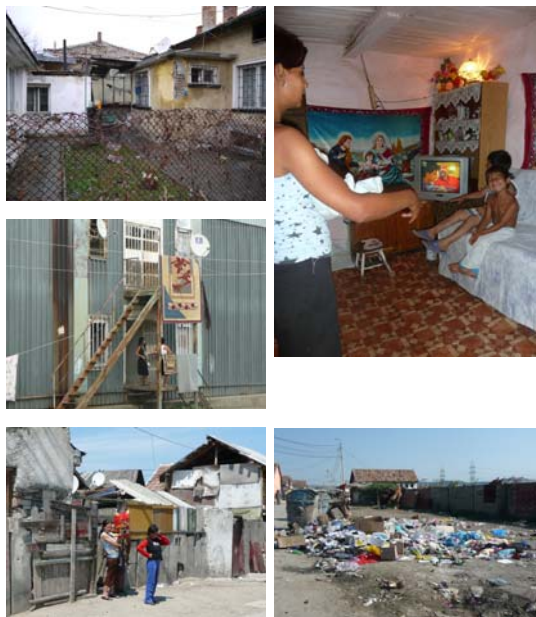


Achieving a broader social mix is often a priority objective of urban renewal projects. The main remedy to stop further segregation is integrated urban renewal, which also enlarges the housing supply, the quality of public spaces, urban traffic and so on – in addition to all the improvements in the social field. We had the chance to compare three examples, which also include major investments in the physical environment: Vaulx-en-Velin, the Malmö Fosie district and Appeldoorn South. For the political assessment it is most important to reflect on the impact of the different scale, pace and concepts of the interventions.

When the social structure doesn't change within a short time after substantial investments in urban renewal have been made, the concepts are also quickly called into question. For example, following the regional elections in France in March 2010 there was a fierce debate over the low voter turnout – up to 80% non-voters in deprived suburban areas. The very high number of non-voters was also seen as an indicator of continuing "ghettoisation" and not enough success with the "politique de la ville" programme.

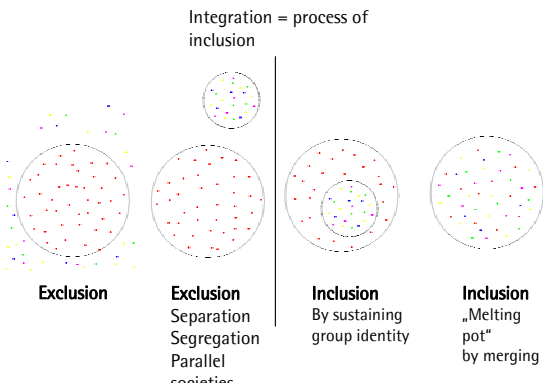
Driven by multifaceted and interwoven economic and social-psychological causes pronounced spatial segregation of the poor, migrant or other cultural minority groups is hard to cope with. "They don't mix" is an often heard sentence, even with regard to students who learn together in their classes every day. And segregation develops great dynamics – the concerned area and the scale of segregation quickly grow, which makes it more and more difficult to turn this development around – we have seen this in Sofia and Alba Iulia – though these are extreme cases.

## 6. b Reduce segregation – develop the inhabitants' quality of life **and undertake efforts to overcome prejudices!**



coping with prejudices

Integration = process of inclusion



**Exclusion**

**Exclusion**  
Separation  
Segregation  
Parallel societies

**Inclusion**  
By sustaining group identity

**Inclusion**  
„Melting pot“  
by merging

Weeber+Partner: based on Wikipedia

A major reason why pronounced spatial segregation is so difficult to cope with is because the social exclusion of ethnic and cultural minorities is an essential driving force of segregation. Generalisations and prejudices play a large role here. And in all cities citizens and also the professionals are struggling to clarify their attitudes of how to tackle the integration of minorities.

Highlights of our learning were our discussions in Sofia and Alba Iulia about the integration of the Roma minorities – a hot topic in many European countries today. The extreme examples opened our eyes to the similar basic phenomena: the French and German partners are discussing the same problems and attitudes in relation to the Muslim minorities.

We summarised 4 lessons:

- see the interrelations between self-exclusion of minorities in parallel societies and the prejudices of the majority towards the minorities – don't tap into this polarisation
- be aware, that also those far away from education act on rational decisions, they compare the benefits of being included and being excluded ...
- everybody has prejudices – however, pay attention that they don't influence your behaviour, they hinder the necessary respect towards the other individual
- Allow pluralism of living styles – this is liberty and peace, however come to agreement on which aspects of diversity are to be tolerated and which not. E.g. the legal obligation of parents to send their school-aged children to school.

The main conclusion is: Views about integration and identity are all too often indiscriminate and crudely-formed. Very often people who belong to the majority would like to see integration as a melting pot like the picture on the right. The once different group has lost its former identity and merged into mainstream society. An increased and more open dialogue can better the chances of change – to organise this is a main task in neighbourhood management.

## 7 Better the neighbourhood's connections to the whole city and boost the city's solidarity with the neighbourhood!



Vaulx



Zabrze



Canhumanitaire, Vaulx-en-Velin

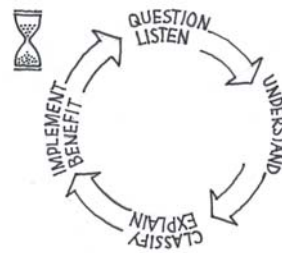
Centro Astalli, support for immigrants Ballaró, Palermo



The key-word of the 7<sup>th</sup> core task was “ a one-city mentality”. This is the needed basis of a city's capacity to cope with peoples' heterogeneous attitudes and interests and to build a positive future. How to maintain this great European tradition, despite the societies growing segmentation? We highlighted three paths in our guide book :

- Firstly: accessibility, networks, positive identity: strengthening physical contacts by good transport links and motivating events, so that people from other city areas also come to the disadvantaged neighbourhoods and know about them, a distinguishing neighbourhood profile and more.
- Secondly: the empathy and solidarity of the whole civil society – patronage, volunteering and fund raising – keeping the traditional forms alive and inventing new solutions
- Thirdly: last but not least: taking responsibility and good governance - for ameliorating deficiencies and positive future development. This is done by proactively using all the tools of new-style governance :
  - sharing diagnoses and evaluation,
  - elaborating on local action plans,
  - including citizen and local stakeholders',
  - backed up by the the leadership of the the key actors and the civil council.
  - And this is best done by embedding this into a city-wide or regional strategies.

## 7 Better the neighbourhood's connections to the whole city and boost the city's solidarity with the neighbourhood!

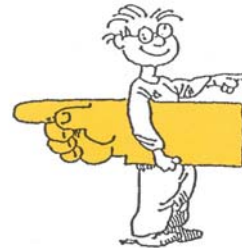


The diagnosis-action circle (A)



governance including contributions and producing results (B)

Liverpool First organisation chart – Liverpool – an evolving partnership (C)

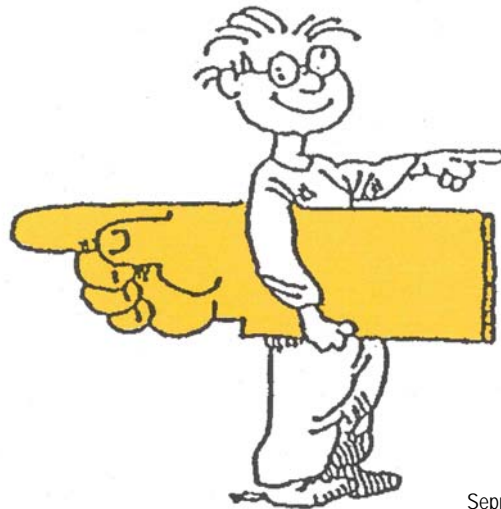


governance dealing with the contradictions (D)

And I included these small graphs in the guide book and today in the power point in order to reminds us of some frequent shortcomings:

- an interrupted diagnosis action circle – sticking to unquestioned inefficient routines (A)
- process management failures - not enough contributions and no or too weak results(B)
- integrated projects only as a singular and short-term lighthouse project – no sustainability, no implementation in a long-term framework (C)
- seeing things through rose coloured glasses: no capacity to deal with the many contradictions (D)

Despite more than ten years of experience with integrated approaches: there are still a lot of questions to answer and steps forward to take.



Sepp Buchegger

Important is the governance – dealing with the contradictions. Decisive for the long-term success is not to sweep conflicts under the carpet. Today positive thinking is highly sought after. However, this too often ends in seeing things through rose coloured glasses and in wishful thinking. E.g. achieving best cooperation between key actors by voluntary cooperation swearing by win-win chances. Or assuming participating citizens always have common welfare in mind.

Now at the end: What do we have to work on to enlarge the outcomes of integrated proceedings? In my view finding the appropriate mix of interventions and instruments should be further explored.

On the one hand, the traditional administrative procedures based on clear responsibilities and on the other hand, procedures based on voluntariness, cooperating networks, consensus oriented joint decision and self-steering.

Thank you for listening.