

European Conference *Urban Futures 2.0*, Stockholm May 3-5, 2006

Workshop presentation

What makes you mad, sad and glad in your neighbourhood, and what can you do about it? Teenagers from the suburbs of London and Stockholm, involved in the European partnership POSEIDON, share their thoughts on current living conditions. They invite workshop participants to join them in a discussion on how the adult society can encourage young people to contribute to the development of their neighbourhoods.

The future of major cities all over Europe is defined by the willingness and the capacity of the adult society to make good use of the full potential of their young citizens. Certain urban areas that are often described – and thereby stigmatised – as “deprived” are in fact teeming with creativity, inventiveness and possibilities. Given the proper support, teenagers growing up in these areas have the capacity to create strong urban societies of tomorrow.

Within POSEIDON, a partnership part-funded by the EU’s Interreg IIC programme, teenagers living in the two suburbs of Haringey (London) and Skärholmen (Stockholm) have visited each other several times in order to share thoughts on the state of their local neighbourhoods – present and future. Together with the project managers they have exchanged ideas and developed methods by which they themselves, but also the adult world, could reach out to more young people and encourage them to participate in the short- and long-term development of urban environments.

The workshop will be presented by:

- Pearl Amoateng, Chair of Youth Forum in London-Haringey (NDC area)
- Patricia Sawyerr, member of Youth Forum in London-Haringey (NDC area)
- Tobias Engstrand, member of Youth Council in Stockholm-Skärholmen
- Joakim Fröling, Stockholm-Skärholmen

All four are teenagers involved in Youth Forums and other youth groups that have been established in order to encourage young people to contribute to the development of their local communities.

Moderators:

- Jason Bradley, Youth Development Officer in London-Haringey (NDC area)
- Susanna Brolin, Youth Development Officer in Stockholm-Skärholmen

Venue:

The workshop is to be held at The City Theatre in Skärholmen, a recently established branch of Stockholm’s City Theatre. The facility in Skärholmen (as well as the main venue located in the heart of Stockholm) is fully funded by the City Council. The theatre was established in the suburb of Skärholmen not only to perform plays to audiences from all over Stockholm but also to offer students in the upper secondary school of the area an

opportunity to study drama, music and dance. These programmes have been set up in co-operation with the city's Education Committee. Both the theatre and the educational programmes have become immediate successes.

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE

The teenagers and youth development officers presenting the workshop have met within the European Partnership POSEIDON (Partnership On Socio-Economic and Integrated Development Of deprived Neighbourhoods). Early on in this partnership, which includes a total of six cities and urban areas throughout Europe, the two partners London-Haringey and Stockholm decided to bring young people into the working processes of POSEIDON.

The result of this particular focus on youth has been very exciting and stimulating, for both project managers and youngsters. Teenagers from the two cities have met several times over the last year, visiting each other's schools, youth clubs and neighbourhoods, exchanging everyday experiences, adopting new ways of viewing one's neighbourhood, developing interesting new methods to deal with shared challenges.

Both Stockholm and Haringey have come to view this youth aspect of the POSEIDON partnership as the most rewarding one, and also the most promising for the future. Elaborating strategies and methods by which young people living in Europe's many marginalised urban areas will be given access, on their own terms, to development and decision-making processes within these communities are among the most crucial challenges of adult society all over Europe, and throughout the world.

1. What is POSEIDON?

The partnership of POSEIDON comprises six European cities and urban areas – Amsterdam, Genoa, London-Haringey, North Kent, Stockholm and Vienna – with the aim to promote mutual strategic reflection on local neighbourhood management policies, for further developing existing policies and introducing new ones.

The overall goal is to enhance social cohesion and to improve living conditions as well as the general image of marginalised urban neighbourhoods in the partner areas. The main target groups addressed are key policy stakeholders, non-public organisations, and individual citizens living in deprived urban neighbourhoods.

Against the background of a spacial fragmentation of cities and the increasing concentration of social risks within specific urban areas, measures that aim at revitalizing these deprived urban zones have become an essential challenge and task for Europe-wide, national and also local urban development policies since the mid-1990's. POSEIDON intends to make a contribution to the wider INTERREG IIIC co-operation topic "Interregional co-operation in the field of urban development".

POSEIDON was launched in January 2004 and will end in December 2006. The partnership tackles the challenge of developing an innovative and integrated approach as well as new methods that aim at the systematic establishment of economic development and social inclusion at the local level.

The total budget of the POSEIDON partnership amounts to approximately €2.2 million and is co-financed under the INTERREG IIIC "East Zone" Community Initiative Programme, with EU funding of about €1 million.

1.1 Neighbourhood management

Area or neighbourhood management is a strategic approach that ideally forms part of a broader urban development concept. It aims at the systematic establishment of sustainable local structures in order to develop these areas in social and economic terms. Neighbourhood management mainly concentrates on co-ordination, moderation and brokerage of different local interests, and may be considered the driving force that motivates local stakeholders to participate actively and self-responsibly within the process of social and economic development of their immediate neighbourhood.

1.2 POSEIDON themes

The POSEIDON co-operation strategy covers the following three over-arching themes.

I. Contents, instruments and structural patterns of neighbourhood management policies:

- Neighbourhood management policies dealing with the improvement of the population's quality of life.
- Achievement of stronger social and ethnic inclusion.
- Organisational context of local neighbourhood management policies.

II. Communication with / consultation of local communities and direct involvement of inhabitants living in deprived urban neighbourhoods:

- Approaches stimulating communication and community consultation in deprived neighbourhoods.
- Initiatives aiming at the empowerment of inhabitants and increasing community involvement.
- Participation and development of local partnerships.

III. Projects improving the socio-economic situation in deprived neighbourhoods:

- Strengthening educational, cultural, sports and leisure offers and activities.
- Improvement of childcare facilities, job re-insertion or gender mainstreaming activities.
- Supporting local businesses and the ethnic economy.
- Setting up of local alliances for integrated urban renewal measures.

1.3 Output and results

POSEIDON aims at generating practical and visible output and results both at inter-regional level and within each partner area. By area-based activities, POSEIDON will practically contribute to the field of urban renewal and will improve existing policy frameworks for urban developments. The partnership will also elaborate innovative pilot projects and allow the partners to actually implement and test innovative initiatives.

2. POSEIDON pilot projects and target areas

Running through most part of the POSEIDON three-year period are the pilot projects planned and implemented by all partner cities in order to find out new ways of dealing with local community challenges and to try out methods learned during exchanges of experiences with the other partner cities.

The six partner areas are implementing ten pilot projects in all. Stockholm has planned and are implementing three different project, two of them focusing on youth empower-

ment. London-Haringey have set up two pilot projects, one of them in particular dealing with involving and empowering young people.

2.1 London-Haringey

London-Haringey is an outer London borough which has a registered population of about 216,000. However, the real population figure is assumed to be some 250,000 since there was a 17 % non-response rate to the census. The borough is characterised by its huge ethnic and cultural diversity. A Member of Parliament has described Tottenham (east of Haringey) as the most multi-cultural constituency in the UK and possibly in Europe. Some 193 languages are spoken – some 12 % of the Haringey population comprises refugees and asylum seekers – by a population estimated at about 20,000 people.

These "new communities" join established working class and ethnic communities, since Haringey and Tottenham in particular has always welcomed people from other countries. The African Caribbean, Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities have been established for several decades now and have been joined in recent years by Turks, Kurds, West Africans, Iraqis, Somalis, and more recently eastern Europeans. Against this background, population mobility and transience are key issues affecting all services across the borough.

Seven Sisters, one of Haringey's two target areas for the POSEIDON partnership, is located in South Tottenham and was one of 38 areas in the UK selected for a national regeneration programme entitled the New Deal for Communities. The area is one of the 88 most deprived districts in England and Wales, which is how it qualified for assistance from the New Deal programme. There are significant problems with poor housing, poor environment and crime and community safety.

2.1.1 Urban development efforts

The New Deal for Communities is a ten-year Government programme. The Seven Sisters area will benefit from a cash injection of £50 million over that period. The NDC is governed by a Board consisting of residents, local councillors and other key partners such as the Police and the Primary Care Trust (Health Authority). The Board also has Theme Groups which work on specific issues, such as youth, the environment and crime.

The thinking behind the New Deal for Communities was to put local residents in the driving seat to spearhead regeneration in their local areas. The Chair of the NDC Board in Seven Sisters is a local resident, and local residents also chair many of the Theme Groups. The NDC is working with residents and partners to, in effect, lift the whole area.

Much has already been achieved in the area since the project began, and the NDC has acted as a springboard for piloting and mainstreaming innovative and exciting policies and projects. Some of these ideas, such as the Clean Team, the Group Repair Scheme and the NDC Youth Forum, have spread to other parts of Haringey and beyond, and are very popular with residents.

2.1.2 Creating the leaders of tomorrow today – The NDC POSEIDON project

This project is all about enabling young people and their families to contribute and be part of the community, particularly those coming from diverse and migrant communities.

Overall goal

- Enabling young people and their families to contribute and be part of their community
- Sharing experiences with the POSEIDON partners on youth participation in democracy and in decision making.

- Developing long lasting links with European partners by way of school and youth group exchanges initiated by young people.
- Enhancing the capacity of young people involved in decision making.
- Understanding our diverse and migrant communities so that we promote cohesion and integration in our neighbourhood.
- Creating the leaders of tomorrow and Youth Citizenship in diverse and transient communities.

Steps

- Developing a Youth Forum Committee and other youth groups – develop understanding how to utilise the political framework to deliver change to be achieved through training, exchanges, visits to other projects and through the delivery of their own project.
- Empower and give young people a permanent voice in the ownership of services targeted at young people in the South Tottenham area (including decision making, budget management and quality assurance/evaluation).
- Developing the link between today's leaders and tomorrow's through a youth mentoring scheme.
- The Youth Forum Committee in the NDC will be further developed through the exchanges and visits from young people in other POSEIDON countries.

The NDC area has been subject to much scrutiny, monitoring and research over the course of its five year regeneration programme. The aim is to ensure that this project provides targeted information which will enable development of a more inclusive programme and better participation processes, mechanisms and methods into future regeneration interventions.

2.2 Stockholm-Skärholmen

Stockholm is represented in the POSEIDON partnership by two of its eighteen city district areas, Skärholmen and Rinkeby. One pilot project has been set up in Rinkeby, two in Skärholmen.

The district of Skärholmen is situated at lake Mälaren in the southwestern region of Stockholm, 25 minutes by underground from the inner city and the City Hall. The area has 31 000 inhabitants, 32 % of them under the age of 25. It is rich in nature, country walks, cultural heritage sites and beaches. The area was built in the 1960's when the Swedish government ordered one million apartments to be built in just a few years, to deal with lack of proper housing. Most of the residents in Skärholmen live in rental housing. Some 40 % are immigrants and more than 80 languages are spoken in the area. Statistics show a high level of inhabitants unemployed, in need of social assistance and/or having low income. The average income is €21 800.

2.2.1 Urban development efforts

Skärholmen has been targeted for several urban development programmes during the last decade. At present Skärholmen is part of the Swedish Government's Metropolitan Policy (in progress since 1999) as well as the Stockholm City Council's programme on City District Regeneration (in progress since 2003).

With the City District Regeneration programme, starting in 2003, Stockholm City Council has initiated a long term, cohesive neighbourhood development programme in the suburbs, involving both City District Councils, Specialist Committees and municipal companies. Up until December 2006, a total of €65 million is being invested in nine city district council areas. The programme is a tool for creating participation and co-operation. It is a tool that brings together individual Stockholmers and municipal actors in the pursuit of jointly formulated visions and goals for the continued development of the city's districts.

Everyone contributes their unique knowledge and experience. The municipality's resources are coordinated and used effectively.

It was decided early on in the process that the focus of the programme should be on the positive aspects of the target areas, rather than on the negative. The guidelines are focusing on the capacity of young people, especially in the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural environments of the suburbs, of being inventive, innovative and entrepreneurial. In order to be successful, development initiatives need to focus on empowerment and capacity building.

2.2.2 Empowerment of young people – one of Skärholmen's POSEIDON projects

The pilot project is set within the overall strategy of the City District Council to create a youth leisure time organisation that is based on the empowerment of young people. The POSEIDON pilot project is the establishment of a Youth Leisure Centre and several smaller youth clubs – the clubs being located in three secondary schools in the area and the Centre as a separate facility in the centre of Skärholmen.

Following the decision by the City District Council on the overall principles regarding the project, the project managers have been reaching out to young people in the area, making an inventory of needs and expectations and inviting teenagers to join the working groups who are now in charge of planning and eventually launching both the centre and the smaller clubs. In parallel to this process, a Youth Council has been established, it's members being elected by the pupils of secondary schools in Skärholmen. The Youth Forum is now playing a major role with regards to the planning of the various activities within the Youth Leisure Centre.

The aim of the City District Council is that the methods being used in order to reach out to young people, encouraging them to get involved and contribute to the establishment of the youth facilities, will eventually be implemented into the ordinary public services, in order to give young people a say in all public activities that in any way concern them.

This POSEIDON pilot project is co-financed by the City Council's City District Regeneration programme.

For more information on POSEIDON, visit www.poseidon-partnership.net.



And now, finally, back to the young people. In preparing to attend our workshop, we would like you to reflect upon the following topics:

- What makes you mad, sad and glad about where you come from?
- What model of integration do you want for your city or local area?
- How would you, in your own city, in your capacity as councillor, public servant, researcher etc, be able to help strengthen the opportunities of young people to contribute to and influence the further development of their local communities?