

Network for community development with marginalised social groups

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Cooperativa Estratègies de Transformació Comunitària Sostenible, SPAIN
Association of Local Democracy Agencies, FRANCE
Association of Community Developers, HUNGARY

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1. Introduction

1.1 Who we are

This guide is one of the outputs of a partnership formed by four European organisations involved in community work and citizen participation with disadvantaged or marginalised social groups in numerous and diverse locations throughout Europe. The social groups facing exclusion in the different countries are very different - from the urban poor of new immigrants in Western Europe to the extreme poverty of segregated Eastern-European Roma and other minorities in small rural settlements – many of the problems they meet are similar. The partnering organisations have expertise with numerous methods and approaches in community development and fostering active citizen participation and many of these methods can be adapted between the varying contexts of the participating countries. The aim of the project is to allow for the mutual learning of innovative tools of community work with marginalized social groups in order to strengthen the capacity of the partnering organisation to introduce methodological innovations cutting across professional boundaries in combating poverty and supporting the social integration and citizen participation of excluded social groups.



1.2 Members of the partnership

Scottish Community Development Centre in Glasgow, Scotland, UK

We are a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, and we are the lead organisation for community development in Scotland. We work at different levels and with different stakeholders in community development. We work directly with community groups to help them improve their organisation and its effectiveness and to help them plan their work. We work with staff and managers of the NHS, local authorities and voluntary organisations to help them develop and improve their relationship with communities. We also work at governmental level advising on policy and delivering certain national programmes across Scotland. All our work has a specific equalities focus and usually is concentrated on areas and issues of poverty and/or social exclusion.

Supported by the Carnegie UK Trust Rural Action Research Programme we produced a practice guide to community development in rural areas. It contains a curriculum framework for the participation of residents / activist; community development and other support persons; programme managers and

intermediaries and for policy leaders. It also outlines approaches to community development with deprived and excluded communities, including the assets approach, the community building approach and the community planning / engagement approach. Separately we have produced, distributed and supported the effective use of several practice resources including: LEAP - an outcome-driven framework for participatory project planning and evaluation; the National Standards for Community Engagement - to encourage constructive and effective relationships between public agencies and communities; SCORE - a resource for assessing the level of community competence, cohesion, organisation and influence as the basis for informing community work priorities; and SCARF - which supports communities to investigate, understand and evidence community issues as a basis for taking action.

Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) in Strasbourg, France

The Association of Local Democracy Agencies is a NGO founded in 1999 to coordinate the network of 13 Local Democracy Agencies (LDA) existing since 1993 in the Balkans. The LDAs, set up by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, were originally conceived to provide concrete assistance to war-ravaged municipalities in the former Yugoslavia, through partnerships with their counterparts in Western Europe.

LDAs grew, over the years, into a genuine network seeking to strengthen local democracy, promote a pluralistic civil society, tolerant and trust-based relationships within communities and improving life conditions. The achievement of LDAs' work resulted in the creation of their network, ALDA, to coordinate their growing system. In 2005 ALDA decided to take its experience to another troubled region in need of post-conflict reconstruction, the Southern Caucasus. In September 2006, ALDA opened its 12th LDA in Kutaisi, Georgia.

Today, ALDA facilitates collaboration within the network of 12 LDAs in the Western Balkans and Southern Caucasus, involving 300 members and partners (towns, regions and NGOs) from 30 European countries. It functions similarly to the towns twinning system, bringing together in the long run local governments and civil society supporting different initiatives in the field of local governance. In addition, ALDA provides the LDAs with technical and administrative support and represents its members in negotiations with institutions and funding agencies, especially with the Council of Europe.

Current projects range from transborder cooperation seminars, capacity building for local authorities and NGOs, youth and women empowerment and training on European integration. ALDA promotes active European citizenship and citizens' participation, fosters local governance and youth policies, and is more and more focusing on the issue of voluntarism.

Cooperativa Estratègies de Transformació Comunitària Sostenible (ETCS CO-OP) in Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain

ETCS co-op is a social economy cooperative aiming to develop and empower individuals, groups, networks and communities to address social issues and achieve social change in Barcelona City and Catalunya Region. ETCS is a value driven organization, the core values underpinning ETCS co-op's actions are social justice and commitment; trust and autonomy building; responsibility; complexity and action – learning.

The main issues ETCS co-op is tackling are social inclusion of disadvantaged people, education, community health and occupation. ETCS co-op works directly with community groups and other stakeholders using community work and participatory-based approaches like Empowerment, Asset Based Community Development, Participatory – Action – Research, Community Organizing, Community Development and Network building.

Since its creation in 2004, ETCS co-op is also advising local and regional policy makers about how to improve the community work with disadvantage people as well as how to engage citizens in public affairs like local government budgetary decisions, urban planning, sustainable agendas and educational programmes.

Association of Community Developers, Hungary

The Hungarian Association for Community Development (HACD) has been functioning as an association since March, 1989, but the founding core has been working together since the mid-seventies. It is a not-for-profit NGO with a nation-wide network of about 250 members with different social and professional backgrounds. The members of the association are all volunteers.

HACD works for the strengthening of civil society, with the aim of encouraging and enabling people to act locally in any field concerning their life. We contribute to democratic practices which will enable people to participate in decision-making processes, to select among alternatives, to take responsibility, to manage themselves, to learn co-operation, to represent their interests, to resolve conflicts, to arrive at a consensus, etc. We believe that the objective of a strong civil society should not be confined to charity and aiding those in need, but it should also aim at active citizenship.

HACD is presently involved - with three other nonprofit organizations - in a four-year project with the aim of providing professional support for community social work for people living in deep poverty in the most underdeveloped regions of Hungary. The methodological challenges of that project is closely related to the themes sought in the present partnership. The role of HACD is organising a workshop on community work with marginalised groups and sharing its experiences on cross-sectoral development work.

1.3 When and what we did

24 October 2011, First coordination meeting in Budapest, Hungary

1-2 March 2012, Visit to Strasbourg, France

13-15 June 2012, Visit to Glasgow, Scotland, UK

25-24 October 2012, Visit to Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain

9-12 April 2013, Visit to Hungary

1.4 What this guide is about

The objective of the partnership and of this guide is to facilitate the mutual learning of innovative tools of community development that tackle the problems of marginalized social groups in different regions of Europe. The main aim will be to share knowledge and experiences of innovative,

interdisciplinary, community based methods effective in combating poverty that can be adapted in other countries, in different local contexts.

There are numerous initiatives of community development and community work throughout Europe and many organisations with significant expertise in these fields. Experience shows that though the marginalized groups can be very different in these countries – from the urban poor of new immigrants in Western Europe to the extremely poor Eastern-European Roma in small, segregated rural settlements – many of the problems are similar and many of the methods can be adapted between the contexts. Mutual learning will strengthen the partner organisations in their resources to bring activity to disintegrated communities and enable them to have a definitive role in shaping their way out of deprivation. The aim is to bring methodological innovations cutting across professional boundaries, combining elements of community development and social work, for introducing new approaches of development in seriously marginalized, deprived, often ghettoized localities. The goal of each partner is to facilitate progress that does not only bring anti-poverty measures but also supports the social integration of different excluded groups.

2. Core values and principles addressing poverty, marginalisation and oppression through community work

The perpetual reproduction, geographical extension and intensifying of poverty in certain regions of Europe is one of the most pressing social and developmental issues to face in the next years. It is exacerbated by the impact of the worldwide economic downturn, and by the increasing levels of inequality within and between regions. Efforts to support the social inclusion of people living in deep poverty are manifold but often ineffective, partly because developments in the different fields do not converge in cross-sectoral synergies. Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that needs interventions that combine instruments of different professional fields. Poverty combines disadvantages in the field of education, employment, housing, access to social and health services and often leads to the decomposition of local communities. Developments initiated from outside of the community usually tackles one of the main problems but cannot bring change to the overall situation of depressed settlements without developing local community relationships, mobilizing the population of the neighbourhood concerned and fostering dialogue among different communities. We know that where communities can play a central role in building on their social and economic assets they become more resilient, more sustainable, and healthier. Although this is generally recognised at a policy level in most of the countries, there is insufficient priority or attention given to supporting the weakest communities to take action on the issues they confront. Through this project we intend to encourage the necessary change in mindset and resource distribution to enable this to change.

Core values and principles underpinning our community work¹

As community practitioners we should explicitly recognise the guiding role of values. Values and principles are our compass, getting us closer to our desired future scenarios. Knowing one's values –

¹ Adapted from Kagan (2011) and Nelson & Prilleltensky.

where we stand- does not guarantee ethical coherence, but without this self understanding it is very difficult to negotiate the dilemmas of community practice. We could consider three core values underpinning our work to address poverty, marginalization and oppression throughout our actions.

The values of social justice and well-being, values that lead to the articulation of the following rights; to a more equal and equitable distribution of resources, to live in peace and in freedom from constraints; to equality and fair treatment; and to self determination.

The value of Community, a value that leads to the articulation of the following hopes and desires: for companionship, love, acceptance and tolerance; to be included and for diversity to be welcomed and celebrated; that our individual and collective flaws will not hide our potential and that we will be accepted for who we are.

The value of stewardship, a value that leads to the articulation of the following duties and responsibilities: to look after our world and the people in it; to enable people to make a contribution and gain a sense of belonging; to not waste things, people's lives or time; to think long-term, to make things last longer than us and to do things as right as we can.

To put such values into practice we can consider some principles for action, core principles underlying the strategies shared within our partnership.

Liberation through empowerment. Community work aims to be a liberatory praxis, working to free people and communities from oppression, marginalization and pain. A commitment to oppressed communities is needed. Empowering people and communities require processes by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community and a critical understanding of their environment, this means to share power as professionals, even lose it sometimes. Asset based approaches; progressive community organizing; and promotion are good examples of such processes.

Allow for diversity. Community work considers seriously the need to respect and work with diverse people, groups and communities. It recognises the importance of such variety of need, interest, aspiration, culture, ability and identity. Citizen participation within decision making, action planning and delivering; development of stakeholders alliances; commitment with the life of people in community are good strategies to cope with diversity.

Promote innovation. While many traditions are valuable resources, society and communities are far from perfect and there is a great need to improve settings and the social practices within them. Enhance social innovation as a principle allows facing new and old challenges and taking advantage of the growing opportunities. Mutual learning through networking and collaboration, co-design thinking and long life learning are excellent strategies to promote innovation, all them enhanced by the emergent role of social networks sites and other ICT tools.

Critical reflection. As community practitioners we learn from our practice, its successes and failures and from those with whom we are weaved, community work is an interdisciplinary-based field. It refuses complacency, being restless in its search to learn from multiple sources. Community stakeholders-based assessment and action-learning are good strategies underlying this core principle.

3. Reflections on experiences

In this section of the report we introduce the contextual backgrounds visited in the study, it attempts to add territorial, economical and cultural information that will help to go deeper in understanding the partnership reflections on the following paragraph: case studies.

3.1. Community development and poverty: reflections on experience in Scotland²

In the post-war years the economic base of urban Scotland moved rapidly away from the heavy engineering, mining and steelmaking industries that had been the mainstay of relative prosperity for a century. At the same time, many of the established neighbourhoods in inner-city areas were redeveloped – to make way for new, high-rise estates or motorways. In either case this resulted in the displacement of established neighbourhoods and communities to peripheral housing estates, new towns, or the redeveloped inner city high rise estates.

These changes had a profound impact – both on levels of poverty, and on the ability of communities to protect, support and nurture families and children. There was a rapid increase in welfare-dependent poverty and a disintegration of community, as people struggled to establish family life in alien places with few facilities, high transport costs and few employment opportunities. Much attention at the time was given to knife crime, youth disorder and family breakdown as recognised consequences of these economic and social changes.

By the mid-1960s a number of small and disparate community projects were emerging, often attached to church or voluntary organisations, and some of these survive to this day. But government and local government were starting to take a more active interest in deprivation and poverty, and what might be done to alleviate them. By the 1970s a series of pilot and action-research projects were in place in neighbourhoods in Paisley, Greenock and Motherwell. At this time, local government directly managed around 70% of all housing in Scotland. Housing allocation policies were seen as a particular reason for poverty and disadvantage to be concentrated in relatively small, but unattractive and undesirable neighbourhoods. So a model of anti-poverty community development work emerged with a small area focus, and with a particular concern for housing issues and the active involvement of community workers drawn from a social work tradition that saw a clear role in prevention of social and community breakdown, as much as in picking up the pieces.

This model gained greater currency throughout the 1980s as Strathclyde Regional Council (then the largest local authority in Europe) and others adopted a strategic approach to tackling deprivation and disadvantage, deploying a substantial workforce and continuing to focus on those areas with the greatest levels of disadvantage, including targeted work with women, ethnic minorities and disabled people. While it was acknowledged that there was little local government could do to address the root causes of poverty, much work was done on welfare rights and income maintenance: on community enterprise and employability; on encouraging community control over community

² Adapted from an article originally published in Practice Insights, IACD (ref)

initiatives; on campaigning and action groups and on engaging community representatives in decisions on local development and service delivery.

These gains were undermined in the 1990s as a reorganisation of local government did away with the regional councils and their commitment to community work; with a retrenchment in social work for a community approach to a risk management, protectionist model; and the consequent reduction in the numbers of community workers in the most challenging communities. By this time, however, a significant network of community organisations had built up across urban Scotland and these organisations were often able to continue to lead local development and maintain a voice in policy. With the establishment of a devolved Scottish parliament in 1999 and the creation of a Ministerial post for Social Justice (subsequently Communities) a recognition of the problems of small excluded neighbourhoods (and groups such as care leavers, learning disabled people and others) resurfaced and 48 social inclusion partnerships were established, mainly on a small area model, with the general aim of addressing issues of poverty and exclusion in communities through supported dialogue between community representatives and service agencies, implementing the actions agreed through this dialogue. The small area focus was largely lost with the introduction of community planning after 2003, although local authorities and their partners were expected to concentrate particular effort and resources on the 'worst' 15% of census districts in Scotland. Following the election of a SNP administration in 2007, a concordat between government and local government was established and adopted a 'national performance framework' which sets out to address inequalities in health, life chances for children and young people, and in employability rather than poverty as such.

In the third sector a significant number of organisations work locally and nationally, aiming to keep the issue of poverty on the policy agenda and to encourage a focus on working with people in poverty. The Poverty Alliance seeks to influence policies at all levels that have an impact on poverty and can create the conditions for a more socially just Scotland. They carry out this work through a range of activities: campaigns, lobbying, networking, project work, awareness-raising, and training, working alongside people experiencing poverty to have their voices heard.

Themes emerging in more recent years include significant work on community engagement – seeking to encourage more productive relationships between communities and government; an ever-stronger concern with the relationship between poverty, inequality and health outcomes; and an emerging interest in asset-led approaches to community development entailing both the idea of encouraging communities to take ownership or control of land, buildings, services and organisations to work for community benefit, and the idea of seeing people and communities as having social and human assets to build on, rather than as problems to be dealt with.

Prospects for the poorest communities, and for community development, are not encouraging. Austerity programmes in response to long-term recession are doubly disadvantaging the already most disadvantaged. Severe cuts in welfare benefit payments to disabled people, job-seekers and tenants of social housing mean that poor people are becoming poorer – both relatively and absolutely. Meanwhile the public services that are most required by those communities are the most vulnerable to budget cuts and cost savings so their long-standing concern to help alleviate some of the impact of poverty on people's lives is severely compromised. And – perhaps it is a triple disadvantage – resources to support community development and to support deprived communities to become more resilient and sustainable are also reducing. Having acknowledged that, it is also

important to understand that in many poorer communities there are active and innovative organisations run and managed by community members that are achieving economic gains, managing social housing, growing and distributing healthy food cheaply; providing care and support to the most vulnerable; creating opportunities in arts and sports for young people and many other things. The challenge for community development is to help government understand the nature and extent of this network, encourage government to work with this resource more creatively and freely, and to commit resources to the least developed neighbourhoods and communities to encourage this community infrastructure to grow and become ever more relevant to people's lives.

The two main themes of the Scotland study visit were social poverty and displacement. What we mean by social poverty is that – to some visitors - Scotland will not appear to be poor. They will see reasonably decent houses, cars etc and may conclude that there is not a problem of poverty. However, whilst there is little absolute poverty (although arguably this is increasing with the current economic climate and its effects on unemployment, homelessness, giving rise to more demand for food banks etc) there is a high degree of relative poverty and inequality, which shows up in the poor health record, drugs and alcohol, social stress, territorialism and lack of community infrastructure in some of Scotland's most disadvantaged and disenfranchised communities. Some of the wealthiest and poorest communities are only a few miles apart from each other and the issues, and community development response for each is very different.

The other theme is displacement, which is about the movement of people as a consequence of poverty or powerlessness. Often because of new developments, motorways, and regeneration initiatives people are (sometimes forcibly) moved out of their community and dispersed to other areas – away from their social and family ties, and into unfamiliar surroundings which can cause distress and alienation.

3.2. Community Action as a social policy in pursuit of social inclusion and well-being: reflections on experience in Barcelona, Catalonia (Spain)

Throughout the Barcelona study field visit we aimed to:

- Share the “Community Action Framework” lead by Barcelona local authorities and other communities' stakeholders.
- Introduce a contextual background about poverty and social exclusion in Catalonia Region.
- Field visits to *Community Development Plans (CDP)* and other community actions.
- Share some innovative tools to tackle social exclusion: social theatre and solidarity economy.

Since the last decade, local authorities have encouraged many experiences and methodological approaches related with participatory democracy and community organising. This phenomenon can be due to different factors:

- Increased limitations by the State in order to carry out and sustain inclusive and integrative public policies, especially in a dynamic society with increasing inequalities and complexities.

- Conviction of some left wing sectors is that the present representative democracy system excludes citizen participatory potential. Citizen participation can contribute to a better quality, efficiency and legitimization of public policies.
- Empowerment and rise of social movements and community organizations at present.
- Increasing awareness of the limitations and prejudices on the liberal culture of individualism, competitiveness and market hegemony. This awareness encourages some social sectors towards cohesion, public and collective approach.

With regards to Community Action model, we can assert that a major boost has been encouraged by Barcelona Local Authorities in the last decade (2000 – 2010). Looking back we could set three mayor stages to explain the development of Community Action as a public policy:

First stage – the 80's: At the time the first democratic city councils started their work, they began to include the community participatory culture in many of their structures, mainly technical or professional. In their first terms, the city councils developed either social community work proposals and programmes or administrative and political decentralization of their structures, services and equipment.

Second stage – late 80's and early 90's: The previous gains were undermined by a “new public management” approach. The local authorities gave up the community approach in favour of what was called “new public management”, mainly based on a private management approach. This new public management dealt with “cases”, “users” or “clients” who had to be attended one by one. As a consequence, the focus of the problems (and their solutions) moved from the social to the individual.

Third stage – mid 90's to the present: The new public management approach begins to reveal that it neither served to deal with cohesion and social inclusion within problematic areas and urban peripheries, nor did it face challenges like the new complexities associated with all areas of life (education, health, urban sustainability, diversity, coexistence and so on). These issues demand negotiation rather than efficiency and cannot be tackled without the involvement of stakeholders in order to face challenges. At this third stage was necessary to pause and design a social policy plan for community action suitable for the present day in the city of Barcelona.

Community action in Barcelona as a social policy: We would like to point out that community action does not begin and end with the local authorities. Non – governmental community action, the one fostered by citizens, associations and community organizations, has not ceased since the arrival of democracy.

Going back to community action encouraged by local authorities, we cannot say the same. After the break in mid-90's, community action as a social policy started its new journey. We can point out three major factors that are involved in this new boost:

- Community and civic actions Programmes encouraged by the regional authority (*Generalitat de Catalunya*), more specifically through the implementation of the *Community Development Plans (CDP)*. Since 1996, these plans have been carried out within some neighbourhoods of Barcelona city.
- The professionals concern about the “Personal and Social Services Approach” in some districts of the city. This concern was about the need to add community action strategies to these public

services to better face the problems in the neighbourhoods to which the “New public management approach” could not give appropriate answers.

- The constitution of a new local government in 2003, for which community action became a priority issue within social and local policies, as can be seen in the “Municipal Action Program”. The “Municipal Action Program” is the document that represents the local government board agreement, and establishes the legislature political priorities. The priority of community action was included in the first (2004-2007) and second term (2007-2011). Thus, community action became a priority public policy for the city council of Barcelona. Since May 2011 a new government has been set up which neither has yet declared its wish in terms of community action as a social policy nor blocked the previous efforts.

These three factors are the precedents that push the publication of the “Municipal framework for Community action”³, which represents the consolidation of this new community action period as a social policy in Barcelona. Within this framework many publications have been edited which try to go deeper in the community action concept and knowledge in Barcelona. Since 2010, community action is defined as a public policy in terms of three levels or intervention typologies:

- **Community Development Plans (CDP):** Defined as “Public processes of community action, with a strong emphasis on education and values which, from a global vision, face transformation and improvement of an area to increase the quality of life of its citizens. A process in which participation is the strategy and a core element to achieve the goals, by engaging citizens, community organizations, public services, local and regional politicians and other stakeholders.
- **Collective actions lead by Public Social Services:** Defined as “group and community-based actions, undertaken with other services and the people who share a need to address a social problem. This group of people feel themselves accompanied by the professionals in pursuit of a solution to their problems or concerns. Depending on intensity, we can characterize three typologies: informative or public awareness action; mutual help groups and support actions; and actions that support neighbourhood actions.
- **Solidarity exchange networks:** Defined as “community actions with deep local roots, that in common have the aim to enhance social weaving and as a consequence leverage social capital. Values and principles like solidarity, trust and shared responsibility are in the roots of these experiences, intensifying citizen’s ties. We can distinguish four different typologies: “time banks” and solidarity banks; knowledge exchange networks; goods exchange networks; and agro-ecological consumption cooperatives and others co-ops.

The city council of Barcelona, in its last report published in 2009, informs about 283 community action experiences in the city, involving more than 584 community organizations.

The programme set up for the Barcelona study field visit within the Grundtvig Learning Partnership strived to showcase experiences and realities of Community Action in Barcelona.

³ The “Cooperativa Estratègies de Transformació Comunitària Sostenible” was one of the advisors in the policy design.

3.3 European Citizenship and Citizens Participation in Europe: the experience of ALDA

Nowadays, while the EU is experiencing a constant evolution and new challenges, ALDA believes that European citizens have a key and primary role in building Europe. For this reason, ALDA has been promoting and implementing projects, actions and debates regarding the future of Europe, the necessity to get Europe closer to its citizens and the importance of a wider involvement of citizens in the life of community, both at the local and the European level, with the aim to promote good governance throughout Europe.

In these last ten years, at least, new forms of consultations of citizens, interacting with decision makers have been put in place. It goes from consultative bodies to more binding partnerships with citizens and associations. In many fields and for many topics, instruments have been used to reach citizens that usually could not be contacted, through citizens' panels, for instance. Furthermore and in particular at the local level, committees of citizens are interacting on several issues with the elected representatives and mobilize themselves to influence the decision-making.

The practice of citizens' participation in Europe has been praised and valued. In a complex and fast society like ours, extremely globalised, the capacity to have inputs from the interested parts increase the possibility to reach a better results in decisions and then action. Indeed, the value of citizens' participation should be proved when the decision made with this modality creates more benefit than those taken without this methodology.

The programme Europe for Citizens (EfC), supported by the European Commission, offers many opportunities to support active European citizens. The programme fosters debates, consultations, interactions with the European Union Institutions and decision makers.

EfC, even if not big as for its budget is concerned, is a great resource for citizens and local authorities since it is relatively accessible and engages in many ways citizens.

ALDA has been a real key player since the very beginning of the programme, managing one of the pilot project working with the methodology of the Citizens panels (2006-2007) and becoming nowadays one of the main European actors working within this programme.

The Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process

Since the very beginning, as partner of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organizations, ALDA has been involved in the drafting of the Code of Good Practice on Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process. Upon a recommendation of the Council of Europe's Forum for the Future of Democracy, the Conference of INGOs drafted the Code of Good Practice, whose main objective has been the definition of a set of European principles and guidelines for NGOs participation in decision-making processes that are to be implemented at local and national level in Council of Europe member States.

Several regional NGOs consultation conferences were held throughout Europe before its adoption by the Conference of INGOs on 1 October 2009 and its official launching at the meeting of the Forum for the Future of Democracy in Kyiv on 21 October. ALDA usually promotes the Code within its projects, organising meeting and presentations.

Principles of Civil Society Participation stressed by the Code

Participation: NGOs are the collectors of citizens' views, opinions and needs. Such information constitutes a fundamental part of the decision-making process.

Trust: Different sectors of the society have in common a shared objective, for which they have to cooperate: people's wellbeing. Cooperation, to correctly work, must be based on mutual trust.

Accountability and Transparency: This means openness and responsibility

Independence: NGOs must be allowed to have positions different from the public authorities

Case study: My Europe, presenting the Code of Good Practice to youngsters

Within the project My Europe, ALDA presented the Code of Good Practice on Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process to youngsters coming from 14 different partners across Europe. The project aims at empowering citizens to play a full part in the democratic life at local and European level.

The event, that took place in Strasbourg from 25 to 27 June 2013, represented an occasion for youngsters to have a say and actively participate, addressing their comments and needs to local and European policy makers.

The main expected result of the event has been the drafting of recommendations on youth participation in the decision making process that has been presented during the plenary session of the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe.

The methodology of Citizens Panels

ALDA enhances and supports the active participation of citizenship through the citizens panels methodology, an innovative and constantly improving participatory method that has been successfully implemented by ALDA since 2006.

Based on a participatory methods which aim at involving citizens in the different steps of the project, a citizen's panel is a group of "ordinary citizens" who would not have spontaneously participated in projects of a European nature and paying attention to involve people of different demographic, social and professional background.

Main features

- a new methodology to promote active interaction and discussion between citizens on matters related to EU policies that affect their daily life
- a valid formula to collect the opinions of citizens on some key EU challenges for the future
- a mechanism to allow EU citizens to develop civic competences, formulate their views and opinions on the EU integration process as recommendations for policy makers at EU level
- a tool for encouraging the dialogue between EU citizens and the institutions, empowering citizens as regards EU policies and their impact, and ensuring appropriate follow up of citizens' opinions

The ultimate aim of the citizens' panels is to submit recommendations on the selected theme to local decision makers and EU institutions.

A thematic approach is needed to better use the potentials of these activities and to assure interaction with decision-makers. Usually the number of participants involved in each local citizen panel is 40, including a wide range of profiles and focus on the whole spectrum of society: volunteers, teachers, NGOs representatives, representatives of the sport sector, disadvantaged people, etc.

Granting Opportunities for Active Learning: a best practice of Citizens panels tackling immigrants participation

The project Granting Opportunities for Active Learning (GOAL) aimed at promoting citizen participation in the construction of a tighter-knit, democratic, world-oriented and united Europe, tackling the challenge of immigration and emigration as opportunities to develop active citizenship and sense of ownership of the EU, whilst enhancing tolerance, solidarity and mutual understanding. The project presented a set of activities that granted citizens the chance to interact – both at the local and at the European level – and offered them the occasion to “work” together towards a common aim.

GOAL specific aim was to further improve the methodology of “citizens’ panels” adding the component of immigration.

Groups of citizens⁴ from different European countries met in 2011 to discuss the effects of migration on their local communities and draw up recommendations to make the best of the situation. These citizens’ panels united immigrants, representatives of local authorities and other stakeholders as well as ordinary citizens. Organised in six European countries dealing with different migration movements, the panels jointly discussed and defined their recommendations.

The following propositions to improve the situation of migrants in Europe and draw full benefit from their potential are the result of these discussions. The propositions have been structured according to different fields in which action is considered particularly necessary:

1. Intercultural Dialogue
2. Administrative Procedures
3. Labour Market
4. Political Participation
5. Housing

In each of the fields, the panels have identified problems, objectives and recommendations how to reach the objectives.

3.4 Background of community and social work: reflexions on experience in Hungary

Community development and community social work are relatively new disciplines in Hungary. Since the communist regime did not admit the existence of poverty in the country for a long time, social

⁴ Twelve citizens’ panels with 2 citizens’ panel activators each were organized in six different countries. Each panel involved directly around 30 participants.

work itself did not exist until the 1980-ies, when family care centres opened. Some pilot community development processes were also initiated in the early 80-ies, but other than that the mainstream of community activities were restricted within the walls of so called “culture houses” that could be found in every settlement or urban neighbourhood.

After 1990 higher education of social work started focusing on providing social services. Social work then quickly gained recognition, its legislation background was created (in 1993), and a social institutional network was developed. In 1989 the Association of Community Development was formed and the methods of community development were set up, but it never reached a higher level of institutionalisation.

Despite of the low level of acknowledgement of community development, community work has been carried out by civil organisations, and many of them has joint the Association or became part of a mainly informal network of a professional community. Good practice and success stories spread through conferences and newsletters managed by the Association.

Community development and social work came together in the 3-year EU funded project “Community integration of those living in deep poverty”, in which the Association along with other organisations form a methodological background for the 25 action groups working all around the poorer parts of Hungary. Gaining experiences from the work done in these projects the practice of community work with marginalised social groups and the cooperation among social work, community work and rural development are taking shape.

4. Case studies

In this section of the report we discuss each of the projects and organisations visited in the study. We have placed these in a three-stage model of community development, as follows:

Stage 1: engagement. This starts with discussion of how to begin to engage and work with people and communities that are extremely marginalised, isolated, vulnerable and unorganised. Through joining together, marginalised and isolated people can begin to share their experiences, support each other and begin to form organisations to take action on common needs and problems. Learning together is an important part of this process.

Stage 2: solidarity. One contacts have been made, communities can take steps themselves to improve their prospects and opportunities in employment, education, and participation in the wider society through creating organisations run by the communities themselves that provide services, support, and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable. The idea of solidarity includes the notion of a strong community infrastructure, and the development of human and social capital as the basis for further change.

Stage 3: transaction. At a more ‘advanced’ stage, the organisations that emerge from Stage 2 engage with political systems and wider civil society to bring about wider awareness of the roots of exclusion, marginalisation and poverty, and seeking to bring about social justice and human rights by influencing policies and culture is the wider world. They can also set up community enterprises employing people from the community, they can campaign and take action on issues of injustice and

human rights, they can link with others to broaden solidarity between excluded groups, and they can work collaboratively with municipalities and governments on projects and programmes.

4.1 Stage 1: engagement projects

Community work in an urban environment in Avas district of Miskolc (Hungary)

Avas is the “hill” of Miskolc, the regional centre of North-Hungary, with a symbolic lookout. Its slope facing the city has moody streets and wine-cellars, but on the southern slopes huge housing development took place between 1973 and 1985, resulting four- and ten-storey concrete blocks of houses for 38,000 dwellers and a hotbed of social problems. The apartments that used to belong to the city were mainly purchased by the dwellers after the political change. The blocks were built in 3 phases and there is a considerable difference in quality among them. Houses built in the first 2 phases have outdated mechanical equipment (elevators, lighting etc.), run down staircases and corridors. One of the biggest deficiencies of the neighbourhood is the lack of community space. With the enlargement of Avas High School a theatre was built in 2001 with one huge room, but was unable to attract locals.



Beyond the structural deficiencies, the problems accumulated with a so-called “nesting programme”. The aim was to assist families in getting loans and buying apartments. In Miskolc it went completely astray: with fake employment certificates to fit input criteria corrupt lawyers and local politicians managed to get loans and apartments for families that proved unable neither to pay the loans back nor to pay the utility fees. These people are predominantly coming from a rural environment and have no skills to live in their new, urban community. Many of them are Roma which just makes the conflicts even sharper. Many of these families got evicted later, but also many of them still stayed in the neighbourhood by moving into larger family members’ apartments or simply occupying empty flats illegally. The problems of the neighbourhood quickly reached the level where members of the original community started to move out even though the prices of apartments fell drastically.



The community development process, initiated to mitigate further conflicts, is based on three distinct but coherent pillars. *Working with the youth community* had a priority from the first moment since the whole process was started in cooperation with the local Jesuit High School. They have regular meetings where they discuss problems regarding the community and the neighbourhood, organising their representation on different forums, as well as organising numerous actions to draw people’s attention that they all need to be active in order to achieve any change.



The other pillar is the *cooperation with the institutions operating on Avas*, since it was realised that there isn’t any kind of communication among these institution. The inter-professional, inter-institutional workshop has started from this deficiency with regular monthly meetings. One of the important challenges was to represent the interest of the neighbourhood in the Integrated Urban Development Strategy of Miskolc.

The third pillar activity is the so called *neighbourhood work* including community discussions aiming at defining actions of common interest, and the actions themselves, like planning and painting together the footings of block houses. The greatest problem and difficulty is still having everyone to meet community standards and values and therefore helping this community to understand each other.

Crossroads Youth and Community Association (Glasgow, UK)

Govanhill in Glasgow is Scotland’s most ethnically diverse community. Waves of immigration have traditionally moved into the area: Irish, Jewish, people seeking asylum, overseas students, migrant workers. Now a third of local people are from ethnic minorities and over 50 languages are spoken in the area.

It is estimated that there are around 1500 Slovak/Czech Roma people, and 100-1500 Romanian Roma in the neighbourhood. Due to restrictions in employment rights and welfare rights entitlements people from the Romanian Roma community survive mainly through black market employment or selling the Big Issue. Many are living in absolute poverty with some forced to steal and scavenge for food to survive. These restrictions will remain in place until 31st December 2013 at the latest.



The ethos behind Crossroads' work in the area is integration – to facilitate people from different backgrounds in the community coming together. This is done by working directly with people in the community through groups and by providing one-to-one support and advocacy to more vulnerable people. We also work closely with partnership agencies to achieve joint objectives.

Crossroads provided an Advocacy service for EU nationals, the majority of which are Slovaks and Czechs living in Govanhill, from June 2007 to September 2012, when funding was withdrawn. There were two full time bilingual workers for the service, and recently three temporary Roma bilingual workers joined the team. "Clearly, the variety and quality of services and activities that Crossroads provide constitute vital support for new migrants, helping them to find their feet, re-orientate and integrate themselves into the new environment. Not only is this essential for their integration into society but also more broadly for the cohesion and wellbeing of the local community, particularly in the context of the diversity and marginality in the Govanhill area".

For the more vulnerable families and individuals using the service Crossroads provides emergency assistance, which comprises of provision of food/clothes and other essentials to meet peoples' most basic needs. These is contact with local churches, which provide this essential support. For the last 3 years we have run a job club on Wednesday mornings in partnership with Glasgow's Regeneration Agency (GRA). More recently, we have been working in partnership with GRA to run the Roma Employability Service, which provides intensive employability support to people from the Roma community. Crossroads also participates in Roma-Net (a European partnership group sharing good practice); the Slovak Worker's Meeting; and the EU Practitioners Group.



There are two 'drop-in' sessions each week. People coming along can have free food and hot drinks, take part in a range of activities (such as games, arts & crafts, discussions, community projects, socialise) and access specialist advice from agencies such as Money Matters and Positive Action in

Housing. Participants have taken part in community projects such as a photography project which will culminate in an exhibition at a local arts centre, and in a community singing project. Another collaboration, the Understanding Each Other Project focuses on the local Govanhill community, concentrating on migration issues and aiming to promote cohesion within the community. Local residents from 3 different communities (Asian, Irish and Roma) tell their stories of migration and their journey to Glasgow. They bring an object that accompanied them on their journey (e.g. pictures), which helps children to visualize the story. These stories spark a curiosity in children, who are then asked to research their own families' stories, which they share together the following week. There are also fitness classes, English classes, and participation in International Women's Day and Refugee Week. www.cyca.org.uk

Local Democracy in Strasbourg (FR)

Since 2008, the City of Strasbourg has initiated new forms of democracy based on participation aimed at allowing more active citizenship. A permanent dialog is put in place between residents, elected officials and municipal employees, and is fundamentally changing their relations to foster proximity and exchange. This innovative and proactive policy is transforming the city of Strasbourg in a place where local democracy is particularly lively. This new governance continues to evolve, to strengthen and consolidate, placing more and more citizens at the heart of the public dialogue. Local democracy in Strasbourg is characterized by a multiple approach to citizen participation, which is innovative and adapted to the different issues. The different approaches to local democracy ensure that residents, youth, foreign residents but also neighborhoods are taken better into account, keeping the attention high on the needs and expectations of each focus group. These bodies are the essential framework of local democracy in Strasbourg.

In Strasbourg, the municipal system is committed to offer the possibility of exercising citizenship rights in many different and active ways. The City offers a true consultative capacity to its inhabitants. It involves all citizens in the public decision, create debates and brings expertise to each city's projects.

These are the main feature of local democracy in Strasbourg:

- Make people important actors of municipal life by combining large public decisions, placing them at the heart of decision-making to better understand their expectations.
- Establish an ongoing dialogue between local residents and elected officials.
- Rely on the experience of people and build a new relationship of trust and interaction with citizens.
- It is a voluntary act and takes into account the needs of residents in municipal's projects and plans.
- The consultation is made up of joint contributions involving all the stakeholders who contribute with their own expertise to achieve the best solution possible to face any problem or decision.

Neighborhood offices (Directions de Proximité)

These offices represent the nearest interface between citizens and the City. They support and coordinate the processes of consultation taking into account the experience and expertise of all

residents and stakeholders in the area. They play a central role in the development of local democracy in the communities.

The other offices missions are:

- Relationship and continuity: ensure, in the different neighborhoods, the link with municipal institutions.
- Urban Management: improve the daily lives of people by monitoring the quality of implementation of municipal services. It can include, for example, improve the responses on issues of cleanliness, municipal project management, in strong coordination with the relevant municipal department.
- Support to events: coordinate and mobilize all resources available for the organization of events in close cooperation with local partners and stakeholders.
- Development of local social activities: support local partners associations in drafting and implementing their local projects,
- Facilitate networking and new partnership at the local level,

The neighborhood councils

Established in September 2008, Neighborhood councils play a central role in deciding and implementing key City projects. Neighborhood councils formulate proposals and opinions on draft municipal laws. Members of neighborhoods councils are divided into three categories: residents, associations, socio-professional actors. The neighborhood councils are independent, and people sitting in the councils are not elected. They meet in plenary once a month and can be organized in working groups. They can also own initiative on projects that are not on the agenda of the City. The opinions produced by the councils are annexed to the official municipal law process and are usually taken into consideration by decision-makers.

The Foreign Residents' Council

It gives the voice to foreign residents and involves them in the decision-making process. Moreover, it contributes to fight against xenophobia and racism and promote the right to vote in local elections. The Foreign Residents' Council is both a place for debate and a place for proposals. It was established in February 2009 and it helps to enrich the public debate on key issues, such as discrimination, access to rights, and recognition of cultural diversities. The council works on the right to vote in local elections for nationals of non-EU Member States. The members of the council are entitled to give advices and make proposals on policies implemented by the municipality. The plenary meetings, committee meetings and working groups of the Foreign Residents' Council are open to the public, and every interested citizen can participate.

The Youth Council The Youth Council represents a real resource for the City and recognize the role of young people as promoters of good municipal policies and, at the same time, empower them giving direct access to funding for youth project in the city. The Youth Council was established in 1993 with the aim of giving to young generation the possibility to act as active and proactive citizens. The members of the Youth Council are elected at the end of an electoral campaign conducted by the candidates at the neighborhood level. They are aged 11 15 years, from all the neighborhoods of the

city. They are divided into four thematic committees. The committees meet every 15 days. The Youth Council develops opinions on municipal policies and proposes projects and activities to the municipal council for approval.

4.2 Stage 2: solidarity projects

Once contacts have been made, communities can take steps themselves to improve their prospects and opportunities in employment, education, and participation in the wider society through creating organisations run by the communities themselves that provide services, support, and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable.

Fund to Support the Poor (SZETA) – Eger Foundation (Hungary)

During the communist regime the existence of poverty was denied in Hungary. The breakthrough in the research into poverty at the turn of the seventies was inspired – directly and indirectly – by István Kemény. After his immigration to France in 1977, his former students founded an organisation to help the poor. Such an activity in that time had an openly oppositional political meaning. The *Fund to Support the Poor* (Szegényeket Támogató Alap abbreviated as SZETA) collected and distributed donations for the poor, which was disapproved by the authorities. Meanwhile, Kemény had the opportunity to speak regularly on Radio Free Europe. His lectures on Hungarian poverty had broken the silence surrounding the question of poverty.



The *Eger Foundation of SZETA* was established in 1989 with the aim to help poor people and families in and around Eger with various devices. In 1998 it institutionalised by purchasing and renewing a property and so establishing the Youth Assistance House. The site, which is a few hundred meters from the long-established segregated Roma housing area (Béke telep) in Eger is functioning as a multi-purpose community space and a settlement type community house. It is also the centre of the Foundation, and functioned as a temporary home for 12 children on the legal bases of child welfare service between 1998 and 2012.

Over the years the Foundation's activities and services steadily expanded. Some of the activities are: assistance to those living in a segregation area with the tools of community and social work, summer camps for disadvantaged children, consulting and information services in social and legal matters, regular community and small group events for families, protection against discrimination, collection and transfer of donations for families in need (operating a "gift shop" since 1989). Today the Foundation is reaching people with various projects not only in Eger and the nearby villages but also in the surrounding micro regions.

The Foundation – as consortium partner or lead partner – implemented Roma ghetto demolition programmes in two villages (Szomolya, Sirok) and operated a Roma employment and social service network in several neighbouring small settlements between 2007 and 2010. Currently it is implementing a 32 months EU funded programme in seven municipalities aiming the community integration of people living in deep poverty. Another EU funded project run by the Foundation is called “NGOs of North Hungary for the (Re)integration of Labour” and a new initiation financed from the Swiss-Hungarian Cooperation Programme is a scholarship grant program for the support of Roma students from poor settlements.



Eger with its 58,000 inhabitants is the centre of Heves county and the second largest city (after Miskolc) of Northern Hungary region. Within the region the town – as a tourist and cultural centre – is well placed, its socio-economic indicators are highly favourable. However, there are two segregated housing areas in the city, inhabited mainly by Romas, where different social problems are concentrated. One of them is situated in Felnémet, one of the outskirts of Eger, which – according to research – was already in existence in the 19th century. In this segregated neighbourhood and in the surrounding streets about 450 to 500 people are living, but there are other streets predominantly inhabited by Romas in Felnémet as well. Families living here are the primary target group of the Foundation. One of the background problems is that the city's education policy and its attitude towards the poor and Roma people are – similar to many settlements in Hungary – exclusionary and discriminatory.

Bátonyterenye, Nógrád County Roma Association (Hungary)

Bátonyterenye is part of an ex-industrial micro region in the northern part of Hungary. The micro region is one of the most underdeveloped areas of the country. After the closing of the mines and the collapse of the heavy industry at the beginning of the 90's, unemployment has been steadily very high. Average educational level in the micro region is also significantly lower than the national standard. Bátonyterenye is the only town in the micro region, surrounded with a number of rather

poor, small villages. Roma population is high in Bánytereny and in another five villages, estimated at 20-50%.



The Roma civil organisation of Bánytereny was established in 1996 with the main aim of supporting the most vulnerable social groups in the town and the neighbouring villages. The programs implemented by the organization are very diverse, including desegregation of Roma segregated housing areas, establishment of a network of after-school extracurricular educational institutions, fostering employment of Roma people, social reintegration of prison inmates and many more. Their most important recent programs include the following:

After-school, extracurricular educational institutions are one of the few quite successful Roma integration programs of the last decade. Its aim is to apply a broad set of extracurricular methods in order to support the educational success of disadvantaged primary school students, to foster their further education and overcome the cause of their failures in the mainstream educational institutions. The network established in Bánytereny and the neighbourhood is one of the best of these institutions. Pedagogical tools focus on individual development, positive feedback, diverse programs including help in the actual school curricula, complex art education, personality development and identity strengthening, as well as focusing on the cooperation with the parents, families.

Desegregation/demolition of Roma segregated housing areas was the aim of another major project implemented in 2010-2011. Fifteen families had been relocated from the segregated housing areas to integrated housing in the town. The program involved the purchase and renovation of the properties, completing primary education, job trainings for the participants in various professions, installing prepaid electricity meters in the houses, etc.



The participants faced serious difficulties with the increased housing costs of the new homes. Many of the families are still supported by the association in their integration efforts, for example they participate in the *bio-briquette* program. The winter heating costs are reduced by producing refuse derived fuel, briquettes made of a mixture of waste paper and dry leaves. The technique is very simple, the briquettes are made by hand with the help of a very simple device.

Settlement type social work was introduced in the framework of a recent community based development program. It started a few years ago after many failures of community programs that were imprisoned in the rigid development support system of European funds with specialized, sectoral programs and unrealistic procedural regulations. This program aims at supporting complex programs that are built on partnership, reflect on the local needs, flexible and reactive to the successes and conclusions of the local development processes. It is implemented in many localities with very diverse content. In Bányterenyé the program is focused on two Roma segregated housing areas of the town with no infrastructure, where 18 families live.

BHIM RAO Association, Szendrőlád (Hungary)

Szendrőlád is a settlement of 1800 inhabitants, out of which 80% is Roma, in one of the most disadvantaged micro regions of Hungary.



The organisation's full name is *Social, Cultural and Educational Association for Equal Opportunities for Vulnerable Youths (Roma and non-Roma)* in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. BHIM RAO stands for two things: firstly, it is made up of the first letters of the organisation's full name, whilst it also refers to Bhim Rao Ambedkhar, the great Indian statesman who fought his way up the social ladder in India from the untouchables' caste to Minister for Justice under Gandhi's premiership. Founded in 2002, the BHIM RAO Association is a non-profit organisation with high public interest status. Their main objective involves supporting Roma and non-Roma youths with multiple disadvantages in their access to primary, secondary and higher education, and to ensure that they achieve good results in these institutions.

The Association opposes all forms of discrimination and segregation. Their strategic aim relates to implementing complex programs, which not only reach the widest possible scope of disadvantaged youths, but help lift whole families out of poverty by ensuring that children complete secondary-level education, learn a trade and obtain professional qualifications, hence building an educational system which inhibits the reproduction of employment disadvantages. In addition, they also organise trainings and re-training programs for the family members of these children, which enables them to acquire marketable knowledge and jobs and in turn re-enter the primary labour market by getting permanent jobs. They are contacting educational institutions and supporting the group's empowerment. Their main programmes are local, but some activities are reaching over the boundaries of their settlement.



The Association is operating a network for assisting students in after-school learning in 4 settlements and a national Roma mentor programme. One of their new facilities is a community house in Szendrőlád, which also serves as a Roma museum integrated into a sub regional tourism route and programme package. The Association gained EU funds to implement a mushroom producing facility where they can provide job opportunities for long-term unemployed (10 at the time). Apart from the very important aim of employment the facility is also a tool in fighting the stereotype that Roma people are not eager to work. More and more people from the area are visiting the site to purchase freshly harvested mushroom on the spot and get familiar with the Roma employees of the Association. <http://bhimrao.hu/en>

Can Masdeu⁵, Barcelona, Catalonia (Spain)

Can Masdeu is a squatted social centre, residence and community garden in the Collserola Park on the outskirts of Barcelona. A former leper hospital which had been abandoned for some 53 years

⁵ Adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Can_Masdeu

before its eviction, the squat became famous in 2002, when squatters in lockons and on tripods nonviolently resisted the eviction. During a three-day standoff, police were unable to remove the squatters, resulting in the case returning to the courts. After three years, the case was won by the owners, but no eviction notice has since been issued.

Most Sundays there is an open house and from 100 to 300 people come up to participate in activities related to ecology, activism, and self-sufficiency.



Can means "property of" and "Masdeu" comes from the Masdeu family who once inhabited the farmhouse at the center of the valley. Thus, Can Masdeu can refer to any of the following:

- the masia - a traditional Iberian patriarchal mansion or plantation house
- the valley, or the community gardens which inhabit it
- the community of squatters
- the social center or the ecological project associated with it.
- the nunnery or leper hospital which once inhabited the masia and the valley.

Relations with the surrounding local population has been a focus faced by the residents of Can Masdeu. Immediately after the occupation, the community encouraged local gardeners to come to plant on the grounds. About a dozen people at first, mostly older women responded to the offer and began planting mostly produce and some flowers. The community hosts monthly or bi-monthly potlucks with local gardeners and there are regular meetings to manage the affairs of the garden. In 2006 a large second terrace of gardens was recovered from the surround bush lands and additional local gardens were planted. There are three tiers of gardens, the lowest is the new local gardens, the middle tier is production garden for the community and the top tier is the original local gardens. These neighbors initially came from the nearby Nou Barris district (Barcelona city), but increasingly locals from others parts of the city came to the gardens.



For most Sundays of the year there are public workshops offered in the social centre. These workshops and presentations cover a variety of topics including:

- environmental issues
- permaculture and organic farming
- communities movement
- political resistance
- independent film presentations
- music, dancing and cultural expression
- walking tours of the community grounds and building

A vegetarian meal served for which a donation is requested. The meal typically features food which has been harvested from the communities gardens or traded with other local farms.



The Social Centre and the rurbar, a cafe serving local and organic meals and drinks, is open most Sundays from noon until evening. Activities are listed on the website and in the newsletter Infousurpa. Above you can see a picture of gardeners and residents.

Blantyre & South Lanarkshire Credit Union (Scotland)

The Mission of the Credit Union is to promote the financial well being of its members. To achieve this purpose the Credit Union is committed to providing a broad range of innovative financial products supported by the excellent service of a dedicated, well-trained staff. These programs are administered in accordance with sound management practices to maintain the financial strength of the Credit union.

A Credit Union is a financial co-operative that is owned and controlled by its members. Credit Unions offer a variety of financial services; providing a safe and convenient place to save money, accessible



loans at a very reasonable rate of interest and a variety of other financial services. As such, Credit Unions have the potential to offer a much more accessible, efficient and cost-effective financial service than either banks or other financial institutions.

Worldwide there are over 100 million Credit Union members in 84 countries, and they are extremely popular in Ireland, America, Australia

and the Caribbean. In the UK, the Credit Union movement is growing rapidly with over 360,000 members and with assets of over £300 million.

Unlike banks, which are owned by private shareholders and all profits are returned to them, Credit Unions are owned and controlled by every member. The members employ a small professional staff team to run the Credit Union on their behalf. After the costs of running the Credit Union are met, the profits are returned to the members through annual returns known as dividends. This keeps money within the local area and the pockets of each member.



Credit Unions are not-for-profit organisations and are driven by an ethos of service to its members, rather than maximising profit. They are also an ethical way to bank, as they provide social benefits, renew a sense of community identity and retain wealth within the local area. Credit Unions are regulated like other financial institutions by the Financial Services Authority. They are regularly audited and monitored and members savings are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme so savings, of up to £85,000, are as secure as any bank or building society account.

In the face of powerful multinationals and increased globalisation people feel isolated and less in control of their lives. Credit Unions are a positive response to claiming back control and rebuilding local communities. Credit Unions are committed to giving their members control of their finances by helping them to save for the future and borrow responsibly.

Marabal Association, Community based Social Theatre, Barcelona, Catalonia (Spain)

Marabal is an organization that works with body arts as a creative mean and a source for personal, professional and social development. They believe in arts as a form of self-expression accessible to everyone and as a tool to foster social changing and well – being. Since 2008, Marabal is settled in the *Poble Sec* neighbourhood as a Training and Artistic Creation Centre. They act as a core stakeholder in the *Community Development Plan* (CDP) of the neighbourhood.



The disciplines they develop within the communities are: Dance, Theatre, Social Theatre, Street Theatre, Cabaret, Art – Therapy and Plastic Art Expression.

One of their most remarkable project is *Rua XIC*. “Rua” means “street” in Portuguese, this term is used to refer to the crowds of people dancing and singing on the streets during carnival. *Rua XIC* was awarded by the City Council with the first **Prize of Associations of Barcelona 2012**.

LUV cafe (Glasgow, UK)

The LUV Café is a much needed social amenity in Govan - an eatery with a difference. Set up in 2004 as part of the Linthouse Urban Village (LUV) with a healthy eating ethos, the café is located at the junction of Govan Road and Drive Road, just outside the centre of Govan. The Café operates on a not for profit basis and puts any profit back into the local community.

What makes it quite special is that it is a social enterprise employing 5 local people. It is a community based café providing wholesome, nutritious food at affordable prices. There is nothing on the menu that costs more than £4.50, with wonderful bowls of home-made LUVly soup retailing for a mere £2.20.



LUV isn't just about the food. This 'hidden gem' in Govan was set up as an affordable place to come and unite different sectors of the community. It is used by those who live, work or visit the area. The café itself is a warm and inviting place, innovatively designed in a modern eclectic style with artist commissions forming most of the design. Home baking and a friendly service form the basis of this busy community café.

NORAI Project , Barcelona, Catalonia (Spain)

Norai is a cultural project on social responsibility and marine gastronomy of the Barcelona Maritime Museum and the Royal Shipyards Consortium. It was started in August 2010 under the auspices of the Barcelona Maritime Museum (MMB), the Norai - *Raval SCCL* cooperative, *Impulsem SCCL* and the *Fundació Surt* with two basic objectives: to include a restaurant-café in the new layout of the museum and to help improve the quality of the life of people in the *Raval* neighbourhood.

The permanent exhibition at the MMB was closed for a complete renewal. The construction work lasted until mid-2013 and considerably changed the architectural layout of the royal shipyards building that holds the museum, and provided a chance to completely change the museography of the MMB. Norai plays a major role in this new museum design and layout. With Norai, the MMB will ensure that marine gastronomy forms part of the museum's learning activities and has set aside space for a restaurant-café and for research and experimentation into marine cuisine with the aim of making it another place to learn at the museum.



The Norai Project will also work toward improving the quality of life of the people in the *Raval* neighbourhood where the museum is located by providing training and job opportunities for people at risk of marginalization. Norai will welcome students doing internships as assistant cooks and assistant waiting staff members, who will work in the restaurant-café. There are also plans to provide a job placement guidance service for students with difficulty finding work. In some cases, they will be hired as part of the project.

Norai also aims to help to generate business in the area by ensuring that the suppliers of the restaurant-café are neighbourhood companies and businesses, such as vendors of fresh fish at the *Boqueria* Market and the Moritz beer company, which has close ties to the *Raval* neighbourhood.

The aim of the new museography project is to make the MMB an open, accessible museum that uses new forms of communication that respond to today's needs, and that preserves and transmits the maritime culture in its broadest sense.

The Local Democracy Agencies – a unique tool for the development of local democracy outside the EU

The Local Democracy Agencies have been established in the Western Balkans by the Congress of the Council of Europe since 1992, as a support programme to strengthen local democracy, foster respect for human rights and further sustainable development. Today there are 13 active Local Democracy Agencies based in Western Balkans and South Caucasus coordinated by ALDA.

The agencies function as self-sustainable, locally registered NGOs, but they are different from other local NGOs because of the international framework they operate in. Indeed, the LDAs develop

partnerships with local authorities and NGOs from all over Europe giving to the whole network direct access to an international framework through the support of ALDA, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

The most important aspect of the LDAs is the process of partnership building. The cooperation and partnership between local and international partners, between local authorities and NGOs, give added values to the process of designing projects and implementing local activities. This process is in itself a learning process for everyone involved and serves as a practical example of how a democratic participatory planning process can create results.

Methodology of multilateral decentralised cooperation

The partnership established around the LDA context by the means of international decentralised co-operation has been developed through two main lines of action:

- **Territorial based**, involving all the actors of the communities concerned on a geographic base
- **Thematic networking**, focused on a specific, commonly determined issue connecting different local communities

Types of action

a) City to City Partnership

The partnership, which involves only the local authorities – without any support or involvement of NGOs require adequate level of administrative capacities and, as a rule, exist mainly in the cases when large or capital cities are involved.

This kind of co-operation partnerships have brought to creation of diverse European wide network of cities attracting substantial funding from the European Union in the region and are dealing also with relevant support provided for infrastructure. They imply, it goes without saying, a particular attention of the political level for these issues as well as a relevant experience and internal capacities. Being purely linked to the institutional level, it often happens that they are suspended if the local administration has been changed by the elections.

b) Partnerships between local authorities and civil society

Co-operation between the cities and NGOs has become one of the most efficient, result oriented tool of capacity building for networking and twinning programmes. Support by a local NGO which gives continuity and constant support to their official commitment. On the other hand, the NGO whose work is recognised by the local authority, can start an important process of being actively involved in the policy of the leaders of their community. It is a good chance of being included in a virtuous circle, which makes the community richer and more participative.

The participation of NGOs might also assure certain continuity for the work if the local authority changes its political majority and maybe does not consider the partnership as a new priority the involvement.

c) Long-term programmes

Partnerships among towns and regions, based on official relations and institutional contacts tend to be long-term relations, even if sometimes this aim is not reached. The activities related to the partnership represent a step of a shared programme and co-operation. The projects involve the communities of the two partners. They have the objective to bring about, in the medium and long term, the social and economic development of the area in SEE and to raise the attention and the awareness of the citizens in Europe regarding these issues.

The long-term programmes with the involvement of civil society and institutional authorities are the most effective but also the most difficult to be implemented.

In the local authorities, in addition, it is hard to be committed in the long term due to the annual budget and the change of the political level of the authority at each mandate. Again, the support of civil society could be fundamental since it can keep alive the connection and the partnership for a long period of time.

For some cities and regions in Europe, the co-operation with SEE is now a real characteristic of their international activity. They have been extremely committed in those last 10 years and their success has proved to be recognised by the international community but also by the citizens, at the local level.

In any case, the experience shows that the partnership – even strongly established and institutionalised – between local and regional authorities, if it is not supported by a wide range of representatives of civil society, has some difficulty to survive for many years. This may happen if the local authority is connected to any network that supports them in the partnership or if a member of the city board, or even a senior officer, might be particularly committed. But, it is, then, related to a personnel question, which can really matter for a long-term engagement.

Participatory planning process

As far as the partnership among local authorities and NGOs is concerned, for the methodology of their actions, a special feature has to be highlighted. By definition, the decentralised international co-operation is based on the participation of all the different actors in the phases of the action. Therefore, the two parts of the partnership should be involved in a process of evaluation of the needs and identification of the resources, from both sides. The basis of this partnership is the exchange among the parties in the co-operation.

The balanced co-operation, the understanding that it is not a one-way approach, is fundamental for a better achievement of the programme. The community, from Europe, involved in the programme must be aware that they have a general benefit out of this action (not only a political visibility for the current political representatives). The result for them is a deeper understanding of the democratic processes, a revitalisation of their civil society through practical action and co-operation, the growth of the whole community by being involved in actions for the protection of human rights and democracy. The programmes of co-operation, without doubts, are focusing on the need to learning from good local practice, while the development – and this is the central aspect of the partnership among towns and regions – is understood in a wider sense, which includes a general welfare of the community: education, environment, human rights, employment and other issues related to

economy. The partnerships presented in this document have a common objective to promote a shared and long lasting development in the community. The economic revitalisation is also part of these partnerships (exchanges of business people and possible investments).

The partnership among local authorities and NGOs, reflecting the specific needs of all actors involved may help promote the democratic participatory planning process if the partners committed to the commonly shared vision and objectives.

If the activities of the co-operation are genuinely shared, the results will be applicable and effective. It will not be just coming down from the top and responding to the objectives “of the donors” but it will be the meeting point between the expression of the needs and resources of the local community in SEE and the possible resources from the other local authorities, from Europe.

In this case – and this is the substance of the partnership among towns and regions, with NGOs, the international decentralised co-operation – the process is maybe more important than the programme itself. The co-operation among cities and the participation is – on a long term – as much important as the support for the rebuilding of a single house, for instance.

Institution building (local authorities, NGOs)

Long history of cooperation between local authorities has already brought substantial benefits to the institution building process. More transparent and responsive local self-government has become one of the most important criterion of the democratic achievement of the countries in the region.

The institutional building concerns the development of the capacities and skills of the local authorities and NGOS, actors of the partnership: how they are managed, how they are organized for reaching their objectives, etc.

The activities for institution building carried out in different partnership are:

- a) Exchanges of good practices (in the different fields of competence of the local administration or the relative NGO)
- b) Training and training of trainers
- c) Analysis and comparative studies
- d) Internship offered by the members of the partnership
- e) Development of pilot cases
- f) Technical assistance, peer-to- peer exchanges

4.3 Stage 3: transaction projects

At a more ‘advanced’ stage, the organisations that emerge from Stage 2 engage with political systems and wider civil society to bring about wider awareness of the roots of exclusion, marginalisation and poverty, and seeking to bring about social justice and human rights by influencing policies and culture in the wider world.

“Romani Platni” Roma Restaurant (Budapest, Hungary)

Romani Platni is a community-based initiative that aims to dispel stereotypes and misconceptions about the Roma people through traditions, especially Romani dishes that have been prepared in

kitchens of Roma families for over 100 years. The idea came from social workers active in one of the most segregated neighbourhoods of Budapest. Together with their Roma “clients” they decided to create a place where they can discuss issues that are important to the Roma community over traditional Roma meals prepared by members of the Roma community. A small group called the Romani Platni Anti-Discrimination Group has been set up. They found it was a good way to learn about Roma people, to get to know their customs, stories, music and culture.



The restaurant is functioning in a local community place once a week or whenever a group orders it. The dinner can be accompanied with authentic Roma music played by youngsters living in the neighbourhood. Originally meant to be a local event open for members of the neighbourhood, the success of the restaurant is far beyond any expectations: people from all over Budapest and abroad are learning Roma traditions by dinners served by the Romani Platni group. ⁶

Community Links South Lanarkshire (Scotland)

Community Links was established in February 2002 and is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status as an independent community consultation and engagement organisation. We originally evolved from the Social Inclusion Partnership and now work across all the communities in South Lanarkshire with particular emphasis on areas which fall into the 15% worst deprivation, as identified by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). As a community development organization it has two notable characteristics: first, it is owned and managed by the community in which it is based, and secondly it is commissioned by the local authority to engage with poor communities and provide services to them. The local authority recognizes this as an effective way to collaborate, and to provide better services that are more relevant to the needs of the community. The organization operates as a social enterprise delivering contracts on behalf of government and other agencies, retaining any surplus for community use.

Some examples of the work done follow. We deliver innovative and effective consultation services to partner agencies and service providers to involve local members of the community in local decisions. We hold a Service Level Agreement with South Lanarkshire Council Tackling Poverty to deliver projects such as Asset Based Community Research in local neighbourhoods, provide support to a community led environmental project – Pride of Place, produce the Community Matters Newspaper,

⁶ See also: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/04/24/us-hungary-roma-restaurant-idUKBRE83N0G920120424>

Social Marketing campaigns and actively recruit local volunteers to assist with our projects and events. We are one of the few dedicated community engagement organisations in Scotland with a strong focus on the community asset based approach. We also hold a Service Level Agreement with our local Hamilton Locality Public Partnership Forum to promote and encourage local residents to become involved in how local healthcare is delivered in the communities.



Funding was secured from Scottish Government's People and Communities Fund to deliver our exciting new SELECT project. This is a new volunteer-based, peer mentoring ICT skills development service that will provide residents with the necessary ICT skills in job search, financial and welfare services, goods and services and personal learning and development to allow them to move their lives forward.

Community Links has been providing bespoke community consultation services to a number of agencies for almost 10 years and is now regarded as a leader in this field. At a time when legislation - affecting both public and private sector bodies - is quickly changing to recognise the importance of engaging local individuals in decisions that affect them and their families, Community Links has the knowledge, skills and resources to guide clients through the appropriate processes.

Community Links (South Lanarkshire) currently hold a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Tackling Poverty Team to deliver and develop community engagement across the top 15% of deprived communities within South Lanarkshire. Therefore, part of their SLA for 2010/2011 was to embark on Asset Based Community Development for the Fairhill Area. A similar project took place in the Springhall Area – working in partnership with the Cambuslang and Rutherglen Community Health Initiative (CHI) who have already begun using the approach in other local communities and are best placed to offer support in using this new and innovative approach.

***Apropem-nos* – “Getting closer” (Barcelona)**

Apropem-nos – “Getting closer” is one example of a Community Development Plan (CDP) as was noted in the paragraph 3.2 above.

Apropem-nos – “Getting closer” is settled in the neighbourhood of *Poble Nou* (Barcelona City) and it started on 2001. This plan aims to address coexistence issues through reception, raise awareness and community education. *Apropem-nos* – “Getting closer” is a network of associations, public services and individuals that works through networking at the neighbourhood level and city level.

At the neighbourhood level they enhance, weave and strength a network of solidarity jobs and a network of support to settlements. Since 2008, there are some settlements in the neighbourhood

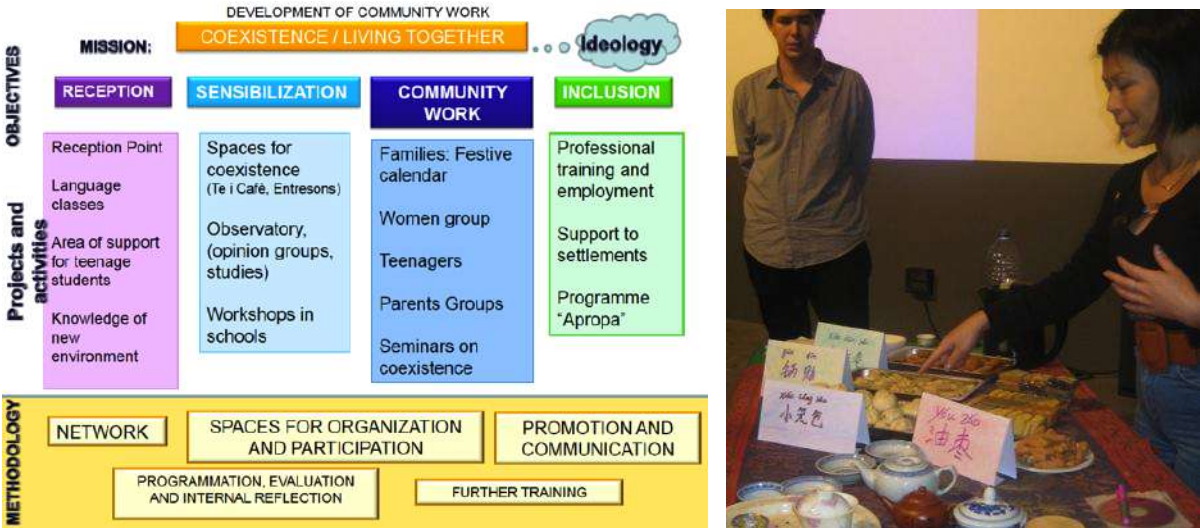
inhabited by immigrants without residence permit. At this level they set up spaces for organization and participation like the committee of organizations and the social committee.



At the city level, *Apropem-nos* – “Getting closer” is one node of the city immigrant’s reception network and collaborates with the city social services in a wide range of community-based projects, as an example they are an active node in the anti-rumours network.

Their main goals are reception of newcomers; awareness raising towards immigration and coexistence issues; community work; and social inclusion. The next figure summarises the main features of *Apropem-nos* – “Getting closer”:

Apropem-nos – “Getting closer” brings people together responding to common needs (language issues, education, legal and work advice....). Rather than a service, they define themselves as a community network, arguing that they face the assessed community’s needs through community work and engagement. The final goal is to create a network within the neighbourhood, interconnecting individuals, organizations, areas and activities looking for more horizontal relationships based on interactions and trust.



As an example, “tea and coffee” is an activity for coexistence that enhance “getting to know each other, changing the look we have towards the other person” that aims to raise awareness. See the picture below.

Sociopoly board game (Hungary)

Sociopoly is a board game designed by László Bass, sociologist and professor of Eötvös Loránd University, on the model of the well known game *monopoly*. Players (virtual families of players) go through days of an average month – accelerating time with the dice – and they should survive the month under the financial circumstances of a long-term unemployed.



Playing this game anyone can try out what social allowances, family allowances, maternity leave and income from casual work is enough for. Revenue and expenditure amounts were designated to roughly correspond to the reality of today's Hungary and therefore the game should be updated when major changes occur in the political environment or in case it is adapted to other countries. During its few years' of existence Sociopoly has proved to be a good tool of raising awareness and changing approach concerning the hardship of poor families.

Healthy 'n Happy Community Development Trust (Scotland)

Healthy n Happy was established by local people in 2002 as a Healthy Living Initiative. We have evolved and diversified significantly since our foundation as a health initiative; as well as our core health and wellbeing initiatives, we have launched a community radio station, worked on the regeneration of local communities using community engagement and capacity building, incorporated a local NHS youth health service and established a social enterprise arm.

To reflect these changes, in June of 2012 we became a Community Development Trust which is appropriate to the broader role the organisation now takes in supporting the health and wellbeing of local communities in the communities of Cambuslang and Rutherglen. Healthy n Happy is a community development trust and our key purpose is to provide community members in Cambuslang and Rutherglen with the opportunity to take an active part in improving their lives and in ensuring their own, their family, and their community's current and future health and wellbeing.



We are a community owned organisation, which means we are governed entirely by local people and everything we do is steered by the local community. We now have thirteen staff, a bank of 30 sessional workers and 110 volunteers.

Over the last ten years we have grown and developed successfully - we have a high degree of local support, both from local people and our partners and funders. Each year, 6,000 local people take part in our organisation's work and we deliver work across 98 different local venues. We undertake a wide range of activities which meet our aim of improving the lives of people living in Cambuslang and Rutherglen. We currently group our activities and services under six themes:

- Supporting Communities - Consultation, Engagement and Development
- Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Promoting Healthy Choices
- Community Broadcasting and Digital Media
- Volunteering Opportunities and Supported Placements
- Family Health and Resilience

The European Roma and Travellers Forum (Strasbourg – FR)

The European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) is the most inclusive representative of Romani civil society in existence. As it is such an inclusive body, drawing together the resources, wisdom and faith of Romani community representatives from so many CoE member States.

When the European Roma and Travellers Forum began its work in 2005, Europe was enlarging and the number of Roma with European citizenship was growing rapidly. There was a sense of euphoria and optimism regarding the rights and opportunities that Roma would enjoy in their countries after enlargement and concerning the influence that multilateral bodies would have on new member states. Today, governments have changed, moods have changed and Roma have grown sceptical. European multilateral institutions' efforts to improve the situation of Roma have largely been unsuccessful. The Council of Europe's efforts to promote equal opportunity for Roma have similarly failed to have the desired results.

The idea of setting up a forum representing Roma communities in Europe had been in the air since the early 1990s. From 2001 until July 2004, several dozen meetings took place in Strasbourg where Roma and Travellers representatives negotiated with the Council of Europe on the creation of the European Roma and Travellers Forum. The ERTF was registered as an association under French law in July 2004. In November 2004, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers agreed to establish close and privileged relations with the ERTF through a Partnership Agreement, which was signed on 15 December 2004. In virtue of this Agreement, the ERTF receives assistance in terms of financial and human resources, and has privileged access to the various bodies and organs of the Council of Europe dealing with matters concerning Roma and Travellers. The ERTF is however an autonomous body, independent of governments and inter-governmental influence. It has the status of a non-governmental organisation. Its wide representation, the ERTF is a unique and important interlocutor encouraging two-way communication between the Roma and the non-Roma community in order to positively influence policy makers to ensure that policies reflect the real needs of the Roma.

ERTF's mission is to ensure that each and every one of the 12-15 million Roma is not discriminated against because of his/her ethnic origin and is treated with dignity and respect.

The ERTF and its members are committed to the achievement of equal rights and equal opportunities for Roma in Europe as well as increasing political participation. The European Roma and Travellers Forum take an active part in the fight against discrimination and for the full realisation of human rights.

5. Conclusions

Despite the fact that poverty in East Europe is mainly a rural issue while in West Europe it is more concentrated in urban centres, the methods and tools that are used for integration of poor people are somewhat similar, especially in the field of community interventions.

Poor communities in East and West Europe are not only similar, but sometimes they are practically the same, as we saw it in Glasgow, where East European Roma families form one of the biggest groups of immigrants. Thus it is no wonder that Slovakian social workers are employed in a Scottish social centre. As we can see combating poverty cannot be concerned as solely a national issue any more. Strengthening of European cooperation, networking and the spread of best practices is essential in coping with poverty.

Regarding intervention, there are different stages. After an initial crisis aid, community based services or services maintaining a community building attitude are proved to be efficient on the long run. Local or regional governments can delegate tasks on civil organisations that are more flexible and sensible in dealing with poverty issues.

5.1 Commonalities

There is a great deal of common ground in community development thinking and practice across Europe. We share the same values and mindset and we talk the same language in our different ways. There are also commonalities in the way poor and marginalised communities stay poor, and in the ways this poverty is experienced by excluded and ignored people. Despite its relevance to addressing these issues, many community development organisations across Europe struggle to survive in an adverse economic and political climate.

5.2 Differences

In Hungary, community development is driven by thinking about civil society, and thereby creating and supporting robust social institutions. In Scotland there is an extensive civil society, although it is usually called the 'third sector'. While Scottish practice is also concerned about the decline in civil society institutions in an age of austerity, practice is more driven by notions of engagement, capacity building and inequalities.

Again in Hungary it was noted that much of the development work observed was undertaken by social workers. While it was different in the 1980s and 1990s, social work in Scotland is focused on child protection, social care and individual / family work, rather than wider community work.

In some countries poor people and communities can be readily identifiable by the way they dress, where they live and how they live. In other countries poverty may be obscured yet inequalities are pronounced – for example the UK is the third most unequal nation in the developed world, and the effects of this are felt most acutely in the most marginalised communities.

In eastern Europe some of the work aims to challenge cultural stereotypes – in particular those associated with Roma people. Practice seeks to demonstrate that Roma are not work-shy, not unproductive, and not capable by setting up projects that clearly demonstrate that these ascribed characteristics are both wrong and further stigmatising. In Scotland there is relatively little work that focuses on cultures and perceptions.

5.3 Community development practice

The visits have confirmed that community development is never a quick fix, and that it can be a long and difficult journey to bring marginalised communities into engagement with the mainstream. Any journey requires motivation, opportunity and capacity, and the most marginal communities tend to lack these qualities. In their absence there is need to be a slow and careful process of building contacts in a community, bringing people together, identifying common experiences, issues and hopes; developing skills, confidence and understanding through action-learning and organising; then beginning to build a sound infrastructure with human capital, social capital and organisational capacity. It is only once this has been achieved that communities can consider setting up, financing and running local services, exploiting whatever assets are available, encouraging collective and citizen action, or engaging with and partnering with government or public services. A parallel development in the capacity of public services and politicians to engage constructively with marginalised communities is also required.

When we started this journey, we asked: What is the primary driver for change, and determinant of success? At the end of the journey we have learnt what we perhaps already knew: that communities themselves are the best drivers for change, but that the most vulnerable communities need support and solidarity from people and organisations that share their anger about injustice, inequality and ignorance.

We also asked about the role of citizen participation, and how this might move away from token consultation towards proper engagement, dialogue and collaboration between governments and poor communities. We were impressed with the experience of community organisations in South Lanarkshire, Scotland, where the local authority (municipality) works closely with community organisations to plan and deliver anti-poverty work.

A third ambition was to establish the best methodology for addressing extremely marginalized communities without any local democracy experiences. Our answer was much the same as above: the starting point is to bring people in communities together, and to help build an awareness and understanding of the value of connections between people, and the potential for doing things together. We saw this in Miskolc where people had been encouraged to paint their buildings

together, and in the 'drop-in' centres in Govanhill where recent migrants could meet together and also get help with advice on their legal status, housing problems, employment or income.

The different role of social work in community development was interesting. In Scotland the workers in the organisations were called community workers, support workers, development workers and health workers, but not social workers. Social workers concentrate on working with vulnerable and problematic individuals and families, rarely getting involved in community-based services. In Hungary and other countries the community development work was often being done by social workers as part of their job. This raised an important question for Scotland about whether the social work profession should adopt a greater community development role and focus.

We visited many projects where communities were setting up alternative economic models – creating cafes, radio stations, cheap fuel, tourist destinations and consultation services (to name a few), engaging local people in delivery and management, and crossing the territories of social and economic development. Such initiatives were successfully challenging the myths that poor people cannot work, that they lack skills, or that they are scroungers or skivers. These are important messages, and being in paid work is clearly of both financial and social benefit to those employed in such initiatives. However this 'solidarity economy' is dependent on markets being available for the goods and services they provide and usually needs some form of external funding to remain sustainable.

So, the availability of finance is important to social-economic development – but 'social investment' is also vital. Every project visited appeared to have some visionary, dedicated and passionate leaders or organisers, either behind the scenes or on the stage. They could be community members or activists, social workers or community workers, or from an unexpected background. The challenge for community development is to find ways to identify and support such people in all marginalised communities, so that they can begin to enjoy the benefits and pride that were so apparent in the projects we visited.