



Social Polis

Social Platform on Cities and Social Cohesion

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The overall objective of Social Polis is to elaborate a research agenda which focuses specifically on the role of cities in social cohesion and on key related policy questions. It will create a platform where researchers and other stakeholders can express and discuss potentially effective future research directions for FP7.





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The overall objective is implemented on 3 fronts:

- critical analysis of research to date;
- construction of a social platform of related networks for information gathering, dialogue and agenda-setting.
- production of thematic strategic texts supporting a coherent research agenda;

Networks are unrolled from the research and stakeholder cores using “snowball” methods.





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12 focused “existential” fields

- Welfare and social services
- Labour markets and economic development
- Built environment, housing and health
- Mobility, telecommunications and security
- Urban ecology and environment
- Governance and public management
- Education and training
- Urban and regional inequalities
- Diversity and identity
- Creativity and innovation
- Neighbourhood development and grassroots initiatives.

And: social cohesion and the city as a whole. Plus transversal thematics.





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Social Polis organizational concept - a process

It is based to a large extent on a dialogue involving:

- the 'Scientific community', consisting of the *Scientific Core* (all Social Polis partners) and the broader *Researchers Network*,
...and the *Practice and policy community* involving different types of stakeholders and users:

Started with stakeholders with whom core partners have traditionally worked together through joint research, action oriented research, policy analysis, consulting, QUICK FEEDBACK.

Expanded network with those with a looser relationship with the Scientific Core or/and have been involved through indirect contacts, or with no previous relationship.





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User involvement

Some examples

Several ways to become involved and give feedbacks:

- Use existing networks (from local to EU level. Ex. Eurocities)
- Information sharing and Discussion Forum on website.
Post items on website
- Apply for small grant to write a paper (3000€)
- Apply for a local workshop grant (5.000 to 10.000€)
- A launching workshop (Brussels) and a large scale conference (Vienna 13 May 09)





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Issues arising from experience

Involvement of stakeholders and visibility:

- 1) How to engage with stakeholders and be attractive?
Why should they be interested in participating? Include some of them in the consortium
- 2) Ensure involvement of European-level organisations and institutions in the debate
- 3) Nominate someone for communication (be proactive: PR, website including discussion forum, newsletter)
- 4) How to simplify research issues so that stakeholders can engage well. Yet research needs theoretical approaches...





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