

**EUROPEAN REGIONS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION**  
**„KICK OFF MEETING” MINUTES**  
**LODZ, 26-28 MARCH 2014**

1.

The very first meeting was the occasion to discuss agenda of the meeting as well as the guidelines for the project as well as some budgetary issues.

2.

During the study visit to Uniejow project partners had the opportunity to explore the Therm's Complex in Uniejow, Institute of Human Health and the House of Creative Work. During the trip the participants had the opportunity to learn about practical examples of the impact of the local infrastructure of the region on the social inclusion process of excluded persons. During the study visit, the Director of the Institute for Human Health explained to guests how the Institute in cooperation with the National Social Insurance Institution and the National Health Fund uses social inclusion instruments and therefore provides its services not only for private visitors but also less favored groups of society. After the meeting and exploration of the Human Health Institute all the guests went to the next meeting with the President of the City Council and the Manager of Uniejow Therms. During the meeting guests had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with modern swimming pool complex and hear about plans to expand and extend the offer of Therms by applying for the EU funds. The Manager explained as well the great importance of this investments in job creation in the area of Uniejow City, especially for the excluded people. The trip ended with a lunch at the House of Creative Work, after which all participants went back to Lodz for the kick-off meeting at Marshal's Office of the Lodzkie Region.

3.

The kick-off meeting of the European Regions for Social Inclusion project was inaugurated with the speech of Marshal of the Lodz Voivodeship - Mr Witold Stepień. Mr. Stepień emphasized the important role that is assigned to social inclusion in the Europe 2020 strategy and the important role of this process in Lodzkie Region that *"(...) needs this type of activity and tries to raise and develop the activity of the civic society for 25 years, which is since Poland entered to modern Europe"*. Mr Marshall expressed his hope that the newly alluding cooperation will be the element that will contribute to the development of the Lodzkie.

4.

After welcoming the guests, time has come to learn about all the activities of the partners of the project that they introduce in their regions and organizations. They presented also expectations for the project. The series of presentations began with the speech of Mrs. Patrycja Wojtaszczyk- the Coordinator for Cooperation with NGOs in the Office of the Marshal, who spoke about the cooperation of Lodz Region with non-governmental organizations, civil dialogue and the formal framework of cooperation in the region, which allows to develop the right direction and with the cooperation of NGOs. Then each Partner presented his organization and region. All the participants could familiarize themselves with the activities in the field of social inclusion and their expectations for future cooperation. 21 project partners, both European regions and local entities of Lodzkie Region as well as representatives of NGOs made their statements of this matter. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of the City of Lodz and the Regional Center for Social Policy in Lodz.

5.

The budget of the project and the plan of allocation for each

meeting was discussed. The creation of a network of partnerships until the time of the meeting in Brussels in October 2015, which would be held in the framework of the Open Days 2015, was proposed.

6.

The host of the next meeting in Madrid in May 2014 discussed the activities of the region in terms of social policy, economic and social inclusion and with particular emphasis on the integration of immigrants. A key element of the presentation was detailed plan of the meeting in Madrid in May 2014 that was presented by Mrs. Assya Atanasova Rafaelova together with Mrs. Mariasunción Molina Ventura. The point, which required further discussion, was the form of the debate on the best practices sharing of each region in terms of social inclusion. A form of debate in thematic groups in the form of "round tables" was adopted. The second part of the talks about the Madrid meeting was held by Mrs. Anna Dudek-Lisowska from the Regional Center for Social Policy in Lodz. She presented the content of the Project, as well as its accepted priorities: civic dialogue, social inclusion, social economics. It was also underlined that the following areas, on which Partners would focus their activities were distinguished: exchange of good and bad practices, promotion of local development in economic terms through social economy, creating partnerships with NGOs, engaging citizens in policy making.

7.

Continued discussions allowed the final conclusion that in Madrid each Partner will present the Power Point presentation about 1 best practice from the 1 of 4 thematics that we described together during preparations to the kick off meeting. The initial deadline for sending a presentation was set on 25.04.

8.

The next meeting in Lodz is scheduled for October 2014.

Project Partner - Social Support Association „Me-You-Us”, proposed Lodz meeting to take the form of the International Multisectoral Conference on Social Enterprises, organized for two years already by the association. Mr Michał Filutowicz who was representing the association, stressed that it would be important to discuss the following topics: social economy and its shortcomings, the exchange of best practices, the social aspect of the business, collaboration with NGOs. The meeting itself was established for the second half of October.

9.

Mr. Filip Zoń discussed the importance of various e-tools for project promotion and communication between Partners. The functioning of the My Europe platform was discussed. It can be used both for the dissemination and promotion of the Project, as well as to communicate between Partners and the efficient exchange of information.