Socially Innovative Gdynia

Gdynia has been actively implementing social innovations in various fields for years, creating solutions that serve as nationwide examples. The effective work in the field of social welfare, or even broadly - the social policy, requires a constant setting up of new goals and searching for the ideas that are "ahead of their times".

Such approach inspired creating a space dedicated to growth of social innovations. It is located at the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park (PSTP). For several months now, in the Park next to IT specialist, biotechnologist and designers, a reality aiming at the development of social innovations has been created. The goal of the established social innovation module is integrating the community, networking, inspiring, and supporting - substantially and financially - development of social innovations.

The module is developed in the strategic partnership with the Social Welfare Centre in Gdynia. The partnership itself already reflects the fact that Gdynia manages a modern welfare and relies on searching for innovations that resolve the most difficult social challenges such as homelessness, disability, aging of the society, or accumulated social problems. Another role of the social innovation module at the PSTP is supporting the innovative initiatives, especially those related to the participation of Gdynia’s residents. One of such initiatives is a successful organizing local community, like the one in Gdynia Chylonia district.

In 2011, Pomeranian Science and Technology Park has been a Country Partner of Social Innovation Europe (SIE) - European Commission’s initiative launched in March 2011. The partnership enables access to knowledge, experience, projects, organisations and innovative methods in social actions throughout whole Europe. Gdynia has even more assets in developing social innovations when it comes to collaboration with the international experts. As of July 2011, one of three Polish offices of the United Nations Development Programme has been operating in Gdynia at the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park. In addition, last year in September, PSTP hosted TEDxGdynia dedicated to social innovations. Later that year in November the Park co-organised SIX Winter School, a 3-day workshop-event attended by the social innovators from all over the world cooperating within the Social Innovation Exchange (SIX) network.

GULDBORG SUND

Get on the Bus – and Get Healthy!

Guldborgsund Municipality participated in February 2008 in a national health survey project, called KRAM. The survey discovered a lot of challenges in health promotion. The citizens’ health behavior was significantly below the middle, among municipalities with low levels of education and income.

Following this national health survey Guldborgsund continued the focus on the KRAM-factors (K stands for diet, R smoking, A alcohol and M exercise, and "RAM" is the Danish word for a huge). KRAM is a simple message and easy to communicate. The Health Department in Guldborgsund arranged KRAM-ambassador courses for local workplaces, bought a minibus named the KRAM-bus and interviewed citizens to the local newspaper. The interview were citizens who had quit smoking, lost weight, started running or started other health improving activities. At KRAM-ambassador courses employees get inspiration to initiate health promoting activities at their workplace. It can be fruit schemes, healthier food in their canteen or for meetings, quit-smoking courses, establishing an alcohol policy, or exercise classes after work. The KRAM-bus offers employees and citizens a health interview with a health consultant. The KRAM bus comes around in the municipality twice each year and visit businesses and institutions by appointment. The results show that the individual takes responsibility for his or her own lifestyle.

In 2010 Guldborgsund participated in a new nationwide health survey. New data showed that citizens were in the process of changing health behaviour. Citizens now smoke and drink less than people in comparable municipalities and they are more physically active. The data actually places the citizens’ health profile among municipalities with a higher degree of education and higher income. This could indicate that the efforts done in connection with the KRAM-factors are working.

Measuring of the person’s individual health data is highly motivating for the citizens to see their own health described in numbers and being encouraged to improve their health.

Jëkabpils Supports Healthy Lifestyle

One of the functions of a local government is to promote healthy lifestyle and sports. Local government is entitled to promote formation and operation of sports organizations, including sports clubs. Jëkabpils municipality together with local entrepreneurs has the opportunity to form the basketball club ‘Jëkabpils’ that will play in Latvian national basketball league. By taking part in this undertaking, the municipality promotes sports life and encourage youngsters to live active and healthy lifestyle.

Basketball is the one between football, volleyball and others that gathers children of all ages, as well as grown-ups. Already there are 10 to groups of youngsters in the city that play basketball. The main goal of this club is to support a development of high class basketball players.