

On 21 September 2012 the first meeting of **Latvian HEPROGRESS expert group** took place. The group involves administrators, politicians and professionals from eight local municipalities and Vidzeme planning region.

It was established

in order to sustain a platform for common development initiatives by taking into consideration public health in all policies. During the meeting the group was introduced to the HEPROGRESS survey results from Latvia and discussed the potential for using the data for the development of the next 7-year plan in the municipalities.

Despite the fact that local municipalities are rather similar, there were several questions that indicated the differences and raises yet unanswered questions about the reasons for that. Rauna and Jaunpiebalga municipalities have already used the data on well-being, social capital and health among their population for their internal work group discussions.

- These results are expressing the reality in the local rural and urban environment, and give an insight into people's life, behaviours, needs and wishes. Thus, policy planning on regional as well as on local level can be more targeted and prioritized, says **Janis Antons** from Vidzeme planning region.

Expert group realized the huge potential among different age groups, especially among youth that could be involved more in the life of local community. Those who are outside the labour market and elderly people were the other important target groups identified during the meeting.

One of the main goal of the expert group is to develop a framework, based on current estimates, for Public Health strategy for eight local municipalities in Vidzeme planning region. At the first meeting experts defined seven major areas for intervention: 1. Social environment and social capital; 2. Social care; 3. Health care; 4. Education and culture; 5. Territorial planning and housing; 6. Security; 7. Infrastructure. Some of the items will be combined or extended depending on the activities that could be implemented under each item. The next task is to list the activities already available as well as new activities that could be developed and implemented in order to improve people's quality of life. Aim is to raise awareness about social inequalities in health that reduces people's capacity to participate in daily life activities.

The finished outline of **Public Health Strategy** will be presented to politicians, administrators

Initiation of the development of Public Health Strategy in the partner municipalities in Latvia

Written by Karolina

Wednesday, 03 October 2012 12:30

and NGOs for common discussion in the end of October.

Written by: Anna Broka, Latvian Coordinator of HEPROGRESS