EURO-URHIS 2 and Urban Health Impact Assessment
Fiona Haigh – IMPACT - University of Liverpool

Background
In 2008 it was estimated that for the first time ever, more than half of the world’s population live in urban areas, with three quarters of those in developing countries living in cities. In Central and Western Europe this figure rises to 80% of the population living in urban areas. There is a number of issues that affect Urban Areas (UA) primarily. For example, internationalisation of metropolitan regions, specific vulnerable groups such as migrant populations, homeless people and drug users, infrastructure and environmental factors such as noise and access to green space. UAs have specific problems associated with health that are different to non-UAs that national or regional investigations do not identify.

What is EURO-URHIS 2?
The European Urban Health Indicator System 2 (EURO-URHIS 2) is a 4 year research project, funded by the EU and DG Research, on urban health indicators. The project commenced on 1st January 2009, following on from EURO-URHIS which developed a network of 60 urban areas across Europe.

The EURO-URHIS initiative sought to identify the availability of a range of health indicators across Europe and to describe some factors that, whilst not specific only to urban situations, have a major impact on the health of urban residents. EURO-URHIS 2 takes this work further by developing instruments to collect data at urban area level, through health interview surveys, routinely available sources of information and consultation with public health policy makers in each participating city. Urban Area Data will be collected from 30 cities in 12 European countries and Vietnam (figure 1).

The project aims to develop methodology and validated tools to support policy makers at all levels in making evidence based policy decisions for urban populations – healthy public policy. This includes the development of Urban Health Impact Assessment.

Project team
The project is managed by the University of Liverpool and is supported by partners from many different countries (see left). It consists of ten work packages, each led by a member of the team.

About IMPACT
IMPACT is participating in work package 7 of EURO-URHIS 2 (Development and application of aggregate health policy measures) and is leading work developing Urban Health Impact Assessment (UrHIA).

IMPACT - the International Health Impact Assessment Consortium is based in the Division of Public Health, a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Policy Research on the Social Determinants of Health, at the University of Liverpool, UK.

IMPACT aims to improve health and reduce health inequalities by advancing Health Impact Assessment (HIA) nationally and internationally. More specifically we seek to promote the integration of HIA into policy planning. We achieve our aims by the following activities:
- Research and development
- Consultancy
- Education and training

Urban Health Impact Assessment
The core elements of this work are:
- Synthesising an Urban Health Impact Assessment Methodology
- Developing an Urban Health Impact Screening Tool
- Piloting the Screening Tool

The methodology and screening tool will build on and integrate the outcomes of other work packages. For example: health and policy profiles using collected data; reports on health differences within and between Urban Areas; Healthy Life Years (HLY); Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs); future health trend analysis; Population Impact Measures (PIMs).

UrHIA will provide the participating countries with a tool to utilise the data collected in EURO-URHIS 2 to develop and influence healthy public policy.

Where we are up to
Overall: Indicators identified in URHIS 1 have been reviewed and 4 data collection streams were agreed - existing data, survey data not captured by existing data (adult surveys and youth surveys), data from policy makers. Data collection tools have been developed and 2 training workshops carried out. Data collection started in February and will continue throughout 2010.

URHIS: We are working on Stage 1 which involves carrying out a scoping review of HIA methodologies, tools and relevant literature with view to:
- Development of Urban HIA methodology and screening tool
- Identification of potential role of URHIS indicators within Urban HIA

Further information
Fiona Haigh
impact@liv.ac.uk
www.urhis.org.uk
www.urhis.eu

Acknowledgements
This project was co-funded by the EU Commission

Figure 1: Urban Areas participating in EURO-URHIS 2