



## **Cities against Terrorism (CAT)**

### **– Training local representatives in facing terrorism**

#### **Rationale for the project:**

Terrorism has been a reality in many European countries and a great number of European cities are faced with a continuing threat. Terrorist acts bring about long-term negative effects for the cities and high social costs not only from the financial, but also psychological point of view due to individualized trauma of victims and the overall experience of inhabitants confronted with the perils of terrorism.

At the same time, a wealth of experiences exists among European cities in their ways to face the threat of terrorist attacks, to prevent future risks, to mobilize the population against threats against safety and to assist victims to recover by various means of social and psychological support provided by local authorities.

In fighting terrorism, local elected officials and local authorities play a key role, in terms of crisis management, promotion of public solidarity, as the most recent experiences of New York, Madrid, London have shown.

Local authorities have a role to play to raise awareness among the population regarding the threat of terrorism, whilst avoiding movements of panic and confrontation between different groups of the population. Local elected officials must act as mediators between the global issues within which terrorism develops and the local preoccupations of the population confronted with an actual or perceived threat. This is why the issue of communication around terrorism is particularly sensitive for elected officials.

#### **Project activities:**

The Cities against Terrorism project (CAT) proposes to elaborate communication training for local representatives, to help them improve their capacity to publicly confront terrorist threats, develop public solidarity, build partnerships with civil society, lead information campaigns on victim support and more generally mobilize the public opinion against terrorism in all its forms.

The objective is to create a training package developed during four seminars involving experts in communication, security specialists and contemporary research on the terrorist threat.

The seminars will produce answers to four thematic challenges addressed by the project:

- emergency response,
- crisis management and communication,
- solidarity and public support,
- prevention of terrorism/ community relations.



Each of the seminars will follow the same methodology bringing together city representatives, universities and experts in each thematic field.

The training package developed during the project seminars will then be disseminated to the EFUS's network of cities and presented in a final conference involving the major European cities and universities.

### **Project partners**

The main project partners are the four universities organizing thematic seminars:

- University of Silesia, Katowice (Poland),
- University of the West of England, Bristol (UK),
- University of Tuebingen, Tuebingen, (Germany),
- New University of Lisbon, Lisbon (Portugal).

In addition to the above universities, external speakers such as city representatives and experts in the area of terrorism from neighbouring member states are encouraged to contribute with their expertise in order to achieve broad EU representation and ensure European dimension, necessary for concerted actions to be taken to provide support for victims of terrorist acts.

**Project duration:** 15 months

### **Project calendar:**

Phase 1 - Preparation and University Coordinators' Preparatory Meeting: April/ May 2006

Phase 2 - Four European seminars at four Universities: September – November 2006

Phase 3 – University Coordinators' Operational Meeting: November 2006

Phase 4 – European Conference to discuss results: March 2007

Phase 5 – Dissemination and Publication: May-June 2007

