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Sharing Good Practice from Northern Ireland for Good Health in Romania

Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC), the World Health Organization body in Belfast, is a citywide partnership working for a healthy, equitable and vibrant city where all sectors provide leadership to allow citizens to reach their full potential.

Through leadership and innovation, our aim is to deliver the Phase V goals of [World Health Organization \(WHO\) European Healthy Cities Network](#), which include addressing health inequalities, improving social living conditions and increasing prosperity in a healthy way, through intersectoral collaboration and a 'health in all policies' approach.

A particularly important element of this work is sharing learning and good practice locally and internationally.

A senior representative from Belfast Healthy Cities Ruth Fleming, is speaking at a conference in Bucharest this week. The event, which will be attended by state politicians and key employers, will present the learning and experience gained from a three-year project, which involved Belfast Healthy Cities working with five regional Romanian organisations.

The project focused on partnership working to address issues of workplace health; employability; and health and wellbeing. Utilising Belfast Healthy Cities' extensive experience of collaboration at a European level and expertise in issues relating to partnership formation, health, community and inequalities the project was extremely successful. The overall result was the exchange of learning between Romania and Northern Ireland as well as the development of a number of resources that will support better health across rural regions in Romania including;

- Study visits to Northern Ireland for employees and employers from Romania that included the opportunities to visit social economy initiatives and meet with business organisations.
- Training, in Romania, on community development principles, leadership and project management
- Facilitation of meetings for the design of work programmes and advising on the planning and implementation of health fairs to 19 rural communes (townships)
- The production of three extensive documents that provide guidelines on Workplace Health, Inequalities in Health and Partnership working in rural areas that will provide an ongoing resource for organisations aiming to improve their practice.

Speaking from Bucharest Ruth said the exchange of ideas and experience was very worthwhile.

“Although Northern Ireland is a much smaller region than Romania, both in terms of size and population, we can learn from each other particularly on rural wellbeing and inclusion. This week’s seminar has been very worthwhile and there is a strong partnership now between Romania and Belfast.”