



StoryCities

A project by:

Intercultural Cities Programme, Council of Europe

Communication Department, Council of Europe

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Concept

Intercultural Cities is a long-term Council of Europe action that promotes an intercultural approach to diversity management and migrants' integration in view of building more inclusive societies. Intercultural Cities is also a global network of municipalities that believe and prove that diversity, if managed responsibly and skillfully, is a major asset for European societies, not a threat. These cities rely on people, officials and political leaders that take actions and produce knowledge and expertise from everyday life. Confronted to the governance of a more and more intense mobility across borders, the Intercultural Cities work both on policies design and on concrete and immediate actions. The strong interlinks between policies and actions are beneficial though: policies reply to existing needs and actions; actions are guided and framed by policies. At the centre, there are people, communities, residents, citizens.

The Intercultural Cities' programme is thus launching a strategy to enhance communication and to be closer to cities' heart: the people and their intercultural actions and stories, thus enabling the intercultural cities to put the stories of their people on the spotlight. In 2017, the year of 10th milestone anniversary of the Intercultural Cities programme, the Council of Europe is planning short trips to a restricted number of Intercultural Cities in order to collect stories, images, interviews (video and podcast) that give the voice back to the people. This is the StoryCities project.

Goals

StoryCities aims to collect stories of people engaged with local authorities in the intercultural cities and that are working to put into practice the intercultural policies of the municipality. The idea is to support cities in providing relevance and visibility to the people and associations that help making diversity an advantage for all the residents. This is going to foster the local population's sense of belonging to a common project and a shared vision about the development of the city, thus contributing to successful intercultural relations and social cohesion.

The project will focus on cities' good practices and help deliver them into a more narrative and emotional way, in order to make better known cities' efforts toward intercultural cohesion in a digital environment like social media, where knowledge, information, and content are consumed by a growing number of users, and where their awareness is shaped every day.

Content

In each participating city the StoryCities team will collect pictures, videos, the voices of people, the sounds of the neighbourhoods, the essence of the places where intercultural projects are implemented. The contribution of participating cities to highlight projects, NGOs or association that are working actively on intercultural issues and to organise visits to the places where

intercultural actions/activities are implemented: intercultural centres, refugees welcoming spaces, public spaces where cultures meet and hybridise, mixed neighbourhoods, innovation hubs (including for business/media and diversity), schools, intercultural centres and associations, theatres, platforms for inter-convictional dialogue, and any other place where people activate intercultural relation or have opportunities to share their cultures.

The team will interview the people involved in project, including intercultural professionals, officials, community developers, educators, representatives of minorities or neighborhoods, representatives of associations, artists, and anyone else may provide a useful and touching insight of her/his view on the role of diversity within the city. **The story we want to tell is not the story of the city itself, but the story of the everyday engagement, challenge and success of the people that make of diversity an asset for the community, the neighbourhood.**

For this reason, the questions will be human and emotionally driven - although based on data and facts - in order to stimulate emotional answers that will contribute to shaping more positive perceptions about diversity. Interviews will not be like Q&A sessions, formal and institutional, but rather friendly and sincere talks, a dialogue between the interviewer and people involved in the interviews. Below a list of suggested questions:

Questions

For citizens, target group, inhabitants:

- What does diversity mean to you?
- What does it mean to be a citizen? And what does it mean to be a citizen of an intercultural city?
- Describe the situation of the city in terms of demography: people and their origins and your views about that.
- How do you feel the intercultural policies of the city? What is their impact in your life?
- What do you like most in your city? What do you miss in your city?
- What is the asset of your city?
- What should the city do better (more participation of people, more focus on practical issues, more organization at municipality level, more cohesion between NGOs, etc.)
- What is your favourite book?
- What is your favourite movie?
- What is your favourite music group?
- What is your favourite colour?
- What do you think about racism and discrimination?
- What does cohesion mean to you?
- What would you wish for your city in the coming future?

For people implementing projects/actions/policies:

- Describe solutions the city, the project, and the people are adopting to face intercultural challenges.
- Describe how and why people are the very heart of intercultural policies.
- Describe the challenges of the city towards diversity, as well as the advantages that diversity brings to your city.
- Describe the mission, the context, and the activities of the project.
- Describe how your project is effective.
- Describe stories of people you have worked with in relation to positive results of the project.
- Describe why diversity is a strategic drive for the city and for your community.

Cities as Provider and Multiplier

We are going to ask each city involved to:

- Identify good practices and stories that would fit in the StoryCities project
- Identify people involved in intercultural activities providing an index views of needs and challenges
- Identify NGOs working on intercultural issues
- Help meeting people involved in intercultural projects
- Organise visits (providing support on the spot, guiding the team, planning the meetings, ensuring availability of key interlocutors, etc.) to neighbourhoods involved in intercultural projects and/or where people meet
- Share the content prepared by the team on social media once published and promote the project through their digital channels

Outputs

We want to portray city not only as a human relation hub, but as a hero-like figure shaped by people. The StoryCities project will collect: audio interviews, video interviews, video shooting of activities and places, pictures which portray people and activities, texts that tell stories of people and their activities, stories of challenges city decided to face.

The hashtag of the project will be: #storycities

For each participating city there will be:

- Content on social media profile of the Intercultural Cities programme: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram
 - A StoryCity: the final digital interactive story for each city, edited by the StoryCities team
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- [A yearly final StoryCities teaser edited by the Communication Department of the Council of Europe](#)

Schedule

The StoryCities project covers six cities this year. Each interactive story will be online after the visit to the city. On November 2017, for the Milestone Event of Lisbon, the final teaser will be officially launched.
