



# ICC MILESTONE EVENT

## 10 YEARS OF INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION

### Urban policies for migrant integration and diversity advantage

## Main Conclusions

Launched in 2008 as a pilot project involving only 11 cities, Intercultural Cities (ICC) has developed into a long-term capacity building programme that is providing assistance to an ever growing number of local authorities (121 members in 2017), across Europe and overseas, to adopt an asset-based approach to migrant inclusion policies.

In 2015, based on the evidence of the positive outcomes of the intercultural integration policy model developed by the Intercultural cities programme, the 47 Council of Europe member States have endorsed intercultural integration as an effective approach to the challenges posed by the growing cultural diversity of European societies; they have indeed recognised that intercultural integration allows authorities to manage diversity as a resource, amplifying its socio-economic benefits and minimising its potential negative effects.

Yet, the intercultural integration concept needs to be regularly enriched and further developed to respond to the needs of permanently evolving societies. Also, while the take up of intercultural integration at the local level is more than encouraging, there are limits to the mandate and scope of action of local authorities, which makes it important to promote further the application of this policy approach also at the national level.

Therefore the Intercultural Cities Milestone event aimed to celebrate the success of the ICC programme, but also to take stock of achievements and develop new perspectives, approaches and partnerships. Organised in cooperation with the city of Lisbon and Portuguese authorities, the ICC milestone event brought together 271 participants representing the cities participating in the programme from the five continents, including Mayors, Deputy Mayors, State authorities, academics, intercultural experts and NGOs.

The rich agenda offered round tables during which Mayors and State authorities shared their vision and understanding of intercultural integration, but also their practical experiences in dealing with diversity, and responses to some of the main challenges of migration management. Eight itinerant workshops, organised in different venues provided by local NGOs and/or civil society dealing with diversity management in Lisbon, helped participants reflect upon topics such as: access to employment, business, and education, community safety, urban planning, participatory heritage mapping, and participatory digital narratives. An anti-rumours training was also organised in parallel.

On the second day, participants worked in plenary and in break-out groups to address issues such as social innovation, populism, gender equality, anti-discrimination and participation. Besides, the links between human rights and intercultural integration were deeply discussed, concluding that the two are complementary and

reinforce each other. Participants further debated and agreed on an expanded ICC narrative and policy model for the decade ahead, and committed to strengthen work for policy innovation, in particular in the fields of participatory democracy, active urban citizenship, human rights and non-discrimination, LGBTi rights, anti-rumours, and inclusive integration. These issues were all recognised as useful mechanisms to counter inflammatory rhetoric and populism while promoting cohesion trust in public institutions, welfare and wellbeing.

Besides, Mayors and State authorities had the opportunity to gather together for a restricted meeting in the form of a Policy Lab for inclusive integration, to address a major challenge for public authorities, i.e. the need for national and local authorities to cooperate and co-act in this field. Participants committed to work systematically under a co-operation framework to improve the design and implementation of coherent inclusive integration policies, with the Council of Europe acting as a honest broker and facilitator of the process.

Finally, the 270 participants made a bold statement in favour of diversity and inclusive integration, and endorsed the "[Lisbon Declaration](#)" to spell out their renewed commitment.