



THE SQUARED CIRCLE
INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION POLICY LAB

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KEY POLICY AREAS FOR MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION ACROSS EUROPE

GENERAL FRAMEWORK

Across Europe, competences on immigration and integration policies at state, regional and local governments vary significantly, reflecting differences in competence and relations between levels of governance. Border control, admission policies, nationality, asylum, and general migration and integration frameworks are usually the sole responsibility of the central state government. Regions and cities also have responsibility for integration policies in fields such as employment, education, housing, health, social services, etc. An increasing number of municipalities have adopted their own local integration plans or undertake specific initiatives in this area. NGOs also play a role, providing services, or supporting the work of different administrations.

This complex institutional landscape reflects the transversal and interdisciplinary nature of integration and makes it particularly challenging to conceive and implement coherent and coordinated policies between the different policy areas and governance levels. A robust and permanent dialogue between the institutions and actors concerned is essential in this respect.

A strong case can be made in favour of orienting both national and local policies towards a more inclusive approach. This means not only complying with States' obligations under various international legal instruments such as the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter, but also ensuring more cohesive, peaceful societies. Countries with more inclusive integration policies (i.e. higher MIPEX overall scores) have lower levels of perceived threat and, to some extent, lower levels of negative attitudes towards immigrants (Callens 2015). This finding on the relationship between national integration policies and public opinion is even more important since no other national level contextual factor seems to be as significant. Inclusive policies may also help us trust immigrants and see the benefits of immigration to our society, while restrictive policies harden distrust and xenophobic attitudes among the public.⁶ A drop in a country's MIPEX score usually signals a rise in anti-immigrant

attitudes and the success of anti-immigration parties¹. Similarly, a recent MPG study of the Intercultural cities INDEX and the Quality of Life in European Cities Eurobarometer survey 2015 also found that a strong statistical link exists between local intercultural policies and local well-being. Cities with stronger intercultural policies are more likely to have populations who believe that foreigners are good for their city, that local services are trustworthy and efficient, that the city is safe and that finding jobs is easy.

POLICY AREAS AND TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED

1. Residence and nationality

In most of European countries, initiatives and measures to promote migrant integration are solely focused on legally resident non-nationals (third country nationals in the EU framework). In some countries, such as Spain, central, regional, and local governments use residence criteria as a key focus of debates about integration and social cohesion. Discussions on migrant integration are linked to residence, and rights related to the legal residence status. Currently discussions evolve around the question of refugee status and the impact increasingly restrictive legal regimes have on the humanitarian situation of large groups of people in a very vulnerable position.

Matters related to nationality and residence are an exclusive competence of the central government. Naturalisation processes and residence permits are national competences and are managed by central bodies (mainly courts and police) around the national territory.

National policies largely determine whether immigrants are settling down permanently, becoming voters and equal citizens (Huddleston et al. 2016). Restricting permanent residence and citizenship (e.g. Austria, Cyprus and Greece) leads to large numbers of ‘permanently temporary’ foreigners who are legally precarious and socially excluded. Facilitating permanent residence but restricting citizenship (e.g. Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Switzerland) means most immigrants are secure in their status but treated like ‘second-class citizens’ in national politics and several areas of life. Equal rights are not guaranteed in practice in countries whose policies privilege certain national or ethnic groups over others (e.g. Hungary, Japan, South Korea, Spain). In contrast, confident countries of immigration like New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Portugal opened up these opportunities, so that most immigrants enjoy equal and secure rights that boost their integration outcomes in many areas of life².

However, in some cases (see the box below), local or regional authorities may grant certain rights through an administrative resident registration, thus not only enabling successful integration but also creating conditions for possible subsequent “official” residence status and even naturalisation. Some cities (eg. in Switzerland) grant rights to education beyond the

¹ Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tanczos and Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

² Idem

compulsory minimum stipulated in law, benefitting from a legal uncertainty. Such cases illustrate the complex dynamic between national and local competence and actions.

Local authorities can even play a role in largely 'national' policies like naturalisation. The highly discretionary and costly path to citizenship in most European countries discourages rather than encourages immigrants to apply and succeed as new citizens. So far, local and regional level has rarely stepped into the process to inform, inspire and support immigrants to become citizens, despite the obvious importance for their enfranchisement as full local, regional and national citizens. The 2012 CITIMP data demonstrates that local and regional authorities are rarely involved in the application checking or assessment procedure while few immigrants benefit from local citizenship preparation courses or high-visibility citizenship ceremonies involving local or regional authorities.³

Box. Spain: The exceptionality of the 'padrón'

The Spanish Municipal Population Register (*padrón municipal*) is the administrative register in which the residents of a municipality are identified and represents proof of their residence. Each town council is in charge of the creation, management and maintenance of its register. It is a register containing personal data regulated by the law regulating the basis of local government and data protection law. The system of continuous and computerised management of municipal population registers was introduced in 1996, and starting in 1998, population figures have been obtained (up to the 1st of January of each year), which are declared official by the Council of Ministers (at the end of the year).

In Spain, residents are entitled to public services by being registered in the municipal population register. Registration, or empadronamiento, is mandatory for all residents (in permanent or temporary basis) in the municipality, regardless of their legal status. By registering, all residents (nationals, immigrants and irregular migrants) receive a health card that entitles them to full health coverage and access to education for their children. Even unregistered immigrants who do not have a health card are treated in hospitals without being reported to the police. Political participation is also related to the *padrón*, as it is the register that provides data for the electoral census, and several taxes along with part of the national funds devoted to local authorities are based on this municipal register's data.

The set of rights for residents are related to their registration into these local registers, without consideration of the legal status of foreign residents. The registration is mandatory and the local authorities are in charge of the creation, management and maintenance of their registers.

Due to its exceptionality in the European scenario, the *padrón* has been controversial, especially regarding irregular migrants and their access to basic public services.

³ Huddleston, T. (2012), 'The naturalisation procedure: measuring the ordinary obstacles and opportunities for immigrants to become citizens', Working Paper RSCAS PP 2013/16, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies EUDO Citizenship Observatory, Fiesole, Italy: http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/28122/RSCAS_PP_2013_16.pdf?sequence=1.

On the other hand, the access of irregular migrants to public services is a matter for complex discussions. In countries such as Spain, where the local register guarantees the access to public services, this question is controversial. In other EU countries such debates arise from time to time, especially due to advocacy by NGOs taking care of irregular migrants. However, many local officials are also openly voicing concerns about the human and community consequences of eroding access to basic services for persons without legal residence rights.

Questions

- Should naturalisation policies be reconsidered with a view to facilitating it as a basic pre-condition for social integration?
- How national and local policies could help in reducing differences in rights and liberties (mainly regarding political participation) between different national groups?
- Local registers could be a good tool to reinforce integration policies. Should they be mainstreamed or are there valid reasons to believe that they constitute a 'call' to irregular migration?
- How can local vote for migrant population be encouraged? Beyond bilateral agreements with countries of origin, there are other ways to promote political participation of non-nationals?
- How local and national authorities could reinforce integration policies for short-term residents in the age of hyper-mobility?

2. Family reunion

Family reunion is usually a national competence, regulated by the immigration law. Under the EU framework, a set of conditions have been defined, but national authorities have a room for national regulations⁴.

National authorities provide family reunion permits, without interaction with local authorities. Authorities at different levels –national, regional or local – are dealing with labour market qualifications and access; education; housing, health or social services among others. In that sense, they should ideally share family reunion processes information in order to anticipate and prepare to address specific needs of the arriving family members and support them in their integration processes (access to labour market; skills to be developed and special needs to be fulfilled; recognition of foreign qualifications and abilities; schools; psychological and family counselling, health, elderly care, etc.).

The rules and practice of family reunion have a profound impact on the readiness and capacity of migrants and refugees to put efforts into their own integration. Those who worry for the safety of their family, lack family support or an unsure of their settlement prospects are clearly less motivated and able to invest energy and resources in integration. Increasingly restrictive

⁴ Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification. See <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=celex:32003L0086>

family reunion policies in some countries⁵ are of concern to local authorities who have to deal with the psychological and social consequences of family separation.

Many established countries of immigration are restricting eligibility to the modern nuclear family and expecting transnational families to live up to standards that many national families could not: higher ages to marry, high incomes, no need for social benefits and tests about their language skills and social knowledge, all with disproportionately high fees to pay and little support to succeed (e.g. Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Malta, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK). Increasingly, countries make exceptions to the legal conditions for those most able to meet them (highly-skilled workers and the wealthy), but only rarely for those most vulnerable (usually for minors and beneficiaries of international protection).

The MIPEX (Migrant Integration Policy Index) review of statistics and evaluations suggests that ambitious policies are helping immigrants and their children in practice to reunite together, get basic training, become permanent residents, voters and citizens and use their rights as victims of discrimination. This can benefit everyone in society. Researchers using MIPEX around the world find that the countries with inclusive integration policies also tend to be more developed, competitive and happier places for immigrants and everyone to live in.

Questions

- Is there any mechanism through which national authorities could provide foreknown information in the family reunion processes to other administrations to define better tools for integration?
- How can national/regional and local policies interact to facilitate the school incorporation for dependants under compulsory schooling age with foreknown information?
- How can national/regional and local policies interact to facilitate spouses/partners' labour market incorporation with foreknown information?
- How family reunification could be facilitated to reduce elapsing time?
- How national/local policies facilitate the recognition of foreign qualifications and abilities to avoid "brain waste"?

3. Asylum reception

Regulating the right to asylum and subsidiary protection (concession, denegation, etc.) is generally a national competence usually handled by the Ministry of Interior.

In each EU country, the first period of acceptance as asylum seekers –before the asylum application is approved or refused – is managed differently. Some countries provide lodging in

⁵ From 2011 to 2014, regular changes to the rules significantly restricted the opportunities for families to reunite and the path to settlement and UK citizenship. Separated families now face the least 'family-friendly' immigration policies in the developed world: the longest delays and highest income, language and fee levels, one of the few countries with language tests abroad and restricted access to benefits. (Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tanczos and Alexander Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

Refugee Reception Centres or through NGOs' infrastructure, depending on the national asylum scheme or depending on the needs and circumstances of each case. After that, local authorities (sometimes in partnership with regions) are responsible for the development and implementation of social integration policies for immigrants and therefore refugees in the areas of: employment, education, culture, health, welfare, and housing, etc. Achieving an inclusive and integrated approach tackling both the medium and long-term challenges requires multi-level governance. Cities need to be ensured that European regulations will have no negative impact on the integration of migrants and refugees, that opportunities are funded and that knowledge exchange on best practices takes place⁶.

Local and regional authorities are willing to increase their participation in the asylum reception, taking care of refugees and asylum-seekers from the very beginning, to help them to participate in the cities' life as soon as possible. The lack of an integral asylum law which includes the role of these administrations has been an obstacle for that.

Questions

- How can national authorities support and empower local authorities in their role in asylum welcome policies?
- How can legal and policy frameworks be adjusted so that refugees and asylum-seekers be included as soon as possible in the general services dealing with labour integration; language training, schooling, etc.?
- Is there any improvement to be sought regarding coordination between local authorities and NGOs providing services for asylum-seekers?
- Which are the best practices to overcome the bottlenecks for cities regarding reception and housing of refugees?

4. Education

Education plays a crucial role in helping migrants and refugees settle in new countries and environments. From language learning to the recognition of qualifications, education is a part of the solution throughout the integration process. Equally, education institutions and organisations can benefit from guidance and good practices on how to tailor the provision of education for migrants.

In the EU member states foreigners under eighteen are entitled to education on the same basis as nationals. This right includes access to free, compulsory basic education, getting the corresponding qualifications and in some cases access to a public system of scholarships. Regarding education before the age of compulsory schooling, public administrations may guarantee places to ensure access for the children of asylum-seekers.

The competence on Education varies across European countries. In non-Federal states, educational programmes, admission, teacher training and recruitment are in general

⁶ See <http://urbanagendaforthe.eu/inclusion-of-migrants-and-refugees-documents/>

exclusively national competence (with variations depending on the level of education). In Federal states this competence falls generally upon Regions, and in some countries, such as Norway, competence is shared but with strong powers of local authorities.

Most migrant pupils have little extra support to find the right school and class, catch up if they are behind, quickly learn the language or even learn some of the rules of the language that they use at home, according to MIPEX. Teachers and other pupils are lucky if they learn anything about diversity or immigrants. Most countries leave it up to the general education system to fix (or exacerbate) any problems. The most significant factors determining the educational attainment of migrant pupils are their parents' educational background, their language skills, the composition of their school and the general structure and quality of the country's education system.⁷

Since 2010 only eight European countries made minor improvements on MIPEX on education, opening the system to all legal migrants (Romania) or to undocumented migrants (Switzerland, Sweden), setting basic standards for language support (Czech Republic, France), opening up to non-European languages (Belgium), and promoting diversity in school or society (Austria, Denmark). A few leading countries lost some of their political will and resources to promote diversity or target migrant pupils' specific needs (Netherlands, Spain, UK).⁸

There are many issues around access to education, the educational environment and school organisation, the pedagogical methods, the diversity of origin and diversity competence of teachers etc. which are relevant for successful social integration and building inclusive, cohesive societies. Local authorities increasingly understand the importance of ensuring mixing and diversity competence in schools, as well as opening schools to the diverse local communities and facilitate these developments via various initiatives, but they generally tend to be small-scale and with limited impact.

Regarding education, the most concerning topics are the risk of concentration of migrants in public schools, avoiding 'white flight', school segregation and de-facto discrimination of children of migrant origin and lower socio-economic background.

Furthermore, the intercultural approach in the education system requires to paying attention to diversity (languages, cultural expressions, religious diversity, etc.), ensuring that the participants in the educational process – students, teachers and parents - understand the challenges diversity entails and develop strategies in dealing positively with them, as well as maximising opportunities that diversity brings.

On the other hand, the access of students with minority/migrant background to tertiary education is also an interesting topic of discussion.

⁷ Bilgili, Ozge (2015), *Evaluating impact: lessons learned from robust evaluations of labour market integration policies*, MPG, Brussels http://mipex.eu/sites/default/files/downloads/files/mipex_evaluating-impact-lessons-learned-from-robust-evaluations-of-labour-market-integration-policies.pdf.

⁸ Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tanczos and Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

In the EU framework, the European Commission facilitates the exchange of good practices on the integration of migrants and funds relevant projects across the different levels of education, and paying special attention to multilingualism, access to higher education, vocational education and training, etc.⁹

Questions

- How segregation, concentration or “white flight” should be discouraged from national, regional, and local authorities?
- How diversity could be managed in schools, from meals to festivities? Should legal frameworks be revised and/or should greater competence be given to cities in this respect? Which are the best practices or actions to be implemented?
- How learning minority language(s) could be incorporated in the official curricula? How can be diversity of linguistic resources better exploited in the educational process?
- How schools could increase the participation of parents from migrant/minority background in parents’ associations and in the educational process?
- How schools could provide attention and support for students who need linguistic support and tutoring outside the school hours?
- How can newcomer children be better accompanied in their initial integration in the school & local community by teachers but also other actors (associations, volunteers, social services), ideally even before the start of the school year?
- Could national authorities support regional and local authorities with some orientation of educational systems in countries of origin to facilitate the incorporation of newcomer students?
- How national/local authorities help students from minority/migrant background to access tertiary education?

5. Health

Access to health care is both an individual right and a public health issue. Many countries recognise the right of all foreign nationals to receive healthcare on an equal footing with nationals, as well as universally for minors or pregnant women (during pregnancy, birth and postpartum), and universal right to public emergency healthcare in the event of serious illness or accident. However, national governments are increasingly limiting or planning to limit healthcare rights to the most vulnerable and to emergency situations, curtailing access for those without residence permits.

The access to healthcare for irregular migrants has become a key topic in most of the EU countries¹⁰.

National migrant health policies are at least slightly favourable in most English-speaking countries (Australia, New Zealand, UK, US), the Nordics (Finland, Norway, Sweden) and major

⁹ See Education and Migrants at http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration_en

¹⁰ FRA's report on Migrants in an irregular situation: access to healthcare in 10 European Union Member States at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/migrants-irregular-situation-access-healthcare-10-european-union-member-states>

regions of destination in Austria, Italy and Switzerland. At the other end, health systems are rarely inclusive or responsive in countries with restrictive integration policies, such as in most of Central and South East Europe. Where numbers of migrants are very low, little or nothing may be done to adapt service delivery to their needs. Austerity measures also play a major role in countries like Greece, Portugal and Spain¹¹.

The fact that legally binding international law provisions on the right to health have limited enforceability, the vague language used (such as 'adequate care'), combined with the need to implement international and European standards in countries with very different healthcare systems, lead to a divergent understanding and application of the existing legal framework across the EU with different outcomes in terms of healthcare services offered to migrants who are in an irregular situation, not all of which are in line with existing standards.

The right to health and the limited access to healthcare for irregular migrants are often met with resistance by regional and local authorities and the medical professionals. From the point of view of human rights, inclusive societies and effective integration, it seems clear that an adequate access to healthcare is essential.

Furthermore, a study¹² elaborated by the Fundamental Rights Agency states that providing access to regular preventive healthcare for migrants in an irregular situation would be cost-saving for healthcare systems. Even when using a simple model to estimate costs, the implications are clear: treating a condition only when it becomes an emergency not only endangers the health of a patient, but also results in a greater economic burden to healthcare systems.

Questions

- Is there any need to ensure access to 'adequate care' as a set of conditions to be guaranteed to all migrants?
- How access to health services could be guaranteed to all residents? How can national and local governments work together towards this objective?
- How national, regional, or/and local authorities could provide services to accompany people who may need an initial guide into the healthcare system?
- How social service and medical professionals be better trained to meet the requirements of an increasing diverse society?

6. Access to work. Recognition of qualifications and support for entrepreneurship

Employment is recognised as one of the mainstays of the process of integration in terms of access to goods and services with which to ensure a decent standard of living, and contribute to the community. All states regulate the legal arrival of foreign workers by formulating

¹¹ Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tanczos and Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

¹² See Cost of exclusion from healthcare – The case of migrants in an irregular situation at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2015/cost-exclusion-healthcare-case-migrants-irregular-situation>

conditions for migrants and enterprises for access to work visas under more or less restrictive regimes.

While most newly-arriving family members and long-term residents can immediately access the private labour market, public employment services and training, those immigrants looking for the right job or a new degree will have to find one without the help of the social safety net or strong targeted programmes to recognise their skills or foreign qualifications, and orient them to jobs and mainstream services. Portugal emerges as the only new country of immigration with a favourable framework for labour market mobility, both for immigrant and emigrant workers.¹³

Support for migrant entrepreneurship is provided more often at the local level but it is not common for all local authorities.

Accessing the labour market is a challenging issue in most countries in Europe due to complex and restrictive regulation, red tape, lack of awareness of enterprises of the potential value of a diverse workforce, ineffective systems for the recognition of qualifications etc. Other issues include avoiding labour exploitation or irregular work.

Insufficient knowledge of the host country language, lack of contacts/networks & discrimination are areas in which local authorities have been most active in taking up remedial action. Some local authorities have even set up their own offices for the recognition of qualifications and encouraging entrepreneurship among migrants.

Questions

- How national, regional, and local authorities could better respond to migrants' needs (training, information, etc.) to facilitate their access to the labour market.
- How can women in particular be empowered to seek employment outside the home?
- How can national, regional, and local authorities join forces in encouraging immigrants' entrepreneurship (eg by reviewing regulations and reducing administrative complexities, offering legal advice and targeting migrants for access to business incubators)?
- How public administration could balance the migrants' access to mainstream labour organisations (labour unions, employees' associations, etc.) with fulfilling the specific needs for a successful labour integration?
- How can local/national co-operation enhance labour inspection to avoid labour exploitation and irregular work, along with increasing sanctions for employers who break the rules?
- How national/local authorities could impulse economic activities in areas with high unemployment taxes, facilitating labour inclusion of all residents?
- Is it useful to impose 'diversity charters' to encourage firms and enterprises to hire diverse staff?

¹³ Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tánzos and Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

- How can public administrations at all levels increase hiring workers from minority/migrant background and learn from each other?
- Could be possible to amend general public procurement rules so that actively promote non-discrimination and diversity in entrepreneurship at the national, regional and local levels?

7. Housing

Housing is usually a national competence with delegation at regional and local levels. Often resident foreigners have equal access to social housing as nationals¹⁴ but the picture is very mixed when it comes to other groups.

Regulation often takes place at local or regional level, making it harder to assess housing integration approaches. MIPEX housing-related policy indicators show that in only 8 States temporary workers, family members and long-term residents have equal access to housing benefits, while in 12 States equal access is denied to all three groups. Housing discrimination is prohibited on grounds of nationality in 14 States and on grounds of only racial, ethnic and religious origin in another 11 States¹⁵.

Many governments have put in place policies to promote access to housing, either through home ownership or rental for the general population or for specific groups (low income, young people, first owners...): public housing, rental-support housing for young population, tax deduction for ownership or rental housing, etc. However, these policies have in many cases been insufficient in large cities due to limited offer, speculative property markets or high unemployment rates.

There is often a lack of public housing for low income groups but some migrants also faced with discriminatory practices in accessing to these housing due to residence-time requirements in some municipalities.

Furthermore, some migrant populations have faced discriminatory practices in house rentals. State regulation and anti-discrimination mechanisms have generally been ineffective in addressing the issue and local authorities have started to create their own.

In some countries decades-old housing policies which concentrate social housing in urban peripheries or inner cities have led to pockets of concentrated deprivation and high-levels of ethnic diversity – an explosive mix. In other cases, the lack of urban planning which takes diversity into account had lead the market to create similar zones. These entrenched situations

¹⁴ See Policy measures to ensure access to decent housing for migrants and ethnic minorities at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/decenthousing_leaflet_en.pdf

¹⁵ Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tanczos and Alexander Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

are extremely difficult and costly to change. Some local authorities are undertaking ambitious urban regeneration projects with a view to increasing social and ethnics mixing, trying to avoid at the same time excessive gentrification and to increase the offer of accessible housing. Depending on countries, they may meet obstacles of national legal/regulatory regimes or require state support for important projects.

Questions

- Which instruments or actions should be developed by national and local authorities to actively promote ethnic mixing and fight residential segregation?
- How could be strengthened the role of urban planning in diversity policies? At local or national level?
- Which actions could be developed to fight against discrimination in rental housing?
- Are there 'best practices' in relation to strengthening neighbourhoods' coexistence and cohesion?
- How public policies on housing need to address diversity?

8. Language learning

An increasing number of countries require sufficient language knowledge to award residency or citizenship, and even for family reunion. Many of these countries do not provide official language courses and in some cases attending courses is compulsory¹⁶.

While most EU/EEA countries now offer some sort of free state-sponsored language and civic or social integration course and test, few are rights-based, needs-based, education-based, work-based, flexibly timed, child-friendly or sufficient to attain the level of proficiency required for skilled work, permanent residence or naturalisation.

Some countries, such as the Netherlands, demand but do not support migrant adults to learn the Dutch language and the country's core civic values, with 'loans' replacing the grants and free courses provided traditionally by the Netherlands and by most other countries.¹⁷

Usually, language learning is part of the welcome policies that municipalities offer to help migrants to be part of the host society in all the vital areas of daily life. In accordance with that, each municipality has developed (or not) a set of tools, instruments, and actions to promote autonomy through languages' learning.

There is a wide variety of language learning policies for migrants among the European states.

There are generally no national policies for multilingualism (except in the case of minority languages under the Council of Europe Charter for Regional and Minority Languages).

¹⁶ See [Linguistic integration of Adult Migrants – Policy and Practice, Council of Europe 2013](#)

¹⁷ Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe, by Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tanczos and Alexander Wolffhardt (paper for the Autumn Academy 2016, Global Exchange for Migration and Diversity)

However, some cities are now paying attention to the value of migrants'/minorities' languages for improving their economic and cultural attractiveness, and cosmopolitan image but these efforts need to be supported and resourced in particular by administrations dealing with education, culture and economic development.

Questions

- How can state-city partnerships improve the provision of orientation/guidance on languages courses for migrants or prospective migrants, as well as refugees?
- How can national and local policies help to promote multilingualism?
- Most EU countries are increasing language requirements for different legal procedures (naturalization; renovations' permits, etc.): how could local or national authorities provided better services to facilitate language learning?

9. Social, civic, and cultural rights

Aside from the right to vote, there are many other ways in which the immigrant population may engage in local politics. These may be forums, or regional and local advisory committees under different denominations, which enable the immigrant community to articulate its demands and influence the policies that directly affect them. Thus, all social agents, immigrant associations and local governments are striving to increase the immigrant community's engagement in the local community to ensure a harmonious neighbourhood and inclusive citizenship, beyond political participation.

When it comes to political rights, in a growing number of countries foreign residents can vote in local elections under certain conditions. However, their voting activity is generally lower than that of nationals. The right to be elected is far from being generalised. Only in a few countries there are national consultative bodies on integration which involve migrants and refugees. The protection of the right to practice one's religion is unevenly ensured and gives right to a lot of controversy in today's climate, especially as far as Islam is concerned.

There are a range of promising and compelling practices and examples in these areas at the local level.

Questions

- How to encourage the political expression and participation of migrants and refugees?
- How can local and national authorities join forces to combat intolerance and discrimination in relation to religion?
- How can national and local authorities support the cultural sector to promote diversity and intercultural relations?
- How national, regional, and local authorities could accommodate religious differences in public expressions (festivities, institutional events, etc.)?
- How social participation of migrant population should be increased?
- How national, regional, and local authorities could strength the fight against racism and xenophobia? Which are the best awareness-raising practices?

- How the work of anti-discrimination could be improved? Better coordination at different levels is required?
- How national/local authorities could engage mainstream population in fighting discrimination practices, hate speeches, etc.?
- How reinforce the instruments on equal treatment dispensed to immigrants and to avoid discrimination based on race or ethnic origin?
- Does it seem necessary to develop a public discourse that highlights the positive contribution of diversity, and, therefore, of foreigners, in the development of the country and the city?