



Intercultural cities

Building the future on diversity

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Guidance for city policy-makers with good practice examples

The Intercultural city aims at basing its policies and identity on the explicit acknowledgement that diversity can be a resource and not necessarily a problem. To achieve this, the city puts in place a strategy to adapt its governance system and its policies in all relevant fields to the needs of a diverse population. Intercultural city strategies need to facilitate positive intercultural encounters and exchanges but should not ignore or fail to address intercultural conflict. Conflict is to be welcomed as inevitable. Handled well, it can lead to mutual learning and growth for all participants, including city authorities.

Consultation and participation of citizens and communities in the development, implementation and evaluation of the intercultural city strategy is not only important and a value in itself, it is essential for achievement. A genuinely intercultural city can only be achieved through the active participation of all the major institutions, groups and communities in the city.

Included in this section are examples of intercultural approaches in a range of policy fields which could facilitate the development of intercultural strategies.

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Education for diversity (youth, language support, universities)

Education plays a crucial role in encouraging integration and tolerance among people from different backgrounds. The following initiatives include language learning support, university's activities, trainings and other educational approaches to insure a peaceful coexistence in diverse multi-lingual and multi-faith societies.

Barcelona, Spain - Teaching respect for diversity in classrooms

Intercultural approach to education to insure peaceful coexistence of diverse communities

- Facilitate the official recognition of academic qualifications from other countries through collaboration with the Agència d'Homologació de Títols (Agency for the Recognition of Qualifications) that has been launched by the Government of Catalonia.
- Formulate training entrance exams for work integration training programmes through the objectivation of abilities and not so much from the knowledge that a specific school education may signify.
- Support the measures aimed at encouraging the continuity of studies through programmes that use the figure of the "referent model" in high schools.
- Strengthen the programmes for entry into, or return to, regulated education as well as the promotion of work values and culture. Commitment from the Educational Consortium in the execution of its competences in planning and schooling, to take measures that involve the schools from the same educational zone so that all the schools teach about the neighborhood's socio-cultural diversity in the same way, as provided for in the LEC (Law on Education) in the definition of the Educational Service in Catalonia. In order to provide a response to the greater socio-cultural diversity of students, incorporate new instruments and methodologies into the support programmes for success at school at the basic and compulsory level.

Examples:

- Continue strengthening and adapting the running of reception classrooms, guaranteeing a link with the ordinary classroom, and maintaining the model of temporary reception classrooms for children older than 14 years who are incorporated into the educational system from the third term onwards.
- Strengthen school support programmes, tutorials between equals and assisted study, where the adults of reference are individuals who have immigrated, so that successful role models are created for the newly-arrived pupils.
- Encourage the continuity of post-compulsory studies and facilitate the transition from school to work, strengthening the programmes of orientation and guidance that take into account the different socio-cultural contexts of the students. With regard to artistic education, use compensatory policies to ensure a progressive incorporation of students of immigrant origin into artistic training activities so that they enjoy the same opportunities of integral training as native children.

Treatment of cultural diversity in classrooms to strengthen the values that ensure coexistence in a context of diversity

The new reality makes schools work to promote the values of respect for diversity through knowledge and dialogue, emphasising common and shared attributes. Constitute a working committee with leading figures and experts from the educational sector in order to introduce interculturality as a mainstream element of the curriculum, working from a diagnosis of that which is already being done.

Example:

- Drawing up a map of educational resources for interculturality systemising all those that already exist in Barcelona promoted by administrations, entities, immigrant associations, NGOs, etc.

Training teachers in intercultural education and knowledge of the socialising processes that these children experience in their countries of origin.

Drive the learning of first languages within a framework of multilingualism and reciprocity with regard to Catalan language learning. The importance of the environment and the involvement of families and all social agents in the educational process. In the process to become a citizen, apart from at school, children and families participate in social networks that enable them to associate with society.

Encourage the involvement of families in the educational process of their children, opening spaces for meetings between families, entities and the school.

Examples:

Promote training spaces for parents so that they can access information on the educational system and join the PTA to facilitate their involvement in their children's educational process.

- Take advantage of the reception activities in the family regrouping guidance programme to put them into contact with families that regroup children of school age, in order to be able to better programme and facilitate the schooling process.

Strengthen policies that open up the school to the neighbourhood and make it a place for meeting and coexistence.

Example:

- Within the framework of the programme of New Social Uses of Time, continue promoting the Programa de Patis Oberts (Open Playgrounds Programme) at schools during the weekends for all residents in the neighbourhood as a meeting place.

Barcelona, Spain - Barcelona Centre for Linguistic Normalization

Improving access to employment through language education

Distribution of the contents of the Citizens' Charter in "Easy Reading" formats and in different languages. The Barcelona Centre for Linguistic Normalization (CLN) welcomes over 17,000 students from 127 different countries. The classes are thus an active example of diversity and the respect of difference. It is for this reason that the CNL has adopted intercultural dialogue as one of the strategic values of its educational project, in which new arrivals are acquainted with the characteristic traits of Catalan culture, not in terms of a single, homogeneous model but rather from the position of exchange, plurality, interaction and the miscegenation and hybridisation of culture.

Aims to continue promoting the knowledge of Catalan in collaboration with the Consorci de Normalització Lingüística (Language Normalisation Consortium) and facilitating the learning of Spanish in collaboration with associations in the city.

Adapt the knowledge of the languages for professional sectors so that, at the same time as people are learning the language, they are adding to their professional qualifications.

Example:

- Courses and materials associated with the field of assistance to the elderly, to certain services and commercial sectors, etc.

Carry out specific policies offering Catalan courses for groups in which a scant knowledge of Catalan is detected, in order to avoid anyone in Barcelona, for whatever the reason, being excluded from knowing it.

Examples:

- Materials and courses at a basic level for the Chinese and Pakistani communities.
- Carrying out activities, making course offers known through the specialist media of immigrant groups. Facilitate the teaching of the languages of origin in schools - out of school hours – providing this is in response to a request by the parents.

Programme to furnish skills to people from immigrant groups to be "qualified disseminators" of their languages of origin and provide them the tools to promote the teaching of the languages of origin amongst immigrant groups.

Drawing up a protocol for the translation of foreign languages at Barcelona City Council.

Promote and provide support to the different programmes of language pairs that exist in the city, both in the exchange of Catalan as well as in the languages of origin of immigrants.

Give support to programmes of language exchange in groups.

Promote the Espai Llengua i Cultura (Space for Language and Culture) as a reference for the dissemination of cultural activities in Catalan amongst students who are learning it and as a space for intercultural stimulation.

Bergen, Norway - Funds to stimulate parents' participation and intercultural projects in schools

Parents' inclusion in intercultural school projects

The Bergen municipality has announced funds to stimulate the collaboration between schools and parents from minority background. The city also promotes local schools which carry out intercultural projects. Many schools apply for funding for different intercultural projects where the parents are actively involved. Most of the schools engage in mutual collaboration, evaluating and sharing their experiences and projects

Bergen, Norway - Language trainings

Project to foster minority languages

The city provides specific language training in the official languages for hard-to reach groups. It also provides learning migrant/minority languages as part of the regular curriculum at schools and as mother tongue course for migrant/minority kids only. Bergen encourages projects which give a positive image to minority/migrant languages. The public library in Bergen is host to events promoting literature and art from the migrant home countries.

Bergen, Norway - Interdisciplinary seminars, information networks and training courses

Workshops to improve intercultural skills

According to the answers provided in the survey, the city promotes the intercultural competences of its officials and staff through interdisciplinary seminars, information networks and training courses. Since 2001 the City of Bergen has offered courses in intercultural communication to its staff. The County council has also offered this course to its staff and other public and private sector workplaces. The city also conducts surveys to find out how inhabitants perceive migrants/minority groups.

Bergen, Norway - EMPO Multicultural Resource Centre

The method and goal of empowerment

Empo-Multicultural Resource Center is a resource center for young adults and families with immigrant background living in Bergen. It is under the Church City Mission and is led by a team of 14 staff and 6 volunteers with a multicultural and interdisciplinary and broad knowledge and experience in promoting diversity, dialogue and participation in Norway's multicultural society. 10 of the 14 staff members have immigrant background. In 2014 Empo had 550 participants, and 67 children representing all 52 nationalities.

Empo started in 2005 as a platform for women with children to meet and practice Norwegian. It has since then developed into a resource center with 10 year experience of cross-cultural work with and for people of immigrant background

Empo is an abbreviation for «empowerment», which is both goal and method for the resource center. Methodically, Empo's work is based anthropological knowledge such as cultural understanding and

cultural analysis, combined with the practical approach of health and Social work. It offers several meeting arenas, courses, individual counseling, work in groups with role-play, discussions and parental guidance as well as social, cultural and professional activities.

The offers depend on the needs expressed by participants. Through sharing practical and theoretical knowledge, they assist and enable participants to use and develop their own resources, expand their networks and experience a sense of mastery and greater control over their own lives. They encourage participants to learn Norwegian and engage in other activities to meet local people and families. They also provide participants with information, networks, and a chance of taking initiative and becoming active in the local communities. They help migrants understand the codes of the society and the keys to the functioning of schools and other environments.

Empo collaborates with the Bergen municipality, the Introduction Center for refugees, schools, health stations, schools and other public and private sectors. It also acts as a link between the different migrant groups and the public sector, sharing experiences and expertise on issues in regards to integration, community empowerment etc. A good example is a collaboration they had with a hospital that once wanted to raise awareness on diabetes through offering courses to immigrants, as Diabetes was prevalent among migrants. They had challenges getting people to register for the courses and took contact with Empo for a collaboration and help on how to plan the course. Together they organized the course at EMPO with a very good turn up. The multicultural staff played a very important role to pass on the information.

EMPO initiatives such as women's groups, men's gatherings, courses, theme days and seminars, counseling, parental guidance, language and work practice, social networking across cultures - create space for dialogue, mutual understanding and change. And promote greater inclusion and integration into the society.

Berlin-Neukölln, Germany - Berlin-Neukölln's strategy for Roma inclusion: an intercultural approach

Towards the inclusion of the Roma people

With a population of about 300,000 inhabitants, of whom 40% have a migrant background, the district of Neukölln in Berlin is often defined by its distinctly intercultural and diverse nature. One growing ethnic group in the district is that of the Roma, Europe's largest minority, which face poverty, social exclusion and discrimination across the continent, Many Roma families arrive in Berlin without any resources or knowledge of German, hoping to find a better life for themselves and their children. Despite the considerable challenges which this recent immigration from South-Eastern Europe has posed, the district of Neukölln is going to great lengths to address the issues at hand as part of a wider inclusion strategy. A comprehensive action plan has been introduced covering education, healthcare, accommodation and networking.

The first key step was to establish the 'AG Roma' or 'Roma working committee', which has brought together all relevant stakeholders such as schools, the police, youth and job centres, the city administration, NGO's, Roma organisations and neighbourhood management. The group was then divided into further sub-committees to address specific areas such as healthcare in more depth. Enabling all stakeholders to bring their various expertise to the table was crucial to ensure that any measures taken by the district were based on the experiences of those directly affected.

Recognising education as the most important area to act on, the district has set up separate special classes for newly arrived pupils who have little or no knowledge of German. There are currently 31 of these 'Welcome classes' for children with no knowledge of German with a total of 417 pupils (many of whom are Roma) of all ages, who receive 30 hours intensive teaching a week. The focus is on a rapid acquisition of German so as to enable the students to quickly be integrated into the regular school system. Many of these pupils make the transition after only 3 to 4 months tuition. A 'tandem system' is also used in some schools which involves combining a fully qualified standard teacher with a language interpreter to aid integration into the regular curriculum. Career guidance programmes are also carried out in schools to broaden horizons and youth projects at schools attempt to break down prejudice within certain groups of the community.

Given that many Roma children have never even been to school, it has also been a priority to work together with parents to ensure that these children start attending school, which is a legal requirement. Free adult education courses in German have been made available to parents and a parent's association has been set up with weekly free events to encourage active engagement by parents in their children's education. A free vaccination campaign by the city council was also recently introduced and so far 681 vaccinations have taken place at 8 different primary schools. Whilst the parent's association and vaccinations are not specifically directed per se at Roma since they aim to integrate families of all nationalities, translation of all relevant documents into Romanian and Bulgarian has ensured that Roma parents are not left in the dark.

Neukölln is also taking steps to improve the living situation of Roma in the district. The construction and accommodation watchdog (Bau- und Wohnungsaufsicht) of the city council puts a focus on it. A counselling service for tenants by a Roma NGO has been set up to try and prevent problems arising with landlords. In addition the district has mediated where conflicts have arisen due to a breakdown in communication by inviting all those involved to a meeting and addressing the issues directly. Numerous disputes have been resolved in this way.

One excellent housing project which took place with the assistance of the district administration was the complete renovation of Harzer Straße 64-67 by the Aachener Siedlungs und Wohnungsgesellschaft (a housing company with a humanistic approach). Completed on the 14th of September 2012, the formerly mouldy and rubbish-overfilled building now offers 137 fully renovated flats, childcare facilities, rent advice and various artistic and recycling projects. Named after a famous pastor who hid away Roma during their persecution in Nazi Germany, the Arnold-Fortuin House accommodates 400 Roma residents together with other residents of German or other nationalities who rent these apartments at low cost, all of whose children are now attending the local school.

Other successful projects have also been carried out. After recognising that mainstream childcare and health services were not reaching certain minorities, the district established – already in 2007 - a programme called 'Stadtteilmütter' or 'neighbourhood mothers'. The project provides mothers from a particular minority with a basic qualification in childcare and counselling techniques, which they can then use to help their own community and be paid to do so by local government. Between 2007 and 2012 6000 families were visited by Stadtteilmütter in Neukölln alone. Whilst most participants are of Turkish or Arabic descent, the first group of Roma Stadtteilmütter recently completed the qualification and can now pass the knowledge gained on within the Roma community. The district aims to reach a further 3000 migrant families by 2015.

Last but not least the district has been raising awareness of the challenges brought about by increased

immigration from South-Eastern Europe as well as informing stakeholders about what is being done to address them. This applies to both influencing federal policy by publishing extensive status reports on the situation of Roma in Neukölln, breaking down prejudices through exhibitions in local galleries, and courses for social workers in dealing with anti-Roma sentiment.

There still remains a great deal to be done but Neukölln is acting decisively to improve the integration of Roma as part of its wider integration policy. Only by continuing these efforts can the district benefit from the different cultural skills and attributes offered by this increased diversity. Other cities across Europe which have Roma populations can and should draw inspiration or best practices from these policies, particularly in education given the success of the 'Welcome classes'.

Berlin-Neukölln , Germany - Neukölln turns a failing school into a site of educational excellence

School revitalised and renewed

The Rütli school had become notorious all over Germany in 2006, when the national press had reported a general climate of insecurity, as well as some incidents that had occurred within the school, with pupils allegedly threatening and attacking teachers and school staff. The school Rector had addressed an open letter to the authorities, asking for immediate help and denouncing the situation offering no future whatsoever to its pupils (and especially to that 83% of foreign origin or family). The Rector was correctly pointing out that it is impossible to try and integrate pupils of Turkish and Arabic origin in a school system that did not have any facilitators and/or mediators of the same origins, and was also pointing her finger at the difficulties the school system has to encourage the academic achievement of pupils of working class migration backgrounds.

A few years later, the situation appears to have completely changed: the Rütli School has been thoroughly reorganised, with a new pattern of "joint school" (Gemeinschaftsschule) in which primary school, Hauptschule and Realschule and Gymnasium are merged together into a single, continuous path that keeps together pupils from their sixth year of age through to 18. In a way, the experiment of the Rütli school could become a forerunner of the future reorganisation of the whole German school system.

The campus hosts a day care centre, a sport centre and a youth centre. There is also a general and broad cultural offer for adults, in the first place for parents, though not exclusively for them. The leading idea is to bring together school and local neighbourhood life, so that the Campus offers something to all inhabitants of the area. The action of educators, teachers and counsellors is coordinated to provide the best possible level of support for parents, children and young people, who are also invited to participate in the educational decisions and school life in general. Cultural diversity and multilingualism are treated as positive opportunities and are nurtured. Turkish and Arabic, are for instance, valid languages for the Abitur, the end of High-school exam required for University. This has enabled many young people from the district to access higher education.

Intercultural mediators have been hired, who could play a bridging role between school and parents. The new system has been approved by 90% of the teachers, and the others had the liberty to go and work in a different school. The Rütli school is today rather trendy among teachers, because many apply to work there. Of course results can be seen only in the long run. In 2014 23 of the pupils passed the Abitur, they started 2007 one year after the start of the new model.

The school is also trying to win back pupils who are allegedly unwilling to learn, offering them certain subjects taught in their mother tongue (either Turkish or Arabic) with mother tongue teachers. This initiative has had a big success among the parents, because for the first time they felt accepted in their cultural identity and national language. In turn this generated a more positive approach towards the German school, with which they can now identify more easily.

This year the school will start the construction of an additional building to offer additional training possibilities in workshops in order to offer an even better pathway for vocational training and jobs.

Obviously, this effort has also had a relevant cost in financial terms, which may hinder its mainstreaming. Most of the costs are borne by the Berlin Senate, an investment of 31,5 M Euros (to be spent by 2016). Apart from that, the Rütli school has been able to attract funds from a few private sponsors, such as the Freudenberg Foundation, which is going to invest 1,2 M Euros over a period of ten years. It is important to underline that Campus Rütli is not an isolated project, but rooted in the neighbourhood's overall intercultural integration strategy

Berlin-Neukölln, Germany - Stadtteilmütter (District Mothers) initiative

Home visitors' campaign to promote educational and health information for migrants

The Stadtteilmütter (District Mothers) scheme has trained 140 migrant women to be home visitors to promote educational and health information thereby creating a strong local network for integration. Over 1000 families have been reached in this way. Following a campaign for culture sensitive care for senior citizens, the Department for Social Affairs, Housing and Environment of the City Council of Neukölln works together with the migration service of the Caritas (social welfare institution of the Catholic Church in Germany) in the area of services for senior citizens. The staff of the service for senior citizens was familiarised with culture sensitive services for senior citizens in the framework of information and sensitisation events. An important matter was to attract migrants for voluntary participation in the social committees. The constructive cooperation with the domestic migrant associations at all areas of the services for senior citizens, in particular the work of the social committees and the Senior citizens' Committee on the local level, is an objective of the culture sensitive service for seniors. A further cornerstone of the culture sensitive service for seniors is the opening of the established meeting points for seniors specified on themes for groups of elderly migrants to gain more visitors of this group.

Geneva, Switzerland - 'Whole family' approach

Children-parents cooperation for a better integration

Educational policy and curricular matters are a cantonal responsibility whilst the city is responsible for school buildings. Schooling is seen as central to the creation of a harmonious city. A major reorganisation of primary schools is underway with the aim of better integrating them into their localities. A 'whole family' approach is being adopted whereby teachers are required to build closer links with families to understand the external factors that might influence a child's ability to learn. In the case of foreigners this means attempting to welcome them in their mother tongue. There is a one year transitional class for new arrivals with little or no French language, to fast-track into the mainstream and prevent them becoming alienated.

A good example of the approach is the Sac d'histoires (bag of stories) programme. Children can bring a collection of bilingual books, CDs, DVDs and other media which they share with their parents, who are

then given a much greater stake and involvement in their child's progress at school and improve their own language skills.

After school classes are an important aspect of education, indeed it is an obligation placed on schools in Swiss federal law to make their facilities available to the community. This is an important space for mother tongue teaching and over 6000 children regularly attend under the ELCO (enseignement de langue et de culture d'origine) programme. The canton must also ensure there is adequate provision and training of language teachers to meet local demand. However, the programmes seem to have differential effectiveness according to ethnicity. For example whilst children of Italian and Spanish origin generally seems to have settled well and left school with better qualifications and career prospects than their parents, Portuguese children tend to give a lower regard to education and follow the low skill employment paths of their parents.

There are estimated to be up to 1500 children in local schools without residence permits.

Schools are seen as a valuable way in which adult migrants can gain a foothold on the employment ladder. Teacher's assistant, library assistant, cleaning, cooking, and traffic patrols are all now taken as serious professions and extra funding is provided for training to enable these people to integrate in the labour market, particularly those with high skill but unrecognised qualifications.

Some schools have entered an experimental system of participatory budgeting to which 230,000 francs have so far been allocated. Schools are encouraged to propose new and innovative ideas and many of those so far supported have been intercultural in intent.

43% of the canton's foreign residents, including a high proportion of migrant children, are enrolled in public primary and secondary schools. The objective of Geneva's Department for Public Education is to ensure equal access to the canton's schools and Universities and tailor its services to the needs of its diverse inhabitants. For instance, it publishes key information documents pertaining to Geneva's education system in several languages. This ensures that migrant parents are aware and can make informed decisions on their child's education. The Department promotes the integration of migrant pupils in local schools, in their community as well as in the employment market. It also ensures that migrant pupils' parents are integrated into the school and wider cantonal community. For instance, the Department for Public Education offers French as well as minority language training to the pupils' parents.

Local associations as well as other organizations also ensure the integration of migrant pupils into the canton's public schools. For instance, the Red Cross, "Pro Juventute", as well as the Association for Young Workers and Apprentices offer extra curricula activities for migrant students.

Limerick, Ireland - Anti-rumour modules incorporated into education curriculum

Anti-rumour projects to encourage integration and inclusion

To develop a more sustainable model of working with Anti-Rumours, the C4i team in Limerick, with the participation Anti-Rumour Advocates and local networks around third-level education, came up with an idea that Anti-Rumours could be embedded into the post-secondary teaching and learning. Each third-

level institution has incorporated the Anti-Rumours project into an aspect of their courses and used the project as an assignment for part of a course:

- In The University of Limerick approximately 100 students in Psychology participated as part of a Political Psychology course delivered by one of our Anti-Rumour advocates.
- The Anti-Rumours approach has been included in the Development Education module run by Mary Immaculate College as part of the teacher training programme. The module encourages participants to take part in an external event and lists the Anti-Rumour workshops.
- The MA in Social Care course in Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) has adopted the Anti-Rumours methods as part of its Diversity module. In addition, they are currently working on projects as part of an Anti-Rumour assignment co-ordinated through the Course Director. The students staff are being trained in the 'Anti-Rumour' methodology as part of the Teaching and Learning seminar organised for staff of all three universities on the 26th of April, 2015.

Furthermore, the Limerick Youth Service developed links with second-level schools and ran workshops as part of their participation in the project. The workshops have resulted in the development of an Anti-Rumours Education pack which can be used in Second-level schools throughout Ireland.

Lastly, third-level students engaged in the Anti-Rumours campaign have started planning an Anti-Rumours Flash Mob / Performance for the 11th of April in Limerick City centre. The mob will include students from LIT, Mary Immaculate College and the University of Limerick and highlight the intercultural contribution made by students to the city. The mob will use Anti-Rumour facts on placards as well as the Anti-Rumour logo as part of the performance.

Lyon, France - Lyon - The "Fabuleuses traversées" of the final year pupils at Jean Giono primary school

Pupils sharing their history while reinforcing the feeling of belonging

In an effort to find out more about their origins and their present identities, the pupils of a final year class (CM2) at Jean Giono primary school in Lyon put on a show in April 2014, after six months' preparation in the form of workshops. The show consisted of the projection of pictures and photographs, the reading, recital and singing of texts etc. in what they chose to call "Fabuleuses traversées" (fabulous crossings) – the history of their families and the different stages in their lives.

How did this project take form? In Lyon, which is a member of the Intercultural Cities Network, civil society is working very actively to promote "living together" through its associations. For example, La Maison des Passages is conducting a cultural project based on intercultural activities. In the context of its partnerships, the association supports numerous initiatives aimed at fostering shared knowledge, respect for diversity and democratic values. It also intervenes in schools in the form of workshops that are run in co-operation with the teachers, and in which "otherness" is explored through different types of artistic expression. A project was set up at Jean Giono primary school at the request of the headmaster and teachers, who were having to deal with conflicts between pupils. The idea was to create the conditions for pupils' "reconciliation" with their own history and with that of those who are different.

The work carried out in the final class workshop was based on themes such as: objects and their symbolic role; fairy tales and oral transmission; voyages: across the world; the history of my family;

France, a country of many cultures; France, a country of many colours; Today's France; Tomorrow's France; What does it mean to be French?; My dreams of Tomorrow...

In this search for plural identities, the pupils were invited to consider what made them think about not only their own culture but also the culture of others, and this constituted the originality and the value of the project. When all these discoveries had been shared, they led to a show where "everyone mixes, rubs shoulders and invites their classmates to discover and get to know one another better".

La Maison des Passages has conducted several other similar activities at Jean Giono primary school: also in 2014, the pupils in the last class but one (CM1) set out to discover countries and poets in an activity entitled "Poèmes ... au ciel de la terre" (Poems ... in the heaven of earth); in 2013 a CM2 class presented their idea of a shared future in a show entitled "Traversées: nous sommes l'avenir!" (Crossings: we are the future), while a CM1 class expressed its hopes, aspirations and sorrows in a poetic register in a show entitled "Mon cœur bat sans hésiter" (My heart beats freely").

Melitopol, Ukraine - Intercultural Melitopol: measuring cultural empathy

A sociological study on cultural competences

Melitopol is a city of the Azov region, where more than 225 years there's harmonious coexistence of ethnic-religious and national minorities. Today it's the home to over 158,000 residents, belonging to 93 ethnic and religious groups. Upon initiative by the Development Centre "Democracy through Culture" in 2008, the city of Melitopol was included in the pilot project of the Council of Europe "Intercultural Cities". Today, the Ukrainian intercultural platform consists of eleven cities.

Melitopol carried out a representative survey on "The role of multi-cultural environment in shaping inter-ethnic tolerance of youth in Melitopol". It allowed not only to discover discrete patterns of the formation and manifestation of tolerance (or intolerance) towards people of other cultural backgrounds, but also outline the values and emotional attitudes of young people allowing to predict their behavior. The survey was based on the scale of social distance by E. Bogardus (modernized and adapted by Ukrainian sociologists) was used. The scale reveals the identity, openness (tolerance) (agrees admit as a member of the family – 1 point, as close friends – 2 points, neighbours – 3 points), national isolation (as colleagues – 4 points, people in the country – 5 points), national isolation (as tourists – 6 points) and xenophobia (don't allow to the country – 7 points).

Positive developments in achieving an acceptable level of intercultural urban environment and of sustainable multi-ethnic tolerance has been achieved through a coordinated approach of all social institutions: public, specialists in different fields, social services, media and local authorities.

Thus, the development of the "Strategy of Melitopol 2020" accounted not only experts' ideas, but also those of inhabitants. 10 focus groups with different compositions and a survey among more than 12 thousand respondents, revealed that people considered interculturality one of the main advantages of Melitopol, compared to other Ukrainian cities (according to almost a quarter of respondents (24.1%). 20.1% of respondents wanted to see and intercultural Park of Culture and Leisure and 62.1 % believed that the city's intercultural profile promotes a culture of tolerance.

Now the sociological research laboratory is working on testing methods of measurement of "cultural competence" (for ideas of G. Hofstede and tested by Ukrainian sociologists N. Kostenko and L. Skokova). This involves analysing the interaction of four components, namely: competence motivation (interest, confidence and desire to adapt to different cultures), cognitive (understanding of cross-cultural issues and differences), metacognitive (strategy understanding of cultural diversity and experience) and

behavioral (changing verbal and nonverbal actions according to the situation of interaction in different cultures) in different intercultural situations.

The Laboratory of sociological research of the State Pedagogical University of Melitopol invites the Intercultural Cities to cooperate to conduct comparative analytical research and develop practical recommendations for policy development.

Neuchâtel - Integration and citizen awareness Programme

Help migrants become acquainted with their new environment of life

Integration and citizen awareness programs constitute a specific mechanism for audiences with variable skills in French and different time availability. The objective is to get migrants acquainted with their new environment of life and help them practice the French language in everyday situations.

Depending on the program, emphasis is put on the practice of French or learning about the social and institutional environment of the Canton and Switzerland. Altogether there are five distinct programs carried out in 10 quarterly or yearly classes in Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds.

Programme

Noisy-le-Sec, Seine Saint-Denis, France - An approach to inter-cultural education that works: the example of Théodore Monod vocational school in Noisy-le-Sec, Seine Saint-Denis, France

Fostering interculturality and social cohesion through the study of different cultural backgrounds

The Théodore Monod vocational school of Noisy-le-Sec, located in the northeastern district of Paris (Seine Saint-Denis), is taking a different approach to addressing the interculturalism amongst its 850 pupils. While teaching the basic principles of secularism, harmonious co-existence and integration – characteristics of the French model – it also ensures that its pupils, of some 45 different nationalities, do not lose sight of their own cultural backgrounds.

A dedicated group of teachers, committed to ensuring greater access for their pupils to different cultures, organize regular trips, e.g. to Andalusia, the Holocaust Memorial in Washington, as well as the Arab World Institute in Paris. One such teacher, who understands the significant role that schools play in relaying messages of tolerance and respect for others, said:

“When we went to Andalusia, we visited a number of cathedrals, synagogues, places of worship which were previously mosques and which later became cathedrals. Our role is vital [...] in instilling the values of liberty and democracy in our students.”

Another teacher believes that it is necessary to promote the different cultural backgrounds of these pupils through studying history which does not solely focus on Europe; thus, this teacher often points out the important role of African infantrymen in the liberation of several cities during World War II.

The results of this intercultural approach are positive and encouraging, as pupils participating in these projects have higher baccalaureate results (80% pass rate) than in their other classes at the same school.

The difference is also felt in the open atmosphere and tolerant attitudes of the pupils vis-à-vis the different cultural backgrounds of their peers.

“With these teachers, we learn when we need to be more tolerant.”

However, obstacles remain and some teachers are acutely aware of the constant battle against the presence of preachers who advocate a certain idea of violent Islam, once the pupils leave the classroom. Teachers are calling for additional resources to develop their projects and avoid the risks of indoctrination and the rejection of formative education.

“It is distressing because one has the feeling as though there is a parallel society that is created; as if there is the official discourse and the reality. School can save these kids.”

Notably, the Ministry of Education of France decided that from September 2015, all students in France will have to undertake courses on secularism, where issues of tolerance, social diversity, and cultural identity will be addressed. Similarly, a radicalisation prevention booklet and a booklet on secularism will be distributed to education personnel.

Oslo, Norway - Gamlebyen Skole: diversity in cultures and arts

Promotion of cultural and intercultural education to counteract “white flight” phenomenon in kindergartens

Kindergartens tend to be characterised by great ethnic mixing but there are signs that primary and secondary schools are gradually becoming more ethnically-polarised as more affluent parents opt out of some schools and into other. This is being countered by limiting the right to choice and also by heavily investing in those schools that are threatened by ‘white flight’. For example, the Gamlebyen Skole is a classic inner city primary school with a wide range of languages and a combination of complex social and cultural issues. The school’s physical environment is shaped to involve references of migrant children’s culture of origin such as the climbing wall made up of letters of all world alphabets, the original carved wood pillar of a destroyed Mosque in Pakistan, kilims and other objects which create a warm, homely atmosphere. The curriculum in the school involves cultural and intercultural learning. There is a benchmarking tool allowing teachers to check whether they stand in diversity matters such as engaging parents from different origins. The school has edited a book from a joint project from Ankara and is now running a film project with schools from Denmark and Turkey.

Oslo University also has its own diversity programmes. One of them involves elective subjects about diversity in Norway and about higher education in 5 secondary schools, with master students acting as mentors. This has led over the 4 years to 30% increase of university admissions from these schools, while the Oslo school average was 7% increase. A mentoring scheme for mature students from minority backgrounds helps to lower dropout. Now there are about 11 % minority students and the target is 15% in the next two years. Similar projects in other universities also worked well. Encouragingly, Oslo University has turned the project into a permanent diversity office.

Oslo, Norway - "Strengthen our efforts": a strategy for language stimulation of migrants

Free language tuition programmes for adults and children

Some 5 000 adults are at any one time enrolled in language tuition programs. The city provides free tuition to refugees and adults in family with Norwegian citizens or refugees. The free tuition programs are – on certain conditions - extended to unemployed immigrants in general, in need of help from employment and welfare agencies to get a job. Refugees are enrolled in two-year introductory programs, which besides language training consist of periods of in-work training and mentorship and an introductory allowance. The adult education service adopted in 2008 a three year €10m strategy named "Strengthening our efforts" consisting of 20 measures, amongst others tuition courses that can be combined with having a job and/or taking secondary and higher education. In recent years the city has adopted a strategy of language stimulation which target children in kindergartens and primary schools. The aim is that no children shall enter schools without a basic knowledge of Norwegian and no pupils leave school without a mastery of the language. The strategy consists (among other measures) of subsidized kindergarten fees, language tests at health clinics, combined mother-child tuition classes and educational programs in kindergartens.

Oslo has pioneered efficient methods in adult language education such as project-based learning, inviting students to set up their own company. Students make contact with the local community, learn to make telephone conversations, talk to managers in other companies, apply for jobs...all in real. One of the companies which emerged was a puppet-based story telling of Persian fairy tales.

Parla, Spain - Education project for intercultural coexistence/integration in secondary schools

Volunteering projects to foster equality and solidarity in Secondary Schools

This project is run by the International Cooperation and Intercultural Department and is implemented in 10 Secondary Schools (8 public and 2 private) and was initiated in the 2012-2013 school year. There are 3 sessions with each school group using participatory methodology. Objectives:

- Promotion of intercultural relations in the educational space
- Education in attitudes and values of equality, solidarity and inclusion
- Prevention attitudes of discrimination, racism and xenophobia

A team of 4 interdisciplinary monitors (students from different faculties) work in each school that implements and evaluates the project. Upon completion of the educational sessions, volunteers are asked to join a *Network of Volunteers for Intercultural coexistence*.

1st session: mutual knowledge

2nd session: emotional work, empathy, prejudices

3rd session: rap against racism, to encourage self-esteem and prevent discrimination

The evaluation of the project by the students and coordinators was positive although there is a need to adjust certain aspects for the forthcoming sessions. This Institute has 31% immigrant students (the highest in Parla, who has an average of 20%). The director told us that budget cuts in education are having a very negative impact. With fewer special support teachers they are supplemented with tutors,

but have no training or know how. Students have less access to grants for books, so they are looking for alternatives using more digital resources to minimize spending on books.

The centre is also making a strong bid to open to the neighbourhood because the neighbourhood is very new and has no many facilities. They want to turn the school library in an open neighbourhood library and cultural activities for all the neighbours are organized. On the other side, this is the only public Institute in Parla that has an English - Spanish bilingual education, and although it has positive effects, can also generate some discrimination processes (students who have gone to English schools previously have higher priority to access and this can gradually reduce the number of immigrant students who have not attended those schools.

Parla, Spain - Parla's Network of Spanish language

Promotion of mutual understanding through the learning of the Spanish language

The International Cooperation and Intercultural Department promotes and coordinates this Network, where six local associations work together to offer free Spanish lessons to foreigners. Its objectives are:

- Promote the integration of citizens of all foreign-born individuals who live in Parla.
- Encourage the knowledge of the city: history, geography, customs, festivals, cultural activities, municipal, educational, health, associative services etc.
- Facilitate the meeting and mutual understanding between different groups as part of this network, participating in cultural weeks and other events.

In our visit to the Adult Training Centre (CEPA) we were able to talk with representatives of the entities that form part of the Network. They told us 90 % of students are women, most from Ecuador, Colombia, Morocco and China. Some entities do courses in the evenings and on Saturdays and they are now in need of literacy to many older women who have never been to school. They used to have more students groups but the regional government cuts forced them to reduce the number of groups, but with the support of the city council could keep some of them. The entities evaluation of the establishment and operation of the network was very positive, despite budget cuts has meant they cannot respond to the whole demand. They valued very positively the commitment and support given by the municipality.

Parla, Spain - Cooperation agreements with universities

Students and academics working together to promote interculturality

The municipality started to collaborate with some Universities and four cooperation agreements were signed to develop research projects in various areas with students in practices:

1. Sociological study on intercultural relations in Parla:

It was proposed to create an observatory with a first diagnosis and from there to design public policy strategies to address the problems and challenges identified

Five areas were chosen regarding coexistence:

- Security
- Public spaces

- Neighbours coexistence/relations
- Places of worship
- Education

2. Intercultural communication, interpretation and translation services

In the translation project there are students of Arabic, Polish, Russian, Chinese, English, etc. Students perform translation tasks and mediation and are integrated into the municipal team.

- 3. A study about how population makes use of health services.
- 4. Opportunities for Parla's internationalization.

In total, these working groups have joined 41 students from 4 teams and the valuation made by students themselves, teachers and municipal officials was very positive. No doubt this is a very interesting experience that many other cities could emulate. In the new Bologna curriculum, universities need to offer many practices to students and collaboration with local councils offers great opportunities. However, it's important to avoid the risk that these practices end up replacing services should provide municipalities through labour contracts.

Parla, Spain - Network of young promoters for city coexistence

Youth for interculturality and social cohesion

This activity is to form a network of promoters for city coexistence in Secondary Schools of Parla to participate in the creation and development of the "Hall of History and Stories of the City".

Joining the Network implies a commitment to attend an initial training workshop and initially participate in working groups to provide data collection and production of materials about:

- Coexistence, solidarity, participation and social cohesion
- Dialogue and communication: mechanisms and resources
- Attitudes and behaviours: rumours, stereotypes and prejudice
- The role of the promoter: goals, tasks and search tools, collection and production of information on city stories.

Patras, Greece - Enhancing Teachers' Intercultural Competence through collaborative learning: A work-based action research intervention in Greece using C4i methodology

Communication for Integration in the education field

Introduction

Europe's rapidly increasing social, cultural and linguistic diversity has transformed teachers'/knowledge workers role across the board. Teachers are viewed as dynamic agents of change in educating the global learner and building an inclusive society. However, in most cases, teachers are native monolingual professionals who teach predominantly students of diverse ethnic origins. The teaching force is also reluctant to acquire new intercultural leaning as the later threatens widely spread ethno-romantic narratives of identity (homogeneity) and national building.

Thus, it becomes essential for the future teaching force not only to relate to students' diversity, but also

to acquire broader intercultural competence (sensitivity, awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes) as well as an inclusive and transformative pedagogical philosophy (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). It is through collaborative professional learning that intercultural sensibilities and competence can be obtained in the most effective way. Collaborative professional learning seems to be an appropriate training approach for promoting intercultural learning and dismantling prejudice as it provides the opportunity for peer work, dialogue and negotiation focusing on narrative exchanges, respect and mutual understanding (Damini & Surian, 2013).

Effective teachers are expected to cultivate students' intercultural competence enabling them to engage in everyday intercultural interactions free of stereotypes or prejudice or diversity-related rumors. In doing so teachers have to design learning experiences which foster reciprocal communication and collaborative intercultural action.

Professional Learning Model – DESECE, University of Patras

Communication for Integration (C4I) principles and methodology supplemented by an action research intervention and instructional design approach has proven to be a reliable and sustainable teachers' training model at the University of Patras.

More specifically, 250 prospective teachers (undergraduate students) were engaged (between March and June 2015) in an action research collaborative project as part of their multicultural course at the University of Patras. They were asked to design, implement and reflect/evaluate an anti-rumor campaign to combat prejudices, stereotypes and racist attitudes in workplaces of their choice.

The main scope of the project was students to be involved in instructional design activities for early childhood and secondary school environments or other NGOs, but also to actively communicate with diverse audiences and negotiate cultural differences through compacting prejudices and stereotypes. Engaging future teachers in authentic intercultural circumstances was view as a productive way to deal with real world diversity. This culturally-sensitive intervention aimed to provide multiple perspectives that allow prospective teachers to gain a greater understanding of their role as global citizens, educators and persons.

The professional training model was grounded on the notion that (prospective) teachers with high intercultural sensitivity is more likely to become a) more confident global citizens having a more deep understanding of cultural differences and b) more sophisticated knowledge workers able to design intercultural oriented learning scenarios to deal with learners' diversity.

Initially, students were trained to become anti-rumor agents according to the European C4I Content and Methodology Guidelines. Then they became familiar with the action research methodology (Mertler & Charles, 2011) and identified themselves as designers of experiential, conceptual, analytical and applied learning activities based on the epistemological framework of 'knowing processes' and multimodality (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p.238-253).

Continuous mentoring secured students' acquisition and implementation of the new learning agenda (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p. 324) as shown below.

The anti-rumor campaign was implemented during May 2015 in diverse workplaces such as schools and NGOs in the city of Patras, which deal with diversity and migrant issues. Prospective teachers formed learning teams of 4-5 persons to:

- Identify the main rumors in each organization

- Compile data and arguments to dismantle rumors
- Maintain extensive communication with stakeholders and target groups (migrants, refugees, stakeholders, school children, parents, general public)
- Create Anti-Rumor networks and multipliers
- Design multimodal anti-rumor materials and activities (videos, radio spots, posters, policy guidelines, etc.)
- Implement antitumor activities at workplace
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their intervention (both the design process and impact on social change), and
- Reflect (in focus groups) on their learning process
- Prepare a full report-campaign on their anti-rumor intervention

Finally, students completed (at the initial and post stage of their training) the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) in its five dimensions (Chen & Starosta, 2000). The pre and post ISS scores demonstrated student's enhanced positive attitudes towards diversity after their semester-long engagement with anti-rumor strategy. However more accurate tools are need to evaluate students' overall cultural responsiveness and competence (and not only intercultural sensitivity).

Dissemination

Students will present their work in a number of events, such as:

- Children's festival at DESECE at the University of Patras (Patras, May 2015)
- European Local Democracy Week (Delphi, October 2015)
- Showcase conference with all the students, NGOs and schools participated in the implementation phase (Patras, November 2015)

Sustainability plan

- Integrate this project as a practical component in one of the university courses at the University of Patras
- Enable students to become volunteers/ anti-rumor agents in the local NGO network
- Integrate the anti-rumor concept/strategy as a theme in joint peer learning amongst ERASMUS students
- Build interuniversity ERARMUS agreements (starting from universities which are placed in the ICC network) to promote intercultural learning using the anti-rumor strategy.
- Combine an internship program between universities and NGOs/ schools to develop/implement anti-rumor campaigns
- Built a lifelong learning certificate or post graduate program for anti-rumor agents using e-learning methodology
- Utilize cgscholar platform to disseminate good practices and materials.
- Apply for research grants to develop and document intercultural indicators in different localities (in the context of ICC).

[Reggio Emilia, Italy - Learn Arabic!](#)

Arabic language school for non-Arabic speakers

In 2011 the Intercultural centre Mondoinsieme opened for the first time an Arabic language course for non-Arabic speakers. The course was very successful.

There is a project in collaboration with the Local Health Authorities to improve linguistic cultural relations between foreign citizens and health services. Basic Italian language courses are provided for mothers of children attending primary schools to offer initial language support and correct communication with the school. In order to help families preserve the competence of migrant children in the mother language, in two schools in Reggio Emilia there are classes in the native languages of children and in parallel their parents learn Italian. There are Summer events to teach Italian to youth who do not know Italian and who attend secondary schools at the second level. It aims to provide individuals a minimum knowledge of the language to facilitate access to school; prevent summer "scattering" of youth and social marginality, especially by one's peers.

Reggio Emilia, Italy - SAFE: School Approaches for Family Empowerment

Promotion of integration through families' engagement

A European project headed by the municipality of the City of Reggio Emilia, with the involvement of the Intercultural Centre Mondinsieme, which encourages social integration of foreign families through initiatives that involve local schools with diverse students.

The project, called SAFE, is carried out in partnership with the Italian municipalities of Arezzo and Torino, the City of Lewisham (UK), and the Efus (European Forum on Social Security). It is co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration of non-EU immigrants and the Italian Government.

The project meetings will take place in all the Italian partner cities and in Lewisham (one of the most populated suburbs of London), with study visits to schools and organisations working on the relations between young people and their families.

SAFE is based on the method of networking: Reggio Emilia, Torino and Arezzo are part of the Italian Network of Intercultural cities; Reggio Emilia and Lewisham are members of the Intercultural cities program of the Council of Europe

It also aims to reach and involve public servants, intercultural mediators, school heads and families. It has been developed to give the school a central role in the process of social integration of foreign families and to value the competences and social capital of second generation youth, which represent 35% of the whole foreign population in Italy.

Moreover, the project aims to find the suitable means for families' social inclusion and to stimulate dialogue and networking between the towns involved.

Among the expected results, it aims to:

- increase knowledge and analysis of good politics and practices about foreign families' support inside the school and through educational processes, both at national and European level;

- foster exchanges, debates and a structured benchmarking actions between the more advanced European experiences;

- promote and broaden a structured portability of good practices in order to implement new politics supporting foreign families through school.

In order to facilitate the exchange of different experiences, partners will organize meetings, workshops and networking tools.

SAFE points to the engagement of local authorities, teachers, and cultural mediators in all its steps towards the development of policies that support foreign families. The good practices experienced during the project will be collected and organised in a specific on-line tool and they will be the guidelines for the development of policies supporting families through school.

Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal – The school we have & the school we want

Education for integration and mutual acceptance

“The school we have & the school we want”, funded by the European Union under Key Action 1 in the School Education sector Erasmus Plus, aims to answer the needs for integration and mutual acceptance that derives from a constantly more heterogeneous youth population. Subsequently, it aims to improve students’ educational achievements addressing to specific needs that have been identified in schools, such as: improving school organization and management, monitoring processes and supervision of teaching practice in the classroom, helping the integration process of students with different cultural backgrounds and students with special educational needs, lack of motivation or interest.

These problems, either directly or indirectly, have been causing absenteeism and early school leaving, hence school failure. For this reason, five main objectives have been identified:

1. improve the skills of professionals, meet the individual needs of learners addressing their social, cultural and linguistic diversity;
2. improve skills in the management and direction of schools;
3. develop the capacity and international dimension of schools;
4. extend the knowledge of other cultural and educational realities;
5. improve language skills.

From this project, one of the activity carried out in 2016 is the “X Jornadas de Educação” (Day for Education). This day is dedicated to highlight the importance of respect, tolerance and democracy in the educational environment and it encourages the exchange of educational practices for a better understanding of the challenges students face, while enhancing fundamental values such as respect and enriching differences of all kinds: either physical, mental, cultural or economical. Last but not least, the Day for Education is an important moment to reflect upon the family values as well as the importance of childhood and adolescence.

Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal – The Children Assembly

A school twinning between Portugal and France to encourage intercultural relations.

The Children Assembly, which this year celebrates 10 years, is an active citizenship body that aims to improve the intercultural relations among the youngest community members in Santa Maria da Feira.

Every year, 23 children from primary schools are involved in a twinning exchange with Joué-Lés-Tours, in France, to take part at the Conseil des Enfants. The twinning lasts one week and during these days, children will take part in a wide range of activities to make their stay as pleasant as possible: cultural as well as sportive activities will be based on the values of solidarity and harmony to promote interculturality and mutual understanding in a relaxed and joyful environment.

Stavanger, Norway - Johannes Learning Centre

A bilingual school which hire and teach minorities

Johannes Learning Centre is the city’s main vehicle for building language competence. Although the staff used to be all Norwegians, 40% are now of minority background. Then the school has made the move to bilingualism with mixed staff. To achieve this they started hiring former students and appointed people with bilingual skills, wherever there was a need. As a consequence, the school achieved better results. It seems like the leadership had the courage to go beyond that which the law required of them. For

Johannes the winning formula seems to be: hire them and teach them; make them part of your functional network. It is said that nobody quits working from Johannes because it is such a good place to work.

Subotica, Serbia - Breaking down the sectarian divides in society

Adoption of a common history curriculum to address inter-community tensions

The city sees education at the heart of both its problems and opportunities. The separation of children into three main monolingual school systems threatens to create another generation of ethnic division and misunderstanding. The system is defined and imposed by central government, and unfortunately the city only has limited discretionary powers but within these limits Subotica is attempting to break down the sectarian divides. For example he is encouraging all schools to adopt a common history curriculum to address the misunderstandings that have sometimes fuelled tension. They have supported the writing of a new history of Yugoslavia in which Serb, Croat and Bosnian historians have collaborated. The best example of good practice in education has been the inter-school quiz competition 'How Well Do We Know Each Other?' To win, school teams must answer questions on both general knowledge and about the cultures other than their own. It is sponsored by a large telecoms company and is screened on regional TV so it is widely known and is keenly competitive, with the four winning schools receiving large cash prizes and foreign excursions.

The Roma Educational Centre is doing impressive work. It has become the interface between Roma parents, teachers and non-Roma parents to overcome mutual suspicion, establishing parents' councils in schools in which Roma are represented. REC has also pressed for the training of Roma teachers and non-teaching assistance and for their employment in local schools and kindergartens. They have also raised money to help repair derelict parts of schools so that new, cross-cultural, facilities can be provided. In 2005 the city of Subotica formed a Team for the inclusion of Roma children in the school system consisting of experts, the members of the Roma Educational Centre and two Roma high school students. This team prepared the Strategy for the inclusion of Roma children in the school system. According to the data of the Roma Educational Centre (REC) from 2006 already 61% of Roma children between the age of 7 and 14 (primary school) were included in the school system, what is a great achievement both of the REC and of the local government.

Tenerife, Spain - Official Language School and La Laguna University

Language classes for non-native speakers

Tenerife's language policy achievement rate (60%) is higher than the city sample's rate of 47% and the Spanish average (43%). Tenerife has thus been positioned in the first and second tertiles respectively among the 29 cities with a population of over 200,000 inhabitants and the 24 cities with a foreign-born population of 15% or more. Tenerife provides a number of opportunities to learn Spanish and migrant/minority languages alike, especially through specialised training at the Official Language School and La Laguna University. It is positive that the Island Council supports projects seeking to give a positive image of migrant/minority languages. We invite Tenerife to pursue its efforts in the area.

Tenerife, Spain - The Immigration Observatory of Tenerife (OBITen)

Migration and scientific research

The OBITen is a joint initiative of the Cabildo of Tenerife and La Laguna University arising in 2001 with the aim of promoting scientific research of migratory movements on the island of Tenerife. It prioritizes the need to apply theoretical knowledge to the planning and management of diversity policies, betting on the link between theory and practice. This goal has guided the definition of its research.

Since its creation in 2001, the OBITen represents a turning point regarding the ability to generate knowledge and to promote discussion and reflection on migration issues. Each year since 2001 have been organizing technical seminars to deepen the main topics related to the management of migration flows, diversity and interculturalism. Over the years, the OBITen has become a key instrument to plan and implement Cabildo's intercultural strategy. In the early years there was an urgency to respond to the needs of the moment. However, from 2009 evidenced the need to bet more on participation and interculturalism on the island. This results in the creation of the project "Together in the Same Direction" which is the Cabildo intercultural strategy.

Tilburg, Netherlands - Rainbow school in Tilburg: "colorful and excellent"

Recognition of the multi-ethnic identity at the school level

The report of the expert visit found that the Dutch system of schooling is quite distinctive. In strict terms, all Dutch schools are private having been established as the initiative of private individuals or groups rather than the state. Of course the state provides finance for most but control of staffing and curriculum is jealously guarded at the local level. Often several schools in a district will be managed by a board of governors, mainly comprising professionals. The Groenwoud School is typical of several that serve multiethnic parts of the city. It is pleasant and well resourced although pupil-teacher ratios of 30 seem quite high for a school where Dutch is not always the language spoken by pupils at home. The head teacher and staff work very hard to ensure all parents receive at least one home visit each year. It is noticeable that the school does not display anything that reflects the diverse cultural origins of the children. The head-teacher explains that this is deliberate. The policy of the school is that all the children are Dutch and that it would confuse them to remind them of a past culture. It is also notable that few teachers in Tilburg are of migrant background. It is explained that this is because teaching is not considered a desirable profession by minorities.

At present the debate that is occupying the educational milieu in Tilburg is around findings that Muslim faith schools seem to be delivering lower performance outcomes than other schools. Some would like to see the state intervene to rectify this, but it would present a challenge to the Dutch tradition that anyone is free to establish a private school according to their beliefs.

According to the report provided by the city, Dutch families often avoid having their children in schools located in neighborhoods with large diversity. Because the municipality cannot force the Dutch parents to choose the school in their own neighbourhood, a plan is discussed now about bringing together schools with pupils from different social and ethnic groups in one large building.

A big problem occurs when children change schools: from the primary to the secondary school. This happens in the Netherlands when a child is about 12 years old. This is a dangerous age. Many migrant children have big problems in the first two years of the secondary school, with many negative

consequences (no diploma, drop outs). In one of the impulse neighborhoods a Community School will start (where primary and secondary school are in the same building), with special attention to the age of 10 till 14. For migrant children facing educational difficulties, extra lessons are offered in the weekend school every Sunday. It is hard to get a good trainee post during the school period for many migrant children. No trainee post means less motivated pupils, means no positive report which means no diploma which means no job. This is the circle which has to be broken through. A special promotion team looks for trainee posts for migrant trainees. The team approaches many employers till they find the right trainee post for the students of the regional institution for adult and vocational training. This investment is profitable in the long term. In Tilburg extra lessons are offered to migrant children in the weekend school every Sunday. The lessons are given in the class rooms of the Tilburg University. The program includes theatre and music, with children being able to prepare a video clip and a CD with own songs. The location (Tilburg University) is very stimulating. Most children dream to be a student there once.

Progress report (May 2011):

Rainbow is what is known (with rather brutal perspicuity) in the Netherlands as a Zwarte School, meaning that more than 70% of its roll are children of a visible ethnic minority. Stokhasselt is the home to about 70 nationalities and most are represented amongst its 200 pupils. The district was until the early 1990s a mainly white working class district but it was not a popular location and house rents were low. This attracted a large contingent of Somalis and since then it has become increasingly diverse, with significant groups from Turkey, Morocco and Sierra Leone. This has been accompanied by white flight to other parts of the city.

However, Rainbow dispels the stereotype that such schools are of low quality. On the contrary it was recently inspected and declared to be of an excellent standard and one of the best performing schools in the south of the Netherlands. This clearly derives from strong leadership and a highly motivated staff team. Because the school receives extra subsidy in recognition of its multi-lingual intake, it is able to offer a teacher/pupil ratio of about 1:10, which evidently produces results. So the headteacher prefers to call the school 'colourful and excellent' rather than the derogatory 'black'.

Amongst the school's principles are: the parent as partner; learning to learn together; and a revenue-focused approach (which we understood to mean that education is geared towards the child becoming a future contributor towards the welfare of themselves, their families and the community). In effect this is a teaching establishment which puts the student at the centre of a process which also includes the family and the wider community, and accepts that the child's education cannot be understood without reference to the wider influences upon it.

The Neighbourhood Impulse brings great opportunities for the school, not least in the impending move to new premises. The plan is to house Rainbow and another, all Muslim, school under the same roof. It had originally been hoped that the two schools might integrate their curricular activity but compromise has not been possible so they will exist side by side and share some common facilities such as a gymnasium and playground. Apparently the growth in Muslim schools in Tilburg has now reversed following a series of bad inspectorate reports on the quality of teaching, and many Muslim parents are now turning back to mainstream schools.

There are frequent tensions and violence around the school but not within it, and the head teacher is relieved that none of this is ethnically-based.

It is notable that the first time the team visited Tilburg they were taken to an ethnically-mixed school in Groenewoud district. Here the headteacher made it a matter of policy not to display any material or to teach anything which acknowledged the countries of origin of the children. This was regarded as an impediment to integration in Dutch society. The head teacher of Rainbow took a very different view and believed it was essential for kids to retain their knowledge of parental culture as part of a rounded education.

Tilburg, Netherlands - Before and Timely Education

Early Language support for migrant children

In the projects of VVE ('before and timely education'), children in the range from 2 till 6 are trained in order to develop especially language skills. The aim is that these migrant children will not have language arrears when they enter the primary school at the age of 5 years. Many language activities are implemented to toddlers in the playgroup. VVE - support is also given to the first two classes of the primary schools. Recently, the alderman of Education and Youth Policy decided to invest also in the day care centres. He gave 140,000 euro to train teachers in six day care centres in order to teach them how they can stimulate young children in the development of their language skills. The results until now are extremely positive and the number of playgroups with VVE-projects will be expanded.

Toronto, Canada - Bridging the gap between "New" and native Canadians

Equal opportunities approach in education

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) governs over 550 schools. In some of these schools, the proportion of "new Canadians" is as high as 80 to 95 per cent. For half of them neither English nor French is their native language. TDSB aims to ensure that all students reflecting that diversity, have equitable opportunities to be successful in school and that systematic barriers to their achievements are identified and removed. Therefore TDSB provides for low-achieving students individual support in the classroom and access to language learning in the students' native language. TDSB supports also efforts to involve parents, neighbourhoods and ethnic communities. According to the data from the Programme for international Student Assessment (PISA) the TDSB has successfully closed the average achievement gap between second generation students of migrant origin and their Canadian peers.

Vienna, Austria – Spacelab

Support to young people

SpaceLab offers support to young people, often of migration background, who are "lost in the transition". The lab is based on open and detached youth work and the goal is to provide skills about learning, communicating, gaining confidence and hope for the future.

Based in 4 locations across the city, SpaceLab has a very low threshold young people to come in. It offers recreational activities, vocational training, coaching, sports, knowledge workshops... Young people who are disappointed in society and themselves get help with finding their interests, developing skill, practicing different jobs, developing a career plan, and navigating the complex employment support system of Vienna. The different SpaceLab locations offer different professional ateliers, including a cultural production space - radio, theater etc. In every place young people can try something and say "I did that". For instance when they make films, the films are shown on Vienna TV.

The results are impressive – after 3 months 33% of the participants are back to education, training or employment.

Vienna, Austria – Multilingual pedagogy for the diverse city

Multilingualism to help intercultural pedagogy

The European primary school in Vienna has pioneered an intercultural pedagogy based on multilingualism. Eight years ago the school realized that they had pupils with 28 different mother tongues and decided to explore the possibilities this language diversity give. They came up with the idea of language ateliers where children could learn to appreciate their own language as well as the others, and understand that there are no superior and inferior languages. The school was fortunate to have teachers with different mother tongues who also spoke additional languages, and used this talent pool.

The school established language ateliers in Arabic, Turkish, Bosnian/Serb/Croatian, Kurdish, Polish, Albanian, Slovak and Hungarian and many other languages. The ateliers run in the second, third and fourth grade of the primary cycle. The children chose the languages and their preferences decide the final language offer. Each child had 6 weeks induction each in 5 different languages per year. In three years they experience 18 languages and cultures. The learning methods are very different from one atelier to another as teachers draw on their own experience and cultural sensitivity. Learning content draws upon suggestions by pupils - eg a winter atelier about Christmas time in different countries, meet and greet, counting, food etc.

In the intermediate courses there is no fixed theme, teachers decide - dancing, theatre, arts and craft, music, children are active and move around and express themselves.

In three years the children develop their own language portfolio and a strong awareness of the value of diversity and the equal importance of languages. The decoration of the school is also multilingual and pluri-cultural, the school cultivates diversity as the norm.

The school is situated in a disadvantage neighborhood and good results in tests – demonstrating that the multilingual approach and cultural empowerment compensate for learning difficulties which may be present.

Every school that has the energy to find native speakers - teachers or parents, can replicate the idea (the parents are trained by the teacher in charge of the project).

Zürich, Switzerland - QUIMS programme: Quality In Multicultural Schools

Special education programmes for migrants to reduce inequality in education

Schools with a percentage higher than 40 % of pupils with a mother tongue other than German are part of the QUIMS-program [QUIMS: Quality In Multicultural Schools]. 51 of schools in the City of Zurich are part of the QUIMS-program (2010). The Zurich QUIMS programme aims at reducing inequality in education and at raising the standard of education in schools for all students, so they will be equally attractive to Swiss middle class parents and pupils and their non-Swiss peers. In the Swiss canton of Zurich the programme is mandatory for all public schools that have more than 40% student from immigrant backgrounds (excluding Germany, Austria and Liechtenstein). To ensure the success of the

programme a dedicated QUIMS officer is selected who receives training through a special certification process. The selected QUIMS officer prepares and coordinates the QUIMS activities for the entire teaching staff. New schools receive introductory training and close monitoring and support during the first two years. Teachers receive ongoing QUIMS training and the opportunity to network and learn from the experience of other schools. QUIMS offers extra financial and professional help to these schools: the money must be used to develop special projects in line with the aims of the programme based on local needs. Integration support is one of the three main aims of the programme: Building a shared culture of appreciation, respect and understanding through the use of intercultural mediators to liaise between parents and teachers; and the establishment of parent councils.

Welcoming and social integration (welcoming, inclusion and integration of minorities)

This section emphasises the importance of inclusion and integration of minorities in intercultural societies. It includes a wide range of activities: welcoming programmes for migrants and refugees; promotion of cultural diversity through festivals, events, sports; enhancement of public spaces such as libraries; workshops and laboratories to exchange experiences, etc.

Barcelona, Spain - Creative factories of modern city

City solid commitment to diversity through culture

- Promote knowledge of the history and cultural heritage of the city amongst all citizens and especially amongst those who have recently arrived, visibilise the contributions that people and communities from diverse origins have made throughout history.

Examples:

- Design of exhibitions on the history and cultural heritage of the city.
- Incorporate references to the history of the city and its cultural heritage into the content of language courses and reception materials and sessions.

Promote and give support to projects that visibilise and value the cultural diversity of the city, with the objective of promoting mutual acknowledgement, interaction and exchange.

Examples:

- Through intercultural subsidies, prioritise those projects that place emphasis on cultural knowledge and exchange, promoting a real interaction amongst people of different origins.
- Include festivals of a number of communities into the city's calendar of festivities and holidays, encouraging such events to be open to all citizens.

Creation of the Xarxa Intercultural de Barcelona (Barcelona Intercultural Network) that will include cultural entities and agents from the entire city, committed to promoting intercultural dialogue.

Establish a solid commitment to respect and acknowledge the cultural diversity that exists, strengthening its true representation in the decision-making spaces and bodies at the Culture Institute of Barcelona and in the narrative of communication in the cultural agenda of the city.

Create new forms of working in a network to detect interests, needs and find synergies with new circuits and spaces for meetings, exchanges and interrelations amongst new artists and cultural entities, amenities, institutions and other cultural agents.

Promote new functions for cultural amenities (cultural centres, libraries, 'Creation Factories', etc.) as spaces that will encourage interaction, production and creation arising from the collaboration amongst individuals from different backgrounds.

Support cultural programmes that take into account diversity in fields such as the performing arts (theatre and dance), music, design, audiovisual creation and festivities, as well as in regular cultural events (e.g. the Grec Festival in Barcelona, etc.)

Promote the management of cultural heritage from a plural standpoint (organisation of museum collections, interrelation with the countries of origin, working with the public).

Incorporate criteria that promote equality of opportunities into official announcements for public aid to:

- Drive projects of cultural production based on the mixing of races, interculturality and creative innovation.
- Promote creators/artists/cultural entities with cultural experience from different backgrounds who live in the city.
- Promote projects that use the arts and community creative processes as transforming and stimulating elements for interaction and coexistence in neighbourhoods.

Create easier access to sports amenities and their services for all citizens in conditions of equality; provide incentives for the participation of residents of diverse origins in sports activities within the city, as well as in conventional leagues.

Examples:

- Review the conditions for access to clubs and groups, as well as the timetables of amenities in order to make them more accessible.
- Offer activities that give the chance to make contact with sports services that were initially designed for and addressed to a particular community, but which will then make the activity accessible in an inclusive and normalised way.
- Facilitate the inclusion of boys and girls in regulated sports, promoting changes in current legislation that may hinder the participation of foreign youngsters.

Respond to needs arising from the arrival of new sports modalities, making it easier for people to become involved in them and adapting existing sports areas where necessary or evaluating the need to create new ones.

Promote projects based on sport that encourage interaction between young people from different origins, especially in the urban areas that have the biggest immigrant populations and the highest risk of isolation or segregation.

Examples:

- Promote sports projects outside the school timetable and in the school holidays to encourage the participation of youngsters and school pupils in areas with high percentages of residents of foreign origin. Promote the creation of intercultural sports teams.

- Involve the city's important sports clubs, such as the Barcelona and Espanyol football clubs, in the promotion of initiatives that raise awareness of diversity and encourage integration through sport.

The Raval Foundation of Barcelona is a co-ordination platform for cultural institutions and social organisations working with children, women, people at risk from exclusion, commercial organisations, trade unions and many other actors in the neighbourhood. Together they investigate the local area, create thematic and project networks, communicate about Raval to the media and generate community projects.

One of the many actions carried out by the Foundation and its members is a 4-days festival involving 100 different entities from Raval, each contributing their own know-how and activities. The festival has grown over the years from a small local initiative and is becoming larger and more popular every year. The different participating organisations are covering their own costs. People from other neighbourhoods come to Raval festival as well. Raval is in a way the intercultural laboratory of Barcelona.

There is a project "culture in situ" which encourages cultural institutions present to reach out to the local community. It involves both social organisations and cultural institutions and consists of visits to the cultural institutions/associations, workshops for children, open doors only for people from the neighbourhood, communication through the local NGOs... The opera has for instance a special programme exclusively for Raval.

The founders of the Foundation were small entrepreneurs from the neighbourhood who wanted to promote a good image of Raval. Then they began to meet social associations and started developing projects together. The Foundation has a key role in co-coordinating, networking, taking initiatives etc. When 33 entities had joint, they started looking strategically and developing project, but the project is not over-institutionalised, it remains grassroots, and the Foundation has legitimacy with all NGOs in Raval. There is a delicate balance between spontaneity and institutionalisation and the Foundation has achieved it. Similar institutions in other areas have become too institutionalised and eventually lost the pulse of the community and failed.

Barcelona, Spain - Innovation and impact on welcome policies: the example of Barcelona

An innovative welcoming projects

During the first decade of this century Barcelona was defining a global public policy for welcoming the thousands of immigrants arriving each year to the city, as a first step towards a more global process of intercultural integration. The system had its symbol in a municipal centre called SAIER that was created more than 30 years ago to support immigrant and refugees. The SAIER is funded by the municipality but many of its main services are offered by important NGOs, associations of lawyers and trade unions.

However, the massive arrival of immigrants in the past years meant that many local NGOs, civic or cultural centres were providing some kind of welcome services (learning the language, legal advice, knowledge of the environment, occupational training workshops, empowerment of women, youth work etc.)

But in order to make all that effort more efficient, there was a need to coordinate and to design a common welcome framework and a practical methodology to share know-how and to collaborate in

order to respond better to the daily challenges. This is how the “Welcome Network” of Barcelona was created. It is coordinated by the city and includes more than 100 organisations and agencies. The coordination of all these welcoming services very soon showed great improvements in the efficiency of the system. Specific working groups were created focusing on topics like legal advice or language learning. New tools and materials were also created as a result of common needs and diagnoses. Annuals working plans were approved and members met in working groups and new online tools to share information were created, together with more public resources to support the members' activities.

In addition to the Welcome Network, new reception policies were applied in schools through reception classrooms to reinforce learning of the language and basic information on the context and in other sectors like hospitals, occupational training courses etc.

Very soon it was obvious that the methodologies and approaches used on the welcome policies should be tailored to the constant changes in migratory flows, profiles, ages, backgrounds and circumstances of people arriving.

For example, since the year 2007 there was an important increase of the the arrival of immigrants for family reunification, unlike previous years when most immigrants were single adults (women and men) who were in an irregular situation. Taking into account the specific circumstances of the new type of migrants, it was considered important to create a specific space to address the needs of the reception of reunited family members (whether husband, wife or children).

These were people with a very specific reality. On the one hand, their welcome was a long process and complex in administrative and legal terms. On the other, families were often coming with a significant emotional and psychological burden, strained by the not always easy reunion between mother and child or husband and wife... It became clear that if this process of family reunification could be accompanied from the very beginning, providing information, preparing the key aspects of arrival, and also offering psychological support could minimise many of the potential complications. Knowing in advance what kind of documentation was important to validated education qualifications, providing adequate resources for language learning, taking care of the legal aspects relating to work permits or access to health care or the psychological preparation for the reunion with teenagers or couples - these were issues identified as crucial for facilitating the welcoming process.

The project to meet these needs was implemented by professional technicians at the different districts of the city, working closely with the families, services and social resources of the neighborhoods. Participation of migrants was voluntary but families were actively solicited, thanks to the information that had the council on applicants for family reunification. The informative workshops were filled with families who found the service very important to prepare for the reception of their relatives. They were creating specific spaces to discuss issues of empowerment of women, addressing health issues and also focusing on the specific reality of teenagers.

But after a while, an important gap on the welcome itineraries for the youth was identified.

Minors who came for family reunification, needed to access the education system (depending on their age). The schools provided specific support focused mainly on learning the language. When the kids arrived during the school year, they went to school and started learning the language and making their first friends.

The problem was when the kids came to Barcelona at the final days of the school year and did not go to school until after almost three months of vacation period. In addition, for the 16 years old, for whom schooling is no longer compulsory, there was a need to prepare your next steps. The specific reception classrooms of schools also closed for holidays! And the free courses for learning the language offered by institutions were only for adults over 18 years. There was a hole in the net: if you were 9, 14 or 16 years,

there was no host resources during the summer for a key group and at a crucial time of the welcome process.

We are talking about youth from very different backgrounds from Latin American countries, from Pakistan, India, China etc. In many cases they arrived after a long time of not seeing or living with their parents, leaving behind key family relations, friends etc. Suddenly they were in an unknown city (some of them didn't want to come) where for three months they could do little more than sit at home waiting for their mother or parents to return from work. That meant losing 3 key months to facilitate the reception of these youth. The psychological impact that this situation also caused did not help their adaptation and also all the pressure was transferred to the school or the education centre to which they would go after the summer.

It was obvious there was a need to address this gap and capitalise on those three months. But what could be done? The immigration and intercultural department we had some resources, but it was considered up to the Education department to take care of the language training and preparing their moves into the education system. But since Education had also many other complexities, that priority was not at the top.

We decided to go for the basic recipe for social innovation: having a good diagnosis of the challenge, and a good dose of creativity and focus on collaboration and networking.

We started identifying possible allies in this process. Where could they go these youth to learn the language during the months of July and August? Schools were closed and trying to convince the system to open some of them proved more than complex under the weight of competences, bureaucracy, and legal barriers.

At some point we thought on the great network of city public libraries. We were already collaborating in some activities and also the wide network of public centers throughout the city did not close in summer. The director of the public libraries responded well to our proposal and from there we started identifying the activities that could be offered. The main objective was to foster the language learning, but not only. It was also important to know the neighborhood, and social, cultural and historical aspects of the city, and also the institutions, basic services or sports and cultural facilities etc. The activities were designed and the program was called "During summer, Barcelona welcomes you" and culminated in activities focused on several libraries in the districts during the mornings of July and August, boosted by professional technicians and specific collaboration of staff from different municipal departments (education, health, participation youth..)

The activities were not only implemented at the libraries but there were visits to many sites of the city to learn about the environment. But from an intercultural lens, it was also very important that a positive interaction between these youth and other youth of the city be promoted. And finally, also a crucial aspect: the symbolic one. This was a voluntary pilot program for families participating in the comprehensive program of support at regrouping. It was important to give a symbolic dimension to the process of reception of these youth and it was decided that at the end of the "summer welcome course" a ceremony would take place in the noble hall of the city council, with the Mayor of the city and the families, where a diploma would be delivered to all the youth who had completed the course. From the first year, the room was filled with proud mothers and fathers of their children in the most symbolic room of the city council. The emotional atmosphere that such event created it was really deep and touching. The Mayor cheering the youth saying they were the brilliant future and the best energy for the city that was proud to welcome them. Looking at the eyes of many mothers who have come few years ago leaving their kids behind and working so hard to get them back. That was something.

Our feelings and intuitions were clear about the effort we had made by launching that humble program was having a real and positive impact to the lives of some people. But we can't live on intuitions, and neither can public policies that need resources and political support. We have to prove that that "feeling" is really being translated into real social change, and that's still one of the main weaknesses of

the realm of public policies, mainly in some social areas and also more in some countries than others. After two years of implementing the program, we performed an assessment of the welcome policies and further evolution and development of the youth who had come for family reunification to the city and who were between 15 and 18 years. In this context, we compared the evolution of the group of youth who had participated in the course "during summer, Barcelona welcomes you" with the youth who had not gone through the program.

The results were very interesting and I want to emphasise their importance from the intercultural perspective. On the one hand it showed that among young people who had gone through the program, had lower rates of education failure and drop-off. While 13% of these youth were neither working nor studying, in the case of those who had not gone through the program the percentage was 33%. But also we could identify that the youth participating in the program were engaged in more extracurricular activities and had more relationships with other youth of the city. Hence the importance of the intercultural approach. On the one hand facilitating equal opportunities by preventing them to be "excluded" from the education system, and on the other bear in mind the importance of interaction, building relationships and sense of belonging.

The availability of this kind of impact data of public policies is essential. Not only reinforces the motivation and commitment of the team and the chances that politician decide to strengthen and expand the program. It is necessary to be accountable to the citizens of the use made of public resources. Because the most important message of this program is not that it is important and necessary for the youth who come to the city. It is a program that benefits the entire city. It reduces the pressure input to the school classrooms since these young people begin the course with a better preparation and with a more positive attitude, which impacts positively on the development of the educational activities of the center, to all students and teachers.

The program also showed that through the youth, their mothers and fathers made one step further in their integration process, gaining more interest in learning the language, to understand the host society and develop a stronger sense of belonging to the city and its institutions. It does not take much imagination to understand that the cost of not making such kind of programs, which reduces the levels of school failure and segregation and that are committed to promoting equal opportunities and positive interaction is much higher in the medium and long term. The lack of effective and comprehensive welcome policies is very very expensive, at all levels and for all.

Barcelona, Spain - XEIX project for Diversity Advantage

A project to pursued social integration

The project is about fostering intercultural relations through the city Retail Associations that, together with other cultural and social organizations, become a vehicle of economic and social promotion of small businesses in their neighbourhoods.

The project was first implemented in 2012 in Fort Pienc, a neighbourhood with an important presence of Chinese families (18% of foreign population) where local businesses were closing down and taken up by Chinese family businesses. The city impuled the setting up of a Retail Association to help revitalise the neighbourhood and manage community relations. In collaboration with the association, a strategic plan was prepared. It allowed the incorporation of the figure of intercultural mediators and interpreters in public services, initially, one expert in Chinese language and culture and, later, another working with the South Asian community.

They went door to door in the shops. In the beginning, it was hard to convince the shop owners that if they engaged this would benefit them, as well as the community. Little by little they became aware that joining the association can be a way of accessing first hand information, and a way of improving the community image as persons who work and, most important, live in the neighbourhood and care about the place. Another challenge was to achieve interaction between them as well as with the local residents. To overcome these challenges the association organises activities for its members (annual and members of the Board meetings) as well as public events (fairs, festivals, etc.).

Originally, the goal was to bring together into the Retail Association diverse shopkeepers of different backgrounds to foster local development. Now the partners are also other kinds of organisations such as local immigrant organisations (Chinese language schools), institutions (Casa Asia, the Confucius Institute, Universitat Autònoma, etc), cultural facilities (National Theatre) non-profit organisations (ACCEM-refugees) and private enterprises. There has been an organic process of federating the local actors to foster initiatives, ideas and collaborations. The Retail Association has now become a catalyser of all the local initiatives, both economic (fairs, shopping campaigns) and cultural (local festivals, exhibitions). The social and cultural activities carried out in the neighbourhood involve all communities (e.g. the health fair involved ayurveda, acupuncture, blood donation and herbalist's stands) and promotes participation, interaction and mutual acknowledgement in public spaces.

The Retail Association is a place where all local shop owners can find useful information (in different languages), develop advocacy for common interests vis-a-vis the administration, and train to keep their business up to date with new technology (web sites, e-commerce).

The project works with various city departments and services. It aims to apply intercultural principles to areas beyond immigration, such as economic activities. It is a challenge because there are more and diverse people involved in the project, and sometimes it is hard to reach an agreement but then it is powerful and innovative.

Bergen, Norway - The Kaleidoscope and the FIKS Bergen

Encouraging cultural and social mix through art and sport activities

Bergen uses interculturalism as a criterion when allocating grants administered by the City. Bergen's cultural and civil life policies are full of events and activities in the fields of arts, culture and sport to encourage inhabitants from different ethnic groups to mix. Kaleidoscope (Fargespill) is an art project where young Norwegians and newly arrived migrants meet and create music together. Similarly, the FIKS Bergen initiative promotes cooperation between different sports clubs to include people from migrant background in their activities, and they organise an intercultural day to introduce people to their activities.

Bergen, Norway - Several welcoming projects to (gladly) receive diverse groups

Joint programmes to welcome refugees and immigrants

Bergen has implemented various welcoming policy instruments. For instance, the city has set up a designated agency to welcome newcomers. The Introduction Centre for Refugees welcomes around 400 new refugees a year. On 2016 the city council decided that Bergen will receive 820 new refugees (including family reunification). They will go through a 2 year introduction program aimed at qualifying them for a job or participation in the ordinary education system. The program had around 510 participants in December 2013. The participants are paid around 14 200 NOK a month to participate in this course. The municipal Norwegian language school for newly arrived immigrants had around 3700 adult students in 2015. The city of Bergen owns the organisation Business Region Bergen together with 22 other municipalities in the region and the county council. This organisation works to strengthen and develop trade and industry in the Bergen region, especially within the region's most important industries: Oil, gas, marine activities, maritime industry and tourism. Their goal is to contribute to sustainable and knowledge based growth, diversity and high level of employment in the region. They offer assistance to people who want to establish business in Bergen.

The City Council is working for the establishment of a service centre for work migrants in cooperation with regional state agencies (SUA). Regional politicians, trade unions, business organisations and the relevant regional state agencies are all united in the demand that a centre should be opened in Bergen. The city has promised funding towards such a centre in Bergen. There is also an appropriate office space available for the office in the regional tax office. The City hopes the new national government in Norway will open a centre in Bergen as soon as possible.

Bergen has published a comprehensive package of information to aid newly arrived foreign residents. The city's services and agencies provide support tailored specifically for students, family members, refugees and migrant workers. For instance, the INN Bergenis a service centre for the Bergen region run by Bergen Chamber of Commerce and Industry¹⁸ provides various services to the businesses in the region that are recruiting foreign employees.

The goal is to ease the companies' efforts at recruiting foreign employees, and getting foreign residents to feel at home in Bergen. There is a great need to recruit qualified employees to the region, according to a survey done by Bergen Chamber of Commerce and Industry with financial support from the Municipality of Bergen. Regarding international students, the University of Bergen, the Bergen University College and other higher education institutions in the city have their own programs welcoming foreign students. The city cooperates with these institutions.

Bergen, Norway - The "Action Plan for Inclusion and Diversity"

An innovative project to promote inclusion and interculturalism

Bergen has adopted a number of initiatives which demonstrate its commitment to the intercultural approach. The city council has formally adopted a public statement in as an Intercultural city. The local government has designed an integration strategy with intercultural elements and has developed an integration action plan to put it in practice. An evaluation process for the integration strategy has been planned.

Bergen's official webpage includes the *Action Plan for Inclusion and Diversity*. The city also provides a diversity award as a mean of acknowledging local services that have succeeded in this field.

Bergen is seriously thinking about a dedicated cross-departmental co-ordination structure for its integration strategy. Bergen has not allocated a budget for integration, as it has been considered as a cross-cutting field. The different fields which are affected by the topic amend their budget to achieve the goals in the course of integration. Furthermore, some services related to migrant integration as the Introduction Centre for Refugees and the Centre for Learning Norwegian are funded by State grants.

Berlin-Neukölln, Germany - "News from Babylon"

Intercultural library and other good initiatives...

Mitmachzirkus Neukölln is a traditional family circus which has been reinvented to give schoolchildren of disadvantaged background the opportunity to train intensively in new skills. It creates for them and their parents, possibly for the first time in their lives, a real sense of achievement. The "Helene-Nathan-Library" is the Central Library of Neukölln (Berlin) with 160.000 media and an overall floor space of 3000 sqm. It is very popular for migrant children and young people. During the years 2004 – 2006 it was centre of the project "News from Babylon", which dealt with multilingualism in Neukölln and the responsibility of a library in a multicultural city and its way to actually become an intercultural library.

For the 2009 Berlin Karneval der Kulturen, the Paul Hindemith Music School entered a float in the procession, under the banner 'Neukölln - Intercultural City'. The car upon which the float was built was given on a free loan by the police and the local police station opened up its premises for the building of the float. This was an impressive intervention for a number of reasons: it was one of the few floats not based upon a single ethnic group; it actively involved many young people some of whom might otherwise be considered 'difficult to reach'; it involved large numbers of Turkish-origin people who, despite being the largest minority group in the area, are not otherwise well-represented in the Karneval.

"Tek-Stil" is an art project, sponsored by the German Culture Foundation in the project framework "New possibilities and forms of work". The project brought young designers and migrant women together. Berlin is trying to become a centre for "creative industries" and young creative people. Part of this movement is the regeneration of the textile industry. Fashion and design schools are springing up, and the young professionals want to hold shows and bring their ideas to fruition. The idea of the Tek-stil project is to consolidate two important potentials: young professional designers and a special kind of needle worker – preferable women with migrant background. Many of them live in Neukölln without paid work but are skilled in textile and handicraft fields, especially needlework.

"Neighbourhood International" and "Moved Worlds" is the oldest intercultural flagship trial project of Berlin Neukölln and the oldest intercultural festival of Berlin. It is organised by the Department of Culture and Arts of Neukölln and the intercultural work group of the Protestant Church of Neukölln and is complemented in the meantime by the dance festival "Moved Worlds". Migrant associations and their cooperation partners present themselves and form a considerable stage programme, a vivid cultural diversity with people from more than 160 nations is shown.

Berlin Neukölln, Germany - Refugees welcome – Refugee integration policies in Berlin Neukölln

Refugee integration policies

The new report "Refugees welcome – Refugee integration policies in Berlin Neukölln" analyses policies of Berlin's district Neukölln to create a welcoming environment for refugees in the policy areas of education, housing, language and communication, employment, as well as culture and leisure.

The report should serve as an inspiration for local policy makers to develop and enhance their city's refugee integration policies. Its purpose is to support the efforts of cities participating in the Council of Europe Intercultural cities programme to adopt effective refugee inclusion policies, based on the principles of Intercultural integration.

Copenhagen, Denmark - Copenhagen's Host Programme facilitates the integration process

A chance for welcoming and hosting migrants

Copenhagen's Host Programme seeks to facilitate encounters between newly arrived migrants and Copenhageners who wish to volunteer as hosts. It is coordinated by the city's Department for Integration and Language which is responsible for administrating the Integration Act in the municipality of Copenhagen.

The programme is operated in close collaboration with two local organisations. The "Danish Refugee Council" carries out social activities with newly arrived inhabitants including Danish conversation courses and provides information on the local community, cultural activities and those carried out by local associations. "Foreningen Nydansker" helps newly arrived inhabitants integrate into the local education system and job market.

Kari Mørkøre-Yde, coordinator of the Host Programme, explained the programme's expected outcomes stating that it will result "in an increased understanding, awareness and tolerance among the residents of Copenhagen" as well as in "a city that is more welcoming and easier for foreigners to settle in". She also stressed the importance of the Host Program in facilitating the integration process. She said: "It prevents discrimination. It promotes inclusion of new citizens".

During the two months since the programme was launched, the city received over 100 enquiries from residents in Copenhagen who wanted to be volunteer hosts. To date there are over 176 volunteer hosts in the two organisations. During a presentation Kari Mørkøre-Yde explained the high level of interest the program has received from the city's inhabitants. She said: "Reasons include personal experiences with settling in a foreign country, being new in Denmark – or an opportunity to show Denmark as an open and welcoming society". Two anonymous testimonials explained what connected them to the programme. One explained: "When I lived in New York for 15 years and returned to Denmark in 1996, I found it quite difficult to connect with the Danes and often felt there was little interest among Danes for foreigners, on the whole, for each other...unfortunately. Therefore I would like to host a foreigner who comes here". The other stated: "I read an article about the "project" in Politiken (a Danish newspaper) this morning and now – 5 hours later – I simply have to respond to this. Wow – it really sounds exciting. Really a good initiative which actually (again) makes me proud as a Dane to read about it. It is time that we again become an open and welcoming society towards immigrants. Therefore, I would love to be a host".

The programme has attracted an overwhelming interest from newcomers with different permits including refugees, family reunifications, EU citizens, green card holders and students.. The benefits of the programme according to newly arrived inhabitants span from making new friends, to meeting

people in similar professions, to finding out about public services, to entering the labour market. One testimonial said: "I had a chance to meet a Danish person from my professional field and I learned about the Danish system". Another when referring to the advantages of participating said: "I found a good friend and a voluntary job". Time was the main challenge for people who were keen to participate in the programme. One participant stated: "Lack of time from my side was a problem as I was going to class in the mornings and work afterwards, but we managed to find time to meet during the weekend or evenings".

Kari Mørkøre-Yde explained why the programme had been successful. She said: "It boils down to close cooperation between the municipality and civil society organisations, a broad target group and personal contacts". She also explained that the programme has a solid legal framework – The Danish Integration Act. Put simply it allows individuals and residents in Copenhagen to act as hosts for newly arrived populations and receive a reimbursement for small expenses in relation to their hosting activity. Kari Mørkøre-Yde concluded by giving future perspectives for the city's Host Programme. She stressed: "It is important that the Host Programme's design remains a collaboration between the municipality, voluntary organisations and civil society, since the precondition for the success of the programme is to gain contact through the municipality, have the professionals work with volunteers in the voluntary organisations and participation of people from civil society who are motivated out of altruistic interest".

Copenhagen's Host Programme goes way beyond offering newly arrived inhabitants a symbolic "welcoming ceremony". It contributes to promoting social ties, dialogue, tolerance and respect on an equal footing between all inhabitants in the city. It also ensures that newly arrived inhabitants to the city are familiar with the city's services, job market, and educational systems. In our view it could be considered a best practice intercultural policy example which may inspire other European cities to implement similar initiatives.

Copenhagen, Denmark - Growth through diversity in Copenhagen

Inclusion policies: aiming to engage

Engage in Copenhagen is a three year inclusion program, designed to function as a catalyst for the City of Copenhagen's new inclusion policy and vision for the city.

The goal of Engage in Copenhagen program is to start a number of initiatives with the common aim of making Copenhagen into an open and welcoming city. During an interview with Cities of Migration Copenhagen's Mayor for Employment and integration, Anna Mee Allerslev said: "Just like the climate movement, the diversity movement has a severe impact on our growth and quality of life. And just like there is no reasonable alternative to green energy, there is no reasonable alternative to growth through diversity".

The city's vision is to become "the most inclusive city in Europe by 2015- based on trust and active citizenship." Four strategic pillars currently guide the city into achieving its vision. The city aims at systematically engage partners. To name a few, these include companies, educational institutions, the media, as well religious associations, minority ones and those that inform the public. Ali Sufi, Vice Chair of the Danish Ethnic Youth Council showed his full support for the program. He said: "On the Danish Young People's Council we support the municipality's initiative and look forward to take an active part in the work of Engage in CPH, on the way to a more diverse Copenhagen which is really an extension of the

work of New Danish Young People's Council, with its focus on inclusion and recognition.

Engage in CPH also seeks to promote relationships between children, parents and neighbours in order to create a safe city characterized by familiarity, understanding and tolerance amongst its citizens. During an interview, Anna Mee Allerslev echoed the importance of building a social fabric, she said: "Inclusion is a feeling of belonging. That is if you feel like a Copenhagener, you are included in the city".

The last two strategic levels are combatting discrimination and exclusion and spreading further knowledge about the rights in relation to discrimination and equality of treatment. The city hosts information and attitude campaigns to put a stop to discrimination and a hotline for support to victims. The Diversity Charter and its Diversity Board are central to the Engage in Copenhagen Campaign.

The Diversity charter followed the example of the charter adopted in London. Signatories affirm the three guiding principles that inform Copenhagen approach to govern the campaign: diversity is a strength; everyone should have the chance to participate and being an involved citizen is everybody's concern. To date 500 businesses and associations have signed the charter.

The city of Copenhagen has certainly set itself a very ambitious vision. We very much hope the city can engage as many actors from various sectors and citizens further to enhance its Intercultural approach. Other Cities in the network may wish to draw inspiration from it.

Donostia-San Sebastian - Gipuzkoa Solidarity V. Bizilagunak / The Nextdoor family

A meal: a way to create connections

The project "Bizilagunak: La Familia de al lado" started in 2012, inspired by a Czech organisation. The idea is to gather migrant families and Basque families together. The project operates on a local area, focusing on building relations among families within the same neighbourhood; the final goal is to build a net of connections that will strengthen the feeling of belongings, encouraging acceptance and social cohesion.

"The Nextdoor Family" project offers a perfect excuse to gather together around a meal, in one of family's house, in their private area; an incredible opportunity to exchange stories, experiences and get to know each other in a relaxed environment. Everyone can take part in this project, not necessarily a traditional family. In the enrolment process, families state whether they want to host or to visit; moreover one has to indicate the language spoken, food preferences, allergies, pets etc. After the enrolment process, families are paired and mediators inform the families about each other. During the pairing process organizer takes care to pair similar families.

On the day "de la comida", the host family will cook a meal and will welcome the guest family. A mediator will be present and will coordinate the reunion until everyone feels at ease. Once the ice is broken, children will play together while parents will get to know each other's culture and habits. However, the mediator will monitor the gathering, possibly giving language support in case of misunderstandings.

The Gipuzkoa Solidarity conveys the idea that we are all Basque citizens. These intercultural connections fight prejudices and stereotypes, while bridging the gaps between foreign-born people and natives. Simultaneously, this project fosters social inclusion among neighbours, leading towards a harmonic cohabitation. In a word: equality.

The project has been a great success throughout the years; for instance, in 2012, 65 meals took place, whereas in 2014 already more than 230. More importantly, families continue to see each other even after the meal, this willingness to keep the relationship going is the witness of the success of this project.

Erlangen, Germany - *Immigration city Erlangen*. Revising the relationship between migrant and receiving societies

Understanding migrations and appreciating cultural mix

We have learned where Lampedusa is located, have discussed why in 2005 French suburbs burned and understand that climate change will increase the number of immigrants to Europe. Despite this expertise, one popular fallacy still dominates Europe's immigration discourse: understanding immigration as a modern phenomenon. Sure, the IOM is rightly describing migration – besides climate change and international terrorism – as one of the key challenges of the 21st century. However, this has been always the case. Research shows that migration mattered already in the 20th century, in the 19th century and in all centuries before, since the first people immigrated to Europe¹.

Contrary to “traditional immigration” countries, such as the USA, Canada and Australia, where immigration is part of the national identity, Europe seems to have a hard time accepting that immigration has played a crucial role across time. Recently, we see in Europe an increasing number of museums and exhibitions opening their doors to a wider audience and to the topic of immigration. Only few of them, however, deal with the subject matter in a historic perspective. But exactly such long term approach is needed to dissolve the myth of opponent receiving and migrant societies, understanding that European societies always have been pluralistic themselves.

The German city of Erlangen promotes such novel historic perspective with the museum tour *Zuwanderungsstadt Erlangen* (Immigration city Erlangen) from spring 2013 onwards. Visitors will get the chance to rediscover Erlangen's history under the perspective of immigration and revise the relationship of migrants and receiving societies. In ten stations one can experience the impact of immigration on a city's development.

The tour shows how immigration was increasingly politicised in the course of European nation building processes in the 19th century and increasingly was denied its actual historic importance: being a society's motor for progress through the exchange of ideas, technologies and know how. In an inclusive, discursive approach that includes the visitors experiences and opinions, for each of the ten stations key information about immigration is provided and an array of questions is discussed, such as:

How did the 500 inhabitants of Erlangen react when 1500 French refugees moved into the city in the 17th century? What integration policies were put in place that turned the city into a prosperous commercial hub?

What were the arguments the Nazis used to construct the existence of a mono-cultural German society and at the same time expel Jews from economic, political, and social life? What impact have modern claims of national mono-culturalism?

What were the push and pull factors that made people from around the world come to Erlangen, when Adidas and Puma were founded and when SIEMENS was established?

In addition to the tour *Zuwanderungsstadt Erlangen* the museum will act in the course of open door festivities as forum and place for meeting and exchange, where immigration can be discussed, where ideas and problems can be voiced and solution advocated – by and for all inhabitants of Erlangen.

Zuwanderungsstadt Erlangen by Annasophia Heintze is developed in cooperation with Ine Brehm, head of education of the city museum of Erlangen and the generous support of the city museum, the department of culture, the integration office and the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

Erlangen, Germany - Lyrical Bridge Building

Attracting refugees to cultural events

How does it feel to arrive in a country without understanding anything? And what can poetry convey even when the listener does not speak the language? These were some of the thoughts that lead the organizers of the annual poetry festival in Erlangen to bring poetry in five different languages together – without any translation. The event “Lyrical Bridge-Building” was organized by the culture department and wants to set an example for living together in peace through understanding, openness and charity, independently of culture, religion and nationality. The main goal was to attract refugees to cultural events like the poetry festival and to sensitize the receiving society.

Four refugees, living in Erlangen, recited poems in their mother tongue: Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish and Ukrainian. Moreover, a poem by the German poet and orientalist Friedrich Rückert was presented. The event was accompanied with Kanun music performed by the musician Gilbert Yammine. With poems of the authors Tamim Al Barghothi, Abdullah Pashew, Dergham Al Saffan, Saadi Shirazi and Lesya Ukrainka the reading took the audience on a trip through Eastern Europe and the Arab world. The audience of around 100 people listened carefully to the sound of the languages and the music. The target groups were primarily refugees living in Erlangen, and the organizers were glad to see that the audience was a mix of people with different nationalities. This event showed that even without understanding the words, people are able to communicate somehow. In this case, lyrical performance translated the feelings of the authors and the readers.

According to Katja Rausch, the organizer of the Lyrical Bridge Building, the event was successful and reached its goal of bringing people from different cultures together, encouraging the team to keep on offering these kinds of cultural activities. The city of Erlangen is on its way to be an even more inclusive and intercultural city, appreciating our differences and celebrating the things we have in common. The cultural and linguistic exchange between receiving society and refugees is one of many stones that need to be piled up to build a bridge between the cultures.

Geneva, Switzerland - The city supports a project of aide to LGBT asylum seekers

Meet the specific needs of LGBT people in the field of asylum

The City of Geneva supports lesbians, gay, bi and trans* (LGBT) organisations and associations active in the field of asylum, which have launched a joint programme of study and action.

Since many years LGBT questions have become a major issue of migration internationally. Increasingly people who are victims of persecution due to their sexual orientation and/or their gender identity, look

for protection outside their countries, particularly in Europe.

Coordination asile.ge , which brings together associations working with migrants and asylum seekers, have teamed up with the Geneva Federation of LGBT associations, which coordinates the LGBT associations active in the Geneva area, in order to carry out a project to meet the specific needs of LGBT people in the field of asylum in Geneva.

Geneva does not possess much quantitative and qualitative data of LGBT population seeking asylum. These people, who are part of stigmatized populations and almost totally socially invisible, are often found in specific situations of vulnerability and insecurity.

“Asile LGBT-Genève” project aims at identifying the needs of LGBT persons in the field of asylum in Geneva and implementing effective actions to improve their living conditions and promote best practices among all actors in connection with this population.

This project is supported by the Service Agenda 21-Sustainable City of Geneva, the Office of Integration of Foreigners of the Canton and by the Service against Racism of the Swiss Confederation.

Limassol,Cyprus shapes its future by investing in integration

Help the smooth integration of refugees and immigrants to the local communities

For the third consecutive year the city of Limassol is implementing the “Limassol: One city, the whole world” project, to help the smooth integration of refugees and immigrants to the local communities of Limassol, Ay. Athanasios, Mesa Yitonia and Yermasoyia.

The project is co-funded by the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (90%) and the Republic of Cyprus (10%). It includes diverse activities such as recreational activities and training sessions. More specifically:

- Intercultural / artistic events / festivals with the objective of promoting the interaction of the local community with migrants and refugees and the exchange of cultures through creative and recreational activities;
- Training and educational programs with the aim of the development of Third Country Nationals' (TCN) skills that will help them both in their daily lives and in their personal and professional development (Computer lessons, Art lessons etc);
- Social support programs aiming to serve and facilitate the daily life of TCN children and parents, the provision of information on matters relating to their daily life and addressing any problems encountered (Child care services, experiential workshops, operation of an information and integration centre for TCNs and street social work);
- Anti - racism anti - discrimination actions for development of feelings of acceptance, understanding and diversity among the citizens of Limassol (Children's workshop with the use of technology, interventions in schools with large numbers of TCNs, Anti - racism agents volunteering group, Production of short anti - rumor videos, creation of anti - rumor comic flyers, children's excursion with the participation of both TCNs and Cypriots);
- Actions to exchange views, best practices and know-how (Educational programme for social services workers, informative workshop at school students, educational/training seminar to anti - racism agents and other stakeholders);

- Social Orientation Programmes (Organization educational trip to cultural / historical sites aimed at acquaintance with Cyprus);
- Participation in the European Action Week Against Racism 2016 with the ICC Network.

The city will also join the ICC Campaign for the World Refugee Day

Lisbon, Portugal - Fifth edition of the Festival "ALL – Walk of Cultures" 2013

A festival to celebrate the richness of diversity

For the fifth consecutive year, Lisbon City Council promoted the Festival TODOS – Walk of Cultures in partnership with GLEM (Lisbon Crossroad of the World Office) and the Academy of Cultural Producers.

This intercultural event is centred in its new territory, in the area of São Bento and Poço dos Negros streets, fulfilling its vocation of a nomadic festival that takes place in different neighbourhoods. The organizers intended to find out new multicultural and intercultural foci in the city of Lisbon, fighting down idea of ghettos and bringing people from diverse cultural backgrounds and age groups closer to each other. The programme of the Festival points to the interculturality present in Lisbon and the inter-religious dialogue is sub-theme associated to that idea.

This year's edition took place between 12th and 15th of September and included street performances, an itinerant photo exhibition, theatre, gastronomy, music, drawing, dance, visits, walks, and meetings, among many initiatives that foster another look on the city and its relation with other cultures.

The neighbourhood is rich in diversity. From the African bars and restaurants, where can have "cachupa" and Cape Verdean music, to the Brazilian hairdressers and restaurants, shops from Pakistani and Nepalese merchants, to the Passos Manuel High School, one of the partners in this initiative, where children from 33 different nationalities can be found.

This was a time of change, and we believe that the 5th edition of the Festival, on the whole, had a positive and significant note. We discovered and understand more deeply this territory, its potential, difficulties, its people.

We want with this Festival, coming out of their first habitat – Largo do Intendente/Mouraria – celebrating through the arts, the inexhaustible richness of Lisbon.

The Festival's audience raised close to 13.000 direct spectators.

Lisbon, Portugal - Lisbon celebrates the World Interfaith Harmony Week and the Chinese New Year

The celebration of multi-faith society – interreligious dialogue as peace establisher

World Interfaith Harmony Week was proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution A/RES/65/5 adopted on 20 October 2010. In the resolution, the General Assembly, points out that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace.

Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions to enhance mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people, the General Assembly encourages all States to support during that week the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship, on a voluntary basis and according to their own religious traditions or convictions.

Arroios celebrates Chinese culture in a week of events.

The celebration of the Chinese New Year was just one of the very many activities that filled the Chinese Week in Arroios which included exhibitions, martial arts, Chinese writing workshops, dance shows and presentation of Chinese products and Chinese art.

This initiative took place between 16 and 21 of February in Arroios, Lisbon and is part of the BIP ZIP 1/11 Project, Around the World in Arroios, a project striving for the integration and cultural sharing of the multiple communities living in Arroios.

This week began on February 16 with the painting exhibitions called "Beautiful China" and "Red China" in Largo Café Estúdio in Largo do Intendente Pina Manique. On the 16th there was a writing workshop of Chinese characters, Chinese paper cutting art and traditional Chinese music. The 18th included masks painting and Chinese knots.

On February 20, the Largo do Intendente Pina Manique filled with life with an exhibition of products and Chinese art, food, books and crafts, and other activities such as dance, music and martial arts.

On February 21, the colours of the Chinese New Year celebration invaded Largo Intendente Pina Manique with the Dragon Dance and Lion Dance being the highlights of a parade that started on this location, Arroios, and finally closed this week of events dedicated to China.

So far were held the weeks of Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Germany, Spain, Bangladesh and China. Several more weeks like this are scheduled over the coming months for Ukraine, Morocco, India, Angola and Brazil, taking place in Arroios.

Lisbon, Portugal - the Festival "TODOS" to celebrate interculturality

Promoting the encounter of cultures and intercultural dialogue through contemporary arts

In September the city of Lisbon holds its Festival TODOS (Everyone). Taking place at Colina de Santana and Campo dos Mártires da Pátria neighbourhoods, the Festival promotes the encounter of cultures and intercultural dialogue through contemporary arts.

For the last session, the organisers focused on ways To Surprise the Everyday Life. Performances were offered to the citizens for free and range from music and theatre to circus, dance, photo exhibitions, street food and urban art. Artists from several countries (Argentina, Brazil, Bangladesh, France, Angola, Italy, Morocco, Bulgaria, Mongolia, etc.) surprised the inhabitants in their daily activities by intervening in public squares, gardens, churches, hospitals, palaces, galleries, gyms and warehouses located in the 2 selected areas.

With these 'surprise activities', organisers wanted citizens to reflect on neighbours origins and the value of interculturalism in everyday life. The idea is to stimulate curiosity about the neighbourhood's past and create expectations for a future based on knowledge and mutual understanding.

Set up in 2009, the Festival has contributed to the elimination of territorial ghettos associated with immigration, opening the entire city to all people who are interested to live and work there. It is an initiative of the Lisbon City Council which is organised in partnership with the Academy of Cultural

Producers (Academia de Produtores Culturais), with the support of Arroios and Santo António civil parish councils.

Lublin, Poland - "A Gypsy is your Neighbour" Programme: re-discovering national heritage

Roma-Jewish pilgrimage

The 'A Gypsy is your Neighbour' Programme, includes a mixed Roma-Jewish pilgrimage to south Poland, children's trips, PE classes and swimming made available that meets the needs of Roma females. A project launched by MFSC in Lublin called "Save Haven" aims at creating the so-called "protected flats" for refugees. Families living in such flats will be assisted by the so-called "family assistant", a trained social worker whose aim is to help the family in leading an independent life.

There are also other activities included in the project:

- education and integration activities for the inhabitants of the districts
- intercultural classes in district school
- reportages in the local press on refugees advances in integration with local community and adaptation to independent life

Neuchâtel - Award "Salut l'étranger-ère!"

Foster intercultural dialogue

On 20 March 1995 Neuchâtel State Council decided to award an annual prize of 7,000 CHF "Salut l'étranger-ère!" to a person or a group of persons of all ages and nationalities living in the Canton, who through a work, a performance, an act or even a word or an attitude, contributed to:

- raising awareness of the need for inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue in order to promote respect for others and cultural diversity;
- promoting tolerance;
- rejecting any exclusion based on ethnicity, religion or nationality.

The entire population, all public and private institutions are invited to submit applications to the prize "Salut l'étranger-ère!"

[More information](#)

Melitopol, Ukraine - Melitopol Forum 2015 launches its Intercultural City Strategy 2015-2020 and marks a new era in the development of national ICC-UA network

The development of interculturality

On September 28-29, 2015 the city of Melitopol hosted a second intercultural forum, one year on from a prior event entitled 'Intercultural Melitopol Supports a United and Integrated Ukraine'. This year's theme was 'Revisiting the concept of Intercultural Cities in the contemporary Ukrainian reality'.

And, indeed, it might have been thought that that 'reality'—no more clearly manifested than by the fortified military checkpoint outside the city, at the junction with the road to the strategic city of Mariupol, little more than 200km away—would make a discussion of interculturalism appear at best

irrelevant and at worst indulgent. The conflict focused on the Donbass region continues to simmer and, just two days after the event ended in Melitopol, National Guard officers were killed in clashes with nationalist protesters at the parliament building in Kiev, as elected representatives hotly debated new decentralisation arrangements which, while applying across Ukraine, is hoped to ease secessionist sentiment in easternmost part of the country.

Yet, the second forum was bigger and more ambitious than the first, which had essentially been a round table bringing together for an initial discussion principally local stakeholders, including from the municipality, the university and the various minority associations in a city embracing more than 100 ethnicities. The 2015 event reinforced a natural alignment between the idea of interculturalism, first elaborated in the Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue of 2008, which signalled the Intercultural Cities (ICCs) network as a seedbed of good practice, and the historical experience in Melitopol of a taken-for-granted state of coexistence as the natural state of affairs. The second forum offered self-evidently another model of Ukraine, a Ukraine that went beyond the stereotypical divide into Ukrainian- and Russian-speakers, east and west: as the Council of Europe intercultural policy expert Kseniya Khovanova-Rubicondo told the forum, gathered in the City Hall, interculturalism was about 'removing barriers between people'.

The focus moved on in 2015 to translating the intercultural commitment of Melitopol into a practical plan and to spreading the message across Ukraine. This time participation was enlarged to more than 150 attendees, and in particular to municipalities right across Ukraine, with a view to establishing a functioning national network of intercultural cities, as has already been done in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Norway. And the city's new intercultural strategy (plan), which was designed in close consultation with the Council of Europe expert Kseniya Kovanova-Rubicondo had engaged 120 individuals in its preparation, was presented to this audience, hopefully as a model others could emulate.

One lesson from the experience of the ICCs network has been that political leadership is key to the success of the intercultural approach. This is for two reasons: first, its inherently 'transversal' nature means it can easily fall between municipal departments, with no one taking responsibility, unless the mayor makes clear that it is the responsibility of all; secondly, interculturalism can seem ethereal and removed from day-to-day concerns unless it is clearly communicated to the public by those in elected authority. Significantly in that light, the mayor of Melitopol, Sergiy Minko, welcomed the key figures involved to his office before the forum, opened proceedings at a session in City Hall expressing his support to Melitopol's participation in the ICC Programme and rejoined participants informally on day two. The vice-mayor for culture and the representatives of the strategic development department attended the event throughout.

Mr Minko linked the city's integration strategy to 'innovation' pointing out that the Melitopol plan was designed with entrepreneurial spirit of its citizens, regardless the fact where they work: for public or private sector, for cultural, educational or government institutions. He emphasized that it is essential that interculturalism assists a city like Melitopol, with its strong engineering tradition, to find a route to economic modernisation, including by helping to attract and retaining the qualified personnel needed to compete in a globalised economy. In the context of Ukraine's severe issues of not just of political turmoil but also post-Soviet deindustrialisation and chronic corruption this, of course, remains a challenge.

A second lesson which the ICCs network has thrown up was the significance of the university vis-à-vis intercultural strategies, on which theme there was a valuable ICC network seminar in Oslo in May. Interculturalism is not a bed of roses: managing diversity fruitfully presents challenges, to which academic problem-solving expertise can be valuably applied. As with the previous forum, this event took place partly in the university in Melitopol, and the participation of the rector and other academics reflected a clear commitment on the part of this 90-year-old institution not only to the city but also, specifically, to its intercultural trajectory.

Melitopol Intercultural Strategy 2015-2020

The “Melitopol Intercultural Integration Plan 2015-2020” is set in the context not only of the ICCs network but also of the Development Strategy of Melitopol, which has the same conclusion point. This is valuable in allowing everything the municipality does to be viewed through the ‘intercultural lens’ and in making the connection to the wider public arena. It is similar to the approach which is being taken by many other cities-members of the ICC network, e.g. the Irish city of Limerick or the Serbian municipality of Subotica, where the intercultural strategy is seen as nested with the overall sustainable-development strategy for the city.

The ICCs network has always sought to exploit the ‘diversity advantage’ and the Melitopol integration plan concretises the mayor’s ‘innovation’ theme, describing its main objectives in talent-tapping terms: ‘creating conditions and new opportunities for dynamic, inclusive, truly intercultural society with the participation of all residents regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, age, sex or education’.

The plan is organised around five strategic themes:

- cross-cultural awareness, education and intercultural communication;
- promotion of social activities, economic and informational support of intercultural development;
- intercultural planning and creative arrangement of urban space;
- the welcome policy of the city and cultural and spiritual practices of the community, and
- tourism and regional studies as factors of intercultural city integration.

Each of these themes is associated with a number of specific organisational purposes and consequent tasks. Each of these tasks has an identified responsible actor(s), a timescale and envisaged results.

The plan is to be implemented by a working group approved and chaired by the mayor. It includes a wide range of local and external stakeholders, although the reference to business representation is not matched by that of trade unions or third-sector organisations. It will be essential, as elsewhere, for the plan to enjoy the support of non-governmental organisations as well as their engagement in its delivery on the ground.

Development of national ICC network

To an extent, the Melitopol forum was symbolic for ‘revisiting the concept of Intercultural Cities in the contemporary Ukrainian reality’. This is not only for the reason that Melitopol is the only Ukrainian member of the European ICC network since 2008 but also because its key actors and stakeholders have been working at the regional and national level (hence, the representatives of the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs and of the regional administration attending the forum) raising awareness about the intercultural approach.

In this context – and following a very informative presentation of the ICC network benefits and its best practices by the Council of Europe expert Robin Wilson and an interactive Q/A session with the two experts from the Council of Europe on the key concepts of the ICC - the forum agreed that a national network of Ukrainian intercultural cities would be beneficial and more than ten cities-participants expressed their interest before the event was over. A new application form was presented and shared with the cities, and detailed instructions and submission deadlines provided. This is a core group of critical mass with which to start and over time it is envisaged that more cities will join officially, as the network proves itself in practice. The meeting agreed that the principles of such a network would be set down in a memo of understanding agreed by its founding participants. There was a valuable discussion in this light of the benefits of partnership between the cities and relevant local NGOs.

The ICCs Programme has produced a ‘step-by-step guide’ to intercultural cities. A more specific guidebook for ICCs in Ukraine is envisaged to assist the members of the new national network. The content of this guide were discussed with the forum participating cities.

In January 2015, The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe provided a recommendation endorsing the work of the ICCs network. It not only urged member states to support national intercultural-city networks but also to take account of this experience in developing national integration plans. Apart from the benefits of a Ukrainian network in sharing good practices, a longer-term goal to

influence national policy in this regard was discussed at the forum. A national intercultural policy could be a very important assertion that a diverse but unified Ukraine is a realistic political goal.

Oslo, Norway - Organisation Against Institutional Discrimination (OMOD)

Information, Advice and Assistance in the field of intercultural relations

There is a large and very active voluntary sector concerned with diversity in Oslo and it plays a vital role in many things from combating racism and discrimination to the delivery of mainstream public services. One of the most interesting from an intercultural perspective is OMOD - Organisasjon mot offentlig diskriminering (Organization against Institutional Discrimination). They provide information, advice, and assistance to organisations in the area of race relations, serving as an ombudsman against institutional discrimination and alleged breaches of civil and human rights in Norway. They also scrutinize the central and local government's rules and policies and their implementation in relationship to minorities and immigrants. Whilst this in itself is an important but rather commonplace set of functions, the way OMOD perceives itself is as an opportunity to appraise public service 'through an intercultural lens'. They pose a challenge to Norwegian society by arguing that integration is not simply an issue for migrants but for all.

Oslo, Norway - Diversity opportunities flourish in Oslo Extra Large

An innovative programme to face diversity

In October 2012 the Norwegian city of Oslo welcomed a group of international experts to review its intercultural policies. This has been the third expert visit to the city since its joining the Intercultural Cities programme as a pilot city in 2008. The visit coincided with the adoption of decision 152/12 by the City Government, aiming to strengthen the central Oslo Extra Large (OXLO) diversity campaign launched in 2001, to assess diversity policies and raise awareness thereof among the residents.

The implementation of the Eurocities Charter on Integrating Cities as well as the Norwegian integration policies were also on the agenda. Amongst larger cities that have completed the ICC Index, Oslo has posted the most impressive result. The group was keen to observe how this had been achieved and, in particular, how Oslo translates its wide range of policies into practice.

Background

Oslo is one of the fastest growing cities in Europe, due in particular to economic migration from the rest of Norway, Europe and beyond. Today, about 27 per cent of the city's population has origins in over 150, mainly non-European, countries (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Turkey, Morocco, Vietnam, Iran, Philippines and India). Most recently though, immigration from Sweden, Poland and Spain has been increasing. Half the children in Oslo have a minority background through their own or one of their parents' migration history and, by 2030, it is estimated Oslo's population might experience a further 30 % increase, owing to immigration and high birth rates.

Statistically, there is no glaring difference in the performance of the majority and minority populations in Oslo in terms of education, employment and home ownership. What is more, a 2010 survey shows that the feeling of belonging to Oslo is slightly more developed among residents with a minority background (69 %) compared with the ethnic Norwegian population (65 %). However, a slightly higher percentage of individuals and families with a minority background fall into the 'economically vulnerable' category.

Oslo demonstrates a growing international trend towards divergent approaches between major cities and their national governments on integration policy. Oslo has been rather critical of several aspects of Norwegian national policy, in particular the decision to cut support for language tuition to migrant workers and the maintaining of a high threshold for newcomers trying to access the labour market. The city strives to address these challenges by offering alternative solutions, for example encouraging language learning programmes run by businesses, educational institutions or civil society and fostering job finding rather than job qualification programmes for migrants. The city government has proposed the repeal of a dual language (Nynorsk and Bokmål) entry in secondary education, in order to promote better language learning and fight early school leaving. It also facilitates experience exchange between Norwegian cities facing similar challenges through the National City Network on Diversity and Ethnic Equality, which meets twice a year.

Findings of the expert visit

The expert visit was structured along three themes: non-governmental organisations (NGOs), businesses and a cross-sectoral approach to neighbourhood management in the Groruddalen districts.

It was generally agreed among the participants that, despite the current international economic climate, Oslo remains an attractive place to live and thrive. The integration policy has evolved and offers better opportunities to everyone, including migrants and minorities, in terms of employment, education and housing. The city continues to play an example-setting role in these areas and actively supports intercultural projects. In 2012 alone, Oslo granted 700 000 euros to cover such projects.

Moreover, efforts have been made to ensure political participation of ethnic minorities. As of now, 30 % of members of the city parliament have an immigrant background, with the Labour Party leading the way at the last local elections in 2011.

Moreover, Oslo's companies and education establishments have started to recognise and take advantage of the diversity opportunity already present in the city. A number of interesting programmes supported by the city serve this purpose, such as Global Future, Diversity in Academia, Diversity in the Workplace and Top 10 diversity initiatives. Thus, the Global Future programme, co-funded by six business partners and the city government, provides courses in leadership and cultural competence free of charge, along with mentoring to highly educated young talents with a migrant background living in Norway. Farhat Khan, a Global Future graduate, said, "The initiative was a truly empowering experience because it aimed at rebranding the immigrant group from a problem to a resource." After graduation, Farhat established her own management consulting company based on diversity and was nominated for the European Muslim Women of Influence (EMWI) award. The University of Oslo is also actively attracting students across cultures through direct advertising in schools, informing minority parents of higher-education opportunities for their children and creating a multi-cultural environment at the University. For those interested in starting up a sustainable business, the city's Agency for Business Development offers courses in English, Polish, Turkish, Arabic, Farsi and in Somali.

Meanwhile, in the neighbourhoods the Area Lift programmes aims to upgrade living standards in highly diverse and vulnerable places. Groruddalen is a vast area of 1960s high-rise development on the edge of Oslo, superficially typical of many such examples in European cities. But most untypical is the high standard of care and maintenance given to the infrastructure and public spaces here. Whilst some Norwegian journalists might wish to describe Groruddalen as a ghetto, it is far from that when compared to similar places elsewhere in Europe. For example, prior to developing the Alna and Furuset

areas the local administration collected residents' opinion through mapping, workshops and door-to-door surveys in cooperation with minority advisers and field workers. Thus emerged, for example, the idea of a 'World Park' to be designed and maintained by the residents. Consequently, the residents feel greater ownership of the regeneration process and now engage more actively in housing cooperatives and other common ventures. A sharp drop in youth crime incidence between 2008 and 2012 is also partly attributed to the increased participation and ownership.

Yet, as expert Phil Wood put it, "Intercultural cities are selected first and foremost for their readiness to honestly address their challenges and shortcomings as well as their successes and to open themselves to scrutiny of issues that lie beneath the surface". A number of challenges were identified at the meeting with NGOs, in particular the enduring perception of ethnic minorities as 'foreigners' despite many decades of presence in Norway; the official denial that discrimination remains in aspects of public life; a more negative outlook on life among children with a migrant background; and the absence of a common, intercultural identity. It may well be that escalating extremism both among extreme nationalist and Muslim groups (emphasised by Shoaib Mohammad Sultan, Advisor at the Norwegian Centre against Racism) is indeed a sign of a missing common identity in the wake of the 22 July 2011 attacks. It is altogether laudable that Oslo does what it can to retain mixed neighbourhoods through intervention in education, housing and the public realm. On the other hand, the city authorities may wish to broaden their engagement with the mainstream media, which contribute so powerfully to shaping public attitudes and perceptions.

Several related challenges were identified in the business and neighbourhood sectors. Representatives of both underlined the need to foster the intercultural competence of staff, including social workers, managers, human resources professionals and headhunting agencies. The business representatives also pointed out the persistence of discrimination in recruitment against people with 'non-Norwegian' names, as well as the need to accredit foreign qualifications and to reflect diversity at top managerial levels, in particular in small companies, which account for 90 per cent of businesses in Norway. It would also be advisable to encourage minority-owned businesses to enter the mainstream economy and value-added sectors. Finally, the neighbourhood services sector acknowledges it needs to do even more to identify service needs in highly diverse and rapidly-changing districts; and the need to better share experience and good practice around the city. Thus, mixing and knowledge-exchange between neighbourhoods should become pivotal to Oslo's intercultural strategy.

Oslo, Norway - EuroPride Human Right conference – Oslo sets the agenda

The pursuit of LGBT rights

The City of Oslo and the LGBT-association welcomed cities and NGOs from across Europe to the 2014 EuroPride Human Right conference on 26 and 27 June.

The conference addressed challenges lesbians and gays meet in the daily life of European cities, the links between discrimination due to gender and ethnicity as well as sexual orientation, and how cities, public authorities and civil society can join forces and make lesbian and gay rights a reality in Europe. Day one targeted international and European issues, with speeches and workshops lead by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights of the UN, and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit of the Council of Europe. Day two targeted the provision of equal municipal services.

At the conference, Vice Mayor Hallstein Bjercke presented a new action plan for diversity and freedom, against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. It is a plan for human rights – forming one of the pillars of the city's diversity policy – Oslo as a city for all, Oslo Extra Large.

The aims of the new plan are to enhance the knowledge about gender identities among the citizenry of Oslo, combat harassment and discrimination, and ensure that municipal services are accessible for all.

The plan is inspired by the ethos of Intercultural Cities program of the Council of Europe and the concept of the diversity advantage. The message from Oslo is that discrimination is unjust and unfair. It is also an obstacle to the city's growth and creativity. Discrimination and anticipated discrimination restricts the freedom and available options of lesbian and gay, and force lesbian and gay people to avoid or opt out of education, professions, organizations and residential areas. The delegates to the conference had the good fortune to learn about public policies to promote, defend and guarantee the citizenship rights of homosexuals and transsexuals in the city of Barcelona. In the workshops participants also learned about the very concrete measures and initiatives taking place in the cities of Lisbon, Berlin, Manchester and London. The delegates were concerned to hear from NGOs in Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine about the more difficult situation for lesbians and gays in Eastern Europe.

LGBT rights are human rights. The conference confirmed the relevance of the ideal standards and values of the Council of Europe, to the city's work on diversity and anti-discrimination. The City of Oslo is grateful for the support from the Council of Europe, in sponsoring the international guests.

Parla, Spain - Bank of Time project

A pure chance to share experiences while meeting new people

The Bank of Time (BT) is a network of citizens who spend part of their time to share activities or services (without the intermediation of money) with others (members of BT). It is a time-sharing network that has its origins in the ancient "barter" in rural areas. The BT project in Parla works from October 8, 2010.

Objectives:

- Improve the quality of life of citizens through the exchange of services, networking activities.
- To promote positive values: self-esteem, confidence, communication, participation, reciprocity, equality and interculturalism.
- Create meeting places where people approach and exchange knowledge, skills, experiences etc.
- Achieve social networks and emotional ties between the neighbours to contribute to the prevention of social isolation, loneliness...

Of the 90 members 21% are foreigners from Colombia, Ecuador, Guinea, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia. The set of exchanges that take place, 37% have been produced between mixed couples (national and foreign).

Among the services offered people find actions related to care for people with special needs, education, leisure and sport, languages, sewing, housework, transportation, computer repairs ...

In our meeting with responsible BT and some users told us that one of the weaknesses of this project is that often find many offers but few demands. People still do not know the project and do not demand services. There are others BT in the country and they are part of the BT's network so that they can share best practices and new methodologies. Unlike other BT experiences driven by social entities, in this case the council promotes the BT and anyone can join. Some users told us how rich the experience was for them and the need to make it known to more people join. The BT coordinator has a foreign origin and

we found that despite the need to increase the number of partners, this is a project that really promotes intercultural relations in Parla.

Parla, Spain - Project of training adult promoters for city coexistence

Adults get voluntarily committed to improve the quality of life

The project consists of three courses of 15 hours of training and at the end of the course participants are asked to be part of a "Network of City Promoters for City Coexistence " to work together.

Objectives:

- To promote intercultural relations to manage diversity in the neighbourhoods of the city, through local associations and proactive citizens individually.
- Preventing discrimination, isolation, prejudices and stereotypes.
- To promote values and attitudes of solidarity, cooperation, inclusion, openness, equality and mutual respect.

We had the opportunity to meet some of the people who are creating the network of promoters (at that time 40 persons had been trained).

People choose some specific topics to work on like:

- Carry on a study on the evolution of local commerce and trade in Parla.
- Analysis of Parla's urban planning and neighbourhoods' development.
- Studies of Parla's sociocultural evolution.

Among the promoters we spoke with representatives of immigrant organizations from Romania, Ecuador and Angola who want to value the contributions of immigrants to the city and promote associations. We also spoke with representatives of neighbours associations, unemployed, former alcoholic etc. Special mention a guy from Angola who arrived to Spain at age 14 and was unaccompanied minor he was 18 and left the assistance centre and started studying international relations in college. Currently he is working on a project with the Youth House to promote the integration of young people through capoeira, also driving the association of Congolese in Parla and participating in a project with the University to identify opportunities for internationalization of the city. It was also interesting an example of a Colombian man unemployed with professional experience as an audio-visual communicator, who decided to create an Internet TV channel to spread positive news on the city.

In summary, this was a great encounter with people from diverse backgrounds who share a commitment to work voluntarily to improve the city. It is also a great example of how a municipality can facilitate networking processes identifying active and committed people that from a participatory methodology can provide much to community development and interculturalism.

Patras, Greece - Benefiting from the social inclusion of vulnerable groups of Patras' population

Social inclusion to defend minorities and vulnerable groups

The city of Patras, Greece, continues its efforts for the benefit of social inclusion of vulnerable groups of population. The conception and running of programmes and the implementation of projects in this respect is of vital importance.

More specifically, the project entitled "Support to Roma of Achaia" aims at the activation of Roma people in the labour market. It involves the mobilization of local bodies with a view to ensuring the creation of jobs for the Roma population after diagnosis of local needs and highlighting of the growth potential in the intervention area. As a result, a social enterprise for recycling materials will be established.

The project includes actions on coordination-management, counselling, training, networking and awareness raising. It is implemented by a Development Partnership (DP) entitled «axaia roma», coordinated by "Daphne VET". Within the DP among others, partners are the "Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development - ADEP SA" and the "Social Organisation of the Municipality of Patras - KODIP". The project falls under "Full integration of all human resources in a society of equal opportunities" axis of the "Human Resources Development " Operational Programme (2007-2013).

Very recently, another project has been approved entitled "Combating Discrimination in the Field of Entrepreneurship: Women and young Roma and Muslim immigrants" which is financed by "PROGRESS-Support to national activities aiming at combating discrimination and promoting equality" (JUST/2012/PROG/AG/AD) EU programme. Raising awareness, disseminating information and promoting the debate about the key challenges and policy issues in relation to anti-discrimination for Roma and Muslim immigrants as far as entrepreneurship is concerned, are the main objectives of the project. Mainstreaming of policies through the involvement of social partners, NGOs and relative stakeholders is also a challenge. The project is coordinated by the "National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)" and the area of Patras has been identified as a core-place at a national level, equal to the area of Athens. "Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development - ADEP SA" is the local partner organization.

It is true, that these two projects are part of a "chain of on-going actions" of the Municipality of Patras (Vice-Municipality of "Support to Citizen, Volunteerism, Gender Equality & Integration of Migrants") and its organizations, supporting the development of the intercultural character of Patras into equal opportunities for all its civil society.

Patras, Greece - Synergy for Diversity benefiting Democratic values

Local stakeholders joined forces to celebrate the "European Week Against Racism 2016" from 16th to 21st March 2016.

On that occasion, the "Park of Educational Activities (PEA) of the Municipality of Patras", with the support of the Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development (ADEP SA), coordinated a series of events entitled "Synergy for Diversity benefiting Democratic values". The initiative is the outcome of a participatory design involving various stakeholders from the sectors of education, sports, culture, civil society, creative industry, local government.

The events were inscribed in Patras' action within the "Intercultural Cities-ICC" programme and took place in PEA's premises which now serve as a "hub" hosting the city's educational and civil society actions.

The programme of the week (as described in the agenda attached) included several events, concerts and theatre performances, interpreted by the participating organisations, local youth (disabled included), pupils and students. The associations of migrants presented their culture and heritage, their music and dances, their tasteful food and spirits, the whole in the PEA exceptional location, close to the seaside and within a pleasant green environment. The activities also included a workshop on creative writing by pupils, as well as a workshop of poetry reading (in Albanian and Greek language), both emphasising on refugees and migrants stories. In parallel, the citizens enjoyed photo and posters exhibitions, as well as a symbolic sea contest organised by the regional sailing clubs.

On 21st March, being the International Day of Poetry, a high-scale event took place at the premises of "APOLLON" main theatre at the city centre, organized by Patras Cultural Organisation in cooperation with the orchestra of Patras Municipal Conservatory. The event, entitled "The foreigner of water", perfectly matched music with poems read by well-known actors, addressing the themes of refugees and uprooting.

"Synergy for Diversity benefiting Democratic values" initiative was also linked to the UNITED network through the participation of secondary schools in a poster competition. This was possible thanks to the network of schools set up by the Directorate of Secondary Education of Achaia - Dpt. of "Cultural Projects", through a protocol of cooperation with ADEP SA, tackling matters related to interculturalism. The posters created by the students can be found in the gallery hosted online by UNITED network.

All activities were embraced by the Municipality of Patras through a statement of the Mayor, Mr Kostas PELETIDES emphasizing on the need for multifaceted action to combat exclusion and all forms of discrimination based on nationality, color, sex, religion, disability, and living standards.

Patras promises to continue working together for the benefit of democracy, equality, human rights and solidarity, inclusive society being a trustful partner for all those wishing to act for this common goal.

Portimão , Portugal - Intercultural Week

Celebrate cultural diversity

Portimão celebrates cultural diversity in a week dedicated to Interculturality, through a programme aimed at sharing experiences and relationships between various migrant communities and stimulating the dialogue between cultures, raising awareness of all citizens to the importance of having a more just, equal and intercultural society.

The Intercultural Week of Portimão entails a diversified program of activities such as music, dance, gastronomy, handicrafts, among others, involving the active participation of different people; several local immigrants, leisure and sports associations; restaurants and local commerce.

For the first time, the Municipal Day of the Immigrant and Cultural Diversity will be celebrated on May 29, a date that will become a landmark in the local agenda, a clear sign of the transformation of

Portimão into an intercultural society, where there is a mix of cultures peacefully coexisting and mutually respecting each other in difference, where one can learn and enrich itself through dialogue and living together with diversity.

The Intercultural Week of Portimão emerges within the framework of the Municipal Plan for Immigrant Integration that has been implemented by the municipality since April 2015, translating an inclusion policy to host “well” and become more and more a city of tolerance and solidarity towards migrants of more than 60 different nationalities that live and work in Portimão.

Reggio Emilia, Italy - Mondo tra I fornelli: intercultural cooking laboratories

Meeting of Italian and Foreign Women around an oven

The Mondinpiazza Festival is an intercultural weekend that unfolds in the city streets. It is organised in collaboration with associations of foreigners, Municipal services and foreign and local artists. Theatre, cinema, performances, music, tales, folkdances, foreign craftwork, booths for foreign communities and ethnic food are all a part of the activities during the weekend, preceded by several public debates and conventions held the days prior to the weekend.

There are other events including an intercultural dialogue festival to encourage collaborations between municipal operator, local associations, citizens and artists. Ten days of cultural initiatives, in which citizens participate in creative workshops.

Mondo tra i fornelli: Intercultural cooking laboratories held by foreign women and open to Italian women in collaboration with Constituency 5 and Centro Sociale Rosta Nuova; producing a menu-book based on the experience is created and made available in libraries and cultural centres. Due calci al razzismo (2 kicks against racism) is the name of the sports event (5-a-side football) organised every year in November at the Palazzetto dello Sport. Organised since 2006 in collaboration with sports associations (Uisp). Participants include representatives from the various minority communities, the police force, Italian and/or foreign women, disabled individuals, local administrators, youth from secondary schools etc.

Reggio Emilia, Italy - Mondinsieme: together with the world

Supporting Diaspora groups through active intercultural policy

An aspiring intercultural city should have an international policy that seeks, at least in part, to promote a dynamic relationship with places of origin of major Diaspora groups. Such relations can help the city understand the geopolitical, cultural and economic context in which newcomers have been socialised, and shape its policies of welcome and integration accordingly. They can also support migrants in developing a sense of belonging to their new community, by giving a formal recognition their country of origin and their cultural identity.

Cities across Europe are becoming aware of the need to develop such “foreign affairs” and most commonly use city twinning, artistic exchanges and development co-operation to this end. Some cities are trying to foster business relations with countries of origin, seeking investment or joint ventures, but few have an (inter)cultural international policy agenda where both parties contribute as equals to supporting integration, social cohesion and respect for diversity.

Reggio Emilia, member of the Intercultural cities network, has made a major step in this respect. It has just signed, through the Intercultural centre Mondinsieme, an agreement with the Moroccan Ministry in charge of relations with the diaspora. The agreement underpins Reggio's holistic intercultural policy and seeks to "promote socio-cultural mixing and openness towards the other".

Both sides are providing significant financial contributions to the activities included in the agreement, which are as follows:

- An open space mini-theatre in the Pauline Park – an innovative park area designed to encourage intercultural contacts through educational trails and games for adults and children and intercultural encounters.
- Annual cultural visits to Morocco for young Italians of different origins
- Participation of students from Reggio Emilia in the Summer university of the young people of the world organised annually in Morocco
- The promotion of Moroccan culture and the teaching of Arabic to young people in Reggio of different origins
- Enabling the participation of young people of Moroccan origin living in Reggio Emilia in cultural and sports activities of the city.

Mondinsieme has already opened an Arabic class for non-Arabic speakers – the demand for which exceeded by far the expectations.

The Municipality of Reggio Emilia has a wide network of international contacts and projects aiming to share the city's best practices and opinions world wide. The city has established through the years a set of twinning and friendship agreements reaching to 15 official international institutional relations which are to be implemented through continuous exchanges of delegations study visits, conferences on topics of common interests, international joint project (such as EU projects or development cooperation projects). It includes cities in: Spain, France, Poland, Germany, Croatia, USA, Rep of Moldova, Serbia, South Africa, Mozambique, Brazil, Cina, Palestinian Territories , Saharawi Republic, Morocco. Besides these official relations the city participates to various different European Projects (within INTERREG , URBACT , LIFE programmes...) and International Networks (SERN, ALDA, EUROTOWNS). In 2008 RE was awarded the title of Italy's most intercultural city, it has a platform to lead a movement to counter the prevailing isolationist rhetoric. In 2000 it set up an Agency to sustain the management & improvement of all the city's international contacts and projects: Reggio Nel Mondo. It acts as a crosscutting tool supporting all municipal departments in developing a continuous international exchange and dialogue.

Reggio Emilia, Italy – Burkina Faso: the true spirit of co-development

Migrants create connections with their country of origin

In Reggio Emilia, the migrant inclusion is enhanced through projects for development cooperation with countries of origin. Creating thousands of workplace for the agricultural development and the fight against the food insecurity in Burkina Faso is not just a dream anymore thanks to the engagement of Reggio residents from this country and their capacities to do networking.

In July, the association of people from Burkina Faso of Reggio Emilia and Emilia-Romagna (Abreer) signed at the town hall of Reggio Emilia an agreement with the Government of Burkina Faso, represented by Raymond Balima, Ambassador of Burkina Faso in Italy, and Emilian companies.

“Italy and Reggio Emilia have good relations with the burkinabé community, they foster each other – said Serena Foracchia, Council Member of the City of Reggio Emilia in charge of international and intercultural relations – Citizens with foreign origins have relevant skills, they keep their eyes open to the world and are able to make a difference for the development of the city they are living in and of the country of origin. This is a view that redefines the idea of international co-operation and, along with the project of the association of people from Burkina Faso, it would be important to involve other communities and countries”.

The project goal is to transfer technologies and competence to the African country in order to install production plants to assemble machines, as well as structures and services to sell the goods.

The idea was born following within the association of people from Burkina Faso living in Reggio. “Some of us lost our jobs because of the crisis, so we decided to invest our time to learn something for the future – says the president of the association, Seni Bandaogo – We collected some money among ourselves to organise training in organic agriculture for burkinabé living in Reggio, to see if it was possible to take advantage of these skills here in Italy and in Burkina Faso”.

The course on agricultural techniques, AgrAfrica, gathered other local organisations, like Cooperativa La Collina, associazione Il Gabbiano, Crpa, and Dinamica, who helped for the training programme. Now, little by little, it is becoming a project of development cooperation, aiming to create autonomous small companies in the villages of Burkina Faso, active in agriculture, livestock farming, and energy production, in order to assure food and energy security, better conditions in health and education.

“This project did not start here at random, but because there is a history of voluntary work, social engagement, and international relations: it is the result of the collective intelligence of our city – says Matteo Sassi, Deputy Mayor of the City of Reggio Emilia – the commitment of these people for their city and their country of origin should be an example for all of us, and the municipality is going to put more effort into international and intercultural policies”.

The Government of Burkina Faso will communicate the first areas and actions to start the implementation of the project in September. Meanwhile, a group of six companies from Reggio Emilia, active in the production of tractors and agricultural machines, machineries to process and preserve agricultural produces and food, and renewable energy, has already signed the agreement, ready to export components of machines and equipment to be assembled in Burkina Faso: Goldoni spa, Ceti Group, Parma Tech-Magreb, Boorea, Sei elettrotecnica, Amp.

“Migration has a positive impact on culture and society, as this project well explains – says Raymond Balima, ambassador of Burkina Faso in Italy – People with burkinabé origins are thankful to live in a city where they can find attention and willingness, starting from the institution: they are caring both of the future of their city and their native country”.

Reggio Emilia - Welcoming pact

A Welcoming pact is signed by the managing entity (often an NGO), the city and a refugee.

This pact is tailored and based on screening interviews done at the moment of arrival to find out what are the assets of the beneficiary (character, habits, competences, knowledge, resilience, etc), what are his/her expectations, needs; but also which answers can come from the territory, which local activities can be trusted, etc.

In the pact are enlisted the services the beneficiary will receive, as well as what he/she is supposed to give back to the city.

Among the services received: a shared flat with other people from different background from his/hers (so that Italian would be the lingua franca to speak with the other flatmates), at least 10h Italian course per week and vocational training (tailored on the real necessities of the person) and 2 internships (the first "observational" for 1 month and already before having the asylum granted, to be used to understand how the person is fitting within the organized space, which are the skills possessed etc. Both the internships are done within the social cooperatives of the territory).

At the end of the 6 months-1 year project they would also be assisted in looking for a house (support for paying the rent at the beginning is also possible) and a job.

On the other hand the beneficiary is expected to give something back and to volunteer for a certain amount of hours. Some voluntary activities are for example to clean the spaces, baby sit or help in handling out food to homeless people etc (same practice is used for the beneficiaries of the social services).

Reggio Emilia - dealing with the local impact of the refugee crisis

Applying an intercultural approach to dealing with welcoming newcomers

Reggio Emilia has invested in a comprehensive service to try and deal with the local impact of the refugee crisis, based on the national programme SPRAR (Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati) the system to protect refugees and asylum seekers.

The city is applying an intercultural approach to dealing with welcoming newcomers, via a two-stage process. The First Welcome deals with the basic issues of identification, certification, first aid etc. Then the Second Welcome offers services based upon the language, professional skills, family needs of each individual. People have very specific needs which must be dealt with and which must then be channeled into their ongoing life. They usually only have 6 months in which to demonstrate who they are and what they can do. They must learn a new language whilst they may also be undergoing trauma treatment. The service deals with employment, training and housing, with an emphasis on portraying the newcomers as an asset to the social life of the neighbourhood into which they move.

The main countries of provenance of Reggio's asylum seekers are different from the national picture. There is less emphasis upon Syria. Reggio started in 2009 with 15 places for asylum-seekers and are now up to 48. Actions are directed towards legal, health, psychological, language, job market, and housing issues. Most people live in flats in small communities to help them live socially. Every placement is governed by a general agreement with the NGO which will manage the placement. Each gets a personalised pathway including 10 hours per week of language training. Then there is vocational training or an internship, with SPRAR designing the methodology for each person. The first phase of an internship is to understand how a person can introduce themselves into work, even before they have received formal asylum status. Giving them simple jobs develops an understanding of how they are able to cope with structures and social conditions. There is also an assessment of their literacy skills.

Stavanger, Norway - INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL NETWORK

Events and Activities strengthen the sense of belonging

The International Cultural Network (INK) is an organization running in Stavanger whose main goal is to encourage social cohesion and integration while assisting newcomers. INK has been founded in 1982

and it initially counted 5 organisations, even if it has been growing (reaching today almost 80 organizations) INK has kept the focus on two objectives. First objective is to make Stavanger more attractive for businesses in a country where the culture is not very open to newly-arrived. Second goal is to help people with different backgrounds in the integration process. Minorities are encouraged to join the boards of different cultural institutions. To pursue this goal, INK emphasizes the richness their diverse cultural background brings to the Norwegian community rather than stressing the differences.

The idea hidden behind the INK's philosophy is to use cultural diversity as a way to bridge people from different countries into Norway. Stavanger, in this perspective, represents the international "capital of Norway", a city that welcomes refugees and migrants from all over the world. In fact, Stavanger's population is composed of 130.754 inhabitants; out of the total, 27.531 are immigrants. The percentage of first and second generation immigrants is of about 23%; whereas the national average is of 14.9%. This means that Stavanger has a higher percentage of diverse population compared to any other Norwegian city.

The network, composed of about 80 organisations and associations, represents minority groups and stresses the importance of establishing a sense of community through the organisations of events and activities. In fact, it would appear that the network organises about 700 events a year; some events run annually, whereas other activities are scheduled on a weekly/monthly basis. Some events are:

- On a weekly basis an International Cultural Café is organised. This event has been going on for 30 years now, and it is getting extremely popular, it gathers together people with different minority backgrounds as well as locals. During the event several activities are carried out and often the public library plays a fundamental role in promoting international books translated in several languages.
- The language café, instead, takes place in the public library, it runs twice a week and each session lasts two hours. This activity attracts many foreigners and newcomers who wish to learn Norwegian. Teachers are usually volunteers, for example retired teachers willing to teach Norwegian language. In order to take part in the language class, it is not necessary to sign up, all participants have to do is to show up. However, in order to attract a wider target group, classes are not theoretical but rather practical; for example, mock dialogues with a doctor, or general cultural aspects of the Norwegian society. Interestingly, the language café is perceived as a social event, a good way to meet and get to know people. The event is getting more and more popular; for example, the organisation expected 30 people for the first event, instead they gathered 70 people. Nowadays, the café hosts between 100 and 110 people every time. The biggest ethnic groups that usually join the café are Polish, followed by Spaniards and Lithuanians.
- The Children's World Day is an annual appointment that gathers together children from 3 to 11 years old and their families. Usually it happens in March and it is always very crowded. During this day several activities take place, it is possible to hear music from exotic countries, taste any kind of food, make handcrafts, women can get henna painted, kids can get face paint while singing songs etc... This event gathers together people from all over the world and encourages minorities to keep their traditions and habits alive.
- Every year a Seminar about youth is held. In this occasion, experts talk about the risks young people run when they fall outside the society. Last year, for instance, the topics discussed were

linked to what happened in Paris and Oslo: radicalism, new-Nazi groups and the extreme right wing. As a result, the international community, especially Muslim, experienced some kind of prejudices, stereotypes. Experts aimed to answer these questions: how to make our society safer? How to reach people that are falling out? What are the processes to bring them back? Ms. Deeyah Khan took part as activist in the fight to radicalism; she explained how extremism works and how it is possible to get out of it.

- During the elections, the IKN gave people leaflets to teach how to vote. In fact, after 3 years one has the right to vote but newcomers rarely know that. The flyer was translated into several languages to make it more understandable. The Venezuelan organization was very active in the election process, to the extent that several political debates were held in Spanish and not in Norwegian. Intercultural mediators' job is to introduce foreigners into the Norwegian culture and society. An obstacle is to get people engaged in cultural and political institutions. In fact, it is necessary that institutions mirror the ethnic variety of the population they represent. Instead, there is a lack of participation and cultural diversity in several fields: work force, marketing, in the decision making process etc. it is not possible to make a programme able to suit ethnic minorities if the representatives have the same Norwegian background.
- Upcoming events: the carnival will take place in February and the Venezuelan community will play music and children will play the piñata. In summer the kite festival and kite workshop are a highlight of the Stavanger's events season.

These events are extremely helpful in the integration process, insomuch they encourage and strengthen the relations between people from different countries. This is particularly important when some ethnic groups are facing problems with other specific groups. Such conflicts are often based on prejudices that have been inherited from their home countries and, as a result, migrants brought them in the host country; for example, conflicts between Russian and Polish. Here, in Stavanger, organisers help each other to overcome the original barriers making the community stronger.

Stavanger, Norway - welcoming internationals to the city

Creative initiatives to welcome and include immigrants in the city life

It's very important for the region that newcomers are properly welcomed. Several years ago, the Stavanger Chamber of Commerce and Industries started a program to introduce international employees and their families to the city. The regions Welcome Center is called INN (International Network of Norway). INN focuses on the practical transition into Norwegian life and the needs of the employee and family, whilst the Chamber favors the interests of the industry and businesses as a whole, and for the region.

INN publishes a monthly newsletter in English and organises about 80-100 events annually for the INN members. The events relate to information needed as a newcomer to Norway, this involves everything from taxes and pensions, driving and driving license, practicalities of having children in Norway, health system, work etc. as well as social events such as Portuguese wine evenings, Visit the USA, Italian evenings, The best of Eastern Europe with representatives from the various embassies and tourist boards. In addition, INN provides support for the accompanying spouse in regards to job training, employment and building a network. The social aspect is important as it means opportunities for newcomers and residents to meet in the context of activities organised in co-operation with the local

associations. Norwegians are generally very active in their free time, and newcomers are encouraged to join.

A Welcome course day about 'Area Orientation' also takes place. This is a full course day about geography, history, Norwegian culture, values and beliefs, and practical information about the welfare system, health system, and daily living.

A seminar on 'Creating an International WE culture' is offered to companies with various nationalities including Norwegians. This seminar raises awareness around attitudes and personal responsibility. A good international team focus should be on the positive strengths we all bring to the table rather than on the 'negative' differences. Getting rid of the 'us and them' mindset and creating a 'We' culture is beneficial to the company, the employees and ultimately the region.

The "New in the Stavanger and Haugesund region" guidebook provides a wealth of useful information and inspiring pictures of Stavanger and its surroundings. It answers the main questions most newcomers have upon arrival. The focus is on topics which are important to understand the Norwegian way of life. This includes information on outdoor activities, culture, practical living, culinary experiences, education and employment. This guidebook also works as an inspiration for people who are considering moving to the region or have already done so. The book can be obtained at the INN office at the Chamber of Commerce, or it can be downloaded as a pdf.

The industry of the region is technological and innovative; these companies attract resourceful people, and it is important to use their competencies and interests outside the company as well. INN is the networking facilitator, both for culture and innovation.

Stavanger, Norway - Cultural and sport events for diversity

Overcoming diversities

- In other Norwegian cities, the *Syttende Mai Norwegian National Day* is devoted solely to the celebration of an invented 19th century ideal of Norwegian culture (such as the *bunad* regional folk costumes), but the city of Stavanger has taken the bold step of making it a celebration of all cultures. This has been embraced by the citizens and has also been copied by other cities. Nevertheless, Stavanger has had to negotiate some potentially controversial situations, such as the public uproar which initially met the decision of a Sri Lankan Muslim Fahmida Haniff in 2009 to wear a costume which combined the bunad with hijab.
- The *Central Library* is seen and trusted by most people as the place in the city where anyone can come and meet others. Every week the Library has a *Living Orientation Day*, providing guidance and advice on how to build and maintain a Norwegian social network. Besides this all, the Library does not shy away from taking highly controversial topics on the discussion agenda. The impression is that with this, they have acquired more authority as an independent platform for discussion and formation of opinion, than would have happened in a so-called "neutral" position.
- An interesting example of ordinary people taking the initiative in Stavanger is *EatinCommon* which helps people who would like to host dinner parties for strangers.
- The football club *Brod* has cultivated a very international profile, and also accepts people who cannot pay the membership fees.

Subotica, Serbia - "Tolerance Cup": Mini-Olympics for children from local communities

Breaking down ethnic barriers

The Tolerance Cup is an annual event in which schools of all background take part in a mini-Olympics. In the arts there has been a more ambiguous situation, with some groups with drawing into cultural essentialism. However events such as the Interetno Festival and the Dancing Together Festival run by the Nepkor Hungarian Centre are reaching out to all groups.

Utrecht, Netherlands - A diversity advantage story: Dutch city hires Polish psychology experts

Psychology to overcome obstacles

Autumn 2011 had the Dutch city Utrecht in a predicament. Rejected asylumseekers were out on the streets and a group of longterm homeless Polish vagrants had teamed up with rejected Somali asylumseekers. Together they had started a tentcamp close to the suburbs. There were signs of group patrols, complete with baseballbats, knives and, the latest rumour, even shotguns.

So when the city heard of a succesfull Polish organisation called 'Barka', they swiftly set out to investigate whether this organisation could help manage the situation.

Barka was founded by a Polish psychologist, Tomasz Sadowski right after 'Die Wende'. Sadowska, who had longterm experience in psychiatric clinics and detention centres, realised that a new social system tends to be slow in institutionalizing new solutions for the vagrants and the vulnerable, the 'misfits' in society. So he immediately started a first community home for a group of those in 1989, which was so successful that it has been by now expanded to some 20 large-scale communities.

In 2012 a first Barka 'outreach' team started work in Utrecht, hired by the local government. The Barka philosophy shows a subtle mix of former ideology and modern psychology. The leader of a team was once homeless himself and he has a trained psychologist or social worker as his assistant. This is not the traditional Western-European style, the trained psychologist on equal footing to a converted tramp.

Barka doesn't use the negative word 'return' but a better one, 'reconnection'. If someone fails to adapt to a new country, he may be in need to be reconnected to his country of origin. And this is exactly what Barka does. Barka creates opportunities to return home for people facing homelessness or difficult social and economic situation, and they run a Social Economy Centre, supporting migrants on their way to economic and social rehabilitation and integration within the receiving country. Some of those supported through Barka's Leaders Approach programme, have become leaders themselves and are employed in projects run by Barka foundations across several countries or have initiated their own associations and are supporting others.

Since the Polish team started working in Utrecht, Barka 'reconnected' almost 400 people to their families or Barka communities in Poland. Among them heavily addicted men, victims of trafficking and psychiatric patients, lost in limbo.

Tomasz Sadowski is now working, together with African organisations, on starting social economy and integration projects based on Barka's experiences and models in African countries that are, like Poland

was, on their way to a new political and social reality. Sadowski feels how also in Africa, the vulnerable will be last in line. So he wants to help the Africans, who themselves found the Barka models appealing to enroll the formula of the Barka partnership model, communities and other experiences in a couple of African countries.

It leaves the Dutch city of Utrecht hopeful about a future in which African organisations inspired by a Polish organisation pick up lost African souls and reconnect them to renewed communities in an emerging Africa.

Communication and Anti-rumour (Mass Media, Mediation, conflict resolution)

To what extent the way we speak and communicate can influence the perception of the "other"? This section includes examples in relation to breaking down stereotypes and discouraging discrimination through Anti-Rumour campaigns, conflict resolution and partnerships with Media to foster positive diversity awareness.

Amadora, Portugal - Anti-rumour agents trained in Amadora's school

Breaking down stereotypes and negative perceptions

In the framework of the Communication for Integration (C4i) project, the city of Amadora (Portugal) has been implementing a communication campaign focused on education and schools. The campaign aims to address the rumour identified through research at the city level that pupils with a migrant background lower the education level in schools. In Amadora, 60 per cent of the foreign residents, who represented 10 per cent of the city's population in 2011, originate from Portuguese-speaking African countries.

As part of the campaign, 60 pupils of Seomara da Costa Primo secondary school were trained as anti-rumour agents. They identified the following rumours in the classroom: new students are never welcome, Spanish and Portuguese do not like each other, white people are believed to steal babies in Cape Verde, mathematics and Portuguese teachers earn more than other teachers, etc.

The pupils also participated in a debate "how do I see the others" where they were to mosaic their school mate using foodstuffs.

Finally, they presented an anti-rumour song at the C4i 3rd Coordination meeting in Amadora on 12 December 2014 and expressed interest in joining more anti-rumour activities.

According to scientific research conducted in Amadora as part of C4i, a secondary school with a majority of students of different nationalities was positioned among the eight best schools in the city in 2013. Similarly, about a quarter of the students awarded for merit and excellence were immigrants. Amadora strongly believes that excellence in education can only be achieved in an integrated and inclusive education system.

Amadora, Portugal - promoting "expression through art" and "positive dialogue"

Discouraging prejudices through art and dialogue

As part of the campaign “Do not Feed the Rumor!” launched by Amadora’s City Council in September 2014, the city has set up a kite contest for all primary and secondary schools. The contest is held between 2 March and 30 April 2015. The results will be presented to the public on May 21 (World Day for Cultural Diversity, Dialogue and Development).

The contest aims to promote the appreciation of cultural diversity and social cohesion; to contribute to the deconstruction of stereotypes, prejudices, discriminatory attitudes and rumors about immigrants; and to encourage creativity and imagination in learning and reflection on interculturality and immigrant integration.

After a series of awareness-raising campaigns, including a video featuring judo expert Nuno Delgado, actress Carla Chambel, singer Ana Bacalhau and journalist Joaquim Franco, Amadora intends, through the kite contest, to reach out to younger generations who make a difference as anti-rumor agents. It is believed that these go on to influence their primary and secondary support networks i.e. family, friends, colleagues, teachers and fellow pupils.

Therefore, teachers are working in several schools in Amadora enabling students to talk about the issues and express themselves through “positive dialogue” and art. Teachers from Seomara da Costa Primo trained as anti-rumour trainers, set up anti-rumour photography classes, recorded an anti-rumour song with students, conducted classroom debates “how do I see the others” where students were to mosaic their school mate using foodstuffs.

Barcelona, Spain - Anti-Rumors Campaign: dispelling myths about migrants

Inter-city network to fight against negative attitudes towards diversity

- Disseminate more and better information to the people of Barcelona on the cultural diversity that exists in the city as well as to the newly arrived population with regard to the social and cultural characteristics of the city.
- Promote a programme of “Citizens’ Debates” throughout the entire city that, through guided initiatives, aim to reflect on, debate and reject stereotypical ideas surrounding cultural diversity.

Design an urban strategy against negative rumours without foundation that make coexistence in diversity difficult, based on working in a network with different agents and social entities, promoting the figure of “the active antirumour agent”.

Example:

- Boost the network combating unsubstantiated allegations using and disseminating diverse material such as the “Manual against unsubstantiated allegations and subjects”. The media have an important responsibility in the formation of images and person schemata in the collective imagination, especially in relation to immigration and cultural diversity. Their vital role makes them agents of action with whom lines of involvement and collaboration need to be drawn up to fight stereotypes and prejudices.
- Initiatives to promote working together will be encouraged, with measures for providing information and resources. The aim of this is to facilitate the task of sharing

information related to cultural diversity.

- Support will be given to initiatives where people are working to achieve a rigorous treatment of news, and to prevent the spreading of stereotypes, as well as work to positively recognise good practice in the communications media.
- Work to achieve recognition and normalisation of new media and communications channels
 - those specialised in the immigrant population and/or the use of new technologies (Internet, etc.)
 - integrating these into communicative strategies as important sources of information and communication within the city.

Bergen, Norway - Promoting a positive image of migrants and minorities in the media

Mass Media for migration

Bergen monitors the way in which minorities are portrayed in the local media. Occasionally, the municipality promotes a positive image of migrants and minorities in the media. Four or five times a year, the city publishes a newspaper with information about activities in the city that is distributed to all households in the city. The November 2013 edition was dedicated to integration. The city's communication department is instructed to regularly highlight diversity as an advantage in different types of communications. Bergen may wish notice an initiative launched by the city of Barcelona (Spain). Since 2010, the city is carrying out the BCN Anti-Rumour campaign to combat negative and unfounded rumours that have an adverse effect on living in diversity, based on working in conjunction with different social actors and organizations. A part of this campaign has been substantial press coverage.

Bergen, Norway - Utekontakteten and Samarbeidsråd for tros- og livssynssamfunn:

Municipal mediation services dealing with cultural and religious conflicts

Bergen has introduced many initiatives to achieve its mediation and conflict resolution policy objectives. The city has set up a generalist municipal mediation service which also deals with cultural conflicts. Bergen also provides mediation services in places such as neighbourhoods, on streets, actively seeking to meet residents and discuss problems. This service is provided by the Community Youth Outreach Unit in Bergen (*Utekontakteten*). Finally, Bergen has also set up a municipal mediation service committed to interreligious issues specifically. *Samarbeidsråd for tros- og livssynssamfunn* is an interfaith organisation in Bergen. Most faith communities in Bergen are represented in the council, which is supported by the municipality.

Berlin-Neukölln, Germany - "Good Daughters – good Sons": getting young people to understand conflicts

Creative solutions to counteract violence and inter-ethnic conflicts

There is little to suggest that Neukölln is a place with immediate inter-ethnic tensions. However, there is great concern that violence is becoming increasingly prevalent particularly amongst young people, and this might – if not handled well – also develop an ethnic complexion. The work being undertaken to address this is impressive, for example the opening of a neighbourhood conflict mediation centre in Richardplatz; the theatre project 'Good daughters – good sons' designed to get young people to understand how conflicts can start.

Office "Citizens help citizens", Berlin Neukölln. A Turkish and an Arabic association offer a lower threshold advisory service in the respective mother tongue for five days of the week in the Town Hall of Neukölln. Especially for older migrants, who have difficulties in learning the German language, this is a highly demanded service.

Bilbao, Spain - Anti-Rumour Web Application

How the web will help promoting inclusion and integration

The main metaphor used in the Bilbao communication campaign is the umbrella as a defence against rumours, that fall from the sky. It has developed a short game, in two forms of a scratch card and a Web app, that can allow the user to assess whether they are 'protected' from or 'drenched' by rumours.

Following a series of fact-based questions it tests the degree of knowledge that people have about immigration, and illustrates the truth or otherwise of common rumours about immigrants. Multi-choice questions are used. In addition, longer statement of factually accurate information is presented alongside each answer, with a view to raising awareness of rumours and stereotypes that negatively affect coexistence of the different city populations.

A final score is given, indicated the degree of 'protection' from rumours. By disseminating this information more widely in social networks, the user may obtain additional 'medals' and join the campaign for the values of multiculturalism, social cohesion and combating racial discrimination.

Similarly, and in order that this information could reach groups of people who are not related to information technology was created on paper other version of the game.

The Webapp has been completed over 1,300 times from September 2014 to February 15 averaging over four minutes per user per session.

In addition badges have been produced, as well as 1,500 scratch cards similar to the Webapp above.

Botkyrka, Sweden - Rumours in Botkyrka – a study of common rumours which harm an intercultural Botkyrka

How to prevent rumours

The spreading of rumours is a central feature of the mechanisms which exclude and stigmatise marginalized groups in the society. The Multicultural Centre has been commissioned by the Municipality

of Botkyrka, Sweden, and the Council of Europe to make a study of common rumours which are circulating in the municipality and which impede the development towards an intercultural Botkyrka.

This [study](#) is a step in the anti-rumour work which Botkyrka wishes to develop, following the work against rumours carried out in recent years in Barcelona, Spain. Research into rumours has shown that these cannot be understood outside the social, cultural and economic context within which they circulate. Vanja Möller, the project manager for Botkyrkas anti-rumour campaign, is very pleased with the study:

This study has laid the foundation for our anti-rumour work and inspired our anti-rumour network Botkyrka Fördomsfritt where the civil society, locally based researchers and the municipality work together to identify, nuance and counteract rumours that lead to xenophobia and racism. During the spring 2014 The Multicultural Centre will make a follow-up study to identify the arguments, reasoning and facts that can be used in the work to eliminate these rumours.

Botkyrka as a context

Botkyrka is the poorest municipality in Greater Stockholm measured by income per capita. It also has the third youngest population of all Sweden's municipal districts. In 2010 Botkyrka became the municipality with the largest proportion of citizens with a foreign background (53.2%) in the country. Most of the people with background in a non-western country live in the northern part of the municipality, usually called Northern Botkyrka. This area is both geographically and symbolically separated from the southern part of the municipality. Southern Botkyrka has a longer urban history, while the greater part of northern Botkyrka has been developed more recently.

From the 1980's and particularly during the 1990's and onwards, the immigrants who settled in the northern part of the municipality came increasingly from lands other than the western countries. Now, the three administrative districts in northern Botkyrka, i.e. Fittja, Alby and Hallunda-Norsborg, are among the most diverse and resource-weak municipal regions in Sweden. In northern Botkyrka, more than 65 per cent of the population have a foreign background, and in some parts the figure is 90-95 per cent. Of these, almost 70 per cent have a non-Western background. The majority in the southern parts of the municipality have a Swedish background, and they also have on average a higher income per capita and a better attachment to the labour market.

Common rumours which harm an intercultural Botkyrka

The rumours identified in this study are linked to the socioeconomic pattern which characterises Botkyrka as a municipality:

1. People in northern Botkyrka are criminal
2. The culture of the immigrants is incompatible with the Swedish culture. Immigrants do not want to be integrated.
3. The distribution of resources in the municipality is unfair, the northern part gets all the tax money.
4. It is upsetting that the Swedish traditions are forbidden.

Each one of the formulated rumours in this list concentrates a variety of different rumours articulated in the studies that were analysed. These rumours are often interconnected. In an analysis of these studies, certain patterns have become clear regarding the spreading of rumours that are antagonistic to the intercultural processes in Botkyrka. It is apparent that certain rumours circulate more among some groups than among others.

A challenge in the work has been to find a suitable level of abstraction to identify the rumours. While some of the expressed rumours can be very general and diffuse, others are very detailed and relate to

specific persons. The next step will now be to identify the arguments, reasoning and facts that can be used in the work to eliminate these rumours.

Botkyrka, Sweden - Anti-rumours cafés

Creative innovation to discourage rumours

In Botkyrka, Sweden, anti-rumours cafés have been set up in libraries as a public platform to discuss and explore rumours and prejudices. Libraries were chosen as they are well attended by young people aged 18-25 years old, the main target of the C4i campaign in Botkyrka.

All in all, 4 anti-rumour cafés were set up and each one focused on a particular rumour. The initial theme-specific concept was “Criminality” (the most prominent theme of rumours in Botkyrka), followed by “incompatibility of the Swedish and immigrant cultures”, “Unequal distribution of public resources” and “Swedish culture is under threat”. The rumour-theme, “Swedish culture is under threat”, was among the most visited café. This can be explained by the political situation in Sweden 2014. The populist party, Swedish democrats, had recently achieved their best election result to date, raising questions for citizens all over Sweden, not least the citizens in Botkyrka. This notion of a threatened ‘Swedishness’ is often illustrated by the feeling that Swedish traditions are no longer being celebrated or carried out as they used to be and that “all the old” is dying out.

However, irrespective of the level of interest in a rumour theme, attendance by the majority Swedes was poor. Part of the explanation may relate to the effect of the rumours themselves: When the cafés are organized in Alby, Fittja and Norsborg/Hallunda (areas of high immigrant populations), the level of interest among majority Swedes is lower. Statistically, majority Swedes prefer to attend the cafés in Tumba and Tullinge, with lower concentrations of immigrants. This challenge was addressed by organising “extra invitations” addressed to target groups from different demographic areas (Tullinge and Tumba). In addition, invitations and information about all the events were disseminated through social media (facebook, internal web etc).

The main goal of each café was to encourage people to talk about rumours that they usually feel uncomfortable discussing, and the survey of the participants indicate that this goal was accomplished. The participants reflected on how “true” the rumours all over Botkyrka were and gave examples from their own lives. One general outcome was a widespread belief that rumours lead to depression and that the need of dialogue is huge!

Erlangen, Germany - Anti-rumour Picnic Banquet

Overcoming rumours in a social picnic

To launch the C4i Communication für Vielfalt (Communication for Diversity) campaign, the city of Erlangen built a banquet table over 180 meters in length and hosted a giant picnic along the main street of the city. About 1,000 Erlangers and asylum seekers directly communicated and exchanged with each other, and took away with them information about rumours and how to counter them. In their C4i campaign, Erlangen puts a particular emphasis on asylum seekers as prejudices about them gained new political relevance further to a request by the government to accommodate 300 new asylum seekers.

Along the city’s longest picnic table, a ‘Living Library’ offered open conversations with asylum seekers, to

encourage exchange in a deeper and sincere manner and not just symbolically share a large table. Thus, along the table people were explicitly invited to ask 10 asylum seekers – or ‘Living Books’ –about their life, talents, skills, experiences and dreams. The aim was to pose questions one would not normally dare to, thus revising assumptions and overcoming rumours. Banquet participants met people with extraordinary résumés with exceptional stories to tell; learned about unexpected talents of people living next door – asylum seekers in Erlangen.

As another tool to encourage exchange, common rumours and facts to debunk them were presented on placemats. Distributed along the banquet, these placemats were intended to spark conversations about rumours and to enable reflection on them. In addition, on the back of the placemats guidelines and advice on how to effectively debunk rumours were printed* , to give conversational guidance on how to argue against the rumours.

The positive ambience - live music, flower bouquets, white table cloths and 400 balloons released in a symbolic act of diversity and togetherness - was key to conveying a positive feeling, in addition to the ‘knowledge of facts’ that refugees are not ‘a threat’ but can be an enriching source for the city. The banquet was a highly cross-departmental action, including various public institutions such as the public library (for the Living Library), the public safety unit (for the large event), the public refuse collection unit, the press and PR department, the Mayor’s office, etc.

Media coverage of the banquet was very high and in some depth, including traditional media such as Radio, TV and newspapers and local magazines and Social Media like Facebook. Strikingly, the media coverage was positive throughout, showcasing Erlangen as good example of engaging in discourse about refugees, during a time where the arrival of large numbers of refugees to German cities was largely portrayed in a negative light and seen as a “problematic situation” rather than “asset”.

London Lewisham - Having Faith in Lewisham

System of governance and mediation that takes account of diversity

Traditionally the Council have only needed this if there is a direct effect on a service (ie the use or misuse of a building). In the past the Council has funded and promoted Race Equality Action Lewisham as an independent mediation service. There are currently plans to re-constitute REAL and a proposal is going to the next Mayor & Cabinet Meeting (19/01/2011) to allow for this.

As already stated, Lewisham is characterised by a high degree of demographic transience and social atomisation and traditional bonds of neighbourhood or ethnic and national identity are not as strong as might usually be encountered elsewhere. This might well explain why religion seems to have emerged as the strongest form of social bonding and identification for many Lewisham residents. This may in turn explain why the local authority has accorded a level of prominence to religion that might be considered unusual in many other parts of Europe. Traditionally in Britain, as well as elsewhere, local government has sought to maintain a clear line of distinction and a distance between itself and religion. Secularism is the norm, extending in France for example to a severely policed laïcité.

Certainly in Britain since Part 2 of the Equality Act 2000 came into effect in April 2007 it has been unlawful to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief and this has begun to blur the traditional divide. But strict secular separation seems never to have been the case in Lewisham where for many years the local authority has sought to actively engage with religious groups, particularly through a series of

conference 'Having Faith in Lewisham' and a Faith in Lewisham Network in which the Mayor takes a prominent role. The council has a dedicated Faith and Social Action Officer and has a specific budget offering grants of up to £2,500 to faith-based organisations – something which would be considered beyond the pale in many other places.

Lewisham explains its distinctive approach by pointing to the large numbers of residents who subscribe to a religion and of the rapidly growing number of groups (over 200). As already noted, this can lead to problems if not regulated, but on a more positive level these faith groups are seen as having a vital social role to play. Without ever directly engaging with the act of worship or with proselytizing, the Council believes that one of the best and most cost-effective ways of communicating with many of its residents is through their membership of faith groups.

The role of the Faith Officer has been to establish relationships and build trust, both with the Council and between different denominations. There can be tensions between groups which the officer must mediate. Usually the greatest antagonism can be between different Christian denominations. From this basis of trust she can then probe more sensitive issues that might otherwise be hidden or problematic, for example sexual health or child welfare.

Now that many groups are amassing large congregations and economic power, it is expected they will begin to seek greater political influence. The British electoral system currently makes it difficult for minority interests to find representation so groups are exploring other ways of making their views known, particularly through direct contact with the Mayor. There seems to be an assumption in Lewisham that faith groups will continue to grow in size and importance and will assume greater influence and authority in the future, so rather than try to deny this the borough is trying to design a system of governance that takes account of it.

Neuchâtel - Committee for integration and multicultural cohesion (ICMC)

Promote the integration of foreign populations in the Neuchâtel Community

In 1991, Neuchâtel State Council created a working Committee for the social integration of foreigners (CNTISE). In 1996 it acquired a broader legal basis with the law on the integration of foreigners and was renamed to Community integration and multicultural cohesion (ICMC). Its mandate is to study phenomena related to international migrations, relations between Swiss and foreign citizens, and to promote the integration of foreign populations in the Neuchâtel society. The Committee may take particular action in the following areas:

Find and implement means for the integration of foreigners (events like(?) "Salut l'étranger !", intercultural two-week "Being Muslim in Neuchâtel");

- Promote and ensure information between Swiss and foreigners, on the one hand, and foreigners among themselves, on the other;
- Support foreign associations registered in the Canton with financial, as well as with ad hoc support and advice;
- Train and educate the officials of the cantonal and communal administrations to the problems of integration;
- Synchronize and coordinate cantonal decision-making procedures in order to find consistent, agreeable and equitable solutions;

- Participate in research and studies aimed at understanding migration and finding out the best ways to cope with it.

[More information](#)

Oslo, Norway - Media in Oslo: responsible and intercultural

Strong focus on multicultural identity

The city has an internet service, called "Cultural diversity in the media" informing on concerts, exhibitions and festivals organized by artists with minority backgrounds. The service was established in recognition of Oslo as the multicultural capital of Norway. This pro-diversity coverage of the cultural scene is reflected in the local media (newspapers, radio, local TV). Several of the stars in music and filmmaking, as well as sports, gaining national and international prominence in recent years, are of minority background. Among journalists and editors, and media researches, there is a growing awareness about the role of the media in promoting cohesion and presenting news in a responsible and intercultural way. This has resulted in a stronger focus on the recruitment of journalists with ethnic minority background. The municipality runs its own publication – "Oslo Now" – which is distributed freely to every household in the city. The Office of diversity and integration runs an internet based newsletter – the "OXLO bulletin". The municipality sponsors an event called "Top 10", which each year celebrates and profiles the ten most successful immigrants in Norway, in business and work, academia and media, culture and civic life.

Oslo, Norway - OXLO Business Charter

Diversity as an enriching element of intercultural cities

OXLO Business Charter was launched at the Oslo 2013 Global Mobility Forum, by Hallstein Bjercke, Vice Mayor for Cultural Affairs and Business Development. The Charter creates a forum and a network for collaboration between the city and the business community, making migrants visible as a resource for business and economic growth.

The charter and the seminars of the OXLO Breakfast Club are open to participation from business, universities and colleges, civil society and the public sector. Companies and others that join the charter get access to knowledge about intercultural recruitment, diversity management, welcome services and inclusive work environment.

Migration of competence

The launch of the Charter was a response to needs expressed by the Oslo business community. The Norwegian economy stops without migrants. In 2013 the Oslo Chamber of Commerce published a report on migration of competence and knowledge to Oslo and Norway, asking for a forum for collaboration between companies, business associations, educational institutions and local authorities.

Networks are important to migrants of competence. The OXLO charter and its network of stakeholders enhance cooperation to foster social integration. In 2013, some 20 000 people immigrated to Oslo, mainly from Europe. Half of them came for work, one in eight came to study, and most of the others joined a husband or a wife. Jobs and the opportunity to earn a living draws migrants to Oslo. As the

Chamber points out in its report, though, it is the soft aspects of tolerance and the interculturality of city life that make people stay. The sense of belonging to Oslo depends in the long run on the social environment at work, the opportunity to join sport or cultural activities, and the happiness of spouse and children.

JobMatch Oslo

1500 international students and academics attended the Oslo 2013 Global Talent Career Fair. Few of them have job experience from Norway or contacts with employers in Oslo, and 7 out of 10 leave the city for opportunities elsewhere after finishing their studies.

The city will in 2014 explore stakeholder interest in creating JobMatch Oslo, inspired by the Copenhagen Career Program. JobMatch Oslo is to be a network matching migrants who have come to Oslo to work or study, and mentors from the business community, the municipality and civil society.

The city itself pilots the OXLO internship program, where master students get mentors in the municipality and the opportunity for short-term internship and project assignments during their study.

A Welcoming City

The charter is operated by the city government and its regional development agency, Oslo Business Region, as part of city international profiling.

The OXLO Breakfast Club is a forum for discussing solutions to common challenges of diversity. The topic of the first seminar of 2014 was learning Norwegian and the establishment of joint forum for providers of Norwegian courses. The next seminar in May will discuss corporate business responsibility and cooperation between business and city in employment schemes. A planned meeting in April invites business leaders and leaders from sport and culture to discuss welcome programs for new migrants.

Patras, Greece - SNETOR Seminar - Contribution of intercultural mediators to the social inclusion of migrants

Intercultural mediators to integrate migrants in local communities

The European project SNETOR is the first systematic effort internationally to design services that meet the professional needs of intercultural mediators. Within this framework, a seminar on, the "Contribution of intercultural mediators in the social inclusion of migrants" was held on Tuesday 15th January 2013 in Patras with great success, both in terms of audience numbers and the level of presentations and debate.

During the workshop scientists, representatives of migrant associations and specialized services managers discussed the facts of education and employment of intercultural mediators, focusing on the experiences recorded in Patras and other Greek cities, from efforts to integrate immigrants into local communities.

The on-line Training Platform for Intercultural Mediators was presented alongside which is combined with social networking applications and training methodologies so that to help intercultural mediators during their work through specialized educational content and services.

Of particular interest were the six workshops held in the second part of the event, in which various topics were addressed especially training of cultural mediators, and specific incidents and problems they face in their communication with migrants in the fields of education, health, housing and legal support.

The event was organized by the Laboratory of Educational Material and Educational Methodology (EEFEM) of the Hellenic Open University (HOU) and the Vice-Municipality of "Support of Citizens, Volunteerism, Gender Equality and Integration of Immigrants" of the city of Patras, in cooperation with the ITYE "Diophantus" Development and "Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development-ADEP SA".

At the start of the meeting the respective Vice-Mayor Mayor Mrs Maria ANDRIKOPOULOU-ROUVALI presented all recent actions of the Municipality of Patras aimed at the integration of migrants and the awareness of the citizens. Emphasis was put to international initiatives and partnerships accomplished through the active participation of Patras as the only Greek city in the international network "Intercultural cities" coordinated by the Council of Europe (CoE).

The President of ADEP SA, Mr Antonis KOTSALIS reported on the importance of the initiatives undertaken by the city of Patras so that to integrate migrants as well as the need for awareness by all of the historically formed intercultural character of Patras. He also stressed the role of ADEP SA as a "tool" to support the work of the Municipality through the submission and implementation of transnational projects and operation of networks. Specifically, regarding interculturalism, he emphasized on the "Intercultural cities" network coordinated by the Council of Europe (CoE) and the excellent cooperation that is maintained for this regard with the Dpt. of "Programming-Networking & International Affairs" of ADEP SA acting as a direct and strong link with the Vice-Municipality and the CoE.

The event provided an excellent platform for the organization of the international SONETOR conference to be held in Patras, within 2013. The CoE and the "Intercultural Cities" network is expected to be actively involved since the role of intercultural mediators in the inclusion process of migrants into local societies, is fully respected.

Patras Carnival embraces all!

A series of events where spontaneity, improvisation, inspiration and volunteerism are the main principles

Patras Carnival is the largest carnival event in Greece. It measures more than 180 years history. It is not an isolated event but a series of events including dances, exhibitions, parades, "treasure" hunt (a contest among carnival groups based on games of problems solving), carnival of children, etc.

The events begin on 17th January and last until Holly Monday. It culminates the last weekend of Carnival period by the Saturday night parade of the crews and the Sunday noon extravagant floats and crews parade. On Sunday, it ends up through the burning of "King" of Carnival, the best float of the parade, being its emblem. The burning takes place in the sea at the harbor of Patras.

This year of 2016, more than 30.000 Carnivalists took part in it and thousands of local people as well as visitors, enjoyed watching the parades and participating in the festivities.

This year's opening ceremony was characterized as a journey of voices, movement, songs and traditional percussion, where Greece, Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Cuba and Italy combined, and ended with the percussion group of the Olympic Games of 2004 "Ichodrasi" Athens. Besides, the ceremony was attended by the group of African percussion and dance of Lefteris Grigoriou, the group of Brazilian percussion "Bloco Swingueira", the Cuban group "Havana Tropical", the percussion group "Croussis" of musicians and soloists barrels.

The Mayor of Patras during his speech urged young people to react, to ask for what they deserve and to take at their hands a fight for peace based on human values, love and friendship.

Thousands of carnivalists came to take part from other cities of Greece (Messolonghi, Pyrgos, Amaliada, Serres, Athens, Agrinio, Zakynthos, etc.) and TV coverage of Patras Carnival was done by foreign TVs too (such as Japan and Chile).

An intercultural dimension has been identified every year that is strengthened as time goes by. More precisely, within Patras Carnival 2016 the Russian Association of Patras in cooperation with the Institute of Intercultural Relations formed "CKAZKA" (fairy tale) group dressed in white and blue referring to peace and joy. The Bulgarian Association of Patras joined the Bulgarian Association of Peloponnese and participated dressed with traditional folklore costumes, using bells, calves, but also a banner ahead, expressing in Greek language, their friendly feelings towards Greece.

The "Children of the Earth" crew used flags from many countries all over the world and danced for friendship and solidarity!

Furthermore, crew members of "Minor Asia Association of Patras" dressed in "blue" forming the group of "A sea of dreams that will not sink", with a quite symbolic subject referring to refugees and the Aegean sea.

Patras Carnival is directly related to life and situations we experience – that is the reason why it always transfers awareness messages.

Reggio Emilia, Italy - Centro per la Mediazioni dei Conflitti

Intercultural center of mediation with variety of ethnic and language backgrounds

This is undoubtedly one of Reggio Emilia's great strengths and it surely has much to teach all other cities in the IC network on this. The Centro per la Mediazione dei Conflitti has impressive outcomes of 85% solution of cases. The Centro Mondinsieme has great expertise in training mediation workers and supplies staff for schools and hospitals. Reggio Emilia has established an Intercultural centre with trained mediators with a variety of ethnic and language backgrounds who intervene whenever they feel a problem might arise – for instance if kids in some schools tend to cluster too much on ethnic basis.

Tenerife, Spain (*El Fraile* Neighbourhood) - The "Fraile for All" project

An alternative to bridge gaps between cultures

El Fraile is a small town in the municipality of Arona in South Tenerife with a population of just over 7000 inhabitants. The neighbourhood is known for its multicultural character through settlement for decades of people from very diverse backgrounds. In 2011 half of its population was foreign-born, most Latin American and African origin. The great sociocultural diversity of the neighbourhood has been associated with a highly stigmatized image of conflict. Before the visit we were warned that the image did not conform to reality, but after walking a few hours around the neighbourhood and talk to neighbours and representatives of local organizations, we found that few times the distance between perception and the reality of a neighbourhood was so marked. That distorted picture has somehow hindered the development of the area, which on the other hand has many facilities that constitute it as

one of the best equipped neighbourhoods in the island.

As part of the *Together strategy* and specifically through the working group of social participation, El Fraile was chosen as the first neighbourhood where to promote specific projects to foster participation, intercultural relations and ultimately its development.

The "Fraile for All" is known as the process has been launched in the district from the decision of all entities and individuals. The process has the support of the municipality of Arona and OBITE collaboration and the results are clearly positive.

On our visit we were able to talk with a large representation of the entities and residents in various areas such as the Muslim cultural centre, the association of elderly or the church. In those meetings we were able to see first-hand the high level of involvement of residents and entities in the project and the significant progress that had occurred through participatory work. By promoting opportunities for dialogue and mutual understanding were going removing prejudices and typical stereotypes are always present in environments with high cultural diversity.

The working methodology is an adaptation of the *Together project* methodology with the creation of several working groups from the priorities and needs identified by consensus among the participants. The visit revealed the existence of a strong sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and especially a high degree of connection between neighbouring generations and different cultural backgrounds.

The topics chosen by the neighbours to work them in the working groups are related to the environment and awareness of the issues of cleanliness, with the promotion of intercultural and inter - religious relations, promote collaboration between the different associations, conduct mediation actions and focus on language translation of information on basic services such as education and healthcare.

One area that deserves special attention is related to the media. The media are key when it comes to stigmatize a particular territory as has traditionally happened to El Fraile. The commitment of neighbours to work to reverse this situation has shown positive results regarding the image media are currently putting on El Fraile, although there is still much work to do.

In short, a visit to El Fraile surely meant the best way to check on the ground the positive results of the work being done under the *Together project*. Rarely the title of a program has been adjusted so well to the social reality of a neighbourhood that has all the ingredients to be considered a great neighbourhood. Many cities not only in Spain but in Europe should come to know first-hand what is happening in El Fraile. It is not about avoiding conflicts and problems, but to address them directly through dialogue and commitment to work collectively to improve the neighbourhood and the lives of their residents. In El Fraile you can breathe real interculturalism.

Diversity Governance (Public & Social Services, urban planning, citizenship)

These activities encourage citizens' political participation in the decision-making process and in elections'. Cities foster citizens' commitment, inter alia, through the promotion of intercultural mixing in public spaces, offering legal training and stressing the importance of making the city competitive in the global market.

Ballarat, Australia - Multicultural Ambassadors' Program

A link between the City Council and the Community

The City of Ballarat launched its Multicultural Ambassadors' Program (MAP) in November 2009. This program was developed in order to provide leadership within the migrant community, therefore encouraging minorities to participate in the political life of the City.

Multicultural Ambassadors come from a multicultural, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background although they must have lived in Ballarat for at least six months and be Australian citizens. When Ambassadors are elected, they are appointed for a two-year term and will undertake civic engagement and political participation activities. As part of their duties, Ambassadors will represent the multicultural community to schools, community groups, service clubs, industry groups and employers.

Ever since 2009, this program aims to enhance community awareness while fostering social cohesion and mutual acceptance. The objectives are:

- Enhance community awareness and foster inclusion of existing and new CALD communities in Ballarat
- Support leadership within the CALD community and to recognise the commitment and contribution made by migrants and Indigenous people to the Ballarat community
- Advocate for and promote the benefits of cultural diversity through learning, exchange and celebration
- Collaborate with the City of Ballarat in implementing its Cultural Diversity Strategy
- Promote the MAP as a platform for learning and exchange within the broader community.

Multicultural Ambassadors will be champions for their existing communities and will engage citizens' participation in workplaces, social, religious and recreation groups, as well as in schools and community groups. For example, Ambassadors tries to involve parents in the school life and those who are parents themselves give presentations about their respective countries to students and teachers. Another initiative is related to the promotion of the engagement of radio shows: Ambassadors, in fact, conduct a radio program in their language on a weekly basis.

Ambassadors share the same values and principles and they are all willing to make a positive contribution to their local community; hence discouraging discrimination while highlighting the positive contributions migrants and Indigenous Australians make to Ballarat.

Ballarat, Australia – The Harmony Fest

Together, unity in diversity

In 2010, Ballarat promoted a unique festival to encourage its citizens to meet and get to know each other. Since then, every year during the month of March colours, music and flavours invade the city and the residents crowd streets and avenues to celebrate diversity.

The Harmony Fest usually begins with a big “Parade of Cultures” that kicks off a wide range of activities and satellite events, such as live concerts, international food exhibitions, workshops, games, markets and activities dedicated for the youngest. Citizens celebrate their cultural and ethnic background with outstanding performances. For instance, in 2016, the Fighting Gunditjmara, a traditional Aboriginal dance group, presented their culture through an impressive and powerful performance that mixed traditions with modern technology. A girl-group called Paris Inc. entertained the public with their R&B and Pop songs. The Italian community, spread all over Australia, paid tribute dancing The Tarantella: the most famous dance of the south of Italy; whereas the African community brought their drums and their rhythm to share traditions dear to the homeland.

Another key element of one’s culture is food. In fact, during the Harmony Fest everyone tasted recipes coming from: Thailand, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Italy.

With all these events and activities, the Harmony Fest is a manifestation that aims to raise cultural awareness, teaching people about their neighbours’ background while creating curiosity in the others’ culture. What makes this manifestation so important is the sense of community that brings together different cultures and different traditions to celebrate unity.

Barcelona, Spain - Building public space through dialogue and personal exchange

Participative approach to the urban planning

Value common spaces of interaction where the social use of Catalan is fostered through experience and personal exchanges

- Incorporate those responsible for urban development in the city into each of the interdepartmental committees at the Council to strengthen the mainstream application of all urban and social policies.

Examples:

- Inter-group roundtables that could involve representatives from urban planning and, for example:
 - Committee for public spaces
 - Committees for coexistence
 - Inter-group committee for immigration
 - Other
- Promote and standardise bilateral relations through bridges for dialogue, between the area for urban

development and other areas at the Council.

- Integrate the neighbourhood scale into the practice of urban development: that which is most every day to reconstruct dialogue, consensus and the involvement of citizens.

Examples:

- Value “personalised” activities, observing the realities and special characteristics of the neighbourhood, within the framework of a comprehensive city strategy. This can be based on a “common project”, from a fairly global idea, with various expressions to suit each context.
- Go deeper in the practice of participative processes - introduce new approaches and adapt them so as to ensure their representativity of the sociocultural diversity in the target setting. A renewed definition of the public space - spaces for relations – as an integral part of the idea of a city and as a space for meeting and generation of citizenship. The increase in cultural diversity has brought about, amongst other factors, new and old ways of being and using public spaces, amenities, shops – the street level -, strengthening its important socialising role and thereby bringing about new complexities that need to be tackled.
- Review architectural typologies, principally as regards the structure and form of the ground floor, both in residential buildings as well as in offices and amenities, taking into account their impact on the definition and character of the adjacent public spaces.

Examples:

- The visual permeability of the ground floor could be an element that provides security to users of a public space.
- Entrances to amenities can be integrated into public spaces in certain situations where large numbers of people gather (at school gates, etc.).
- Adopt the street floor concept into the management tools for public spaces (dimension, design, urban furniture, maintenance, layout of parking spaces) and into the management tools for the ground floor (façades, uses), taking into account the relation between these two spaces, the public and the private, on the ground floor, incorporating criteria of flexibility and adaptability to various situations (to neighbourhoods or even to streets).

Examples:

- The concentrations arising from certain uses on the ground floor can cause excessive pressure on the adjacent public space along some streets owing to its configuration (too narrow, poor access). Or, conversely, a ground floor that is more diversified in its uses and activities can encourage use of the adjacent public space as a point for meetings and socialising.
- Avoid the concentration of certain shops that can contribute to stigmatising a certain area or generating rejection of some kind. On the other hand, to enhance the mix contributes to normalising

what is sold by shops and contributes to the modification of perceptions and attitudes about the area itself.

- Integrate social policies into the construction of social amenities or public spaces.

Examples:

- Incorporate into public spaces elements that contribute to generating spontaneous interaction between users: play areas in children's parks, specific offers for young people, bicycle or walking paths.
- The Neighbourhood Law includes proposals of an urban, social and economic character that are often tackled in an excessively segregated manner. This should involve taking advantage of the physical construction of benchmark amenities to promote existing social networks or build new ones.

Barcelona, Spain - Barcelona- intercultural city

Intercultural Plan adopted by the city Parliament

The intercultural plan has been passed by the city parliament. There is a Policy responsible for Intercultural dialogue.

A Mayor's Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue co-ordinates immigration policies and intercultural dialogue at the city level. The Commissioner has broad transversal responsibility and related to all departments of the municipality. The political leadership of the Mayor in putting intercultural policy high on the agenda is essential for the effective functioning of the Commissioner.

There is a municipal migration council chaired by the Mayor which is instrumental in developing political consensus and preparing municipal immigration plans. The first such plan was adopted In 2002 following a broad with social actors and based on a strong political consensus involving all political parties. A second plan is being negotiated at the moment, again in the context of a political consensus. This consensus is essential and an important message for citizens that the management of migration is a priority for the entire community.

Make citizens' rights and duties known in the city's reception material and informative sessions

- Advocate the right to vote in municipal elections for resident foreigners
- Adaptation of services to guarantee equality of rights in a context of greater religious plurality (adaptation of cemeteries, menus in public centres such as schools, etc.)
- Training of workers and the incorporation of more "enabling agents" to guarantee accessibility and quality of services to all users

In order to guarantee the success of the Intercultural Plan, the City Council will take the following measures:

1. Set in motion training and awareness programmes for the workers in the different municipal sectors and districts on the management of diversity and intercultural policies.
2. Make the necessary technical coordination arrangements to guarantee that the Plan is implemented,

rolled out and monitored.

3. Reinforce transversality, appointing a person to be responsible for the Plan in all municipal areas, and carry out periodical monitoring of the Plan within the framework of the government bodies and existing inter-group roundtables
4. Reinforce channels of communication and forums where work is done in collaboration with the Districts, to give them support and to help ensure that the measures are put into practice in all of the city's neighbourhoods. Adapt the Barcelona Intercultural Plan website, so that it will become an accessible area for the follow-up and monitoring of the Plan's development, and constitute an important centre of resources regarding intercultural.
5. Assess the impact of the Plan's policies by way of the indicators of results that are attached in the annex. This will need to be validated, adapted and extended in an ongoing way with the incorporation of new indicators
6. Draft a comprehensive biannual report, with a complete evaluation of the process of putting the Barcelona Intercultural Plan into practice, and with an analysis of the situation of the city in terms of intercultural matters. Finally, the City Council is also committed to its workers being more and more representative of the city's pluralism and sociocultural diversity, eliminating the barriers that directly or indirectly make this aim more difficult to achieve.

Bergen, Norway - Promoting intercultural mixing in public libraries, museums and art initiatives

Cultural and social mixing

Bergen has implemented several public spaces policy instruments. The local government promotes intercultural mixing in public libraries, museums and art initiatives. Bergen stimulates the engagement of local communities in planning processes for the development of their neighbourhoods, irrespective of the ethnic origin. It is positive that there are neither areas in Bergen reputed as "dangerous", nor spaces or areas dominated by one ethnic group where other people may feel unwelcome. In fact, according to a 'mapping' project elaborated in 2012, there are no 'gangs' or groups that intimidate other residents in the vast majority areas of Bergen. There are no areas in the city which are reputed as 'dangerous', and only few spaces or areas in Bergen seem to be dominated by one ethnic group.

Bergen, Norway - Implementing public policies to take advantage of diversity

The advantages of diversity

Bergen's local authority has implemented several good governance policies. The City passed its first comprehensive action plan for integration, *Diversity brings Possibilities (Mangfold gir muligheter)* in 1998. In particular it made provision for the establishment of an Introduction Centre for refugees, courses for municipal employees in intercultural relations, and specialized work qualification and Norwegian language courses.

In 2007 City of Bergen approved a new action plan for integration – *Integration is Everybody's Responsibility (Integrering er alles ansvar)*. It built upon the plan from 1998 and, as the title suggests, was emphasizing the responsibility of all parts of the municipal organization.

The city has an independent council to represent all ethnic minorities at regional level (the city of Bergen means the 60% of the Hordaland county population), the Kontaktutvalget mellom innvandrere og styresmakter i Hordaland (Contact committee between immigrants and authorities in the Hordaland County).

Regularly, Bergen city council promotes initiatives to encourage migrants/minorities to engage in political life. Before every election there is a campaign to encourage people from migrant background to participate. The city works with migrant communities to inform them about their rights and the election. There are also debates with leading politicians on topics chosen by migrant organisations.

The ethnic background of elected politicians does not yet reflect the composition of the city population. Newcomers are eligible to vote in local election after three years of residence or less. The challenge is to encourage recent migrants to engage in political life, parties and institutions.

Berlin-Neukölln, Germany - Karl-Marx Strasse – “Young, Colourful, Successful” *Redesigning a City Centre taking into account the intercultural diversity*

Action! Karl-Marx-Straße – ‘Young, Colourful, Successful’ is an ambitious €10 million urban regeneration programme for the main street in the borough. Whilst Karl-Marx-Straße is the buzzing heart of Neukölln with not only the Town Hall but also the ethnic retail economy, it currently feels tired and dowdy and dominated by the motor car. Neukölln has the chance to be the first place in Germany to redesign a city centre in a way that acknowledges cultural diversity. The City Council of Berlin Neukölln was awarded by the German Federal Government the title “Place of Diversity” and with this sends a message against right-wing extremism and for diversity and tolerance. The place-name sign “Neukölln – Place of Diversity” is set up visibly on the square in front of the underground station “Britz-Süd”.

Berlin-Neukölln, Germany Have a Say in Neukölln! – Nachbarschaftsheim Neukölln

An extremely diverse neighbourhood

Neukölln is a borough located in the southeast of Berlin; it is characterized by having one of the highest percentages of immigrants in Berlin. In fact, the 42% of its inhabitants have an immigrant background and only the half (21%) owns a German passport.

Nachbarschaftsheim Neukölln is a community centre which aims to facilitate social cohesion and discouraging negative attitudes, such as prejudices and stereotypes. The community centre offers a wide range of activities for children, families and adults. These initiatives cover almost every aspect of everyday life: education, sports, culture etc. Of particular interest, it focuses its attention on the connection between social integration and political inclusion.

The organization aims to reduce the under-representation of migrants’ inhabitants, fostering citizens’ political participation and civic engagement; especially in the community decision-making process. In fact, in several decentralized residents’ councils only the 20% of the members have a migrant background. Moreover, it would appear that, on average, migrants are 10% less likely to vote than the natives.

“Have a Say in Neukölln” is one of the projects lead by the organization. It underlines the importance of interculturality, which must be seen as an enriching element and not a barrier. The project promotes

equality and inclusion through various initiatives: It offers legal training for participation rights. For example, in each school two parents are elected as parents' representatives. It gives advice and suggestions to migrants, focusing on a community level. For example, it helps migrants to become more effective at the community level, in order to become local political stakeholders. It promotes voting rights, explaining to the residents the election procedure. In addition, it aims to extend the voting rights for migrants without a German passport, at least on a local level. To counter the negative image of the neighbourhood, a photo portrait exhibition "We Are Neukölln" has been organized in order to raise awareness of the multi-culturality of the borough. At the same time, migrant inhabitants have been introduced as role models of active citizenship.

However, this organization faces several challenges and obstacles. For instance, some representatives of the host society are impeding migrants' empowerment. In fact, they claim that only when the host culture has been fully assimilated, participation can take place. Another problem is that migrants are often too focused on practical issues, such as renting, to get involved in the community life.

Botkyrka, Sweden - What does it mean to be an intercultural competent city?

Keys to a successful implementation of the intercultural approach

After almost 60 years of migration, many Swedish citizens who have been living in the country for generations are still considered as temporary guests or not fully members of the Swedish society.

The understanding of what and who the Swedish society really should include need to change. Six years ago Botkyrka municipality, the most ethnically diverse municipality in Sweden, took the lead to promote such a change and started working to create the same possibilities and life opportunities for all individuals to enable all citizens to fully express their identities as a prerequisite for the growth and sustainable development of the city. To do so, Botkyrka municipality chose an innovative approach to diversity: the intercultural policy model. Being an intercultural competent city means thinking, acting and planning in an intercultural manner. And this includes the involvement of all sectors of the municipality in the coordinated development of intercultural actions and policies.

The first key element of an intercultural competent approach is a clear political commitment. In Botkyrka such a political commitment is shared by all political parties based on an inclusive approach to democracy. A cross-party consensus on intercultural integration is fundamental to ensure the long-term implementation of the related policies.

Another key to a successful implementation of the intercultural approach is the development of a critical, systematic and constructive analysis of the practices and activities within the administration, at both strategic and operational levels.

The third and last key is to set up a global strategy for inclusive integration, and to regularly monitor it. The global intercultural strategy of the city of Botkyrka is based on the following components:

- Political consensus on the value of interculturality.
- The implementation of an Intercultural strategy
- Annual and multi annual political goals, and follow up analysis
- Guidelines to all the departments within the municipality
- Recognition of intercultural competence as a key component of human resources (for both employees and leaders)
- Capacity building and specific intercultural training for political representatives: basic knowledge on Swedish anti-discrimination law, human rights, interculturality and gender equality

- Capacity building of new employed directors, managers and process leaders, human rights specialists, and citizens (through a web-course that has been specifically developed for the purpose)
- Development of anti-discrimination and equality data and indicators
- Periodic “Dilemma” workshops with a view to learn from case-studies.

The creation of growth and a sustainable society requires an intercultural community characterised by interaction between individuals and groups. The intercultural policy model can help cities to successfully face this challenge.

Copenhagen, Denmark – Asserting the diversity advantage

The results of diversity on several levels

The city of Copenhagen has raised awareness of diversity advantage at several levels:

They demonstrate to public opinion that there are a lot of people interested and willing to work for diversity: a diversity charter has been issued and various organisations have been invited to sign it in order to declare their commitment to diversity. Within a year, 400 associations and companies have signed up. They receive the offers of the city, and get branding as socially responsible organisations with their logos on posters and publications, and they can participate in the city diversity projects.

They show companies that diversity is good for business: city and external experts analyse the company and measure how it can benefit from diversity, with financial figures as a proof, or provide quick diversity training that increases employee confidence and creativity (eg in one hotel it turned out that employee diversity increases customer satisfaction and recommendations that increase custom, with benefits of 15 (fifteen) mln DK a year)

They show the city administration that diversity management is important to make the city competitive in the global market for talent: 50 per cent of expats leave Denmark before the contract ends, and 90% say that the reason is that their spouse does not feel welcome because the society is not open enough. The city has asked a civil society organisation with long experience in making the relationships that help people settle, the Danish Refugee Council, to train mentors that support expats in settling. Now more and more people want to be hosts and mentors, and companies send their expats to the city mentors, and citizens-mentors become more tolerant because they are exposed to foreigners. The Mayor and Director of integration are also mentors, and this is a way to involve people in diversity work without it being political, but on daily encounters basis.

Dublin, Ireland - Dublin fights racism and discrimination in public transport

Avoiding discrimination and prejudices

Dublin City Council in partnership with Immigrant Council of Ireland, the Equality Authority of Ireland and partners in public transport launched a document 'Towards an Inclusive Public Transport Service in Ireland' on Friday 27th June 2014.

This project developed with the One City One People Campaign in 2010 to ensure passengers and staff travelling on Dublin public transport, that racism and discrimination will not be tolerated. The project has developed over the last four years by the Immigrant Council of Ireland and has evolved with

improved transit and outdoor advertising campaigns, staff training, recording of racist incidents and awareness of interculturalism for the whole city.

Speaking at the launch, Lord Mayor of Dublin, Christy Burke said: "Migration is our future. Diversity Advantage is vital to the success of our city and its development. The Anti-Racism Toolkit is a core partnership project that makes a clear statement across our city that we do not accept any form of discrimination and will be a great asset in developing or Intercultural understanding".

Denise Charlton, Chief Executive of the Immigrant Council of Ireland added: "We are very grateful to our public transport partners who have over the past two-years worked with us on awareness campaigns to assure victims of racism that they have nothing to fear in coming forward. Today – we move to the next stage of that partnership with the publication of 'Towards an Inclusive Public Transport Service in Ireland' which will ensure that staff are trained to respond to incidents and that proper reporting procedures are in place".

The initiative was also showcased at the recent Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin organised by the Maytree Foundation.

Showcasing this idea during the conference, Declan Hayden of the Office for Integration in Dublin City Council stated: "Through Intercultural Cities, many cities across the greater Europe, are striving to build a future where culturally diverse communities will learn to live in harmony, respect and peace. We are proud that Dublin is one of these pioneer cities and the One City One People and the Transport anti-racism and discrimination campaigns are an excellent example of this work".

Dublin, Ireland - Joining the Dots: Promoting Interculturalism Through Seed Funding and Strategic Engagement – Case Study of Immigrant Council of Ireland's Partnership with Dublin City Council and Public Transport Partners (2011-2015 and Beyond)

The promotion of engagement

This opinion piece focuses on a strategic partnership involving public transport companies operating in the greater Dublin area, a local authority (Dublin City Council), a transport regulator (National Transport Authority) and a civil society organisation (Immigrant Council of Ireland). Relationships that underpin the partnership developed as a result of the main actors' involvement in the work of the Dublin City Council's Office for Integration. As part of the implementation of the Towards Integration - A City Framework launched on May 29th, 2008, Dublin City Council launched the One City One People campaign in 2010 'to promote inclusion, integration and to combat racism and discrimination'. During the campaign, posters were displayed on many platforms, including buses, trams and suburban trains. The campaign has been rolled out on a number of occasions since.

The trigger of the partnership this opinion piece covers was the publication of statistics of anti-social behaviour on the LUAS (Tram Service) in 2010. These figures were published on February 7th, 2011. They highlighted the fact that 'DRIVERS and staff on the Luas network were threatened almost 100 times ..., with racial taunts the most common form of abuse'. With a €3,000 grant from Dublin City Council, the Immigrant Council of Ireland commissioned a research project on racism and discrimination with particular emphasis on the public transport sector. As part of the research, two focus group interviews with front line employees of migrant background were organised in partnership with Dublin Bus and the LUAS respectively. The research led to the publication of Taking Racism Seriously in 2011. The publication of the report was a key milestone and a reference point for follow up initiatives. Young people were identified in the report as one of the groups that public transport companies needed to engage with, in

relation to anti-social behaviour in general and racism in particular. In 2012, with a grant from the Equality Authority (now part of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission) under the Equality Innovation Fund, the Immigrant Council of Ireland organised 5 workshops with young people across Dublin to explore the issues that emerged in the aforementioned report. The feedback from these workshops was presented at a seminar hosted by the Immigrant Council of Ireland on September 24th, 2012. The seminar explored how to get young people involved in promoting anti-racism attitudes.

On March 21st, 2013 the Immigrant Council of Ireland, in partnership with Dublin Bus, Dublin City Council, the National Transport Authority, Iarnród Éireann-Irish Rail and TRANSDEV Ireland (operator of the LUAS) launched the 'Dublin's Transport Links. Racism Divides' campaign. The campaign had a number of objectives, including raising awareness on the issue of racism among public transport service users and the wider public; and demonstrating solidarity with frontline staff members in the public transport sector who had been victims of, or witnesses to, racist incidents. Case studies on the campaign featured on the website of cities of migration and in a publication of European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions - Eurofound published in 2013. The campaign was also shortlisted for a Chambers Ireland Corporate Social Responsibility Award and won a Metro Éireann Africa Day Award in 2013.

Embedding diversity and anti-discrimination in the public transport sector service delivery was paramount and featured in the recommendations of the report. The Immigrant Council of Ireland in partnership with the public partners successfully applied for a grant from the Equality Authority under the Equality Mainstreaming scheme in 2013. The aim of the project was to develop an anti-racism and diversity training pack, deliver diversity training sessions and develop diversity statements for the public transport partners. In June 2014, the Immigrant Council of Ireland launched the training pack and TRANSDEV Ireland and Iarnród Éireann-Irish Rail's diversity statements. Additionally, in 2014, the Immigrant Council of Ireland successfully applied for grant from the Equality Authority under the Equality Mainstreaming Scheme to expand the diversity training and strategic planning to another public transport provider and the taxi industry.

Following the huge success of the 'Dublin's Transport Links Racism Divides' campaign, in April 2014, the partners launched the There is No Room on Board for Racism and Discrimination campaign. In 2015, it is envisaged that the campaign will go national and other European cities have been inquiring about the campaign; it is likely that the initiative will inspire other cities. As a result of the Immigrant Council of Ireland's involvement in the partnership, its anti-racism information and referral service saw an 85% increase in reports of racist incidents from 78 (2012) to 144 (2013). This trend continued in 2014 and there was a 51% increase (217 incidents reported up to December 18th, 2014).

This initiative demonstrates how timed seed funding can help in promoting systemic and sustainable social transformation. The key in this case was the small grant from Dublin City Council's Office for Integration. The grant helped in the production of the research report which became a roadmap of the partnership, so to speak. Awareness raising; solidarity with public transport frontline staff who were victims of or witnesses to racist incidents; developing internal diversity management capacity in the organisations involved; encouraging victims and witnesses to racist incidents to take action; are just some of the benefits from the various initiatives undertaken by the partnership. Initiatives undertaken helped in promoting interculturalism; fostering a partnership that included unusual allies; provided opportunities to explore diversity advantage; and developed models that have inspired other cities and organisations in Ireland and beyond. As the story goes, it all started with €3,000 grant from Dublin City Council coupled with partnership and engagement.

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Erlangen, Germany – The importance of an Integration Charter

Key elements to promote Integration

The City of Erlangen is becoming more and more multicultural and, today, about the 34% of its inhabitants have a migration background. In order to encourage social cohesion, the city has redacted an Integration Charter that illustrates the integration strategy plan. More importantly, this charter witnesses the change of perception of migrants. In fact, they are no longer labelled as “Gastarbeiter” (guest worker) but as citizens with an immigrant background whose integration process will require time and efforts on both sides.

The Charter outlines the key elements to achieve a high level of integration. Integration and coexistence should be considered a global objective, concerning every area of local administration: The City Council should hire more employees with a migration background in the public administration and in the municipal businesses. In fact, employees with foreign origin firstly speak several languages and secondly have intercultural competences.

People with a minority background will equally benefit from all city programs and services – this means that services already in place may be modified to suit specific requirements. The city of Erlangen actively discourages and stands against any form of discrimination and racism, on the contrary, it guarantees every citizen the right to preserve their religious and cultural identity.

Moreover, the Integration Charter points out that citizens with immigrant backgrounds are indispensable and their customs and traditions must be recognized as an enrichment to the host society. For this reason, the municipality of Erlangen aims to strengthen the feeling of self-confidence and openness to ensure peace and mutual understanding.

Therefore, integration will be fully and successfully achieved when all the citizens will feel accepted and heard within their society, when they will identify with the community leader and with the public administration and, ultimately, when they will feel at home.

Lisbon, Portugal - Local Plan for Immigrant Integration

90 measures across various policy areas

In order to express his commitment to the local people and to inject a sense of urgency into public officials, the Mayor of Lisbon Antonio Costa has taken the radical step of moving his office from the palatial City Hall to the Largo do Intendente, one of the city’s poorest and most multicultural districts. He also ensured the work will be properly co-ordinated by establishing a special team within the municipality called GLEM (Lisbon at the Crossroads of the World), and giving it executive powers to ensure different agencies co-operate with each other.

Portugal is one of the few European countries to have adopted an instrument for global orientation of public policy on the integration of immigrants in the form of the first Plan for Immigrant Integration, effective from 2007 to 2009, and a second Plan for the period 2010-2013, which comprises 90 measures across various policy areas. It is also one of the few countries where a single public body, ACIDI, takes responsibility for policies on intercultural dialogue. As such ACIDI oversees the Immigration Observatory and a country-wide network of 80 National Immigration Assistance Centres (CNAI). The latter have pioneered a ‘one-stop-shop’ approach in Lisbon and Porto to improve the quality of service to migrants and to rationalize resources.

Logan City, Queensland, Australia – Building trust between police and ethnic minority communities

Opening Doors: The Logan Police/Ethnic Communities Partnerships Project.

MultiLink Community Services is a not-for-profit organisation in Logan City, Queensland, Australia which provides a range of settlement services to people arriving in the city as migrants or refugees.

There was a need for the project as Logan City was growing rapidly and overseas migration, coupled with the relatively young age of migrants, led to a low level of trust between Police and young people from emerging communities.

After some public conflict, parents and ethnic community elders asked MultiLink to facilitate a meeting between police, young people and parents/elders. This started a partnership between MultiLink, Logan Police District and people from more than 30 ethnic communities. In total, more than 700 people were involved. On average there were 20 community members and 10-15 police in attendance.

In some cases communities that had been in conflict in their country of origin were involved in the same workshop. However, at no time was that conflict brought into a workshop and an intercultural opportunity was created for people from those different ethnic groups to meet and form meaningful, long term relationships. Generally, running the meetings in a cross-community way would leave little time for each community to tell their story and bring diverse perspectives within the community.

The participation of high-ranking police was important to reinforce the Police hierarchy's commitment to fairness and non-discriminatory community policing and to get approval to pay police officers to attend as part of their usual working hours.

The project's results were a greater focus on community policing via relationships, stronger interaction between young people and police, stronger reliance on police and elders for knowledge and community intelligence. The same methodology and results occurred in the areas of child protection, education, health and family services.

How did they do it?

Sessions were held between 6pm and 9pm during which:

- the community provided information about their country of origin and migration history;
- a dinner took place so community members and police could build networks, exchange phone numbers etc. so that an ongoing relationship could be developed;
- The Police provided information about laws, domestic violence, driving, emergency services;
- Final Q&A are raised, announcements of initial plans of specific projects are made such as Police-Polynesian rugby games, police attendance at multicultural festivals, community members involvement in police activities like sports and remembrance days etc;
- Some sessions took place in mosques, football clubs, churches, which was a critical tool for reducing barriers and offering opportunities to Police who usually would not have that experience;
- Cost – approx 3 000€ x 2 years for casual staff to promote the workshops and to pay for the food prepared by community members.

London Lewisham, United Kingdom - Lewisham “Young Mayor” project

Putting power and responsibility in the hands of young people

Young people were taken to different parts of the borough they didn't know to interview others so they could get a deeper understanding of the competing priorities.

Special mention should be made of one of Lewisham's most important innovations in governance and participation: the Young Mayor. Many local authorities have adopted the idea of youth parliaments but these can often appear tokenistic. On the other hand the Lewisham Young Mayor seems a much more robust attempt to put real power and responsibility in the hands of young people and treat them seriously. The Young Mayor is elected by direct ballot every year and – along with a cabinet of young advisors – is given a budget (£30,000 per annum) to initiate a programme of work, as well as to scrutinise the work of Sir Steve Bullock and the Council.

Having met several past and current young mayors and advisors they demonstrate a high level of self-confidence and understanding. They have travelled extensively around Britain and the rest of Europe and this has helped them to appreciate what has been achieved in Lewisham. They have encountered few other places where young people's participation in the democratic process is taken so seriously. Also they have noted how much more diverse Lewisham is and, importantly, how much more comfortable it seems with its diversity, than most other places. They concur that whilst Lewisham may not be the most comfortable of places to live, and that it can at times be quite threatening particularly for young people, few of the district's problems are attributable to ethnic divisions. Even the gangs are multi-ethnic, we were told.

London Lewisham, United Kingdom - The Big Society: making things happen by encouraging active citizenship

A strategy to facilitate communication

Whilst the Coalition government is trying to introduce a new concept of governance across the UK call The Big Society, Lewisham likes to argue that it is well ahead of the trend in terms of the devolution of power and services and the encouragement of active citizenship. The local authority has long since ceased considering itself as a service-delivery organisation and prefers to take a strategic and facilitating role. Lewisham is proud of its attempts to engage more people in the deliberative process of local governance. It employs a Local Assemblies Manager and a team of 6 co-ordinators, which is given a high priority by the Mayor and will be protected from spending cuts.

Each of its 18 wards has a local forum (chaired by a councillor) which meets quarterly to discuss local issues such as transport, anti-social behaviour, and the environment. They have a small funding allocation of £18,000 to make things happen. They are managed in such a way as to avoid being dominated by organised lobby groups and to encourage strangers to meet and interact. They also encourage cross-fertilization of ideas between different ward forums. So, for example, one area has established a social enterprise called 'Lea Green Lives' to encourage local ownership of shops and other assets and this is now being copied by other areas. The Local Area Assemblies are designed to be representative of the areas they represent and currently are within 5% of the borough profile with specific actions made to under-represented communities who can participate separately if required.

One of the LAA outcomes is "Residents understand each other better and social cohesion in Lewisham is promoted". And one of our indicators is "PI 3 Increase % attendees strongly agreeing /agreeing that

the Assembly brought people from different backgrounds together".

Lewisham admits that the devolution of power is not always acceptable to some councillors who see it as an undermining of their own role as elected representatives, but they accept that this trend can only accelerate. They now consult and support bloggers, tweeters and online networks to monitor local concerns, canvass opinion and assess the effects of new initiatives.

During 2010 the Council initiated a form of participatory budgeting and asked people how they would like to distribute the forthcoming public expenditure cuts. 2500 people took part. Now during 2011 Lewisham will host a rather special project to create 'conversations' in neighbourhoods. The aim is to increase awareness of the richness and diversity of local people, to discover hidden talents, create a greater sense of connection and belonging and create collaborations between people who wouldn't normally meet. The Project is the idea of writer Theodore Zeldin, author of 'An Intimate History of Humanity', and is in association with the National Portrait Gallery and the National Health Service. The BBC is also making a radio documentary about the project. The eventual aim is in each neighbourhood to connect together groups of up to 200 people from all walks of life who would not normally belong to such a diverse group.

The Council also collaborated with the RSA to map social networks in localities and New Cross Gate was used as a guinea pig. It produced some surprising and enlightening findings about people's social connections in a diverse community and found that the supermarket tended to be the hub of modern communities.

Neuchâtel, Switzerland - NEUCHÂTOI 2013: Cultural Interaction To Overcome Cultural Barriers

Events and public activities to foster integration

Following its success in 2006 and 2009, NEUCHÂTOI is taking place again in 2013 to promote diversity in public areas and the positive image of a plural society. From April to November 2013, the Association NeuchâToi and the Working Community for the Integration of Foreign Nationals (CTIE) are overseeing the organisation of over sixty events across the canton of Neuchâtel, which are being carried out in partnership with a wide range of private and public partners.

Exchanges, cultural or sports encounters, round tables, shows and concerts: NEUCHÂTOI 2013 is a programme of instructive and varied intercultural events, targeted at the entire population of Neuchâtel to encourage fruitful discussions and debate on its heterogeneity while identifying shared values and the feeling of belonging. The main aim of all these events is to improve mutual knowledge and understanding among Swiss people and people from migrant backgrounds and to instil confidence in the whole population so that they can live together while respecting pluralism in a multicultural society that seeks to foster inter-community integration. During this third year, NEUCHÂTOI is focusing on four main areas of work:

1. CHARTING THE FUTURE Encouraging active citizenship in all sectors of the population across the canton through activities which foster the democratisation of decision-making procedures in practical ways. The long-term outcome should be greater participation by all citizens in the public affairs of the country.

2. SHARING SPACE Taking an interest in the spatial and geographical dimension of public areas: streets, parks, a street block, or a building. The aim is to give a higher profile to the cultural wealth of the canton and to foster encounters between Swiss nationals and people from migrant backgrounds. The idea is to encourage people to live in harmony and in a constructive manner and also to encourage the city districts or organise themselves with a view to fostering good neighbourhood relations.

3. SENDING OUT A MESSAGE Focusing on information and communication so as to transmit positive messages on cultural diversity and, in the long term, reduce xenophobia among the population and above all convince the public of the merits and the important contributions of the many different groups that make up society. A further aim of this area of work is to facilitate the integration of newcomers through carefully targeted measures meeting the specific needs of this population.

4. PROMOTING EQUALITY Reducing the obstacles to equal opportunities and combating discrimination. The aim is to identify those which prevent certain categories of the population from having free access to public services and public property on account of their ethnic, social or religious background.

Reggio Emilia, Italy - Neighborhood Pact: mutual obligations for the city and citizens

Strong emphasis on civic values and culture

There is a strong political will and commitment to addressing issues for both indigenous and migrant communities. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor see Reggio Emilia as a town under constant transformation and believe in turning perceived problems into opportunities. There is strong reliance and belief in the history and traditions of the town and its capacity to address current challenges. There is also a strong emphasis on protection and development of the civic values of the town and this has been made explicit with a public declaration of values and the development of a 'pact' with the townspeople available in 12 languages.

Reggio Emilia has introduced an observer city councillor elected by the foreign nationals residing in the city. The city has also signed a "neighbourhood pact" in one of the poorer multicultural neighbourhoods outlining mutual obligations for the city (provision of services) and citizens (management of conflict, organisation of events and activities).

San Sebastian, Spain - Ombudsman institution at a local level

Defending human rights and critically assessing the public policy

The city has formally adopted a public statement that it is an intercultural city, as well as forming an intercultural strategy and action plan with dedicated budgets. These go through an evaluation process and are supported by references to interculturality in official speeches and publications.

Office of the Ombudsman

By far the largest and most effective existing institution is the Office of the Ombudsmen. Whilst the role bears some comparisons to Ombudsmen elsewhere in the world, the Spanish model, and the San Sebastián specifically is in many ways far more impressive. The institution was created in 1989 and has

50 employees and an elected chief. Its role is to be an independent and unbiased defender of the rights of ordinary people against maladministration or abuse of power by the state. There are three main blocks of work:

- Complaints and claims against public administration (from district to EU level)
- Critical assessment of public policy
- Promotion of human rights

The first of these roles is the one most familiar in other parts of Europe.

However the second role takes the Ombudsman beyond merely responding to claims and into a proactive engagement with policy. They begin by consulting with a wide variety of interest groups and public opinion to try and determine whether policy remains relevant to the changing realities of peoples' lives. They have intervened in issues such as undocumented foreign-born minors, violence against women, and drug use by minors.

Their third role is even more novel – the active promotion of human rights. Whilst remaining scrupulously impartial, they have a brief to conduct research and surveys on potential breaches of human rights and to engage in awareness-raising and opinion-influencing campaigns. They have looked into public views on terrorism, attitudes to Roma people, bullying and harassment, and equality of immigrants and gay people.

The law establishing Ombudsmen give great discretion for interpretation. Some offices elsewhere play a more passive and juridical role but San Sebastián's Inigo Lamarca considers himself to be a community activist. He is confident about the prospects for San Sebastián to accept and integrate with many more foreign residents. Partly because there is a long history of Basques and Spaniards integrating. Also because the remarkably high number of local NGOs with expertise. His main concern is what the effect of rising unemployment of ethnic Basques will have on this.

There have been few claims made so far by migrants but this is probably due to lack of awareness on their part. The Ombudsman believes he has to make a special effort to publicise his services to them. Also he needs to ensure the municipality is rigorous in registering all foreign residents, though he acknowledges San Sebastián is a much better performer in this regard than many other Basque municipalities.

The minority which requires the most protection from abuse is the Roma. There are numerous cases of discrimination in the labour market and housing and of inappropriate behaviour by the police. Again, taking a proactive stance, he has initiated a joint protocol with the police to respect diversity and to give officers diversity training.

His other priority is undocumented minors who arrive in search of work. Since the recession many have become unemployed and risk falling into crisis. He lobbies for the setting up of education and pastoral care to ensure they are not socially-excluded.

[Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal – The Jovem Autarca Project](#)

A project to get young people interested in politics

Jovem Autarca (Young Mayor) is a project addressed to young adults from 13 to 17 years old. This

initiative aims to enhance citizenship behaviours, valuing the opinions of young people, their ideas, dreams and their perspectives for the future.

Young adults who commit in taking an active part in the political life and decision-making process of their municipality, will also have the following tasks: manage a dedicated budget, supervise the realization of several projects, promote dialogue and co-operation among the community members.

In order to be selected as young mayor, teenagers must be residents in the municipality of Santa Maria da Feira. The mandate lasts one year, starting on the 6th of December 2016 until the end of the legislature period, expected in December 2017.

Setúbal, Portugal - Office for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities (GIME)

A transversal approach in order to foster immigrants' integration

Through the *Office for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities (GIME)*, the municipality of Setubal develop an inclusive and transversal approach to diversity and migration. This office handles a number of issues related to this segment of the population. For example, it acts as the bridge between migrant associations and the rest of the municipal structure. Through *Setúbal, Ethnicities and Immigration (SEI)*, the *GIME* provides a number of services to migrants, connecting them with a number of public and private entities and the functions they perform. These include Border Control (SEF), Education and Health services, employment office, ombudsman, Caritas, OIM etc. This office also helps with consular acts and electoral procedures for foreigners in their home countries. The *GIME* also implements a number of ACIDI (High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue) programmes in the Setúbal County, including the *Escolhas* programme and mediation services.

Tenerife, Spain - Together in the same direction

Managing diversity through a participative strategy

In 2009 started the *Together in the same direction*, which marked a before and after in the commitment and action of the Cabildo regarding intercultural policies.

"Together" is a strategy for managing diversity developed by the Administrative External Action Service of the Cabildo and OBITen.

As part of this initiative has woven a broad network that includes the vast majority of immigrant associations that exist in Tenerife as well as institutions and social organizations with the common goal of promoting intercultural dialogue and strengthen integration processes and social cohesion. Currently more than 100 entities between immigrant associations, social partners, public agencies and institutions participate on the Together strategy.

The development of the strategy and the involvement of members of the network are organized into five thematic working groups:

- Social Services
- Gender Violence
- Co-development
- Social Participation
- Communication

Each group discussed and approved by consensus a Work Plan that should define clear objectives, specific actions to achieve those objectives, expected results and indicators of evaluation. This strategic planning work is very important and brings rigor and clarity to the actions developed.

Key Objectives:

1. Promote intercultural dialogue and integration processes in an increasingly multicultural society.
2. To promote the values of tolerance, coexistence in diversity , equal opportunities and social cohesion.
3. To promote community action for social, economic and cultural development in the areas linked by migration.
4. To strengthen the network performance of organizations and human resources that serves the social and cultural diversity.

Main lines of action:

1. Promoting the level of representation of associations in relation to national and / or regional groups.
2. Promotion of communication, coordination and cooperation between public institutions, private entities and NGOs, in relation to the integration processes for social cohesion in the Canaries.
3. Promoting knowledge and scientific research of the population, relationships and associative structures formed from immigration.
4. Fostering networking in contexts of diversity in the areas of gender violence, co-development, social services, communication, social participation, youth and interculturalism.
5. Strengthening training for qualified attention to social and cultural diversity in the territory and public and private organizations.
6. Adequacy of communication strategies to the characteristics of an increasingly multicultural society.
7. Contribution to the consolidation of organizations and actions of their leading teams.
8. Development of communication channels for the dissemination of work done in a collaborative network, with special emphasis on best practices.

The strategy has financial resources for its implementation that provides the Cabildo and the Canary Islands Government through its calls for grants.

A part of the evaluation of the strategy is carried out in the Immigrant Associations and Social Agents of Tenerife Committees and a technical team, is currently working with the entities participating in the *Together* network to establish an instrument of participatory consultation, monitoring and supervision.

Although the working groups are themed and they can engage people across the island, the strategy has been spreading through the “Tenerife for all” initiative to specific areas of the island geography. So far this has been driven territorial application in the neighbourhoods of El Fraile and Taco, but is expected to extend to other districts soon.

The visibility of the strategy is increasing in the island context right now considering a specific project to share its philosophy, objectives and methodology of work with the other Canary Islands by the Island Cabildos with support from the Canarias Government.

Together in the same direction has a Web, YouTube Channel and Facebook profile, among other communication resources.

Meeting with the Permanent Commission of the “Together” Network:

On our visit we had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the entities that are part of the Permanent Commission of Together that has been created recently (representatives of groups Hispano-Moroccan, Sahrawi, Uruguay, Nigeria, Peru, Bolivia, and associations for the employment of women etc.)

These people talked about their experience and what it meant for them to participate in the Together Network. They noted that the network gave them many forces to work together and they considered it as a great big family. The network allowed them to learn, collaborate, meet other experiences that could be applied in their associations and also foster positive values of solidarity and coexistence and generate more excitement and hope.

Tilburg, Netherlands - The House of the World: meeting place for new people and ideas

Public space as a platform for education, exchange, and creativity

From the report provided by the city, we experience that Dutch people often stay at home, in their own garden. In the culture of migrant families public realms as parks and playgrounds are often used. It seems that the public realm in Tilburg is not created for the purpose to meet each other. Also markets as places where people could meet each other are not numerous in Tilburg. The city has still many challenges to create meeting places where people from different cultures can meet each other in public realm.

There are many resident initiatives in Tilburg, financially supported by the municipality. One example is The House of The World. It is a unique experimental garden for multicultural meetings, a source of inspiration for people who want to do their best for a tolerant world. The House of The World is a platform for education and exchange, for debate, expositions, movies and creative activities. In its restaurant work refugees. Another example is The Round Table House, which is a inter-religious centre in Tilburg-North. In this house residents with their questions about religion and society are important. This house bundles multiformity. People from all different religions can organise their meetings there. In this way social cohesion is promoted and stimulated. The artist Karin Bruers proposed to place 1,000 ‘art’ benches in the city of Tilburg. These benches are called ‘social sofas’ and encourage residents to can sit down and talk to each other. The municipality supports the idea creating more meeting places.

People in a neighbourhood can apply for a social sofa.

Progress report (May 2011): The Pucciniflat is a large multi-storey block of deck-access apartments which has acquired a bad reputation – even by the standards of Stokhasselt. Its population is transient and unstable and it has been used as a place to deposit families with multiple social, economic and health problems. The owner of the property WonenBrebreg housing corporation has gone into partnership with Stichting Experimenten Werkgelegenheid (SEW) (the Foundation for Experimentation in Employment) for an innovative new project to rehabilitate the place. In parallel with investment in the physical fabric there will be a concerted attempt to engage with the residents and give them some control over improving their circumstances. A frontline worker will take up permanent residence in the block and gradually make contact with all residents to bring them out of isolation. Many of the households are single migrant mothers with many children, some of whom are delinquent and school truants.

The project does not set over-ambitious targets and is realistic about what can be achieved. It would be considered a breakthrough if, after a year, several of the mothers had the confidence to sit in the adjacent playground and supervise their own kids and those of others.

This will be long and painstaking work but it is seen as preferable to the other alternatives: to abandon the district to becoming a lawless ghetto, or of wrapping the residents in a welfare blanket which runs their lives but completely disempowers them.

Finally we visited the Ypelaer Community Centre which is at the heart of the neighbourhood and will be a base for many of the activities planned for the district and for the devolution of officials and services from the centre.

Vienna, Austria - Diversity Monitor

Tri-annual report on the city's integration processes and diversity policies

The Vienna Diversity Monitor is a tri-annual report on the city's integration processes and diversity policies. It includes 8 areas, 60 indicators, 11 benchmarks which reveal the structural and systemic reasons which lead to inequality related to migration status and/or ethnic origin. The monitor is based on existing statistical sources (everyone who resides in Vienna for over 3 months is registered and is counted in the statistics). The obstacles to integration revealed by the report can be related to the legal framework (eg restricted work permits, access to public housing, voting rights etc.).

The Monitor results are used to inform policy decisions.

For example, 27% of Viennese residents above 16 who are eligible are currently excluded from voting due to the legal restrictions on the voting rights of third country nationals and the restrictive naturalisation regime (eg. 18% of 3rd country nationals are excluded from naturalisation because of income requirements, double citizenship is not allowed except in rare cases). In order to empower non-citizens to take part in the political life, in 2013 Vienna introduced petition rights independent of nationality.

Another example is the initiative taken to support newly arrived young people of migrant background between 15 and 18 who are not in education, employment or training. The report showed that the

reason for their “dropout” is structural - they have been to primary school in their country and when arrive to Austria they cannot go to the secondary school due to lack of language. Later they catch up on language but are too old to go back to primary school. So Vienna created a special “youth college” to cater for these children.

The Vienna integration department also provides advice to other departments in relation to diversity and inclusion. For example the clubs for elderly were growing empty because their information, activities and staff were not adapted to a newly diverse elderly population. When changes were adopted, the clubs became popular with elderly migrants.

Recommendations:

- facilitate naturalisation
- Promote political participation
- Appreciate and recognise foreign qualifications and competences
- Enforcing legal wage and social protection
- Affordable, safe and quality housing
- Embedding diversity management at the strategic, staff, and service level
- Mainstreaming of equal treatment and fight against discrimination

The Diversity Monitor serves also as a tool for track the diversity performance of the administration: it covers the work of 43 departments since 2008 and has revealed that those who implement diversity measures (eg diversify staff, provide multilingual information, diversity training etc.) have fewer complaints and higher customer satisfaction etc.

Business (the world of work)

This set of initiatives aim to strengthen the link between business and citizens, stressing the benefits that a multi-lingual and multi-cultural background can bring to enterprises. These initiatives include international partnerships, local agreement and start-up incubators; cities also offer leadership and entrepreneurship trainings.

Amadora, Portugal - "Amadora Empreende" Programme

Providing information and strengthening awareness about business development for most vulnerable

The Programme "Amadora Empreende" seeks to identify, with the young population and from people in situations of social vulnerability of Amadora, individual entrepreneurial initiatives by providing the necessary conditions for developing a business idea. With two distinct points of action: "A Incubadora Quick" (directed at young people aged 18 to 30 years) and "Quem não Arrisca não Petisca" (directed to people in socially vulnerable - women, disabled, immigrants and prisoners and ex-prisoners), this is intended as a program of selective support, which can give strength to projects that are often not exposed, for lack of support of the development of ideas, or seeking financial support.

The Programme "Amadora Empreende" described in the question 26 and the "2ª Expo Emprego e Formação da Amadora" - Organized by the Municipality of Amadora in conjunction with the Escola Intercultural das Profissões e do Desporto da Amadora, EM. This initiative aims to provide a special area of information and awareness for the challenges and opportunities faced in education, training and employment, bringing together in one room schools and businesses. During three days, these companies promote their services, projects and best practices, and some publicize job opportunities and accept resumes from those wishing to apply to offers exposed or make a spontaneous application.

Barcelona, Spain - "Do It in Barcelona": attracting creative and entrepreneurial talents

Multitude of initiatives to strengthen the city's competitiveness

Broaden and strengthen the training offer for adults through new programmes adapted to encourage the learning of the language, regulated training at adult education schools and employment training.

- Training of experts responsible for assisting users from different places of origin in employment programmes and the creation of companies.
- Incorporate new methodologies into existing entrepreneurial support programmes that allow people with a business background in their home country to make the most of their experience.

Identify resources and good practices in the business environment with respect to managing and making the most of diversity.

Examples:

- Persuading companies in Barcelona to join the European Charter for Diversity in Businesses.

- Inform and give support to initiatives to raise awareness and provide training for businesspeople and executives regarding the management of diversity.

Promote instruments that will respond to the new situation of cultural and linguistic diversity, both in social and business contexts.

Examples:

- Support the creation of intercultural teams to develop business efficiency and productivity.
- Support initiatives aimed at finding multi-linguistic solutions. That would help to manage diversity in businesses and in daily life. For example, the Lingua Mon Project - Casa de les Llengües, in District 22@.

Promote the development of intercultural professional and business networks.

Examples:

- Support the creation of social networks that encourage the integration of new residents into the city and that also make it possible to establish economic bridges with their home countries.
- Create instruments and meeting points that will facilitate contact and cooperation between the city's traditional economic framework and new economic poles linked to the transnational networks that the new residents have brought.

Research, innovation, creativity: eliminate the barriers that make it difficult to take advantage of diversity in these fields

Attracting and making the most of talent, wherever it originates, is a key factor for our region's competitiveness in an increasingly globalised world. The incorporation of these talents, of diverse origins, into a region's economic and social framework is also a factor of social cohesion, while at the same time being an element that strengthens its competitiveness.

Making Barcelona more attractive as a place that has opportunities for creativity, innovation and enterprise.

Examples:

- Reinforcing programmes that are specifically aimed at attracting creative and enterprising talent, as is the case with "Do it in Barcelona", strengthening the intercultural dimension of the activity carried out.
- Giving more attention to aspects linked to the city's intercultural society in initiatives that support the entrepreneurialism carried out within Barcelona Activa.
- Incorporate aspects of the management of diversity and the attraction of artists and other creative people to the Creation Factories cultural initiative.

Work to create a comprehensive platform that would facilitate the arrival in Barcelona of researchers and entrepreneurs from abroad.

Examples:

- Improve the management of the paperwork necessary to increase the intake of foreign students at Barcelona's universities, at graduate level and, especially, at postgraduate and Master's degree level.
- Promote initiatives aimed at helping researchers and entrepreneurs arrive, find accommodation and stay in Barcelona, whatever their origins.

Promote knowledge of at least three languages among the population in general, and among children and young people in particular.

Example:

- Promote trilingualism, not only as a factor of the city's competitiveness, but also as an instrument for social integration and for attracting foreign talent to the city (Welcome to Barcelona)

Bergen, Norway - The Future Workplace and the Global Future projects

Encouraging intercultural mixing and competences in both public and private sectors

According to the answers provided in the survey, the ethnic background of public employees reflects the composition of the city's population only at the lower levels. However, Bergen has put into practice a specific recruitment strategy to ensure that the ethnic background of public employees mirrors the composition of the city's inhabitants. In 2013, the City Council passed an action plan called *The Future Workplace* which deals with this issue among others, paying special attention to the role of the municipality of Bergen as employer for minorities.

Non-nationals can seek employment in the local public administration. The city encourages intercultural mixing and competences in private sector enterprises. Different initiatives are promoted in this field, such the economic support to the project *Global Future* leads by the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise and the economic support and co-partnership in the annual International Career Fair with the Bergen Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The website emphasises the importance of intercultural and multilingual employees for Bergen's business to stay competitive in today's international business culture.

Besides, Bergen provides three out of the four services listed in the Intercultural cities index which are tailored to the needs of the ethnic/cultural background of its citizens: it offers funeral/burial services, women only sections and times in sports facilities in response to culturally-based requests and other services such as the municipal translation agency, which provides translators in more than 60 languages and special services to residents in care-homes.

Bergen, Norway - New International Plan for Bergen

Towards international cooperation

Bergen has put into practice several policies to encourage international cooperation. A new International Plan for the city is been prepared by the municipality. Funding for international cooperation is integrated in the budgets of different departments, such as the cultural affairs department or in supra municipal administrations such the *Hordaland fylkeskommune* (Hordaland

County Council) which has an international agency for internationalization. Bergen supports local universities in order to attract foreign students, and ensures that foreign student populations take an active part in the city life.

Lisbon, Portugal - Study on diversity in the economy and local integration (DELI)

Promoting and highlighting Immigrant entrepreneurship

The city of Lisbon, in the framework of DELI (Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration) project, carried out a study on diversity in the economy and local integration. The study aims to support the analysis and strategies concerning the role and development of immigrant entrepreneurialism in Lisbon. The main objectives are the following:

- i) provide some basic socio-economic features about the foreign population of the city,
- ii) present a basic and specific picture of immigrant entrepreneurial activities, mostly of micro and small size, based in the data gathered through a series of in-depth interviews applied to relevant stakeholders (immigrant associations, leaders of business organizations and some leaders of sectors related to municipal economic activities) in addition to 62 questionnaires applied face-to-face to immigrant entrepreneurs established in the city of Lisbon.

According to the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF), in 2014 50 047 citizens with foreign nationality lived in the municipality of Lisbon–, mostly coming from non-EU countries. The central area of Lisbon emerges as a social gateway to the city being widely recognized and valued by the presence of ethnic and cultural diversity.

Immigrant entrepreneurship in Lisbon has been quite robust and stronger than in the rest of the country. Becoming an entrepreneur seems to be:

- i) a strategy to face unemployment or a choice to increase revenue and
- ii) part of a planned path, sometimes the main reason why they have emigrated from their native country.

The contribution of immigrants to the dynamics of Lisbon economy is meaningful, not only in the city centre and in inner city but also in several residential areas scattered throughout Lisbon. The opening of a diverse set of business creates new jobs, promotes interculturality, as well as the Lisbon cosmopolitanism.

Having into consideration the characteristics described and the hindrances that have been identified, a few recommendations may be presented:

- a) The creation of a system to gather and treat data related with economic activities in Lisbon. To support the analysis of immigrant entrepreneurs, that data should include information about the “geographical origin of the owners”. In addition, a monitoring system of the Lisbon economic activities that could use the aforementioned databases should be set into place;
- b) In order to overcome the language barriers, the legal documents regarding the opening and management of businesses should be bilingual (Portuguese and English).
- c) It should be discussed how it could be possible to introduce some limited positive discriminatory measures (considering that immigrants are a vulnerable group) in the processes of specific public contracting of services (e.g. food supply, particularly if non-Portuguese products and dishes are

concerned), namely the ones performed by the City Council. Note that these measures are circumstantial and transitory and should be removed when the specific disadvantages of immigrants vanish.

d) The ethnic dimension should be more used in the promotion of city, in particular regarding the economic valorisation of diversity (for instance using it on the Lisbon Shopping Destination platform or as the basis for the creation of historical ethnic routes in the city).

e) Finally, it would be useful to update the Lisbon Intercultural Guide and to think in a kind of Lisbon ethnic food festival.

Oslo, Norway - Bringing diversity into the Norwegian business

Local government takes stance on integrating minority business

The City Council's Office for Business Development has taken an active stance on integrating minority businesses. The greatest problem they have is with the complexity of Norwegian rules and regulations regarding taxation and business practice. Many small business contravene the law without understanding or even knowing it, and many others opt to enter the black economy to make life simpler. A Nordic Network for Diversity at Work has been established and Oslo hosted a conference on the European Intercultural Workplace recently, attended by 70 CEOs, but it is felt there is much still work to be done in bringing diversity into the Norwegian business world.

The Norwegian Center for Multicultural Value Creation is helping the so-called "non-western", first and second-generation immigrants to start their businesses by providing advisory services, coaching and training in business establishment. The center is unique in its approach in assisting the professional immigrants, and has received extensive and positive attention and support nationwide among the immigrant organizations, government institutions, private organizations and the media. The result of such attention has been that a large number of immigrants have contacted the center and are frequent users of the services provided.

Oslo, Norway - Open and creative capital: city strategy for international cooperation

City positioning as a provider of services and place for business investment

The city's international policy is described in the 2002 city council white paper "Strategy for the international cooperation of City of Oslo". International impulses and benchmarking – especially within Europe and the Nordic region – contributes to development of the city as a provider of services, as a living and vibrant city and as an attractive place for business investments. In the government parliamentary whitepaper on the role and function of the capital – The Open and Creative Capital (2007) – the city's function as the gateway for immigration of skilled workers is stressed (in accordance with the writings of Richard Florida on the role of the creative class). The international strategy is pursued through agreements of cooperation, through international organizations, through networks and projects and through visits and international profiling. The themes of integration, diversity and tolerance are important to organizations and networks such as Eurocities, Metropolic, ECCAR and the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation, as well as to agreements with cities as Gothenburg and St. Petersburg. There is an International Office in City Hall, and the city administration is represented within EU by its European Office in Brussels. In recent years, the city of Oslo has been profiled as a city of peace and tolerance, through the Nobel Peace Center and the new Wergeland Center – COE's European Center for

intercultural dialogue.

Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal – Diversity and migration as a door to new markets

A platform for networking

Santa Maria da Feira, a municipality on the outskirts of Oporto, in northern Portugal, is adapting to the reality of cultural diversity in a surprising way. Spurred by the municipality, the local business community is exploring new opportunities presented by migration: The presence of people from different origins in its territory, and the presence of Feirenses in a number of foreign countries.

The municipality is planning the launch of an online platform that will link local business owners of all backgrounds with the Portuguese diaspora and with the countries of origin of local immigrants. The launch of this platform is the culmination of a number of initiatives that reach out through business partnerships.

The municipality has regular business exchanges with Kenitra, in Morocco. The partnership, made possible thanks to the presence of Moroccan nationals in Santa Maria da Feira, started with a visit by a Kenitra delegation in 2012. Since then, a number of protocols between the two municipalities have been signed, in addition to the private sector business relations established.

Similar partnerships have been previously established in other countries, such as Venezuela, Mozambique and France. The municipality takes an active role in helping local businesses expand internationally. The diversity of Santa Maria da Feira's population is a precious resource which the council has sought to make the most of.

Besides the local migrants, Santa Maria da Feira has also reached out to the Portuguese diaspora. Many successful Feirenses abroad have responded positively, allowing the municipality to continue its mission of providing business opportunities abroad for locally based companies.

José Fonseca, who owns of a construction company based in Payerne, Switzerland, has been invited to Santa Maria da Feira by the council. The idea is to help open up the Swiss market to local construction and building materials companies. Santa Maria da Feira's location, close to Oporto's transport infrastructure, makes it a key location for doing business in the rest of Europe and further afield.

The strategy underlying these initiatives involves finding partners for development, both immigrants from around the world living in Santa Maria da Feira and Feirense emigrants living abroad, building exchanges based on cultural diversity.

Stavanger, Norway - Bilfinger Industry Company, start-up incubator and leadership training

Trainings to boost citizens' careers

- The *Bilfinger Industry Company* has taken the practical approach of organizing its business processes almost complete bilingually into Norwegian and Polish;

- The city has a business start-up incubator which recruits from the university and 50% per year of 20 students are of foreign-origin. The *Global Future project* (co-ordinated by the Norwegian Confederation of Enterprise) is active in enabling talented minority graduates to find employment in established Norwegian companies;
- Guided by the *Chamber of Commerce*, the *Confederation of Norwegian enterprises* organises expatriate leadership training in which about 20 CEOs of leading enterprises in the Stavanger area participate as coaches. This project appears to be successful: two thirds of the participants change career and achieve promotion after participating. This cross-cultural training appears to contribute positively towards the attitude of both the trainees and the coaches.

Tilburg, Netherlands - Diversity Undertaking Tilburg (DOT)

Entrepreneur club to support migrants' business initiatives

In general it appears that whilst many people of minority background turn to small business as a the most viable form of employment, few have progressed out of specific 'ethnic economies' to become major players in the economy as a whole. In Tilburg, two entrepreneur clubs are active in the field of diversity: DOT (Diversity Undertaking Tilburg), and TOT (Turkish Entrepreneurs Tilburg). Especially DOT is stimulated by the local government. It pays also special attention to the new and young migrant entrepreneurs (often women). In a special project new migrant entrepreneurs are combined with a Dutch experienced and skilled entrepreneur in Tilburg. Unfortunately the number of matches between Dutch and migrant entrepreneurs is still too low.

Housing and Neighborhoods (Public spaces for a diverse city)

These initiatives focus their attention on the use of public spaces and in the structure of neighborhoods and housings. They aim to revitalise poor and disadvantaged areas changing their negative and "unsafe" perception; improving intercultural dialogue through the promotion of social mixing; fostering favourable neighborhoods for a peaceful coexistence between all citizens.

Amadora, Portugal - Oportunidade/Geração Project: special award for best policy of reception

Initiative for the integration of 2nd and 3rd generation migrants

The municipal housing stock consists of 2052 houses over three main districts of rehousing and other cores of rehousing dispersed with a large number of residents of the same ethnic background. Two of the three main districts are mainly composed of communities with the same ethnic background (Cabo-Verde). There are, also, several cores (five), identified below, of provisional masonry houses, even by resettling, composed of communities with the same ethnic background:

- Neighbourhood 6 de Maio
- Neighbourhood Estrela de África
- Neighbourhood Estrada Militar do Alto da Damaia
- Neighbourhood Santa Filomena
- Neighbourhood Encosta Nascente

Run in the city several projects for the integration of the resident population in the districts of which highlights the Project Oportunidade/Geração¹¹ whose target is the population descended from the 2nd and 3rd generation of immigrants and being developed in the Casal da Boba neighbourhood, recognized as a good practice in 2008.

The Project Oportunidade/Geração was awarded by Prize of Distinction for Best Practices in municipal area of immigrant integration granted by the Platform on Policies for Reception and Integration of Immigrants in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. *Zambujal Melhora* Programme with the creation of "facilitators neighbourhood" which is the joining of two people with different ethnic backgrounds receiving training at the same time in a certain area and then working together in their own neighbourhood, and in other districts.

Barcelona, Spain - Breaking down barriers between communities

Public housing policy for everyone

A single public housing policy for everyone that contributes to integration into neighbourhoods and social cohesion, avoiding the territorial segregation of communities.

Promote the culture of renting as a feasible means of accessing housing, facilitating information and advice through the network of Housing Offices.

Strengthen policies aimed at the refurbishment of dwellings in order to avoid processes of alienation and urban segregation and to improve the quality and conditions of life for people. The best way to break down barriers between people and strengthen values of coexistence is through experience and

personal contact.

Creation in the neighbourhood of residents' spaces for coexistence to foster a favourable setting for coexistence between all neighbours.

Examples:

- Transfer the experience of the Committees for Coexistence to other neighbourhoods in the cities (Trinitat Vella, Poble Sec, etc.) of which the different neighbourhood associations form part, to facilitate dialogue, tackle problems and to promote knowledge and shared projects.

Promote everyday participation and associationism at an individual level of new neighbours of foreign origin in the areas of relation and civic participation in the neighbourhood.

Example:

- Make the activities in public spaces in the neighbourhoods known and achieve the participation of new residents in local neighbourhood festivals, carnivals, neighbourhood shows, etc.

Create a space for exchange, knowledge and meeting amongst the different experiences of the neighbourhood, to analyse the different realities of coexistence, promoting a sense of belonging to the city.

Examples:

- Hold meetings amongst the members of the Committees for Coexistence from two or more different neighbourhoods to get to know and share the different realities of coexistence in these neighbourhoods.
- Promote and disseminate good practice at the neighbourhood level to the rest of the city.

Bergen, Norway - Increasing diversity and improving dialogue in the neighbourhoods

Dialogue to bridge cultural gaps

In most of Bergen's neighbourhoods a vast majority of residents comes from the majority background: there is no district with a vast majority of minority ethnic groups. Bergen doesn't encourage residents from one neighbourhood to meet and interact with residents from another because there are no ethnically segregated neighbourhoods in the city.

Furthermore, the city has a policy to increase the diversity of residents in the neighbourhoods. 50% of the residents at Council Housing (around 3,000 flats) are from a migrant background: the municipality does not buy or build new housing in areas where there are previous council houses. This city's commitment in housing is stated in the Action Plan for Inclusion and Diversity.

The city of Bergen has a policy to encourage people from different ethnic backgrounds to meet and interact in their neighbourhood. The City has a special focus on areas of the city where the highest percentage of residents have a migrant background. The city has several small community centres in

these neighbourhoods with activities aimed at increasing the interaction between the residents in the neighbourhoods. In two of these neighbourhoods, the City has employed coordinators to improve the dialogue between the municipality and the residents. The city also supports *Open kindergartens* in all areas of the city.

Parents with infants or small children who are on maternal/paternal leave or are at home with their children can come to these centres during the daytime. This offer is popular among the migrant population and a good place to practice Norwegian and make friends. In areas with diverse population, the city encourages the residents to participate in the European Neighbours' Day. This day has been celebrated in Bergen since 2006. Finally, the city encourages people from migrant backgrounds to play football and participate in activities in their local areas with their neighbours and classmates regardless of ethnic background. This strategy is working well and is possibly the context the majority and minority population interact most in the neighbourhoods. The city does not encourage ethnically defined football teams or sports clubs.

London Lewisham, United Kingdom - Local Assembly Programme

Actions to support the community

This programme started in 2008 and consists in a forum during which the Council talks to the residents, community organisations, police and businesses in order to create a sense of ownership and improve areas and neighborhoods (the 18 wards). The local planning groups organise the meetings, deciding time and venue. Meetings are usually held in community centres, for example in sports grounds. Positively, the attendance is going up, the forum is getting more and more popular and nowadays it counts 8 officers for the 18 local assemblies.

The borough pays the charges of some services provided, such as housing, welfare and the officers need to monitor the quality of services. This service has given great results and seven years later, the community is much more active in the integration process and in offering assistance to newcomers. Furthermore, community leaders and activists aim to engage people of underrepresented backgrounds in the social life and in the decision making process.

Each assembly has a budget of 15000£ to spend on projects which benefit the area. The assemblies are chaired by a counselor and they come up with a set of issues such as facilities for older people, programmes for younger people etc. and anyone can apply for the money as long as their initiative meets objectives and priorities.

There are different approaches to the budget: from small grounds initiatives to strategic commissioning. It is the Community's job to include events in the area with biggest spending. It has been observed that this is the best way of bringing the community together and celebrating diversity and shared values.

In the following paragraph there are a few examples of successful actions:

- Evening parents' forum is linked to the assembly and it reaches out disadvantaged and isolated parents. In the forum, people meet and talk about their concerns which are then brought to the local assembly.

- Online engagement – an online platform, similar to an online forum, has been established. People log-in with their post code and talk to their neighbors, people living in the same street or area, and local area managers and councilors respond.
- Festivals are used to reach out minorities and those communities that are usually the hardest to reach. Organisers have tents to host people and they often use the word of mouth to spread the initiative, going around polling people.
- Community consultations are meetings where organisers talk about waste, recycling, or about which services should be cut.

Local assemblies and other tools are a fabulous way of creating supportive communities for people who would have been on their own in the past, struggling with issues such as urban planning or services.

London Tower Hamlets, United Kingdom - [Arnold Circus revamp](#)

Changing negative perceptions of the “bad” neighborhood

Arnold Circus was one of the United Kingdom's very first social housing estates. Now around 97% of the local Virginia Primary School pupils are of Bengali origin. Local people held a very negative view of Arnold Circus. They perceived it as a dark, hostile place which was inhabited by gangs. In 2006 a local community-generated charity intervened. Their objective was to rehabilitate the gardens and bandstand of Arnold Circus. The charity raised sufficient funds to commission artists to work with local children. Together they implemented projects to revamp Arnold Circus. During four years they designed, photographed, drew, planted trees and flowers. Active involvement and participation in the project were key to the overall success.

As a result of the revamp, the local population's perception has changed dramatically. This was proved by comparative attitude surveys carried out before and one year after the project finished. Residents now use this area for social activities and celebrations. The children feel emotionally attached and continue to plant flower seeds twice a year. This proves that active participation by local residents in such a project is critical to building social cohesion.

Loures, Portugal - [change the image of a neighbourhood](#)

The renewal of disadvantaged areas

On 28 February 2015, some 130 persons participated in the guided tour of Quinta do Mocho neighbourhood conducted by the C4i team of Loures, Portugal, together with local artists and youth. In October 2014, breath-taking frescos were painted on 33 buildings in the neighbourhood, with the help of 2000 artists and local residents, 25 NGOs and 43 private companies. That is how the area was transformed in a Public Art Gallery. The aim of this 3 days' intervention, known as “O Bairro I o Mundo” (the neighborhood and the world), was to change the image of the “stigmatized” neighbourhood which used to be considered as dangerous, destroy prejudices against its residents from diverse backgrounds and increase self-esteem, interaction and the sense of belonging to the neighbourhood.

Since October 2014, the C4i team in Loures managed 46 visits, from enterprises and artists: 28 guided tours and 18 media tours – including interviews for newspapers, television, radio and internet. In addition, at least 80 news items from around the world covered the neighbourhood regeneration

process.

The evaluation of the initiative, made through empirical observation and an extensive survey, demonstrated that it has contributed to fostering social cohesion and local development through cultural expression. Furthermore, it contributed to changing the image of the neighbourhood and increased perception of safety. As a resident of a near-by wealthier area posted on the “O Bairro I o Mundo” facebook page, thanks to the event, she had overcome her fear of visiting Quinta do Mocho, after 10 years’ living “on the other side of the avenue.” So, with her family, she just crossed the street to see the frescos.

Another guided tour of Quinta do Mocho will take place on 28 March 2015. Children will be trained to offer a guided tour of the Public Art Gallery in the neighbourhood, which reached 3000 likes on the “O Bairro I o Mundo” facebook page.

Lublin, Poland - “Closer and Closer”: good neighborhood policy through culture

Taking advantage of the geographical situation

Lublin is bidding to be the European Capital of Culture for 2016. Taking power and experience from its heritage it wants to show Lublin as a city where culture plays a main role. It also wants to show the eastern EU borderland as one of most fascinating and mysterious part of Europe with a strong culture life, rich history and beautiful nature. The city has also established “Closer and closer” – the Euroregional Information and Cultural Cooperation Centre with a view to providing ongoing support to trans-border cultural cooperation of Lublin, Lutsk in Ukraine, and Brest in Belarus. The Centre operates as an entity of the Municipality of Lublin. It has an important role in bringing cultural institutions and organisations of the three towns together by exchanging information on current cultural events and organising trans-border cultural projects.

Paris, France - Voisin Malin (Smart neighbour) – an intercultural social enterprise in disadvantaged neighborhoods

A network of neighbours to promote cohesion in the neighbourhood

VoisinMalin is a social project that aims to help people living in poor and disadvantaged areas. It gives residents the possibility to build a better future, and to deploy their abilities in order to improve their lives and the neighbourhood’s conditions. This project was born in October 2010 and now runs in ten cities in the greater Paris area. The project’s philosophy stresses the fact that inhabitants of disadvantaged areas have abilities and competences, which are not sufficiently recognised by the city and other organisations.

The organisation VoisinMalin offers a peer-to-peer network of trained citizens whose aim is to help their new neighbours throughout the social integration process, and help create interpersonal connections. The “Voisins”, or “neighbours” are selected for their communication and language skills, trained and remunerated. They have different cultural backgrounds and ethnic origins and many speak several languages, making it easy to approach recent migrants with limited knowledge of French. They work by knocking on doors, trying to reach everyone in the neighbourhood to give out information about various projects and services, and raise awareness about residents’ rights and opportunities. They provide information about housing, transport, recycling, access to education, social benefits, health, and cultural

activities. At the same time, they enquire about people's needs and feed back to the different agencies and companies in order to help adapt the services to the needs.

For example, one of the missions is to enhance the cooperation with the city of Ris-Orangis. Here, Voisins malins encourage people to use the free cultural facilities, such as the media library and the cultural centre. Another mission is to spread information about the discounts of the "solidarity transportation pass". This pass has improved people's mobility in their daily life. Yet another mission is to help people understand and use the complex energy saving systems coming with the new social housing.

VoisinMalin aims to connect citizens and local services by using the local social and linguistic capital of residents themselves. The project encourages people to change perspective and to abandon the feeling of being second rate citizens; on the contrary, it helps people to rebuild trust in themselves, in their neighbourhood and in the institutions.

Since the beginning, VoisinMalin has launched 6 branches in 9 underprivileged neighbourhoods in Paris region and Lille. In 2014, 25 door-to-door missions were conducted on key issues for inhabitants: fuel poverty, living expenses and financial vulnerability, housing and neighbourhood environment, health, education, access to social rights, use of proximity services, etc. Nineteen operating partners helped us building those door-to-door missions, among which: social housing companies, utilities companies and local authorities. 10 000 households (about 30 000 people) were met at their homes over the past 4 years; 4 500 households only in 2014. Currently, VoisinMalin is at a turning point in its development. In the coming years they aim to:

- Operate in 20 underprivileged neighborhoods in the 6 main French urban regions.
- Put Smart Neighbors in a position to meet the 20% of the 4.5 million people who live in French underprivileged neighborhoods.
- Open 150.000 doors in the next 5 years (500.000 in 10 years).

The business model of the project is a guarantee of sustainability – the Voisins Malin are mostly funded by the commercial or social organisations offering services to the neighborhoods.

The main challenge is to be present in the 20% of the popular districts in order to have the legitimacy to weigh in the debates (concerning political issues in the popular districts) and also to operate new innovations that would strengthen the action of VoisinMalin on a local level. However, in order to achieve these goals, financial support is needed. Financial support, in fact, would assure us a proper study to select the various opportunities while considering the opening of a new branch. Moreover, financial support will considerably reduce the risk of a lack of starting investment. In parallel, VoisinMalin is working hard on gathering multiple partners in order to spread the risk. Also by consolidating our economic model, this will help us gaining autonomy and independence. There are several areas in which we would like to get better. For instance, we've identified a need to improve our IT systems as well as our communication tools.

Lastly, VoisinMalin project is not only improving "new" neighbours' lives, it is also enhancing VoisinMalins'. In fact, this project appears to be of great benefit on people's life both on a social level and on a professional level. On a social level, people can foster their social and intercultural skills, meeting new people and learning about their culture. These interactions foster intercultural and multi-lingual skills, which will benefit their professional career.

This project is an example of Diversity in Action, where inhabitants themselves build a new dynamic that creates links between the neighbourhoods and the services. Results are visible and tangible.

Reggio Emilia, Italy - Reggio Emilia - a local framework pact for the requalification of the railway station zone

The revitalizing of the railway area

Background

The railway station area in Reggio Emilia was originally conceived as an upper-middle class residential neighbourhood.

The bankruptcy of the building firm, as well as the dynamics typical of a railway station zone and the significant migration wave experienced by the city during the 2000s, has brought to a situation that has been described as "a banlieu in the old town centre" (2008).

The area covers 3 districts, around 30 streets and 4000 inhabitants, 59% of which were migrants, outstanding percentage if compared to the city average (18,4%).

The area was becoming more and more an enclave, an otherness removed from the rest of the city.

2007: "Cohabiting in the station zone "

This project deployed by the city administration brought to the writing and signing of the "Local Framework Pact for cohabiting, following rules and taking responsibilities" between local administration, citizens, unions, Cooperation agents, NGOs and committees. Around 200 people took part to this phase.

The pact was articulated around 4 themes:

- Role and actions of the security force, in particular the local police: through a proximity policing approach, 2 teams patrolling by foot and interacting with the zone inhabitants as well as the other bodies operating there, have been deployed. One of their main aim has been to enforce the municipal ordinance which prohibits selling alcohol after 17h30 (one of the main problems emerged from the citizens was the constant presence of drunk groups).
- Urban Design: demolition of the "lucchetto" (the lock), a building designed as a parking but turned into a meeting place for drug dealers and other kind of illegal activities. Instead of this building, symbol of degradation, a park, which conveys the idea of transparency and openness, as well as representing a place of aggregation due to the Reggio Bar and to the opportunities of cultural entertainment offered, can be enjoyed. The restoration of the Paulonie Park, as well as the empowerment of the street lightening and the restoration of sidewalks with the addition of cycling lane were managed. Finally, the administration bought some of the spaces in the area for leasing them to citizens and associations of the zone.
- Development and redefinition of the services' network: a new bus line, the reorganization and empowerment of the garbage collection, as well as the cleaning day by day of streets and private porticos, were managed. A series of more socio/cultural/educational services were also deployed as "spazio Raga", a place offering a reference point to young people (14/18).
- Social Prevention Projects and Activities: a series of projects aiming at promoting the real cohabitation between old and new citizens have been started: continuous labs of cultural activities (which end in the public festival "1,6,7 contatto!"), a centre for the mediation of conflicts, not only public but also dealing with the private spaces of condominiums. Furthermore a new operational core of street mediators, composed by one educator with previous experience of street work, one Moroccan social worker able to mediate in Arabic, one social animator, have been set up. Finally the Centro Incontro Reggio Est have been revitalized thank to a new group of people, both from Italian and foreign background.

The Pact

The staff of the "Department of policy planning for integration, inclusion and cohabiting" decided to use a Logical Framework approach, not calling for suggestions but actively outreaching to the inhabitants of

the zone for writing a document which could bind all the parts to activate actions in order to reach the objectives that have been expressed.

The work proceeded along these steps:

1. Problem definition
2. Outreach for interviewing and talking with people working and leaving in the zone
3. Analysis of the problems: through 4 seminars with the stakeholders, problems are exposed in a tree framework, in cause-effect logics.
4. Problems are converted in objectives that represent the solutions that have been proposed by the participants to the seminars.
5. The objectives are transferred in a master plan and completed through the actions that must be realized, the indicators and the sources for the evaluation (sub-logical framework).

Thanks to this active outreach approach all the people and associations that were active during the previous years have been involved, leading to consulting more than 180 people.

The working team in charge of designing and managing the project was composed by: 5 members of the Department of policy planning for integration, inclusion and cohabiting, 9 consultants of Extrafondente (a company dealing with social research, training and co-planning), 70 inhabitants of the area, other public bodies like USL (Local health board), police headquarters, "tavolo interforze" (a partnership between all the security agencies for coordinating their actions), other Departments of the Administration, 5 associations.

Monitoring tools of the progresses have been two groups of 10 people each, meeting with the team every 3 months, a middle term meeting with 88 people working on 6 different topics, surveys and press analysis.

The results

Regarding the objective that was felt as one of the more urgent by the population, changing the representation given by the press and transmit a positive image of the area, the press analysis has shown a rate of 48,6% positive articles in the two years after the signing of the pact.

Also the citizens opinion has been moderately positive given the 5,3/10 in the realization index and 85% of the population agreeing on the need for the project to go on.

Setúbal, Portugal - Promoting social mixing and urban renewal through intercultural events

Music Festival and Fairs to bring people together

In Setubal, some activities run by minorities have a limited cross-cultural attendance. On the other hand, there is evidence of good attendance by the general public at "intercultural" events and a good amount of inclusion of diversity in the cultural programming. Here are two examples of this:

- The yearly *Santiago Fair* which takes place during the summer was moved to a more "problematic" neighbourhood on the outskirts of the city, in an effort to bring more people to the area and destigmatize it. Intercultural events have also been included in the programme.
- The *Setúbal Music Festival* takes place during the Intercultural Dialogue Month of May. The municipality has given an intercultural element to the festival, adding world music to the programme and *grass roots elements*, with schools and migrant associations invited to participate in a percussion march through the city, which results in a good interaction between all.

Tenerife, Spain - The Forum Island

Intercultural events to promote diversity

A good practice (which stands out in the Manual of intercultural policies published by RECI) is the "Isla Forum Tenerife in the world" which is to enhance the brand of island of Tenerife as cultural diversity, for his close ties with Europe, Latin America and Africa. Exhibitions, public debates, courses, seminars and conferences are organised in order to promote awareness of the cultures of different countries and the mixture between them. In the framework of this initiative, the municipality stages also special days, meetings and festivals related to diversity and living together and occasionally encourages cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions, for example in the cinematographic sector. The "carnaval" celebration of the island is also a great event in which interculturalism is promoted.

Tenerife, Spain - The "Charrúa" Association

Intercultural activities for social cohesion

In 2011 Uruguayan-born citizens founded this association that aims to work for social cohesion and disseminate, promote and integrate Uruguayan culture in Tenerife.

The association is clearly committed to promoting interculturalism, and this proves that among its 225 members include people from 5 different nationalities. It is open to all residents and whose leaders are committed to the global challenges that affect the entire population of Tenerife.

The main activities carried out:

- Personalized advice on immigration, health, etc.
- Legal advice
- Advising Associations
- Solidary Wardrobe
- Library
- Courses and workshops: Yoga, Karate , Computers, Murga , Kids Recreation .
- Group "Infant Charrua"
- Food and celebrations

The association is also heavily involved in all the initiatives that are promoted as part of the *Together* strategy involved in numerous working groups (gender violence, communication, El Fraile etc.) and on projects of all kinds, as the "anti-rumour ".

Despite the many activities taking place in the association, the main concern of those responsible is related to the difficult times that are living in Tenerife and in the whole of Spain as a result of the economic crisis. Job losses and the difficulties arising from this situation by particularly vulnerable groups are having a very negative impact on many families who see their life projects are crumbling. This association is a good example of how an entity linked to a particular group is actively involved in working to enhance social cohesion and welfare of the whole society. Again, the theoretical principles of interculturalism intensely applied in the everyday life of neighbourhoods.

Tilburg, Netherlands - General when possible, specific when needed

Diversity Training for civil servants

According to the report made available by the city, Tilburg only has general homes for the elderly, and there is a worry that migrants cannot get a care adapted to their culture when they reach a high age. Now the housing corporations in Tilburg build old people's homes for specific groups, like elderly from Suriname and from Turkey. The policy is: general when possible, specific when needed. All civil servants in Tilburg who have contacts with clients in their work have got an intercultural training. Especially the people in Social Affairs are trained in diversity. It is a standard procedure for a new employee. The general information from the authorities is presented in several languages. When Dutch language is used, the language is rather simple.

Tilburg, Netherlands - "Enrich your Neighborhood": a genuine bottom-up approach to governance

Migrants' participation in the community projects

The city of Tilburg undertook a complete reassessment of the offer and performance of public services in the light of citizens' expressed wishes and needs. The result was public services which are much more flexible, client-centred, result-oriented, evidence-based, responsive and effective.

The city council has 39 seats, and only 4 of them can be regarded as migrant representatives. There are differences between the political parties; they decide themselves who will be their candidates. The mayor and the aldermen are Dutch. In Tilburg there are many projects related to diversity. Centres for migrant mothers, the Antillean platform *Perspectiva*, second hand shops for migrants, youth work for (migrant) youngsters without diploma and without a job, the network of Turkish academics, the Youth Ambassadors, the Volunteer of the Year, the language coaches, neighbourhood prevention teams, the Moroccan platform *Tadamon*, etc. The report made available by the city mentions that in Tilburg, the municipality only wants to organize diversity when it is really necessary, when it is unavoidable and that it would be much better when residents take the initiative. This is mentioned as a strategy, not laziness.

In this spirit, instead of going directly to migrant organisations when an issue arises, Tilburg prefers the bottom-up approach: when there is an initiative by one of the residents, the city immediately looks for possibilities to support it. In the context of the "Enrich your neighbourhood" scheme residents can receive some money for special activities in their own neighbourhood. This could be related to a barbecue in the street, a multicultural cooking evening, flower-boxes in the street, an extra swing in the playground, a neighbourhood party, etc. The neighbourhood committee will decide about approval. Alcohol won't be paid for. The city has special "enrich your neighbourhood"-ambassadors, residents who have experience and who can help other residents with the organisation or the paperwork.

Progress report (May 2011):

Alderman de Vries explained that Tilburg is embarking on a fundamental review of its policies and practices. It believes that the size and influence of the state (local and national) has become too great and that, for reasons of both policy and of pragmatism (in response to the financial crisis and shrinking public sector budgets), the trend must be reversed. Whilst public sector intervention may have been initiated with the best of intentions, it has become an impediment and disincentive to citizen action, creating a dependency culture in many organisations and individuals.

CRBA has allowed Tilburg to focus on the true value of the many projects which it invests in, and many of these have proven to be much less effective than they were thought to be. The economic buoyancy of the recent past meant it was often easier to allow ineffective projects to continue than to close them.

But in the current climate Tilburg will submerge beneath its commitments unless it takes tougher measures to rationalise them.

One of the negative side-effects of state intervention in ngo's and community projects is that it imposes a bureaucracy of accountability and a demand for professionalization on the recipient. This can stifle the very motivations that gave the project birth and can drive out the originators. They may then be replaced by people more interested in the process, salary or status than in the original passions for social change and public service. The system has created many winners but also far too many losers. This is one of the explanations of why so many people now feel alienated from the mainstream political processes and are attracted to populist messages.

To refocus its efforts as a local authority, Tilburg is to align all of its activities towards the things that it believes really matter to ordinary people. These, it has resolved, are Work, Poverty and Education. It may decide to broaden its goals further with two additional themes: Health and Community

There will be a transitional period of three years in which resources will be redirected towards activities which directly impact upon these three priorities and, as a consequence, many peripheral activities will have their funding withdrawn. The city has set itself targets to be achieved by 2014, and a strategy of how it aims to get there with a diminishing budget.

Work on diversity and support for minority and migrant groups will be integrated into all services of Tilburg, rather than be focused within one department. There is an expectation that each municipal department will take into account the specific integration needs and include these in their planning and budgeting. This assumes a horizontal or transversal approach to integration.

The focus of the city's ICC work will be in coming year(s) on one of the impulse neighbourhoods, Stokhasselt a large residential area within the Nieuw-Noord district, with 9,900 dwellings and 23,800 residents. If this is a success the city may extend the approach to other areas.

There is going to be a gradual withdrawing of funding from many organisations and projects across the whole city which represent the interests of, or deliver services to, single ethnicity groups, unless they can demonstrate they make a very direct impact upon the Council's priorities.