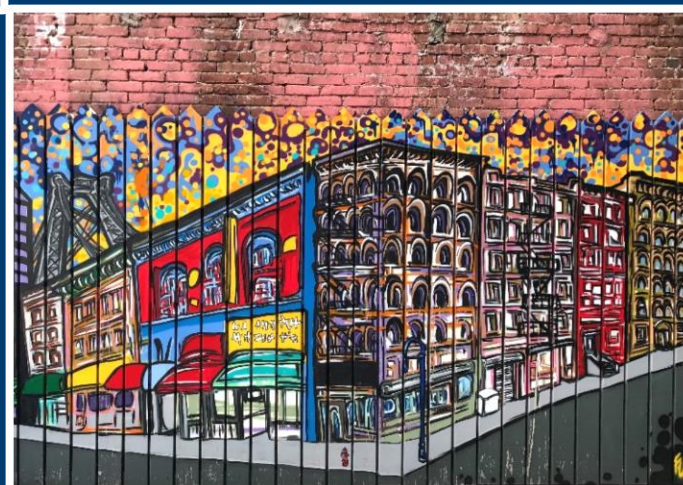




BOTKYRKA

INTERCULTURAL CITIES INDEX ANALYSIS 2023



Diversity, Equality, Interaction

BUILDING BRIDGES, BREAKING WALLS



www.coe.int/interculturalcities



BOTKYRKA
INTERCULTURAL CITIES INDEX ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

Intercultural Cities is a Council of Europe flagship programme. It seeks to explore the potential of an intercultural approach to integration in communities with culturally diverse populations. The cities participating in the programme are reviewing their governance, policies, discourse and practices from an intercultural point of view.

In the past, this review has taken the form of narrative reports and city profiles – a form which was rich in content and detail. However, narrative reports alone were relatively weak as tools to monitor and communicate progress. Thus, an “Intercultural Cities Index” has been designed as a benchmarking tool for the cities taking part in the programme as well as for future participants.

While this report is being written (April 2023) 161 cities embraced the ICC programme and approach, and 124 (including Botkyrka) have analysed their intercultural policies using the Intercultural Cities Index. The respective reports can be found [here](#).

Among these cities, 30 cities (including Botkyrka) have less than 100,000 inhabitants and 33 (including Botkyrka) have more than 20% of foreign-born residents.

This document presents the results of the Intercultural Cities Index analysis for Botkyrka, Sweden, in 2023, and provides related intercultural policy conclusions and recommendations.

INTERCULTURAL CITY DEFINITION

The intercultural city has people with different nationalities, origins, languages or religions/beliefs. Political leaders and most citizens regard diversity positively, as a resource. The city actively combats discrimination and adapts its governance, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population. The city has a strategy and tools to deal with diversity and cultural conflict and to enhance participation. It encourages greater mixing and interaction between diverse groups in the public spaces.

METHODOLOGY

The Intercultural Cities Index analysis is based on a questionnaire involving 86 questions (73 of which are mandatory) grouped in 12 indicators with three distinct types of data. Indicators have been weighed for relative importance. For each indicator, the participating cities can reach up to 100 points (which are consolidated for the general Intercultural Cities Index).

These indicators comprise the following (including the two new indicators in bold):

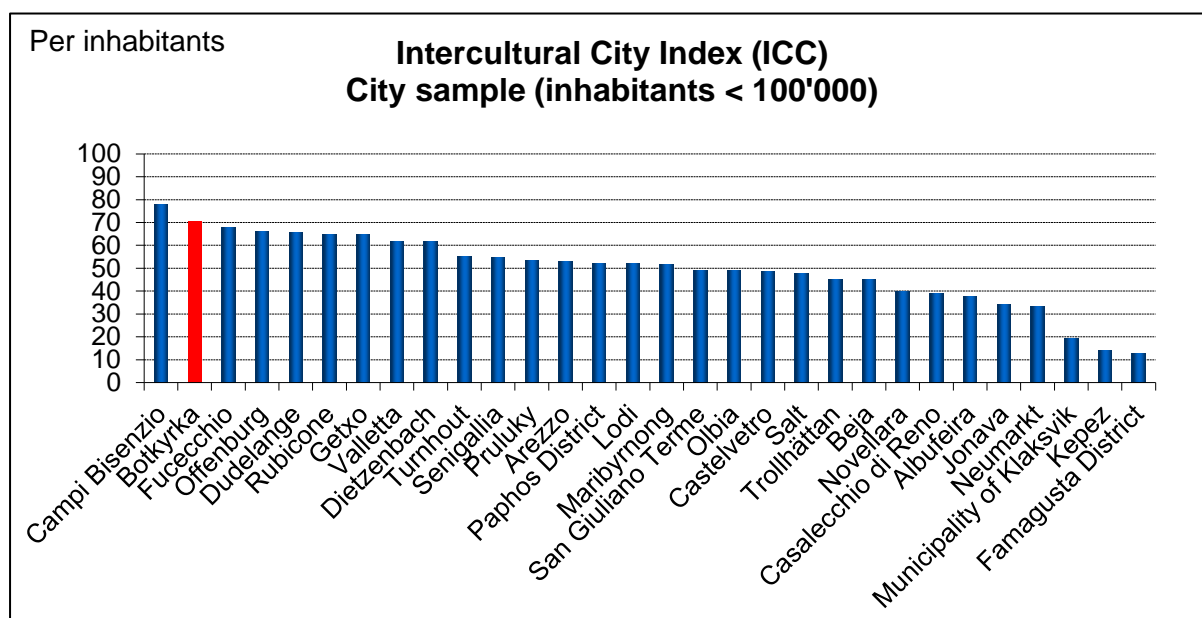
1. Commitment	
2. Intercultural lens	Education
3. Mediation and conflict resolution	Neighbourhoods
4. Language	Public services
5. Media and communication	Business and the labour market
6. International outlook	Cultural and social life
7. Intercultural intelligence and competence	Public space
8. Welcoming newcomers	
9. Leadership and citizenship	
10. Anti-discrimination	
11. Participation	
12. Interaction	

The comparison between cities is strictly indicative, given the large difference between cities in terms of historical development, type and scale of diversity, governance models and level of economic development. The comparison is based on a set of formal criteria related to the intercultural approach in urban policies and intended **only as a tool for benchmarking/benchlearning**, to motivate cities to learn from good practice.

Taking into account the above-mentioned differences between the cities and a growing number of new cities willing to join the Intercultural Cities Index, it has been decided to compare the cities not only within the entire sample, but also according to specific criteria. Two of these have been singled out so far: the size (below 100,000 inhabitants; between 100,000 and 200,000; between 200,000 and 500,000; and above 500,000 inhabitants) and the percentage of foreign-born residents (lower than 10 per cent; between 10 and 15 per cent; between 15 and 20 per cent; and higher than 20 per cent). It is believed that this approach would allow for more valid and useful comparison, visual presentation and filtering of the results.

So far, 40 cities have used the Intercultural Cities Index containing the new indicators in their evaluations, including Botkyrka. Thus, the city will be compared to the entire sample for all the indicators, and to the new sample for the new indicators relating to participation and interaction.

According to the overall Intercultural Cities Index results, *Botkyrka* has an aggregate Intercultural Cities Index result of 71 (out of 100 possible points). The details of this result will be explained below.¹

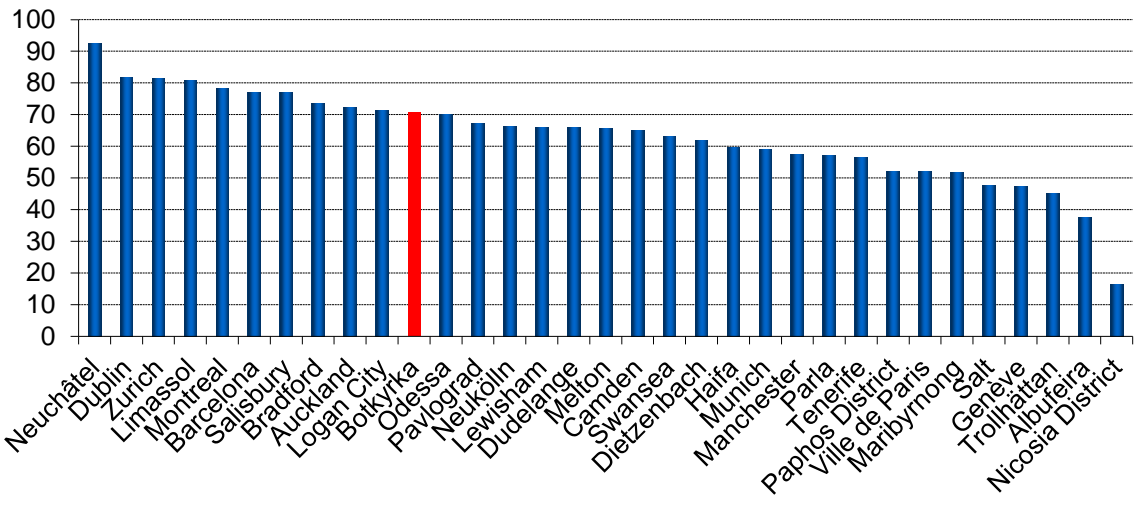


¹ The original Intercultural Cities Index contained 69 questions. The Intercultural Cities Index was updated in 2019, when additional questions were added, some questions were removed and completely new indicators were added (anti-discrimination, interaction and participation), resulting in the extended Intercultural Cities Index with 86 questions. As a main rule, the Intercultural Cities Index report applies the scoring from the original Intercultural Cities Index, to ensure the broadest possible comparison group in the global achievement rate.

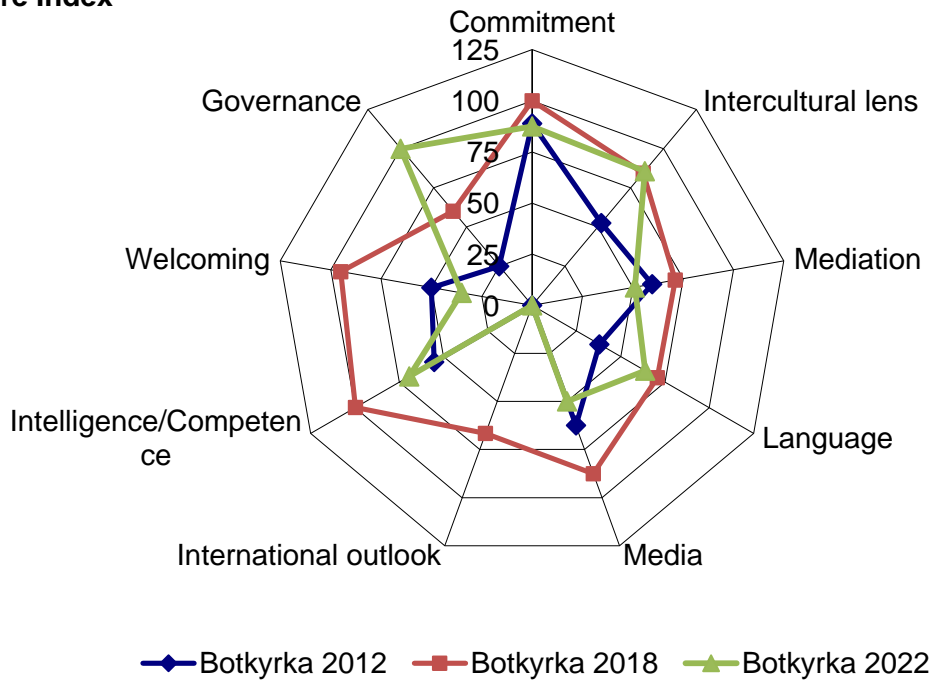
In addition, the scoring from the extended Intercultural Cities Index is provided in an explanatory footnote for all indicators where it is relevant. This scoring encompasses the assessment of the questions of the original Intercultural Cities Index as well as the new questions of the extended Intercultural Cities Index for each specific indicator. The scoring of the original Intercultural Cities Index and extended Intercultural Cities Index for the same indicator may hence differ based on the differing number of questions. Finally, the indicators which are completely new to the extended Intercultural Cities Index only include the scoring from the extended Intercultural Cities Index. This scoring for these indicators hence shows directly in the text and not in a footnote.

Per diversity

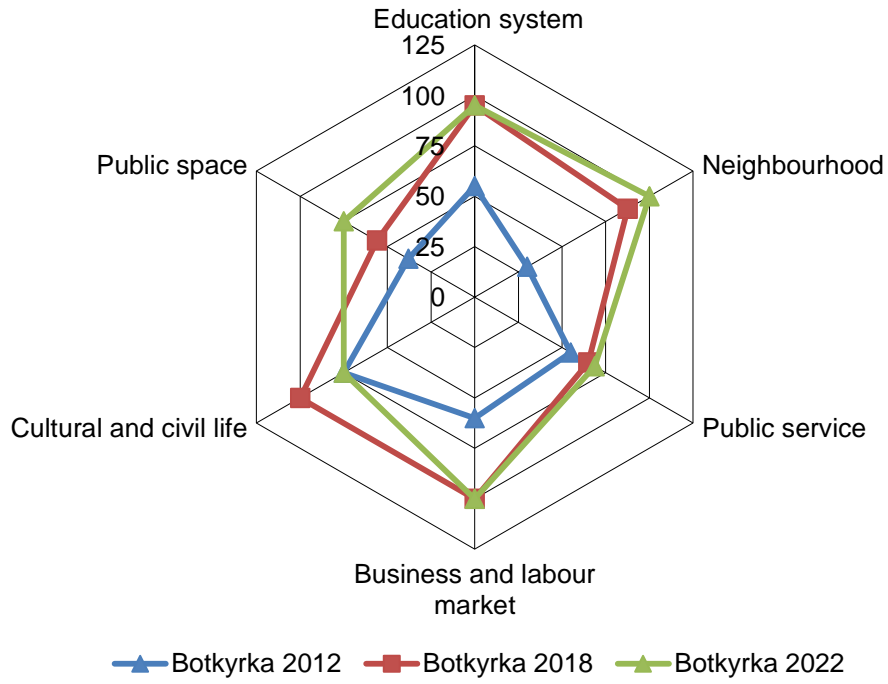
Intercultural City Index (ICC) City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns > 20%)



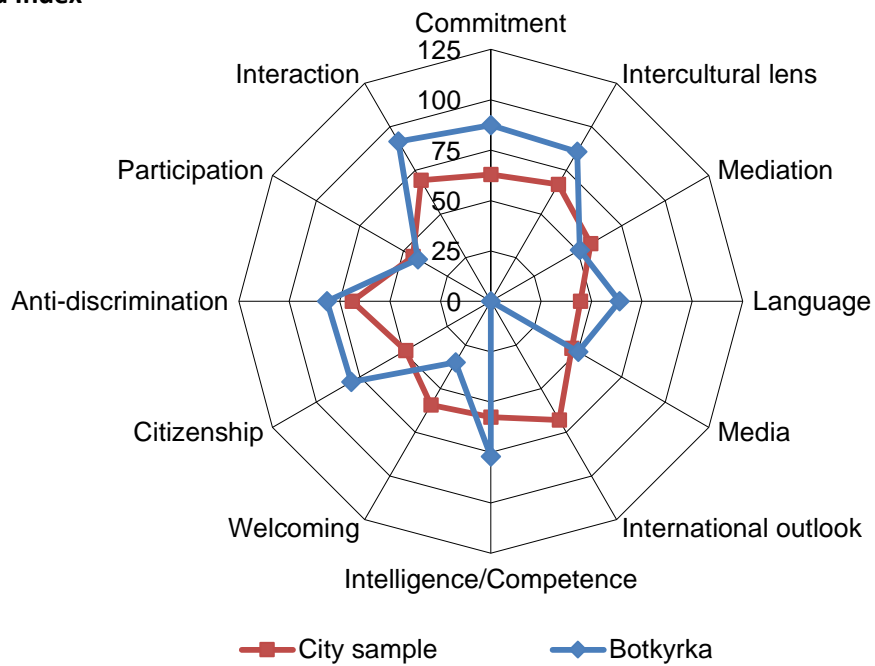
Core Index

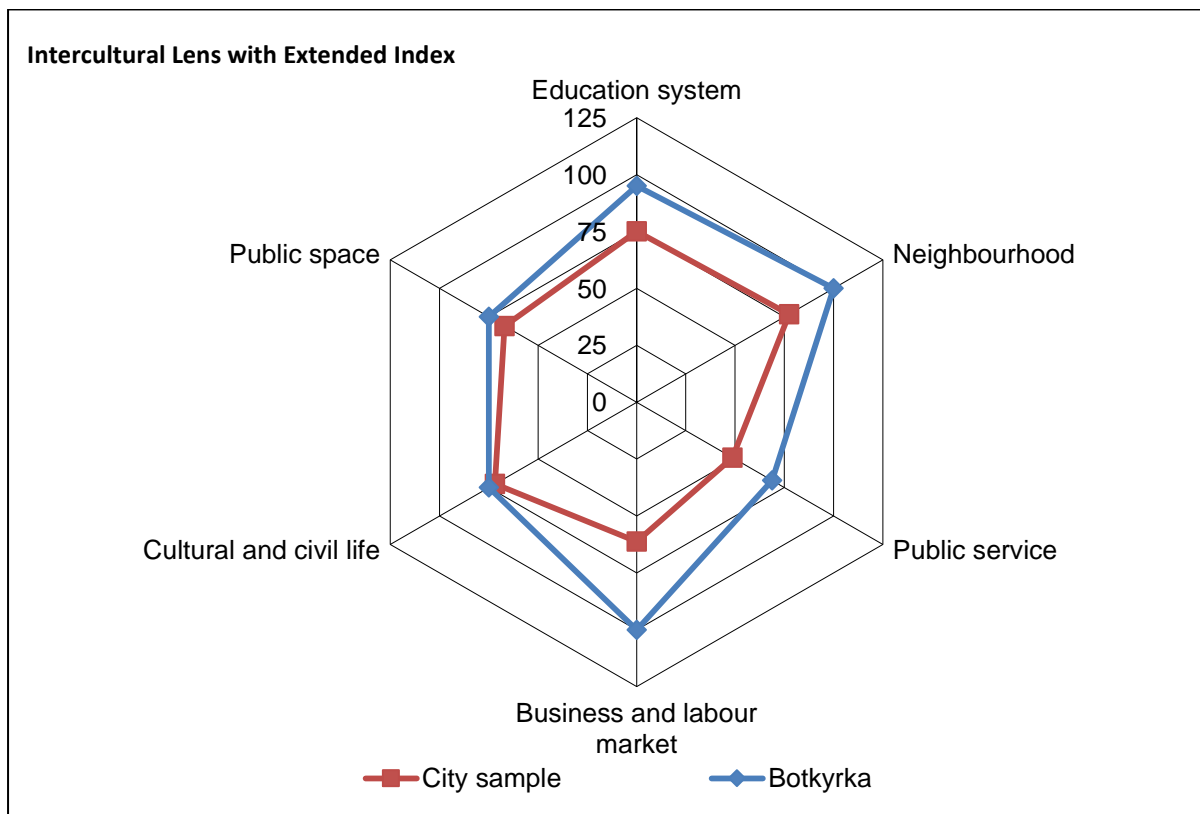


Intercultural Lens Index with Core Index



Extended Index





BOTKYRKA: AN OVERVIEW

Botkyrka is a municipality in eastern Sweden located in the county of Stockholm of which it is the fifth largest municipality. The municipality is divided into territorial sub-units with six districts: Hallunda/Norsborg, Alby, Fittja, Tumba/Storvreten, Tullinge, and Grödinge. The seat of Botkyrka is located in Tumba. The origins of the municipality can be traced back to the twelfth century as the municipality is named after the twelfth century Christian missionary, Saint Botvid. Saint Botvid is portrayed on the Botkyrka coat of arms where he holds an axe and a fish. In 2000, Sweden officially recognised five national minorities: Sami, Jews, Roma, Swedish Finns and Tornedalers (sometimes called Torne Valley Finnish).

One of the main attributes of Botkyrka is its reputation for providing a home for new arrivals and foreigners. Since the 1970s Botkyrka has consistently been one of the municipalities in Sweden with the highest proportion of individuals having a foreign background. Since the early 2000s, this proportion has remained above 50% of the population. In Botkyrka, the term “foreign background” is used to categorise people born outside of Sweden and people born in Sweden from parents who were born outside of Sweden. It does not include refugees and people awaiting permanent status. Non-nationals are people who do not have the Swedish nationality.

In 2021 the population of Botkyrka was comprised of 95,000 inhabitants. It was characterised by the following figures:

- 18% non-nationals, of which 32% were nationals from EU – EFTA countries.
- 27% foreign born nationals.
- the largest migrant groups represented were Turkish (5.2% or 5 000 residents), Iraqi (4.1% or 3 900 residents), Syrians (2.9% or 2 000 residents), Polish (2.8%) and Finnish (2.4%).
- the main country of heritage was Türkiye with over 7 000 residents with a Turkish background (7.3% of the population).

In September 2022, according to the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA), 1 036 people were registered at the SMA as being in Botkyrka but were not registered at the municipality. This data gives an estimate of the number of people who are in the asylum application process. However, there are no official statistics regarding undocumented and irregular migrants in Sweden. In 2018, the SMA together with the border police estimated that between 30 and 50 thousand people were undocumented and living outside the Swedish system (i.e. people whose application for

asylum had been rejected, people with expired work permits or with expired residency permits, etc.). Of these, it was estimated that approximately 1 000 were living in Botkyrka. At the time of writing, 723 Ukrainians benefitted from temporary protection in Botkyrka.

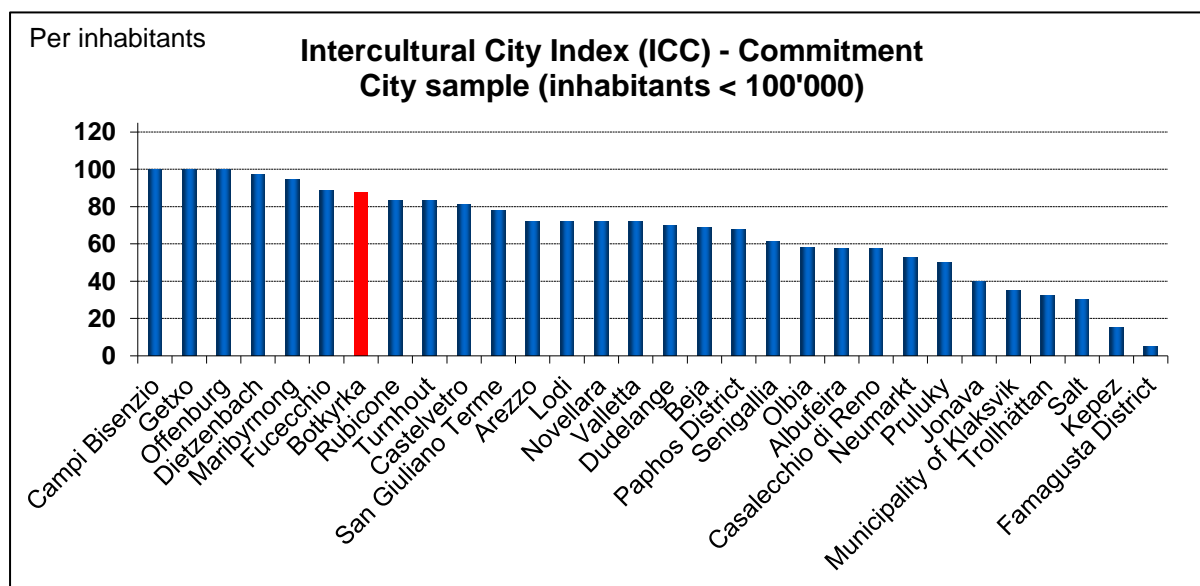
In Botkyrka, special focus is given to diversified groups (origin, language, sexual orientation, disability, etc.) and individual circumstances when it comes to service provision. This is also the case for newcomers, asylum seekers and refugees. In addition, some of the activities of the departments for Social Services and Culture and Leisure have a special focus on LGBTI residents. Furthermore, Finnish is a minority language in Sweden and Botkyrka is, by law, an administrative area for Finnish, which means the local authorities must be able to provide services using Finnish, for instance Finnish-speaking staff must be recruited in care homes and preschools.

In 2019, the regional GDP per capita for Botkyrka was 239 000 Swedish kronor, which is less than half of the aggregated regional GDP for the whole country.²

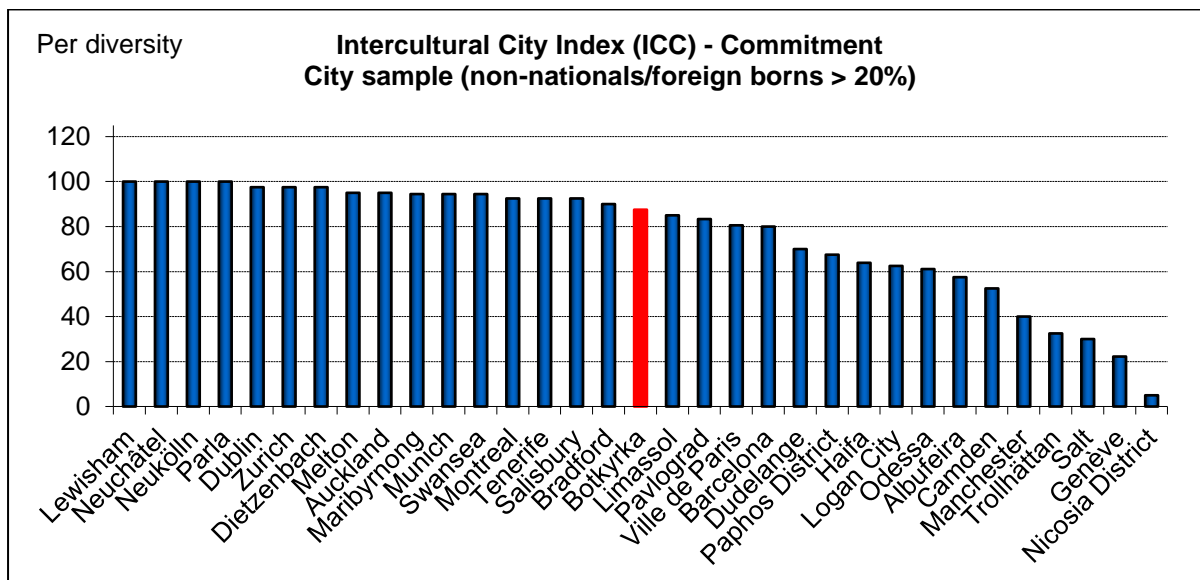
COMMITMENT

For intercultural inclusion to occur, city authorities need to send out a clear and well-publicised message emphasising their commitment to intercultural principles, i.e. diversity, equality and interaction. Ideally, a majority of elected officials and senior policy officers will have a clear understanding of these core principles and their implications for policy-making. City authorities also need to initiate an institutional process to translate the principles of interculturality into concrete policies and actions. Most importantly, an intercultural city actively seeks to include residents of all nationalities, origins, languages, religions/beliefs, sexual orientations and age groups in the policy-making process. The authorities also highlight and nurture any intercultural practices that may already exist in the city.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 88%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 68%. However, it is lower than its previous score of 100%. This is mostly due to the updated ICC Index questionnaire where questions are more specific than those answered by Botkyrka in 2018. This means that although the situation might not have changed, scores can be lower in some instances.



² Figures available at: <https://www.kolada.se/verktyg/fri-sokning/?kpi=38516&years=30200,30199,30198&municipals=16542,33612,82304&rows=municipal,kpi&visualization=bar-chart&focus=16542>.



Botkyrka's municipal council has adopted a **public statement** that it continues to aspire to be an intercultural city and, as for all decisions, and this was publicly announced after adoption.

Botkyrka's **Strategy for an equal Botkyrka**³ (which has replaced the previous Intercultural strategy) contains both strategic orientations/priorities and an announcement about interculturality as a guiding direction for local community development. Information for Botkyrka residents can be found at botkyrka.se, which is continuously updated. Previously, strategies applied for five years, but this time limit has been removed and strategies are now updated when appropriate/necessary. The *Strategy for an equal Botkyrka* may be updated next in 2023.

In the beginning of 2022, an **action plan** for the implementation of the *Strategy for an equal Botkyrka* was developed, but the implementation was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The work to implement the strategy is coordinated in a **municipality-wide working group** (jämlikhetsamordningen), led by the Municipal Head Office, that includes responsible representatives of seven out of eight departments/administrations. These representatives take on this role in addition to their main tasks and the time allocated as well as the level of specific competence on the topic can vary greatly depending on the department. The transversal working group has drawn up the municipal-wide action plan to which all administrations must contribute. It prioritises investment in time through the working hours put into it by the representatives of the different departments, as well as funds in the regular administration. The plan identifies 7 priority areas: knowledge development and rights-based practice, equality mainstreaming, consciously contributing to non-discriminatory community service, universal design, children's rights perspective in governance and follow-up, language as a human right, and health as a human right. The Municipal Head Office has funds dedicated to intercultural capacity building, data collection and knowledge development which are available to all departments. In Spring 2022, Ebba Östlin, the mayor at the time, stated internally that the intercultural mindset is the DNA of the municipality.

In addition, Botkyrka has adopted a process of systematic **policy consultation** which includes individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Each municipality district contains district *developers*. These developers maintain an ongoing dialogue with inhabitants and local stakeholders so as to involve them in the district's development processes. Botkyrka has created the Council for civil society issues (*Rådet för civilsamhällsfrågor*)⁴ which promotes information sharing and cooperation between politicians and civil society. Here, various associations can have a direct dialogue with local politicians, where issues related to policy development and strategies to improve conditions for local civil society are discussed. The role of the civil servants is in this case only administrative and supportive to both sides. At the moment mostly majority swedes are represented in this council, but there is a specific expectation to try to reach out to migrant- and minority swede associations. Botkyrka has also created the

³ Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/migpractice/docs/302/Botkyrka.pdf>

⁴ More information is available at: [https://www.botkyrka.se/download/18.1fbbaae6170bff9469deac2/1584093629923/Reglemente%20f%C3%B6r%20r%C3%A5det%20f%C3%B6r%20civilsamh%C3%A4llesfr%C3%A5gor%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.botkyrka.se/download/18.1fbbaae6170bff9469deac2/1584093629923/Reglemente%20f%C3%B6r%20r%C3%A5det%20f%C3%B6r%20civilsamh%C3%A4llesfr%C3%A5gor%20(2).pdf)

Dialogue Commission⁵, where politicians who have a mandate and a special budget can work directly with citizens' proposals through short decision-making paths.

Follow-up is provided through the Strategy for an equal Botkyrka, which has interculturality as one of five perspectives that must permeate municipal work and which feeds into annual reports on the steering document "A sustainable Botkyrka" (Ett hållbart Botkyrka). All departments must also take into consideration the equality strategy in their operational follow-up (quarterly as well as yearly operational reports).

With regards to **official communications**, the municipality reports that it only rarely makes a clear reference to its intercultural commitments. Storytelling around the municipality's intercultural work is done only sporadically, depending on which officials work with different activities. Information about the city's intercultural statement, strategy and action plan can be accessed by the general public after six clicks from the municipality's homepage.⁶ Lastly, the municipality's Culture and leisure department awards annual prizes to civil society organisations that distinguish themselves through their activities. Interculturality is not explicitly stated as a criterion, but the work that is rewarded generally promotes interculturalism, e.g. creating meeting places between young people from different districts and building community. Botkyrka municipality also provides financial support to the Multicultural Centre, whose annual award – the K. P. Arnoldsson Prize against xenophobia and racism – recognises persons or organisations contributing to the creation of a society where people are not subjected to discrimination.

Suggestions

Botkyrka is doing an excellent job with their commitment to intercultural principles and policies, as evidenced by their achievement rate of 88%. However, there is always room for improvement which will ultimately add to the creation of a better Botkyrka that is inclusive towards all minority groups.

Botkyrka rarely references its intercultural commitments in official communications and although there is official information about the city's intercultural statement and strategy on the website, six clicks are needed to access it. These are steps that the municipality could improve quite easily. The municipality itself has also noted that storytelling around its intercultural work is sporadic and that it could develop this work more.

One city that has made a long-term effort to communicate its intercultural commitment is [Bilbao](#), with its Bilbao, City of Values project.

After a process of citizen participation, the Plenary of the City Council approved the Bilbao Charter of Values on March 22, 2018. The Bilbao Charter of Values encompasses the following 17 individual and collective values:

- Respect for Human Rights, Social Justice, Gender Equality, Solidarity;
- Diversity/inclusion, Commitment, Environmental Sustainability;
- Participation, Trust, Creativity, Coexistence, Identity, Effort;
- Co-responsibility, Honesty, Enthusiasm, Health.

The Charter includes the possibility for neighbours, as well as institutions, companies, and entities, to [join](#). This adhesion implies a commitment to maintain and promote attitudes and behaviours following the spirit and content of the Charter.

⁵ More information is available at: <https://skr.se/download/18.71b542201784abfbf7a14b6f1616597892714/Ut%C3%A4rdering%20av%20Botkyrkadiologen%202019%20ordf%C3%B6randebereedning.pdf>

⁶ Available at: <https://www.botkyrka.se/kommun-och-politik/sa-styrs-kommunen/sa-arbetar-kommunen/sa-arbetar-vi-med.../hallbar-utveckling/interkulturalitet>

THE CITY THROUGH AN INTERCULTURAL LENS

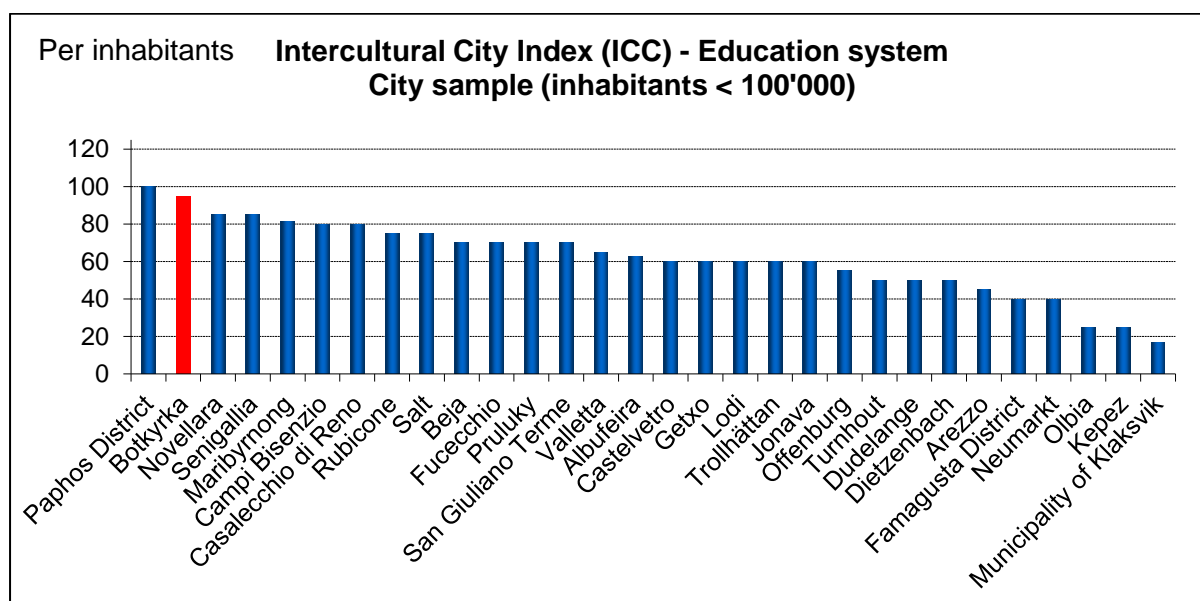
Although the formal functions cities and other local authorities assume vary considerably from one country to another, all cities have the primary responsibility for maintaining social cohesion and preserving the quality of life in the city. The policies designed to achieve these goals will therefore be re-conceived and re-configured in order to assure they provide adequate service to all residents regardless of their nationalities, origins, languages, religions/beliefs, sexual orientation and age group. This is most notably the case for policies concerning education, neighbourhoods, public services, business and the labour market, cultural and social life, and public space.

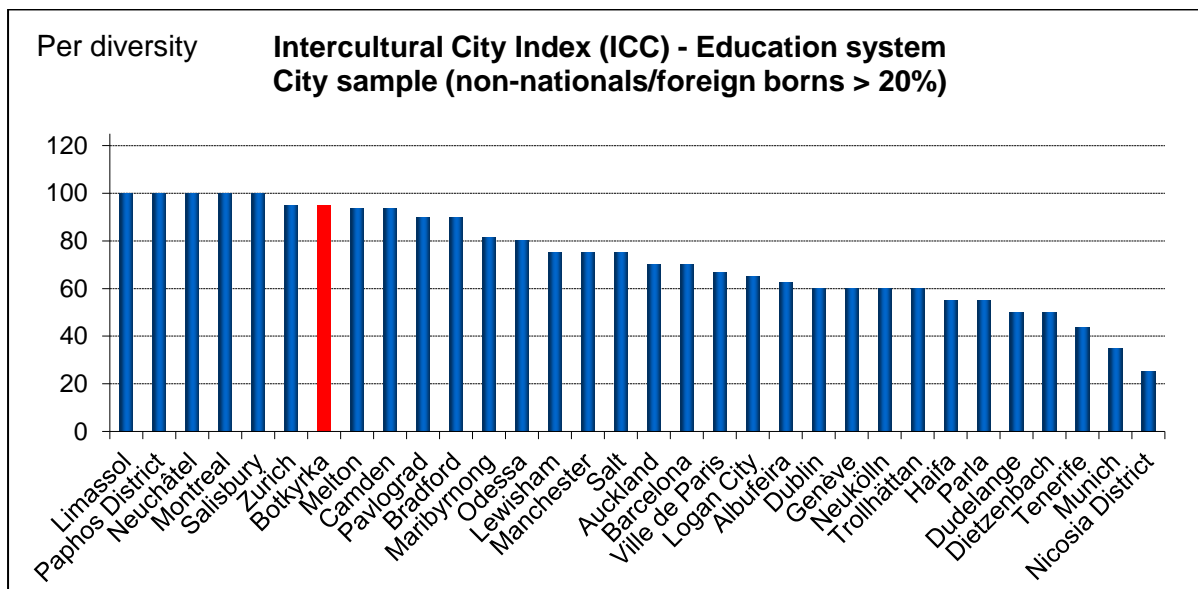
The overall rate of achievement of the urban policies of Botkyrka, assessed as a whole through an "intercultural lens" is considerably higher to that of the model city: 86% of these objectives were achieved while the rate of achievement of the model city reaches 62%.

EDUCATION

Formal education and extracurricular activities have a powerful influence on how children will perceive diversity as they grow up. Schools therefore have a strong potential to reinforce or, on the contrary, challenge prejudices and negative stereotyping. Although school programmes are defined primarily at the national or regional level, local schools can look at alternative and innovative ways of providing opportunities for children of different cultures to build trust and mutual respect, and create thereby favourable learning conditions for all pupils, irrespective of their nationalities, origins, languages, sexual orientation or gender identity, religions/beliefs. From the intercultural perspective, cultural and other diversities, including multilingualism are treated as positive opportunities and are nurtured accordingly. Intercultural schools also consider parents of pupils with migrant/minority backgrounds on an equal basis as other parents. They take steps to ensure that all parents overcome any reluctance they may have in engaging with the school and give them in this way the possibility of playing the educational role usually expected from parents.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 95%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 69%. In 2018 the municipality also achieved a score of 95%, showing consistent achievement in this field. The examples of good practice below showcase some of the work that Botkyrka is doing in education that may be useful to other intercultural cities.





The Education department has developed a specific methodology as Botkyrka has been recognised a segregated municipality. Concentrated work is undertaken to mitigate this issue, particularly in the northern parts of the municipality and Storvreten in the south. This involves strong cooperation between schools, a focus on developing intercultural school leadership and meeting with parents with different backgrounds and life situations. Special intercultural attention is paid to students and parents who are new to Sweden, particularly those from countries where there is no tradition of parents' participation in school. The schools follow the Swedish School Law, which states that every single school must promote an inclusive social learning environment, as well as prevent and react to situations of harassment and discrimination.

Botkyrka encourages interweaving interculturalism in school projects. However, there is not an official overview or mandate for this, rather an awareness of the importance of this work and that many schools are conducting their own projects. Schools with many students with a foreign background already consciously work with this perspective, but more work could be done in schools where the majority of students have a majority Swedish background.

The municipality works actively to increase the proportion of children of parents with a foreign background who are enrolled in preschool, as this has proven to be very important for school attendance later. The municipality agreed on a development project on intercultural leadership in school before the pandemic, but the project was delayed before starting again recently with the support of the Municipal Head Office.

Botkyrka is working on their policy to increase ethnic and cultural integration in their schools, although teachers at school still only sometimes reflect the ethnic and cultural background of the city's population. Previous work around "language development methods" in schools where many students have a foreign background continues. A decision was made in 2022 to develop Botkyrka's "Language Centre" with more focus, and that newly arrived children should be distributed across all schools in the municipality. The head of the Administration for elementary schools has asked that principals in the same district cooperate to make space for this to happen. It is otherwise a challenge to be able to influence the mix of students based on legislation and regulation that states that the "proximity principle" is default when it comes to which school children attend. There is also an awareness that cities cannot just use a bus to transport students from one district to another district with a different character. This needs to be prepared first so that it will ultimately be positive for the students' results and living conditions. There have been difficulties during trials from other municipalities.

Suggestions

As with the area of commitment, Botkyrka is an experienced intercultural city with a wealth of experience to share. The municipality has identified several areas it would like to develop, including to ensure the intercultural approach is carried out in all city districts, even where the majority of students have a majority Swedish background. Another identified action is to carry out a mapping of which intercultural efforts are being made in all schools.

Botkyrka is clearly working to increase interculturalism in their city, combat segregation and support an intercultural educational environment for students.

Whilst there are still schools where the teachers do not always represent the ethnic or cultural background of the students, Botkyrka could consider encouraging more interaction between families by considering [Donostia/San Sebastian](#)'s interesting example 'Ongi etorri eskolara.' This consists of appointing (volunteer) mentor families to help newcomer families to be part of the local community. Usually, families have children in the same class so that the two-year programme of support can include both academic and extra-curricular activities. The interaction and exchange of cultures is crucial for the programme, but the main focus is the shared situation (parents with children at the same school and in the same classes). The programme has had positive impacts so far on teachers, classes, students and parents, while raising awareness about the diversity advantage for the overall population. The programme identifies families in the class meetings at the beginning of the course to mentor and to be accompanied, and several activities are planned during the year. Most of the families organise additional social activities (via WhatsApp groups). Specific evaluation processes have been developed over time.

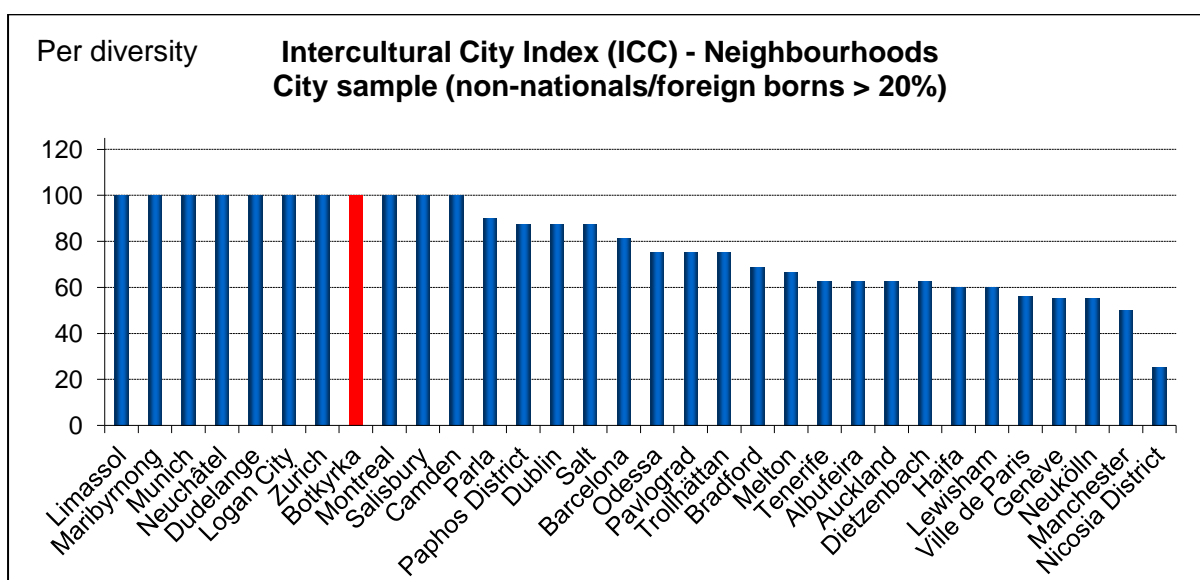
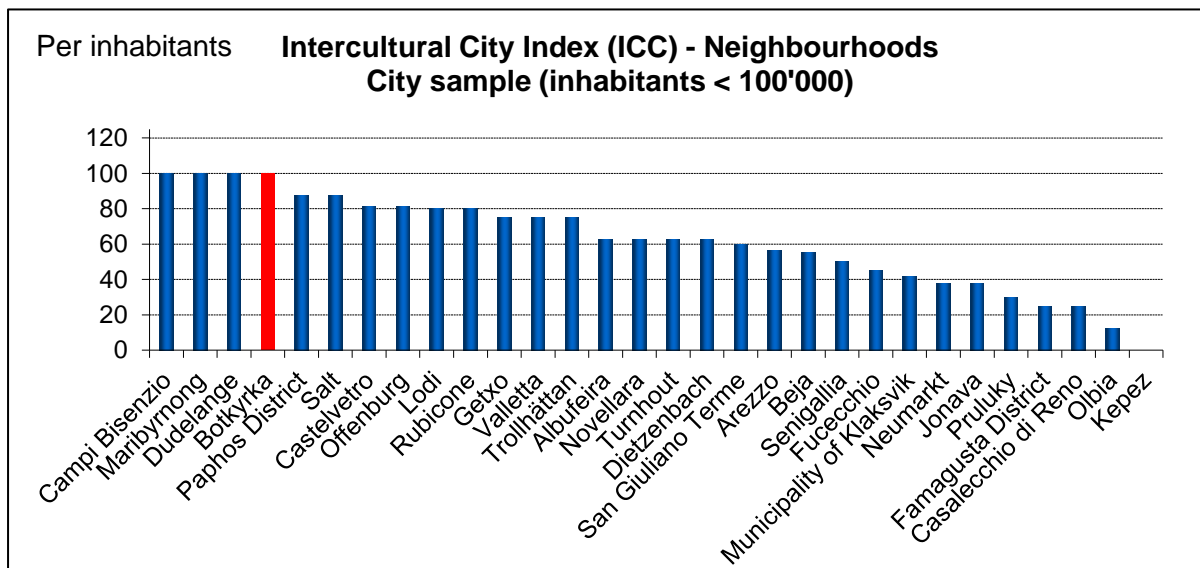
[Bradford](#) also has useful experience through its school linking project. Bradford works with primary, secondary and special schools in localities that have been identified as having segregated communities. Through a carefully planned and research-led approach, underpinned by Social Contact Theory, the city support teachers to facilitate meaningful and positive sustained social mixing. A year-long programme of structured visits for paired classes and curriculum work equips learners with the skills, confidence and knowledge to thrive in modern Britain. The training enables teachers to support their learners to develop trust, empathy, awareness and respect. Tried and tested resources are employed in the classroom and the resulting work is exchanged between the pairs of schools. Learners first meet at a neutral venue, such as a museum, where they engage in joint co-operative, enjoyable activity. The first meeting is followed by class visits to both schools, where the learners experience being hosts and guests by turn. Great care is taken in structuring these visits, including reflection time to unpack learning and experiences. Through-out the linking year ongoing curriculum work on the themes of identity, diversity, community and equality is exchanged. Opportunities for dialogue, critical reflection and positive attitudinal development are encouraged.

Lastly, ICC programme resources on education are also available [here](#).

NEIGHBOURHOODS

Within a city, districts, neighbourhoods, or other territorial sub-units, can be more or less culturally/ethnically diverse. People are indeed free to move and settle in the neighbourhood of their choice. To be intercultural, a city does not require a 'perfect' statistical mix of people in all neighbourhoods. It will however make sure that ethnic concentration in a neighbourhood does not convert into socio-cultural segregation, and does not act as a barrier to the inward and outward flow of people, ideas and opportunities. In particular, the intercultural city ensures the same quality of public service delivery in all the neighbourhoods and plans public space, infrastructures, social, cultural and sport activities to encourage intercultural and socio-economic mixing and interaction.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 100%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 68% and higher than Botkyrka's previous rate of 88% in 2018, showing this is a real strength for Botkyrka and a source of good practice for other cities.



One of the most innovative and effective actions that Botkyrka municipality has taken is the creation of a structure of District Development as a cross-sectoral municipal responsibility. It is a municipal structure that enables officials to be found locally on site, in the city districts, which give them the opportunity to develop a broad network of local actors. By having daily contacts with local stakeholders in civil society and inhabitants, they play an important role for the municipality when it comes to, for example, getting input from citizens. The contacts also take place through the work of the Dialogue Commission, an initiative that gives politicians the opportunity to decide on local investments through direct contact with residents. Through area development as a cross-sectoral municipal commitment, inclusive, locally based, basic democratic activities are developed in multi-ethnic parts of the municipality.

Botkyrka has stated its ambition to work for a greater mix of housing forms in different parts of the municipality. Even where this is not expressly done for reasons of the ethnic breakdown in neighbourhoods, it has been noted that districts with mixed forms of housing also counteract ethnic segregation. This ambition to counteract ethnic segregation in the municipality can also be seen in the work on the reception of newly arrived refugees in the municipality. Refugee housing since 2015 has been built, for example, in Tumba and Tullinge, districts with a relatively low proportion of people with a foreign background compared to other districts in the municipality.

Additionally, the municipality regularly organises festivals, such as the family festival *Vi är Botkyrka* [We are Botkyrka], in Hågelby, a central district where residents from across the municipality can easily get to and meet. All associations in Botkyrka can showcase their activities there. During the festival, prizes are awarded to specific persons, like the entrepreneur of the year or athlete of the year. The cultural festival also encourages mixing between different groups, regions and people of different backgrounds. The municipality plans its housing/ sub-

units according to the future needs of its citizens. This includes, for example, a first apartment for young people moving out or adapted living for the elderly. This is also important to ensure a variety of people in all parts of the municipality.

Lastly, the municipality aims to create meeting places in every municipal district. The housing company Botkyrkabyggen organises a cleaning day where children, young people and local associations work together. The municipality organises Sustainability Day, with the participation of different associations from across the municipality. Botkyrka's Art Gallery, located in Fittja, functions as a meeting place as it draws an audience from other parts of the municipality. There are association councils in each district, where associations of various kinds collaborate. Association councils are also involved in organising the Family festival in Hågelby. The Interreligious Network works with the support of the municipality and its integration work to create a peaceful society. Every year, the municipality offers summer jobs to young people which include meeting across group boundaries as an aim. The municipality also provides support to other initiatives, including: a) the local media house Fanzingo, which supports the youth magazine Shoo! With an editorial staff that includes young people from all parts of the municipality, b) The association Kompis Sverige, which matches established Botkyrka residents with new arrivals and creates new friendships that help new arrivals integrate more quickly into society.

Suggestions

Botkyrka has excellent achievements in the area already but others' experience is always useful.

The neighbourhood plan created by [Barcelona](#) has actively contributed to their diversification of neighbourhoods in the city and could be of interest, particularly given Botkyrka's innovative work at district level. [The Barcelona Neighbourhood Plan \(Pla de Barris\)](#) is a municipal initiative that implements social, economic, and urban actions to improve the neighbourhoods that need it most, in collaboration with local residents. The Directorate of Community Action Services, Neighbourhood Plan and the city's districts work together to create links and good neighbourhood relations. They consider the intercultural perspective which includes combatting segregation and fostering positive interaction. In addition, a person from the Intercultural team works on the Neighbourhood Plan, bringing cross fertilisation of experience. District personnel are even taking the initiative to design their own Intercultural Action Plans. The "territorialisation" of the intercultural perspective through the involvement and connections between different districts and neighbourhoods shows how embedded interculturalism is in the city.

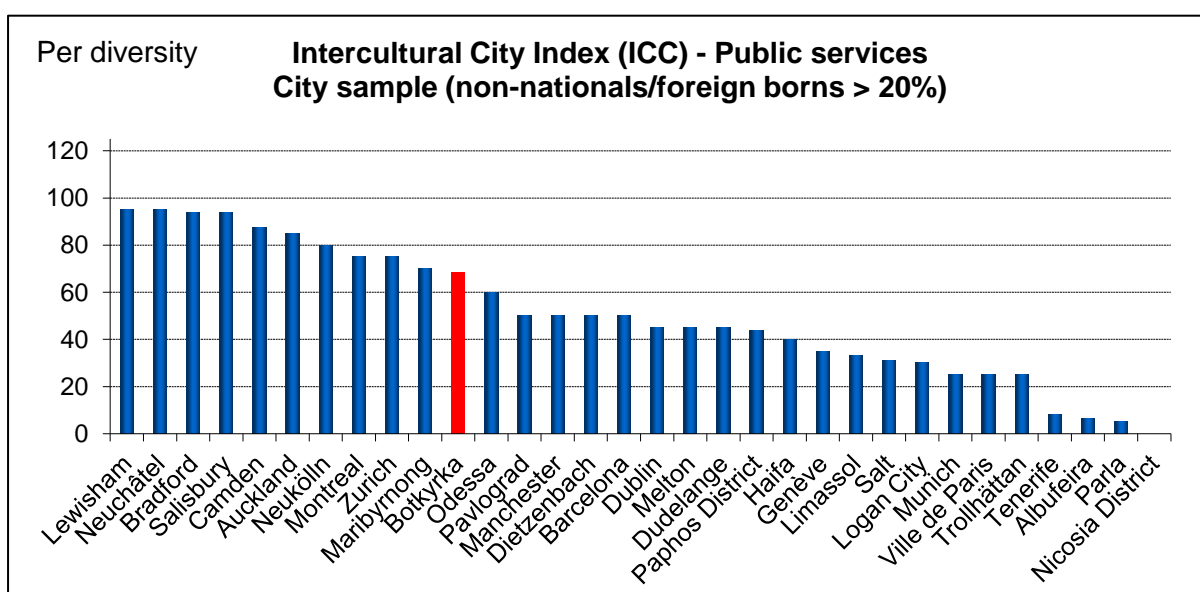
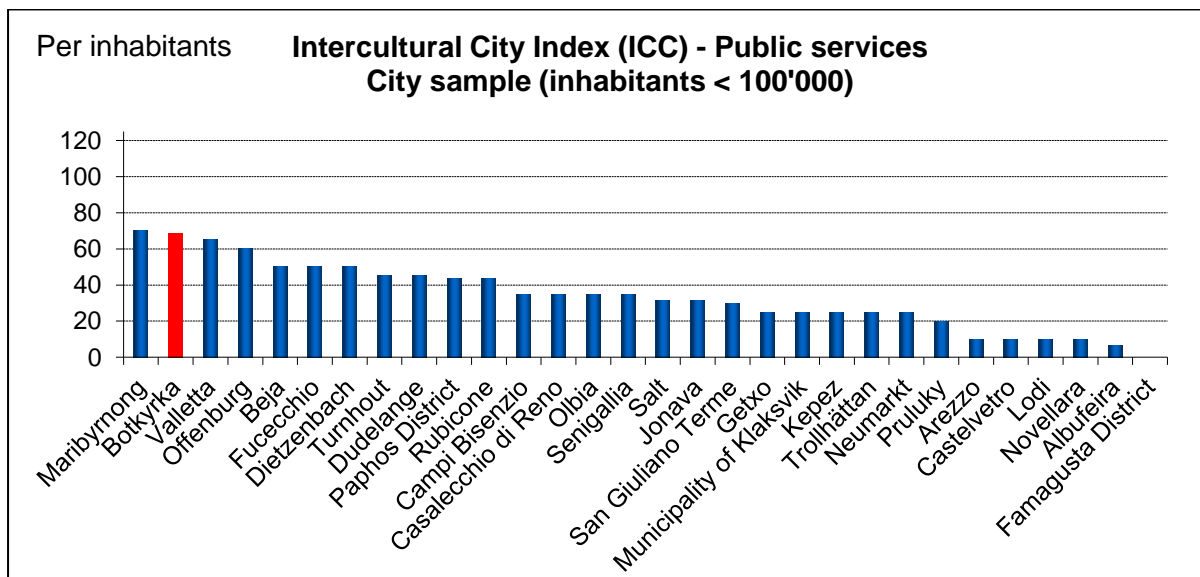
[Zambujal](#) in Portugal, may also provide some inspiration for smaller scale meetings of individuals who work together at district level. The Zambujal Melhora Programme established the "facilitators neighbourhood" idea which is the joining of two people with different ethnic backgrounds who receive training at the same time in a specific area. They then go on to work together in their own neighbourhood or others.

The [ICC study on managing gentrification](#) offers a range of strategies and examples of how to create inclusive public space, manage positively socio-cultural mixing, nurture sense of belonging and encourage diverse businesses to thrive.

PUBLIC SERVICES

As their very name implies, public services work for the benefit of the public as a whole. If the population is diverse, public services will be more efficient in delivering adequate benefits and information if city officers, at all levels of seniority, are as diverse as the population in general. This requires much more than simply ensuring equal opportunities to access public service employment. When taking action to encourage a diverse municipal workforce, an intercultural city acknowledges that a 'one size fits all' approach to public services and actions does not guarantee equal access to public benefits. The city also recognises that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds should never be treated as passive consumers of public benefits but can contribute actively by suggesting new ideas and innovative solutions to public problems.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 69%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 45% and slightly higher than Botkyrka's previous rate of 65% in 2018, showing consistent improvement in this field from the municipality.



The municipality has developed methods and policy documents that ensure a greater diversity within the organisation. The document *Employee and work environment policy* [Medarbetar- och arbetsmiljöpolicy], focuses on securing the right skills among employees, based on the needs that exist in the municipality, in relation to the citizens of the municipality and to avoid bias. Previous research has found that this competency-based approach increases diversity in organisations. Although Botkyrka does not have any direct actions aimed at encouraging a more diverse workforce, intercultural mixing and competence in the private sector, activities conducted within the framework of the Labour Market and Adult Education Administration are often relevant. This administration works directly with companies and employers to get people into work and historically the focus has been on those born abroad.

In terms of services, there are different sections in the local cemetery “Lilla Dalen” for all religions in the municipality, including for Muslims and Syrian Orthodox. This is a part of the work done within the interreligious network in Botkyrka and is coordinated nationally by the Swedish (protestant) Church. Library operations have an intercultural approach and have hosted intercultural and ‘anti-rumour cafes in Botkyrka.’⁷ Some swimming pools offer bathing hours each week for women only. This has made it easier for certain women of faith to learn to swim, and for women with trauma from male violence to take part in the municipality's activities. There are also different

⁷ See Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Good Practice Examples, Anti-Rumour Cafes, available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/-/anti-rumour-cafes>.

types of bathing suits for rent, which are, for example, adapted for women of the Muslim faith and others who want to cover a larger part of the body. Schools offers meals with halal meat and there are always vegetarian options.

Suggestions

Botkyrka already has some excellent policies in the field of public service. As there are no direct actions aimed at encouraging a more diverse workforce in the private sector, Botkyrka may be interested in an initiative in Leeds in the UK that maps diversity in employment. Although the initiative currently maps diversity mainly across public sector employers, it also welcomes the private sector, and as such encourages more knowledge of positive aspects of diversity in the workforce across the city.

The [Leeds](#) City Region Diversity Dashboard is a project by the Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network made up of the city's largest (mainly) public sector employers. They come together and focus on areas where they can make a difference for people as an employer, through procurement, through service delivery or as a civic partner. The dashboard shows the number of people employed by the eight employers according to different diversity indicators, including: age, if people are carers, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, socio-economic factors and sexuality. The dashboard uses an agreed diversity data standard that uses current data collected by the network members, but also tries to map characteristics to existing national standards as much as possible so that comparisons can be made with national data sets. There are currently eight organisations who publish data on the dashboard: Kelda Group Plc; Leeds Beckett University; Leeds College of Building; Leeds Trinity University; Leeds City Council; University of Leeds; Calderdale Council; and Leeds City College. The organisations employ a large number of people in Leeds between them, with Leeds City Council alone employing more than 14,000 people. Other organisations are welcome to join.

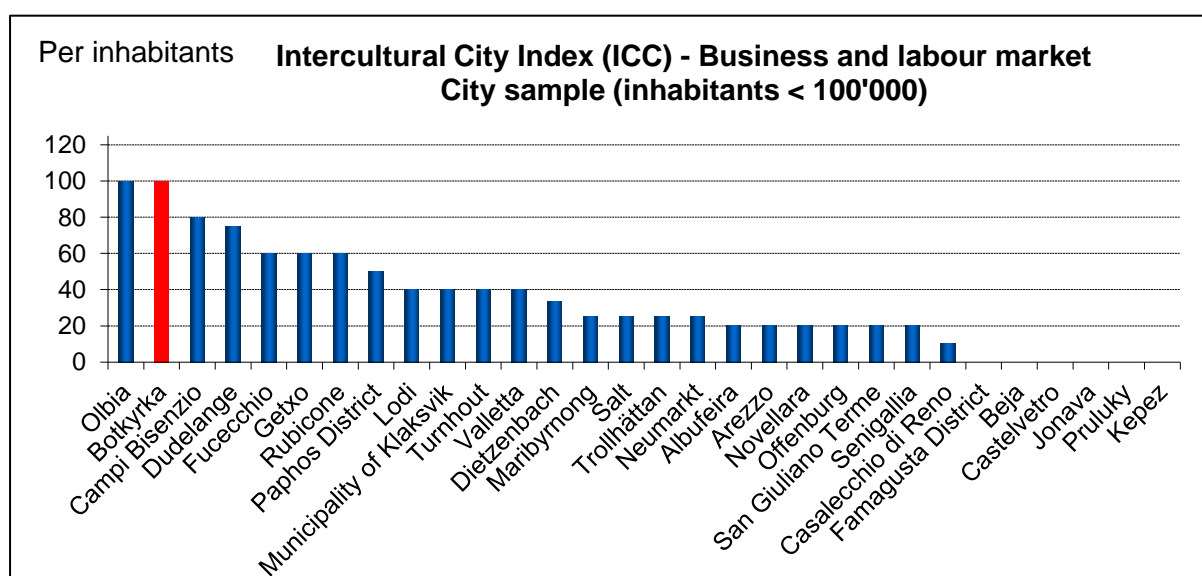
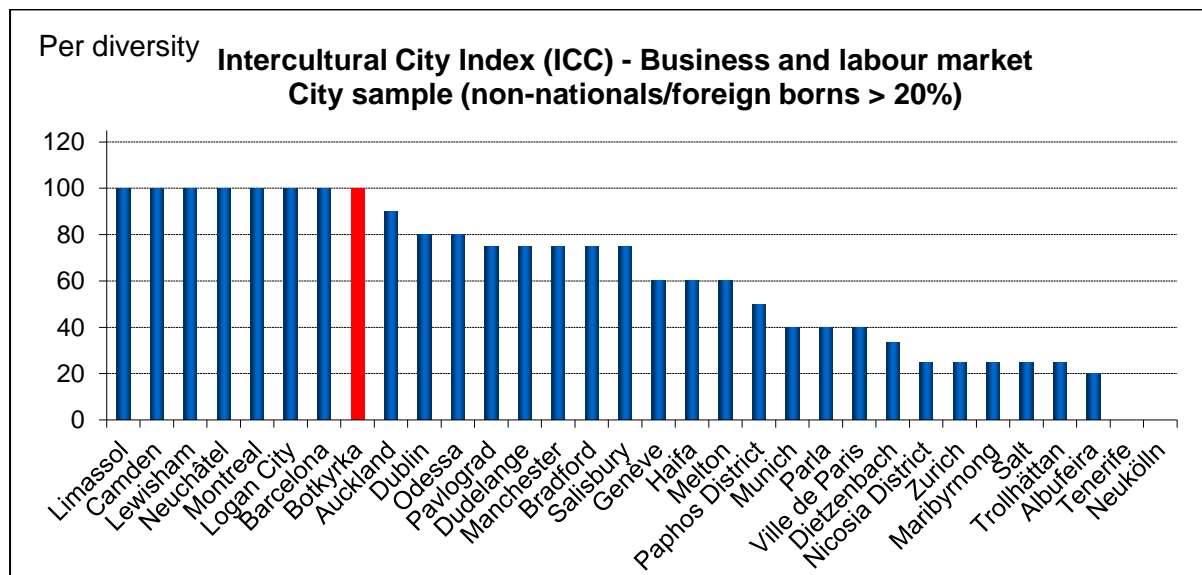
There are also resources from 2021 from the Italian municipalities of Novellara, Reggio Emilia, and the union of municipalities "Rubicone e Mare" who were awarded an ICC intercity-grant to develop "[Diversity Management approaches in the public-private partnership industry](#)", a project aiming to promote greater inclusion of employees from different backgrounds. Although public organisations are also concerned by this issue, they can have more limitations and restrictions as they are subject to specific rules, in particular with regards to recruitment and career development processes. At the same time, as political bodies they can promote the topic in the public debate and incentivise companies they have contracts with, to adopt effective Diversity Management strategies. After its very successful implementation, the project report contains all elements that will enable transferring to other public institutions the broad knowledge acquired and the methodological approach to a real inclusive diversity management in the workplace.

ICC programme resources on public and community services are available [here](#).

BUSINESS AND THE LABOUR MARKET

Access to the public sector labour markets is often restricted by national or regional legislation. When this is the case, the private sector may provide an easier route for people with migrant or diverse backgrounds to engage in economic activity. As a result, private companies and activities tend to offer much more diverse working environments than the public sector. Research has also proved that it is cultural diversity in private companies, and not homogeneity, which fosters creativity and innovation. By constantly highlighting the diversity advantage in business, and partnering with their chambers of commerce and entrepreneurs, cities can influence how diversity is perceived in the private sector in such diverse sectors as shops, clubs, restaurants, industry, technical services and science.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 100%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 51% and equal to Botkyrka's previous rate of 100% in 2018. This shows consistent high achievement in the municipality across business and labour market strategies and initiatives.



Organisations to promote diversity and non-discrimination in the labour market are active on the domestic stage in Sweden. One example of a nationwide organisations is *Företagarna*: an organisation that represents small business owners in Sweden, with local associations including in Botkyrka, offering legal advice on discrimination law amongst other things. Another example is an organisation called Companion. Companion promotes cooperative business and entrepreneurship with a focus on equality. Lastly, *Nyföretagarcentrum* offers courses for starting a business, including in different languages such as in Arabic. In the municipality, the Labour Market and Adult Education Administration works to create jobs and employment for Botkyrka residents and has over the years had many projects to support citizens born abroad and newcomers, especially young people.

The municipality has a policy to reach out to offer assistance to local businesses, independently of the owner's background, if required. This has been done through *Tillväxt Botkyrka* which is a non-profit collaborative initiative between business and the municipality that provides business development support to companies with between 5-50 employees.

Examples of incubators that the municipality promotes include: Changers Hubs; an organisation from Botkyrka that supports and develops young entrepreneurs from the municipality, many of whom have a foreign background; Good Talents, which organises training and events for young people in social entrepreneurship; and Klump, which helps cultural entrepreneurs develop their vision into sustainable companies. In addition to financial support, the municipality helps these organisations by communicating the organisations' activities externally, helping them gain attention and contributing to their growth. The organisation *Miljonbemanning* started in Botkyrka and has expanded

across the country. Its purpose is to act as a bridge so that companies come into contact with and hire people from the suburbs.

Botkyrka has a strong emphasis on procurement in relation to environmental, economic and social sustainability. When the municipality is completing their annual plan for upcoming procurement projects related to goods, services and construction projects, an analysis related to these areas of sustainability is completed first. Initially, a procurement strategy that describes the context and market conditions is formulated. Based on this the goals for the procurement project are set, including prioritised requirements, such as sustainability. Requirements on non-discrimination are standard in most contracts and are included in the municipality's standard contracts. Botkyrka does not have a requirement on intercultural inclusion, but it can be considered if the business unit responsible finds it necessary.

Suggestions

Although Botkyrka has very high achievements in this field, it is always useful to learn from the experience of others.

The cities [Amadora, Loures, and Oeiras](#) in Portugal recognised the disparity of equity and inclusion in employment and have created a guidebook for employers which emphasises the importance of interculturalism and inclusion. Their "Inclusive Recruitment" project has also worked on ways and means to encourage Portuguese employers to hire migrants and newcomers, taking advantage from diversity. Sponsored through an ICC intercity grant, the project mapped the obstacles to smoother inclusive recruitment in Portugal, to map knowledge and know-how gaps among employers. They developed an inclusive recruitment guide called "Employers' starter pack", to provide information on labour laws for Portuguese companies, on areas such as migration legislation and workplace inclusion. Specific information was further developed to target and empower jobseekers. The project was implemented in a participatory manner, involving the relevant local authorities, representatives of the workers and employers, including big companies such as Ikea and Portugalia. Thanks to the success of the Guide and with the help of the Portuguese Network of Intercultural Cities (RPCI Cooperative) some additional multimedia material has been produced including short videos and a series of podcast. The report can be easily replicated by other ICC members through adaptation to their legal and administrative contexts⁸.

The Intercultural Employment Pathways Programme created by [Ballarat](#) in Australia could also be of interest to Botkyrka. The Intercultural Employment Pathways Programme (IEP) aims to enhance social inclusion, employment and education pathways for culturally and linguistically diverse men, women and youth. This programme supports participants with training and personal development opportunities to be work and study-ready in Australia. The IEP program is funded by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) and coordinated by the City of Ballarat – Intercultural Team with the support of partners Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC), Ballarat Community Health (BCH) and the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY). Evaluations by participants received overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Lastly, [Camden](#) (United Kingdom) shows inspiring practices, related in particular to encouraging businesses and residents from ethnic minorities to move beyond the ethnic economy and enter the mainstream economy and higher value-added sectors. These initiatives target among others under-served communities, aspiring entrepreneurs, pupils and private-sector enterprises, and consist in partnerships with community-level actors, incubators and neighbouring local authorities, as well as in grants and contract opportunities and awareness-raising.

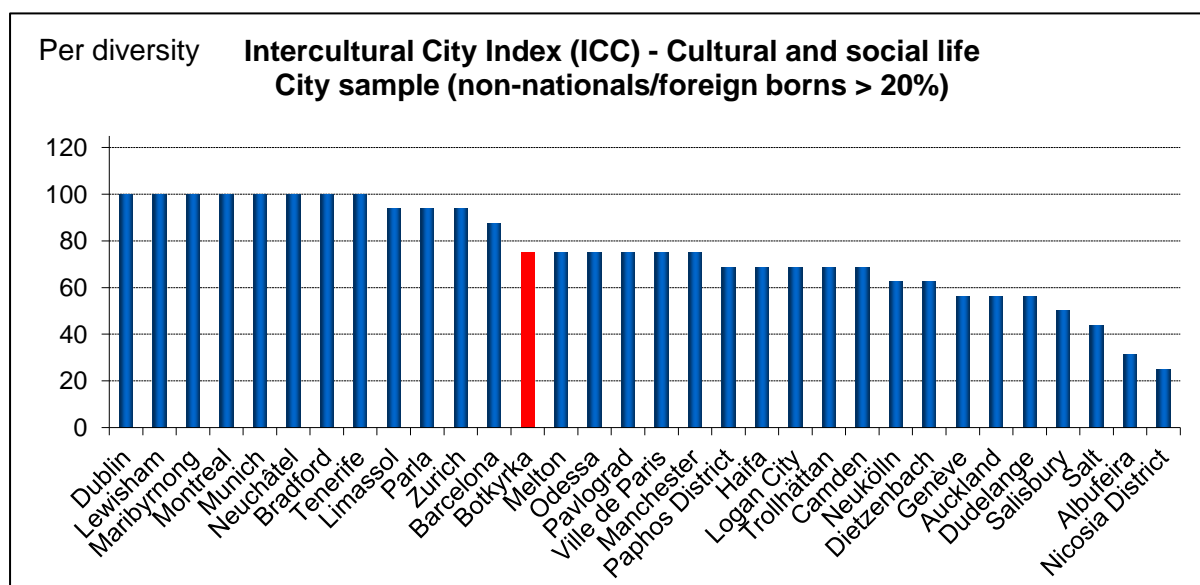
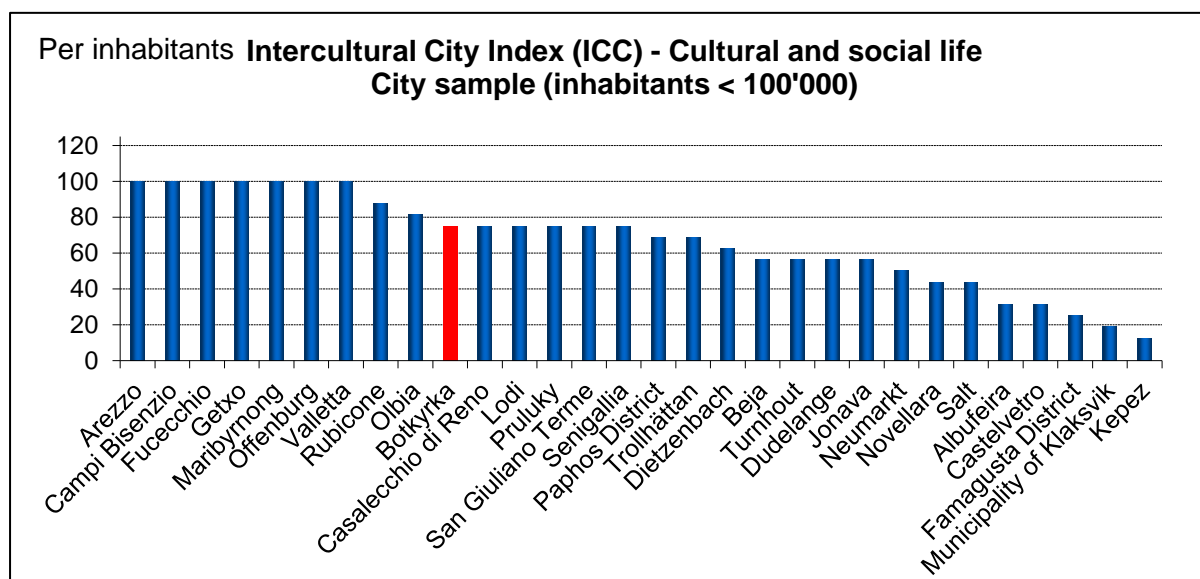
ICC programme resources on business and employment are available [here](#).

⁸ For more information, see the Intercultural cities website, at: <https://rm.coe.int/inclusive-recruitment-2021-project-report/1680a535d6> and <https://rm.coe.int/guide-inclusive-labour-market-en/1680a535d5>.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

Whereas people living in a city may have different migrant/minority or other backgrounds, they very often share the same interests and satisfaction when engaging in leisure activities, especially in the fields of arts, culture and sports. Such activities are sometimes structured along ethnic lines. That is quite understandable when they aim to preserve folklore traditions or the language and history of countries of origin. What is problematic is when cross-cultural leisure activities are organised along ethnic lines, for example when a football team only accepts players from one ethnic group. The intercultural city can encourage cultural openness through its own activities and by introducing intercultural criteria when allocating resources to artistic, cultural and sports organisations.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 75% in cultural and civil life, which is slightly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 72% but considerably lower than Botkyrka's previous rate of 100% in 2018. The decrease in score for Botkyrka in 2022 from 2018 is due to the more specific questions for the 2022 questionnaire after it was updated.



The municipality has a long tradition of investing in creativity, knowledge, and culture as a way of meeting the challenges that come with the municipality's demographics. It is a strategic thinking that, for example, led to the creation of Subtopia, a cluster of companies and organisations that work with art and creative industries; Multicultural Centre, a foundation that works with research, education and exhibitions around migration, segregation and racism; Fanzingo, a media house that spreads perspectives from underrepresented groups in the media and Changers Hub, an innovation house that offers coaching to young entrepreneurs from the most vulnerable districts.

Cultural and civil life is well supported by the municipality. Grants are given on the condition that associations - including ethnic and religious associations - are open to everyone, work against discrimination, and abide by democratic principles. Associations can also receive grants to organise summer vacation activities that create meeting places and promote interaction among children from different backgrounds. Special grants are announced, when necessary, for example, in connection with events organised by the municipality. These special grants have a focus on creating activities that will reach different groups in the local community. This work is done in collaboration with district developers in the municipality. The municipality also organises events such as *Botkyrkadagen*, a day full of artist performances and activities for children and young people. During these events, associations of various kinds meet, they participate in activities that must address all Botkyrka residents.

The municipality also provides holiday grants so that associations can organise meeting places during the holidays where children from different backgrounds can meet in joint activities. The municipality organises conferences, such as 'Association Day,' which brings together actors from across Botkyrka's civil society to discuss current issues in Botkyrka, thus creating a meeting place where associations can meet across all types of borders. There are specific requirements for the organisation of these events, including that activities must be open to everyone, and that they must work against discrimination in their activities. Certain types of association support are given to support associations in organising activities where children from different backgrounds can meet. The municipality also helps associations to extend its reach with information about their activities, as they can apply for grants for marketing to reach a wider audience in the district.

Regarding debates, Botkyrka does not organise debates or campaigns as such on intercultural matters, but it gives financial support to organisations such as the Multicultural Centre [*Mångkulturellt centrum*] or *Fanzingo* that regularly organise lectures, debates, and conferences on related matters. Also, the Botkyrka Youth Council organises this kind of events from time to time specifically for youth.

Suggestions

In [Barcelona](#), the Apropa Cultura network is fascinating and could definitely provide inspiration for Botkyrka, particularly given the prominence of the art gallery, library and festivals in Botkyrka's expertise.

Apropa Cultura's philosophy and main goal is to prevent social exclusion encouraging people's participation promoting the democratisation of culture.

It is a network of cultural facilities, such as theatres, concert halls, festivals and museums, whose main purpose is to encourage inclusiveness promoting cultural activities and events. The initiative started during the season 2006/2007 when L'Auditori launched the Auditori Apropa: a programme targeted to attract groups at risk of social exclusion, encouraging minorities to attend events at a lower price. A few years later, L'Auditori invited other organisations in Barcelona to participate and, as a result, the Apropa Cultura was created with a rich programme of events: music, theatre, dance and circus. Today, Apropa includes 15 cities with a total of 55 cultural centres, involving about 20,000 spectators every season.

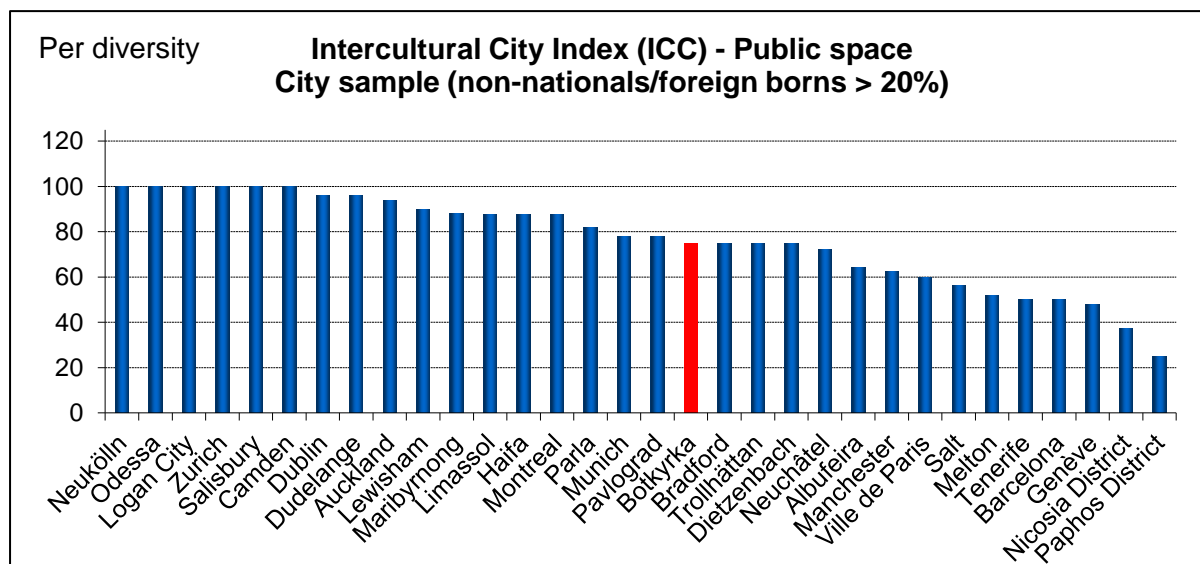
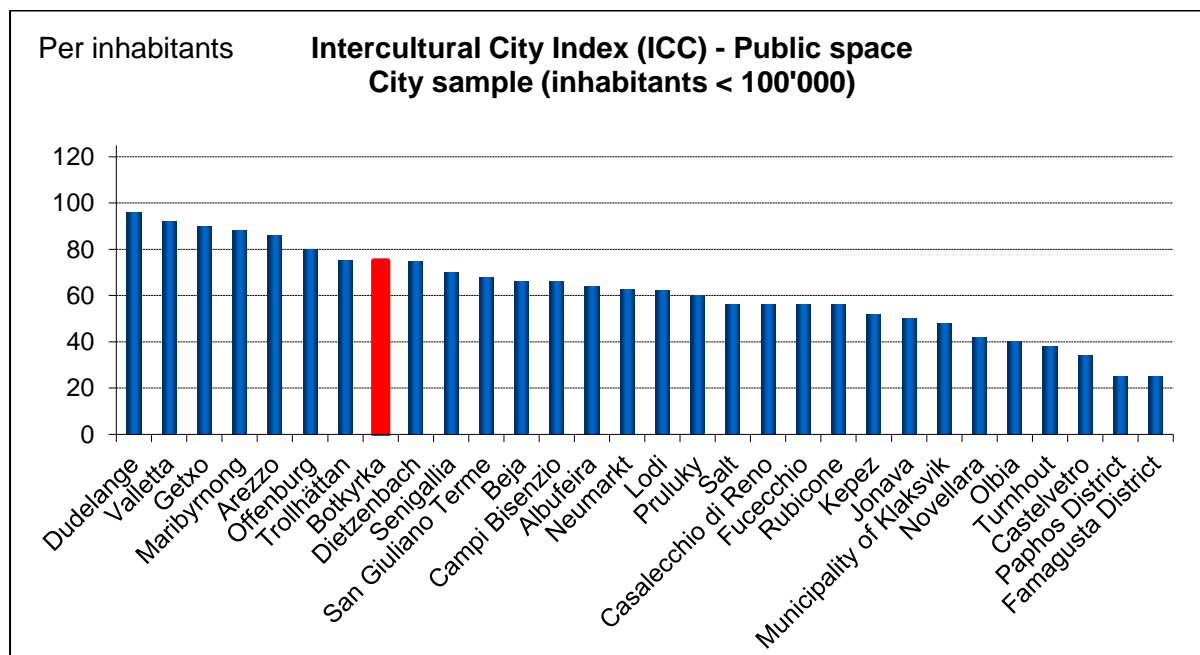
In addition to music, theatre, dance and circus, Apropa offers a wide range of activities: for instance, museums and cultural centres offer free visits of their exhibitions. Some activities have been designed exclusively for vulnerable groups and are carried out throughout the season in different theatres and auditoriums. Moreover, courses are organised in the performing of arts, music, plastic and visual arts.

As Botkyrka does not organise its own debates on intercultural issues, it could be interested in [Bergen](#)'s experience in Norway, where a report on structural racism sparked useful public debate. The research initiative was undertaken by Bergen Municipality to establish how minority ethnic populations perceived the way they were treated by the city's services and how they experienced living in Bergen. There was an interest to capture the narratives of minority ethnic people and to hear their critique. The research report enabled understanding of the issue of structural racism, and it has become a reference point for the issue. A specific and accessible theoretical chapter on the issue was included in the report on what the concept of structural racism means in the Norwegian context. This has enabled city officials to operationalise the concept in plans and actions. In addition, the research report provoked debate. Politicians on the City Council took it seriously, and a number of public meetings on the report were held. There was good media coverage and debate of the report.

PUBLIC SPACE

Public spaces (streets, squares, parks, etc.) and facilities (public buildings, day centres, schools, health centres, etc.) are places which most citizens are obliged to use. They offer the possibility of meeting people of different nationalities, origins, languages, religions/beliefs, sexual orientations and age groups. For encounters between diverse people to actually occur, such spaces and facilities should be designed and animated in a way that all residents feel comfortable when using them. Conversely badly-managed spaces can become places of suspicion and fear of the “other”. When this is the case, the intercultural city actively engages with all the people concerned, firstly to understand the local context from their perspective, and secondly to identify solutions largely support by them.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 75%, which is slightly higher than the city sample’s achievement rate of 67% and considerably higher than Botkyrka’s previous rate of 56% in 2018, showing considerable improvement in this field.



Botkyrka takes action to encourage meaningful intercultural mixing and interaction in public space. For example, the libraries in Botkyrka function as meeting places by organising activities such as author talks and language cafes, where you can get help in learning Swedish through informal conversations. Additionally, the library in Fittja has changed its cataloguing system so that books in different languages on the same theme are now next to each other, and not in separate sections as before. Botkyrka Art Gallery, is tasked with collaborating with local

associations around exhibitions and events, and has, e.g., through the Färgsättarna project, made it possible for local young adults to develop as artists through public commissions. Botkyrka has a municipal strategy to develop Botkyrka's parks to function as meeting places by making existing places multifunctional and thus attract different categories of inhabitants. Good examples are the Public Health Park (Folkhälsoparken) in Alby and the Banslättsparken in Tullinge, both built in consultation with different groups of citizens. Alby Public Health Park is a well-visited meeting place with sports activities, outdoor gym, hammocks, sound system with Bluetooth and green areas for cultivation. Banslättsparken was completed in the autumn of 2022 and is a universally designed clearing in the forest created with the support of wisdom from different groups living in the area, with different needs and wishes, for example with different types of disabilities and children and young people.

Botkyrka endeavours to take into account the diversity of the population in the design, renovation and management of new public buildings and spaces. This is done through the conscious effort to create more meeting places. Furthermore, there are routine consultations with local stakeholders such as local associations, when it comes to new buildings. An example is when the municipality's art gallery was moved from Tumba to Fittja in 2019. After consultation with local actors, a kitchen and room for a stage was built next to the entrance of the new building to enable local stakeholders to organise events there. Another example is the new neighbourhood Terrassen in Fittja, which was built on a plot of land that had been empty for a very long time after a thorough consultation with residents about their wishes for the area. The Terrassen neighbourhood was built, among other things, to contribute to a more diversified range of housing types in the district.

Botkyrka has been an administrative municipality for the Finnish language since 2011, and works to revitalise and strengthen the language, e.g., by putting up signs in Finnish where there are Finnish-language services, such as citizen offices, libraries, homes for the elderly and the municipal hall. Botkyrka has also given support to the artist Saadia Hussain, who through collective artistic processes with different groups of residents has created a number of public murals to celebrate Botkyrka's diversity. In addition, there are established routines in the municipality to involve different groups of residents when it comes to the redevelopment of districts. The municipality's district strategists play a central role in these processes, by arranging dialogue meetings, meeting with associations, companies, student councils, etc., to document views on building plans. The participants are also asked about participation in working groups together with civil servants. These groups then help to write proposals that are sent for referral and are given as a basis to officials and consultants who work based on it. However, there are a couple of premises that are dominated by an ethnic group, which is in the minority in the municipality, and which are perceived by some others as unsafe spaces. This feeling is reinforced by the fact that only men from that group use that space, and that they are perceived to have activities that do not welcome others.

There are established cooperation groups between municipal stakeholders, including the police and the fire service. They make continuous analyses of how things are going in the different districts. The municipality does not give grants to associations that only cater to men, only to associations that are open to everyone and that strive for an even distribution of power in the association based on gender. However, it is not possible for the municipality to do anything if associations themselves are responsible for financing their activities and paying their premises rent. However, the municipal housing company Botkyrkabyggen is aware that some associations are perceived by others as unwelcoming and has an ongoing dialogue with the associations about this.

Recommendations

Cities are encouraged to strengthen policies and actions to support a public space for all. Botkyrka has already taken a number of steps to reduce segregation and increase the accessibility of the public space and could draw further inspiration from the following good practices.

Montreal in Canada has several good practices in this area. Through intercultural events and initiatives geared towards integration, Montreal helps to ensure mixing between the various communities present within its boundaries.

Every year for the past five years, under a partnership with the Quartier des spectacles entertainment district, the city has run an open-air event called "Les Jardins Gamelin" designed to encourage living together in public spaces through an extensive cultural programme.

All neighbourhood library services are designed to take account of the diversity of the local communities and run their collections (print, audiovisual, digital) and mediation activities in such a way as to turn libraries into places where all cultures can exchange with one another and learn without criticism. Of particular note here, the "Living library: borrow a life" programme takes up a Council of Europe good practice by inviting representatives of

Montreal's cultural communities to turn themselves into "human books" and talk about their life stories. They can be "borrowed" to find out about the worlds of Indigenous peoples or migrants in one-to-one exchanges that offer ideal opportunities for fighting prejudices and building bridges between cultures.

In addition, as part of cultural trail activities, the city runs a tour of Montreal Island from the Indigenous perspective, consisting of a bus tour in which participants visit various neighbourhoods to find out about the history of Indigenous peoples in urban areas down through the centuries.

In the area of urban renewal, Montreal has a universal design guide for new buildings and the extension, renovation and maintenance of existing city buildings; a universal design policy supplements regulations that include technical criteria to be met when designing or refurbishing buildings or public spaces. Following the entry into force of these instruments, the city has, for instance, worked on standardising the design of public spaces so as to make it easier for people who do not speak French or have intellectual or visual impairments to find their way about; it provides family changing/locker rooms accessible to everyone (persons with reduced mobility, assisted by a person of the opposite sex, prams, LGBTQ +); it provides level or gently sloping routes for persons with reduced mobility, prams, delivery workers, staff with cleaning/maintenance equipment; and it also provides new short, direct routes and resting places for elderly people and short or overweight people, convalescents or people with other mobility issues.

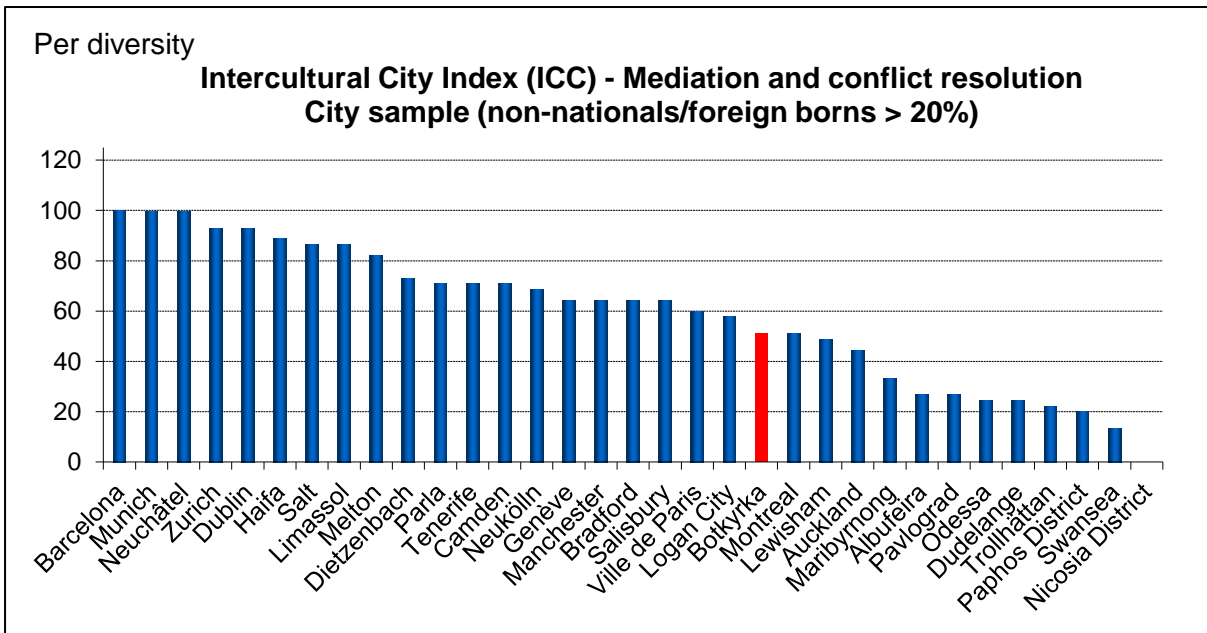
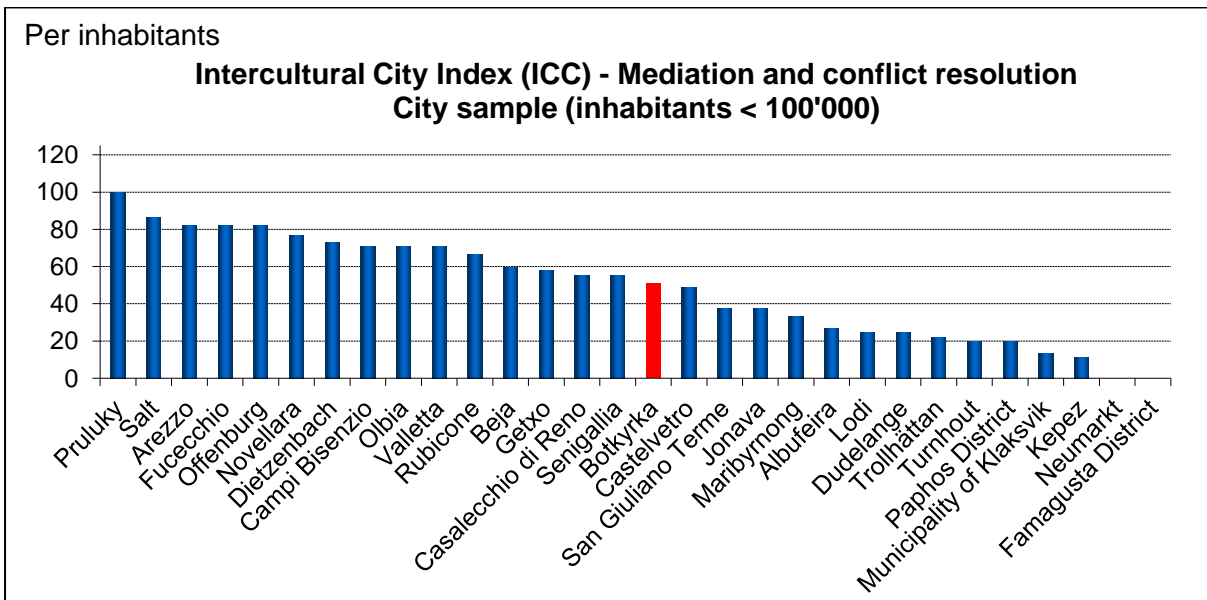
"Muraliza" is a Mural Art Festival in [Cascais](#), Portugal, which takes place every summer since 2014 and lasts for nine days. Arts have the uncanny ability to overcome cultural and ethnic differences: art is like a universal language that brings people together. During the festival, it is possible to meet artists and talk about their masterpieces. In fact, Muraliza maintains the desire to renew the status of Cascais as the cradle of all street artistic expressions in Portugal. The event attracts many tourists every year that also have the opportunity to take part in guided visits to achieve a deep understanding of the pieces. The event involves all facets of Portuguese culture and it witnesses its transformation and evolution: the painting murals of great and medium size are always inspired by the innumerable and unique characteristics of the region and, concretely, in the peculiarities of this social district built in the 60's.

ICC programme resources on housing, public spaces and urban planning are available [here](#).

MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In diverse societies there is always the potential for misunderstanding and conflict over values, behaviour or resources. In cities, where people with different cultural backgrounds and socio-economic statuses live together in close proximity, such tensions are natural and indeed part of everyday life. Instead of denying, ignoring, or repressing conflict, the intercultural city seeks to anticipate, identify, address and resolve issues to the satisfaction of all protagonists without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The intercultural city views conflict as a normal feature of free, dynamic and communicative communities and sees the very process of conflict mediation and resolution as an opportunity for innovation and sustainable social cohesion.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 51%, which is slightly lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 58% and considerably lower than Botkyrka's previous rate of 71% in 2018. This is due to the questionnaire being updated in 2019, whereby multiple answers are possible. This means those cities with a variety of mediation services offered in a variety of contexts would score higher.



Botkyrka works with different organisations to provide professional services for the mediation of intercultural communication. For example, the Interreligious network [*Botkyrkas Interreligiösa nätverk*] is independent but co-operates with the municipality to develop practices that support dialogue between different religious congregations in Botkyrka. The predominant aim of the network is to preserve peaceful coexistence, but also to handle conflicts when it is necessary. However, intercultural mediation is provided through the Interreligious network and in some cases in collaboration with other associations. An example is when the Danish radical nationalist Rasmus Paludan was in Botkyrka to agitate the community by burning the Koran. The municipality collaborated with local associations and congregations to gather strength, call for calm, and clearly take a stand for the right of all Botkyrka residents to be who they are. Additionally, staff from the Municipal Head Office support the Interreligious network based on their needs. Recently, the focus has mainly been operational development and support to shape structures within the network. The network has recently asked the municipal administration for capacity building for deeper knowledge about the Swedish Law on Freedom of Speech and the law on hatred against ethnic groups (*hets mot folkgrupp*), which the municipality is providing.

The municipality also reports implementing initiatives to prevent youth violence following the Tåget and Mentors in Violence Prevention methods targeting schools with pupils aged 9 to 15. Those initiatives are the result of cooperation between social services, the safety and security unit of the municipality, the police, a housing company and civil society. They focus on empowering children/youth to report situations of violence and raise awareness

among peers on ways to prevent violence. With these methods, teenagers also can become mentors for younger pupils.⁹

Recommendations

Botkyrka already has a strong basis for its work in intercultural medication and works well with the Interreligious network. If the municipality wished to diversify and expand its work in this area, the following are interesting examples.

The creation of “EDUCA” in [Cascais](#) (Portugal) is very interesting and might be something Botkyrka wants to emulate in their city. In Cascais, a group of immigrant or immigrant descendent mediators has been created with training and support, to develop mediation in the educational context. These mediators are interlocutors in the pupil/school/ guardian triangle and a source for signalling specific individualised interventions. Schools feel that they have a quality resource: availability to play with students in the playground, management of emerging conflicts among students, identification and signalling of problem situations. The partners committed to the practice include the creation of a consortium which plays a central role in helping to break down prejudices about some families by trying other ways of approaching problem situations.

An interesting example is also [Barcelona](#) (Spain) which has a wealth of services to ease tensions and provide mediation in the city. The Translation and Intercultural Mediation Service aims to help professionals who work with people of different origins to adopt an intercultural perspective. It is divided into three areas: translation; interpersonal mediation; and group and community mediation. The Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Service of the Office for Non-Discrimination (OND) and the Office for Religious Affairs (ORA) deals with situations of violation or discrimination on the grounds of gender, religious choice, origin or other particular or collective rights. Intercultural mediation is provided in specialised institutions such as hospitals, police, youth clubs, mediation centres, retirement homes, etc. It is also provided in the city administration for general purposes; in neighbourhoods, on the streets, where the city actively seeks to meet residents and discuss problems.

As Botkyrka already has some experience working with interreligious groups, Sabadell (Spain) has some good examples of how to increase understanding of different religions and to work together to promote tolerance. The [map of the diversity of beliefs in Sabadell](#) shows all the spiritual, religious or non-religious and humanistic traditions present in the city. There is information such as places of worship, when they meet, how to contact them, etc. The map is a tool to bring them closer together and to encourage them to set up common projects. For the last ten years there has also been an [Open day](#) for worship centres to promote knowledge of religious diversity and freedom of conscience when there are guided tours and open doors to various worship centres in Sabadell.

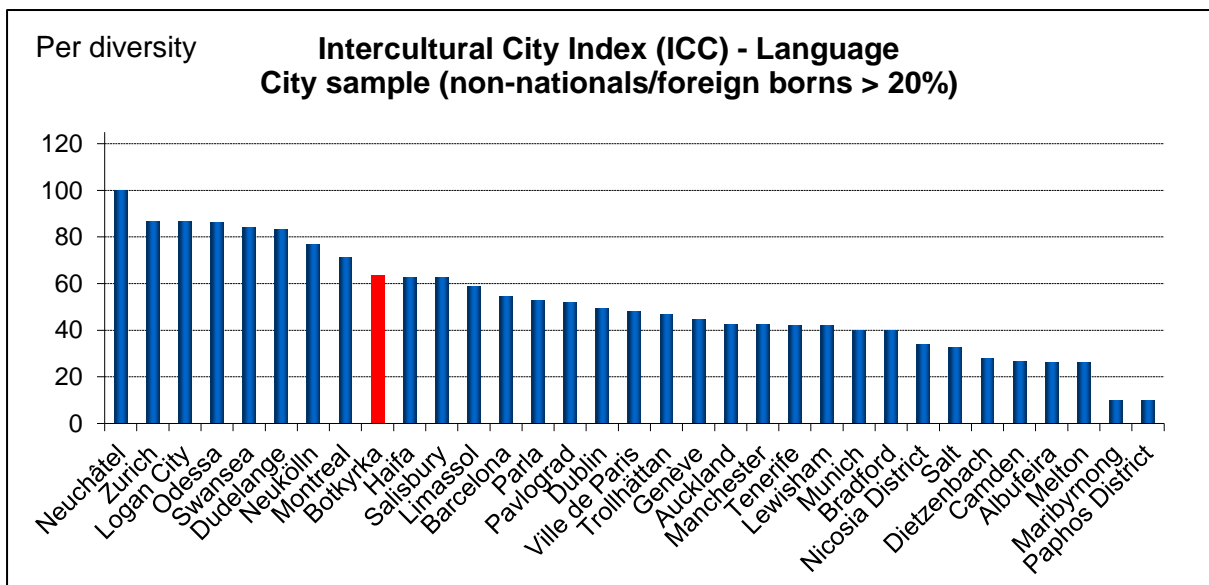
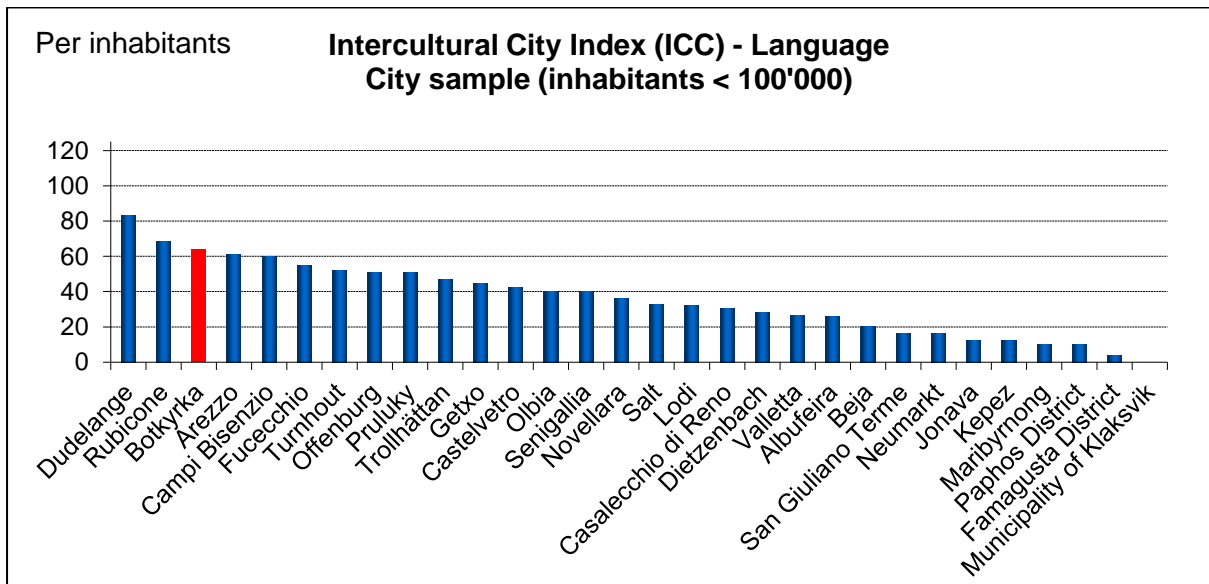
ICC programme resources on intercultural competence and mediation are available [here](#).

LANGUAGE

The provision of courses and other facilities for people with migrant backgrounds to learn the receiving country's language(s) is important to ensure social and economic integration. It does however need to be supplemented with activities which highlight the value of other languages, and enable people with migrant origins not only to preserve and transmit their languages to their children and other members of the community, but also to take pride in them as a heritage enriching the local community. An intercultural city promotes multilingualism as a resource for education, business, tourism, cultural life, etc. It underlines the value of all languages present in the city, for instance by giving opportunities to diverse language speakers to express themselves in their mother tongue in public and at cultural events and by promoting all events that offer opportunities for linguistic exchanges and mixing.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 64%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 46% and is slightly lower than Botkyrka's achievement rate of 71% in 2018. This shift in achievement rate from 2018 to 2022 is due to the updated questionnaire of 2019 and Botkyrka not marking “learning migrant/minority languages as part of the regular curriculum at schools” in 2022 as it did in previous questionnaires.

⁹ This information was provided after Botkyrka's achieved rate was assessed and is thus not reflected in the score indicated above.



In addition to the opportunity to receive education in the mother tongue at school, there is the opportunity to learn Swedish in adult education alongside SFI or Swedish for immigrants. The municipality also works with civil society organisations whose aim is to strengthen knowledge of Swedish for people who do not participate in regular activities in their daily life, such as SFI, work or other. Formalised cooperation exists with, for example, the organisations Kompis Sweden and Nya Kompisbyrån.

Botkyrka is an administrative municipality for the national minority Finnish people. The revitalisation of the Finnish language is an important part of that work. The municipality signs are both in Finnish and Swedish in various public places. All new and replaced signs are in both Finnish and Swedish. The municipality receives an annual state grant from the County Administrative Board [*Länsstyrelsen*] to work with national minorities. 10% of the state grant is distributed to local associations. The municipality pays for advertising in local Finnish newspapers. In Tumba library, there is a Finnish-speaking staff member employed tasked with strengthening the Finnish language in Botkyrka. The municipality is part of a collaboration agreement with Botkyrka community radio association, which broadcasts in different languages.

Recommendations

As Botkyrka is interested in improving language provision, and the fact it already works with its libraries so well, the experience from Ansan in South Korea could be useful.

[Ansan](#) City offers Korean language education for non-nationals. The city itself runs Korean language education programmes while commissioning private organisations to complete the offer. There is a course in preparation for the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK), which is considered a necessity for non-nationals to find a job in Korea, and a social integration programme as a compulsory course to acquire Korean nationality. With the view of helping intercultural children and youth retain their mother tongue, Ansan also offers mother tongue classes primarily centring on Russian. In addition, to help locals understand interculturality and acquire language proficiency, the city runs a range of other foreign language education courses (English, Chinese, Vietnamese, etc.).

Ansan City publishes quarterly newsletters to inform residents of updates related to their daily lives. Published in eight languages (Korean, English, Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Nepalese, and Cambodian), the newsletter's circulation is around 40,000 copies a year. The city also publishes a guide to life and legal affairs in the Republic of Korea for non-nationals in eight languages, 5,000 copies annually. A local TV programme, entitled Wongok-dong Neighbourhood Meeting, is produced six times a year and representatives from different countries are invited.

Ansan City purchases books from different countries and lends them to both locals and non-nationals. The current collection contains 122,187 books, with new books added to the collection annually with the goal of improving the diversity of languages available. Notably, the city now runs two multicultural libraries for non-nationals.

[Barcelona](#) may also be of interest, given its focus on Catalan and plurality of language and culture. The Barcelona Centre for Linguistic Normalization (CLN) welcomes over 17,000 students from 127 different countries. The classes are an active example of diversity and the respect of difference. The CNL has adopted intercultural dialogue as one of the strategic values of its educational project. New arrivals are acquainted with the characteristic traits of Catalan culture, from the position of exchange, plurality, interaction and the hybridisation of culture.

Activities include:

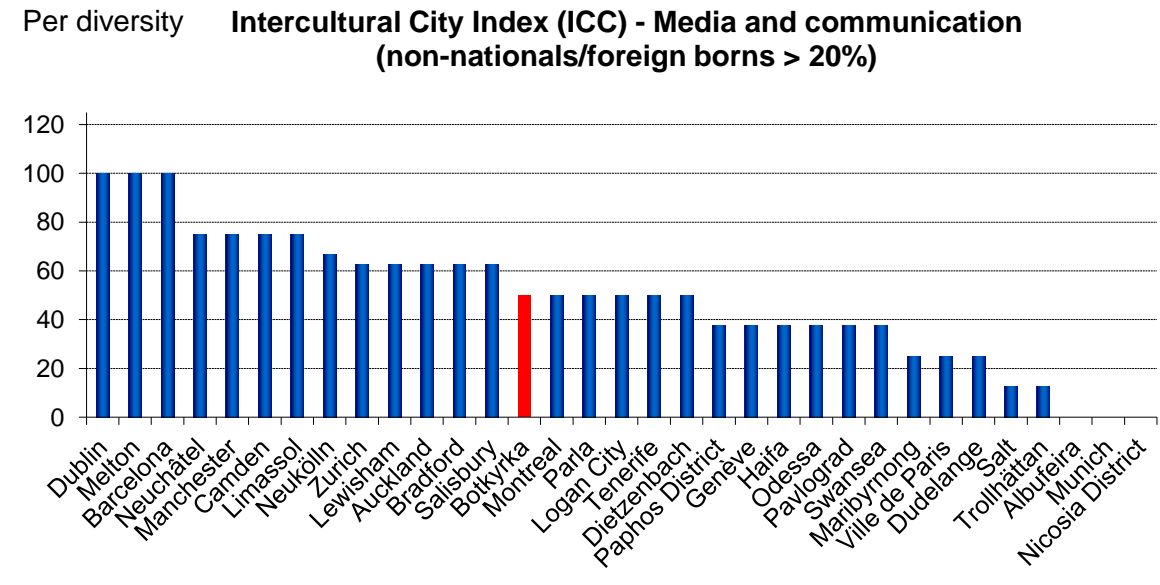
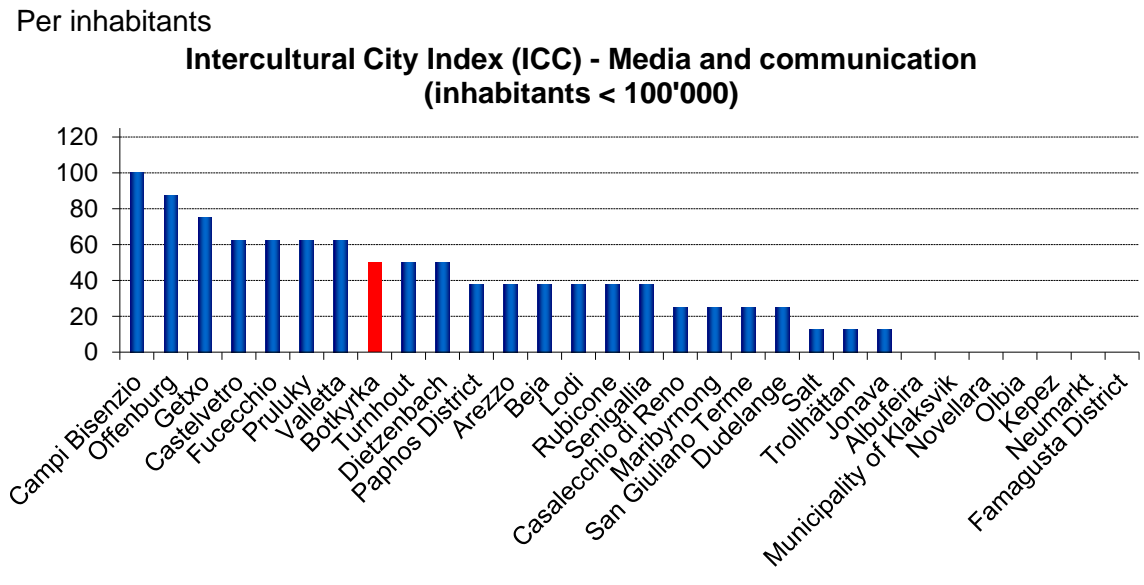
- A programme to furnish skills to people from immigrant groups to be “qualified disseminators” of their languages of origin and provide them the tools to promote the teaching of the languages of origin amongst immigrant groups;
- Promoting and providing support to the different programmes of language pairs that exist in the city, both in the exchange of Catalan as well as in the languages of origin of immigrants;
- Giving support to programmes of language exchange in groups;
- Promoting 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.

ICC programme resources on multilingualism are available [here](#).

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Traditional and social media have a very powerful influence on attitudes towards cultural diversity and other diversities. Much of the information people access is generated by international newsgroups, national media, or by private persons in the case of social media. Nevertheless, there is still much the city authorities can do to achieve a climate of public opinion more conducive to positive intercultural relations. In its communication, an intercultural city constantly highlights the positive contribution of people with migrant/minority backgrounds to the social, cultural and economic development of the city. More importantly, the city partners with local media agencies so that they purvey a similar message and cover events occurring in the city in an objective and unbiased way.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 50%, which is slightly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 47%. However, this number is considerably lower than the previous achievement rate of 88% in 2018. It can be explained by the fact that Botkyrka indicated that it is not monitoring traditional and social media to see how people with migrant or minority backgrounds were portrayed.



Botkyrka has a communication policy that makes it clear that the diversity of appearances that exist in Botkyrka must be communicated, i.e. a conscious strategy for the images the municipality communicates in, in different contexts, such as the local media. Botkyrka municipality has long-established contact and dialogue with local newspapers and radio channels. The municipality provides, among other things, support to a local Finnish radio channel. This makes it possible to follow up on any inaccuracies or problematic representations of people with a foreign background in local media, although this has not happened for many years. One possible explanation is that local media have a high level of awareness around issues of migration and negative representation. Botkyrka municipality also provides financial support to the local media house Fanzingo, which works with the representation of minority groups in the media. Botkyrka municipality has not developed a media strategy on this issue but is now planning to develop such a document.

Recommendations

Botkyrka itself has recognised the need for a media strategy that addresses interculturalism and has plans to develop it, it could also look at monitoring how social and traditional media portray those with a migrant or minority background as part of this strategy.

The city of [Sabadell](#) has a welcoming programme and a communication campaign associated that includes images, posters, press releases and social networks. In addition, the communication department is instructed to highlight diversity as an advantage.

The city monitors local media and social networks to know how they represent migrants or minority groups. Indeed, when local media portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds through negative stereotypes, the communication department contacted the concerned media to explain the City Council's communication policy. Additionally, the city has carried out training sessions addressed to media to avoid negative stereotypes under the Antirumours Strategy "Sabadell Antirumors". From time to time, public sessions on these topics are also organised.

[Camden](#) a borough of London in the UK is also active in this field. Camden Council has a communication strategy to improve the visibility and image of people with migrant/minority backgrounds in the local media and the communication department is instructed to highlight diversity as an advantage regularly and in various types of communication. One of Camden's defining features is its diversity and the Council's central mission is to ensure 'no-one gets left behind' and this implies that it focuses on communication projects that give visibility to people of all backgrounds. The Council also actively seeks to promote Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic¹⁰ leaders, by supporting its cabinet councillors, Youth members of parliament and community leaders by using them as spokespeople for key issues facing the borough.

With regard to media monitoring, the Council itself monitors the way in which traditional local and/or national media, as well as social media, portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds. When local media portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds through negative stereotypes, the Council engages with them directly. For example, it has discussed instances of perceived unfair treatment of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic councillors with local media and sought and achieved remedy for this.

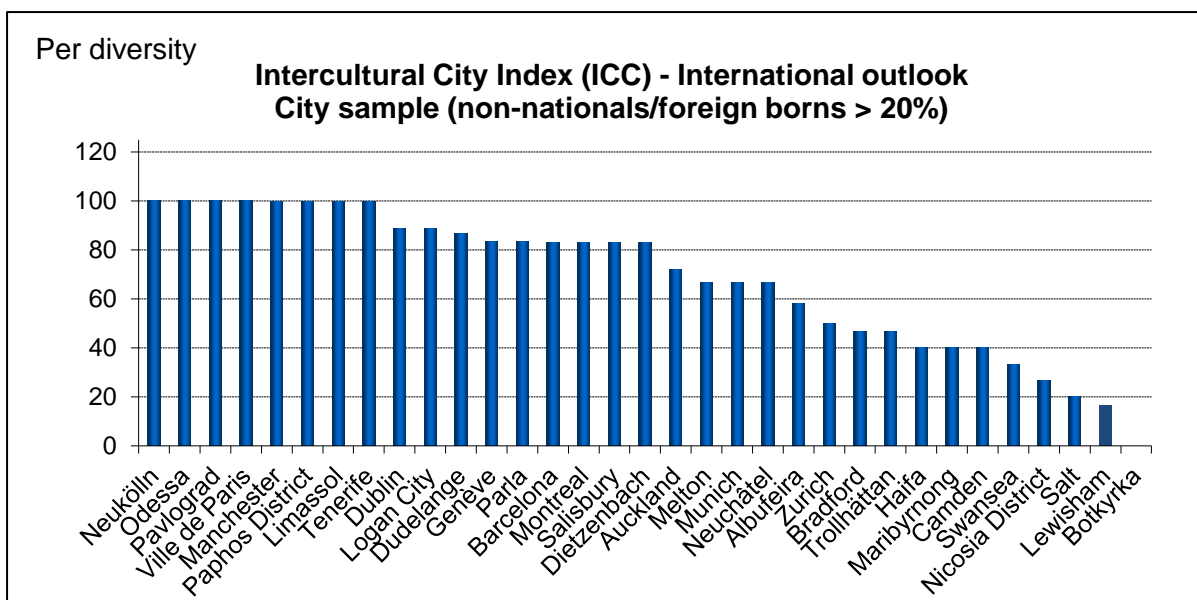
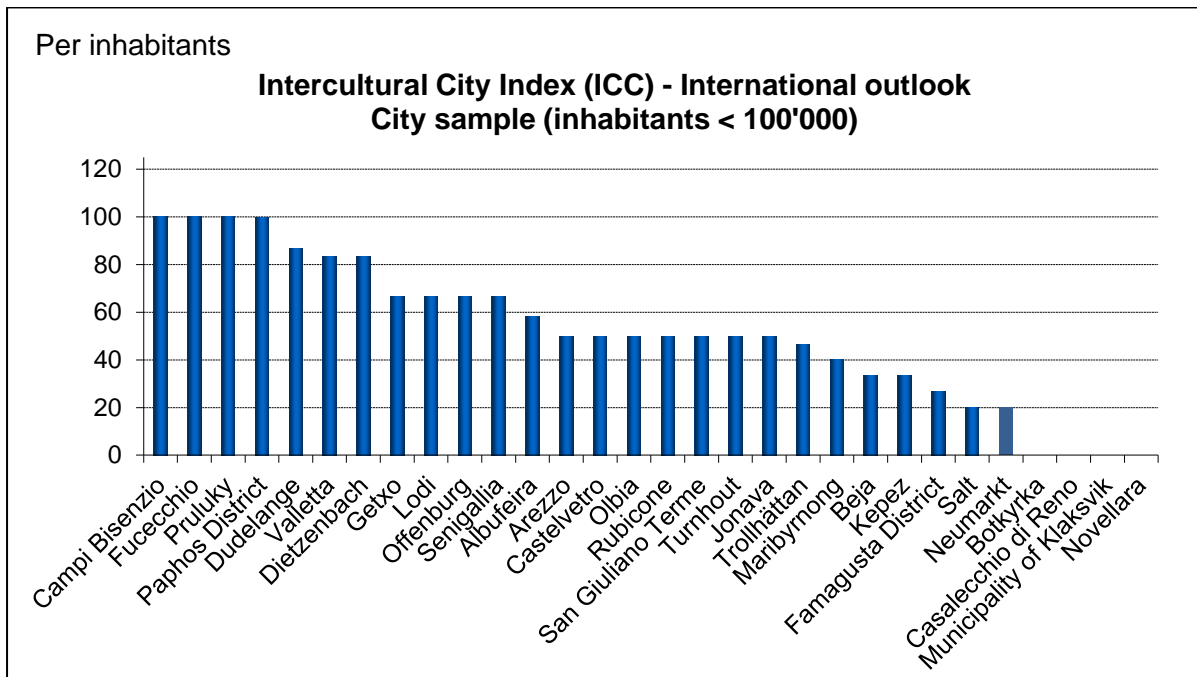
ICC programme resources on communication and public awareness are available [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Although cities have little or no competence in foreign policy, they can actively seek to make connections in other countries to develop business relations, exchange knowledge and know-how, encourage tourism, or simply acknowledge the ties the city may have elsewhere. An intercultural city actively encourages interactions with the outside world and in particular with the cities, regions or countries of origin of its inhabitants.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 0, which is considerably lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 69% and Botkyrka's previous score of 67% from 2018. The change in score is due to the updated questionnaire that was redacted in 2019, and which required cities to have more detailed actions in this field.

¹⁰ Reference terms specifically used in the UK context. This footnote is also applicable for the rest of the document, each time these reference terms are used.



Botkyrka has previous experience in this field including a previous programme of Twin towns which stopped in 2017. There is no explicit policy today on international cooperation, even though the municipality is part of international networks such as the Intercultural Cities Network. Decisions have been taken regarding participation in international networks on specific occasions. There is an interest in clarifying the benefit and purpose of the municipality's participation in networks of this type. This could be addressed through the policy development process, although Botkyrka is not currently working on this. Neighbouring municipalities such as Södertälje have investigated opportunities for export and import, made possible by the Iraqi diaspora in this municipality. In Botkyrka there are many examples of entrepreneurs who themselves carry out import operations from other countries, but the municipality has not so far developed a way of thinking about it.

Recommendations

Botkyrka is already thinking about how it can develop its international outlook and is aware of good practices in neighbouring municipalities. It also has previous experience of twin towns and other projects. There may be other work that Botkyrka is undertaking that was not included in the survey. It would be useful to see how other cities are working in this area.

[Barcelona](#) in Spain is active in several ways in this field, which may provide some inspiration and ideas. Barcelona has a firm commitment to international municipalism, with two priority areas: promoting bilateral relations and joint work with other cities — to exchange knowledge and learn from cities that are benchmarks in various fields, and to promote common policies— and to strengthen Barcelona's participation in the main international networks and bodies where the city is represented.

The International Relations Department works closely with educational and research centres, think tanks and other institutions in the city to help raise awareness and build an engaged, responsible and critical citizenry, and to provide research and knowledge on priority issues related to the city in a global context.

Barcelona City Council's development cooperation has become a distinctive and key policy that shows Barcelona's profile and leadership in the growing internationalist activism of cities and, also, the support and commitment to active solidarity of citizens and their organisations in civil society.

The City Council has actively established direct cooperation with some cities, such as Medellín, Maputo, different Palestinian cities, Havana, and the Tangier-Tétouan corridor, among others. These experiences, based on horizontal dialogue and the reciprocity of the political and technical teams, have become true channels for the exchange of knowledge and technical expertise for institutional strengthening, the definition of policies and the provision of public services. All based on a municipal agenda, in which the participation of different departments was significant. This has become one of the main assets of the City Council's cooperation.

Botkyrka has already noted the work with the Iraqi diaspora that is being undertaken by a neighbouring municipality. It is useful for any aspiring intercultural city to 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.

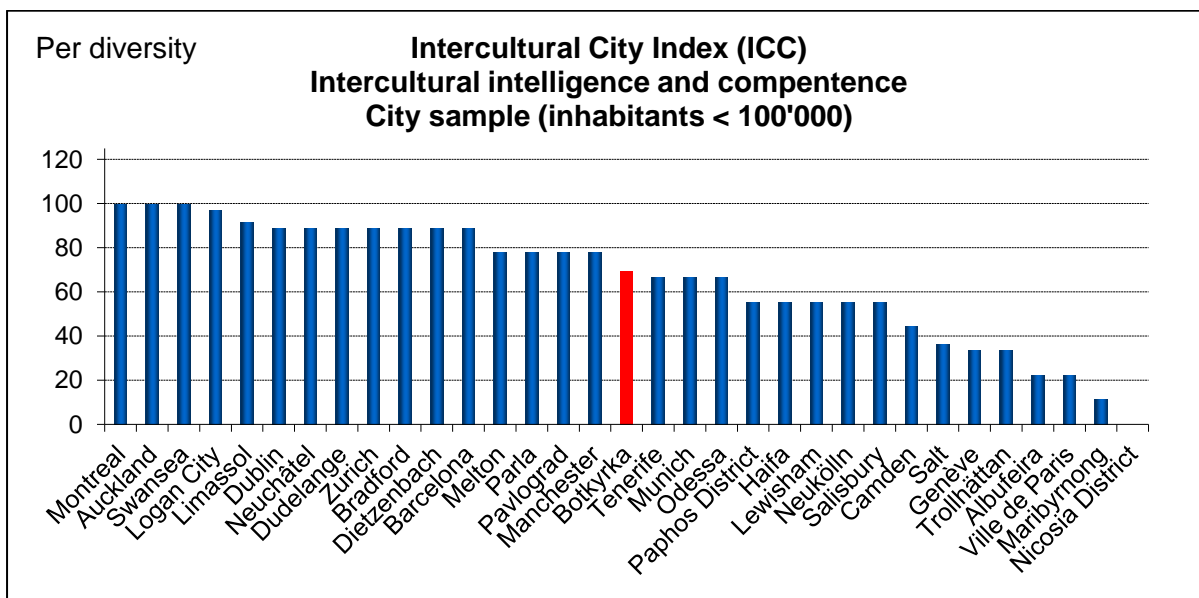
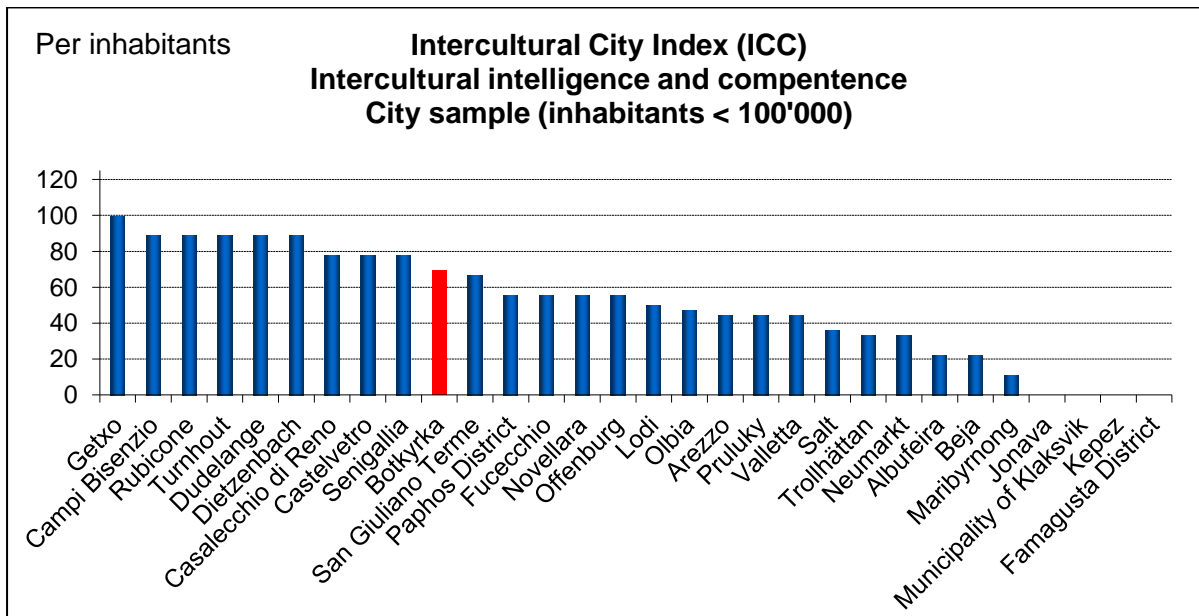
[Reggio Emilia](#) in Italy has made a major step in this respect. It has signed, through the Intercultural centre Mondinsieme, an agreement with the Moroccan Ministry in charge of relations with the diaspora. The agreement underpins Reggio's holistic intercultural policy and seeks to “promote socio-cultural mixing and openness towards the other”. Both sides are providing significant financial contributions to the activities included in the agreement.

The Municipality of Reggio Emilia has a wide network of international contacts and projects aiming to share the city's best practices and opinions worldwide. 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 as part of study visits, conferences on topics of common interests, international joint projects (such as EU projects or development cooperation projects).

INTERCULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETENCE

Nobody can be an expert in all the languages and cultures that coexist in contemporary cities. Yet, in an intercultural city, officials have an intercultural “mind-set” which enables them to detect cultural differences and modulate their responses accordingly. Intercultural intelligence and competence require a specific know-how when dealing with unfamiliar situations and not an in-depth and often elusive knowledge of all cultures. Such sensitivity and self-confidence are not commonly-seen. It is a technical skill which can be acquired through training and practice. In an intercultural city, the authorities view such skills as equally important and essential to the good functioning of the city as the other professional and technical skills usually expected from public employees.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 69%, which is higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 60%, however, it is considerably lower than the municipality's previous score of 100%. This decrease in score is a result of the new questionnaire that was updated in 2019 to include more specific questions and possible answers. For instance, in this survey, Botkyrka noted that statistical and qualitative information about diversity and intercultural relations was not completely mainstreamed to inform the city government/council's process of policy formulation and there were multiple answers possible for improving the intercultural competence of a city's staff.



Municipal administrations are obliged to report every year on how their activities comply with the municipality's Equality Strategy, which includes a clear section on interculturalism. This is regulated by the municipality's steering document 'Strategy for an equal Botkyrka'¹¹ and 'Guidelines for an equal administration.'¹² It should however be noted that reporting in this area was not considered a priority for 2021 and 2022 due to leadership at the time. It will resume in 2023.

Every other year Botkyrka conducts a city-wide survey. It asks questions about what the citizens think of living in Botkyrka, and how they perceive the municipality's public services. There is no question on general perceptions of minorities, but it is possible to see how the respondents who identify as belonging to a minority may differ in opinion to the majority, in different parts of the survey. It is also possible to follow the answers from respondents who identify as being religious or having a disability that affects them in everyday life and compare their answers to the rest of the respondents. This data is used to evaluate if the Municipality is providing a public service that includes all. There are also questions on whether neighbourhoods feel safe. The data is used to evaluate over time

¹¹Strategy for an equal Botkyrka', available at: <https://www.botkyrka.se/download/18.1fbbaae6170bff9469deb40/1584093805295/Riktlinjer%20f%C3%B6r%20en%20j%C3%A4mlik%20verksamhet.pdf>

¹² Botkyrka, Guidelines for an equal administration, available at: <https://www.botkyrka.se/download/18.1fbbaae6170bff9469deb42/1584093805373/Strategi%20f%C3%B6r%20ett%20j%C3%A4mlikt%20Botkyrka.pdf>

if people feel safe and if there are differences between how different categories of citizens feel about where they live depending on neighbourhoods, social background, age or gender.

Over the years there have been recurring investments in courses on interculturality aimed at civil servants and politicians. Recently, for example, the HR unit under the Municipal Head Office organised a course for its employees where they were trained to review their work from a norm-critical anti-racist perspective.

Recommendations

Despite the lower scoring for this indicator compared to its previous score, Botkyrka is an experienced intercultural city that has consistently pointed out areas for its own development and progress as well as initiatives that are being planned, throughout this review of their intercultural work. This shows high levels of self-awareness, intercultural intelligence and competence and is a strong basis for improving scoring for indicators across the board.

Auckland and Ansan both have well developed approaches to intercultural intelligence.

Auckland Council's Research and Monitoring Unit (RIMU) conducts environmental, social, economic and cultural research to inform and support policy development, implementation and evaluation.

The Auckland Plan 2050, for example, is based on statistical and qualitative evidence about diversity and intercultural relations provided by the RIMU, shaping the specific directions and focus areas in the plan. Moreover, to improve inclusive governance, the Inclusive Auckland Framework and the Council's Quality Advice programme (which aims to ensure that elected members are presented with the best advice, at the right time and in the right way to help them fulfil their decision-making responsibilities) are working together to:

- Pilot, evaluate and implement a new process for community service design and delivery decisions based on demographic data and research;
- Establish high quality social and community impact assessments as standard practice for all policy advice, with training on this already underway.

Ansan, in South Korea was the first local government in South Korea to publish statistics on multicultural and international households, which consist of 98 types of standard statistical data for policy development. The city also publishes annual social survey reports that include a survey on people's awareness of non-nationals, conducts annual fact-finding surveys of Koryo-saram in Ansan and regular surveys on non-nationals' human rights. There are education programmes on intercultural societies for children and juveniles with the aim of building consensus among locals about interculturality and to help them develop a global mindset.

Apart from trainings for staff on intercultural competences, the city may wish to consider other capacity building forms, for instance trainings on managing communications in a multicultural workplace or on communications skills to organise inclusive outreach campaigns.

The city of Dudelange (Luxembourg), also provides interesting examples of practices, including an awareness-raising training on how to write easy-to-read information. The main objective was to build skills for participants for their communications to reach people with disabilities, as well as all those who have difficulty grasping the content due to gaps in the three languages usually used in the country. Additionally, an internal training "Developing intercultural skills" was organised over three days focusing on critical incidents, intercultural negotiation and the scope of intercultural competences. The objective was the development of skills to help the person who has experienced a critical problem to overcome it and communicate better with others.

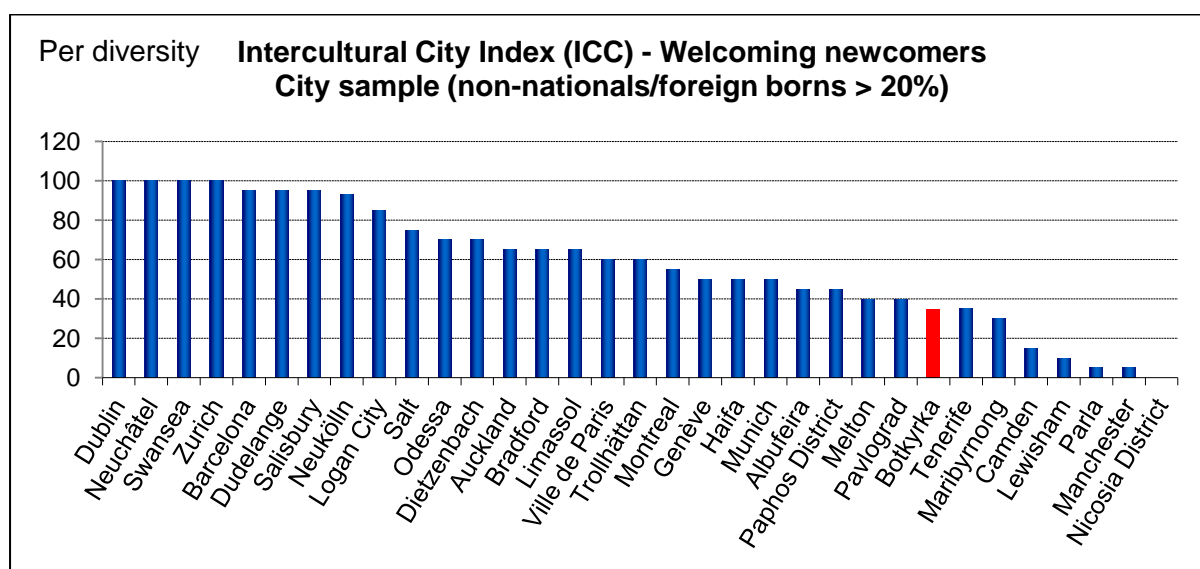
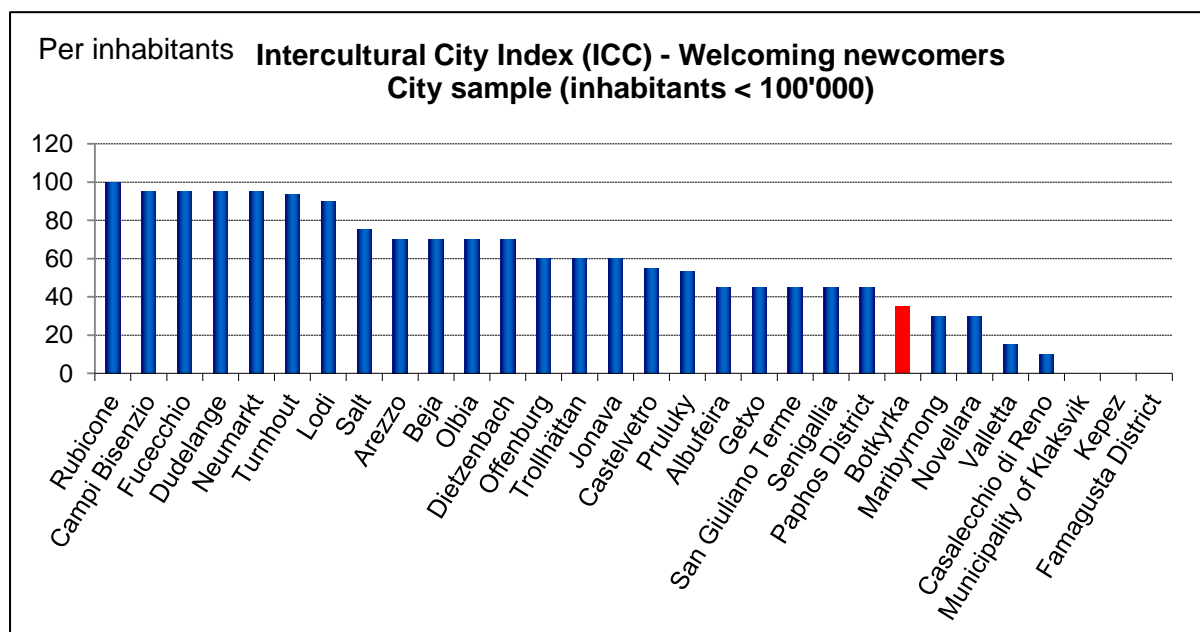
ICC programme resources on intercultural competence are also available [here](#).

WELCOMING NEWCOMERS

People arriving in a city for an extended stay, whatever their circumstances (expats, migrant workers, spouses, refugees, unaccompanied minors, retired persons, etc.), are likely find themselves disorientated. The less familiar they are with the new environment, the more support they will need to feel comfortable and confident enough to start building a new social and professional network. The way in which the city coordinates and effectively delivers various support measures strongly conditions their capacity to integrate or, conversely, their tendency to remain confined to a cultural "ghetto". This also depends to a great degree on whether the rest of the city's population is

open to the idea of welcoming newcomers in their capacity as residents and citizens or, on the contrary, is accustomed to viewing newcomers as outsiders who pose a potential threat. Again, it is the message the authorities convey on diversity, in communication or through concrete actions, that determines to a certain degree attitudes towards newcomers.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 35%, which is considerably lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 57% and considerably lower than the municipality's previous score of 95%. This decrease in score is a result of the updated questionnaire in 2019 that includes more specific enquiries for each municipality, including on how the municipality welcomes specific groups of newcomers.



The social administration in Botkyrka provides refugees designated by the Migration Agency, unaccompanied children and (resettlement) quota refugees, with housing support for the first four years of their time in Botkyrka, which could be considered generous considering that other municipalities only offer support for two years. Quota refugees also receive support at home to learn how to manage their apartment and help to get children into school. Families with children can get permanent housing. Unaccompanied children receive their own social worker who provides support, helps with placement in family homes, or in special homes. They get help until their high school years are over. The municipality also holds an annual ceremony in Hågelby park on Swedish National Day (6 June) for all Botkyrka citizens who have received Swedish nationality for the first time.

Recommendations

Botkyrka already holds a welcoming event for new citizens annually and provides particular welcoming support for unaccompanied minors who arrive in Botkyrka. This is an area where cities can be particularly creative and have fun.

Other cities have held other types of events that could be adapted as welcoming events. In [Erlangen](#) in Germany, they launched their anti-rumours C4i Communication für Vielfalt (Communication for Diversity) campaign, by holding an enormous picnic. The city built a banquet table over 180 meters in length and hosted a giant picnic along the main street of the city. About 1,000 native Erlangers and asylum seekers directly communicated and exchanged with each other, and took away information about rumours and how to counter them.

[Erlangen](#) also has a Welcome App that helps refugees organise their everyday lives in Germany, to overcome the language barrier and find information regarding asylum law.

[Neumarkt](#) in Germany also had a lot of ideas for how to welcome newcomers. There is an annual reception and all newcomers are invited four times per year. Welcome packs and the reception address all aspects of city life including sustainability, fair trade and integration. Surveys are conducted for feedback as to why people move to Neumarkt and the city enjoys hearing the stories of new arrivals.

Information materials are also provided to newcomers including: flyers on the community centre; free time offers; the city newsletter with all the programmes at the community centre; school and education information; and the sustainability strategy. As Neumarkt is involved in fair trade there is information about shopping opportunities and what you can buy. There is also information on support for older newcomers from the Genial/genius club who help older people live for longer in their own house. After the reception there is a 1.5-hour tour of the town and a small meeting in the Bürgerhaus with snacks. This helps those who have moved to Neumarkt and do not have family or friends in the area to meet more people.

ICC programme resources on refugees and welcoming policies are also available [here](#).

LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP

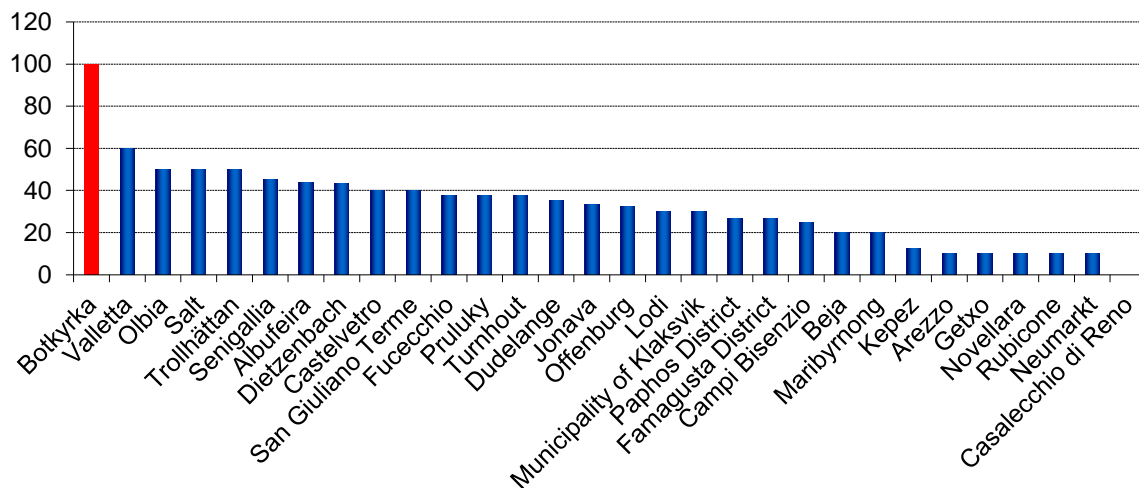
The most powerful and far-reaching action a city can take to be more intercultural is to open up democratic representation and decision-making to all residents of the city irrespective of their origin, nationality or residence status. Formal political rights at the local level are determined nationally or at the regional level in some federal states. Nonetheless, there is much that a city council can do to influence the way in which diverse groups interact and co-operate around the allocation of power and resources. An intercultural city strives to include all residents in the policy-making process and ensures thereby that public services are provided according to their diverse needs and not according to their cultural or political proximity to public decision-makers.

Botkyrka achieved a rate of 100, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 37 and of Botkyrka's own achievement rate of 65 in 2018. This is an excellent result showing Botkyrka's continued efforts in this field.¹³

¹³ Botkyrka's achievement rate in the extended Intercultural Cities Index is 80, while the city sample achievement rate is 49%.

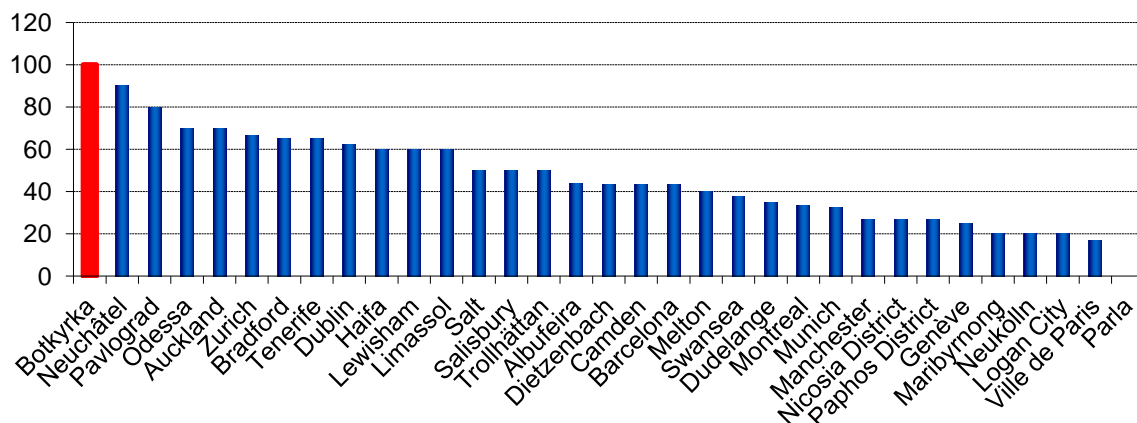
Per inhabitants

Intercultural City Index (ICC) - Leadership and citizenship
City sample (inhabitants < 100'000)



Per diversity

Intercultural City Index (ICC) - Leadership and citizenship
City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns > 20%)



Standing and voting in local elections is regulated in the Municipality Law [Kommunallag 2017:725], 1 chapter, section 7, on the Right to vote, and 4 chapter, 3 section, on Eligibility. Eligibility in local elections, meaning the right to stand as candidate, is based on the right the right to vote in local elections. The right to vote in the local election of members and substitutes in the municipal council is held by anyone who is registered in the municipality, turns 18 on election day at the latest and: 1) is a Swedish citizen or EU- citizen, 2) is a citizen of Iceland or Norway, or 3) has been registered in Sweden for three consecutive years before election day.

Botkyrka undertakes recurring municipal initiatives to encourage people in low turnout districts to vote. These are mostly districts with a high proportion of people with a foreign background. There is a youth council, where young people from different parts of the municipality are trained in political participation. Botkyrka municipality has created the Dialogue Commission, where politicians who have a mandate and a special budget can work directly with citizens' proposals through short decision-making paths. These dialogues are held in every part of the municipality. This is part of a greater municipal dialogue work, where citizens can take part in dialogue processes before major changes in their housing areas; for example, they can form working groups. In this way, they also develop an understanding of the municipal apparatus.

Suggestions

Botkyrka has a full score in this field but the work of others can always provide inspiration to take forward new initiatives.

Given Botkyrka’s work with young people and the youth council, the municipality may be interested in the London Borough of [Lewisham](#)’s (United Kingdom) Young Mayor initiative – an initiative 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 to initiate a programme of work, as well as to scrutinise the work of the Lewisham mayor and of the city council.

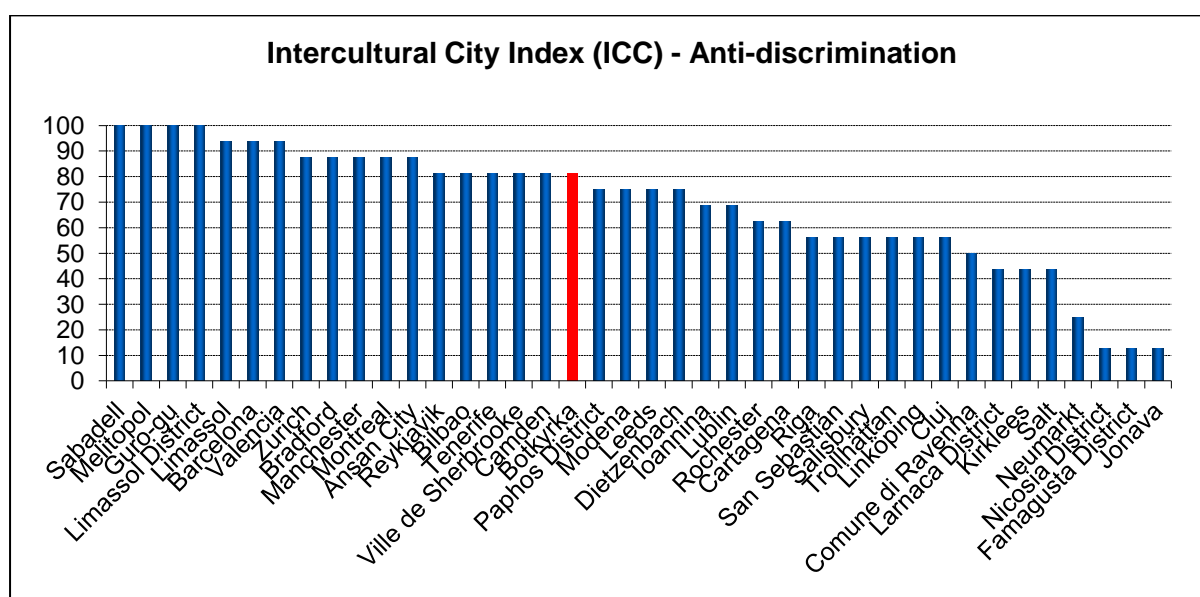
In order to improve further the representation of diversity, it could be fruitful to explore the possibility of creating a consultative body through which individuals of migrant and minority backgrounds can voice their concerns to facilitate inclusive governance. In this framework, the city of Ballarat (Australia) launched its [Multicultural Ambassadors' Program \(MAP\)](#) developed to provide leadership within the migrant community, encouraging minorities to participate in the city's political life. [Ansan](#) also provides examples in this area. It has among other initiatives set up a non-nationals Council which advises many different support projects and advocates on behalf of non-nationals (from China, Uzbekistan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Cambodia, etc.). In addition, there is also a non-nationals Monitoring Group which is not a compulsory committee to supervise public services, but its roles include: to understand developments and trends among non-nationals, collect their voices, survey the city’s administration for non-nationals, and make recommendations for improvement.

ICC programme resources on political and public participation are also available [here](#).

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Racism, xenophobia, homophobia, intolerance against certain religious groups, gender discrimination, prejudice and ethnocentrism, are all conducive to discriminatory attitudes and practices. They often subsist in people’s minds despite laws proscribing discrimination against persons or groups of persons on grounds of race, colour, language, religion, nationality, national/ethnic origin or sexual orientation. An intercultural city assures every effort is made to ensure non-discrimination in all of its policies, programmes and activities. The city works in partnership with civil society organisations and other institutions that combat discrimination and offer support and reparation to victims. It also communicates widely on the risks discrimination presents for social cohesion, quality of life and the local economy.

Indicators on anti-discrimination have been included in the Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 40 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Botkyrka’s rate of achievement in the field of anti-discrimination is 81%, which is a strong result, showing the importance of this work for Botkyrka.



Botkyrka has a binding document proscribing discrimination against persons or groups of persons on grounds of race, colour, language, religion, nationality, national/ethnic origin or sexual orientation in the municipal

administration and services. The municipality reviews the city's rules and regulations to identify any mechanisms or that may discriminate against citizens with minority or migrant backgrounds to a certain extent. In the citizen survey, Botkyrka analyses when citizens have experienced discrimination and the context in which it happened. The information received through the citizen survey is supplemented with statistics and qualitative data from various individual cases from the local anti-discrimination agency ADB Syd, which the city part-finances.

Schools, after-school centres and leisure centres comply with Swedish school laws, which means that they must work against discrimination. Associations receive support if they work inclusively. The municipality supports the Multicultural Centre (www.mkcentrum.se), which regularly organises open lectures on racism and segregation.

Botkyrka is part of the organisation Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions' [*Sverige kommuner och regioner*] network against racism and discrimination – Swedish ECCAR - together with around 20 municipalities.

Botkyrka has developed work against rumours, among other things, by producing the manual *Stoppa ryktet!* [Stop the rumours]. The handbook is an adaptation of the Council of Europe's anti-rumour methodology to the Botkyrka context, made in collaboration with civil society. The municipality also ran a project around anti-rumour work in 2017-2018. These methods are now partly incorporated in communication and storytelling and the municipality has seen value in broadening its preventive work.

Recommendations

Botkyrka has a strong result for its work on anti-discrimination. There are several other cities with high scores in anti-discrimination whose work could be interesting such as Barcelona (Spain), Guro-gu (Republic of Korea), Limassol (Cyprus), Sabadell (Spain) and Melitopol (Ukraine).

It is well worth reading the Index report on anti-discrimination from [Guro-gu](#) from the Republic of Korea. Anti-discrimination measures are a priority for Guro-gu. All of Guro-gu's ordinances, rules and policies have to comply with the Support for Foreign Residents and Multicultural Families Ordinance, the Prohibition of Discrimination in Employment Act and the Human Rights Protection and Promotion Act. Guro-gu has also enacted and enforced the "Basic Ordinance for Gender Equality. Guro-gu has opened a city integrity and human rights portal site to provide legal information and operate a reporting centre for any discriminatory or illegal activities. In addition, Guro-gu provides dedicated services to assist victims of discrimination in community welfare centres and civil society organizations. There are many other initiatives including a multicultural supporters' group to provide mentoring to and share skills with immigrants and minorities, and through public-private partnerships. It carries out various support projects such as medical services for foreign residents and scholarships for children of multicultural families.

Guro-gu is a representative human rights city in Korea. Guro-gu's anti-discrimination-related agency, the Audit Office, and the Ombudsman, have established policies to prevent discriminatory administration, conduct regular monitoring, and provide human right education to employees every year. In this regard there is a Human Right Guarantee and Promotion Plan of Guro-gu to make Guro-gu a Human Rights District, a Human Rights Education Operation Plan and an Implementation Plan for a Human Rights Impact Assessment of Autonomous Laws to Prevent Violations of Human Rights.

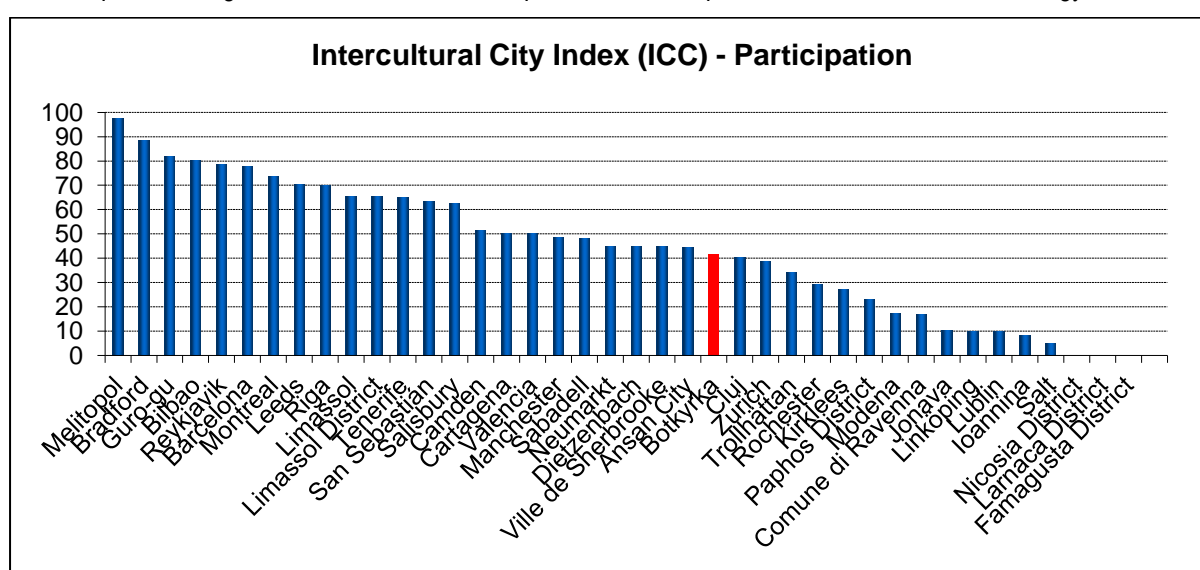
As Botkyrka has mentioned issues in the past with extreme right-wing groups agitating in the town, it may be useful to consider is engaging with those discriminating and holding racist and radical attitudes. A good example is the Think Project, an educational programme aimed at individuals with a higher risk of far-right extremism, implemented in [Swansea](#) (United Kingdom). In the framework of three-day courses, participants were encouraged to discuss and reflect on diversity issues and their own attitudes and views, engaging in open dialogue as well as experiential learning. The Think Project employed a non-criminalising approach, listening to their concerns and exploring the experience and information underlying their negative attitudes. After the course, participants were encouraged to engage in intercultural interaction. The project has proven to be able to transform young peoples' worldviews and thinking about diversity and societal change.

ICC programme resources on systemic discrimination are also available [here](#) and resources on anti-rumours are available [here](#).

PARTICIPATION

Inclusion, power-sharing and participation are the golden keys of intercultural policy-making. A range of studies have demonstrated that inclusive integration policies produce better outcomes in terms of social cohesion, trust in the administration, safety, quality of services, welfare, good governance and economic growth. People with different backgrounds and experiences can bring innovative solutions to common challenges, as well as anticipate problems that might arise. Conversely, when people encounter barriers to participation, or otherwise choose intentionally not to participate, they may, passively, withdraw from social and public life or choose, actively, to live outside prevailing social customs and law. An intercultural city actively seeks the participation of all residents in the various decision-making processes that affect life in the city. By doing so, it increases support, and thereby the sustainability of local policies, while at the same significantly reducing the economic costs of social exclusion and instability.

Indicators on participation have been included in the Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 40 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Botkyrka's rate of achievement in the field of participation is 42%. This indicator may have lower scores because Botkyrka noted it did not undertake direct consultation on its intercultural strategy, however, direct consultations did take place in neighbourhoods, district development and other processes that fed into this strategy.



Botkyrka's intercultural strategy is not the direct result of consultation processes with people from foreign backgrounds, but it is the result of the municipality working with intercultural perspectives and issues for a very long time, through for instance, developing inclusive, consultative methods, developing a focus on district development, and collaborating with civil society. The intercultural strategy stresses the importance of continuing to develop this work.

The operationalisation of the intercultural perspective follows a long tradition in Botkyrka of cooperation and inclusive, consultative methods with stakeholders within civil society, as well as a pervasive focus on district development and the creation of spaces where people can meet across borders. The intercultural perspective has been included in a larger work with human rights based on established inclusion practices.

The dialogue commission in Botkyrka has five million kronor (approximately 430,000 Euros) annually to implement citizens' proposals. These are general measures, although there is some focus on districts with a high proportion of people with a foreign background. There are established routines for dialogue with local actors in case of major construction works in a block. There is an interfaith network which is supported by the municipality, and which is activated when local events require it. This network was active when the Danish right-wing extremist Paludan visited different quarters in Botkyrka to provoke residents by burning the Koran.

There are some statistics from the national election agency about election participation, but not based on migrant or minority background. Two metrics that Botkyrka follows is first time voters and the participation per elector district. The aim is to raise the participation in the five districts with the lowest participation, where there is a high percentage of citizens with a migrant background.

Botkyrka has ambition of being an equal and gender equal municipality, free from discrimination and harassment. Botkyrka has succeeded well with the ambition to have an organisation where the proportion of employees reflects the population of the municipality in terms of foreign background. Data from Statistics Sweden (SCB) show that a total of 60 percent of the municipality's employees in all forms of employment have a foreign background, which is 3 percentage points more than in 2020. For the municipality's managers, the corresponding figure is 24 percent, which is an increase of 2 percentage points. The proportion of Botkyrka residents with a foreign background was 60 percent in December 2021 (60.8% - 2020). In Södertälje municipality, which has a similar composition of the population as Botkyrka, the proportion of employees with a foreign background is lower (around 51 percent) but has a higher proportion of managers with a foreign background (27.5 percent).¹⁴

The municipality does not give grants to associations that only cater to men. Botkyrka only supports associations that are open to everyone and that strive for an even distribution of power in the association based on gender. The associations are asked to have an even distribution of power and influence in the organisation regardless of gender. This can be found in the document Rules for association contributions [*Regler för föreningsbidrag*].

Recommendations

Given its ambition to be a gender equal municipality, [Barcelona](#)'s experience may be of interest. Barcelona City Council is implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy to ensure that all its activities work to promote gender equality. Thus, a gender perspective is introduced in the functioning and organisation of the City Council and in all the policies that are developed in the city and in the districts. There has been considerable progress in gender mainstreaming in the City Council. This includes a Strategy against the feminisation of poverty and precariousness in Barcelona (2016-2024). The strategy is made up of a series of actions aimed at combating the situation of inequality suffered by women in different areas. It implements measures to attack the most structural aspects, such as discrimination in the labour market, inequalities in the distribution of care and domestic work, access to housing or the improvement of health status. Barcelona has a Municipal Plan for Sexual and Gender Diversity (2016 - 2020). As part of its strategy for gender equality, Barcelona City Council has made a website available to all citizens with information and updates on everything to do with sexual and gender diversity: information on the rights of LGBTI people; tools for detecting LGBTQIphobia; services for LGBTQI people and transgender women sex workers; resources and news on LGBTQI issues in the city of Barcelona

In addition, comprehensive monitoring of the participation of residents with migrant/minority backgrounds in the decision-making processes is key to design better strategies to overcome barriers to participation. While acknowledging the difficulties in doing so, an approach could be to start by conducting minor research in particular areas of the city.

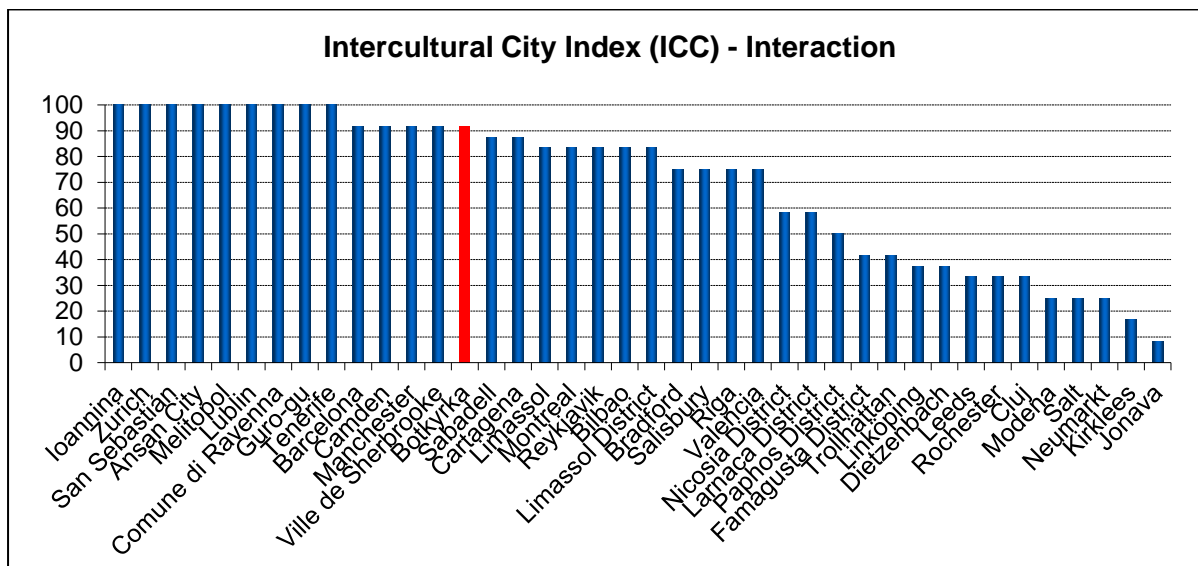
ICC programme resources on political and public participation are also available [here](#).

INTERACTION

Interaction between people of all kinds is what gives the intercultural city its distinctive value. Identity is not 'given' in a passive sense, but something which is 'enacted' and defined through interaction. In spite of protective laws, prejudice and discrimination can thrive where there is segregation or a lack of contact and dialogue between people. There is ample evidence to prove that, under certain conditions, the more contact people with different backgrounds and lifestyles have with each other, the less likely they are to think and behave in prejudicial ways. Therefore, an intercultural city develops, in partnership with other organisations, a range of policies and actions to encourage more mixing and interaction between diverse groups.

Indicators on interaction have been included in the Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 40 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Botkyrka's rate of achievement in the field of interaction is 92%, an excellent result.

¹⁴ From the 2021 annual report. <https://www.botkyrka.se/download/18.69a2106617ff7177f6a172/1651494170620/Botkyrka%20kommuns%20%C3%A5rsredovisning%202021.pdf>



Botkyrka has many areas of good practice in the field of interaction. There are frequent meetings with associations where common needs are examined. There are also regular contacts with stakeholders at local level through the municipality's district work. The structure of this work is currently being revised together with civil society. During the pandemic, cooperation with and between various stakeholders in civil society intensified, often addressing issues with intercultural connections. Recurring meetings were held, when the municipality informed participants about and supported them in matters mainly linked to the pandemic. Civil society also contributed information from their activities that was important to the municipality. This will continue in some form, but how is now being developed together with those stakeholders.

The Administration for Culture and Leisure has a list of associations dedicated to sports and culture. The Municipal Head Office has a list of other associations and NGOs with which the municipality cooperates. Those who are on these lists can book meeting rooms. There are established dialogue routines when the need arises to respond to various crises.

The municipality prioritises how to communicate with children based on an intercultural approach. This is a central part of teaching language development used in the municipality. The aim is for teachers to use this approach including in their communication with parents. There is a political position in the municipality that Swedish should be the language of communication, which applies in general, but there is flexibility and nuance. Already vulnerable groups are at risk of not being reached with important information if the communication is not adapted. The municipality stresses the importance of highlighting language as a rights issue, to enable communities to solve social challenges and to convey important information to create changes in behaviour.

Suggestions

Botkyrka had a high achievement in the field of interaction, not achieving a full score as it did not have a public list of all stakeholders including civil society and grass roots organisations. Although Botkyrka has such a good achievement in this field, it is always useful to learn from other cities.

Lewisham has an interesting programme of Local Assemblies to encourage interaction with the city. It may be of interest to Botkyrka given its achievements in working at district level.

In Lewisham a network of citizen forums empowers local decision making and action. There is 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 neighbourhoods (the 18 wards). The local planning groups organise the meetings, time and venue. This service has given great results, 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 councillor 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 initiatives to strategic commissioning. It is the Community's job to

include events is 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.

A few examples of successful actions include:

- 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 neighbours, people living in the same street or area, and local area managers and councillors 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.














ICC programme resources on anti-rumours are also available [here](#) and resources on intercultural competence and mediation are available [here](#).

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Botkyrka's aggregate Intercultural Cities Index achievement rate was 71. This is another excellent report by Botkyrka on its intercultural journey. Botkyrka achieved particularly high scores in several areas, with lower achievements sometimes due to the latest questionnaire that requires more detail or more than one way of working on particular issues to achieve the full score.

The following table gives more information on what Botkyrka does well and areas it could learn more from the experience of other cities.

COMMITMENT	✓	Botkyrka has adopted a public statement that it continues to aspire to be an intercultural city. There is a Strategy for an equal Botkyrka replacing the previous Intercultural strategy and which includes an action plan and monitoring. The Municipal Head Office has funds dedicated to intercultural capacity building, data collection and knowledge development which are available to all departments. Botkyrka has also adopted a process of systematic policy consultation which includes individuals from all different cultural backgrounds.
	✗	Botkyrka rarely references its intercultural commitments in official communications and although there is official information about the city's intercultural statement and strategy on the website, six clicks are needed to access it. The municipality itself has noted storytelling around its intercultural work is sporadic and could be more regular.
EDUCATION	✓	Botkyrka works hard to address segregated areas in the municipality and encourages interculturalism in school projects. It works actively to increase the proportion of children of parents with a foreign background who are enrolled in pre-school. The municipality has identified several areas it would like to develop, including to ensure that the intercultural approach is carried out in all districts, even where the majority of students have a majority Swedish background.
	✗	Botkyrka could work more to ensure teachers' ethnic or cultural backgrounds reflect those of their students more or encourage more linking between schools and students where there is segregation.
NEIGHBOURHOODS	✓	Botkyrka has an innovative structure of district development as a cross-sectoral municipal responsibility. This enables officials to work locally in different districts and develop a wide network of local stakeholders. The municipality works to ensure a good mix of housing forms in different areas. It also regularly organises festivals to encourage mixing, as well as creating meeting places in every municipal district.
	✗	The municipality achieved a full score in this area.
PUBLIC SERVICES	✓	Botkyrka has policies in place to ensure diversity within the organisation. It works with companies and employers to help get people into work, including with a focus on those born abroad. It provides a wide range of services including burial services for different religions, and sports and school services that cater to those from a minority or migrant background.
	✗	The minority/migrant background of public employees only reflects the composition of the city's population at the lower levels. The municipality could consider working more directly to encourage a more diverse workforce in the private sector.
BUSINESS AND THE LABOUR MARKET	✓	National organisations working to promote diversity and non-discrimination also work in Botkyrka. There are several business incubators provided. Botkyrka also has a strong emphasis on procurement with requirements on non-discrimination standard in most contracts.
	✗	Botkyrka could further encourage businesses from ethnic minorities to move beyond the ethnic economy.
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE	✓	Cultural and social life is well supported by the municipality. Grants are given to organisations that are open to work with everyone and to democratic principles. Associations can receive grants to organise summer vacation activities. Association

		<p>Day brings different organisations and stakeholders together from across the municipality to showcase their work. The Multicultural Centre organises debates and events, as does the Botkyrka Youth Council, with support from the municipality.</p> <p> The municipality does not organise public debates or campaigns on the subject of cultural diversity and living together.</p>
PUBLIC SPACE	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>Botkyrka takes action to encourage meaningful intercultural mixing and interaction in public space. The libraries function as meeting spaces as does the Botkyrka Art Gallery. There is a municipal strategy to develop parks to attract different categories of inhabitants. Botkyrka encourages the Finnish language through Finnish signs where there are Finnish language services such as in libraries and the municipal hall.</p> <p>The city does not always take into account the diversity of the population in designing public spaces. There are one or two premises in the municipality that are dominated by an ethnic group, which is in the minority in the municipality, and which are perceived by some others as unsafe spaces.</p>
MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>Botkyrka works with different organisations to provide professional services for the mediation of intercultural communication including the Interreligious network.</p> <p>Botkyrka could diversify its work on mediation and conflict by extending it to specialised institutions such as hospitals, youth clubs, retirement homes and within the municipality itself. It could also further expand the scope of initiatives already implemented in schools and with the police and social services.</p>
LANGUAGE	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>There are opportunities to learn mother tongue languages at school as well as Swedish in adult education. Botkyrka is an administrative area for Finnish and revitalisation of the Finnish language is part of that work. The municipality works with Botkyrka community radio that broadcasts in different languages.</p> <p>Botkyrka could consider teaching migrant/minority languages as a regular language option available to everyone.</p>
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>Botkyrka has a communication policy that makes it clear that diversity of appearance exists in Botkyrka and must be communicated. The municipality provides support to a Finnish radio channel. It also supports the local media house Fanzingo working on the representation of minority groups in the media.</p> <p>Botkyrka has recognised the need for a media strategy to address interculturalism. It could also monitor how social and traditional media portray those with a migrant or minority background as part of this strategy, although this seems less of an issue in Botkyrka.</p>
INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>Botkyrka is already thinking about how it can develop its international outlook and is aware of good practices in neighbouring municipalities.</p> <p>Botkyrka does not have an explicit and sustainable policy to encourage international cooperation in economic, scientific, cultural, or other areas. It does not currently reach out to students or other youth groups for foreign exchanges. It does not seek to develop business relations with countries/cities of origin of its diaspora groups. These are all areas that could be addressed through developing a strategy for how Botkyrka wishes to develop its international outlook.</p>
INTERCULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETENCE	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>Botkyrka is an experienced intercultural city that has pointed out areas for its own development throughout this process, underlining its intercultural intelligence and competence. Administrations report periodically on how activities comply with the municipality's equality strategy. Botkyrka also runs a city-wide survey every other year.</p> <p>Botkyrka could ensure that data about diversity and intercultural relations was mainstreamed to inform the city's policy formation and could use diverse ways to improve the intercultural competence of the city's staff.</p>

<p>WELCOMING NEWCOMERS</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Welcoming activities are undertaken, particularly for refugees, where there is a generous provision of housing support. Unaccompanied children are also provided specific support services until their high school years are over. An annual ceremony is held for all those who have received Swedish nationality for the first time.</p> <p>Botkyrka could diversify how it welcomes newcomers and consider activities outside of service provision. It could also extend its welcome to all newcomers, although refugees and unaccompanied minors are in need of specific support. In this area, city can really be creative in terms of types of events and activities.</p>
<p>LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Anyone who has been registered in the municipality for three years and is over 18 has the right to vote and stand in local elections. Botkyrka holds regular initiatives to encourage people to vote including in districts with a high proportion of people with a foreign background. There is a Dialogue Commission where politicians can work directly with citizens' proposals through short decision-making paths.</p> <p>In order to improve further the representation of diversity, Botkyrka could explore the possibility of creating a consultative body through which individuals of migrant and minority backgrounds can voice their concerns.</p>
<p>ANTI-DISCRIMINATION</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Botkyrka has a binding document proscribing discrimination in the municipal services and administration. Schools, after-school centres and sports centres all need to comply with Swedish school laws and work against discrimination. Botkyrka is part of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions Against Racism and Discrimination. Botkyrka has worked with the Council of Europe's anti-rumour strategies to prevent racism.</p> <p>The city does not carry out a systematic review of all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanisms that may discriminate residents with /migrant/minority backgrounds or run regular campaigns against racism.</p>
<p>INTERACTION</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>There are frequent meetings with civil society and different stakeholders at local level through the municipality's district work. Botkyrka is currently working on a framework for its cooperation with civil society as things changed after the pandemic. Language is stressed as a human rights issue to enable communication.</p> <p>Botkyrka could consider making a public list of different civil society and other actors working in the field of interculturalism in the municipality.</p>
<p>PARTICIPATION</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>The Dialogue Commission has a budget every year to implement citizens' proposals. There is an interfaith network, which can be activated when it is needed to encourage discussion and participation. Botkyrka only provides grants to organisations that are open to everyone and that strive for an even distribution of power and influence in the organisation regardless of gender. There is a long tradition of cooperation and inclusive consultative methods with civil society.</p> <p>Botkyrka noted it had not undertaken direct consultation on its intercultural strategy although direct consultations may have taken place in other fora such as in neighbourhoods, district development and other processes.</p>

In view of the above, we wish to congratulate Botkyrka for their continued impressive efforts on their intercultural journey. Overall, it was an excellent result, with several areas such as business, neighbourhoods and leadership having a full score. The most evident gap was the need for a strategy on international outlook.

RECOMMENDATIONS

When it comes to the intercultural efforts, with reference to the questionnaire, Botkyrka could enhance the sectors below by introducing different initiatives:

Commitment: Botkyrka may wish to reference its intercultural commitments in official communications more frequently and give its intercultural statement and strategy more prominence on the website. The municipality itself has noted storytelling around its intercultural work could be more regular.

Education: Botkyrka could work more to ensure teachers' ethnic or cultural backgrounds reflect those of their students more or encourage more linking between schools and students where there is segregation.

Public services: The municipality could consider working more directly to encourage a more diverse workforce in the private sector, as well as ensuring the diversity of the population is reflected at all levels of the public service.

Cultural and social life: The municipality may wish to consider organising public debates or campaigns on the subject of cultural diversity and living together.

Public space: The city could take into account the diversity of the population in designing public spaces more systematically, as well as continuing the work it identified to address the one or two perceived by some as unsafe spaces.

Mediation and conflict resolution: The municipality may wish to diversify how it works on mediation and conflict resolution, including addressing specific institutions such as hospitals, youth clubs or retirement homes. It could also consider providing such services within the municipality itself.

Language: The municipality may wish to consider minority languages as a regular language option open to all.

Media and communication: Botkyrka has recognised the need for a media strategy to address interculturalism. It could also monitor how social and traditional media portray those with a migrant or minority background as part of this strategy.

International outlook: Botkyrka could benefit from developing a strategy on how it wishes to engage with the area of international outlook in the context of interculturalism. There are many examples of different approaches in the Intercultural cities database of good practices and Botkyrka itself has identified examples in Sweden.

Intercultural intelligence and competence: Botkyrka may wish to ensure that data about diversity and intercultural relations is mainstreamed to inform the city's policy formation and could use diverse ways to improve the intercultural competence of the city's staff.

Welcoming newcomers: Botkyrka could diversify how it welcomes newcomers and consider more activities outside of service provision. It could also extend its welcome to all newcomers.

Anti-discrimination: The city could consider a systematic review of all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanisms that may discriminate residents with /migrant/minority backgrounds and consider running regular campaigns against racism.

Interaction: Botkyrka could consider a public list of different civil society and other actors working in the field of interculturalism in the municipality.

Participation: Botkyrka could clarify for itself if the different consultation processes it undertakes are sufficient to provide direct consultation on its intercultural strategy.

Botkyrka may wish to consider further examples implemented by other Intercultural Cities as a source of learning and inspiration to guide future initiatives. Such examples are provided above for each sector as well as in the Intercultural cities [database](#).

Diversity has become a key feature of societies today and is particularly tangible in urban centres. While people of diverse national, ethnic, linguistic and faith backgrounds have immensely contributed to post-war prosperity, inequalities related to origin, culture and skin colour persist, and anxiety about pluralism, identity and shared values is often politically instrumentalised. The challenge of fostering equity and cohesion in culturally diverse societies has become more acute. Cities are uniquely placed to imagine and test responses to this challenge.

The Council of Europe and its partner cities have developed and validated an intercultural approach to integration and inclusion which enables cities to reap the benefits and minimise the risks related to human mobility and cultural diversity. A decade after the start of this work, there is growing evidence that diversity, when recognised and managed as a resource, produces positive outcomes in terms of creativity, wellbeing and economic development.

The Intercultural Cities (ICC) Programme invites cities in Europe and beyond to explore and apply policies that harness diversity for personal and societal development.

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the

