



Offenburg: Results of the Intercultural Cities Index

Date: 27 January 2012

A comparison between 43 cities¹

Introduction

The Intercultural Cities programme is a joint initiative between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. 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 is rich in content and detail. However, it is relatively weak as a tool to monitor and communicate progress. The new intercultural city index has been designed as a new benchmarking tool for the cities taking part in the pilot phase of the programme as well as future participants.

As of today 43 cities have undergone their intercultural policies analysis using the Intercultural City Index: Amadora (*Portugal*), Arezzo (*Italy*), Barcelona (*Spain*), Botkyrka (*Sweden*), Campi Bisenzio (*Italy*), Cartagena (*Spain*), Copenhagen (*Denmark*), Donostia-San Sebastian² (*Spain*), Dublin (*Ireland*), Duisburg (*Germany*), Erlangen (*Germany*) Fuenlabrada (Madrid region, *Spain*), Geneva (*Switzerland*), Genoa (*Italy*), Izhevsk (*Udmart Republic, Russia*), Limassol (*Cyprus*), Lisbon (*Portugal*), Lodi (*Italy*), the London borough of Lewisham (*United Kingdom*), Lublin (*Poland*), Lyon (*France*), Melitopol (*Ukraine*), Mexico City (*Mexico*), Montreal (*Canada*), Munich (*Germany*), Neuchâtel (*Switzerland*), Neuköln (Berlin, *Germany*), Offenburg (*Germany*), Oslo (*Norway*), Patras (*Greece*), Pryluky (*Ukraine*), Reggio Emilia I & II (*Italy*), Rijeka (*Croatia*), Sabadell (*Spain*), Sechenkivsky (*District of Kyiv, Ukraine*), Senigallia (*Italy*), Subotica (*Serbia*), Tilburg (*The Netherlands*), Turin (*Italy*), Turnhout (*Belgium*), Unione dei Comuni-Savignano sul Rubicone³ (*Italy*), Västerås (*Sweden*) and Zurich (*Switzerland*).

This document presents the results of the Intercultural City Index analysis for the city of Offenburg and provides related intercultural policy conclusions and recommendations.

¹ This report is based on data contained at the Intercultural cities INDEX database at the time of writing. The INDEX graphs may include a greater number of cities, reflecting the growing interest in this instrument.

² The Spanish city of Donostia-San Sebastian is hereinafter referred to as San Sebastian.

³ The Italian city of Unione dei Comuni-Savignano sul Rubicone is hereinafter referred to as Rubicone.

Intercultural city definition

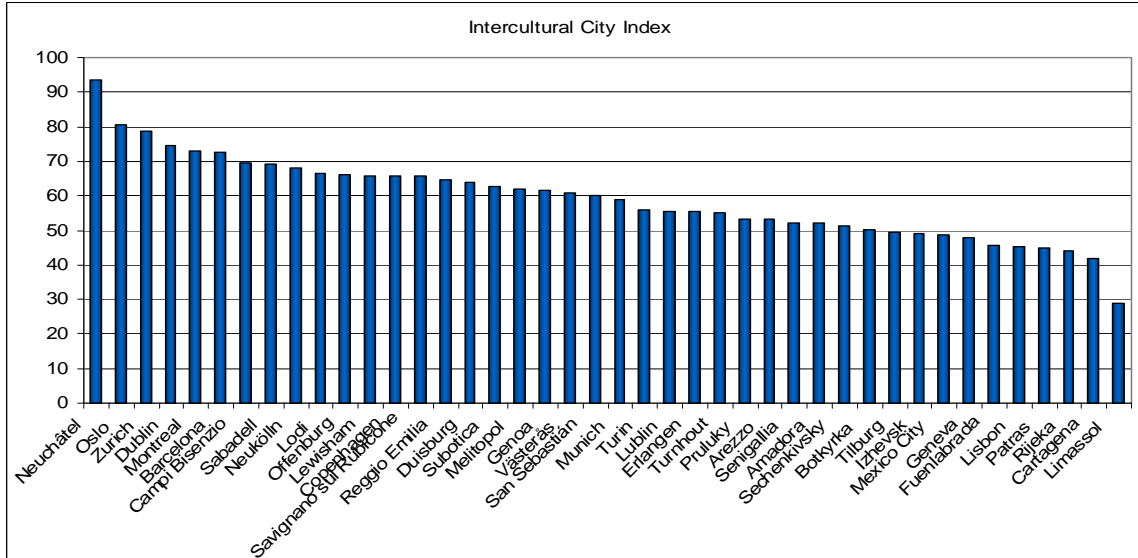
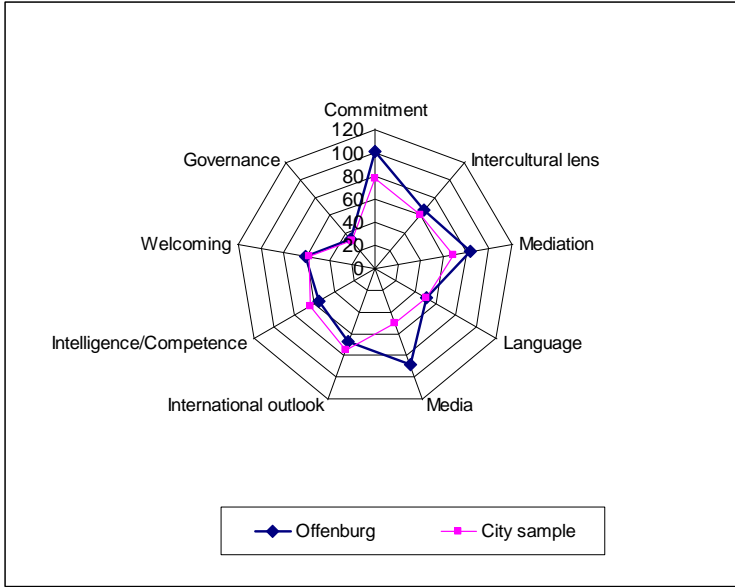
The intercultural city has people with different nationality, origin, language or religion/ belief. Political leaders and most citizens regard diversity positively, as a resource. The city actively combats discrimination and adapts its governance, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population.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

Methodology

The Intercultural City Index analysis is based on a questionnaire involving 69 questions grouped in 14 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 ICC Index).

These indicators comprise: commitment; education system; neighbourhoods; public services; business and labour market; cultural and civil life policies; public spaces; mediation and conflict resolution; language; media; international outlook; intelligence/competence; welcoming and governance. Some of these indicators - education system; neighbourhoods; public services; business and labour market; cultural and civil life policies; public spaces are grouped in a composite indicator called "urban policies through the intercultural lens" or simply "intercultural lens".

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, to motivate cities to learn from good practice.



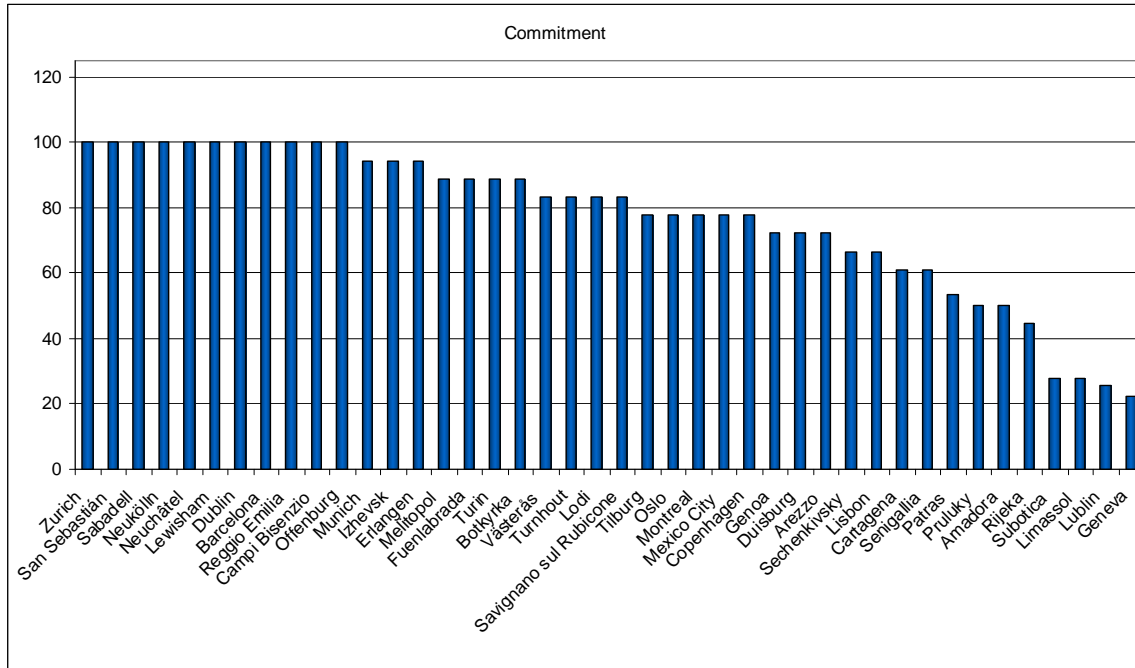
According to the overall Index results, Offenburg is positioned 11th among the 43 cities in the sample in relation to the index as it stands at present.

Offenburg: An overview

Offenburg is a municipality in the Ortenau district situated in the west of Baden-Württemberg state, Germany, with a population of 58,122 inhabitants. The percentage of non-national residents is 10%. Foreign-born residents account for 20% of the population. The Turkish, which make up 2.04% of the population, constitute the largest minority group in Offenburg⁴. According to the latest data available, GDP per capita in the Ostenau district amounts to €30,344⁵.

⁴ Data provided on 30 November 2011 by the Integration Service of the Offenburg town administration.
⁵ Reference year 2009, idem.

1. Commitment



The optimal intercultural city strategy would involve a formal statement by local authorities sending an unambiguous message of the city's commitment to intercultural principles as well as actively engaging and persuading other key local stakeholders to do likewise.

The rate of achievement of Offenburg's commitment policy goals is 100%, while the city sample's rate⁶ for commitment policy is 77%.

Offenburg has launched a number of initiatives which demonstrate the commitment to the intercultural approach in the city's integration policies. To begin with, Offenburg has formally adopted a public statement that it is an Intercultural City. The city prepared an intercultural strategy and an intercultural city action plan that also includes an evaluation process. In this regard Offenburg also set up a cross-departmental co-ordination unit and has allocated a budget for the implementation of its intercultural strategy. Also, the city has launched an official website that communicates its intercultural statement. The website **Integration in Offenburg**⁷, now available in German, provides information and advice regarding diversity and the city integration policies.

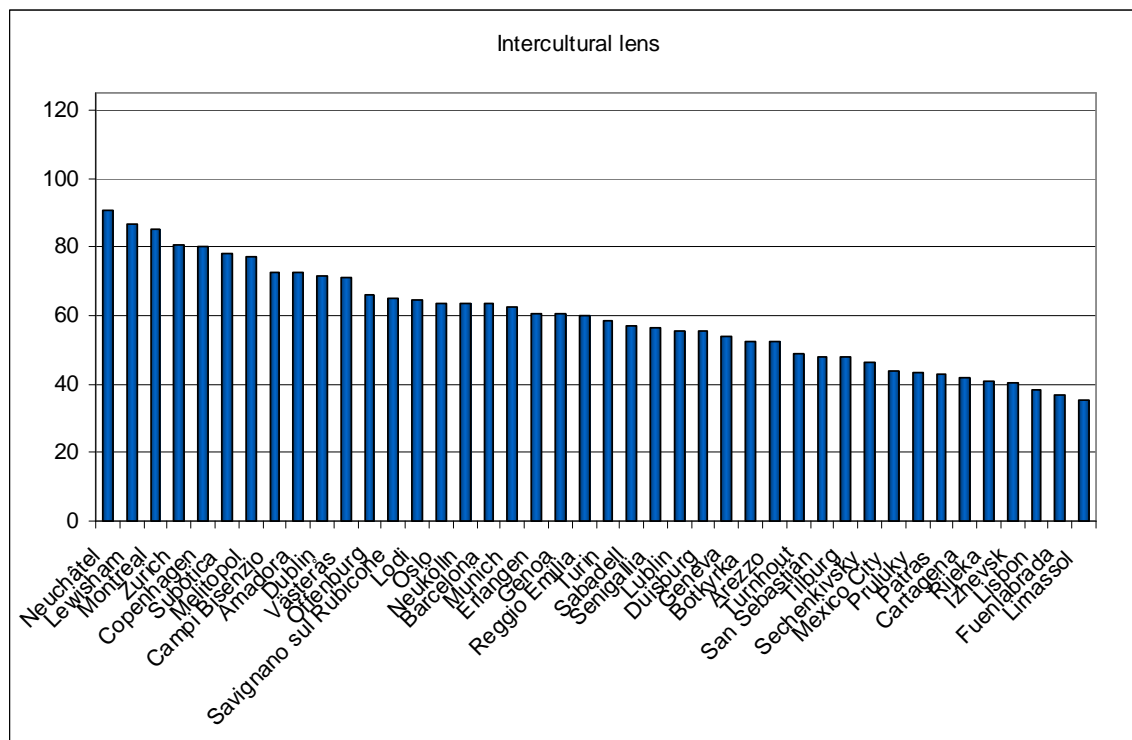
Beyond that, official speeches and communications by the city do make clear reference to the city's intercultural commitment. Furthermore, the city acknowledges and honours local citizens who have done exceptional things to encourage interculturalism in the local community.

⁶ The term "city sample" refers to the weighted average of the 43 cities included in the Index at this moment in each of the fourteen areas of intercultural governance.

⁷ <http://www.offenburg.de/html/integration.html>

The local authorities may wish to further explore possible commitment policies by ensuring translation of the website **Integration in Offenburg** into both English and French but also in Turkish, so as to reach out to newly-arrived migrants and foreign citizens who do not master German. On this point, we draw the authorities' attention to the website of the [Geneva Cantonal Office for Integration of Foreigners](http://www.internationalcooperationgeneva.ch/fr/node/3169)⁸, which serves as a resource centre for migrant communities. In 2008-2009 the number of those who visited the website increased by 100%. An interactive map displays 140 local addresses comprising, amongst others, local administrations, social services, associations serving migrant and female inhabitants, health services and leisure providers. These addresses may be useful for newly arrived migrants, foreign citizens, as well as for people who have lived in the community for a longer period of time.

2. Education⁹ policies through an intercultural lens



School has a powerful influence in society and has the potential to either reinforce or challenge prejudices in a number of ways through the social environment it creates, the guidance it provides and the values it nurtures.

⁸ <http://www.internationalcooperationgeneva.ch/fr/node/3169>

⁹ The term "Education" refers to a formal process of learning in which some people consciously teach while others adopt the social role of learner (ref. http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html).

The analysis shows that Offenburg's education policy achievement rate (55%) is about 10 % lower than the city sample's rate (66%). However, in the overall intercultural lens index Offenburg assumes a position in the second tertile: its attainment rate (66%) is slightly higher than the city sample's (59%).

Pupils in primary schools in Offenburg have different ethnic background. Most schools make strong efforts to involve parents from ethnic minority/migrant backgrounds in school life. Sometimes schools carry out intercultural projects.

Yet, the ethnic background of teachers in Offenburg rarely mirrors the city's diverse population. In this respect the City Council might consider adapting its policies, inspiring by the example of the Serbian city of Subotica, where the **Roma Education Centre** pushed for the training of Roma teachers and non-teaching assistants and for their employment in local schools and kindergartens.

Furthermore, we invite Offenburg to encourage schools to carry out more intercultural projects. In this respect, the Italian city of Campi Bisenzio, where high schools have been particularly involved in activities to counteract bullying and racism, may provide a source of learning. Thus, the high school **Agnoletti**, known for its high ratio of immigrant pupils, has excelled at intercultural activities by staging the musical '*Ho fatto un sogno*' (I had a dream) and producing the short film '*Campi di Battaglia*' (Battlefields). Furthermore, one of the city's partners, the **Learning Center of San Donnino** (Circolo Didattico di San Donnino), organised extracurricular activities to involve immigrant families of Chinese origin, whereas other partners helped conduct extra language classes in Arabic and Italian, both for children and adults. In addition, the **Garibaldi-Matteucci** high school offered its premises for teaching Chinese after regular school hours. In total, these intercultural school activities funded by the City Council amounted up to €20,000 in 2011.

3. Neighbourhood policies through an intercultural lens¹⁰

An intercultural city does not require a "perfect statistical mix" of people and recognises the value of geographical proximity and bonding between people of the same ethnic background. However, it also recognises that spatial ethnic segregation creates risks of exclusion and can act as a barrier to an inward and outward free flow of people, ideas and opportunities.

Offenburg's neighbourhood policy indicator of 81%, in comparison with the city sample's rate of 61%, is quite high.

Offenburg did not specify the percentage of neighbourhoods in which the vast majority¹¹ of the residents have the same ethnic background. However, as it follows from the answers, in one or two neighbourhoods, people from minority ethnic groups

¹⁰ By "neighbourhood" we understand a unit within a city which has a certain level of administrative autonomy (or sometimes also certain political governance structures) and is considered as a unit with regard to city planning. In larger cities, districts (boroughs) have several neighbourhoods. The statistical definition of "neighbourhood" varies from one country to another. Generally, it includes groups of population between 5,000 and 20,000 people on average.

¹¹ For the purpose of this report, a "vast majority" refers to a situation where more than 80% of residents come from the same ethnic background.

still constitute the majority of the residents¹². On this point, it is advisable that the city authorities pay attention to the experience of the Dutch city of Tilburg, which does not have any area in which only one ethnic group is concentrated. Thus, the Tilburg city initiatives helped break up the concentration of Antillean residents in one area, so as to avoid ghettoisation. In view of this, some areas, designated as 'impulse neighbourhoods', received large injections of investment to upgrade the quality of housing and infrastructure. Furthermore, the Tilburg public authorities took measures to involve residents in local decision-making. Thus, the project '**Behind the Front Door**' seeks the views of residents, who might otherwise be invisible, on their needs and perceptions of life in the neighbourhood.

According to the answers, Offenburg encourages interaction between neighbourhoods composed of people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and has adopted a specific policy to this end. In addition, a policy aiming to increase diversity of residents in the neighbourhoods and to avoid ethnic concentration is in the pipeline. In this regard, Offenburg may wish to consider the housing policies of Erlangen (Germany) and Zurich (Switzerland). Thus, it is common for the Erlangen municipal housing agencies and house building companies to pay attention to a heterogeneous mixture among communities and buildings. In Zurich, where a large proportion of inhabitants live in rented accommodation, 25% of the rented flats are provided by the city or through housing associations, which target their allocation policy to achieve a "good mix" between different social groups.

4. Public service policies through an intercultural lens

An optimal intercultural approach remains open to new ideas, dialogue and innovation brought by or required by minority groups, rather than imposing a "one size fits all" approach to public services and actions.

The analysis shows that Offenburg's public services policy achievement rate (60%) is higher than the city sample's rate (42%).

To begin with, Offenburg provides all of the three services listed in the Intercultural Cities index, which are tailored to the needs of the ethnic/cultural background of its citizens: it offers funeral/burial services, school meals and women-only sections and times in sports facilities in response to culturally-based requests. Furthermore, Offenburg has set up sports clubs specific to the ethnic/cultural background of the city dwellers.

We invite the city to build upon the existing intercultural initiatives by adding an intergenerational dimension to them. The experience of the Dutch city of Tilburg and the German city of Neukölln (Berlin) are particularly illustrative in this regard. In the past, Tilburg had only general retirement homes, and there was a worry that elderly migrants would not be provided with culture-sensitive care. Nowadays, the Tilburg housing corporations build old people's homes for specific groups, like the elderly from Suriname or Turkey. Moreover, all civil servants in Tilburg who have contacts with clients from a different cultural background have received intercultural training. Likewise, after a public campaign promoting culturally sensitive care in Neukölln, the

¹² By "minority group" we understand a subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over their own lives than the members of a dominant or majority group have over theirs (ref. http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html)

City Council for Social Affairs and Housing launched cooperation with the migration service of Caritas (a social welfare institution of the Catholic Church in Germany). Within this framework the Caritas staff working with senior citizens with different cultural backgrounds was familiarized with culture-sensitive services through workshops and information sessions.

It is positive that Offenburg takes action to encourage intercultural mixing in the private sector labour market, notably through the **Social City** project.

However, when it comes to employment in Offenburg's public administration, it is regretful that, although non-German nationals can be employed there, the ethnical background of public servants does not reflect the composition of the city population and the city has no relevant recruitment plan.

In view of the above, Offenburg may wish to explore initiatives of Copenhagen (Denmark), Amsterdam (the Netherlands) and Berlin (Germany). Thus, the Copenhagen administration offers paid internships to people with minority backgrounds, for instance, on condition that they master a certain language. Such internships may lead to permanent employment. The Amsterdam City Council advertises its vacancies through community media groups, as well as universities with a high proportion of students from minority backgrounds. In Berlin, the recruitment campaign '**Berlin braucht dich**' (Berlin needs you) programmed for 2006-2012 aims at diversifying the Senate's workforce by promoting traineeship opportunities and raising awareness of migrant associations and parents. Stakeholders are also involved in making sure the progress is closely monitored. Thus, as a result of the campaign, the percentage of trainees with a migrant background increased from 6% in 2006 to 14.5% in 2008. Similar achievements have been made in Amsterdam, where the **Diversity** programme (2007-2010) with targets across salary scales enabled the city administration to hire 21.5% staff with a migrant background in 2008 against 14% in 2006. In addition, Amsterdam's administration set out the objective to reflect the composition of the city among its employees, both at the political and the senior management level.

5. Business and labour market policies through an intercultural lens

Offenburg's business and labour market policy indicators (20%) are twice as low compared to the city sample (44%).

It is encouraging that the city takes action to prompt ethnic/cultural minorities businesses to move beyond localised economies and enter the main stream and higher value added sectors.

However, Offenburg may wish to ameliorate its initiatives, for instance, by creating an umbrella organisation which has among its objectives to promote diversity and non-discrimination in employment; signing a binding document, such as a charter, against discrimination in the workplace; taking steps to encourage 'business districts/incubators' in which different cultures could more easily mix; and, lastly, giving priority to companies with a diversity strategy in its procurement of goods and services.

On the above points, we invite Offenburg to consider the examples of other European cities. Thus, in the Italian city of Lodi, the Chamber of Commerce

embraces the role of an umbrella organisation promoting diversity and non-discrimination in employment. In the Spanish city of Barcelona legislation authorises local businesses and institutions to sign a charter to acknowledge their commitment to the fundamental principles of equality, respect and inclusion for all people in the workplace and in society, regardless of their background. The charter also stipulates that a workforce from a diverse cultural, demographic and social background will bring benefits to the organisation.

In terms of 'business districts/incubators', the Italian city of Campi Bisenzio created shopping centres and industrial zones as part of its urban development policy. These commerce and business-oriented incubators provide a number of activities and services that promote the fusion of different cultures. The city of Lodi installed incubators around the **Parco Tecnologico Padano** (Technology Park), relevant for the city's biotechnology and the food industry. Likewise, the Ukrainian city of Melitopol foresees to build an **Intercultural business centre** in the former Palace of Culture, and there is a high demand from its prospective tenants.

Moreover, in order to prioritise companies with a diversity-based procurement strategy, the City Council of the Swiss city of Zurich adopted guidelines for procurement of goods which include the core ILO labour standards (e.g. non-discrimination). In this spirit, since 2007 the Dutch city of Amsterdam has been running the project **Social Return on Investment** aimed at including social obligations in public contracts. In particular, contractors are asked to use the money generated by the contract to offer employment opportunities to those excluded from the labour market, including migrants.

6. Cultural and civil life policies through an intercultural lens

The time which people allocate to their leisure may often be the best opportunity for them to encounter and engage with inhabitants from a different culture. The city can influence this through its own activities and through the way it distributes resources to other organisations.

The rate of achievement of Offenburg's cultural and civil life policy is 100%, while the city sample's rate is 81%.

The City Council regularly uses interculturalism as a criterion when allocating grants to associations and initiatives. For instance, €30,000 yearly is granted to sports clubs. Additionally, the city regularly organises events in the fields of arts, culture and sports that contribute to intercultural exchange, as well as public debates or campaigns related to diversity and intercultural dialogue. Beyond this, Offenburg encourages cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions.

7. Public space policies through an intercultural lens

Well managed and animated public spaces can become beacons of the city's intercultural intentions. However, badly managed spaces can become places of suspicion and fear of the stranger.

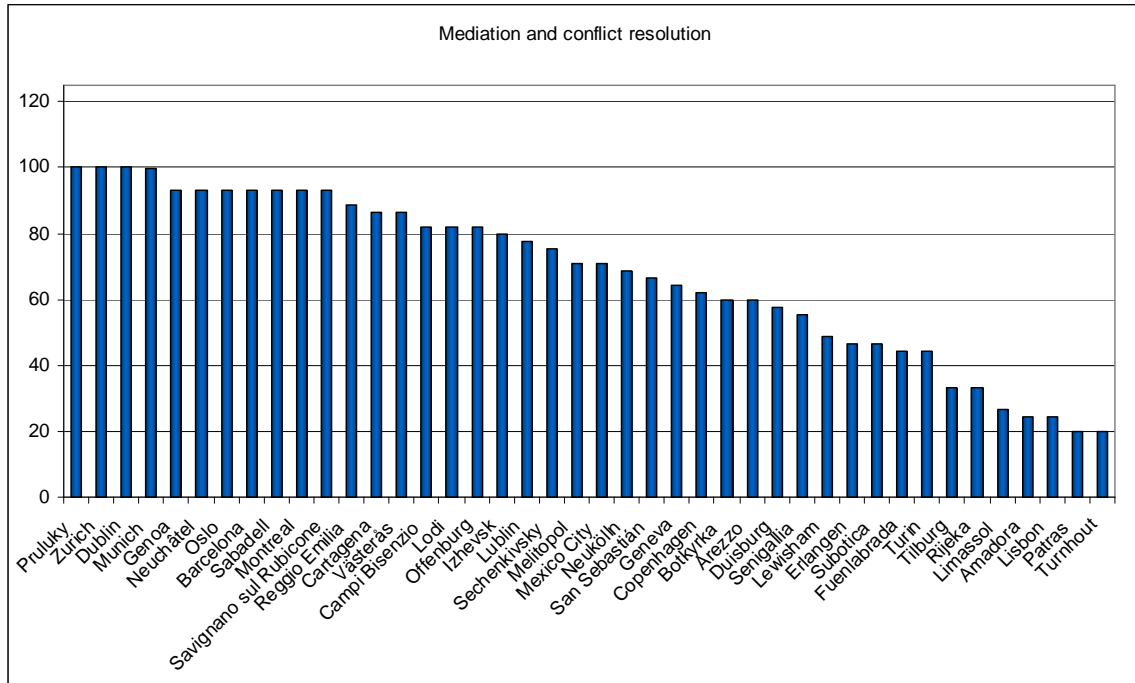
The rate of achievement of Offenburg's public space policy goals (80%) is significantly higher than the sample city's rate (65%) in this area.

Offenburg has implemented several public space policy instruments. For example, it does take action to encourage intercultural mixing in libraries, museums, playgrounds and public squares. There are also several other public places provided, such as family centres, arts and music schools or adult evening training centres, where people from different cultures can meet. Every time when the city authorities decide to reconstruct an area, they propose different forms and places of consultation to reach out to people from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds.

However, only occasionally does Offenburg take into account the backgrounds of citizens in the design and management of new public buildings and spaces. In this regard, the city could draw its attention to Campi Besenizio (Italy), where this has become a regular practice. For example, when the city authorities decide on new urban development programmes or other local issues of collective interest (schools, transportation), associations representing the city's various ethnic groups can discuss and evaluate planned activities in public meetings and assemblies. The **Rosa Parks** was also designed and evaluated along these lines. Beyond that, Campi Bisenzio tries to support different religious communities, both by providing local public spaces and contributing to managerial expenses. For example, the city is helping the **Islamic Cultural Centre** to construct a new building where its activities would take place. Another useful example comes from the Portuguese city of Amadora. After 284 fires broke out in the **Casal do Silvia** neighbourhood, Amadora designed new playgrounds, recreational, educational and socio-cultural facilities, whilst taking into consideration the ethnic/cultural backgrounds of its inhabitants.

Although there is no area in Offenburg reputed as "dangerous", there are still one or two neighbourhoods in the city that are dominated by one ethnic group (majority or minority) and where other people feel unwelcome. On this point, mediation and conflict resolution policies become increasingly important with a view to forging a peaceful living together.

8. Mediation and conflict resolution policies

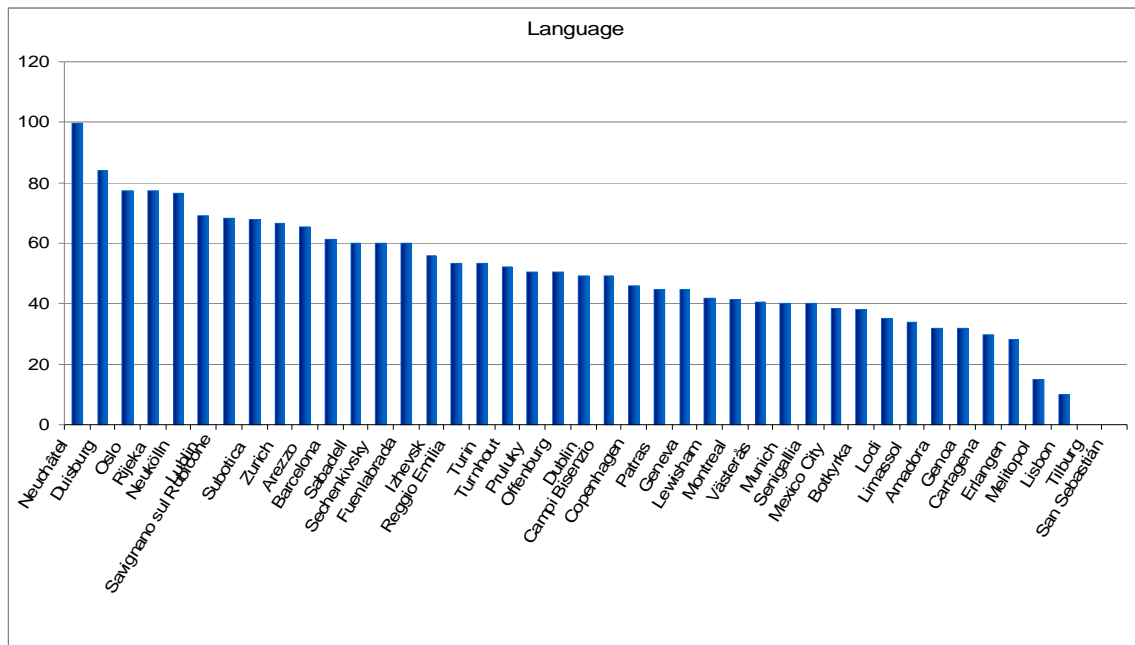


The analysis shows that Offenburg's mediation and conflict resolution policy achievement rate is higher (82%) than the city sample's rate (68%).

Offenburg has a generalist mediation service, including intercultural competence and specialised staff. Beyond that, it provides intercultural mediation services in the city administration but also in the neighbourhoods and in the streets, proactively meeting residents. Additionally, there is an organisation in the city dealing specifically with inter-religious relations.

We invite Offenburg to consider building upon the city's existing mediation and conflict resolution policies by launching intercultural mediation activities in services, such as hospitals, police, youth clubs and mediation centres. On this point, Offenburg could consult the Italian city of Rubicone, where a municipal intercultural mediation setting (**Servizio di Mediazione Interculturale**) offers intercultural mediation services in hospitals. Another Italian city, Lodi, has a similar setting. Its **Stranello Stranieri** (contact point for foreign nationals), together with the **Cooperativa Socaile Il Mosaico**, advises foreigners, including youth groups, in multiple languages, such as Arabic and Romanian. Furthermore, the Italian city of Reggio Emilia has great expertise in training mediation workers through a specialised setting (*Centro Mondinsieme*) and supplying staff for schools and hospitals. Reggio Emilia has also established an intercultural centre with trained mediators from a variety of ethnic and language backgrounds who intervene whenever they feel a problem might arise, for instance, if kids in some schools tend to cluster too much on the ethnic basis. Lastly, in two neighbourhoods of the Portuguese city of Lisbon, **Casal dos Machados** and **Quinta das Laranjeiras**, there is a library where the police have facilities to meet with 'difficult' families on a neutral ground.

9. Language¹³



Offenburg's language policy achievement rate (51%) slightly overweighs the city sample's rate of 50%.

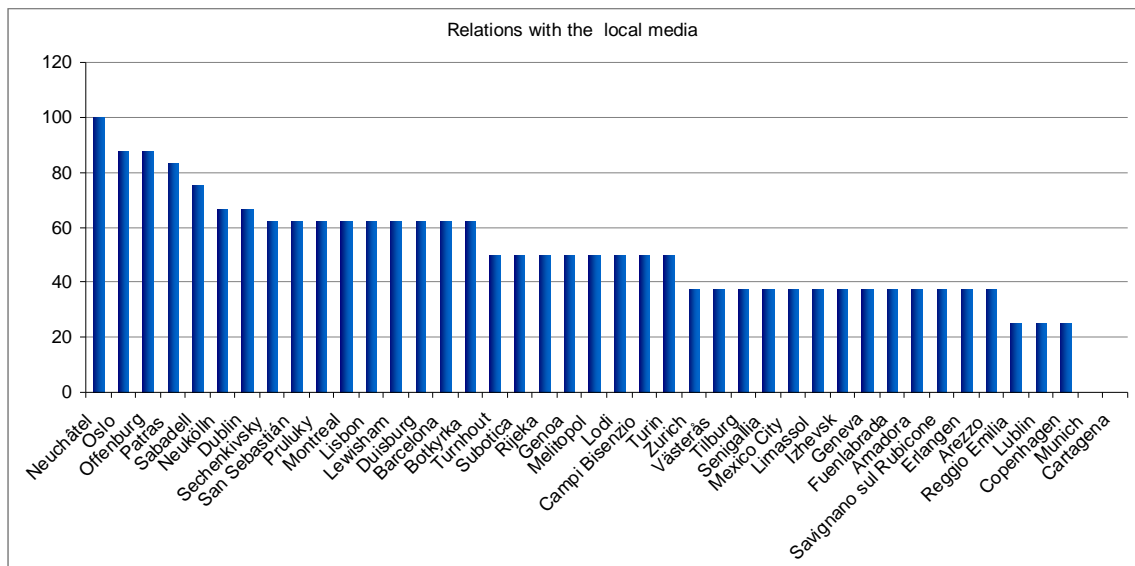
To begin with, the city provides specific language training in German for hard-to-reach groups (non-working mothers, unemployed or retired people). It also supports learning migrant/minority languages as a mother tongue course for migrant/minority kids. Additionally, Offenbug participates in the funding of a local Russian newspaper and endorses projects promoting positive image of migrant/minority languages.

We invite Offenbug to consider fostering the city's existing language policy by introducing the learning of minority languages to the regular school curriculum or, at least, as a regular language option available to anyone.

Offenburg is further encouraged to support private and civil sector institutions providing training in migrant/minority languages. On this point, the city's attention is drawn to Campi Bisenzio (Italy), which encourages private and civil sector institutions offering a broad range of language training for diverse target groups, including the hard-to-reach population. These institutions also provide language programs (Chinese or Arabic) for migrants, helping them learn and improve their mother tongue. Similarly, Neuchâtel (Switzerland) supports an intercultural library run by volunteers. The idea is that the provision of books in a range of languages – both to individual users and through schools – helps migrant children learn French. At the same time, reading books in their native language reinforces children's interest in reading and learning altogether and encourages the acquisition of the native language.

¹³ By language we understand an abstract system of word meanings and symbols for all aspects of culture. The term also includes gestures and other nonverbal communication. (ref-http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html)

10. Media policies



The media has a powerful influence on the attitudes to cultural relations and upon the reputations of particular minority and majority groups. Local municipalities can influence and cooperate with local media agencies to achieve a climate of public opinion more conducive to intercultural relations.

88% of Offenburg's media policy goals were achieved, which is significantly higher than the city sample's attainment rate for these goals (50%).

First and foremost, the city's information service is instructed to promote harmonious intercultural relations. The city provides support for advocacy, media training or mentorship for journalists with a minority background. Lastly, the city monitors the way in which media portray minorities.

Offenburg may wish to further improve its policy initiatives by extending its media strategy to promote positive image of migrants/minorities in the media, for instance, by means of special columns in the press, TV and radio campaigns, targeted media briefings or joint public events with media. Offenburg can take on board the following initiatives implemented by other European cities famous for their vivid media sector.

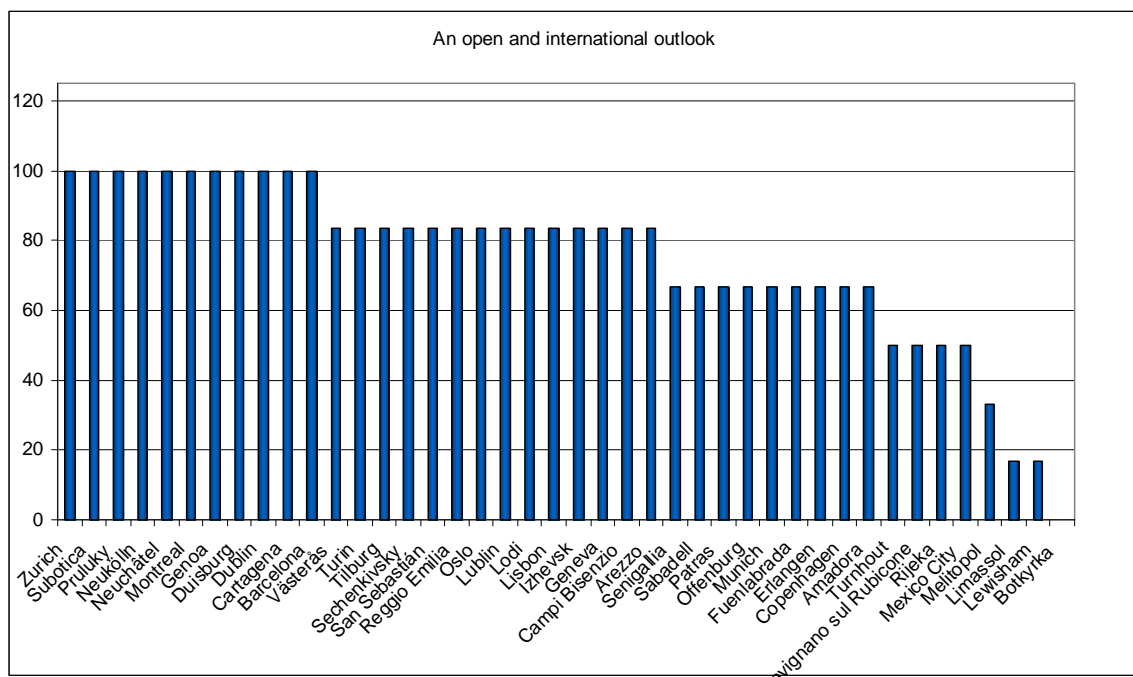
Thus, in the Swiss city of Neuchâtel, the journalists of the newspapers *L'Express* and *L'Impartial* are often of immigrant origin or foreign residents and are very sensitive to the diversity and integration issues. The newspapers often report on the celebrations of different ethnic communities. For example, everyday during the training camp of the Portuguese team for Euro2008, they published a page in Portuguese to present Portuguese culture. One of the Neuchâtel media's flagship initiatives has been the **Week of Integration in Public Service Media**, as a result of which a number of reports about foreigners and their lives were published. The city authorities also finance a freelance journalist to interview foreign residents and transmit their stories to local media.

The Italian city of Reggio Emilia issues the **Speciale Reggio Emilia**, a monthly supplement page in the **Metropoli**, a national weekly publication. This intercultural page is realised by one Italian and one foreign editor to ensure that the Reggio intercultural experience is included in national news.

In the London borough of Lewisham (the UK), the local council funds community radio stations as a way both of communicating with specific communities and encouraging the stations to develop as enterprises and job creators. To cover the diversity of the borough, the council also publishes the **Lewisham Life** magazine, where articles are accompanied with selected pictures representing the diversity of the population.

Lastly, the Danish city of Copenhagen carried out the three-year campaign **We Copenhageners** which aimed, *inter alia*, at acknowledging and celebrating diversity. A part of this campaign was directed towards the media and received substantial press coverage. Similarly, the municipality of Oslo (Norway) sponsors the **Top 10** event (www.thetop10.no), which yearly celebrates and profiles the ten most successful immigrants in Norway, in business and work, academia and media, culture and civic life.

11. International outlook policies



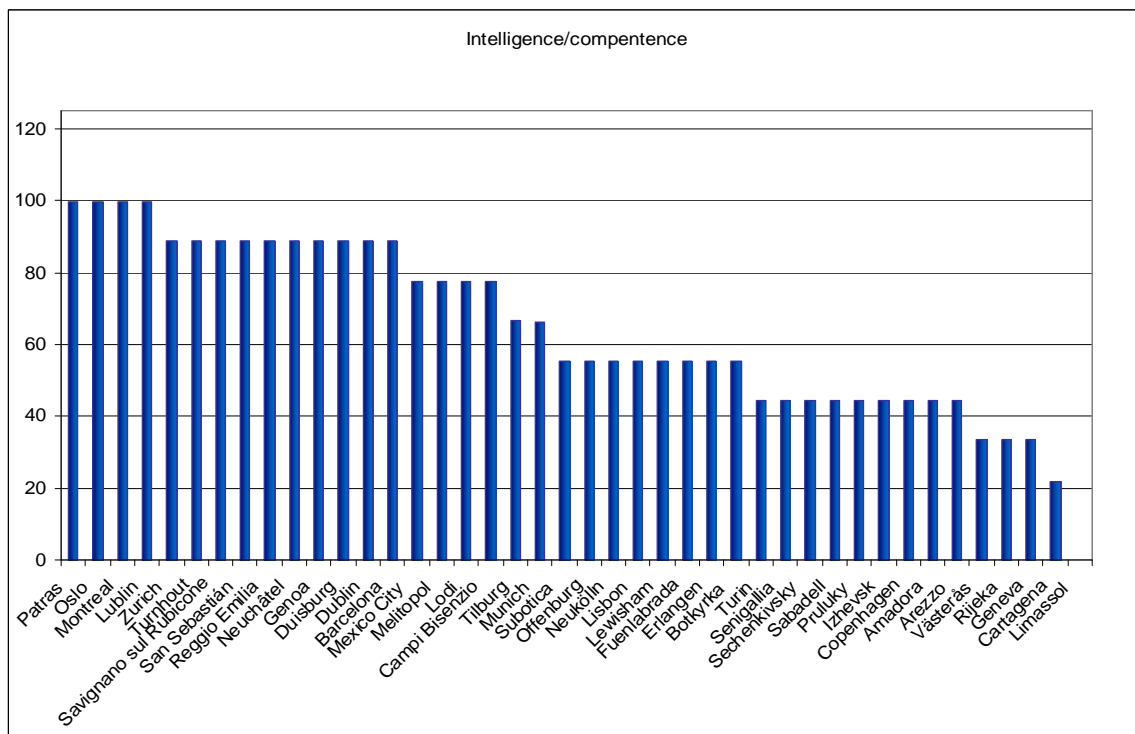
Offenburg's international outlook policy rate (67%) is not that high as the average rate (75%).

Offenburg has put into practice several policies to encourage international cooperation. In particular, it has adopted an explicit policy and a specific financial envelope has been introduced to this end. Furthermore, the city supports universities to attract foreign students and encourages them to participate in the life of the city, for example through the **Senior Service** project.

We invite Offenburg to ameliorate its international outlook policies, for instance, by setting up an agency with a specific responsibility for monitoring and developing the city’s openness to international connections and by initiating projects and policies to encourage economic co-development with countries of origin of its migrant groups.

The experience of the Italian city of Reggio Emilia is particularly inspiring on both of the above learning points. Thus, in 2000 the city set up the **Reggio Nel Mondo**, an agency aiming to sustain and improve the city’s international contacts and projects. It acts as a crosscutting tool supporting the municipal departments in developing a continuous international exchange and dialogue. Furthermore, Reggio Emilia signed an agreement with the Moroccan Ministry in charge of relations with the diaspora with a view to “promoting socio-cultural mixing and openness towards the other”. Both sides are providing significant financial contributions to the activities included in the agreement, such as setting up an open-space mini-theatre in the *Reggio Pauline Park* to encourage intercultural encounters between adults and children; promoting Moroccan culture and teaching Arabic to young Reggio residents; enabling young Reggio residents of Moroccan origin to participate in cultural and sports events and organising cultural visits to Morocco for young Italians.

12. Intelligence and competence policies



A competent public official in an optimal intercultural city should be able to detect and respond to the presence of cultural difference, and modulate his/her approach accordingly, rather than seeking to impose one mode of behaviour on all situations.

The attainment rate of Offenburg’s intelligence competence policy goals (55%) is significantly lower than the city sample’s (64%).

In Offenburg, information about diversity and intercultural relations is mainstreamed to inform city councillors and public servants on new developments in this field. Furthermore, by organising interdisciplinary seminars and information networks and delivering training courses, the city promotes the intercultural competence of its officials and staff.

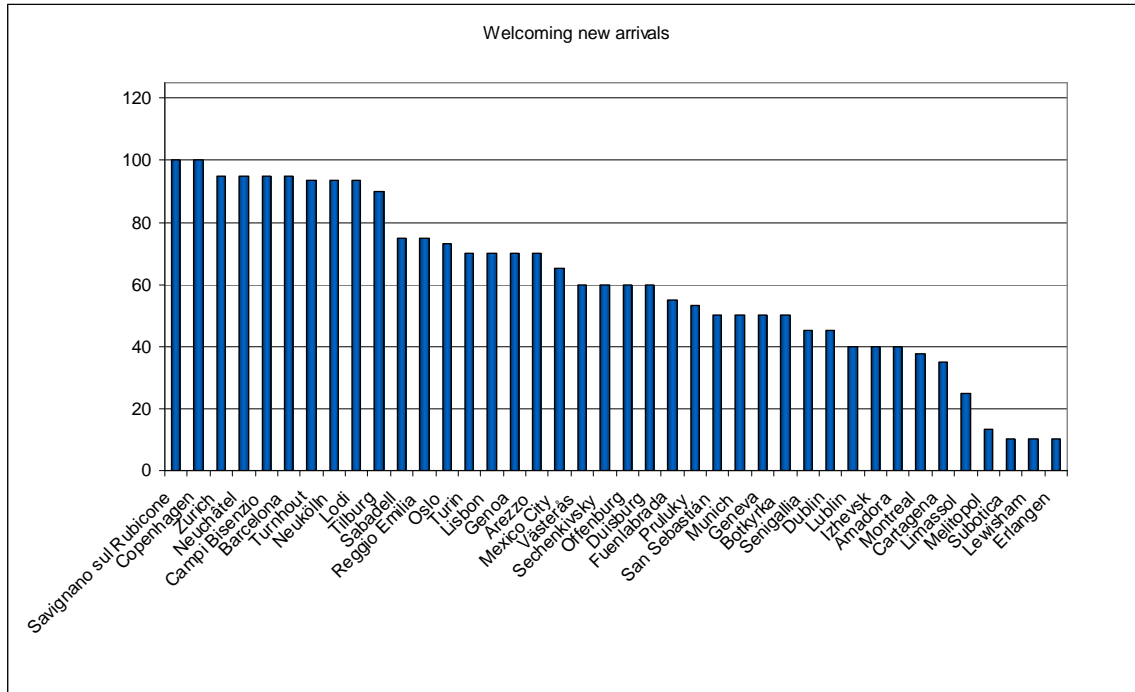
The local authorities may wish to further explore possible intelligence and competence policies by carrying out surveys including questions about the perception of migrants and minorities. In this regard, the city could draw its attention to interesting practices implemented by a range of European cities.

Thus, every two years, the **Department for Research and Information** of the Dutch city of Tilburg conducts a survey among the city residents concerning their attitudes to 'the multicultural society'. This survey includes the same ten statements each time, so it is easy to compare the results. The research department also presents monitor studies, like the Poverty Monitor, the Integration Monitor, the Antilleans Monitor, the Moroccan Monitor, etc. The local authorities shape their policies on the basis of this information.

Likewise, in the Italian city of Reggio Emilia, locals and foreigners are regularly surveyed on the phenomenon of migration by **IPSOS Public Affairs**, a research centre based in Milan. In the Greek city of Patras, similar surveys will soon be carried out by the synergy of the University of Patras and the Institute of Immigration Policy (IMEPO) at the Greek Ministry of the Interior.

What is more, the Ukrainian city of Melitopol was the first in the Intercultural Cities network to conduct a public survey in accordance with the Analytical Grid. The survey revealed a number of interesting trends in the perception of diversity. It established, in particular, that an overwhelming majority of the surveyed believed that local ethnic differences were recognised and respected by the city's public services (67.1%); that their neighbourhood was a place where people from different backgrounds could live harmoniously (72%); and that they knew more people of different ethnicities than five years ago (60%).

13. Welcoming policies



People arriving in a city for an extended stay (whatever their circumstances) are likely to find themselves disorientated and in need of multiple forms of support. The degree to which these measures can be co-ordinated and delivered effectively will have a significant impact on how the person settles and integrates.

The attainment rate of Offenburg’s welcoming policy goals (60%) is slightly higher than the city sample (58%).

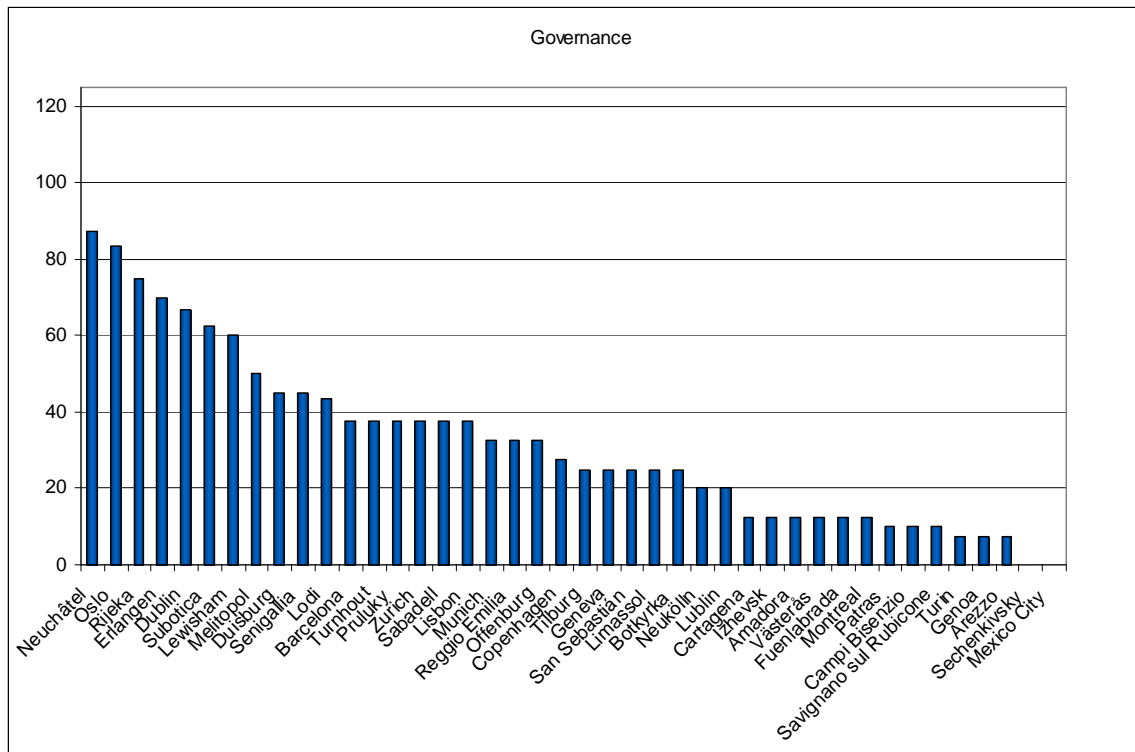
Offenburg has a designated agency to welcome newcomers and a comprehensive city-specific package of information and support to newly-arrived residents from abroad. Some city services provide welcome support for newly-arrived family members and students.

It is advisable that welcome support be extended to a broader range of newcomers, such as refugees and migrant workers. On this point, Offenburg’s attention is driven to interesting practices developed by other European cities. Thus, refugees arriving to Oslo (Norway) are offered a two-year introductory program, including language classes and classes in Norwegian life and society, in a language that the participant can understand. On the other hand, agencies working with new arrivals in Peterborough (the UK) created the **New Link** project. The initiative is a one-stop shop of service providers. It is operating nine projects over a three-year period to help integrate new arrivals. This task is even more challenging, given that the city has been allocated about 78 per cent of asylum-seekers dispersed to the East of England region. Lastly, the Polish city of Lublin set up a number of initiatives providing welcome support to refugees, including the **Lawyers for Refugees** programme carried out by the Rule of Law Foundation; the **Caritas Aid Centre for Immigrants and Refugees**; the **Centre for Refugees** administered by a voluntary

centre; and the **Social Aid for Foreigners and Refugees** programme run by the Municipal Family Aid Centre.

Similarly, Offenburg might wish to introduce a special public ceremony to greet newcomers in the presence of officials. On this point, the city might consider the experience of Campi Bisenzio (Italy) and Tilburg (the Netherlands). Annually in December persons who obtained Italian citizenship the previous year are called to participate in a public ceremony in Campi Bisenzio. Numerous migrants' associations and individuals working in the sector participate in the ceremony and assist with its organising. Tilburg also organises an annual greet party for all the new residents. In some neighbourhoods and blocks of flats special guides welcome the newcomers and inform them of everyday issues (medical assistance, police, town hall, public transport, etc.), customs and traditions of the Tilburg residents.

14. Governance policies



Perhaps the most powerful and far-reaching actions which a city can take in making it more intercultural are the processes of democratic representation and decision making.

Offenburg's governance policy attainment rate (33%) approaches the city sample (32%). The city is thus positioned in the second tertile of the index.

It is positive that Offenburg has a political body, the **Integration Council**, which is entitled to represent all ethnic minorities and is independent of the local authority.

However, only citizens can vote in Offenburg's local elections. Therefore, the ethnic background of elected politicians does not reflect the composition of the cities population. In this regard, Offenburg may wish to further explore possible governance policies by introducing activities to increase the representation of migrants in the city administration. An interesting example of such an initiative has been developed by the UK-based operation **Black Vote** which has set up a scheme in Liverpool. It allows young migrants to shadow established local politicians, so they better understand what the job involves, and encourages them to engage in politics.

Moreover, the city could introduce a standard for the representation of migrants/minorities in mandatory boards supervising schools and public services. An interesting step in this direction was made by the Serbian city of Subotica. The Municipal Council for Interethnic Relations established a **Board of Parents** in one of the neighbourhoods, **Peščara**, where 500 Kosovo Roma have settled. This board allows parents, including these of Roma origin, to have representatives at school.

15. Conclusions

In a number of areas Offenburg does much better than many other cities, especially when it comes to policy areas such as neighbourhood, public services, public space, mediation and conflict resolution or relations with media. What is more, and that is particularly noteworthy, Offenburg reaches the maximum rate of 100% as regards its commitment to interculturalism and the provision of a diverse cultural and civil life (for documentation on its intercultural activities, see Offenburg's municipal [website Integration in Offenburg](#)¹⁴).

16. Recommendations

When it comes to Offenburg's intercultural efforts, with reference to the survey, the city could enhance them in the sectors below by introducing the following initiatives:

- **education:** adopt specific recruitment and training policies to secure a more diverse teaching staff; encourage schools to conduct more intercultural projects;
- **business and labour:** create an organisation to promote diversity and non-discrimination in employment; sign a binding document against discrimination in the workplace; encourage 'business districts/incubators'; prioritise companies with a diversity strategy in procurement of goods and services;
- **international outlook:** set up an agency to monitor and develop the city's openness to international connections; initiate projects and policies to encourage economic co-development with countries of origin of the migrant groups;
- **intelligence and competence:** conduct surveys including questions about the perception of migrants and minorities.

To this end, the city may wish to look into further examples implemented by other Intercultural Cities as a source of learning and inspiration to guide future initiatives. Such examples are provided in the Intercultural Cities database¹⁵.

¹⁴ <http://www.offenburg.de/html/integration.html> (available in German)

¹⁵ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance_en.asp