

# RESULTS OF THE INTERCULTURAL CITIES INDEX



# PATRAS

April, 2017



**Intercultural cities**  
Building the future on diversity

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A comparison between 86 cities<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The 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 City Index” has been designed as a benchmarking tool for the cities taking part in the programme as well as for future participants.

As of today 86 cities have undergone their intercultural policies analysis using the Intercultural City Index: Albufeira (*Portugal*), Amadora (*Portugal*), Arezzo (*Italy*), Ballarat (*Australia*), Barcelona (*Spain*), Beja (*Portugal*), Bergen (*Norway*), Bilbao (*Spain*), Botkyrka (*Sweden*), Braga (*Portugal*), Bucharest (*Romania*), Campi Bisenzio (*Italy*), Cartagena (*Spain*), Casalecchio di Rena (*Italy*), Cascais (*Portugal*), Castellón (*Spain*), Catalonia (*Spain*), Coimbra (*Portugal*), Comune di Ravenna (*Italy*), Constanta (*Romania*), Copenhagen (*Denmark*), Donostia-San Sebastian<sup>2</sup> (*Spain*), Dortmund (*Germany*), Dublin

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish city of Donostia-San Sebastian is generally referred in the programme as San Sebastian.

(Ireland), Duisburg (Germany), Erlangen (Germany), Forli (Italy), Fucecchio (Italy), Fuenlabrada (Spain), Geneva (Switzerland), Genoa (Italy), Getxo (Spain), Haifa (Israel), Hamburg (Germany), Ioannina (Greece), Izhevsk (Udmurt Republic, Russia), Jerez de la Frontera (Spain), Municipality of Klaksvik (Faroe Islands), the London borough of Lewisham (United Kingdom), Limassol (Cyprus), Limerick (Ireland), Lisbon (Portugal), Lodi (Italy), Logroño (Spain), Lublin (Poland), Melitopol (Ukraine), Mexico City (Mexico), Montreal (Canada), Munich (Germany), the canton of Neuchâtel (Switzerland), Neukölln (Berlin, Germany), Novellara (Italy), Offenburg (Germany), Olbia (Italy), Oslo (Norway), the district of Osmangazi in the province of Bursa (Turkey), Parla (Spain) Patras (Greece), Pécs (Hungary), Pryluky (Ukraine), Reggio Emilia (Italy), Reykjavik (Iceland), Rijeka (Croatia), Rotterdam (the Netherlands), Sabadell (Spain), San Giuliano Terme (Italy), Santa Coloma (Spain), Santa Maria da Feira (Portugal), Unione dei Comuni-Savignano sul Rubicone<sup>3</sup> (Italy), Sechenkivsky (District of Kyiv, Ukraine), Senigallia (Italy), Stavanger (Norway), Strasbourg (France), Subotica (Serbia), Sumy (Ukraine), Tenerife (Spain), Tilburg (The Netherlands), Turin (Italy), Turnhout (Belgium), Unione Terre dei Castelli<sup>4</sup> (Italy), Valletta (Malta), Västerås (Sweden), Ville de Paris (France), Vinnitsa (Ukraine), Viseu (Portugal) and Zurich (Switzerland).

Among these cities, 39 (including Patras) have more than 200,000 inhabitants and 50 (including Patras) have less than 15% of foreign-born residents.

This document presents the results of the Intercultural City Index analysis for Patras (Greece) in 2016 and provides related intercultural policy conclusions and recommendations.

### 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.

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<sup>3</sup> The Italian city of Unione dei Comuni-Savignano sul Rubicone is generally referred in the programme as Rubicone.

<sup>4</sup> Former Castelvetro di Modena.

# METHODOLOGY



The Intercultural City Index analysis is based on a questionnaire involving 73 questions grouped in 11 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).

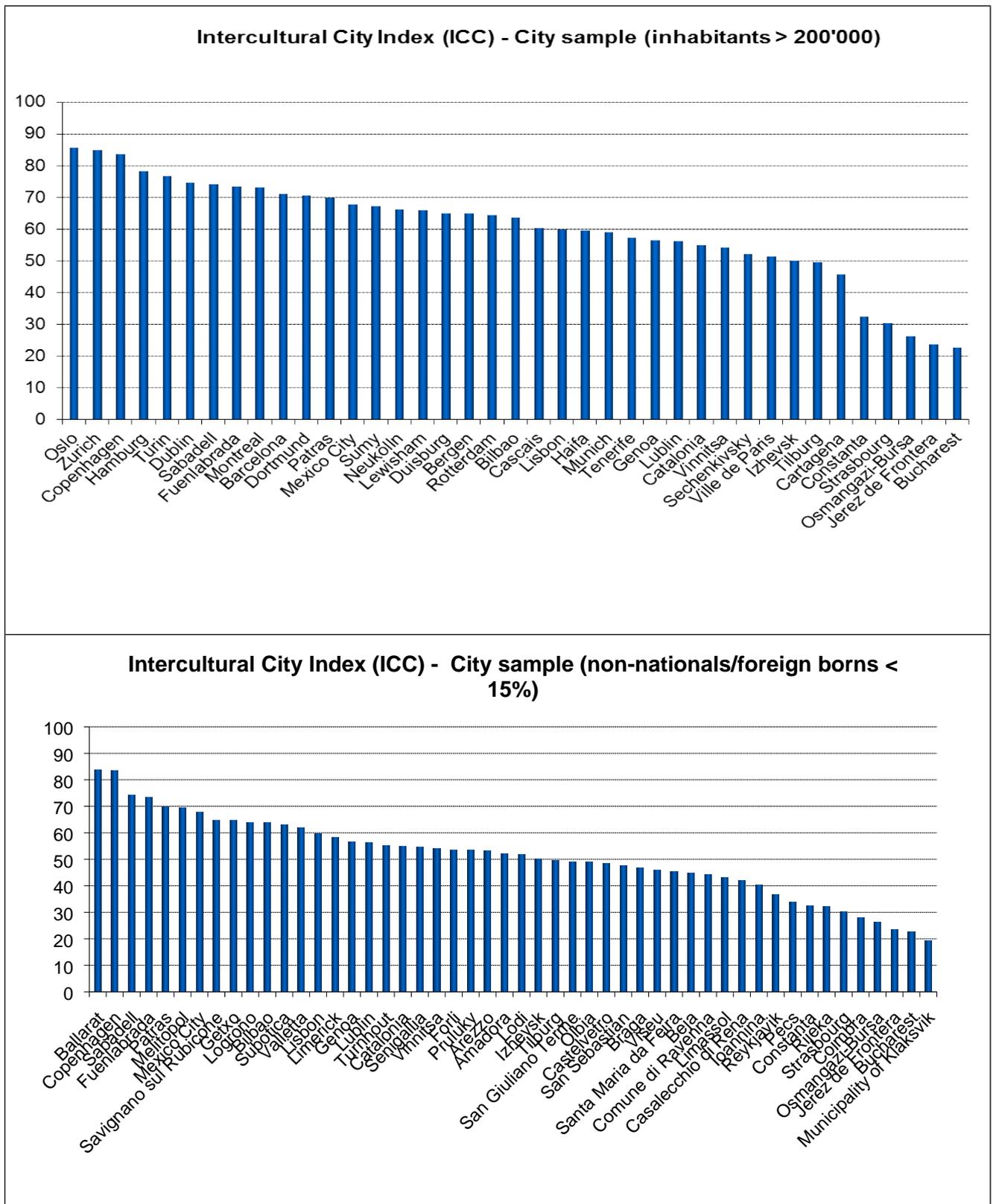
These indicators comprise: commitment; education system; neighbourhoods; public services; business and labour market; cultural and civil life policies; public spaces; mediation and conflict resolution; language; media; international outlook; intelligence/competence; welcoming and governance. Some of 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".

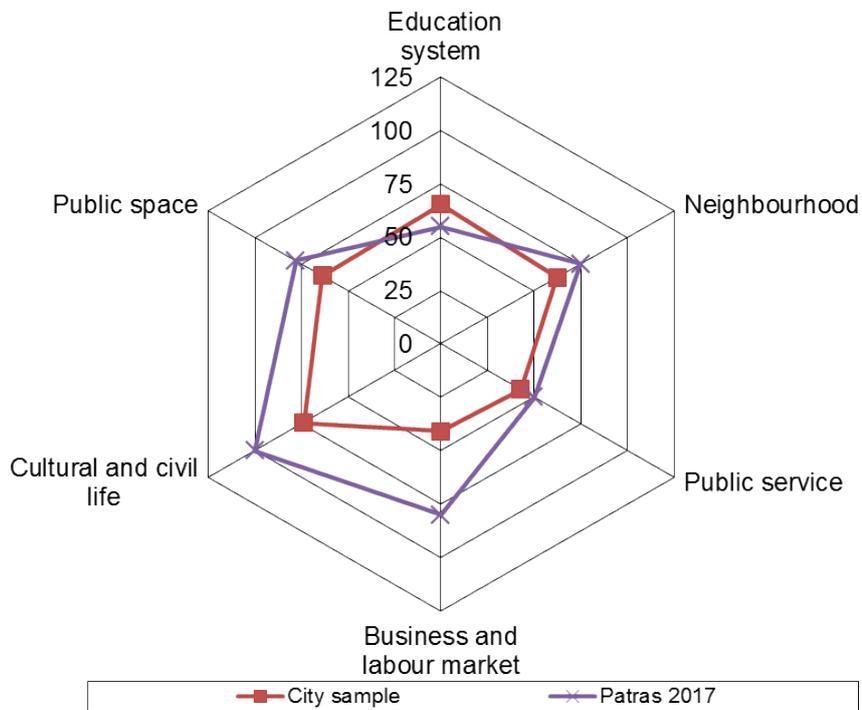
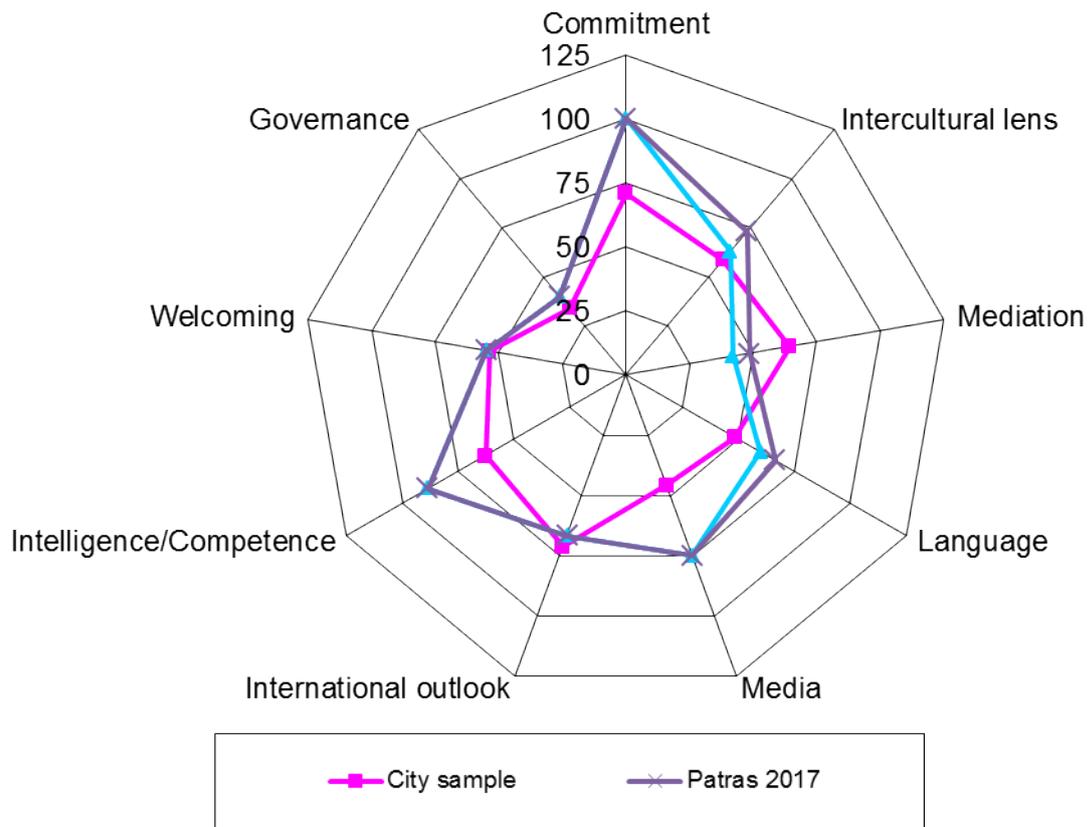
The comparison between cities is strictly indicative, given the large difference between cities in terms of historical development; type and scale of diversity, governance models and level of economic development. The comparison is based on a set of formal criteria related to the intercultural approach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

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 insofar: the size (above or below 200,000 inhabitants) and the percentage of foreign-born residents (higher or lower than 15 per cent). It is believed that this approach would allow for more valid and useful comparison, visual presentation and filtering of the results.

According to the overall index results, Patras has been positioned 17th among the 86 cities in the sample, with an aggregate intercultural city index of 70%, after Dortmund (71%) and before Melitopol (69%). Patras has been ranked 12th

among cities with more than 200,000 inhabitants and 5th among cities with less than 15% of foreign-born residents.





## Patras– An overview

Capital of Greece's Western region, Patras enjoys a remarkable history of engagement with the wider world going back to ancient times, with successive conquests leaving a rich heritage of cultural sediments, like the Byzantine cupola inside the dome of St Andrew's Cathedral. Already a significant port during the Roman empire—its remains still visible in the Odeon—in the last millennium it was embroiled in the Crusades and came under the dominion at different times of Venetians and Ottomans. In the van of the revolution of 1821, it was finally liberated seven years later by a French expeditionary force. The failure of Garibaldi's revolution brought Italians to its shores. This cosmopolitan tradition brought the city to a high level of civilisation, joining other major European cultural centres in 1872 in constructing a municipal theatre and opera house, with an Italian stage and co-founded by a Bavarian winemaker.

Patras is today a Mediterranean gateway, particularly to Italian east-coast cities. This is not, however, supported with adequate infrastructure in its hinterland—most manifest in the railway connection from Athens, truncated by the crisis, which the business community recognises represents a barrier to development. Even before the crisis, a collapse in the textile industry in Patras in the 1990s led to a surge in unemployment in the city. Around three in ten of the adult population are currently unemployed.

Patras' geopolitical location has of course proved problematic in recent years, as many individuals arriving from north Africa and the middle east, lacking entitlement to remain, have identified Patras as a transit point en route to their hoped-for destination of one of the northern European countries, though this may be blocked by their lack of documentation or, if they are seeking asylum, by the requirement that they claim in the EU state of arrival.

It does not however prevent Patras embracing the positive nature of its positioning as a cultural bridge in the heart of the Mediterranean.

The municipality recognises that all the residents of the city are culturally enriched by its contemporary diversity and its distinctive heritage and that its intercultural character is, simply, a fact. Around 8% of the population within the municipality of 215,000 (following the 2011 merger with four small municipalities) are of migrant background, as are 11 per cent of primary schoolchildren. This is reflected in the designation of a deputy mayor with a brief to cover 'volunteerism, gender equality, NGOs, integration of immigrants and services for the citizens', and in the establishment of a Council for the Integration of Immigrants and an Office of Services for the Immigrants.

The largest ethnic group is the Albanians, which rises up to approximately 4% of Patras population. Furthermore, other ethnic groups are Chinese (1000 persons); Nigerians (300 persons); Russians (250 persons - mostly women and children); Ukrainians (250 persons - mostly women and children); Georgians (100 persons - mostly women and children); Belarusians (100 persons- mostly women and children); Syrians, Iranians, Iraqis, Turkey, Egyptians (approximately 100 persons); Indians (60 families - approximately 4 children per family); and finally Pakistanis (40 families - approximately 5 children each family). There are also around 1000 Bulgarians and 1000 Romanians.

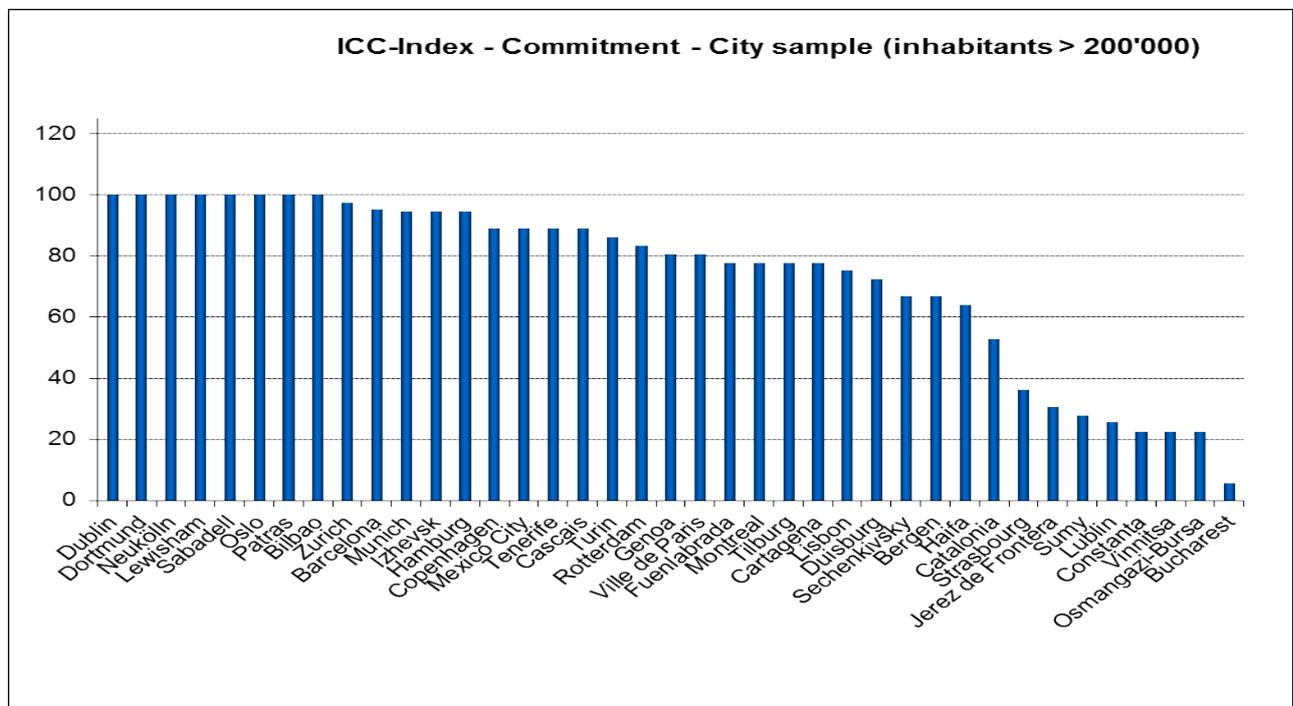
Overall, in 2016, the percentage of the majority ethnic group resident in Patras was the 4%. Unfortunately, statistical data concerning the percentage of non-nationals resident in the city, foreign-born nationals' residents, as well as people who are second or third generation migrants are not available.

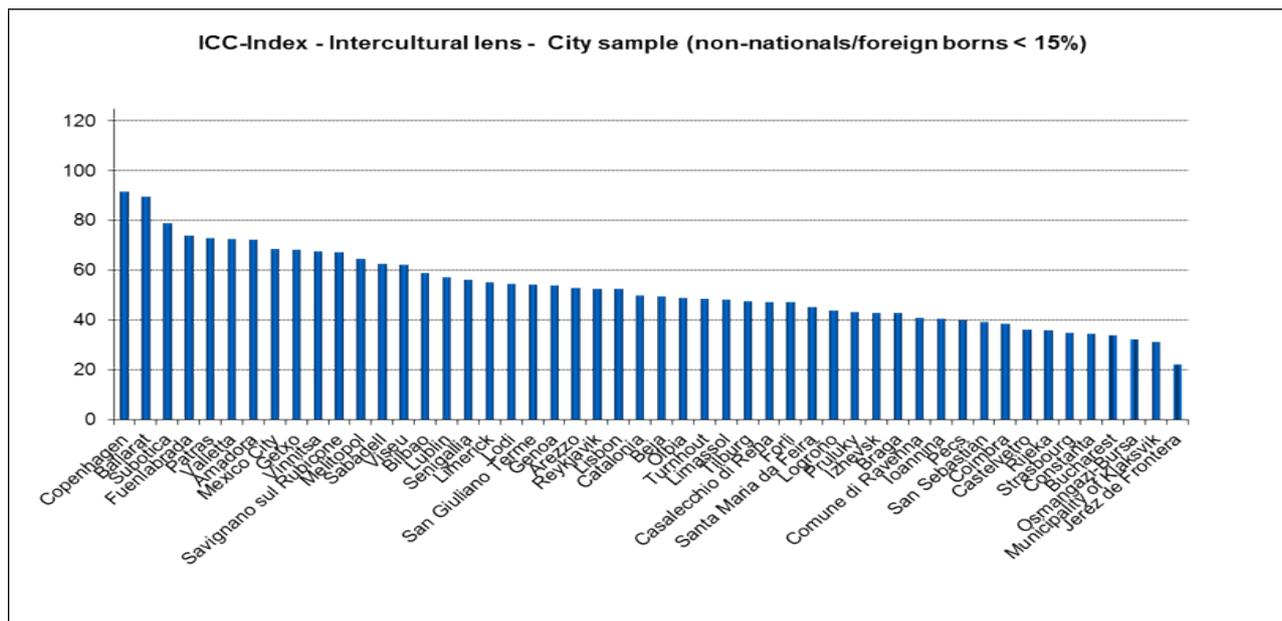
The city of Patras has generated a GPD of about 13.242,00 Euro. Positively, the city has a working body with leading responsibilities for intercultural integration, and more specifically it is included in the tasks of Vice Municipality of "Health & Social Policy". It is also linked with the Department of "Equality Policy".

# 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.*





Patras' rate in the field of Commitment in 2016 is the 100%, an excellent result compared to the city sample score of 71%.

The city has formally stated its participation in the Intercultural Cities network. The city has also adopted an integration strategy program with intercultural elements.

Moreover, the city of Patras has adopted an intercultural action plan which also involves members of Council for the Integration of Immigrants. Indeed, this Council is a valuable tool for participation, representation and promotion of the views of immigrants at local level. The Council participates and enriches decision-making processes of the Municipality.

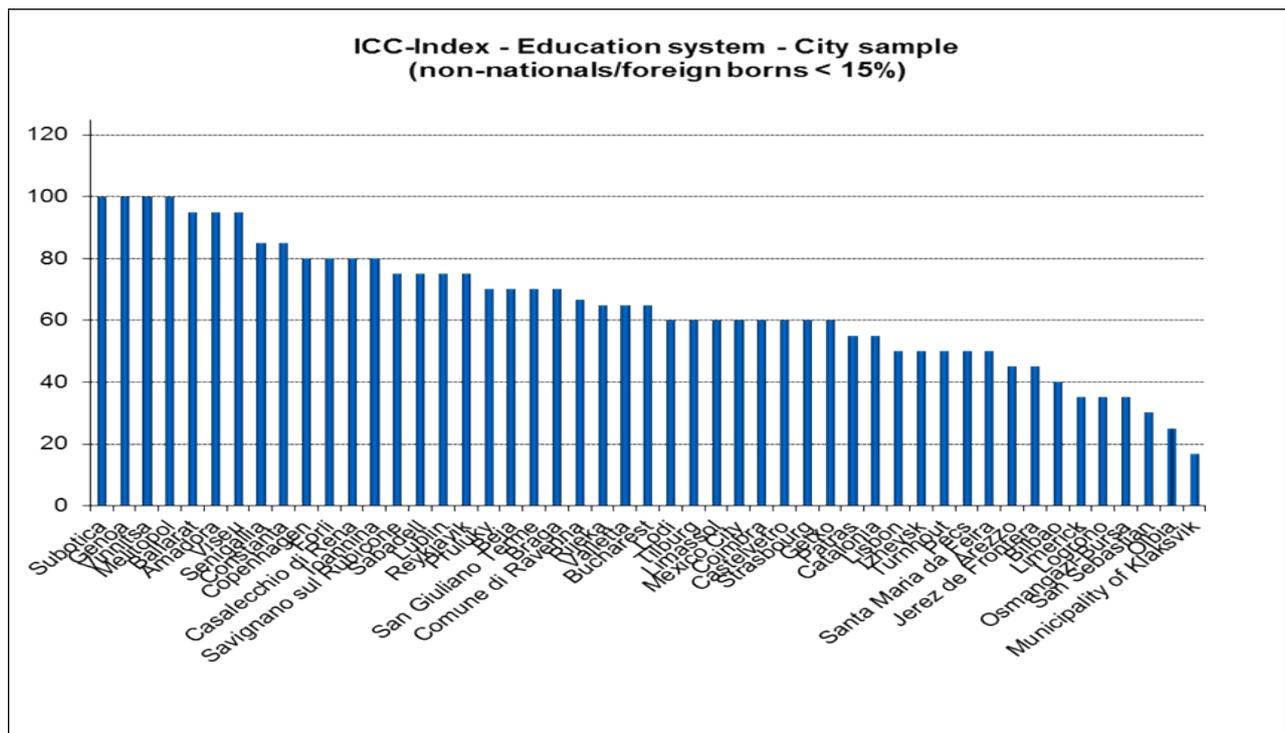
Patras has also allocated a budget for the implementation of intercultural strategies. Even though in Greece the economic crisis has affected extremely the state funds fixed to local government organisations, it is noteworthy that the municipality of Patras has a strong will to apply democratic values and believes in equality, solidarity and interculturalism for building inclusive societies. Therefore, the Municipality has allocated 60.000 euros for 2016 through the Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development (ADEP SA) for the implementation of intercultural actions and related networking benefiting active involvement of all Patras inhabitants.

Public speeches often make clear reference to the city's intercultural commitment and the city has an official webpage<sup>5</sup> to communicate news and initiatives. Positively, the city has a cross-departmental co-ordination structure responsible for the intercultural strategy and intercultural integration. In 2010 the municipality established a Council for the Integration of Immigrants, which is chaired by the vice-mayor responsible for integration and which engages the NGOs representing migrant communities. In line with established good practice across Europe, this provides a vehicle for dialogue between the city's political leadership and its migrant members, and for the co-production of events. It also

<sup>5</sup> [www.e-patras.gr](http://www.e-patras.gr)

provides a ready-made structure for the co-management of the city's intercultural strategy, its ethos of participation for all ensuring that members of minority communities can be involved on a basis of equal citizenship with members of the 'host' community. The CII can draw on the technical assistance of ADEP, over which the vice-mayor also presides and which has been involved in Patras' trajectory as an intercultural city since developing the application to join the network in 2008. ADEP itself enjoys links to outside expertise, such as the National Centre for Social Research, EKKE.





Patras' education policy achievement rate is lower than the city sample. In fact, Patras achieved the 55% , while the city sample's rate is the 65%.

In all schools, children are of the same ethnic background but only sometimes teacher's ethnic backgrounds mirror pupils.

Schools activities are important because they are a meeting point for parents coming from different countries, with different cultural background, to get to know the other members of the community. Therefore, it is important to offer a wide range of activities to attract as many families as possible. Positively, most schools in Patras are making strong efforts to enhance parents' participation in the education system. As a matter of fact, every school elects and operates an "Association of parents" that represents it to the Board of the school. This Association supports special events of the school, supports the whole operation and contributes to cooperation spirit. It keeps close cooperation with the pupils, the teachers, the educational administration bodies and the Municipality (especially the Deputy Mayor of education). Within this concept, actions involving all and co-creation (co-enjoy) is encouraged. Care is taken, so that to respect religious, ethnic "rules" (for example when gastronomy festivities take place, care is taken to have alternatives respecting multi-religious and multi-cultural pupils and parents).

Schools in Patras also carry out intercultural projects. In fact, Patras is opening up school grounds and premises, therefore producing many new open spaces for public mixing, playing together and developing intercultural projects within the artistic, musical, theatre spheres of action, sporting events. As a result, there is involvement of "new" persons within this newly found space which was never before available for civilian activities. Some projects involve increasing the free open spaces for amusement (recreation & sports) especially having in mind the lack of such premises within the core urban city centre of

Patras. In this way, children / pupils living in the centre would benefit mostly from it through this "Opening up activity" the school grounds and premises benefits the operation of the associations of parents of the pupils of every school. Then the premises (indoor and outdoor) are used for their activities towards both the enhancement and possibly the enrichment. As a matter of fact, the school becomes a "place" not only for gaining knowledge but also a core for common action contributing to cohesion through playing, working together, co-creating. People come closer and this benefits not only the close neighbourhood but the society as a whole. This initiative has been launched in September 2011 (through the Vice-Municipality of Education) and has been maintained since then.

Furthermore, the Directorate of Secondary Education of Achaia, Department of "Cultural Projects" operates a network of secondary schools in the area of Achaia, where Patras is regarded as capital tackling matters on interculturalism. The Unit of "Cultural Projects" and ADEP SA have validated a cooperation protocol in 2016 about this, so that the school network is 'exploited' for diffusing information on ICC matters and for co-organising related actions (within school premises and public spaces).

Unfortunately, schools do not have policies to increase ethnic/cultural mixing in schools. And although the city does not have a need for such a policy, since it does not exist "ghettoization" in neighbourhoods of Patras, in order to improve ethnic/cultural mixing in schools, Patras might find Oslo's (Norway) initiative inspiring.

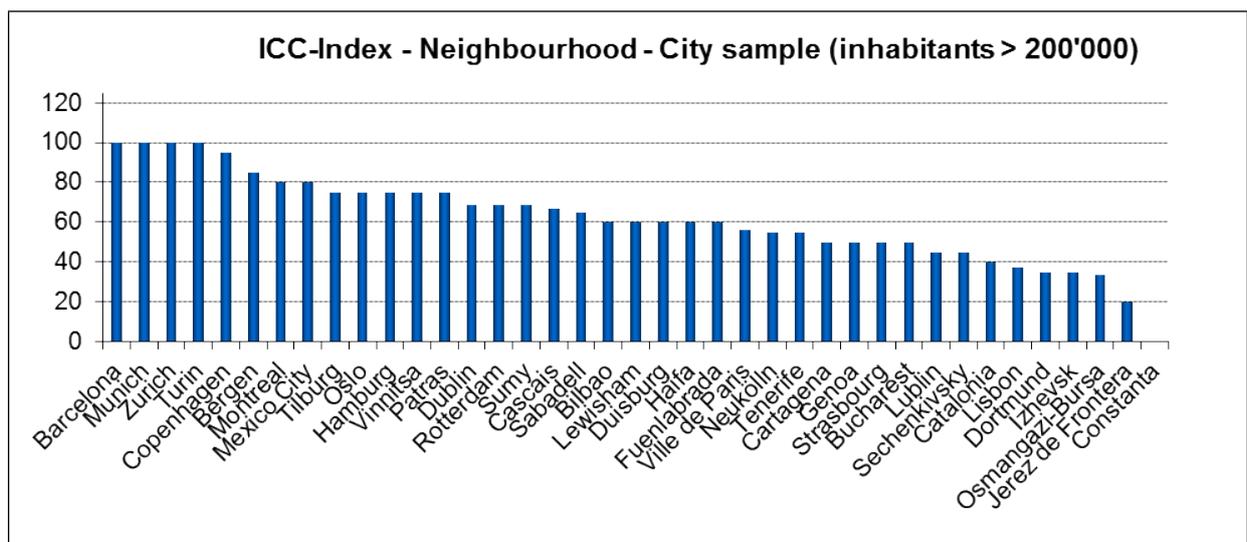
The project called "Gamlebeyn Skole" promotes cultural diversity through arts. In fact, cultural and intercultural education will help to counteract the "white flight" phenomenon in kindergartens. In Oslo, kindergartens tend to be characterised by great ethnic mixing but there are signs that primary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

# NEIGHBOURHOOD

through intercultural lens



*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.<sup>7</sup>*

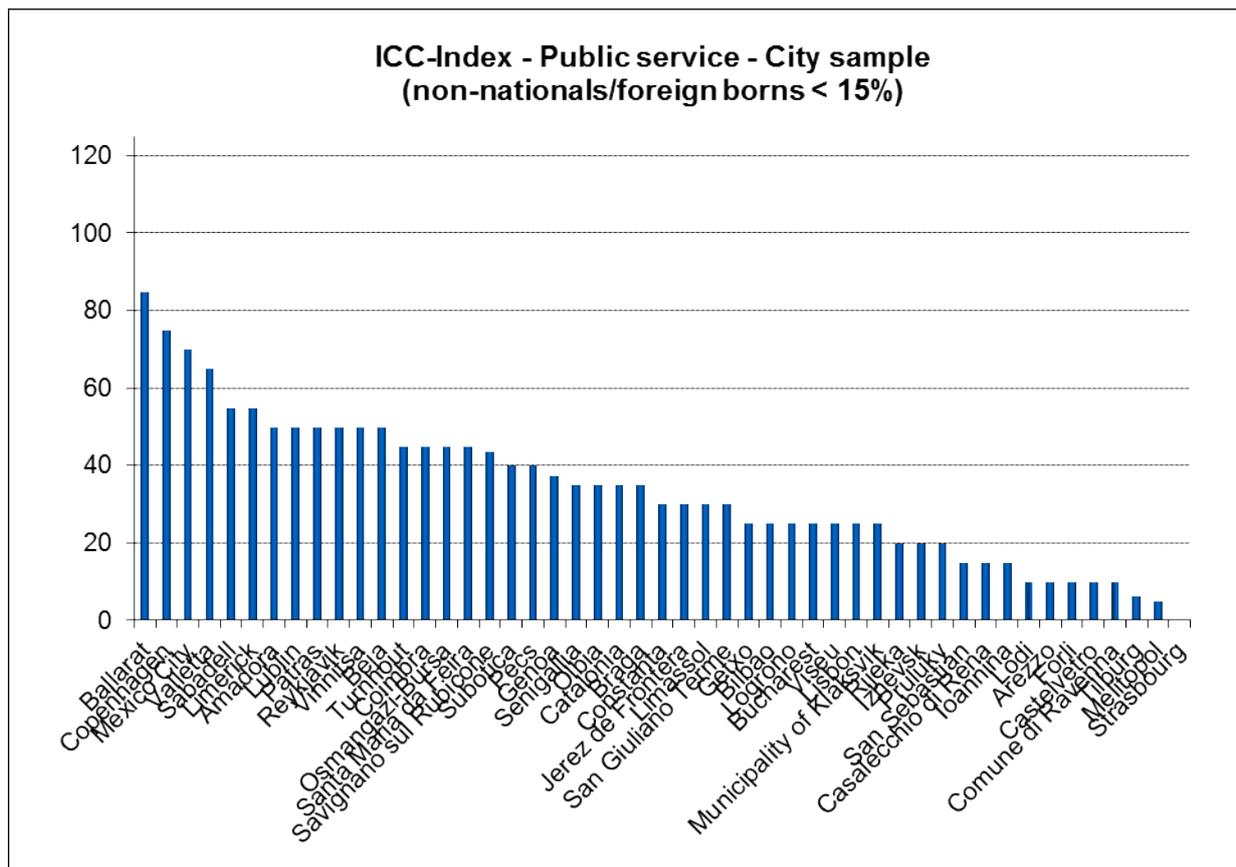


<sup>7</sup> By "neighbourhood" we understand a unit within a city which has a certain level of administrative autonomy (or sometimes also certain political governance structures) and is considered as a unit with regard to city planning. In larger cities districts (boroughs) have several neighbourhoods. 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 the average.



Patras might wish to look up at the Portuguese city of Braga that organizes the "Programa Escolhas - Família do lado" in which neighbourhoods promote diversity and inclusion of various ethnic groups and cultures. Alternatively, in Limassol, the Euromed Festival aims to gather people together through folkloristic dancing and exhibitions. Another activity carried out in Limassol is the "Social Work on the Road" programme that started in 2010 and since then it aims to prevent criminality, especially among young people. The programme aims to raise awareness on the danger of drug and alcohol abuse; it offers psychological support and fight against unemployment.





Patras public service rate is the 50% , higher than the city sample result of 43%.

The ethnic background of public officers does not reflect the composition of the city's population. The city should be open to new ideas and innovations of the minorities and avoid the so called approach "one size fits all" in public services.

Furthermore, the ethnic background of public employees does not reflect the composition of the city's population. The questionnaire underlined that the city cannot have such a recruitment plan for public employees. In Patras the public employees are hired through ASEP (Superior Council for Hiring Personnel). ASEP is responsible for conducting the related announcements based on specific national law (no.2190). Therefore, the city cannot apply specific preferences or criteria so to ensure any type of recruitment plan.

However, we wish to recommend Patras to introduce a recruitment plan; perhaps the municipality might wish to look up at Sumy's initiative. In fact, it would appear that many people with foreign background are opening SMEs in Sumy overcoming by the entrepreneurial activity the locals (natives). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that foreigners-owned companies have been established in Sumy many years ago: for instance, KusumFarm is run by people coming from India, Italy, Azerbaijan, Poland and Holland. This clearly shows that the city has created a favourable atmosphere for foreign business, where companies hire people with different cultural background, including native Ukrainians.

Positively we acknowledge that the city of Patras encourages intercultural mixing and competence in the private sector enterprises. The Municipality maintains active cooperation with Achaia Chamber of Commerce. It is regarded as the main business representation body of the area. They are aware of the ICC initiative and share its concept. It is noteworthy, that one of the members of the Managing Board of the Chamber comes from Syria and has been a very active businessman in Patras. It is also noteworthy that the Chamber participates in common with the city in application of projects within EU programmes (e.g. INTERREG GR-IT) respecting the same principles. It is expected that the Chamber of Commerce will continue actively supporting the whole process.

As a suggestion, Patras might wish also to look at Barcelona's project has set a project for Diversity Advantage called "XEIX" to pursuit social integration bringing together local businesses. Originally, the goal was to bring together into the Retail Association diverse shopkeepers of different backgrounds to foster local development. Now, the Association welcomes all sorts of organisations; such as local immigrant organisations (Chinese language schools), institutions (Casa Asia, the Confucius Institute, Universitat Autònoma, etc), cultural facilities (National Theatre) non-profit organisations (ACCEM-refugees) and private enterprises; with the result that the Retail Association has now become a catalyser of all the local initiatives, both economic (fairs, shopping campaigns) and cultural (local festivals, exhibitions). The social and cultural activities carried out in the neighbourhood involve all communities (e.g. the health fair involved ayurveda, acupuncture, blood donation and herbalist's stands) and they actively promote participation, interaction and mutual acknowledgement.

To suit the needs of the multi-cultural community, the city of Patras provides funeral/burial areas and schools meals. There are religious ceremonies as well as funeral and burial procedures within Patras cemeteries for Catholics. Moreover, there is always special care when gastronomy events take place in schools, so that to incorporate needs of ethnic pupils. Furthermore, the City Council adopted a decision in 2016 about the organisation of incinerator for dead people. Indeed, the establishment of such premises is very rare in Greek cities (mostly due to religion). However, the city should consider introducing also women-only sections in sport facilities. Women-only sportive facilities in the city should have women-only time schedules in order to suit the needs of women with specific necessities. For instance, in Erlangen, the BIG-Projekt fosters intercultural sporting engagement and there are female-only swimming days in the public swimming pools.

Perhaps, the city of Patras will find these activities very thoughtful and interesting: The Spanish city of Getxo organizes a Street Culture Day to promote social cohesion and encourage immigrants' integration through sportive activities; combined to this, the International Folk Festival, where music promotes interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds, celebrating cultural diversity with folk music. Alternatively, in the London borough of Lewisham, in Pepys Park, young people were invited into the process of designing and making a new playground area. At Ladywell Fields, an area of abandoned meadowland was restored to public use with the involvement of a park user group and the reinstatement of a park warden and a 'Rivers and People Officer'.

Patras could also organize a wide range of activities to promote social cohesion and to encourage intercultural mixing: for example, the Spanish city of Getxo organizes a *Street Culture Day* to promote social cohesion and encourage immigrants' integration through sportive activities; combined to this, the *International Folk Festival*, where music promotes interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds, celebrating cultural diversity with folk music. Alternatively, in the London borough of Lewisham, in Pepys Park, young people were invited into the process of designing and making a new playground area. At Ladywell Fields, an area of abandoned meadowland was restored to public use with the involvement of a park user group and the reinstatement of a park warden and a 'Rivers and People Officer'.

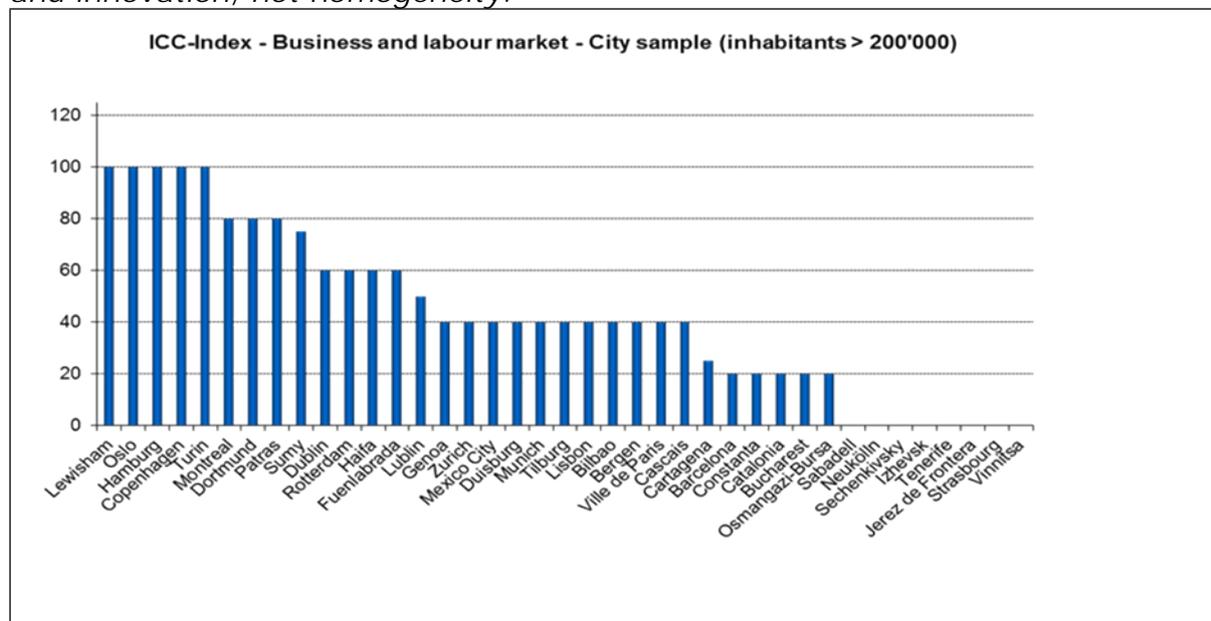
To conclude, we would like to stress the importance of establishing a recruitment plan to increase minority representation in the higher hierarchical levels, even though the economic crisis imposes 'hostile' recruitment procedures toward diversity.

# BUSINESS & LABOUR

through intercultural lens



Large parts of the economy and the labour market may be beyond the remit and control of the city authority, but they may still fall within its sphere of influence. Because of nationally-imposed restrictions on access to the public-sector labour market, the private sector may provide an easier route for minorities to engage in economic activity. In turn, such activity (e. g. shops, clubs, restaurants but also high-skill industry and research) may provide a valuable interface between different cultures of the city. While barriers for entry usually concern migrant/minority groups, in some cases it could be the other way around. Research has proved, however, that it is the cultural mix that fosters creativity and innovation, not homogeneity.



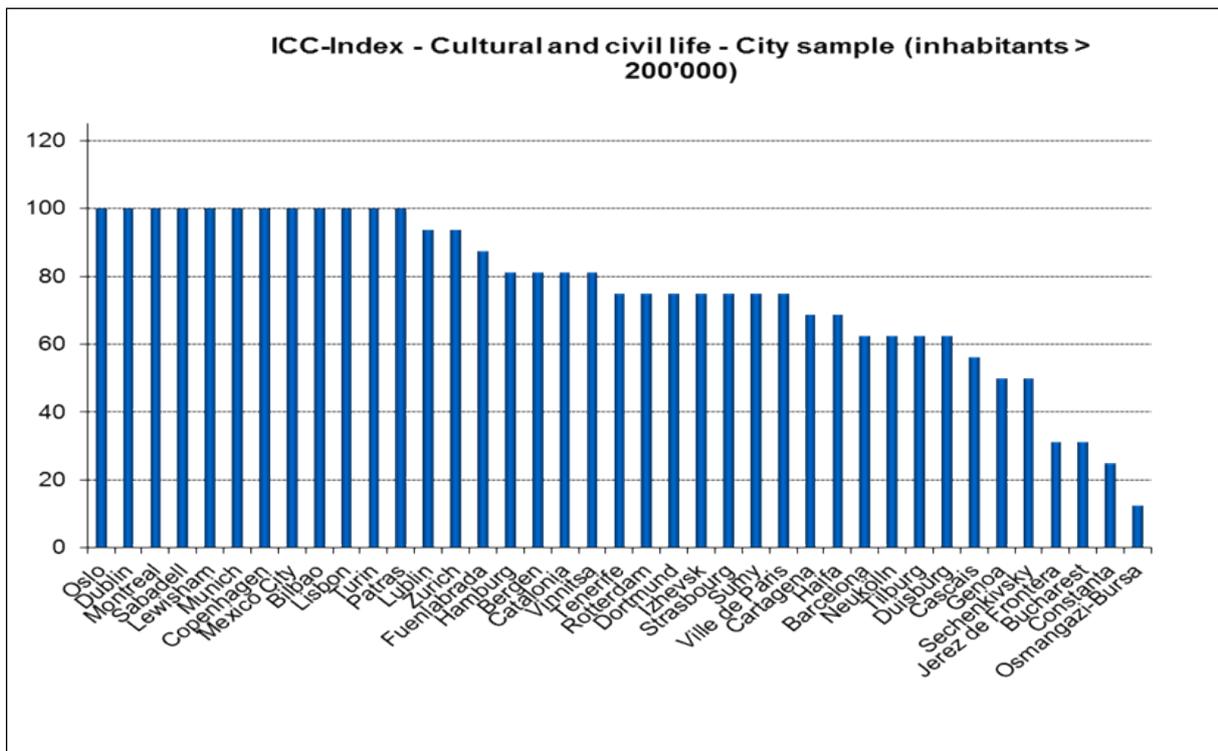


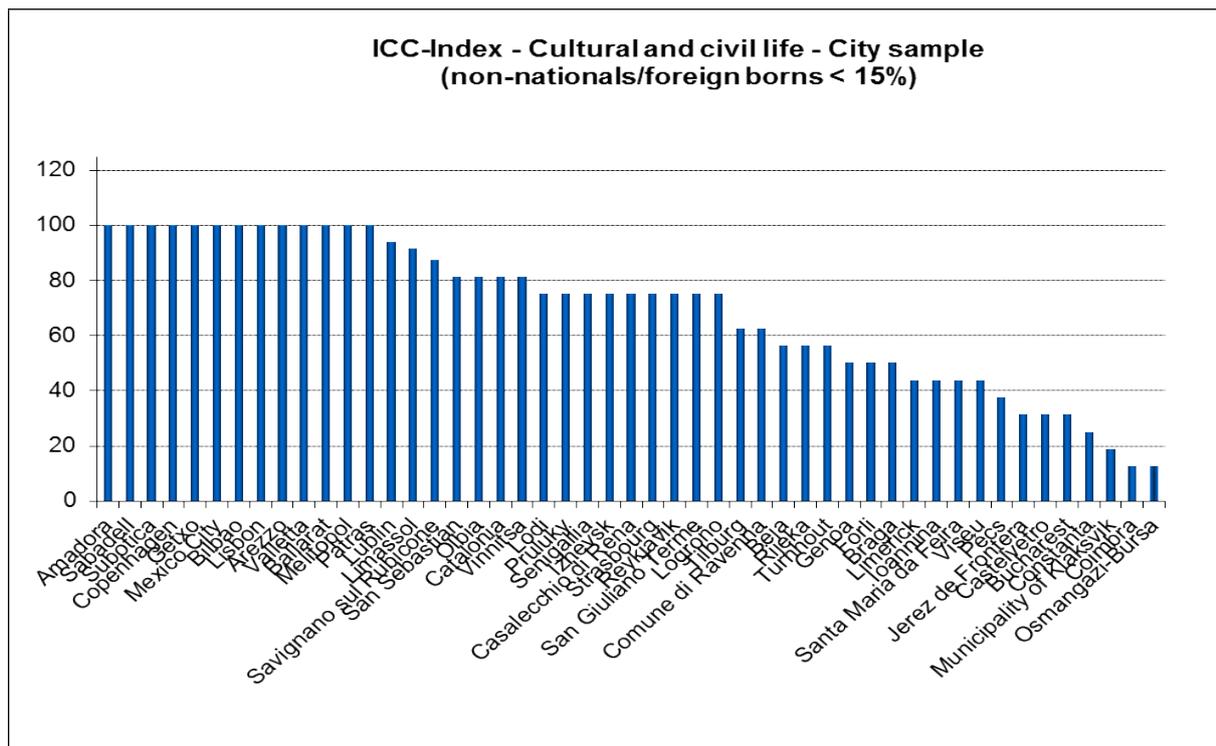
# CULTURE & CIVIL LIFE

through intercultural lens



The time that 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.





Patras achievement for cultural and civil life policy corresponds to an excellent 100% , considerably higher than the city sample achievement of 74%.

Interculturalism is used as a criterion when allocating grants to associations, and positively the city regularly organises intercultural activities. Indeed, the Municipality of Patras allocates in-kind grants to associations e.g. it supports their activities through in-kind contribution free of charge such as provision of premises, equipment, helping them out with their projects and events.

Positively we acknowledge that the grants to associations and initiatives are granted over the 30% of such initiatives having an intercultural dimension.

Additionally, the city regularly organises events and activities in the fields of arts, culture and sport aimed at encouraging people from different ethnic groups to mix. Patras is very extrovert city and active in national and EU projects in management of interculturalism. Due to the implementation of such projects, it is very common (and effective) to exploit arts and culture as a means for awareness and co-working (e.g. Anti-racism Week, C4i project, Patras Carnival, PROGRESS Anti-discrimination, etc.).

Furthermore, the city encourages cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions. This is achieved through active local networking that also includes the cultural dimension. The networking is applied internally within the Municipality level and externally with various local bodies. It is not a matter of grants or regulations but a matter of respecting the importance of synergy for achieving multiple effects.

Last but not least, regularly, the city encourages cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations. Equally important, Patras also organises public debates or campaigns on cultural diversity and living

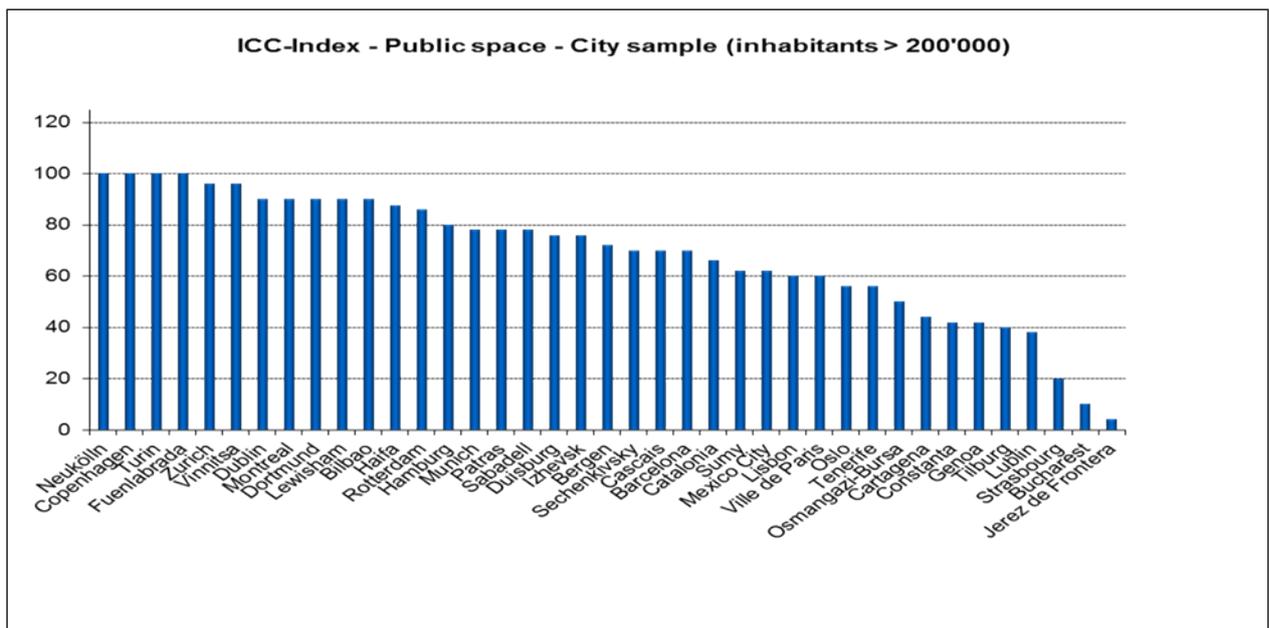
together; notably the operation of Patras CII-Council for the Integration of Immigrants.

# PUBLIC SPACE

through intercultural lens



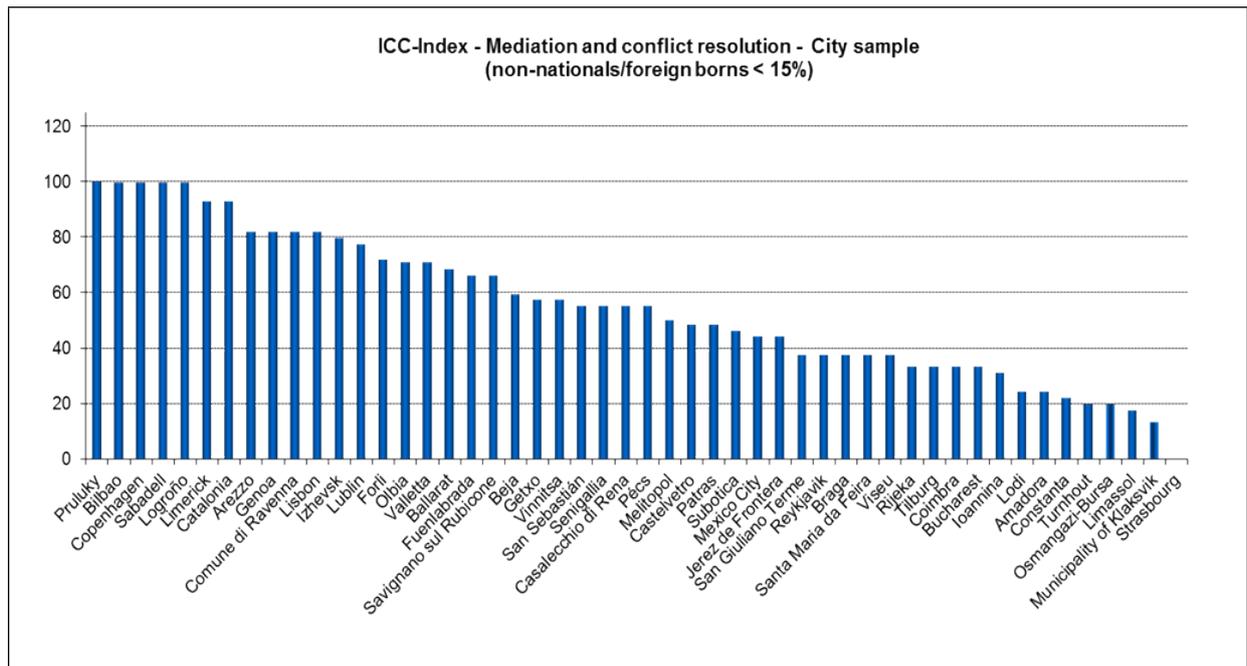
*Well managed and animated public spaces can become beacons of the city's intercultural intentions. However, badly managed spaces can become places of suspicion and fear of the stranger.*





Lastly, Patras might wish to look up to Barcelona that has the objective to promote mutual acknowledgement, interaction and exchange through intercultural subsidies, such as festivals (also adopting migrants' holidays), art exhibitions and workshops, etc. For what concerns sports, Barcelona facilitates the inclusion of boys and girls in regulated sports, promoting changes in current legislation that may hinder the participation of foreign youngsters. It promotes projects based on sport that encourage interaction between young people from different origins, especially in the urban areas that have the biggest immigrant population and the highest risk of isolation or segregation.





Patras' mediation and conflict resolution policy achievement corresponds to the 49% , lower than the average of the cities taking part in the programme (64%).

The city provides a mediation service devoted to intercultural issues through civil society organisations. As a suggestion, the city should consider establishing a general service which would deal with cultural conflicts. Moreover, we positively acknowledge that the city has engaged with the Centre for Open Protection of Elderly. The city of Patras operates such centres so to provide the elderly with the opportunity to meet, to exchange, to act in a cultural manner (through singing, dancing, make artistic ornaments, etc.). In addition, psychological support is provided with specialised sessions as well as team discussions. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that there is a great number of NGOs that maintain active cooperation with the Municipality and various local organisations so to complement with their operation in the fields of health, youth, creative occupation, etc.

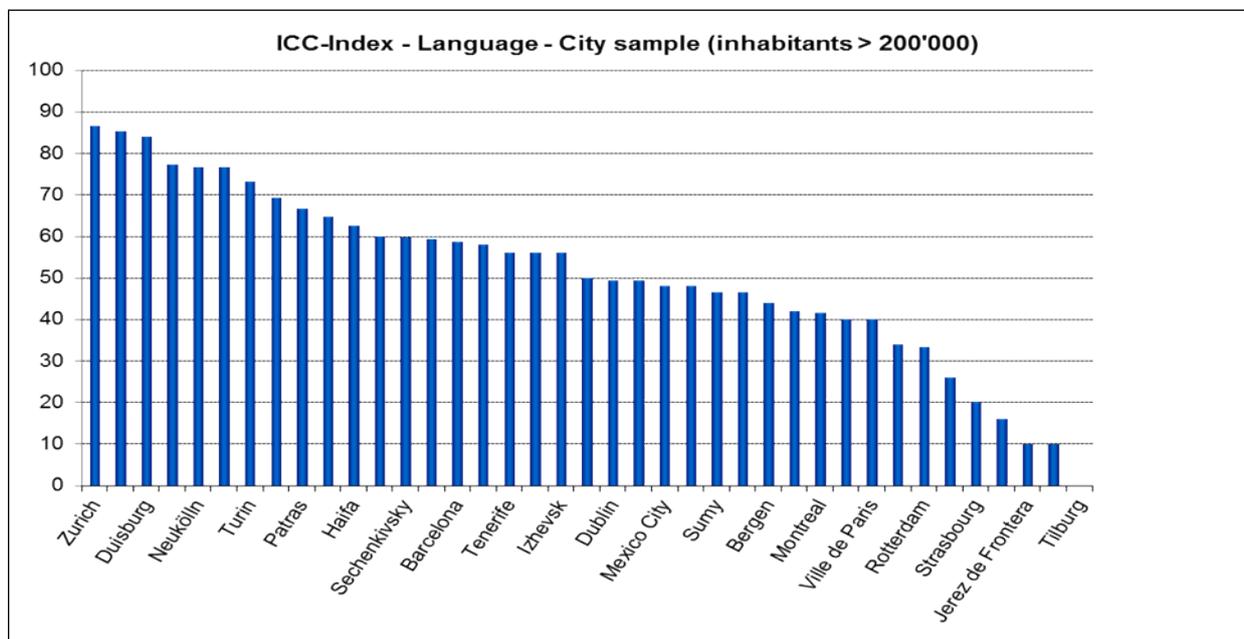
In Patras, intercultural mediation is provided in special institutions (hospitals, police, youth clubs, mediation centres etc.) and in the city administration for general purposes.

As a suggestion, the city of Patras might want to consider taking into account The Italian Intercultural City Reggio Emilia which has set a centre to mediate and to prevent and solve conflicts. The intercultural centre "*Mondinsieme*" welcomes a great variety of ethnic and language backgrounds and offers support and assistance. For example, the Mondinsieme has great expertise in training mediation workers and supplies staff for schools and hospitals. Reggio Emilia has established an Intercultural centre with trained mediators with a variety of ethnic and language backgrounds who intervene whenever they feel a problem might arise – for instance if kids in some schools tend to cluster too much on ethnic basis.

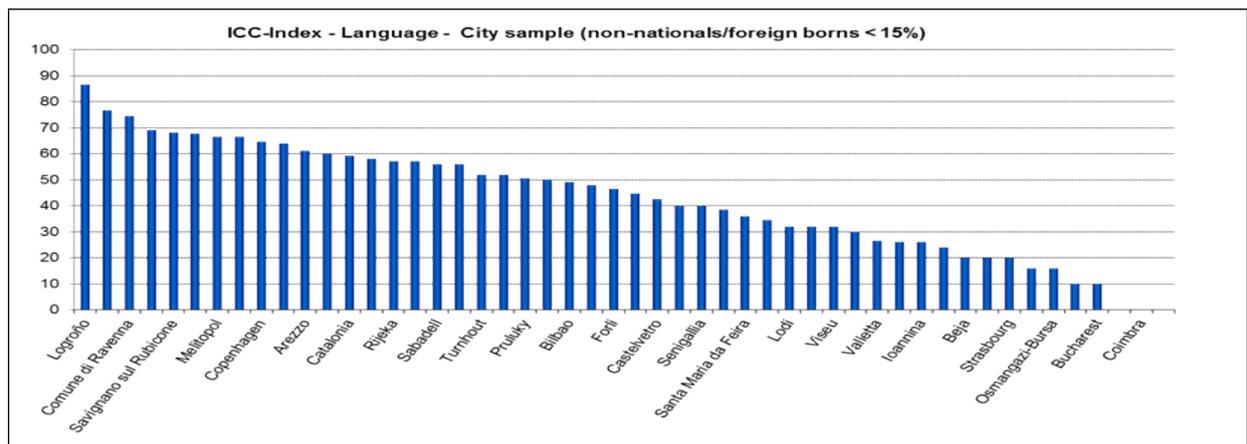
# LANGUAGE



The learning of the language<sup>8</sup> of the host country by migrants is key issue for integration. However, there are other considerations in an intercultural approach to language. For example, in cities where there are one or more national minorities (or indeed where there is indeed no clear majority group) there is significance in the extent to which there is mutual learning across language divides. Even in cities where recent migrations or trade connections have brought entirely new languages into the city, there is significance in the extent to which the majority are prepared to adopt these languages.



<sup>8</sup> 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://highereducation.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student\\_view0/glossary.html](http://highereducation.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html))



Patras' language policy achievement rate corresponds to the 67% , higher than the city sample's result of 48%.

Patras supports and provides specific language training in the official language(s) for hard-to-reach groups (non-working mothers, unemployed, retired people etc.). Moreover, the city provides learning migrant/minority languages as a mother tongue course for migrant/minority kids only; learning migrant/minority languages as a regular language option available to everyone; and it also supports private & civil sector institutions providing language training in migrant and/or minority languages.

In cooperation with communities of immigrants and volunteers (former teachers currently retired, students at the University Of Patras - Department Of Education) these language learning courses take place by using school premises in the afternoon. This is part of the "Opening Up Schools" initiative. The courses are "open" to anyone to attend regardless age and origin. Additionally, the city provides in-kind support to NGOs operating language learning courses for migrants. This is achieved through the provision of premises, equipment, etc.

Although the city is not able to support financially language local initiatives, it provides in-kind support, targeting at enriched synergy for co-creation and acting for common purposes.

The city of Patras is also supporting several projects to give a positive image of migrant/minority languages. This is part of the "Opening Up of Schools" initiative as well as of the activities of the communities of migrants which are in-kind supported by the city.

The municipality is also planning to develop a project with public schools and youth service, 'We are all Patras', to encourage young people to befriend others residents of different nationalities, taking advantage of the huge scope of social media in this regard. The project will include school essays, where participants tell the story of the life of their new friend(s) as if through their own eyes, with text and imagery.

As a suggestion to improve in the language field, Patras should financially support minority newspaper and/or radio and TV programmes in a minority language like the Intercultural Cities of Arezzo and Ballarat. In fact, Arezzo's weekly newspaper Piazza Grande has a Romanian column; moreover, the

channel Tele San Domenico (TSD) shows the news in several languages. Instead, Ballarat has collaboration with the 99.9 Voice FM – Ballarat Community Radio. Today, the radio station offers a weekly radio program to be conducted by the Multicultural Ambassadors in minority languages.

Nevertheless, it is excellent that the city seeks to give a positive image of their minority language. Beja, for example, organizes poetry evenings, public readings and other cultural event to emphasize the importance of languages and the richness that minority languages entails.

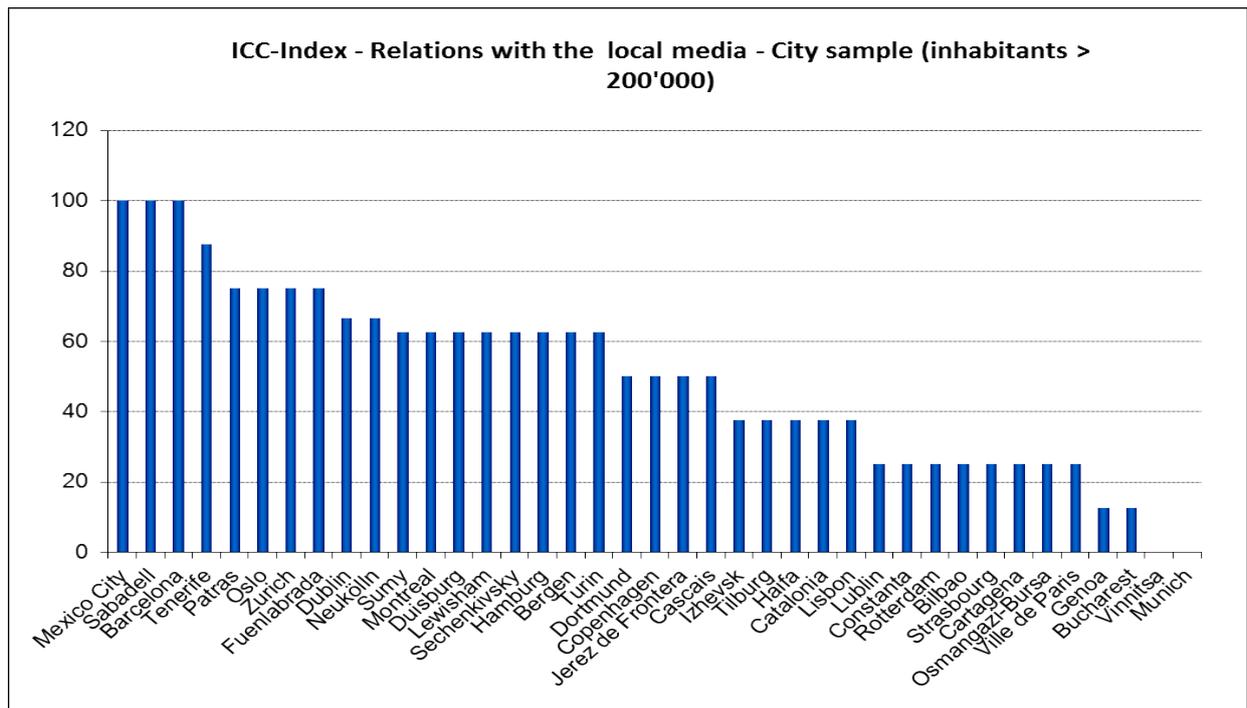
Patras might find the following organization very interesting: the Parisian Association Dualala (from one language to another) accompanies bilingual families and professionals involved in multilingual environment taking under consideration the transmission of languages and cultures of origin. Dualala considers bilingualism as an asset for any child, regardless the language spoken. The association is composed of linguists and specialists in intercultural communication and it is supported by the Ministry of Culture and Communication and the Ashoka network. In addition, the association regularly organizes conferences in favor of multilingualism. Example: "Growing up with several languages: the challenges of the inclusion of the mother tange" ("Grandir avec plusieurs langues: les enjeux de la prise en compte de la langue maternelle").

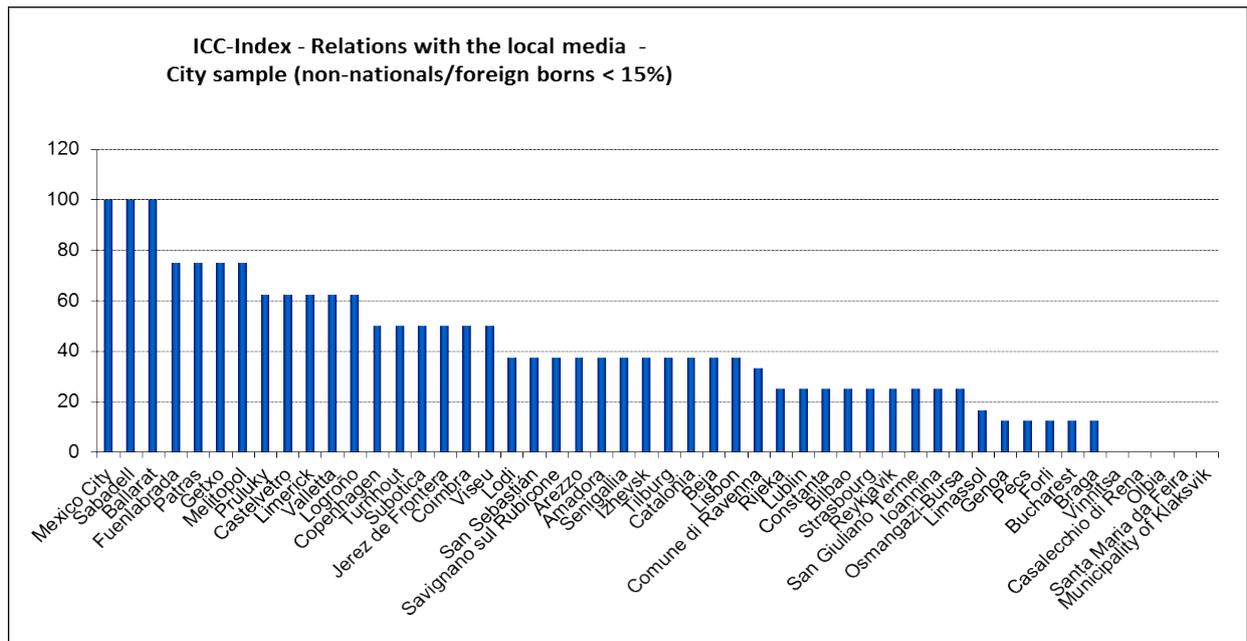
Language is crucially important in the integration process, especially at an early age. On this purpose, Patras could be inspired by the example set in Tilbug, in the Netherlands. In the projects of VVE ('before and timely education'), children in the range from 2 till 6 are trained to develop especially language skills. The aim is that migrant children will not have language arrears when they enter the primary school at the age of 5. Many language activities are implemented to toddlers in the playgroup. VVE - support is also given to the first two classes of the primary schools.

# 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 partner with local media organisations to achieve a climate of public opinion more conducive to intercultural relations.*





Patras media policy is the 75% , positively, a higher result compared to the 46% achieved by the city sample.

The city has a media strategy to improve the visibility of migrants/minorities in the media. Awareness actions linked with media are part of the “Patras CII operation”. A lot of emphasis is put to promotional events and tools within the implementation of EU and national projects as well as within the networking initiatives at a local level. Articles and photos are published on local newspapers whenever a related activity is implemented (EU/national projects as well as local initiatives celebrating special occasions like Anti-Racism Week, Migrants Day, Refugees Day, ELDW, etc.).

The city has also a communication (PR) department instructed to highlight diversity as an advantage regularly and in various types of communications.

Furthermore, the city provides support for advocacy and/or media training to mentor journalists with minority background.

Specifically, Patras already has a strong experience of communicating its intercultural message to its citizens, with the SPARDA project generating compelling phrases like ‘I am immigrant as well’. Journalists were sensitised to open-mindedness through a three-day training programme, and the wider public were engaged through a TV advertising spot.

Perhaps Patras might wish to combine its programmes with this Parisian association: “La Maison des journalistes étrangers” (House for foreign journalists), an association that welcomes foreign journalists persecuted in their home country in defence and promotion of the freedom of expression.

Unfortunately, Patras does not monitor the way in which minorities are portrayed in the local media, and does not promote a positive image of immigrants and/or minorities in the media. To improve, Patras could follow

Bergen's example. The Norwegian city publishes a newspaper with information about activities in the city that is distributed to all households in the city, four or five times a year.

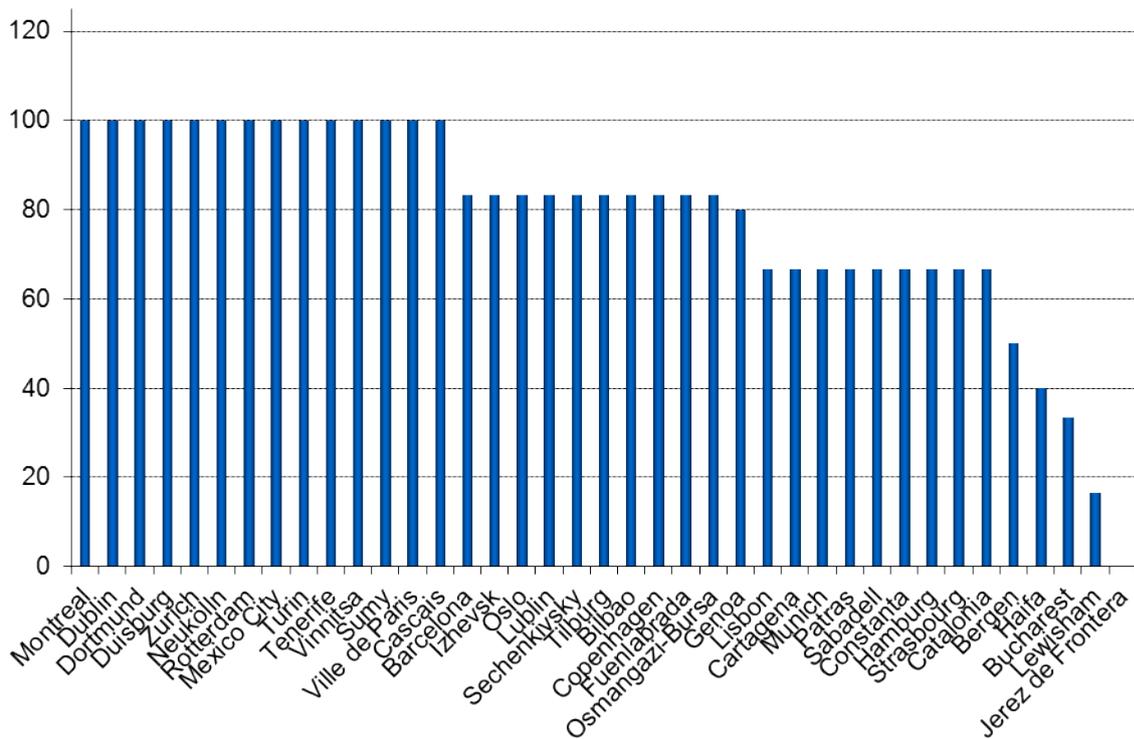
Another good practice comes from the Intercultural Norwegian City of Oslo, where the city has an internet service, called "Cultural diversity in the media" informing on concerts, exhibitions and festivals organized by artists with minority backgrounds. The service was established in recognition of Oslo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

# INTERNATIONAL outlook policies



*An optimal intercultural city would be a place which actively sought to make new connections with other places for trade, exchange of knowledge, as well as tourism.*

**ICC-Index - An open and international outlook - City sample  
(inhabitants > 200'000)**





by a Kenitra delegation in 2012. Since then, a number of protocols between the two municipalities have been signed, in addition to the private sector business relations established.

Furthermore, Patras has established an agency with specific responsibility for monitoring and developing the city's openness to international connections.

Equally important, Patras universities encourage foreign students to participate in the city life and to remain after graduation. The city support universities to attract foreign students. Indeed, the city of Patras has enabled, through the sustainability plan students to become volunteers/ anti-rumor agents in the local NGO network; integrate the anti-rumor concept/strategy as a theme in joint peer learning amongst ERASMUS students and build interuniversity ERARMUS agreements (starting from universities which are placed in the ICC network) to promote intercultural learning using the anti-rumor strategy. Unfortunately, Patras does not enhance economic relations with countries of origin of its migrant groups.

Finally, Patras could consider following the Santa Maria's example, aforementioned, to establish similar businesses connections with another city alike.

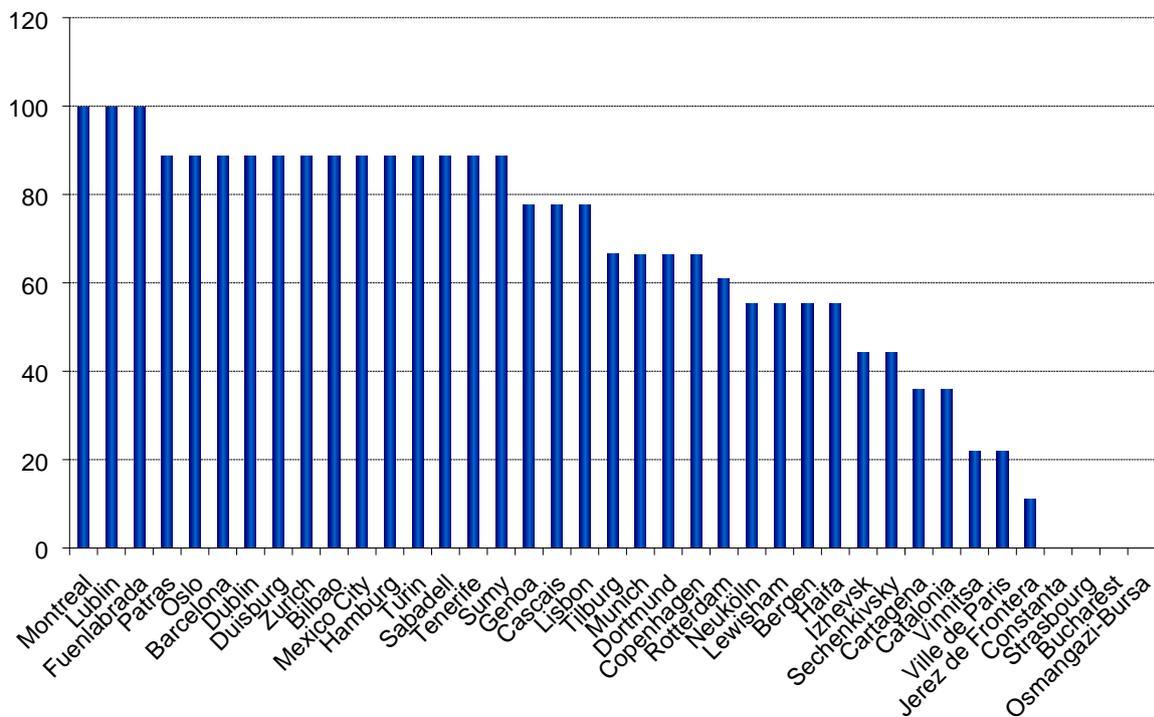
# INTELLIGENCE

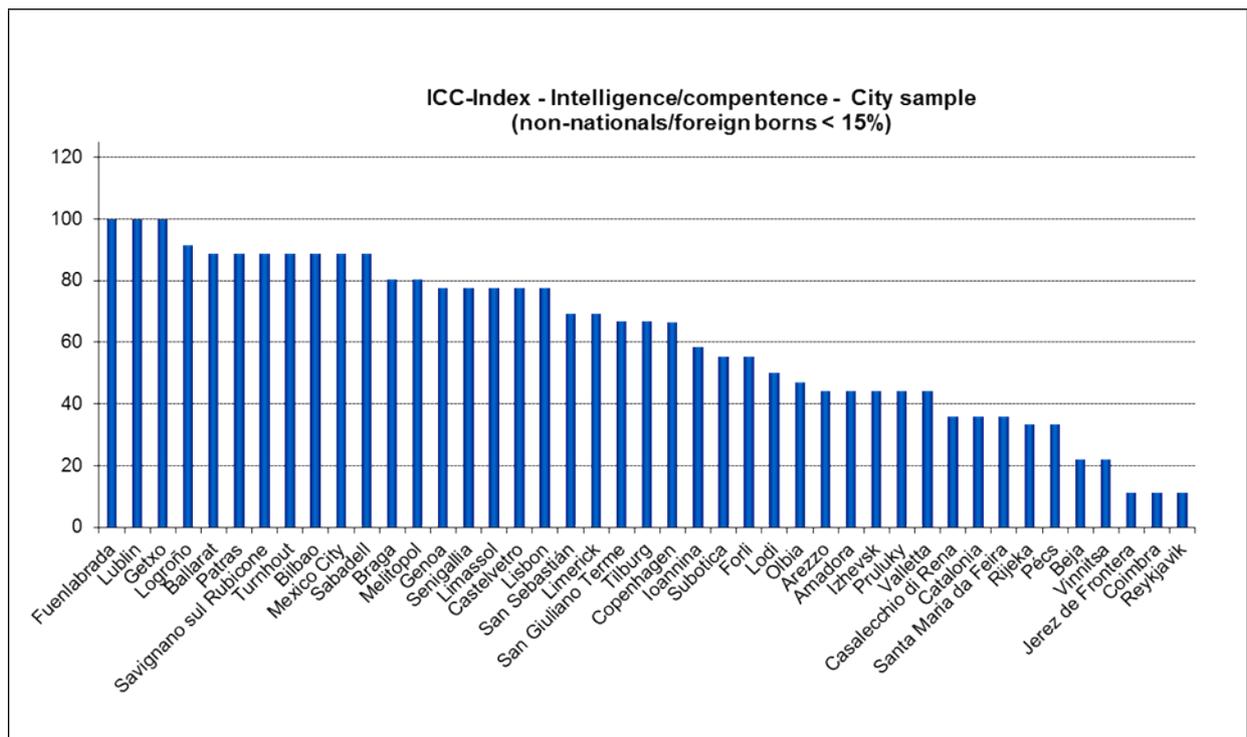
competence policies



*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 model of behaviour on all situations.*

**ICC-Index - Intelligence/competence - City sample (inhabitants > 200'000)**





The attainment rate of Patras in the field of intercultural intelligence competence policy is of the 89%, considerably higher compared to the city sample's rate of 63%. The City already spreads information about diversity and intercultural relations, which are also mainstreamed to inform the city council's process of policy formulation.

However, Patras might find interesting this integration programme carried out in Neuchâtel to raise citizen awareness and to help migrants to become acquainted with their new environment, helping them to practice the French language in everyday situations. Depending on the program, emphasis is put on the practice of French or learning about the social and institutional environment of the Canton and Switzerland. Altogether there are five distinct programs carried out in 10 quarterly or yearly classes in Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds.

It is excellent that Patras takes surveys to monitor the public perception of migrants/minorities and fosters intercultural competences through interdisciplinary seminars and trainings.

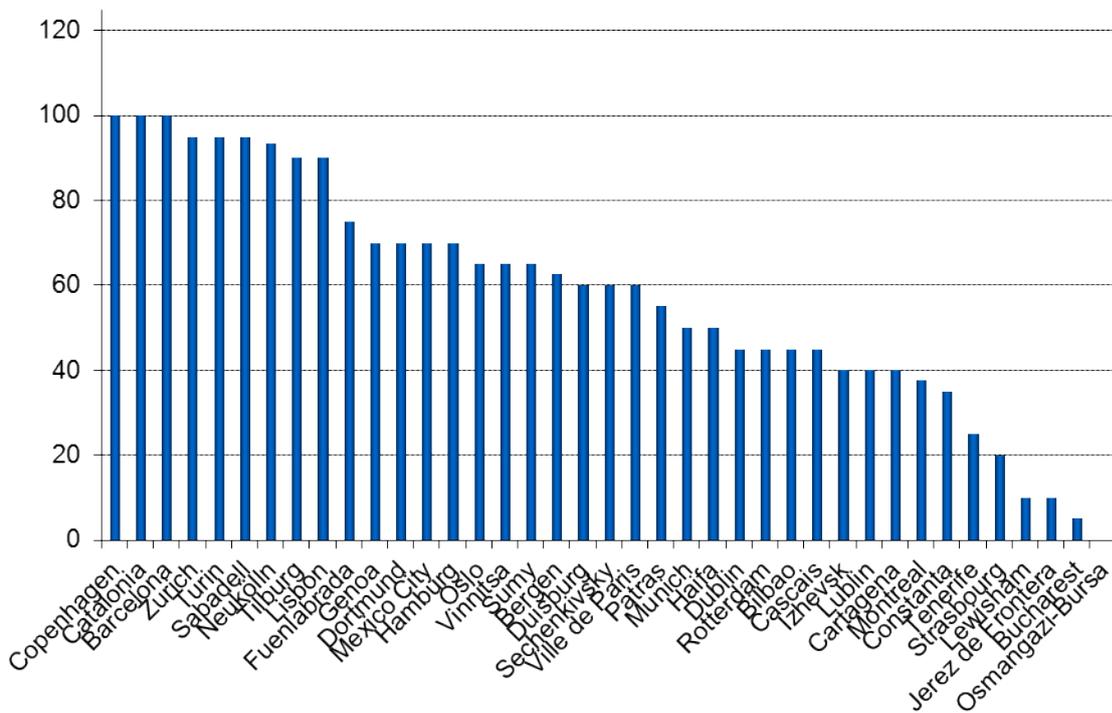
Patras has been an active member of the ICC network of the Council of Europe and since the very beginning it had the chance to organise various types of training courses dedicated to specific types of services. Indeed, networking at a local level has been strengthened and this has led to the support of actions implemented by other local actors which also have provided added value for the ICC competences of the officials. Furthermore, surveys are introduced within the content of EU and national projects for vulnerable groups as well as due to the implementation of actions of educational institutes of the area (e.g. Technological Institute of Western Greece, Hellenic Open University).

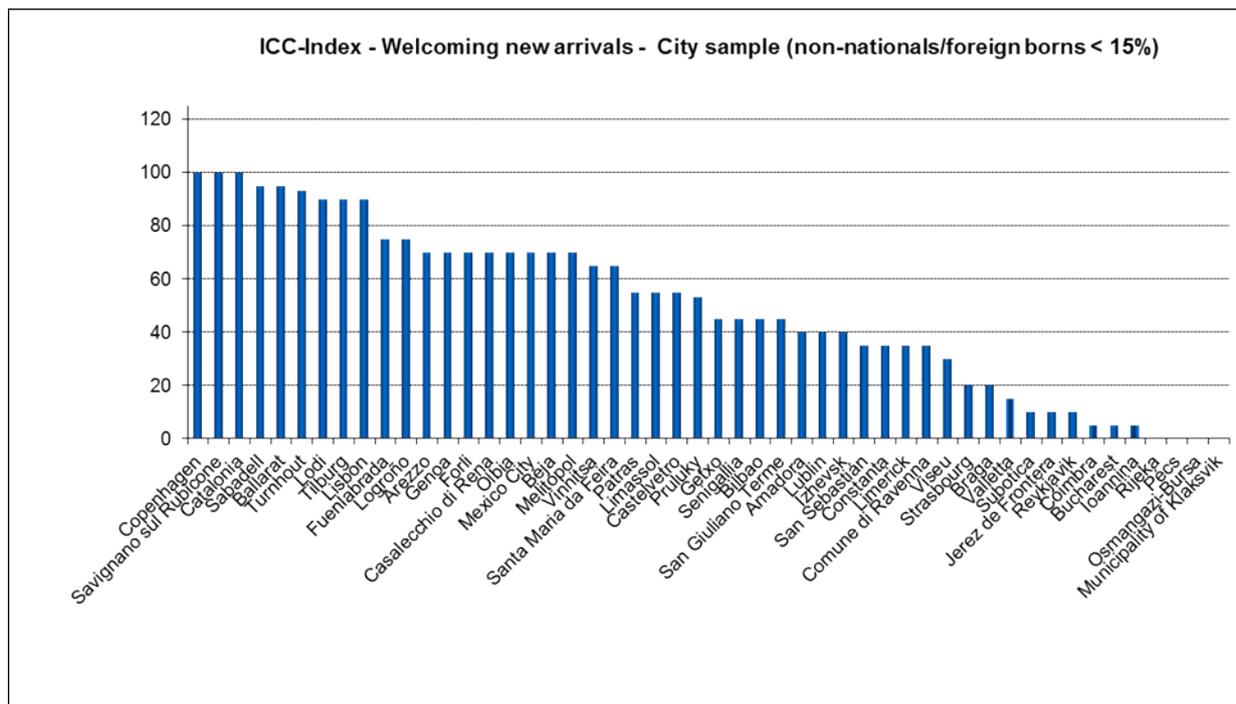
# WELCOMING



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.

ICC-Index - Welcoming new arrivals - City sample (inhabitants > 200'000)





The attainment rate of Patras welcoming policy is the 55% , much like the city sample's rate of 54%.

The city has established an office to welcome migrants and newcomers to the city. Most importantly, Patras offers a comprehensive city-package with useful information and assistance in support to newly arrived residents.

The city supports and welcomes specific categories of newly arrived. Positively, we acknowledge that with the "Kallikrates" system for local government organisations in Greece, there is possibility that municipalities organise "Office for Immigrants" with an integrated approach. The city of Patras intends to organise such an office, and hence, initiate the preparation of business plan about its structure and provision of services. Currently, the operation of Patras CII (Council for the Integration of Immigrants) through the involvement of migrants' communities support welcoming and spread of information. Likewise, there is an existing network of local NGOs and related organizations outside the Municipality circle that are complementary.

Despite these encouraging results, the city of Patras should consider introducing a special public ceremony to greet newcomers in the presence of officials.

To help migrants and newly arrived, Patras could follow Ballarat's interesting activity of the *Migrant Morning Tea*: every day these morning teas have helped establish friendships across cultures, provided settlement information to new migrants regarding assistance that may be available. Instead, Barcelona encourages social inclusion and integration through the promotion of the history and cultural heritage of the city amongst all citizens and especially amongst those who have recently arrived, also, citizens contributes sharing their culture with art exhibitions.

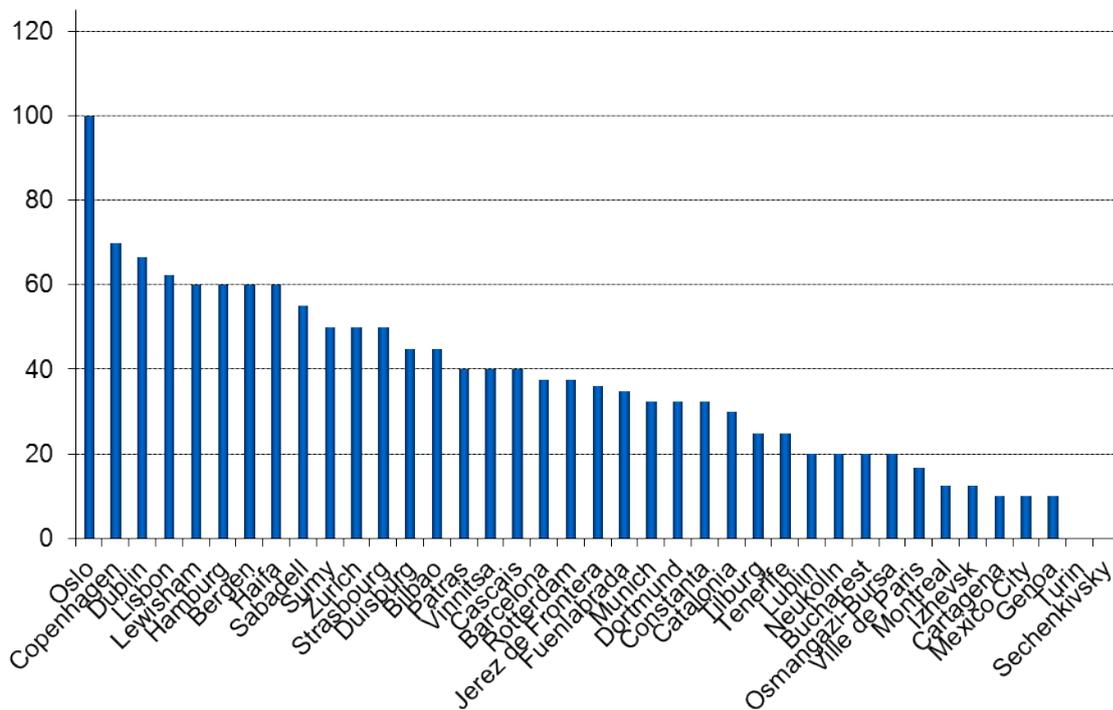
Another good practice comes from Donostia-San Sebastian; the project is called "*Gipuzkoa Solidarity V. Bizilagunak*" (The Nextdoor family) and suggests an original way to create connections. The project started in 2012, and the idea is to gather migrant families and Basque families together. The project operates on a local area, focusing on building relations among families within the same neighbourhood; the final goal is to build a net of connections that will strengthen the feeling of belongings, encouraging acceptance and social cohesion. "The Nextdoor Family" project offers an incredible opportunity to exchange stories, experiences and get to know each other in a relaxed environment. On the day "de la comida", the host family will cook a meal and will welcome the guest family. A mediator will be present and will coordinate the reunion until everyone feels at ease. Once the ice is broken, children will play together while parents will get to know each other's culture and habits. However, the mediator will monitor the gathering, possibly giving language support in case of misunderstandings. The Gipuzkoa Solidarity conveys the idea that we are all Basque citizens. These intercultural connections fight prejudices and stereotypes, while bridging the gaps between foreign-born people and natives. Simultaneously, this project fosters social inclusion among neighbours, leading towards a harmonic cohabitation. In a word: equality.

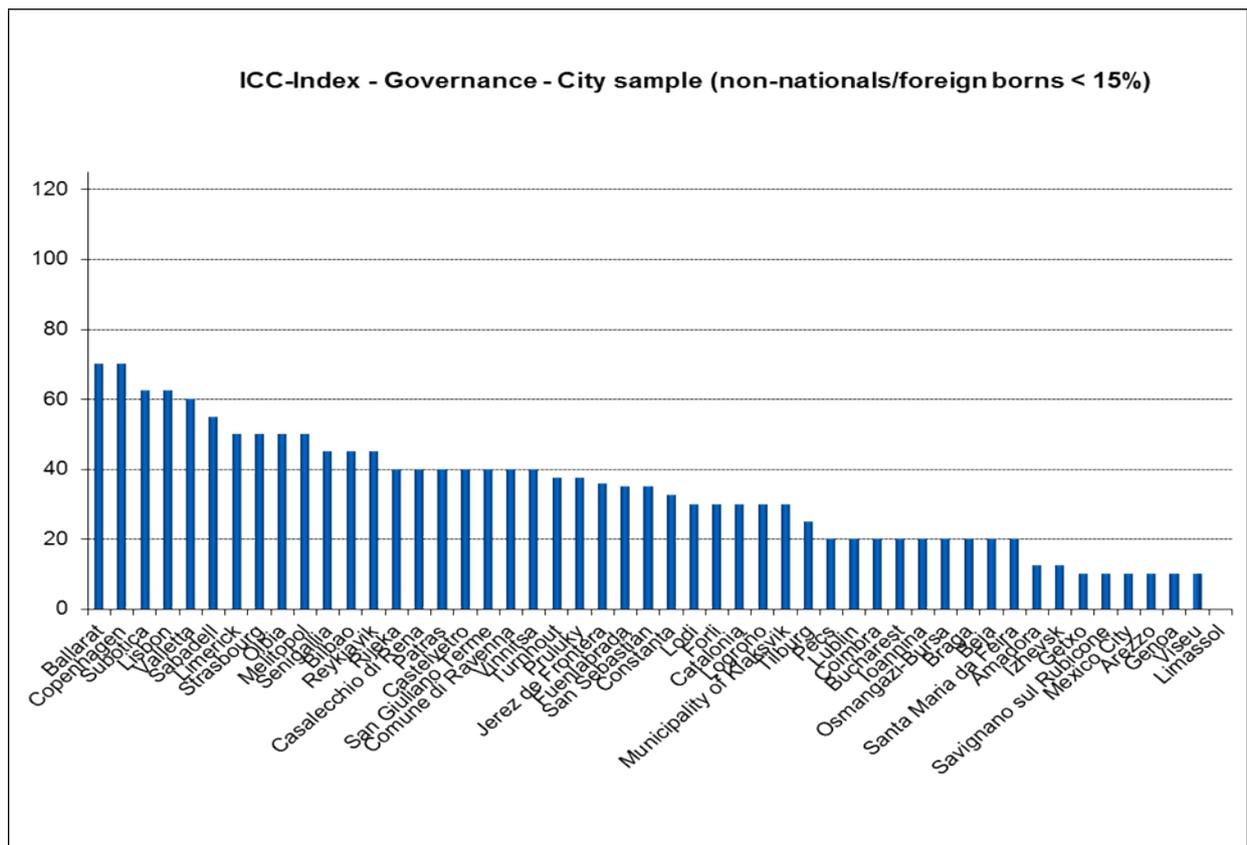
# GOVERNANCE



*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 citizen participation in decision-making.*

**ICC-Index - Governance - City sample (inhabitants > 200'000)**





The attainment rate of Patras in the field of governance is the 40% , higher than the city sample's rate of 34%.

Newcomers can vote only when they obtain the nationality. Moreover, Patras' ethnic background of elected politicians partially reflects the composition of the city's population. However, Patras has established an advisory body involving migrants/minorities as well as relevant public institutions, organisations and experts to deal with diversity and integration matters.

Specifically, since 2010 the municipality established a Council for the Integration of Immigrants, which is chaired by the vice-mayor responsible for integration and which engages the NGOs representing migrant communities. This body works as a vehicle for dialogue between the city's political leadership (five councillors), its migrant members. It also provides a ready-made structure for the co-management of the city's intercultural strategy, its ethos of participation for all ensuring that members of minority communities can be involved on a basis of equal citizenship with members of the 'host' community. The CII operation can draw on the technical assistance of ADEP, over which the vice-mayor also presides and which has been involved in Patras' trajectory as an intercultural city since developing the application to join the network in 2008. ADEP itself enjoys links to outside expertise, such as the National Centre for Social Research, EKKE.

We acknowledge that Patras sometimes encourages migrants and minorities to take part in the political life.

Currently, the operation of Patras CII (Council for the Integration of Immigrants) through the involvement of communities of immigrants supports decision making and therefore provide a direct platform for political life. It is also expected that the organization of the Office of Migrants with an integrated approach will be operational in 2017.

Nonetheless, the city might wish to follow the example set by the city of Paris where 123 "*conseils de quartier*" or "neighbourhoods' councils" are open to all residents, regardless of their nationality, and allow people to express their opinions and proposals on issues that affect the neighborhoods, such as development projects, neighborhood life, and all the strategies that could potentially improve the quality of life. The Councils are a bridge between the citizens, the elected officials and the Mayor.

Patras might find inspiring this initiative coming from Ballarat: the Multicultural Ambassadors' Program (MAP). This program was developed in order to provide leadership within the migrant community, therefore encouraging minorities to participate in the political life of the City. Ever since 2009, this program aims to enhance community awareness while fostering social cohesion and mutual acceptance. The objectives are:

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

Multicultural Ambassadors will be champions for their existing communities and will engage citizens' participation in workplaces, social, religious and recreation groups, as well as in schools and community groups.

# ANTI DISCRIMINATION



The answers provided in the questionnaire indicate that the city of Patras does not monitor the extent and the character of discrimination in the city. However, the city has a specific service that advises and supports victims of discrimination and/or provides grants to civil society organisations that play this role.

The city regularly runs anti-discrimination campaigns and/or raise awareness in other ways. For example, the city of Patras puts lot of emphasis on the submission and implementation of EU proposals, focusing on awareness raise campaign on diversity, equal opportunities & rights (notably, Anti-Racism Week, European Local Democracy Week, C4i, PROGRESS Antidiscrimination).

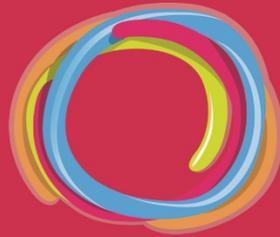
It is noteworthy that the city of Patras won the 2nd prize for Democratic Innovation in World Forum for Democracy 2015 (about an awareness workshop in the prison of Patras). In many cases arts and culture are regarded as effective “tools-means” for awareness combined with the application of the “anti-rumour” model. Moreover, Patras’ project entitled “Combating Discrimination in the Field of Entrepreneurship: Women and young Roma and Muslim immigrants” which was financed by “PROGRESS-Support to national activities aiming at combating discrimination and promoting equality” (JUST/2012/PROG/AG/AD) EU programme, is also remarkable. Raising awareness, disseminating information and promoting the debate about the key challenges and policy issues in relation to anti-discrimination for Roma and Muslim immigrants as far as entrepreneurship is concerned, were the main objectives of the project. Mainstreaming of policies through the involvement of social partners, NGOs and relative stakeholders was also a challenge. The project was coordinated by the “National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)” and the area of Patras has been identified as a core-place at a national level, equal to the area of Athens. “Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development - ADEP SA” is the local partner organization.

Schools are crucial partners, not only for the acquisition of intercultural competences, but also for a broader understanding of interculturalism as a way of life. For further improvement, Patras could follow Amadora’s schools example in addressing stereotypes and negative perceptions about specific communities. In fact, the city of Amadora (Portugal) has been implementing a communication

campaign focusing on rumours identified through research at the city level about pupils with a migrant background lower the education level in schools. In Amadora, 60 per cent of the foreign residents, who represented 10 per cent of the city's population in 2011, originate from Portuguese-speaking African countries.

As part of the campaign, 60 pupils of Seomara da Costa Primo secondary school were trained as anti-rumour agents. They identified the following rumours in the classroom: new students are never welcome, Spanish and Portuguese do not like each other, white people are believed to steal babies in Cape Verde, mathematics and Portuguese teachers earn more than other teachers, etc. The pupils also participated in a debate "how do I see the others" where they were to mosaic their school mate using foodstuffs. Finally, they presented an anti-rumour song at the C4i 3rd Coordination meeting in Amadora on 12 December 2014 and expressed interest in joining more anti-rumour activities. According to scientific research conducted in Amadora as part of C4i, a secondary school with a majority of students of different nationalities was positioned among the eight best schools in the city in 2013. Similarly, about a quarter of the students awarded for merit and excellence were immigrants. Amadora strongly believes that excellence in education can only be achieved in an integrated and inclusive education system.

# CONCLUSIONS



Patras showed an aggregate intercultural city index of 70% , resulting 17th among the 86 cities that for the time being are part of the Intercultural Cities Network. Together with these excellent results and innovative programmes, the Index has also shown that there is room for further improvements.

It is appreciable that the city scored a rate higher than the city sample in the following fields: Commitment, Intercultural lens, Neighbourhood, Public service, Business and labour market, Cultural and civil life, Public space, Language, Media, Intelligence/Competence, Welcoming and Governance.

On the other hand, the weakest fields where the city's municipality must strengthen its policies are: Education system, Mediation, International Outlook.

In view of the above, we wish to congratulate with the City of Patras for the efforts taken. Nonetheless, we are confident that if the city follows our guidelines and other Intercultural Cities' practices, the results will rapidly be visible and tangible.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



The municipality has developed strong relationships with all the key civil-society actors in the city. Apart from the migrant associations, these importantly include the social partners, cultural actors and the University of Patras. These network connections are invaluable, particularly in the context of a constrained municipal budget, in ensuring intercultural practice is a meaningful reality on the ground.

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

- **Education:** Schools should adopt policies to increase ethnic/cultural mixing, for instance they could adopt a calendar with several multi-cultural and multi-religious activities. This would enormously help students from a minority background (especially the Roma population residing in Patras), through the integration process and it would foster the feeling of acceptance.
- **Mediation:** To improve the field of mediation, the municipality the city should consider establishing a general service which would deal with cultural conflicts, for instance in the form of a public-private partnership or a foundation, similar to the Intercultural centre Mondinsieme in Reggio Emilia or the Multicultural centre in Botrkyrka.
- **International Outlook:** the city could support the creation of social networks to encourage the integration of new residents into the city and also make it possible to establish economic bridges with their home countries. On this purpose, Patras could encourage co-development projects with the major migrant groups' countries of origin.