



## Beja: Results of the Intercultural Cities Index

Date: 17 September 2012

A comparison between 50 cities<sup>1</sup>

### 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 50 cities have undergone their intercultural policies analysis using the Intercultural City Index: Amadora (*Portugal*), Arezzo (*Italy*), Barcelona (*Spain*), Beja (*Portugal*), Bilbao (*Spain*), Botkyrka (*Sweden*), Campi Bisenzio (*Italy*), Cartagena (*Spain*), Constanta (*Romania*), Copenhagen (*Denmark*), Donostia-San Sebastian<sup>2</sup> (*Spain*), Dortmund (*Germany*), Dublin (*Ireland*), Duisburg (*Germany*), Erlangen (*Germany*), Fuenlabrada (*Madrid region, Spain*), Geneva (*Switzerland*), Genoa (*Italy*), Izhevsk (*Udmurt Republic, Russia*), Jerez de la Frontera (*Spain*), Limassol (*Cyprus*), Lisbon (*Portugal*), Lodi (*Italy*), the London borough of Lewisham (*United Kingdom*), Lublin (*Poland*), Melitopol (*Ukraine*), Mexico City (*Mexico*), Montreal (*Canada*), Munich (*Germany*), Neuchâtel (*Switzerland*), Neukölln (*Berlin, Germany*), Offenburg (*Germany*), Oslo (*Norway*), Patras (*Greece*), Pécs (*Hungary*), Pryluky (*Ukraine*), Reggio Emilia I & II (*Italy*), Rijeka (*Croatia*), Rotterdam (*the Netherlands*), Sabadell (*Spain*), Sechenkivsky (*District of Kyiv, Ukraine*), Senigallia (*Italy*), Subotica (*Serbia*), Tenerife (*Spain*), Tilburg (*The Netherlands*), Turin (*Italy*), Turnhout (*Belgium*), Unione dei Comuni-Savignano sul Rubicone<sup>3</sup> (*Italy*), Västerås (*Sweden*) and Zurich (*Switzerland*).

Among these cities, 21 have fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and 26 have less than 15% of foreign-born residents.

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

---

<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 hereinafter referred to as San Sebastian.

<sup>3</sup> 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).

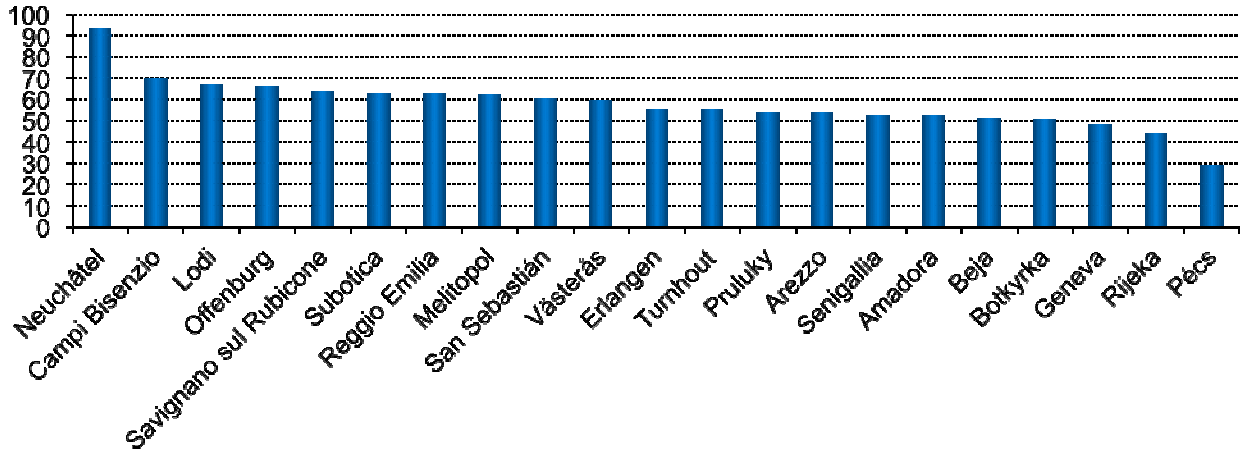
These indicators comprise: commitment; education system; neighbourhoods; public services; business and labour market; cultural and civil life policies; public spaces; mediation and conflict resolution; language; media; international outlook; intelligence/competence; welcoming and governance. Some of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

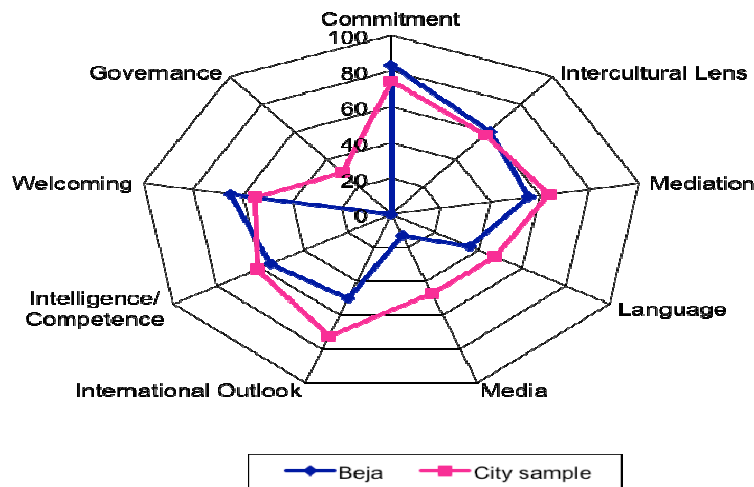
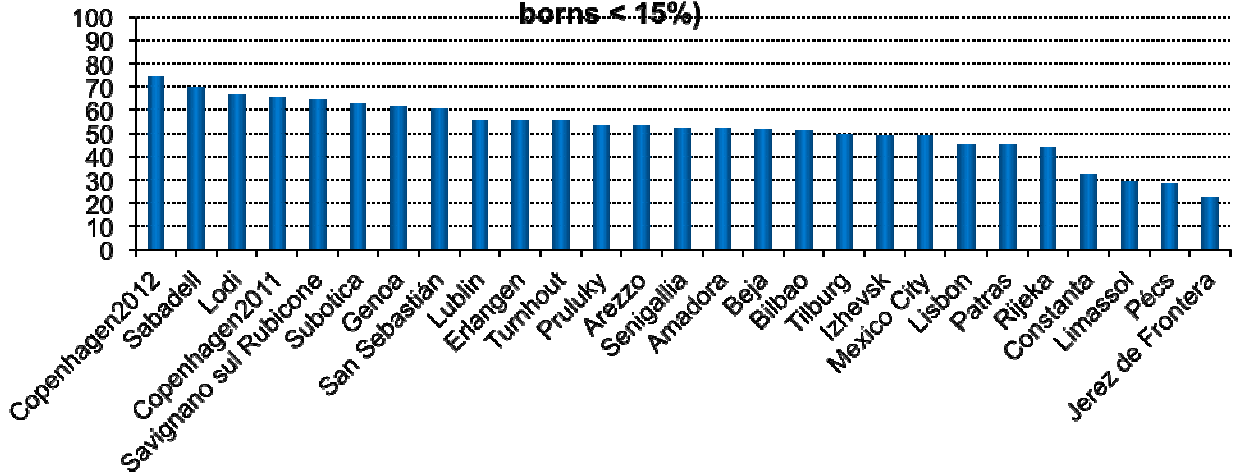
Taking into account the abovementioned differences between the cities and a growing number of new cities willing to join the Intercultural Cities Index, it has been decided to compare the cities not only within the entire sample, but also according to specific criteria. Two of these have been singled 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 collected in September 2012 Beja has been positioned 33rd among the 50 cities in the sample, with an aggregate intercultural city index of 51% identical to that of Bilbao (Spain) and the Sechenivsky District of Kiev (Ukraine). Beja assumes a position in the second tertile among the 21 cities with fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with less than 15 per cent foreign-born residents.

**Intercultural City Index (ICC) - City sample (inhabitants < 200'000)**



**Intercultural City Index (ICC) - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)**



## **Beja: An overview**

Beja is a municipality in the Alentejo Region in Southern Portugal with a population of 35,734 inhabitants<sup>4</sup>. It is the capital of both the District of Beja composed of 14 municipalities and the Region of Baixo Alentejo. The most important ethnic group – the Portuguese population – represents 73 per cent of the municipality's inhabitants. Regular migrants account for 3.5% of the total population, the largest minority group being Roma (1.73%) followed by Brazilians, Ukrainians, Moldovans and Romanians. According to the answers provided in the questionnaire, there are other unrecorded migrant groups in Beja.

The latest GDP/per capita estimates for the Baixo Alentejo Region approximate € 13,219<sup>5</sup>. The estimates for the municipality are unavailable.

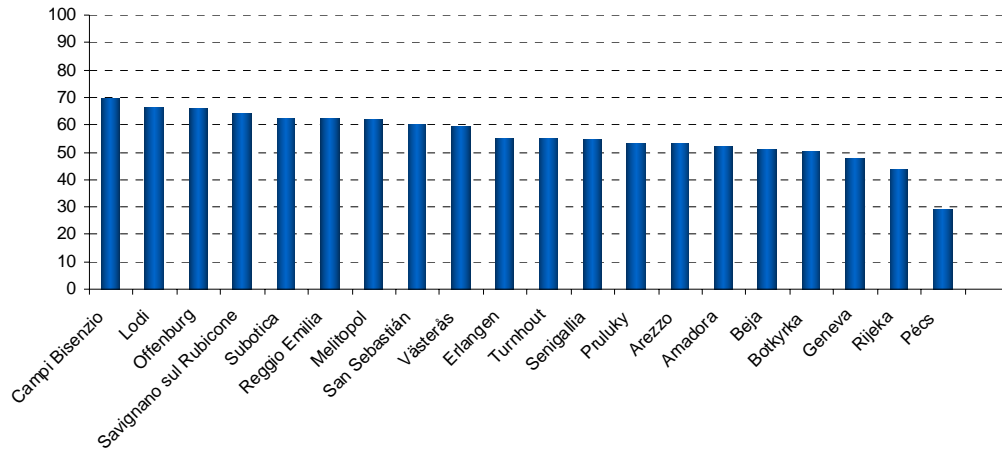
### **1. Commitment**

---

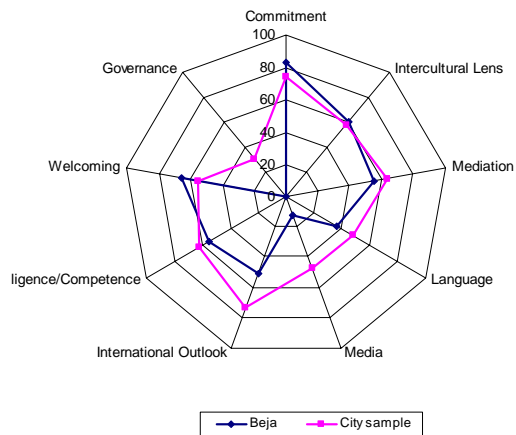
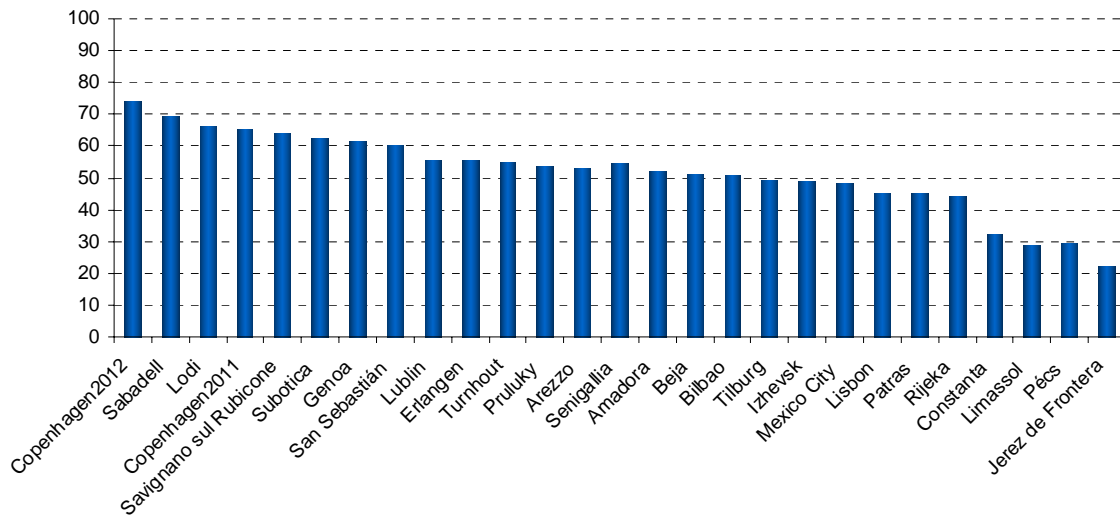
<sup>4</sup> Last Census of 2011

<sup>5</sup> Latest government agency broadcast.

**Intercultural City Index (ICC) - City sample (inhabitants < 200'000)**



**Intercultural City Index (ICC) - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)**



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 Beja's commitment policy goals is 83%, which is higher than the city sample's rate<sup>6</sup> of 50 cities in this policy area (74%). What is more, this is the fourth highest result in this policy area both among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%. The German city of Turnhout and the Italian cities of Lodi and Rubicone have the same score.

Beja has implemented a number of initiatives, which demonstrate commitment to the intercultural approach in the city's integration policies. First and foremost, the municipality has adopted an integration strategy with intercultural elements pertinent to the school and mediation levels<sup>7</sup>. Beja's **Gabinete de Desenvolvimento Social** (Office for Social Development) acts as a dedicated cross-departmental co-ordination structure responsible for the city's intercultural strategy. The Webpage of the Office communicates the city's integration strategy<sup>8</sup>. The city's official speeches and communications often make clear reference to its intercultural commitment.

Moreover, a number of activities deriving from the city's intercultural strategy make up for a local intercultural plan. A budget has been allocated for their implementation and an evaluation process has been put in place.

On the above points, we invite Beja's City Council to build upon its integration strategy with a view to developing fully-fledged intercultural strategy and action plan. As a further step, the city may also wish to adapt the relevant budget and evaluation process accordingly. The webpage of the Office for Social Development may also be adapted and translated into other languages spoken by the city's most important migrant groups. Furthermore, it would be advisable that Beja formally adopt a public statement as an intercultural city.

Here, we draw the authorities' attention to a number of models of communicating commitment policy developed by other Intercultural Cities, notably the Norwegian city of Oslo. In 2001 this city adopted the declaration '**Oslo – a city for all**', declaring itself an open and inclusive city, and put in place commitment policy named '**OXLO – Oslo Xtra Large**'. The declaration states: "*Oslo is a city where all citizens are of equal value. The citizens of Oslo are its future and its most cherished resource. We are citizens with different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, and have all the same fundamental rights, duties and responsibilities. (...) The municipality of Oslo aims to mirror the diversity of its population, among its public servants and leaders, and in the services it provides.*" In 2005 the city of Oslo set up its **Office for Diversity and Integration (EMI)**, which aims to facilitate dialogue

---

<sup>6</sup> The term "city sample" refers to the weighted average of the 50 cities included in the Index at this moment in each of the fourteen areas of intercultural governance.

<sup>7</sup>See, e.g.,

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.342688385808740.82174.131275870283327&type=3#!/incl usaopelaarte>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.cm->

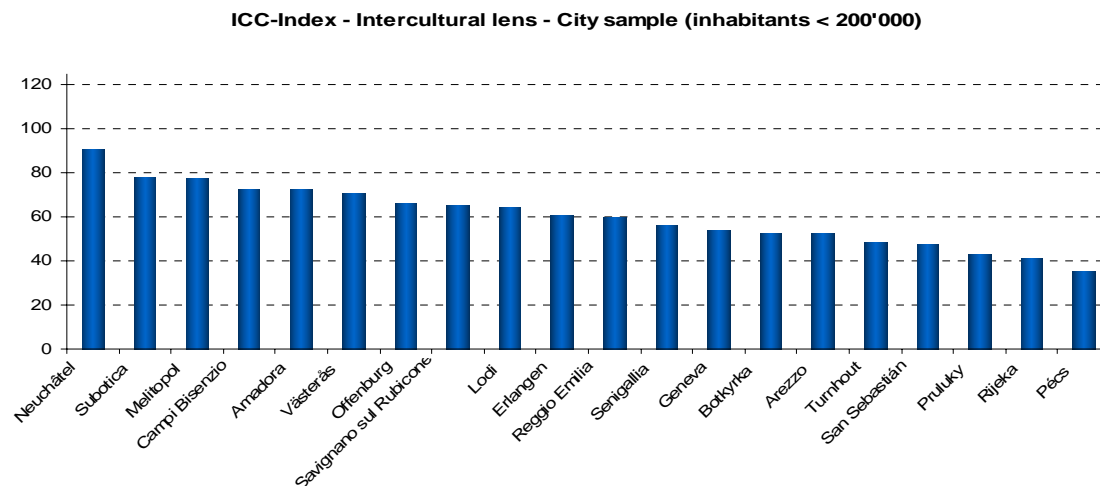
[beja.pt/portal/page?\\_pageid=73,46181&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&conteudos\\_genericos\\_qry=BOUI=52689](http://www.cm-beja.pt/portal/page?_pageid=73,46181&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&conteudos_genericos_qry=BOUI=52689)

with minority groups, carry out the OXLO-campaign and service the NGOs representing minority groups and interests. In partnership with other organisations, such as the **Council of Immigrant Organisations**, the EMI promote positive role-models and make visible the success stories of the modern cosmopolites of Oslo. It also runs an online newsletter, the **OXLO Bulletin**, and a monthly seminar, the **Contact Forum**, for exhibiting best practices.

It is positive that Beja implements occasional initiatives to acknowledge and honour local citizens who have done exceptional things to encourage interculturalism in the local community, for instance by delivering municipal medals of honour or celebrating the International Migrants Day. The city may wish to consider conducting such initiatives on a regular basis.

In this connection, the following initiative is noteworthy. In 2006 the **Immigration Observatory of Tenerife** (Canary Islands, Spain) introduced the practice of annual awards to honour local citizens for their outstanding commitment to intercultural dialogue and their contribution to integration and social cohesion on the island. A special webpage is dedicated to this practice<sup>9</sup>.

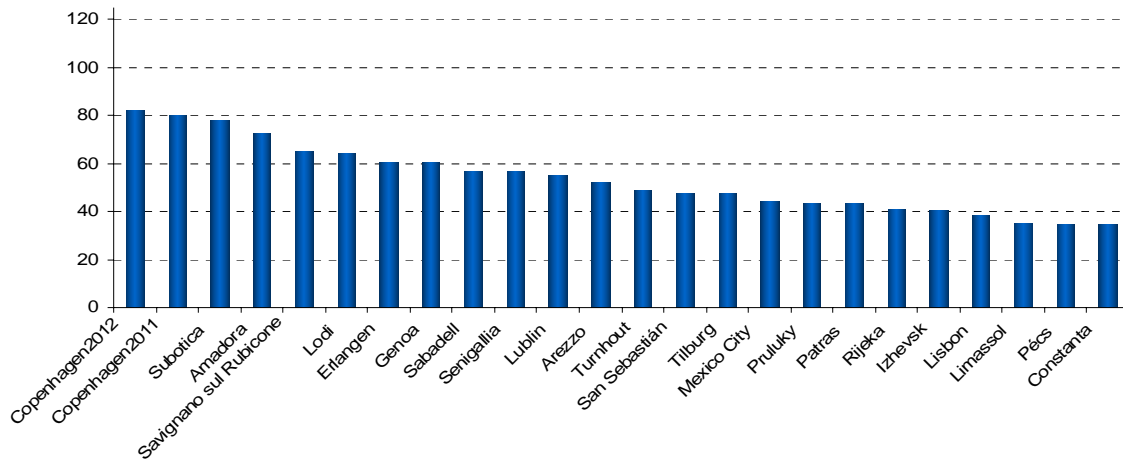
## 2. Education<sup>10</sup> policies through an intercultural lens



<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.obiten.net/> (under 'Reconocimientos', available in Spanish)

<sup>10</sup> 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](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html)).

ICC-Index - Intercultural lens - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



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.

The analysis shows that Beja's education achievement rate (70%) is slightly higher than the city sample's rate (65%). Together with Pryluky (Ukraine), Beja has been positioned the second tertile among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

In the overall Intercultural Lens Index, Beja also assumes a position in the second tertile with the attainment rate of 61%, which is somewhat higher than the city average of 58%.

Although almost all children in primary schools have the same ethnic background, the ethnic background of teachers often reflects the composition of the city's population. Furthermore, Roma pupils are integrated in regular classes at all schools.

It is also positive that Beja has a policy to increase ethnic/cultural mixing in schools and to avoiding "white flight" and ghettoisation. In addition, schools often carry out intercultural projects, which include the celebration of the International Roma Day.

However, the fact remains that only very few schools in Beja make strong efforts to involve parents from ethnic minority/migrant backgrounds in school life.

The municipality may wish to consider building upon its education policies by inciting all schools to involve parents from migrant/minority backgrounds in daily school life.

For instance, in Copenhagen (Denmark), the **Rådmandsgade School** invites parents to an open school day twice a month. They are given free dinner and have an opportunity to talk to psychologists, nurses, teachers, as well as local associations. Since 2007 the city has put into practice an initiative to increase ethnic/cultural mixing in the city's schools.



### **3. Neighbourhood policies through an intercultural lens**<sup>11</sup>

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.

Beja’s neighbourhood policy indicator of 90% significantly overweighs the city sample’s rate of 59%. Indeed, the municipality has the second best score in this policy area among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a migrant population of less than 15%.

To begin with, Beja has put in place a number of neighbourhood initiatives. It has adopted policies to encourage interaction within neighbourhoods, increase diversity of residents and to avoid ethnic concentration in the neighbourhoods. Furthermore, the municipality encourages interaction between neighbourhoods.

At the same time, in the **Bairro das Pedreiras** neighbourhood a vast majority<sup>12</sup> of residents comes from the same ethnic background. In addition, in one or two neighbourhoods people from minority ethnic groups constitute the majority.

On these points, the city authorities might wish to consider the experience of the Dutch city of Tilburg, which does not have any area in which only one ethnic group is concentrated. Thus, the 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.

Likewise, the Spanish city of Vic adopted a decision that social residences should have mixed tenants (by age, family situation and income levels) to avoid ethnic clustering. The municipality thus begun to buy flats in areas where particular ethnic groups, or migrants in general, are clustering in order to install young families from other ethnic origins.

Similar policies promoting diverse neighbourhoods have been introduced in Zurich, where a large proportion of inhabitants live in rented accommodation. Here, 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.

---

<sup>11</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 average.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

#### **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 Beja’s public services policy achievement rate (40%) is slightly lower than the city sample’s rate (42%). Beja occupies a position in the second tertile both among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%, together with Subotica (Serbia).

The municipality has implemented some initiatives in the public service policy area. Thus, non-Portuguese nationals can be employed in public administration. The ethnic background of public employees does reflect the composition of the cities population but only at lower levels of hierarchy.

With reference to the above, it is recommended that a specific recruitment strategy be introduced to ensure that the ethnic background of their public employees mirrors that of the city’s inhabitants. Such a strategy would specifically aim to increase migrant/minority representation across all hierarchical levels, including the higher ones.

In this regard Beja may wish to explore initiatives developed by 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.

Moreover, Beja may also wish to ameliorate its public service policies by encouraging intercultural mixing in the private sector labour market. We draw the city’s attention to an interesting practice implemented by the London borough of Lewisham (the UK). Indeed, the Borough Council’s procurement policies and contracts include an equalities statement that bidding companies need to show they meet as part of their application for funds.

Lastly, the municipality would benefit from extending the offer of public services tailored to ethnic/cultural needs of its residents to funeral/burial services and school meals, to complement the existing women-only sections and times in sports facilities.

## **5. Business and labour market policies through an intercultural lens**

Beja's business and labour market policy indicators are more than twice as low compared with the city sample's rate (42%): only 20% of these goals were achieved. Beja has thus been positioned at bottom of the list of the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

It is encouraging that the City Council has set up a business umbrella organisation promoting diversity and non-discrimination in employment.

We invite the municipality to further enhance its business and labour market policies, namely by adopting a binding document to outlaw discrimination in the workplace.

The example of Barcelona (Spain) is noteworthy in this regard. Here, 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.

It will also be valuable for the development of Beja's business and labour market policies to incite businesses from ethnic/cultural minorities to move beyond localised/ethnic economies by entering the mainstream economies and higher value-added sector and to encourage 'business districts/incubators' facilitating the mixing of inhabitants from different cultures.

On the above points, the city may wish to consult the following examples.

In terms of fostering minority-owned businesses, the experience of London (the UK) is particularly illustrative since this city was a pioneer in establishing a comprehensive 'business case for diversity'. The **London Development Agency** argues that companies which embrace the city's diversity will see economic advantage, i.e. through expanding the skill base of their workforce, extending their markets both at home and (through diasporic links) internationally, and expanding their product lines through supplier diversity initiatives.

Similarly, in Copenhagen (Denmark), the **Copenhagen Business Center** offers courses on entrepreneurship and business development to people from non-Danish background. These courses mainly focus on starting up a business in Denmark and using cultural/international competencies to launch a business with a global mindset, such as exports, services for Danish and transnational companies, etc.

In terms of 'business districts/incubators', Campi Bisenzio (Italy) 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, Melitopol (Ukraine) foresees to build an **Intercultural business centre** in the former Palace of Culture, and there is a high demand from its prospect tenants.

Lastly, it is advisable that, when it comes to procuring goods and services, Beja's City Council give priority to companies with a diversity strategy, having a particular regard to valuable practices described below.

Thus, the City Council of Zurich (Switzerland) adopted guidelines for procurement of goods, which include the core ILO labour standards (e.g. non-discrimination).

Similarly, since 2007 Amsterdam (the Netherlands) 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.

Likewise, in Copenhagen "hard" and "soft" clauses have been included in the procurement contracts since 2006. "Hard" clauses require that the supplier recruit a certain number of unemployed, trainees or people in "supported employment". "Soft" clauses require that the supplier weave diversity management practices into his/her human resources. By the end of 2009, 420 contracts with social - majorly soft - clauses had been signed. In September 2010, it was decided to use hard social clauses, in particular, with regard to trainee employment. By December 2011, 15 contracts with hard social clauses had been signed with 55 full-time trainee positions. An increased use of hard social clauses is expected in the coming years.

## **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 Beja's cultural and civil life policy (75%) is slightly lower than the city sample's rate (77%). Beja has been positioned in the second tertile among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%. The cities of Rijeka (Croatia), Pryluky (Ukraine), Senigallia and Rubicone (Italy) have the same score in this policy area.

Beja has implemented a number of initiatives in the cultural and civil life policy area.

To start with, the municipality regularly organises events that contribute to intercultural exchange in the fields of arts, culture and sports, such as intercultural parties and meetings or the ***Futebol de Rua*** (CAIS) (a football tournament for and by homeless people).

Beyond this, Beja regularly stages public debates and campaigns around the topics of diversity and living together. The City Council also encourages cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions.

Beja might wish to consider fostering its policy initiatives, namely by starting to use interculturalism as a criterion when allocating grants to associations and initiatives.

For example, in Rubicone (Italy) and Barcelona (Spain), 15% of annually allocated grants are interculturalism-based, where as in Geneva (Switzerland) such grants amount to 60%. In 2008 the municipality of Lublin (Poland) funded 20 out of 150 projects run by minority associations. Many other projects financed by the municipality reflect interculturalism. In 2010 Campi Bisenzio received €90,000 (€30,000 were allotted by the Region of Tuscany) to support intercultural activities within the project of *La Città Visibile*<sup>13</sup>. What is more, in 2011 alone the Office for New Citizenship in Sabadell (Spain) allocated all available funds, i.e. € 272,500, basing on the criterion of interculturalism. In the same spirit, the London borough of Lewisham supports exclusively intercultural projects.

## **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 Beja's public space policy goals (68%) is slightly higher than the sample city's (64%). Beja assumes a position in the second tertile among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

First and foremost, Beja takes action to encourage intercultural mixing in libraries and public squares. It would be advisable that intercultural mixing be also promoted in other places of public gathering, such as museums and playgrounds.

Beyond this, according to the answers given in the survey, there is no area in Beja reputed as "dangerous". However, the municipality acknowledged that up to two areas were dominated by one ethnic group. It might be time to break up the ethnic concentration in these areas, following the example of the Dutch city of Tilburg (see page 9 above).

It is highly positive that, when reconstructing an area, Beja's City Council proposes different forms and places of consultation to reach out to its ethnically and culturally diverse inhabitants.

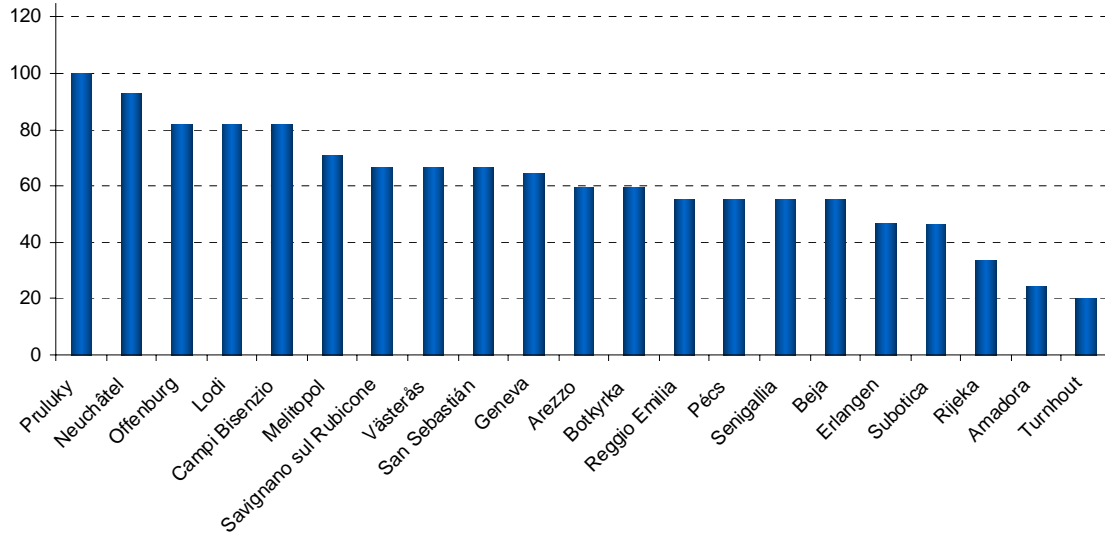
Likewise, the municipal authorities may build upon the public space policies by taking into account ethnic/cultural backgrounds of citizens in the design and management of all new buildings and spaces.

---

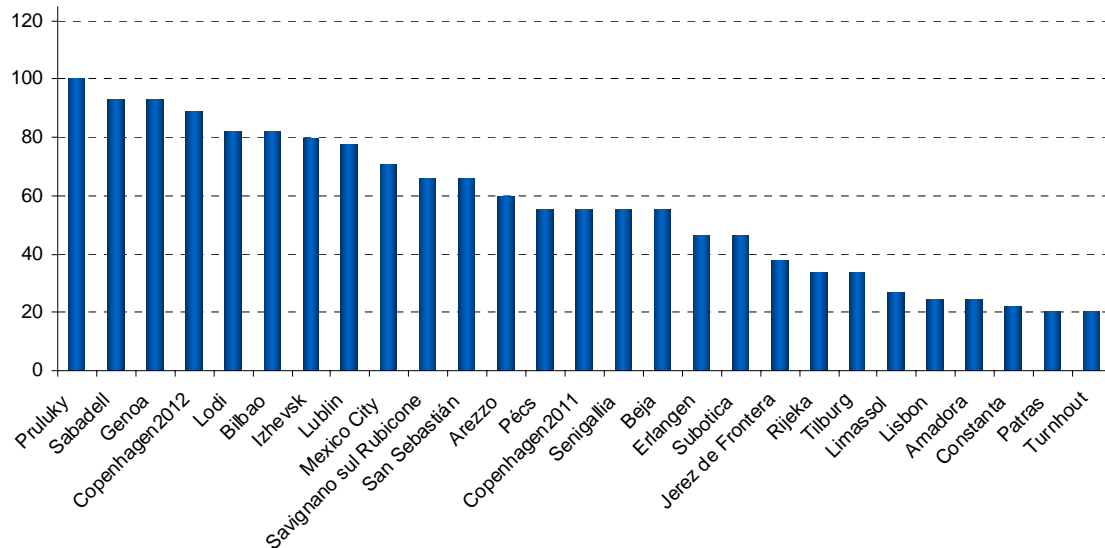
<sup>13</sup> see *supra* [Commitment](#)

## 8. Mediation and conflict resolution policies

ICC-Index - Mediation and conflict resolution - City sample (inhabitants < 200'000)



ICC-Index - Mediation and conflict resolution - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



The analysis shows that Beja's mediation and conflict resolution policy achievement rate (55%) is somewhat lower than the city sample's rate (64%). Together with the cities of Senigallia (Italy) and Pécs (Hungary), Beja has been positioned in the second tertile among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

Beja has a municipal mediation service specifically devoted to intercultural issues. Beyond that, it provides intercultural mediation services in the city administration for general purposes and in specialised institutions, such as hospitals, police, youth clubs, mediation centres and retirement homes.

Beja's authorities may wish to further ameliorate their mediation and conflict resolution initiatives, namely by complementing the existing municipal mediation service with a state-run mediation service and an intercultural mediation service run by a civil-society organisation.

The experience proves that a combination of state-run, municipal and civil society bodies and actors can be an effective way of addressing intercultural conflicts.

Thus, in Oslo (Norway) an emergency taskforce was established in 2005, with representatives from the municipality, NGOs, scholars and the police. The purpose is to respond quickly to crisis where youth and violence are involved, and to problems of racism and neo-nazism. The capacity to deal with minor episodes, however, is widely spread on the level of schools and youth services. In the city districts, this work is coordinated through the **SaLTo** networks, where municipal youth workers, schools and the local police participate. In dealing with localised conflicts, community leaders from NGOs, churches and mosques are regularly consulted and engaged, as well as the local staff of the state-run **Mediation and Reconciliation Service**.

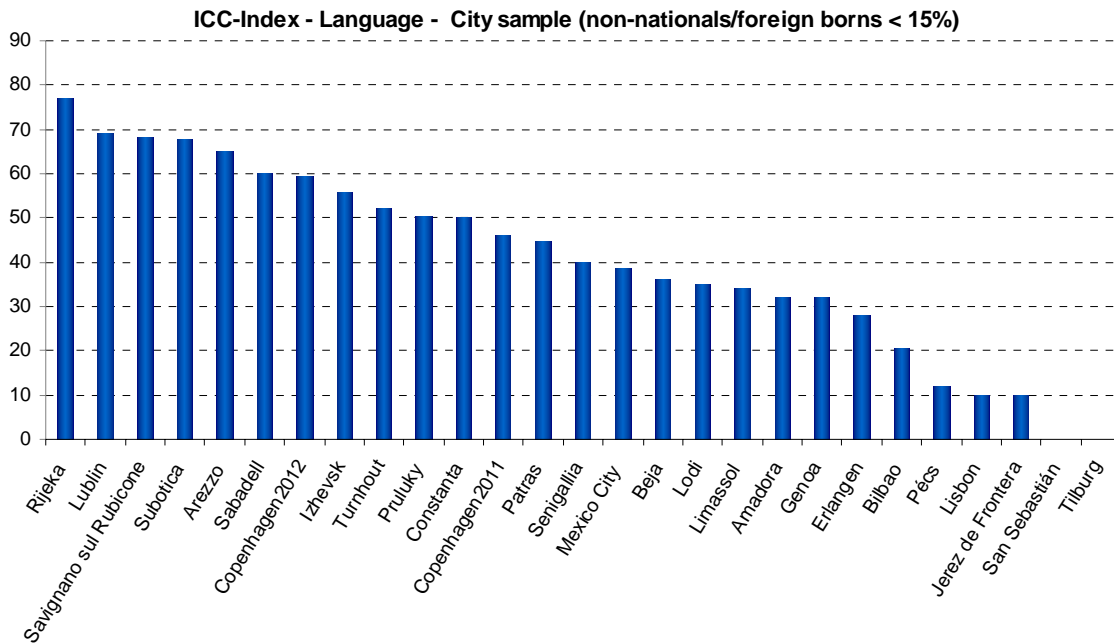
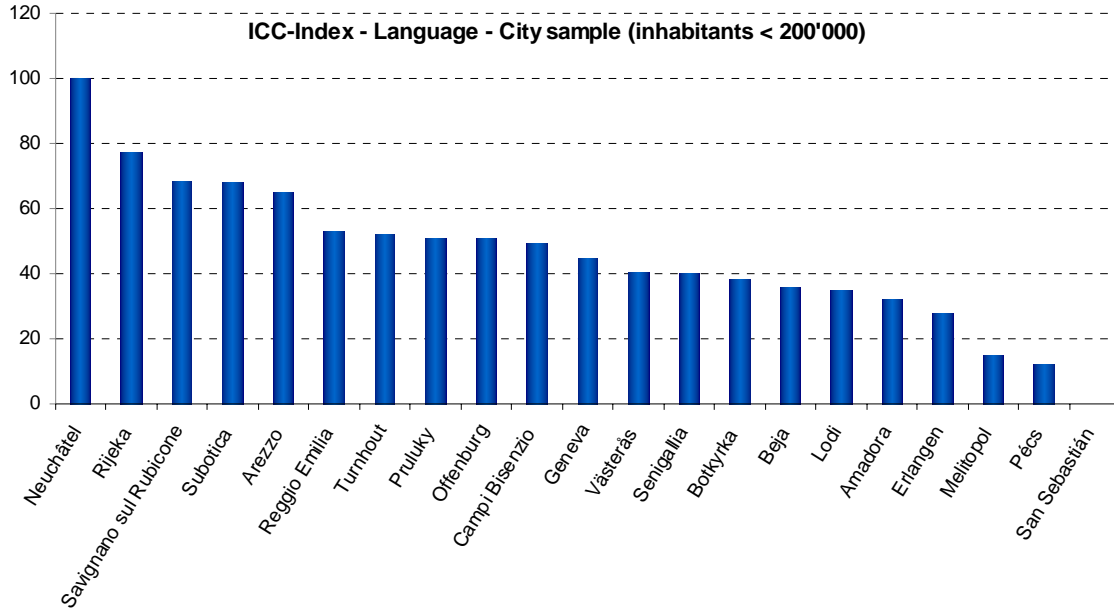
Similarly, in Copenhagen (Denmark) a mediation service run by a civil-society organisation has recently been complemented with a specialist municipal mediation service for intercultural issues (the **Ethnic Consultancy Team** within the Social Commission, majoring in mediation among youth), a generalist municipal mediation service including intercultural staff (the **Dialogkonsulenter**) and a so-called **VINK** service (Knowledge Inclusion Copenhagen) aiming to facilitate dialogue through counseling and group or individual encounters with staff on issues such as social control, resistance identities, conflict resolution, prevention of extremism, etc.

We further advise Beja to offer intercultural mediation services in the streets and neighbourhoods, proactively meeting residents. On this point, the city may inspire by the examples of Subotica (Serbia) and Vic (Spain). Thus, Subotica, with support from the **GTZ Centre** in Belgrade, has been running training for 27 young people of mixed backgrounds involving 40 hours tuition in mediation. They hope to expand this and do more work in neighbourhoods and in support of the Roma community. In Vic, a team of 10 "street mediators" not only deals with minor neighbourhood conflicts but also seeks to meet and talk to people in the streets and in public places about their concerns related to the arrival of foreigners, the changes in the host community and the role of the host population in the integration process.

Moreover, Beja's mediation and conflict resolution policies would benefit from setting up an organisation dealing specifically with inter-religious relations. Although no migrants from cultures other than Roma, Brazilian, Ukrainian, Moldovan and Romanian were reported by the municipality, we believe that such a proactive initiative could only be beneficial for the urban development. On this point, Beja may wish to consider specific structures established in Copenhagen (Denmark) and Rotterdam (the Netherlands). The city of Copenhagen, with the support of the Commission for Children and Youth, set up a civil-society organisation, the **Din Tro Min Tro**, dealing specifically with inter-religious relations. This organisation has panels in schools, which are composed of a Jew, a Christian and a Muslim. The city of Rotterdam set up a platform of religious institutions, including migrant churches and non-monotheist religious institutions, specifically to deal with inter-religious relations.

However, it is reminded that the absence of the above initiatives in the city at present should not be viewed as a weakness of Beja's mediation policies but as an opportunity and a recommendation to guide the city's future initiatives.

## 9. Language<sup>14</sup>



<sup>14</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://higherred.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student\\_view0/glossary.html](http://higherred.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html))



Beja's language policy achievement rate of 36% is about twenty per cent lower than the city sample's rate of 47%. Beja assumes a position in the second tertile among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

To begin with, Beja supports projects promoting positive image of migrant/minority languages, namely by organising dedicated poetry evenings, multi-lingual cultural events and migrant day celebrations.

It is also encouraging that Beja provides specific language training in Portuguese for hard-to-reach groups<sup>15</sup>, including migrants. The municipality is invited to foster this initiative by launching the offer of migrant/minority languages as a regular language option available to everyone, including migrant/minority kids or, even more, by introducing the learning of minority languages to the regular school curriculum. Beja is also encouraged to support private and civil sector institutions delivering training in such languages.

On the above points, Beja may wish to consider the following initiatives developed by other Intercultural Cities. Thus, in Reggio Emilia (Italy) two schools offer classes in the native languages of children and, in parallel, their parents learn Italian. This is done in order to help families preserve the competence of migrant children in 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. Lastly, Melitopol (Ukraine) supports cultural associations of ethnic communities which provide, *inter alia*, language courses open to everyone – including people from other ethnic and linguistic backgrounds – and many such people attend the courses.

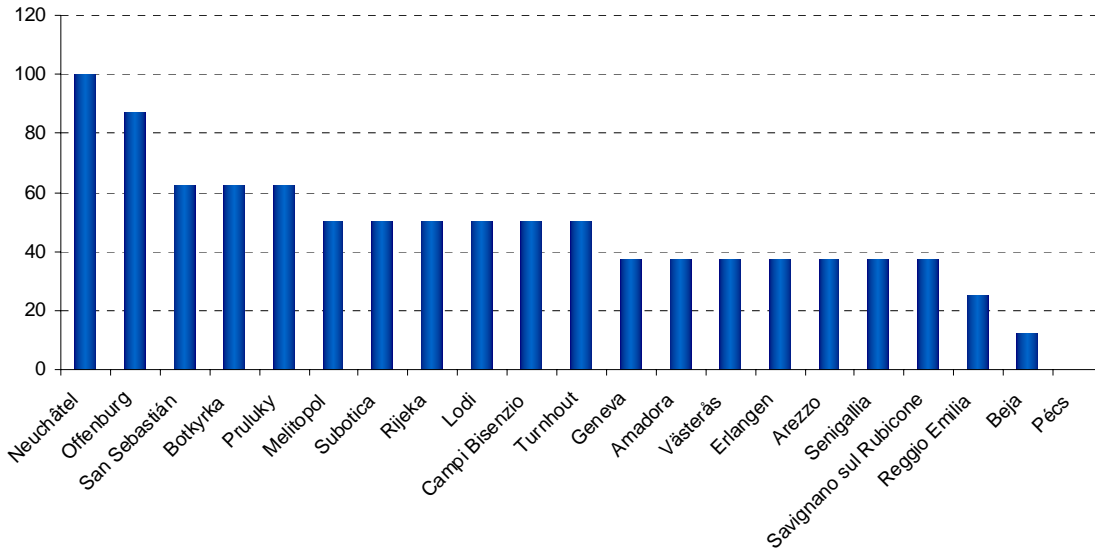
Moreover, the provision of financial support to local media initiatives, such as press, TV or radio programmes in languages other than Portuguese, would be beneficial for Beja's language policies. On this point, the authorities' attention is drawn to Subotica (Serbia). Here, **Radio Subotica**, founded by the city council in 1968 and 80 per cent funded by the municipality, is broadcasting to the public a diet mainly of information, all day every day in the three official languages and weekly in Bunjevac and German. In Zurich (Switzerland), the **Local Integration Credit** has supported a local non-for-profit radio station. It broadcasts in several languages and is mostly run by volunteers. Another interesting practice has been implemented in Melitopol (Ukraine). This city supports publications in minority languages and provides the city libraries with a number of copies of such publications, thus making them accessible to the population.

---

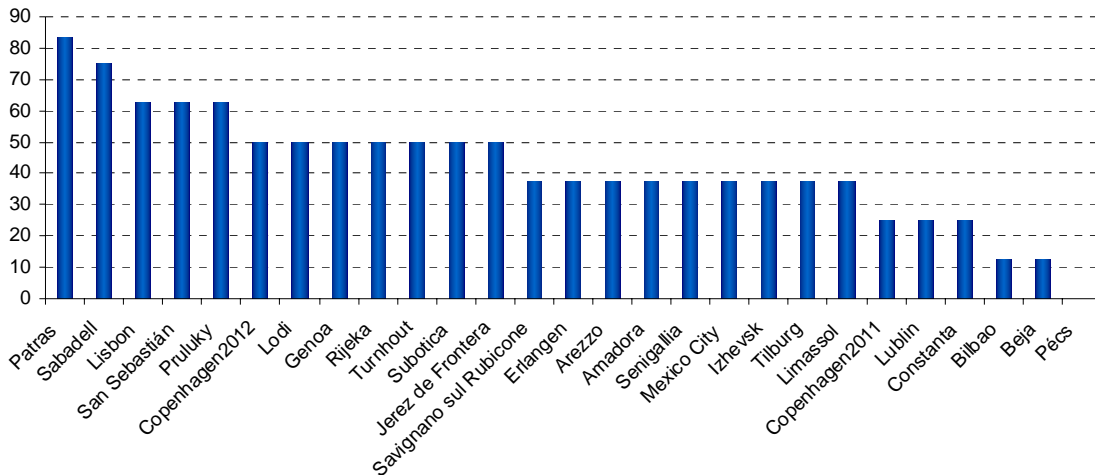
<sup>15</sup> The term makes specific reference to non-working mothers, the unemployed, as well as retired people.

## 10. Media policies

ICC-Index - Relations with the local media - City sample (inhabitants < 200'000)



ICC-Index - Relations with the local media - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



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.

Beja's media policy indicators (13%) are more than thrice as low compared with the city sample (47%). Hence, the city has been ranked last but one both among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and among the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

It is encouraging that there are occasional media actions in Beja with a view to improving the visibility of migrants/minorities in the media.

With a view to enhancing its media policies, Beja is invited to consider the following initiatives: adopt a media strategy to promote positive image of migrants and minorities in the media; instruct its information service to regularly highlight diversity as an advantage in various types of communications; provide support for advocacy/media training/mentorships for journalists with a minority background; and monitor the way in which the media portray minorities.

On the above points, Beja may inspire by the following initiatives.

As regards the diversity-driven media strategy, the journalists of the newspapers *L'Express* and *L'Impartial* in Neuchâtel (Switzerland) 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.

As regards the instruction to promote the diversity advantage for the attention of the city's information service, Reggio Emilia (Italy) issues the *Speciale Reggio Emilia*, a monthly intercultural supplement to the *Metropoli*, a national weekly publication. The supplement is realised by one Italian and one foreign editor to ensure that the Reggio intercultural experience is included in national news.

As regards support for journalists with a migrant background, an interesting initiative involving training and advocacy elements has been implemented by the City Council of Oslo (Norway). As a result, there is growing awareness among the city's journalists, editors, and media researchers about the role of the media in promoting cohesion and presenting news in a responsible and intercultural way. Consequently, a stronger focus has been put on the recruitment of journalists with an ethnic minority background.

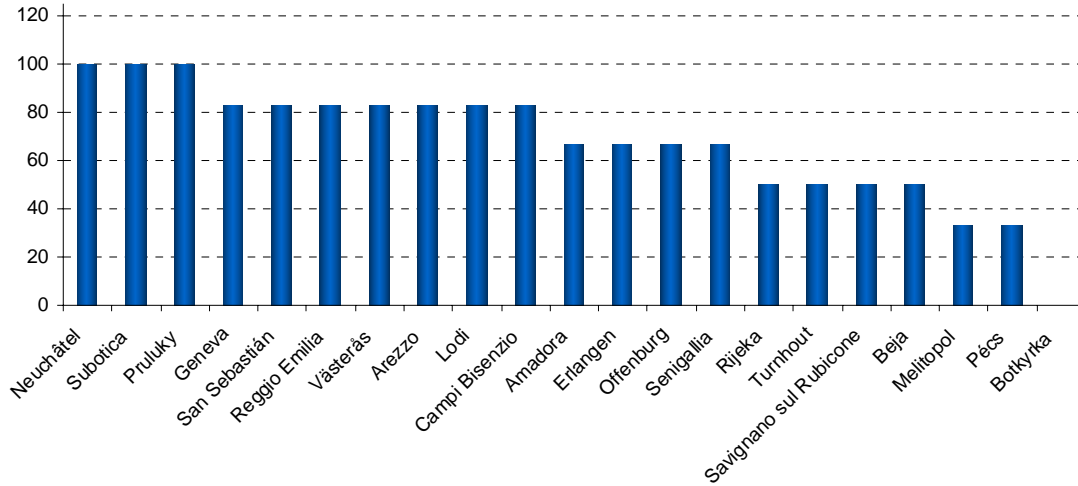
Finally, as regards monitoring of minorities by the media, the following best-practice examples are noteworthy. In San Sebastian (Spain) the City Council in association with the **SOS Racism organisation** is undertaking research into the role of the media in influencing public attitudes to diversity. Another Spanish city, Barcelona, launched a [website](#)<sup>16</sup>, in collaboration with 60 city organisations, to combat clichés and stereotypes about cultural diversity, such as immigrants abusing public spaces or not paying taxes. The programme, which comes under the *Barcelona Intercultural Plan*, also envisages creating a first-of-its-kind *Anti-Rumour Manual* featuring useful data and information to debunk these ideas. The website will publicise awareness-raising activities, organise participatory activities for people to reflect on the concepts of rumours and stereotypes and analyse how the media treat cultural diversity.

---

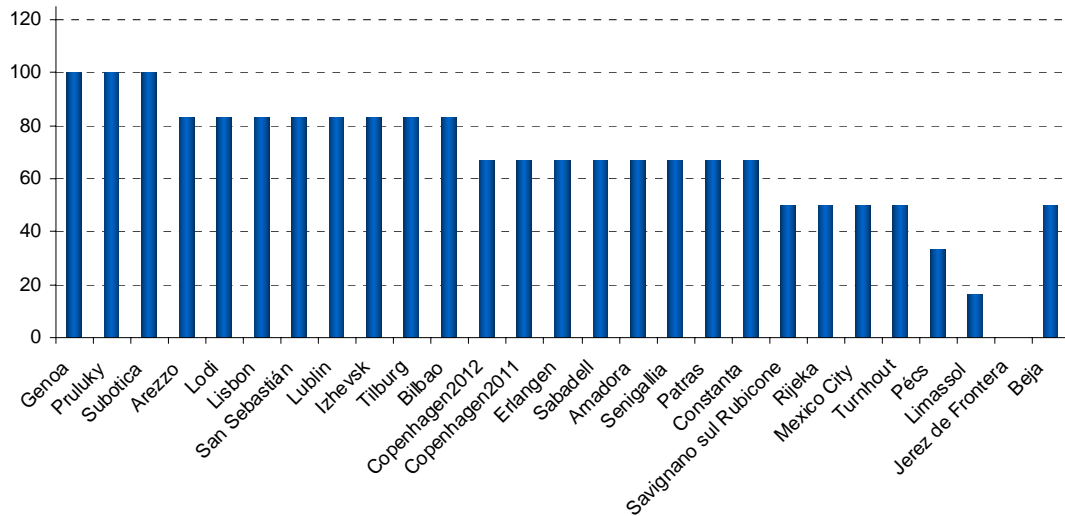
16 <http://bcnantirumors.cat/?q=category/rumors/s%C3%B3n-inc%C3%ADvics>

## 11. International outlook policies

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



ICC-Index - An open and international outlook - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



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.

Beja's international outlook policy rate (50%) is significantly lower in comparison with the city sample's rate in the area (73%). Thus, Beja has been positioned at bottom of the list of the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

Beja has implemented several international outlook policy instruments in so far. For instance, it has adopted an explicit policy to encourage international cooperation and introduced a specific financial provision to this end.

Moreover, the municipality encourages universities to attract foreign students. As a further step, it would be highly advisable to promote foreign students' participation in the life of the city and to advertise opportunities, such as job and housing, for them to stay in Beja after graduation.

On this point, Copenhagen (Denmark) could provide a positive example. This city has been developing a broad agenda on securing the city's openness to and international attractiveness for international students. This is done both through strategic policy-making aiming to improve overall framework conditions and through projects, some of which aim to facilitate international students' access to employment in the city's companies. Furthermore, foreign students are invited to participate in a welcome reception at the City Hall along with other expats. Here they meet city officials, local associations and hear about cultural offers of the city.

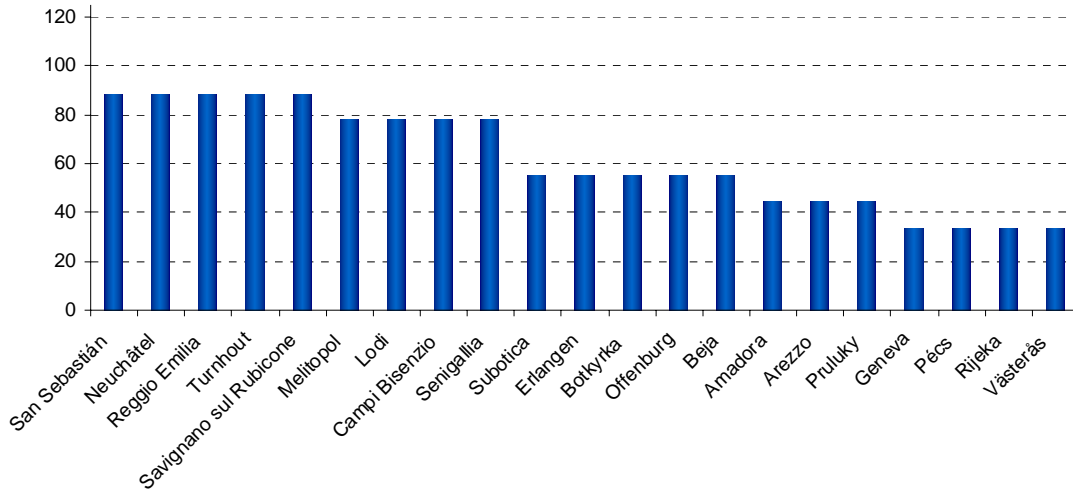
Similarly, Lublin (Poland) carried out research to find out the needs of foreign students in terms of establishing a relationship with a wider community. The city designed the project **"Welcome to Lublin"** to encourage students to take part in different cultural events, including a city tour, and to learn about the Polish culture and traditions.

We also invite Beja to build upon its international outlook policies by initiating projects and policies to encourage economic co-development with countries of origin of its migrant groups. Likewise, the municipality may wish to set up an agency in charge of monitoring and developing the city's openness to international connections.

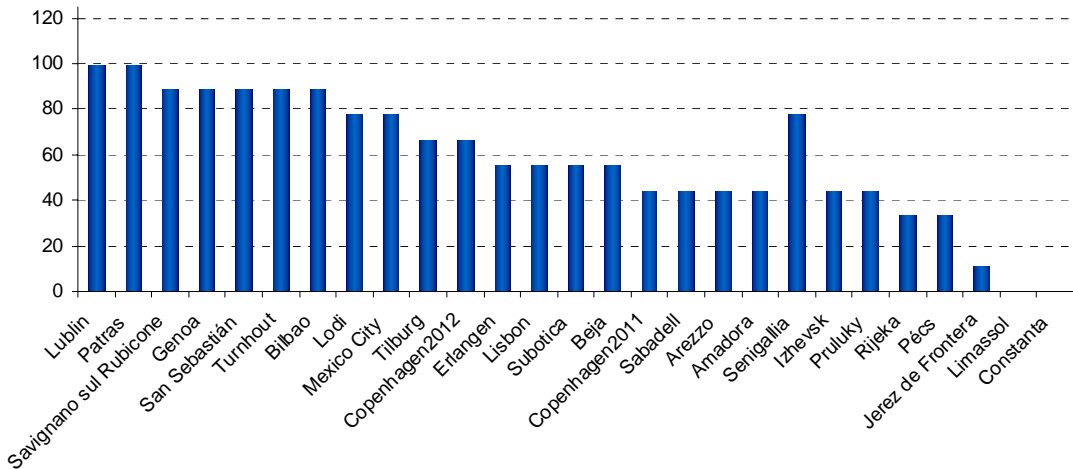
On the above learning points, the experience of the Italian city of Reggio Emilia is particularly noteworthy. Thus, in 2000 the city set up the **Reggio Nel Mondo**, an agency aiming to sustain and improve the city's international contacts and projects. It acts as a crosscutting tool supporting the municipal 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 Moroccan 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

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



ICC-Index - Intelligence/competence - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



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 assessment shows that 55% of Beja's intelligence and competence policy goals were achieved, which is somewhat lower compared with the city sample's attainment rate for these goals (62%). The fact remains that in this policy area Beja has the third and sixth highest score respectively among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%. The cities of Erlangen (Germany) and Subotica (Serbia) have the same attainment rate.

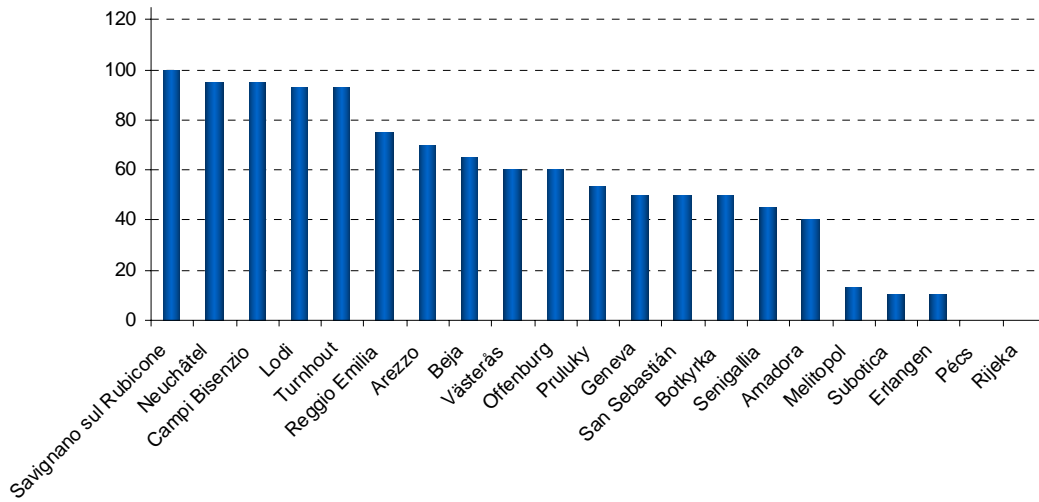
Some of the intelligence and competence policy initiatives have been implemented at the city level.

Thus, the municipality conducts surveys including questions about the perception of migrants and minorities. Furthermore, Beja promotes the intercultural competence of its officials and staff through training courses, interdisciplinary seminars and information networks.

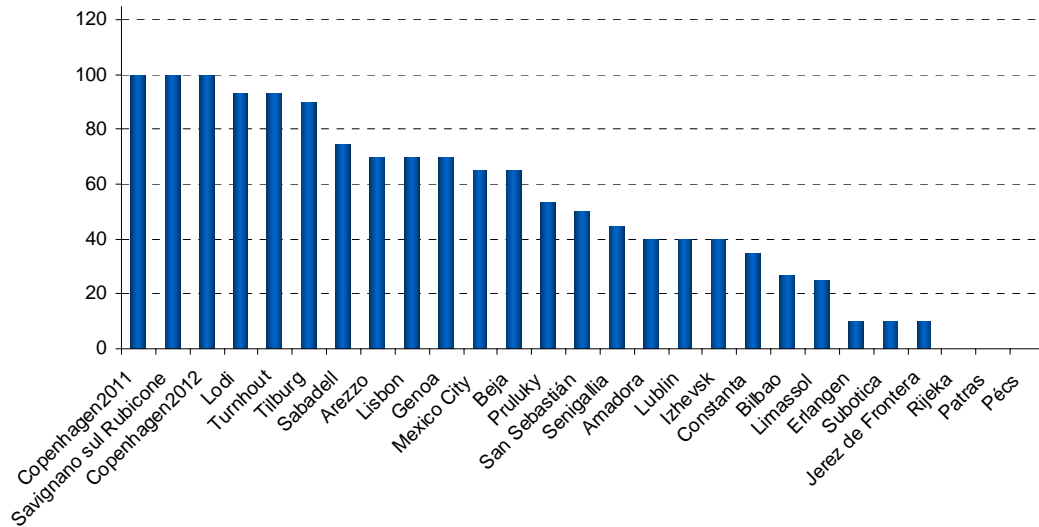
At the same time, we would recommend that measures be taken to mainstream information about diversity and intercultural relations to city officials in order to inform them of the current developments and to influence policy formulation. For instance, in Sabadell (Spain) this is done through the so-called **Special Commission for New Citizenship**, comprising representatives of all political groups, who get together monthly to elaborate policies related to welcoming, accommodation, intercultural awareness and advocacy.

### 13. Welcoming policies

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



ICC-Index - Welcoming new arrivals - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



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-coordinated and delivered effectively will have a significant impact on how the person settles and integrates.

Beja's welcoming policy indicators (65%) are higher than the city sample's rate (55%). Beja assumes a position in the second tertile both among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.



The municipality has adopted a number of welcoming policy initiatives. Thus, it set up a designated agency to welcome newcomers. Beja offers a comprehensive package of information to aid newly-arrived foreign residents to find their way in the new surroundings.

Moreover, different municipal services and agencies provide welcome support to newly-arrived family members, students and migrant workers. We would advise that welcome support be also extended to refugees.

For example, refugees arriving in 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, in Lublin (Poland) a **Centre for Refugees** supervises educational and integration programmes which are carried out by the city's **Voluntary Centre**. Also, the **Municipal Family Aid Centre** offers social aid for foreigners and refugees.

In addition, Beja might consider ameliorating its welcoming policies by introducing a special public ceremony to greet newcomers in the presence of officials.

On this account, the following examples are meritorious.

Tilburg (the Netherlands) throws 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.

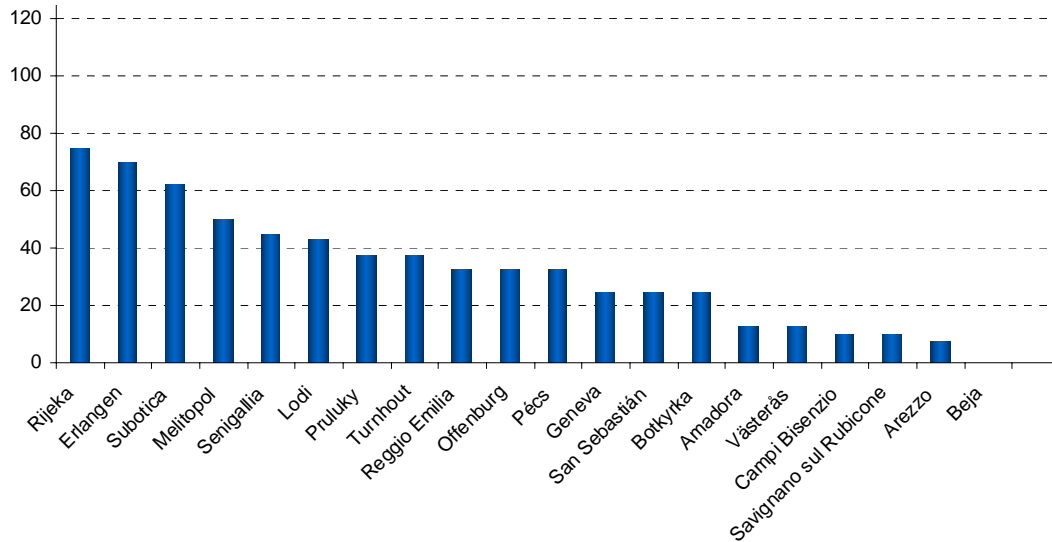
In Copenhagen (Denmark) twice a year a **Welcome Reception and Copenhagen Expat Fair** is held at the City Hall by city officials. All international residents, including students and newcomers, can participate in the reception. Thus, in September 2011 the participants were welcomed by the Mayor and offered an opportunity to talk to members of various city clubs and associations about the services provided and discuss joining options<sup>17</sup>.

---

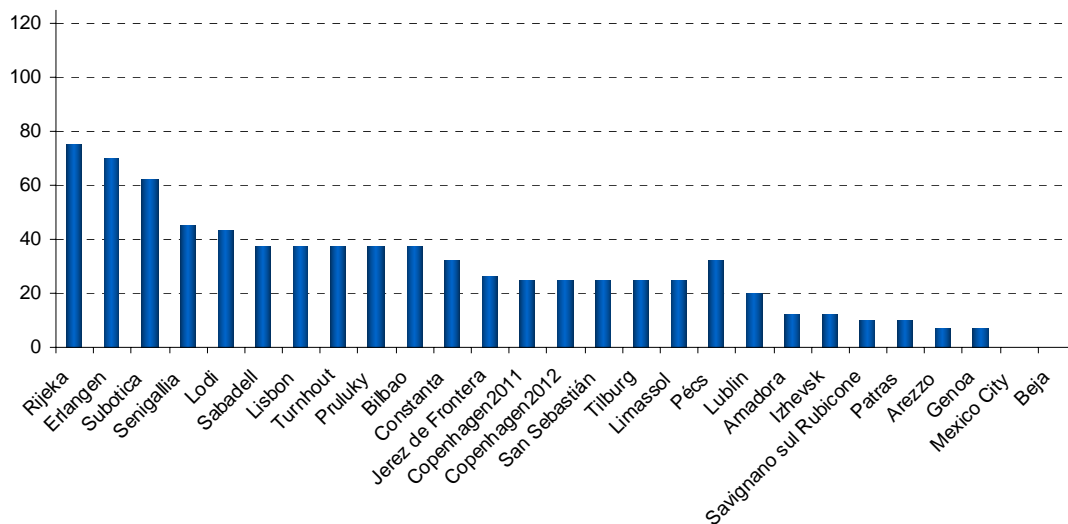
17 Invitation available at:  
<http://www.cphvolunteers.dk/Files/Billeder/Invitation%20Expat%20Fair%20Final.pdf>

## 14. Governance policies

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



ICC-Index - Governance - City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns < 15%)



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.

Beja's governance policy attainment rate (0%) is drastically lower than the city sample's rate (31%), which means that none of the policy goals have been achieved in this area. Consequently, Beja has the lowest score among the 21 cities with a population of fewer than 200,000 inhabitants and the 26 cities with a foreign-born population of less than 15%.

In order to improve its rating in the governance policy area, we invite Beja to consider exploring the following initiatives.

To start with, citizens alone can vote in Beja's local elections. Therefore, the ethnic background of elected politicians does not reflect the composition of the city's population. To overcome this trend, Beja may wish to take measures to increase the representation of migrants/minorities in the city administration and to encourage them to engage in political life. Thus, an interesting 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 municipality would benefit from establishing an independent political body to represent its ethnic minorities. Thus, in Leicester (the United Kingdom), the **Multicultural Advisory Group** is a forum that coordinates community relations with members representing the City Council, police, schools, community, faith groups and the media.

Lastly, it would be advisable to establish standards in the representation of migrants/minorities in mandatory bodies supervising Beja's schools and public services. An interesting step in this direction was made in Subotica (Serbia). The **Municipal Council for Interethnic Relations** established a **Board of Parents** in one of the neighbourhoods, **Peščara**, where 500 Kosovo Roma had settled. This board allows parents, including these of Roma origin, to have representatives at school.

## **15. Conclusions**

The results of the current ICC Index assessment show that although Beja performs better than other cities in almost half of the policy areas (i.e. commitment, education, neighbourhood, public service, public space and welcoming), it underperforms in the remaining policy areas (i.e., business/labour market, cultural/civil life, mediation, language, media, international outlook, intelligence/competence and governance). Furthermore, Beja's level of achievement is more than twice as low compared with the city's sample's achievement rate in the areas of media and business/labour market. In the governance area none of the policy goals have been attained in so far.

In view of the above, we invite the city to make greater effort in the policy areas detailed below.

## **16.Recommendations**

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

- **Commitment:** formally adopt a public statement as an intercultural city; develop fully-fledged intercultural strategy and action plan; adapt the relevant budget and evaluation process accordingly; subsequently adapt and translate the webpage of the Office for Social Development into other languages spoken by the city's most important migrant groups;
- **Education:** incite all schools to involve parents from migrant/minority backgrounds in daily school life;
- **Neighbourhoods:** take measures to further reduce the number of neighbourhoods where a vast majority of residents comes from the same ethnic background and where people from minority ethnic groups constitute the majority;
- **Public services:** lay down a specific recruitment strategy to ensure that the ethnic background of public employees mirrors that of the city's inhabitants across all hierarchical levels; encourage intercultural mixing in the private sector labour market; extend the offer of services appropriate to ethnic/cultural requests to include, *inter alia*, school meals and funeral/burial services;
- **Business and labour market:** sign a binding document against discrimination in the workplace; incite minority-owned businesses to enter the mainstream economy and higher value-added sectors; encourage 'business districts/incubators'; prioritise companies with a diversity strategy in procurement of goods and services;
- **Cultural and civil life:** use interculturalism as a criterion when allocating grants to associations and initiatives;
- **Public space:** regularly take into account ethnic/cultural backgrounds of citizens when designing and managing new buildings and spaces; reduce ethnic concentration in the identified areas; promote intercultural mixing in museums and playgrounds;
- **Mediation and conflict resolution:** establish a state-run mediation service; encourage the setting up of an intercultural mediation service run by a civil society organisation; initiate an organisation dealing specifically with inter-religious relations; provide intercultural mediation services in the streets and neighbourhoods;
- **Language:** offer migrant/minority languages as a regular language option available to everyone, including migrant/minority kids; introduce the learning of minority languages to the regular school curriculum; support private and civil sector institutions delivering training in migrant/minority languages; financially support minority press, radio and TV programmes, including in languages other than Portuguese;
- **Media:** instruct the city's information service to regularly promote the diversity advantage in various types of communications; adopt a media strategy to promote positive image of migrants and minorities in the media; provide support for advocacy/media training/mentorships for journalists with a minority background; introduce monitoring mechanisms to examine how media portray minorities;

- **International outlook:** set up an agency with a specific responsibility for monitoring and developing the city's openness to international connections; initiate projects and policies to encourage economic co-development with countries of origin of the city's migrant groups; take measures to encourage foreign students to participate in the life of the city and stay there after graduation;
- **Intelligence and competence:** mainstream information about diversity and intercultural relations to city officials in order to inform them of the current developments and to influence policy formulation;
- **Welcoming:** extend welcome support to refugees; introduce a special public ceremony to greet newly arrived persons in the presence of the local governments officials;
- **Governance:** introduce activities to increase the representation of migrants/minorities in the city administration and encourage them to engage in political life; set up an independent political body to represent ethnic minorities; establish a standard for the representation of migrant/minorities in mandatory bodies supervising schools and public services.

The municipality 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 database<sup>18</sup>.

---

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance_en.asp)