



City of Cartagena

Intercultural profile

1. Background

The Spanish city of Cartagena is part of the Autonomous Community of the region of Murcia, and with a population of 218,528 inhabitants on 1 January 2014 it is Spain's 23rd largest city.

Cartagena was founded around the year 227 B.C. by the Carthaginian General Hasdrubal, on the site of an old settlement, and had its heyday in Roman times under the name Carthago Nova. The city was part of the Byzantine Empire, was destroyed by the Visigoths and fell under Muslim control from 734 to 1245. From the 16th century the city played an important military role thanks to the strategic importance of its port, and in the 18th century it became the capital of the Mediterranean Maritime Department.

In the second half of the 20th century Cartagena thrived once more thanks to the boom in the mining industry, which in turn boosted industry and trade there. The city suffered the dramatic consequences of the Civil War, during which it was one of the main strongholds of the republican government and, together with Alicante, the last city to fall into the hands of General Franco. Nowadays, now that the mineral resources have been exhausted, Cartagena lives mainly off shipbuilding and repair, petrol refinery and exporting olive oil, fruit, vegetables, esparto, wine and metal products. It is also one of the country's main naval bases and an increasingly popular tourist attraction thanks to its important historic and cultural heritage.



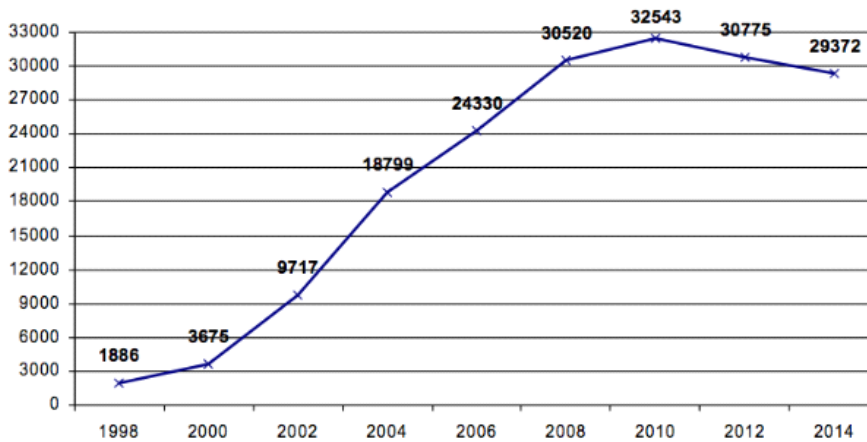
The Roman theatre of Cartagena

2. The increasing socio-cultural diversity of Cartagena

Towards the end of the last century and in the first decade of this century the number of foreign residents in the city increased sharply. Whereas in 1998 foreigners made up 1.1% of the total

population, by 2008 the figure had risen to 14.3%. According to the register for 1 January 2014, the city had 29,372 foreign residents, or 13.4% of the city's population.

Foreign population curve in Cartagena



The main continent of origin is clearly Africa, where 49.6% of the foreign residents come from, followed by Europe with 32.2%, America with 15.4% and, in fourth place, Asia with 2.8%.

- Africa: Morocco accounts for 91.4% of immigrants from the African continent, followed by Nigeria, Algeria and Ghana, none of these accounting for more than 2% of all African immigrants.
- Europe: the United Kingdom occupies first place, with 39.6% of all immigrants from Europe, followed by Romania with 15.5% and, in third place, Ukraine with 7.2%.
- America: Ecuador is the Latin American country with the highest percentage (43.5%) of immigrants from the Americas in Cartagena, followed by Bolivia and Colombia with 12.5% and 12.2% respectively.
- Asia: China is first, with 63.1%, and India is second, with 21.6% of all immigrants from Asia.

The immigration pattern in Cartagena has always been dominated by people of Moroccan origin, who were the first to arrive in the city and who at present make up 45% of the foreign population. The other main countries of origin (out of a total of 111 countries) are the United Kingdom (12.7%), Ecuador (6.7%), Romania (5.0%), Ukraine (2.3%), Germany (2.1%), Bolivia and Colombia (1.9%) and China (1.7%).

The municipality of Cartagena is divided into 24 districts, and these are in turn divided into a total of 161 neighbourhoods and "deputations". In 15 of the 24 districts a large majority of the population is Spanish and only in 3 does the population of foreign origin account for around 50% of the total.

3. Diversity management policies in Spain

Spain took in the largest number of immigrants over the years 2000-2010, far more than the United Kingdom, Germany or France, where the influx remained more or less steady over the

period. Other southern countries, like Italy, also witnessed a sharp increase in immigration, but not as sharp as in Spain.

In Spain integration did not become an issue until a few years after the arrival of the first waves of immigrants, first at the local level, and subsequently at the level of the Autonomous Communities and the State. Indeed, the idea of integration did not even appear in the wording of the first Aliens Act of 1985, and it was not until the 1990s and more specifically 1996, that the question arose, drawing as it did so on the greater experience of the local and Autonomous Community authorities in the matter.

Some of the plans that emerged confined themselves to transcribing the various departmental measures of the local and Autonomous Community authorities relating to the immigration present in their territories. Others went a step further, placing such measures on a broader theoretical plane (debates on multiculturalism, interculturalism, living together, diversity, or civic citizenship), even shaping municipal and autonomous authority services and actions to suit this approach; some would incorporate budgetary provisions and evaluation mechanisms, which were not always fully implemented. Be that as it may, the integration plans grew and spread like any other instrument of the organisation of administrative activity, although their very spread and multiplicity helped to create a veritable patchwork of integration models in Spain, rather than one single model.

The tools of integration policy

The Act of 1999 finally paved the way for a State integration model in coordination with the other administrative levels. An Immigrant Integration Fund was set up with substantial resources and State Citizenship and Integration plans were developed. The economic crisis led to cutbacks in funding, however, and a loss of interest in the issue.

- Model based on equal rights and duties. Limited distinction between “regular” and “irregular” through compulsory registration in the municipal register, giving access to local public services
- Development of the Citizenship and Integration Strategy:
 - First Plan (2007-2010)
 - Second Plan (2011-2014)
- Immigrant Integration and educational support Fund:
 - State funds distributed to the municipalities by the Autonomous Communities (with sharp cutbacks in recent years)
- Compared with the rest of Europe (MIPEX-28), Spain ranks somewhere in the middle in terms of best practices, with slightly favourable results.

One salient feature is that in spite of the serious impact of the economic crisis in Spain, just as large numbers of immigrant workers were arriving, it is safe to say that, for the time being, populist anti-immigration propaganda has not received as much support as it has in other European countries. Exactly why this should be the case is unclear, but it is something definitely worth noting and indeed analysing in order to clearly identify the reasons behind it, as this is one of the major challenges facing Europe in this century.

4. Diversity management policies in Cartagena

Cartagena was one of the founding cities of the RECI network and for many years it has promoted policies to foster the reception and integration of immigrants, which have gradually focused more on living together and interculturality.

The report on Cartagena based on the results of the intercultural cities index describes in detail the reality of the city's diversity management situation and policies. The present report, drawn up following the experts' visit to the city in April 2015, provides a more qualitative supplement to the Index-based report. It does not claim to describe all the policies and projects under way in Cartagena, but simply to provide additional qualitative information and make a few recommendations.

It should be noted that as a result of the municipal elections held in May 2015 there has been a change of government in the city. From 1995 to 2015 the city was governed by the People's Party and Pilar Barreiro was Mayor. Since the last elections a coalition government has been formed by the Citizens' Movement and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), and the Mayor is now José López Martínez.

During the experts' visit the situation was found to be much the same as in many other cities. The impetus given to diversity management policies is owed largely to the profile and commitment of the councillor responsible for social affairs, Antonio Calderón, with his highly professional and equally committed team. Thanks to them it has been possible to foster internal transversality, albeit of a more informal kind, and for a number of years now emphasis has been placed on networking with the various local groups and entities in the city.

As was confirmed during the visit, not all the politicians in place "appreciated" the importance of transversality in the same way, and while cooperation with the youth and education sectors, for example, was very clear, or other sectors such as urban and economic development were starting to work on the issue, in the cultural field, for example, there was much less cooperation.

Unlike in other cities, which have opted to define a long-term intercultural plan or strategy in order to develop a policy road map and simultaneously foster transversality and participation, in Cartagena no such step has yet been taken. The argument is that the city preferred to develop a theoretical framework and a few lines of strategy and set to work on specific projects, counting on community work in the neighbourhoods, schools, reception centres, with young people, etc. and building a culture of cooperation and networking with a view, subsequently, to defining a long-term strategy based on a broad participation process.

4.1. Policy developments

In the early 1990s efforts began to be made to understand the reality of immigration and facilitate reception and participation, as well as preventing marginalisation and exclusion. At the time a

novel project in the education field was launched which is still in place today: "Open Schools: Intercultural Education". In 1993 the Coordinator of Work and Solidarity with Immigrants was established, with the participation of different entities working on integration and awareness, such as trade unions, public authorities, adult education groups, non-profit associations and so on. It is important to note the emphasis placed on the transversal approach and the work done in this respect for many years now.

It sets a precedent for coordinated municipal action as a means of developing a global response, to the issue of integration. The sectors involved were education, culture, youth and social policy. In 1998 the Permanent Immigration Observatory was set up and in the ensuing years various projects were carried out to assist immigrants, raise awareness and understand the reality.

It was in 2006, however, that the Municipal Immigration Programme was created, marking the start of a new, more proactive and ambitious era for local diversity management policies. One of the priorities of the Immigration Programme is to foster coordination between the city's entities and associations, organising action in the field, avoiding duplication and improving the reach of the services.

In coordination with the entities in the network and the immigrants' associations, different activities related to diversity have been developed in recent years in the following areas:

- Reception and information
- Integration and socio-occupational mediation
- Community Intervention
- Awareness raising and encouraging interculturality
- Intercultural education in formal and informal contexts.

The people responsible for the programme told us about the main challenges facing them at the present time:

- The impact of the crisis and the resulting budget cutbacks come at a time when new resources are wanted and new needs are emerging, which means increasing cooperation, creativity and collaboration with other public authorities and other cities.
- It is also necessary to improve coordination between the local agencies working on diversity issues and bodies in the tertiary sector.
- It is important that steps be taken to improve assessment of the impact of these policies.
- Strengthening the levels of participation by immigrants in the plan and policy development process.
- There is a noticeable negative perception of immigrants as being responsible for the crisis, and efforts must be made to combat these prejudices and stereotypes.
- Local competences in respect of integration and immigration issues must be strengthened so that the cities have access to more resources.
- A pedagogical approach is needed to change the view some people still hold that immigration is a short-term phenomenon linked to the economic situation.
- Addressing the fact that the media sometimes actually fuel the prejudice.

- Viewing investment in diversity management policies as an opportunity for the development of the city.

This is a long list of challenges indeed, and one which many other cities share. In the last five years the city has strengthened its commitment to intercultural diversity management policies in various ways. In 2011 it joined RECI and has played a very active part in the network. In 2013 the technical team developed an Action Plan with a series of strategic lines to define a series of actions, although this plan does not seem to have gone very far. From January 2014 to June 2015 the city played an active role in the European DELI Project (Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration). In October 2014 it set up the Cartagena Diversa portal (<http://diversa.cartagena.es>) as an online display case for the municipality's work on diversity. The portal provides a lot of information, about the general policy framework as well as the various projects, with news about the progress being made. This is undeniably a very useful means of encouraging transparency in this key area. In addition, since July 2015 Cartagena has joined the ICI (Intercultural Community Intervention) project promoted by the "Caixa" Foundation in more than 30 Spanish cities, and is also supporting the anti-rumour project in the city.

All this intercultural "effervescence" was endorsed in the *Institutional Declaration* of support for Cultural Diversity as a means of Social Cohesion and Integration, unanimously adopted on 2 December by all the political groups that make up the Municipal Council.

Lastly, the best sign of the Council's commitment to diversity management policies is the fact that all these efforts have been made at a time of severe cutbacks in the funding received from other government agencies. In spite of these cutbacks the Municipal Programme has been maintained and developed through networking and cooperation with other outside actors to adapt to the new context and make the most of the resources available.

Generally speaking it can be said that the city has been working hard on diversity management issues over the last ten years, although as in other cities there are areas where greater efforts are needed. But before making suggestions and recommendations, it is important to take a more detailed look at some of the policies and initiatives implemented in various fields over the last ten years to improve reception, integration and harmony. This is by no means an exhaustive list but simply the fruit of the meetings we had with many people, be they politicians, technicians or representatives of the various bodies and associations active in the city.

Reception

The Municipal Immigrant Support Office

This service operates under the Municipal Immigration and Development Cooperation Programme in place since 2006, providing the necessary information about access to and the workings of the various resources available, advising the immigrant population of Cartagena about the different formalities they have to complete under the law governing foreign residents, including their roots, the different types of authorisation and their renewal, and family reunification, for example. The multidisciplinary team work together to answer the different needs that arise. The Council is responsible for encouraging and coordinating networking with all the social entities and agencies working in this field.

Support workshops for reunited families

This activity began in 2014 for all immigrants arriving in the city to join their families. The aim of the workshops is to welcome the newcomers and support the families immediately before and after the arrival of the family member, and to coordinate the work in the field and promote certain aspects such as the empowerment of women.

Since the outset **12 workshop sessions** have been held, in which **134 people** participated. The idea is that the workshops serve to set in motion a process of social and family advancement, helping the families to settle down in the different neighbourhoods of the city.

Active Citizenship Training Groups

This is a service to facilitate the arrival of newcomers to the city. It provides information about the local context, rights and duties and the various resources available in the city and those specific to a particular territory.

Training workshops are organised as a "gradual path" towards socio-cultural advancement, with a series of modules divided into different sessions according to the issues addressed. Each workshop is initially programmed to last 18 hours, divided into 9 sessions.

Schools open to other cultures: intercultural education

In spite of the lack of competences in matters of education, the consolidation and progress of a project in favour of interculturality that has been under way for a number of years is quite remarkable. It is a fine example of how local governments can, if they so desire, influence education, both formal and informal.

The "Open schools: intercultural education" programme was initiated in 1992 to foster education and harmonious living together, in infant, primary and secondary education centres in the city which have pupils of immigrant origin. It is very interesting to see what the initial aims of the programme were in 1992 to get an idea of how groundbreaking the programme was:

- Developing the intercultural perspective in education
- Fostering equality of opportunities and combating discrimination
- Facilitating the reception of pupils of immigrant origin
- Encouraging families to participate in the education process.

The participants in the programme include associations, education centres and the municipal departments of education and welfare. The activities are offered to the centres free of charge and on a voluntary basis and it is the teachers who request activities.

At present the programme is undergoing assessment and review to make a few improvements. In the course of our discussions the entities and teachers from the centre commented that perhaps diversity should also be presented more as an advantage. It is not just the values of work, respect, tolerance and living together that must be promoted but also diversity, which should be presented as a valuable resource.

According to the bodies involved in the programme (such as the CEPAIM), working with the education centres helps them in their extracurricular work with young people, in the social and family dimension of the neighbourhood context. The link with the centres is fundamental because the centres are already in touch with the young people, and it enables them too to work with them in the neighbourhood.

This is certainly a community-based programme that links the reality of the education centres with the environment and makes it possible to work with the young people with more continuity.

The Intercultural Centres

The Intercultural Centres act as informal educational instruments aimed at young people from 11 to 17 years of age living in the Los Dolores area and the old part of the city. The centres highlight ethnic and cultural diversity and use leisure activities to develop respect, interaction and mutual understanding.

The activities can be broken down into three categories:

- Workshops: study support, film forum, group dynamics, games of the world, manual activities, gymkhanas, intercultural activities.
- Discussions: drug prevention, sex education, social behaviour, healthy eating, conflict resolution, temper control.
- Excursions: outdoor sports, cinema, exhibitions, aquatic activities.

One important advantage of the intercultural centres is the opportunity they provide for working with the mothers of the children who frequent them. During our visit we were fortunate enough to meet a group of women of different origins who attend the empowerment group and are learning the language and acquiring a basic knowledge of the city and how various services function. A Moroccan woman told us that the group was very useful and that she was also friends with Spanish women. But we also got the women to open up and talk about certain experiences of hostile reactions on the part of some autochthonous residents. The general feeling, however, was that they were well received, although this is obviously a very active and dynamic group of women not necessarily representative of immigrant women in general. They told us about another, less open, exclusively Moroccan group of women in a neighbourhood with a stricter imam, who they say are moving backwards rather than forwards in terms of the empowerment of immigrant women.

Neighbourhoods, participation and community work

One of the main characteristics of local action in favour of cohesion and intercultural harmony concerns the intensive efforts that have been put for many years into community participation. It involves all the local bodies and organisations and helps to prevent situations of exclusion and at the same time to foster feelings of belonging and responsibility in the neighbourhood as a whole.

Neighbourhood coordinators provide a meeting point for participation in the activities of neighbourhood associations in a given area, with the aim of getting together to analyse the issues affecting the area concerned, agreeing on action and making proposals that resolve concrete problems.

These Coordinators have emerged either as a natural result of the intervention of local associations, or at the initiative of the Welfare Department, to optimise the work being done in the city. As we saw during our visit, some of these projects were supported by European integration funds in the last three years.

Lastly, there is the Intercultural Community Intervention project launched in July 2014 in the particularly interesting city centre, financed by the “Caixa” social fund for a 3-year period and coordinated by the CEPAIM Foundation. The Project promotes the consolidation of a stable framework of cooperative relations between the various agencies working in the multicultural field, to strengthen social harmony and cohesion.

Also, since 2013 there has been collaboration under the Immigration Programme on the “Creating Networks” project, also financed by European funds and coordinated by the CEPAIM Foundation, the aim of which is to encourage immigrant participation in associations and their connection with the local association fabric.

Of course the focus on all this community work does not mean that the city authorities could not also work on improving the urban environment and providing some of these neighbourhoods with better infrastructures and equipment. Apart from the difficulty in extrapolating conclusions from all this community work in the neighbourhoods, the fact is that in Cartagena there is very little conflict in the neighbourhoods with the greatest diversity. The councillor for social policies argues that this is the result of the preventive policies implemented over the last ten years.

In this connection mention should be made of the existence of the Social Mediation and intercultural awareness service, the main aims of which are:

- To provide support and intervene in problem or conflict situations, encouraging communication between the parties and eliminating the barriers to integration and harmonious living together.
- To eliminate the possible causes of social exclusion and marginalisation. Familiarising residents with the different cultures and customs, of both the countries of origin and the receiving country, to help bring people together and foster neighbourly understanding.

In addition to this service important work is being done to empower specific groups, such as immigrant women, young people and, of course, the gypsy population.

The city has a **Gypsy Development Plan** that has focused mainly on the Villalba neighbourhood, where workshops provide support with school work, basic computer skills for women or occupational training for young people.

There is also the fundamental role played in Cartagena by youth and sports policies in fostering social inclusion and interculturality. For many years innovative projects have been carried out in the youth sector in conjunction with education and sport. Projects such as “friends: together in diversity” with groups of young people to foster friendly coexistence in and between certain neighbourhoods; but they have had to be abandoned because of budget restrictions. Cartagena’s initiative to use sport as an instrument of cohesion won the city a prize at a conference in Mexico

in 2003 for its sport and interculturality training programme. The idea is to involve the young people's families and also to identify talents who have the potential to become professionals.

Another project is the Mandarache project to promote reading, which is now ten years old and involves young people from the age of 12 to university age. Reading committees of 6 people are formed and provided with books selected by a sponsor group, and the young people read them and meet the authors and various prizes are awarded.

It is a pity that other important projects that were having a positive impact have had to be abandoned because of budget restrictions or because they were financed with European funds. The municipal team themselves have acknowledged that working with young people is a key to the city's future. One need only look at some of the "whatsapp" messages sent out by many young people following the attack on Charlie Hebdo, which surprised and worried many municipal employees. This reality is shared by most cities and in any event it is clear that in-depth, cross-sector work with young people in Cartagena has been very important, just like using sport as an instrument of cohesion and social harmony. Now is not the time to lower our guard in this respect... quite the opposite.

Urban development and diversity

On the subject of the connection between urban development and diversity we had a very interesting conversation with the councillor responsible for urban planning about the situation in the city and a particular project to develop one of the central parts of the city.

He acknowledged that much remained to be done, especially in certain neighbourhoods such as San Anton or Santa Lucía, where there are more problems. He told us about some important changes in the old city, where the Roman theatre is located, which used to be a very marginal area. As was the area where the university now stands, which used to house a high concentration of immigrants and vulnerable groups and was associated with prostitution and drugs.

In this central part of the city there is a large site which used to be a very marginal district and is now an open-air car park. The Council has decided to turn it into a pole of learning and entrepreneurship, taking advantage of the proximity of the university and developing an urban project along "smart city" lines.

Thanks to the persistent pedagogical approach of the councillor for social policies, the project was being approached in a much more inclusive and participatory manner than was probably initially envisaged. One anecdote illustrates this well: the councillor for social policies explained how certain "colleagues" linked to the project commented that one of the key issues was what to do with the people currently living in the neighbourhood (people of immigrant origin in needy situations, broken families, young people with drug problems, prostitution, etc.); the councillor's answer was: precisely... these are the people who live there, so the development project we carry out must make every allowance for them. That is to say that the idea is not to gentrify the neighbourhood and rid it of the present inhabitants, but rather to include them in the process and foster their social inclusion and improved living conditions. Sometimes this "informal" transversality, with the right influential and highly motivated people in charge, can bring about fundamental changes in the mentalities of other political decision makers.

They have started building a consensus through meetings with the local residents and with the various municipal departments involved. They have also started negotiations with interested firms, but the strategic decisions will come from the participation process and the contributions of many local actors. It is a long-term project and indeed the councillor for urban planning told us that they want to do things well so that if a new government is elected in the next elections the project will continue nonetheless. Now that the team in place has indeed changed, it will be interesting to see if the project goes ahead as planned or there is a change of strategy.

Economy, business and diversity

In spite of certain efforts in support of social responsibility in business enterprises, combating discrimination and providing advice and support to businessmen and women of foreign origin, the link between business and diversity achieved very poor results in Cartagena's intercultural city index.

For this reason it was important for the city to join nine other cities in the European DELI Project (Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration) managed by the Council of Europe and financed by the European Integration Fund. The purpose of the project (implemented from January 2014 to June 2015) was to support local policies aimed at entrepreneurs of immigrant origin and businesses in order to foster local economic growth and development through inclusion and diversity. The project was run by the Local Development and Employment Agency in conjunction with the council's Social Services department.

The aims were:

- to get a better picture of the socio-economic state of the local business fabric;
- to consolidate a platform for local cooperation as a vector for dialogue and participation between all the local players (businesses, council, associations, immigrants, university..), to agree on policies tailored to local needs;
- to integrate immigrants' businesses into existing business associations and allow them to participate in calls for tenders issued by large companies and government agencies;
- to raise awareness of the benefits and advantages of diversity management in terms of the city's social and economic development.

During the visit we were able to meet many participants in the local cooperation platform who worked on the DELI project and exchange impressions on the development and results of the project.

Two platforms were set up to develop the project:

- Internal: liaising with the different Council departments.
- External: with the participation of large companies, immigrants' associations and social bodies in the field of immigration, banks, the polytechnic university, and other key social agents in the city.

Our conversations with the participants in the project pinpointed some of the most notable results they considered had been achieved:

- The importance of having set up a platform for cooperation and dialogue between the different actors. These exchanges helped them realise the added value of cooperating, identifying common challenges and agreeing on concrete action.
- Getting a clear picture of the reality of the business fabric of immigrant origin, which was previously lacking and which helped to identify the challenges facing them and to prioritise certain courses of action.
- The gradual inclusion of social clauses in municipal contracts, so that preference is given to firms that foster diversity and the integration of sectors and workers at risk of social exclusion.
- Raising awareness, among the actors involved and the population as a whole, of the economic benefits and advantages of cultural diversity.
- Improving internal transversality.

Research carried out by the university through a questionnaire survey of immigrant business people gave a much clearer picture of the reality of that community, the challenges facing them and their future prospects. The associations played a key role in preparing the questionnaire. A representative of one of the associations involved (ACCEN) stressed the importance of getting immigrants' businesses to join associations and networks, which thus far scarcely any of them had done because they did not see the point. However, thanks to DELI immigrant firms have started to understand the usefulness of local structures and institutions, and this has brought a perception of acceptance and inclusion that sends out a very important symbolic signal for the future. Basically, one of DELI's greatest achievements has been to reveal what the immigrant business community is doing for the local economy.

Amongst other things the survey revealed that the predominant profile of the immigrant entrepreneur is that of a man, generally from the Maghreb, who has set up a business in the food and catering sector in order to achieve independence and self-sufficiency, financed from savings or with money lent to him by friends or family. The survey showed how few of these businesses are financed by banks and how few of them are members of associations as many of the owners see no need for this.

In any event our conversations with the different actors showed that they were convinced of the positive nature of the experiment and of the need to continue the work they had started. The feeling is that the main achievement has been to create a forum for dialogue for the wide variety of parties involved, and to convince them all of the importance of, and the need for, cooperation in this field. What was also revealed, however, was the need to go a step further and translate the cooperative spirit and the knowledge generated into concrete action in the field. We hope that steps will be taken in that direction in the future.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The importance of the strategy

Cartagena has clearly been working for years on policies in favour of the acceptance and integration of the immigrant population and has gone on to introduce policies to encourage everyone to live together in harmony.

What is needed, however, is a comprehensive long-term strategy which, without losing the flexibility necessary in order to adapt to the changing context, identifies the concrete priorities and lines of action to be developed. Such a strategy, defined by means of a broad process of participation, would not only give all those involved a shared road map but also provide a diagnosis and a map of everything that was being done.

2. Transversality

Indeed, advantage could be taken of the development of the above strategy to take transversality a stage further. Surely Cartagena is one of the cities in which most projects can be said to be the fruit of cooperation between different municipal departments. This is an asset worth thinking about, in order to better organise the cooperation, work on medium- and long-term objectives and incorporate new working methods to guarantee improved efficiency in the collaboration process.

3. Assessment and impact

One of the keys to this process is precisely to improve the assessment of the impact of the policies implemented. Considering the complexity of this impact assessment, what is needed are more specific objectives and more effective indicators with which to work. Some cities in the ICC have worked on this issue and could be a source of inspiration.

4. Participation

There is clearly a lot of energy in Cartagena among the citizens and their organisations which is ready to be channelled into joint neighbourhood improvement projects that make it possible for everyone to live together in harmony. However, all this energy, visible in so many initiatives, lacks a more formal structure to support, visualise and encourage them. Not an institutionalised structure that would stifle the energy with a bureaucratic approach, but more stable and lasting networks and channels that could maximise the impact of the participation. There is no doubt that Cartagena has the necessary ingredients to succeed in this direction.

5. Prioritisation and continuity

One of the most common problems with which local governments are faced is the difficulty in setting priorities, assessing what is being achieved in respect of the priorities identified and adapting the action to guarantee the continuity of key policies and projects. If we can demonstrate that something works and corresponds to a priority, we must run with it and extend it to the whole city, adapting it to the context in each locality. However, the cost of keeping many projects going if we do not really know whether they are producing results is too great a risk. The development of a long-term strategy could provide an opportunity to think about priorities and above all about what is being done and what is no longer being done. An example of this is the initial progress made with the DELI project - it would be a pity not to translate it into concrete action that gave meaning to the work already done.

6. Perceptions

There are signs in Cartagena that indicate the importance of working on perceptions, stereotypes and prejudices. The city is already committed to the anti-rumour project, which is one way of addressing this issue and also of setting new participation processes in motion. In this connection the experience of the European C4i project run by the Council of Europe is a major asset for Cartagena, giving it a substantial advantage compared with cities that started out with far fewer references.

7. The new government team and political consensus

Lastly, whenever there is a change of government it is a time for reconsidering policies, priorities and teams. Just as there is no denying that much remains to be done in Cartagena and that fresh impetus needs to be put into certain issues, it is equally as clear that the work already done needs to be built on and maximum use made of it to press on deeper and further with the priorities identified in this new phase.

We hope that both the European intercultural cities programme headed by the Council of Europe, and the RECI project will be valued as an opportunity and as allies by the new government team, with the aim of building a more inclusive and intercultural Cartagena. Our final suggestion is that the new government consider the importance from the outset of securing maximum political consensus in respect of this process. The experiences of many European cities show that the more political consensus there is, in a stimulating context that encourages citizen participation, the easier it is to work towards the goal of an intercultural city.