



City of Ioannina

Intercultural Profile

Introduction¹

Ioannina is the capital and largest city of Epirus, an administrative region in north-western Greece, with a population of 167,901 (2011). It lies in the mountains at an elevation of approximately 500 metres, on the western shore of lake Pamvotis, 60 km from the Albanian border at Kakavia, 80 km from the sea at Igoumenitsa, and 450 km north of Athens. It is located within the Ioannina municipality, and is the capital of Ioannina regional unit and the region of Epirus.

Founded by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD, Ioannina flourished following the Fourth Crusade, when many wealthy Byzantine families fled there in the early 13th century following the sack of Constantinople. It was part of the Despotate of Epirus from 1358 to 1416, before surrendering to the Ottomans in 1430. Between 1430 and 1868 the city was the administrative center of the Pashalik of Yanina. In the period between the 18th and 19th centuries, the city was a major centre of the modern Greek Enlightenment. Ioannina joined Greece in 1913 following the Balkan Wars.

The city has both a General and a University Hospital, and is the seat of the University of Ioannina (with 17 departments and 20,000 students the fourth largest in Greece) as well as several departments of the Technological Educational Institute of Epirus.

Inward and outward migration are a strong feature of the city's history and identity. After the destruction of its monastery in 1618, many citizens were forced to leave, but the Ioannina diaspora had a powerful influence. Its former inhabitants continued their commercial and handicraft activities which allowed them to trade with important European commercial centers, such as Venice and Livorno. Merchants from Ioannina established international commercial and banking houses. Also the first printing presses to be operated in Venice - which published thousands of books for the Ottoman-ruled Greek people - were established by members of the Ioanniote diaspora. Ioannina was the centre through which the books printed on these presses were channelled into Greece, which is why Ioannina is attributed as the leader in the revival of Greek culture. Neofitos Doukas a famous Epirot scholar wrote that during the 18th century, every author of the Greek world, was either from Ioannina or was a graduate of one of the city's school.

Ioannina was also the home of one of the oldest, largest and most distinctive Jewish communities in Greece for many centuries. These Romaniote Jews have lived in the territory of modern Greece for more than 2000 years. They had a distinct language of Yevanic, a dialect of Greek, today's Romaniotes speak Greek. The Romaniotes are historically distinct from the Sephardim, some of whom settled in Greece after the 1492 expulsion of the Jews from Spain. All but a small number of the Romaniotes of Ioannina, the largest remaining Romaniote community not assimilated into Sephardic culture, were killed in the Holocaust. Ioannina today has 35 living Romaniotes.

¹ This report is based upon the visit of the CoE inspection team on 25 & 26 November 2014, comprising Irena Guidikova, Eugenia Arvanitis and Phil Wood.

Although the economy of Epirus is one of the least developed in Greece, the city of Ioannina itself is relatively well-endowed with a diverse economy focused particularly on food production, tourism and education, and this has made it attractive to some economic migrants over the years. About 10% of the population is not of Greek ethnic background. Of these the great majority are Albanian, with small numbers of Pakistanis, Cypriots, Chinese and Africans also resident.

However, there are underlying demographic difficulties. According to EUROSTAT, between 2008 and 2011 after parts of Latvia and Lithuania, the Ioannina area experienced the largest proportional fall in population of anywhere in the EU.²

Background to Migration and Diversity in Greece

For much of its history since independence in 1832, Greece can be characterized as being predominantly a country of emigration – of Greeks for economic reasons, and of ethnic and other minorities for political reasons. The first important immigration inflows were during and after the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922 and its final resolution with the Treaty of Lausanne. This resulted in the “Exchange of Populations” with Turkey and the displacement of over 2 million persons – Christians to Greece and Muslims to Turkey³.

After the traumas of both World War II and then the Greek Civil war, the Greek economy was very weak, leading to extraordinary levels of emigration – initially to the USA and after 1960 to northern Europe, primarily Germany. Immigration to Greece started in 1980s with immigrants coming mainly from Africa and Asia, but it was limited in scope and legal in character. It was only in the 1990s that Greece started receiving large inflows of immigrants from the Central and Eastern Europe following the collapse of the communist regimes, and much of this was irregular in nature. The first immigrants came from Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania, with large numbers of Albanians following soon. During this decade, Greece actually had the highest proportion of migrants in relation to its labour force of any state in the European Union (EU). The pull factors included Greece’s geographical location, porous borders, improved economic situation, large size of informal economy, and seasonal nature of its many industries, such as tourism, construction, and agriculture. By 1990, the immigrant population was of the order of 2-3% of total population – reflecting the country’s increasing political and economic stability in the region.⁴

By 1997 Greece had acquired an estimated immigrant stock of some 700,000, of which only 60,000 were with legal status and, over subsequent years a combination of improving economy, a programme of regularisation and a reduction in deportation measures would have seen the figure grow further. However, by the time of the 2011 Census, the economy was in decline and so was immigration. According to the 2011 national Census data, there were 713,000 third country nationals (TCN) and 199,000 EU citizens (non-Greek) living in Greece accounting respectively for 6.6% and 1.8% of the total resident population.

² EUROSTAT The Regional yearbook 2013

³ Sadly there was widespread hostility towards the destitute Christian refugees in Greece, followed by decades of exclusion and second class status. This initial response to mass inflows has been posited by some scholars as setting the tone for the future, with similarly inhospitable reactions to the more recent immigrations of ethnic Greeks in the 1980s and Albanians in the 1990s (Baldwin-Edwards, M. & K. Apostolatos (2008): ‘Foreword. Ethnicity and migration: A Greek story’, *Migrance*, 31, 1-17).

⁴ Baldwin-Edwards, M (2014) *Immigrants, Racism And The New Xenophobia Of Greece's Immigration Policy*. Mediterranean Migration Observatory Working Paper 11, July 2014.

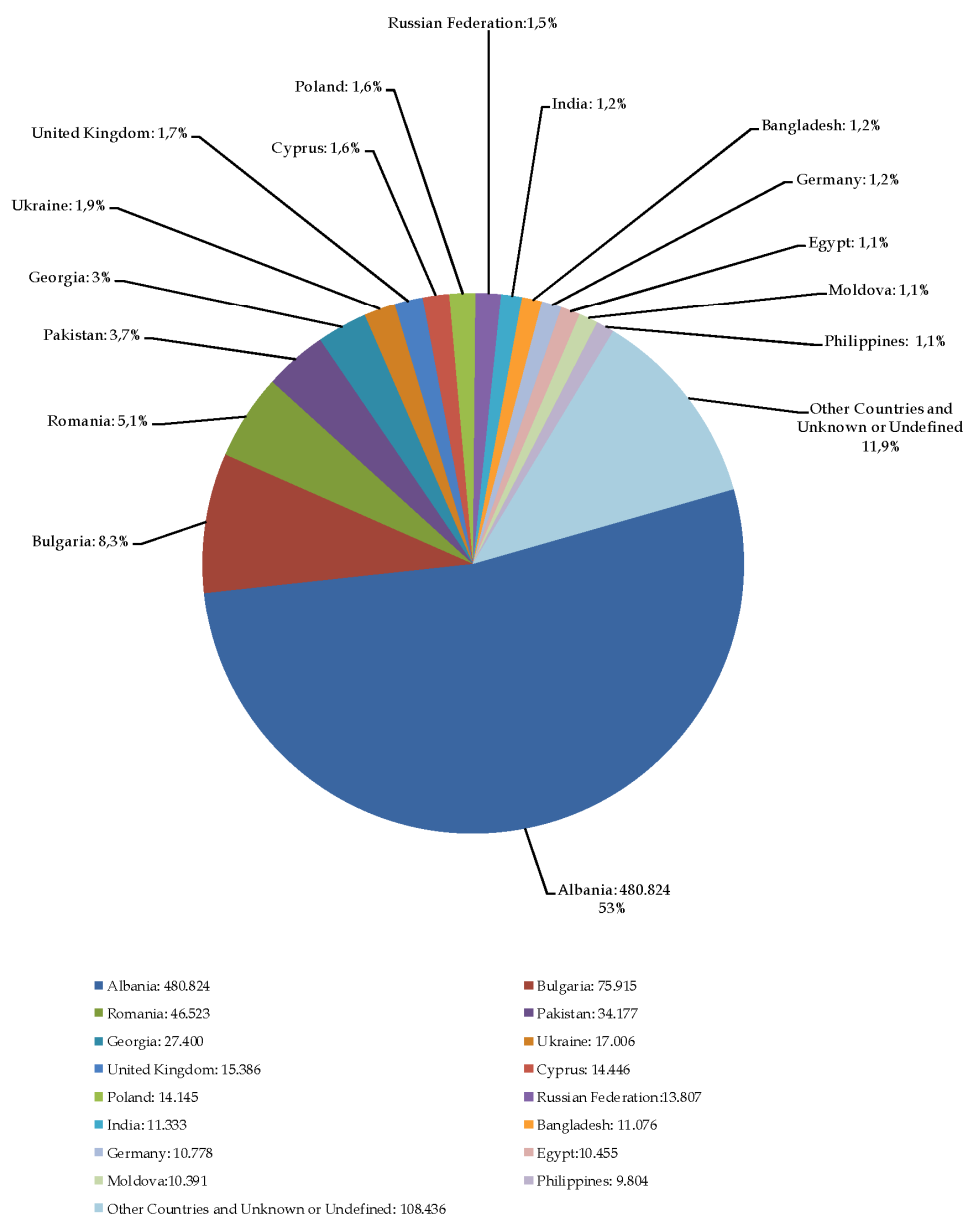
Figure 1 Stock of Foreign population according to the 2011 Census

	Size of immigrant stock	% of total resident population
Total TCN population	713,000	6.59
Total EU population (non Greeks)	199,000	1.84
Total immigrant stock	912,000	8.43
Total population of Greece	10,815,197	100.00

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), National Census 2011, data published in September 2013.

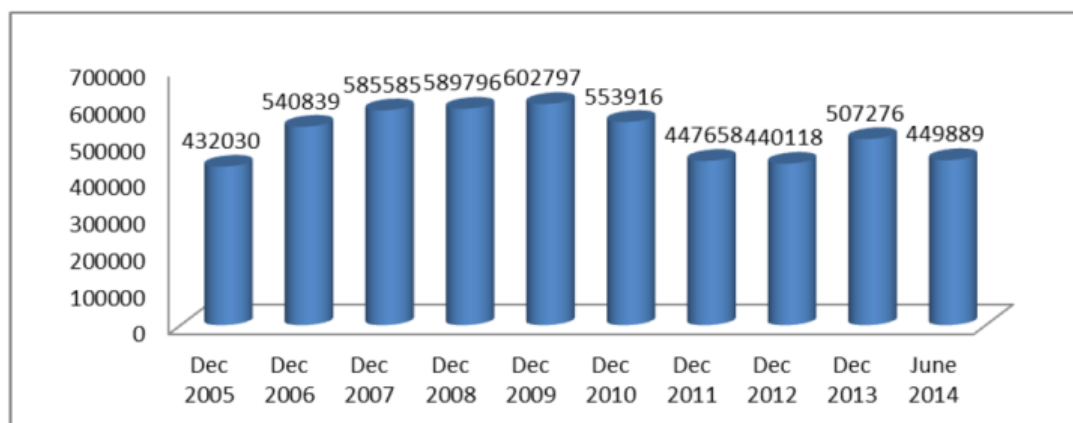
The largest immigrant groups were Albanians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Pakistanis, Georgians, Ukrainians and Poles.

Figure 2 Major nationalities normally resident in Greece, 2011 Census



Since the 2011 Census there is evidence that legal migration has remained well below the level in 2009, as Figure 3 demonstrates. The decrease in the number of valid stay permits is related to the current economic crisis that Greece is facing: migrants lose their jobs and are unable to renew their permits. Consequently they either leave the country or stay but become undocumented.⁵

Figure 3 Legal migrants to Greece 2005-2014



Source: Database of valid stay permits, Ministry of Interior.

Whilst figures for irregular migration are, by definition, more difficult to come by, Figure 4 would suggest that up to 2014, this also fell.

Figure 4 Apprehension of irregular migrants, per border, 2007-2014

Apprehensions	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Greek Albanian border	42,897	39,267	38,164	33,979	11,743	10,927	10,413	4,957
Greek FYROM border	2,887	3,459	2,355	1,589	1,003	1,168	1,041	810
Greek Bulgarian border	966	1,795	1,258	983	636	365	505	442
Greek Turkish land border	16,789	14,461	8,787	47,088	54,974	30,433	1,122	1,141
Greek Turkish sea border	16,781	30,149	27,685	6,204	814	3,610	2,525	21,983
Crete	2,245	2,961	2,859	2,444	1,640	2,834	2,557	1,869
Rest of the country	29,799	54,245	45,037	40,237	29,372	31,151	16,253	10,728
TOTAL	112,364	146,337	126,145	132,524	99,368	76,878	34,416	41,930

Note: data refer to apprehensions, not to people. Hence the same person if apprehended twice counts twice. * data refer to the first 8 months of 2014.

Source: Greek police data, www.astynomia.gr

Of course, during 2015 Greece and Europe, entered a new dimension with the Refugee Crisis, which continues up to the time of writing. Figure 5 gives a stark indication of how the numbers have leapt up this year. We might expect to see a fivefold increase on the 2014 figures by the end of 2015.

⁵ Triandafyllidou, A (2014) *Migration in Greece: Recent Developments in 2014*. Report prepared for the OECD Network of International Migration Experts, Paris, 6-8 October 2014.

Figure 5: Numbers and Nationalities of migrants/refugees detected in Greece 2010-2015 (data from the Hellenic Police)⁶

	2015 (Jan-Aug)	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Syria	175,375	32,520	8,517	7,927	1,522	n.a.
Afghanistan	50,177	12,901	6,412	16,584	28,528	28,299
Pakistan	11,289	3,621	3,982	11,136	19,975	8,830
Albania*	10,985	16,751	15,389	10,602	11,733	50,175
Iraq	9,059	1,023	700	2,212	2,863	4,968
Somalia	2,160	1,876	1,004	1,765	2,238	6,525
Bangladesh	1,706	1,164	1,524	7,863	5,416	3,264
Palestine	1,509	622	469	1,718	2,065	7,561
Iran	1,245	n.a.	317	692	n.a.	1,133
Congo	813	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Georgia	805	838	568	n.a.	n.a.	1,456
Eritrea	n.a.	1,019	726	923	1,172	1,628
Egypt	n.a.	619	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Morocco	n.a.	n.a.	442	2,207	3,405	1,645
Algeria	n.a.	n.a.	443	4,606	5,398	7,336
Tunisia	n.a.	n.a.	95	n.a.	1,095	n.a.
Other	6,033	4,209	3,268	n.a.	n.a.	9,704
TOTAL	271,156	77,163				

National Policy Context

Greek ancestry (i.e., “jus sanguinis”) has long been the primary criterion at the core of citizenship allocation since the national building processes of the nineteenth century. This is reflected in the term *ithagenia* that has been used to refer to citizenship legislation from its outset until today, in the formation of the Code of Greek Ithagenia. *Ithagenia* contains the word *genos* which means descent or generation and originally was used to refer to the Orthodox population of the Ottoman Empire. As one commentator notes, it is a term “reflecting par excellence the ethnic connotations of Greek nationality”.⁷ Many Greeks would connote the term *ithagenia* to rights of birth and descent and would differentiate it from the term *ipikooitita* (which stems from the noun *ipikoos*, that is, the person who is subjected to the power of the state) which relates to civic rights and responsibilities.⁸

In the late 1980s, Greece was found institutionally unprepared for receiving the first large flows of immigration from Albania and neighboring Balkan countries and to a lesser extent from some Asian and African countries. Since the 1990s and until 2009 when new legislation was announced, arrangements of citizenship allocation were mainly regulative rather than policy-oriented. Criteria were restrictive, and their discretionary character led to citizenship allocation decisions that could often be characterized as arbitrary. Although from 2000 onwards certain reforms made the legislation less restrictive, until 2010 the criteria

⁶ European Stability Initiative (2015) *The Refugee Crisis Through Statistics*. 17 October 2015

⁷ Christopoulos, D. (2013). *Country report: Greece*. European Union Democracy Observatory. Florence: European University Institute.

⁸ Kadianaki, I., & Andreouli, E. (2015). *Essentialism in Social Representations of Citizenship: An Analysis of Greeks' and Migrants' Discourse*. Political Psychology, June 2015.

were largely entrenched into “historically bequeathed ideas [that] view Greek citizenship as a right to be exclusively reserved for those who ethnically belong to the cherished national community”.⁹

On the eve of the 1990s when immigrant flows started, Greece also lacked a legislative framework for the control and management of immigration. The increasing migratory pressures of the late 1980s led the Conservative government in 1991 to the design of Law 1975/1991, which remained in force until 2001. This law was concerned exclusively with restricting migration, its main objectives being to prevent the entrance of undocumented immigrants and facilitate the expulsion of those already present in Greek territory, by means of simplifying the expulsion procedures, extending autonomy to local police and judiciary authorities and also penalising illegal alien stay in the country. The law aimed to bring Greece into line with its European partners, co-signatories of the 1990 Dublin convention and members of the 1990 Schengen treaty – although in its practice it produced a far more oppressive atmosphere in Greece. More specifically, a maximum time-period was set for residence and work permits regarding certain types of employment, along with a list naming categories of ‘unwanted aliens’. A special police force was established to maintain effective border control and regulate deportations, and the conditions for recognition of refugee status were made stricter, with sanctions imposed on those who employed foreign workers without permission or helped them in any way to cross the border.

Moreover, the Law defined the entrance of any alien into Greece without documents and residence permits as a criminal action, and authorised deportations and expulsions, even in the transit zones. Additionally, the law required that the employment of non-nationals was allowed only when the job vacancy could not be filled by Greek citizens or EU nationals, in which case the Ministry of Labour would grant work permits for the specific employment in question, only before the arrival of the foreign employees in Greece.

The Law gave the Greek police license to mount regular operations known as *skoupa* (broom) to round up undocumented immigrants and expel them, generally to Albania. In 1992, 277,000 Albanians were summarily expelled without legal process, and 221,000 in 1993. From 1992 to 1995, 250-282,000 immigrants (predominantly Albanians) were expelled annually.

Law 1975/1991 was heavily criticized for its failure to acknowledge the reality that Greece had now become a country of immigration. It ignored the *de facto* presence of several tens of thousands of foreigners in Greece and made nearly impracticable the legal entry and stay of economic migrants, seeking work.

Overall, Greek national policy on immigration and integration during the 1990s has been described by one commentator as ‘Arrest and Deport’.¹⁰ Yet, despite its tough stance, the Law failed to stem the flow of immigration. In the years that followed, hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants came to Greece, crossing the northern mountainous borders between Albania or Bulgaria and Greece on foot at night, or landing with small dinghies on the Greek islands of the Aegean or Crete (often via human trafficking networks).

It took more than five years for the Greek government to realise that immigrants were there to stay and the new phenomenon could not only be managed simply through stricter border control and massive removal operations. At the end of 1997 two Presidential Decrees were issued introducing the first programme in Greece to regularize the status of migrants.

This was followed in 2001 by Greece’s first Immigration Law. It stated for the first time that migrants were welcome to come to Greece, but only if they had regular jobs. However, migrants were welcomed only so

⁹ Anagnostou, D. (2011). *Citizenship policy making in Mediterranean EU states: Greece*. EUDO Citizenship Observatory, European University Institute, Florence and Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies.

¹⁰ Triandafyllidou, A. (2009). *Greek immigration policy at the turn of the 21st century. Lack of political will or purposeful mismanagement?*. *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 11(2), 159-177.

long as they had work and, if they became unemployed or the labour market no longer needed them, they were expected to leave.

However the law was criticised for being impractical and unworkable. It established many demands which the bureaucratic and policing infrastructure was unable to manage, thus creating many delays. Employers accused it of being more concerned with the needs of politicians and officials than the actual requirements of the Greek labour market. Once again it seemed that Greece was in denial about the changes in society and its legislators perpetually behind the pace of change.

New Immigration Laws followed in 2005 and 2007 and these, for the first time, offered some hints that politicians (perhaps under pressure from the EU) might be acknowledging that not only was immigration here to stay, but that it might also be something not to be shunned but welcomed as an opportunity. The Laws introduced further regularisation measures particular in relation to the labour market and family reunification. They also introduced for the first time an Action Plan for the social integration of immigrants based on the respect of their fundamental rights and with the purpose of their successful integration into the Greek society. Emphasis was placed upon the migrant acquiring certified knowledge of the Greek language, following introductory courses of history, culture and way of life of the Greek society, integrating to the Greek labour market and engaging in active social participation. Sadly however this program remained largely on paper as the Ministry of Finance failed to make available the necessary resources. Moreover, a Social Integration Directorate was created as a response to the establishment of the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals in the summer of 2007, but the funds made available by the European Union for this purpose were not used by the Greek government due to what a leading expert has described as 'bureaucratic inertia and lack of political will'.¹¹

The socialist government that came into power in November 2009 submitted a National Action Plan on Immigration and Asylum that would form the basis for the reforms that followed. Law 3907/2011 introduced the Asylum Service, an Appeals Committee and a First Reception Service. The Asylum Service and the Appeals committee would be autonomous and impartial, while the First Reception Service would be responsible for the 'management' of new arrivals, bringing together a team of 'first respondents' in the maritime and land borders. The law harmonised Greece with the European Directives on Reception and Return, and created a functioning asylum service. It thus set new standards concerning the first reception of irregular migrants, the distinction between irregular migrants and asylum seekers, the processing of asylum applications, the waiting period for the judgment of these applications, and took the asylum committees out of the authority of the Greek police, which had basically taken over the whole asylum system since 2008.¹²

As of April 2014, Greece had a new immigration law that has brought some improvement to the previous situation. It regulates matters of entry, stay and social integration of third country nationals in Greece. EU citizens, refugees and asylum seekers are excluded from its field of effect. The Migration Code aims to simplify and organize the different types of stay permits into six categories: stay permits for work or professional reasons; temporary stay permits: stay permits for humanitarian or exceptional reasons; stay permits for study, training or voluntary work; stay permits for victims of trafficking or human smuggling; stay permits for family reunification, and stay permits of long duration.

The Migration Code offers a small increase in security of residence to the second generation. People who were born in Greece or who have finished 6 years of schooling in Greece by age 21, can obtain a stay permit of 5 year duration. Such a stay permit is renewed every 5 years with the mere presentation of the previous stay permit. Nonetheless there is no preferential treatment for the second generation as regards citizenship acquisition.

¹¹ Triandafyllidou (2009)

¹² Triandafyllidou (2014)

The Code continues to prohibit Greek public services, local authorities, and organisations of social security from offering services to foreigners who are ‘unable to prove that they have entered and are residing in the country legally.’ Children’s access to the public education system is regulated by law 2910/2001, regardless of their parents’ legal status.

Whilst the 2014 Migrant Code is an important step forward in the simplification and codification of the legal provisions in fully aligning Greek legislation with relevant EU directives, it remains a management law rather than one that has embraced and offered a sense of perspective for Greek society and its changed demographic composition.

At the end of 2014, the international Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) ranked Greece as 27th out of the 38 countries it studies, alongside countries with smaller, newer and more homogenous immigrant communities than Greece, such as Hungary and Croatia.¹³

MIPEX finds that Greece is making greatest progress in the field of anti-discrimination, but still has much work to do in all areas, with particular concern in the areas of health, education, political participation and access to nationality.

Figure 6: Migrant Integration Policy Index, Greece 2014



MIPEX concludes that long-term improvements in Greece’s economic, social and political prospects would certainly improve non-EU citizens’ societal outcomes – and make it easier to work on integration. It says that much can, has been and must be done within the current context to fix the residence, citizenship and anti-discrimination policies for Greece’s now long-settled immigrant population. The needs for integration are greater now more than ever and are more visible both to the Greek public and international community. Any solutions must rely on limited administrative capacity and significant political will. The new 2015 SYRIZA government has promised a more humane and rational migration policy as part of its social policies and, if implemented, this could bring Greece up to the European average and put local communities on the first steps to becoming stable and welcoming, following a pattern established successfully in the countries that it

¹³ <http://www.mipex.eu/greece>

most resembles, Italy and Spain. It is too early to judge whether SYRIZA will be capable of delivering on its pledges.

National Public Opinion

Whilst many commentators cited above have been highly critical of the conduct of Greek politicians and civil servants over the last 30 years, one might say in their defence that they only reflect the attitudes and desires of the electorate. Whether this is true or not, it is certainly the case that Greek public opinion is pronounced and unambiguous in its attitude to migration and diversity.

The Pew Research conducted an extensive survey of public opinion¹⁴ (based upon samples of 1000 respondents in each country), including questions on migration and diversity. Greeks came out noticeably negative against migrants and say little evidence of the ‘diversity advantage’:

% Immigrants today ...

	Are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and social benefits	Make our country stronger because of their work and talents	Neither/Both (Vol)	Don't know
	%	%	%	%
Greece	70	19	10	2
Italy	69	19	12	1
Poland	52	24	15	9
France	52	45	2	1
Spain	46	47	6	1
UK	37	52	7	4
Germany	29	66	3	3

Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. Q85a.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

And Greeks were most likely to blame immigrants for crime:

% Immigrants in our country today ___ than other groups

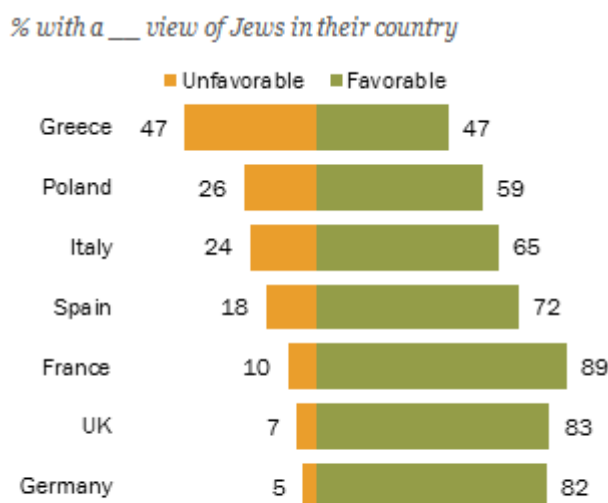
	Are more to blame for crime	Are no more to blame for crime	Neither/Both (Vol)	Don't know
	%	%	%	%
Greece	51	36	11	2
Germany	48	45	1	6
Italy	45	39	16	1
France	36	63	0	1
Spain	25	70	4	1
Poland	21	49	12	18
UK	20	76	2	3

Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. Q85b.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

¹⁴ Pew Research Center (2014) *A Fragile Rebound for EU Image on even of European Parliament Elections*. May 2014.

A further question was unrelated to immigration, but was an indicator that Greek public opinion is currently unfavourable to people considered to be 'other', such as Jews:



Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. Q37a.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Although Greeks were found to be slightly less antipathetic to Muslims and Roma people.

Such opinions cannot be separated from the documented growth in racially-motivated discrimination, hate-speech and violence. The most recent report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) paints an alarming picture of public antipathy and institutional inaction:

Although the Greek authorities acknowledge the need to fight racism, there is no comprehensive and multisectoral strategy in place to address its root causes and to involve civil society partners in the fight against racism.

There has been a strong increase in the levels of incitement to racial hatred, in particular in the context of public discourse, including from representatives of political parties. Hatred is usually directed against immigrants, but also against Roma, Jews and Muslims. This situation is not adequately addressed and there is widespread impunity for acts of hate speech and insufficient official condemnation.

Greece has seen a surge of racist violence in recent years and although some measures have been taken, these have remained largely insufficient. Fear of arrest and deportation discourages victims of racist violence who do not have a regular residence status from reporting incidents to the police. The negative attitudes of members of the police towards migrants and their unwillingness to investigate cases of racist violence against the latter effectively added to a general atmosphere of impunity. In addition, there is inadequate support for victims, with the notable exception of some charitable non-governmental organisations providing assistance.¹⁵

The report did speak approvingly of action taken against the racist Golden Dawn political party which, it hoped, might de-escalate the atmosphere. There was also support for the institution of national Law 3852 of 2010, which has established the framework for local integration councils. There are approximately 100 such

¹⁵ ECRI (2015) *Report on Greece (fifth monitoring cycle)*. Strasbourg, 24 February 2015.

councils operating across the country, which are (at least in theory) serving as a useful integration tool by providing a platform for dialogue between the different migrant communities and the municipal authorities.

Local Diversity and Policy Context

As noted above, the Greek central state has provided neither the political and cultural leadership nor the legislative framework to prepare the country for its multiethnic reality. As such, the responsibility has fallen to regional and municipal authorities. Fortunately Epirus and Ioannina have been amongst those who have taken this responsibility seriously, and they have together made prepared the candidacy for ICC membership.

Beyond its historic associations with migration and diversity, Ioannina came face to face with the reality of the global world quicker than most places in Greece in the early 1990s due to its proximity to the Albanian border. It was the first point of arrival for many in the flood of Albanians who left the country after the fall of Communism. Many subsequently made the city their permanent home and have been largely assimilated into society. This experience has perhaps sensitized Ioannina to the current situation of the 2015 refugee crisis.

Although the predominant route of refugee travel has so far been through the town of Evroni on the Greek-FYROM border, there is awareness in Ioannina that, if FYROM were ever to close its border, the flow would probably divert in its direction, either towards Albania or the Ionian seaports. Thus the driving force behind Ioannina's candidacy to join ICC is a wish to prepare itself for this possible eventuality. There are reasonable grounds to predict that, were large numbers of refugees to seek access to central Europe via Albania, the Albanian government would turn then back, creating a potential humanitarian crisis in the area between the Kakavia border post and Ioannina. Thus, the immediate drive for the local authorities and police is to make preparations to forestall this. However, the longer term ambition – and something which is more directly relevant to the agenda of ICC - is to make Ioannina a community which is welcoming to newcomers (whether they arrive through choice or under duress) and which has the legislative and institutional infrastructure and expertise to transform their hospitality into practical support and sustainable communal integration.

The Greek central state has granted regional authorities the responsibility for processing migrant permits and asylum status. However long delays in permit processing, and strict regulations as well as the lack of coordination between ministries and the lack of expert personnel, information and funding has hindered access to official state services for both newcomers and long-term migrants. Local municipalities have also been given the responsibility to establish and run local Councils of Migrant Integration enabling long-term and legal migrants to participate more actively in social life. In this context, migrants are able to voice their needs and make their presence more visible. So far a few such councils (about 15%) that have been able to demonstrate much progress (e.g. the municipalities of Sykeon and Korydallou) and the vast majority of municipalities have fallen short in their responsibility.

One of the first points of note about Ioannina is the high level of political backing for a positive approach to immigration. During the visit of the ICC team, there were important interventions from several high level figures. Mayor Thomas Mpegas gave a formal welcome and spoke of his strong personal and political commitment to making Ioannina an active member of the ICC network. At a special conference during the visit, Alexandros Kachrimanis the Regional Governor of Epirus said that the region had learnt during the Albanian migrant crisis that it would have to adapt to new conditions without help from central government, and it was prepared to do so again. His ambition was that Epirus and Ioannina would become an inspiration and a model for other parts of Greece to follow. The ICC team also addressed a meeting of the Ioannina city council and the level of support for the initiative was impressive. Finally the team was accompanied throughout by the Deputy Mayor Pantelis Kolokas, who will take personal responsibility for the membership, and a city official Rozalia Nousi has also been delegated to coordinate administrative matters. It should be

noted that Ioannina scored highly in the ICC Index in regard to political commitment, international outlook and intercultural intelligence and competence.

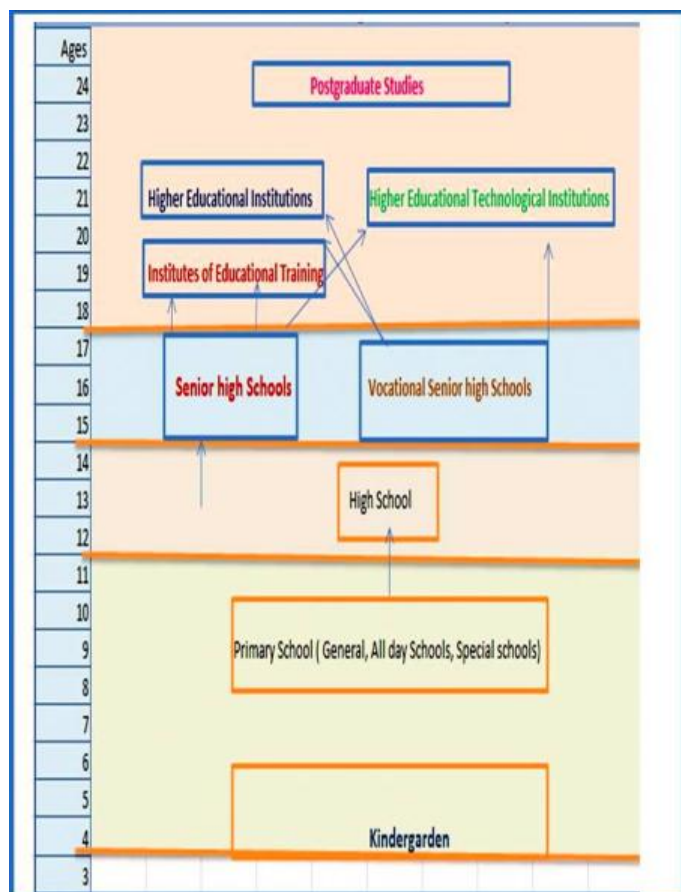
In line with its international perspective and its deep cultural heritage, Ioannina has also announced itself as a candidate to become the Greek European Capital of Culture in 2021.

Education and training

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its history, Ioannina score well above the group average for its practices in education, in the ICC Index. A policy to increase ethnic and cultural mixing within the schools is set in place and most schools are making strong efforts to involve parents from ethnic minority/migrant background in school life. Local schools also often carry out intercultural projects as, for example, part of the Comenius Project.

The Greek national legislative framework concerning intercultural education was laid down in Law 2413/1996, while Law 2790/2000 consists of reception and establishment measures for repatriated Greeks; Law 2910/2001 lays down the reception and establishment framework for third country nationals. The legislative framework on the establishment and operation of reception and supplementary tutorial classes for intercultural education purposes is contained in a Ministerial Decision.¹⁶

Figure 7: The Structure of the Greek Education System



In addition, in schools, where a large number of foreign students attend, reception classes and preparatory courses also operate. The aim of the Intercultural Education system is to organise and enable primary and secondary schools to provide education to people with special educational, social, and cultural characteristics. Intercultural Education Schools (*Diapolitismika Scholeia*) adopt the curriculum of the traditional state schools, but it is tailored to the particular educational, social and cultural needs of their students. There are twenty-six schools designated as Intercultural Schools in Greece with specialised curricula. Special projects of intercultural education for repatriated and foreign students are applied in some regular primary schools in various regions of the country (see projects)

The Reception Class scheme is completed in two cycles/levels integrated into the ordinary school curriculum.

- In Reception Class I, students who are to enter the Greek education system take an intensive course to learn Greek as a second language. Its duration is one teaching year.

¹⁶ Triandafyllidou, A and Gropas, R (2007) *Greek Education Policy and the Challenge of Migration: An Intercultural View of Assimilation*. Paper prepared for the EMILIE project, 22 November 2007

- In Reception Class II, implementation of a short internal and external linguistic and learning support course, that takes place in ordinary classes with parallel language teaching support.

This type of course lasts up to two teaching years, after having finished Reception Class I. The supplementary tutorial classes are attended by repatriated or foreign students who haven't studied in Reception Classes. These classes refer to students who face language difficulties or students who have received these support measures but continue to have difficulties in the 'normal' class. These supplementary tutorial classes operate outside ordinary school hours. Furthermore, most such classes begin in January, as there are not enough teachers or classrooms in the existing schools.¹⁷

The Second Chance School of Ioannina falls into this category. It has 124 mature students, 40% of whom are Roma, and another 10% Indian, Pakistani, Iraqi, and people with special needs. The school has needed to invent special methods of teaching, based on group learning, promotion of friendship, and solidarity. The students visit prisons, elderly homes, and social services centres so they can understand that diversity is everywhere in the city. The main challenge is that many people abandon the school because they face so many difficulties in their lives and 70% are unemployed.

We were given the chance to meet students and staff from the school, and particularly to observe the outcomes of an impressive project designed to build understanding and empathy for migrants and displaced people. Our only concern was that such education should not be limited to the students of an intercultural schools, but should be made standard for students of all schools.

Employment and business

The Greek labour market is rather distinctive, and was so even before the economic crisis. The main distinguishing feature is the extremely high levels of self-employment. Of the ten cities with the highest levels of self-employment in the EU, eight of them are in Greece – including Ioannina where 27% of the labour market was self-employed in 2008.¹⁸

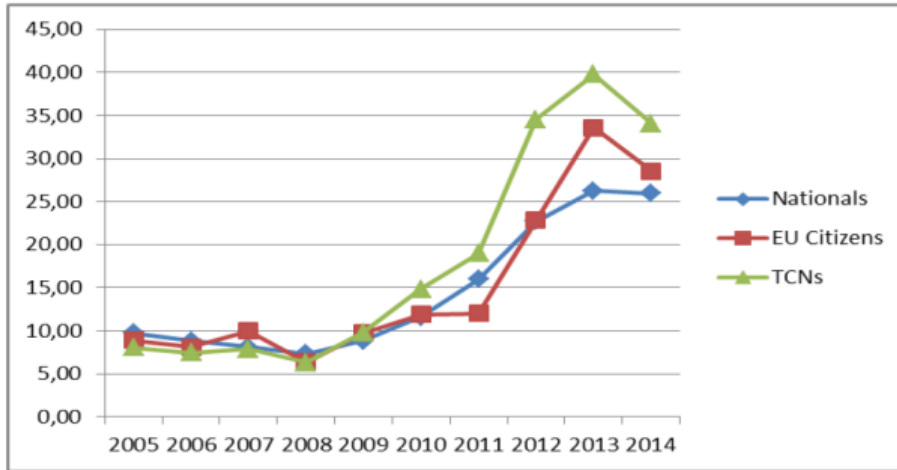
Perhaps this is one reason why the Greek central government does not appear to have given much consideration to the integration of migrants into its labour force – or what MIPEX has described as “Greece’s nearly non-existent targeted support for labour market integration”.

Of course since 2008 the story has been less about employment of any kind and more about unemployment. However, the table below demonstrates that whilst unemployment has risen throughout the whole of the Greek labour force, it has been far worse for non-Greeks and particularly TCNs.

¹⁷ Spinthourakis, J. A., Karatzia-Stavlioti, E., Lempesi, G. E., & Papadimitriou, I. (2008). *Country Report: Greece. Educational policies that address social inequality*. EACEA Action, 6(2).

¹⁸ Feldmann, B. (2008). *The Urban Audit—measuring the quality of life in European cities*. EUROSTAT, Statistics in focus, 82, 2008.

Figure 8: Unemployment in Greece, 2005-14



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), Labour Force Survey, 2nd trimester of each year

We learnt that for the most part the Albanians who arrived in the early 1990s have found their place in the local labour market. Many had brought with them skills which were in short supply in Greece, for example building and masonry, and had been able to find good jobs or establish their own companies. However, we were told of cases of discrimination against more recently arrive minorities by employers in Ioannina. Mrs Giota Hatzipavli, representative of the International Organization for Migration, told of a case in which a major employer had sacked large numbers of migrant workers in order to avoid paying them substantial wage arrears which they were owed. This caused such a strong reaction that a campaign was mounted, and now there is a heightened awareness in the community and perhaps a greater disincentive for unscrupulous employers to behave like this in the future.

The Second Chance School would seem to have the potential to do much more to connect migrants to the labour market but it lacks the funds to expand.

Governance and democratic participation

Last year Greece became the first country of immigration in recent history to take the retrograde step of removing the right to vote from immigrants. The repeal of the birthright citizenship provisions also left a large number of children living without equal rights, even without papers, depending on the legal status of their parents. However, the legal reforms promised by the SYRIZA government, backed by certain parties of the opposition could substantially improve the conditions for integration in Greece. Within SYRIZA's new Cabinet, Mrs. Tasia Christodouloupoulou and Mr Giannis Mouzalas were the first to be appointed as Alternate Ministers of Migration Policy under the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction. SYRIZA's pre-election programme saw migration policy as part of its social policies and promised a more humane and open migration policy respecting international treaties, but this remains a case to prove.

In the interim it is difficult for municipalities to make progress alone in the field of democratic participation. However, there is scope for local action, for example through the formation of effective consultative and liaison bodies on which people of minority background are able to sit alongside established institutions. We were told that the local Council for Migrant Integration was not working well at the moment. We were not given specific reasons for this but we must conclude that it must be a priority for this situation to be rectified before progress can be made in other fields.

Culture

The field of art, sports and libraries is more readily amenable than most to establishing intercultural initiatives, even when budgets are limited. We were told that the municipality already organises cultural and sport events to encourage dialogue within neighborhoods and there are public consultations and debates on diversity, through the university and libraries.

However, we also found that the municipal staff in these fields seemed to lack confidence and knowledge about the possibilities of what could be achieved in these fields, for example through simple ideas like the publishing of an annual calendar of significant days in the culture of all the diverse residents of the city; or a Human Library¹⁹. There also seemed to be few opportunities for different minority groups to present and discuss aspects of their culture with others. Within the context of the city's candidacy for European Capital of Culture a consultation open to all the sectors of the creative industry of the city took place. However, some cultural professionals reported that they would have wished for a deeper engagement in this process. We would recommend that cultural professionals be delegated more initiative and challenged to expand their horizons and try out some new ideas and methods.

Language and multilingualism

It was reported that the municipality does have a programme to teach Greek to migrants (including the illiterate), in partnership with the languages department of the University. There are currently 600 students from 80 countries.

We heard from one migrant of Pakistani origin who had been in Ioannina for five years. After initially finding rejection in Greece, he was able to gain access to the University, and paid for his own education, and he believed this had now given him a second life and he had made the city his permanent home. However, he was concerned for the plight of many of his fellow countrymen who were illiterate and were working in gangs where they only conversed with other Pakistanis. They thus had no access to Greek language or society or little hope of building a life beyond the precarious of work.

Public space, neighbourhoods and ethnic mixing

Little time or discussion was devoted to the topic of intercultural living and dialogue. Based upon its experience of settling large numbers of Albanians in the 1990s the city is confident of its ability to settle further newcomers in its neighbourhoods. This should be a topic for further discussion in the future. We would note that the Albanian resident population is considered to have made great efforts to assimilate into Greek culture and to make itself largely inconspicuous. This is not a desirable or realistic expectation for an intercultural community in the future and therefore Ioannina should explore the ICC network to look at examples of neighbourhoods which are highly diverse but which maintain cohesion.

Interfaith Dialogue

The team were impressed that a senior figure from the Greek Orthodox Church attended the conference. His message was positive and helpful, particularly in his emphasis that openly embracing migrants and refugees should not simply be motivated by pity for the victim of crisis, but from a broader sense of empathy and social cooperation. However we also note that the Greek Orthodox Church is engaged in deep and often skeptical debate regarding the subject of Ecumenism, both within the Christian faith and between Christianity and other faiths.

¹⁹ <http://humanlibraryuk.org/>

It may be necessary for Ioannina to make a profound and high-profile gesture to demonstrate that theological divisions will not be allowed to stand in the way of intercultural progress. We noted that the city has several former mosque buildings from the period of Ottoman rule. Whilst one of these is used as a museum, others seem to be in a poor state of repair. There could be an opportunity to develop one of these as a place to reinterpret Greece's relationship with Islam in the past in the context of its likely future as a place of refuge and residence for a growing number of Muslims.

Media

The visiting team was struck by the wide range of local and national media organs which operate in Ioannina, and this seems to present numerous opportunities for the municipality and NGOs to convey information and positive messages about migration and diversity. Equally it could also present many opportunities for the transmission of misinformation or rumours if misused. The visit did not provide the opportunity to meet with opinion leaders and owners of the media, but this should be seen as an area of priority for the future. We noted that the president of a leading local radio station is also a member of the city council, and this connection should be pursued. The Greek partner city of Patras has made positive initiatives with journalists and editors and Ioannina would be advised to learn from its experience. Ioannina might also consider finding out about the Anti-Rumours Project which has been one of the most successful spin-offs of ICC.

Welcoming

There is a strong political motivation to make Ioannina a welcoming city, whether for people in transit, short-term sojourners or people intending to settle. Set against this is the outcome of the ICC Index which indicated the city currently meets virtually none of the required criteria. The attainment rate of Ioannina's welcoming policy goals is only 5% while the city sample rate is 55%. The city hasn't implemented a comprehensive city-specific package of information for newly-arrived residents, nor has it created a designated agency or office to welcome them.

Whilst the Index indicates that there are many sectors in which Ioannina needs to make progress, we believe this should be a priority for the short to medium term. Ioannina is well-advised to study examples of good practice in other cities. For example in Copenhagen, the International House Copenhagen provides citizen services in English, a one point entry for all paperwork, networking activities, help with job seeking and much more in order to help newcomers settle in the best possible way into Danish society and labour market. Copenhagen published a comprehensive package of information to aid newly-arrived foreign residents. At CPH International Service (part of International House Copenhagen), newly arrived citizens will find all the authorities that they typically need to contact, as well as private actors ready to help them settle in the best possible way.

Ioannina may wish to further explore possible welcoming policies by organising a special public ceremony to greet newcomers in the city. In that sense, it could be interesting to draw attention to the city of Neuchâtel: here, a meeting of the Council is held every 6 months to greet all the new arrivals. This is not only an occasion to be welcome but also to obtain information about the administration, life and population of the city. Similarly, the municipality of Tilburg, throws an annual greeting party for all 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. Finally, in Copenhagen 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.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The ICC team would wish to reiterate its pleasure at the high level of enthusiasm, open-heartedness and political commitment with which the city of Ioannina has embraced ICC. Although the ICC Index demonstrates that the city is starting from a low base, and the national and international climate remains difficult and unpredictable, there is much reason to look forward with confidence and hope.

We would first make some general points about the national situation and about governance within the city of Ioannina:

- The city of Ioannina should give priority to achieving a more inclusive approach to local governance. The activation of the local Council of Migrant Integration would create a forum to discuss, plan, and eventually take coordinated action on migration issues.
- There should be further collaboration with well-performing municipalities around Greece to facilitate the sharing of good practices and coordination in this field. The cities of Patras and Sykeon (<http://www.dimosneapolis-sykeon.gr/web/guest/home>) would be good starting points.
- The city could also be more proactive in raising awareness and the need for common action within the Greek Central Committee of Municipalities and Regional Authorities. Local councils and municipalities are the prime governance institutions which deal with migration issues in their everyday routine. Their leadership and mobilization can result a constructive public dialogue raising awareness, rigorous consultation with the central government and ultimately contribute to policy making.
- Greater cross-sectoral collaboration within the city would offer better coordination amongst local NGOs, municipal departments, humanitarian bodies, the church, social services and educational authorities. To this end the City Council could undertake a leadership role to achieve a cross-sectoral consultation process and ultimately form a local charter of services for migrant inclusion and broader intercultural awareness.
- The city, in alliance with others, should continue to lobby the central municipal authority for more resources, administrative actions and coordination.

Future directions & action plan

Short-term actions

Make use of the ICC network of know-how and good practices to find out about:

- Welcoming and settlement policies.
- Setting up intercultural dialogue frameworks between religious groups (Muslim & Christian).
- Civil society participation (engaging with local NGOs, international organizations and humanitarian groups).
- Educational actions and language training (for example, creating a registry for all language training services and second chance schools).
- Forming closer relations with the ICC partner city in Patras.

Develop a comprehensive action plan

- Make a directory of services provided for migrants and refugees (e.g. language learning providers, social services, etc.).
- Establish and operate an information office for migrants
- Identify stakeholders to lead, engage civic society- coordinate dialogue and create a charter and an action plan involving all stakeholders in cross sectoral activities. Record local priorities and needs regarding the migrant issue.

- Set priorities for managing a new refugee influx, and develop a reception and settlement policy for new comers.
- Create an intercultural calendar of events using museums, school and business activities.
- Use the food industry and the vocational schools to create an intercultural food industry in the city and an annual event/festival supported by local hotels and restaurants.
- Liaise with the university to offer internships to students in local NGOs and agencies as well as to train local teachers to acquire intercultural competence.

Media exposure

- Make migrants visible through the local media (e.g. multilingual radio/TV service, expose migrant success stories and achievements).
- Training media personnel to acquire a more inclusive approach.

Long term action

- Create public policies for making migrant talents visible via contests and awards (e.g. set activities to mobilize migrants via sports, culture, etc.).
- Showcase the cultural diversity of the city and expose existing ethnic business activity in the city (through a festival and common activities).
- Brand Ioannina as a 'city of sanctuary refugees and a place where migrants can achieve social and economic development.
- Form an Epirus ICC network with nearby municipalities (e.g. Dodoni, Konnitsa, Igoumenitsa, etc.).
- Promote intercultural mediation and translation services in schools and in all sectors (hospitals, police, social agencies, etc.).
- Invite other cities from the Greek Diaspora with strong expatriate presence (e.g. Melbourne, USA) to joint ICC network.
- Work on the city's migrant and diasporic profile with the aim of attracting benefactors.
- Foster interreligious or interethnic dialogue via the local migrant council.
- The Greek partner city of Patras has made positive initiatives with journalists and editors and Ioannina would be advised to learn from its experience.
- Participate in the Anti-Rumours Project which has been one of the most successful spin-offs of ICC.

Recommendations

The city of Ioannina could take a leadership role in transforming public and political discourse and setting the agenda of branding their name as an inclusive city by:

- Initiating dialogue by the local political parties and NGOs regarding migration and migrant presence in the city.
- Celebrating 25 years of the Albanian community and its contribution.
- Examining the cross-border cultures and business activity along its northern border line (from Igoumenitsa to Kakavia and beyond). Major cities associated with migrant exit gates such as Konnitsa could be engaged providing important insights of economic, cultural and academic coexistence (both from migrants and locals).



Intercultural cities ICC Expert Visit

25-26 November 2015

Ioannina, Greece

AGENDA

	<u>25 November 2015</u>
15:30	Official welcome to Ioannina (candidate city for the European Cultural Capital for 2021) – Meeting with the Mayor, <i>Mr. Thomas Mpegas</i> , Ioannina Town Hall
16:00	Field Visit to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelling to Greek- Albanian borders, Kakavia.
18:30	Municipal Art Gallery of Ioannina: migrant Exhibition by Ioannina Second Chance School.
19:30	Dinner: The Mayor will host the official dinner at “Politeia” restaurant.
	<u>26 November 2015</u> <u>“Dimitrios Chatzis Conference Room</u>
9.30 – 09.45	Welcome address Mr. Thomas Mpegas, Mayor and Mr. Alexandros Kachrimanis, Epirus Regional Governor
09.45 – 10.45	Building an Inclusive Society - Discussion by stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of the Metropolis Orthodox Church of Ioannina

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Georgios Kapsalis, Rector of the University of Ioannina, • Representative of the Regional Police Directorate of Epirus
10.45- 12:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Intercultural Cities network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Setting a framework of the City Engagement in ICC network</i>, Mr. Pantelis Kolokas Deputy Mayor • ICC objectives and programme presentation, Mrs Irena Guidikova, Head of Division, World Forum for Democracy, Intercultural cities programme manager, Council of Europe <p>Discussion</p>
12:30- 13:00	Coffee break and Lunch provided by students of Public Vocational School.
13:00- 13:30	<p>Integrating Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Elisaf Moses, representative of the Jewish Community of Ioannina. • Mrs Giota Hatzipavli, representative of the International Organization for Migration (Officer in the Epirus region).
13:30- 14:30	<p>Round table discussion/group work – Addressing future challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive governance policies • Media perceptions of the others • Cultural policies and civic participation • Lifelong learning
14:30- 16:00	Walk by the Lakefront and visit to the unique Lake island
16:00	Meeting with representatives of the Municipal Authority, Municipal Council Room
18.00	Field visit to Ioannina Second Chance School