

RECI - Red de Ciudades Interculturales

11th Working Session - Donostia

Date: 26 October 2016

Venue: Casa de la Paz y los Derechos Humanos, Palacio de Aiete

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Welcoming and new phase in RECI

Imanol Telleria opens the session welcoming everyone, highlighting the opportunity of celebrating the meeting at *Donostia*, the 2016 European Capital of Culture.

Dani de Torres explains the new phase at RECI and introduces the new President, Jaime Lanaspá. Mr. Lanaspá holds a longstanding career committed with the local world and the encouragement of cohabitation and social cohesion, through his work at *Fundación La Caixa*, as an observer member at IOM, and at the *Club de Roma – Barcelona*. Dani adds that the presidential role does not follow an honorific model, but a commitment with the continuation of the work done at RECI and the reinforcement that will be done in this new phase.

Jaime Lanaspá emphasises the great challenge of managing diversity and points out the importance of working together in promoting respect and dignity, using the French experience as an example of the consequences of not managing properly the diversity. There is a risk of misunderstood patriotism (racist), which leads to a discomfort both to the native population and the new comers. In this context, RECI might not be an absolute guarantee, but it is indeed a good experience we need to strengthen, as cities play a key role in the construction and maintenance of social cohesion. The link with the Council of Europe (CoE) is the ascertainment that this is a European priority.

Dani de Torres explains the new phase of RECI as a part of the strengthening process of the *Intercultural Cities* programme (CoE). RECI has evolved following a constructive growth model, since its establishment five years ago, where the interaction and collaboration among participant cities has been key.

During the new phase, we aim at strengthening the role and repercussion of RECI, as most of

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the challenges we face as local actors, have to be managed under the framework of administrative cooperation. In this sense, we would like to provide RECI with a greater capacity of action and management, with the support of the CoE and *Fundación La Caixa*. To this end, we aim at reinforcing the role of the association managing RECI as well as its link with the cities, the CoE and *Fundación la Caixa*. In this context, it is suggested to ask for a € 2,500 fee per city (half of the amount demanded at ICC).

The future scenario has two phases: the first one to restructure the association managing RECI (agreements with the CoE, *La Caixa* and the cities); and the second one -at medium-long term, to assess the possibility of reformulating the Project according to its evolution. The first phase, opened to debate, implies to establish a more detailed work plan, designed with the participation of the cities and identifies priority actions. It means too to work under the principles of rigour and transparency that characterises RECI. The cities agree with the general proposal of this new phase and highlight the importance of keeping the link with the CoE and to define and agree the legal form needed to guarantee the link between the cities and the RECI-ICC. In addition, it is highlighted the need to elaborate an argument for the cities in order to be able to explain the changes in the participation – linked with the association and annual fee.

Follow-up of the agenda

Diversity Advantage. The cities share some of the initiatives they would present to the contest. It is pointed out the importance to identify those practices stressing that diversity has been an advantage in the development of a private or public action or initiative.

The deadline to submit projects is extended to November 30<sup>th</sup>

Local actions and refugees. We have gathered five actions from different cities, which make it impossible to develop a final document according to the plan. However, we aim at offering a report including the experiences from RECI and ICC cities in this topic that allows sharing ideas, practice and activities.

ICC index. Along 2017, it would be interesting to count on a new index edition to the RECI cities, in order to be able to make both an individual and a collective assessment. A working calendar will be established, taking into account the ICC needs and resources.

Local-National dialogue. The new configuration of government allows to, after two years of

paralysis with local and national elections, reopen the dialogue between the local world and the State on the management of the diversity. We will use the previous work done and build a new working agenda.

Communication. A new RECI communication group has been established to deal with internal communication. It is important to keep developing the RECI brand to make us visible in Social Networks. RECI Brand has to be linked with the ICC – to take advantage of the CoE.

General context RECI-ICC 2016-2017

Ivana d'Alessandro congratulates the work done by RECI and agrees on the changes proposed in a context where the CoE itself aims at strengthening the ICC project. As the CoE would like to keep the balance between quality and quantity in the ICC growth and to reinforce national networks -assessing how to improve the management, it fully supports the new phase in RECI. The CoE wants to make progress in the revision of the intercultural concept, considering a new strategy of action that allows a better visibility of good practice and its transference; or the research on innovative working methodologies (dialogue spaces in the city and with citizens). They will work to strengthen the ICC Index, linking it to other indexes that allow an assessment of the success of intercultural policies.

In 2017 the ICC Project will celebrate its 10 year anniversary and the cities will be invited to actively participate in the celebration event. Intercultural Cities wants to strengthen its institutional presence and visibility at European level. In this sense, the CoE will promote more shared actions (i.e. International Migrants Day, World Refugee Day) and offer a toolkit to promote the visibility of ICC (a compilation of experiences from the cities; life stories, a guideline-including how to work with the media, multilingual multimedia material, etc.).

Main activities:

- Joint action "International Migrants Day/ World Refugee Day"
- Thematic event: Human Rights in the cities (Oslo)
- Expert visit: how to address radicalisation (Lyon)
- Training: online course on antirumours
- Others:
  - Certification of NGOs
  - Policies lab with a variety of actors (public administrations; associations, etc.)
  - Diversity in businesses (workshop to be organised under the framework of

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The cities in RECI are invited to use and claim its belonging to ICC.

### Working session about religious diversity

At the previous RECI meeting, it was agreed to open spaces to debate about specific issues. In this occasion, we have organized a debate about the experience in managing religious diversity in the RECI cities. The cities should reflect on the following question:

- How do you approach religious diversity from your city?
- What are the three main challenges?
- Identify a good practice in your city

Fuenlabrada, Sabadell and Tenerife opened the debate by sharing their experiences. As the host city, *Donostia* has explained its experience, and invited representatives of different religious communities to share their experiences and challenges.

The representatives of the religious communities pointed out:

- The need of more institutional support (representation at events, borrowed venues, etc.);
- The claim that the religious diversity is native (not only linked to immigration);
- Normalisation and visibility of religious diversity;
- Strengthening trust between religious communities and local administration (dialogue spaces).

The debate between cities offers a panorama rich in experiences and initiatives. Among other issues, cities brought up the following objectives:

- To articulate a discourse where religious freedom is understood as a human right and make religious diversity visible within non-religious contexts;
- To raise the religious diversity issue to the political sphere;
- To meet the needs of religious diversity in public spaces;
- To take advantage of the resources in place developed by specialised institutions;
- To organise working sessions with representatives of different confessions and the public administration and to identify what guarantees success and effectiveness from these dialogue spaces;

- To promote joint work based on shared objectives, without debating about every particular religion, which could be done in other spaces;
- To build an argument explaining the intercultural approach in the field of religious diversity;
- To share experiences between RECI and ICC cities.

### Closure and agreements

The meeting closes highlighting the great opportunity of belonging to a European Network with 100 city members.

- Proposal of agreement between the Association and the RECI cities (in charge: RECI team). This new relationship aims to make the work easier in the long term (work plan and evaluation), improve transparency and to look for new external resources. The agreement will include:
  - The interaction of RECI with the CoE and the ICC Project, including the rights and duties derived from this relationship.
  - The annual fee to be paid by the RECI cities (€ 2,500);
  - A mandatory annual work plan, to be evaluated.
- Identification of examples of membership to other networks (responsible: RECI cities)  
The cities will share with the RECI team information related to models of agreements they could have with other networks of cities.
- Arguments to sign the new agreement (responsible: RECI team). Development of key points to explain the new phase to the policy-makers teams in the RECI cities.
- Visibility of the belonging to ICC-CoE (responsible ICC). A new website will be developed with resources (ICC logo, for instance) to be used by the cities.
- Diversity Advantage. The deadline to submit practices is extended until the 30th of November.
- Local action and refugees (responsible: RECI). The material gathered will be reviewed and the RECI team will analyse how to present it in order to be shared among the cities.

- Religious diversity in the cities (responsible: RECI cities). The cities should reflect on the following question:
  - How do you approach religious diversity from your city?
  - What are the three main challenges?
  - Identify a good practice in your city

The RECI team will assess the information received and propose potential future actions to take into account for the Work Plan 2017.

- Work Plan 2017 (responsible: RECI team and RECI cities). A brief questionnaire will be developed to gather the different contributions of the cities in order to design the Work Plan 2017 – to be approved at the next meeting in Parla, Madrid in March 2017.

Note: the next meeting will be held in Parla, and the day after, in Madrid, will take place the ceremony of the Diversity Advantage awards in collaboration with the CoE and *Fundación La Caixa*.

#### Participants:

- Carolina Adarraga, Department of Cultural Diversity, Donostia-San Sebastián City Council
- Duñike Agirrezabalaga, City Councillor of Neighbourhoods and Desentralisation, Civic Co-responsibility, Equality and Cooperation, Donostia-San Sebastián City Council
- Ivana d'Alessandro, Project Manager, ICC- CoE
- Mohamed Benzagur, Responsible of Diversity Management in the religious field, Castellón City Council
- Silvia Carballo, chief of the Department of Cultural Diversity, Donostia-San Sebastián City Council
- Paloma Corres, City Councillor of Family and Equality of Opportunities, Logroño City Council
- Ana Domínguez, Department of Social Inclusion and Solidarity, Jerez City Council
- Claudia Emmanuel, Immigration expert, Bilbao City Council
- Jesús Esteban, Director of the Area Equalities of Opportunities, Logroño City Council
- Cinta Ferrer, Chief of Civil Rights and Citizenship Services, Sabadell City Council
- María Fonte, Project Coordinator OBITEN, University of La Laguna- Tenerife City Council
- Lluís Fuentes, City Councillor of Social Rights, Santa Coloma de Gramenet City Council

- Rosa M. García, Coordinator of SEMI. Cultural Diversity programme, Fuenlabrada City Council
- Marc Gil, Fundación Bancaria La Caixa
- Cris González, Chief of Coexistence Services, Santa Coloma de Gramanet City Council
- Concha Jimeno, Coordinator of International Cooperation and Intercultural Coexistence, Parla City Council
- Jaume Lanaspá, RECI President
- Ekain Larrinaga, Immigration expert, Getxo City Council
- María del Carmen Martín, City Councillor of Social Services and Social Mediation, Cartagena City Council
- Jose Luis Ortega, Coordinador de la Unidad de Inmigración y Cooperación Social, Ayuntamiento de Cartagena
- Gemma Pinyol, RECI Coordinator, ICC-CoE expert
- Manel Raimí, Responsible of the Intercultural Coexistence Plan, Logroño City Council
- Julio Ramallo, Employment, Economic Development and Commerce Service, Tenerife City Council and Immigration Observatory of Tenerife
- M<sup>a</sup> Jesús Rodríguez, intercultural mediator, Getafe City Council
- Imanol Telleria, Responsible of Education and Social Promotion at Donostia-San Sebastián City Council
- Dani de Torres, Director of RECI and ICC-CoE expert