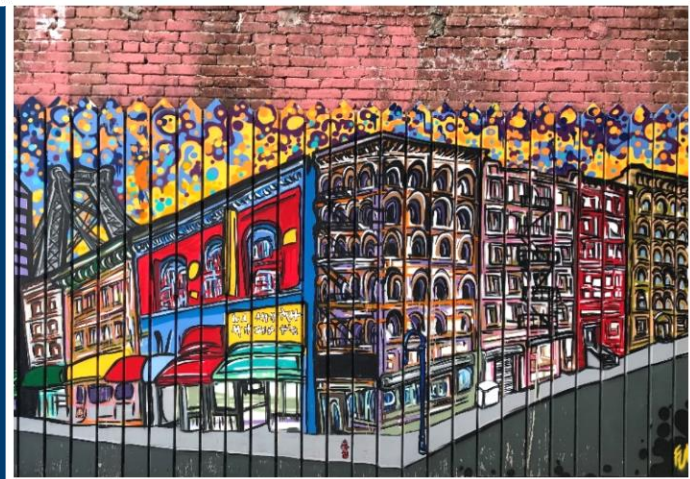


BILBAO



ICC INDEX ANALYSIS 2020



Diversity, Equality, Interaction

BUILDING BRIDGES, BREAKING WALLS



www.coe.int/interculturalcities



Bilbao
INDEX ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

Intercultural Cities is a Council of Europe flagship programme. It seeks to explore the potential of an intercultural approach to integration in communities with culturally diverse populations. The cities participating in the programme are reviewing their governance, policies, discourse and practices from an intercultural point of view.

In the past, this review has taken the form of narrative reports and city profiles – a form which was rich in content and detail. However, narrative reports alone were relatively weak as tools to monitor and communicate progress. Thus, an “Intercultural City Index” has been designed as a benchmarking tool for the cities taking part in the programme as well as for future participants.

While this report is being written (August/2020) 168 cities embraced the ICC programme and approach, and 140 (including Bilbao) have analysed their intercultural policies using the Intercultural City Index. The respective reports can be found here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/index-results-per-city>.

Among these cities, 26 cities (including Bilbao) have between 200,000 and 500,000 inhabitants and 37 (including Bilbao) have between 10% and 15% of foreign-born residents. This document presents the results of the Intercultural City Index analysis for Bilbao, Spain, in 2020, and provides related intercultural policy conclusions and recommendations.

INTERCULTURAL CITY DEFINITION

The intercultural city has people with different nationality, origin, language or religion/ belief. Political leaders and most citizens regard diversity positively, as a resource. The city actively combats discrimination and adapts its governance, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population. The city has a strategy and tools to deal with diversity and cultural conflict and to enhance participation. It encourages greater mixing and interaction between diverse groups in the public spaces.

METHODOLOGY

The Intercultural City Index analysis is based on a questionnaire involving 86 questions (73 of which are mandatory) grouped in 12 indicators with three distinct types of data. Indicators have been weighed for relative importance. For each indicator, the participating cities can reach up to 100 points (which are consolidated for the general ICC Index).

These indicators comprise the following (including the two new indicators in bold):

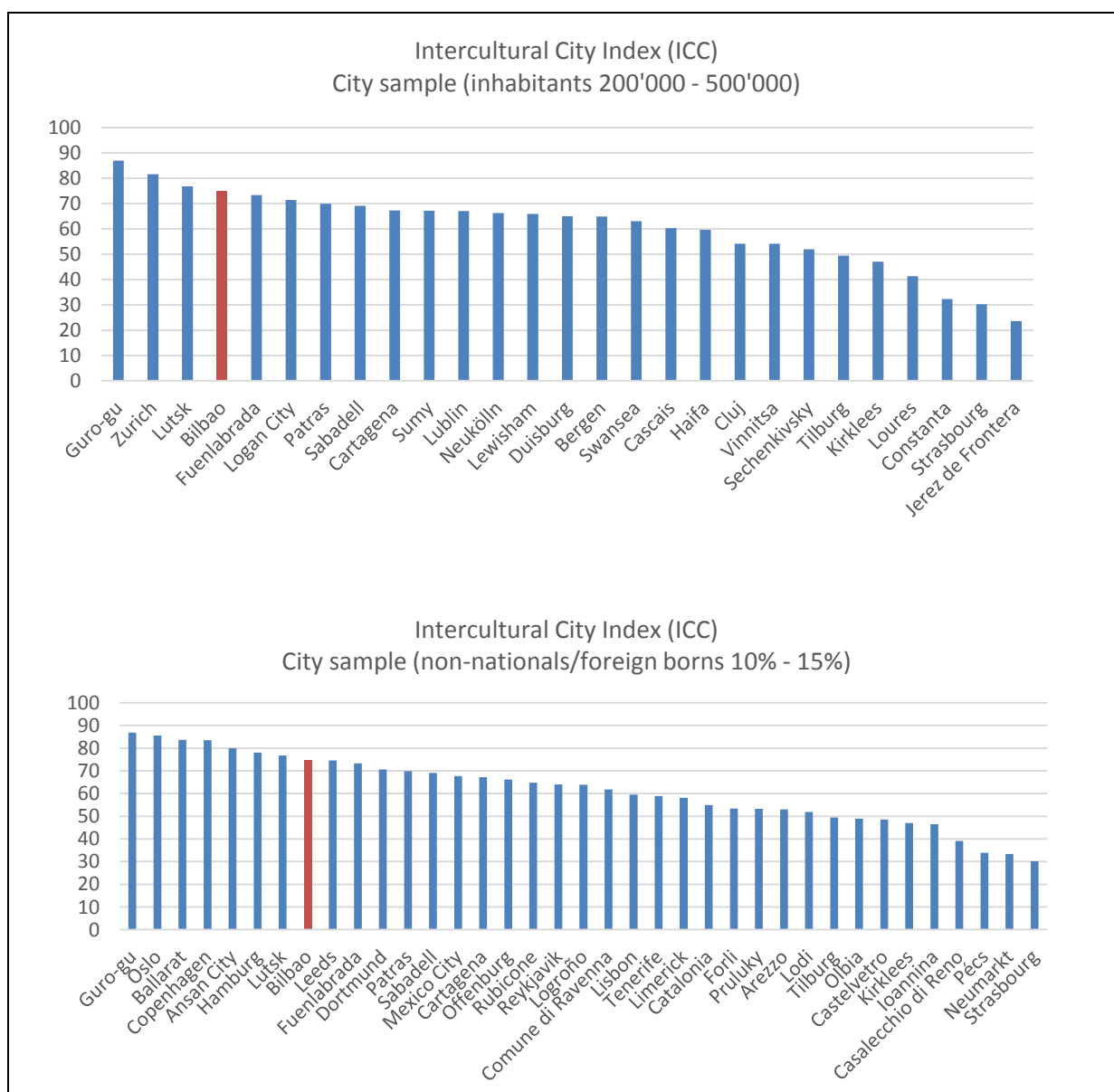
1. Commitment	
2. Intercultural lens	Education
3. Mediation and conflict resolution	Neighbourhoods
4. Language	Public services
5. Media and communication	Business and the labour market
6. International outlook	Cultural and social life
7. Intercultural intelligence and competence	Public space
8. Welcoming newcomers	
9. Leadership and citizenship	
10. Anti-discrimination	
11. Participation	
12. Interaction	

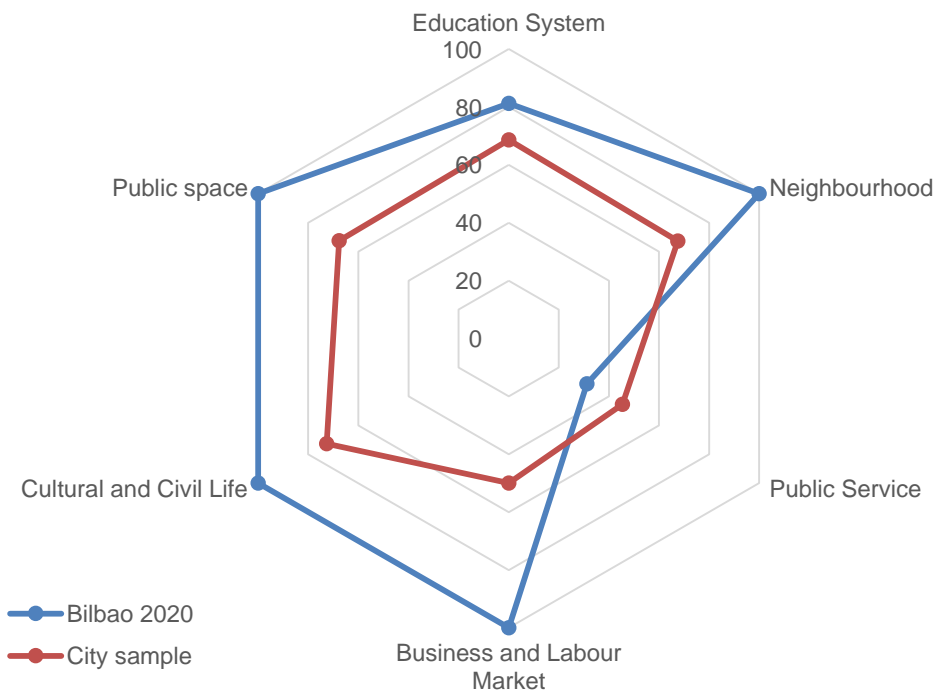
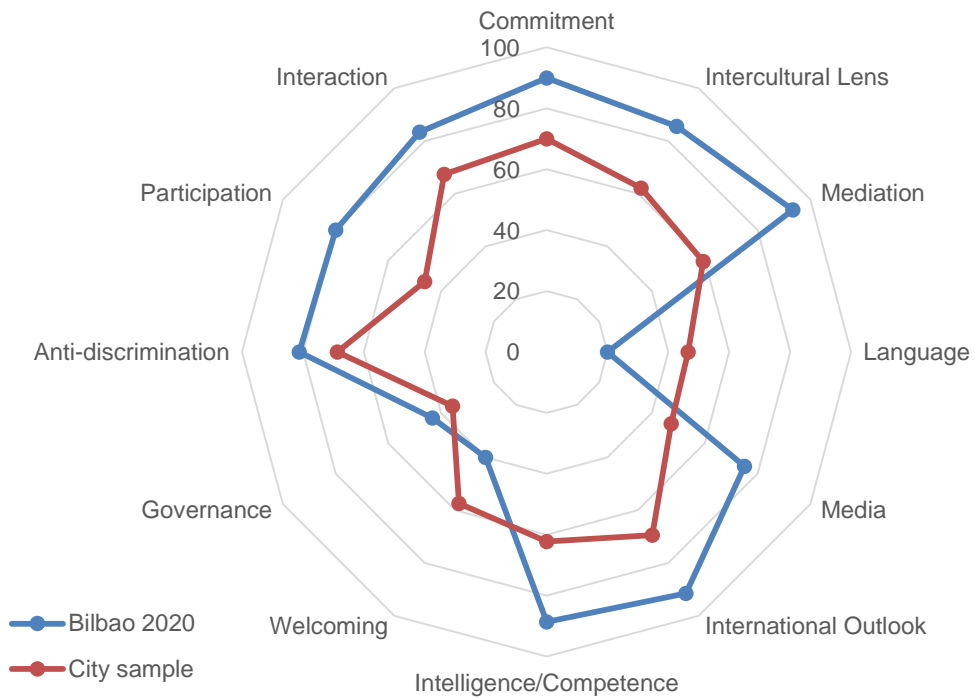
The comparison between cities is strictly indicative, given the large difference between cities in terms of historical development, type and scale of diversity, governance models and level of economic development. The comparison is based on a set of formal criteria related to the intercultural approach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

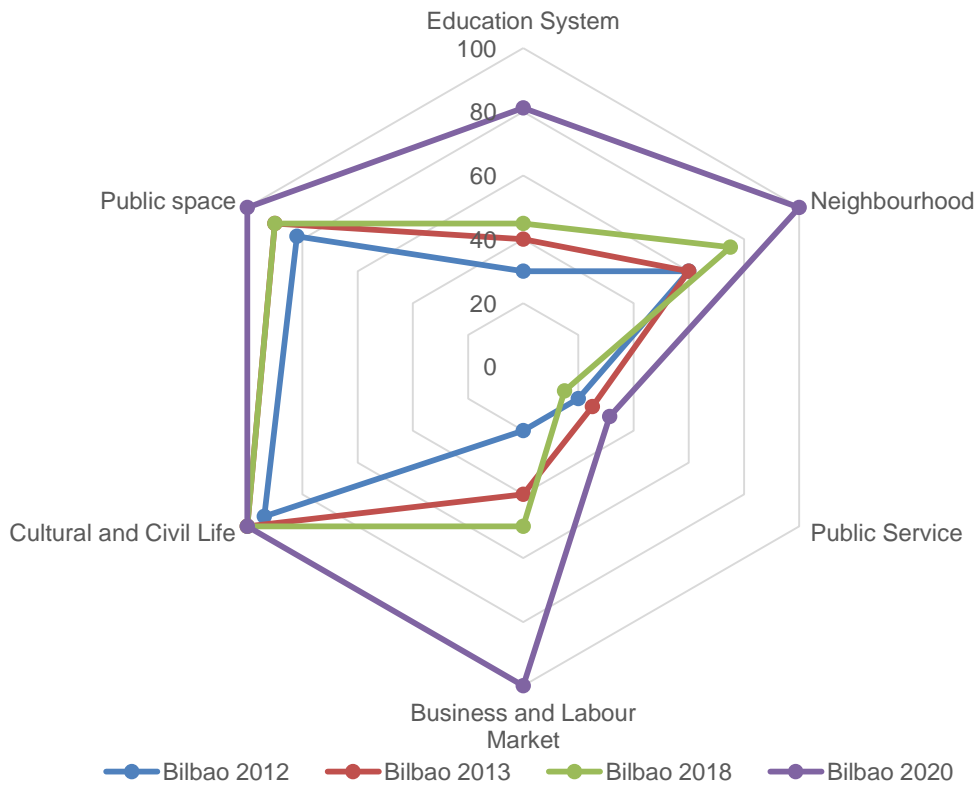
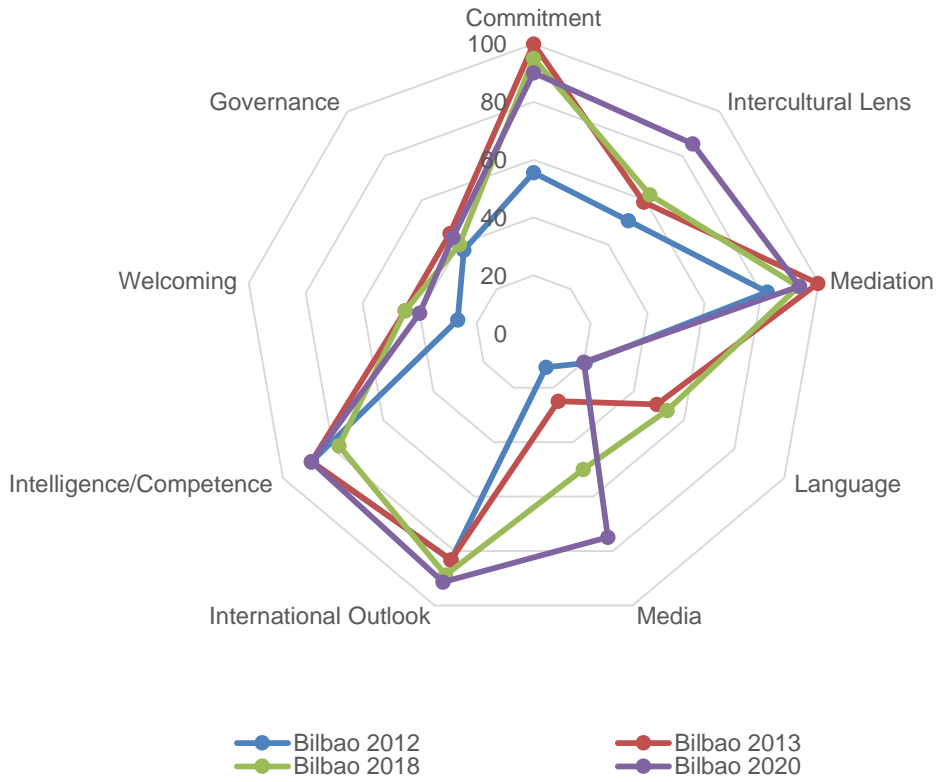
Taking into account the above-mentioned differences between the cities and a growing number of new cities willing to join the Intercultural Cities Index, it has been decided to compare the cities not only within the entire sample, but also according to specific criteria. Two of these have been singled out insofar: the size (below 100,000 inhabitants, between 100,000 and 200,000, between 200,000 and 500,000 and above 500,000 inhabitants) and the percentage of foreign-born residents (lower than 10 per cent, between 10 and 15 per cent, between 15 and 20 per cent and higher than 20 per cent). It is believed that this approach would allow for more valid and useful comparison, visual presentation and filtering of the results.

So far 16 cities have used the index containing the new indicators in their evaluations, including Bilbao. Thus, the city will be compared to the entire sample for all the indicators, and to the new sample for the new indicators relating to participation and interaction.

According to the overall index results, Bilbao has an aggregate intercultural city index of 75 (out of 100 possible points). The details of this result will be explained below.







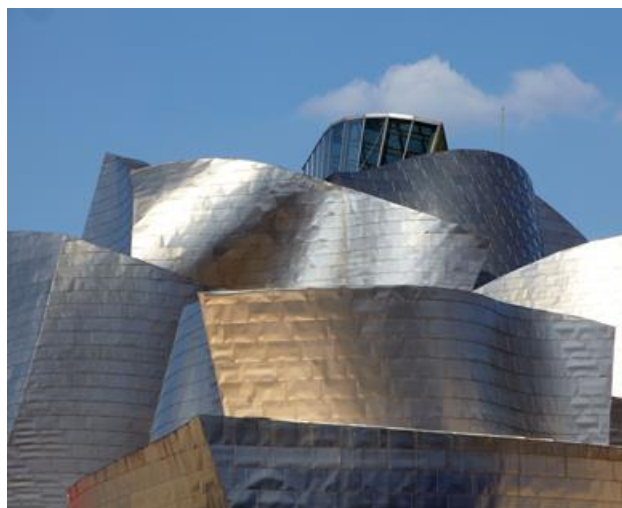
BILBAO: AN OVERVIEW

Bilbao is a city located in northern Spain in the province of Biscay, belonging to the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country. It is located south of the Bay of Biscay where the estuary of Bilbao is formed. It is the tenth largest city in Spain with a population of 347,083 and it is also the main urban area in what is defined as the Greater Basque Region.

Towards the end of the 20th century, as a result of industrial restructuring, Bilbao had to make a radical change to its economy. After years of economic uncertainty, the city recovered its dynamic nature and became a service city, totally committed to environmental and urban regeneration. Industrial land became the space for internationally awarded spatial transformation (Abandoibarra) that has positioned Bilbao as a powerful tourist destination. The great emblem of this "New Bilbao" is the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, designed by Frank Gehry, although many other factors have contributed to this regeneration and profound change. Over 25 years Bilbao has gradually been shedding its industrial skin and rehabilitating emblematic areas of the city.

The data from the INE in 2019 shows that we are looking at a diverse society, and that the variable "nationality" is an insufficient metric by which to analyse this diversity. Currently, 8.6% of the population registered in Bilbao is of foreign nationality (29,815 people). If we add to these foreign nationals the current population of Spanish nationals born abroad (14,930, or 4.3%), we see that 12.9% of the population of Bilbao is of foreign origin (44,745 people). As of 1st January 2019, Morocco is the main nationality in Bilbao's foreign population, and accounts for 10.7% of the total foreign population. The next most significant nationalities are Romania and Colombia (8.2% in both cases). The nationalities whose relative weight has increased most, in line with what was observed in previous years, are Venezuela, Nicaragua and Colombia. On the other hand, Bolivia's relative weight as a nationality continues to decline. If we take into account those people born abroad, as well as those of foreign nationality, we see that people of foreign origin registered in the municipality come mainly from Colombia and Bolivia. Both origins represent a quarter of the people of foreign origin registered in Bilbao (22.4%). The third origin (in order of importance) would be Morocco. It should be noted that there are 2,506 people born in Spain who have still not been able to access Spanish nationality. As for the evolution of the population of foreign origin, we can observe that the Latin American population born in Bolivia and Ecuador has somewhat reduced its weight compared to other Latin American origins such as Nicaragua, Venezuela and Honduras, which have increased in significance, as have other origins such as Morocco. On the other hand, the population from Colombia has increased its relative weight in recent years.

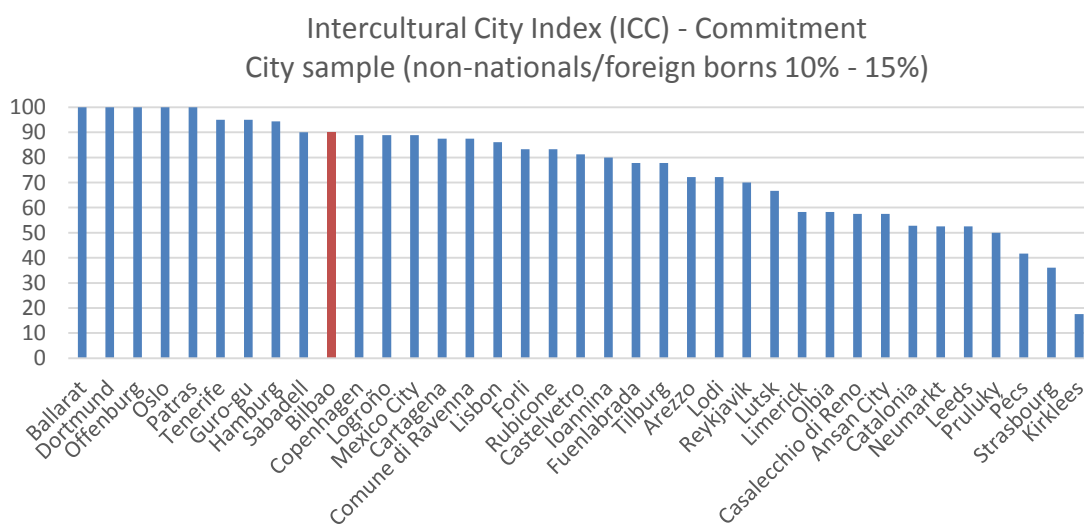
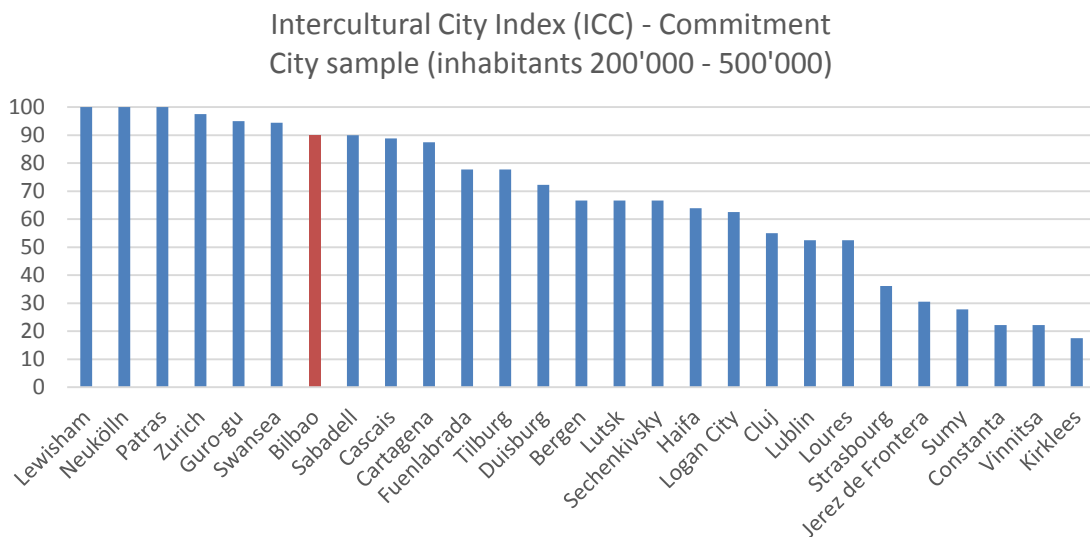
The GDP per capita for the period of 2017 was 34,366.2 euros, higher than the Spanish and European Union averages. The main economic sectors of the city are banking; ports, that adds 419 million euros to the Basque GDP and maintain 10,000 jobs; mining and ironworks and tourism.



COMMITMENT

For intercultural inclusion to occur, city authorities need to send out a clear and well-publicised message emphasising their commitment to intercultural principles, i.e. diversity, equality and interaction. Ideally, a majority of elected officials and senior policy officers will have a clear understanding of these core principles and their implications for policy-making. City authorities also need to initiate an institutional process to translate the principles of interculturality into concrete policies and actions. Most importantly, an intercultural city actively seeks to include residents of all nationalities, origins, languages, religions/beliefs, sexual orientations and age groups in the policy-making process. The authorities also highlight and nurture any intercultural practices that may already exist in the city.

Bilbao's score in the field of Commitment is 90, considerably higher than the city sample result of 70. Bilbao has participated in the Intercultural Cities program since 2012 and has an extremely well-developed strategy and evaluation methodology.



The Local Government's plan (2019-2023) includes the **New Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity** as a priority action within its scope of intervention, in the field of social harmony. "The Bilbao City Council has pledged to continue working for a harmonious and innovative Bilbao, where development and quality of life are paramount.

As part of this objective, Bilbao is committed to developing an intercultural society, where there is space for differences within a framework of equality, and in which the diversity of resources of citizens is encouraged, to jointly add to and contribute to the development of the city. A city in which everyone participates actively, and in which opportunities are offered to every person to participate in the shared project of social harmony. For this, a new cross-sectional “Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity” will be developed for the integration of immigrants in the municipality’s political, economic, social and cultural life. This Plan’s priority lines of action will be directed towards social cohesion, intercultural co-existence and achieving inclusive citizenship”.

Bilbao City Council has the Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity, which is currently being assessed. The Bilbao City Council’s Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity has a budget of 242,524 for the year 2020. Bilbao City Council has the **Local Immigration Council** to foster participation (see Participation).

The **Immigration Bureau** is the body in charge of implementing the intercultural strategy. This unit is located in Bilbao City Council’s Department of Cooperation, Social Cohesion and Festivals. It is composed of three experts on the matter of immigration and interculturality, and a Department coordinator.

Furthermore, the City Council has the **Bilbao Religious Diversity Participation Committee** as a space to reflect and develop actions directed at promoting the exercise of freedom of thought and religion, in a context of citizens living together in diversity, and defending human rights in the city, characterised by being non-denominational¹.

These structures participate in the design, execution and evaluation of the policies and actions on the matter of diversity, interculturality and social harmony developed by Bilbao City Council.

There’s plenty of municipal declarations from the city government where the commitment to become an Intercultural City is made:

- Bilbao City Council Government Team Agreement by which a commitment was made to participate in the Basque Welcome Model and develop the municipality’s own tools to ensure a comprehensive welcome model for migrants and refugees (22nd May 2020).
- Government team declaration 21st March 2018. Presented at a press conference by the Councillor for the Department of Cooperation and Social Cohesion.
- Conceptual framework of the 2nd Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan, approved by the Board of the Local Government. Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan Presented by the Mayor of Bilbao at the public meetings for presentation of the Plan.
- Social Policy Pact, signed by the Government Team with the aim of seeking social cohesion, and that all people living in Bilbao, regardless of their circumstances, are able to live with dignity.

Other related municipal declarations include:

- Declaration of the Board of Spokespersons on the situation experienced by thousands of people who seek help and refuge in Europe.
- The Local Council’s Declaration, signed by all the Municipal Political Groups, rejecting the agreement between the Heads of State and the Government of the European Union with Turkey, for the return of people requesting international protection (18/03/2016).
- Declaration of the International Day of Refugees (20/06/2016).
- Bilbao City Council’s Code of Conduct, Good Governance and Commitment to Institutional Quality.
- Adhesion to the [European Charter to Safeguard Human Rights](#) in the City at the Plenary of September 2018.

1

https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=BIO_Noticia_FA&cid=1279164677226&language=en&pageid=3000075248&pagename=Bilbaonet/BIO_Noticia_FA/BIO_Noticia

Finally, there's also the "Charter of Values and Development Plan". The City Council is developing the project [Bilbao: City of Values](#), which aims to generate a space for analysis, dialogue, reflection and collaborative work between institutions, social entities, businesses, communication media, educational centres and citizens, for the development of a framework of shared values in the city of Bilbao. As a result, the Bilbao Charter of Values and a plan that includes actions both from the local institution as well as social organisations were approved, to develop and promote the approved values. The Charter of Values includes the following: Respect for Human Rights, Social Justice, Solidarity, Diversity, Inclusion, Participation and Social Harmony.

The city of Bilbao acknowledges local **residents /organisations that have done exceptional things to encourage interculturalism in the local community**, awarding them with a wide variety of prizes.

- **Bilbao North-South Prize.** The aim of this prize is to recognise the social projects led by schools that are clearly committed to teaching values linked to interculturality, solidarity and defending human rights.
- **Bilbao Balioen Hiria Prizes** are part of the Bilbao Balioen Hiria project, and aims to make sure that the City is known and recognised not only due to its important process of regeneration, recovery and economic and urban transformation, but also due to its values. It is about creating a space for analysis, dialogue, reflection and collaborative work between institutions, all sorts of organisations, companies, Media, political groups and citizens in general. These prizes are one of the three strategic axes and one of the 15 committed actions of the Charter of Values Development Plan.
- [Bilbao Gazte Balioak Martxan Prizes](#). Prizes aimed at promoting the role of young people in developing a Bilbao with values, but for the first time in 2019, the projects must be linked to the Sustainable Development Objectives of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, in which cities will play an essential role.
- **Recognising Migrant Women in Bilbao:** Women are life – women are diversity. A prize promoted by the Local Immigration Council, which recognises the trajectory of women with foreign roots in three categories: political women, women who are agents of change and entrepreneur women.

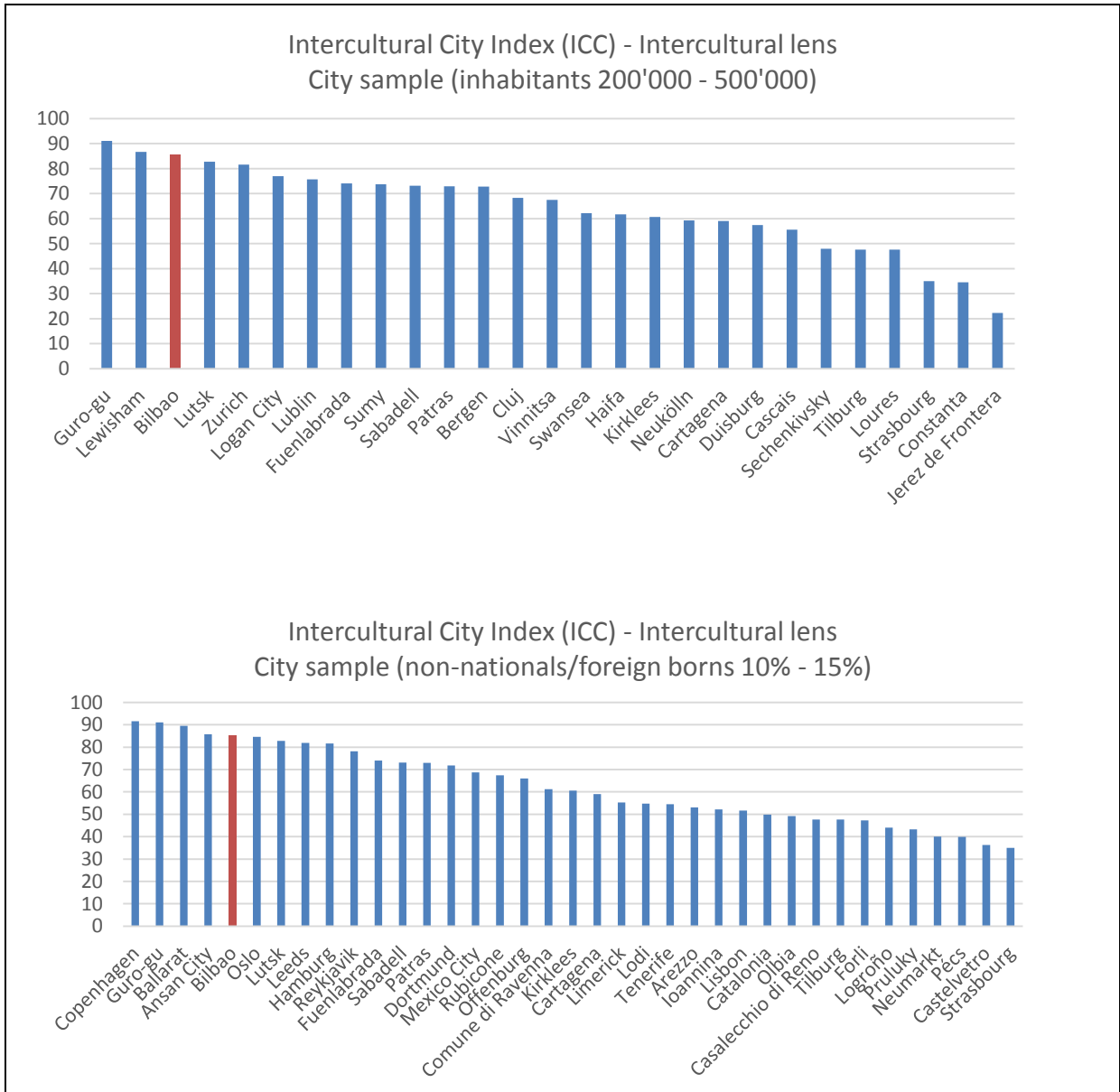
Suggestions

The evaluation of the Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity could be a good opportunity to identify strengths and room for improvement in the intercultural policymaking of Bilbao. The evaluation of the Plan and its impact will be based on a series of tools, to respond better to social challenges. The following tools will be part of the evaluation of the Municipal Plan: Results of Bilbao in the Index of Intercultural Cities; Results of Bilbao in the Barometer of perceptions and attitudes towards foreign immigration; Index of tolerance towards immigration; Specific evaluation questionnaires with stakeholders. It should be noted that the collaboration of social networks is also foreseen for the evaluation of actions and projects, as it has been done in the design and implementation of the Plan and its actions.

THE CITY THROUGH AN INTERCULTURAL LENS

Although the formal functions cities and other local authorities assume vary considerably from one country to another, all cities have the primary responsibility for maintaining social cohesion and preserving the quality of life in the city. The policies designed to achieve these goals will therefore be re-conceived and re-configured in order to assure they provide adequate service to all residents regardless of their nationalities, origins, languages, religions/beliefs, sexual orientation and age group. This is most notably the case for policies concerning education, neighbourhoods, public services, business and the labour market, cultural and social life, and public space.

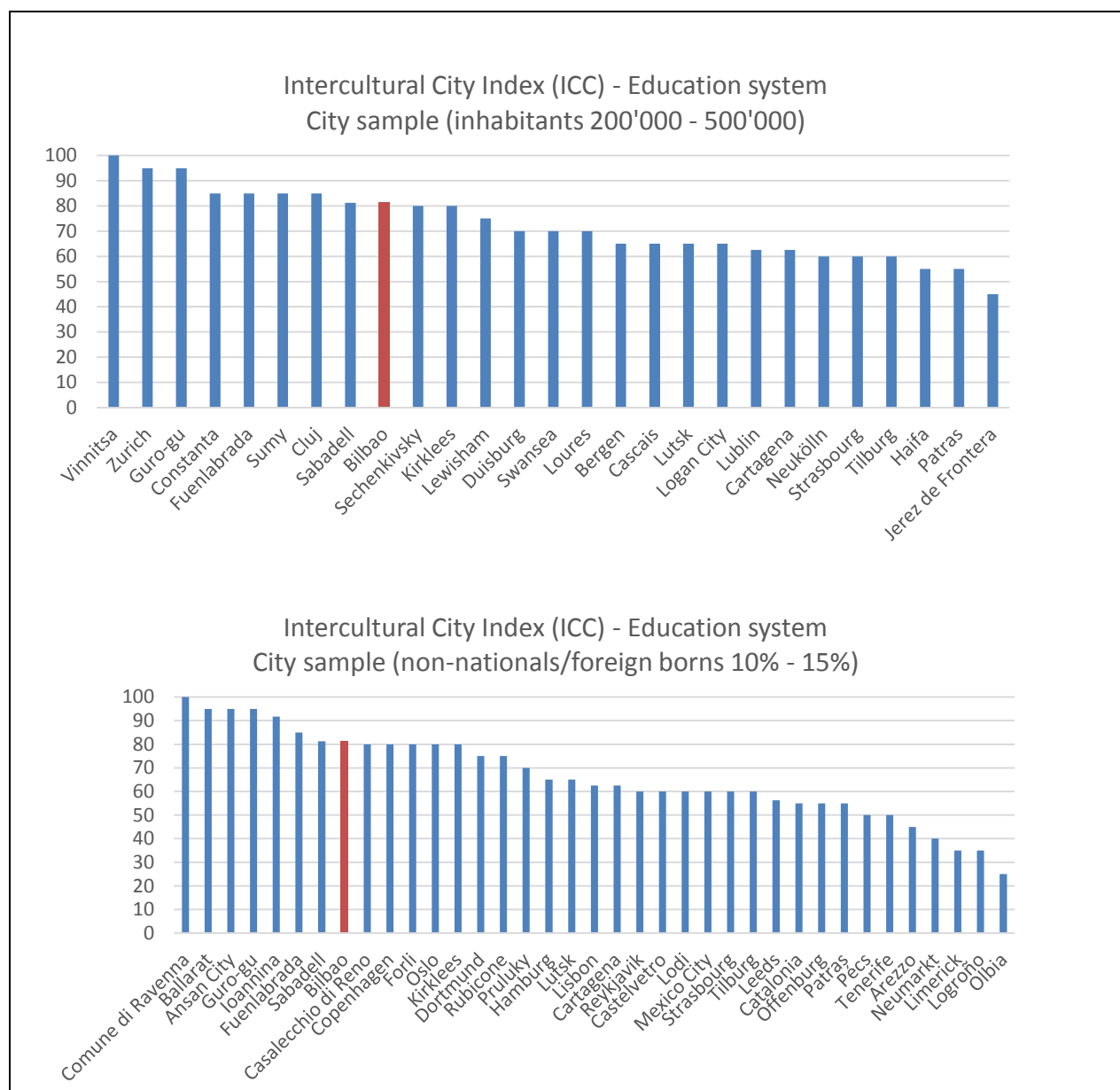
The overall rate of achievement of the urban policies of Bilbao, assessed as a whole through an "intercultural lens" is remarkably higher to that of the model city: 86% of these objectives were achieved while the rate of achievement of the model city's engagement policy reaches 62%.



EDUCATION

Formal education and extracurricular activities have a powerful influence on how children will perceive diversity as they grow up. Schools therefore have a strong potential to reinforce or, on the contrary, challenge prejudices and negative stereotyping. Although school programmes are defined primarily at the national or regional level, local schools can look at alternative and innovative ways of providing opportunities for children of different cultures to build trust and mutual respect, and create thereby favourable learning conditions for all pupils, irrespective of their nationalities, origins, languages, sexual orientation or gender identity, religions/beliefs. From the intercultural perspective, cultural and other diversities, including multilingualism are treated as positive opportunities and are nurtured accordingly. Intercultural schools also consider parents of pupils with migrant/minority backgrounds on an equal basis as other parents. They take steps to ensure that all parents overcome any reluctance they may have in engaging with the school and give them in this way the possibility of playing the educational role usually expected from parents.

Bilbao's score in the field of education is 81, considerably higher than the city sample result of 69. This reflects the fact that the education system in Bilbao is filled with schools/organizations which carry out intercultural projects and activities, providing innovative ways for children of different cultures to interact with each other.



In Bilbao, there are schools that make strong efforts to involve parents with migrant/minority backgrounds in school life. Some examples are:

- [EMPATHY SITE PROJECT](#), coordinated by La Salle School, includes a welcome network and socio-educational support led by students, teachers and parents. Under the slogan 'Take your time. Share your time' it seeks to involve families and encourage their participation and interaction with other families. It is a tool where people exchange their skills without using money. Instead, time is used as a currency, counting the hours of service rendered and received. This type of exchange, in which every participant is valued equally, promotes social relations and equality and revitalizes community life.
- [Miribilla Rules Project](#), run by the Miribilla LHI School, aims at encouraging coexistence by developing a fun, universal activity like singing amongst all members of the school community, extending it to the neighbourhood.

- The “[Family Meeting](#)” project (Mujika Eskola) aimed at promoting understanding and recognition of the cultural diversity at schools.
- The school J.M. Sánchez Marcos L.H.I. organises storytelling and workshops inviting families with diverse origins to share stories, poems, songs, or tales in their native language.
- Margotu Professional Training Centre implements an awareness raising and intercultural mediation programme for vulnerable young people involving the whole educational community (teachers, students, families and their cultural and social environment).

In addition, the municipality itself leads some intercultural projects targeting educational centres:

- [BOSA! Programme](#) is offered to schools and teaches the values of diversity through cinema. In 2019, 744 students participated in this programme.
- Under the framework of Bilbao Antiracism Strategy, the City Council has published a [Handbook](#) addressed to education centres to implement actions to combat discrimination, prejudices and stereotypes around diversity. In 2019, 891 students participated in different workshops.

Suggestions

As mentioned before, Bilbao has some excellent practices already in this field, however, it is always interesting to learn from others.

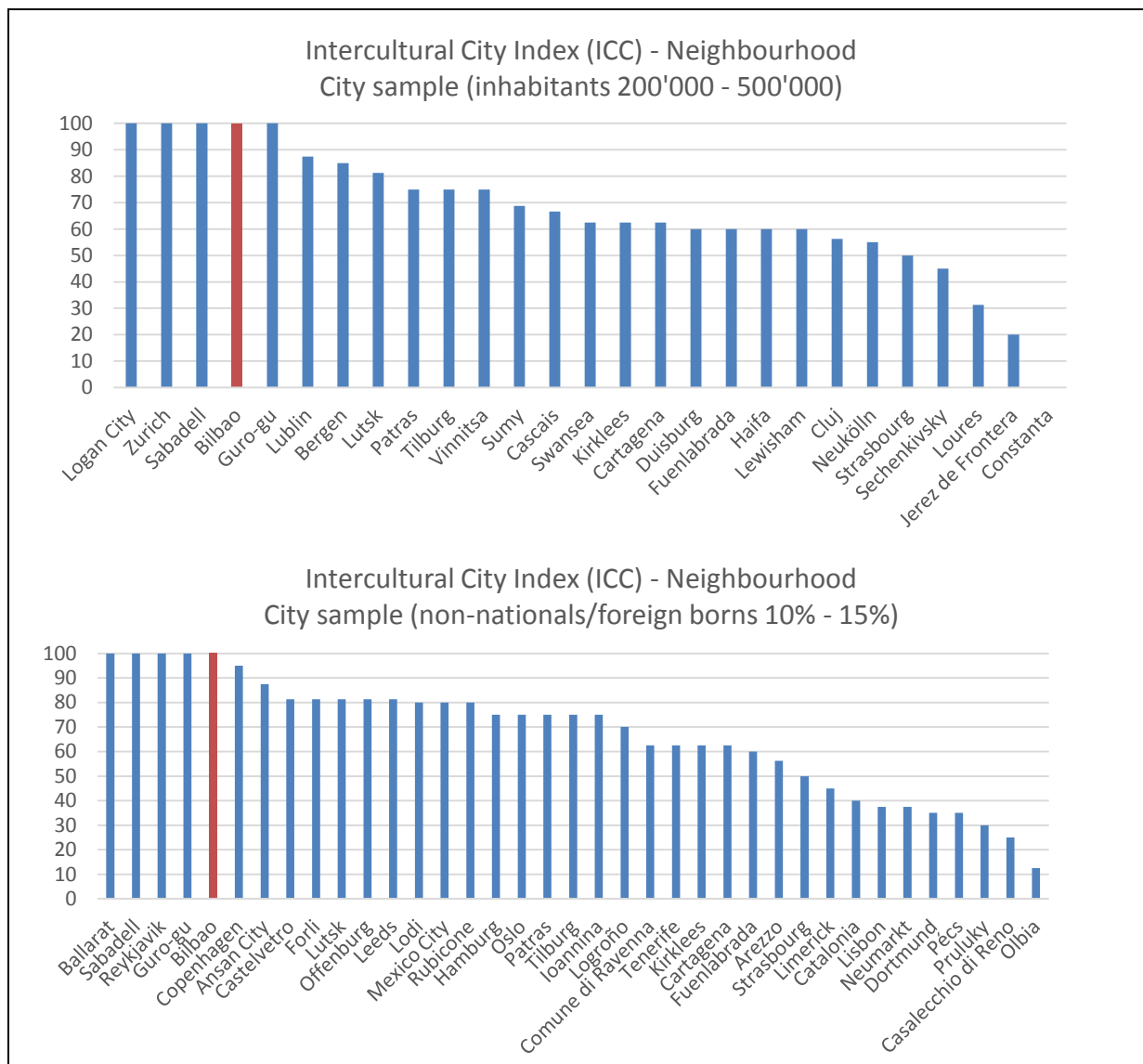
For instance, the Ongi Etorri Eskolara (Welcome to School) is a programme running since 2016 in several schools of Donostia-San Sebastián. One of its objectives is to collaborate in the inclusion of families from other countries, starting from the school community, as well as to raise awareness among all school agents about the advantages of cultural diversity. The programme consists in appointing (volunteering) mentor families to help newcomer families to be part of the local community. Usually, families have children in the same classrooms so that the two-year programme of support can include both scholar and extra-scholar/social activities. The interaction and exchange of cultures is crucial for the programme, but the main focus is to be found in the shared situation (parents with children at the same school and in the same classes). The programme impacts professors, classes, students and parents, while raising awareness about the diversity advantage for the overall population.

The city of Montreal also runs a wide range of activities aimed at school students from primary to secondary education. The [Montreal History Centre](#), a city-run body, conducts various intercultural projects in co-operation with schools, including: “You’re part of the story”- a programme aimed at building bridges between the past of recently arrived students and their new lives in the country by telling of personal stories and recording of personal “treasures” which students share with Montrealers in the museum. The programme fosters learning of the host country’s languages, as well as self-esteem and interaction between the newcomers and other citizens.

NEIGHBOURHOODS

Within a city, districts, neighbourhoods, or other territorial sub-units, can be more or less culturally/ethnically diverse. People are indeed free to move and settle in the neighbourhood of their choice. To be intercultural, a city does not require a ‘perfect’ statistical mix of people in all neighbourhoods. It will however make sure that ethnic concentration in a neighbourhood does not convert into socio-cultural segregation, and does not act as a barrier to the inward and outward flow of people, ideas and opportunities. In particular, the intercultural city ensures the same quality of public service delivery in all the neighbourhoods and plans public space, infrastructures, social, cultural and sport activities to encourage intercultural and socio-economic mixing and interaction.

Bilbao’s score in the field of neighbourhoods is 100, considerably higher than the city sample result of 67. This reflects the fact that Bilbao is running a wide range of activities to ensure that neighbourhoods are diverse.



The Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan includes actions to promote connection, dialogue and interaction between the population of Bilbao's different neighbourhoods.

All districts in the city have cultural, educational, sports and leisure infrastructure, which promote connections in the community in different leisure contexts. In addition, intercultural intervention projects are held in the districts with the highest percentage of foreign population. The following should be highlighted:

- [Intercultural Community Intervention Project](#) promoted by La Caixa Foundation in collaboration with the Bilbao City Council, which is held in the District of Rekalde,
- The Auzokizuna Plan aims to improve the quality of life of the people who live in Bilbao la Vieja, San Francisco and Zabala neighbourhoods and their relational, economic and urban environment. It is a programme that has the commitment and political will to have a scalable development, with a global vision of intervention that considers all aspects (social, urban planning, employment and local development, education, health...) and that, in addition, transversally incorporates other central considerations such as gender equity and interculturality.
- The Comprehensive Community Intervention Programme in the neighbourhood of San Francisco, promoted by the social organisation *Doctors of the World* and with the support of the Bilbao City Council (providing spaces, materials, etc.).

Under the framework of the Bilbao Antirumours Strategy, the city implements a variety of actions in different districts that promote interaction amongst people from different neighbourhoods.

The 'People of the World Festival' is a social initiative supported by the City Council. Although it is always held in the same location, people from different neighbourhoods are invited.

Suggestions

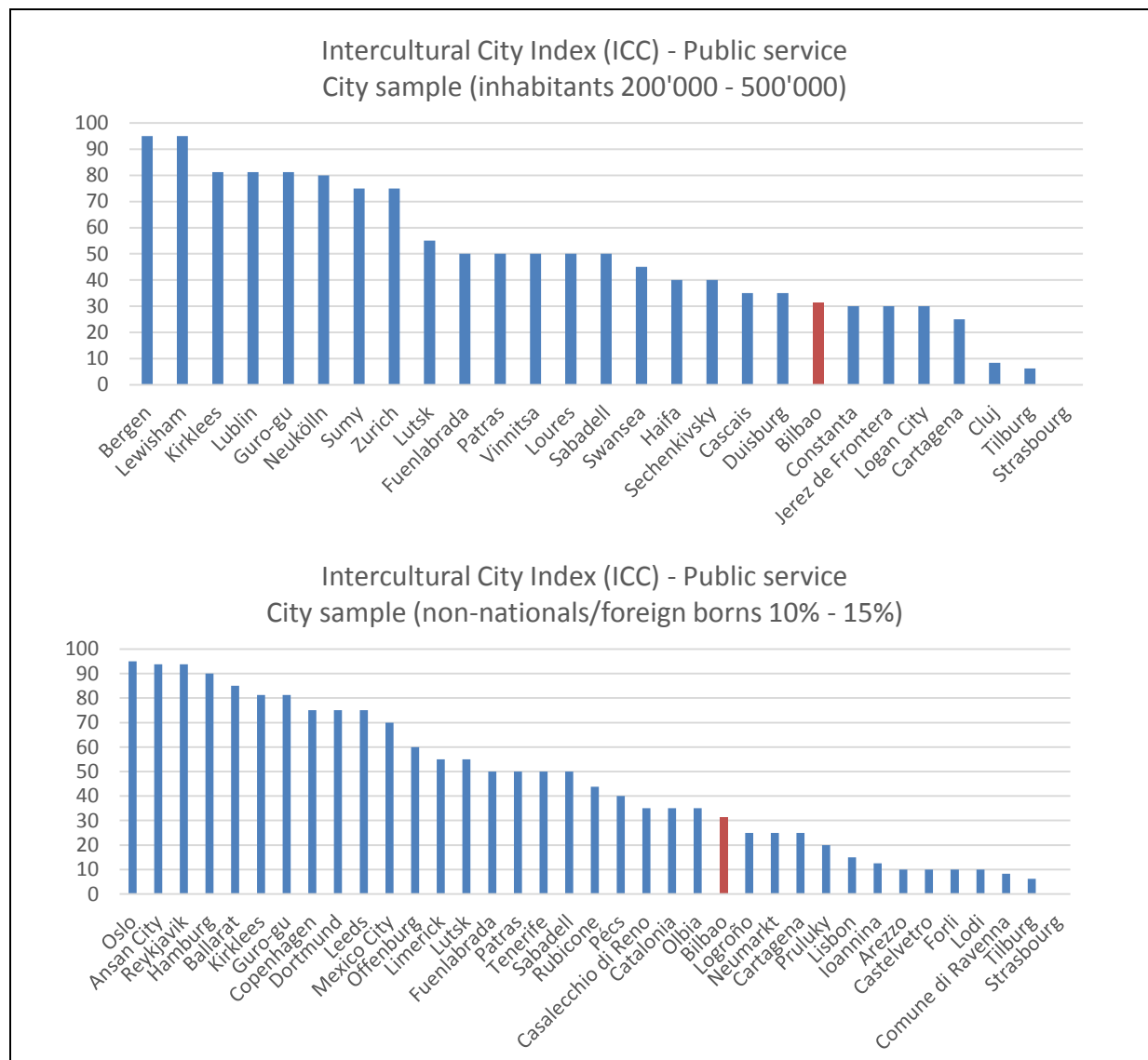
Many initiatives can be implemented to bring people together, it is important to ensure that all generations, cultures and genders are equally involved in the integration process. In Botkyrka, from 2019 until 2022, the city is implementing the local strategy: Creative city of Fittja (Kreativ stadsmiljö Fittja). It aims to improve security and safety in vulnerable areas of the city by opening public spaces and making them more attractive using their vivid culture and intercultural interaction to improve the image of those areas. The program has just started to be implemented in an area prioritized by police. This area has a low socioeconomic status, a rather high criminal impact on the local community (including public acts of violence and open drug markets), low collective social control, lack of trust in systems, low crime reporting rates, and low willingness to contribute to legality. Nevertheless, this area is deemed full of potential. City government policies are focusing on those residents who want to contribute to giving the area a new and better image and encouraging them to act in this sense. Based on that, Botkyrka has started working on placemaking to push out criminality by making public places more attractive to a diverse public. The city has been working with the civil society, private and public housing companies, small and large traders of the area. The action is based on tested methodologies related to violence prevention in school that have a whole-community-approach. A fundamental step is the identification of the areas of intervention and partnership opportunities so to involve all relevant actors within the targeted areas. Having a particularly good aggregated knowledge of the problems specific to each area is part of the solution and helps mapping the strengths of the area to create a safer environment. The action is based on tested methodologies related to violence prevention in school that however have a whole-community-approach. A fundamental step is the identification of the areas of intervention and partnership opportunities so to involve all relevant actors within the targeted areas. Having a very good aggregated knowledge of the problems specific to each area is part of the solution and helps mapping the strengths of the area so to create a safer environment.

Furthermore, the ICC study on gentrification offers a range of strategies and examples of how to create inclusive public space, manage positively socio-cultural mixing, nurture sense of belonging and encourage diverse businesses to thrive.

PUBLIC SERVICES

As their very name implies, public services work for the benefit of the public as a whole. If the population is diverse, public services will be more efficient in delivering adequate benefits and information if city officers, at all levels of seniority, are as diverse as the population in general. This requires much more than simply ensuring equal opportunities to access public service employment. When taking action to encourage a diverse municipal workforce, an intercultural city acknowledges that a 'one size fits all' approach to public services and actions does not guarantee equal access to public benefits. The city also recognises that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds should never be treated as passive consumers of public benefits but can contribute actively by suggesting new ideas and innovative solutions to public problems.

Bilbao's score in the field of public services is 31, lower than the city sample result of 45, showing that this is an area with considerable room for improvement.



The city of Bilbao takes into consideration the migrant backgrounds and the minority groups in order to provide its services. It does so by adapting meals in public schools, offering the possibility of celebrating Muslim burial ceremonies and adapting Libraries' services, among others. Moreover, the City Council offers translation and interpretation services to social services (local care and support facilities, including migrant women victims of gender violence) as well as a mediation service.

Recommendations

There is still room for improvement in this regard for Bilbao. City government public employees do not reflect the composition of its population and there is no plan to ensure it, mainly because the Spanish regulations difficult hiring non-national residents. In any case, it could be interesting to explore the connections with the private sector, which manages its own actions in diversity, inclusion and cultural competence, and where their efforts could be magnified through explicit encouragement and direct support from city government. In that sense, it could be interesting for them to take notes of some initiatives from other cities. In Auckland (Australia), there is a strong public commitment to strengthen an inclusive city. To celebrate diversity and focused on belonging and participation, the Auckland Plan 2050 aligns well with the intercultural cities' principles and approach. It recognises that 'successful settlement involves empowering people to participate in the social, economic and political life of Auckland' and that belonging can 'be influenced by how well, and how easily, people can see themselves reflected in civic and community life, in positions of leadership, decision-making and in public spaces'. The Council calls for

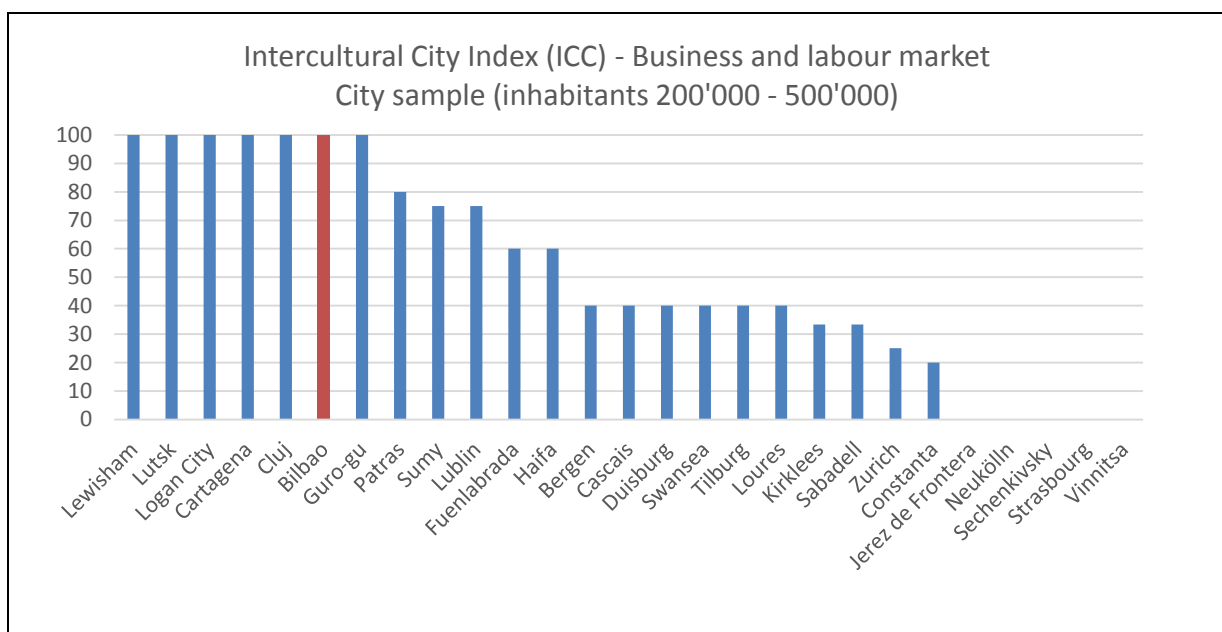
the cooperation between all communities, sectors, governmental levels, institutions and organisations. Not only is the national and local government responsible for the plan's implementation, but also various institutions and non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the civil society. The plan includes specific action plans, strategies and initiatives to deliver on these high-level commitments and to ensure the Auckland Plan is translated into practice.

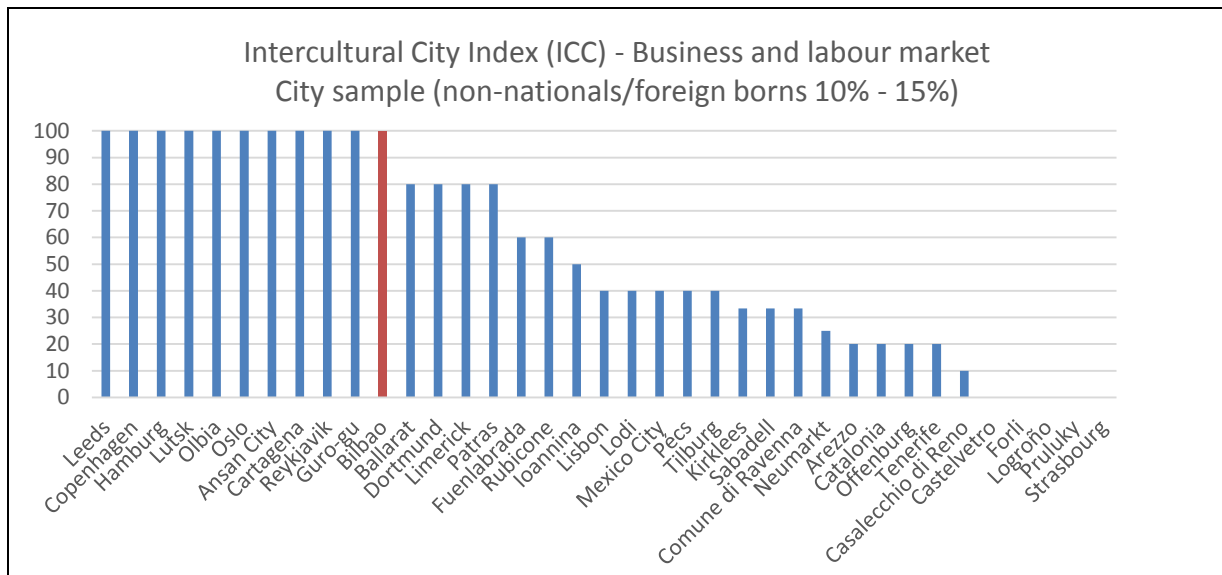
In Zurich (Switzerland), the city has a policy to increase the diversity of residents in the neighborhoods and avoid ethnic concentration. The City Council housing program aims, among other things, at a good social mixing within the city. Most of the city population lives in rented apartments. Twenty-five percent of these apartments are owned by the city government of Zurich or by non-commercial housing associations. The city as well as the housing associations have adopted a rent policy, which considers the cultural mixing within the neighbourhood. Moreover, Zurich's policy on socially acceptable inner development looks at future building sites and seeks to create societal cohesion and cultural mixing. The city encourages actions where residents of one neighborhood meet and interact with residents with different migrant/minority backgrounds from other neighborhoods. Generally, the Integration Policy, the housing program, and the social culture strategy (Soziokultur) include useful guidelines. More specifically, projects that promote an improved cohabitation of 'locals' and 'foreigners', can sometimes be financed by the city government of Zurich.

BUSINESS AND THE LABOUR MARKET

Access to the public sector labour markets is often restricted by national or regional legislation. When this is the case, the private sector may provide an easier route for people with migrant or diverse backgrounds to engage in economic activity. As a result, private companies and activities tend to offer much more diverse working environments than the public sector. Research has also proved that it is cultural diversity in private companies, and not homogeneity, which fosters creativity and innovation. By constantly highlighting the diversity advantage in business, and partnering with their chambers of commerce and entrepreneurs, cities can influence how diversity is perceived in the private sector in such diverse sectors as shops, clubs, restaurants, industry, technical services and science.

Bilbao's score in the field of business and the labour market is 100, the top score and considerably higher than the city sample result of 50 and reflecting that labour migration and enterprise are a key element of Bilbao's diversity advantage.





Bilbao Ekintza is a public business organisation created by the Bilbao City Council to develop municipal competencies on the matter of economic promotion, employment plans, training, occupation and integration of unemployed in a direct and decentralised way. It supports different organisations that develop projects aimed at facilitating the integration in the labour market of people with socioeconomic difficulties, such as neighbours with a migrant background of newcomers, through training, literacy, employment guidance and mediation with companies, etc. That is the case of the [Ojala Programme](#) (Itaka-Escolapios Foundation), the [Otxarkoaga Professional School](#) and the Peñascal Foundation programmes. In addition, it cooperates with the Basque Government's employment service and training centres in the [Singular Plans](#).

BIG-Bilbao Centre for Entrepreneurship helps entrepreneurs through training, advice on finances, marketing, technology, commercial skills, communication strategy and workshops, networking opportunities, etc. Despite this service is addressed to the whole society, in 2019 the 20% of entrepreneurs who received support were immigrants.

[AUZO FACTORY](#) is Bilbao City Council's business incubators, designed to create economic activity in the city's neighbourhoods, and to attract people with talent and innovative ideas.

Moreover, Bilbao City Council has participated in the initiative promoted by the [Council of Europe 'Diversity connectors'](#) for start-ups and is in contact with the University of Mondragón and the company Tandem as part of the [W-BRIDGE project](#), an entrepreneurial programme for immigrant women.

Last, Bilbao City Council has approved an Order with the objective of boosting socially responsible strategic public contracting in Bilbao City Council's contracting activity. The Order includes criteria for promoting social and labour insertion (hiring people with disabilities, subcontracting social insertion companies and/or special social initiative employment centres, improving the employability of people who have barriers to accessing the labour market).

The municipality also works closely with private initiatives such as [Koop SF 34](#) (a social micro-business nursery created by people of Sub-Saharan origin in the neighbourhood of San Francisco. This pioneering project intends to serve as a model of entrepreneurship and social development) or [REAS Euskadi](#) (a network of associations and entities working for an alternative and solidary economy).

Suggestions

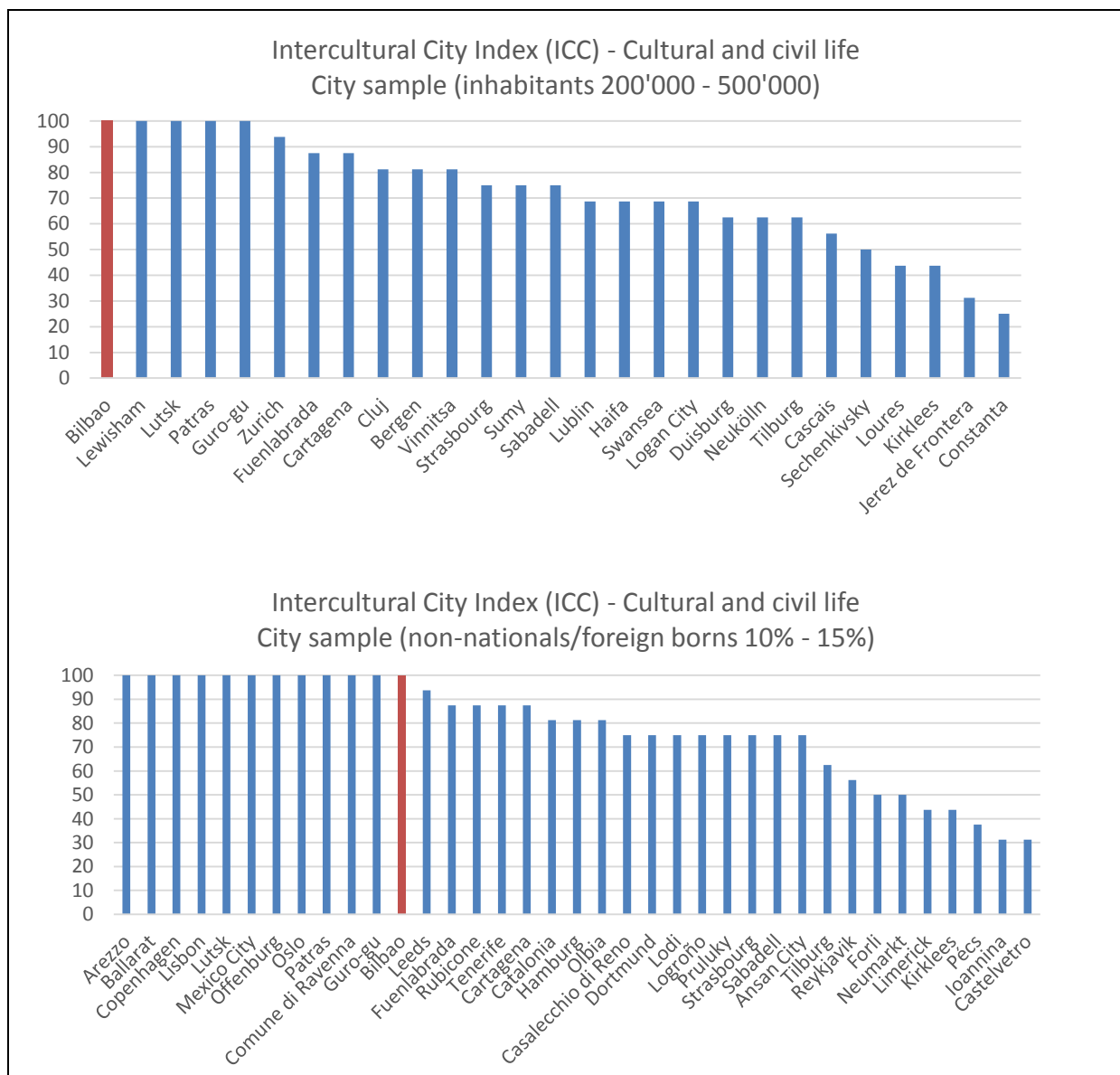
In line with the measures applied in Bilbao, Montreal has launched and Integration – work- training programme (PITF). This project, which was launched in May 2017, aims to speed up the integration of newcomers in the jobs market, while supporting the largest Montreal employers in testing and assessing innovative processes for

recruiting, integrating and retaining newly arrived skilled workers in Quebec. The objective for 2019 will be to have offered significant work experience to 60 qualified newcomers and to have ensured lasting changes in attitude and practices by approximately ten stakeholders within the human resources processes of major participating Montreal employers.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

Whereas people living in a city may have different migrant/minority or other backgrounds, they very often share the same interests and satisfaction when engaging in leisure activities, especially in the fields of arts, culture and sports. Such activities are sometimes structured along ethnic lines. That is quite understandable when they aim to preserve folklore traditions or the language and history of countries of origin. What is problematic is when cross-cultural leisure activities are organised along ethnic lines, for example when a football team only accepts players from one ethnic group. The intercultural city can encourage cultural openness through its own activities and by introducing intercultural criteria when allocating resources to artistic, cultural and sports organisations.

Bilbao's score in the field of cultural and social life is 100, considerably higher than the city sample result of 73 thanks to all programs and initiatives put together by the city.



Bilbao City Council, as part of its annual call for proposals, has a specific grant line related to Immigration, from which it subsidises migrant associations and programmes of an intercultural nature developed by social organisations. Another line is 'Raising Awareness and Education for Social Transformation', which funds projects aimed at informing, educating, raising awareness and understanding on diversity. Within the field of education, there are grants addressed to schools and parents to promote the values of dialogue, coexistence, solidarity, and to integrate students with a migrant background. In addition, the intercultural perspective is part of the assessment criteria in other calls for proposals from different fields, scored based on whether the project takes the municipality's cultural diversity into account.

Bilbao celebrates through annual campaigns international days such as the 21st March (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination), 21st May (Day for Cultural Diversity), 20th June (World Refugee Day) and 18th December (International Migrants Day) are worthy of mention.

Bilbao City Council promotes the access to culture for the whole population, with a broad programme of free events and activities. Some notable examples of cultural activities may include: the spring cultural programme **Kultura Kalez Kale**, which takes place in all districts with different activities (music groups, street theatre, folklore exhibitions, choral concerts, dances, etc.); the **International Festival of Street Theatre** and **Arts Bilboko Kalealdia**; the **open-air cinema programme** in various neighbourhoods in summer; and **Aste Nagusia** (festival of festivals), with hundreds of municipal and associative activities for all audiences. The City Council also participates in the global cultural festival '**FAIR SATURDAY**' with an open and participative organisation of cultural activities, held in a multitude of cities across the world on the same day. It is one of the most innovative social start-ups in the world, generating development and social cohesion through art and culture. For example, an activity organised was '[Stories considering racism](#)'.

Bilbao Arte is an artistic production centre, under the Bilbao City Council's Department of Culture. It collaborates with the **Festival Censurados**, a space for exhibiting cinema or audiovisual work that has been censored or prohibited in different parts of the world for political, religious, gender, social, sexual or environmental reasons. The City Council provides support to the **Gazte Egunak** programme and particularly to initiatives related to diversity: [Afrook Life Style](#), [Han eta hemengo gazteak](#) and Bilbao Refuge Charity Race (CEAR Euskadi).

Different institutions include intercultural and diversity related activities in their programmes, such as the **Azkuna Zentroa**, the **Bidebarrieta Library** and the **Invisible Film Festival**, with a prize category on interculturality. And different cultural festivals include the cultural diversity in their productions (i.e. Fantastic Cinema Festival, Theatre and Street Arts Festival, International Festival of Documental Cinema and Short Films). Similarly, as part of other projects such as the Intercultural Community Intervention project or the Antirumours Strategy, various activities are organised aiming to tackle cultural diversity and the promotion of intercultural living together.

In terms of recognition, the City counts on the "**Bilbao Balioen Hiria Prize**", a contest aimed at awarding and recognising the work of the organisations that promote the content of the Bilbao Charter of Values (i.e. Respect for Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion, Social Cohesion and Participation).

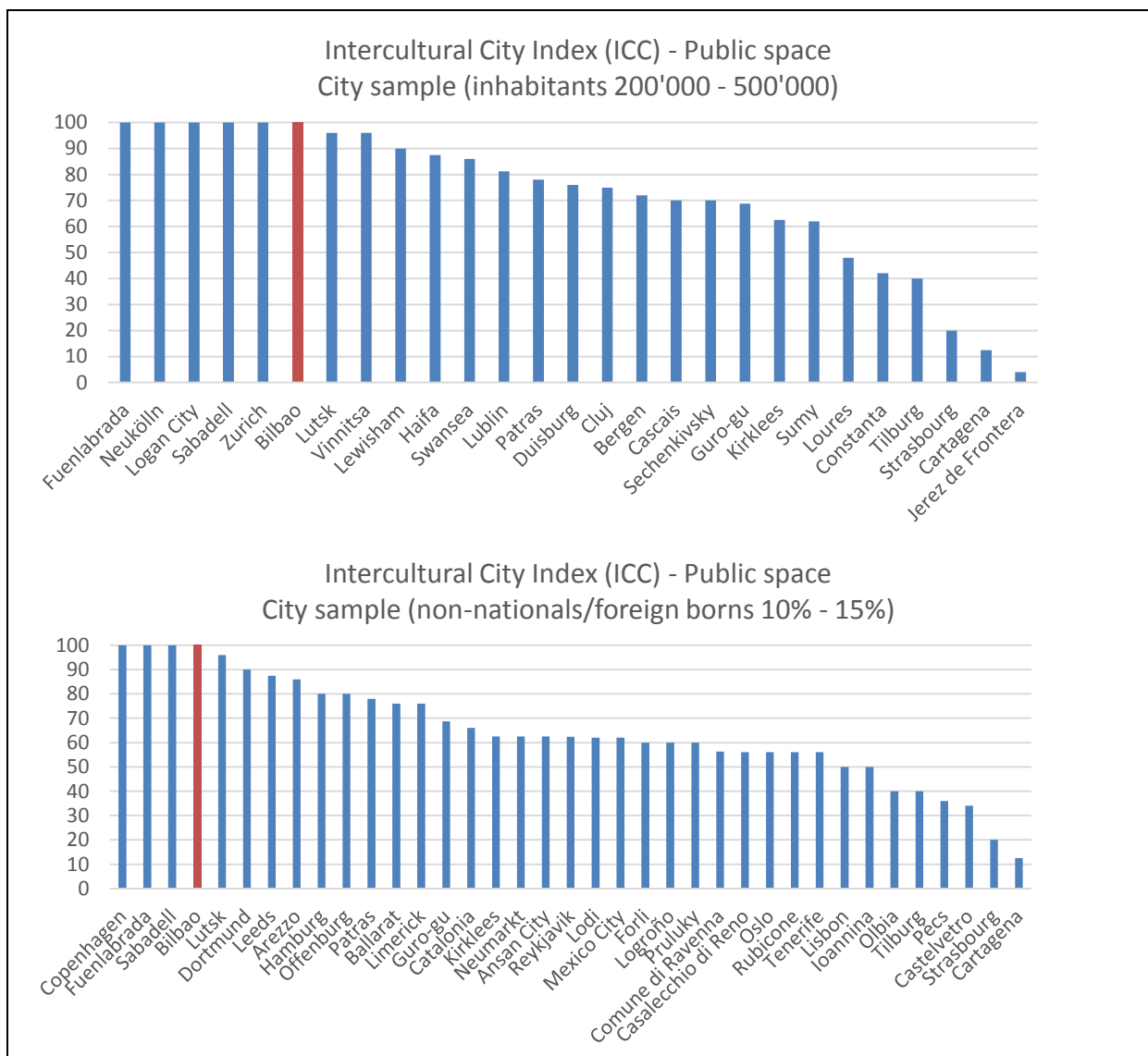
Suggestions

Bilbao already runs wide variety of cultural activities and events, but they could take inspiration from the experience of some other cities. In Oslo, for instance The Intercultural Museum was founded to reflect intercultural reality of Oslo which other museums were failing to do. It was set up as a public foundation which undertook a prize-winning transformation of an old police station and in 2006 merged with two other museums including the old City Museum. Its ethos of respecting diversity and casting an equal gaze was embodied from its inception in its representation—with a majority of people of immigrant background on its management board.

PUBLIC SPACE

Public spaces (streets, squares, parks, etc.) and facilities (public buildings, day centres, schools, health centres, etc.) are places which most citizens are obliged to use. They offer the possibility of meeting people of different nationalities, origins, languages, religions/beliefs, sexual orientations and age groups. For encounters between diverse people to actually occur, such spaces and facilities should be designed and animated in a way that all residents feel comfortable when using them. Conversely badly-managed spaces can become places of suspicion and fear of the “other”. When this is the case, the intercultural city actively engages with all the people concerned, firstly to understand the local context from their perspective, and secondly to identify solutions largely support by them.

Bilbao achieved a rate of 100, which is considerably higher than the city sample’s achievement rate of 68 with a huge variety of interesting activities like intercultural tournaments in public spaces.



The city of Bilbao takes action to encourage meaningful intercultural mixing and interaction in public spaces, such as public libraries, museums and squares, among others. This commitment translates into different kinds of initiatives and actions:

- Intercultural Tournaments in Public Sports Centres.
- Adapting bibliographic resources with an intercultural focus at Municipal Libraries.
- Squares and public spaces as part of the Bilbao Festivals.

- Support for intercultural activities promoted by associations by granting use of public spaces.
- People of the World Festival.
- Intercultural Community Intervention Project: Festival of Bread and Open Summer School
- Activities at District Municipal Centres.
- Exhibitions linked to diversity in the Municipality of Bilbao.

Through the multiple channels available to all citizens (email, telephone, letters, in-person and the “Mejora Bilbao” app), the municipality collects complaints and recommendations provided by citizens in order to improve the municipal services.

Different methods and places for consultation are in place to ensure the involvement of people with different migrant/minority backgrounds when re-building an area. SURBISA is the public company set up by the Bilbao City Council to encourage the urban rehabilitation of the municipality's residential buildings and it starts with a previous collection of socio-economic data including migrants and minorities. Based on understanding and analysis of such data, all actions are aimed at taking into account all the people targeted, giving priority to the most vulnerable resident families.

Suggestions

Bilbao already runs wide variety of projects and actions in this dimension, but they could take inspiration from the experience of some other cities. For instance, the “Dialogue creates Neighborhood” action in Berlin Neukölln’s neighborhood is conducted in partnership with the Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation (CSSP). The project is aimed at preventing conflicts between inhabitants of refugee accommodation and residents. Qualified trainers for conflict mediation firstly address the inhabitants of the accommodation to find out about their concerns, interests, and requests for information. NGOs and the local neighborhood management team are involved. Afterwards, roundtable discussions are organized between refugees and residents. The action helps to identify possible conflicts, reduce prejudices, prevent escalation, and establish sustainable communication structures. Furthermore, it provides refugees and residents with qualifications, thereby opening up new professional perspectives.

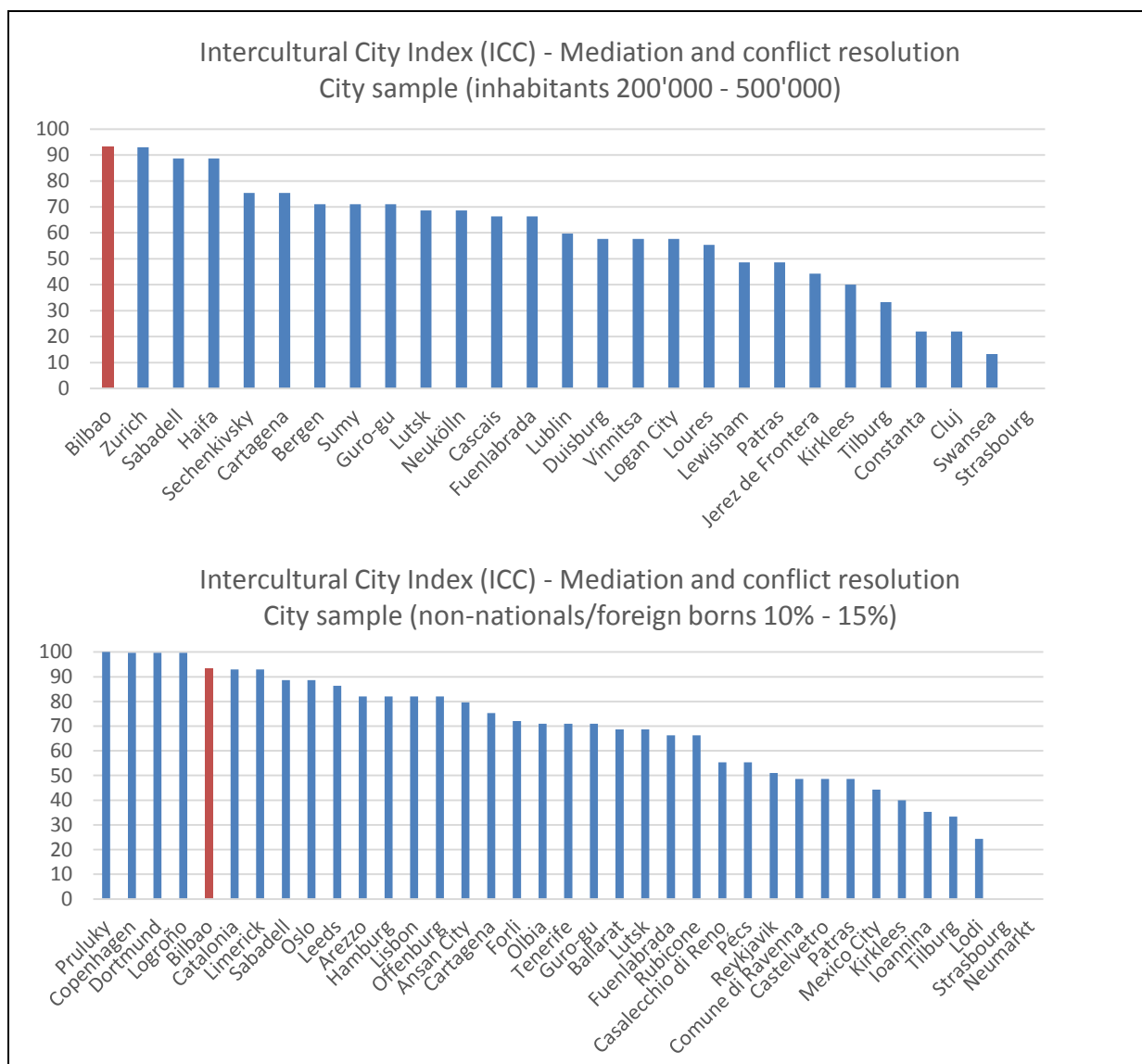
From 2019 onwards, the city government of Zurich (Switzerland) is financing intercultural neighborhoods weeks (Interkulturelle Neighborhoodsmwochen), which will take place every two years and seek to make lived diversity in the city visible. The Zurich community centers (Gemeinschaftszentren) were founded in 2010 and aim to promote community development as well as the implementation of equal opportunities and participation of all resident groups. Among other things, community centers are implementing own programs on education, integration, and cultural mediation.

In Spain, interesting initiatives of neighbours engagement and participation have taken place in Sabadell, in the design of a new local infrastructure of the old space [Vapor Cusidó](#), attending neighbourhood claims and taking into account all existing visions or the participatory process of remodelling [Fadura Park](#) in Getxo.

MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In diverse societies there is always the potential for misunderstanding and conflict over values, behaviour or resources. In cities, where people with different cultural backgrounds and socio-economic statuses live together in close proximity, such tensions are natural and indeed part of everyday life. Instead of denying, ignoring, or repressing conflict, the intercultural city seeks to anticipate, identify, address and resolve issues to the satisfaction of all protagonists without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The intercultural city views conflict as a normal feature of free, dynamic and communicative communities and sees the very process of conflict mediation and resolution as an opportunity for innovation and sustainable social cohesion.

Bilbao achieved a rate of 93, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 59 reflecting the wide range of activities carried out in this field.



The **Social Cohesion Observatory** provides a generalist support and management on community conflicts (including those in the public space), through Multidisciplinary Conflict Management Teams, where different municipal departments work in a coordinated way. In addition, the Observatory offers training to the administration staff in conflict management and social cohesion.

At regional level, the BILTZEN Service (Basque Service for Integration and Promotion of Intercultural Social Cohesion) run by the Basque Government, develops intercultural mediation processes in different fields.

The Department of Cooperation, Coexistence and Festivals through the **Religious Diversity Programme**, deals with inter-religious relations. The programme aims at articulating the democratic management of the right to exercise freedom of thought and religion, in the context of citizens living harmoniously in diversity. On the one hand, it seeks to understand Bilbao's socio-religious reality, and on the other hand, to recognise the articulation between the public administration and different organisations and religious sensibilities. In this line, the **Religious Diversity Participation Committee** is a consultative forum between the City Council and the different religious

denominations in Bilbao, in which different topics on the public management of religious diversity can be discussed and contrasted.

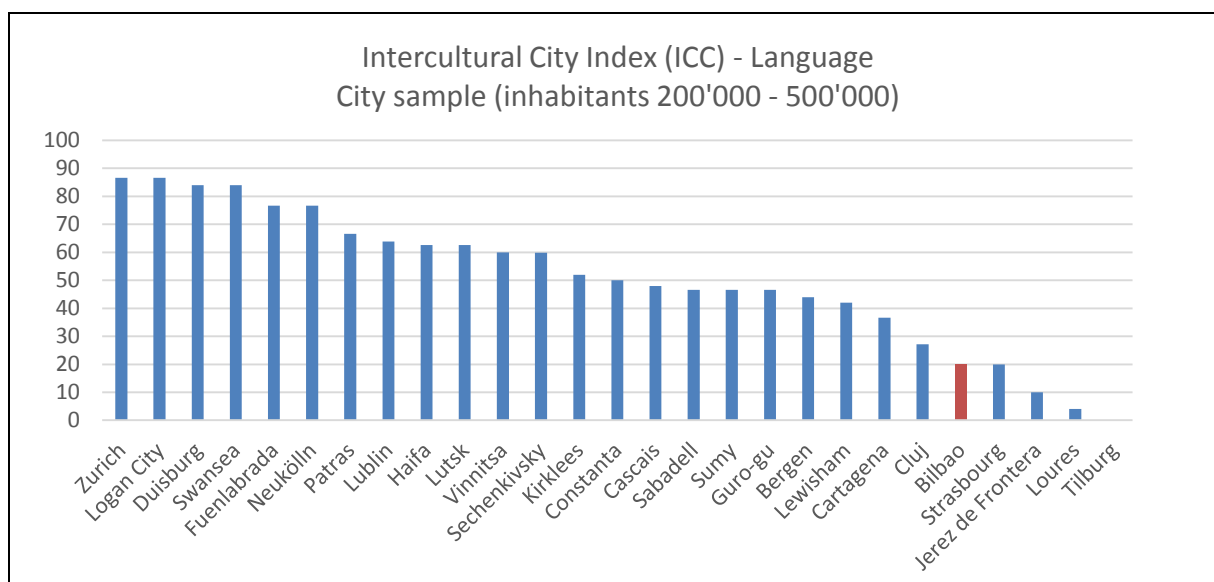
Suggestions

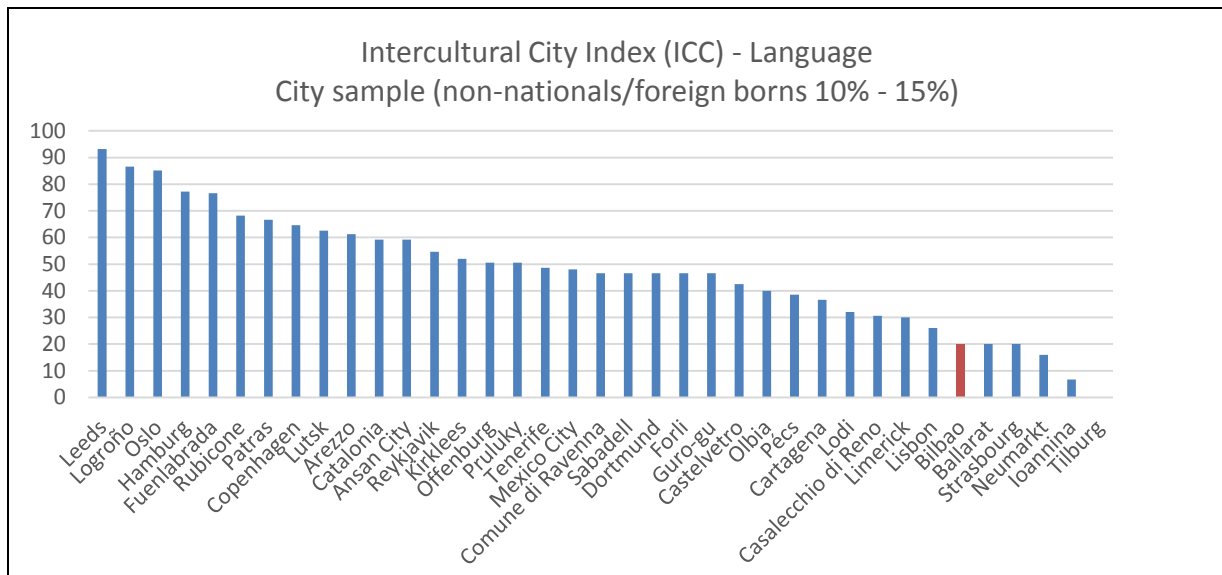
Berlin-Neukölln supports the organisation “LebensWelt” (“Living Environment”) in its intercultural mediation project at the Rixdorfer Primary School in Neukölln, which is visited by 19 different nationalities and by many children with families that do not speak German or English. The intercultural mediators work with parents and teachers to solve specific conflicts or problems, such as learning difficulties or other problems that teachers and pupils have with one another. Moreover, the mediators familiarise parents and children from minority/migrant background with the German school system and offer advice on upbringing and how to support their children’s education. Parents are thereby encouraged to take part in their children’s school life and to see that their children’s education is the task of both school and parent.

LANGUAGE

The provision of courses and other facilities for people with migrant backgrounds to learn the receiving country’s language(s) is important to ensure social and economic integration. It does however need to be supplemented with activities which highlight the value of other languages, and enable people with migrant origins not only to preserve and transmit their languages to their children and other members of the community, but also to take pride in them as a heritage enriching the local community. An intercultural city promotes multilingualism as a resource for education, business, tourism, cultural life, etc. It underlines the value of all languages present in the city, for instance by giving opportunities to diverse language speakers to express themselves in their mother tongue in public and at cultural events and by promoting all events that offer opportunities for linguistic exchanges and mixing.

Bilbao’s score in the field of language is 20, considerably lower than the city sample result of 46, and lower than previous ICC Index results for the city.





The Basque Government is the competent administration on educational matters and provides specific resources for educational centres, such as the [Linguistic Support Teaching Staff](#), Spanish and Basque teaching for foreigners in Adult Education Centres.

To meet the needs that are not covered by other resources, Bilbao City Council supports the programme “Ojalá”, run by ITAKA Foundation, for learning Spanish as a way to facilitate the integration in the labour market. The Basque Department also supports various literacy initiatives aimed at specific groups (families, people with less resources).

Recommendations

The Barcelona Centre for Linguistic Normalization (CLN) welcomes over 17,000 students from 127 different countries. The classes are thus an active example of diversity and the respect of difference. It is for this reason that the CNL has adopted intercultural dialogue as one of the strategic values of its educational project, in which new arrivals are acquainted with the characteristic traits of Catalan culture, not in terms of a single, homogeneous model but rather from the position of exchange, plurality, interaction and the miscegenation and hybridisation of culture.

In relation to minority languages, within the framework of the General Call for Grants of Barcelona City Council, technical support has been given projects aimed at the recognition of language diversity (i.e. ‘Teaching Ukrainian language, culture and history’, ‘Conservation of Russian language and culture’, ‘Prollema, teaching mother tongue’. ‘Teaching of Mother Tongues; Arabic and Urdu’, ‘Multilingual city’ and many more. In 2019 a meeting was held with organisations working in the field of linguistic diversity and mother tongue teaching with the aim of establishing a common space of knowledge of the entities and finding synergies that promote the linguistic diversity of the city. Donostia-San Sebastián provides support to projects that seek to raise awareness and give a positive image of minority languages, such as Bozak, a radio programme run by a feminist initiative to give voice to migrant women and Uhinak Kolorretan, realised by migrant communities, both in Antxeta radio.

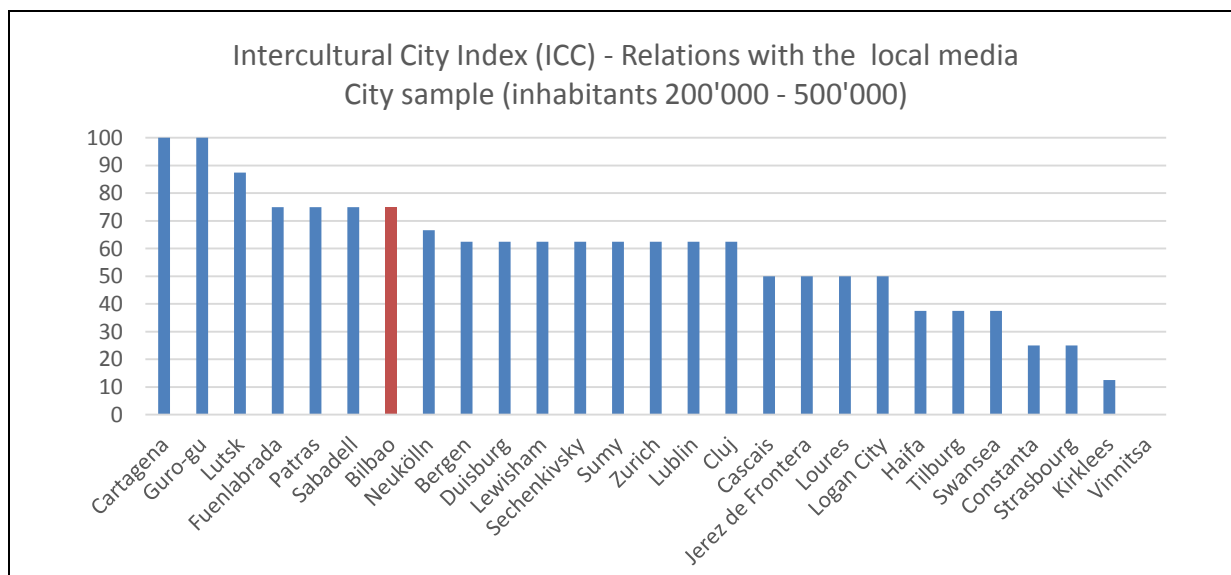
The European primary school in Vienna has pioneered an intercultural pedagogy based on multilingualism. Eight years ago, the school realized that they had pupils with 28 different mother tongues and decided to explore the possibilities this language diversity give. They came up with the idea of language ateliers where children could learn to appreciate their own language as well as the others and understand that there are no superior and inferior languages. The school was fortunate to have teachers with different mother tongues who also spoke additional languages and used this talent pool. The school established language ateliers in Arabic, Turkish,

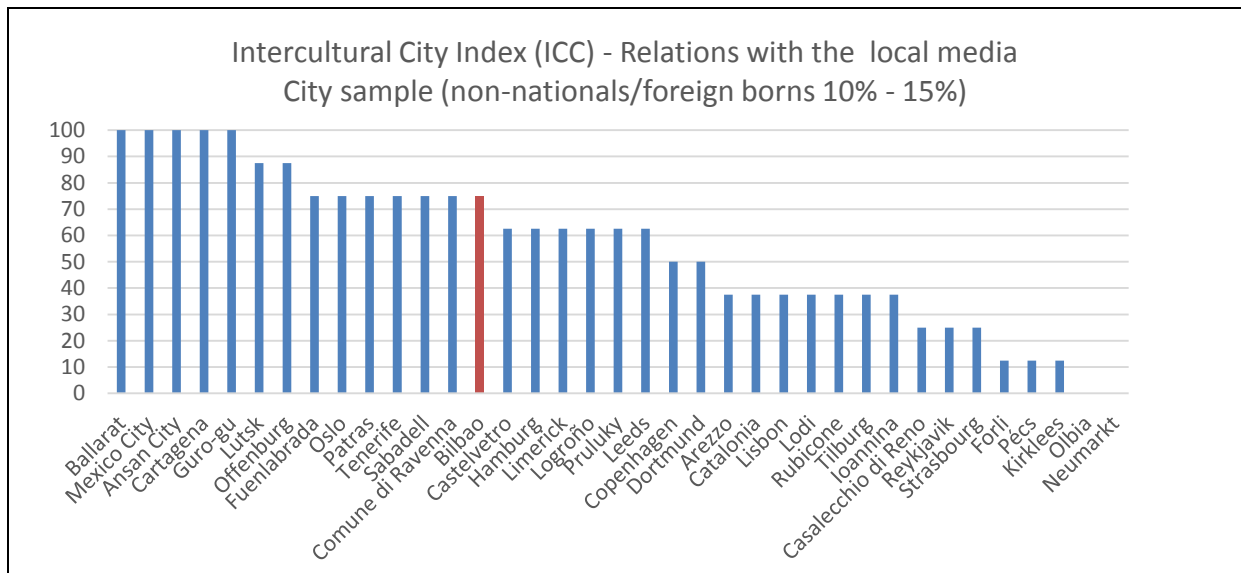
Bosnian/Serb/Croatian, Kurdish, Polish, Albanian, Slovak and Hungarian and many other languages. The ateliers run in the second, third and fourth grade of the primary cycle. The children chose the languages and their preferences decide the final language offer. Each child had six weeks induction each in five different languages per year. Over three years they experience 18 languages and cultures. The learning methods are quite different from one atelier to another as teachers draw on their own experience and cultural sensitivity. Learning content draws upon suggestions by pupils – e.g.: a winter atelier about Christmas time in different countries, meet and greet, counting, food etc. In the intermediate courses there is no fixed theme, teachers decide - dancing, theatre, arts and craft, music, children are active and move around and express themselves. In three years, the children develop their own language portfolio and a strong awareness of the value of diversity and the equal importance of languages. The decoration of the school is also multilingual and pluricultural, the school cultivates diversity as the norm. The school is situated in a disadvantaged neighborhood and achieves good results in tests – demonstrating that the multilingual approach and cultural empowerment compensates for learning difficulties which may be present.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Traditional and social media have a very powerful influence on attitudes towards cultural diversity and other diversities. Much of the information people access is generated by international newsgroups, national media, or by private persons in the case of social media. Nevertheless, there is still much the city authorities can do to achieve a climate of public opinion more conducive to positive intercultural relations. In its communication, an intercultural city constantly highlights the positive contribution of people with migrant/minority backgrounds to the social, cultural and economic development of the city. More importantly, the city partners with local media agencies so that they purvey a similar message and cover events occurring in the city in an objective and unbiased way.

Bilbao achieved a rate of 75, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 47. This shows what comprehensive work they undertake with the media.





The municipal communication office develops the communication strategy of the Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan, organising communication of the strategic milestones of Bilbao City Council's intercultural action. Communication is made through Press Conferences and Releases, as well as through social networks with specific intercultural content, where publications related to this content are made.

Bilbao City Council provides support to different Media projects, promoted by journalists with a migrant background through grants. That is the case of the TV channel from the 'Emigrados sin Fronteras' association and Candela Radio.

Suggestions

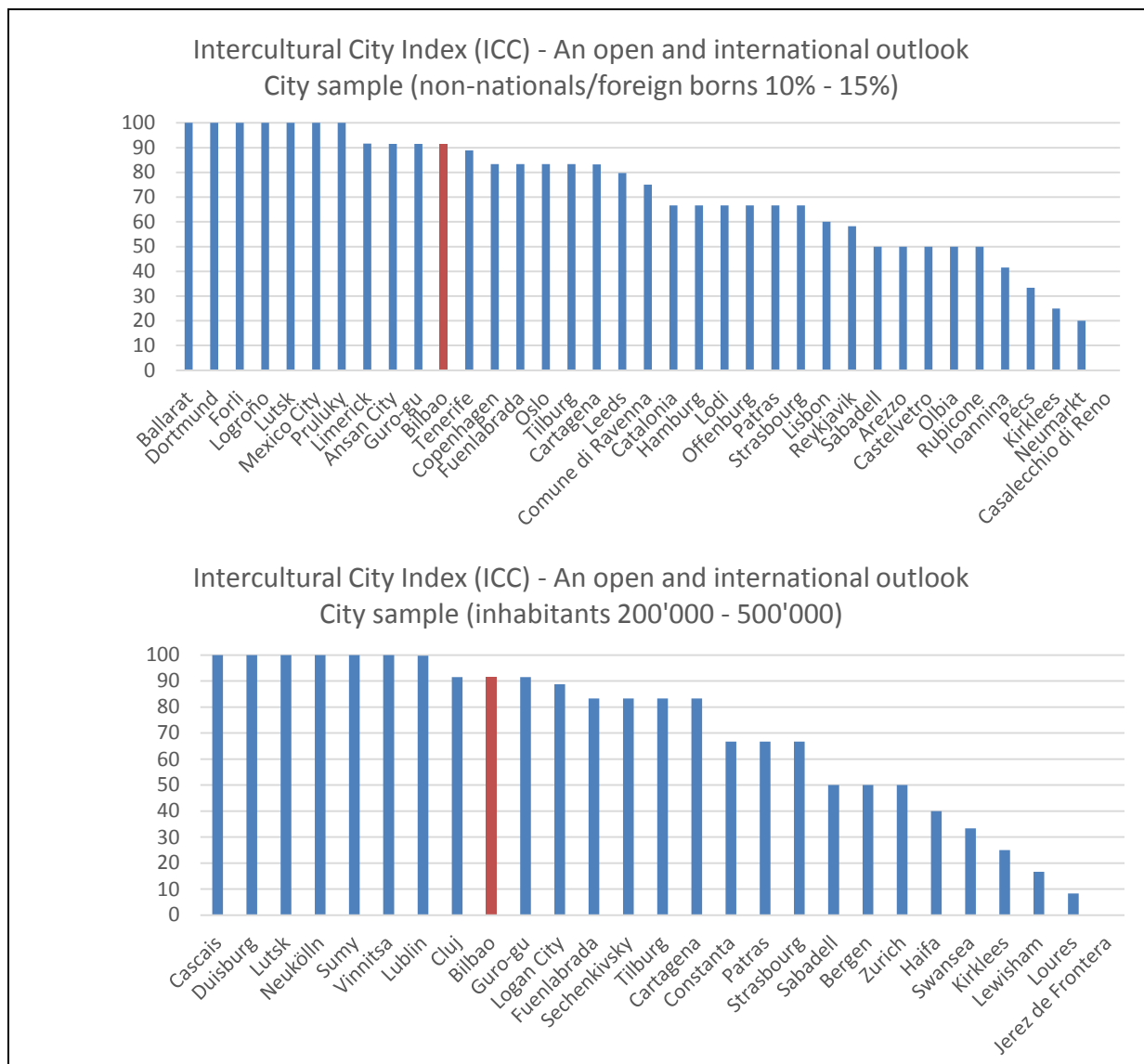
Bilbao's score in this area is rather good but it could still improve looking at what other cities are doing, especially in the engagement with the local media or social media when portraying people with migrant/minority backgrounds. In Donostia/San Sebastian (Spain) the city works in partnership with civil society organisation SOS Racismo which has an observatory for media treatment on migration and diversity issues (financed by the municipality) with daily updates. Actions, research and publications can be consulted at www.mugak.eu.

In Barcelona, the Antirumours Network is made up of different working groups, including the Communication Group. It aims at promoting and designing actions for the use of an inclusive language and the correct treatment of cultural diversity in the media and social networks and reflecting and proposing alternative counter-narratives and narratives on cultural diversity through communication campaigns, materials and other types of resources. In addition, this group monitors the way in which the media represents minorities or migrants and produces resources and materials such as a computer graphic that gives basic recommendations to critically analyse the news that reaches us and not to contribute to its dissemination. The cross-cutting of communication has been done by supporting the [Observatory of Discriminatory Discourse in the Media](#) and the [Observatory of the Hate Speech in the Media](#), projects of the Ramon Barnils Group of Journalists, with the support of the Directorate of Services for Citizenship and Diversity of Barcelona City Council.

INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Although cities have little or no competence in foreign policy, they can actively seek to make connections in other countries to develop business relations, exchange knowledge and know-how, encourage tourism, or simply acknowledge the ties the city may have elsewhere. An intercultural city actively encourages interactions with the outside world and in particular with the cities, regions or countries of origin of its inhabitants.

Name of the Bilbao's score in the field of international outlook is 92, considerably higher than the city sample result of 69, which highlights the job carried out in this field.



Bilbao 2030 International Action Strategy vectors are: Economic development, employment and talent; Social cohesion and values Alignment with the United Nations' SDGs; Excellence in urban transformation; Identity and culture; Open government: intelligent, participative and transparent governance; Mobility and sustainability.

The city's International Cooperation policy is expressed through the **Development Cooperation Director Plan III** (2016-2020), currently in progress. The municipal commitment for 2020 involved more than €3,000,000 for cooperation with development, which approaches a figure of 0.7%. Bilbao has traditionally demonstrated its commitment to the development of the poorest countries of the South, from a perspective of joint responsibility and a concept of global citizenship.

There is an annual partnership agreement with the **University of the Basque Country**, the aim of which is to make it easier for foreign students to access studies at the UBC, through accommodation and/or economic support in Bilbao. This support can be requested by student applicants or beneficiaries of international protection, and students studying at universities with an agreement with the UBC that are located in countries considered priority by the Bilbao City Council Development Cooperation Director Plan III.

Bilbao has partnership agreements, twinning agreements and pacts with different cities in broad fields, from urban development to the promotion of tourism. Many of these agreements are the product of relationships with diaspora communities, the relationship with immigrants in the city and their cities of origin, or the interests of companies and business associations.

As an example, the ‘Africa Basque Challenge’ is organised by the University of Mondragón and the Mondragón Team Academy, and it arose from the existing relations between Africa and the Basque Country to promote new social and business realities co-created by young people. The teams selected took part in a bootcamp in Nairobi, after which they received training in digital entrepreneurship in Bilbao.

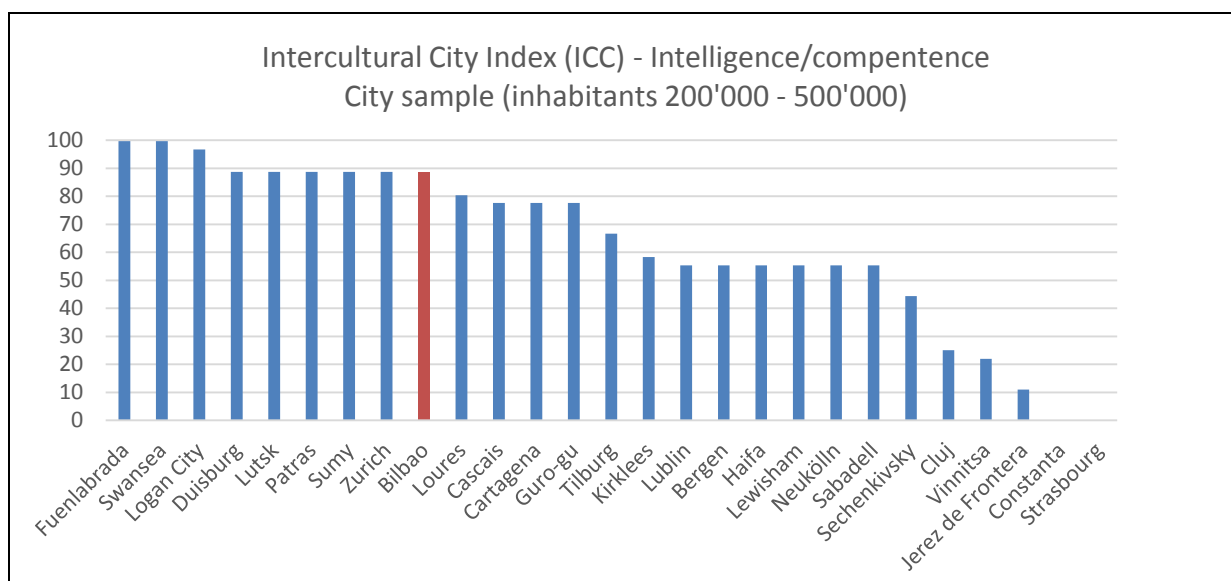
Suggestions

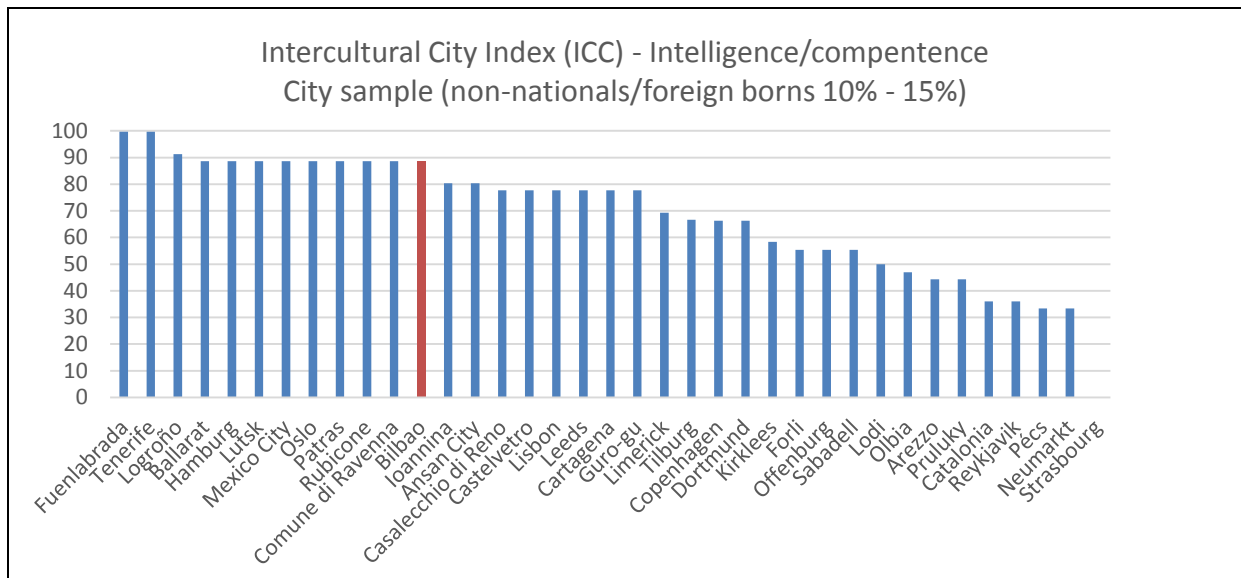
Cities across Europe are becoming aware of the need to develop such “foreign affairs” and most commonly use city twinning, artistic exchanges and development co-operation to this end. Some cities are trying to foster business relations with countries of origin, seeking investment or joint ventures, but few have an (inter)cultural international policy agenda where both parties contribute as equals to supporting integration, social cohesion and respect for diversity. Reggio Emilia, member of the Intercultural cities network, has made a major step in this respect. It has just signed, through the Intercultural centre Mondinsieme, an agreement with the Moroccan Ministry in charge of relations with the diaspora. The agreement underpins Reggio’s holistic intercultural policy and seeks to “promote socio-cultural mixing and openness towards the “other””.

INTERCULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETENCE

Nobody can be an expert in all the languages and cultures that coexist in contemporary cities. Yet, in an intercultural city, officials have an intercultural “mind-set” which enables them to detect cultural differences and modulate their responses accordingly. Intercultural intelligence and competence require a specific know-how when dealing with unfamiliar situations and not an in-depth and often elusive knowledge of all cultures. Such sensitivity and self-confidence is not commonly-seen. It is a technical skill which can be acquired through training and practice. In an intercultural city, the authorities view such skills as equally important and essential to the good functioning of the city as the other professional and technical skills usually expected from public employees.

Bilbao achieved a rate of 89, which is considerably higher than the city sample’s achievement rate of 62, reflecting its overall positive ‘mind-set’ in this area.





The **Bilbao Immigration Observatory**, in collaboration with the Public University of the Basque Country, publishes an annual study on Bilbao's foreign population, studies on immigration and social cohesion in different neighbourhoods and a barometer on immigration (launch every three years). It analyses the perceptions, values and attitudes of Bilbao's population towards immigration and it is identified as a key tool for evaluating the Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan. This research provides essential information for designing municipal strategy for the management of diversity and interculturality.

Every year, different training modules are incorporated into the municipal staff training plan. The latest editions (2017-2018-2019) included the following courses: Immigration and interculturality; basic module on immigration; interculturality and gender violence; Stop the Rumour: knowledge, resources and skills; and family educational guidelines, related to the following groups: Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Maghreb, Eastern Europe and China.

Bilbao is involved in a project on **Intercultural Competences**, funded by the Council of Europe, which aims at defining the basic keys of an intercultural competent public action related to the project design and training local administration staff mainstreaming the intercultural approach in the project design. In addition, the Council is involved in the working group of Intercultural Competences at RECI, which reflects on the concept of intercultural Competence itself and aims at increasing the competences of technical and political staff in the local administration to design better policies with the intercultural approach. Both projects will provide Bilbao with meaningful resources and tools to have an intercultural "mind-set" not only at the city council but within the organisations that work with the Council. It is key for the Council to carry on these projects in the long term, mainstreaming the need for intercultural competences and disseminating the resources and tools produced by both initiatives.

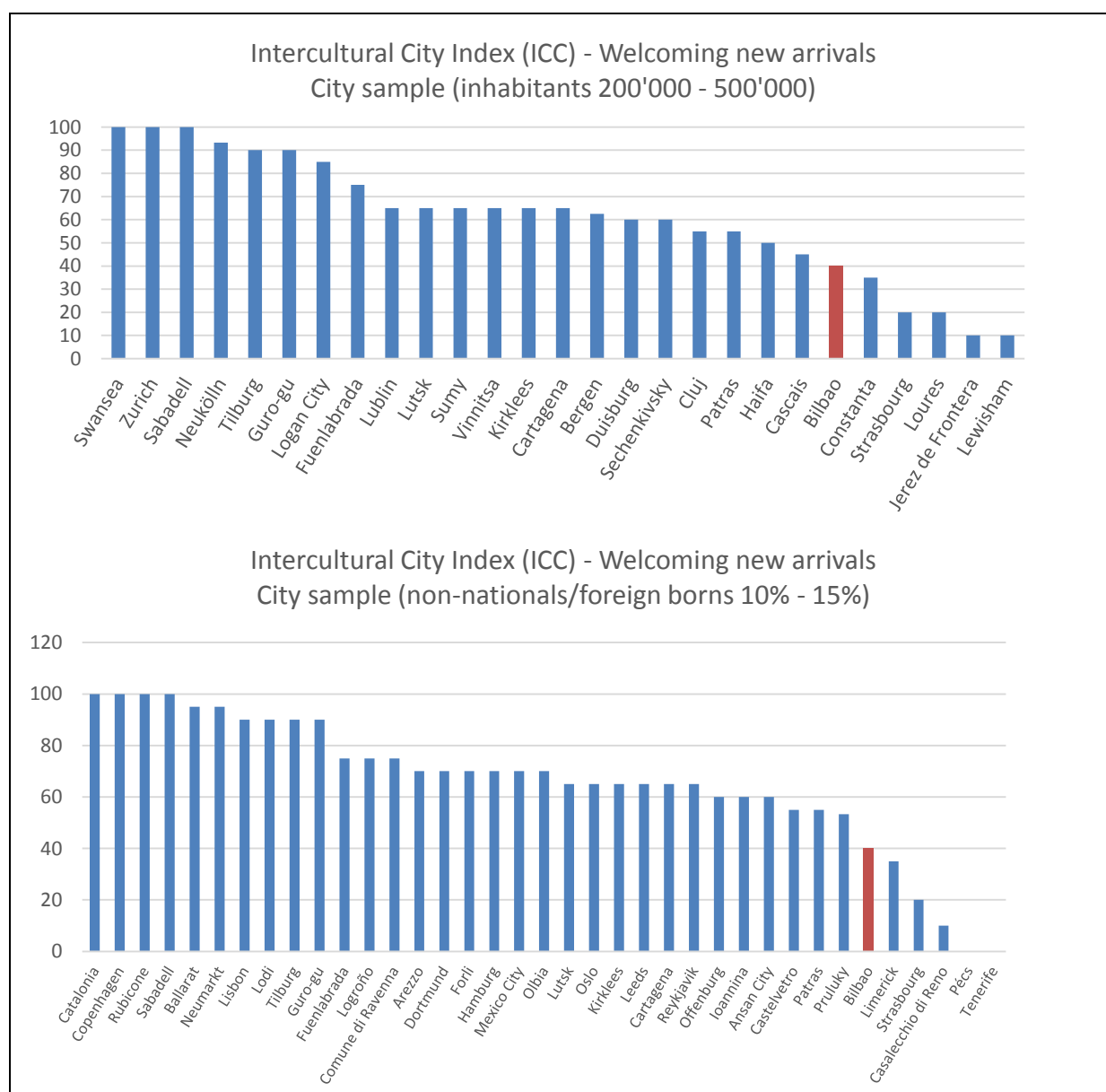
Suggestions

To strengthen its position in this area, Bilbao could further develop tools to understand and better manage diversity in all its dimensions. For instance, the City of Vienna's integration and diversity monitoring produces two separate Monitors: The **Integration Monitor** looks into the labour market situation of migrants in Vienna and their own and their children's choices in education and training. It also deals with legal equality issues and the political participation of migrants. The Diversity Monitor shows how the Vienna City Administration deals with the increasing diversity of the population (answering questions such, for instance, Has the city government adapted its services to the diverse needs of residents? Has diversity management been implemented in all departments? How diverse is the staff of the city Administration?).

WELCOMING NEWCOMERS

People arriving in a city for an extended stay, whatever their circumstances (expats, migrant workers, spouses, refugees, unaccompanied minors, retired persons, etc.), are likely find themselves disorientated. The less familiar they are with the new environment, the more support they will need to feel comfortable and confident enough to start building a new social and professional network. The way in which the city coordinates and effectively delivers various support measures strongly conditions their capacity to integrate or, conversely, their tendency to remain confined to a cultural “ghetto”. This also depends to a great degree on whether the rest of the city’s population is open to the idea of welcoming newcomers in their capacity as residents and citizens or, on the contrary, is accustomed to viewing newcomers as outsiders who pose a potential threat. Again, it is the message the authorities convey on diversity, in communication or through concrete actions, that determines to a certain degree attitudes towards newcomers.

Bilbao’s score in the field of welcoming newcomers is 40, considerably lower than the city sample result of 57. Although the score is better than the first ICC Index evaluation for Bilbao, is a bit lower than in the 2013 and 2018 editions.



Bilbao City Council has a general support service for all citizens, which is managed by the Citizen Support Office and the District Offices, where paperwork related to the City Council can be processed. The service offers an [on-line multilingual guide](#) (seven languages) that include all the practical information about local resources for newcomers: Registering as a resident; Health assistance; Municipal social services; Social benefits; A Home; Employment; Education; Driving licence; Consulates; Citizen security; Help for abused victims; Status legalisation. In addition, the [Welcome Resources Map](#) gathers the resources necessary to carry out basic procedures and management such as registration, access to social services, health, or seeking employment. city services and agencies provide welcome support for particular groups of newcomers

The welcome support is a responsibility of municipal social services and targets particular groups of newcomers such as families: integration in schools (i.e. they offer information about the education system translated into seven languages) and family reunification processes. In addition, a welcome programme for refugees has been set up by the Basque Government through a network of institutional collaboration, in coordination with the central government and specialised NGOs.

Last, Bilbao City Council is currently participating in defining a Basque Welcome Model, promoted by the Basque Government within the framework of Action Plan V on Citizenship, Interculturality and Immigration. The Bilbao City Council Government has committed to this process, also taking on the need to develop the municipality's own tools that ensure a comprehensive welcome model for migrants and refugees.

Recommendations

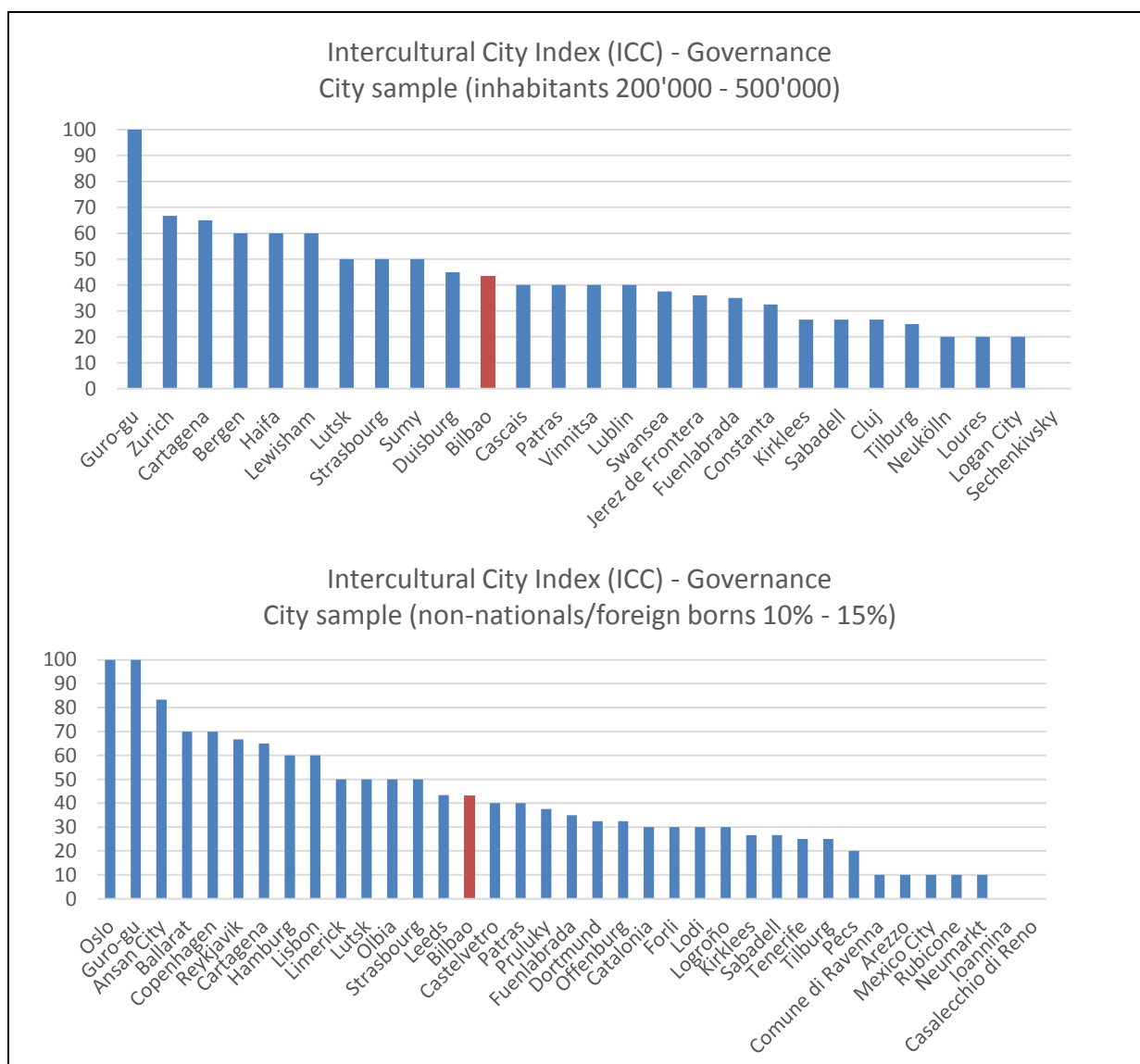
In this area, Bilbao could take some inspiration from successful initiatives held in other cities like Stavanger. Several years ago, the **Stavanger Chamber of Commerce and Industries** started a program to introduce international employees and their families to the city. The region's Welcome Centre is called INN (International Network of Norway) and it focuses on the practical transition into Norwegian life and the needs of the employee and family. INN publishes a monthly newsletter in English and organises about 80-100 events annually for its members. The events relate to information needed as a newcomer to Norway, this involves everything from taxes and pensions, driving and driving license, practicalities of having children in Norway, health system, work etc. as well as social events such as Portuguese wine evenings, Visit the USA, Italian evenings. In addition, INN provides support for accompanying spouses in regard to job training, employment and building a network. The social aspect is important as it means opportunities for newcomers and residents to meet in the context of activities organised in co-operation with the local associations. Norwegians are generally very active in their free time, and newcomers are encouraged to join. A Welcome course day about 'Area Orientation' also takes place. This is a full course day about geography, history, Norwegian culture, values and beliefs, and practical information about the welfare system, health system, and daily living. A seminar on 'Creating an International WE culture' is offered to companies with various nationalities including Norwegians. This seminar raises awareness around attitudes and personal responsibility. A good international team focus should be on the positive strengths we all bring to the table rather than on the 'negative' differences. Eradicating the 'us and them' mindset and creating a 'We' culture is beneficial to the company, the employees and ultimately the region.

The **Tenderol programme** is coordinated by the Catalan Commission for Refugees with the support of the Sabadell City Council. It arises from the need to respond to people who have been denied their application for international protection or who have remained outside the State programme. But also, to people who, having completed the State programme do not have yet full autonomy. In these situations, where there is a risk of social exclusion, interdisciplinary intervention teams are required, and the municipalities are the closest administration managing the needs of the people who live there.

LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP

The most powerful and far-reaching action a city can take to be more intercultural is to open up democratic representation and decision-making to all residents of the city irrespective of their origin, nationality or residence status. Formal political rights at the local level are determined nationally or at the regional level in some federal states. Nonetheless, there is much that a city council can do to influence the way in which diverse groups interact and co-operate around the allocation of power and resources. An intercultural city strives to include all residents in the policy-making process and ensures thereby that public services are provided according to their diverse needs and not according to their cultural or political proximity to public decision-makers.

Bilbao achieved a rate of 43, which is slightly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 36, but there is also room for improvement in this area.



People with nationality from a country belonging to the European Union (EU nationals) can put themselves forward as candidates in local elections.

As well as those with nationality from a member state of the European Union, nationals from third countries can participate in local elections, provided that a series of conditions is met. The right to vote in local elections for nationals of third countries depends upon the existence of reciprocity agreements. More specifically, nationals of

the following countries can access this right: Bolivia, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Iceland, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. Regulations on foreign persons' right to vote and stand for election is a state matter, and the local administration does not have any competence in this regard. Local institutions carry out informational campaigns on the requirements for accessing this right.

However, some initiatives to encourage people with migrant/minority backgrounds to engage in political life are deployed. This is the case of **the Local Immigration Council**, a body of an advisory and informative nature, which was born of a desire to guarantee democratic participation amongst immigrant associations and other agents involved in the development and promotion of policies for integration and harmony between the different areas of political, cultural, economic and social life in the municipality. The Council is represented by municipal institutional representation; immigrant associations; coordinators and federations of immigrant associations and support for immigrants, as well as political parties with municipal representation with a voice but without a vote.

Likewise, the participation of migrants is promoted in various processes of citizen participation that the city leads in the design of public initiatives.

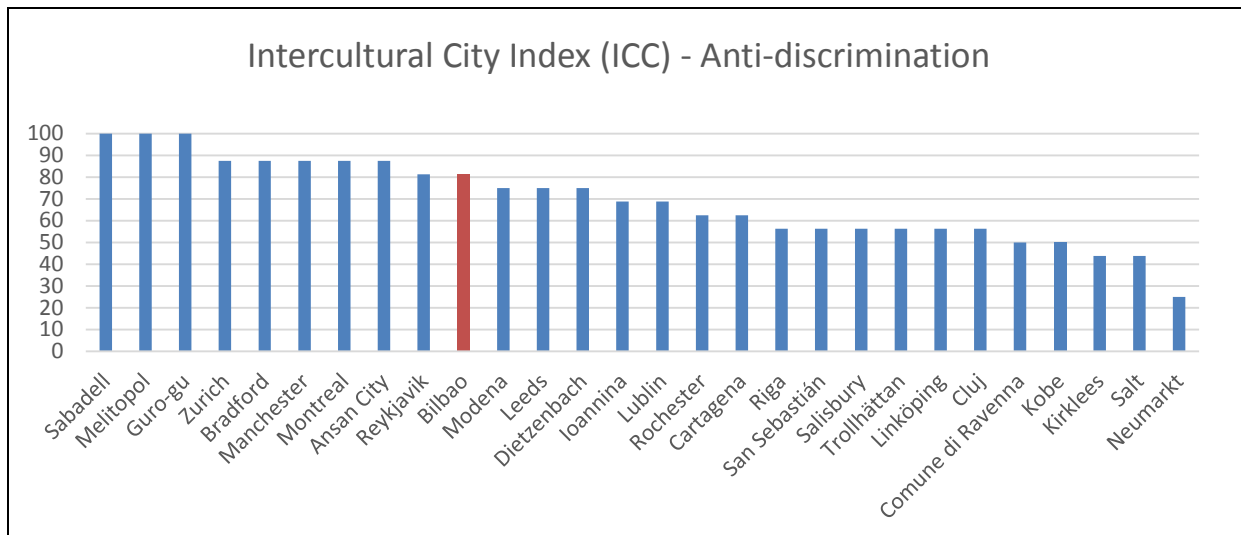
Suggestions

The Immigrants' Council (IC) is an advisory body that was set up in Stavanger already in 1986, under the aegis of the Mayor. Its main objective was to ensure a more active involvement of the immigrant population in local public life, on an equal footing, and to engage migrants in addressing problems affecting the community as a whole. The IC was also due to co-operate very closely with the local politicians (town councillors) and with the regional authorities responsible for addressing those issues. Ultimately, the IC was meant to improve the daily lives of foreign nationals in Stavanger. Since its setting up, the IC has actively and constructively worked at addressing a whole range of issues, in particular employment, housing, urban planning, health, education, recognition of skills and qualifications, teaching and learning of both mother tongue and Norwegian. It has built bridges between the immigrant communities and the locals and has encouraged mutual understanding and interfaith dialogue. In terms of procedure, the City Council appoints half of the members of the IC, while the other half is elected by representatives of the migrant communities (appointed by the City Council). The Chair has a 4-year mandate and is also responsible of a budget allocated by the City Council. The IC meets ten times a year and submits an annual report at a City Council meeting.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Racism, xenophobia, homophobia, intolerance against certain religious groups, gender discrimination, prejudice and ethnocentrism, are all conducive to discriminatory attitudes and practices. They often subsist in people's minds despite laws proscribing discrimination against persons or groups of persons on grounds of race, colour, language, religion, nationality, national/ethnic origin or sexual orientation. An intercultural city assures every effort is made to ensure non-discrimination in all of its policies, programmes and activities. The city works in partnership with civil society organisations and other institutions that combat discrimination and offer support and reparation to victims. It also communicates widely on the risks discrimination presents for social cohesion, quality of life and the local economy.

Indicators on anti-discrimination have been included in the ICC Index in January 2019. The data so far collected is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. Twenty-eight cities have so far (October 2020) replied to this new index chapter. Bilbao's score in the field of anti-discrimination is 81, considerably higher than the city sample result of 69, through the use of different mechanisms to identify cases of racism, xenophobia, homophobia or intolerance against citizens.



Bilbao City Council has a Procedure articulated by the **Municipal Police** for early detection and action in situations of risk, especially those involving vulnerable people. The procedure responds to the objective of promoting detection mechanisms and intervention protocols in the event of racist, xenophobic, homophobic or discriminatory incidents or attitudes.

The **Eraberean Network** is a network promoted by the Basque Government to fight against discrimination on the basis of racial, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation/identity or gender identity. The Network is made up also of various social organisations that work in the field of immigration, with the Roma population and with LGBTBI groups. Eraberean offers a specialised support service, which consists of assistance and advice to potential victims of discrimination on the basis of racial, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation/identity or gender identity, and to those who are aware of such discriminatory situations. Support can take place in person, on the phone, or via email. In addition, the Eraberean Network works with an approach based on prevention and raising social awareness. For these purposes, it carries out awareness-raising activities, trains agents, creates dissemination materials, advises social institutions and organisations, etc. The antennas complement this awareness and training work by bringing these initiatives closer to their associates and other key agents who are close to them.

Social organisations in Bilbao carry out research and studies related to situations of discrimination that occur in the city. And some of these actions have been supported by the City Council as part of the annual call for proposals. Likewise, Bilbao City Council has several intervention projects focused on preventing discrimination. These include the Antirumours strategy and the Intercultural Community Intervention project.

Bilbao City Council has been running the **Antirumours Strategy** since 2013. It is divided into the following lines of intervention: 1) the Districts: the strategy is currently active in five districts, where the maintenance, consolidation and expansion of the network of antirumours agents is promoted. The network's offers training and launches awareness-raising actions in the different districts through participative processes with citizens. More than 200 people are currently associated with the network. 2) Intervention with young people through actions in schools and youth centres. 3) Antirumours Creative Writing: this line develops actions linked to writing and literature with the aim of generating alternative narratives of diversity and immigration.

The Strategy has its own materials, generated with the objective of tackling prejudice, stereotypes and rumours (Antirumours arguments, Antirumours agents' guide, Antirumours keys to communication, [Antirumours Test](#), the publication "Games to Dissolve Rumours", with dynamics for intervention with young people). Moreover, Bilbao City Council is a member of ZAS – Zurrumurren Aurkako Sarea, a network of social and institutional agents in the Basque Autonomous Community that carries out a strategy of social transformation from the perspective of human rights, interculturality and anti-racism.

Bilbao City Council has different mechanisms to promote **gender equality** in organisations. Among the criteria for evaluating the programmes submitted to the calls for proposals, the cross-sectional incorporation of the gender

perspective is taken into consideration (incorporation of the gender perspective into the programme; non-sexist use of language and images; presentation of a report on activities disaggregated by sex; that the programme includes specific measures that ensure it is accessible for all persons).

Furthermore, Bilbao City Council Ordinance for equality between men and women was approved in 2018. The scope of application includes private organisations that sign contracts or collaboration agreements or are beneficiaries of grants. This ordinance is governed (amongst others), by the principle of Respect for diversity and difference, based on an intersectional approach, as well as indisputable ethics. Public policy and municipal action must always take into account that the different forms of exclusion and discrimination are based on social and cultural categories such as gender, ethnicity, language, class, functional diversity, sexual orientation, gender and/or sexual identity, religion, age, nationality, educational level, and other axes of identity, which interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels. This interrelationship generates complex identities that reflect the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination. The ordinance establishes that all municipal areas will have equality units, and that one of their functions is to promote, review and monitor the incorporation of equality clauses in the contracts and subsidies of their department, and to promote other measures in favour of equality. (attach ordinance)

Suggestions

Despite Bilbao City Council does not have a dedicated service to support victims of discrimination, the Council could consider supporting civil society organisations in doing so. The Local Anti-Discrimination Bureaux in Botkyrka (Sweden) assists people who experience discrimination. They are independent non-governmental organisations that explain their rights to people, assist them to make a complaint, or refer them to the necessary institution. The municipal council stands out for the relationship it has developed with the Anti-Discrimination Bureau in its area, including the provision of significant annual funding. This Anti-Discrimination Bureau is an important resource for those who experience discrimination in being able to take action to change their situation and experience. It provides important inputs for the work of Botkyrka municipality in enabling issues of discrimination in the area to be tracked and understood; raising incidents of discrimination with city as necessary; and contributing to the developmental work of the municipality in activities to challenge all forms of discrimination.

Bilbao is considering carrying out a review of the municipal regulations in order to identify the mechanisms that discriminate particular vulnerable groups. Inspiration could be found in other cities, such as Bradford (UK), which is required by the Equality Act 2010 to assess the compliance of every commissioned contract. This partly ensures that the Council reviews all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanism that may discriminate residents with migrants or minority background. The Equality and Community Relations Group also investigates the equality of opportunity and access in relations to public services for all citizens. A group is also set up within the Council to address equality and diversity issues within the organization.

In addition, the Council of Europe is currently working on a new thematic initiative: [preventive systemic discrimination in public administrations](#). A webinar is organised to present a research study and a policy brief in this field. Good practice will be also shared among ICC cities. It is highly recommended to Bilbao to take part in this initiative to learn from other cities experiences.

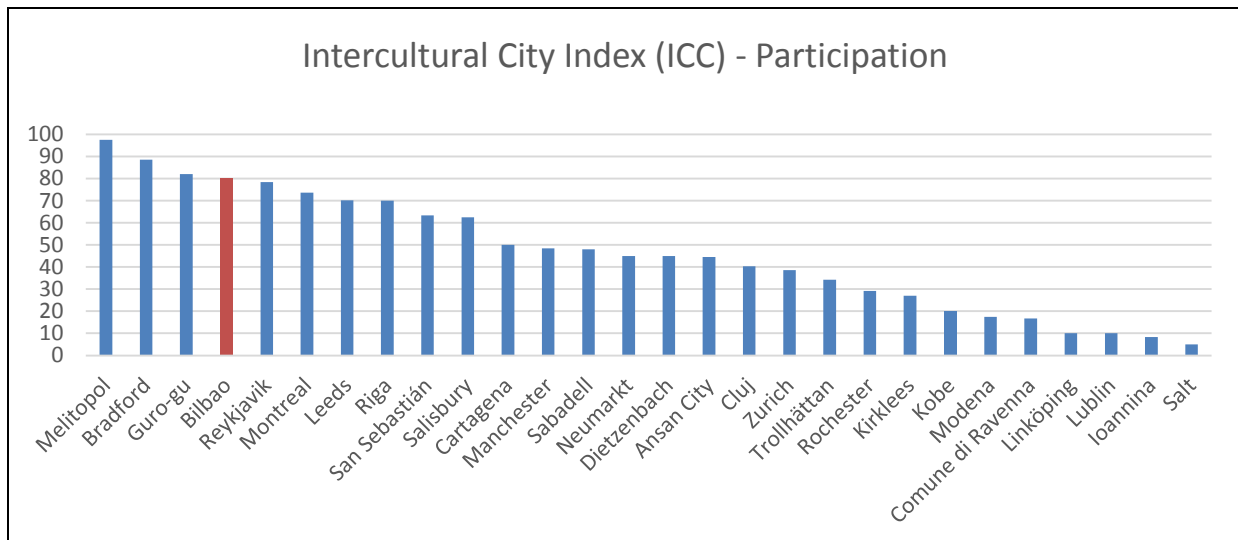
Last, Barcelona City Council, based on the work carried out by the [Observatory of Discrimination in Barcelona](#), detected that one of the sources of discrimination in the city is related to access to the housing rental market. In view of this evidence, the Directorate of Services for Citizenship Rights of Barcelona City Council has promoted a [study](#) in recent months to look more deeply into this issue and objectively assess the extent of this discrimination. In addition, the Council is currently conducting a study on intuitional and structural racism.

PARTICIPATION

Inclusion, power-sharing and participation are the golden keys of intercultural policy-making. A range of studies have demonstrated that inclusive integration policies produce better outcomes in terms of social cohesion, trust in the administration, safety, quality of services, welfare, good governance and economic growth. People with

different backgrounds and experiences can bring innovative solutions to common challenges, as well as anticipate problems that might arise. Conversely, when people encounter barriers to participation, or otherwise choose intentionally not to participate, they may, passively, withdraw from social and public life or choose, actively, to live outside prevailing social customs and law. An intercultural city actively seeks the participation of all residents in the various decision-making processes that affect life in the city. By doing so, it increases support, and thereby the sustainability of local policies, while at the same significantly reducing the economic costs of social exclusion and instability.

Indicators on participation have been included in the ICC Index in January 2019. The data so far collected is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. Twenty-eight cities have so far (October 2020) replied to this new index chapter. Bilbao's score in the field of participation is 80, considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 46.



As it has mentioned before, Bilbao has the **Local Immigration Council**. This is a collective body of an advisory and informative nature, which was born of a desire to guarantee democratic participation amongst immigrant associations and other agents involved in the development and promotion of policies for integration and harmony between the different areas of political, cultural, economic and social life in the municipality.

Participation was key when evaluating and designing the Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan. Not only has it served to inform citizens about the new process, but also to involve them in defining its challenges and priorities. In order to enrich the process of drawing up the Bilbao Intercultural Plan II, a participatory model was established that involved all the relevant agents in this field at a local level. In particular, the District Municipal Councils and the Local Immigration Council participated in this process, as did residents of the municipality, through 506 questionnaires collected and through the Municipal Website, with the participation of organisations involved in managing the city's intercultural diversity, as well as citizens in general. There is great consensus in prioritising the following areas of intervention: the educational sphere, mediation, conflict prevention and resolution, the labour sphere and suitability of public services.

There is a civic predisposition to take an active part in the diversity integration initiatives in Bilbao amongst all the groups that have taken part in this participative process. There is interest, and this may lead to social mobilisation.

The **Plan is currently being evaluated and updated** through a participatory process including the following: 8 District Councils, the Local Immigration Council, the Bilbao Religious Diversity Participation Committee, the Civic Council of the City, the Council for Equality Between Men and Women, the Youth Council, the Elderly Promotion Group, strategic groups for people participating in key programmes (Intercultural Community Intervention Project;

Antirumours Strategy; Women, Health and Violence Programme), the group of representatives from social organisations.

The City Council has various general channels to promote citizen participation and communication with the institution, such as “**Your City Council listens to you**” and other municipal apps that do not distinguish between users’ origins. Nevertheless, other projects have taken this matter into account. For example, dialogue committees as part of the aforementioned Bilbao Balioen Hiria project, or the BILBI project.

Additionally, and in relation to **Participatory Budgets**, the Council will analyse the visibility of the Social Cohesion/Immigration section on the list of preferential subjects for which to present citizens proposals for future editions.

At the **Participation Department**, the focus is essentially local participation (the city’s various districts). In general, they do not aspire to verify that certain population groups (including those of migratory origin) actively participate in decision making. However, they are progressively including this particular concern in their work in order to increase the participation of the population in general, and also that of groups that do not traditionally participate in bodies of structured participation.

Regarding the participation of citizens with a migrant or minority background, the City Council counts on the **Local Immigration Council**, where more than 20 migrant associations participate alongside political representatives from the local institution, with the aim of promoting their participation in the design of local public policy.

Furthermore, a **participation process** is being developed for citizens, with the aim of increasing the participation **of people with a migrant background in the Rekalde district**. As a result of this work, we hope to learn about the circumstances that inhibit their participation in structured participation bodies, but also, possibly, in other spaces and forums; and to be able to draw conclusions that can be applied to other districts, and to the city as a whole.

Suggestions

The city should take action to ensure that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds are fairly represented in key institutions and organisations, besides the Local Immigration Council.

Monitoring the participation of city residents with migrant/minority backgrounds in the decision-making processes is key to design better strategies to overcome barriers to participation. Acknowledging the difficulties in doing so, an approach could be to start by conducting a small research on particular areas, such as the Rekalde district. Valencia City Council did so by carrying out a **diagnosis on the participation of migrants** in the city’s associations (neighbourhood, social, cultural, youth, families, sports, etc.), from which an intervention strategy with specific actions was drawn up. The diagnosis was conducted in two specific neighbourhoods in view to extrapolate the results to the whole city. The study included: a map of the civil society association in the neighbourhoods, including both public resources and the citizens’ organisations present in the areas and identifying the main social groups or movements linked to them; a participated diagnosis on the intensity and quality of social and citizen participation of the population of migrant origin; a guide of proposals for action to facilitate and promote their participation.

A high degree of **cooperation with the Participation Department** could be of interest. The intercultural team could be involved in the design and implementation of their Plans and Measures (by proposing strategies to disseminate participatory processes, adapt methodologies, etc.). This is the case, for instance, of the [‘Government measure to promote participation of people various origins and cultural contexts in the channels of participation’](#) (Barcelona City Council). In this sense, Bilbao should take the opportunity to incorporate the participation of the diverse population in the Municipal Citizenship and Diversity, currently under designed.

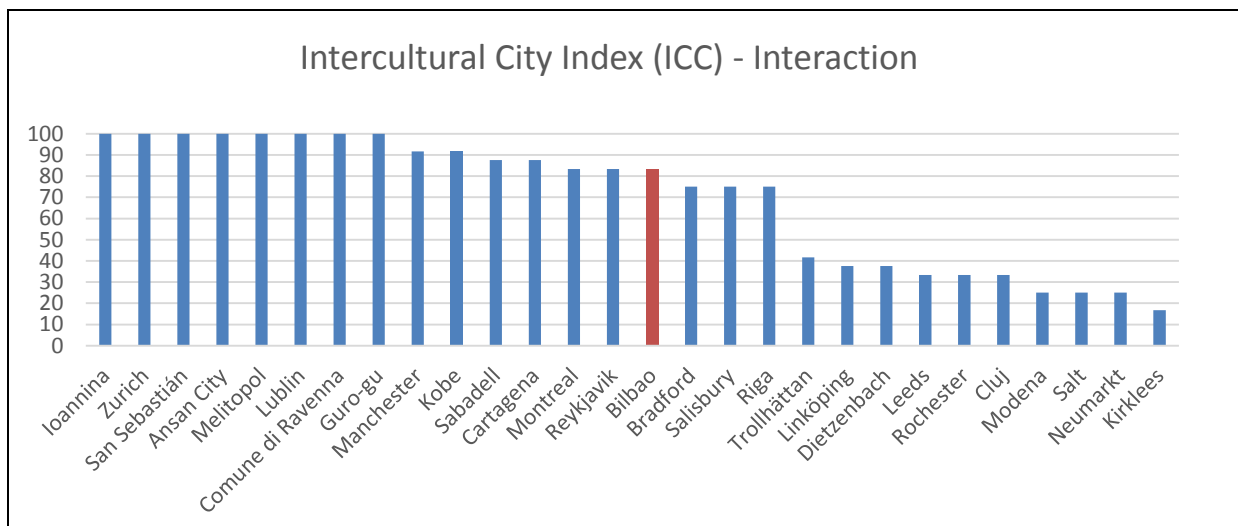
An interesting **participatory process related with the design of the public space** was conducted by Sabadell City Council: "We are Torre-Romeu". The project aimed that residents, associations and professionals work together to plan actions and projects that improve the life of the neighborhood. The return of a diagnosis was made to determine the aspects of improvement and two areas were prioritised. From there, three community working groups were constituted: "Involvement and participation"; "Strengthening of the educational community"; "Torre-Romeu Network of professionals". Each one of these groups has defined objectives and proposals for action. More information on the participatory process could be found [here](#).

A highly recommended lecture is the Guide '[The development of intercultural processes at local level](#)'. The Guide includes best practices and a self-assessment to determine whether a participatory process is intercultural enough (including the leadership and commitment, the understanding of the target groups, the objectives, the channels and communication methods, the participation tools and the evaluation and lessons learnt). A working session could be organised with the Participation Department around this Guide.

INTERACTION

Interaction between people of all kinds is what gives the intercultural city its distinctive value. Identity is not 'given' in a passive sense, but something which is 'enacted' and defined through interaction. In spite of protective laws, prejudice and discrimination can thrive where there is segregation or a lack of contact and dialogue between people. There is ample evidence to prove that, under certain conditions, the more contact people with different backgrounds and lifestyles have with each other, the less likely they are to think and behave in prejudicial ways. Therefore, an intercultural city develops, in partnership with other organisations, a range of policies and actions to encourage more mixing and interaction between diverse groups.

Indicators on interaction have been included in the ICC Index in January 2019. The data so far collected is just starting to become relevant for statistical purposes. Twenty-eight cities have so far (October 2020) replied to this new index chapter. Bilbao's score in the field of participation is 83, considerably slightly than the city sample's achievement rate of 67.



Bilbao City Council has a registry of organisations, where they are identified by type of organisation. This information takes a 'guide' format and is public. Furthermore, Cooperation and Social Cohesion Department has other internal registries containing information on formally constituted associations and informal groups working in this field. In this case, the information is not public.

Bilbao City Council regularly collaborates with social organisations and civil society to promote initiatives that encourage intercultural inclusion. The forms of collaboration are diverse and are articulated within the framework of different programmes, in which grassroots organisations play a leading role. The following relevant programmes should be highlighted: **Intercultural Community Intervention Programme**, **Antirumours Strategy**, awareness-raising campaign, etc. The Cooperation and Social Cohesion Department maintains continuous relations with the social network in the municipality in order to detect intervention needs, identify social projects and collaborate in particular initiatives.

The Local Immigration Council organises "**Recognising Migrant Women in Bilbao**", to acknowledge the trajectory of women with foreign roots in three categories: political women, women who are agents of change and entrepreneur women. Also, the **Women, Health and Violence Programme** bases its strategy on the empowerment of immigrant women in Bilbao, through preventing gender violence, promoting sexual and reproductive health, and establishing transmission channels in the communities to which the participating women belong, raising awareness and informing women in and from their surroundings, with the so-called multiplier or snowball effect, to reach a greater number of women, many of whom Bilbao City Council could not approach in any other way.

Bilbao has taken innovative actions in order to promote intercultural interaction. Within the actions contemplated in the Intercultural Community Intervention Project in the neighbourhoods of Iralabari and Ametzola, a project has been launched under the name "**Historias de Barrio**" (Neighbourhood Stories), with the aim of approaching the intercultural perspective. It is about giving prominence to diversity through a proposal of intervention linked to life stories, serving as a thread to generate synergies between citizens and resources, and relying on them to generate processes of encounter and dialogue that promote empathy and inclusive attitudes. A group has been set up with neighbours' associations, city Council departments and residents).

As part of the **Antirumours Strategy**, it should be noted that in recent years the objective of generating spaces for interaction has been incorporated into the project. In this sense, many of the activities that are currently being developed involve the generation of spaces for meeting, understanding and dialogue between people with different origins and cultural backgrounds. These activities involving interaction are highly valued by the participants.

Last, and despite the training of teachers is a competence of the Basque Government, intercultural skills training is done through the training and educational innovation support centres (Berritzegune). They have a team of professionals to tackle matters of diversity and social cohesion at educational centres.

Suggestions

The Intercultural Department may wish to have its own database on both formally constituted associations and informal groups working in this field (as the Cooperation and Social Cohesion Department does). By building or updating this database (new stakeholders might be interested in joining), the Department could assess how the cooperation and communication with the different organisations is working.

In addition, the municipality should ensure that the different spaces of interaction, mainly those developed by the Antirumours Strategy and the Intercultural Community Intervention Programme do not duplicate tasks and do have share objectives and understanding and an impact. An example of interaction initiatives are the so-called **mentoring programmes**, which are being developed in several European cities. In Strasbourg, the initiative of the Makers for Change association, is helping to involve newcomers in the life of the city, while at the same time including citizens and civil society in the implementation of reception policies. This simple idea consists of introducing newcomers to citizens who have been living in the city for a longer period of time. The aim is for them to get to know each other and to show the newcomer around the city.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The city of BILBAO's aggregate intercultural index is 75. In the table below are listing the strengths (what the city does) and the weaknesses (what the city does not yet do).

<p>COMMITMENT</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Bilbao has participated in the Intercultural Cities programme since 2012 and has an extremely well-developed strategy and evaluation methodology. The evaluation of the Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity could be a good opportunity to identify strengths and room for improvement in the intercultural policymaking of Bilbao.</p> <p>The city could facilitate the access to the website in which the intercultural strategy and activities are presented.</p>
<p>EDUCATION</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>The education system in Bilbao is filled with schools/organisations that carry out intercultural projects and activities, providing innovative ways for children of different cultures to interact with each other.</p> <p>Bilbao does not have a policy to increase cultural mixing and there are no municipal plans to avoid segregation at schools.</p>
<p>NEIGHBORHOOD</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Bilbao municipality is running a wide range of activities to ensure that neighbourhoods are diverse.</p> <p>The city has not designed any particular plan to increase diversity in some neighbourhoods or to promote further interaction between neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>PUBLIC SERVICE</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>The city of Bilbao takes into consideration the migrant backgrounds and the minority groups in order to provide better services.</p> <p>Public employees do not reflect the composition of its population. The Council does not count with a recruitment plan to ensure adequate rate of diversity within the administration workforce, nor the private sector.</p>
<p>BUSINESS AND LABOUR</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Labour migration and enterprise are a key element of Bilbao's diversity advantage. The City Council cooperates with different organisations to improve the insertion of vulnerable groups into the labour market.</p> <p>Bilbao should improve actions to encourage businesses from ethnic minorities to enter higher-added value sectors.</p>
<p>CULTURE AND SOCIAL LIFE</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>Bilbao offers a set of interesting actions to encourage cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions and organizes public debates or campaigns on the subject of cultural diversity and living together. The city uses interculturalism as a criterion for allocating resources, it regularly organises public debates/campaigns and events in the field of culture /cultural diversity.</p> <p>The City Council should assure that access to free cultural activities in the city encourages people from all different ethnic groups to mix.</p>
<p>PUBLIC SPACE</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>The city offers a huge variety of interesting activities like intercultural tournaments in public spaces.</p> <p>Measures to encourage and monitor diversity in decision making on public space are incipient and should be further developed.</p>

<p>MEDIATION</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>Bilbao has a generalist municipal mediation service which also deals with cultural conflicts. The city provides intercultural mediation services in different contexts and has a specific programme to dealing with inter-religious relations</p> <p>The city should explore the possibility of creating a municipal mediation service devoted to intercultural issues.</p>
<p>LANGUAGE</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>The city provides specific language training in Basque language for hard-to-reach groups (e.g. non-working mothers, retired people etc.) and gives support to private/civil sector institutions providing language training in migrant/minority languages. Basque literacy initiatives are also promoted as well as language exchange programmes seeking to give a positive image of minority languages.</p> <p>Financial and logistical support is not given to local minority initiatives, such as written press or radio.</p>
<p>MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>The municipal communication office develops the communication strategy of the Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan, organising communication of the strategic milestones of Bilbao City Council's intercultural action.</p> <p>The city could monitor the way in which traditional media and social media portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds. The city should engage local media when they portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds through negative stereotypes.</p>
<p>INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>Bilbao has a strong local policy to encourage international cooperation.</p> <p>Exchange between the diaspora and the cities of origin is still limited.</p>
<p>INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETENCE</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>Bilbao city efforts in this area, mainly developed by the Bilbao Immigration Observatory, in collaboration with the Public University of the Basque Country, reflects its overall positive 'mind-set' in this area.</p> <p>Intercultural training plan for municipal staff under development.</p>
<p>WELCOMING</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>Bilbao City Council has a general support service for all citizens, which is managed by the Citizen Support Office and the District Offices. The welcome support is a responsibility of municipal social services and targets particular groups of newcomers.</p> <p>The city could recognise newcomers in a public ceremony.</p>
<p>LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✗</p>	<p>In Bilbao, some initiatives to encourage people with migrant/minority backgrounds to engage in political life are deployed, such is the Local Immigration Council. Likewise, the participation of migrants is promoted in various processes of citizen participation that the city leads in the design of public initiatives.</p> <p>The city should develop actions to guarantee a standard for the representation with people with migrant/minority backgrounds in mandatory boards supervising schools and/or public services.</p>
<p>ANTI-DISCRIMINATION</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Bilbao municipality uses different mechanisms to identify cases of racism, xenophobia, homophobia or intolerance against citizens. The municipality works with the Eraberean Network (Basque Government) to fight against discrimination on the basis of racial, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation/identity or gender identity. The city runs an Antirumours Strategy.</p>

	✗	The city should carry out a systematic review of all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanisms that may discriminate residents with /migrant/minority backgrounds.
INTERACTION	✓	Bilbao City Council regularly collaborates with social organisations and civil society to promote initiatives that encourage intercultural inclusion. The city has taken innovative actions in order to promote intercultural interaction.
	✗	The city could improve its database of civil society and grassroots organisations that are active in the various fields concerned by intercultural inclusion.
PARTICIPATION	✓	Bilbao has the Local Immigration Council as an advisory body. Participation is key when evaluating and designing the Municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan (the Plan is currently being evaluated and update through a participatory process).
	✗	Bilbao should monitor the participation of citizens with a minority/migrant background in defining and designing public strategies and actions. The city should take further actions to ensure that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds are fairly represented in key institutions and organisations, on boards or ruling bodies of trade unions, public schools, work councils, etc.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Commitment: The city may want to look into a more formal structure to cross-cutting the intercultural approach in all the municipal departments. The Council may wish to joint forces and increase the political consensus on the intercultural approach.

Education: Bilbao may wish to draw plan to mainstream the intercultural approach into Education in order to increase ethnic/cultural interactions as well as the intercultural competencies of teachers and student

Neighbours: Bilbao should keep conducting participatory processes to decide neighbourhood-related issues and guaranteeing that participants reflect the diversity of the city.

Public services: The municipality should may want to look into a local recruitment plan to ensure an adequate rate of diversity within the municipal workforce.

Business and the labour market: Bilbao should keep promoting actions to improve the insertion of vulnerable groups into the labour market. The city may wish to define a local charter that benefits diverse suppliers' in local procurement.

Cultural and Social Life: Bilbao should assure that access to free cultural activities in the city encourages people from all different ethnic groups to mix.

Media and communication: The city may consider establishing a more stable and long-term cooperation with local media to increase their awareness on the responsibility in how to portrait migrants and minorities.

International outlook: Bilbao may wish to explore working with the diasporas, developing projects to facilitate the interaction and relations with residents in the city and cities of origin.

Intercultural intelligence: It is highly recommended to include training sessions on intercultural competences for municipal staff. Bilbao's current engagement in different projects at the ICC in this topic could be a crucial step forward in that sense.

Welcoming: Bilbao should improve the access to welcome services and should recognise newcomers in a public ceremony.

Leadership and citizenship: Bilbao should further develop the initiatives to encourage people with migrant/minority backgrounds to engage in political life. Similarly, the City Council could establish basic intercultural standards in the representation of migrant minorities in different supervising bodies.

Anti-discrimination: Bilbao should carry out a systematic review of all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanisms that may discriminate residents with /migrant/minority backgrounds.

Interaction: The City could continue developing the Antirumors Strategy in the city, generating new spaces for interaction.

Participation: Bilbao should take further actions to ensure that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds are fairly represented in key institutions and organisations, on boards or ruling bodies of trade unions, public schools, work councils, etc.

BILBAO may wish to consider further examples implemented by other Intercultural Cities as a source of learning and inspiration to guide future initiatives. Such examples are provided above for each sector as well as in the Intercultural cities [database](#).

Diversity has become a key feature of societies today and is particularly tangible in urban centres. While people of diverse national, ethnic, linguistic and faith backgrounds have immensely

contributed to post-war prosperity, inequalities related to origin, culture and skin colour persist, and anxiety about pluralism, identity and shared values is often politically instrumentalised. The challenge of fostering equity and cohesion in culturally diverse societies has become more acute. Cities are uniquely placed to imagine and test responses to this challenge.

The Council of Europe and its partner cities have developed and validated an intercultural approach to integration and inclusion which enables cities to reap the benefits and minimise the risks related to human mobility and cultural diversity. A decade after the start of this work, there is growing evidence that diversity, when recognised and managed as a resource, produces positive outcomes in terms of creativity, wellbeing and economic development.

The Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) invites cities in Europe and beyond to explore and apply policies that harness diversity for personal and societal development.

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 27 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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