



Declaration

Of the Intercultural cities' Milestone event Urban policies for inclusive migrant integration and diversity advantage

Lisbon, 28-29 November 2017

Concerned by the rise of authoritarian populism which instigates fear of open, diverse and inclusive societies, and erodes human rights, democracy, equality and justice;

Inspired by the example of societies & cities which nurture a culture of welcoming and inclusion, even in the challenging circumstances of significant numbers of newly arrived refugees and migrants;

Convinced that when managed aptly, diversity makes cities more resilient, creative and prosperous in an interconnected, interdependent global community;

Aware that inclusive integration policies guaranteeing equal rights to migrants and refugees are linked to positive attitudes to people with a migration background at the national level & better quality of life at the local level;

Persuaded that, for cities to tap into the positive potential of diversity, interaction and solidarity among the entire population have to be encouraged;

We affirm that as members of "Intercultural cities" – a Council of Europe-led coalition of over 120 local (and regional) governments across Europe and the world – we will continue to

- foster leadership and encourage policy innovation to ensure community cohesion in the context of an increased human mobility;
- counter offensive, inflammatory political rhetoric and stand resolutely against discrimination and hate speech;
- promote an understanding of human rights in diverse societies for and among all residents, and cultivate intercultural competence within public authorities and their partners;

- encourage dialogue and constructive public debate about accommodating cultural diversity (including convictional diversity) while building a shared framework of principles and an inclusive “we”-culture;
- make local institutions and their public services representative of the diverse citizenry they serve;
- provide equal access to rights & services for all local residents in the spirit of the right to the city;
- encourage mixing & interaction across cultural, gender, age and other differences;
- support organisations which help build strong local connections as a key to solidarity & belonging;
- make a sustained effort to involve newly arrived and non-national residents in democratic institutions and participatory democracy initiatives;
- engage with peri-urban and adjacent rural areas to exchange diversity management know-how;

One of our priorities for the next 5 years will be to work systematically with national authorities, with support by the Council of Europe, to design and implement coherent inclusive integration policies. In this respect, we commit to the agenda set out by the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights in his issue paper “Time for Europe to get migrant integration right”¹. We are confident that a relationship of trust and cooperation with national authorities, as well as dynamic partnerships with local, national and international organisations that support this agenda, will help make our societies and communities stronger.

¹ Time for Europe to Get Migrant Integration Right (2016). Issue paper published by the Council of Europe by the Commissioner for Human Rights. Council of Europe Publishing