



# FAMAGUSTA DISTRICT

## INTERCULTURAL CITIES INDEX ANALYSIS 2024



Diversity, Equality, Interaction

**BUILDING BRIDGES,  
BREAKING WALLS**



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FAMAGUSTA DISTRICT

INTERCULTURAL CITIES INDEX ANALYSIS

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This analysis is based on information provided by the [Center for the Advancement of Research & Development in Educational Technology \(CARDET\)](#).

Intercultural Cities Secretariat  
Council of Europe  
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex  
France  
[www.coe.int/interculturalcities](http://www.coe.int/interculturalcities)

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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 Cities 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 (December 2024) 162 cities embraced the ICC programme and approach, and 138 (including Famagusta) have analysed their intercultural policies using the Intercultural Cities Index. The respective reports can be found [here](#).

Among these cities, 39 cities (including Famagusta) have less than 100.000 inhabitants and 36 (including Famagusta) have more than 20% of foreign-born residents.

This report was prepared in the framework of the European Union and Council of Europe joint project: “Enhancing policies and structures for intercultural integration in Cyprus”.<sup>1</sup> It is based on information gathered by the coordinator of the Limassol District Intercultural Network ([Center for the Advancement of Research & Development in Educational Technology \(CARDET\)](#)) that was established under the project. The report presents the results of the Intercultural Cities Index analysis for Famagusta District (Cyprus) 2024, in comparison to the previous analysis prepared in 2022 under the “Building structures for intercultural integration in Cyprus” joint project and provides related intercultural policy conclusions and recommendations.

## INTERCULTURAL CITY DEFINITION

The intercultural city has people with different nationalities, origins, languages or religions/beliefs. 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 Cities 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 Intercultural Cities 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

<sup>1</sup> The European Union and Council of Europe joint projects: “Building structures for intercultural integration in Cyprus” and “Enhancing structures and policies for intercultural integration in Cyprus” were co-funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument, and implemented by the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the European Commission.

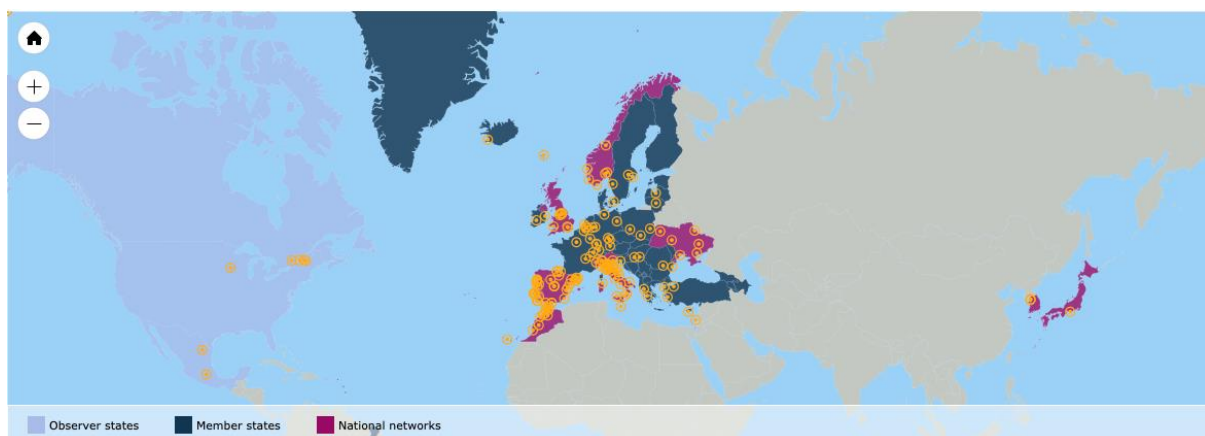
8. Welcoming newcomers	
9. Leadership and citizenship	
10. Anti-discrimination	
<b>11. Participation</b>	
<b>12. Interaction</b>	

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 so far: 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, 57 cities have used the Intercultural Cities Index containing the new indicators in their evaluations, including Famagusta. 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 Intercultural Cities Index results, **Famagusta** has an aggregate Intercultural Cities Index result of 13 (out of 100 possible points). The details of this result will be explained below.<sup>2</sup>

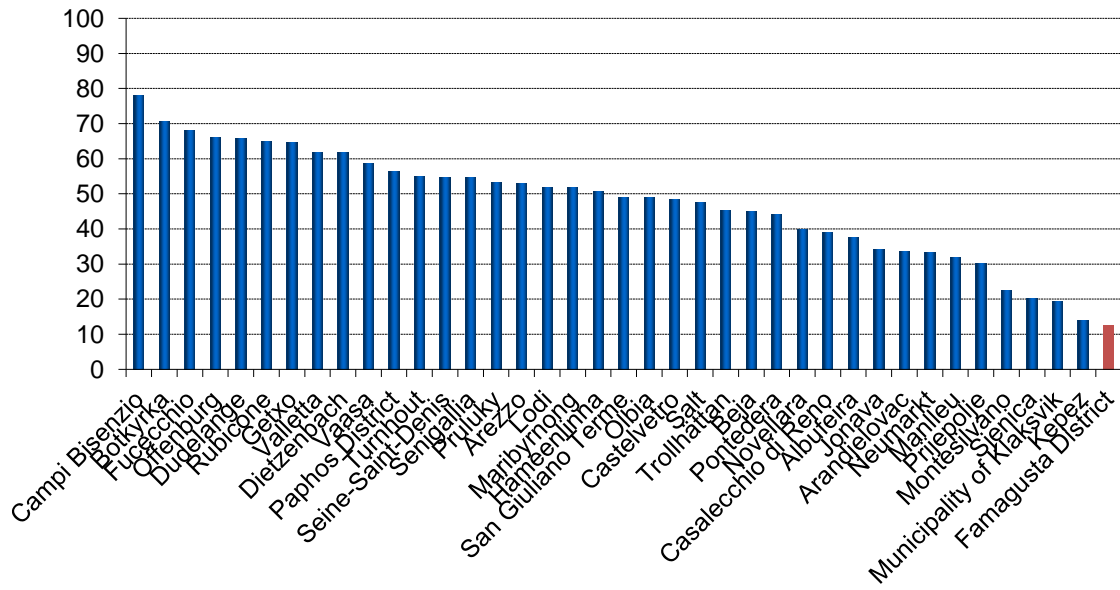


<sup>2</sup> The original Intercultural Cities Index contained 69 questions. The Intercultural Cities Index was updated in 2019, when additional questions were added, some questions were removed and completely new indicators were added (anti-discrimination, interaction and participation), resulting in the extended Intercultural Cities Index with 86 questions. As a main rule, the Intercultural Cities Index report applies the scoring from the original Intercultural Cities Index, to ensure the broadest possible comparison group in the global achievement rate.

In addition, the scoring from the extended Intercultural Cities Index is provided in an explanatory footnote for all indicators where it is relevant. This scoring encompasses the assessment of the questions of the original Intercultural Cities Index as well as the new questions of the extended Intercultural Cities Index for each specific indicator. The scoring of the original Intercultural Cities Index and extended Intercultural Cities Index for the same indicator may hence differ based on the differing number of questions. Finally, the indicators which are completely new to the extended Intercultural Cities Index only include the scoring from the extended Intercultural Cities Index. This scoring for these indicators hence shows directly in the text and not in a footnote.

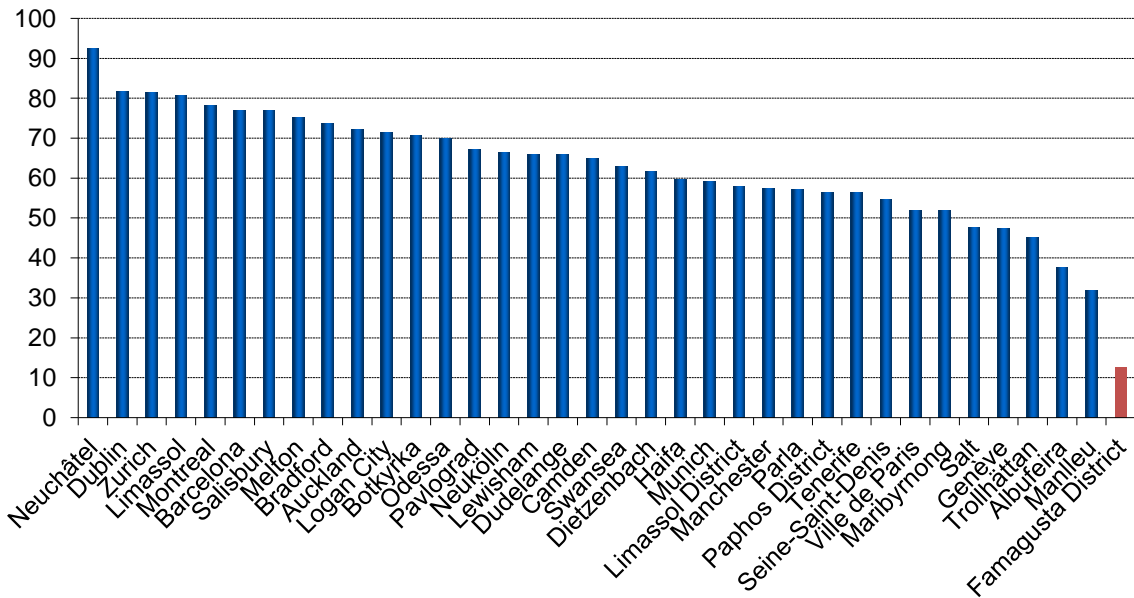
Per inhabitants

### Intercultural City Index (ICC) City sample (inhabitants < 100 000)

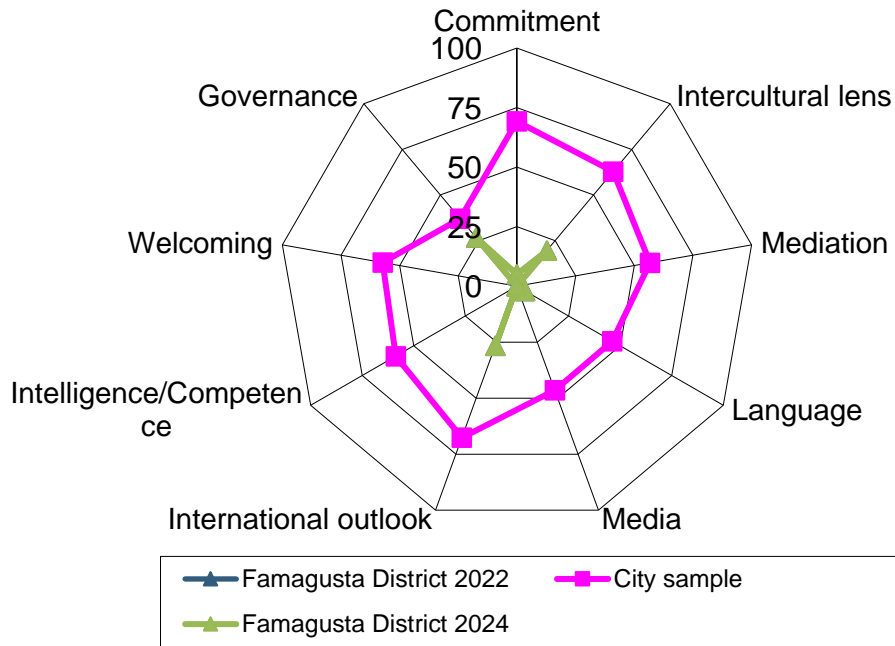


Per diversity

### Intercultural City Index (ICC) City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns > 20%)

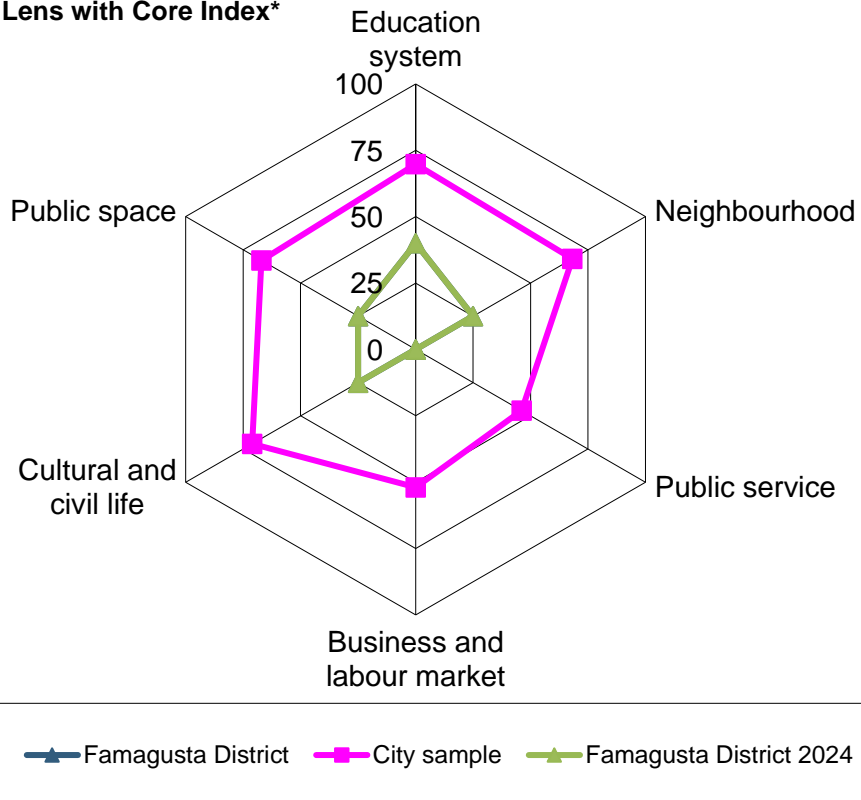


**Core Index\***



\* The results from 2022 and 2024 are identical, causing the lines in the graph to overlap.

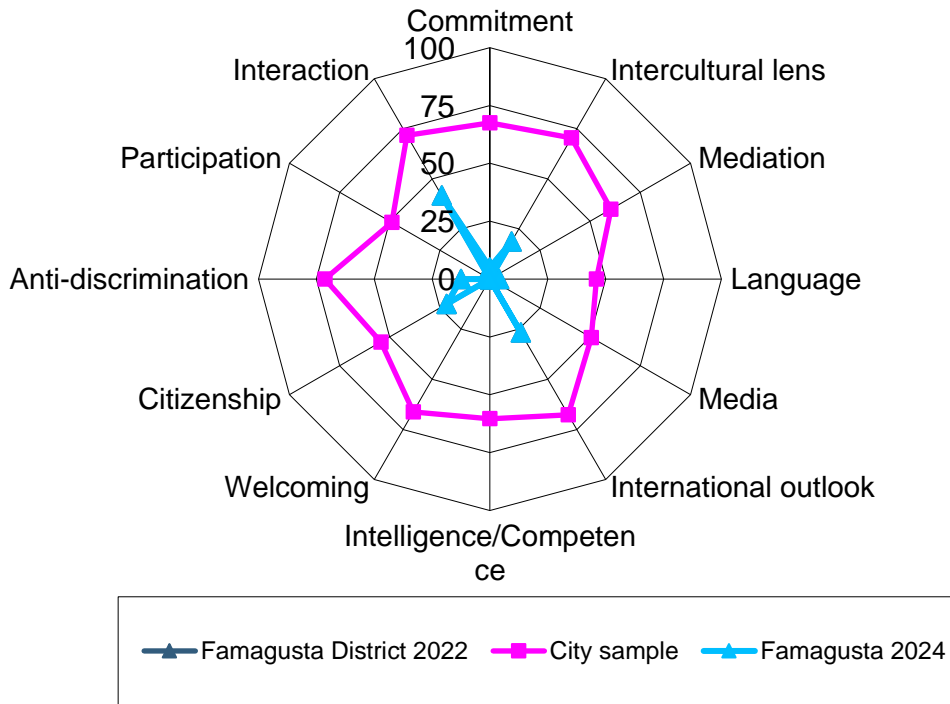
**Intercultural Lens with Core Index\***



\* The results from 2022 and 2024 are identical, causing the lines in the graph to overlap.

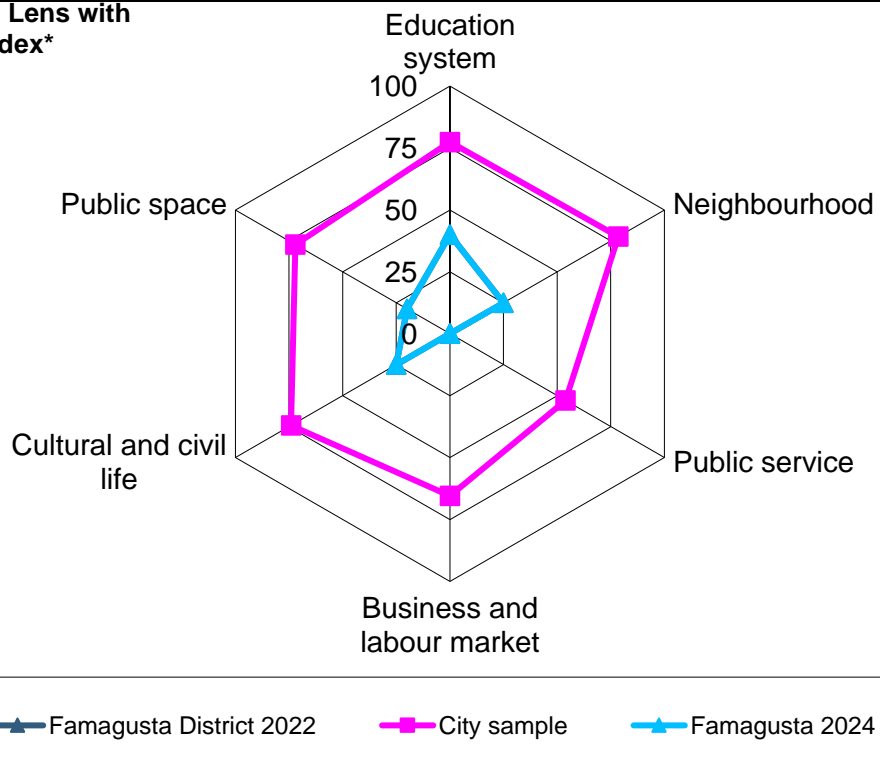


**Extended Index\***



\* The results from 2022 and 2024 are identical, causing the lines in the graph to overlap.

**Intercultural Lens with Extended Index\***



\* The results from 2022 and 2024 are identical, causing the lines in the graph to overlap.



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## FAMAGUSTA: AN OVERVIEW

Famagusta District (in Greek: Επαρχία Αμμοχώστου) is one of the six districts of Cyprus, with its main town, Famagusta, historically serving as the island's most important port. A district administration operates "in exile" in the Republic of Cyprus-controlled areas of the island. Located to the east of Nicosia, the district is home to the island's deepest harbour. During the Middle Ages, especially under the maritime republics of Genoa and Venice, Famagusta flourished as Cyprus's most significant port city. It served as a vital gateway for trade with Levantine ports, from where Silk Road merchants transported goods to Western Europe.

Covering an area of 1 985 square kilometres, Famagusta District is the second-largest district in Cyprus. Administratively, it is divided into municipalities, communities, and villages, with local councils managing services, infrastructure, and land-use planning. However, governance is complicated by political circumstances, as parts of the district fall under the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a territory recognised only by Turkey.

According to the 2021 Census of Population and Housing, the district's population reached 54 318 inhabitants, marking a significant 16.5% increase since 2011. This demographic growth underscores the district's evolving role within Cyprus.

Famagusta District is home to a diverse population that reflects Cyprus's multicultural fabric. Greek Cypriots, the majority group, comprise approximately 70–75% of the population. Turkish Cypriots, many of whom relocated to the northern part of the island following the 1974 conflict, now represent around 1–2% in the Republic-controlled areas. EU nationals, primarily from the United Kingdom, Greece, and Eastern Europe, constitute about 12.6% of the population. Non-EU nationals, originating from countries like the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and the Middle East, make up approximately 8.9%. Smaller groups, including Maronites, Armenians, and Latin Americans, collectively account for less than 1% of the population.

In total, 21.5% of the district's population are non-nationals, reflecting Cyprus's status as a destination for migration and retirement, especially among EU nationals. Approximately 22.4% of the population is foreign-born, showcasing the district's rich multicultural makeup.

The primary economic sectors in Famagusta District include tourism, agriculture, construction, and light industry. Tourism remains a cornerstone of the district's economy, attracting international visitors with its pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters, and scenic natural landmarks. The fertile "red villages," known for their distinctive red soil, support a robust agricultural sector producing high-quality potatoes and other crops. The construction sector continues to expand, driven by residential and tourism-related developments, while light industry provides essential support through small-scale manufacturing and services.

In recent years, Famagusta District has seen significant changes, including the influx of foreign nationals from Eastern Europe and the Middle East, the emigration of young people seeking better opportunities abroad, and an increase in retirees, particularly from the UK and other EU countries, drawn by the district's favourable climate and high quality of life.

The district also faces challenges related to its diverse population. Special attention is given to refugees and asylum seekers, who make up approximately 2–3% of the population, as well as to irregular migrants, for whom precise numbers are difficult to estimate. Minority groups, including LGBTI+ individuals, may also face social and cultural barriers that require focused efforts.

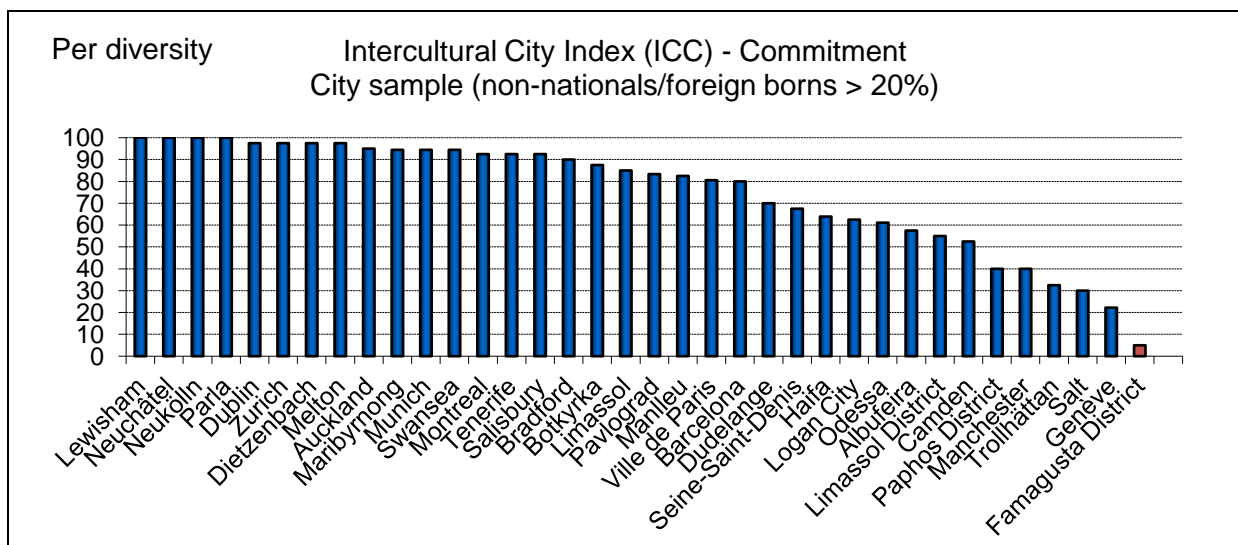
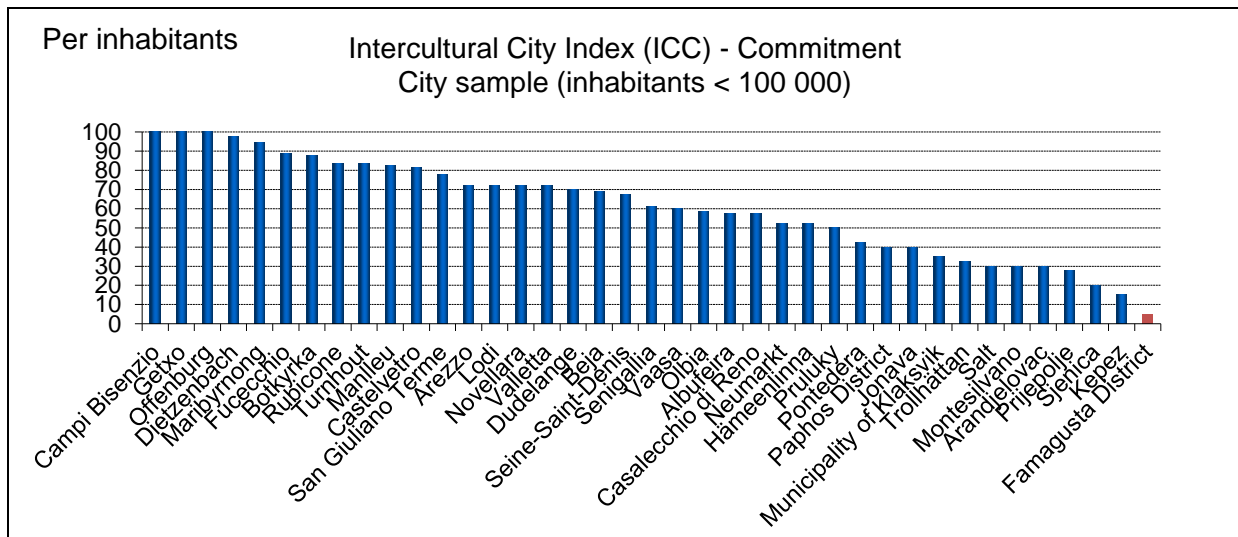
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## COMMITMENT

*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.

Famagusta achieved a rate of 5%, which is a clearly lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 69%.



Despite the diversity present in the District, municipalities in the Famagusta District have not yet adopted an intercultural public statement, strategy, or action plan. There is no established policy consultation process that includes people from diverse cultural backgrounds, nor do they currently have dedicated websites to communicate their intercultural policies. As a result, Famagusta scores 5/63 on the extended Intercultural Cities Index for Commitment.

While there is not yet a dedicated body or cross-departmental coordination structure in place, there are opportunities for growth. Official communications rarely mention the city's intercultural commitment, although individuals who contribute to the community are often recognised and celebrated. The presence of a small number

of civil society organisations (CSOs) focused on integration and interculturalism offers a promising foundation for future development.

### Suggestions

It appears that the municipalities in the Famagusta District are in the early stages of their intercultural development. By drawing inspiration from the best practices outlined in the Intercultural [City Step by Step guide](#), these towns could begin their journey by adopting an intercultural statement and building consultation mechanisms through the established Intercultural Network for the Famagusta Region. This would pave the way for the creation of an intercultural strategy and action plan.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts, it would be important to outline the towns' commitment to funding and identify the responsible implementation bodies, along with establishing other key components such as a communication strategy, evaluation procedures, and a process for periodic renewal.

The Famagusta District could look to several successful examples from the Intercultural Cities (ICC) network for inspiration. [The Limassol Intercultural Council](#) is a strong and proximal model, having developed and implemented its Intercultural Strategy 2018-2020, covering a wide range of areas from education and culture to public services, policing, safety, parenting, public image, and media. The city's commitment to inclusive policies has fostered a positive impact on community relations and social cohesion.

Another example could be the city of Zurich (Switzerland) that has a set of Integration [Policy Targets of the City of Zurich 2022-2026](#). The city adopts a clear integration policy position, guided by fundamental human rights and promoting liberal values and solidarity. Specifically, the Integration Policy Targets includes, among others.

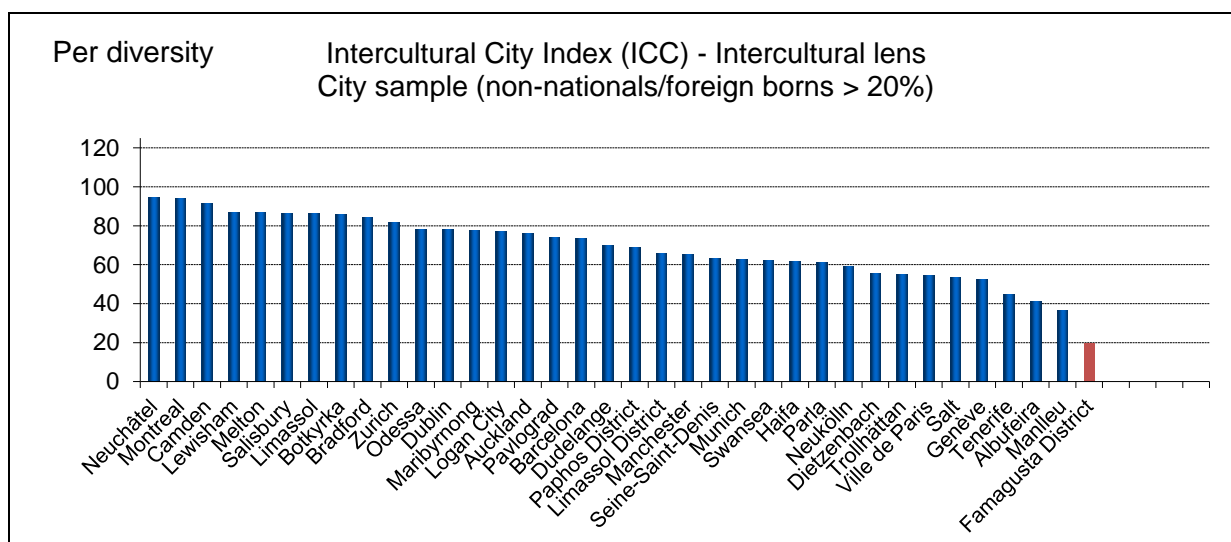
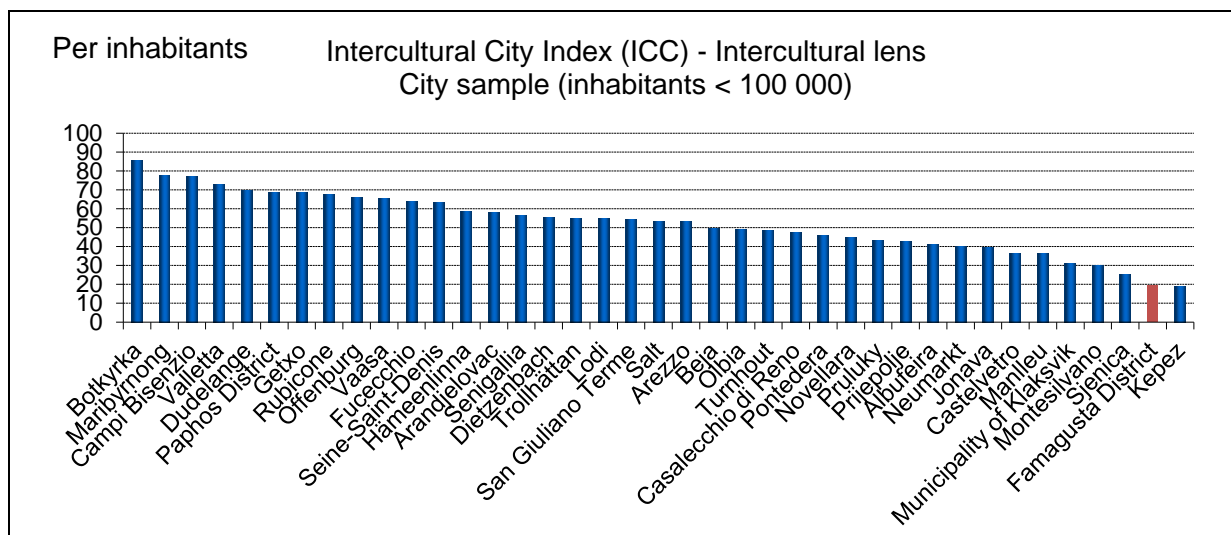
Barcelona offers an exemplary [strategic framework for interculturality](#) and integration, built around three key axes: promoting equity, recognising diversity, and motivating interaction to create shared public spaces. This holistic approach has contributed to the development of inclusive social programs, cultural events, and initiatives that bridge divides between diverse groups within the city.

These examples from the ICC network highlight how cities can successfully implement intercultural policies that promote diversity, equality, and inclusion. By learning from these best practices, the Famagusta District can develop a tailored strategy that meets its unique demographic and cultural needs, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society.

## 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 Famagusta District, assessed as a whole through an "intercultural lens" is lower to that of the model city: 20% of these objectives were achieved while the rate of achievement of the model city reaches 63%.

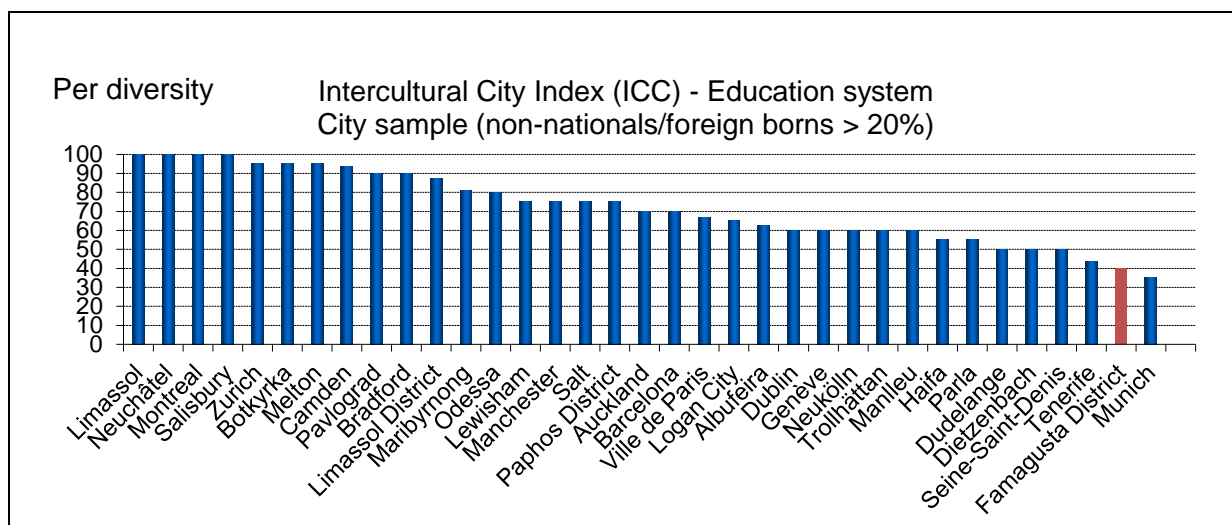
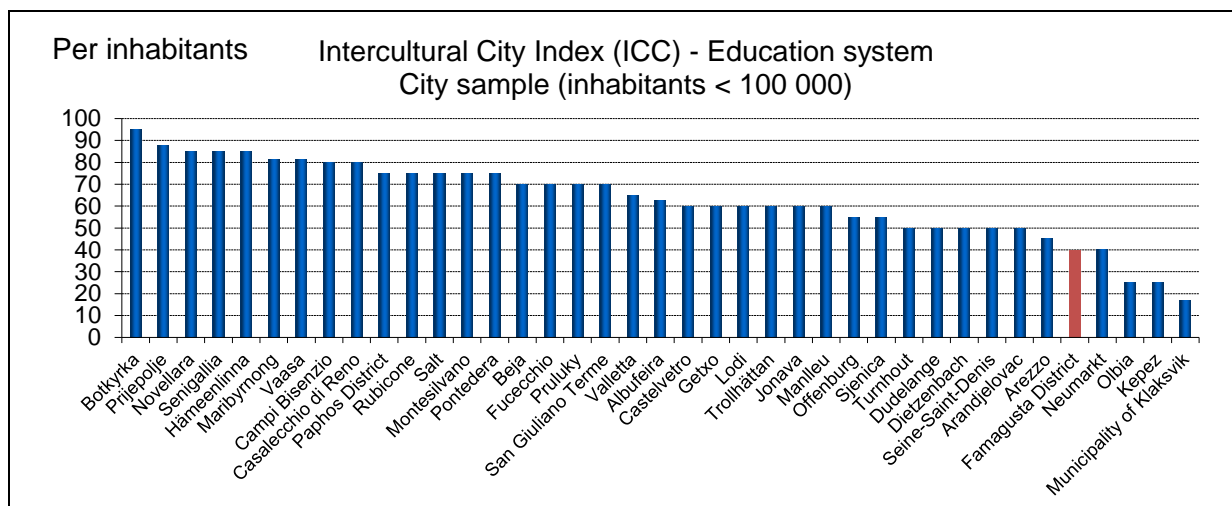


## EDUCATION

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.

Famagusta achieved a rate of 40%, which is considerably lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 70%.



In Famagusta District, primary school education does not predominantly reflect a homogeneous ethnic or cultural background, with schools featuring a mix of student communities. The ethnic or cultural composition of teachers in Famagusta's schools does not typically mirror the diversity of the city's population. The involvement of parents from migrant or minority backgrounds in school activities is limited, with only a few schools actively engaging these parents beyond standard meetings. Initiatives to include parents often rely on the motivation of school leaders and the support of parent-teacher associations. Some public schools participate in the "[Mathainw Ellinika!](#)" programme, which provides mediation services and trains parent-mediators to address communication barriers.

Intercultural projects are rare in schools, although several public institutions have taken part in EU-funded programs like DRA.S.E.+, which encourage intercultural initiatives. These programmes, including Erasmus+ and e-Twinning, facilitate partnerships and collaborative projects with schools across Europe. Despite these efforts,

there is currently no city-specific policy aimed at promoting ethnic or cultural mixing in schools to prevent segregation. Regional and national policies are more influential in shaping educational integration.

### Suggestions

Municipalities in Famagusta have opportunities to enhance interculturalism, combat segregation, and foster an intercultural educational environment for students.

In Italy, the [SAFE initiative](#), led by the municipality of Reggio Emilia and involving the Intercultural Centre Mondinsieme, plays a key role in promoting the social integration of foreign families through school-based programmes. This project recognises schools as central to integrating foreign families and valuing the skills and social capital of second-generation youth, who represent 35% of the foreign population in Italy. It aims at increasing knowledge and analysis of good policy and practices about supporting foreign families inside the school and through educational processes, both at national and European levels. Additionally, it fosters exchanges, debates and a structured benchmarking actions between the more advanced European experiences. Lastly, it also promotes and broaden a structured portability of good practices to implement new policies supporting foreign families through school.

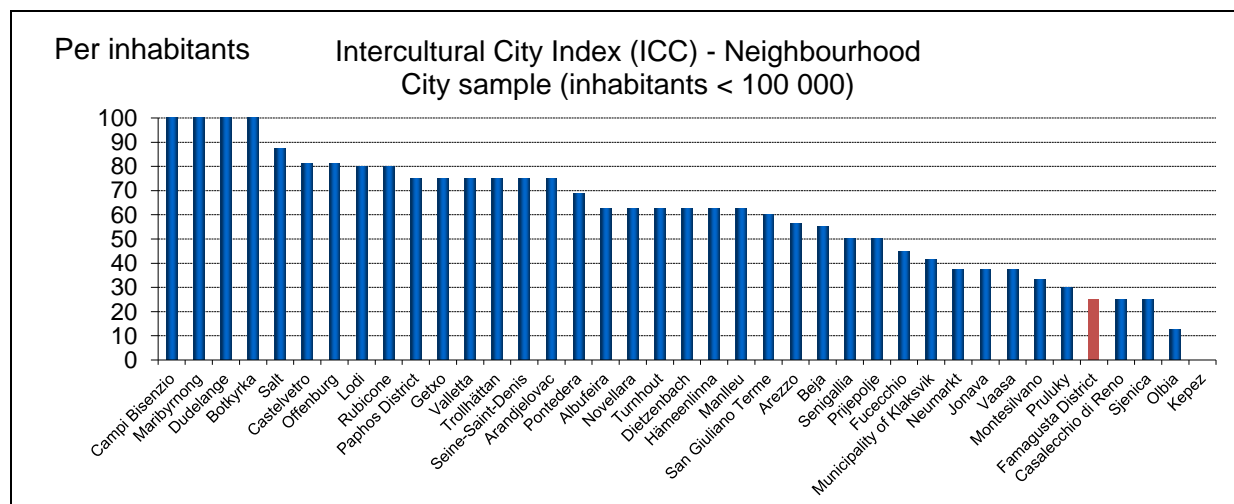
In Hamburg, Germany, over 20 teachers from various schools participated in the pilot project “Qualification for intercultural coordinators” to become intercultural change agents within their schools. These teachers actively engage in intercultural school projects. Additionally, around 200 teachers from different schools regularly participate in the “Intercultural Fair” hosted by the department of intercultural education and are involved in the intercultural “exchange forum” at the teacher training institute to gain new ideas for intercultural projects in their schools.

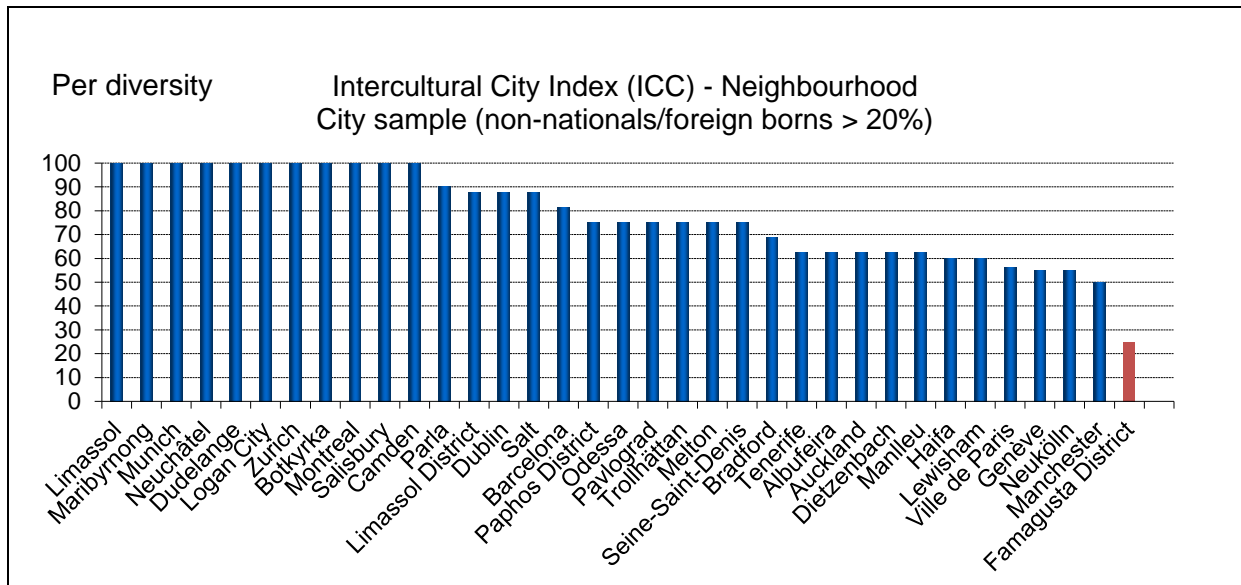
Lastly, ICC programme resources on education are also available [here](#).

## 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.*

Famagusta achieved a rate of 25%, which is lower than the city sample’s achievement rate of 68%.





In Famagusta District, most neighbourhoods are not culturally or ethnically diverse. The city does not have a policy to increase resident diversity in neighbourhoods or prevent ethnic concentration, as there are no significant issues of segregation. Consequently, there are no structured efforts to encourage interactions between residents from different backgrounds across neighbourhoods. Initiatives that do promote interaction are typically organised by local residents but are rare.

The city does not have a policy aimed at encouraging residents with migrant or minority backgrounds to interact with others in their neighbourhoods. Any such interactions occur through occasional multicultural projects, such as festivals or events, which are generally organised by local authorities. However, there is no comprehensive policy or routine practice to facilitate these kinds of community interactions.

### Suggestions

Municipalities in the district have room for improvements concerning neighbourhoods, by promoting raising awareness about all the city and promoting interaction among residents in different parts of the city.

In Reykjavik, Iceland, the city has introduced the “My Neighbourhood” initiative to engage citizens in online discussions about micro-level budget allocations. This initiative also promotes interaction between neighbourhoods, with the Reykjavik City Library playing a pivotal role in the process. Public libraries, often overlooked as resources, can build meaningful connections both in-person and online. [The Reykjavik City Library](#) exemplifies this by its dedication to interculturalism and its support of arts and creativity. The library frequently hosts events across the city, catering to people from all backgrounds. Additionally, the city's cultural institutions strive to welcome a diverse range of guests, serving as spaces for community, creativity, and interactive cultural dialogue, as outlined in the “Roots and Wings” policy by the Reykjavik Department of Culture and Tourism for 2017–2020.

Another good practice for inspiration can be the [XEIX project](#), implemented in Barcelona. The XEIX project, launched in 2012 in Fort Pienc, a multi-ethnic neighbourhood with a significant Chinese community, aims to foster intercultural relations and promote local identity by enhancing interaction among businesses and their communities. The initiative was driven by the need to address the challenges posed by the closure of long-established businesses being replaced by Chinese and Pakistani family-run stores. To revitalize the area and improve community relations, the city established a Retail Association and developed a strategic plan that introduced intercultural mediators and interpreters, beginning with a Chinese language expert and later including support for the South Asian community. A key goal of the project was to combat negative stereotypes and



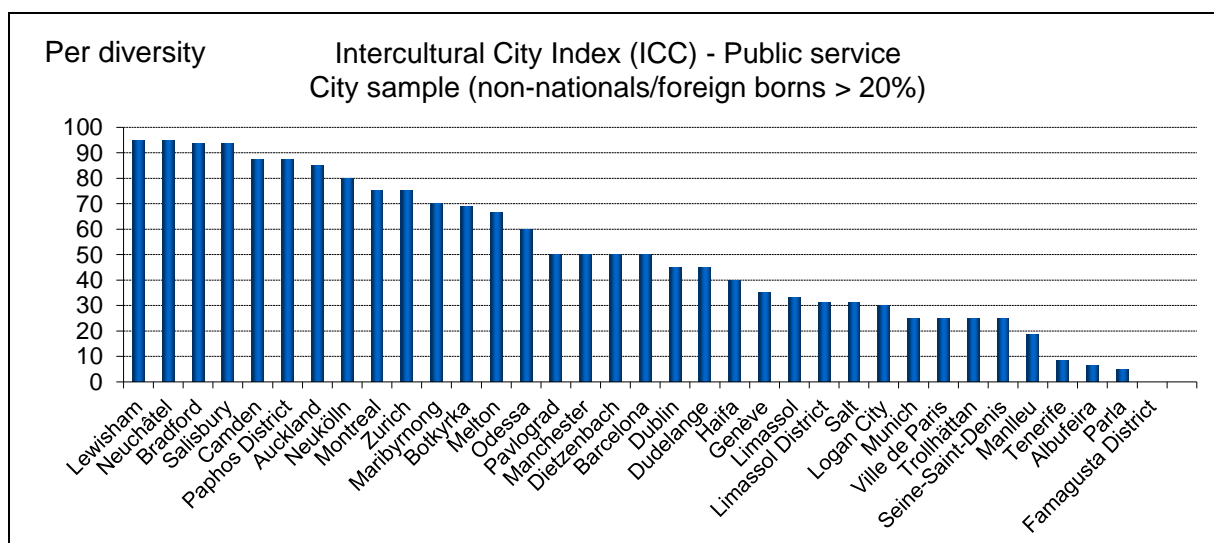
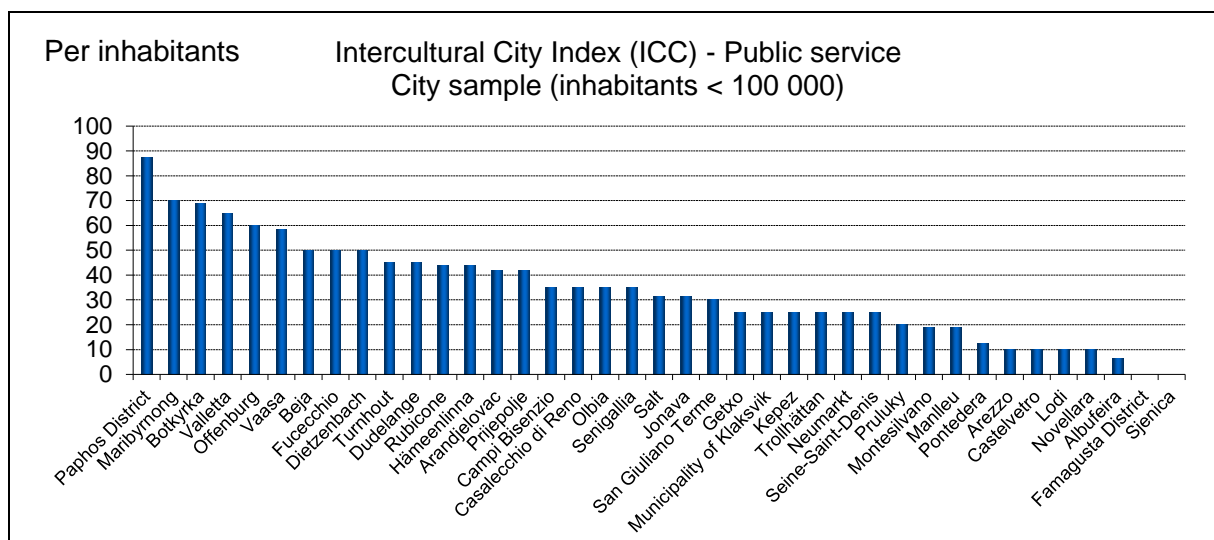
misinformation about the Chinese community. The success of XEIX was recognized when it won first prize in the Council of Europe's Diversity Advantage Challenge in 2015.

The [ICC study on managing gentrification](#) provides various strategies and examples for creating inclusive public spaces, promoting positive socio-cultural interaction, fostering a sense of belonging, and supporting the growth of diverse businesses.

## 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.*

Famagusta achieved a rate of 0%, whereas the city sample's achievement rate is 46%.



In Famagusta District, the ethnic or minority background of public employees does not reflect the overall composition of the city's population. The city does not dispose of a recruitment plan aimed at ensuring a diverse workforce, as this responsibility is not within its competencies. Consequently, there are no targeted efforts to increase representation of individuals with migrant or minority backgrounds in public administration or higher hierarchical positions. Additionally, the city does not take action to encourage workforce diversity or intercultural competence within private sector enterprises, nor does it have measures supporting non-discrimination practices in businesses yet.

### Suggestions

For municipalities in the Famagusta District, there is an opportunity for growth in reflecting the city's diverse population within public service employment and developing more inclusive practices. With proactive steps, the municipalities could foster greater representation in public administration and higher hierarchical levels and workforce diversity and intercultural competence in private enterprises could further strengthen social cohesion and economic growth. While public services such as funeral/burial services, school meals, and access to sport facilities do not currently take into account migrant or minority backgrounds, there is room for future initiatives that consider and integrate the diverse needs of all residents.

In Bergen (Norway) Inclusive Housing is a municipal initiative aimed at providing residences for migrants and refugees by ensuring access to both social housing and private sector housing. The municipality actively works to prevent urban segregation and ensures that housing for refugees is integrated into the community. According to recent data, 70% of people granted a residence permit find their housing without assistance from the municipality. However, even in these cases, the municipality plays a role in facilitating the process. For migrants and refugees facing difficulties in accessing housing, the municipality assists them in finding suitable accommodation and guides them through the rental agreement process. The municipality also checks the rental agreements in advance to ensure compliance and fairness. In the case of social housing provided by the private market, the municipality covers the guaranteed deposit, while the refugee signs an agreement with the community and commits to paying the rent. This approach ensures that migrants and refugees have access to safe and affordable housing while promoting integration and community cohesion.

Montreal (Canada), offers excellent examples of inclusive public service policies. Its strategic programme, Public Service Policies for an Intercultural Montreal, emphasises diversifying public sector staffing by recruiting migrants with appropriate skills. For instance, the Human Resources Department runs a work sponsorship programme, enabling candidates who face employment barriers to gain meaningful, paid work experience aligned with their training within the city. To enhance intercultural competencies among public employees, Montreal provides managers with training to promote respect for cultural differences and improve their ability to handle challenging situations. Recruitment staff at the staff assignment centre are also trained to dispel misconceptions about cultural differences, helping to prevent misunderstandings during the hiring process. Additionally, the Montreal Fire Department reviewed its recruitment practices and introduced a preferential appointment system for ethnic and visible minorities. Changes were also made to selection tests to eliminate systemic discrimination and support the integration of these groups into the firefighting workforce.

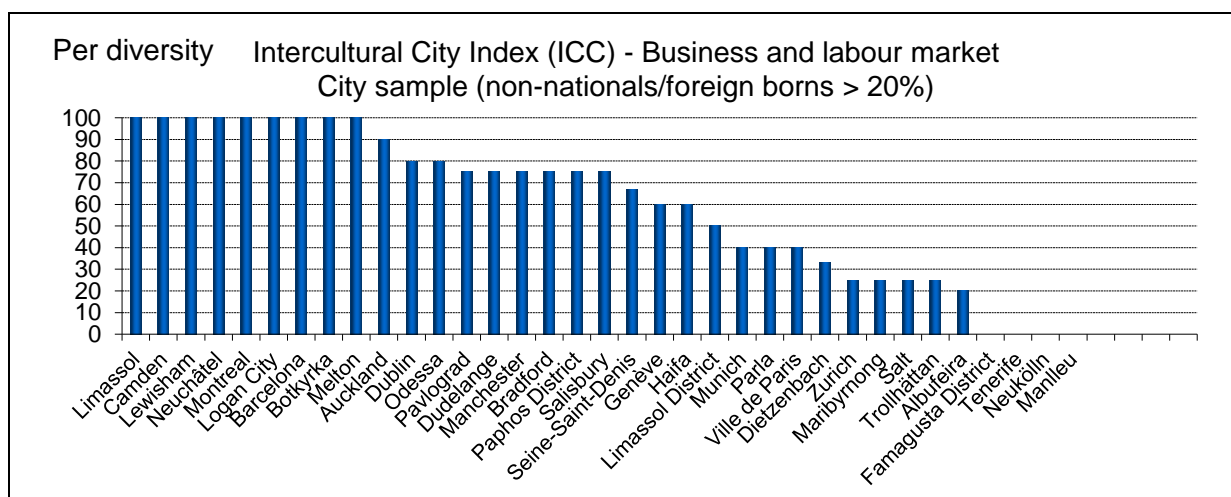
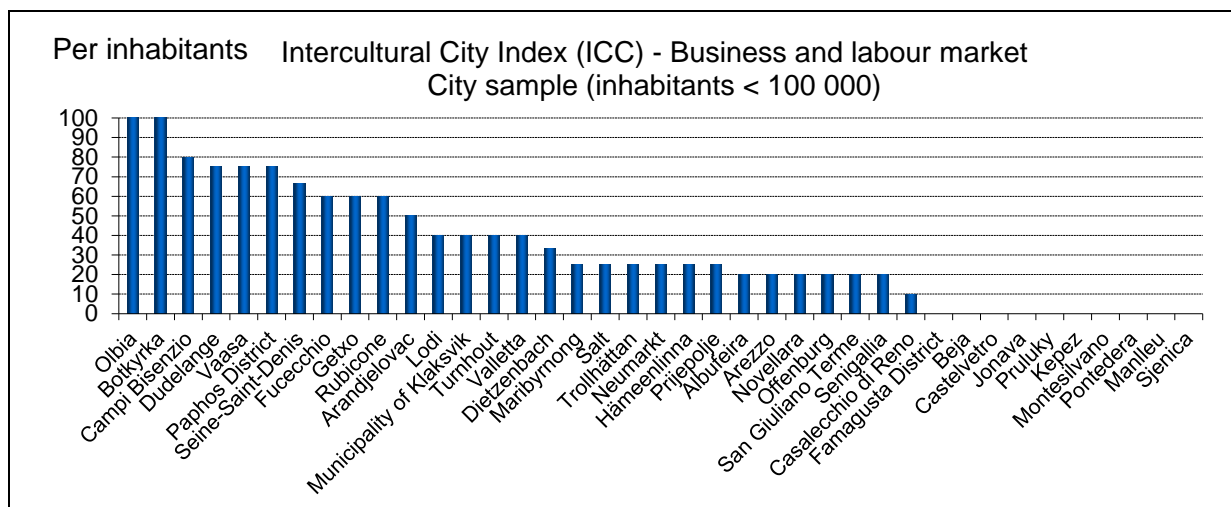
Other ICC programme resources on public and community services are available [here](#).

## **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.

Famagusta achieved a rate of 0%, which is clearly lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 52%.



Despite the district's strong ties to seasonal foreign labour, driven by the prominence of tourism and agriculture, Famagusta District has significant potential to adopt intercultural approaches in its business and labour market sectors. Currently, the city lacks local, regional, or national organisations dedicated to promoting diversity and non-discrimination in the labour market. Furthermore, no targeted initiatives have been implemented to support ethnic minority businesses in transitioning beyond the ethnic economy into higher value-added sectors or to facilitate the inclusion of migrant entrepreneurs in business districts or incubators. Municipal procurement processes also do not prioritize companies that adopt intercultural inclusion or diversity strategies, highlighting an area for further development.

### Suggestions

In this sector, the municipalities of Famagusta have great potential to improve its intercultural approach. Echoing the suggestions for improvement outlined in the district's 2022 periodic report, one suggestion could be to foster sustainable and inclusive tourism in a way that offers a compelling opportunity to promote lesser-known areas and neighbourhoods, create employment for migrants, and enhance intercultural interaction. Towns in the Famagusta District could take inspiration from the Diversitours project, implemented in Bilbao and Valencia (Spain) as part of the European MIGRANTOUR network. This project introduced an intercultural business model featuring educational and community-led guided walks, which helped generate positive narratives about local neighbourhoods, empowered residents through co-creation, and dismantled negative stereotypes. The initiative

also developed methodologies for intercultural visits, tours, and interactive experiences in areas with significant migrant populations.

In addition, municipalities could embed intercultural and diversity principles into their procurement processes for example by awarding additional points in procurement bid evaluations to organisations with clear strategies promoting diversity, intercultural engagement, and equality. Such measures, already applied as horizontal criteria in EU-funded programs, could yield significant societal benefits while advancing intercultural cohesion. For example, Calderdale (United Kingdom) incorporates social value creation into its Inclusive Economy Strategy. All procurement activities align with key social value priorities, including addressing the climate emergency, reducing inequalities, and fostering thriving municipal economies. Calderdale also supports initiatives aimed at boosting economic activity in diverse and underserved communities through project funding and innovative approaches, targeting refugees, black and minority ethnic women, and young people.

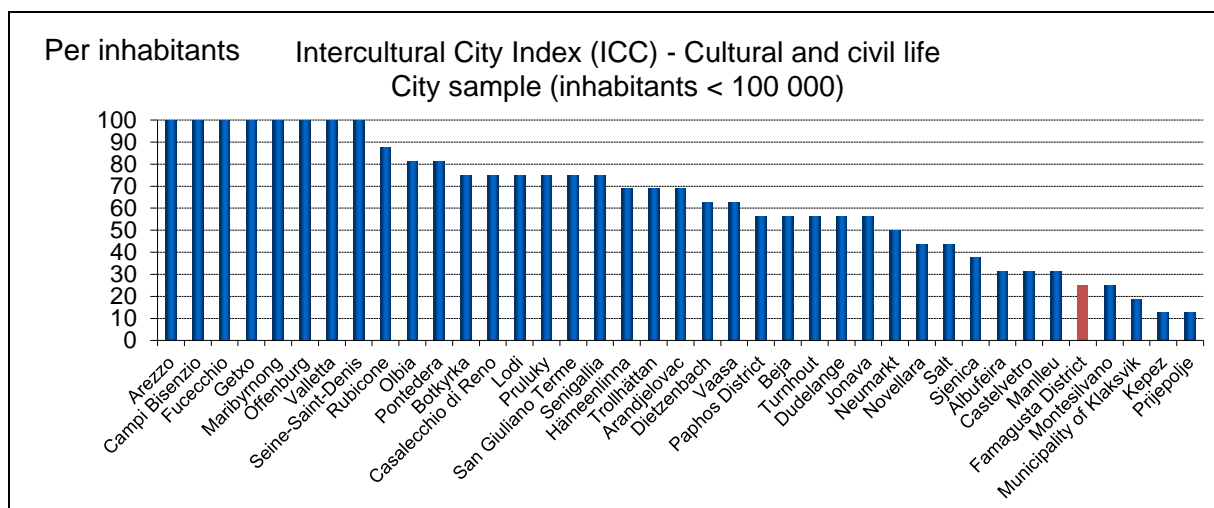
Another inspiring example could be the one of the City of Dublin (Ireland) is striving to involve in its stakeholder networks also large companies committed to job inclusion of people with a migratory background within the company staff. The goal is to enhance the activities carried out and the dissemination of the practices among other companies. Development of a community of social inclusion practices covering the four areas that make up the County of Dublin. For the first time, the representatives and staff working on social inclusion and integration in the four areas of Dublin County (Dublin city Council, Dublin Fingal, South Dublin and Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown) will partake in a community of practices with the aim of exchanging experiences and skills. This good practice has been drafted in connection with the project [ITACA - Italian Cities Against Discrimination \(n. 963374\)](#), co-funded by the REC Programme of the European Commission and implemented by ICEI together with the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, the Municipality of Modena, Mondinsieme Foundation and ISMU Foundation.

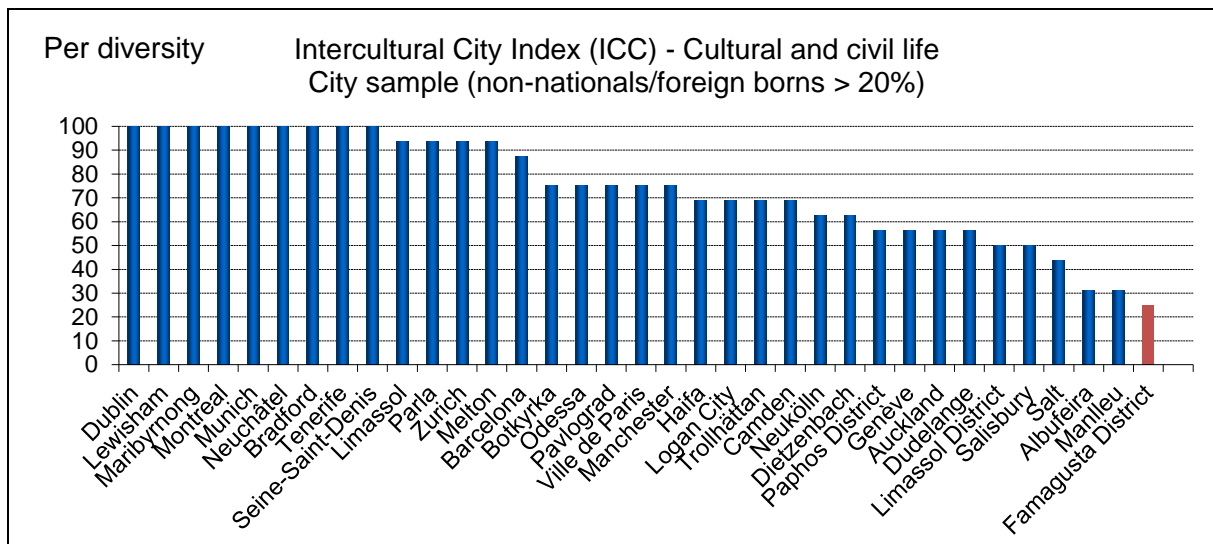
ICC programme resources on business and employment are available [here](#).

## 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.*

Famagusta achieved a rate of 25% in cultural and civil life, which is lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 71%.





The Famagusta District does not currently use interculturalism as a criterion for allocating funds to associations and initiatives. While events and activities in arts, culture, and sports aimed at fostering interaction among people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds occur occasionally, they are primarily driven by projects funded by the EU. Similarly, cultural organisations are occasionally encouraged to address diversity and intercultural relations in their productions, also through EU-funded initiatives. However, municipalities in the district have not organised public debates or campaigns on cultural diversity and living together, indicating a need for greater engagement in promoting intercultural dialogue and collaboration at the local level.

### Suggestions

The towns within the Famagusta District could consider enhancing their existing thematic festivals and popular cultural events by incorporating an intercultural perspective. This approach would allow for greater involvement of migrants in both the planning and artistic execution of these events. A valuable example to draw inspiration from is the [Festival delle Culture](#) in Ravenna, Italy. This initiative actively engages immigrant associations, volunteers, and local residents in organising festival activities, guided by facilitators from Ravenna's Municipality. The festival promotes social participation, encourages the involvement of immigrant associations in shaping public narratives, and addresses themes such as global citizenship, combating stereotypes, human rights, and cultural identity through debates, seminars, exhibitions, and cultural performances.

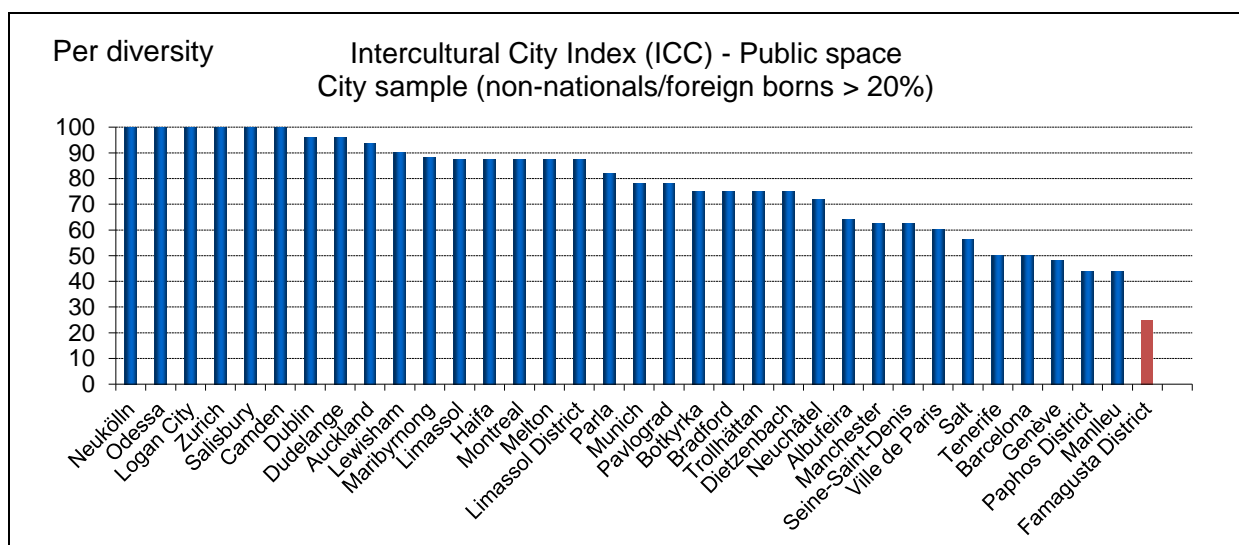
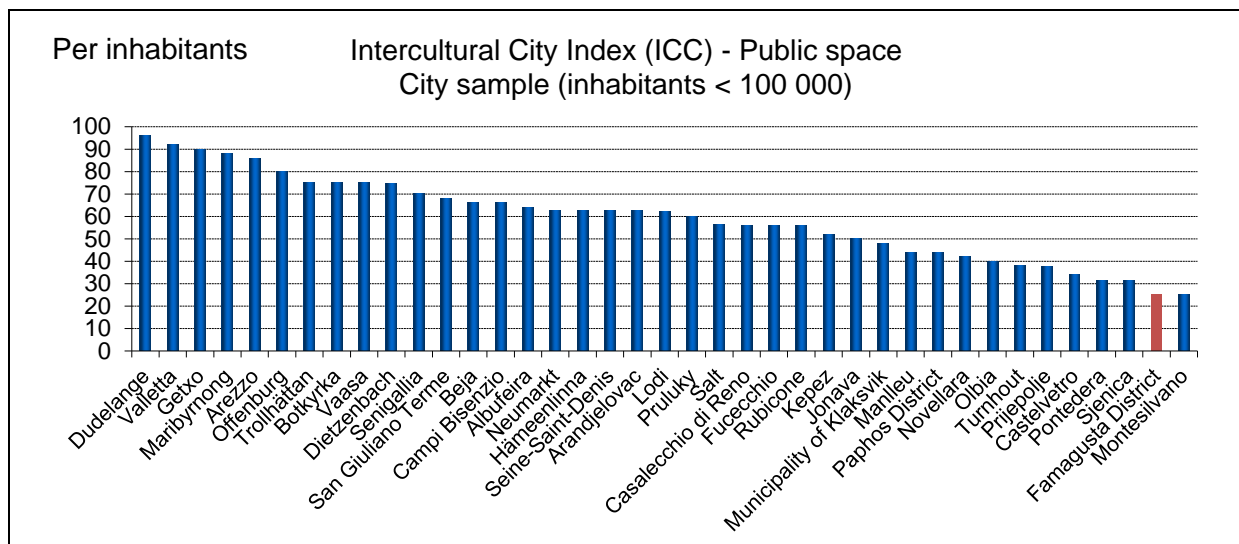
Furthermore, municipalities in the Famagusta District could leverage their Intercultural Network to host public discussions on cultural and civic life, fostering dialogue between local communities and migrants. In this context, the City of Kirklees (United Kingdom) has initiated a place-based [cultural development program](#) running from 2018 to 2023, focusing on public spaces and community engagement through arts and culture. This initiative seeks to promote cultural activities throughout the entire district, embedding them within each town and village. Key programs include WOVEN, a textile festival, and Year of Music 2023, both designed to drive transformational, place-based systemic change in line with the region's year of cultural celebration. These programs engage a wide variety of partners, such as the University of Huddersfield, schools, colleges, businesses, commercial entities, registered charities, community-led voluntary arts groups, individual artists, and local residents. These partnerships have led to investments from commercial businesses, project contributions, and strategic collaborations with the University of Huddersfield.

## **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.

The Famagusta District achieved a rate of 25% rate, which is lower than the city sample’s achievement of 67%.



Currently, the Famagusta District does not have initiatives to promote intercultural interaction in public spaces like libraries, museums, or parks. It also does not incorporate population diversity in the planning and management of new public buildings or spaces, nor does it use diverse consultation methods to involve migrant or minority communities during area reconstruction. On a positive note, there are no known areas dominated by one ethnic group where others feel unsafe, and consequently, there is no specific policy in place to address such issues through multi-sectoral approaches or community consultations.



## Suggestions

Cities are encouraged to strengthen policies and actions to support a public space for all. In this context, the municipalities in the Famagusta District can implement small steps to start implementing significant measures in this area and encouraging the use of public space.

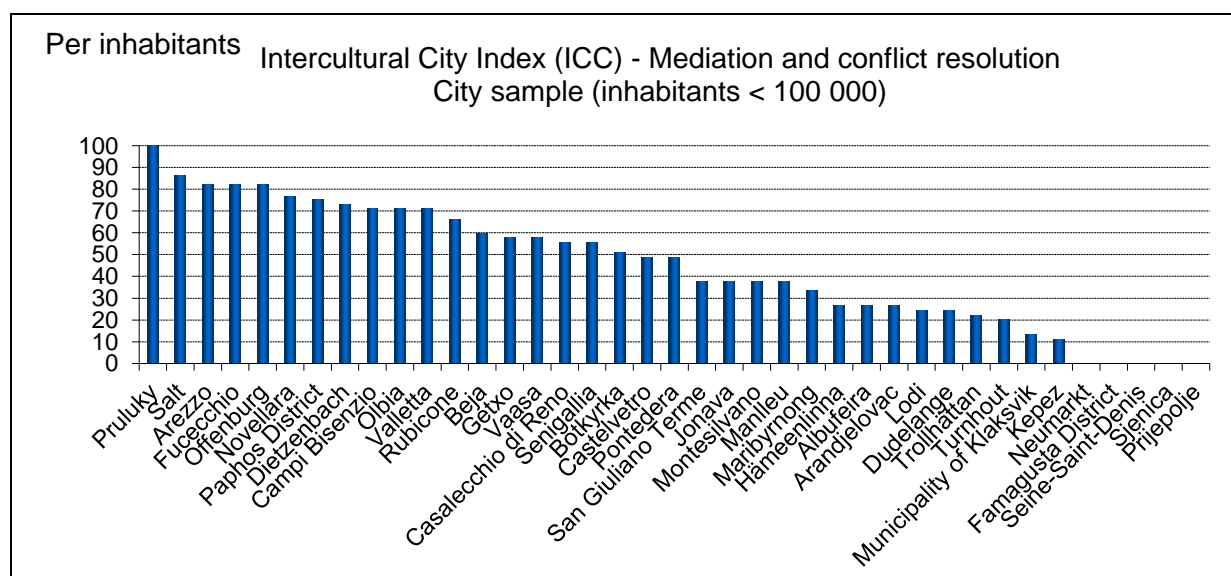
One encouraging example could be the '[Our Spaces' Strategy](#) of the city of Leeds (United Kingdom), the city is committed to creating inclusive public spaces that cater to all ages and abilities and reflect its diverse communities. This initiative aims to make public spaces cultural assets, integrating culture into streets, parks, and urban areas. The city has already completed projects at Playhouse Gardens, Woodhouse Gardens, and Queen Square, with plans for further developments at Cookridge Street, the Corn Exchange, and Meadow Lane. Early stakeholder mapping ensures that relevant groups are included in the consultation process, providing feedback to shape project outcomes. Additionally, to address community cohesion in Harehills, where new arrivals caused some tensions, the city launched a communications campaign using visual tools like wheelie bin stickers to promote positive behaviour and involve local sectors such as West Yorkshire Police and the Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team. This initiative included activities like weekly discussions, children's aspiration sessions, community clean-ups, and play-space creation to foster community engagement and positive change.

ICC programme resources on housing, public spaces and urban planning are available [here](#).

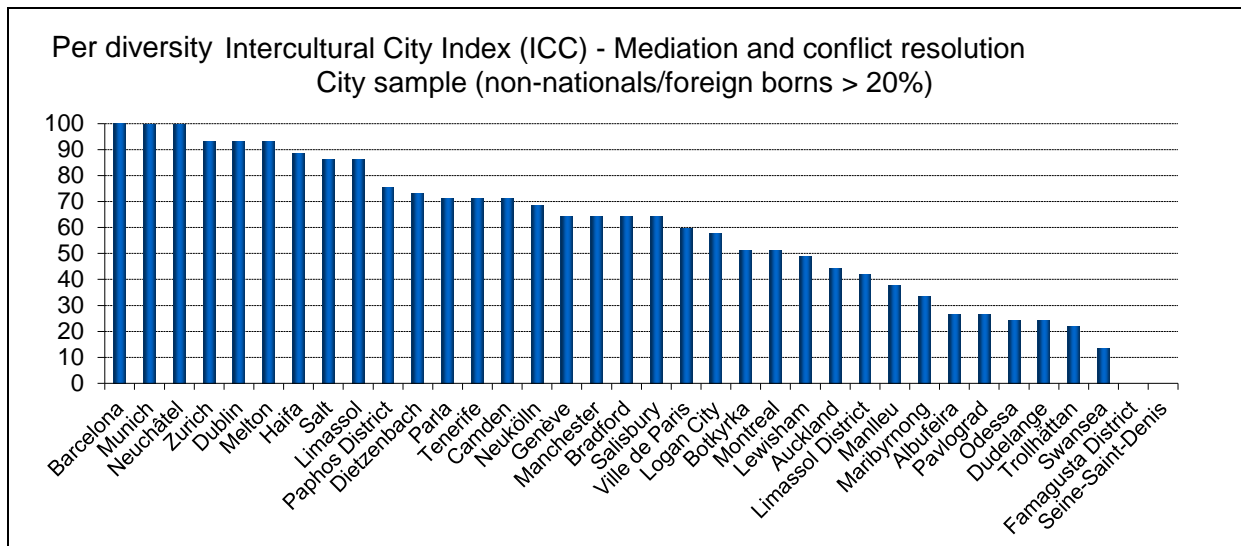
## MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

*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.*

Famagusta District achieved a rate of 0%, which is significantly lower than the city sample's achievement of 57%.







Since there is no evidence of mediation and conflict resolution services in the Famagusta District, this field would need to be further developed.

### Suggestions

Establishing a specialised body for intercultural mediation and conflict prevention could offer significant benefits to the municipalities within the Famagusta District. This body could be developed through collaboration between municipalities or in partnership with other public or political organisations.

In Reggio Emilia (Italy), the [Centro per la Mediazioni dei Conflitti](#) (Centre for Social Conflict Mediation) identifies and support the mediation of conflicts in a network perspective (municipal police, Carabinieri, State Police, ASL, Social Services, URP, schools, voluntary associations, etc.) achieving greater integration of initiatives and projects that are located in the locality. It is particularly skilled in the integration of foreigners and locals, for example in the use of common spaces, noise, pets, private gardens; presence of animals; air pollution, informal groups of young people: and other uses of public space.

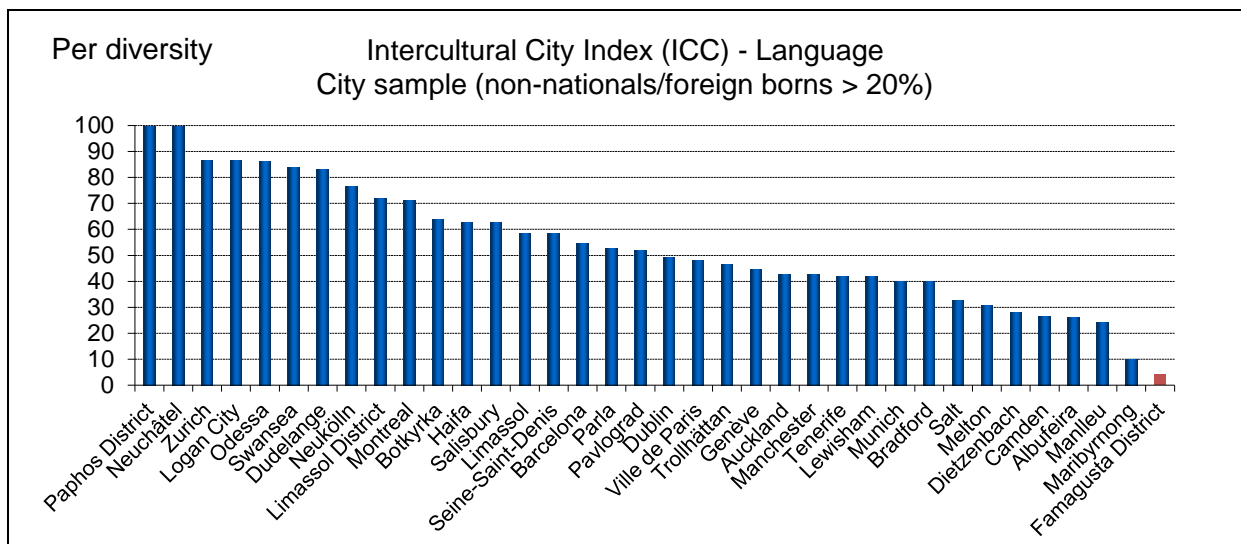
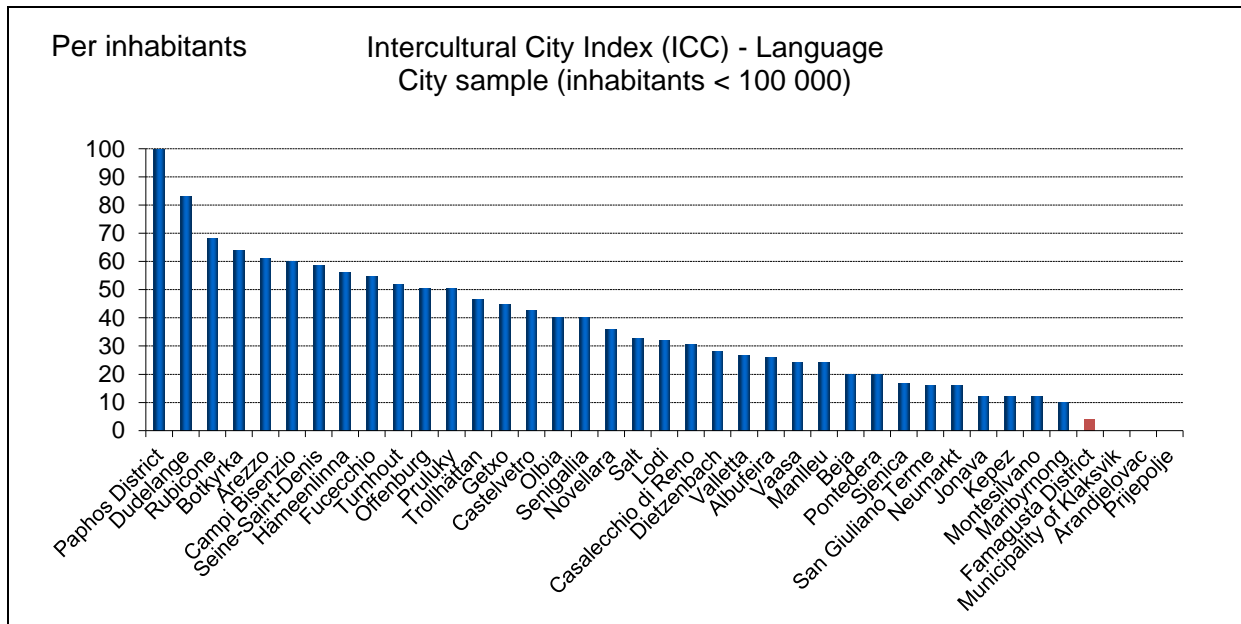
Another example can be found in Novellara (Italy), where exists the La Rosa dei Venti - Mediation desk. Within the framework of gender equality and intersectionality, education and welcoming and social integration, the City of Novellara launched a project in 2017 with the aim to enhance social inclusion of women - both foreign and Italian - through cultural and recreational activities. The project offers support to foreign citizens providing translations and information as well as helping them with bureaucracy and social related issues. The project started with Italian language courses and grew into a “socialisation” course. The project is still ongoing with a wide variety of activities. In summary, the project provides courses in Italian (level A1, A2, and B1) as well as intercultural cooking and sewing classes. Meetings with healthcare professional's such gynaecologists or paediatricians are also scheduled. Finally, recreational activities such as polaroid photography, a film club, creative workshops, a class on the history of photography and cooking lessons are organised. In addition, cultural mediators have weekly office hours at URP (the public relations office) and they also take part in other activities in other offices upon request. Civil society organisations also cooperate with the project such as Proloco (no-profit organisation that organises events to promote the territory), Milad (Turkish cultural association) and Coop (Italian consumers' cooperatives). Moreover, the local Sikh temple Gurdwara Singh Saba also cooperates with the project. The cultural mediators are provided by the social cooperative Dimora di Abramo.

The Intercultural Network in Famagusta could initiate public dialogue and lead the practical development of such a service through its intercultural strategy and action plan. Moreover, ICC programme resources on intercultural competence and mediation are available [here](#).

## 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.

Famagusta achieved a rate of 4%, significantly lower than the sample's achievement rate of 46%.



The district currently lacks initiatives for language training, teaching migrant/minority languages, or supporting organisations that provide such services. There is no financial or logistical support for local media in migrant/minority languages, nor are there projects promoting a positive image of these languages. While

occasional actions may occur, no consistent policy is in place which puts in evidence a great opportunity for improvement.

### Suggestions

Towns in the Farmagusta District could explore the possibility of improving language provisions by taking advantage of the diversity present in the area, tourism and travellers and offering and encouraging more languages in the local private and public services and communications.

One inspiring example could be the [Johannes Learning Centre](#) in Stavanger (Norway) is the primary institution for building language competence, which has evolved from focusing exclusively on teaching Norwegian to promoting bilingualism and multilingualism with a diverse staff. Originally staffed solely by Norwegians, 40% of the current staff now come from minority backgrounds. This transformation was achieved through a policy of hiring former students and individuals with bilingual skills to meet staffing needs. The centre's main aim is to provide newcomers, both children and adults, with the Norwegian language skills and education needed for equal access to the labour market.

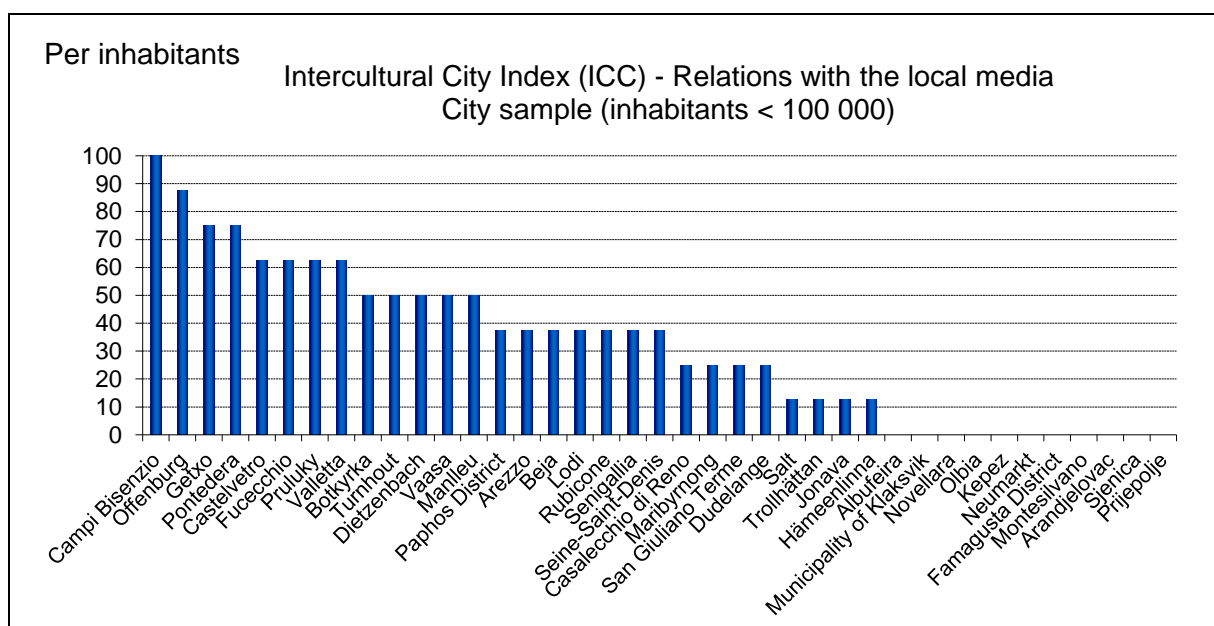
In Lisbon (Portugal), the city, alongside the Portuguese Ministry of Health, has collaborated with local NGOs and hospitals to produce [multilingual health manuals](#). These leaflets were created in partnership with migrant community groups, who identified key topics such as pregnancy, childbirth, STD prevention, and diabetes. The manuals also included illustrations to explain each topic. Community mediators were hired to facilitate discussions with local groups, assist in writing and translating the content, making the development process participatory.

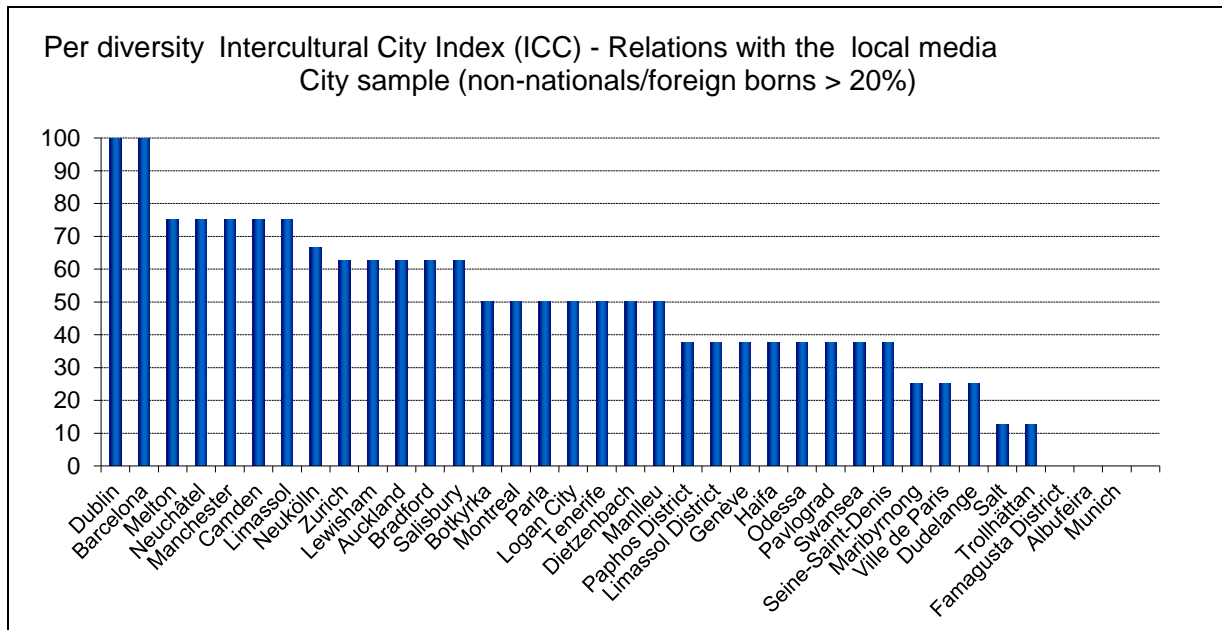
ICC programme resources on multilingualism are available [here](#).

## **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.*

Famagusta District achieved a rate of 0%, clearly lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 46%.





Given the limited presence of media companies in the Famagusta District, there is minimal evidence of local policies addressing how migration is portrayed in local media. To improve this, the municipalities could strategically focus on promoting positive communication regarding migration and interculturalism. This could include involving journalists and media professionals in the Famagusta Region Intercultural Network, maintaining regular communication with them supported by political commitment, and offering training programs. Additionally, providing incentives to journalists of migrant backgrounds could encourage the creation of electronic and social media platforms that contribute to a more inclusive representation.

### Suggestions

To foster a positive culture of diversity in the Famagusta District, municipalities could look to Sabadell, Spain, as an example. Sabadell conducts media training sessions as part of its "[Sabadell Antirumors](#)" Antirumors Strategy to prevent biased portrayals.

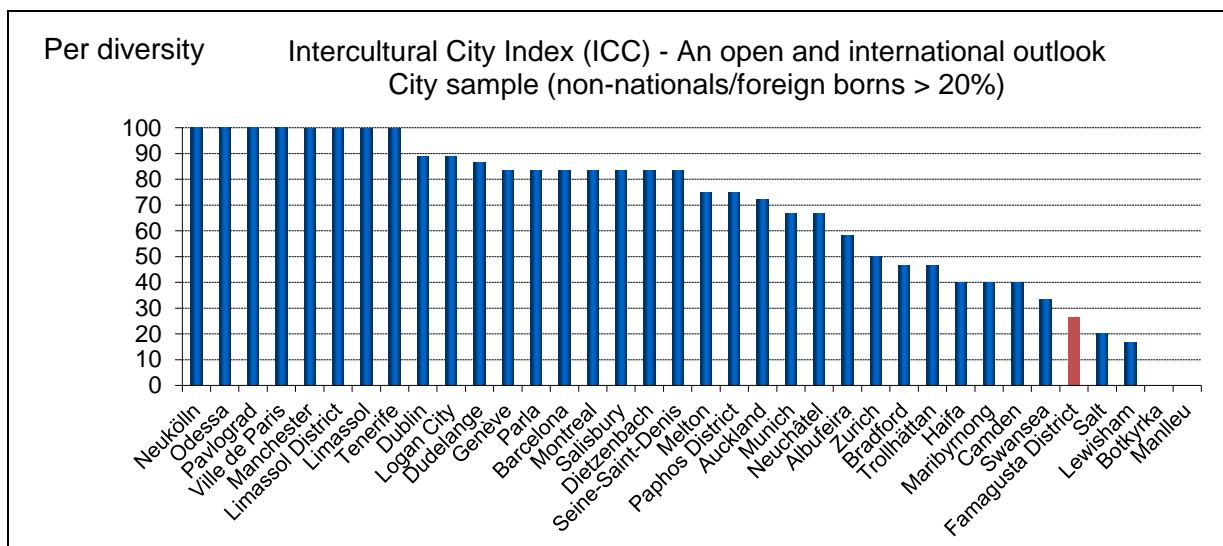
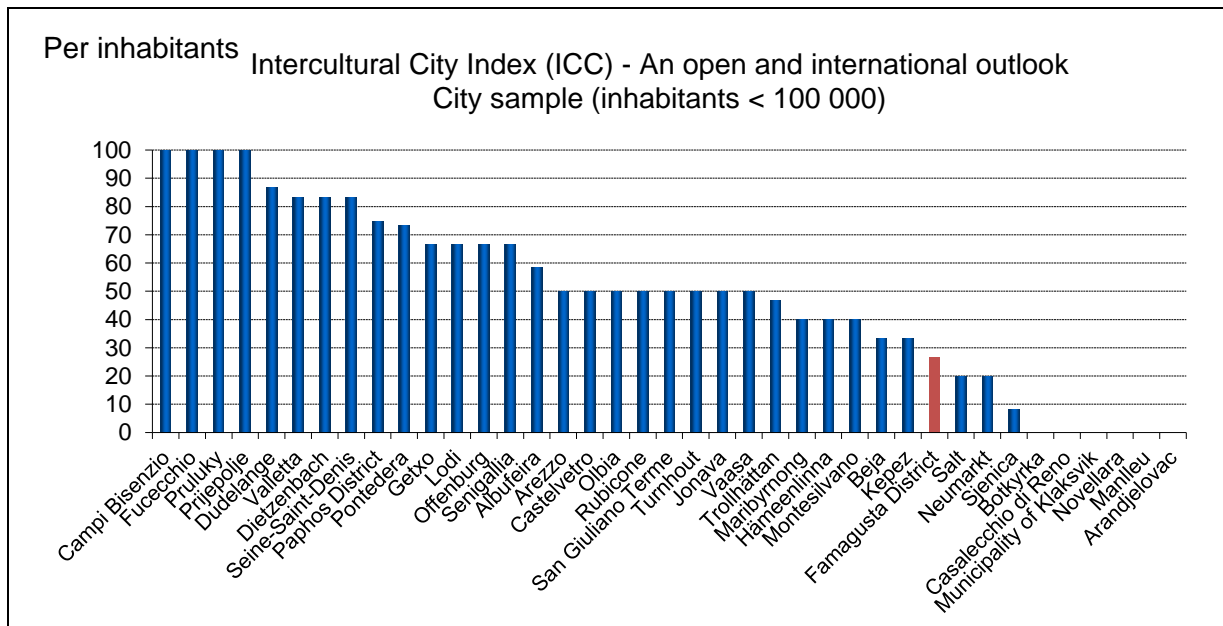
In the Famagusta District, municipalities could partner with the Cyprus Union of Journalists and the Committee of Journalism Ethics through the Famagusta Region Intercultural Network to establish monitoring systems and facilitate constructive communication within the local media landscape.

ICC programme resources on communication and public awareness are available [here](#).

### **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.*

Famagusta District achieved 27%, which is lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 68%.



The Famagusta District does not currently have a formal policy dedicated to promoting international cooperation in areas such as economic, scientific, or cultural relations. While there is no specific financial provision for such policies, the district does engage in actions that foster international connections. These include participation in EU-funded projects and town twinning programs, which help build partnerships with foreign cities and organisations. However, the district does not actively reach out to foreign students or youth groups, as there is no university presence in the area. Additionally, while efforts to develop business relations with the countries of origin of its diaspora groups are not explicitly outlined, the district supports such initiatives through its participation in international programs and collaborations.

### Suggestions

Drawing inspiration from other ICC cities could provide valuable examples and strategies to reinforce Famagusta District's role as a multicultural and welcoming district by improving its international outlook.

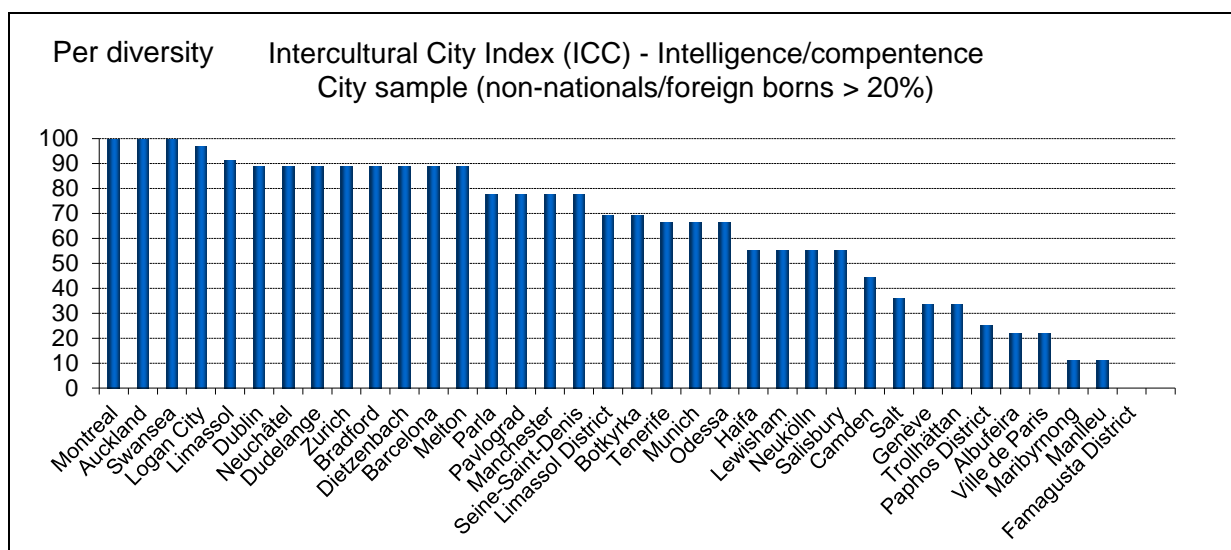
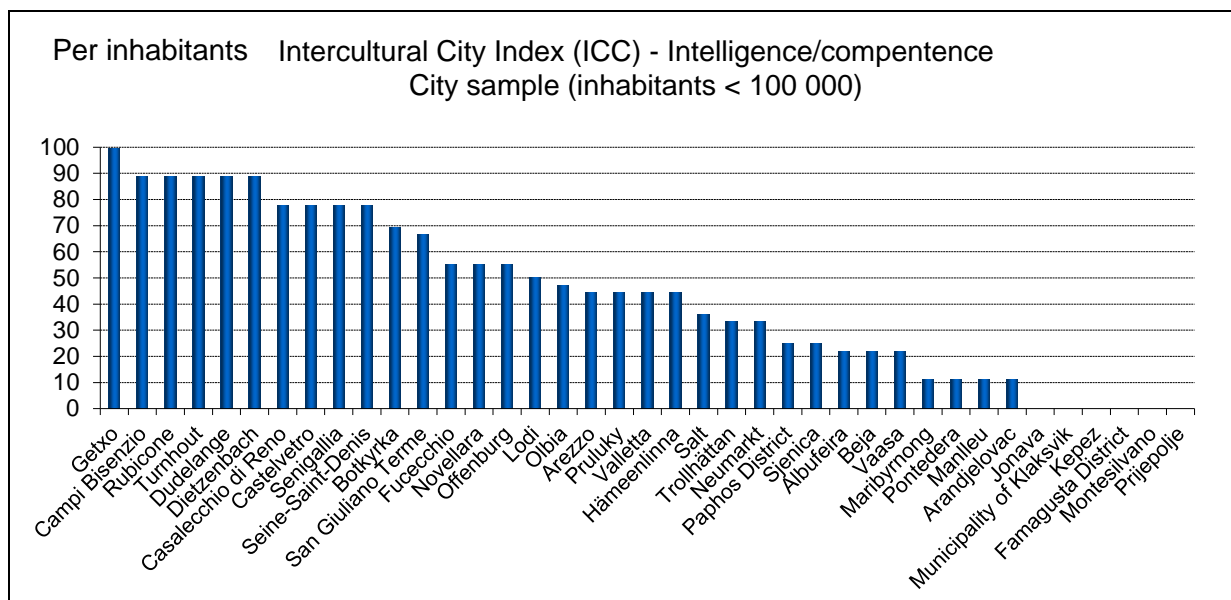
For example, Tampere has developed a systematic network of [Tampere Ambassadors](#) comprising internationally renowned researchers, pioneers in business, visible cultural actors, and international experts from various fields. These ambassadors promote Tampere as an ideal location for living, studying, investing, starting businesses, and hosting events and conferences. Their goal is to support Tampere's internationalisation initiatives by utilising their expertise and networks.

Another inspiring example could be the city Leeds (United Kingdom) has a strategic policy and financial support to promote international cooperation in various sectors. The city's International Relations Team, part of the Economic Development Unit, collaborates with tourism, economic investment teams, and partner organisations to enhance global engagement. It involves the city council, universities, and private sectors and works with schools to foster global citizenship. Leeds also highlights its international efforts through the 'Global Leeds' website. ['Global Leeds'](#).

## 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 are 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.*

Famagusta District achieved a rate of 0%, which is clearly lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 59%.



The municipalities in the Famagusta District face challenges in collecting statistical and qualitative data on diversity and intercultural relations due to their size and geographic layout. There is no indication that the municipalities, either independently or through external agencies, conduct surveys to assess public perception of migrants or the sense of safety related to people from migrant or minority backgrounds. Such efforts are typically carried out by private organisations working directly with refugees and migrants. Additionally, there is no evidence that local municipalities actively promote intercultural competence among their officials and staff in administration and public services, despite some national-level training programs.

### Suggestions

Data collection in the Famagusta District could pose challenges due to a lack of research institutions, universities, and colleges, as well as a limited number of local civil society organisations. To develop evidence-based policies, municipalities in the Famagusta District could consider collaborating with the private sector, national authorities, and existing local and national civil society organisations, while also tapping into funding opportunities offered by EU programs. Additionally, towns might explore joint initiatives to share the costs associated with conducting such research.

For intercultural data collection and analysis, Famagusta District municipalities could start at smaller steps and draw inspiration from the city of Tampere (Finland) which include in the Welcoming City Programme, a collection of testimonies in which people could [share their experiences](#) to build and open, international and welcoming Tampere.

A more comprehensive example could be the one of Ansan, South Korea, known for its approach to intercultural data. Ansan conducts a [survey every three years](#) to gauge residents' intercultural acceptance, with the results used as reference data for policy development. To enhance data accuracy, Ansan plans to conduct this intercultural acceptance survey annually. The city was also the first local government in South Korea to publish statistics on multicultural and international households, compiling 98 types of standard statistical data to inform policymaking. Furthermore, Ansan releases annual social survey reports that include public awareness of non-nationals, conducts yearly fact-finding surveys of the Koryo-saram community in the city, and regularly surveys human rights issues related to non-nationals.

ICC programme resources on intercultural competence are also available [here](#).

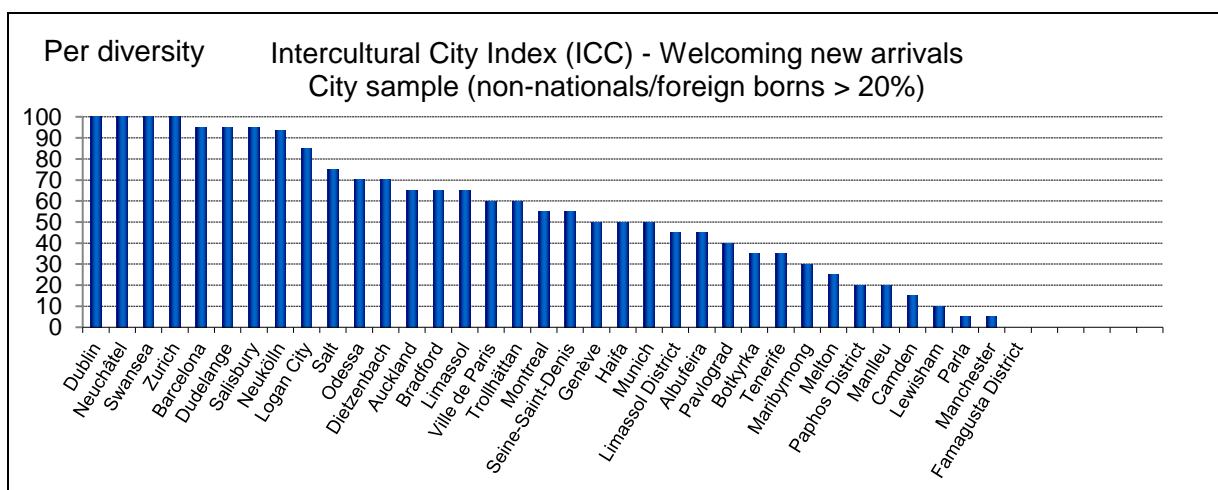
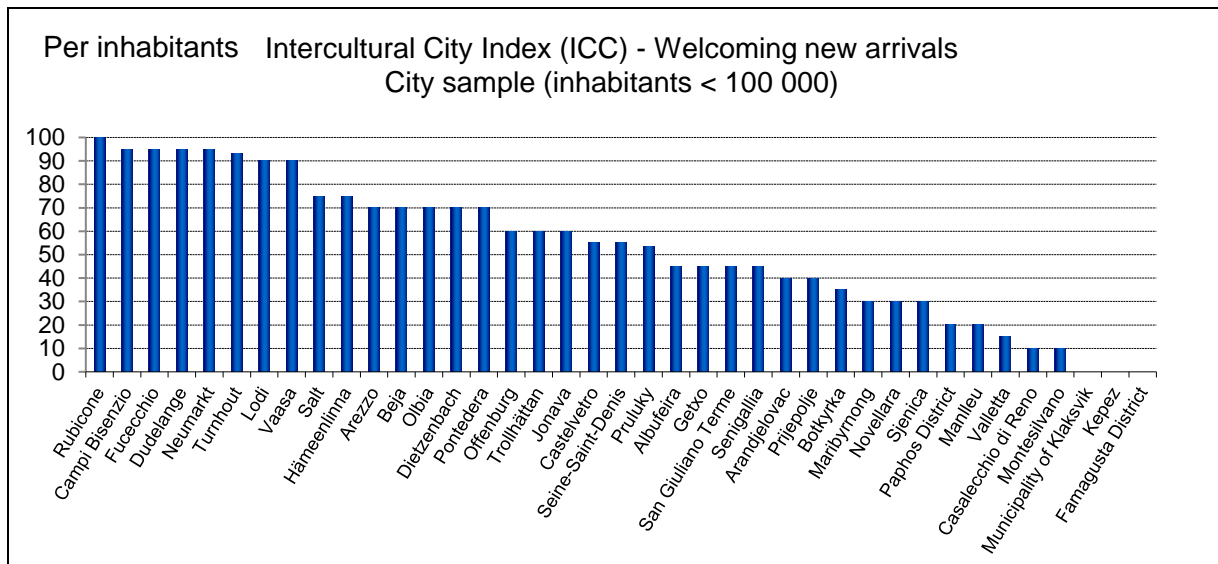
## **WELCOMING NEWCOMERS**

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*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.*

Famagusta District achieved a rate of 0%, considerably lower than the city sample’s achievement rate of 57%.





Designing a welcome package tailored to the specific needs of newcomers in the Famagusta District poses certain challenges. The district's relatively small size and the interconnected nature of its communities, particularly with regard to labour mobility and commuting, contribute to this complexity. At present, there are no dedicated structures, such as specialised agencies, units, staff members, or procedures, to facilitate the integration of new residents. Moreover, there are no established practices aimed at addressing the unique needs of particular groups, such as families, students, minors, or workers. Similarly, the district does not host any general events or ceremonies to formally welcome individuals settling in the area, regardless of their background or nationality.

### Suggestions

Despite possible limitation in resources and challenging context, there are some actions that the District of Famagusta can take to provide town-specific information to newcomers which can boost social cohesion and sense of welcoming for the newly arrived population.

For example, the island of Tenerife (Spain) has developed a children's welcome guide titled [¡Hola!](#). This guide was created by the children's working group *Amiguitos y Amiguitas* as part of the *Together in the Same Direction* programme. Its development involved collaboration with various stakeholders and institutions across the island.

Another example can be the city of Tampere which have a designated unit to welcome newcomers along with a comprehensive city-package for them. The Welcoming Tampere initiative works with other projects such as the [Relocation Guide to Tampere in English](#); and a multilingual guidance in 14 different languages.

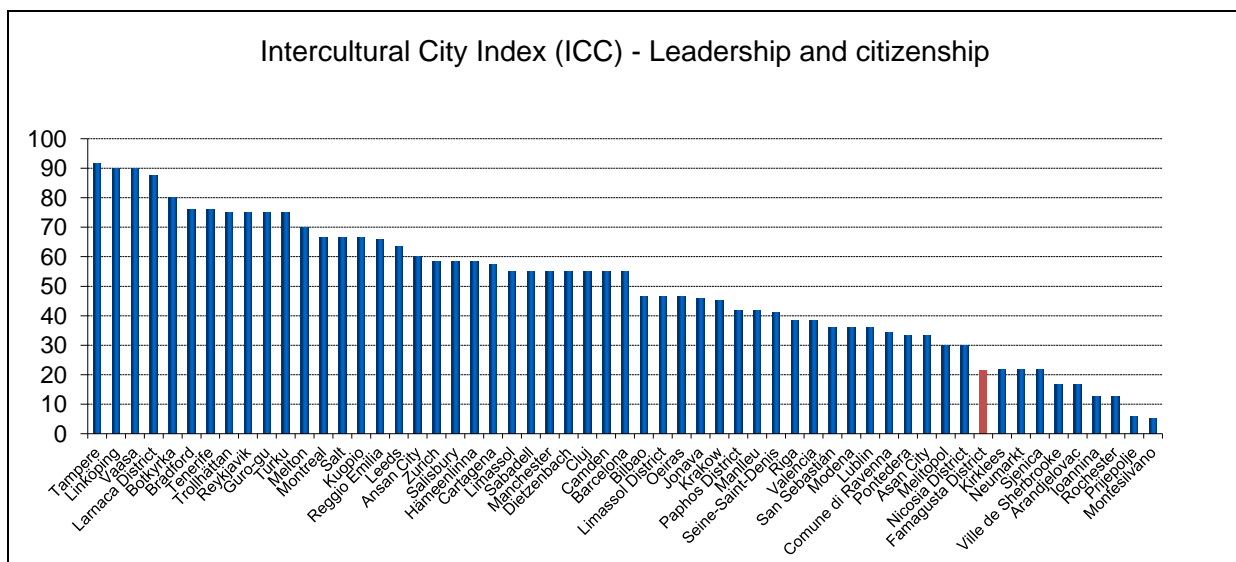
Similarly, Zurich, (Switzerland) has implemented a comprehensive strategy to support new arrivals. This includes a specialised agency for [welcoming newcomers](#), information materials available in 14 languages, and annual events at the City Hall. These events include multilingual information sessions, city tours, and social gatherings to facilitate integration. Additionally, Zurich provides services like a welcome desk, a database of German courses, and multilingual online resources tailored for various language groups, ensuring inclusive support for diverse communities

ICC programme resources on welcoming policies are also available [here](#).

## 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.*

Famagusta achieved a rate of 22%, which is considerably lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 50%.



Under Cyprus national legislation, only Cypriot and EU citizens have voting and electoral rights in local elections, leaving migrants without a direct avenue to voice their concerns or influence decision-making. This exclusion from the political process risks reinforcing social marginalization and discrimination. While amending the voting legislation may require significant time, establishing independent consultative bodies could serve as an interim measure. These bodies would allow individuals with migrant or minority backgrounds to articulate their perspectives and provide guidance to municipal councils on issues related to diversity and integration. The Intercultural Network for the Famagusta Region offers a strong foundation for the creation and support of such structures, facilitating greater inclusion and dialogue.

### Suggestions

The municipalities of the Famagusta District could draw inspiration from Reykjavik, Iceland, where the city's Human Rights Council supported a project called "[Class in Politics for Immigrant Women](#)", organised by the Icelandic Women's Rights Association. The project aligned with Reykjavik's Human Rights Policy, addressing gender inequality and fostering intercultural inclusion. Over seven weeks, participants learned about Iceland's political systems, both municipal and national, and received training in empowerment, public speaking, media interaction,

and networking. They also met representatives of all parliamentary political parties and toured Alþingi, Iceland’s Parliament, guided by its members. This initiative demonstrates a practical approach to integrating and empowering immigrant communities through education and political engagement.

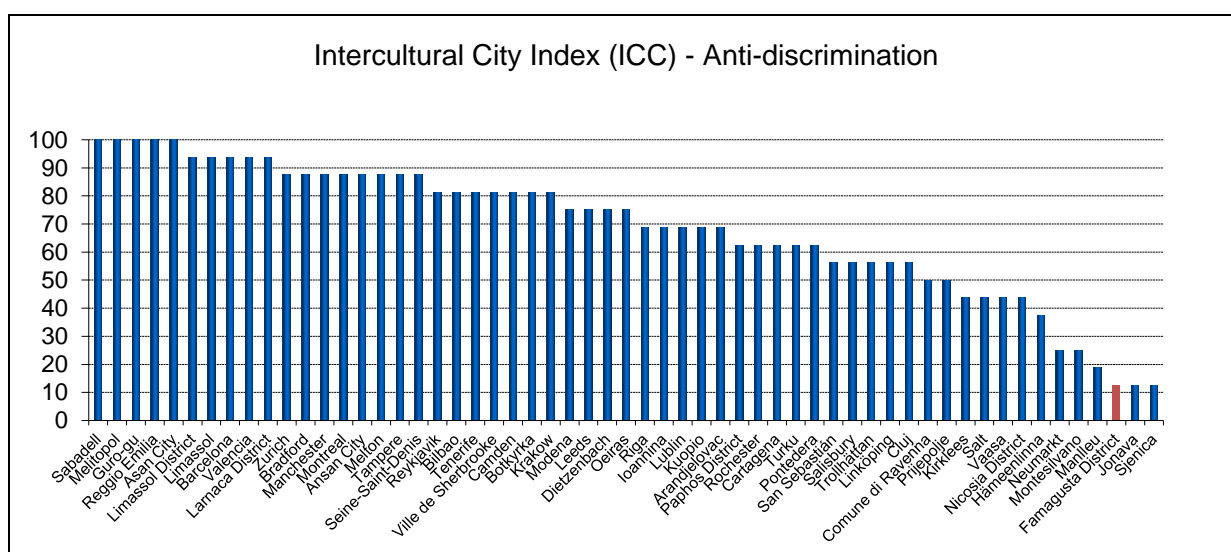
In Erlanger (Germany), the city has redacted an Integration Charter that illustrates the integration strategy plan. The Charter outlines the key elements required to achieve a high level of integration. Integration and coexistence should be considered a global objective, concerning every area of local administration: The City Council should hire more employees with a migration background in the public administration and in the municipal businesses. In fact, employees with foreign origin firstly speak several languages and secondly have intercultural competences. People with a minority background will equally benefit from all city programs and services – this means that services already in place may be modified to suit specific requirements. The city of Erlangen actively discourages and stands against any form of discrimination and racism, on the contrary, it guarantees every citizen the right to preserve their religious and cultural identity. Moreover, the Integration Charter points out that citizens with immigrant backgrounds are indispensable and their customs and traditions must be recognized as an enrichment to the host society. For this reason, the municipality of Erlangen aims to strengthen the feeling of self-confidence and openness to ensure peace and mutual understanding.

ICC programme resources on political and public participation are also available [here](#).

## 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 Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 57 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Famagusta District’s rate of achievement in the field of anti-discrimination is 13%.



The District of Famagusta is taking some first steps to advance in this field. The District has not yet conducted a systematic review of municipal rules to identify discriminatory mechanisms but is seriously considering this step. It lacks a binding anti-discrimination charter and does not provide direct support for discrimination victims, relying on neither municipal, regional, nor civil society initiatives. Financial or logistical support for civil organisations advising victims is also absent, as is regular monitoring or research on discrimination. While the city occasionally supports anti-discrimination campaigns in collaboration with organisations, it does not participate in regional or national anti-discrimination organisations and has not implemented an anti-rumours strategy, although an anti-rumours workshop was held in Deryneia on 26 September 2024.

### Suggestions

Towns in Famagusta District has room for improvement in this area, which is also well accompanied by willingness to take measures. Some inspiring examples for the first steps can be the city of Bilbao (Spain) which has implemented an [Anti-Rumour Web App](#) aimed at combating harmful stereotypes and promoting better social cohesion. This interactive tool educates users about common misconceptions and facilitates awareness-raising efforts that empower communities to challenge discriminatory attitudes

Moreover, the city of Setúbal (Portugal) has established a comprehensive approach through its [Office for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities](#), which has been active since 2004. This initiative works on integrating immigrants and promoting their participation across various municipal services, reinforcing policies that foster intercultural dialogue and tackle discrimination

Sabadell (Spain) provides information and protection to victims of ethnic and racial discrimination through the [Civil Rights Office](#). Besides the attention to victims and management of discrimination cases, the Office also trains and raises awareness of the rights and duties recognised in the city. Another body, the Living Together Commission, made up of municipal and political parties' representatives, third-sector organisations and the police, monitors and intervenes in cases of aggression or discrimination due to xenophobia, racism or homophobia. The city also counts on the municipal Ombudsman.

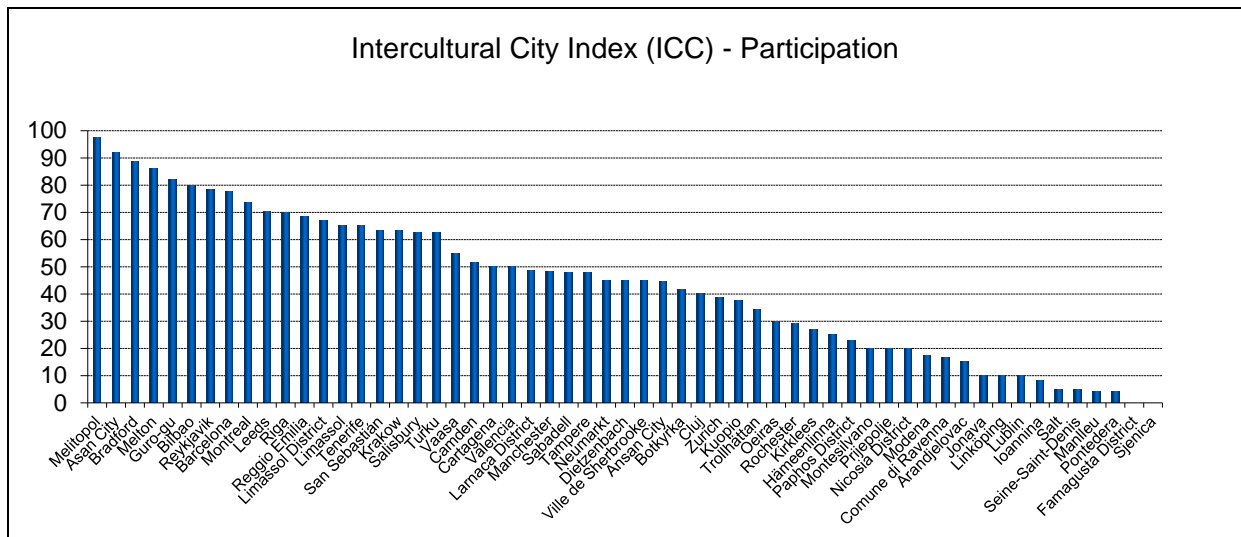
ICC programme resources on systemic discrimination are also available [here](#) and resources on anti-rumours are available [here](#).

## **PARTICIPATION**

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*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 Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 57 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Famagusta District's rate of achievement in the field of participation is 0%



The municipalities in the Famagusta District are at the initial stages of developing their participation policies. Currently, there is no indication that towns in the Famagusta District track the representation of migrants in governance bodies, school boards, other collaborative groups, or trade unions. Additionally, mechanisms for monitoring gender equality in participation have yet to be put in place.

### Suggestions

Some inspiring examples to kickstart actions in the field of participation could be the city of Maribyrnong (Australia), which facilitated informative sessions led by the Victorian Electoral Commission to educate residents about the Australian electoral process. These sessions covered essential topics such as electoral keywords, the obligation of Australian citizens aged 18 and over to enrol and vote, the importance of updating personal details when moving or changing names, and the correct voting procedures in Victorian elections. Additionally, the Victorian Electoral Commission conducted Talking Democracy sessions, aimed at training staff and community leaders, as well as voter education sessions focused on local elections, which were held at various community hubs within Maribyrnong.

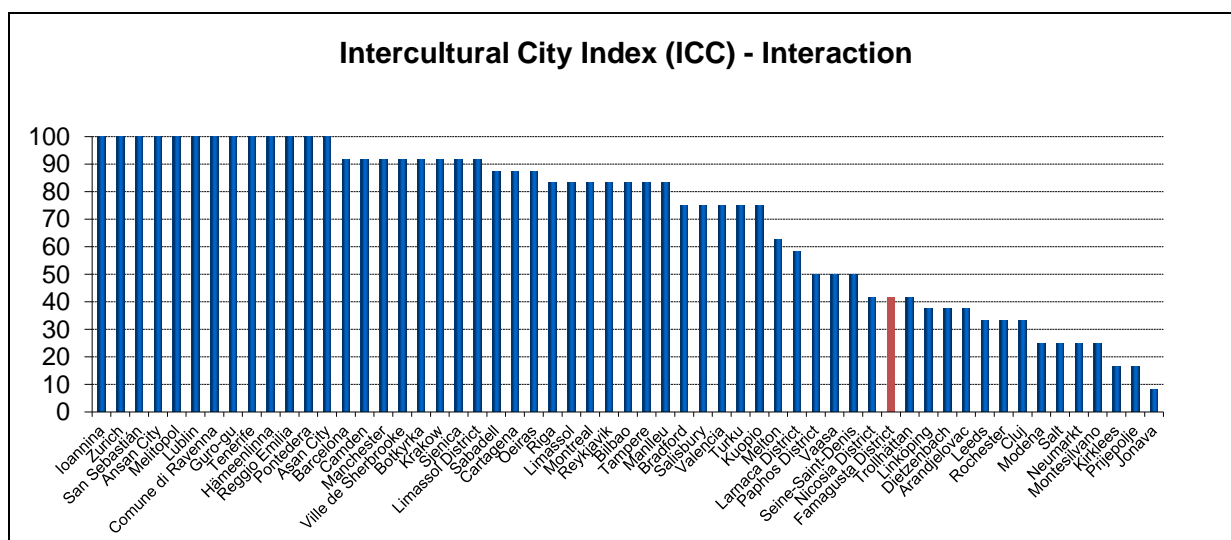
On a similar note, the city of Copenhagen (Denmark) has implemented [the Host Programme](#) (2016-2019) to promote integration by facilitating interactions between new migrants and local residents who volunteer as hosts. This initiative not only helps newcomers become acquainted with the city's social fabric but also empowers them to participate actively in community activities and local decision-making. By building relationships and trust, the programme enhances the sense of belonging and encourages inclusive participation

ICC programme resources on political and public participation are also available [here](#).

### **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 Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 57 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Famagusta District's rate of achievement in the field of interaction is 42%.



In Famagusta District, teachers in primary schools are receiving training in intercultural communication and pedagogy, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Athletics, and Youth (MoEC) and the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute. This initiative aims to support the integration of students from migrant backgrounds, ensuring that educators are well-equipped with the skills needed to foster an inclusive learning environment through various training sessions and seminars.

Although the city does not yet have a regularly updated database of civil society and grassroots organisations involved in intercultural inclusion, it does engage with these organisations, primarily through EU co-funded projects. This approach provides opportunities for collaborative efforts and the promotion of intercultural initiatives within the community.

### Suggestions

Famagusta has initiated some good practices in the field of interaction. Nevertheless, the city has room for improvement, and other cities examples could be inspirational.

In Braga (Portugal), the “(Re)Writing our neighbourhood” project was developed from 2017 to 2020. The main goal was promoting integrated Approaches for Active participation in social and civic life. In addition to the physical improvement of the municipal housing in different neighbourhoods, the project integrated 8 measures to be implemented in the field to foster interaction and public participation.

Famagusta municipalities could also draw inspiration from the Municipality of Cascais (Portugal), which developed an online platform to share the stories of residents with migrant backgrounds. This initiative invites groups of two or more people - where one participant is native to Cascais and the other is not - [to share their experiences](#). Participants can detail their journey to the city, their meeting stories, their life experiences, and interactions within the community, accompanied by photos. This storytelling project seeks to celebrate and highlight the city's diverse social fabric by showcasing personal narratives and fostering a sense of connection among residents.

ICC programme resources on anti-rumours are also available [here](#) and resources on intercultural competence and mediation are available [here](#).



## OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

**Famagusta District's aggregate Intercultural Cities Index achievement rate was 13.** This indicates that Famagusta District is at the beginning on its intercultural journey. The following table gives more information on what Famagusta does well and areas it could learn more from the experience of other cities.

<b>COMMITMENT</b>	✓	In Famagusta District, some CSOs work on integration and interculturalism, and individuals contributing to the community are recognised and celebrated.
	✗	The district lacks an intercultural public statement, strategy, or action plan. Mechanisms for consulting diverse communities are missing. Official communication rarely mentions intercultural efforts.
<b>EDUCATION</b>	✓	Famagusta's participation in EU-funded programs like Erasmus+ and DRA.S.E.+ facilitates intercultural projects in schools.
	✗	Ethnic diversity is not reflected among teachers, and there is no city-specific policy to promote interculturalism in schools. Parent involvement remains limited to a few motivated schools.
<b>NEIGHBOURHOODS</b>	✓	Some community events and festivals occasionally foster interactions across neighborhoods.
	✗	The District has no structured policies to increase diversity in neighborhoods or encourage intercultural interaction among residents. Initiatives remain sporadic and resident-led.
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES</b>	✓	Some private stakeholders in tourism highlight diversity.
	✗	Public workforce diversity in the District does not reflect the local population. No recruitment plans, inclusive public services, or measures to encourage intercultural competence have been developed.
<b>BUSINESS AND THE LABOUR MARKET</b>	✓	The district's strong ties to tourism and agriculture present potential for promoting diversity and inclusion in the economy.
	✗	No targeted support exists for migrant entrepreneurs, and intercultural principles are not integrated into procurement processes or labour market policies.
<b>CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE</b>	✓	EU-funded projects and occasional events foster intercultural interaction in arts and culture.
	✗	Interculturalism is not used as a criterion for funding cultural activities. Public discussions and campaigns on cultural diversity and living together are absent.
<b>PUBLIC SPACE</b>	✓	In Famagusta District, Public spaces do not exhibit significant ethnic segregation or safety concerns.
	✗	No initiatives are in place to ensure diversity in planning and managing public spaces. Intercultural interaction in spaces like parks and libraries is not actively encouraged.
<b>MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION</b>	✓	No intercultural mediation or conflict resolution mechanisms are currently implemented.
	✗	Establish specialised mediation services or councils to address intercultural conflicts. Municipalities have yet to prioritise intercultural conflict resolution.



<b>LANGUAGE</b>	✓	Occasional language training is offered through national and private initiatives.
	✗	There are no consistent programs for teaching migrant languages or promoting their cultural value. Efforts to integrate minority languages in public spaces are absent.
<b>MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION</b>	✓	Informal social media activities by migrant activists highlight some diversity narratives.
	✗	No formal media strategy promotes a positive image of migration or interculturalism. Training programs for local journalists and partnerships with media are lacking.
<b>INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK</b>	✓	Participation in EU-funded projects and town twinning programs fosters international connections.
	✗	The district lacks a dedicated policy or funding to support international cooperation in economic, scientific, or cultural areas. Outreach to foreign students or diaspora groups is limited.
<b>INTERCULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETENCE</b>	✓	CSOs collect some diversity data, providing insights into integration challenges.
	✗	The district does not systematically collect or analyse diversity-related data. Intercultural competence training for staff is absent.
<b>WELCOMING NEWCOMERS</b>	✓	Some welcoming activities are organised by private stakeholders through EU funds.
	✗	The district lacks formal structures for welcoming newcomers, such as tailored welcome packages or integration-focused events and ceremonies.
<b>LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP</b>	✓	The Famagusta Intercultural Network offers a platform for enhancing migrant participation.
	✗	Migrants have limited representation in public decision-making bodies. Independent consultative bodies for migrants are not yet established.
<b>ANTI-DISCRIMINATION</b>	✓	Initial steps have been taken, including anti-discrimination workshops and discussions.
	✗	The district has no anti-discrimination charter, mechanisms to monitor discrimination, or direct support services for victims. Anti-rumour strategies are not systematically implemented.
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>	✓	The district has begun developing participation policies, leveraging its intercultural network.
	✗	Representation of migrants in governance, schools, and unions is not monitored. Mechanisms to track and ensure equal participation are needed.
<b>INTERACTION</b>	✓	Intercultural training for teachers and collaboration with civil society organisations support inclusive education.
	✗	There is no formal database of civil society organisations involved in intercultural efforts. Community-wide intercultural initiatives remain limited to EU-funded projects.

In view of the above, we wish to acknowledge Famagusta District for the efforts taken and we are confident that if the municipalities in the district follow our guidelines and other Intercultural Cities' practices, the results will rapidly be visible and tangible.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

**Commitment:** Towns in Famagusta District could develop intercultural public statements and action plans to solidify their commitment to diversity and inclusion. The district may also draw inspiration from nearby cities to create consultation mechanisms, recognising individuals and organisations contributing to interculturalism. A formal communication strategy could frequently highlight these efforts.

**Education:** Schools in Famagusta District could promote more intercultural projects and encourage engagement between families of diverse backgrounds. The district could also expand initiatives like parent-mediator training to foster inclusivity in schools.

**Neighbourhoods:** Towns could organise structured activities to encourage interaction between residents of different neighbourhoods and create inclusive public spaces for meetings and events, ensuring all residents feel welcome.

**Public Services:** Towns may wish to adopt a recruitment plan that reflects the diverse population in public administration. Initiatives to integrate intercultural competence training into public services and design inclusive facilities catering to all communities could also be beneficial.

**Business and the Labour Market:** Towns could explore incorporating diversity and intercultural inclusion criteria into procurement processes. Supporting migrant entrepreneurs and fostering sustainable tourism projects could further strengthen the local economy.

**Cultural and Social Life:** Municipalities in the Famagusta District may consider organising more regular events incorporating intercultural themes. Encouraging cultural organisations to address diversity in their projects would also strengthen intercultural collaboration.

**Public Space:** The district could adopt a formal commitment to include diverse perspectives in urban planning. This could include consulting migrant or minority groups during the design of public spaces like parks, libraries, and community centres.

**Mediation and Conflict Resolution:** Famagusta District could establish specialised mediation services for intercultural conflicts in collaboration with public institutions such as schools, hospitals, and police departments.

**Language:** The district might explore supporting programs that highlight the value of migrant and minority languages, offering multilingual information and promoting positive narratives around linguistic diversity.

**Media and Communication:** Towns could provide media training and mentorship for journalists from minority backgrounds. Collaborating with media outlets to counter stereotypes and promote diversity would help shape positive narratives about migration and interculturalism.

**International Outlook:** Towns in Famagusta may benefit from developing a sustainable policy to encourage international cooperation in areas such as business, education, and culture, leveraging EU projects and town twinning initiatives as a foundation.

**Intercultural Intelligence and Competence:** The district could implement systematic surveys to collect data on public perceptions of migrants and minorities. Training municipal staff on intercultural competence would also enhance service delivery.

**Welcoming Newcomers:** Towns could extend their welcoming services to include tailored programmes for families, students, and workers. Organizing welcome ceremonies and creating multilingual information packages would support integration.

**Leadership and Citizenship:** Municipalities may wish to establish consultative bodies to ensure the representation of migrants and minorities in public decision-making. Expanding the Famagusta Intercultural Network to include public institutions and civil society groups would enhance inclusivity.

**Anti-Discrimination:** Famagusta could develop an anti-rumours strategy and anti-discrimination charter to address stereotypes and bias. Partnering with CSOs to support victims of discrimination would strengthen community trust.

**Participation:** The district could introduce participatory mechanisms to involve all residents in decision-making processes. Monitoring and ensuring as fair as possible representation of migrants and minorities in governance bodies would promote inclusivity.

**Interaction:** Famagusta might consider creating a comprehensive database of civil society organisations active in intercultural inclusion. Regular collaborations with these organisations could foster stronger community ties.

Famagusta may wish to consider further examples implemented by other Intercultural Cities as a source of learning and inspiration to guide future initiatives available 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 (ICC) Programme invites cities in Europe and beyond to explore and apply policies that harness diversity for personal and societal development.

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