

GT-ADI-INT(2020)8

Strasbourg, 8 December 2020

## WORKING GROUP ON INTERCULTURAL INTEGRATION (GT-ADI-INT)

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### 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting Report and List of Decisions

#### 1. Opening of the Meeting

The Secretary to GT-ADI-INT opened the meeting and welcomed the members and other participants. She reminded of the overall goals of the working group GT-ADI-INT and updated on the progress and developments since the last meeting, thanking the members for their useful written contributions. She further presented the draft agenda, which was adopted as it appears in Appendix I.

The list of participants appears in Appendix II.

#### 2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Secretary to GT-ADI-INT informed of the applications received to the posts of Chair and Vice-Chair, notably:

- Pia Buhl Girolami, Policy Director at the Ministry of Education and Research, Department of Integration, Norway, to the post of Chair.
- Claudia Emmanuel Laredo, Senior Manager of Bilbao City Council in charge of Immigration and diversity, representing the city of Bilbao, and Nadan Petrovic, Professor and Coordinator of the Centre for migration and refugee studies, representing Italy, to the post of Vice-Chair.

The candidates shared their views on the work of the Working Group and their motivations for representing it.

The Working Group decided to elect Pia Buhl Girolami to the post of Chair by acclamation. It then proceeded to a secret ballot for the election to the post of Vice-Chair. Claudia Emmanuel Laredo was elected Vice-Chair.

#### 3. Review of the implementation by Member States of CM/Rec(2015)1 on intercultural integration

The Chair recalled that - within the frame of CD-ADI mandate – the working group GT-ADI-INT is requested to provide specialist support to CD-ADI in carrying out the review of the implementation

of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 by Member states. To this end, CD-ADI endorsed a questionnaire to collect member states' replies in view of the preparation of the present draft report (document GT-ADI-INT(2020)6).

Thirty-two replies were received. The Chair gave the floor to the author of the draft report, Niall Crowley, independent equality and human rights expert.

Crowley stressed that the replies received reflect a track record of commitment and creativity for intercultural integration among the member states, and an appreciation of the importance of multi-level engagement with the national level to encourage action at the local level. The initiatives undertaken by member states are aligned with the requirements of CM/Rec(2015)1 and can be divided into three main strands:

- National/institutional frameworks:
  - o Constitutional provision and legislation;
  - o Dedicated institutions;
  - o National strategies/plans;
  - o Funding streams.
  
- Multi-level engagement:
  - o Top-down approaches involving national bodies with an intercultural remit;
  - o Bottom-up approaches, especially in countries where a National Intercultural Cities network exist;
  - o A mixture of Top-Down/Bottom-up approaches including cooperation with association of public authorities from the regional and local levels.

A few general trends can be identified. For instance, national and international policy frameworks for intercultural integration (including the Intercultural Cities Step-by-step Guide) are considered to be enabling factors for setting up a common agenda among the public authorities involved, and to agree on standards to work towards. Multi-level engagement is appreciated, and bidirectionality emerged as important for effective implementation, including participative processes and structures. Support at/from the European level was praised.

Among the main challenges, member states generally agree that multi-level engagement is not simple, especially in federal contexts with a high degree of autonomy at regional and local levels; the lack of data on equality is also an obstacle to intercultural service delivery; the Covid-19 pandemic has recently impacted ability to promote interaction; and the lack of translation of the Intercultural Cities Step-by-step guide in national languages has reduced its outreach and negatively impacted its dissemination.

The expert concluded with a number of recommendations, notably:

1. Develop European and national level policy frameworks for intervention;
2. Attribute responsibility to institution with powers and resources;
3. Establish platforms for multi-level & multi-sectoral engagement & coordination;
4. Network and engage with Intercultural Cities members at national level;
5. Reinforce equal treatment legislation with equality duties;

6. Undertake action on intercultural integration as part of policy responses to Covid-19;
7. Design models for interculturally competent institutions and deliver intercultural competence training.

The Working Group expressed high appreciation for the draft Report. The Gender Equality Rapporteur (GER), Solve Saetre, stressed that the report is clear and well structured. He pointed out that it has a strong focus on equality, although it does not explicitly refer to gender equality. He however praised the policy examples delivered by the United Kingdom which do address gender equality issues. He concluded by exhorting the Working Group to deliver additional examples on policies and actions that take intersectionality into account.

The London Borough of Lewisham suggested that the final recommendations should address ways to improve/enable data collection on equality.

Bursa Osmangazi, supported by Bradford, considered that the impact of the Covid-19 emergency on increasing inequalities could be emphasised further, and links could be made with the CD-ADI study on member states response to the sanitary crisis.

Finland, supported by Norway, emphasised on the need to proceed to more systematic follow-up, reporting and monitoring to improve implementation.

Limassol shared that the questionnaire has been a good opportunity to engage a multi-level dialogue in view of preparing a comprehensive reply, bringing all stakeholders whose competence is split to discuss matters around different levels of governance.

Norway further suggested to emphasise the good outcomes of the multi-level cooperation triggered in some cases by the sanitary crisis as a model to follow more generally for migrant integration policies.

Finally, some member states expressed the wish to further complete their replies before submitting the report to CD-ADI for consideration.

The Working Group agreed to endorse the draft review report as to be amended by the Secretariat, entrusting the Chair and Vice-Chair to ensure that the final draft reflects all comments and remarks expressed; it further agreed to forward it for discussion and possible endorsement at the second CD-ADI meeting.

#### **4. Community sponsorship for refugee integration**

The Chair recalled that community sponsorship for refugees is one potential solution for making societies more welcoming and inclusive for those who arrive often in distress, and for providing community resources that may empower refugees to give a positive contribution to their new homes. It is also a policy practice that involves different levels of governments as it entails strong cooperation and coordination among states, regions and local authorities, and requires the active engagement of the citizenry in the welcoming process. As such, community sponsorship appears in the matrix of the Draft Guidelines and Model Policy Framework for intercultural integration that is being developed by the Working Group. Canada has a longstanding experience with the implementation of community sponsorship programmes, and it has been a source of inspiration for a number of European countries, including the United Kingdom.

The Chair invited Mary Coulter, Migration Counsellor at the Mission of Canada to the European Union in Brussels, and Jane Kennedy, UK Home Office Community Sponsorship Delivery and Policy Lead to take the floor and share their respective experiences.

Mary Coulter detailed the positive impacts that community sponsorship has had in Canada in the past 40 years of experience. She highlighted that the bonds formed through community sponsorship are beneficial for everyone. Refugees welcomed through the model typically integrate faster and build deeper, more robust relationships with community members. The model provides an opportunity for citizens to participate in welcoming refugees into the local community and can help bring people closer. She then presented the set of programmes that Canada implements, notably a resettlement programme, a community sponsorship programme and a blended programme combining the two methods. She concluded by stressing that the Canadian experience has shown that the success of resettlement depends very much on involvement across multiple levels of government.

Jane Kennedy presented the UK experience, largely modelled on the Canadian model, as launched in 2016. For the UK, the community sponsorship model is a partnership between local communities, civil society organisations and the government. The UK further work closely with the capacity building organization Reset, which is assisting with training and support to groups. Through the collaboration, the state has modified the scheme based on the parties' feedback. Community sponsorship groups are now present in every local authority region, with a concentration in certain areas, as a result of groups having grown the scheme there. This approach has changed how government works with communities and it is now seen as an example of good practice on how to work in partnership.

The questions and answers session that followed focussed on practical questions related to the initial phases of the programme, and on the involvement of the UNHCR. Some member states inquired on the legal instruments, frameworks and structures needed to implement the programme, while cities expressed interest in getting information to the pre-conditions that have to be put in place for ensuring success. The coordinator of the Spanish network of intercultural cities (RECI) informed that Spain has taken the opportunity of community sponsorship for enlarging the competences of the involved regions so to increase their capacity to implement. Other questions concerned the outreach to vulnerable refugees, the research studies that bring evidence on the positive impact, and the adaptability of the model to diverse contexts.

The Secretary to GT-ADI-INT informed that the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative can provide national online training and workshops for interested public authorities and suggested to connect the Group with the Europe Director. She further informed that the Intercultural Cities Programme is preparing a briefing paper with detailed information on community sponsorship which will be share with the Working Group.

## **5. Draft Guidelines and Model Policy Framework for intercultural integration**

The Chair recalled that this document is the core of GT-ADI-INT proposal for a change in the conception and management of integration strategies. It advocates for intercultural integration to be the model to follow and establishes that multi-level cooperation in this field is the most efficient way to the goal. A first draft Guidelines and Model Policy Framework for intercultural integration had been already extensively discussed at the first meeting of the Working Group. Proposals of amendments had been

made both orally during the meeting and in writing after it. The reference of the updated document is GT-ADI-INT(2020)2. She stressed that there were no additions to the matrix, and that the amendments presented mainly concerned the structure and the narrative part, with emphasis given to: the principle of equality and the need to address integration in an intersectional way; the novelty of the approach in replying to the current societal setting; the need to address structural disadvantage and systemic discrimination; the principle of shared responsibility and ways to ensure meaningful participation; reference to researches that show the advantage of diversity also in economic terms; and the need to mainstream the intercultural integration principles across all departments and policy areas. Examples of good practices from the Working Group were also added to the structure.

The GER expressed satisfaction in the amended draft, stressed that gender equality issues are well addressed, and that intersectionality is now duly taken into account. He however suggested to give a more prominent place to the parts referring to gender equality, which are often at the end of the paragraphs, and to include a stand-alone mention to the situation of migrant women who are often facing additional equality challenges because of their specific vulnerability. Finally, he suggested to highlight the need to collect good quality data on gender equality, particularly in migrant communities.

Norway welcomed the practical angle of the document which seem to suit practitioners from both the national and the local levels. The balance between good practices from states and local authorities was also praised. On gender equality, Norway suggested to also mention the policies that empower women, especially migrant women, not only those who protect them from violence and hate.

Bilbao suggested to include the official definition of intersectionality as promoted by the European Institute for Gender Equality, and to add examples of actions aimed at including a gender perspective in project design and implementation.

Canada shared that this year they are paying particular attention to the assessment of the socio-cultural integration of migrant women, cross-referencing data on the economic integration and sex, or the gender and equity in health.

Several members suggested a reference could be made to the Council of Europe standard and practice on sexual orientation and gender identity, particularly because CD-ADI's mandate also covers these issues.

Malta informed on progress towards the finalisation of the National Action Plan against Racism and Xenophobia, which is benefitting from the knowledge shared in this Working Group and is paving the way to the forthcoming National Integration Strategy. Both actions are now interlinked and are drafted from the diversity advantage angle, taking into account the three core principles of interculturality. Malta further emphasised on the importance of securing adequate financial resources to each of the strategies' strands.

The London Borough of Lewisham welcomed the reference to the dangers of hate speech and hate crime and suggested more emphasis could be given also to unconscious bias and other forms of discrimination. Attention could also be raised on the cumulative impact of several, single decisions from different public authorities on the overall goals and objectives.

Limassol suggested the document should be reviewed by youth associations to ensure it takes into account the intercultural education to citizenship dimension.

North Macedonia considered that the paper could address the need of involving migrants into the prevention of discrimination within community groups. An open question concerned the opportunity of defining the “community”, which however seemed difficult to agree upon, especially in a multilingual context.

Finally, the members agreed to present the final draft in the form of an explanatory memorandum to the relevant draft recommendation, provided its practical nature and guidance would not suffer from changes to the form.

The Chair thanked the members of the Working Group for their comments and asked them to submit further amendments in writing within a week.

The Working Group further agreed to endorse the present document as to be amended by the Secretariat following the received amendments and agreed to forward it for discussion and feedback at the second CD-ADI meeting, following the visa of the Chair.

## **6. Draft Recommendation on Intercultural Integration at the National Level**

The Chair recalled that CD-ADI is expecting to discuss a first outline of a draft recommendation on intercultural integration at its second meeting. The aim of this Recommendation would be to embed the principle of multi-level policies and governance for intercultural integration in a legal standard, and to provide guidance for the implementation. If adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Recommendation would be the second Council of Europe legal standard on intercultural integration and the first requiring multi-level cooperation in this field.

The outline of a draft recommendation is included in document GT-ADI-INT(2020)7. It follows the usual standards of a Committee of Ministers recommendation and it is thus composed of a preamble and of a few operational paragraphs. The preamble highlights the challenges to be addressed, the base values, and the rationale for intercultural integration. The operational paragraphs include the actual recommendations to the member states, largely based on the Guidelines and Policy Framework. The recommendation also includes an appendix summarising the main actions to be undertaken.

Globally the Working Group expressed strong satisfaction for the present draft.

The GER pointed to the need to include the gender perspective in the outline, through reference to a few relevant Council of Europe standards in this field.

Norway, supported by Portugal, suggested to separate the reference to citizenship and participation, as a way to ensure that participation is enabled also for those who cannot or do not wish to naturalise.

Bursa Osmangazi highlighted the importance of adopting new and additional standards that can inform national legislations and frameworks.

The London Borough of Lewisham emphasised the delicate balance between taking specific account of the situation of vulnerable migrants and addressing the situation of vulnerable people in general. The notion of intersectionality could address this challenge; mainstreaming the intercultural principles within the whole society could also be an asset.

Portugal wished stronger emphasis on participation of migrants in the decision-making process.

## **7. Next steps, venue and dates of the next meeting**

The Chair particularly appreciated the consensus of the Working Group on the main principles that should inspire intercultural integration policies, including multi-level governance. She further noted that the documents so far developed are quite ambitious and called on the Working Group to start advocacy and awareness raising in this respect.

She gave the floor to the Secretariat for detailing the next steps of the Working Group towards its Roadmap, which had been updated after the first meeting to take into account the dates proposed by CD-ADI for its next meetings.

The Working Group:

1. Welcomed the detailed reports by Canada and the United Kingdom about the community sponsorship programme for refugee welcoming and thanked the two countries for their presentations;
2. Discussed, amended and endorsed the Draft review report on CM/Rec(2015)1, and agreed to forward it for possible endorsement at the second CDADI meeting;
3. Discussed, amended and endorsed the Draft Guidelines and Model Framework for an Intercultural Integration Strategy at the National Level, with the view of submitting it in the form of an Explanatory Memorandum to CD-ADI for discussion, feedback and/or endorsement at its second meeting;
4. Discussed the first outline of a draft Recommendation on multi-level policies and governance for intercultural integration, and instructed the Secretariat to proceed to the agreed amendments in view of preparing a second draft to be forwarded to CD-ADI for discussion at its second meeting;
5. Discussed and agreed on its updated Roadmap, including the dates and venues for the next meetings as follows:
  - a. 3rd meeting: 16-18 March (1.5 days if online; 3 days if in Valencia, Spain)
  - b. 4th meeting: 28-30 September (in Valencia if the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting took place online; otherwise in Reggio nell'Emilia, Italy).
6. The Working Group thanked the regional authorities of Valencia and the city of Reggio nell'Emilia for their proposal to host its future meetings.

## **8. Any other business**

None were raised.

## Appendix I

### AGENDA

**1 December, 2.30 – 5.30 p.m. CET**

**2.30 – 3.00**

1. Opening of the meeting
  - *Welcoming remarks and reminder of main Roadmap milestones, Ivana d’Alessandro, Secretary to GT-ADI-INT*
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

**3.00 – 4.30 (including a short coffee break)**

4. Review of the Implementation of CM/Rec(2015)1
  - a. *Presentation of the draft Review report, Niall Crowley, ICC Expert*
  - b. *Discussion on findings and follow up*

**4.30 – 5.30**

5. Community sponsorship for refugee integration: an example of multilevel cooperation
  - a. *What is Community sponsorship and how does it work in Canada – Mary Coulter, Counsellor Migration, Mission of Canada to the EU*
  - b. *The UK Sponsorship Programme – Jane Kennedy, UK Home Office*
  - c. *Group discussion*

**5.30 End of the first day**

**2 December, 9.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. CET**

**9.30 – 11.00**

6. Draft Guidelines and Model Policy Framework for intercultural integration
  - a. *Presentation of the third draft, Ivana d’Alessandro*
  - b. *The Gender Equality perspective, Solve Saetre, General Rapporteur on Gender Equality*
  - c. *Discussion in view of possible endorsement*

**11.00 – 11.15 Coffee break**



**11.15 – 12.00**

7. Draft Recommendation on Intercultural Integration at the National Level
  - a. *Presentation of the preliminary draft Recommendation, Irena Guidikova, co-Secretary to GT-ADI-INT*
  - b. *Group discussion*

**12.00 – 1.00**

8. Next steps
9. Date and venue of the next meeting

**1.00** End of the meeting

## Appendix II

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

#### ELECTED MEMBERS

##### AZERBAIJAN

**Agil SHIRINOV**

**Confirmed**

Professor,  
Rector of the Azerbaijan Institute of theology,  
Assistant professor at the Department of religious studies,  
Azerbaijan Institute of theology,  
Baku, Azerbaijan.

##### BERGEN (NORWAY)

**Sølve SÆTRE**

**Confirmed**

Special advisor for diversity,  
Advisor on political issues concerning refugees, Roma inclusion,  
LGBTI, prevention of radicalisation, gender equality and faith issues,  
Department for culture, diversity and equality,  
Bergen City, Norway.

##### BILBAO (SPAIN)

**Itziar URTASUN**

**Apologised**

Councillor,  
International cooperation and coexistence department,  
City of Bilbao, Spain.

**Claudia EMMANUEL LAREDO**

**Confirmed**

Official,  
International cooperation and coexistence department,  
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##### BRADFORD (UNITED KINGDOM)

**Ian DAY**

**Confirmed**

Assistant director,  
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Bradford Council,  
City of Bradford, United Kingdom.

##### BURSA-OSMANGAZI (TURKEY)

**Şenol DÜLGER**

**Confirmed**

External relations coordinator,  
Bursa-Osmangazi Municipality, Turkey.

##### CROATIA

**Alen TAHIRI**

**Apologised**

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Government office for human rights and the rights of national minorities,  
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## **FINLAND**

### **Peter KARIUKI**

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Secretary general,  
Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO),  
Ministry of justice,  
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## **IOANNINA (GREECE)**

### **Dionysia AMPATZIDI**

Senior advisor to the Mayor of Ioannina on social and migration policy,  
Ioannina, Greece.

**Apologised**

## **ITALY**

### **Nadan PETROVIC**

Professor,  
Coordinator of the Centre for migration and refugee studies,  
Roma, Italy.

**Confirmed**

## **(THE LONDON BOROUGH OF) LEWISHAM (UNITED KINGDOM)**

### **Damien EGAN**

Mayor,  
London Borough of Lewisham, United Kingdom.

**Confirmed**

### **Philip BAKER**

Borough of Sanctuary manager,  
London Borough of Lewisham, United Kingdom.

**Confirmed**

## **LIMASSOL (CYPRUS)**

### **Nenad BOGDANOVIC**

Intercultural counsellor,  
Limassol Municipality, Cyprus.

**Confirmed**

## **LUBLIN (POLAND)**

### **Krzysztof STANOWSKI**

Director of the International cooperation centre,  
Municipality of Lublin, Poland.

**Confirmed**

## **NORTH MACEDONIA**

### **Robert ALAGJOZOVSKI**

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**Confirmed**

## **NORWAY**

### **Pia Buhl GIROLAMI**

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**Confirmed**

Ministry of education and research,  
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Oslo, Norway.

#### **PORTUGAL**

##### **Cecília MENDES**

Senior adviser,  
High commission for migration (ACM),  
Lisboa, Portugal.

**Confirmed**

#### **REGGIO EMILIA (ITALY)**

##### **Gianluca GRASSI**

Cabinet of the Mayor,  
Comune di Reggio Emilia, Italy.

**Confirmed**

#### **REYKJAVIK (ICELAND)**

##### **Joanna MARCINKOWSKA**

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**Confirmed**

#### **SPAIN**

##### **Karoline FERNANDEZ DE LA HOZ**

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#### **TURKEY**

##### **Burak YASAR**

Migration expert,  
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**Apologised**

### **COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEMBER STATES**

#### **MALTA**

##### **Alexander TORTELL**

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#### **UNITED KINGDOM**

##### **Ben GREENER**

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**Jorge JIMENEZ**

Mexico City, Mexico.

**Confirmed**

**EXPERTS/SPEAKERS**

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**Confirmed**

**Carla CALADO**

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Portuguese Network of Intercultural Cities (RPCI),  
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**Jane KENNEDY** Confirmed  
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**Niall CROWLEY** Confirmed  
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**COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

**DG II - Directorate General of Democracy  
Directorate of Anti-discrimination**

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