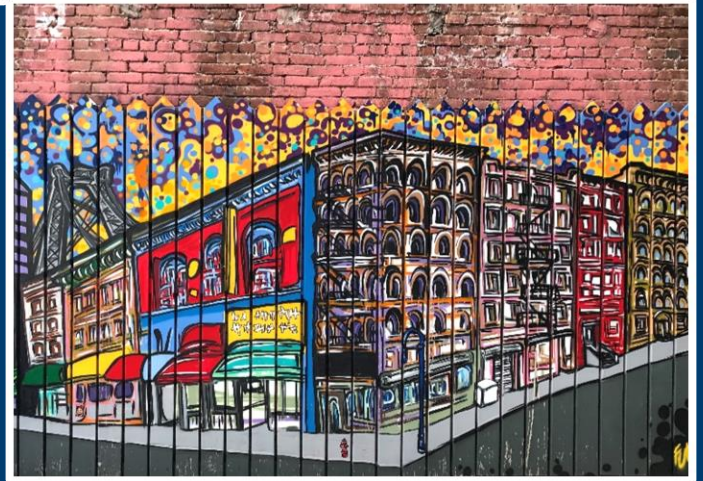




REGGIO
EMILIA

INTERCULTURAL
CITIES INDEX
ANALYSIS
2024



Diversity, Equality, Interaction, Participation

BUILDING BRIDGES,
BREAKING WALLS



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REGGIO EMILIA
INTERCULTURAL CITIES INDEX ANALYSIS

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Intercultural Cities Programme
Intercultural Inclusion Unit
Directorate General of Equal Rights and Dignity
Council of Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex
France

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.

At the time of writing (March 2024) 164 cities embraced the ICC programme and approach, and 130 (including Reggio Emilia) have analysed their intercultural policies using the Intercultural Cities Index. The respective reports can be found [here](#).

Among these cities, 36 cities (including Reggio Emilia) have between 100 000 and 200 000 inhabitants and 18 (including Reggio Emilia) have between 15% and 20% of foreign-born residents.

This document presents the results of the Intercultural Cities Index analysis for Reggio Emilia, Italy, in 2024, 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):

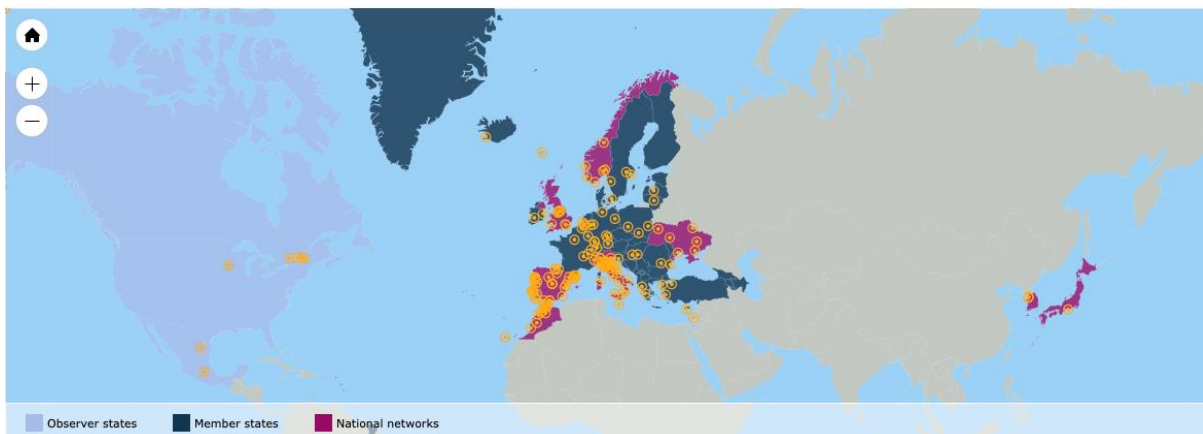
1. Commitment	
2. Intercultural lens	Education
3. Mediation and conflict resolution	Neighbourhoods
4. Language	Public services
5. Media and communication	Business and the labour market
6. International outlook	Cultural and social life
7. Intercultural intelligence and competence	Public space
8. Welcoming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

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

Taking into account the above-mentioned differences between the cities and a growing number of new cities willing to join the Intercultural Cities Index, it has been decided to compare the cities not only within the entire sample, but also according to specific criteria. Two of these have been singled out 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, 47 cities have used the Intercultural Cities Index containing the new indicators in their evaluations, including Reggio Emilia. 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, **Reggio Emilia** has an aggregate Intercultural Cities Index result of 77 (out of 100 possible points). The details of this result will be explained below.¹

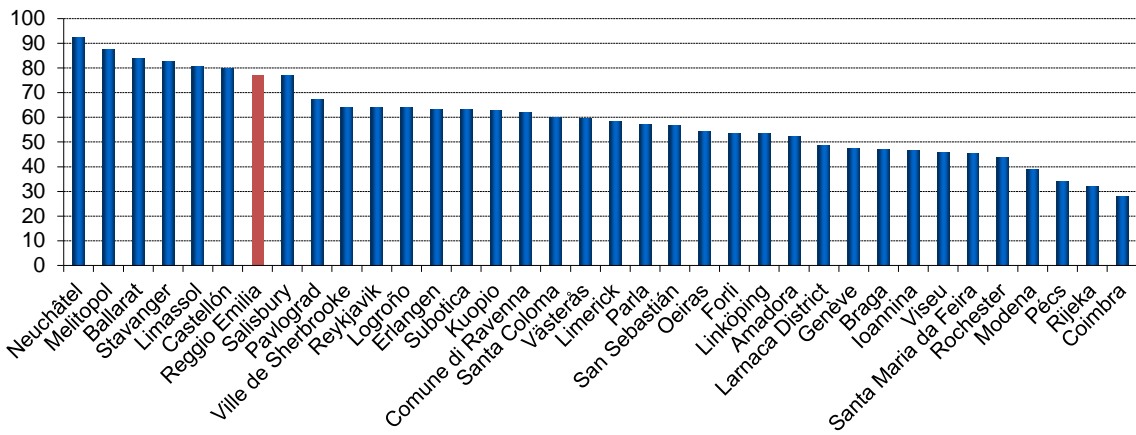


¹ The original Intercultural Cities Index contained 69 questions. The Intercultural Cities Index was updated in 2019, when additional questions were added, some questions were removed and completely new indicators were added (anti-discrimination, interaction and participation), resulting in the extended 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.

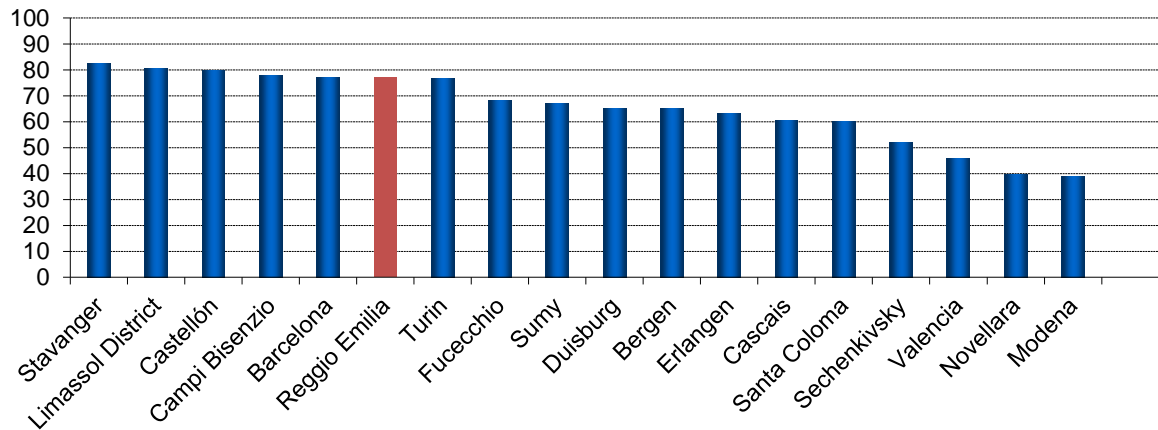
Per inhabitants

Intercultural City Index (ICC)
City sample (inhabitants 100'000 - 200'000)

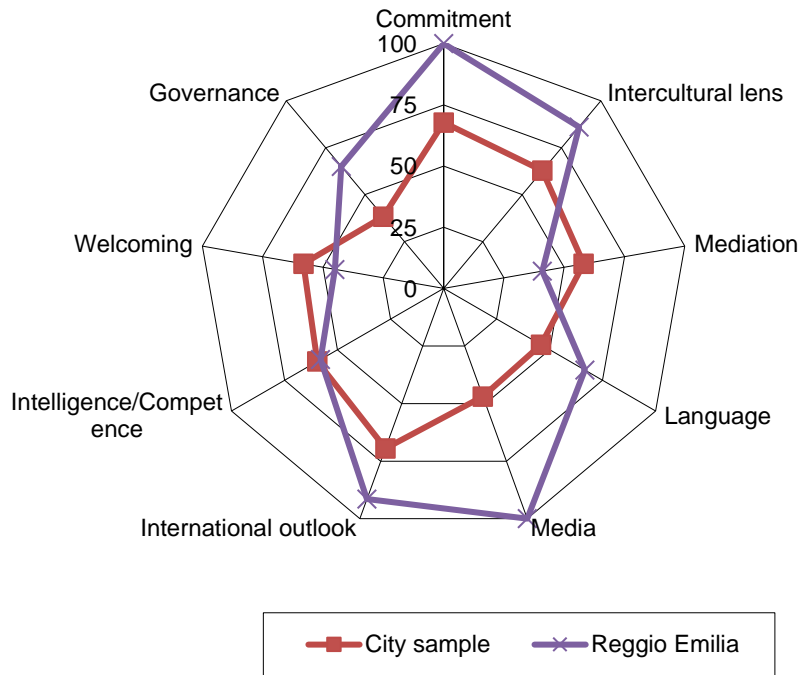


Per diversity

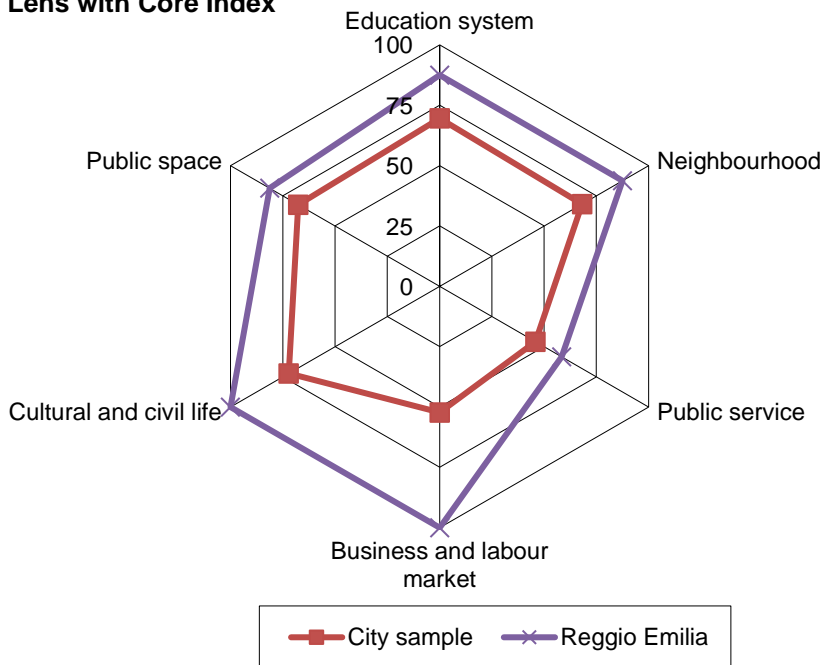
Intercultural City Index (ICC)
City sample (non-nationals/foreign borns 15% - 20%)



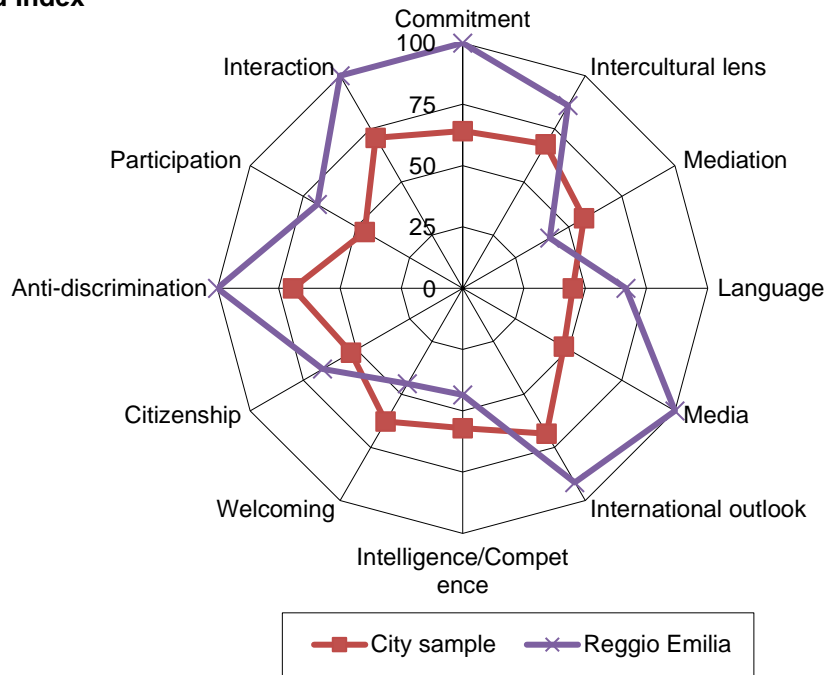
Core Index



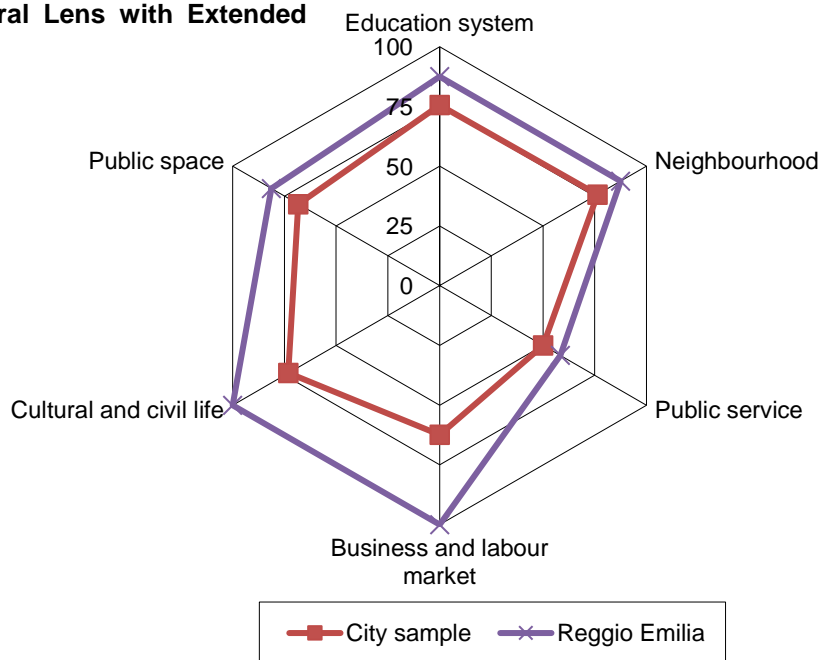
Intercultural Lens with Core Index



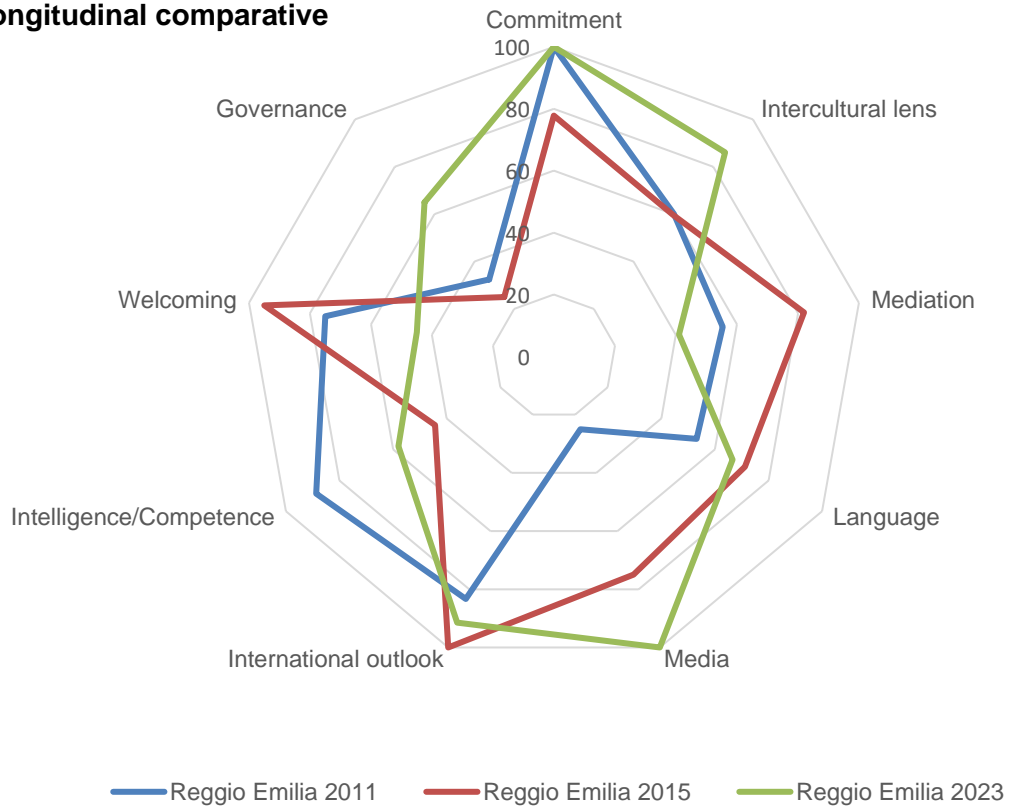
Extended Index



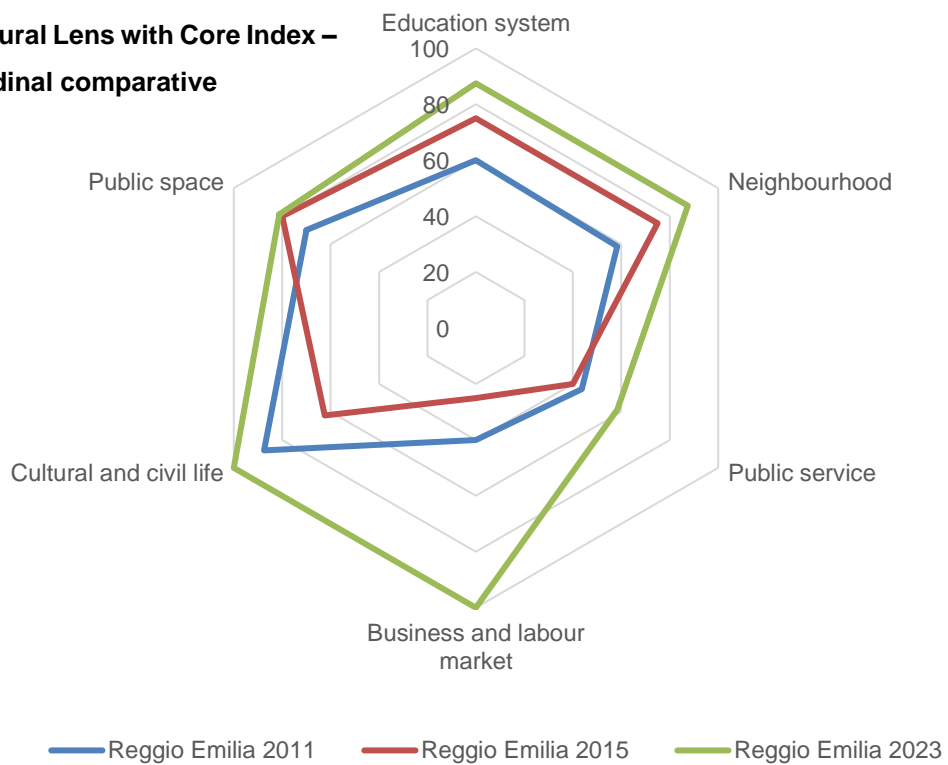
Intercultural Lens with Extended Index



**Core Index –
Longitudinal comparative**



**Intercultural Lens with Core Index –
Longitudinal comparative**



REGGIO EMILIA: AN OVERVIEW

Reggio Emilia is a historic city located in the Emilia-Romagna region of northern Italy. The city is situated in the Po Valley, approximately halfway between Milan and Bologna. It is surrounded by picturesque countryside, including the rolling hills of the Apennine Mountains to the south.

The city has a rich history dating back to ancient times, with evidence of human settlement dating as far back as the Etruscan period. From its ancient origins as a settlement inhabited by Etruscans and Celts, it emerged as *Regium Lepidi* during the Roman era in 183 BC. Founded by the Roman consul Gaius Atilius Regulus, it flourished as a bustling municipality, serving as a vital centre for trade and agriculture in the fertile Po Valley.

Throughout the medieval period, Reggio Emilia endured shifts in power and governance under various feudal lords and noble families, including the Este dynasty and the Visconti of Milan. This era witnessed the construction of architectural marvels such as the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta and the Palazzo Ducale, reflecting the city's cultural and artistic significance. During the Renaissance, Reggio Emilia became a beacon of intellectual and cultural activity, attracting prominent artists, scholars, and thinkers.

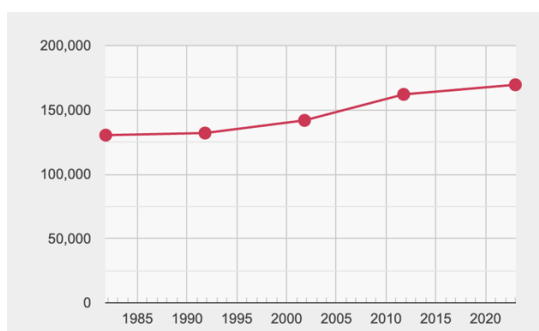
The 19th century ushered in a period of political upheaval and revolutionary fervour, as Reggio Emilia played a pivotal role in the struggle for Italian unification. The city's inhabitants rose up against Austrian rule in the famous uprising of 1831, embodying the spirit of the Italian Risorgimento movement. Following Italy's unification in 1861, Reggio Emilia became an integral part of the newly formed Kingdom of Italy.

In the 20th century, Reggio Emilia experienced rapid industrialization and economic growth, propelling it into the modern era. Despite suffering damage during World War II, the city underwent extensive reconstruction and revitalization efforts.

Traditionally, Reggio Emilia has been known for its agriculture, particularly the production of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and balsamic vinegar. However, the city's economy has diversified in recent years, with manufacturing, services, and technology sectors playing increasingly important roles.

Reggio Emilia has a vibrant cultural scene, with numerous museums, art galleries, theatres, and cultural events throughout the year. The city is known for its contributions to the arts, including the renowned Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education and the Reggio Children Foundation.

In terms of population, total population increased until 2015, then stabilised and began to decrease from 2020 onwards.



Source: citypopulation.de

The Municipality of Reggio Emilia employs citizenship and residency criteria to enumerate non-nationals, categorising individuals with non-Italian citizenship who reside within the Municipality as of December 31st of each calendar year. The increase in migrant arrivals has been the demographic phenomenon that has most characterised Reggio Emilia from the 1990s to the present. The contribution of foreigners on the population trend has progressively increased since 2000 (reaching a peak of 31 796 units - 18.4% of the population - in 2012). In the period 2015-2022 there was a decrease in the number of non-Italian citizens in the younger age groups (0-34

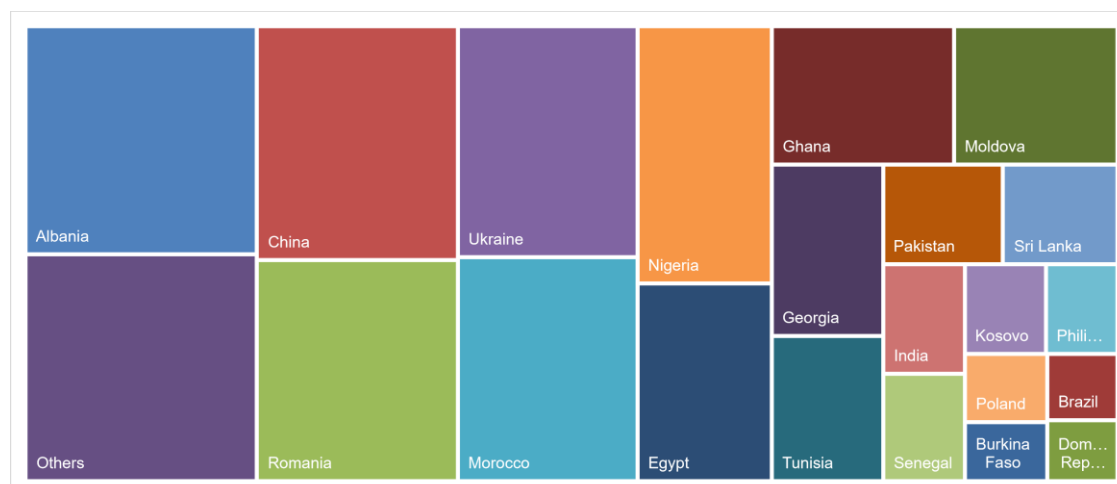
years) and an increase in the older ones. There were 1 136 residents over the age of 65 in 2015 and 1 876 in 2022 (+65.2%). The decrease in the number of residents with foreign citizenship in the youngest age groups is influenced by the acquisition of citizenship by parents (who pass it on directly to their underage children) and young adults who are eligible to apply for Italian citizenship (and who, according to Italian law, can only do so when they turn 18). An internal working group within the municipality is working on demographic data to add to the number of non-Italian citizens the figure of those who were previously foreign citizens and have acquired Italian citizenship, so as to take into account the plurality that disappears in statistical data (including national data) and to be able to give a better representation of cultural diversity in the population.

As of December 31, 2022, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia reports that 16.6% of its residents are non-nationals. Among this demographic, nationals from EU - EFTA countries make up 12% of the non-national population, totalling 3 400 individuals out of 28 220. Additionally, foreign-born nationals constitute 12.5% of the city's population.

Specific data regarding the number or percentage of refugees/asylum-seekers residing in the city is not directly available, because the Emilia-Romagna Region publishes a statistical report every year (the last one for 2022) at provincial, not municipal level. The [annual statistical report on asylum and international protection in Emilia-Romagna for 2022](#) provides some insight, indicating 1 956 valid residence permits classified under "asylum-humanitarian" in the province. As of October 2021, there were 871 individuals housed in reception centres for asylum seekers, along with 72 individuals in the reception system for refugees and unaccompanied minors. Notably, these figures may not fully represent the presence of refugees and asylum-seekers within the city.

The city does not have an estimated percentage of undocumented migrants. The following tables show the data at the end of 2022.

Nationality	%	Nationality (cont.)	%	Nationality (cont.)	%
Albania	10,6	Georgia	3,8	Burkina Faso	1,0
China	9,5	Tunisia	3,3	Brazil	0,9
Romania	8,9	Pakistan	2,4	Dominican Republic	0,9
Ukraine	8,4	Sri Lanka	2,3	Others	10,6
Morocco	8,1	India	1,8	TOTAL	100.0%
Nigeria	7,0	Senegal	1,8		
Egypt	5,3	Kosovo	1,5		



Moreover, a large Sinti community lives in the municipality. The data collected in the report on the Sinti and Roma population of the Emilia-Romagna Region are used to estimate its numerical consistency. This data only refers to the people who live in settlement areas and do not include people living in traditional houses, nor those in illegal and temporary settlements. As of 31 December 2021 in the province of Reggio Emilia 1 226 people lived in settlement areas (representing 47.32% of the regional total), with an incidence of 23 people for every 10 000 residents, significantly higher than in all the other provinces of the Region. The figure for the Municipality of Reggio Emilia alone is 609 people.

Nationally, the most widespread traditionally nomadic groups are the 'Roma', present mainly in Central Italy and the South, the 'Sinti' living mainly in Northern Italy and the 'Caminanti' present in Sicily. Although nomadism is a fundamental aspect of the identity of Roma and Sinti, it is no longer a characteristic feature of these populations, which have long since become sedentary also as a result of forced sedentarisation (source: Ministry of the Interior). Italy has also found to be in a situation of non-compliance with the European Social Charter due to forced evictions and other policies carried out in relation to the Roma, Sinti and Caminanti population.² The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities also raised concerns as to the socio-economic rights of persons belonging to these groups at the national level in its 2022 report.³

In the city, there are different people that require a special focus to avoid discrimination and vulnerabilities. For instance, unaccompanied foreign minors, especially at the age of 18, when opportunities for social support are greatly reduced. In 2022 the **unaccompanied minors** in the municipality's care were 258 (most represented nationalities: 116 Tunisia, 70 Egypt, 33 Pakistan, 11 Bangladesh, 8 Albania). The Arcigay Gioconda Association, in agreement with the municipality, hosts a meeting group of LGBTIQ+ migrants that meets once a month. In addition, in 2022, the association opened a Rainbow House where LGBTIQ+ people in housing emergency, including migrants and refugees, are welcomed. Finally, regarding **illiterate people**, the network Diritto di Parola, coordinated by the municipality, takes in approximately 2 500 people each year who need to learn Italian, including illiterate people. A protocol of exemption from the certification of basic language competence for the renewal of residence permits is in place between and Diritto di Parola, health service, school (adult education centre). In addition, a national seminar on illiteracy is organised every year for teachers, educators and volunteers.

Finally, it should be noted that the Law No. 482 of 15 December 1999 provides that the State shall protect the language and culture of the Albanian, Catalan, Germanic, Greek, Slovenian and Croatian populations, and those speaking French, Franco-Provençal, Friulian, Ladin, Occitan and Sardinian. Persons belonging to these groups are protected under the Council of Europe [Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#).



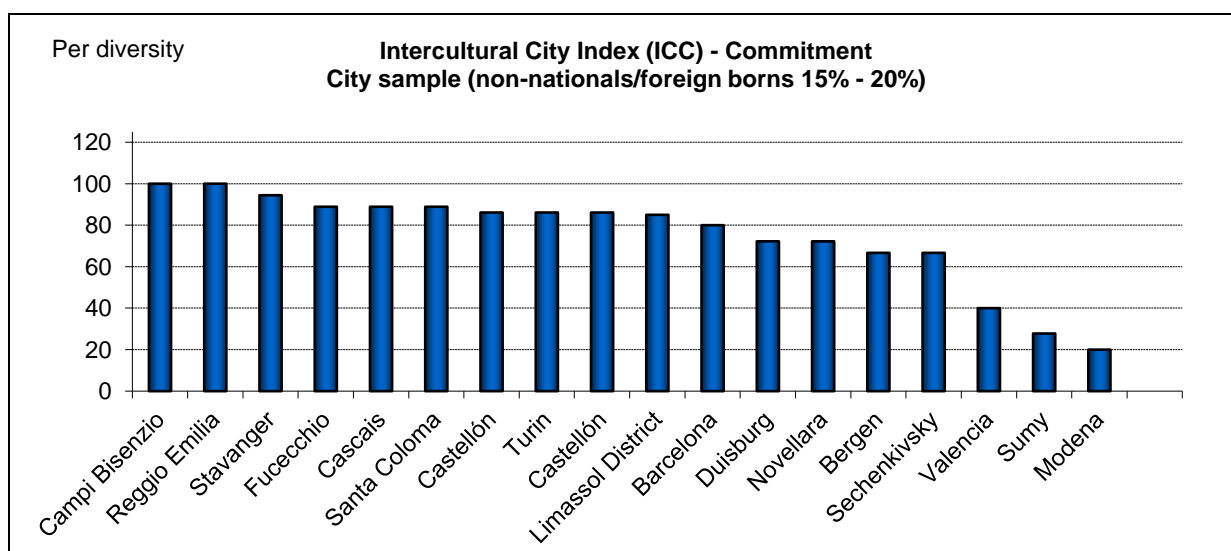
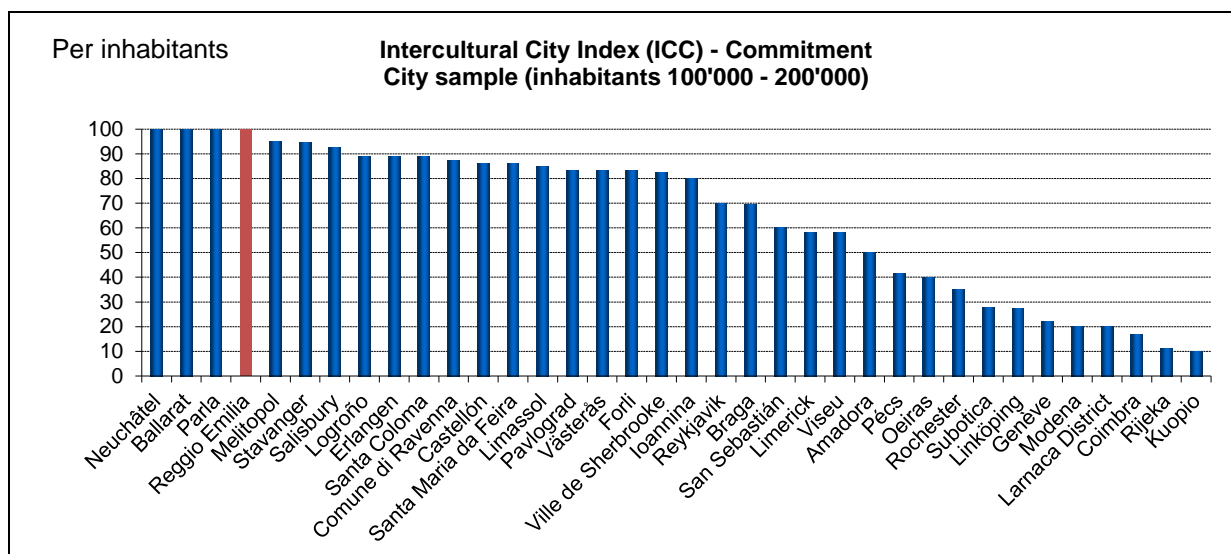
² See European Social Charter, Fact Sheet on Italy, April 2024, at: <https://rm.coe.int/italy-april2024-en-2770-2758-5545-1/1680afc6e6>.

³ See Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Fifth Opinion on Italy, 13 February 2023, at: <https://rm.coe.int/5th-op-italy-en/1680aa21a7>. See also summary in Italian: <https://rm.coe.int/5th-op-italy-summary-it/1680aa1e52>.

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a remarkable rate of 100%, significantly surpassing both the city sample's achievement rate of 68% and the maximum attainable score.



Reggio Emilia is committed to strengthening its role as intercultural city, as evidenced by its participation in the ICC programme since its inception in 2008. Reggio Emilia was also co-founder and first coordinator of the Italian

Network of Intercultural Cities: [Rete delle Città del Dialogo](#). There is different information on the city on the ICC website, including its [2016 Intercultural Profile](#).

The city has officially adopted a public statement acknowledging Reggio Emilia as an intercultural city, a declaration that has been thoroughly deliberated upon and endorsed by the local council. The strategic document for intercultural policies in the city, known as [DiTutti](#), underwent a comprehensive process of consultation and approval. It was first discussed with the mayor and the Executive Committee, followed by deliberations in the Council Commission on Equal Opportunities, International Relations, and Human Rights. Subsequently, the document was thoroughly reviewed and approved in the City Council. Afterward, *DiTutti* was integrated into the Municipality's Single Programming Document. To ensure broad participation and engagement, the document was presented to citizens through an online event held during the Covid-19 period. Furthermore, *DiTutti* was shared with various relevant stakeholders, including the assembly of the *Mondinsieme* intercultural centre, the Human Rights Coordination of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, and the network *Diritto di Parola*, which comprises associations involved in Italian language education. Additionally, it was presented in several public meetings and distributed to all directors, officers, and employees of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia.

Furthermore, the city has a comprehensive intercultural strategy and has adopted an intercultural action plan. The [Single Programming Document](#) has adopted the references and areas of intervention linked to *DiTutti*, both as regards the programming of the municipality and of the *Mondinsieme* Foundation, linking the areas of intervention with the planning of activities and related investments. References to intercultural policies are in several sections of the Single Programming Document, but those referring specifically to *DiTutti* are contained in Strategic Focus 2 "City of education and knowledge", linked to Goal 10 of Agenda 2030 with Action 9.2. - "Promotion of cultural diversity". Following the adoption of *DiTutti* and the inclusion of strategic references in the planning documents in 2021, activities are regularly planned and implemented within the annual **Executive Management Plan** (Unit of Social Welfare and Intercultural Policies in the Area of Services to People). For the year 2022, the investment for the development and implementation of *DiTutti* strategy amounted to EUR 309 792.70.

Reggio Emilia systematically carries out public consultations which involve all kind of inhabitants. [Mondinsieme](#) plays a crucial role in this sense (see more in the Intercultural Intelligence and Competence section). The entity is an affiliated foundation of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, to which associations representing diasporas, intercultural associations and associations related to religious plurality belong. The statute provides that these associations elect a representative to the foundation's Management Board. Thus, associations representing cultural diversity have a voice in the Management Board, on a par with the President and other members appointed by the Mayor. In addition, the associations that are members of the foundation meet at least twice a year in the assembly, which is an instrument for discussion and co-planning of the interventions promoted by the municipality and for the presentation of the associations' proposals.

The desire to give representation to cultural diversity also characterised the **participation projects** that led to the establishment of the elective "Neighbourhood Councils", where the possibility of standing and voting was extended to all residents, even if they do not hold Italian citizenship, and to the definition of the "[Neighbourhood Pacts](#)", that include intercultural dialogue among the objectives, in order to facilitate the involvement of intercultural associations in the definition of projects and activities.

Reggio Emilia has an evaluation and updating process for its intercultural strategy. At the political-administrative level, the updating of the Single Programming Document allows to identify the priority actions and objectives that the Administration pursues during its term of office. At the technical-managerial level, the Executive Management Plan defines objectives and monitoring tools. These strategic documents foresee monitoring and evaluation steps during the year and final reporting, which allow both to analyse the achievement of results and to update and orient policies year after year. The Executive Management Plan is also linked to the budget, and thus to the planned expenditure for individual projects and areas of activity.

In 2023, two and a half years after the approval of *DiTutti*, five working groups (one for each of the five strategic areas defined in the document) were set up within the municipality in order to carry out an evaluation of the

activities, and check needs, strengths and weaknesses. This process also aims to include new priorities and actions in the strategy with respect to the implementation of intercultural policies.

Reggio Emilia's official communications often make clear reference to the city's intercultural commitment, and a specific mention could be found in the [municipal website](#)⁴, accessible with 2 clicks. The city has different instruments to facilitate cross-departmental coordination for implementing the intercultural strategy. The municipality has a '[Social Welfare and Intercultural Policies](#)' service, of which the Interculture office is a part. Within the Mayor's Cabinet there is an advisor on intercultural dialogue. Together with Mondinsieme Foundation they are responsible for implementing the *DiTutti* intercultural strategy.

The mayor or a delegated councillor also extends greetings to diaspora groups and religious authorities on their respective national or religious holidays. Moreover, municipal awards and competitions (e.g. 'Reggiane for example' dedicated to women for their civic commitment, competitions for young artists, films and video-makers, etc.) integrate cultural diversity as a key theme or evaluation criterion.

Finally, the city acknowledges local residents and organisations that have done exceptional things to encourage interculturalism in the local community. Reggio Emilia, known as the birthplace of the Italian flag since January 7, 1797, annually celebrates this historic event in the *Sala del Tricolore*. Attended by national, regional, and local dignitaries, the ceremony includes the presentation of special mentions and copies of the Italian Constitution to intercultural associations. Additionally, the city conducts bi-monthly citizenship ceremonies where new citizens pledge allegiance to the constitution and receive a citizenship kit. Secondary schools take part in the ceremony, bringing a contribution prepared during classroom sessions on the theme of citizenship.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia is exemplary in its commitment to intercultural principles and policies. However, there is always room for inspiration from other ICC cities. The district of Neukölln (Berlin, Germany) published "Normalising Integration - Living together in an intercultural metropolis", a comprehensive policy document that also is a set of principles of good governance. The concept was developed in a participative process including the local migration advisory board as well as the integration committee. The full version also contains the complete list of the measures and projects being implemented by the Neukölln District Office. They were developed with an intercultural lens, having in mind the district's vision of integration as the empowerment for equal participation in our society. As a matter of principle, the focus is on the people of the district as a whole. The five guiding principles of the intercultural work of the district are also detailed in the policy document and are the following: promoting equity in education; empowering people instead of just providing for them; taking a holistic approach; acting pragmatically and transparently; and enforcing democratic values and rules.

Additionally, in the Portuguese city of Cascais, the municipality created the Municipal Merit Award to honour local citizens or organisations that have done exceptional things to encourage interculturalism in the local community.

⁴ Other references could be found at: Public ceremony for new Italian citizens: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/39952950@N02/sets/>; <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=681750296773703>; <https://www.facebook.com/luca.vecchi.RE/videos/5437369373047674>; <https://www.facebook.com/luca.vecchi.RE/videos/600869228330925>; Festivals of non-majority religions and cultures: Ramadan 2023 (<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=574018571493552&set=a.299211685640910>); Chinese new year 2023 (<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=535944428634300&set=a.299211685640910>); Orthodox Easter 2023: (<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=586877526874323&set=a.299211685640910>); Festival of the NGO "Emergency" (human rights, migration and international cooperation): <https://www.facebook.com/cittadireggioemilia/videos/219376217799127> and LGBTQI+ Pride 2023: <https://www.facebook.com/cittadireggioemilia/videos/610703017705085>.

THE CITY THROUGH AN INTERCULTURAL LENS

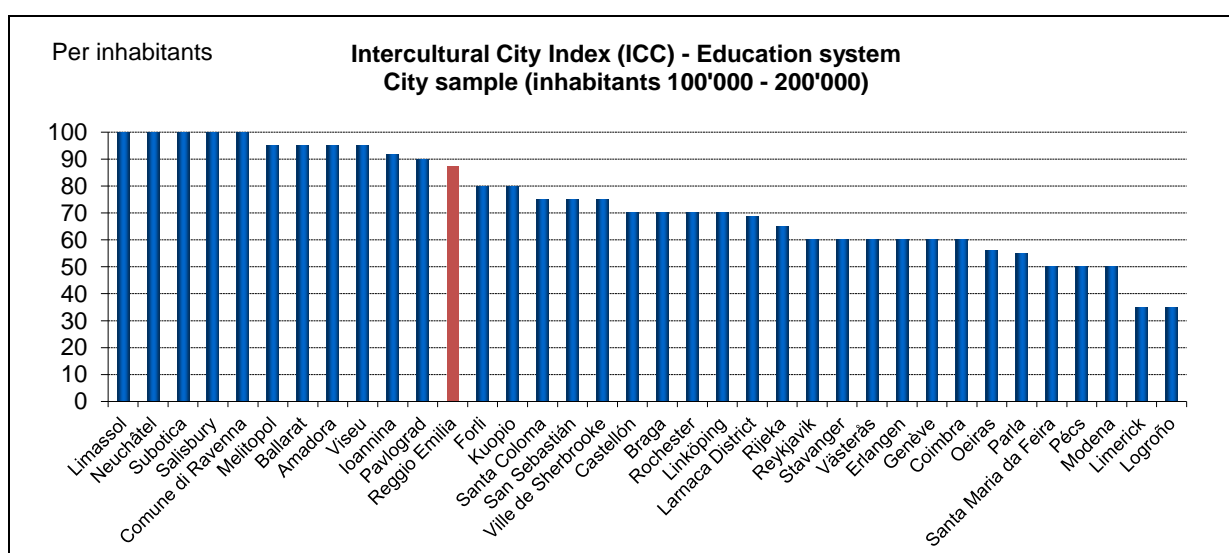
Although the formal functions cities and other local authorities assume vary considerably from one country to another, all cities have the primary responsibility for maintaining social cohesion and preserving the quality of life in the city. The policies designed to achieve these goals will therefore 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.

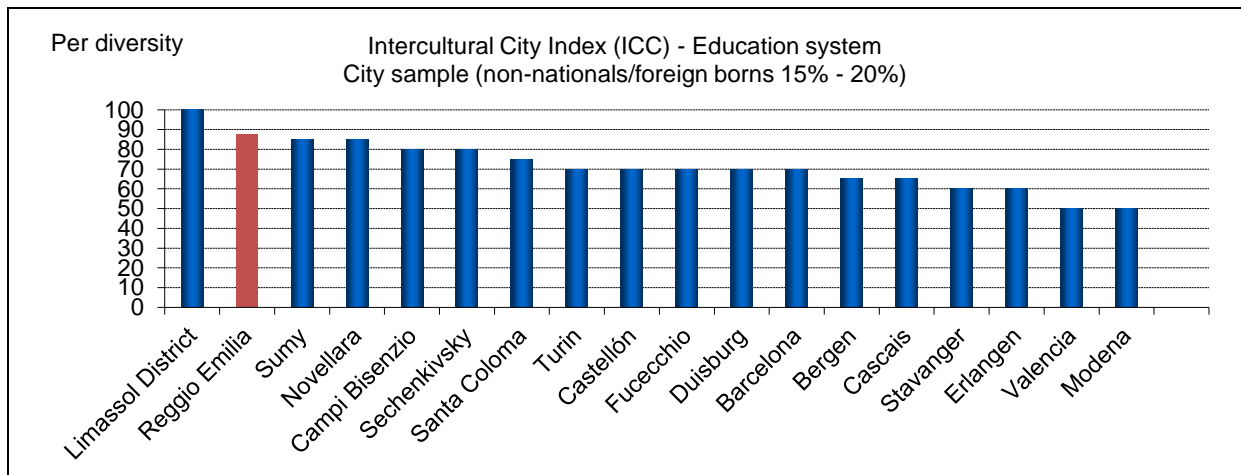
The overall rate of achievement of the urban policies of Reggio Emilia, assessed as a whole through an "intercultural lens" is slightly higher to that of the model city: 65% of these objectives were achieved while the rate of achievement of the model city reaches 62%.

EDUCATION

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

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 88%, which is considerably higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 70%.





In Reggio Emilia, most children in primary schools come from different ethnic and cultural background. According to the 2022/2023 provincial school yearbook, there are 7 063 primary school students in the municipality of Reggio Emilia, of whom 1 969 are foreign citizens (27.9%). The highest percentage of students with foreign citizenship is in the primary schools of the *Istituto comprensivo Manzoni* (43.2%), the lowest in the primary schools of the *Istituto comprensivo Don Borghi* (8.2%). This data takes into account both foreign citizens born abroad, and foreign citizens born in Italy. Nevertheless, data cannot be considered fully representative of cultural diversity, since they do not consider students with Italian citizenship and foreign origin, nor the issue of different cultural affiliation, as in the case of pupils from the Sinti community.

In Italy, schools are not the direct responsibility of the municipality, and the Italian legal system provides for school autonomy, which means that each school has freedom of organisation, planning and use of resources. Italian regulations also establish a maximum limit of 30% for foreign pupils in classes to prevent ghettoization, though exceptions may be granted in cases where nearby schools are unable to accommodate these pupils. In that sense, the city does not require a local policy to address ethnic/cultural diversity in schools and lacks authority in the hiring of teachers.

However, most of the schools involve parents with diverse backgrounds in school life, and Reggio Emilia works with schools to support the participation of foreign students and families and to raise awareness of an inclusive approach to diversity. In 2021 a working group for the intercultural educational pact was set up as part of the *DiTutti* strategy, involving the municipal offices responsible for education from childhood to adulthood, *Mondinsieme* intercultural centre, E35 Foundation (which works on international relations and EU-funded projects), the Provincial School Office and the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. The aim is to share the intercultural approach and coordinate intercultural empowerment interventions in different educational and training contexts, inside and outside school. Furthermore, for several years, the Sinti and Roma office (part of the Welfare and Intercultural Policies service) has paid specific attention to co-planning with primary and secondary schools aimed at the inclusion and educational success of students (dedicated educators in the school and extracurricular context, mediation and support for pupil-family-school communication). The Municipality provides schools and out-of-school educational services with a linguistic-cultural mediation service.

Schools often carry out intercultural projects. In this regard, schools at all levels independently promote intercultural education, global citizenship education, and in-depth studies on migration, utilizing their own faculty or engaging external experts. Typically, these initiatives occur during dedicated hours for civic education. Over the years, *Mondinsieme* centre has designed and delivered courses on intercultural education and dialogue with diversity in secondary schools. For several years, the outcomes of the courses have been publicly presented to citizens on the 21 March celebrations ('springtime without racism'). In recent years, special attention has been devoted to the theme of citizenship rights, with workshops in schools and the participation of students in citizenship ceremonies, with presentations of the work done at school.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia shows a good experience in education, working to increase interculturalism in their city, combat segregation and support an intercultural educational environment for students.

In Sabadell (Spain), most of the schools actively implement intercultural projects and engage migrant families in parent associations to promote diversity and inclusion. These projects encompass various activities such as gastronomic days, intercultural festivities, and country-specific projects. The Youth and Cooperation project involves young people in intercultural activities and cooperation efforts. The City, in collaboration with the Department of Education, provides schools with educational initiatives that complement the curriculum and foster common values. These initiatives include learning and volunteering services, solidarity campaigns, community kitchens, and multilingualism projects. Additionally, the Council offers 20 educational proposals on diversity and coexistence for schools and high schools. These activities address various topics such as storytelling around the gypsy population, rap performances promoting coexistence, games to break prejudices around poverty, and initiatives to combat bullying by fostering empathy.

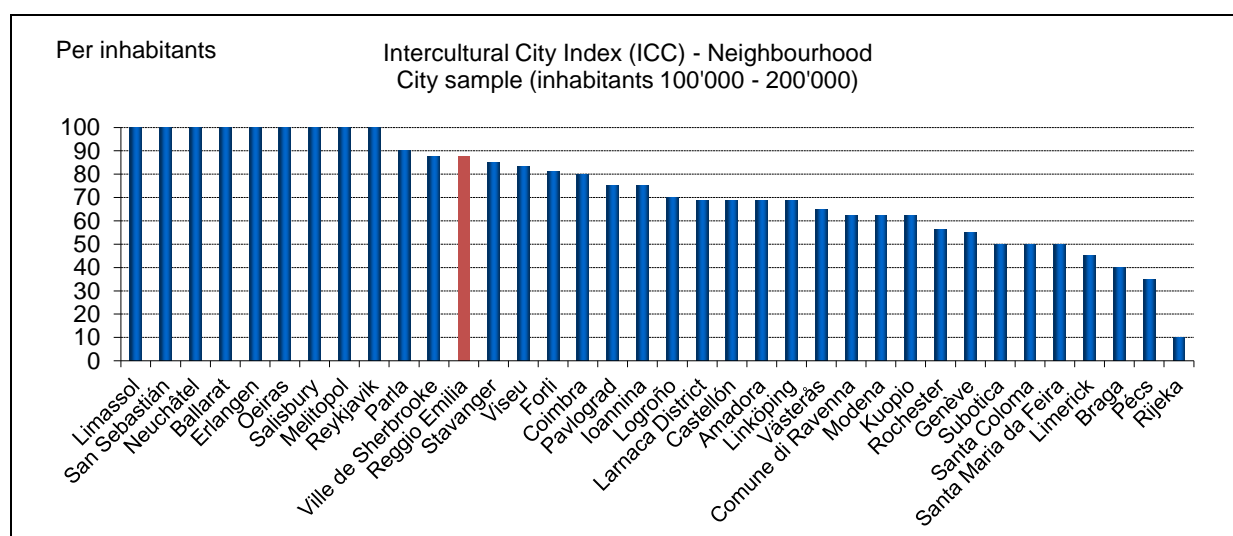
In Camden (United Kingdom), schools make efforts to frequently involve parents, including with migrant/minority backgrounds in school life, both to support parents and to encourage the sharing of culture. In addition, “Camden Learning” and the “Safer Camden Network” have worked with the local community and the Council's communications team to develop a guide to 'Life in Secondary School' that aims to support parents and their children with the move to secondary school. Translated booklets and a range of video resources, tailored for the Camden Somali community, have been produced as part of the work that the Safer Camden Network has undertaken with the local community to support children's transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

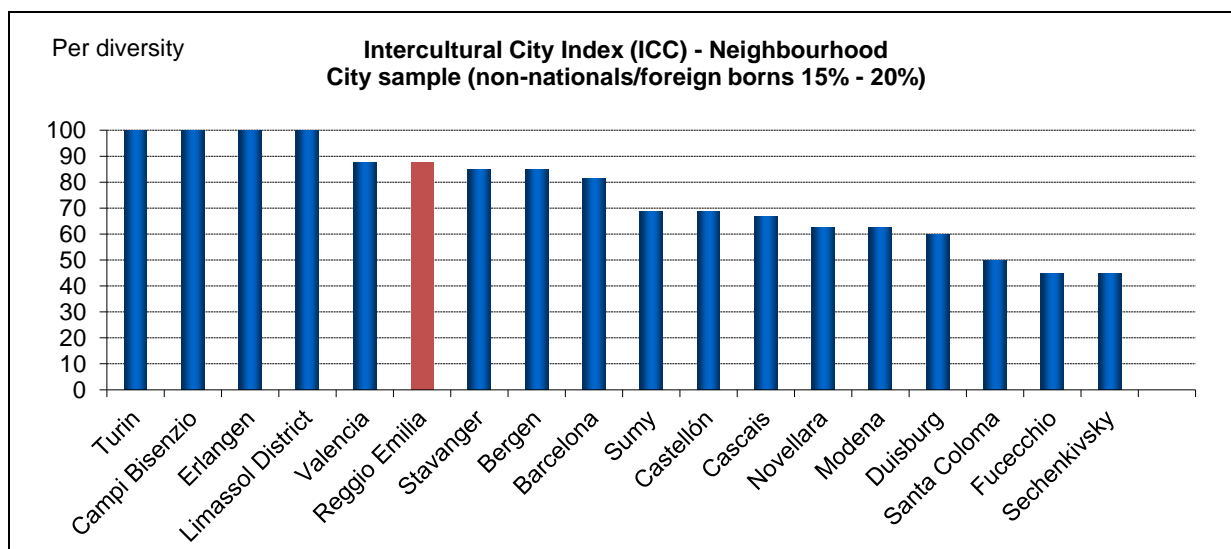
Lastly, ICC programme resources on education are also available [here](#).

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 88%, which is higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 68%.





In Reggio Emilia, most districts are culturally and ethnically diverse, and the city has a policy to avoid ethnic concentration. The city is divided into 64 areas. The percentage of non-Italian citizens varies widely: the highest figure is recorded in San Pietro, a neighbourhood near the centre and the train station (57.9%), the lowest in Gavasseto, a rural neighbourhood 7 km from the centre (3.4%). In the General Urban Plan approved in 2023, questions related to segregation and concentration were considered for the planning of interventions, particularly with the analysis of some indicators such as the [diagnostic framework](#), the [community profiles](#) and [mapping vulnerabilities](#).

The city encourages where residents of one neighbourhood meet and interact with residents with different migrant or minority backgrounds from other neighbourhoods. In 2021, five associations belonging to the Right to Speak network for language integration (coordinated and funded by the City Council) applied to a public call for applications and participated in the planning of activities in the city's neighbourhoods. They signed three-year public agreements to manage activities in different social centres (Italian language courses and other initiatives aimed at all citizens in the neighbourhood with a specific focus on people of foreign origin). *Mondinsieme* supports the organisation of festivals and cultural initiatives promoted by its member associations. Over the years, several intercultural festivals have been organised in different parts of the city (e.g. Teranga Bii Festival from 2017 to 2019, 1,2,3 Medina Festival in 2021). In 2022, on *Mondinsieme*'s 20th anniversary, a public festival was organised at the city park adjacent to the centre's headquarters, with various activities animated by the member associations.

The city takes occasional actions to facilitate residents of one neighbourhood meet and interact with residents in the same neighbourhood. [Estate popolare](#) (Popular summer) is a program of open-air events that enlivens the neighbourhoods of Reggio Emilia from mid-June to mid-September with performances, creative workshops, storytelling and games. The project was born in 2020, after the first lockdown, with the intention of mending ties and reconnecting neighbourhoods and the city through culture and arts. The project is promoted by the municipality and Acer (a company that manages public real estate) in collaboration with cultural associations operating in the city.

[Cantieri sportivi](#) (Sports yards) is a project activated three times from 2013 to the present. Free sports/recreational and social activities are offered to young people in parks and public places often crossed by intergenerational conflicts. The project always includes an educator and a coach, trained in outreach work who design activities with attention to both gender balance and intercultural relations. Sport proves to be a valuable tool to deal with, sometimes conflicting, dynamics with respect to the origin of the young people involved in the activities. These activities have positive spill over effects both on young people and on the neighbourhoods (for example, in the Station Area positive relationships between boys have been consolidated through the game of basketball).

The City of Reggio Emilia plays an active role in organizing and supporting various cultural festivals in collaboration with local associations.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia has a good result in the neighbourhood area, but it could be reinforced 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 launched the “My Neighbourhood initiative” which draws citizens into online discussions about how budgets are allocated at the micro-level. The city also encourages interaction between neighbourhoods and at the origin of this process has been the [Reykjavik City Library](#). Public libraries are an often-underestimated resource but with their branches as well as online facilities they can make real connections on the ground. The city library in Reykjavik has been an inspiration in this regard, with its commitment to interculturalism and the promotion of arts and creativity. The library is reported to hold regular events, in different parts of the city, that are designed for people of all origins. Further, the city’s cultural institutions are reported to aim to open their doors to a diverse group of guests and to be a venue for fellowship, creativity and interactive cultural dialogue through Roots and wings - The Reykjavik Department of Culture and Tourism’s policy on diverse culture in the city 2017–2020.

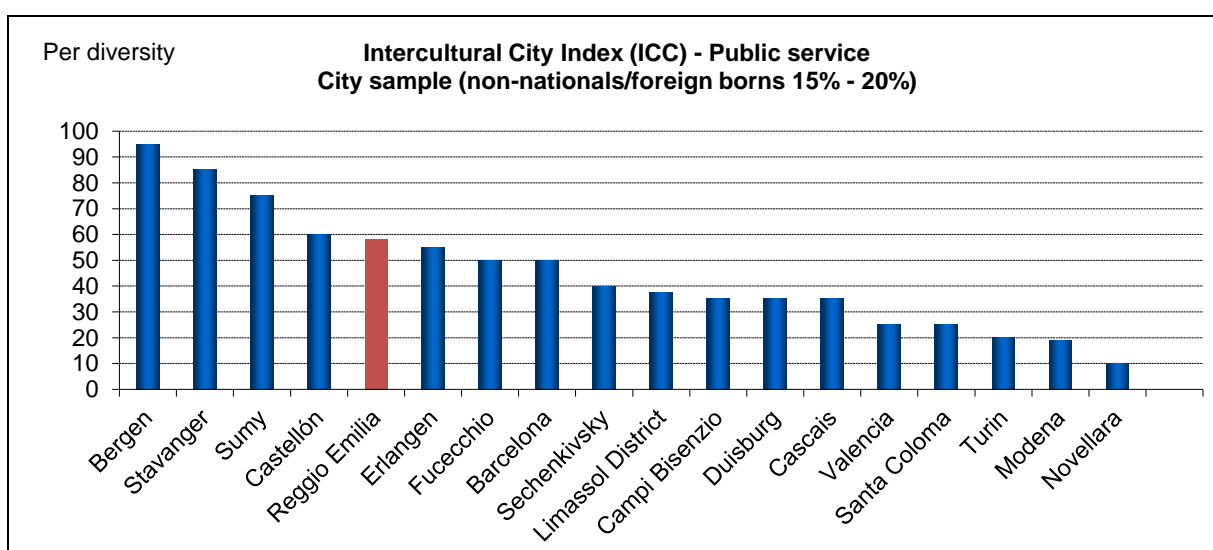
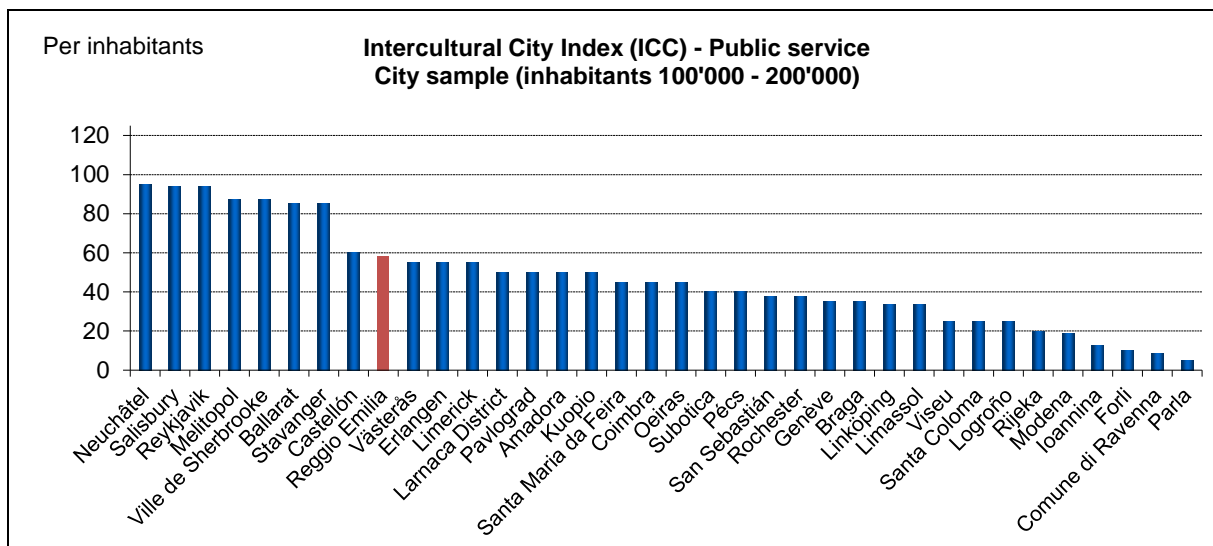
In Loures (Portugal), the ‘Bairro e o Mundo’ (Neighbourhood and the World) project aims regenerating a stigmatised neighbourhood through large-scale art. Quinta do Mocho was for many years the most stigmatized of neighbourhoods in Loures, associated with poverty, crime and ethnic exclusion. Through Loures’ membership of the C4i project, a determined effort was made to change the district’s image amongst the citizens of the wider region. During October 2014, a set of breath-taking frescos were painted on 33 buildings in the neighbourhood, with the help of 2000 artists and local residents, 25 NGOs and 43 private companies. The area was transformed into a Public Art Gallery. Since October 2014, the C4i team in Loures hosted 46 visits from enterprises and artists, including 28 guided tours and 18 media tours and including interviews for newspapers, television, radio and internet. In addition, at least 80 news items from around the world covered the neighbourhood regeneration process. The evaluation of the initiative, made through empirical observation and an extensive survey, demonstrated that it has contributed to fostering social cohesion and local development through cultural expression.

The [ICC study on managing gentrification](#) offers a range of strategies and examples of how to create inclusive public space, manage positively socio-cultural mixing, nurture sense of belonging and encourage diverse businesses to thrive.

PUBLIC SERVICES

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

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 58%, which is slightly higher than the city sample’s achievement rate of 46%.



In Reggio Emilia, the representation of employees with migrant or minority backgrounds in the public sector, particularly at the lower levels of administration, does not reflect the composition of the city's population. The city does not have a specific recruitment plan to ensure an adequate rate of diversity within its workforce (it is not within the city's competences).

Reggio Emilia promotes ethnic diversity in the workforce of private sector enterprises. The [D-LAB programme](#) aims to promote a general understanding of Diversity Management related to cultural diversity by organising systemic actions like awareness-raising events on cultural diversity promotion in workplaces and disseminating a renewed vision which combines inclusion and valorisation efforts and integrates Diversity Management and Diversity Marketing strategies. It also offers local actors (businesses, public institutions, collaborative spaces, etc.) customised trainings on intercultural competence. The main objectives of the D-LAB are mapping informal practices valuing workers with a migrant background and supporting their replicability; creating synergies among migrant and traditional businesses, as part of Diversity Marketing strategies and proving the Diversity Advantage; strengthening a public-private partnership (public organisations can learn from companies how to recognise and value cultural diversity, while removing all administrative obstacles that could prevent them from being inclusive).

The city of Reggio Emilia considers the diverse backgrounds of all residents when providing services. For instance, funeral services, school meals and women-only sports facilities are available. In one of the cemeteries there is a section dedicated to the burial of citizens of the Islamic faith, the result of an agreement signed between the

Municipality and the Muslim community of Reggio Emilia. The Municipality may also assist in the repatriation of the bodies of foreign citizens, according to the procedures set forth in the municipal regulations. Regarding school meals, diets are consistent with the different religious beliefs of families and students are guaranteed in all local preschools and schools. In 2016, the *Mondinsieme Foundation* collaborated with a swimming pool to activate a women-only course, which is now part of the winter seasonal offer. The course is reserved for female users and features only female staff.

In general, through specific projects and within the framework of strategies and action plans for promoting diversity and combating discrimination, the municipality is working to increase the sensitivity of all institutions to cultural diversity.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia already has some good policies in the field of public services but could explore other initiatives. In Barcelona (Spain), the municipality has recently approved a government measure to “[Advance towards interculturalism - Governance mechanisms and Instruments](#)” to promote the diversity of municipal human resources. This plan will include the leadership of the ‘People and Development department’ and the participation of trade unions. It will set specific quantitative targets for increasing the percentage of workers of diverse origins and backgrounds. In addition, the City Council has launched a call for 259 new vacancies to join the Guardia Urbana in which knowledge of Chinese, Arabic and Urdu, as well as English, will be considered. This is an important effort, so that the Guardia Urbana becomes increasingly like the society it wants to serve.

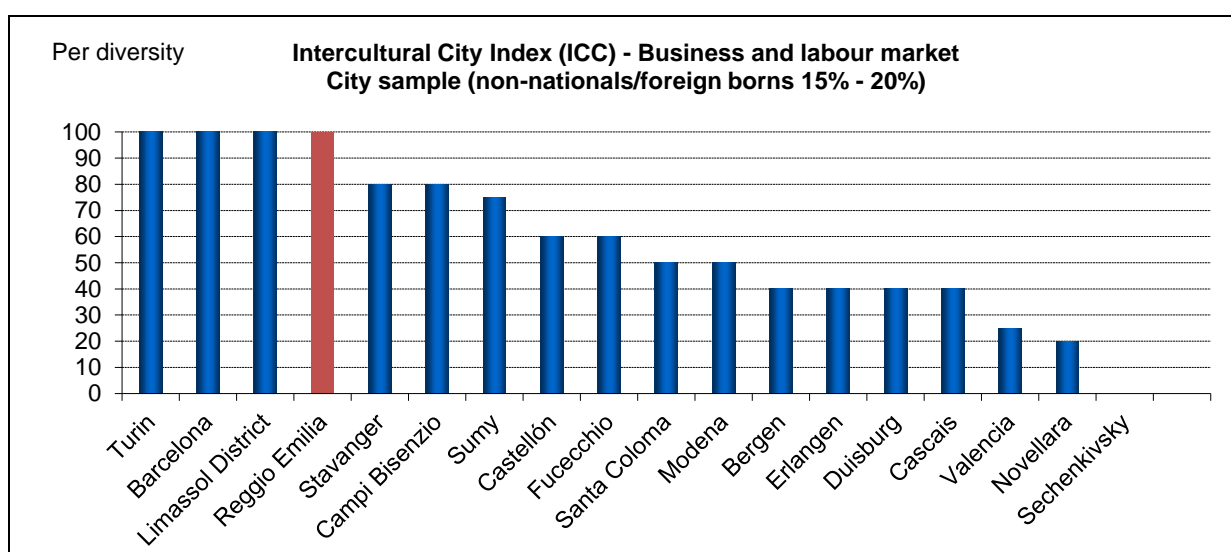
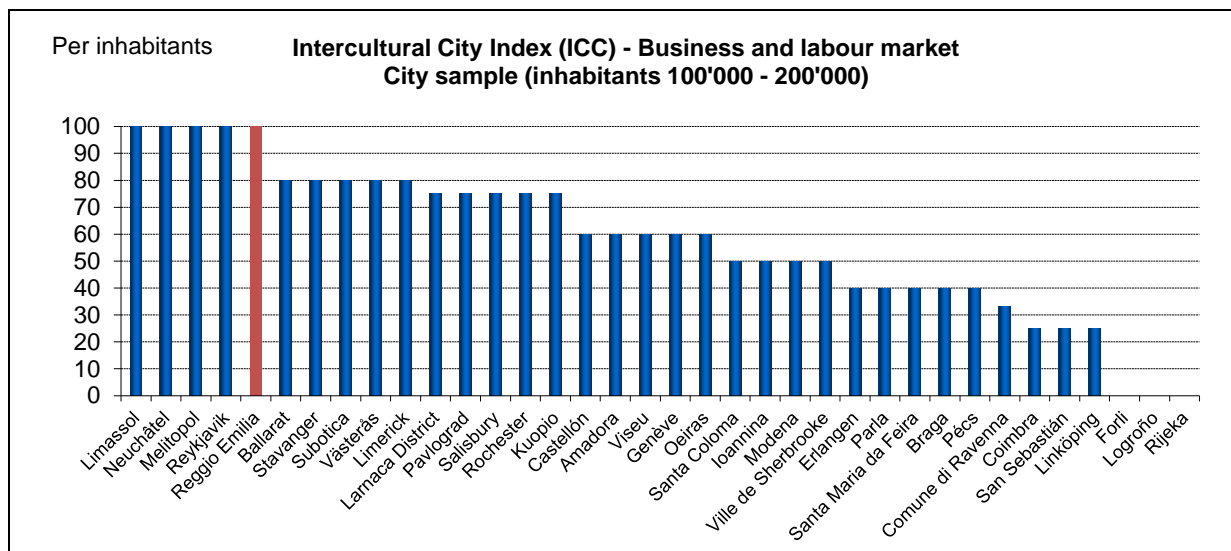
In Bergen (Norway), the public library has been developed as a place for social dialogue. The Public Library of Bergen aims to facilitate a learning hub centred around language and intercultural meetings between Norwegian residents and newcomers. The motivation behind the initiative is to enhance the inclusion and integration of newcomers in Norwegian society as well as expanding Norwegian residents’ intercultural knowledge and foreign language skills. The Public Library of Bergen offers a variety of Norwegian and foreign language courses and cafés, provides books and newspapers translated in several languages, and facilitates the project Language Friends where two people can “switch” language with one another. The expected impact is to create meaningful cultural encounters between Norwegian residents and newcomers through language activities.

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 100%, which is considerably higher than the city sample’s achievement rate of 52%.



To promote diversity and non-discrimination in the labour market, Reggio Emilia follows a national initiative in the form of the [Italian Diversity Charter](#). This is a declaration of intent, voluntarily subscribed to by the Municipality, for an inclusive workplace culture and anti-discrimination policies in HR management. It is the national reference framework for companies and public administrations. At municipal level, D-LAB and [Local Action Plan against racism and discrimination](#) intend to foster an inclusive working environment within the Municipality and favour the expression of employees' diversity (e.g. linguistic and cultural skills) for more efficient public services. D-LAB launched the mapping of employees' qualifications issued abroad and encourages working organisations to recognise it.

Reggio Emilia takes action to encourage businesses from ethnic minorities to move beyond the ethnic economy and enter the mainstream economy in partnership with national actors, mainly through raising-awareness events. In 2020, in collaboration with the National Diaspora Summit, the city [promotes an event](#) to value migrant entrepreneurs as actors of transnational development, who move resources, have a wider access to information, innovate and create new strategies of marketing. The main goals were sharing business experiences, building new networks among institutions, international cooperation organisations, associations and economic actors (trade associations, banks, Italian and migrant entrepreneurs).

The city also encourages business districts/incubators' to involve an adequate percentage entrepreneurs with migrant/minority backgrounds. The *Intercultural Hub* (2018-2019) was an initiative to finance intercultural business ideas (incubate, accelerate and support new entrepreneurial initiatives as well as value the opportunities of an intercultural society). It offered entrepreneurial training and a grant for the start-up or consolidation of winning projects, and included evaluation criteria such as the intercultural perspective; skills and diversity of team; quality, originality and innovation; sustainability and scalability; relations with territory and expected social impact.

The municipality does not favour companies with an intercultural inclusion/diversity strategy in decisions relating to the procurement of goods and services, as regional/national regulations do not foresee it.

Suggestions

While Reggio Emilia has an excellent achievement in this field, it is always useful to learn from the experience of others.

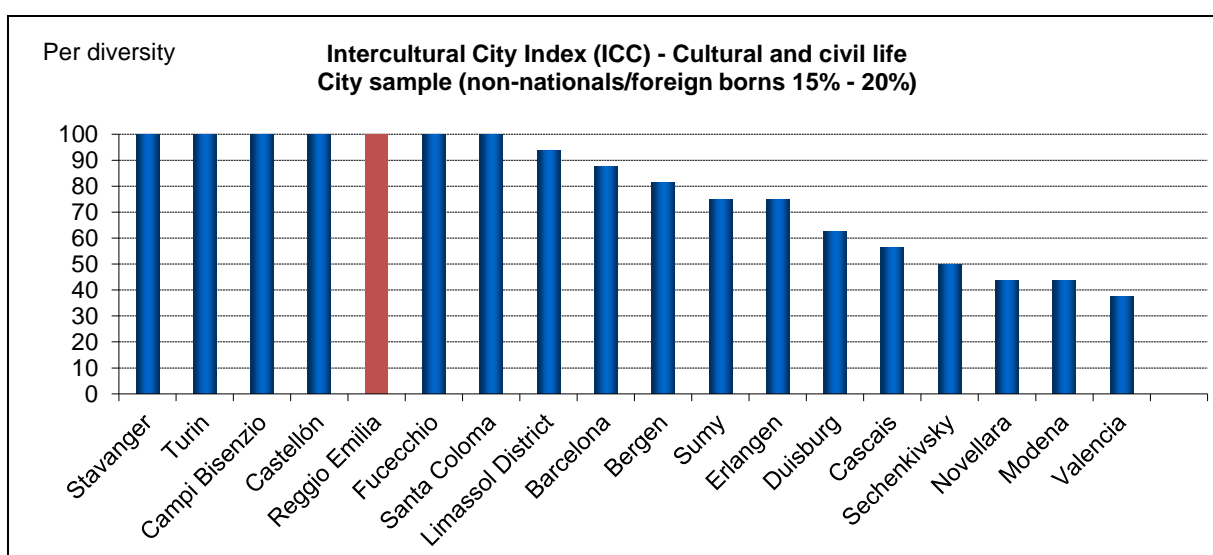
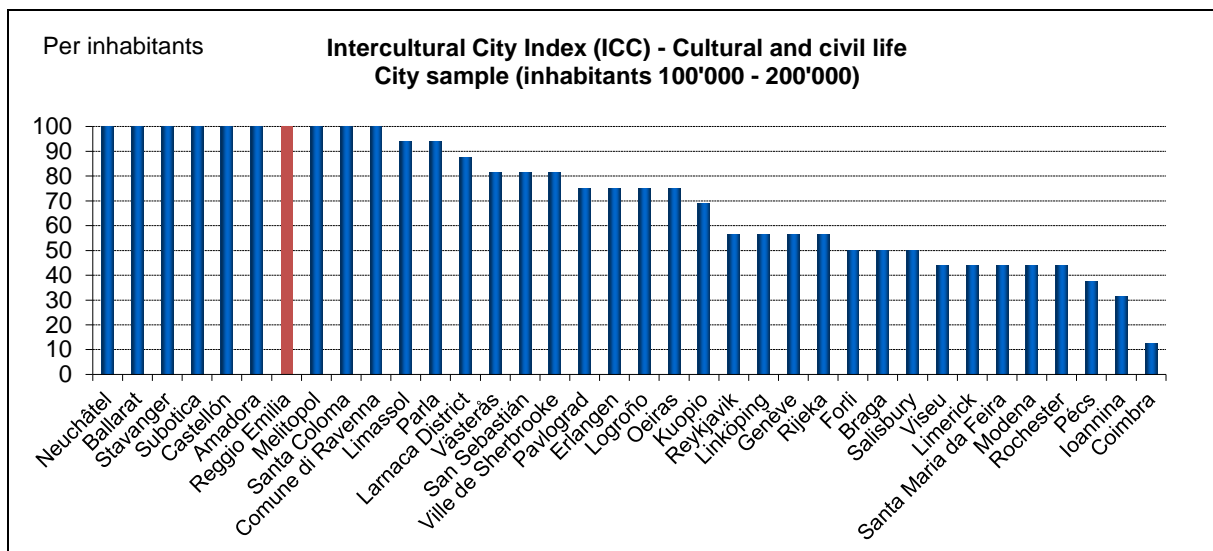
The City of Dublin (Ireland) is striving to involve in its stakeholder networks also large companies committed to job inclusion of people with a migratory background within the company staff. The goal is to enhance the activities carried out and the dissemination of the practices among other companies. 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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 100% in cultural and civil life, which is clearly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 72%.



In Reggio Emilia, interculturalism is considered as a criterion when allocating funds, but it is not consistently prioritized by all areas. The promotion of intercultural dialogue has been included as an objective both in the allocation of funding in the cultural sphere and in participation projects. Unfortunately, it is not yet a cross-sectoral action. Even in calls for tenders for the management of services and competitions on youth creativity, attention is paid to the promotion of interculturality, but not as an economic criterion.

The city regularly organises events and activities to encourage people from different backgrounds to interact. The [Quartiere Bene Comune](#) (Neighbourhood Common Good) project involves the signing of agreements between the municipal administration and the community for the co-design and participatory implementation of neighbourhood projects, based on the needs and priorities identified by citizens and associations. Over the years, various projects have promoted encounters, the enhancement of cultural diversity and intercultural interaction. Similarly, the focus on inclusion is also widespread in the city's youth centres. In particular, [SdFactoryLab](#), a local centre dedicated to youth creativity, designs cultural activities that encourage interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds and promotes awareness-raising events and performances, such as the play for [Migrant's Day 2022](#). Furthermore, since 1997, the [International Tricolour Games](#) have been organised every 3-4 years, involving sports and meeting activities for young people from twin cities, international network partners and other cities collaborating with Reggio Emilia.

The city encourages cultural organisations to deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions. The city promotes guided tours for associations or citizens with a migrant background to promote knowledge of the city's cultural sites. There is also a commitment of cultural institutions to plan their offer according to a logic of representativeness of communities with a migrant background, such as the initiatives of the [Aperto Festival](#). There are also events and initiatives co-planned with *Mondinsieme* and its member associations to promote intercultural relations and the valorisation of diversity, such as the [DRIS project](#) (Co-creating Intercultural Societies: a Focus on Racism and Discrimination) or the [FAMU 2022 – Giornata nazionale della famiglie al Museo](#) focused on equality.

Reggio Emilia has regularly promoted initiatives on cultural diversity and living together. The municipality directly promotes themed initiatives during the international days (World Day for Cultural Diversity, International Migrants Day, etc.) and supports, through collaborations and contributions, initiatives carried out by entities of national relevance for the promotion of initiatives dedicated to children and young people and the general public. For instance, the [Internazionale Kids](#) initiative, with the aim of bringing children and adolescents closer to the themes of diversity, global citizenship; and the [Festival of the NGO Emergency](#), with debates, workshops and seminars dedicated to global issues.

Suggestions

While Reggio Emilia has an excellent achievement in this field, it could draw inspiration from other cities to enrich its work in this area. In Dudelange (Luxembourg), the art project "Quartier Italie en couleurs" worked from 2009 to 2019. The project aimed to revitalize the image of the neighbourhood by empowering residents to positively impact their living environment. Young people are the ambassadors of these changes within the neighbourhood and their families. The project introduces students to contemporary art forms, specifically "Street art," as they paint the neighbourhood's stairs. It involves mentoring students from different schools to collectively create a representative work reflecting their aspirations. The goal is to empower young people to view their artistic actions as enhancing their neighbourhood. Positioning them as artists enables them to co-create civic actions, fostering community participation in the Quartier Italie. The initiative aims to engage youth in beautifying their surroundings, instilling a sense of ownership and awareness of the challenges involved in such efforts. By fostering collective respect for group efforts, the project aims to enhance community life. It seeks to showcase the neighbourhood's talents and foster individual and collective identities among participants, promoting cohesion for future projects. Cooperation involves schools, the Red Cross refugee centre, and the Youth Centre.

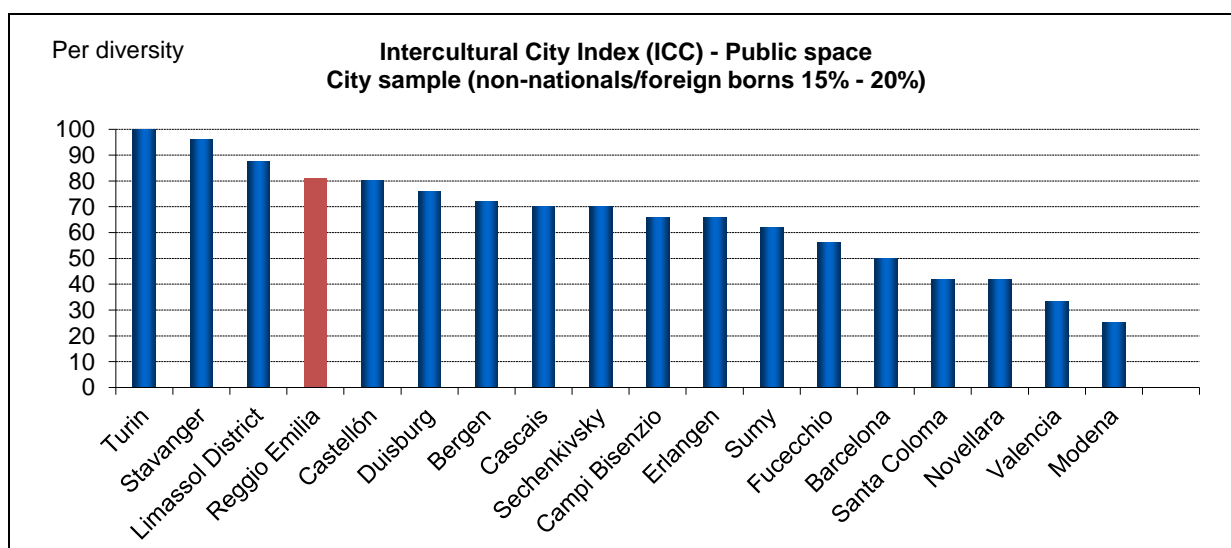
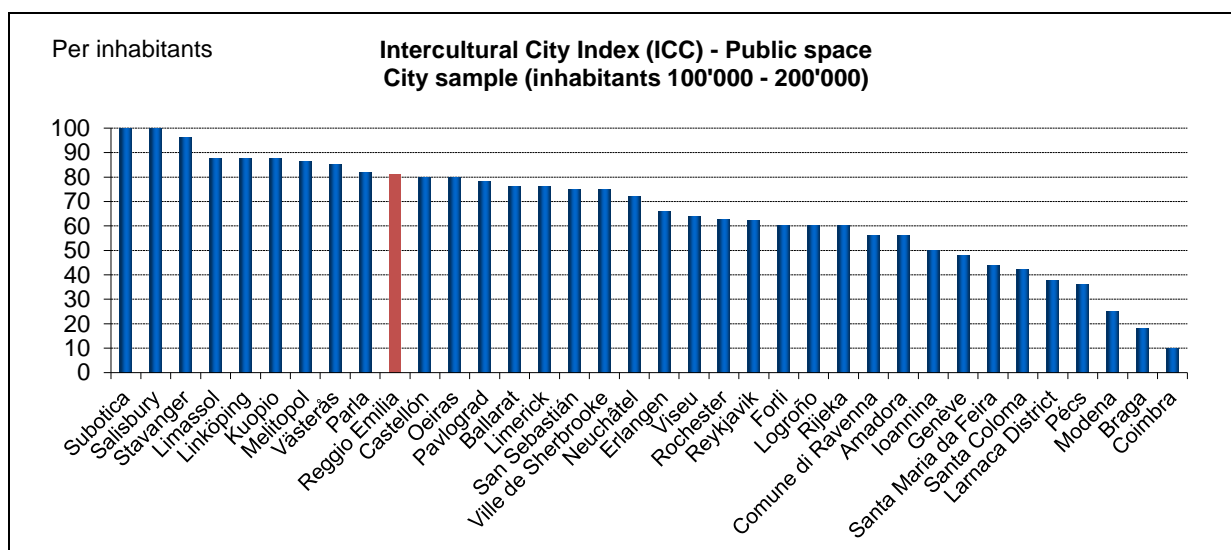
The City of Kirklees (United Kingdom) has initiated a place-based [cultural development program](#) running from 2018 to 2023, focusing on public spaces and community engagement through arts and culture. This initiative aims to deliver district-wide cultural initiatives deeply rooted in each town and village within the area. Two major programs under this initiative include WOVEN, a textile festival, and the Year of Music 2023, aimed at fostering transformational place-based system change aligned with the regional year of cultural celebration. Both programs collaborate with a diverse range of organizations, including the University of Huddersfield, schools, colleges, businesses, commercial organizations, registered charities, community-led voluntary arts groups, and individual artists and residents. Partnerships have resulted in investments from commercial businesses, contributions to projects, 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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 81% rate, clearly surpassing the city sample's achievement rate of 68%.



Reggio Emilia takes action to encourage meaningful intercultural mixing and interaction in public space. The city promotes and encourages intercultural initiatives in libraries, parks, and squares. The municipality has [ad hoc calls for tenders](#) dedicated to the enhancement of public spaces, including the involvement of people of different origins. Similarly, the city encourages intercultural mixing and interaction through [neighbourhood projects](#) and Italian L2 courses and reading awareness activities for people with a migrant background in [public libraries](#).

The city considers the diversity of the population in the design, renovation and management of some buildings or spaces. For several years, the municipal service 'Participation policies' has been developing projects in the city's neighbourhoods through co-planning agreements with citizens and associations, with a particular focus on the involvement of citizens of foreign origin. This [experience](#) has led to the city councils project, in which foreign citizens are also elected.

Similarly, when the city decides to reconstruct an area, different methods are used to ensure the involvement of people with different migrant/minority backgrounds. Moreover, Reggio Emilia is involved in "[Intercultural Cities in Placemaking](#)", a pilot capacity-building project designed by [Placemaking Europe](#) and implemented in cooperation with the Council of Europe Intercultural Cities programme.

While there are no specific areas in the city considered “dangerous”, certain neighbourhoods are affected by phenomena of social marginalisation. For example, the disused industrial area of the former Officine Reggiane, situated behind the railway station, has gradually transformed into an informal settlement for people experiencing poverty and social marginalisation. Reggio Emilia's approach prioritises urban and human regeneration projects over punitive measures. In response to these challenges, the former Officine Reggiane area underwent a comprehensive urban and human regeneration project aimed at enhancing safety conditions and well-being. This collaborative effort involved various stakeholders, including the Municipality (social services and local police), the Health Authority, the investee company Stu Reggiane, and the Bishopric of Reggio Emilia. All interventions were agreed upon and coordinated with the Prefecture of Reggio Emilia.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia has already taken several steps to strengthen policies and actions to support a public space for all and could draw further inspiration from other local practices.

In Leeds (United Kingdom), the city launched an initiative to transform a common public space through cooperation. The city demonstrates a commitment to inclusive public spaces through its ['Our Spaces'](#) Strategy, which aims to cater to all ages, abilities, and diverse communities. Several projects have been implemented, including the creation and improvement of spaces like Playhouse Gardens, Woodhouse Gardens, and Queen Square, with more planned for areas like Cookridge Street and Meadow Lane. The city employs stakeholder mapping exercises to engage relevant groups early in the project development process, ensuring their feedback is considered in project outcomes. Additionally, initiatives like the communications campaign in Harehills address community cohesion by involving multiple sectors and partners to promote positive behaviour and facilitate local resident engagement through various activities.

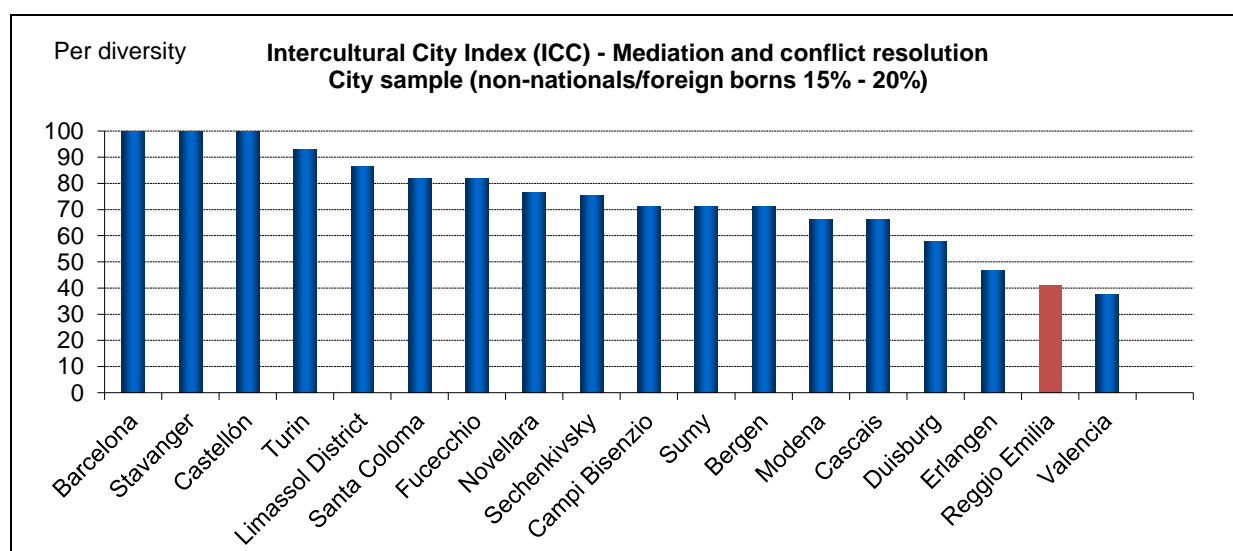
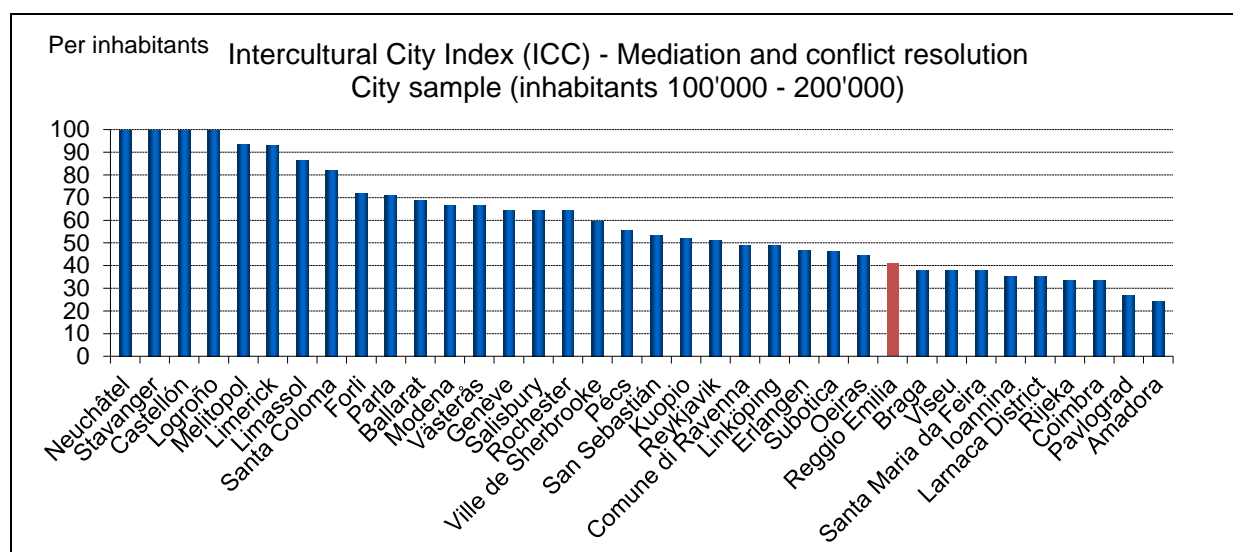
In Cascais (Portugal), the Council promoted a project to reshape the historic centre of the city while arts brought people together. The 1st edition of Muraliza was held in 2014 as part of the celebrations of the 650 years of the Charter of the Village. The Muraliza festival was produced by Mistaker Maker – Association of Creative Intervention, a non-profit association of an artistic and cultural nature, whose mission and main objectives were: to actively and creatively foster the production and promotion of Contemporary Art exercises, in all its (new) forms of expression; To stimulate informally, through the exploration of new paths in the production of content, the integration of heterogeneous audiences, aiming at the reinforcement of the critical mass and the creation, not only of new artistic products, but also of growing economic, social and cultural value. The event involved all facets of Portuguese culture and witnessed its transformation and evolution: the painting murals of great and medium size, were always inspired by the innumerable and unique characteristics of the region and, concretely, in the peculiarities of this social district built in the 60's.

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 41%, which is slightly lower than the city sample's achievement of 58%.



Reggio Emilia works with a municipal intercultural and linguistical mediation service in specific areas. The municipality's linguistic and intercultural mediation service, which has existed in a structured form since 2007, operates mainly in social services, and educational and health services. In the health sector, the Local Health Authority has its own linguistic-cultural mediation service. Linguistic-cultural mediation is also a service present in services and reception centres for asylum seekers and refugees.

In relation to conflict mediation there is an anti-discrimination desk which provides legal guidance and mediation in matters of discrimination related to nationality, origin and cultural and religious affiliation; the family centre, which offers family mediation (mainly in the areas of family conflict and parent-child relations); and the restorative justice centre, which works to spread the culture of legality through encounters and dialogue between offenders and victims of crime.

In Reggio Emilia, the municipality and the *Mondinsieme Foundation* co-ordinate a line of action to deal with inter-religious relations. The promotion of interreligious dialogue and confrontation between citizens with and without a faith, with a view to co-existence and mutual knowledge plays a strategic role in the promotion of intercultural dialogue and is one of the lines of action of *DiTutti* policies. During the current political term of office, a space for discussion between associations expressing different religious affiliations has been established. There is a periodic discussion on territorial planning and programming, for the benefit of the municipality's services, the institutions in the area and the entire citizenry. Such discussions take place between the Urban planning department, the Intercultural department, Mondinsieme Foundation and associations linked to places of worship. In particular, and in co-operation with the urban planning service, a procedure has been defined for the urban regularisation of buildings that house places of worship (meeting legal requirements), in order to transform them into facilities for practising religious rites.⁵ The Municipality has also created an open list of religious organisations and made it available to all the services of the municipal administration.

Suggestions

While the city's score on mediation specifically targeting intercultural issues is comparatively low, the existence of other venues for mediation dedicated to other type of issues could offer an opportunity of mainstreaming the intercultural approach into existing structures such as the family centre and restorative justice centre.

If the municipality is interested in expanding its work in this area, it could be interested in the case of Modena (Italy). The [Punto d'accordo - Centro di mediazione dei conflitti](#) is the social mediation centre of the Municipality of Modena, which deals with the peaceful resolution of small conflicts such as disputes with neighbours, among relatives, disagreements between young people and adults, and misunderstandings between teachers, parents, and students. The social mediation service offered by the centre is free of charge. The centre provides information and guidance to citizens experiencing conflict situations, listens to the parties involved, mediates between them, and designs and manages negotiation interventions. Mediation, conducted by a third party, allows the parties to tell their conflict, facilitating a reopening of dialogue. "Punto d'Accordo" was initiated by the Centro Servizi per il Volontariato di Modena, the Municipality of Modena, and Acer Modena. The structure also collaborates with Social Services, the Municipal Departments of Environment, Education, Youth Policies, and Sports, the Family Centre, schools, municipal police, sports clubs, the Foreigners Centre, district offices, and volunteer associations.

In Cascais (Portugal) exists the "[Educa](#)" project. The initiative is formed by a group of immigrant or immigrant descendent mediators. It has been created with training and support of the city, to develop mediation in the educational context. These mediators are interlocutors in the pupil/school/guardian triangle and a source for signalling the need for specific individualised interventions. Schools feel that they have a quality resource: availability to play with students in the playground, management of emerging conflicts among students, identification and signalling of problem situations. The partners committed to the practice include the creation of a

⁵ Between 2015 and 2017, a mapping of religious presences on the territory was carried out. Thirty-five places were identified, registered mainly as cultural centres and associations, partly due to the lack of an agreement between the various religions and the Italian State and the difficulty of meeting the requirements for a place of worship. Inadequacies have been noted linked to inconsistencies between the statutes and the real identities of religious associations or to the characteristics of the place of worship (safety, consistency with the intended use). In 2020, the City Council approved a specific variant to the Urban and Building Regulations (RUE) that recognised eight of the places previously identified as places of worship, as well as areas owned by the Catholic Church. To be recognised from an urban planning point of view, buildings housing places of worship must be fully owned by the association and located in a single building with a single function (i.e. not a ground floor or part of the building). Once they were recognised from a town planning perspective, the owners of the facilities also adjusted the building use accordingly. In 2021, the City Council approved the establishment of a list of associations and organisations representing religious denominations in the city and is regularly updated.

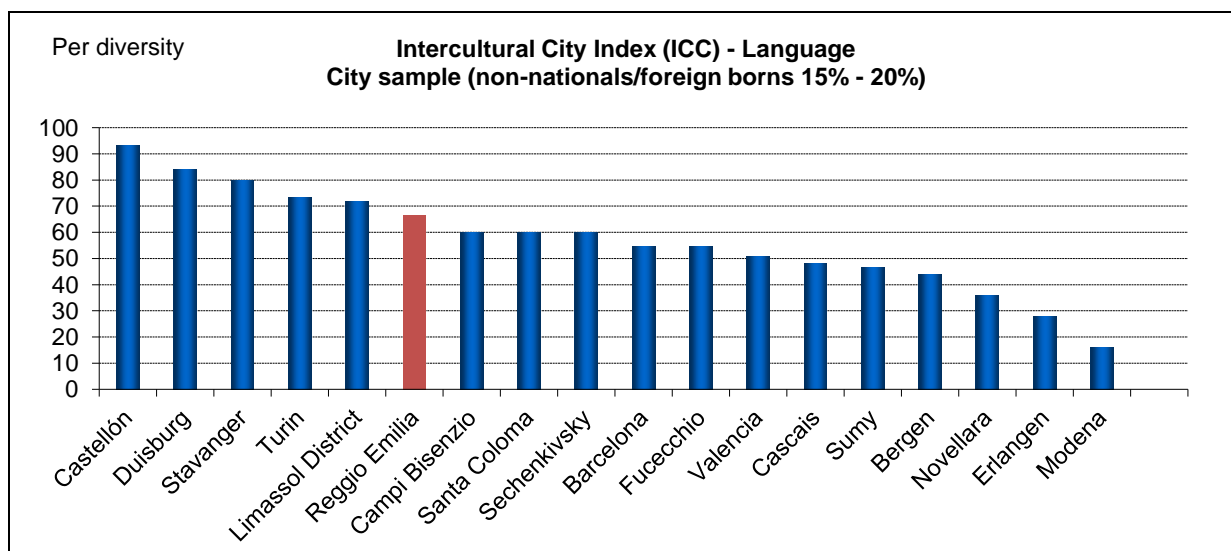
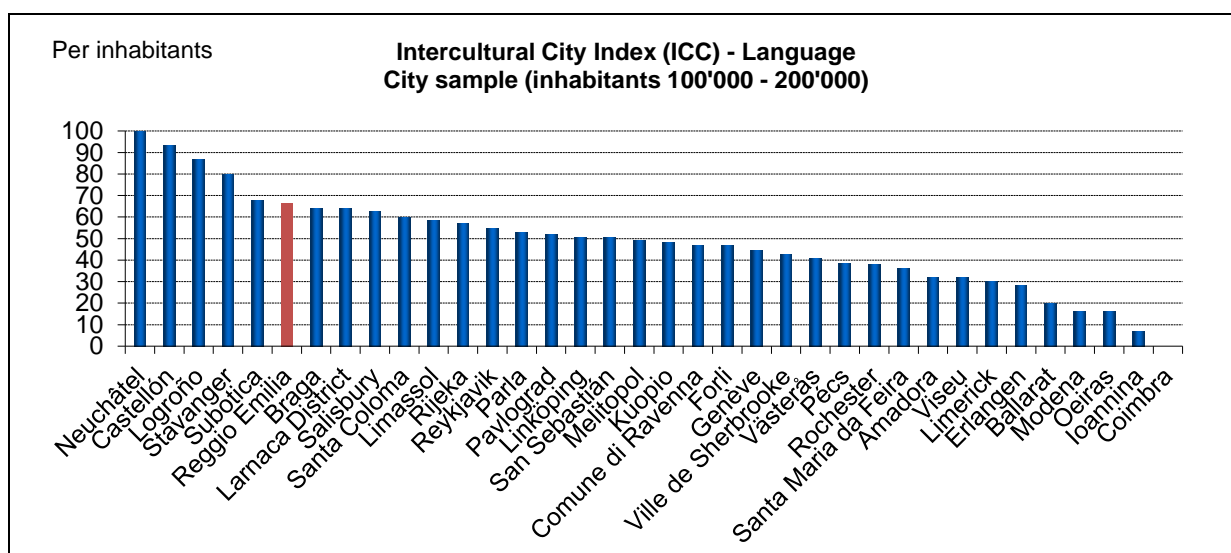
consortium which plays a central role in helping to break down prejudices about some families by trying other ways of approaching problem situations.

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 67%, which is higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 46%.



Reggio Emilia provides specific language training in the official language for different groups. Italian language courses are organised for specific target groups (mothers with children, minors newly arrived in Italy for family reunification, adults and unaccompanied minors seeking asylum recently arrived in Italy, etc.). Furthermore, mother tongue courses are organised by diaspora associations for children and young people (in some cases with the support of the embassies and consulates of the country of origin in Italy), and some associations offer mother tongue courses open to all. The Municipality supports the organisational and economic aspects of the network [Diritto di Parola](#), which brings together eight local associations that offer L2 language courses, workshops, and language integration initiatives.

The city supports raising awareness on migrant and minority languages by helping associations in finding classrooms for courses and promoting the mother tongue courses they organise.

Reggio Emilia seeks to give a positive image of migrant and minority languages. In institutional communication, attention is paid to making information about municipal services comprehensible and usable by simplifying the language used and translating into different languages communications also aimed at citizens with migrant backgrounds (e.g., registration for kindergartens and nursery schools, anti-discrimination desk, communications about public health and safety).

In political communication, there are more and more occasions when the mayor and politicians extend good wishes to communities and citizens celebrating religious and cultural anniversaries. Reference to foreign-born citizens in communication by the municipality or mayor is a policy tool to strengthen the sense of belonging to the city. Posts are made on the social network pages of the Municipality and *Mondinsieme Foundation* on the occasion of national holidays, religious and cultural holidays and celebrations, and New Year's Eve other than Italian. Communication is usually done in dual language so as to be explicitly addressed to the two communities and sometimes video messages are subtitled (e.g., [video greetings for Chinese New Year](#)).

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia could be interested in improving language provision, including the use of different languages in the local services and communications.

In Reykjavik (Iceland), the Department of Education and Youth of the City runs the “Centre of language and literacy” project with the cooperation with the Mother Tongue association. Due to the consistently rising number of immigrant families in the capital of Iceland and the difficulties that students, parents and teachers experience with this increase, the Department of Education and Youth initiated the project “Centre of language and literacy”. The centre covers the teaching of Icelandic as a second language, active bilingualism and co-operation between parents and schools. The project is directed to everybody involved in the education process – students, parents and employees in pre-schools, primary schools, after-school centres, as well as other specialists. Teachers obtain counselling, advice, courses, cross-cultural training and support on how to work specifically and meaningfully with immigrant pupils. The role of facilitators is to support preschool teachers and other employees to build up a rich language and literacy environment in all preschools in the city. They also support primary school teachers in making study programmes that work best for mixed language groups. Facilitators are also educators for all employees in both pre-schools and primary schools.

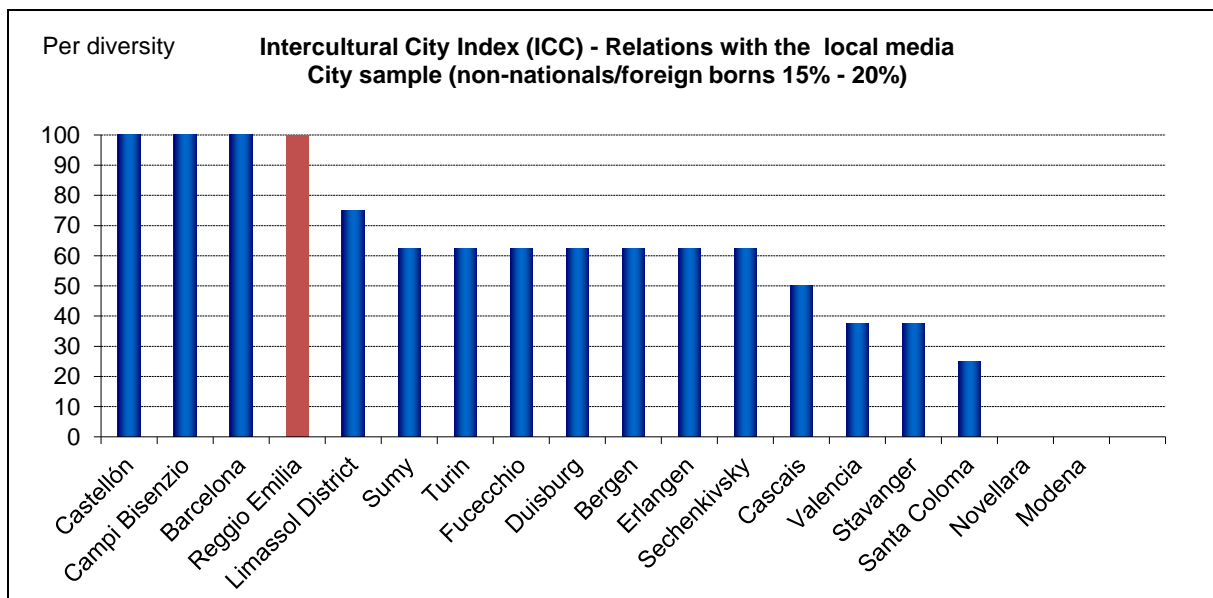
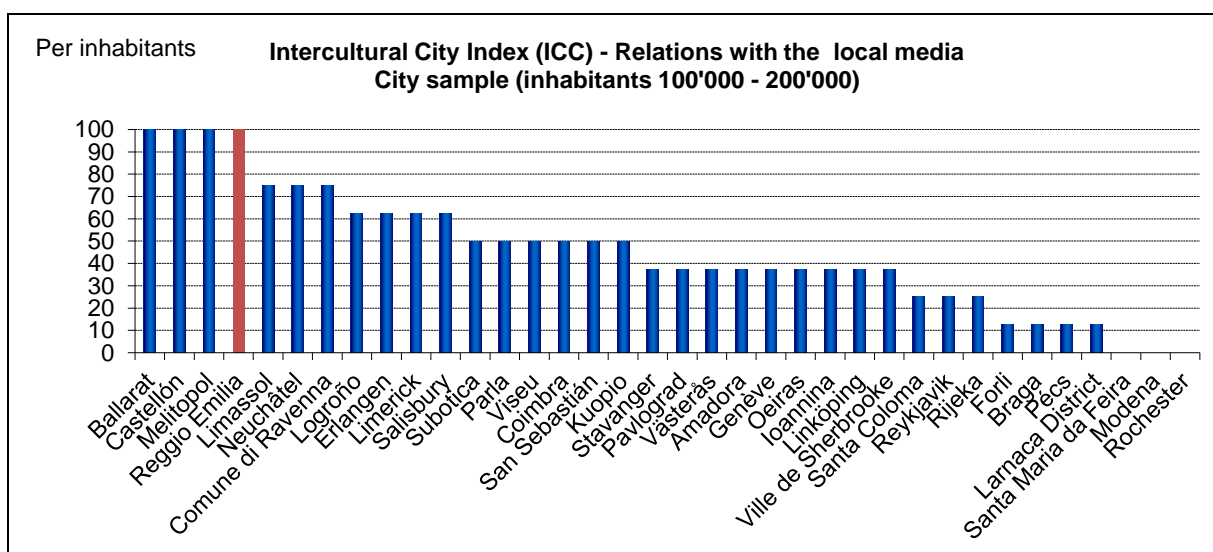
In Lisbon (Portugal), the city and the Portuguese Ministry of Health have partnered with local NGOs and hospitals to create manuals about [health in several languages](#). The leaflets were designed in partnership with local groups of migrants that were able to raise the most pressing topics to discuss including for example pregnancy, birth and STD control and diabetes. The manual further included images to describe each subject. Mediators from the designated communities were hired to moderate conversations with local groups, develop the texts and translate them and the process of developing the manuals was 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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 100%, which is clearly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 47%.



Reggio Emilia has a communication strategy to improve the visibility and image of people with migrant/minority backgrounds in the local media. The intercultural calendar is a shared tool that *Mondinsieme Foundation* and the

municipality have adopted. Thanks to it, celebrations of different cultures, nationalities and religions have visibility in political and institutional communication channels.

The city's communication department is instructed to highlight diversity as an advantage regularly and in various types of communication.

The city provides support for advocacy, media training and mentorship for journalist with migrant/minority backgrounds through an external body - Mondinsieme Foundation in cooperation with Emilia-Romagna Region and the Order of Journalists of Emilia Romagna and Anci (National Association of Italian Municipalities) Emilia Romagna (see [project](#)). Similarly, the city monitors how traditional media and social media portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds through and external entity.⁶

On various occasions, when local media depicts individuals with migrant/minority backgrounds using negative stereotypes, the *Mondinsieme Foundation* has stepped in to offer complementary information and additional sources. Their aim is to present a different perspective and broaden the audience's understanding.

Suggestions

Although Reggio Emilia has an excellent achievement in this field, it could take inspiration from other cities to enrich its work in this area.

A noteworthy example of proactive measures comes from the city of Donostia/San Sebastian (Spain), where the local government extends its support to the regional branch of SOS Racism along with its media observatory. This observatory plays a crucial role in analysing the portrayal of migration-related issues and individuals with migration backgrounds in the media. Through daily analyses, the observatory provides valuable insights into the media's coverage of these topics. These analyses are accessible to the public and can be found on the observatory's website at <http://www.mugak.eu>.

An example of city's support in creating an online safe space for journalists of migrant origin is the "*Maison des journalistes* (Foreign Journalists' House)" - an initiative implemented in Paris (France) which supports refugee journalists. The organisation helps them through all the stages of their asylum process and gives them the means to continue to produce written and audio-visual information materials freely on its [website](#).

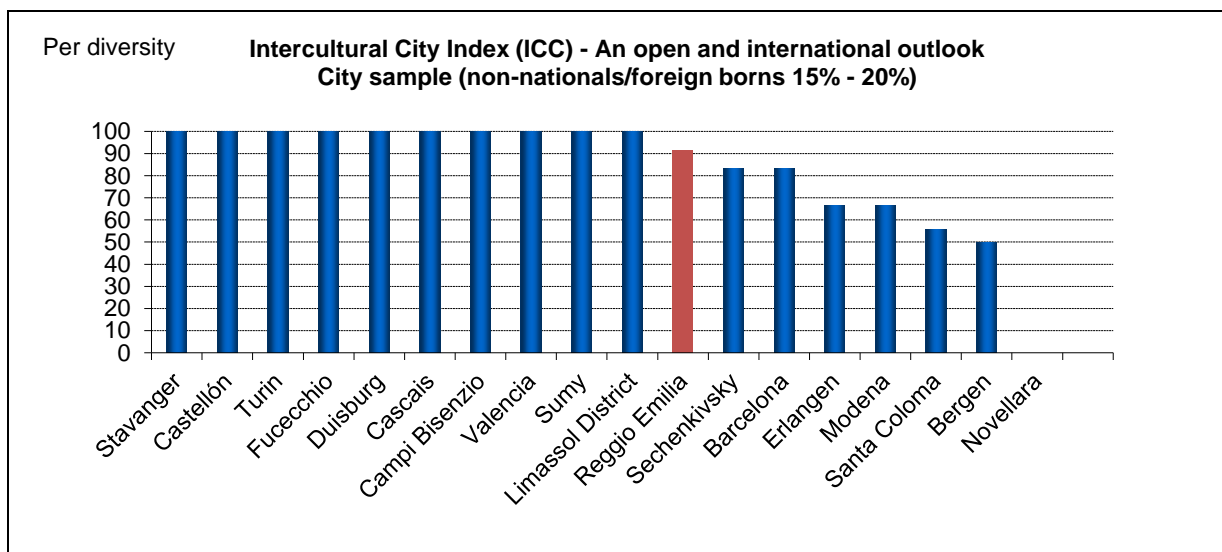
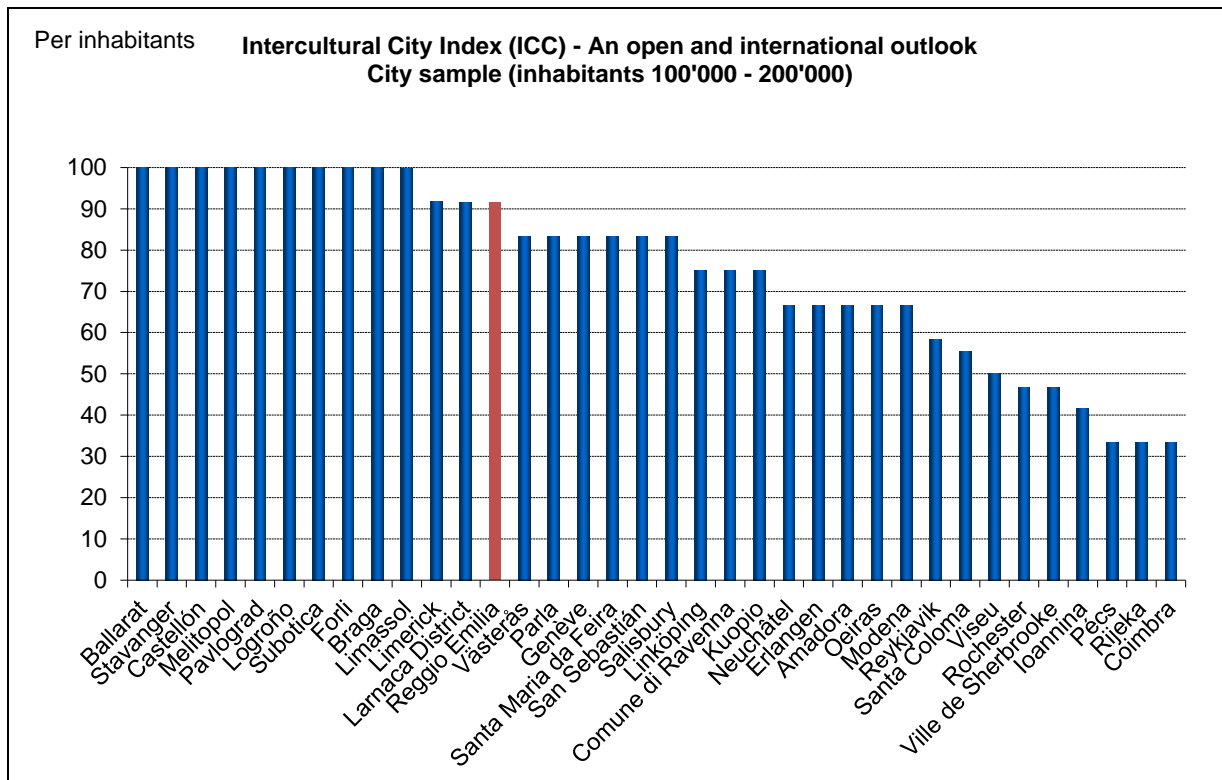
ICC programme resources on communication and public awareness are available [here](#).

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 92, which is clearly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 69%.

⁶ See also: <https://integrazioneimmigranti.gov.it/it-it/Ricerca-news/Dettaglio-news/id/2352/Reggio-Emilia-Comunicazione-istituzionale-interculturale>.



Reggio Emilia's [Single Programming Document](#) links all strategies, policies, initiatives and projects concerning the city's international action. For the period 2023-2025, Strategic Objective 4 is called 'City of attractiveness and internationalisation'. International and European activities strengthen the Municipality's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and are considered strategic levers for promoting equitable and inclusive development locally and internationally. Furthermore, the city takes different actions to develop international connections, such as twinning and friendship pacts, international visits, participation in international conferences, hosting of international delegations in Reggio Emilia, and maintaining relations with Embassies and Consulates.

The Municipality allocates adequate funds to its international activities and ensures the existence of the [E35 Foundation](#), a publicly owned body dedicated to international projects and relations, whose main objective is to support the internationalisation process of Reggio Emilia and its territory, enhancing local skills and actors.

The city also reaches out foreign students arrived at the city. There are orientation days in different languages for Italian and foreign students, 'welcome days' for international students, 'international welcome desk' for international students to provide information on accommodation. Further aid for accommodation and other services are provided by an agency financed by the Emilia Romagna region, to students arriving in Italy thanks to special programmes with low-income countries.

The city develops business relations with countries or cities of origin of its diaspora groups in various ways. These include meetings between local companies and the embassies and consulates of the diaspora groups' countries of origin, exchanges prior to trade fairs, and international missions to the diaspora groups' countries of origin with the support of dedicated economic 'country presentations'. Among the latest actions was the Declaration of Solidarity and Friendship with the Ukrainian city of Melitopol. Additionally, the city engages in international projects involving the countries of origin of the diaspora to foster exchange and cooperation in different areas of intervention such as support for development, exchange of students and teachers, and collaboration on economic issues.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia could reinforce its role as a multicultural and welcoming city by improving its international outlook. Some examples from other ICC cities could be inspirational in doing that.

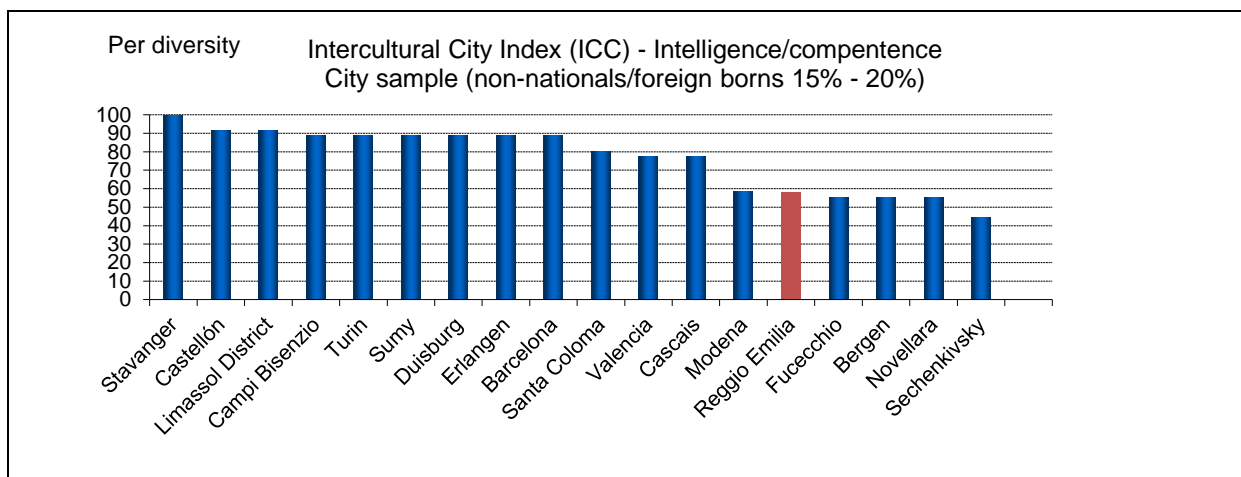
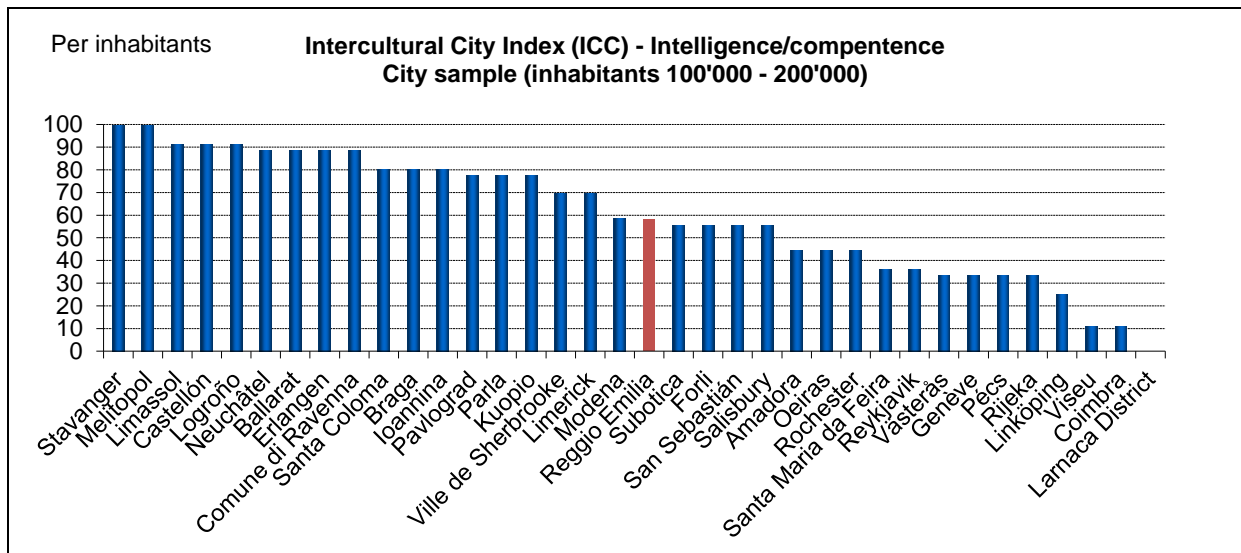
In Logan (Australia), the City Council's Global Connection Strategy 2016-2021 aimed to enhance the city's international economic and cultural relationships through specific outcomes, including increased exports, local company output, and employment growth, ultimately leading to a stronger local economy. Implemented by the Council's Economic Development and Strategy branch in 2012, the strategy envisioned Logan as a regionally and globally connected city. It focused on five main themes: export development, investment attraction, cultural identity, education, and communication. The strategy included a dedicated financial provision to support activities such as international trade missions, participation in trade and investment events, cultural engagements, membership in international Chambers of Commerce, development of an international education strategy, and marketing initiatives. Through these efforts, Logan aimed to strengthen its global connections and position itself as a vibrant and internationally engaged city.

Tampere (Finland) 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 advocate for Tampere as an excellent place to live, study, invest, establish businesses, or organise events and congresses. Their mission is to enhance Tampere's internationalisation efforts by leveraging their skills and networks.

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.

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 58%, which is slightly lower than the city sample's achievement rate of 60%.



Reggio Emilia occasionally utilises statistical and qualitative information on diversity and intercultural relations to inform the local policy-making process. In recent years, diversity and intercultural relations have been mentioned and taken into account in the municipality's strategic and planning documents. Several municipal services (economic policy, statistics, social welfare and interculturalism) have recently started working together and with *Mondinsieme Foundation* to integrate their observatories and cooperate in data disaggregation and analysis. Furthermore, the municipality, in partnership with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, applied for a European project with a specific action on equality data.

The city does not conduct surveys that incorporate inquiries regarding the public perception of migrants or minorities, nor does it conduct surveys on feelings of security and safety concerning individuals with migrant and minority backgrounds.

The city promotes intercultural competences of its officials and staff, in administration and public services through interdisciplinary seminars and networks, training courses and the advice to municipal services provided by *Mondinsieme Foundation*. The municipality is a member of many national and international networks in which diversity and inclusion issues are discussed (e.g. ICC, Città del Dialogo, UNAR network on inclusion of Sinti and Roma communities, RE.A.DY network). In recent years, many training courses on intercultural competences (coordinated or delivered directly by *Mondinsieme*) have been dedicated to municipal staff. Different targets have been involved: local police, youth workers, social workers, educators and teachers of infant-toddlers centres and

preschools, receptionists. With the approval of the Action Plan against racism, the Municipality included in the training programme for employees a 20-hour course on intercultural competence and anti-discrimination in an intersectional perspective, coordinated by the *Mondinsieme Foundation* and co-directed by several municipal employees working in the areas of welfare policies, intercultural policies, and equal opportunities. The first edition of the course started in September 2023 and is currently ongoing. *Mondinsieme's* mandate is to support all municipal services in terms of intercultural competence and planning. Over the years, numerous collaborations have been established with individual services on specific topics (childhood education, family and parenting, civic engagement and participation, communication, etc.).

It is worth to mention the role of *Mondinsieme Foundation* in the intercultural policies of Reggio Emilia. The *Mondinsieme* Intercultural Centre was established as a project of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia in the early 2000s and became a Foundation in 2010. Its mission is to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue, active citizenship and encounters between people of different origins, organised in associations, as well as between local, national and international bodies and institutions. The centre promotes inclusion and mutual empowerment in order to prevent cultural marginalisation and identity radicalism and to help build an intercultural citizenship, capable of recognising diversity advantage. *Mondinsieme* sees itself as a laboratory of intercultural practices, a space for active citizenship and a promoter of solidarity networks, through which: 1) promote intercultural dialogue and the sharing of cultural pluralism while respecting universal rights; 2) encourage and support the active participation of every person, both Italian and of foreign origin, in the city's cultural, economic, political and social activities; 3) prevent and combat all forms of racism, discrimination and exclusion; 4) combat all forms of cultural or religious extremism; 5) Support women's initiatives and women's associations from an intercultural perspective; 6) foster the intercultural mixing of young Italians and young people of foreign origin; 7) increase intercultural management skills for managers, administrators, operators and workers in the private and public sectors; 8) increase the value and impact of diversity and the narrative capital inherent in migratory experiences and global mobility.

Suggestions

Despite the score for this indicator, Reggio Emilia could easily improve its intercultural work in this area. In that sense, it could be interesting to examine the tools developed in Botkyrka (Sweden), like, the "Intercultural Dilemma" methodology that the city developed. The methodology is primarily designed to identify individual and structural practices that prevent or, on the contrary, facilitate an intercultural approach on the part of employees. Participants are invited to describe real situations that have posed a challenge from an intercultural point of view. Half of the audience describes a situation that occurred at the individual level, while the other half addresses a situation where the structural conditions for an intercultural approach were lacking. Proposals on how to solve the problems are then presented and analysed by different groups, and a final debate is held to draw conclusions.

In Bilbao (Spain), the municipality supports the Basque Immigration Observatory ([Ikuspegi](#)) with the University of the Basque Country and other public institutions. Through a cooperation agreement, *Ikuspegi* systematically monitor foreign immigration phenomena in the Basque country and in Bilbao city. These initiatives encompassed annual updates on immigrant population statistics in Bilbao, surveys to gauge native residents' perceptions and attitudes towards immigration, and studies focusing on specific neighbourhoods or communities impacting integration and social cohesion. Over the years, the Observatory conducted surveys to assess the population's attitudes towards immigration, facilitating the establishment of a "tolerance index." This index revealed fluctuations influenced by economic conditions and future expectations.

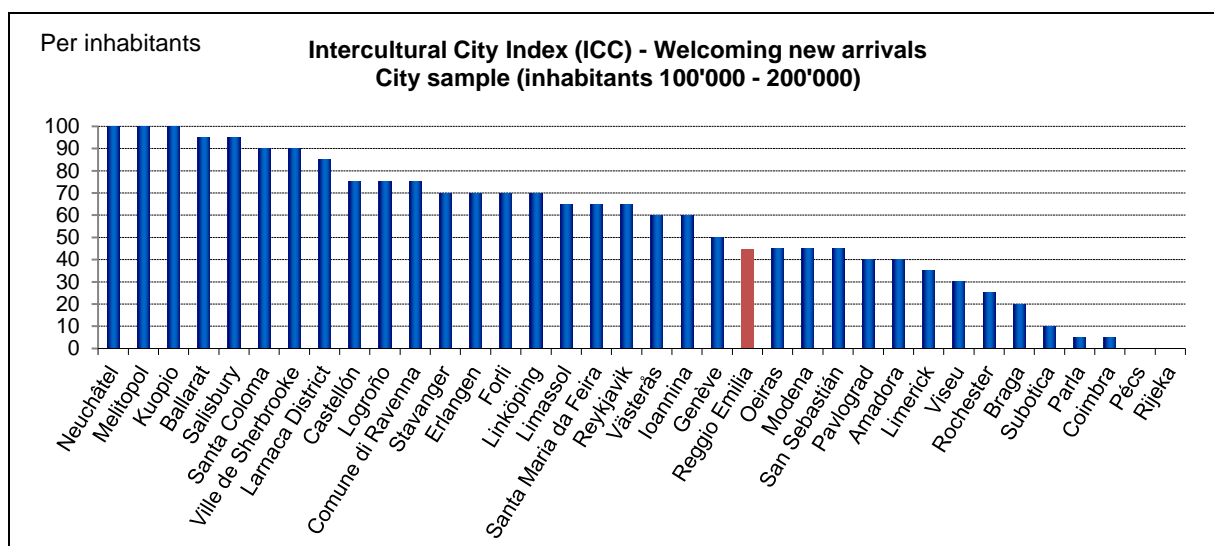
Regarding intercultural training, the city of Reykjavík (Iceland) has designed a specific training course "[Can't I do or say anything anymore?](#)" for city employees to prevent misunderstandings in a diverse workplace and to open up a dialogue about discrimination, equality, prejudice, and stereotypes. All city departments are targeted. It is specifically workplace oriented in its focus.

ICC programme resources on intercultural competence are also available [here](#). In particular, the Training manual on equality data collection to prevent systemic discrimination may be of use to Reggio Emilia in dealing with these issues.⁷

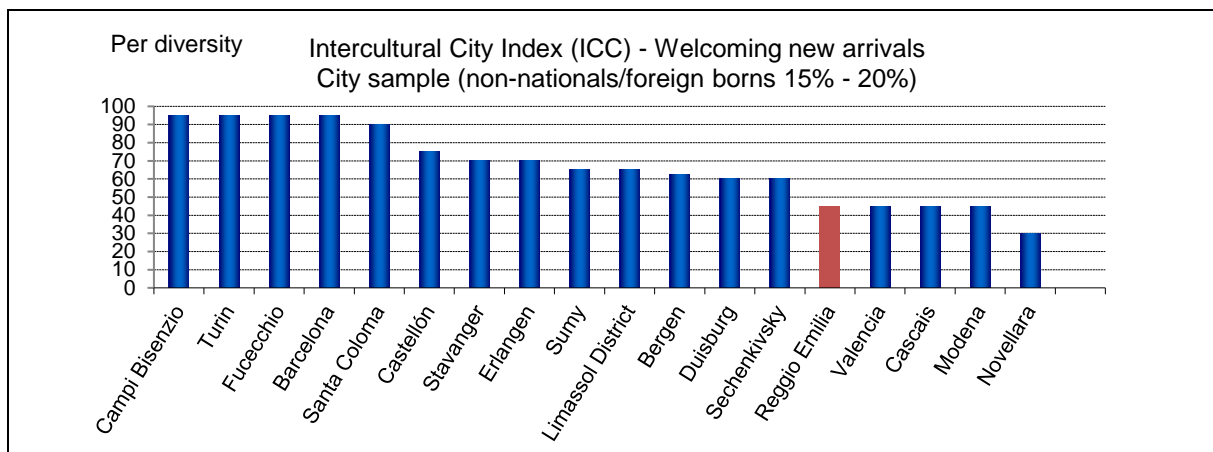
WELCOMING NEWCOMERS

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

Reggio Emilia achieved a rate of 45%, which is slightly lower than the city sample’s achievement rate of 58%.



⁷ ADI-INT, Training Manual on Equality Data Collection & Analysis to Prevent and Address Systemic Discrimination, CDADI(2022)5, 29 June 2023, at: <https://rm.coe.int/training-manual-on-equality-data-collection-to-prevent-systemic-discrimi/1680abcc81>.



The city of Reggio Emilia does not have a designated agency to welcome newcomers. Nevertheless, the city has a comprehensive welcome pack to support them. An information and orientation kit for tourists is available in Italian, English and French. The municipality has a public relations office, which can be contacted for information on the city and its services. Multilingual information is available for access to some municipal services. The municipality has recently published a guide to territorial services, available online in English, Arabic and Russian.

The city provides welcome support for particular groups of newcomers, including students (see International Outlook section), unaccompanied minors, refugees and asylum seekers. Unaccompanied minors are integrated into a protection and reception system, which includes the provision of a social worker's assistance, placement in a reception facility for minors staffed with educators, and the appointment of a legal guardian. Asylum seekers and refugees benefit from the municipality's reception system (SAI - Reception and Integration Service), which features a multidisciplinary team dedicated to facilitating their social and labour integration. Minors reunited with their families upon their recent arrival in Italy are supported through municipal projects aimed at their linguistic integration. These initiatives primarily operate during the summer period and the initial months of schooling. The Foreigners' Information Office provides a comprehensive service offering information and guidance on legal residence procedures in Italy, family reunification, as well as assistance with job and housing searches.

The city does not organise a public ceremony to greet all people arriving to live in the city.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia could be interested in expanding its work in this area. In Kuopio (Finland), the ['International House Kuopio'](#) (IHK) offers advisory services tailored to the needs of international newcomers and companies seeking skilled personnel. Serving as a centralized service point, IHK brings together guidance and counselling services aimed at facilitating settlement and the start of life in Kuopio. With a vast network of service providers, including various officials, educational institutions, projects, and organizations, IHK provides assistance to individuals who may be unsure of where to find services or which authority to contact. Currently, IHK is in the process of developing a [city-specific package of information](#) to further enhance its support services. The information package is being developed and will be managed by Navigaattori (translated as "Navigator" in English), a division of the city's employment services. Navigaattori serves both residents and newcomers of Kuopio, offering expert assistance in navigating educational and career options, as well as other services. Services are available in English, Finnish, Russian, and several other languages to accommodate diverse needs. Navigaattori boasts a broad network of service providers, including various officials, educational institutions, ongoing projects, and organizations, ensuring comprehensive support for individuals seeking assistance.

Neumarkt (Germany) offers an annual reception, and all newcomers are invited four times per year. Welcome packs and the reception address all aspects of city life including sustainability, fair trade, and integration. Surveys

Reggio Emilia does not have any standard for representation with people with migrant/minority backgrounds in mandatory boards supervising schools or other public services, as it is regulated at regional/national level.

The city regularly takes initiatives to encourage people with migrant/minority background to engage in political life. During the participatory process for the establishment of 'neighbourhood councils', meetings were organised for *Mondinsieme* associations, places of worship and second generations. Information materials on the voting rules and the role of the councils were produced in 7 languages, to encourage candidacy for election and participation in voting.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia has a good score in this field, but the work of others can always provide inspiration to take forward new initiatives.

Since 2014, the City of Geneva (Switzerland) has been developing a public policy on cultural diversity and fight against racism. Placed among its priorities by the Administrative Council, the policy aims, more specifically, to create conditions conducive to the integration of migrants and foreign nationals, working in particular to open up the host society and its institutions, as well as to fight against all forms of racial discrimination and discrimination based on ethnic origin, nationality, beliefs or residence status. In 2020, the evaluation of the 2016-2020 roadmap was published, and based on the assessment, it was decided to renew the initiative for the 2020-2025 period. The new roadmap for the 2020-2025 legislature was adopted by the Administrative Council in 2022 under the title "Cultural Diversity and Anti-Racism Policy". It focuses on five priority areas: welcoming, accessibility, non-discrimination, responsibility, and participation. Coordinated by the Agenda 21 - Sustainable City department, it was developed jointly with the City of Geneva's Diversity Network (Rédige) and the departments concerned, based on a questionnaire sent to all the departments in the administration. The 2020-2025 roadmap presents the objectives pursued to translate into actions the priorities of the policy on cultural diversity and anti-racism adopted by the Administrative Council. It aims at developing synergies and coherence between the projects and actions underway in the various departments and services of the municipal administration, and at providing a tool for evaluating the public policy over a five-year period.

In Sabadell (Spain), there is Living Together Commission ([Comissió de la Convivència](#)) established in 2004 with the initial objective of working towards the prevention and comprehensive action against discriminatory, hateful, and hostile violence that was prevalent in the city at the time. In recent years, the Commission has broadened its scope of action and attention, and currently, it addresses and works on most types of discrimination occurring in the city or affecting someone from Sabadell, even if it happens outside the city limits. The functions of the commission include discussing, validating, and activating various actions implemented in the city with the aim of promoting coexistence, social cohesion, and the eradication of any type of violence motivated by racism, homophobia, and xenophobia. One of the key elements in the fight against hate crimes has been the coordinated work with other social and judicial agents, through the signing of various collaboration agreements, such as with the Sabadell Bar Association. The commission consists of representatives from all political parties present in the municipal council, trade unions, neighbourhood and citizen associations, security forces, the Municipal Ombudsman, and the Sabadell Bar Association. Presently, the Commission meets once a month.

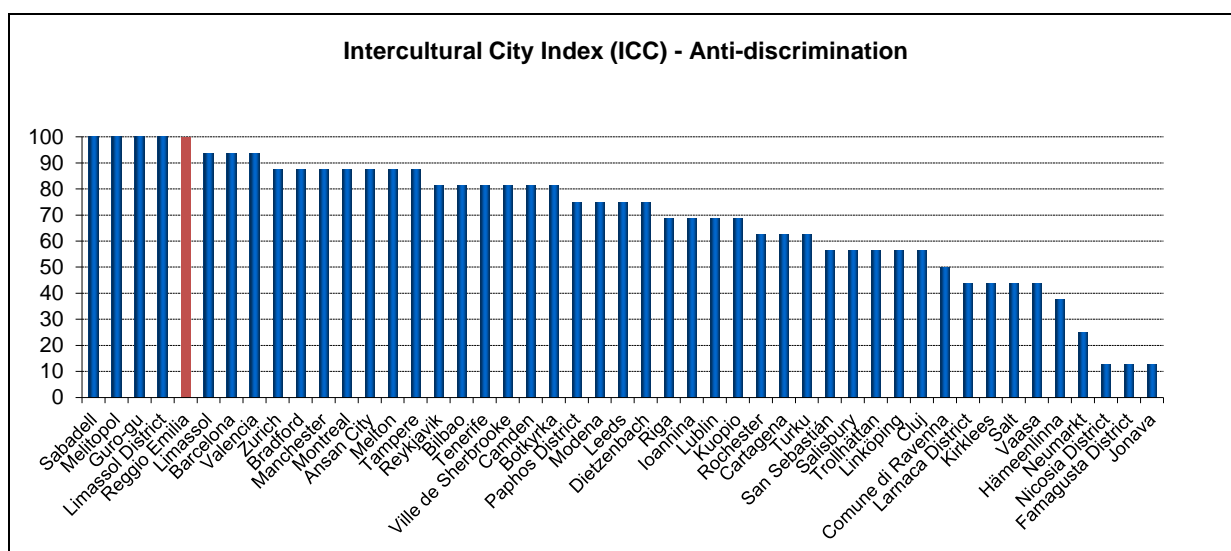
ICC programme resources on political and public participation are also available [here](#).

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, 47 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Reggio Emilia rate of achievement in the field of anti-discrimination is 100%, clearly higher than the city sample's achievement rate of 69%.



Reggio Emilia carries out systematic reviews of all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanisms that may discriminate residents with migrant/minority backgrounds. In 2016, as part of the React-ER project, under the supervision of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, regulations for access to housing, social benefits and funeral rites were revised with an anti-discriminatory perspective. In 2021, as part of the REC ITA.C.A. - Italian Cities Against Discrimination - the ISMU foundation carried out a mapping of the municipal anti-discrimination policies through a questionnaire, the analysis of institutional documents and the examination of documentation relating to procedures and access criteria for civil registration and residence, public employment, public housing, and the provision of welfare benefits. With the approval of the Local Action Plan against Racism, the Administration also committed itself to reviewing and reformulating Article 13 of the municipal statute, which concerns the guiding principles and functions of the Municipality, in a broader and more intersectional perspective.

The city has a binding document ([the Municipal Charter](#)) proscribing discrimination and to safeguard and consolidate the values of freedom, anti-fascism, equality, social justice, democracy, and solidarity, against all forms of totalitarianism (art. 13). In 2023, the Municipal Executive Committee approved the Local Action Plan for combating racism, discrimination on the grounds of origin and cultural affiliation and hate crimes, which is designed to complement all the other policy documents and operational protocols in the anti-discrimination field (gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, LGBTphobia, disability, etc.). As provided for by Law 183/2010, the Municipality has a Single Committee of Guarantee (CUG), an elected body that works to ensure, in the workplace, equality and equal gender opportunities, guaranteeing the absence of any form of moral or psychological violence and discrimination.

The city has a dedicated service that advises and supports victims of discrimination. The Anti-Discrimination desk is a protected listening space for all citizens, offering information and advice on strategies that can be activated, in the legislative and administrative spheres, to deal with situations of discrimination. Reggio Emilia also provides

financial and logistical support to civil society organisations that advise and support victims of discrimination. The municipality coordinates a local network, in which the anti-discrimination desk, so-called 'antennas' and several CSOs working in the field of inclusion work together to monitor situations and causes of discrimination and plan activities to counter them. The antennas and CSOs collect reports of discrimination and accompany people to the anti-discrimination desk to request information and advice.

The Anti-Discrimination desk monitors the extent of discrimination through a regular press review and collects information on the type of discrimination that people report to the desk. This data is collected in an annual report on the state of discrimination in the city.

Reggio Emilia promotes communication campaigns aimed at preventing and combating discrimination on the occasion of international days, such as: 21 March (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination), 17 May (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia), 21 May (World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development), 20 June (World Refugee Day), 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), 10 December (Human Rights Day), 18 December (International Migrants Day). As part of the EU-funded project Super (Supporting Everyday fight against Racism), a multilingual campaign against racism was developed and disseminated in the city during the month of July 2022, in conjunction with other international initiatives hosted in Reggio Emilia on the theme of countering racism.

Similarly, the city participates in regional and national organisations that addresses the issue of discrimination. The municipality has regular contacts with UNAR (National Anti-Racial Discrimination Office) and over the past year there has been strong cooperation in defining the national strategy for the inclusion of Sinti and Roma. Since 2013, the municipality has been a member of the Re.A.DY. (National Network of Public Administrations against Discrimination on the grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity). The *Mondinsieme Foundation* adheres to the Italian New Generations Coordination promoted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which addresses the issue of the rights and representation of second and third generations and citizenship rights.

Finally, since 2018, a local anti-rumours strategy called "Reggio Emilia non abbocca" ("Reggio Emilia does not stick to the hook") has been developed, under the guidance of *Mondinsime* and through training and exchange initiatives involving public and private stakeholders. The city's youth centres are particularly involved in the promotion and dissemination of the anti-rumours strategy, as they have deepened the topic both through their own activities and in the context of European projects (in particular "Youth Spaces Free of Rumours" and "DiversaMente - Youth against discrimination").

Suggestions

Although Reggio Emilia has an excellent achievement in this field, it could take inspiration from other cities to enrich its work in this area. In Swansea (United Kingdom), the city run the [Think Project](#). This is an educational programme aimed at individuals with a higher risk of far-right extremism, implemented in the framework of three-day courses, participants were encouraged to discuss and reflect on diversity issues and their own attitudes and views, engaging in open dialogue as well as experiential learning. The Think Project employed a non-criminalising approach, listening to their concerns and exploring the experience and information underlying their negative attitudes. After the course, participants were encouraged to engage in intercultural interaction. The project has proven to be able to transform young peoples' worldviews and thinking about diversity and societal change.

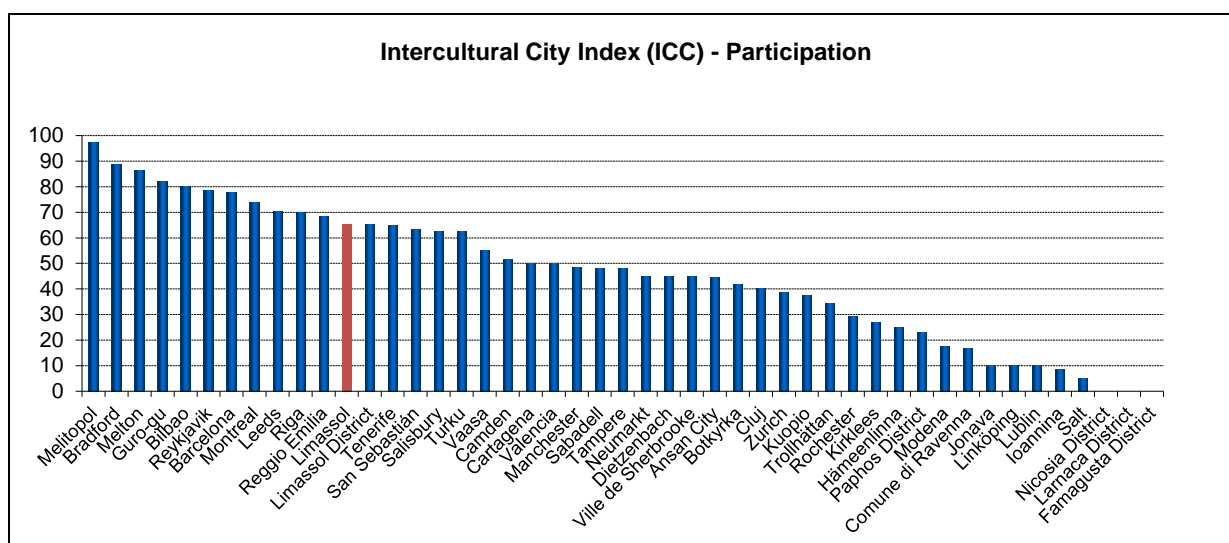
In Geneva (Switzerland) exists the "Complaints of Discrimination" initiative. The city funds and works with the [Centre – Écoute contre le Racisme](#) (C-ECR), which defends, advises, and assists people affected by racism. It can provide support to those who might experience discrimination from the services of the city. It can provide anonymised statistical information on the issues of racism and discrimination for the city. The C-ECR can, with the permission of the person involved, contact the City of Geneva, through the Project Manager for Diversity, to seek to resolve issues of discrimination that might arise in the operations of the city. The City of Geneva, again through the Project Manager for Diversity, can refer citizens who have experienced racism to the C-ECR.

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

PARTICIPATION

Inclusion, power-sharing and participation are the golden keys of intercultural policy-making. A range of studies have demonstrated that inclusive integration policies produce better outcomes in terms of social cohesion, trust in the administration, safety, quality of services, welfare, good governance and economic growth. People with different backgrounds and experiences can bring innovative solutions to common challenges, as well as anticipate problems that might arise. Conversely, when people encounter barriers to participation, or otherwise choose intentionally not to participate, they may, passively, withdraw from social and public life or choose, actively, to live outside prevailing social customs and law. An intercultural city actively seeks the participation of all residents in the various decision-making processes that affect life in the city. By doing so, it increases support, and thereby the sustainability of local policies, while at the same significantly reducing the economic costs of social exclusion and instability.

Indicators on participation have been included in the Intercultural Cities Index in 2019. The data collected so far is not yet relevant for statistical purposes. So far, 47 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Reggio Emilia's rate of achievement in the field of participation is 68% while the city sample's achievement rate is 53%.



Reggio Emilia has adopted an intercultural strategy through a consultation process including people with different backgrounds. The *DiTutt'* intercultural strategy is monitored and implemented together with *Mondinsieme*, which means taking into account the voice of the 35 intercultural and migrant associations that are members of the Foundation and their representative on the management board. *Mondinsieme* staff have daily contact with the associations and twice a year an assembly is organised to discuss the needs, objectives and results of projects and initiatives. Similarly, the definition of the Local Action Plan against Racism is the result of a consultation process that involved civil society and community associations, particularly the groups most affected by the risk of ethnic-racist discrimination). Areas of intervention and actions to be taken were identified and discussed with them during three 'community events' and the plan, both in its draft and final version, was presented and discussed with local public and private stakeholders.

The city has introduced participatory mechanisms to enable all city residents to participate equally in the decision-making process via online participation platforms such as [Hamlet](#) and [RES](#).

There is no data available to monitor the participation of city residents with migrant/minority backgrounds in the decision-making process.

Reggio Emilia does not take action to ensure that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds are fairly represented in key institutions and organisations but is seriously considering actions to change the situation.

Reggio Emilia has taken actions to ensure gender equality in organisations that participates in the local decision-making process on matters related to inclusion and living together. In general, the municipal administration takes gender balance into account when defining the boards of directors of foundations and investee companies. Specifically, the management board of *Mondinsieme* Foundation is composed of 3 women out of 5 members.

Suggestions

Reggio Emilia has a good result in the participation area, but it could be reinforced by inspiring initiatives from other ICC cities.

The city of Bradford (UK) has developed a project called "[Citizen Coin Bradford](#)" as part of the "Stronger Communities Partnership's Strategy and Delivery plan" as one of its goals to increase civic participation. This means getting more people from all backgrounds to connect with others, participate in civic life and get involved in their own communities through local activities. The Citizen Coin scheme enables people to earn digital discount coins when undertaking social value activities, such as volunteering, that they can then use to get discounts off goods and services. Those earning the digital discount coin can also choose to donate their coins to other people and organisations. Bradford is using pioneering technology to involve all its citizens in the opportunities that the city and district offers. Through an app-based technology, the Citizen Coin scheme rewards people for doing social good, connects local voluntary organisations with their neighbourhoods, and communities with businesses, just when the local economy needs it most. Bradford believes in the power of sharing kindness, creating a culture where people help each other to feel safe, get along, get involved and get on. The project is 'holistic'; underpinning the Council plan by promoting better skills, creating more good jobs and better health. It supports the community to ensure they create safe, strong, active communities, whilst helping the local economy to grow, sustainably.

In Vienna (Austria), the [Vienna Diversity Monitor](#) is a comprehensive report issued tri-annually to assess the city's integration processes and diversity policies. It encompasses eight areas, sixty indicators, and eleven benchmarks aimed at identifying structural and systemic factors contributing to inequality related to migration status and/or ethnic origin. Drawing from existing statistical sources, the monitor includes all residents registered in Vienna for over three months in its statistics. The findings from the monitor inform policy decisions, particularly in addressing obstacles to integration highlighted in the report, such as restricted work permits, access to public housing, and voting rights. Notably, the monitor revealed that 27% of eligible Viennese residents above 16 are excluded from voting due to legal restrictions on third-country nationals' voting rights and a restrictive naturalization regime. To promote political participation among non-citizens, Vienna introduced petition rights independent of nationality in 2013.

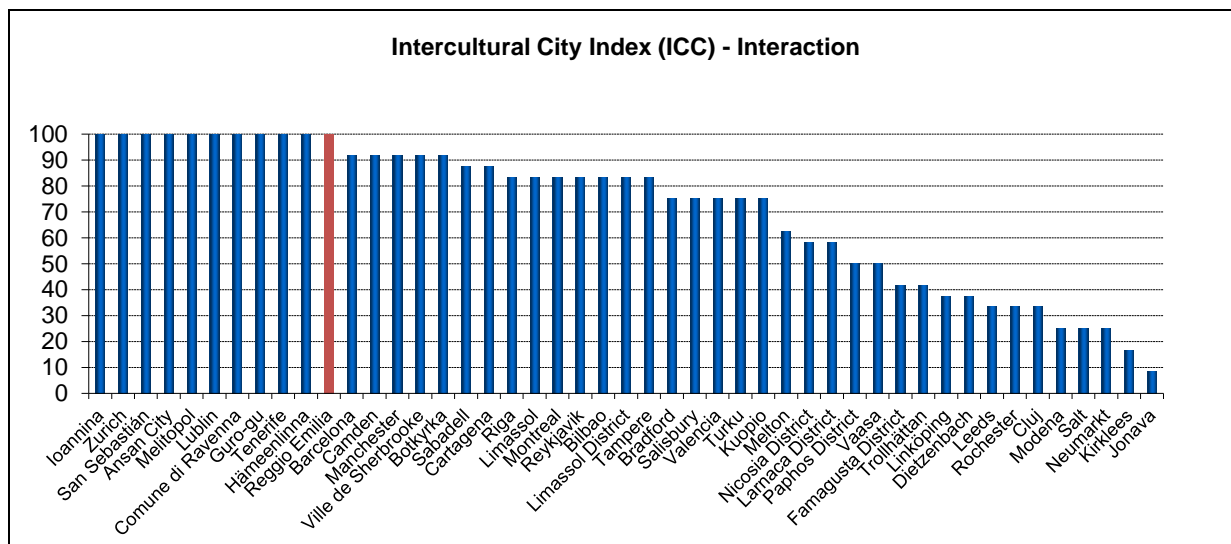
ICC programme resources on political and public participation are also available [here](#).

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, 47 cities have replied to this new Intercultural Cities Index chapter. Reggio Emilia's rate of achievement in the field of interaction is 100%, while the city sample's achievement rate is 71%.



Reggio Emilia does have a database of civil society and grassroots organisations that work in intercultural inclusion topics, that is permanently updated and accessible to the public. The lists of local associations that adhere to *Mondinsieme*, the "Diritto di Parola" network, the Human Rights Coordination and the thematic working groups coordinated by the Municipality are public and can be found on the websites of the Municipality and *Mondinsieme* Foundation. There is also a list for internal use of [places of worship](#) that have decided to register following a public call from the Municipality.

The city collaborates in a regular way with different civil society and grassroots organisations working in intercultural inclusion. The main contexts of discussion with civil society are: the assembly of associations members of *Mondinsieme* foundation, the coordination meetings of the "Diritto di Parola" network for language integration, and the meetings of the Human Rights Coordination of the Municipality.

Teacher training at elementary level is not a municipal competence. Nevertheless, *Mondinsieme* held teacher training courses on intercultural competences as part of a project funded and coordinated by a local high school. Between January and May 2023, the Municipality (Sinti and Roma Office and Social Services) promoted an experimental training action aimed at the teaching staff of a comprehensive institute in the city (pre-school + primary + middle school) in collaboration with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. The training concerned the Sinti community, with a specific focus on school inclusion. Social workers from the municipality also participated in the training.

Suggestions

While Reggio Emilia has excelled in this field, it could draw inspiration from other cities to enhance its efforts in this area. In Montreal (Canada), the city uses public spaces as tools for positive interaction. Through intercultural events and initiatives geared towards integration, Montreal helps to ensure mixing between residents. Every year for the past five years, under a partnership with the Quartier des spectacles entertainment district, the city has run an open-air event called "Les Jardins Gamelin" designed to encourage living together in public spaces through an

extensive cultural programme. In addition, as part of cultural trail activities, the city runs a tour of Montreal Island from an indigenous perspective, consisting of a bus tour in which participants visit various neighbourhoods to find out about the history of Indigenous peoples in urban areas down through the centuries. Lastly, Montreal sets particular store by citizen participation in identifying problems, designing policies and assessing their impact. Montreal Public Consultation Office (OCPM) is an independent organisation whose task is to carry out public consultation assignments entrusted to it by Montreal city council or executive committee. These primarily involve urban and land-use planning projects under municipal jurisdiction but may also include any project submitted by the executive committee or city council. The office also has the task of proposing rules to ensure implementation of credible, transparent and effective consultation mechanisms.

In Botkyrka (Sweden), anti-rumour cafés have been established in libraries as a public platform to address and challenge rumours and prejudices. Libraries were selected due to their popularity among young people aged 18-25 years old. Four anti-rumour cafés were set up, each focusing on a specific rumour theme. The initial theme centered around "Criminality," which was the most prevalent rumour theme in Botkyrka. This was followed by cafés focusing on themes such as the "Incompatibility of Swedish and immigrant cultures," "Unequal distribution of public resources," and "Swedish culture is under threat." The café addressing the rumour that "Swedish culture is under threat" garnered significant attention, particularly in light of the political situation in Sweden in 2014, when the populist party, Swedish Democrats, experienced a surge in popularity. The primary goal of each café was to encourage discussions about rumours that people often feel uncomfortable addressing.

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

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Reggio Emilia's aggregate Intercultural Cities Index achievement rate is 77. This is the good step of Reggio Emilia on its intercultural journey. Reggio Emilia achieved particularly high scores in several areas, with lower achievements sometimes due to the lack of intercultural approach in its policymaking. There is room for improvement from the intercultural perspective, but it is also true that Reggio Emilia has several programmes and policies that could be easily understood and (re)framed as intercultural actions.

The following table gives more information on what Reggio Emilia does well and areas it could learn more from the experience of other cities.

COMMITMENT	✓	Reggio Emilia has an intercultural strategy and action plan, as well as an integration unit that coordinates cross-departmentally work in these topics. A budget has been allocated for the implementation of these initiatives, and there will be a process for evaluation and updating. The Social Welfare and Intercultural Policies' service and the <i>Mondinsieme Foundation</i> are responsible for implementing the <i>DiTutti</i> intercultural strategy. The city systematically carries out public consultations which involves all kind of diverse groups.
	✗	The city achieved a 100% score in this area.
EDUCATION	✓	The municipality is actively fostering interculturalism within the city by promoting an educational environment that embraces diversity for both students and families, including those from minority or migrant backgrounds. Most schools are engaged in intercultural projects.
	✗	Reggio Emilia, despite not having competences in hiring teachers, could explore opportunities and collaborations to strengthen educators' intercultural competences.
NEIGHBOURHOODS	✓	Reggio Emilia tries to avoid ethnic concentration and to support the diversity in the districts for example in city planning. The city encourages where residents of one neighbourhood meet and interact with residents with different migrant/minority backgrounds from other neighbourhoods.
	✗	Reggio Emilia may explore ways to organise activities to encourage mixing in every municipal neighbourhood.
PUBLIC SERVICES	✓	The municipality provides a wide range of services including burial services for different religions, hospitals and school services that cater different backgrounds of residents.
	✗	Reggio Emilia could consider developing a recruitment plan to increase diversity within its workforce and actively employ individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds in certain open positions.
BUSINESS AND THE LABOUR MARKET	✓	In Reggio Emilia, a national organisation encourages businesses from ethnic minorities to enter in the mainstream economy. The City of Reggio Emilia actively promotes ethnic diversity in the workforce of private sector enterprises through initiatives like the <i>Intercultural Hub</i> .
	✗	There is no local normative to facilitate the procurement of goods and services in favour of companies with an intercultural inclusion/diversity strategy.
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE	✓	Cultural and social life is well supported by the municipality. Interculturalism is used as a criterion when allocation funds. Reggio Emilia regularly organises events and activities to encourage people to meet and interact.
	✗	Reggio Emilia achieved a 100% score in this area.

PUBLIC SPACE	✓	The city takes action to encourage meaningful intercultural mixing and interaction in public space. The city promotes and encourages intercultural initiatives in libraries, public parks, and libraries. The city considers the diversity of the population in urban planning and/or the designing public spaces.
	✗	Reggio Emilia does not have a formal commitment to always consider the diversity of the population in the design, renovation and management of new public buildings or spaces.
MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION	✓	Reggio Emilia provides intercultural and linguistic mediation in specific services. The city works with <i>Mondinsieme Foundation</i> on interfaith and religious dialogue.
	✗	The city does not provide intercultural mediation in all areas.
LANGUAGE	✓	Reggio Emilia provides specific language training in the official languages for groups hard-to-reach. Non-national languages could be learnt under specific circumstances.
	✗	The city offers limited services in the field of language competences. Similarly, limited efforts are made to promote a positive perception of migrant and minority languages.
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION	✓	The city has a communication strategy to improve the visibility and image of people with migrant/minority background in local communication tools. The city's communication department is instructed to highlight diversity as an advantage regularly and in various types of communication. The city monitors how traditional media portray people with migrant/minority backgrounds through and external entity. The city does itself the monitoring on how social media portrays people with migrant/minority backgrounds.
	✗	Reggio Emilia does not directly monitor how traditional local or national media depict individuals with minority or migrant backgrounds.
INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK	✓	Reggio Emilia has a global city strategy "Single Programming Document" which refers to the international character of the city. The city has a network of twinning-cities. Reggio Emilia has specific programmes for welcoming international students. The city promotes business relations with countries/cities of origin of its diaspora groups by supporting different organizations.
	✗	The city does not involve diaspora and mainstream entrepreneurs in international visits and meetings. The city does not have partnership/business agreements with counties or cities of origin.
INTERCULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETENCE	✓	Reggio Emilia occasionally utilises statistical and qualitative data on diversity and intercultural relations to inform the local policy formulation process. The city promotes the intercultural competences of its officials and staff through training course, interdisciplinary seminars, and networks.
	✗	The city does not systematically conduct surveys that include questions about public perceptions of migrants or minorities, nor do they assess feelings of security or safety regarding individuals with migrant or minority backgrounds.
WELCOMING NEWCOMERS	✓	The city has a welcome pack to inform tourist and newcomers. Multilingual information is available for access to some municipal services. The city provides welcome support for particular groups of newcomers, including students, unaccompanied minors, refugees and asylum seekers.
	✗	Reggio Emilia does not have a designated agency to welcome newcomers. The city does not organise a public ceremony to greet all people arriving to live in the city.

LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP	✓	Reggio Emilia regularly takes initiatives to encourage people with migrant/minority background to engage in political life. The municipality has established the ' neighbourhood councils ' as an elective instrument of participation and dialogue with the city council in the different neighbourhoods
	✗	The city does not have an independent consultative body through which people with migrant/minority backgrounds can advise the municipal council on diversity and integration matters. The city does not have any standard for representation with people with migrant/minority backgrounds in mandatory boards supervising schools or other public services.
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION	✓	Reggio Emilia carries out systematic reviews of all municipal rules and regulations to identify mechanisms that may discriminate against residents with migrant/minority backgrounds. The city has a binding document proscribing discrimination. The city has a dedicated service (the Anti-Discrimination Desk) that advises and supports victims of discrimination and monitors the extent of discrimination in the city. Reggio Emilia also provides financial and logistical support to civil society organisations that advise and support victims of discrimination. The city promotes communication campaigns to prevent and combat discrimination and racism, and participates in regional and national organisations that addresses these issues. The city has a local anti-rumours strategy called "Reggio Emilia non abbocca".
	✗	Reggio Emilia achieved a 100% score in this area.
PARTICIPATION	✓	Reggio Emilia has adopted an intercultural strategy through a consultation process including people with different backgrounds. The city has introduced participatory mechanisms to enable all city residents to participate equally in the decision-making process via online participation platforms. Reggio Emilia has taken actions to ensure gender equality in organisations that participate in the local decision-making process on matters related to inclusion and living together.
	✗	The city does not take action to ensure that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds are fairly represented in key institutions and organisations but is seriously considering actions to change the situation.
INTERACTION	✓	The city has a database of civil society and grassroots organisations that work in intercultural inclusion topics, that is permanently updated and accessible to the public. The city collaborates in a regular way with different civil society and grassroots organisations working in intercultural inclusion.
	✗	Reggio Emilia achieved a 100% score in this area.

In view of the above, we wish to congratulate Reggio Emilia for the efforts taken and we are confident that if the city reflects more on its different areas of work and what it is already doing, as well as follows our guidelines and other Intercultural Cities' practices, the results will rapidly be visible and tangible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Commitment: Reggio Emilia may wish to give its intercultural strategy more prominence on the website. The city could consider sharing some of its experiences in interaction with other ICC cities through the database.

Education: The city, while lacking authority in hiring teachers, has the potential to explore opportunities and collaborations aimed at enhancing educators' intercultural competences. The city may wish to strengthen its efforts to prevent segregation, encompassing various service sectors and operating at both city-wide and local levels.

Neighbourhoods: Reggio Emilia may explore how to organise activities to encourage mixing within every municipal district by extending its actions to facilitate residents of one neighbourhood meet and interact with residents in the same neighbourhood.

Public services: The municipality could consider developing a recruitment plan to increase diversity within its workforce and actively employ individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds in certain open positions.

Business and the labour market: Reggio Emilia may wish to consider working with private companies to develop diversity charters. The city may wish to explore local regulations to favour the procurement of goods and services in favour of companies with an intercultural inclusion/diversity strategy.

Cultural and social life: The city could consider sharing some of its experiences in interaction with other ICC cities through the database.

Public space: Reggio Emilia should consider having a formal commitment to always consider the diversity of the population in the design, renovation and management of new public buildings or spaces.

Mediation and conflict resolution: The municipality could explore extending its work on mediation and conflict resolution by extending it to specialised institutions such as hospitals, youth clubs, retirement homes and within the municipality itself.

Language: Reggio Emilia may consider improving awareness of migrant languages in the city and increasing support for initiatives aimed at fostering a positive perception of migrant/minority languages. The city could explore the possibility to support radio/TV initiatives on minority languages.

Media and communication: The city may explore improving how to strengthen support for advocacy, media training and mentorship for journalist with migrant/minority backgrounds. The city could consider sharing some of its experiences in interaction with other ICC cities through the database.

International outlook: Reggio Emilia could explore to involve diaspora and mainstream entrepreneurs in international visits and meetings, as well as establishing partnership and business agreements with countries or cities of origin.

Intercultural intelligence and competence: The municipality could implement systematic surveys that include questions about public perceptions of migrants or minorities, as well as assess feelings of security or safety regarding individuals with migrant or minority backgrounds.

Welcoming newcomers: Reggio Emilia could create an office to welcome newcomers and prepare a welcome pack to be used by new residents. The city could organise a public ceremony to greet all people arriving to live in the city regardless of origin or nationality.

Leadership and citizenship: Reggio Emilia might wish to promote an independent consultative body through which people with migrant/minority backgrounds can advise the municipal council on diversity and integration matters. The city could explore a strategy and procedures to support and achieve a minority ethnic representation on key public boards.

Anti-discrimination: The city could consider sharing some of its experiences in interaction with other ICC cities through the database.

Participation: The municipality could take actions to ensure that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds are fairly represented in key institutions or organisations.

Interaction: Reggio Emilia could explore more initiatives to strengthen intercultural competence training within educational institutions. The city could consider sharing some of its experiences in interaction with other ICC cities through the database.

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

Diversity has become a key feature of societies today and is particularly tangible in urban centres. While people of diverse national, ethnic, linguistic and faith backgrounds have immensely contributed to post-war prosperity, inequalities related to origin, culture and skin colour persist, and anxiety about pluralism, identity and shared values is often politically instrumentalised. The challenge of fostering equity and cohesion in culturally diverse societies has become more acute. Cities are uniquely placed to imagine and test responses to this challenge.

The Council of Europe and its partner cities have developed and validated an intercultural approach to integration and inclusion which enables cities to reap the benefits and minimise the risks related to human mobility and cultural diversity. Nearly two decades since 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.

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

