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**STEERING COMMITTEE ON ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (CDADI)**

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATION CM/REC(2015)1 OF THE COMMITTEE OF  
MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES ON INTERCULTURAL INTEGRATION**

**REVIEW REPORT**

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## 1. Introduction

The Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) commissioned this review of the implementation of Recommendation CM/REC(2015)1 on intercultural integration and progress made on intercultural integration, across the member states<sup>1</sup>.

The Council of Europe and its member states have a significant track record of endeavour, creativity and achievement in the field of intercultural integration. This was further underpinned by the Committee of Ministers in its adoption of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1.

The intercultural integration model espoused in Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 was developed through a process of structured policy review, peer learning and evaluation. This was done based on insights from the Intercultural Cities programme.

Intercultural integration is identified in Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 as a shared imperative of the member states, with its concern for diversity management that realises diversity advantage for individuals, communities, and organisations. Intercultural integration is established as a focus for common action by the member states, tested and embedded in policy know-how by the Intercultural Cities programme, and rooted in the key principles of equality, diversity, and interaction.

The guidance developed by the Council of Europe for the Intercultural Cities provides further detail on these three key principles<sup>2</sup>:

- **equality:** ensuring equality and non-discrimination in all their actions, towards their own workforce, in their relations with partners and suppliers, including civil society organisations and enterprises; and taking positive action measures to redress the inequalities experienced by members of minority communities.
- **diversity:** recognising and preserving diversity as an intrinsic feature of human communities; and pursuing the diversity advantage that accrues from the presence of diversity when coupled with specific policies and strategies that enable diverse contributions to shape the cultural, economic and social fabric of the city, and with the management of conflicts which may threaten community cohesion.
- **interaction:** creating conditions for positive and constructive everyday encounters across cultural as well as gender, sexual identity, age, socio-economic status and other differences, where active engagement across difference, rather than benign indifference, is the necessary building block of a thriving society.

The Council of Europe guidance identifies the aim of interculturalism as being to realise equality and societal cohesion in diverse societies, and establishes intercultural integration as being the effective, positive and sustainable management of diversity, on the basis of reciprocal and symmetrical recognition, under an overarching human rights framework.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 reflects an appreciation of how multilevel engagement across different levels of governance underpins progress on intercultural integration. It also identifies

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States [on intercultural integration](#) (adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 January 2015 at the 1217<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

<sup>2</sup> [The intercultural city step by step: Practical guide for applying the urban model of intercultural integration](#), updated by Anne Bathily and edited and coordinated by Ivana D'Alessandro, Council of Europe, 2019.

measures that foster inclusive diverse societies, including promoting public discourse which emphasises shared values and strives to build a pluralistic and diverse urban identity; policies, institutions and services which are adapted to a diverse citizenry, intercultural competence of local officials and actors, and active participation of all in local governance.

The specific recommendations made to the governments of member states were to:

- take note of 'The intercultural city step by step: Practical guide for applying the urban model of intercultural integration' and facilitate its dissemination, including via its translation into their official languages;
- bring the urban model of intercultural integration, and the tools designed to facilitate its implementation and measure its impact, to the attention of local and regional authorities, as well as relevant national, regional and local institutions, organisations and networks, via appropriate national channels;
- encourage, within their means and competences, implementation of the urban model of intercultural integration at the local level and support the setting-up of city networks for the exchange of experience and learning in this respect; and
- take the urban model of intercultural integration into account when revising and further developing national migrant integration policies or policies for intercultural dialogue and diversity management.

The preparation of this review involved circulation of a survey questionnaire to all member states and its completion by thirty-two member states<sup>3</sup>.

The questionnaire sought information from the member states on actions taken to implement Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1, or to align local and national policies with the model and principles of intercultural integration it espouses.

The report was presented at the second meeting of the Working Group on Intercultural Integration (GT-ADI-INT) for feedback and was finalised to be brought forward to CDADI for consideration.

## **2. Progress reported**

### **2.1 National frameworks**

There is significant commitment and action at national level reported in the survey responses from the member states, to create the conditions for progress on intercultural integration at all levels of governance. Specifically, action to establish and operate a national level institutional infrastructure, or elements of such an institutional infrastructure, to progress intercultural integration is identified in various forms across the member states.

This institutional infrastructure provides the foundation, in member states, for progressing intercultural integration, and for the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 and the model and principles of intercultural integration it espouses.

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<sup>3</sup> Albania, Andorra, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus (Limassol), Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation (Izhevsk), San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

There is a pattern evident in the elements of this institutional infrastructure reported by the member states. The key elements that emerge from the survey responses are:

- constitutional provision and legislation;
- institutions;
- strategies or plans; and
- funding streams.

Most member states report an institutional infrastructure that involves a number of these key elements operating in an interlinked manner. In others, the institutional infrastructure is less developed in this regard.

The elements of this institutional infrastructure reported by the member states vary in the breadth of their focus. In some member states it encompasses a wide range of minority groups exposed to inequality and discrimination. In other jurisdictions it is confined to a particular group or groups, most specifically Roma, national minorities, refugees, asylum seekers, or people granted international protection.

The multi-ground approach, where pursued through this institutional infrastructure, usually includes a focus on the ground of gender. This further allows for an intersectional approach to intercultural integration. Intersectional approaches, involving the ground of gender, are also evident in member states where this institutional infrastructure targets a specific group.

The principles of equality, diversity and interaction are evident across the elements reported. The strongest focus reported is on equality with a lower level of focus on interaction. There is a further focus on a principle of participation evident.

### **Constitutional and legal protection**

A number of member states identify a key starting point for their work on intercultural integration as lying in the commitment to equality in their Constitution. This is noted as important in creating the conditions for progress on intercultural integration based on the principle of equality.

Equal treatment legislation is seen as protecting a key standard for intercultural integration, that of non-discrimination. In some member states, this legislation goes further in establishing equality as a key standard for intercultural integration. In these member states provision has been made in equal treatment legislation for positive duties on public authorities to be proactive in promoting equality and preventing discrimination.

Legislation with a specific focus on the rights of national minorities is reported in a number of member states, as contributing to intercultural integration through the human rights standards established for these particular groups.

#### ***Practice of interest...***

*In Albania, Law No. 96/2017 'On protection of national minorities in Albania' provides for the rights of persons belonging to a national minority, to protect their distinct identity, as an essential component of an integrated society, and to guarantee non-discrimination and full equality before the law.*

*In **Azerbaijan**, the right of equality in terms of rights and liberties, and encompassing a range of grounds, is established in the Constitution.*

*In **Belgium**, in Flanders, the Decree of 7 June 2013 regarding the Flemish policy on integration and civic integration provides a legal framework for integration of legally resident persons of foreign origin, and establishes four objectives: autonomous and proportional participation; accessibility of all facilities; active and shared citizenship of all; and reinforcement of social cohesion.*

*In **Finland**, the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010) supports and promotes integration and enables immigrants to play an active role in Finnish society. The purpose of the Act includes to promote gender equality and non-discrimination and positive interaction between different population groups; and the Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014) requires all public institutions to draft, assess and monitor equality plans, that give consideration to diversity in society.*

*In **Montenegro**, the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms defines obligations on local self-government to provide for the participation of minority nations and other minority national communities in the adoption of a development programme of a municipality, spatial and urban planning, budgets and general acts stipulating rights and obligations of citizens.*

*In **Spain**, organic Act 4/2000 of rights and liberties of the foreign population in Spain, gives priority to integration, provides for the establishment of the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia, and creates conditions for preparation of the Strategic Plan on Integration and Citizenship.*

*In the **United Kingdom**, the Equality Act 2010, prohibits discrimination in work and in the wider society, on the grounds of age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It imposes a duty on public authorities, and bodies exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations.*

## **Institutions**

A range of institutions are reported as playing overarching roles in relation to progressing intercultural integration at a national level, in some cases linking with other levels of governance. These include:

- dedicated institutions, often independent, that serve as a source of expertise on intercultural integration, or equality; build and resource a capacity and a knowledge base on these goals; and support progress towards their realisation at different levels of governance;
- mainstream institutions, usually public authorities, that are accorded responsibility for and a role in implementing national strategies that directly address or that relate to intercultural integration;
- platforms established for cooperation between public authorities; public authorities and civil society; and different levels of governance;

- equality bodies with a mandate to promote equality and combat discrimination under equal treatment legislation, or national human rights institutions with a mandate to protect human rights.

In some member states, these institutions serve as spaces to give practical expression to the principle of participation, in particular participation by representatives of minority groups through civil society, but also participation by different levels of governance.

**Practice of interest...**

*In **Andorra**, an Equality Observatory has been established as a technical advisory body, with a role in preparing studies and action plans in this field.*

*In **Austria**, the Advisory Committee on Integration provides a platform for cooperation, networking and collaboration amongst authorities, at different levels, and with civil society in this field.*

*In **Croatia**, the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities addresses integration as a human right, and plays roles in providing training for relevant stakeholders, supporting integration at a local level, and improving national data systems.*

*In **Cyprus**, authority to implement Recommendation CM/REC(2015)1 is shared among various authorities, including the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry of the Interior has in the past sought EU funding to develop an Intercultural Cities network.*

*In **Georgia**, the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality coordinates implementation of the State Strategy for Civil Equality and Integration, with a Government Commission established for its effective implementation.*

*In **Malta**, the Intercultural and Anti-Racism Unit within the Ministry of Equality is developing a revitalised engagement with the Intercultural Cities programme.*

*In **Portugal**, a Secretary of State for Integration and Migration has been designated in the current Government.*

*In **San Marino**, the San Marino Commission for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) was created, to address the rights of people with disabilities under UNCRPD, and works in collaboration with the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Equal Opportunities Authority and relevant civil society associations.*

*In the **Slovak Republic**, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic supports stakeholder dialogue on integration in the labour market, through the Interdepartmental Expert Commission on Migration and Integration of Foreigners, with members from central government bodies, local authorities and other institutions involved in integration issues.*

*In **Spain** an Interinstitutional Memorandum of Understanding engages seven ministries, the National Prosecutor Office, The Council of Judges, and seven platforms of civil society organisations working in collaboration to prevent discrimination, racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.*

## Strategies or plans

National strategies or plans concerned with intercultural integration are reported in most member states. These can be dedicated strategies or plans on intercultural integration, specific strategies or plans focused on a particular group, or strategies or plans that include a focus on intercultural integration as part of a wider policy field. In some jurisdictions, there is more than one such strategy or plan developed.

These strategies or plans encompass a wide spectrum of policy fields including, in particular, education, health, housing and employment. Some include a specific focus on discrimination. Many of these strategies or plans include actions to be taken on different levels of governance.

A number of these strategies conclude in 2020 and are being updated.

### ***Practice of interest...***

*In **Bulgaria**, the National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2012-2020) was adopted by the National Assembly. It covers six priority areas: education, health, housing, employment, rule of law and non-discrimination, culture and media. The strategy is currently being updated.*

*In **Estonia**, Integrating Estonia 2020, the Strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia, promotes integration as a two-way process, with action on diversity management through active involvement of community organisations and businesses, and with local authorities identified as a key partner.*

*In **Georgia**, the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and Action Plan 2015-2020 addresses equal and full participation by minority ethnic groups in civil and political life and in social and economic processes, with the process for a new strategy having been launched.*

*In **North Macedonia**, a National Strategy for the Development of the Concept for One Society and Interculturalism has been adopted with a coordination body to drive its implementation and a permanent advisory body to propose measures and activities to be implemented.*

*In the **Russian Federation**, progress has been made in the city of Izhevsk, where the “Concept of strategic development of Izhevsk as an intercultural city” was adopted in 2017.*

*In **Spain** a new Strategy on Inclusion of Migrants is under development. It aims to update the PECEI (Strategic Plan on Citizenship and Integration) and the comprehensive Strategy against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.*

*In the **United Kingdom**, the Integrated Communities Strategy green paper, was published by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in 2018, inviting views on the government’s vision for building strong, integrated communities where people live, work, learn and socialise together based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. This sets out an ambition that challenging segregation and promoting integration should sit at the heart of all public policy and public service delivery and is being advanced through a number of local level pilot projects.*



## Funding streams

Funding streams for intercultural integration from the national level are reported by a number of member states. These are identified as valuable in stimulating and enabling initiative at all levels of governance.

These funding streams can be dedicated for intercultural integration, or they can be more broadly focused in addressing a wider policy field, such as social inclusion, within which action on intercultural integration can be supported. In some cases, these funding streams are supported from a European level.

### ***Practice of interest...***

*In **Albania**, the law on national minorities provides for the establishment of the Fund for National Minorities to support initiatives for defending the rights of national minorities, and preserving and promoting the distinct cultural, ethnic, linguistic, traditional and religious identity of national minorities.*

*In **Finland**, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy granted over €500,000 annually as a special state grant, to promote integration work by the third sector, between 2016 and 2020.*

*In **Germany**, federal and state urban development assistance, such as the ‘Social Cohesion’ programme, has enabled communication and cooperation between disciplines, and the municipalities with areas assisted under this programme seen as having developed better conditions for successful integration as a result.*

*In **Hungary**, an operational programme, ‘Our Common Values - Diverse Society’, co-financed under the EU European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs), provides grants for initiatives to preserve national minority and minority ethnic identity; reduce prejudices related to Roma and other minority ethnic groups; and increase acceptance by strengthening intercultural dialogue, through the collaboration of social groups with different identities, and by collecting and learning about the traditions and customs of Roma and other minority ethnic groups.*

*In **Portugal**, the High Commission for Migration provides technical and financial support to immigrant associations, including funding, capacity building, and promoting participation in civil society.*

*In **Spain** a funding programme co-financed under the EU AMIF Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs), and the national budget provides grants to civil society organisations to develop programmes for migrants’ integration with a focus on diversity, and on the fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia, gender violence, and human trafficking.*

## **2.2 Multilevel engagement**

There is some limited focus on multilevel engagement for intercultural integration in the survey responses. The specific role of this engagement in bringing the model of intercultural integration to the attention of regional and local authorities and encouraging its implementation is not widely reported.

Three types of approach emerge from the survey responses as providing key channels for national-regional-local articulation of effort in relation to intercultural integration and its key principles:

- national impetus: national bodies with an intercultural remit;
- partnership impetus: associations of public authorities from the regional or local levels and partnership arrangements; and
- local impetus: national Intercultural Cities networks.

### **National impetus through national bodies**

National bodies with an intercultural remit, whether independent or part of government, are noted as serving an articulation of effort on intercultural integration across different levels of governance, by providing tools, training, and funding for local and regional action on intercultural integration.

Measures included in national action plans that are directed at local level for implementation are noted as serving as a focus for multilevel engagement. National bodies responsible for these plans operate across different levels of governance in stimulating and supporting their effective implementation.

This engagement largely reflects a top-down dimension to multilevel engagement for intercultural integration.

#### ***Practice of Interest...***

*In Croatia, the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities undertook a survey of the challenges of integration in Croatia and developed a self-assessment tool to support local and regional units in mapping their needs and existing challenges in the field of integration.*

*In North Macedonia, one of the seven clusters in the National Strategy for the Development of the Concept for One Society and Interculturalism is focused on local government. As part of the Coordinative Body established to implement the strategy, each cluster has its own coordinator, deputy coordinator, and members from governmental institutions and civil society associations, and this should be the case for the local government cluster.*

*In Portugal, the High Commission for Migration created an Immigrant and Diversity Municipalities Index as a support tool for local policies on reception and integration of immigrants, serving as a starting point for the creation of Municipal Plans for the Integration of Migrants. With regard to developing these plans the High Commission for Migration published a 'Practical Step-by-step Guide for the elaboration of the Plans for the Integration of Migrants for the Municipalities'.*

*In Spain, the Secretary of State of Migrations, together with the Municipal Police of Madrid and other seven cities, developed toolkits and local action plan models for the local level to develop community police units and promote coordinated plans for integration at local level.*

### **Partnership impetus through associations of public authorities**

Associations of public authorities from the regional or local levels are noted as providing a valuable forum to enable multilevel engagement in relation to intercultural integration with their national

presence and local and regional membership. Their involvement reflects a bi-directional approach with a balance of top-down and bottom-up dimensions to this multilevel engagement.

These associations are identified as playing various roles in relation to intercultural integration. They can establish a space within which to build and promote shared understanding among members of key concepts relating to intercultural integration. They serve as an arena within which to develop member skills for intercultural integration. They offer a channel of communication between national institutions and regional or local level institutions on intercultural integration.

These associations have provided a means of progressing implementation of parts of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1.

This bi-directional approach is further evident in partnership arrangements that are established to build capacity and advance action on intercultural integration. These arrangements can involve multiple levels of governance as well as multi-sectoral approaches.

#### ***Practice of interest...***

*In **Austria**, the Federal Chancellery and the integration departments of the Federal States coordinated with the Association of Towns and Municipalities and Community Associations to develop an integral concept for improvement of integration skills in rural areas.*

*In **Croatia**, national government made the Intercultural Cities guide available to the Association of Cities in Croatia with a request that they would disseminate it to their members.*

*In **Finland**, the National Integration Partnership Programme was developed in 2016 to devise, identify and support cooperation opportunities that promote integration work. Alongside state and municipal integration work, this involved initiatives and co-operation between civil society, immigrants' own organisations, and companies. The programme supports the practical implementation of the State Integration Programme.*

*In **Iceland**, the City of Reykjavik participates in consultations and provides advice on diversity. The Human Rights and Democracy Office and the Intercultural Council of Reykjavik provide recommendations and comment on draft legislation and regulations concerning migration. Members of the City participate in work groups, on local and state levels, and take the lead on initiatives at both levels.*

*In **Latvia**, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Government hosted a seminar to inform local governments about the Intercultural Cities programme.*

*In the **Slovak Republic**, a two-year project, KapaCity, involves four civil society organisations working on integration issues, the Union of Slovak Cities, and four municipalities in building capacity for integration at local government level, exchanging good practices, and supporting local government communication skills.*

#### **Local impetus through National Intercultural City networks**

National Intercultural City networks are noted as contributing to multilevel engagement on intercultural integration. These networks provide a space within which to analyse, synthesize and communicate learning from local practice of intercultural integration and to establish the policy

implications of this learning. These networks use this learning as a basis for a locally-led multilevel engagement at national level on policy and practice for intercultural integration.

In doing so, these organisations serve as a bottom-up dimension to multilevel engagement for intercultural integration.

***Practice of interest...***

*In Italy, meetings of the Intercultural Cities network have included a policy design workshop with national authorities, and a meeting that explored the possibilities of mainstreaming the network's actions through the wider network of the National Association of Italian municipalities. This network is identified as having served a better structured engagement with relevant Government ministries.*

### **2.3 National mainstreaming**

A number of member states report policy processes that support commitments to intercultural integration in various policy fields. These involve initiatives to ensure a focus on and impact for minority groups from policy and programmes with a concern for advancing equality and non-discrimination, or more specifically intercultural integration.

Member states further report the inclusion of an intercultural integration focus in diverse policy fields at a national level. In a number of these instances, national strategies or plans specifically related to intercultural integration have provided the means to carry this agenda into these policy fields.

#### **Equality mainstreaming**

Equality mainstreaming processes reported by member states are concerned to secure a focus on equality and non-discrimination, and through this on intercultural integration, within national policy and programmes. Legislation has been an important tool in ensuring and underpinning such an approach. Equality mainstreaming processes reported are not always based on such legislation.

The equality mainstreaming processes reported encompass initiatives such as: equality impact assessment of policies and programmes at final draft stage; capacity building to enable a focus on equality, non-discrimination and intercultural integration in different policy fields; systems for the participation in decision-making of minority groups; and equality data systems.

***Practices of interest...***

*In Malta, a proposal for national policy on obligatory integration measures has been developed.*

*In North Macedonia, an online learning platform, to strengthen the competences on intercultural communication and diversity management across the public sector, is being developed and piloted.*

*In Norway, integration policy is based on the principle of mainstreaming in the public sector with all policy areas responsible for contributing to integration and adapting their services to the diverse needs of users. The Department of Integration in the Ministry of Education and Research has a coordination role. The Department of Integration also finances the production of statistics which monitor the situation of immigrants in relation to such as employment, education, housing, income and attitudes, through Statistics Norway.*

*In the **United Kingdom**, public authorities are required, under equal treatment legislation to prepare and publish equality objectives to be achieved that are: evidence based; specify measurable outcomes to be achieved; and reviewed every four years. Public authorities are further required to conduct an equality impact assessment on draft policy. An equality impact assessment establishes the potential impact of draft legislation or policy on minority groups, specifically in relation to advancing equality for, responding to the diversity of, and preventing discrimination against these groups.*

### **Focus in National Policy**

Member states identified a number of policy fields where intercultural integration has been established as a dimension of national policy. These policy fields include: education; health; housing and spatial planning; arts and culture; employment; and policing. National strategies or plans with a focus on intercultural integration have in a number of these instances served to bring a focus on intercultural integration into these diverse policy fields.

#### ***Practice of interest...***

*In **Austria**, active accommodation and settlement management “Spatial Diversity and Integration” is incorporated in the spatial planning concept of the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning in order to prevent ethnic concentrations.*

*In **Bulgaria**, the National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2012-2020) addresses a range of policy areas including health, and includes for the institutionalisation of the profession of health mediator.*

*In **Greece**, a range of intercultural initiatives are reported in the field of education, with a particular focus on migrants and refugees. These include: reception classes in mainstream schools, language teaching, curriculum development, the operation of intercultural schools, and supports for teachers and parents.*

*In **Portugal**, the Strategic Plan for Migration and the National Plan for the Implementation of the Global Migration Pact pursue a transversal approach, encompassing: regularisation; health; social security; employment; education and vocational training; higher education; and housing. They take a multi-level and multi-sectoral approach involving ministries, public administration services, municipalities, and civil society entities in their implementation.*

*In **Romania**, the Ministry of Public Works, Development, and Administration is preparing a National Urban Policy. This will include a dimension that addresses the “just and inclusive city” which will be concerned to eliminate disparities between groups, provide affordable housing and living wage jobs, and socially connect people.*

*In **Slovenia**, the police, under the National Programme of Measures for the Roma, are responsible for the training of police officers to work in multi-cultural settings. They are also the lead actor in implementing the programme “Training of civil servants working with members of the Roma community as part of their duties”.*

*In **Spain**, the Ministry of Inclusion together with the Ministry of Education and the regional governments implement - since 2015 - a programme on the prevention of racism and xenophobia at schools, which works as a platform of exchange of good practices on integration and prevention of intolerance.*

*In **Switzerland**, cultural policy includes cultural participation of the population as one of its three priorities with the Federal Office of Culture supporting national projects and model projects to strengthen cultural participation, with a particular concern to support projects promoting meeting of people from different groups and from different language regions.*

*In **Turkey**, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services has instituted a number of initiatives to enable access of migrants to the labour market, understanding this as key to their social integration. Actions being taken encompass legislation, regulation, and information provision.*

### **3. Enabling factors and challenges**

#### **3.1 Enabling factors**

The importance of a national framework for intercultural integration is emphasised by a number of member states. A national programme or plan for intercultural integration is seen as central to this. A basic framework that takes a more strategic form in setting out goals, key principles and broad lines of action that flow from these is also identified as valuable. The need for any such framework to be clearly defined, communicated and accepted by all stakeholders is noted.

Multi-level engagement, encompassing the various levels of governance, is viewed as valuable in progressing intercultural integration. The bi-directional nature of this engagement and its incorporation within systems to formulate objectives, strategies, and policies for intercultural integration is noted as important. Regular exchanges between the different levels of governance on issues of intercultural integration is seen as having a valuable contribution to make.

European level support for intercultural integration is identified as playing an enabling role. The expertise in the Council of Europe is noted in this regard, alongside the development of tools and supports at this level for intercultural integration. Tools developed at national level are also viewed as important in enabling progress.

Partnership and participative structures are identified as key in engaging the range of stakeholders required for progress on intercultural integration. Civil society is identified as a valued partner with potential to support progress; enable a better understanding of challenges; and contribute to the development of effective strategies. The interest and engagement of minority groups is noted as vital, and civil society can stimulate this interest and enable this engagement.

Leadership for intercultural integration at the regional level and at the local level is pointed to as another enabling factor. This leadership involves informed people in senior positions as well as expert bodies or structures established at these levels.

#### **3.2 Challenges**

Multi-level engagement is identified as complex, particularly in federal structures. There are many relevant stakeholders to be engaged in such contexts. Multi-level engagement must grapple with the

principle of autonomy of local and regional government to be effective in some jurisdictions. Preserving the quality of the relationship between the national and regional and local levels is considered important. Adequate and appropriate powers to ensure effective implementation of the measures for intercultural integration need to reside at these different levels.

Covid-19 and the challenges of economic recovery are viewed as presenting a particularly difficult context within which to make progress on intercultural integration. This context has impacted disproportionately on groups exposed to poverty and, in some instances, it has generated discrimination and a deepening of division and tensions between groups. While it is a context of risk to be managed, it is also noted as presenting a challenge as an opportunity to be seized. Diversity advantage can usefully be mobilised as a resource in such difficult times. While this context has highlighted the difficult circumstances of particular groups, it has stimulated solidarity and action on intercultural integration. Effective responses to the Covid-19 context have required models of multilevel governance that could serve intercultural integration in the future.

There are practical challenges noted in the survey responses. There is a lack of equality data to enable well-designed strategy and to track, monitor and respond to changing situations. There is a need for the Council of Europe guide to be translated in some languages and this serves to limit its availability and impact. Implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1, and similar recommendations, would have been better enabled by identifying agreed follow-up mechanisms and systematic reporting systems with data and targets established for this reporting.

More generally, there is a challenge posed to move from reactive approaches that serve to solve problems as they arise, towards more proactive approaches that realise a new vision for society based on intercultural integration.

## **4. Conclusions and recommendations**

### **4.1 Conclusions**

The member states, in responding to the survey, demonstrate an evolving an important institutional infrastructure for effective intercultural integration. This encompasses legislation, institutions, strategies, and funding streams. These elements are interlinked and a holistic institutional infrastructure embracing all such elements is still to emerge in some instances. The breadth of issues addressed through this institutional infrastructure might also benefit from further expansion in some instances, in particular where a single group or a small range of groups are targeted.

In most instances, the reports on this institutional infrastructure do not explicitly refer to the intercultural model of integration as a focus for their endeavours. It is clear, however, from the survey that principles of equality, diversity, interaction and participation are influential in the design and operation of this institutional infrastructure. The balance between the focus on these different principles might need further attention as might the actual meaning attributed to each one.

There is a limited focus in the survey responses on pursuing the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 or of progressing intercultural integration through multilevel engagement between the different levels of governance. There is reference to dissemination of guidance for intercultural cities, dialogue based on the work done in the intercultural cities, and stimulus and support for intercultural cities through such multilevel engagement.

Associations of regional and local authorities and networks of intercultural cities emerge as having a significant contribution to make to this multilevel engagement. National strategies or plans with actions for local implementation and the bodies responsible for stimulating and supporting their implementation are also noted as having a contribution to make.

There are policy processes reported for mainstreaming a focus on equality, and thus on intercultural integration, across all policy fields, including such as equality impact assessment of draft legislation or policies. Intercultural integration initiatives are also reported as being included across a range of policy fields, in particular education, labour market, spatial planning, health, policing and arts and culture. This can be supported by national strategies or plans on this issue.

Agreed national frameworks for intercultural integration, multilevel engagement, European level support, and partnership arrangements emerge from the reports as key enabling factors. There is a complexity and challenge in managing multilevel engagement in federal contexts and in contexts of local and regional autonomy. The Covid-19 pandemic and the emerging economic context pose particular challenges. The importance of moving from reactive approaches to strategic proactive initiatives for intercultural integration is emphasised.

Overall, while extensive, policy, programmes and initiative on intercultural integration is evident, further progress would benefit from European and national frameworks that ensure a comprehensive, coherent and consistent approach across all policy fields and addressing all relevant groups. Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 and the model of intercultural integration it espouses has been a focus for member state initiative but a higher profile for and greater focus on the recommendation and on mainstreaming the achievements of local authorities operating under its principles, could be pursued in the endeavours of the member states to advance intercultural integration.

#### **4.2 Recommendations**

These recommendations build on the reported endeavours of the member states and seek to strengthen a strategic approach to intercultural integration. It is recommended that:

- a basic framework for policy intervention on intercultural integration should be developed, at European and national levels, to support a coherent, comprehensive and consistent approach to intercultural integration, encompassing shared goals, principles, and lines of action for a spectrum of policy fields, and involving different sectors and governance levels;
- the intercultural integration methodology should be systematically mainstream into the member states general integration policies, strategies and action plans;
- responsibility at national level for driving implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 or the principles of intercultural integration should be attributed to a specific relevant institution with the powers and resources to secure and inform a coordinated and comprehensive approach to this issue and the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1;
- platforms for multilevel and multisectoral engagement on and coordination for intercultural integration should be established at national level, based on principles of partnership and participation;



- networking at a national level for peer support, mutual exchange, and national level engagement between Intercultural Cities and with national authorities should be supported and engaged with;
- equal treatment legislation should be reinforced with provisions requiring a proactive approach by public authorities to equality and non-discrimination, including through equality mainstreaming;
- action for intercultural integration, based on principles of equality, diversity, and interaction, should feature in policy responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, in measures taken for economic recovery, and in addressing tensions and divisions generated by this context;
- recommendations on intercultural integration should include follow-up mechanisms in relation to implementation, including reporting systems with indicators and targets;
- model forms for the intercultural competent institution and for intercultural competence training should be developed, disseminated, and applied.