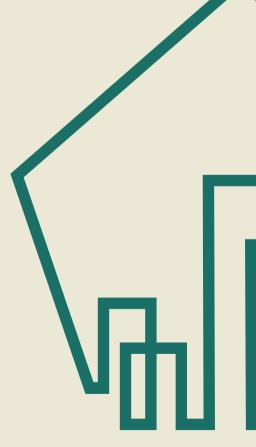# INTERCULTURAL CITIES:
INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Dr. Nihal Eminoğlu

Local Governance and Migration Series

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RESLOG

Yerel Yönetimde Rezilyans Projesi • TÜRKİYE

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR, SKR with its Swedish acronym) is a member organization for all of Sweden's municipalities, country councils and regions. SALAR, and its predecessors, has existed for over 100 years and strives to promote and strengthen local self-government and the development of regional and local democracy. Due to the global nature of challenges that municipalities face today, SALAR is also an important actor at the international arena of local governments. It is active in the global organization for municipalities, the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), in its European branch, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), and as the secretariat for the Swedish delegations to the EU Committee of Regions and for the Council of Europe Local and Regional Congress.

SKL International is a fully-owned subsidiary of SALAR. Its role is to implement and deliver international projects on behalf of SALAR, by drawing from relevant Swedish and other country experiences to support the development of local government systems and practice in developing countries and countries in transition or conflict.

Through its work in the MENA region and elsewhere, SALAR/SKL International has generated extensive knowledge and thorough understanding of issues of decentralisation, local governance, and local service delivery in fragile or close to conflict contexts; including how this brings the need for responsive and conflict sensitive approaches and flexible project management frameworks. SKL International is the long- term partner and implementer of the projects financed by the Swedish Government in 12 countries across the world, with its headquarters located in Stockholm.

SKL International has been operating in Turkey for over twenty years with the Turkish-Swedish Municipal Partnerships Network Project (TUSENET), Turkish-Swedish Partnership for Local Governance (TUSELOG) and ongoing Resilience in Local Governance Project (RESLOG Turkey). In this scope, SKL International supports municipalities and municipal unions in Turkey and also contributes to the establishment of permanent relations and cooperation between the local governments in these two countries.

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Çukurova Municipalities Union

Marmara Municipalities Union

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RESLOG Turkey
Pilot Municipalities

We express our sincere thanks to the Pilot Municipalities for their dedication in this process.

ÇUKUROVA REGION

Adana Metropolitan Municipality

Hatay Metropolitan Municipality

Mezitli Municipality

Reyhanlı Municipality

Sarıçam Municipality

Seyhan Municipality

MARMARA REGION

Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

Orhangazi Municipality

Osmangazi Municipality

Sultanbeyli Municipality

Şişli Municipality

Zeytinburnu Municipality

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Resilience in Local Governance Turkey Project (RESLOG Turkey)

M. Sinan Özden

RESLOG Turkey Project
National Project Manager

The local governments of Turkey and Lebanon have been impacted by the unexpected and massive wave of migration resulting from the Syrian civil war. As a result, it has become necessary to strengthen the resilience[1] of local governments in accordance with the principles of peace and inclusiveness.

RESLOG (Resilience in Local Governance) 2018-2020, is a project implemented in these two countries which have been impacted by the Syrian Migration Crisis, with the initiative of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), financed by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and funded by the Swedish Government. RESLOG Turkey is conducted with the cooperation and project partnership of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey, Marmara Municipalities Union, and Çukurova Municipalities Union. In total, 12 pilot municipalities from Marmara and Çukurova regions are included in the Project. RESLOG is a pioneer in the prioritisation of the involvement of regional municipal unions in strengthening local governance.

The Project is a part of the efforts of local governments and local government organizations in the face of intense, rapid and unexpected migration. In this regard, RESLOG Turkey aims to contribute to national migration policies that reflect local realities and needs, to strengthen inter-municipal learning and support structures through regional associations, and to improve holistic planning and governance at municipal level.

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1 Resilience is the ability to withstand destructive effects and return life to normal. Resilience is defined as the ability of a substance or system to return to its original form and position after a problem or deformation.

Introduction

M. Sinan Özden

RESLOG Turkey Project
National Project Manager

RESLOG Turkey attaches significant importance to the development of an information base for local governments. For almost 10 years, since the beginning of the migration flow from Syria to Turkey, Turkish municipalities have been working to meet humanitarian needs while making great efforts to keep cities prosperous and develop them in the face of this unexpected and massive population increase. They are praised and considered successful in the international arena as well.

We believe that this experience should be recorded and shared. Throughout this process, our municipalities have sought right answers to many questions on the practical issues. For this reason, we have planned a series of 12 meetings called "Knowledge Generation Meetings" and a book series under the name Local Governance and Migration covering the meeting outputs, to provide a discussion platform on innovative topics and an information base for municipalities to facilitate their participation during their intensive efforts.

Marmara Municipalities Union has been conducting highly competent work for strengthening the information base on local governance and hosting our meetings held every two months.

I hope that after the completion of the RESLOG Project, these meetings and publications, aiming at facilitating access to information in Turkey as well as saving and disseminating the information produced within the municipalities, will be continued as a tradition with the contribution of both our municipalities and municipal unions.

Foreword

Local Governance and Migration Book Series

Gül Tuçaltan, PhD

RESLOG Turkey Project
National Project Coordinator

For the last decade, the local governments in Turkey have had to produce immediate solutions for a number of increasingly varying urban and social problems. The first test of local governments was to welcome a fragile population forced to reside in a foreign country and to coordinate humanitarian aid services at the local level. In this process, as a natural consequence, the immigrants and refugees with a different language and culture have become part of the labor market and everyday life. This has made municipalities the main actors in two challenging issues: infrastructure planning for the growing population and identification of the services needed to live together with different cultures and to ensure and maintain social harmony. However, the municipalities' radius of action has been restricted due to the limited financial resources, personnel inadequacies, national migration policies focusing on strategies at the national government level rather than local governments' needs in the fields of migration and urbanization, and uncertainties related to the ongoing migration crisis (for example, Turkey cannot predict whether there will be a new mass migration in the near future or not).

In brief, the international mass migration and the Syrian refugee crisis have resulted in fundamental demographic, social, cultural and ecological changes in urban areas and also created the need for re-addressing the matters of urbanization, infrastructure, municipal service delivery and urban planning. In order to manage these multilayered and complex processes and respond to migration-related urban problems, municipalities municipalities need new tools for information, skills and implementation enabling them to understand their existing working area and to produce innovative solutions with limited resources within this area as the traditional tools and understanding we have used to date for urban planning are no longer sufficient to understand, handle, and change this unstable situation.

At this point, this series created within the "Knowledge Generation and Dissemination for Policy and Planning Activities" as part of the RESLOG Turkey Project is designed to address these exact needs of the municipalities. RESLOG Turkey Local Governance and Migration Series consists of 12 original publications at the intersection of migration, urban planning and local governance, aiming to blend the existing knowledge in these fields with new approaches that may have a positive impact on the perspectives and practices of local decision-makers.

The publications focus on three main areas. In other words, this series includes three groups of books. The first group of books includes Turkey's experiences related to migration, basic concepts about migration and local governance, existing approaches and the false facts in these fields. Regarding the refugee crisis, we present in this group the financial problems encountered by municipalities in the provision of inclusive services, the resource management models and alternative funding sources for these problems, as well as the challenges faced by the municipalities in their practices related to migrants and refugees within the scope of human rights and the legal framework and certain information on administrative jurisdiction, supervision and the regulations of other institutions. This group also includes the books about urban profiling as an effective tool for data collection to identify spatial, social and economic changes (such as housing, infrastructure, health, education, open green spaces, etc.) experienced by the municipalities affected by migration and to map this data in order to relate them to development, spatial and urban planning, and books on the generation of concrete and feasible solutions for the improvement of municipal services. The issues addressed in this group of books also outline the interventions and practices of municipalities in the field of migration and local governance and identify their fields of work.

The second group of Local Governance and Migration books aims to introduce to the municipalities new approaches and intervention tools related to local governance used around the world and in Turkey. In this group, we provide information to our municipalities on governance of diversity for the construction of fair and egalitarian cities comprising all social groups; preparation of the migration master plans to make

the municipalities, prepared against the ongoing or potential effects of migration, and the disaster risk reduction approach which can be integrated into all stages and fields of local governance, addressing the recovery and transformation of urban systems.

The third group of books focuses on practical experiences of Turkish municipalities. In this group, those municipalities share their everyday experiences in the areas of humanitarian aid, urban planning and infrastructure management, use of the potential created by migration, and development of alternative financing, in the context of inclusive service provision, despite the increasing population, potential financial limitations and personnel inadequacies. The authors of these publications are the municipalities themselves. Thus, this group of RESLOG Turkey Local Governance and Migration books supports the mechanisms for municipalities to produce and disseminate knowledge in their fields of work.

The approach summarized above is an output of the in-depth interviews with the relevant units of the project partners, namely Turkish, Marmara and Çukurova Municipalities Unions, the problem and needs analyses conducted together with the pilot municipalities under the Project, and the interviews with experts involved in both professional and academic activities in the field. In particular, I express my sincere thanks to Ms. Merve Ağca, Migration Policy Expert of the Marmara Municipalities Union, for her valuable contribution in the process of identifying themes and for our long-term exchange of ideas.

The RESLOG Turkey team believes that the Local Governance and Migration publications will contribute to the development of the intellectual and practical basis needed for the local decision making and planning mechanisms as a prerequisite for inclusive and peaceful service delivery. We hope that our publications can provide the municipalities with insight into what approaches should be adopted for addressing the issue of migration from an urban perspective.

Note to the Reader

This study was based on the fact that in Turkey, which currently hosts nearly four million refugees, commitment to social cohesion is a necessity rather than a preference. Given this necessity, appropriate governance at both national and local levels is vital to achieve social cohesion and peace. It is essential to develop local cohesion strategies aligned with appropriate national policies, and this study focuses on municipalities, which must lead implementation of local cohesion projects and activities.

Given the scale of the refugee influx into Turkey, building social cohesion is a new experience and challenge for all stakeholders, and conceptual and methodological support is imperative in this learning process. Turkey can learn much from negative and positive experience regarding migrants and social cohesion in other European countries in recent years. Due to transnational migration, societies are no longer homogeneous but increasingly diverse, which requires a new social consciousness and organization which enable diverse communities to live together in peace.

This study aims to support the ideal of "living together in diversity", and identifies forms of collaboration that promote it, based on the new principle of Interculturalism, which can be achieved via intercultural dialogue. It proposes that municipalities adopt the Intercultural Cities Model and process presented to achieve interculturalism and social cohesion, together with good practices developed by various municipalities in Turkey and Europe.

I hope that this study will encourage and provide practical assistance to municipalities, which shoulder the responsibility and spare no effort in supporting refugees, obtaining international cooperation to address their needs, and promoting social integration and cohesion.

Dr. Nihal Eminoğlu
April 2020

INTRODUCTION

Complex global problems have led to new processes in which international and non-governmental organizations work alongside national, regional and local governments to develop solutions. Many European countries including Turkey require assistance in managing mass migration and refugee influx, as a major recent global crisis. Local authorities are the frontline and leading respondents to this crisis and its multiple challenges, as the majority of migrants and refugees live in cities and urban areas. Municipalities[1] are most impacted by, and have to address the needs of these groups - "as the problem is local, the solution must be local"[2].

Turkey has been home to refugees of many different nationalities throughout history, but the scale of the influx of refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict since 2011 is unprecedented. Today, Turkey hosts over 3.5 million Syrians, one of the two largest populations of Syrian refugees in the world. Over 95% of Syrians in Turkey live outside refugee camps, mostly in urban areas, as "urban refugees"[3].

This situation has to be addressed directly by municipalities. Most Syrian refugees have become permanent residents, some having been here for nine years. The Syrian crisis has outlasted all expectations, and most of these long-term, urbanized refugees will probably remain in Turkey.

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1 In Turkey, different local administration units are defined by law. These are Municipalities, Metropolitan Municipalities, Provincial Special Administrations and Village Mukhtarships. (For details, see Ertaş, 2016; Görmez, 2018). This study focuses on municipalities, and the term "local authorities" refers to metropolitan/ provincial/district municipalities.

2 Erdoğan, 2018; Erdoğan, 2017.

3 Turkey applies a geographical limitation to the "refugee" definition of the 1951 United Nations Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, whereby, it grants refugee status only to individuals coming from Europe. Therefore, Syrians in Turkey do not have official refugee status, but are granted "temporary protection". However, it is quite clear that Syrians, who had to leave their country to escape civil war fit the refugee definition found both in international law and sociology. The terms "Syrian refugees" or "refugees" as used in this study, are based on this perspective.

The traditional centralist approach by governments in addressing global problems has restricted the responses of local governments, which need to plan and deliver local services, within the framework of local democratic institutions. Due to the scale of migration, they need to significantly expand services and infrastructure, and also address the issue of social cohesion, which is a priority in both Turkey and Europe.

In this context, effective decentralization requires a clear division of labor between national and local government, working in a coordinated and complementary manner to expand effective local service delivery, and solve social and economic problems.

From the start of the migration influx, Turkish municipalities, especially in border provinces, have made great efforts to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to meet the basic needs of refugees for water, shelter and health services. During this process, municipalities have faced, and continue to face challenges in terms of limited resources and budget. Despite uncertainty regarding their constitutional obligations, some municipalities provided services and aid to the refugees, which some say is "going beyond their authority", while others refrained from addressing the situation, on the grounds that the law did not specifically grant them the power to do so.

The Municipality Law of 2005 (Law No: 5393) governs the functioning of municipalities in Turkey. Two articles of this law led to debate on whether municipalities have the power to provide services to refugees. Article 14 on the provision of municipal services is subject to the criterion of "citizenship", while Article 13 can be interpreted as allowing municipalities to provide services to non-citizens, based on the principle of "fellow citizenship".

Although the law does not explicitly oblige municipalities to provide services to refugees, it also does not explicitly prohibit

this. Municipalities thus interpret the law according to their inclinations, and base decisions on whether to serve refugee or not on these same articles.

An issue for municipalities which do provide services to refugees is that the central budget transfer of funds to them is based on the number of citizens living in the municipality. This results in a situation where a large number of Syrians present in a municipality under temporary protection (who even outnumber the native population in some cities) are rendered "invisible", and municipalities face the challenge of trying to stretch limited budgets allocated for citizens, to cover services for refugees as well.

Assistance by municipalities to refugees is undoubtedly a humanitarian responsibility. Municipalities as primary service providers are expected to meet local needs, which include those of migrants and refugees. Offering services that meet the basic needs of the needy, the victimized and the distressed, whether citizens or refugees, is a must from a human rights perspective. However, it is not always easy to provide services to refugees, due to difficulties in convincing host communities of the need to do so.

The concept and discourse of human rights has been criticized for being overly technical and abstract in the face of the recent global refugee influx, and failing to provide practical solutions or benefits regarding refugee rights. This universal concept is now being discussed from a new perspective. The principle of localization of human rights is a new approach which aims to produce concrete local solutions, rather than implement a standardized concept of human rights. This approach, tailored to fit local circumstances and needs, aims to be more effective, and improve response efficiency.[4]

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4 Oomen & Baumgartel, 2018

Arguing the need for municipalities to provide services to refugees solely on humanitarian grounds has limited resonance in host communities, and may even result in a negative reaction. It is thus necessary to provide other rationales such as those of *Securitist* and *Developmental* approaches.

A *security-oriented approach* results in poorer migrant groups being further excluded from host societies, and being inclined to live in isolated groups. Such groups, if also minorities due to ethnic, religious, linguistic or cultural differences, as in the case of migrants and refugees, may react to exclusion in ways that involve illegal and even violent actions. Examples include the increasing number of riots involving migrant groups in Europe, particularly in the past two decades.

During the riots in France in 2005, young Muslims in Parisian suburbs with a high concentration of migrants took to the streets in rebellion against religious discrimination, which disrupted social peace. Although ostensibly a reactionary movement to safeguard religious and cultural values, it is probable that the riots were also a reaction to the increased poverty and exclusion of migrants.[5]

Social issues in host communities such as job losses, unemployment, declining incomes and increasing living costs, especially in times of economic recession, contribute to anti-migrant sentiments. Migrants are blamed for the economic crisis, are accused of "stealing jobs", and are further excluded, hindering social cohesion and promoting separation and polarization. Alienated disadvantaged groups living an isolated life may result in "reactionary actions".

This makes clear the need to integrate migrant and refugee groups into society via national and local cohesion strategies that bring different communities closer together and enhance interaction among society's diverse communities.

On the other hand, *a developmental approach* makes it difficult for the host community to accept and incorporate "newcomers", especially after mass migration. Refugees forced to flee their country due to wars, etc.,

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5 Kaya, 2009.

are not selected by the state based on qualification criteria, and such groups are seen as a burden rather than an asset for the country, and "a problem which needs to be dealt with".

However, each individual refugee has capacities to contribute to the host society. This view considers the potential of refugees to contribute to the development of both migrant and host communities.

The Hatay/Yayladağ Strawberry Project[6]

A project jointly run by the District Governorship and the European Union (EU) involves Syrians living in a refugee camp in Yayladağ District cultivating strawberries on 130ha of land allocated to the project. Approximately 250 refugees from 43 families earn incomes from production, and contribute to developing the local economy in Yayladağ, a region well-known for its strawberries.

Through this project, the District benefits from the refugees' experiences in farming and agriculture, and has brought unused agricultural land into production. The project has also made a positive contribution by enhancing social and cultural interaction between the refugees and the host communities.[7]

The intentions of Syrians in Turkey to return home are fading, as the civil war shows no signs of ending, and various field studies indicate that most Syrians are likely to stay permanently in Turkey.[8] Based on this fact, and following the initial phase of providing emergency and

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6 Several local authorities and especially municipalities in Turkey have important projects aiming to foster the refugees' participation and contributions in and to the economy and make better use of their capacity. The Hatay Strawberry Project described here is just one example, but as examples of good municipal practices are not the focal point of this study, no further examples are presented. However, it should be emphasized that the efforts made by each contributing municipality in this field is of great value, and such activities should be encouraged.
7 https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/bayirbucak-turkmenleri-hatayda-cilek-uretecek/911033; https://www.haberturk.com/hatay-haberleri/60572620-suriyeli-turkmenler-cilek-hasadina-basladihatayin-yayladagiilcesinde-kaymakamlik (Accessed: 25/04/2020
8 Erdoğan, 2018.

basic humanitarian aid to the refugees, it has now become necessary to initiate a second phase focusing on cohabitation and social cohesion.

Social cohesion has become a Turkish government policy, and an unavoidable priority for municipalities, which creates new challenges, including the lack of financial and physical capacity and qualified personnel, and the need to develop effective strategies and projects to achieve cohesion, and to secure funding for these activities.

This second phase, like the emergency response phase, may also elicit a negative reaction in host communities, who see refugees as temporary guests who will eventually return to their homeland. They are likely to perceive cohesion policies as an incentive for permanency, and municipalities and local politicians fear possible reactions against this. To convince host communities, it is necessary to go beyond arguing the need for humanitarian and conscientious responsibility, and put forward other rationales.

The strongest argument in favor of permanency is based on the concept of social security. Groups which are physically and socially excluded and alienated from a host community are inclined to become a threat to society. Failure to ensure social cohesion and integration of these groups is likely to result in their ghettoization, which will fuel conflicts.

The concept of social cohesion (harmonization) is defined in Article 96 of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, 2013, according to which the Directorate General of Migration Management may:

"to the extent that Turkey's economic and financial capacity deems possible, plan for cohesion activities in order to facilitate mutual harmonization between foreigners, applicants or beneficiaries of international protection and the society and to equip them with knowledge and skills that will facilitate their self-reliance in all spheres of social life without any dependency on third persons in Turkey or in the country to which they are resettled or in their home countries when they return.

For this purpose, the Directorate General may seek the recommendations and contributions of public institutions and organizations, local administrations, non-governmental organizations, universities and international organizations."

The scope of cohesion-related activities as defined in this Law includes all foreigners (refugees, conditional refugees, and individuals under temporary protection and international protection), without any discrimination. Article 96 also stipulates that foreigners may attend introductory courses in which the political structure, language, legal system, culture and history of Turkey, as well as their rights and obligations are explained. The law also states that the Directorate General shall, in cooperation with public institutions and organizations as well as non-governmental organizations, promote informative activities on topics such as access to public and private goods and services, education and economic activities, social and cultural interaction, and primary healthcare services.

Turkey thus defines its cohesion model for foreigners in terms of cultural, social and economic inclusion in communities, promotion of a sense of belonging, mutual recognition of diversities, and creation of social cohesion. Within this policy framework, the Directorate General has prepared the *Strategy Document and National Action Plan on Cohesion*, and established the Migration and Cohesion Subcommittee under the Human Rights Committee of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM), and the Harmonization and Communication Department of the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM). Moreover, the DGMM declared 2019 the *Year of Cohesion*, and implemented a wide variety of cohesion activities and projects involving refugees throughout Turkey.

The situation of migrants in Europe demonstrates the social costs of inadequate or delayed cohesion policies. Following a number of violent acts committed recently by migrants, countries including France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany are re-assessing their approach

to integration of migrants, to address evident failures. Growing discrimination and xenophobia against migrants in these countries, coupled with lack of access to employment and education, have resulted in a culture of protest among migrants, and conflict between communities.[9]

This situation in Europe holds important lessons for Turkey, which currently hosts over four million refugees. Migrant/Refugee groups that are not integrated with host communities are likely to become a threat to society. This can be prevented through systematic and sustainable integration[10] and cohesion policies.

In discussions on social cohesion in Turkey, groups opposed to social cohesion argue that most Syrians will eventually return to Syria, and that there is thus no need for integration, and that cohesion activities encourage Syrians to settle in Turkey, and weaken their chances of return. Counter arguments are that the civil war in Syria is unlikely to abate to an extent that would encourage voluntary return in the medium and long-term, and that it is unlikely that Syrians who have lived in host communities for many years will return to Syria after many more years, as they will have further adapted[11] to living in Turkey.

Furthermore, even if many Syrians do return one day, if a cohesion policy is not adopted, those who remain will become marginalized, and thus a threat to society, as has happened in Europe. The riots in migrant neighborhoods in Europe show that migrant groups, despite being a small minority, are capable of causing serious social conflicts. Considering the likely ratio of Syrians who will return home to those who will stay in Turkey, the lack or failure of cohesion activities may have serious long-term consequences.

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9 Kaya, 2009.
10 European states use the concept of "integration" rather than the concept of "cohesion". Here, the concept of integration was intentionally emphasized, as the examples given pertain to Europe. The differences and similarities between these concepts will be addressed in the following sections of the study.
11 The expression "becoming adapted" as used here, refers to the basic elements that are the natural consequences of the "struggle to live" for individuals in a society, e.g. Syrian children attending school, babies born in Turkey being brought up with no connection to their homeland, and family members engaged in working life, whether formally or informally. Even if a special harmonization policy is not implemented, these groups are likely to remain due to their adaptation to living in Turkey.

Regarding the argument that social cohesion promotes permanency, it is more likely that the lack of social cohesion will result in social unrest and conflict than that social cohesion activities will increase the desire of refugees to stay. The risks of delaying cohesion policies and activities are thus much greater. The likelihood of refugees returning is decreasing by the day, and cohesion activities are needed sooner rather than later. Each day that passes without a plan and action will make future cohesion efforts more difficult. The need to develop effective cohesion strategies and models is thus inevitable in a country that hosts millions of refugees.

Migration is a fundamental phenomenon that changes and diversifies societies. Migrants, including refugees in a host country are an important element of society, regardless of their status. Immigration results in cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity which enriches society, but requires learning to coexist with others who are different.

Concepts such as integration, cohesion and multiculturalism, recently introduced and frequently cited in academic literature and political discourse, agree that states and societies need to manage this new and inevitable social reality, in which social diversity is transforming homogeneous societies. This study will focus on how different communities in multicultural societies can live together in peace and dignity. It examines the Interculturalist model and intercultural dialogue as an effective method for achieving this ideal.

Intercultural dialogue promotes social cohesion between different cultural communities by developing mutual awareness, understanding and acceptance. It enables interaction and builds relationships which transform preconceived opinions and negative perceptions of others who are different. Genuine interaction develops a sense of empathy and connectedness with diverse communities.

The process itself contributes significantly to social cohesion. It is natural that people fear and avoid the unknown, including others who are different. Fear of others or seeing them as a threat leads to excluding them from society. The solution is a 'journey of acquaintance' that starts with dialogue. This study explores key elements of intercultural dialogue, and evaluates its contribution to harmonious coexistence.

There are different views on how to establish social cohesion, but it is generally agreed that it needs to start at local community level. The problem is local and the solution needs to be local. Just as countries differ in terms of their historical, cultural, ethnic and demographic structure, so are regions, cities and neighborhoods different from one another.

The lack of centrally planned settlement arrangements for refugees from Syria to Turkey after 2011 has led to an unequal distribution of refugees among provinces, districts and municipalities, and varying degrees of impact on local services and communities. Given this varied social mosaic, it would be unrealistic to develop a centralized cohesion model and expect it to meet the needs of all regions and cities. Social cohesion initiatives need to be developed at local level to address the local situation and needs.

The Interculturalist model enables a diversity of approaches to creating intercultural cities. A starting point for this approach to social cohesion in cities is the Council of Europe, of which Turkey is a member, and this study will consider the Council's activities in this field.

CHAPTER 1 "INTERCULTURALISM" AND "INTERCULTURAL CITIES" AS A NEW SOCIAL COHESION MODEL

Modern societies are increasingly diverse in term of ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural groups, as a consequence of globalization and migration. The world is involved in a global, pluralist, multi-layered and multi-actor process of change. Despite the notion of nation states continuing to define collective identity, the existence of different groups within countries is an unavoidable reality. Recognizing this, a key social challenge facing many countries is to manage diversity to achieve peaceful and harmonious coexistence.

This section first considers traditional approaches to managing cultural diversity, and then explores interculturalism, which constitutes the focus of the study, as a new "living together" model.

Traditional "Living Together" Models and Their Basic Principles

In today's world, ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural differences are complementary elements that create highly diverse societies. This has resulted in the emergence of several new concepts in academic literature and political discourse concerning how societies can effectively manage diversity.

It should also be noted that although several different coexistence models have been developed and named with different concepts, these models essentially do not differ to a great extent in terms of their reflection on social life. To be more precise, for instance, just as one cannot say that integration and assimilation are completely dissimilar; on the contrary, it is a known fact that these two concepts have several overlapping aspects. Another example; while the multiculturalism discourse is a concept that generally describes the social structure; when analyzed from a political discourse

> point of view, we may find from time to time that the intended reference is actually the concept of integration. With that in mind, it will not be wrong to conclude that these concepts, all of which have several interlaced elements and none of which is defined by clear and precise boundaries, are often interpreted differently by the states and politicians, and that the society has several different perceptions of each one of these concepts.

The approaches presented in this section have been adopted during different periods, particularly in the western world, in order to manage diversity in societies. Each approach has aspects that are effective, and there is no standardized successful coexistence model. Various approaches shaped by political contexts and public order requirements of the time have influenced coexistence approaches over the years. The three most widely discussed and implemented concepts will now be examined, in the order of their historical emergence.

Assimilation

Theoretical studies on the concept of assimilation date back to the 1920s and the *Chicago School[12]* in the USA. In general, an assimilation perspective and approach does not recognize or acknowledge the diversity of a society or the cultures which migrants were part of prior to migrating. In fact, American politics at that time perceived migrant identities and cultural values as a threat. Assimilation policies were thus intended to ensure that migrants abandoned their cultural values and adopt the values and behaviors of their new society.

The "melting pot",[13] notion describes the melting together of different national and cultural communities in the United States over time, to form a harmonious society based on a common ideological commitment to

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12   Refers to the school established to study the causes of the mass ethnic riots that broke out in the early 20th century in Chicago, a city where more than one third of the population was born outside of the Unites States at the time.
13 "The melting pot" is a form of expression used for describing assimilation of immigrants in the USA.

"being American". The assimilative approach remained predominant and influenced policies regarding migrants and minorities until the 1960s.

The objective of the assimilative approach - that diverse communities in society should become similar by adopting the dominant culture and values - is similar to that of the contemporary concept of integration. The difference is that assimilation involves a process whereby the migrant culture and identity is transformed by adopting the host culture and identity. Integration, on the other hand, supports the notion that migrants and minority should preserve their own values and culture while acquiring a new identity.

Today, the assimilative approach is seen as negative, both from a human rights perspective and by migrant and minority groups, and it has thus been widely rejected. However, some states follow assimilative policies, but attempt to soften the negative aspects by referring to it as "integration".

Advocates of assimilation or absorption of a society's ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity into a national identity claim that this has advantages for all members of society. They also assert that when the process follows its natural course via natural or voluntary assimilation, it avoids an oppressive management approach that disrupts society. However, natural or voluntary assimilation does not always happen, even in today's ever-changing and developing world.

In the recent years of growing globalization, migrants increasingly carry their own identity to their destinations, with increased motivation to preserve their identity. With advanced communications technology and improved transportation, modern migrants are able to maintain relationships in, and remain informed about developments in their homeland, which sustains a connection to, and a sense of belonging to their country of origin, which works against assimilation. Most migrants and refugees strive to find a place in the host community while preserving their own identity and culture, and do not accept assimilation, whether voluntary or mandatory.

The most prominent representative of assimilation in Europe is France. Although France describes its policy as integration based on republicanism and secularism, the approach makes it explicitly mandatory to be governed by the values and norms of the Republic of France.[14] In practice, France expects migrants and minority groups to integrate with French culture, without any special process or interventions.[15]

Other European countries including Germany, the Netherlands and the UK have also pursued policies that resemble assimilation from time to time. However, these and most other European countries have abandoned assimilation in favor of integration and a multiculturalist approach.

Another reason for the decline of assimilation and rise of integration is that the former created a distinct hierarchy in society by requiring that migrants and refugees as minority groups at the bottom of the hierarchy abandon their identities and values and adopt those of the resident majority. This hierarchy often coincides with both religious and racial differences, and economic and linguistic disadvantages and discrimination.

Assimilation has thus been discredited as morally unacceptable in undermining the identity, culture and values of immigrant communities, and potentially dangerous due to possible reactions to this threat. Assimilation is no longer a credible political approach, and has been replaced with integration, as a more "soften" approach.

Integration

As assimilation retreated, integration became the focus of academic literature, until the emergence of multiculturalism. The implementation of integration policies in the Western European countries since the

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14 Yardım, 2017; Kaya, 2009.
15 Unutulmaz, 2018.

1990s assured that integration remained prominent in both academic and political discourse.

The core objective of national integration models is to *"provide a stable and legitimate political system and moral social order that would build collective bonds of civilization and tolerance amid differentiation and conflicts caused by the variances in values and personal interests"*.[16] Based on this definition, integration can be seen as a matter of creating common ground, and a legitimate platform and meaningful framework of communication among immigrant and resident communities, rather than as a problem that concerns only migrants.[17]

Although the concept of integration has become common in both academic and political arenas, there are various interpretations of what it actually means among decision makers, host communities and minority migrant groups subject to integration. Some interpretations are regressive in tending towards assimilation, while others are progressive and tend towards multiculturalism. This 'flexibility' is often convenient for politicians who can interpret integration differently for different audiences, and for states that need to justify their policies and practices.

Integration policies do not expect migrant groups to completely abandon their own identities and embrace the national identity, as does assimilation. Instead, integration anticipates that minority groups will become compatible with the majority, and be incorporated into society in a harmonious manner, without coercion. However, integration also strengthens social hierarchy, just as assimilation does, because immigrants have no choice but to integrate, or face marginalization and discrimination. In other words, immigrants as outsiders are at an inevitable disadvantage relative to residents. An effective integration approach thus needs to proactively promote inclusion and counter exclusion of migrants and minority groups by bringing diverse communities together through education, and in particular language learning, as language differences are often the greatest barrier.

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16 Favell,1998. (cited by) Unutulmaz, 2018.
17 Unutulmaz, 2018

> Today, in democratic western societies, children of migrant origin are encouraged to learn their native language in addition to the language of the host country, to enhance the cultural richness of society. This approach emphasizes the fact that the immigrants' identity and language are complementary, rather than a threat to the identity, values and language of the host community.[18]

Because integration can reinforce the social hierarchy when defined as the "articulation of minority groups with the majority group", it is necessary to adopt an integration approach that involves multidirectional and multilateral rather than unilateral articulation. This entails not only migrants becoming more like and coherent with the majority host community, but that the latter develop understanding and support for immigrant minority communities.

This softens the concept of making adaptation of the minority group to the host society mandatory (as in assimilation), and provides the host community with a humanitarian opportunity and mission. Experience has shown that in all societies there are those who will accept and rise to this challenge, and others who will react to and reject it, together with those who bring it to their shores.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism as an approach emerged in the 1970s in Canada and Australia, based on acknowledgment and valuing of diversity in society. It aims to build a society based on recognition of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity, and the equal rights of all groups.[19] The goal is to ensure that diversity exists on legal and political grounds.[20]

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18 For related studies of the Council of Europe, one of the leading international organizations that works for the protection and promotion of languages used by minority groups in the host countries, see https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages (Accessed: 23/03/2020
19 Bikhu Parekh is one of the leading proponents of the multiculturalism model. See Parekh, 200
20 Kymlicka, 2012

Multiculturalism, unlike assimilation and integration, does not create an "other" at the bottom of a social hierarchy. It acknowledges that societies are diverse or multicultural, and defines society within this framework. To manage diversity, it proposes a multicultural policy wherein each cultural community is equal, and the "other" is embraced. Multiculturalism rejects the imposition of certain values on migrant and minority groups in order to maintain a single culture, and opposes the homogenization of society as unrealistic and undesirable.

> Today, most modern and democratic societies are heterogeneous and multicultural, with individuals and communities of diverse origin, religious belief and ethnic/national backgrounds. Multiculturalism is a conceptual and policy approach developed to manage this reality.[21] Multiculturalism is thus a socio-political phenomenon.[22] It is important to understand that the remark by German Chancellor Angela Merkel that Multiculturalism had "utterly failed", referred not to the diversity of society, but rather to the implementation of the policy adopted for managing diversity, i.e. the methodology.

Since 2010, the leaders in Germany, France and the UK in particular, have often declared that "multiculturalism had failed" in their countries. Leading the way in this political discourse, German Chancellor Angela Merkel asserted that migrants must learn German, as they will only be able to participate in the labor market by doing so, and added that a new political process was needed, encompassing stricter integration policies, such as imposing penal sanctions on families that refused to send girls to school.[23]

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21 In English terminology, the expression used to define a multicultural community is "multicultural society", while the multiculturalism envisaged as the method of management of such a society is referred to as "multiculturalism". In other words, the suffix "-ism" added to the end of the word tells us that it is a policy instrument. Likewise, in the French literature, while the expression "multiculturalité" or "la société multiculturelle" is used to describe a society composed of different cultural communities; the term "multiculturalism" in the English literature refers to the model for managing this diversity. For details, please see; Kymlicka, 1996; Medda-Windischer, 2009; Unutulmaz, 2012.
22 Benichou, 2015.
23 https://www.dw.com/tr/merkel-%C3%A7ok-k%C3%BClt%C3%BCrl%C3%BCl%C3%BCk-ba%C5%9Far%C4%B1s%C4%B1z/a-6120526 ; https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/oct/17/angela-merkel-german-multiculturalism-failed (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

This reaction stemmed from the view that, especially migrants of Muslim origin failed to become fully integrated into German society, and that the multiculturalist approach was responsible for this. Adopting a similar approach, French President Nicolas Sarkozy[24] and UK Prime Minister David Cameron[25] also asserted that Europe needed more stringent integration policies that emphasized the national identity and ensured that migrants accepted this identity and its related values.

In contrast to the above, multiculturalism aims to sustain social stability by encouraging coexistence of people and cultures, based on pluralist political theory that sees the multicultural nature of societies as fundamental and valuable. However, realization of this ideal is not always easy or even possible. The process of developing a multicultural society varies for each state, and methods for managing diversity and responding to mass immigration differ.

The multiculturalism model has been successfully implemented in Canada, but has not attained the same level of success in Europe. Different states interpret and implement multiculturalism in different though overlapping ways, and there is no single ideal model that can be applied, given the varying and changing social dynamics between migrant and host communities in different countries.

Nevertheless, a sound conceptual framework for managing diversity in societies is needed, as a basis for determining principles and policies, and developing a road map for effective implementation. This remains an important political and practical challenge for states.

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24 For selected news reports regarding the discourse of the President of France, please see: https://www. ft.com/content/05baf22e-356c-11e0-aa6c-00144feabdc0; https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-sarkozy-multiculturalism-idUSTRE71A4UP20110211; https://www.lepoint.fr/societe/le-multiculturalisme-est-un-echec-affirme-nicolas-sarkozy-10-02-2011-1294163_23.php (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

25 For selected news reports regarding the discourse of the Prime Minister of the UK, see: https:// www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-12371994; https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-radicalisation/multiculturalism-has- failed-in-britain-cameron-idUKTRE71401G20110205; https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/feb/07/editorial-david-cameron-multiculturalism-edl (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

A New Approach: The Intercultural Model and Its Basic Principles

The intercultural approach to developing social cohesion includes the concepts of intercultural dialogue and intercultural cities. Interculturalism involves different cultures in a society communicating and interacting with each other, and intercultural dialogue needs to be developed at local community level to enable a city's transition to becoming intercultural. The intercultural cities model developed by the Council of Europe proposes this approach.

The Emergence and Definition of the Concept of "Interculturalism"

Interculturalism is a policy approach that has emerged in recent years in western societies, which encourages greater mixing and interaction between diverse social groups, facilitated by local governments. This new model is similar to multiculturalism, being based on acknowledgment and acceptance of the existence of different ethnic, linguistic, religious cultural groups in society. However, a fundamental difference is that interculturalism aims to ensure social cohesion through dialogue and interaction among different cultures in a society.[26]

Dialogue among the different cultural communities has been neglected by assimilation, integration, and multiculturalist approaches. Where interaction is absent, minority groups become disconnected and marginalized, which promotes the creation of "parallel lives".[27] Interculturalism aims to create common social spaces for interaction to overcome the preconceived opinions and fears of different cultural groups, and establish common ground based on mutual understanding and relationships.

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26 A Council of Europe publication on comparing the concepts of Multiculturalism and Interculturalism, (ed) Barrett, 2013; also see the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living together as equals in dignity, 2008
27 Hasanaj, 2011.

Alienation develops between groups when there is no communication and interaction between them, and negative rumors and preconceived opinions regarding the "other" are likely to spread. This makes interaction even less desirable or likely, generating a vicious cycle of increasing distancing.

Multiculturalism	Interculturalism
Acknowledges the existence of different ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural groups in society	Acknowledges the existence of different ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural groups in society
Promotes equality among diverse groups	Promotes equality among diverse groups
No communication between different groups	Communication and interaction between different groups
Parallel lives are created	Discovers common values, so parallel lives are not created
Does not facilitate communication	Facilitates intercultural dialogue
Groups are mostly distant from each other, resulting in preconceived opinions and seeing one another as a threat	Transforms preconceived opinions and negative perceptions
Recently regarded as a politically "stained" approach that gives rise to negative perceptions	An alternative approach developed to transform negative perceptions of multiculturalism

As shown in the table, the two concepts are different, but have a common basis. Interculturalism does not dismiss multiculturalism, but offers a new version of multiculturalism[28] which eliminates its methodological deficiencies and flaws.

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28 Cantle, 2012.

The Place of "Intercultural Dialogue" in Interculturalism

To enhance interaction between different cultures, the interculturalism approach facilitates intercultural dialogue.[29] The Council of Europe *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*[30] defines intercultural dialogue as an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, based on mutual understanding and respect.

Intercultural dialogue is a communications approach which operates at all levels - between different groups in societies, but also between European countries, and between Europe and the wider world. In its Strategic Plan of 2004,[31] the European Union, despite not using the concept of interculturalism, underlined the importance of intercultural dialogue for successful integration.

Rather than attempting a precise definition for intercultural dialogue, it is more useful to highlight its core elements, as specified in the White Paper[32]:

• Upholding universal values such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law
• Maintaining equality, fair treatment and mutual respect with all individuals (all segments of the society)
• Supporting the voluntary participation of all individuals in social life in an efficient manner, and not coercing anyone in any way
• Having a minimum level of knowledge regarding the distinctive features of one's own and other cultures
• Respecting cultural diversity and having the intention of creating a common language that is built on understanding.

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29 The topic of intercultural dialogue will be addressed in more detail in the following pages.
30 White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living together as equals in dignity", 2008. For a translation published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, see: https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/Source/Pub_White_Paper/WhitePaper_ID_Turkish.pdf (Accessed: 24/04/2020)
31 Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/common-basic-principles_en.pdf (Accessed: 02/04/2020)
32 https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/concept_EN.asp (Accessed: 03/04/2020)

The "Intercultural Cities" Model

The Council of Europe, of which Turkey is a member, has played an important role in the emergence of the concept of intercultural cities, and to understand the concept and examples in Europe, the Council's work will be reviewed, including its Intercultural Cities Program, which provides a road map for Turkish municipalities that wish to join this program.[33]

The Council of Europe and the European Union

The Council of Europe is often confused with the Council of the European Union, and presumed to be part of the European Union, but it is a separate international organization, of particular importance for Turkey. The Council of Europe was founded in Strasbourg, France in 1949, and has 47 member states. Turkey is among the founding members of the organization, which has a particular emphasis on the fundamental principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In 2010, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the Foreign Minister of Turkey, became the first Turk elected as President of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, and the youngest person to hold this position; and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe was headed by Yavuz Mildon, a member of the Municipal Assembly of Gelibolu, from 2008 to 2010.

The European Union, on the other hand, was founded under the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, and is based in Brussels. Following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU on 31 January 2020, it has 27 European countries as member states. Turkey is an EU "candidate".

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33 For the process for becoming a member of the Intercultural Cities Program, see the Annex.

The Intercultural Cities Program was launched in 2008 as a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the EU Commission. The program aims to help local authorities develop strategies to manage diversity and turn a city's cultural diversity into an advantage, particularly given the demographic changes and growing cultural diversity in cities resulting from intense migration.

The Intercultural Cities Program works to develop policies and action to attain three main objectives:

• To address matters of migration, integration and social cohesion on the basis of an intercultural approach
• To lay down common principles of intercultural integration for cities, and develop intercultural cities tools
• To enhance interaction among cities/municipalities in Europe by means of the intercultural strategy model to be developed.

Member municipalities of the program aim to acknowledge cultural diversity and turn such diversity into an advantage. The program, which focuses on the role of local administrations in managing diversity using the intercultural dialogue approach, answers the question: "How can cities deal with diversity?" as follows[34]:

The table shows how local authorities may adopt different approaches that range from ignoring diverse groups to acknowledging their diversity and turning it into an advantage. The Intercultural Cities approach sees migrants and refugees as a rich human resource, and considers the value that each individual can add, making diversity an advantage rather than a problem.

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34 For the definition of Intercultural Cities and the original text of the table, see: https://rm.coe.int/
CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680483cd4
(Accessed: 24/03/2020)

How to deal with diversity...	Political approach
Ignore it	Segregation
Deny it	Assimilation
Over - emphasize it	Multiculturalism
Realize its advantage	Interculturalism

The Intercultural Cities Program anticipates that cities take initiative to support the following[35]:

• "Cultural literacy" and reciprocity
• Involvement of people with diverse backgrounds in the policy design process
• Sharing of power and responsibility to strengthen the interaction in order to build trust and social cohesion
• Enhancing institutional capacity to deal effectively with cultural diversity and its challenges.

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35 https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices
DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680483cd4 (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

CHAPTER 2 "INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE" AS A NEW COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR SOCIAL COHESION

The essential core of the Intercultural Cities model is interaction and effective communication, or intercultural dialogue between different cultures. Particularly in countries hosting large numbers of migrants and refugees, how the host community refers to and perceives these groups is of utmost significance for establishing social cohesion. The methods and language used in both academic and political circles in addressing the issue of migration is critical in terms of perception management.

This section of the study deals with

• the correct use of the migration-related concepts
• the phenomenon of hate speech, as an escalating problem in Europe identified by the Council of Europe
• efforts to combat hate speech, and an evaluation of its impacts on social cohesion
• how to counter preconceived opinions regarding refugees, with reference to the Anti-rumor Campaign led by the Council of Europe.

The Importance of Understanding and Using Concepts Correctly

The incorrect use of key concepts in migration terminology has a significant impact on shaping a society's perception of migrants and refugees. Since the onset of mass migration from Syria, this issue needed to be dealt with from legal, political and sociological standpoints in both Turkey and Europe. This includes how the migration movement was named, who the migrants were, and the overall conceptual framework adopted.

This study aims to present key concepts and their inter-relationships. This section addresses some of the most frequently confused and contentious concepts, the meanings of which are often altered in political discourse.

The concepts of migrant and refugee are examined comparatively, and the status of Syrians in Turkey is analyzed, followed by an evaluation of the often confused concepts of *irregular migration, illegal migration* and *migrant smuggling*. Finally, the appropriateness of the term *refugee or migrant crisis*, often used in the media, is discussed.

Migrant or Refugee?[36]

Migrating individuals and groups are referred to using different terms, based on the causes of migration, of which the most frequently used are migrant and refugee. The term migrant embraces various sub-types, and varies according to the context in which it is used. The United Nations defines a migrant as *any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (2) whether the movement is regular or irregular; or (3) what the length of the stay is.*[37] This broad definition includes those displaced by force or 'force of circumstance', and those who migrate voluntarily, e.g. to improve their economic and social conditions and attain a better life for themselves and their families.

The term refugee defined in the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, applies to any person who:

> *"As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 in Europe and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it".*

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36 For more detailed legal assessments of these related concepts, see "Migration and Local Administrations in the Light of Human Rights and Refugee Law" (Kılınç, 2019), a RESLOG Project publication.
37 For other definitions of the concepts of migration, see the International Organization for Migration, Glossary on Migration, https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml31_turkish_2ndedition.pdf (Acccessed:24/03/2020)

This definition distinguishes between migrants and refugees on the basis of why they migrate. Migrants migrate voluntarily for economic and social reasons, while refugees migrate due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted, and seek the protection of another country.

However, it is not always easy to determine the degree of compulsion that motivates migration, e.g. when a person migrates to escape economic collapse and destitution and simply survive, there is a strong compulsion to do so. Regardless of how these are defined, all "push" factors that cause people to change their habitual residence are also the factors that drive people to migrate.

The term migrant is an umbrella term for any person who migrates, including a refugee. However, the categorization of refugees according to their reasons for migration in international regulations resulted in granting a legal status to asylum seekers and refugees. This created a rights-based approach and international standards for forcefully displaced persons. A refugee has a legal status and right of entry into another country under international law, whereas the admission of migrants into a country and their status in that country are left to the discretion of that state.

The Status of Syrians in Turkey

Syrians in Turkey are "individuals who, owing to compelling reasons, had to leave their country and move to another country to seek refuge". They are thus refugees according to the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. But Turkey applies a geographical limitation by only granting refugee status to "individuals coming from Europe".

Thus, despite being categorically eligible, Syrians in Turkey do not benefit from the rights afforded to refugees. Under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection of 2013, foreigners, stateless persons and refugees of Syrian origin who entered Turkey from Syria after 28 April 2011 during a period of mass influx, when status determination was procedurally impractical, are under "Temporary Protection".

The most accurate way to describe Syrians in Turkey is "Syrians under Temporary Protection". However, the term Syrian refugees is frequently used in academic studies and the media, though they do not have legal refugee status. However, this does not change the fact that people who flee war in their country and seek refuge in another country are refugees according to the Geneva Convention. Turkey's exclusion of Syrians as refugees is a political stance that does not change the social reality, and from this point of view, it is not wrong to refer to the vast majority Syrians in Turkey as refugees.

There are only three other countries that apply a geographical limitation to the refugee definition of the Geneva Convention, i.e. Madagascar, Congo and Monaco.

There are also situations, where the Syrians are referred to as "migrants". This form of expression, is, perhaps, the most erroneous one among all other terms discussed until now. Although making a very general definition "any person who migrates is a migrant" and including refugees in the scope of that definition may appear to be terminologically correct; from a sociological and legal point of view, the position of people who migrate on account of compelling reasons is more specific. That is to say, characterizing a person or a group in a refugee position as "migrant", gives rise to a situation that softens, and even, conceals the fact that the person or group in question is a victim of impelled migration.

Irregular or Illegal Migrants?

Migration is categorized as *regular or irregular*, based on its legality. *Regular migration* complies with laws and regulations governing exit from and entry into a country (e.g. passport, visa, and residence permit requirements). *Irregular migration* takes place outside the laws and regulations of the state of origin, transit or destination. Exiting a country, entering another country, or staying in a country without possessing the legally required permits or documents is irregular migration. Irregular migrants in a

country include those staying on after expiry of a residence permit, and those not leaving despite not being granted asylum status. People displaced by force or fleeing potential persecution generally enter a country without being able to obtain the required documents and permits.

The terms *irregular migration* and *illegal migration* are used interchangeably in some cases. This stems from the fact that irregular migration may involve a violation or illegality. However, the use of the term *illegal* elicits negative perceptions and responses to refugees in "host" communities, as an expression associated with penal law.

Though irregular migration does involve a criminal violation, it is a violation of migration and administrative law. Referring to irregular migrants as illegal migrants in effect criminalizes persons displaced by force, i.e. genuine refugees.

Migrant smuggling is the procurement of the illegal entry of a foreigner into a state for financial gain or any other benefit. Migrant smuggling is regulated under Article 79 of the section on Offences Against Humanity in the Turkish Penal Code No:5237, which states that "any person who, by illegal means and with the purpose of obtaining, directly or indirectly, a material gain: a) enables a non-citizen to enter or remain in the country, or b) enables a Turkish citizen or a non-citizen to go abroad, shall be sentenced to a penalty of imprisonment for a term of three to eight years and a judicial fine of up to ten thousand days"?.

This law also explicitly prescribes that, where the offence is an unsuccessful attempt, i.e., the smuggler is apprehended before or while committing the act, the penalty shall be imposed as if the offence were committed.

A Refugee Crisis or a Policy Crisis?

The way we describe and name a situation is important, as it determines how the state and society perceive and respond to that situation. How politicians, the media and international organizations address an issue is of critical importance, as terms used deliberately or unconsciously regarding an issue have either positive or negative social repercussions. These actors thus need to take responsibility for the terms and language they use regarding contentious social issues.

A recent example is how mass migration due to the Syrian civil war, which greatly affected both Turkey and Europe, was described. The media and politicians often named it the "refugee crisis", which was problematic in that "crisis" has a negative connotation. No doubt the arrival of refugees was a challenge for most countries, and particularly for Lebanon and Turkey, which received by far the greatest numbers of refugees, amounting to millions each. However, using the word "crisis" in conjunction with "refugee" resulted in a reaction against refugees, creating fear, panic, and tensions between them and host communities. This precluded seeing refugees and diversity as an advantage and "capacity", which is the basis of the intercultural cities and dialogue approach.

> "The way you look at a problem determines how you address it. If we see everything as a problem to be solved the mind and imagination see more trouble than opportunity. By taking the reverse position, inventiveness grows"[38]

When the process of migration is analyzed, refugees are not the creators, but rather the victims of a crisis. The real problem for host countries was how to respond to and manage the influx of large numbers of refugees. The crisis was in great part due to their inability to deal with the influx, due to unclear policies and lack of capacity. The term "refugee or migration management/policy crisis" would thus be appropriate, and not generate negative perceptions and attitudes in host communities.

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38 Wood & Landry, 2008.

Substituting the word "issue" or "challenge" for "crisis" would also contribute to a more positive discourse, and direct the attention of politicians to developing solutions in terms of improved policies and responses.

A social discourse that blames the victims feeds hate and division, and undermines positive responses. A discourse that focuses on the challenges of responding constructively to the needs of the victims, and their potential to contribute in future, promotes effective responses and social harmony.

Using Appropriate Language and Combating Hate Speech

Hate speech is a relatively new concept in legal terminology. The reference document of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe[39] defines hate speech as "all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, and discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of migrant origin".

It is important not to confuse hate speech and hate crimes, as offences under penal law. Hate speech is generally not regulated by law due to its association with the freedom of expression, but can be seen as an abuse of this right. A hate crime involves a criminal act motivated by hatred.[40]

39 For Recommendation No. (97)20 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, adopted in 1997, see https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680505d5b (Accessed: 24/03/2020)
40 Karan, 2010

Hate speech, though generally understood, is not always easy to determine, as it does not always involve an explicit or direct insult or derogatory expression, and even expressions that appear to be logical and normal may contain hate.[41] There is also a thin line between hate speech and freedom of expression, as set forth under article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)[42].

According to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, *"Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers."*

However, in a number of decisions, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) found that concrete expression which constitutes "hate speech" of a derogatory nature for certain individuals and groups may not be considered to be protected under Article 10. Turkey is a party to the Convention, and the rights and obligations arising from it are thus binding for Turkey.

The Council of Europe campaign against hate speech was launched as a youth campaign in 2013. The *No Hate Speech Movement* coordinated by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe pursues the following objectives[43]

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41 Weber, 2009

42 The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1953 (ECHR) regulates and guides signatory states with respect to the norms and principles on matters of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. As a member of the Council of Europe, Turkey is a party to ECHR, and its provisions are binding for Turkey.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), established by the Council of Europe to safeguard the Convention, serves as the judicial authority in the event that fundamental rights are violated.

43 The official website of the Movement: https://www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign/no-hate-speech-movement (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

• To reduce hate speech on all platforms (including the internet/social media), as far as possible
• To support human rights education activities, and support young people's participation in the movement
• To raise awareness in the media and promote media literacy.

Furthermore, an efficient action plan against the use of hate speech requires the following[44]

• To accept the fundamental importance of freedom of expression and opinion, tolerance and respect for the equal dignity of all human beings
• To determine the range of circumstances that can give rise to the use of hate speech and ensure that relevant measures to eliminate such circumstances are taken
• To support the involvement and commitment of a wide range of private and nongovernmental actors, in and to the movement.

This makes it clear that hate speech is a social phenomenon that needs to be controlled in that it shapes perceptions of minority groups, and particularly migrants and refugees. The risk of exclusion and violence against the excluded is much higher in societies where direct or indirect hate speech is prevalent.

The response of groups that are excluded and subjected to discrimination is often radicalization, which diminishes the possibility of establishing cohesion and cultural dialogue in society, and is likely to cause conflict which threatens public security, and increases anti-immigrant sentiments and actions. Combating hate speech is thus also a key means of combating radicalization and its consequences.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe carried out a comprehensive study on the *Prevention of Radicalization and Manifestations of Hate at Grassroots Level* in 2015, which provided guidelines for local and regional authorities.[45] The proposed

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44 For the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech, see https://rm.coe.int/15-nolu-ecri-genel-politika-tavsiye-karar-nefret-soylemi-ile-mucadele/16808da1aa (Accessed: 24/03/2020)
45 For the full text of the study in Turkish, see; https://rm.coe.int/168071a52d (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

measures to prevent hate speech and radicalization of groups subjected to hate speech (generally, migrant and minority groups) include the following:

Designing holistic, local, multi-agency strategies: In addition to developing a plan of action to combat radicalization on a local level, cities need to allocate the required resources, and take concrete measures that are followed up and coordinated with different levels of government.

Raising awareness among stakeholders: It is important to raise awareness among stakeholders and provide adequate training to different actors, including frontline staff working with individuals and groups at risk of radicalization, e.g. prison wardens, social workers, teachers and healthcare workers. Such training should develop their understanding of the process of radicalization and how to prevent and respond to it.

Raising awareness among local authorities on existing good practice: Some local authorities may feel ill-equipped to deal with the situation (or feel that radicalization is not a priority) but information and knowledge is available, and many European cities have significant experience and good practice projects for combating extremism. The Intercultural Cities Program of the Council of Europe also provides member municipalities with opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other.

Examples of municipalities' good practice projects and activities combating radicalization and hate speech are available on the website *Governing Radicalization and Violent Extremism*,[46] developed by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. This website shares examples implemented in 47

46 http://www.congress-intercultural.eu/tr/theme/15-governing-radicalisation-and-violent-extremism.html (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

European member countries, available in six languages, including Turkish. It also provides guidelines for combating radicalization, and a list of academic studies and legal regulations on the subject.

The website of the Intercultural Cities Program[47] also provides examples of successful practices implemented by 150 member municipalities in their cities. Topics include combating hate speech, rumors and prejudice, and education for social cohesion for youth and families.

Education: Education, especially of youth and families, has an important role in preventing hate speech and radicalization. Families have a unique possibility to detect radicalization, but addressing it in a productive manner often requires information and support. Education of youth on topics such as tolerance, respect of others, and human rights is also important.

Schools play an important role in building tolerance and preventing radicalization. Young people are particularly vulnerable to discourses inciting hate and violence, being in a period of identity formation. Though vulnerable, they can also be strong allies in combating manifestations of hate, as shown by their active participation via social media in the Council of Europe No Hate Speech Campaign.

Naming the issue correctly: It is important to communicate strategies to the public in a balanced and positive manner, with an emphasis on developing social cohesion. A balance is required between a clear message against hate speech and exclusion, and against radicalization, without stigmatizing specific groups as a threat, in order to positively influence perceptions and promote better communication.

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47 https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/good-pratice (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

Financing the proposed measures: A key problem for municipalities is often the lack of financial capacity to fund projects and activities. Some municipalities seek cooperation with, and funding from international organizations for their work with refugees and for combating hate speech against them, and radicalization. However, this requires reliable local partners and transparent procedures to monitor and account for how grant funding is spent.

Municipalities often seek cooperation with associations in securing financial resources for their activities on social cohesion. Some municipalities, such as the Sultanbeyli, have established associations to work on refugee-related matters. The Refugees and Asylum Seekers Assistance and Solidarity Association ("the Refugees Association") was established by a group of Sultanbeyli municipal workers in 2014.

The association signed a cooperation protocol on "activities to be carried out with respect to Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Persons Under Temporary Protection" with the Municipality in 2017, which enabled providing support to the Municipality through the Association.

The Refugees Association works in the fields of social cohesion, health care, education, employment, psycho-social assistance, humanitarian aid, legal counseling, shelter, rehabilitation, activities for disadvantaged groups, and translation services for refugees, asylum seekers and persons under temporary protection. It develops projects and secures grant funding for them. The contribution of Sultanbeyli Municipality includes renting the building used by the association, and providing vehicles and staff that enable it to deliver its services.

Combating Prejudice and Rumors at Local Level

The Council of Europe Anti-rumors Campaign aims to raise awareness about the importance of countering migrant and minority-related prejudices and rumors that hamper positive interaction and social

cohesion, and promote discriminatory and racist attitudes. This includes identifying false rumors, and correcting them with accurate information. The campaign, which is regarded as a public policy, has the following elements[48]

• Identifying rumors in a city
• Collecting evidence and developing arguments to dismantle false rumors
• Using emotive arguments that appeal to peoples' empathy to deal with false rumors
• Creating an anti-rumor network and cooperation between local actors and civil society
• Designing campaigns and tools to raise awareness and eliminate 'information pollution'.

Municipalities have an important role to play in reintroducing alienated groups subjected to rumors to society, to increase their visibility and present their true image. Processes are needed for these groups to express themselves and be heard by local authorities and other communities.

A good practice example is the elections held in Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality to elect neighborhood "mukhtars" to represent Syrians and communicate their problems to the municipality. The mukhtar elections encouraged refugees to participate in democratic activities such as exercising their right to vote and stand for elections.

Bağcılar/İstanbul Municipality organized a two-week workshop in İstanbul, in cooperation with its partner municipality of Hamm/ Germany, to work on eliminating prejudice. This workshop provided a platform for sharing experiences in getting to know foreigners and developing empathy.[49]

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48 For the official website of the campaign, see; https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/anti-rumours (Accessed: 24/03/2020)
49 http://www.bagcilar.bel.tr/files/eKitap/_2019/goc_ve_uyum_sempozyumu/files/basic-html/page162. html (Accessed: 24/03/2020)

Two methods can be used to counter false rumors and stereotypes concerning migrants and refugees. The first involves directly denying specific rumors and providing counter information. The second promotes a general affirmative discourse to prevent such cases.

Changing established stereotypes and perceptions is not easy, as is applying the first approach in practice. Providing a counter-discourse may also trigger polarization and confrontation that further intensify reactions. Proactively preventing the general spread of prejudices, and strengthening social networks is thus likely to be more effective.

> In an effort to correct untrue statements and information that had spread throughout Turkish society with respect to Syrians, the Refugees Association of Sultanbeyli Municipality prepared a study titled *False Facts About The Syrians.*[50] This booklet clarified 17 assertions about the Syrians, which the public wrongly assumed to be true. The booklet was made available both in print and online.

The methods for developing alternative narratives on diversity include the following.[51]

Listening: It is essential to listen to people and dedicate time to do so, in order to understand their views and how they speak of things. Creating common platforms to listen to and understand people and groups about which we have negative judgments is most likely to change preconceived opinions.

Defining the problem by using a new frame of reference: Perceptions and patterns of thinking are reflected in our narratives and language, and what we hear from others shapes our thoughts and perceptions. For example, describing the Syrian refugee influx using negative expressions such as "crisis", "systemic disruption", "insecurity",

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50 https://multeciler.org.tr/suriyelilerle-ilgili-dogru-bilinen-yanlislar/ (Accessed: 24/03/2020)
51 From the Intercultural Cities Program of the Council of Europe policy brief in December 2019. For the original publication titled 10 Criteria for the creation of effective alternative narratives on diversity see: https://rm.coe.int/policy-brief-10-criteria-for-the-creation-of-effective-alternative-nar/1680998186

etc., in the media and politics generates negative thinking and attitudes regarding migrants and refugees. Positive language thus needs to be used, with new references and examples.

The Don't Feed the Rumor Campaign[52] launched by the Municipality of the City of Amadora in Portugal in 2014 was a key component of the municipality's communication strategy regarding migrants, and was supported by various NGOs working on migrant and refugee issues. It aimed to combat discourses implying that migrants are inclined to crime, and that migrant children cause problems in schools, etc.

Educational activities were organized in schools, and students and teachers were trained, and provided with the *Don't Feed the Rumor Booklet* prepared by the project. Activities such as a support march were organized to bring together the host community and migrants to create awareness regarding negative discourses. In three years, the project reached nearly 2,500 people, and put the issue of combating hate speech on the agenda of high-level decision makers and politicians, by raising awareness on the subject. The €71,000 project was funded by the Communication for Integration Program of the Council of Europe.

This example is also important in demonstrating that municipalities are able to secure funding for such projects and campaigns through international cooperation.

Developing an inclusive, proactive and positive approach: If the alternative approach and narrative is directed only at a social group regarding which society already has stereotyped negative perceptions, it will be difficult to influence the majority and completely break prejudice. It is thus necessary to also engage the host community and facilitate interaction with the migrant community.

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52 https://urbact.eu/do-not-feed-rumour (Accessed:23/03/2020)

Enhancing interaction and visibility of diversity: Established stereotypes and unfounded prejudice regarding minority groups can be changed by presenting contrary statistical data. For instance, if society believes that migrants or refugees disrupt social peace and pose a security threat, this opinion can be countered by providing crime statistics that include the ethnic origin of those involved.

Yet statistical data alone is not sufficient to dispel social prejudice. In order to foster empathy and find common ground, the excluded and vilified must be made visible as real people, and their stories must be heard.

Einstein said that "It is easier to break an atom than a prejudice." Nevertheless, perceptions can be changed by enhanced communication and interaction, and municipalities have a responsibility to facilitate communication between different cultural groups to counter prejudice, hate speech and false rumors.

Municipalities can bring communities closer together through projects and activities such as street bazaars, park runs, youth centers, extramural school activities, and sports events, which bring together different groups on common ground, and create a basis for interaction and intercultural dialogue, both informal, and structured and facilitated.

Case study: The Living Library

In a "Living Library", the books are other people. 'Reading' is a conversation where another person and the reader meet and interact. The 'book-people' are selected from groups against which there is prejudice, and which are subject to discrimination and exclusion.

Readers select a 'book-person' from the catalogue which provides a summary of their story and the discrimination and victimization they have faced. The owner of the story and the 'reader' meet and engage in mutual conversation for a specific time. While the 'book-

person' talks, the reader listens and gets to know the story teller better by asking questions.

This project was first organized in Denmark in 2000 at a youth festival, in the context of the "Stop the violence" discourse, and became a part of the Council of Europe program in 2003 to raise awareness and dispel prejudice in various situations. This project provided common platforms to bring together members of society as 'readers', and migrants, refugees, and victims of violence against women, child abuse, sexual abuse, etc.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, the key elements of process management on refugee issues and the associated solution offers may be categorized under three main topics, as shown in the table below. As seeking local solutions to global problems such as the migration and refugee issue grew indispensable, local administrations became the most important component of this new glocal (both global and local) governance period. In order to implement sustainable social cohesion and development goals on a local level, the central administration needs to define clearly its strategy for all refugees, and particularly the Syrians, in Turkey. This will enable local administrations and municipalities to be able to develop local cohesion strategies within the framework of the national program. It is important to remember that the problem is local and the solution lies within the local. Thus, achieving local strategic stability through local initiative and under the support of the state, is essential. In this context, social cohesion-related works should be conducted both on a national and local level, in a coordinated manner. Based on the fact that it is not possible to speak of a standardized model for cohesion even though universal principles of cohesion may be identified; it is essential that a number of local models are developed on a local municipal level, in line with the results of relevant micro analyses and needs assessments. Since numeric quantities constitute the main determinant of cohesion activities, it must be noted that the needs and the policy processes will also be identified in accordance with these numbers.

The status of refugees, and particularly the Syrians in Turkey is both a humanitarian and a political issue. However, amid this dilemma, it is of importance that local administrations address the matter predominantly in line with the local cohesion objectives, so as not to be influenced by political discussions, following the principle of serving all fellow citizens living in their respective regions, from a humanitarian point of view. Needless to say, as a requirement of social cohesion, the municipalities must go beyond merely meeting the basic needs of refugees and focus on activities geared towards education, employment and most of all, harmonization of refugees with the native population. To put

it more clearly, at a time where the likelihood of return of refugees, and particularly the Syrians in Turkey is getting slimmer by the day; it is indispensable for municipalities to develop medium and long term cohesion policies for the refugees.

Building new "intercultural city" structures within the framework of "interculturalism", a prominent concept of the recent period, appears to be one of the best models to ensure cohesion, communication and interaction among society. One of the key aspects of this approach, that makes it different from other integration models, is that this approach is far from being a hierarchical mindset that is directed only at a certain social group with the intention of ensuring its cohererence with the majority. Another important approach that functions in connection with the Intercultural Cities model is "intercultural dialogue". Establishing successful dialogue also plays an important role in eliminating false rumours and unfounded prejudice that the society may have towards migrants and refugees. The use of the correct language by all actors of a society is crucial for managing perspectives. In this context, politicians, media representatives and most of all, local authorities have important duties to assume. The "Intercultural Cities" approach is also of importance for the municipalities, in that it provides an opportunity for sharing experiences, acquiring international support and contributing to the capacity building process.

Considering that Turkey's experiences in models for social cohesion and models for coexistence with migrants/refugees are relatively new; it must be noted that this is a learning process for all of us. Receiving ideological and methodological support from different stakeholders is imperative in this process. In addition to having the opportunity to establish a platform enabling the municipalities, which have carried out important work in this context, to share their knowledge and experiences with other municipalities and local actors; Turkey also has the means to transfer the experiences gained by other countries on how to manage this process, through close cooperation with International Organizations, which it is a member of. For this, it is particularly important to thoroughly evaluate how the local administrations of European states, which have experienced long-standing migration,

acted on the matter. Turkey's increasingly active role in the Council of Europe, which it has been a member of since 1950, provides significant opportunities for Turkish municipalities in terms of reaching out to several European municipalities, being a part of the common network of municipalities, and making better use of the related structures and programs in a more productive and effective manner.

3 KEY FINDINGS	3 ROAD MAPS
Experience in Turkey and other countries indicates that the return of most migrants and refugees to their homeland or onward migration to another country is unlikely. In this context, in Turkey, which currently hosts millions of refugees, developing social cohesion is a necessity rather than a preference.	We need to embrace an intercultural society which recognizes and values diversity as a rich resource, and establish dialogue and interaction among different groups on the basis of equality, to achieve harmonious cohabitation and cooperation.
Local problems require local solutions, and social cohesion needs to be developed at local level.	Municipalities need to take the lead in proactively managing migration and its consequences by developing comprehensive cohesion strategies, processes and capacities using the intercultural cities framework and approach.
Social cohesion is essential both to ensure social peace and security, and achieve sustainable development goals. The challenge presented by the presence of refugees is a reality and an opportunity to develop new capacities, if a developmental approach is adopted.	We need to move away from hate speech and develop communication strategies that promote inclusive and empathetic language and intercultural dialogue. This will combat misconceptions and prejudice regarding refugees, who, as fellow residents and future citizens, can make a valuable contribution to society.

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Annex: The CoE Intercultural Cities Program

Benefits of joining the program for a municipality

• The Program's wide network provides the opportunity to meet directly with over 100 member cities and municipalities in Europe, America, Far East and Africa.

• This network enables a municipality to establish cooperation and conduct joint activities with other member cities and municipalities and their projects. The Council of Europe facilitates such communication and cooperation.

• Member municipalities participate in thematic meetings of the Intercultural Cities Program, as well as meetings of Mayors and elected representatives from member cities in different European cities throughout the year. Member municipalities also have the opportunity to participate in study visits to share knowledge and experiences.

• Member cities benefit from the international exposure and credibility of the Council of Europe, as well as assistance provided by the European Union as a program partner.

• Membership increases a municipality's recognition on an international platform, and lays the groundwork for promoting its projects and activities to a wide audience.

• The influx of refugees, particularly Syrians, presents the foremost challenge facing Turkish Municipalities, and municipalities joining the Program can access good practice projects and activities of other member municipalities which address migration-related problems and develop effective solutions.

• Participating cities enjoy technical assistance and advice from leading experts of the Council of Europe, and may request the preparation of reports on related matters.

How to become a member

To join the Intercultural Cities Program, municipalities complete the process below.

1. The candidate municipality first expresses official interest in joining the Intercultural Cities Program of the Council of Europe

2. The candidate municipality then completes the Intercultural Cities Index Questionnaire,[53] sent to them via email, and returns it to the Program office.

The questionnaire has +- 80 questions which enable the Program to get to know the prospective member city/municipality in terms of its multicultural character and issues, and any relevant projects and activities.

3. Following communication between the Intercultural Cities Program and the municipality, a one or two-day study visit is organized.

One or two experts and a Council of Europe Program representative then visit the municipality to establish direct contact and study the local situation first hand. Council representatives visit and talk with relevant local representatives and officials, academics, and representatives of relevant associations, NGOs and community organizations. If the municipality wishes, a ceremony or press conference may be organized for signing of the membership protocol.

4. A final report on the assessment resulting from the study visit is prepared, including recommendations and a road map for strengthening the municipality's cultural diversity. The report, which includes a map of the city, is sent to the municipality for approval, before being published on the Council's website.

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53 The questionnaire can be accessed at https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/about-the-index, (accessed on: March 16, 2020)x

Members pay €5,000 a year to participate in the Intercultural Cities Program, as a contribution to program administrative costs. Expenses incurred by member municipalities in attending international Program meetings and study visits, plus preparation of reports and expert assistance, are covered by the Council of Europe.[54]

Turkish member municipalities - Ormangazi, Bursa and Kepez, Çanakkale

The first Turkish municipality to join the Intercultural Cities Program was Bursa Osmangazi Municipality. Following the study visit of the Council of Europe experts and the membership ceremony in February 2018, Osmangazi became a member of the Intercultural Cities Program. An introductory report and a city report on Bursa/Osmangazi Municipality was published on the Council of Europe website.[55]

The second Turkish member is Çanakkale-Kepez Municipality, which joined the program following the study visit by the Council experts in December 2018.[56]

The Intercultural Cities Program had 140 members in March 2020. Members include, in addition to municipalities from member countries of the Council of Europe, a number of cities in the USA, Canada, Mexico and Japan, which have joined the program as international members. The Intercultural Cities Program is the only Council of Europe program that encourages participation of municipalities outside Europe, with the aim of expanding its network and influence.

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54 A membership fee to join the Program is not exceptional. Various International Organizations require that states pay a contribution fee, including the Council of Europe.
55 Please see https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/bursa-osmangazi
56 https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/kepez

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Dr. Nihal Eminoğlu was born in 1984 in Ankara. She completed her primary, middle and high school education in Büyük Kolej, and graduated from the International Relations Department of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Gazi University with an honors degree. She then received a scholarship from the Republic of Turkey to continue her higher education and moved to France, where she received her Diploma in Political Sciences from the University of Strasbourg.

During her stay in France, she worked as a journalist, as the Europe representative of the Skyturk 360 News Channel. She also worked for several units of the Council of Europe, and participated in short-term projects of the CoE. Currently, she is continuing her studies with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE, and works closely with the Intercultural Cities Program.

Dr. Eminoğlu is also an assistant professor in the Department of International Relations at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, and is involved in refugee-related projects and activities, especially with Syrians, as a member of the Research Centre on Asylum and Migration (İGAM). Her areas of expertise include migrant and refugee rights, integration policies, and minority human rights, and she has done studies on Turks Living Abroad and the Turkish Diaspora.