



## **Making migrant and refugee inclusion work in cities**

### **UNHCR – Council of Europe information meeting about the Intercultural Cities programme**

**22 November 2018, Ministry of Social Security and Labour,**

**A.Vivulskio 13 (room 201), Vilnius**

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND AGENDA**

### ***Background and objectives***

The Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities is a capacity-building programme which supports cities in developing, implementing and evaluating local diversity and inclusion strategies cutting across institutional silos; It helps mobilise local politicians, policy officers, professionals, businesses and civil society to apply a new model of integration based on inclusive citizenship as well as positive mixing and interaction between people from different ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds.

The programme helps cities to:

- Create a sense of pluralistic local identity based on the pride and appreciation of its diverse population and minimise tension and conflict associated with ethno-cultural diversity.
- Set up a governance model empowering all members of the community, regardless of their origin or status, to develop their potential, realise their talents and contribute to local prosperity.
- Build positive relations and trust between people of different cultural backgrounds and thus ensure community cohesion and solidarity.
- Make the public space and services accessible to all and avoid ethnic segregation.
- Empower intercultural innovators in public institutions and civil society and through them ensure that policies encourage intercultural interaction.

- Build a positive political discourse and encourage a balanced approach to diversity in media to foster positive public perception of migrant and minority groups.

The programme involves, as for August 2018, 126 cities within 33 countries and the demand to join is constantly growing. The Intercultural cities approach has also been politically endorsed by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Intercultural Cities offers to its member a comprehensive range of instruments and methodologies: benchmarking, policy reviews and policy development support, peer and expert advice for policy innovation, tested methodologies in specific policy fields, community-building, trust-building and public perceptions management.

The information meeting co-organised between the Council of Europe and UNHCR will introduce the Intercultural city concept and approach to Lithuanian municipalities with a view to their possible joining of Intercultural cities, as well as the involvement of national authorities and civil society organisations. The meeting will focus particularly, but not exclusively, to the potential of the Intercultural cities approach to foster better refugee and migrant inclusion in Lithuania.

Participants will be local elected representatives, city officials responsible for integration, cultural diversity, social affairs or other relevant areas, as well as national authority and NGO representatives.

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 on intercultural integration

## AGENDA

10.30 *Opening of the meeting: welcome and background introductions*

- Wilfried Bucchorn, UNHCR Regional Representation for the Northern Europe
- Irena Guidikova, Council of Europe
- Eitvydas Bingelis, Vice Minister of Social Security and Labour
- Roma Žakaitienė, Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania

11.30 *Intercultural cities – what, why, how?*

Phil Wood, Intercultural cities expert

12.00 *How did Intercultural cities experience help Lublin shape better inclusion policies?*

Anna SZADKOWSKA, Social participation office, Municipality of Lublin, Poland

13.00 *Lunch*

14.00 Q&A about Intercultural cities, opportunities and risks for Lithuanian cities

14.30 *Key challenges with migrant and refugee inclusion in Lithuanian cities and how the Intercultural cities programme can help to address them*

*What conditions should be in place for the Intercultural cities approach to work in Lithuania?*

*What is the state of cooperation between local and national authorities, and NGOs in integration matters and is there a scope for improvement?*

16.00 End of the meeting