The Congress
of Local and Regional Authorities

Chamber of Local Authorities

20th SESSION
CPL(20)2
31 January 2011

Meeting the challenge of inter-faith and intercultural tensions at local level

Committee on Social Cohesion
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Summary

The population structures of European cities have been significantly shaped by recent migration processes. The resulting ethnic, religious and cultural plurality challenges social cohesion and relations between groups and, thus, raises new issues for local politics.

Apart from socio-economic issues such as housing and employment problems which are considered as crucial for social cohesion, local authorities must address other challenges such as: relations with migrant organisations, discrimination, negative attitudes and conflicts between groups, religious issues and the problem of radicalisation within both the majority and minority population.

The report elaborates on these challenges and presents policy recommendations in order to meet them.

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[1] L: Chamber of Local Authorities / R: Chamber of Regions
ILDG: Independent and Liberal Democrat Group of the Congress
EPP/CD: European People's Party – Christian Democrats of the Congress
SOC: Socialist Group of the Congress
NR: Members not belonging to a Political Group of the Congress

A. DRAFT RESOLUTION[2]

1. In many parts of Europe today urban populations have become increasingly heterogeneous in ethnic, cultural and religious terms. While this may offer cities opportunities in terms of cultural innovativeness and international competitiveness, heterogeneity also challenges the ability of local authorities to establish or maintain peaceful and productive relations among different segments of the population.

2. In order to ensure social cohesion, local authorities throughout Europe have therefore implemented innovative policies to ensure harmonious intergroup relations and try to bridge real or perceived 'gaps' between the different ethnic and religious groups in their communities.

3. The European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies (CLIP), co-founded by the Congress, the City of Stuttgart and the European Foundation for the improvement of Working and Living Conditions, has compiled some policies which the Congress fully endorses and which have inspired the policies outlined below.

4. The Congress has long been concerned by the threat to social cohesion posed by intercultural and inter-faith tensions and made several recommendations in the past, notably adopting 12 basic principles governing the conduct of local intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and it remains convinced that it is at local level that the needs and diversity of communities can best be gauged and where sustainable intergroup relationships can be formed.

5. In view of the above, the Congress recommends that local authorities:

a. recognise, support and empower local migrant organisations by:

i.   including them in political consultations and in consultative bodies, as recommended by Congress Recommendation 153 (2004) and Resolution 181 (2004) on a pact for the integration and participation of people of immigrant origin in Europe's towns, cities and regions;

ii.   inviting them to official municipal events and ensuring regular informal as well as institutionalised contacts with the mayor or main political authority;

iii.   providing direct or indirect help (funding, meeting rooms, etc);

iv.   training leaders of migrant organisations in organisation management and political participation;

v.   connecting migrant organisations with local majority organisations;

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b. co-operate with migrant organisations to develop a shared vision for intergroup relations, integration and the future of the city and develop an inclusive identity strategy to create a 'we-feeling' and a sense of belonging among its residents of different origin. This identity should be sufficiently open and inclusive to express existing subgroup differences in an adequate way;

*c.*contribute to reducing ethnic stereotypes by promoting regular interethnic contacts which build upon shared interests (e.g. women's organisations, neighbourhood initiatives, sport) and are therefore less artificial and more sustainable;

d. increase intercultural competence among municipal staff through intercultural and diversity training for staff and employ more people with a migration or ethnic minority background in their administration;

e. install an anti-discrimination office, including an online reporting system and a discrimination hotline;

f. where possible, create a public relations position within their integration/diversity departments and develop a professional media strategy for intergroup relations;

g. develop mediation projects for conflicts in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods and forms of space management for parks, markets and other public spaces ;

h. inform the public about the migrants' religions, notably, in regard to relations with Muslim communities, support activities such as open mosque events and emphasise the diversity among Muslims to avoid their portrayal and perception as a homogenous group;

i. ensure the mayor and integration officers keep regular formal and informal contact with religious organisations, including regular meetings as well as common projects;

j. while uncompromisingly safeguarding the fundamental values of the host community (such as gender equality) take into consideration and adapt to the religious needs of migrant groups by:

i.   respecting the specific burial rites of some migrant religions and ensuring local legislation does not prove an obstacle to them;

ii.   serving food in public institutions that includes options meeting the religious requirements of migrant religions;

iii.   ensuring that religious festivals and holidays of migrant religions play a role in local public life;

k. comply with the desire of Muslim communities for representative religious buildings by:

i.   counselling Muslim communities that plan to build a mosque (planning and building laws etc);

ii.   organising information campaigns and mediation in neighbourhoods where mosques are to be built ;

iii.   supporting the rights of minorities to have a place of worship;

l. initiate or support inter-religious dialogue dealing with faith and secular topics in religiously diverse populations through round tables of religious leaders and/or community members and exchange of preachers, imams and rabbis;

m. make every effort to prevent anti-immigrant radicalisation tendencies in the majority population;

n. use measures of social control against racist or anti-immigrant groups including public pressure, the judiciary and the police and implement de-radicalisation programmes for individuals;

o. install measures to prevent politico-religious radicalisation among young Muslims by:

i.   making every effort to establish trust relationships with all Muslim communities;

ii.   encouraging and recognising the efforts of Muslim communities to prevent or deter radicalisation tendencies among them;

iii.   addressing the legitimate grievances of young Muslims such as frustrations about discrimination and lack of opportunity thereby strengthening the resilience of Muslim communities against *jihadi* ideology and install individual intervention programmes for de/radicalising youth such as mentoring, coaching, social assistance and ideological challenge.

6. The Congress reaffirms its commitment to participation in the CLIP Network and the dissemination of its examples of good practice and conclusions and to this end instructs its Committee on Social Cohesion[3] to continue to carry out this work.

B. DRAFT RECOMMENDATION[4]

1. The population structures of European cities have been significantly shaped by recent migration processes. The resulting ethnic, religious and cultural plurality challenges social cohesion and relations between groups and, thus, raises new issues for local politics.

2. Local authorities have a vested interest in identifying and sharing successful local integration practices. For this reason, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities launched the European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies (CLIP) together with the City of Stuttgart and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in 2006.

3.The CLIP Network identified the current challenges regarding intergroup relations as a matter of grave and increasing concern to local authorities and catalogued the different means at their disposal for promoting intergroup relations and addressing potential conflicts and tensions.

4. Moreover, the Congress welcomes the close co-operation between the Council of Europe and its organs and European Union bodies in such networks as CLIP and Intercultural Cities and considers that both organisations should continue to:

a. improve their cooperation and synergy and monitor manifestations of discrimination, racism and xenophobia;

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[3] Following the Congress reform, the activities carried out by this Committee were taken over by the Current Affairs Committee set up on 1st December 2010.
[4] See footnote 2

b. support good practice exchange between local and regional authorities that is systematic, supported by research and results in a series of good practice recommendations.

5. The Congress is convinced that improving intergroup relations at local level is the key to present and future social cohesion and to this end recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe call on member states to:

a. foster the political and civic participation of migrant groups by increasing their awareness of their political rights;

b. sign and ratify as soon as possible, if they have not already done so, the Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level (ETS No. 144);

c. create the legal and financial basis for institutionalising local anti-discrimination offices in local authorities with a high level of immigration. National legislation should set basic standards for the working of such offices;

d. promote the establishment of, and establish regular contact with, migrant organisations' umbrella organisations which strengthen cooperation between member associations and support members in developing competences and establishing networks;

e. seek to improve relations between public servants, including the police, and migrant groups through intercultural training of staff, joint workshops with personnel and migrant representatives, setting up integration liaison units and encouraging public administrations to increase the recruitment of staff with a migration background.

C. EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. Introduction

European cities, in particular major cities with strong economies, attract immigrants from all over the world. As a result, urban populations have become increasingly heterogeneous in ethnic, cultural and religious terms. The multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious structures of urban society are, on the one hand, an opportunity for cities, for instance in terms of cultural innovativeness and international competitiveness. At the same time, heterogeneity challenges the ability of cities to establish or maintain peaceful and productive relations among different segments of the population. In order to bridge real or perceived 'gaps' between the different ethnic and religious groups in a city and to ensure social cohesion on the local level, many European cities implement intercultural policies.

This report is based on the experiences gained in the CLIP project, a network of 35 European cities. It presents current challenges regarding intergroup relations and suggests means that local authorities can use to promote intergroup relations and contribute to the integration process of migrants and foster social cohesion on a local level.

1.1 The CLIP network

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the City of Stuttgart and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions launched the European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies (CLIP) in 2006. The network is supported politically by the Committee of the Regions and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and has formed a partnership with the European Network Against Racism.

The CLIP network seeks to support the social and economic integration and participation of migrants, combat inequalities and discrimination, and help migrants preserve their cultural identity. It aims to achieve these goals by bringing together European cities and fostering a joint learning process about successful integration practices. The network's analysis of innovative policies enhances the policy debate at both the local and European level.

The cities' shared learning process within the network is supported by the CLIP Research Group, a group of six scientific centres that implements the research.[5] The CLIP network is composed of thirty-five European cities. Of these, thirty-one participated in this third module which deals with intergroup relations and intercultural policies.[6]

1.2 Research methods

The CLIP research team applied a mixed method approach and included evidence gathered through quantitative and qualitative research methods: a standardised common reporting scheme for each city, statistical data, observations and interviews with local actors such as local officials and representatives of churches, NGOs and migrant organisations. In total the researchers met with roughly 700 people of which about 40% are migrants or belong to an ethnic minority group.

2. European policy background

Intercultural policies, in particular intercultural dialogue, are an important policy item of various European actors. To give two recent examples:

- The European Union declared 2008 the 'European Year of Intercultural Dialogue' in order to raise awareness of existing cultural diversity and its advantages, to put the issue of intercultural dialogue firmly on the table of political debates and to promote interactions and dialogue between different cultural, ethnic and religious groups.

- The Council of Europe made the promotion of intercultural dialogue a priority in order to ensure a better understanding between cultures, social cohesion and stability on the basis of the principle of accepting others with their differences. In 2008 the Council published a 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue' and brought out the Recommendation 'Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue: an Opportunity for Local Democracy'.[7] In addition, the Council of Europe and the European Commission established the 'Intercultural Cities' project.

3. Conceptual approach

3.1 The concept of intergroup relations

"Intergroup relations" refers to the state and process of interactions between groups, which may consist of friendship or hostility, cooperation or competition, dominance or subordination, alliance or enmity, peace or war.[8]

The term 'group' refers, on the one hand, to 'real groups' which have a concept of membership and stable structures of interaction between their members (eg local mosque associations, local branches of a political party, city administration department).

[5.] The centres are the Institute for Urban and Regional Research (ISR) in Vienna, the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) in Amsterdam, the Forum of International and European Research on Immigration (FIERI) in Turin, the Institute of International Studies (IIS) in Wrocław, the Centre for Migration Policy Research (CMPR) in Swansea and the european forum for migration studies (efms) in Bamberg which coordinates the research group.
[6] Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Antwerp (Belgium), Arnsberg (Germany), Athens (Greece), Bologna (Italy), Breda (the Netherlands), Budapest (Hungary), Copenhagen (Denmark), Dublin (Ireland), Frankfurt am Main (Germany), L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (Spain), Istanbul (Turkey), Kirklees (United Kingdom), Lisbon (Portugal), Luxembourg (Grand Duchy of Luxembourg), Malmö (Sweden), Newport (United Kingdom), Prague (Czech Republic), Stuttgart (Germany), Sundsvall (Sweden), Tallinn (Estonia), Terrassa (Spain), Turin (Italy), Turku (Finland), Valencia (Spain), Vienna (Austria), Wolverhampton (United Kingdom), Wrocław (Poland), Zagreb (Croatia), Zeytinburnu (Turkey) and Zurich (Switzerland).
[7] Council of Europe (ed.) White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue. Living together as equals in dignity, Strasbourg: Launched by the Council of Europe Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their 118th Ministerial Session, 2008; Council of Europe (ed.), Intercultural and inter-religious dialogue: an opportunity for local democracy, Strasbourg, 2009.
[8] Sherif, M./Sherif, C., Social Psychology, New York, Evanston, London and Tokyo, 1969.

On the other hand, 'group' is understood as a 'social category'. In this sense, national, ethnic or religious 'groups' are people with some common characteristics. These people are seen by others as belonging to a 'group', but they do not necessarily interact with one another or form a system of relations (eg 'the native population', 'the migrants'). The perception of ethnic and religious group-categories by 'others' is often shaped by stereotypes that have developed historically and which typically hide the socio-structural and cultural heterogeneity that exists in these 'groups'.

Intergroup relations at the local level need to address both meanings of 'groups'.

3.2 Local intercultural policies – policies influencing intergroup relations

Here we define local intercultural policies as the specific policies, programmes and activities of local authorities and organisations which aim to improve the social interaction, communication and mutual understanding of 'old' and 'new' citizens and their organisations as well as between migrant groups and bridging differences between ethnic and religious groups in a city.

Intercultural policies are part of a comprehensive integration policy aiming at improving social cohesion at local level that includes intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

4. Issues of intergroup relations and patterns of intercultural policies

While socio-economic issues are crucial for social cohesion, the following issues also have very high priority in intergroup relations: relations between local authorities and migrant organisations, discrimination, negative attitudes and conflict between groups, religious issues and radicalisation within both the majority and minority population.

4.1 Recognition of and contact with migrant organisations

In most cities, migrants have come together to form ethnic, cultural and/or faith-based organisations. These are of high importance for local intergroup relations: on the one hand, they support their members by providing networks and promoting familiarisation with the 'new' society. On the other, they are useful for the local authority because their leaders can act as bridges between the administration and individual members, bringing people together and sharing information about different cultures and religions and thus facilitate the development and implementation of effective local policies.

Below we outline five main challenges facing city officials and migrant organisations regarding their relations and present policies to overcome these challenges.

a. Mapping of migrant organisations

Though many city representatives emphasise the importance of migrant organisations in general, some cities do not even know how many and what kind of migrant organisations exist in their city. Having information about the organisations is an important prerequisite for establishing effective relations with and policies towards them.

Several local authorities gather systematic information about migrant organisations in their locality, including their members, aims, activities and demands. Some publish this information on their websites or in brochures. Others benefit from studies carried out by external researchers or even use research to get organisations' input towards, or feedback on, planned policy strategies.

b. Recognition of migrant organisations

The official recognition of migrant organisations and their heritage appears to be one of the most crucial issues affecting intergroup relations in many European cities.

Migrants often have cultural preferences and adhere to cultural practices that are not shared by the majority population. They want 'their' cultures to be preserved and their cultural traditions to be represented in the urban life of the cities in which they now live. Migrant organisations wish to be recognised by city officials, to intensify contacts with the city and to undertake common projects.

This recognition is also crucial for the local authorities in order to ensure that they are aware of migrants' demands and issues and to involve migrant representatives in local activities promoting social cohesion. Policies of recognition can include institutionalised consultative bodies of migrant representatives advising the city council, respect for ethnic, cultural and religious customs, symbols and holidays and giving them a place in the city's life, mutual invitations to municipal, religious or cultural events and continuous informal contacts between the city and migrant organisations.

c. Funding of migrant organisations

Most migrant organisations have very limited financial resources: they lack both funding and sufficiently large spaces to run their activities such as meetings, language courses and cultural events. Thus, supporting migrant organisations can take the form of direct financial support (project funding and/or institutional funding), which can be organised via a public-private partnership, or through providing rooms and/or rent allowances. Some local authorities promote the collective use of buildings since this can encourage co-operation between different groups.

d. Empowering and connecting migrant organisations

Many migrant representatives are committed to engaging in local activities, but many have neither the experience or expertise nor the necessary relations within the local societal structures. Thus, empowering and connecting migrant organisations is crucial and can be done by:

- organising capacity building programmes (training in association management, funding and leadership) as well as involvement of migrants as 'multipliers', i.e. to train committed migrants on a specific issue (such as political participation) who transfer their knowledge and competence to their communities;
- establishing umbrella organisations to strengthen cooperation between member associations, enable members to create synergies and increase the associations' influence at local level; and
- involving different migrant community leaders in intercultural policies by connecting them with leaders in the majority population in networks and local forums.

e. Promoting a shared vision in the city

Organisations are formed to pursue a common interest. Migrant organisations are no exception. Some mainly aim at preserving 'their' culture and or religion; others provide support for their members, or act as a representative voice improving the organisations' recognition in urban life.

Conflicts can arise when the different groups in the city strive for different goals, or for goals that each urgently desires, but which can be attained by one group only at the expense of the other. There are divergent interests about material goods (such as funding resources), but also about values, beliefs, norms and lifestyles. To avoid or solve conflicts some cities explicitly strive for a 'shared vision' or a 'super-ordinate' goal that can be reached only through a common effort. Social cohesion can be such a super-ordinate goal, if it has been successfully promoted as a shared vision by the city and the ethnic associations. To reach this goal, several local authorities, have developed strategies and measures aiming at ensuring that everyone has a sense of belonging to the city.

4.2 Policies reducing discrimination and improving attitudes and relations

Intergroup relations in European cities are generally peaceful, yet stereotypes and prejudice between different migrant and majority groups are an urban reality. This needs to be addressed when considering intergroup relations, because such prejudice can develop into discrimination and threaten the social cohesion of a city.

Consequently, discrimination is of significant concern for many migrant representatives and city officials. Although almost every ethnic and religious group experiences such discrimination, evidence shows that Muslims face an even greater level of discrimination when compared to most other groups. Thus, the demand for respect, acceptance and tolerance of migrants in general, and particularly those from minority religious groups is a central issue of intergroup relations.

Policies and measures to reduce hostile attitudes and enhance relations between groups at local level can be grouped into seven policy approaches: humanising the 'other' by creating informal contacts, intercultural events, intercultural competence building, anti-racism/anti-discrimination work, propagating an inclusive identity strategy, communication strategies and public space management.

a. Humanising the 'other' by creating informal contact

Stereotypes and prejudice between groups and a devaluation of 'other' groups can be reduced by contact and activities that help to 'humanise' the 'other' if groups meet in terms of equality and engage in mutually rewarding activities.[9] These include creating informal contact between individuals of different ethnic group through activities such as cooking nights, library projects or sports as well as efforts to systematically encourage migrants' participation in local majority organisations such as non-profit organisations, sport clubs or scout groups.

b. Intercultural events

Experiencing diversity through art and other cultural programmes is a way to change ethnic and racial stereotypes among a population. Such events include intercultural festivals, theatre, music and film as well as food specific to certain ethnic groups. They increase the visibility of the city's cultural diversity and encourage the city's entire population to interact with, learn about and enjoy other cultures. They can be classified as: events celebrating ethnic and religious heritage e.g. the Chinese New Year, the Feast for Buddha, the Turkish children's festival '23 Nisan' or the end of Ramadan, intercultural events celebrating diversity and internationality; and traditional local festivals that encourage the participation of migrant groups and consequently become 'intercultural'.

c. Intercultural competence building

Intercultural competence helps to reduce cultural misunderstandings and improve peaceful intergroup relations and can constitute a valuable resource for the local economy. It can take the form of: intercultural training of administrative staff and police officers, intercultural education at schools and youth clubs and programmes improving migrants' linguistic competence in both their mother tongue and the immigration country's language.

d. Anti-racism and anti-discrimination work

Some measures to overcome racism and discrimination are: municipal programmes and campaigns, installing anti-discrimination offices and running anti-racism and anti-discrimination projects, possibly in cooperation with NGOs and social partners.

e. Inclusive identity strategy

An inclusive identity strategy aims to create a 'we-feeling' among inhabitants – regardless of whether they belong to the native group or have a migration background – and, thus, to build a common city identity. This identity is meant to exist alongside the ethnic identities, in other words (sub)group identities remain, but are superseded by a collective city identity. A necessary condition for success is that the larger group identity be sufficiently inclusive to express existing differences in a complex manner.

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[9] Staub, E., Preventing Violence and Terrorism and Promoting Positive Relations Between Dutch and Muslim Communities in Amsterdam, in: Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 13(3), p. 333-361, 2007

f. Public communication strategies

Public communication and media reporting exert influence on public opinion making and political agenda setting and, consequently, have an impact on intergroup relations in the city. Some cities have developed strategies on how to communicate about minorities, diversity and intergroup relations. These include: providing municipal information in various languages, co-funding of projects with local media, improving journalists' intercultural competence and presenting the diverse population and its activities in a positive way, such as by awarding new inhabitants who foster the city's success.

g. Intercultural mediation and public space management

Neighbourhoods and other public spaces such as public parks and street corners are important locations to meet and interact with others. Because these places are enjoyed by many different groups in many different ways, such interactions can cause conflict and seriously challenge intergroup relations. Some local authorities have established intercultural mediation services that can respond to intercultural neighbourhood conflicts and public space occupation complaints, others have devised policy initiatives to ensure the peaceful use of public spaces such as projects to solve conflicts over behaviour in the streets and guidelines for the use of public parks and institutions.

4.3 Meeting religious needs and fostering inter-religious dialogue and relations

Whilst many migrants are not religious, religion is of importance for others – sometimes, religion becomes more important due to the migration process, because the combination of culturally attuned (spiritual) guidance and material assistance can increase the appeal of religious organisations.

Since migrants' religions often differ from those prevalent in the immigration country, religious migrants bring along new practices and needs. This creates challenges, the most significant at present are meeting religious needs regarding religious buildings and burials, fostering inter-religious dialogue and improving relations with Muslim communities.

a. Meeting religious needs regarding religious buildings

While migrant communities already have places of worship in most European towns and cities, as these communities increase in size they try to find new premises that are larger, centrally located and more 'visible'.

Representative religious buildings are of practical and religious importance for them, but the significance goes further: the permission to build, for instance, a mosque or temple is a sign of recognition of their religion, a question of acceptance. The planning and building of such buildings, however, challenge intergroup relations since neighbours and native organisations often protest and try to obstruct plans, in particular when the building is a mosque. The reasons are manifold and include, among others, Islamophobia, racism, unwanted external influences as well as practical issues such as parking facilities, traffic and noise.

Attempts to prevent or reduce neighbourhood conflicts surrounding this issue include:
- providing land for religious buildings to be built on;
- counselling for religious communities that plan to build a religious building to inform them on planning and building laws as well as on potential neighbourhood problems;
- starting information campaigns for the local population and mediation efforts that bring religious community members, neighbours and protest groups together;
- organising political and public support, making clear that racism and Islamophobia are unacceptable and that religious freedom includes the right to have a place of worship.

b. Meeting religious needs regarding burials and cemeteries

An increasing number of migrants are being buried in their host countries. There are, however, central differences in burial rites between the religions – particularly between Islam and Christianity – that local authorities have to consider.

Some of these rules, such as the burial without a casket or aligning the deceased towards Mecca, are not in accordance with national or local laws or would require the provision of additional space which is scarce in many cities. Some local authorities have established separate cemeteries for adherents of their 'new' religions or reserved a particular area of an existing cemetery for a particular group and allow Islamic burial rites such as to bury the deceased without a coffin.

c. Fostering inter-religious dialogue

Religious groups live more or less 'side by side' without knowing much about each other. Initiatives enhancing inter-religious dialogue can help. There are two kinds of inter-religious dialogue:
- inter-religious dialogue about faith topics gathering members of different religious communities and/or religious leaders to discuss differences and commonalities between religions. 'Abrahamic projects' are a specific form of dialogue designed to enhance mutual understanding and relationship between Christianity, Judaism and Islam;
- other initiatives gather representatives of different religious communities to discuss societal and political issues such as discrimination, city planning or youth work.

d. Improving relations with Muslim communities

Islam is the largest 'new' religion in European countries of immigration. Nonetheless, Muslims are often perceived as disconnected from 'European life'. Compared with other migrant groups, Muslims experience higher rates of discrimination and prejudice, sometimes reflecting underlying anxieties about Islam as a threat to the culture and way of life of European cities and to security.[10] Thus, several cities have a political focus on Muslims and organise various projects and initiatives to improve relations with this group, for instance:
- recognising Muslim communities by inviting them to political receptions and accepting their invitations, organising *iftar* dinners at the town hall, involving them actively in public holidays and festivals as well as in municipal projects and having both regular informal and institutionalised communication;
- empowering and involving Muslim representatives, including female representatives, by the training of young Muslim leaders and imams and installing networks of key figures;
- conducting seminars and exhibitions on Islam to inform the majority population, issuing information bulletins, supporting open mosque days and organising Ramadan festivals.

4.4 Tendencies of radicalisation and de-radicalisation policies

Migration and integration have become politicised in many European cities. Radical groups can be found in both the majority as well as the minority population. Radicalisation within the majority population becomes apparent in racist attitudes, voting for (right-wing) anti-immigrant parties as well as discriminatory behaviour. Within the minority population, religious-political radicalisation can be found in several European cities, being manifested in extremist attitudes and behaviour and in 'radical mosques' – all seen as a risk to security.

In order to fight radicalisation or radical tendencies at local level measures include diminishing the breeding ground for radicalisation of both majority and minority groups (tackling challenges such as socio-economic problems, lack of opportunity, discrimination and the spreading of xenophobic ideologies), increasing resistance against radical ideologies and de-radicalisation, via implementation of de-radicalisation and opt-out programmes for individuals as well as coaching, social assistance and, if necessary, police interventions.

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[10] European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), EU-MIDIS – European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey. Data in Focus Report 2: Muslims, Vienna, 2009b; Esposito, J. L./Mogahed, D., Who speaks for Islam? What a billion Muslims really think, New York, 2007.