POLICY BRIEF

CIRCULAR AND INTERCULTURAL CITIES

Including migrants and diversity in circular, green and inclusive economic models

THIS POLICY BRIEF HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR

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FOREWORD

Cities are home to more than half of the world's population and are the centres of the modern economy. Hence, cities are also the hotspots for the key societal challenges we are facing today; be it inequality, climate change, or resource depletion.

The Intercultural Cities (ICC) programme of the Council of Europe has commissioned Nordic Sustainability to develop this policy brief. The aim is that it can be used as a resource for cities on how best to integrate the agendas of interculturalism and green development through the lens of the circular economy concept.

Green and circular initiatives can have social benefits. For example compact, walkable cities are both good for the environment while lowering costs and increasing mobility for more people. However, social benefits are not a given. We see examples of vulnerable workers, such as migrants, being exploited in 'gig economy' jobs[1] in areas such as ride-sharing, delivery services, cleaning, waste collection, and similar.

Currently, there is an important gap in dealing with the green transition in a way that is truly inclusive and offers solutions to social challenges – and vice versa.

Taking the core principles of the intercultural approach into account, green sustainable development policies and actions *should* also ensure equal rights and opportunities for all.

They should build on the diversity advantage, and enable meaningful intercultural interaction, active participation, co-creation, co-development and co-evaluation.

The objectives of this brief are to:

1) Outline how the intercultural and the circular economy development agendas are interrelated.

2) Provide guidance for cities on how to integrate the two agendas by:

● Sharing best-case examples from the ICC network and beyond.

● Provide actionable guidance on how to drive sustainable urban development combining a circular economy and intercultural perspective.

To support the development of this paper, a survey has been shared with the ICC cities network. Through the survey, the ICC cities have contributed with information about their city's approach and key challenges. The cities also provided best case examples of how the city and its local organisations drive sustainable development, with initiatives that integrate social as well as environmental considerations through an integrated and holistic approach.

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1) The term covers jobs where people are independent contractors often connected to the client through a third-party online platform.

BACKGROUND

The SDGs sets direction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), formulated by the United Nations, encapsulates our common goal for how our society should be - ideally by 2030. In 17 Goals this ideal is broken down into tangible visions of what sustainability means in different contexts; for example, what does it mean to have good health and wellbeing, gender equality, sustainable production and so forth.

The goals are intrinsically interrelated

While categorising sustainability in 17 goals makes the vision more tangible, one must not forget that the goals cannot be realised separately. For example, ensuring sustainable cities (SDG11) is crucial, as cities are the centres of our economy. However, cities' sustainability potential relies on that all the other SDGs are being realised at the same time.

Uncertainty about solutions

While the SDGs set a clear direction for where we should go, the solutions for how to get there are less clear. Hence, a number of conceptual frameworks and new narratives have developed to formulate useful perspectives and approaches to developing concrete solutions.

Two frameworks in this paper

In this paper we will be looking at two frameworks, that until now have been addressing very different aspects, within the realm of sustainability:

- **Interculturalism** addresses societal diversity and how we, with the right urban policy approach, can benefit from this reality rather than trying to oppose it.
- **Circular Economy** addresses how we can continue to create economic wealth through new means of production and consumption.

In the following sections the two concepts will be described as well as how they are interrelated.

Figure 1: The Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations)

THE INTERCULTURAL APPROACH

Diversity is a reality which we should celebrate and benefit from

It is a fact that our cities and societies are diverse. Our cities consist of people of different genders, ages, education, physical abilities, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and so forth. In democratic societies, respect for plurality is also not only an element of development and stability, but also a matter of legality, principles, and guiding values.

However, often in the public debate and in businesses, the narrative around diversity can have a strong negative focus on the challenges that arise when different people with different backgrounds meet. In many places and organisations, the solution has been to 'harmonise cultures' and otherwise to increase or reinforce segregation - intended or unintended - through spatial planning, public debate, education, family policies etc. However, such segregation is very problematic as it hinders individuals to meet their full potential - which entails that we all miss out on their potential societal contribution.

To guarantee societal cohesion, the existence of differences must be assumed, but also the commitment that they do not degenerate into inequalities nor discrimination.

> *The concept 'interculturalism' covers the support for cross-cultural dialogue. It embraces the idea of a fruitful exchange between persons of different backgrounds and realities, which together add up to enrich a sustainable and cohesive society.*

Since the early 2000s, intercultural dialogue has been on the work agendas of international institutions such as UNESCO, the European Union, and the Council of Europe itself. In fact, 2008 was the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, to highlight that in the current context, societies are increasingly multicultural, more diverse and plural in number of languages, religions, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, among other elements.

The commitment to intercultural dialogue is a step forward from traditional models such as assimilationism or multiculturalism, which seeks to minimise or passively accept diversity, rather than building on the opportunities diversity entails.

The Intercultural Cities Programme

The intercultural perspective promoted by the Intercultural Cities programme of the Council of Europe aims to articulate public actions under the key principles of equality, recognition of diversity and positive interaction to achieve societal cohesion, equality in diversity and local development.

The concept of equality is understood as a basic commitment to promote equal rights, duties, and opportunities, within the framework of an inclusive concept of "resident citizenship". This involves active anti-discrimination policies and, in general, promote equity to break down barriers that may hinder mobility and the social elevator for reasons related to sociocultural diversity.

Focus on creating space for positive interaction

Finally, 'positive interaction' is the most innovative principle of the intercultural perspective. It highlights the importance of designing the city and the urban space in a way that facilitates contact, interpersonal relationships, and positive interaction between citizens of diverse profiles and socio-cultural backgrounds.

MIGRANTS' ROLE IN AN INTERCULTURAL CITY

Migrants represent a key social group of focus in this paper, as they contribute to cultural diversity - especially in cities. However, migrants are also more often exposed to segregation and discrimination, due to being viewed as a group, rather than individuals in many situations.

The economic diversity advantage of migrants

While the public narrative around migrants often can have a negative focus, economic research concludes that diversity and migration can be a clear economic advantage; When demographic diversity correlates positively with cognitive diversity (a variety of skills, preferences, and knowledge), the benefits more than outweigh any costs.

Research shows that for all OECD countries migration is either cost neutral or has a positive impact on the fiscal budget as well as leading to raising incomes for existing workers at all income levels.

Importantly, the level of positive benefit to society depends on the public up-front investment in integration, how fast migrants access the labour market and the host-society's ability to fully utilise the skills new-comers bring with them (K4D, 2019; OECD, 2014; JRC, 2017).

Economic facts on migrants and impact on host society (OECD, 2014; K4D, 2019)

- Migrants come with diverse backgrounds: 1/3 come with a tertiary education while another 1/3 has no or little education

- Migrants are at minimum cost neutral but often have a positive impact on host country GDP

- Migrants account for 47% of the increase in the workforce in the United States and 70% in Europe over the past ten years

- Foreign STEM workers can explain 30% to 60% of US total factor productivity growth between 1990 and 2010

- The networks of international migration and bilateral trade (foreign direct investment) are strongly and positively correlated

- Migrants have a positive impact on salaries across all income levels and - in the case of Denmark, the inflow of low-skilled migrants encouraged natives to upgrade their skills, taking advantage of immigrant-native complementarity to spur mobility and increase specialisation into more complex jobs, where they were more productive. The most affected natives typically ended up earning 3% more than they had before

- Studies of large refugee movements reinforce the existing consensus that the impact of immigration on average native-born workers is small, and fails to substantiate claims of large detrimental impacts on native low-skilled workers

Inclusion and diversity strengthen business

The economic benefit of diversity in business organisations has also been investigated and quantified. Several studies and consistent data gathering by Mckinsey & Co. shows that not only does the business case remain robust but also that the relationship between diversity on executive teams and the likelihood of financial outperformance has strengthened over time. These findings emerge from a large dataset, encompassing 15 countries and more than 1,000 large companies (McKinsey, 2020).

The Diversity advantage in business (McKinsey, 2020)

- Diverse teams have been shown to be more likely to radically innovate and anticipate shifts in consumer needs and consumption patterns— helping their companies to gain a competitive edge.

- Companies in the top quartile of gender diversity on executive teams were 25 % more likely to experience above-average profitability than peer companies in the fourth quartile.

- In the case of ethnic and cultural diversity, companies in the top quartile outperformed those in the fourth by 36 % in terms of profitability in 2019.

Despite positive evidence, inclusion is happening at a too slow pace

Despite the proven positive economic impact of diversity on society and business, inclusion is happening at a very slow pace.

One-third of the firms McKinsey tracked since 2014 have achieved real gains in executive team diversity. However, about 50% have made little or no progress and, within that, many have seen gender and ethnic minority representation even go backwards.

Similarly, trends can be seen in society, as the negative focus on migration continues to

overshadow the opportunities, they bring to host societies.

On average, migrants belong to a more vulnerable societal group. They are more exposed to exploitation, discrimination and have less resilience to economic shocks caused by events such as natural disasters (for example flooding, fires, drought) as well pandemics like Covid-19 that have had the most impact on the more vulnerable groups.

Inclusion is therefore imperative to protect and integrate these groups. Likewise, prevention of negative events happening in the first place is of course key.

HOW THE SOCIAL AND GREEN AGENDA ARE INTERRELATED

Meeting social needs is *not* possible within the current economic model

Society has experienced an exponential wealth-increase over the last decades and has improved living conditions for many - but there is still a long way to go. However, we face a major barrier to ensure prosperity for all as economic growth is currently directly coupled with the consumption of resources.

Figure 2: Economic growth is currently directly dependent on material consumption (*UN, 2019*)

Population, material footprint and GDP growth index, 2000−2017 (baseline 2000=100)
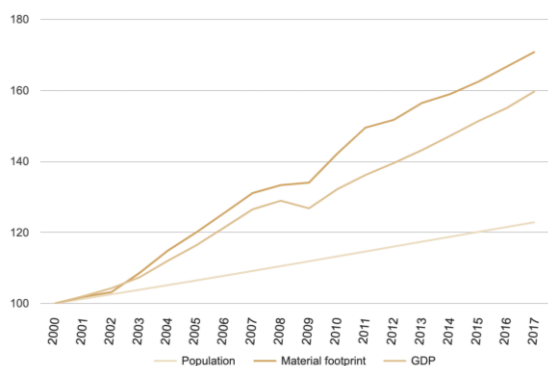
Our economic model is what we call 'linear'. We take, make, and dispose of our resources at a growing speed. Such a model entails low utilisation of assets, high waste-rates, and value loss, as well as emission and pollution throughout the value chain.

Hence, we see that the strain on our ecosystems is growing at the same speed as economic growth.

The current economy is wasteful by design (EMF & Mckinsey, 2015)

It is not only the growing amounts of solid waste that is considered 'waste' in a circular economy. It also includes the economic value loss that is structurally designed into the global market; meaning most business models are incentivised to be inherently inefficient as they rely on low utilisation in order to increase sales.

For example in Europe:

- Cars are parked 93% of the time.

- 50-60% of office spaces are vacant. during working hours

- Roads are utilised 10% during peak hours.

- 1/3 of all food is lost along the value chain.

'The planetary boundary framework' defines the safe operating space within which humanity can continue to develop and thrive for generations to come. Crossing these boundaries increases the risk of generating

large-scale abrupt or irreversible environmental changes ([Stockholm Resilience Center n.d.](#))

Figure 3: Status of the nine planetary boundaries ([EEA, 2020](#))
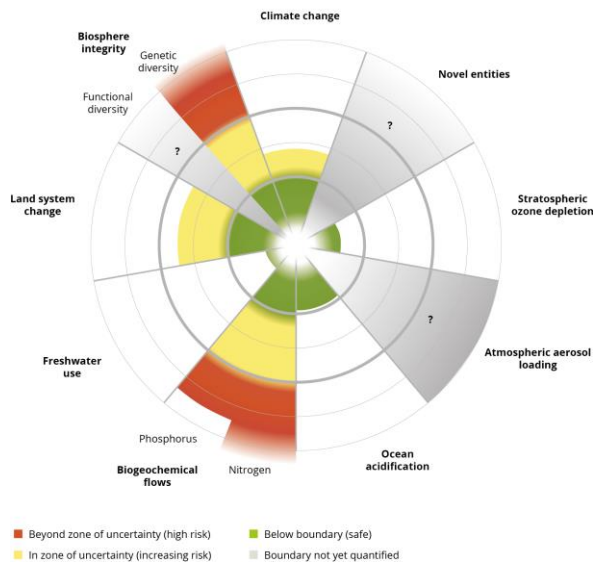
At a global level, we are already surpassing the sustainable limits in several crucial areas such as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and nutrient consumption. While others are further from surpassing at the global level, they can already have been surpassed at local level - such as freshwater withdrawal and chemical pollution.

Avoiding societal collapse caused by the depletion of our ecological systems entails <u>absolute and immediate</u> change - we must rethink the way we make, access, and use goods and services.

Figure 4: Social needs are not yet met but the planetary boundaries are surpassed ([Raworth, 2017](#))
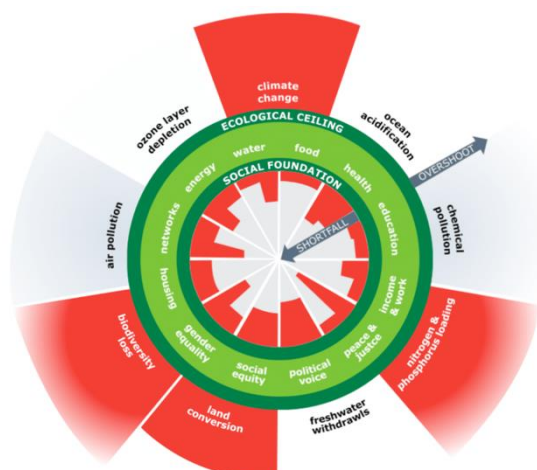
The circular economy is a sustainable alternative

The circular economy is a sustainable economic model, developed as an alternative to the linear economy. It is a model where value is generated through continuous circulation of resources with high utilisation and value retention.

The principles of a circular economy

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation has formulated three overarching principles of what a circular economy is built on:

1. **Waste and pollution are designed out at *the outset.***

2. **Products and materials are used at their highest utility and value for the longest possible.**

3. **Natural systems are restored and will continuously *regenerate*.**

Social needs and planetary boundaries are the design criteria

In a circular economy, the planetary boundaries for economic activity is taken into account and we formulate solutions from a systems and human-centric design perspective.

By doing so, we back-track from the human need required to meet and instead consider the ecological boundaries for how we can provide solutions.

This means for example *when looking for effective solutions we focus on the needs, not specific products.* So, you could say that people need *housing* not buildings, *nutrition* not steaks, *mobility* not cars, *information* not laptops and so on. Subsequently, we chose the best solutions by assessing their potential environmental impact (negative and positive).

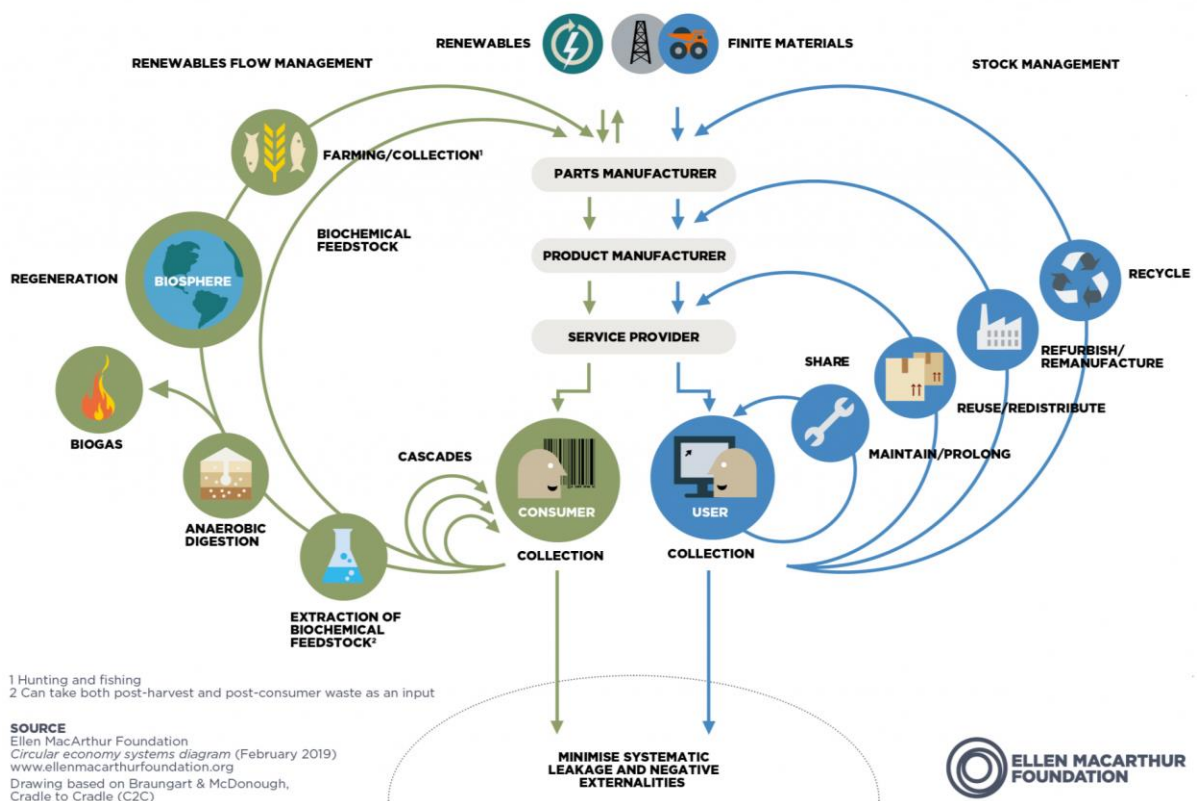**Example: Green and human-centric mobility = a walkable city**

For example, in relation to transport, people need to get from a to b; from home to work, to school, to the park, etc. They need *mobility* to prosper, not a specific means of transport as such.

In most cases in the city, effective and affordable mobility is thereby not the car because even if the car did not pollute, it still takes up a disproportionately large amount of space (roads and parking), it is expensive, noisy, badly utilised, and often unsafe for the driver and pedestrians. Furthermore, cars and especially electric cars use large amounts of finite materials and rare earth metals, which currently are not recovered at a sufficient scale.

More effective means of transport often include walking, cycling and mass transit (shared transport), as it is much less resource intensive. At the same time additional social and economic benefits also count low transport costs (and hereby inclusion of lower income groups), increased interaction between people, higher footfall in local stores and better health (EMF, 2019c).

Urban planning is in this example key to ensuring that a city is 'walkable' through compact urban design. Means include densifying along mass-transit lines, mixing the use of buildings to ensure diverse transport flows, and designing urban space for people rather than vehicles.

Figure 5: Butterfly diagram / or simple butterfly (EMF, 2019b)

1 Hunting and fishing
2 Can take both post-harvest and post-consumer waste as an input

SOURCE
Ellen MacArthur Foundation
Circular economy systems diagram (February 2019)
www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org
Drawing based on Braungart & McDonough,
Cradle to Cradle (C2C)

Job creation in the circular transition

In a circular economy there is a need for more hands locally in both old and new sectors. Further supported by good policy that makes products easier to repair, share and longer lasting with incentives to take old products back, a circular transition can cut unemployment and reduce people's living costs.

A study by Green Alliance concludes that expanding the circular economy could create 205,000 new jobs in the UK alone.

Because it can address labour market skill gaps and regional unemployment, 54,000 of these jobs could be net jobs by 2030, bringing people back into employment. Similar trends are expected in other countries as well.

Not all jobs are equally secure

Here it is important to note, that while recycling generally is considered a driver of job creation, low value recycling (where materials are blended and mixed into lower value products or materials) the jobs here are at greater risk of automation, while at the same time recycling retains lower levels of value of the original product, than other solutions.

Supporting higher value activities such as repair and reuse, often also provides better

paid jobs with better work conditions and more security.

Skills training and capacity building should consider green job opportunities

There exists a large number of skills-building initiatives targeting migrants and other vulnerable workers, aiming to help enter/re-enter the labour market as fast as possible.

Such initiatives should consider future trends and how these people can become part of the green transition. Both in order to support the green development as well as to future-proof workers' skill sets.

Figure 6: Circular job creation opportunity in the UK by skill type (Green Alliance, 2015)
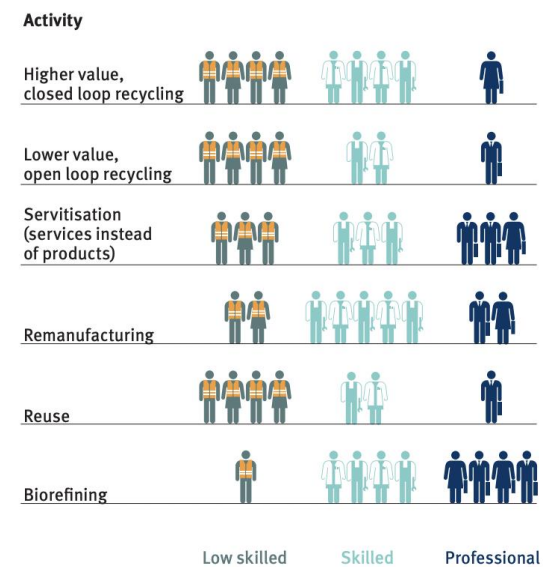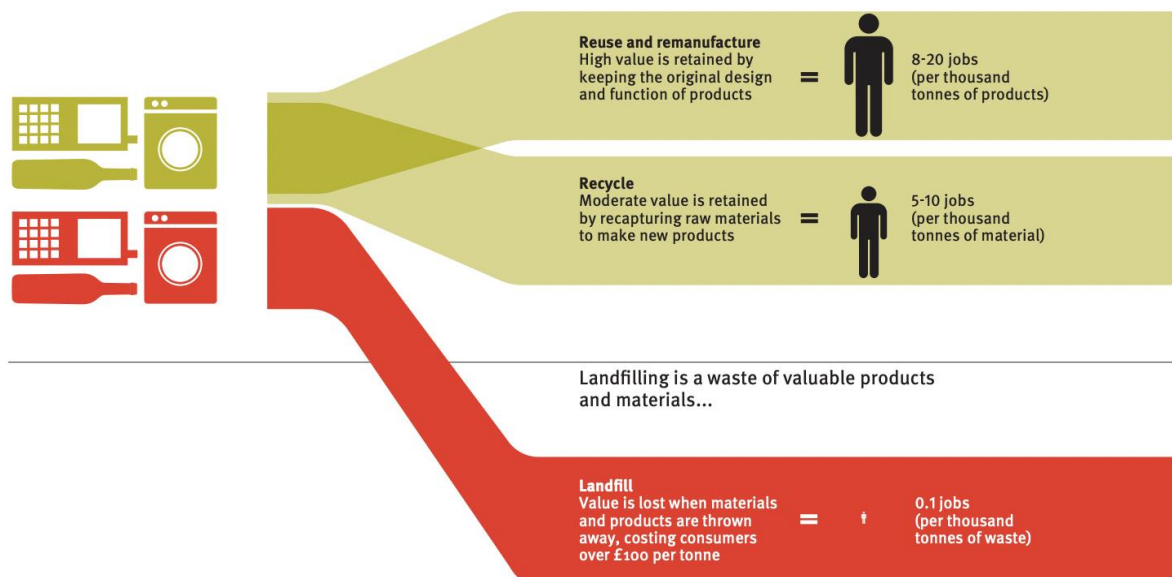

Figure 7: Job creation and value retention opportunity from different end-of-life options of products in the UK (Green Alliance, 2015)

BUSINESS CASE EXAMPLES

A large number of local businesses in cities around the world are paving the way on how to generate profit with both social and environmental benefit. Below is a short and non-exhaustive selection of such cases exemplifying the breadth of existing business solutions. The cases are derived from the ICC cities survey and through desk research.

Case 1: Utilising waste land to build community, local resilience, and employment

The largest employer in one of the most deprived areas of Calderdale, United Kingdom, is a voluntary organisation that has created a green kitchen building in a community garden on a piece of wasteland. The building is a straw bale structure, and the garden grows food.

From this facility, they teach cooking, and it has also acted as a hub for emergency food provision throughout the pandemic. Most significantly, the activity has helped build skills and capacity and leveraged funding to create employment opportunities in the area.

- **Location:** Halifax, Calderdale, UK
- **Company:** 'Outback' by Halifax Opportunities Trust
- **Sector:** Charity

Reference: ICC survey

Case 2: Supporting social interaction and environmentally solutions for buildings with data platform

Yeme Architects design buildings that are green and aim to also encourage communities to thrive and mix. Through a 'Community Data' platform, they seek to use technology to rejuvenate social interaction within the built environment and find environmentally sustainable solutions for buildings. Yeme Tech is composed of a team of information architects, as well as social and regeneration specialists. It has a vision of increasing community harmonization and social capital through the use of digital technology. Yeme Architects is currently working on Sunwin House, where it aims to transform an old department store into a cultural creative community.

- **Location:** Bradford, UK
- **Company:** Yeme Architects
- **Sector:** Built environment

Reference: ICC survey, Yeme Architects (n.d.)

Case 3: Supporting inclusion of migrants through second-hand shops

Emmaüs Solidarité supports people in very unstable situations, including migrants, in their overall integration (health, employment, housing, etc.).

The Emmaüs Solidaire's stores sell second-hand objects, furniture, and clothing at an affordable price, which allows them to finance the "Emmaüs communities" (welcoming places for vulnerable people).

These shops also help promote the professional integration of members of the Emmaüs community, by offering them employment and enhancing their skills, particularly through upcycling projects.

- **Location:** Paris, France
- **Company:** Emmaüs Solidarité
- **Sector:** Retail

Reference: ICC survey

Case 4: Integration and training in agroecology

Espero is an association that allows people who are refugees and those who are unemployed to gain expertise in agroecology through training and professional integration courses in sustainable fields such as: circular economy, beekeeping, upcycling, urban permaculture, etc. This equips them with the ability to work on concrete professional projects and allows them to gain autonomy.

- **Location:** Paris, France
- **Company:** Espero
- **Sector:** Food & hospitality

Reference: ICC survey

Case 5: Incremental social housing that ensures building longevity

The Iquique project in Chile is an incremental and participatory housing concept, developed by the company Elemental. With a budget of USD 7,500 per home (including land), buildings are designed for low-income households but with middle-class needs in mind. This ensures that the building's shell will be useful for longer and limits the need for reconstruction. Initially, only half of the building is constructed, which includes three floors with the essential elements such as a kitchen, bedroom, roof, and sanitary installations.

This makes the house fully habitable, but with the anticipation of additional rooms being added as and when residents can afford the expansion.

- **Location:** Iquique, Chile
- **Company:** Elemental
- **Sector:** Built environment

Reference: Moore (2016)

Case 6: Makerspaces for refugees for increased empowerment and encounters with locals

In a circular economy, where products are made to last, repair and maintenance skills will be key. Likewise, the ability to manufacture locally using small digital machine tools (3D printers etc.) of locally available resources will increasingly be relevant skills to master. The makers movement and its 'Fab Labs', encapsulate these trends while at the same time enabling more people to access the knowledge and tools needed to run their business.

Habibi.Works is an example of such a FabLab, but with an added layer. It is an intercultural FabLab, designed to bring refugees, locals, and international experts together to create products and perspectives. It is an intercultural maker space and platform for education, empowerment and encounters for refugees and Greek locals in the North of Greece.

Habibi.Works is a 700 m2 space, consisting of 11 different working areas in which people create, learn, teach, and meet.

- **Location:** Katsikas, Greece
- **Company:** Habib.works, Soup & Socks e.V.
- **Sector:** Repair & manufacturing, education & skills training

Reference: Habibi.Works (n.d.)

Case 7: Supporting marginalised workers through a holistic fashion business model

The garments produced by Birdsong use 100% natural or reclaimed fibres. By manufacturing ethically, locally and with sustainable fabrics like bamboo, Tencel, organic cotton, hand-woven fairly traded Khadi (from women's co-operatives in India) and reclaimed fabrics from charities, Birdsong is making a blueprint for a better fashion industry.

Whilst most garment workers are paid poverty wages, and even in the United Kingdom often

are exploited, Birdsong is committed to pay a London Living Wage of at least £10.75 per hour to lift women and their families out of poverty.

All packaging and postage are done ethically by Mail Out. Mail Out offers people with learning disabilities support with their health and wellbeing and apprenticeships in warehousing.

This contrasts with the way that many e-commerce businesses operate, with

warehouse staff frequently laid off for poor health, and facing poor pay and working conditions across the world as well as in the United Kingdom.

Birdsong also uses recycled packaging materials for each and every order and is looking into switching to a provider who also offsets their carbon usage.

- **Location:** London, UK
- **Company:** Birdsong
- **Sectors:** Fashion, logistics, packaging

Reference: Birdsong (n.d.)

Case 8: Digital inclusion in the time of crisis, while extending life of IT products

With the Covid-19pandemic, the topic of digitisation has become even more important. At times, participation was only possible digitally. However, the need for digital equipment is not fully covered. This is where a circular economy volunteer project comes into play. At the Erlanger recycling centre, electronic devices can be handed over to private individuals for reuse. The laptops handed in are cleaned, checked and, if

necessary, repaired and then passed on to non-profit organisations free of charge. In this way, these organisations can support families, children, or young people with the introduction to digital use.

- **Location:** Erlangen, Germany
- **Company:** Zweckverband Abfallwirtschaft and Volunteers
- **Sector:** ICT, Refurbishment

Reference: ICC survey

WHAT CITIES CAN DO

At the heart of creativity, innovation, and growth, cities play a central role as motors of the global economy: 54% of the world's population live in urban areas, and cities account for 85% of global GDP generation.

Cities are also the centres of today's largest social and environmental challenges for example:

- **75%** of natural resource consumption,
- **50%** of global waste production
- **60-80%** of greenhouse gas emissions
- **50%** of the world's refugees live in cities
- On average, the Gini index of inequality is **3.3%** higher in metropolitan areas than in the rest of the respective country

(EMF 2019a, EC 2017, OECD 2018)

City governments see, experience, and often manage the negative consequences of our current economic model, be it through the public funds spent on solid waste management and climate adaptation, to having to manage everything from congestion, health issues due to local pollution to handling social unrest fuelled by increasing inequality.

The challenges of modern society concentrate in cities, but cities are also centres for change. Cities can catalyse wider system transformation and in recent years we have also experienced that city governments have become bolder in leading such change.

URBAN POLICY LEVERS

Cities can drive change through hard *and* soft levers

The autonomy and scope to apply policy levers varies from city to city. Some cities will have a greater ability to use certain policy levers than others, since city powers are not uniform and are dependent on the relationship to other tiers of government.

In the project 'Circular Economy in Cities', the Ellen MacArthur Foundation defined ten types of policy levers city governments can use to drive change.

It is also the case that the various policy levers are strongly interlinked. For example, softer measures such as awareness raising, and capacity building would often go hand-in-hand with regulatory restrictions.

A policymaker will naturally have to consider the interrelationships and coherence of different policy levers and specific measures within them, in addition to other factors such as the individual cost-effectiveness and distributional effects of any given policy (EMF, 2019a).

VISION | ENGAGEMENT | URBAN MANAGEMENT | ECONOMIC INCENTIVES | REGULATION

ROADMAPS AND STRATEGIES | CONVENING AND PARTNERING | URBAN PLANNING | FINANCIAL SUPPORT | LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

AWARENESS RAISING | ASSET MANAGEMENT | FISCAL MEASURES

CAPACITY BUILDING | PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

© Ellen MacArthur Foundation, March 2019
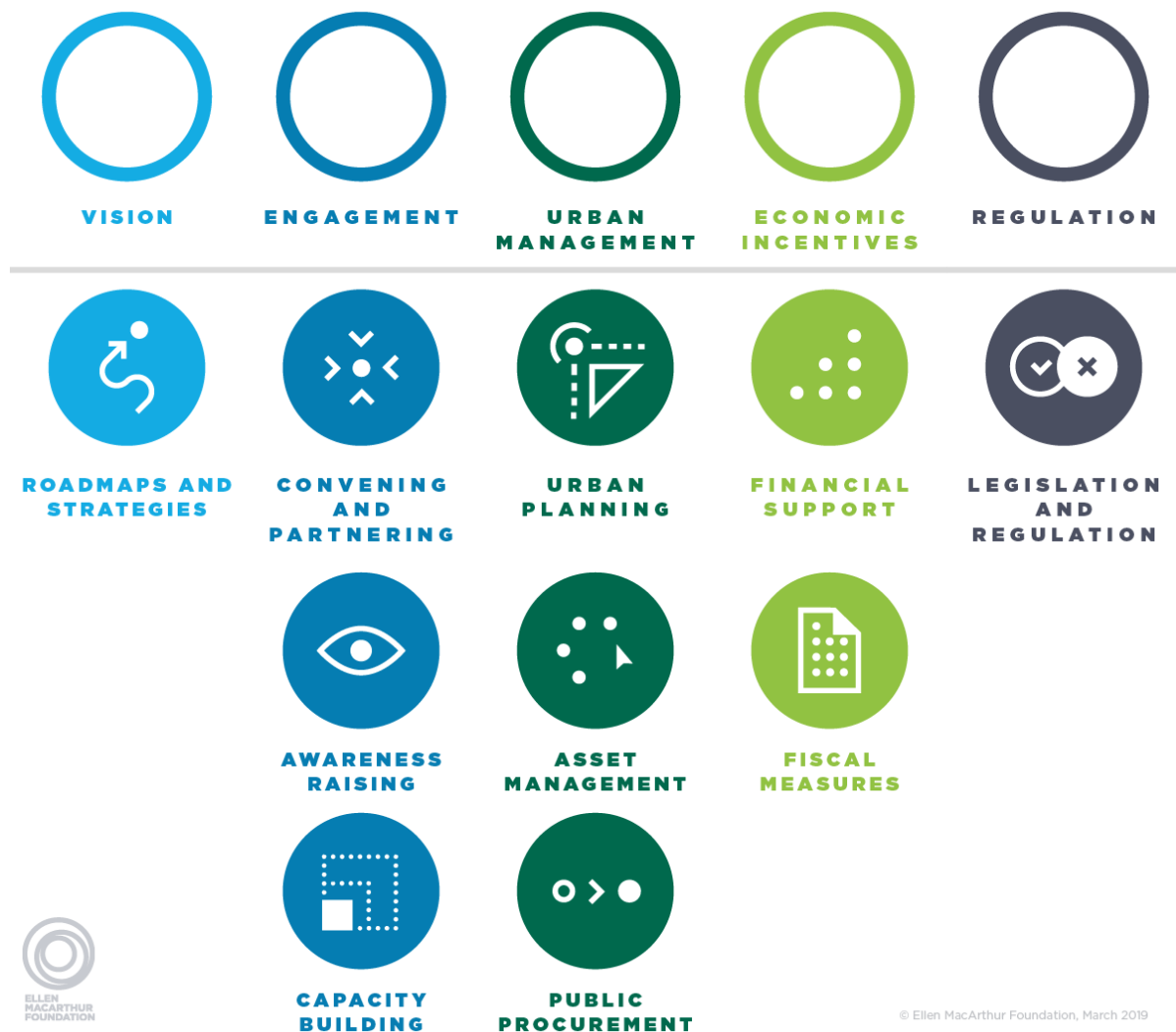
KEY CHALLENGES OF SCALING INCLUSIVE AND GREEN SOLUTIONS

In the survey completed by the ICC cities, city representatives were asked about the main challenges to realising and scaling initiatives that address both interculturalism and green development.

As they all highlighted several advantages to including migrants and diversity in circular, green, and inclusive economic models, the city representatives also pointed to obstacles they face in terms of implementation.

1) Political will

Currently, intercultural and circular initiatives have a low priority on the political agenda in some cities, which leads to a lack of strong policy and funding.

To improve policy, city officials suggest engaging with a diverse range of businesses to ensure that all voices and communities play their part in any movement towards a green and more circular inclusive local economy.

Political will must be heightened to ensure that structural changes are made to allow for an inclusive community approach, with initiatives spawning from city bodies as well as private businesses.

2) Funding

Many cities have yet to allocate adequate financial resources to intercultural and circular initiatives. These programmes require funding

from the city budget, specifically funding for start-ups and social enterprises.

In terms of financial incentives, the efforts would likely be aided by favourable business and tax incentives. This would allow communities to understand what "good" looks like for circular and inclusive solutions and mainstream key ideas.

To ensure strong results, funding with specific targets around both the diversity of those involved and performance indicators around moves towards green and inclusive business practices might be a helpful catalyst.

3) Capacity building

Capacity building is important to facilitate business led initiatives and spur innovative projects in the community. To further develop skills and capacity, linkages to universities can be formed, allowing for educational research, knowledge transfer, and sharing of best practice.

Recruitment skills must seek to address inequalities to develop skills among migrant and refugee communities. Likewise, the development of digital skills could contribute to furthering the green agenda and lead to innovation of circular initiatives as well supporting digital inclusion more broadly. At the same time, people with different backgrounds could provide different skills that should also be recognised and valorised.

4) Awareness

Cities need to focus on raising awareness about inclusive and circular businesses. Communities and policy makers themselves are not always aware of the opportunities there are within the integration of diversity and the circular agenda, and how these intertwined issues can be addressed in unison.

Initiatives must raise awareness to ensure that existing businesses understand the 'diversity advantage' and their responsibility as actors and influencers within communities. This would allow them to play their vital part in moving towards interculturalism as an approach across the entire district and towards greener and more circular methods of delivering their business models.

CITY LED CASE EXAMPLES

Cities from across the world are successfully implementing innovative projects aimed at addressing both interculturalism, inclusion and circularity, ranging from migrant-led community cafés to recycling shops that transform waste to overarching urban planning initiatives that transform the physical structure of the city itself.

The following section showcases ICC member cities as well as other cities, undertaking inclusive and circular initiatives. Specific examples of projects illustrate how these projects can be carried out and the impact they can have.

Barcelona: A 'DIY' urban future that is accessible, inclusive, and open source

In 2014, the then mayor of Barcelona committed the city to be the first 'Fab City' and challenged the other leaders of the world to develop a new urban model. A model where cities enable the return of local manufacture to produce everything the city consumes locally by 2054, while sharing knowledge globally. It is an 'DIY' urban future that is accessible, inclusive, and as open source as possible.

The Fab City hereby supports the development of a connected but distributed network of maker's spaces (also known as Fab Labs) where communities are given access to the means of production; everyone can design, manufacture and learn using small affordable digital machine tools (e.g. 3D printer) and learn from other makers. The idea is to be able to provide citizens with all the resources they need without compromising the planet's ecosystems.

Reference: Atlas of the Future (n.d.), Diez (n.d.)

Home to one of the leading laboratories of the worldwide Fab Labs network, over the last decade, Fab Lab Barcelona has helped people around the world to locally conceptualise, design, develop and manufacture – with a focus on truly world-changing technologies. Based in the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia (IAAC), the centre combines innovation, participation, digital manufacturing, technology, and creation. The Fab City project in Barcelona plans to open several fab labs, at least one in every district, over the next few years.

- **Location:** Barcelona, Spain
- **Policy lever(s):** Roadmaps and strategies, Convening and partnerships, Capacity building, Urban planning, Financial support

Belo Horizonte: Addressing resource recovery, skills training, and digital inclusion

One of the largest cities in Brazil, Belo Horizonte, is facing several challenges including youth unemployment, electronic waste production, and digital exclusion.

To simultaneously address these issues, the city has launched the Computer Reconditioning Centre which provides citizens from low-income communities with the training required to restore IT equipment. The refurbished equipment goes on to support over 300 'digital inclusion sites', where locals

Reference: EMF (2019)

have free access to computers and the internet, as well as varied training opportunities in basic digital literacy.

The project has created very positive results, with the city being deemed Brazil's most digitally advanced city, while keeping electronics in use and out of landfills.

- **Location:** Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- **Policy lever(s):** Capacity building, Financial support

Bergen: Integration project for newly arrived refugees with urban farming

The City of Bergen has established a course for newly arrived refugees combining Norwegian language learning and learning skills farming in urban areas. This project has been especially aimed at refugees with a little formal education and maybe a background in farming. This project is a part of the City of Bergen strategy for urban farming 2019-2023. The aim is to use more urban spaces for growing plants for human consumption.

One of the farming locations is based in a city hotel where they use the products for guests. The other location has been a large municipal park. The aim is to develop this project further and enable the participants to develop business ideas for urban farming. There is a growing demand for locally produced farm products.

- **Location:** Bergen, Norway
- **Policy level(s):** Capacity building, Urban planning

Reference: ICC cities survey

Bradford: Fostering local innovation project

Led by the Bradford City Council, United Kingdom, the 'Bradford for Everyone' programme, has funded a number of small-scale projects which aim to address both interculturalism and improve environmental conditions. The funding is delegated through the "Innovation Fund". The programme focuses on four key areas: 1) Getting On, 2) Getting Along, 3) Getting Involved, and 4) Feeling Safe.

'Friends of Bradford Moor Park' is an initiative under Getting Involved, which highlights the

importance of biodiversity and clean, safe spaces for general health and wellbeing through hands-on education and tree planting, involving local residents and the wider Bradford community. Another Innovation Fund project focused on growing plants and vegetables, home cooking with children, and learning about other cultures through food.

- **Location:** Bradford, UK
- **Policy lever(s):** Financial support, Capacity building, Awareness raising

Reference: ICC cities survey

Calderdale: Carrying out an Inclusive Economy Strategy for social and environmental value

Calderdale, United Kingdom, has committed to social value creation through its Inclusive Economy Strategy. All its procurement activity must be in line with social value requirements and organisational key targets which includes: 1) addressing the climate emergency, 2) reducing inequalities and deprivation and 3) creating thriving municipal economies.

As part of the Inclusive Economy Strategy, Calderdale also has some designated initiatives to improve economic activity in the most deprived and diverse communities

through community development and project funding to encourage creative and innovative approaches to improving people's economic lives. It has target groups that include the most disadvantaged people in communities with refugees, black and minority ethnic women, black and minority ethnic young people.

- **Location:** Calderdale, UK
- **Policy lever(s):** Roadmaps and strategies, Procurement

Reference: ICC cities survey

Milan: Collaborating to change local food systems

Milan is combating food waste by making the most of its food resources while supporting the regeneration of natural systems. The city has developed circular logistics for the redistribution of surplus food and sustainable ways for organic material to be discarded. So far, the city has worked with local public and private organisations and has seen significant reductions in food waste.

Reference: EMF (2019d)

Every second, the equivalent of 6 garbage trucks of food is wasted globally, and cities could be a major player in addressing this problem.

- **Location:** Milan, Italy
- **Policy lever(s):** Awareness Raising, Public Procurement, Fiscal Measure

Montreal: Transportation equity with green transport

Some issues remain concerning public transit in Montreal, particularly in terms of universal accessibility, safety, social exclusion, and pricing. Over the next few years, Montréal will work with its public transit and shared mobility partners to continue to improve the access to sustainable mobility services in certain underserved and often disadvantaged sectors of the city.

The city will continue to work on the implementation of social pricing for regional public transit. It has already set aside the necessary funds in its budget to reduce public

Reference: ICC cities survey

transit fares for seniors in Montréal by 50% and to offer free transit for children under 12.

Transportation equity in Montréal also includes universal accessibility to public transit for families and people with functional limitations. The development of Montréal's public transit system will improve equitable access to jobs and basic services. Over the next few years, the city and its partners will work to better understand this challenge in order to act more effectively in the most disadvantaged sectors of the city.

- **Location:** Montreal, Canada
- **Policy lever(s):** Urban planning

Paris: A temporary emergency accommodation as well as a project hub

A project located in Paris' Latin Quarter, France, titled "Les Grands Voisins" allows for the temporary emergency accommodation of migrants. It has been active since 2015 and is a supportive and cooperative village with an eco-quarter. It also works on solidarity projects, cultural, and artistic events, all with an ecological dimension.

In a circular economy initiative titled 'Les Ateliers autour de l'Économie Circulaire', allowing for a workshop space where circular solutions can come to fruition. For instance, the 'Biocycle' fights food waste and local food

Reference: ICC cities survey

insecurity by collecting bicycles and food donations from local supermarkets to then distribute it by bike to charities across the community.

Another initiative at Les Grands Voisins is called 'La Ressourcerie Créative', a shop dedicated to reuse and recycling and has transformed more than 70 tonnes of waste since it opened in 2015.

- **Location:** Paris, France
- **Policy lever(s):** Urban planning, Financial support, Convening and partnering, Capacity building.

Reggio Emilia: Striving for social cohesion through urban gardens managed by refugees

As part of their intercultural integration approach, the municipality of Reggio Emilia, Italy, has created social urban gardens managed by refugee associations. These public urban gardens produce local, zero-km products that are shared among the community and allows for social cohesion by involving residents of many different nationalities of origin.

- **Location:** Reggio Emilia, Italy
- **Policy lever(s):** Urban planning, Convening and partnering

Reference: ICC cities survey

São Paulo/Curitiba: Increasing urban mobility and providing affordable housing

São Paulo, Brazil, has launched several interesting initiatives in line with its 2014 urban masterplan. A key focus of this plan is the urban mobility system by reversing car-centric mobility and expanding public and active transport modes. The plan seeks to increase the number of residents living near public transportation to 70% by 2025, with the city allocating 30% of urban development funds toward the project.

The masterplan aims to unlock economic, societal, and environmental opportunities which includes supporting the provision of
Reference: EMF (2019c)

more affordable housing and improving economic opportunities for urban residents.

Likewise, in Brazil, Curitiba stands as the prime example of compact development and urban mobility planning, where it has enhanced the affordability of public transport making it possible for the average low-income family to spend only around 10% of its income on transport, which is comparatively low in Brazil.

- **Location:** São Paulo & Curitiba, Brazil
- **Policy lever(s):** Urban Planning

ACTION GUIDE

Introduction

A sustainable future is one that is inclusive and within planetary boundaries. But such a future will not come about without proactive action - and currently change is happening at a too slow pace.

City governments are in a unique position to drive change, both within their own organisation but also by enabling and collaborating with local businesses, organisations, citizens as well as influencing other tiers of government.

This last chapter outlines some key guidance on how a city can drive sustainable urban development, while both taking social and environmental agendas into account.

Three key approaches to sustainable development

Learning from both the intercultural and circular agenda we can formulate these overarching guidelines for how a city can develop and implement socially and environmentally solutions in the most effective manner.

INTERDISCIPLINARY

While area-specific expertise is needed in policymaking, all areas are as earlier mentioned interrelated. For example, solutions to urban health issues might entail working with urban planning, transport, and education.

COLLABORATIVE & PARTICIPATORY

Following the previous point, one person or one department will never cover all expertise needed. On top of this, a department or city government rarely holds the full authority enabling them to roll out an initiative on their own. Hence, effective development and implementation of sustainability initiatives should always ensure to engage all relevant stakeholders at the right time in order to gather the right information and ensure implementation where other stakeholders' actions are needed - this includes all relevant residents, businesses, institutions and organisations.

EVIDENCE-BASED

Knowing what the situation is now and the effects of possible development paths is crucial to make informed choices. Data-management, research and knowledge sharing is needed to drive effective sustainable development. This might seem like an obvious point, however in a world with a growing number of 'alternative facts' and populism, we see many examples of policies that do not consider actual societal costs and benefits, but are based on feelings of what might be true.

Strategic development question by core city functions

As humans we all have default reaction and thinking patterns, which is defined by the narratives we see the world from. That helps us be efficient in our everyday life but can be a barrier when the aim is to be innovative. Innovative thinking is needed however, as we are seeking to create a world that has not existed before, a sustainable world. Hence, as we identify sustainable solutions to societal needs, _we need to ask the right questions:_

Asking for direction to the train station does not help you figure out how to cook an egg

Below are examples of what those questions could be - both in general and in relation to some of the core functions a city has.

Table 1: Strategic questions that can help identify sustainable solutions from both a circular and intercultural perspective

	Circular economy	Interculturalism
Overarching questions you should start *and* finish with	- What is the **core need** we are seeking to meet? - Does this solution have positive *or* negative **impacts on other areas?** - What solution has the <u>biggest (collected) sustainability impact at the lowest cost</u>?	**Equality and equity:** Does the practice consider the equal access and treatment of the whole population? Does it correct inequalities and avoid discrimination? **Recognition of diversity**: Does the practice consider the different profiles within the population? Does it use diversity as an advantage? **Positive interaction:** Does the practice facilitate positive interaction among citizens? Neighbourhoods?
	Across the different urban functions, we can ask more specific questions, always starting with ***"How might we…"***	
Spatial planning	…ensure maximum utilisation of existing built space? …ensure housing and workspace for everyone (even temporary), in a resource efficient manner? …ensure that the built space reduces travel *and* freight distances and supports low-impact and low-cost transport solutions (walking, cycling, electric cargo bikes etc.)? …ensure adaptation and resilience to climate change?	…ensure that the urban space facilitates positive interaction between people? …ensure that spatial planning processes allow all relevant stakeholders to partake? …ensure that spatial planning takes into consideration all voices, needs, skills and know-how in the city? …ensure that diversity of uses is considered in spatial planning?
Waste management	…support that unnecessary waste is avoided? …ensure that unavoidable waste is recovered and utilised in a valuable manner? …facilitate value retention and circular flows of used products and materials?	… ensure sustainable waste management principles are communicated to and understood by all citizens, taking into consideration different backgrounds, languages, etc.? …ensure consistent participation of social actors and civil society, to secure high-quality services to all residents in all neighbourhoods? …ensure waste management is affordable for all?
Transport	…ensure that mobility is affordable and available to all? …ensure that transport and freight	…ensure that transport is affordable and available to all? …utilise urban transport as a means to

	creates minimal harm and disturbance takes up a minimal amount of the urban space? ● ...support more efficient logistics and freight while minimising negative effects such as pollution, road damage, noise, and accidents?	create positive interaction and urban desegregation? ● ...ensure diversity of needs and possible uses are used to map needs of transportation?
Education & training	● ...ensure that residents gain the skills and insights a circular society needs across *all* skill levels?	● ...ensure all have equal access to education and training? ● ...ensure education and training offerings utilise the diversity advantage of the students?
Business & jobs	● ...facilitate business development and innovation that contributes to societal needs? ● ...ensure the existence of a workforce with the right skills and talent? ● ...minimise the use of virgin material and unnecessary waste production from manufacturing? ● ...facilitate value retention and circular flows of used products and materials? ● ...support local production of local materials that fits a circular system?	● ...ensure that businesses have access to the largest pool of talent possible? ● ...ensure individuals' qualifications, experience and aspirations provide an effective pathway into economic self-sufficiency, active citizenship as well as personal, community and business growth? ● ...support businesses reaping the opportunities of a diverse workforce?
Healthcare	● ...ensure medical equipment is efficiently utilised? ● ...reduce health costs through environmentally friendly behaviour?	● ...ensure all have equal access to health care? ● ...ensure the health system adjusts services to the diverse population? ● ...support sustainable and healthy lifestyle choices across the whole society?
Asset management & procurement	● ...ensure public investments in new urban assets are cost effective from a societal perspective? ● ...ensure assets owned by the city are *fully* utilised? ● ...ensure to maintain existing assets to prolong effective use? ● ...ensure public assets are energy and resource efficient to operate?	● ...support the uptake of diversity advantage and equality policies in businesses?" ● ...ensure inputs from residents are included in budgetary decisions? ● ...ensure all residents have equal access to shared public assets?

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The Intercultural Cities programme (ICC) is a Council of Europe capacity-building programme supporting local authorities design and implement inclusive integration policies. The programme proposes analytical and practical tools to help stakeholders develop institutional capacity ensuring the diversity in society is managed positively through equal enjoyment of rights and opportunities for all, embracing diversity as an asset for societal development, promoting meaningful intercultural interaction, and encouraging participation throughout the public space.

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.