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Report on capacity-building and awareness-raising activities on intercultural integration in Finland

February 2025

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Overview of the capacity building activities under Output-4	2
Intercultural methodology training.....	3
Training session for project experts on the concept and practice of intercultural integration.....	4
Anti-rumours methodology training	6
Training on inclusive communication and effective media interviews	9
Study visit.....	11
Training on equality data and prevention of systemic discrimination	16
Recommendations	17
Appendix - Participants	18

Introduction

Launched in 2022, the European Union and Council of Europe Joint Project, [Building an Inclusive Integration Approach in Finland](#), addressed the capacity building needs of Finnish municipalities and national level actors through a series of trainings conducted under its Output-4.

Based on the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities (ICC) framework and in line with the Finnish Good Relations concept, the project encouraged Finnish authorities to adopt more inclusive and intercultural integration policies. The project also aimed to promote meaningful interaction, equality, and active participation at all levels of society.

The project's implementation reflects Finland's proactive approach to integration. In collaboration with seven municipalities - Hämeenlinna, Kuopio, Oulu, Tampere, Turku, Vaasa, and Vantaa - it provided tailored support to develop local integration strategies that embody the [Finnish Good Relations concept](#) and the [Council of Europe's intercultural integration model](#). These strategies are designed to address key areas such as participation, education, cultural life, urban planning, labour market inclusion, anti-discrimination efforts, and multilingualism. Through trainings and capacity-building activities, municipalities have been empowered to apply an intercultural lens to their work, thereby fostering a more inclusive organisational culture within local authorities.

This report documents the capacity building activities organised by the project based on the needs of the participating municipalities. This report can serve as a guide for future training courses and will provide recommendations for additional capacity building initiatives. The project placed a strong emphasis on peer learning and capacity building, with the aim of creating a foundation for sustainable action beyond the duration of the project.

In this regard, several capacity building activities were planned under Output-4, including intercultural competences training, and workshops on European anti-discrimination standards and anti-rumouring. These activities were delivered in face-to-face and online sessions, and involved representatives of national and local authorities, as well as civil society organisations working with migrants.

Overview of the capacity building activities under Output-4

	Date	Activity	Location	Participants
1	23-24 March 2023	Intercultural methodology training (Activity 4.1)	Online	Local and national level representatives
2	5-6 June 2023	Training session for project experts on the concept and practice of intercultural integration (Activity 4.2)	Helsinki (Finland)	Project Experts
3	24-25 October 2023	Anti-rumours methodology training (Activity 4.1)	Helsinki (Finland)	Local and national representatives
4	11-12 March 2024	Training on inclusive communication and effective media Interviews (Activity 4.1)	Helsinki (Finland)	Representatives of municipalities
5	10-11 April 2024	Study visit (Activity 4.1)	Lisbon, Loures and Cascais (Portugal)	Local and national representatives
6	22 November 2024	Training on equality data and prevention of systemic discrimination (Activity 4.1)	Helsinki (Finland)	Local and national representatives

Intercultural methodology training

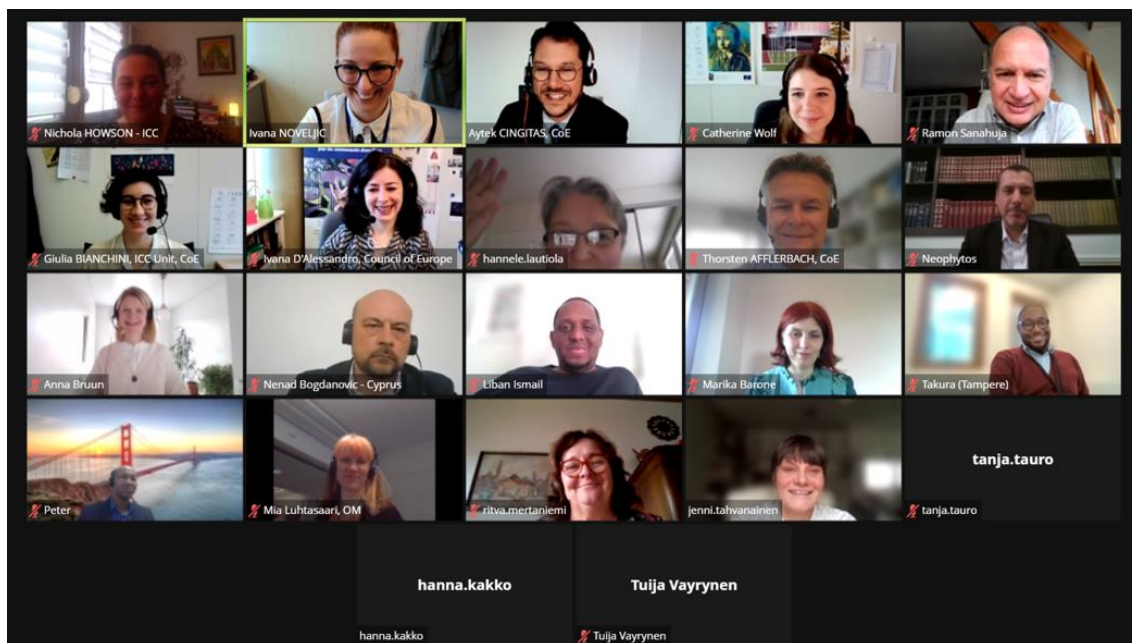
Online, 23-24 March 2023

As the first activity under Output-4, five Finnish municipalities received an online training on 23-24 March 2023.

The well attended training gathered the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, European Commission's DG for Structural Reform Support, the Council of Europe, the participating municipalities of the project (Hämeenlinna, Tampere, Turku, Vaasa and Vantaa), the municipalities of Barcelona, Limassol, Riga and the project experts.

During the training, the participants heard theoretical background presentations as well as practical examples on the concept of good relations in Finland, the Council of Europe's intercultural approach, intercultural competences, municipal local policy development groups, integration of intercultural competences, and the Intercultural Cities (ICC) Index.

There were also peer-learning elements based on the experiences of the municipalities of Barcelona and Limassol in developing an intercultural strategy and an intercultural municipality.



The post-event feedback survey showed a high level of satisfaction, with **100% of respondents** stating that they were very satisfied or satisfied. Equally significant was the fact that **all participants found the training useful for their professional activities**, with 75% finding it very useful and 25% finding it useful for their work.

Training session for project experts on the concept and practice of intercultural integration

Helsinki, 5-6 June 2023

Under Activity 4.2, a training for selected project experts on intercultural integration was organised in Helsinki in June 2023. The purpose of this training, conducted by experts from the Council of Europe (Daniel de Torres and Gemma Pinyol Jimenez), was to provide experts with the skills to assist the participating municipalities in preparing their ICC index, as well as developing and implementing intercultural strategies.

The main objective of the training was to provide participants with both theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of the intercultural approach promoted by the Council of Europe and the Good Relations approach promoted by Finland.

The **methodology** of the training was designed to balance the presentation of theoretical concepts with practical examples, ensuring that participants could engage with both abstract frameworks and real-world applications. A significant part of the sessions was devoted to discussion and group work, encouraging critical thinking, creativity and active collaboration among participants.

The group of experts who participated in the training had a diverse profile, and the fact that the number of participants was relatively small (around 10 participants) allowed them not only to easily understand the concepts of the sessions, but also to make interesting contributions and stimulate discussion among the participants.

The trainers tailored the sessions to the profile and expertise of the participants, ensuring that their knowledge and experience was effectively leveraged. This adaptability made the sessions highly engaging, useful and stimulating, maximising their impact on the participants.

The training began by examining [different models of managing diversity prior to the emergence of interculturalism](#). Participants were encouraged to familiarise themselves with assimilationist and multiculturalist models, analysing their strengths and weaknesses in order to understand the historical context and rationale behind the development of the intercultural approach. This was followed by an in-depth [introduction to interculturalism](#) was provided. This aimed to give participants a good understanding of its core principles and to equip them with the ability to apply an intercultural lens when diagnosing challenges or evaluating policies.



A dedicated session explored the [Good Relations approach](#), with first-hand insights by a representative of the Finnish Ministry of Justice. Participants learned how this approach, which has important similarities with interculturalism, focuses on improving interaction between different population groups while promoting a sense of security, fostering positive attitudes, and encouraging active participation. The comprehensive nature of the approach was highlighted, emphasising its aim to

promote the well-being of all groups in society through activities ranging from local policy planning to neighbourhood-level initiatives.

A significant part of the training focused on translating [theoretical concepts into practical strategies and actions](#) within local policies. This involved exploring key elements such as:

- Political commitment and leadership
- Mainstreaming intercultural principles into different policy areas
- Encouraging the active participation of diverse community members
- Creating inclusive and compelling narratives
- Developing robust evaluation frameworks to measure impact

To support this practical application, the “[Intercultural Cities Step by Step](#)” guide was highlighted as a particularly valuable resource.

The training also addressed the essential [need to develop intercultural skills](#) among key actors. Participants explored the specific competencies needed by politicians, municipal staff, professionals working in different sectors, and civil society leaders to effectively design, implement, and evaluate intercultural policies. Participants were also trained in how to conduct [good diagnostics](#) to identify key challenges and priorities in promoting interculturalism and good relations. The importance of building on existing initiatives and engaging key stakeholders was emphasised. The process of [designing intercultural strategies](#) was also explored in detail, with a focus on elements such as strong leadership, a transversal vision, proactive and critical thinking, broad participation, creativity, flexibility, and robust monitoring and evaluation systems.

Recognising the power of narratives in shaping public perceptions, the training explored strategies for [creating alternative narratives](#) that promote inclusivity and counter populist discourses that can stigmatise certain groups. The [anti-rumour strategy was introduced](#) as a key tool for tackling stereotypes and prejudices that often hinder positive interaction and good relations. The training concluded by addressing the important but often complex issue of [evaluating intercultural policies](#). Participants were introduced to various evaluation tools and frameworks, including the MIPEX indicators at national level, the EC impact indicators, and the ICC Index. These were presented as essential tools for monitoring progress and assessing the overall effectiveness of policies.

Anti-rumours methodology training

Helsinki, 24-25 October 2023

As the anti-rumour approach was one of the priorities identified by the cities in the needs assessment conducted, a training on the anti-rumour approach and methodology was organised for representatives of the Finnish cities and national level stakeholders in October 2023.

The main objective of the training was to provide participants with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to the anti-rumour approach. In particular, it focused on how to design and implement an anti-rumour strategy tailored to their respective cities. The methodology of the training combined presentations of theoretical concepts with practical examples, as well as ample opportunities for discussion and group work. The training, which lasted one and a half days, was divided into several sessions, each covering key topics and developing specific skills.

1. Introduction to key concepts

This session introduced participants to the **fundamental nature, causes, and consequences of prejudice, stereotypes, and rumours**. It explored questions such as: *Why do these phenomena exist? How do they spread?* Participants learned that prejudices, stereotypes, and rumours often result from a combination of social, cognitive, and emotional processes. The session emphasised that addressing these



issues requires more than simply disseminating objective information or data through communication campaigns. Instead, it requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach, involving a wide range of stakeholders and using a variety of strategies and tactics.

2. Strategies to reduce prejudices, stereotypes, and rumours

This session encouraged participants to reflect on **possible actions and strategies they could implement in their cities to challenge prejudice and rumours**. It became clear from these discussions that reducing such prejudice requires efforts in a number of areas, including:

- Education, awareness, and critical thinking
- Addressing systemic inequalities and promoting social justice
- Promoting exposure to diversity and positive interaction
- Developing alternative narratives to counter misinformation
- Proactively challenging prejudices and rumours
- Building empathy through perspective taking
- Facilitating dialogue and debate
- Involving communities through participatory initiatives
- Working with diverse social actors
- Promote media literacy and digital responsibility

- Undertake ongoing research and evaluation

3. The Anti-Rumours approach

This session explored the basic principles of the anti-rumour approach to guide participants in formulating their strategies. The discussion highlighted several key elements, beginning with the approach's foundation in intercultural principles and the recognition that prejudice and rumour spreading are universal human tendencies. The importance of securing political commitment and promoting both collective and individual responsibility was underlined. Participants were encouraged to adopt a multidimensional, long-term strategy to effectively address root causes. The session stressed the importance of engaging rather than blaming the majority population and highlighted the essential role of social cooperation and partnerships. It also advocated a balance between creativity and rigour in order to achieve meaningful results, while stressing the need for both proactive and counterstrategies in tackling rumours and prejudices.

4. The Anti-Rumours Dialogue

Before developing an anti-rumour strategy, participants engaged in introspective exercises to **identify their own biases and consider methods of countering prejudice in everyday interactions with their social circles**. The session focused on identifying effective face-to-face communication techniques to challenge opinions based on prejudice or misinformation. Discussions focused on a range of strategies, including the practice of active listening coupled with thoughtful questioning, making connections by aligning with others' interests or values, and tactfully challenging generalisations without adopting a confrontational stance. Other approaches explored were the use of concise yet powerful data, maintaining a respectful and empathetic tone, sharing personal experiences through emotive storytelling, identifying common ground or neutral topics for discussion, and recognising collaborative efforts by sharing credit.

5. Designing an Anti-Rumours strategy

The final part of the training focused on guiding participants through the process of designing an anti-rumour strategy from diagnosis to evaluation. This practical exercise allowed them to adapt the anti-rumour methodology to the specific context of their cities by working in groups on key phases:

1. **Diagnosis:** Identifying prevalent the prejudices or rumours prevalent in their cities, while recognising existing initiatives and potential allies for collaboration.
2. **Defining objectives:** Setting clear priorities based on the diagnostic findings to establish actionable goals for the strategy.
3. **Communication and narrative building:** Develop alternative narratives based on inclusive criteria while creating a city-wide communication strategy that reaches diverse audiences.
4. **Building an anti-rumours network:** Identifying non-traditional allies who could actively participate in the strategy's implementation.
5. **Training anti-rumours agents:** Identifying who should be trained, for what purpose, and what skills they should acquire after the training. Training was also seen as a way of bringing new stakeholders into the network.

6. **Developing an action plan:** Proposing concrete actions in line with the diagnostic findings while defining indicators to assess whether the objectives are being effectively met.

Overall, the training was a success, with participants appreciating the trainer's knowledge, the well-structured content, and the practical usefulness of the acquired skills. The feedback survey revealed a high level of satisfaction, with **93% of respondents** indicating they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the training, and a similar percentage finding it useful or very useful for their work.

Training on inclusive communication and effective media interviews

Helsinki, 11-12 March 2024

In March 2024, a communication and media training was organised to strengthen the capacity of representatives from six Finnish cities - Vaasa, Tampere, Hameenlinna, Turku, Vantaa and Kuopio - to promote intercultural narratives and counter (online) hate speech. The first day of the training was dedicated to presenting recent research and guidelines on producing intercultural narratives and preparing for hate speech, providing a theoretical counterpart to the practical second day of the training, which focused on interviewing skills. The training also aimed to create a forum for sharing good practices and common challenges among Finnish city officials.

The [eleven participants](#) were mostly communication or integration officers from the six cities. They had not all met before, and some participants were grateful for the opportunity to share knowledge with their “partner” officer from a different department in their own city. However, they formed a relatively homogeneous group with roughly the same level of knowledge and experience. This made the training particularly productive and participatory compared to previous sessions on this topic delivered to international groups in different settings.



The first day of the training began with an introduction to the basics of interculturalism and narrative change, followed by a more participatory session responding to a documentary film that had been distributed for viewing in advance. The focus then shifted to hate speech and the resources/methods for dealing with it, with an emphasis on the role of inclusive and participatory media education as a strategy for creating more resilient and media literate audiences across cultural divides. This was followed by a session on

changing public attitudes through the use of the arts or popular culture/sport, focusing on recent case studies from across Europe. The day ended with another interactive session in which short videos were discussed in relation to the concept of “[post-migrant societies](#)” and asking participants were asked to share their top 3-5 priorities for action on the issues discussed during the day when they return home.

Overall, it was a successful workshop with active and productive participation from the group, who seemed genuinely energised and grateful for the input provided. The trainers found it very helpful to have mutual support throughout, as well as excellent support from the ICC Secretariat.



Training within a single national context proved to be far more effective than training international groups, probably because the right people from the administrations were involved, they felt

comfortable with each other and there were few language barriers given the high level of English in Finland.

The second day of the training focused on equipping participants with the tools, techniques, and confidence needed for effective media interviews in a variety of formats, including TV, radio, and print. Led by trainer Robert Taylor, the session provided a hands-on approach, allowing participants to practice real-life media scenarios and receive constructive feedback.



The day began with introductory remarks, followed by two interview simulations where participants analysed their performance through playback and key takeaways. The morning continued with three promotional interviews, focusing on message delivery and engagement. After lunch, the focus shifted to crisis communication, with participants navigating high-pressure scenarios and refining their responses. Later, “issues” interviews addressed handling challenging questions and maintaining composure. The training concluded with a final review to ensure that participants left with a stronger understanding of media interaction strategies.

The evaluation forms completed by participants showed unanimous satisfaction with the training. 64% of the participants were very satisfied and the remaining 36% were satisfied, giving a [100% satisfaction rate](#). The practical value of the training was also noteworthy, [with all participants finding it useful for their professional work](#). Specifically, 55% of participants found the training very useful and 45% found it useful.

Study visit

Lisbon, Loures and Cascais, 10-11 April 2024

In April 2024, a study visit was organised to Portugal, a country with expertise and experience in intercultural integration and multi-level, multi-stakeholder governance, with municipalities that are members of the Intercultural Cities (ICC) network. The main objective of the visit, which took place in Lisbon, Loures and Cascais, was to gain insight into the practical experience of the Portuguese authorities in implementing multi-level governance and the concept of intercultural integration. In addition, the visit aimed to learn about potential challenges and draw inspiration for the future work of the Finnish cities and the project.

1. AIMA - Portuguese Migration and Asylum Agency

The visit began with a meeting at the [Portuguese Migration and Asylum Agency](#) (AIMA | Agência para a Integração, Migrações e Asilo) in Lisbon, where the group was welcomed by Mário Ribeiro, Director of the Portuguese Department for Migrant Integration (DIM). He presented the participants with a document from the [National Observatory for Migrations](#) containing [statistical data for 2023](#).



Representatives of AIMA then presented the Migratory Policy Board, giving a history of migration policy in Portugal since 1974. They discussed the challenges of creating AIMA in 2023, and the different missions and organisational cultures involved emphasising that interculturalism must be at the heart of all policies, working consciously from exclusion to inclusion, recognising that hostility in a society is often rooted in exclusion. Then, they outlined the process of inclusion in Portugal, from legalisation to access to public services and citizenship rights.

The participants observed AIMA's widespread presence throughout the country, with offices in both rural and urban areas. The representatives explained the opportunity to learn about AIMA's partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs), such as the [CLAIM](#) network and the GIP Migrante network, which strengthen the work of migrant-led organisations as service providers and build trust at the local level. Furthermore, the delegation also heard about [Lisbon's Municipal Migrant Integration Plan](#), developed in partnership with universities and funded by AIMA, and the fact that AIMA was involved in the design of the [Portuguese Diversity Charter](#), which aims to promote diversity and equal opportunities in the workplace and has been endorsed by over 400 employers.



This AIMA's presentation was followed with a presentation of the Board of Services for the promotion of the Portuguese language focusing on the [1st national strategic plan for teaching Portuguese as a foreign language](#), launched in March 2024, which aims to achieve greater social and professional integration of migrants by ensuring access to and mastery of the Portuguese language. Facilitating the

integration of economically disadvantaged people, such as women and girls, and people with disabilities, is a clear priority. The plan involves collaboration with partner organisations, such as the [Portuguese Employment Services](#) (IEFP), and includes indicators to measure its success. It is divided into five axes and includes actions such as mentoring programmes, training for language teachers, and using leisure activities for informal language learning.



Finally, a presentation was made about the Support Office for professional insertion, education and qualification (GAIPESQ), which promotes the employment and economic integration of migrants and minorities, providing support for enrolment in training courses and universities in Lisbon, Porto and Faro. For its part, the Office of Social Affairs and Inclusion (GASI) comprises a team of psychologists, educators and social workers who provide support to vulnerable migrants. Participants learned that GASI aims to support the integration of

migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in areas such as health, education and housing. Its services include assistance with housing applications, social security information, voluntary return assistance in cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration, national registration of foreign minors, support for homeless people and counselling for [applicants for international protection](#).

2. Municipality of Lisbon



During their visit in Lisbon, the participants were welcomed by Miguel Soares, Director of the Department of Social Rights and Inclusion and given an overview of the city's initiatives. The delegation had the opportunity to learn about the [Municipal Council for Interculturality and Citizenship](#) (CMIC), an advisory body uniting Roma communities, various backgrounds and religious communities and civil society organisations and discovered the [Municipal Forum for Interculturalism](#) (FMINT), an annual event that promotes diversity through cultural activities and discussions.

The delegation also had the opportunity to learn about the [Refugee Welcoming Programme](#) (PMAR Lx), funded by AIMA, which aims to provide temporary accommodation and support for refugees, including language classes, assistance in accessing public services, and legal and psychological support. They heard about a phase two scheme where they will be moved into housing. Participants learnt that many LGBT refugees come to the city because of its safer environment.

Finally, the group gained insight into the challenges faced, including systemic racism and

discrimination, as well as the efforts to address these issues through data collection and alternative narratives. They learnt of projects in place, especially the [Gabip Almirante Reis Project](#), which was tailored to assisting migrant communities.

The visit concluded with a tour of the Refugee Welcoming Centre, which provided a first-hand look at the support provided to newcomers.



3. Municipality of Loures

António Marcelino, Municipal Director for Social Cohesion, welcomed the delegation, and Lúcia Santos, Director of the Equality and Social Development Department, highlighted the importance of networking for inclusion. The delegation heard about the decentralised teams working to receive migrants, reflecting the diversity of urban and rural areas.

Thorsten Afflerbach, Head of the Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Division of the Council of Europe, contextualised Portugal's commitment to intercultural integration and emphasised the purpose of the delegation's visit to learn about multi-level governance. They then had the opportunity to hear from Nélson Araújo, Intercultural Intervention and Mediation Coordinator, who presented Loures' [Migrant integration support office](#). In fact, the participants learned that Loures is home to more than 100 nationalities, mainly from Portuguese-speaking African countries and Brazil. To promote coexistence, Loures has developed several services and projects. These include the Migrant Integration Support Office, which helps migrants with practical issues and provides decentralised services. The delegation also heard about future projects, such as mobile services in schools and sports clubs.



Community groups, which facilitate meetings and discussions among local stakeholders committed to community transformation, were also presented. These groups address local problems, assess resources, resolve conflicts, and identify needs for intervention by public entities. The delegation also discovered the Participatory Assemblies, which aims to promote participatory methodologies to address community needs and involve the community in finding solutions developed in partnership with the Portuguese Intercultural Cities Network (RPCI). Indeed, the group had the opportunity to explore the role of the RPCI, including its involvement in projects promoting inclusivity.

Following this, Loures' Migrant Integration Plan was presented as a key framework involving public entities, employers, and civil society. The plan covers ten areas, including welcoming, urbanism, work, training, education, culture, health, civic participation, combating racism, and interreligious dialogue. Participants had an opportunity to learn how the city supports migrant associations through training, employment workshops, and support for cultural events. They heard about educational activities in schools promoting intercultural understanding and the "[Positive Pathways](#)" project, which showcases examples of young people from less privileged backgrounds achieving professional success.

Participants were also informed about the efforts of the [Maria Keil School Cluster](#) to provide differentiated solutions to the diverse needs of students, to combat inequalities and to promote intercultural interaction. Initiatives such as the "Techari Project" and Portuguese classes for adults were presented as successful examples. Finally, the delegation gained insight into the challenges of centralising competences and combating social exclusion in social housing estates. Patricia Santiago, Head of the Department of Equality and Citizenship, addressed the increased difficulties faced by racialised people and efforts to reduce discrimination.



The visit in Loures culminated in a tour of the *Quinta do Conventinho Museum*, where participants saw the exhibition "[Loures on the road to Interculturalism](#)", which showcased the cultural diversity within the municipality.

4. Municipality of Cascais


In Cascais, the participants were warmly welcomed by Councillor Carla Semedo, who emphasised Cascais' inclusive philosophy, stating that "*there are no foreigners*" in the city and that "*every person who arrives is a citizen*".

The delegation discovered that Cascais, home to 143 nationalities, has a special tradition of welcoming migrants. They learnt about the city's focus on promoting human rights, fostering social cohesion and addressing disparities between rich and poor areas, and were informed that the city employs mediators who speak different languages to improve the reception of diversity. The group also had the opportunity to meet the diverse team working on cultural diversity, led by Ana Almada, head of the Rights Promotion Unit. They were introduced to team members from six different nationalities, including four mediators who provide access to information for migrants.



Participants were informed about Cascais' response to recent waves of migration, particularly following the political changes in Brazil and the war in Ukraine. They heard how these demographic changes have benefited the local population and the social security system by increasing the number of young people and people of working age.

The delegation was also presented with several action plans, programmes and activities being implemented by the city:

- 1) [The Cascais Migrant Integration Plan](#): Its evolution since 2016 was presented, and how it was initially funded by national sources, but later continued with the city's own funds. They noted that the plan had been designed and implemented with communities' input. 
- 2) [Intercultural Mediators](#): this programme started in 2009 with Creole-speaking mediators and expanded to a multilingual team. They learned about the training of mediators and the importance of their neutral and empathetic stance.
- 3) [Support to Migrant Associations](#): a financial and logistical support is provided to migrant associations for projects, cultural events, and activities. They learned about the city's efforts to promote intercultural projects between associations.
- 4) [Support for Regularisation](#): local migrant support centres have been run in partnership with migrant associations since 2000, and services have recently been extended to every parish.
- 5) [Migrant Employment Offices \(GIP Migrante\)](#): these offices support the professional integration of migrants and address challenges such as the recognition of foreign qualifications.
- 6) [LOQUI Literacy Programme](#): this initiative aimed to promote literacy and Portuguese language learning among adults, using both formal and informal approaches.
- 7) [Diversity Campaigns](#): participants were introduced to various cultural diversity awareness campaigns, including the "[Find the World in Cascais](#)" project.
- 8) [Refugee Integration](#): finally, the delegation heard about Cascais' efforts to welcome and integrate refugees, particularly in response to the Ukrainian crisis. They heard about the challenges faced and the solutions implemented, including a temporary centre that has housed over 400 people.

Overall, participants noted that the central government sees the inclusion of migrants as a national priority that goes beyond documentation and language to include social, economic and political integration. This holistic approach includes support for entrepreneurship, access to services, funding for migrant-led organisations and support for voter registration. The overall satisfaction with the visit was consistently high, with respondents rating their experience as **4 out of 5**. Similarly, when asked about the usefulness of the information gained during the visit for their personal or municipal work, the participants again awarded a score of **4 out of 5**.

Training on equality data and prevention of systemic discrimination

Helsinki, 22 November 2024

In November 2024, representatives from Finnish municipalities and relevant ministries gathered in Helsinki for the final training session of the project, on data collection and analysis to prevent and address systemic discrimination.

The training began by exploring the [underlying theme of systemic discrimination](#), situating it within the wider phenomenon of structural discrimination with its historical, societal and institutional elements. The issue was defined, and participants explored the challenges they face in addressing it. A framework for action on the issue was presented, with equality data identified as a key tool for implementation. The framework included actions to:

- develop organisational momentum around the issue
- making the issue visible
- address the issue through enabling reporting and equality planning
- prevent the issue through equality reviews and equality impact assessments.

A [broad understanding of equality data](#) was presented, including qualitative and quantitative dimensions, both data and information. The challenges of collecting, analysing and using equality data were then discussed. A framework of approaches to collecting equality data, both qualitative and quantitative, was then presented. This framework included actions to:

- undertake research
- engaging local communities, specific groups and staff in equality data initiatives
- develop institutional equality data initiatives
- developing and implementing an equality data strategy.



The training concluded with a [practical exercise](#) in which participants designed equality data interventions to address systemic discrimination. These interventions included data initiatives involving specific groups experiencing discrimination and municipal staff, the development of a discrimination observatory and the implementation of an equality data strategy. [Participants' knowledge and understanding of systemic discrimination was deepened, new ideas and concepts were introduced](#), and useful perspectives were shared among participants.

Participants noted and appreciated a broader understanding of equality data that included, but went beyond, statistics. There was a shared understanding of the potential of this broader understanding, both in terms of making equality data collection more feasible and in terms of enabling more effective use of equality data in responding to systemic discrimination.

The participant's feedback revealed a high level of satisfaction with the training. [87% of respondents expressed contentment, with 56% reporting being very satisfied and 31% satisfied](#). Only two participants remained neutral, and notably, no dissatisfaction was recorded. The practical value of the training was equally noteworthy, with [88% of participants finding it beneficial for their daily work](#).

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the participants' feedback, the following recommendations and next steps can be proposed to authorities in Finland who wish to continue providing trainings on intercultural integration, inclusion and good relations:

1. Content and methodology

- Include more practical examples and case studies relevant to the local context.
- Include experiential exercises to help participants identify their beliefs and stereotypes.
- Develop tailor-made training programmes for different professional groups (public officials, educators, health professionals, etc.).
- Deepen issues such as:
 - Translating the ICC Index findings into actionable policy.
 - Creating alternative narratives.
 - Developing anti-rumour strategies.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of integration strategies.

2. Participants

- Involve a wider range of professionals (police officers, teachers, journalists, social workers).
- Increase participation of civil society organisations in direct contact with migrant communities.

3. Logistics

- Allocate more time for participants to share experiences and network.
- Ensure earlier access to the venue to identify and resolve technical issues beforehand.
- Include a study visit to a relevant local organisation.
- Consider follow-up sessions to stimulate the application of learning.
- Share safe space guidelines before sessions and address potential biases at the beginning.
- Provide more information/materials to participants before the activities (on the theme, the city/country visited, etc.).

4. Follow-up and implementation

- Organise follow-up sessions for participants to share their reflections and define concrete actions.
- Encourage local councils to give participants the opportunity to present their ideas from the training.
- Implement pilot projects at the municipal level to combat systemic discrimination.
- Establish organisational mechanisms (leadership, working groups, partnerships) to ensure ongoing action on these issues.

Appendix - Participants

	Title	Organisation
Intercultural methodology training – 23-24 March 2023		
1	Integration Coordinator	Municipality of Tampere
2	Integration Coordinator	Municipality of Turku
3	Head of Welfare	Municipality of Turku
4	Integration Manager	Municipality of Vaasa
5	Service Supervisor	Municipality of Vantaa
6	Chef Specialist	Municipality of Hämeenlinna
7	Project Manager	Municipality of Tampere
8	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
9	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
10	Senior Planning Officer	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
11	Policy Officer	European Commission
12	Policy Officer	European Commission
13	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
14	Integration Coordinator	Municipality of Barcelona
15	Integration Coordinator	Municipality of Limassol
16	Project Expert	Council of Europe
17	Head of Division	Council of Europe
18	Head of Unit	Council of Europe
19	Senior Project Officer	Council of Europe
20	Senior Project Officer	Council of Europe
21	Senior Project Officer	Council of Europe
22	Project Officer	Council of Europe
Training session for project experts on the concept and practice of intercultural integration – 5-6 June 2023		
1	Project Expert	Council of Europe
2	Project Expert	Council of Europe
3	Project Expert	Council of Europe
4	Project Expert	Council of Europe
5	Project Expert	Council of Europe
6	Project Expert	Council of Europe
7	Project Expert	Council of Europe
8	Project Expert	Council of Europe
9	Project Expert	Council of Europe
10	Member of the board	ETNO
Anti-rumours methodology training – 24-25 October 2023		
1	Development manager	City of Kuopio
2	Coordinator for employment services	City of Kuopio
3	Coordinator	City of Vaasa
4	Coordinator for non-discrimination	City of Tampere
5	Senior Specialist	City of Tampere
6	Director	City of Hämeenlinna
7	Chief Specialist	City of Hämeenlinna

8	Communication designer	City of Turku
9	Communications specialist	City of Turku
10	Head of Multicultural Affairs	City of Vantaa
11	Partnership Expert	City of Vantaa
12	Project Manager	Ministry of Justice
13	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
14	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
15	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
16	Senior Planning Officer	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
Training on inclusive communication and effective media interviews – 11-12 March 2024		
1	Senior communications specialist	City of Vaasa
2	Internal communications specialist	City of Vaasa
3	Director of Talent Attraction and Migration	City of Tampere
4	Director of Communications	City of Tampere
5	Communications Specialist	City of Hämeenlinna
6	Integration Expert	City of Hämeenlinna
7	Communications planner	City of Turku
8	Coordinator for Immigration Services	City of Turku
9	Head of Multicultural Affairs	City of Vantaa
10	Communications Departments representative	City of Vantaa
11	Communications Specialist	City of Kuopio
Study visit – 10-11 April 2024		
1	Deputy Mayor	Municipality of Kuopio
2	Deputy Mayor	Municipality of Tampere
3	Deputy Mayor	Municipality of Turku
4	Deputy Mayor	Municipality of Vaasa
5	Deputy Mayor	Municipality of Vantaa
6	Director of Synergy	Municipality of Hämeenlinna
7	Head of Unit - Integration services	Municipality of Hämeenlinna
8	Immigration coordinator	Municipality of Kuopio
9	Service manager	Municipality of Tampere
10	Immigration Coordinator	Municipality of Turku
11	Welfare Director	Municipality of Vaasa
12	Head of Multicultural Affairs	Municipality of Vantaa
13	Senior Advisor	Ministry of Justice
14	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
15	Labour Migration and Integration Unit	Ministry of Economic Affairs and
16	Senior Planning Officer	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
17	Policy Officer	DG REFORM - European Commission
Training on equality data and prevention of systemic discrimination – 22 November 2024		
1	Planning Officer	Municipality of Oulu
2	Planning Officer – Education and Culture	Municipality of Oulu

3	Welfare coordinator	Municipality of Kuopio
4	Business intelligence expert	Municipality of Kuopio
5	Senior Planning Officer	Municipality of Hämeenlinna
6	Participation coordinator	Municipality of Hämeenlinna
7	Project Manager	Municipality of Vantaa
8	Service Supervisor	Municipality of Vantaa
9	Welfare Expert	Municipality of Vaasa
10	Project Manager	Municipality of Vaasa
11	Project coordinator	Municipality of Turku
12	Spearhead Manager	Municipality of Turku
13	Equality Coordinator	Municipality of Tampere
14	Senior Specialist	Municipality of Tampere
15	Senior Planning Officer	ELY-Keskus
16	Senior Planning Officer	ELY-Keskus
17	Adjunct Professor of Sociology	University of Helsinki
18	Project Expert	Council of Europe
19	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
20	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice
21	Senior Specialist	Ministry of Justice