MODEL FRAMEWORK FOR AN INTERCULTURAL INTEGRATION STRATEGY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Intercultural integration strategies: managing diversity as an opportunity

STEERING COMMITTEE
ON ANTI-DISCRIMINATION,
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (CDADI)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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Modèle de cadre pour une stratégie d'intégration interculturelle au niveau national

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Contents

Executive summary

Migrant and refugee integration policies pertain to a range of policy areas and levels of government, and their drafting requires systematic consultation and co-ordination among all relevant stakeholders. Their success depends on embedding them in diversity-management policies which value diversity as a resource, promote diversity in institutions and in residential and public spaces, and reduce segregation in social, cultural, economic and political life. Ultimately, the success of integration policies depends on their ability to achieve effective inclusion by promoting ownership and active engagement of state institutions, regional and local authorities, and civil society.

The intercultural integration model promoted by the Council of Europe contains all these elements[1] and while this document specifically addresses migrant integration, it should be noted that the intercultural integration approach here described is equally relevant for the integration of other people with different backgrounds, and for the smooth adaptation of the whole society to its increasingly diverse fabric.

This model policy framework has been developed through multilevel dialogue and aims to serve as a basis for national intercultural integration strategies that are holistic, based on human rights standards, underpinned by a realistic understanding of cross-border mobility and its impact, and aware of the human, social and economic cost of non-integration. It also draws on the positive results of those local authorities and member states that have applied the intercultural integration approach as a means to achieve real inclusion at the local level.

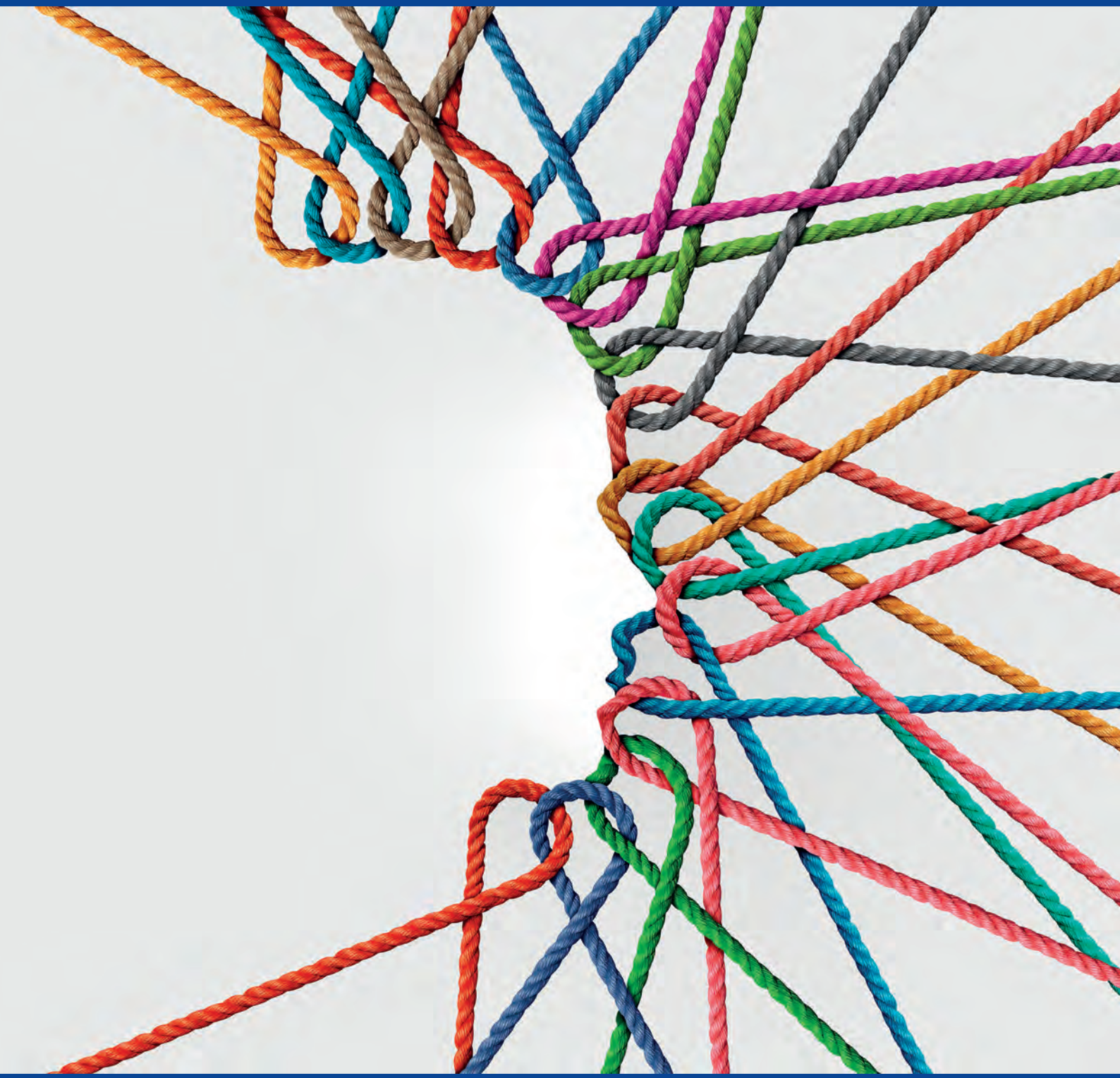
This model policy framework is therefore a tool for practitioners and policy makers working in the field of diversity and inclusion. It offers inspiration from leading practice collected through multilevel dialogue involving Council of Europe member states and cities which have adopted the intercultural integration approach and contribute to greater equality and cohesion, in line with relevant Council of Europe standards. It is conceived as a flexible tool that practitioners should be able to adapt to the specificities of their legal and administrative settings.

Premise

This model policy framework is a tool for practitioners and policy makers working in the field of diversity and inclusion. It has been developed through multilevel dialogue and draws on the positive results of the local authorities[2] and member states[3] that have applied the intercultural integration approach as a means to achieve real inclusion at the local level. It is conceived as a flexible tool that practitioners should be able to adapt to the specificities of their legal and administrative settings.

This model policy framework is not intended to address or affect the legal status of migrants residing in a territory of a member state, or the conditions for legal entry to the territory, or any other national legal provision concerning the management of migration and border control.

1. See: Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration. At the adoption of this recommendation by the Committee of Ministers, the Russian Federation made a statement indicating, *inter alia*, that the recommendation is not a consensual document and does not reflect a common approach of all member states, and that the Russian Federation reserves the right to decide the extent of its implementation.
2. See: Intercultural Cities Index reports by city.
3. See: the review report on the implementation of the aforementioned recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 (document CDADI(2021)5).



Introduction

In the context of lasting geopolitical instability, public anxieties over migration and diversity have been steadily growing. At the same time, discrimination continues to affect large numbers of ethnic minorities, immigrants and children of immigrants in the EU and beyond.[4]

As a result, integration policies often fail to live up to European human rights standards, including those related to social cohesion, equality and anti-discrimination,[5] and create challenges in relation to the rule of law. Effective integration is often perceived as a pull factor in the absence of agreed asylum and border policies and harmonised approaches to integration across the continent.

And yet, lessons from absent or deficient integration policies in the past show that the price to pay in terms of eroded cohesion and wasted talent can be serious: "If we fail to devise policies and strategies to promote the inclusion of refugees and migrants with the right to remain in our societies, we will create entirely avoidable problems for ourselves in the future."[6] It is "time for Europe to get migrant integration right"[7] by putting it on a solid human rights basis,[8] and making it an integral element of good governance.[9]

Migrant and refugee integration policies pertain to a range of policy areas and levels of government, and their development is a complex and delicate process which requires systematic consultation and co-ordination among all relevant stakeholders. Their success ultimately depends on their ability to achieve effective inclusion by promoting ownership and active engagement of state institutions, regional and local authorities, and civil society. The success of integration policies also depends on embedding them in diversity-management policies which value diversity as a resource, promote diversity in institutions and in residential and public spaces and reduce segregation. All these elements constitute the intercultural integration model promoted by the Council of Europe, which has been successfully tested by regions and cities across Europe and beyond and is increasingly informing state policies.

4. See: *Together in the EU: promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants*, report of the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), March 2017. See also Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II) – Main results, FRA (2017), and the following relevant reports: Being Black in the EU, FRA (2018), Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Muslims – Selected findings, FRA (2017), Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Migrant women – Selected findings, FRA (2019). All country data can also be found on FRA's interactive data explorer.
5. These include, but are not limited to, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the European Social Charter and the Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Political Life at Local Level.
6. Ambassador Tomáš Boček, "First report on the activities of the Secretary General's Special Representative on Migration and Refugees", Council of Europe, February 2018, p. 21.
7. "Time for Europe to get migrant integration right", issue paper published by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe Publishing, May 2016.
8. "Human rights in culturally diverse societies", guidelines adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 2 March 2016.
9. See: the Council of Europe's 12 Principles of Good Governance. See also *The spirit level* research, by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, which demonstrates across a range of indicators that "reducing inequality is the best way of improving the quality of the social environment and so the real quality of life for all of us".

Integration policies should adopt a balanced and comprehensive approach between the responsibilities of migrants and of societies.

On the one hand, integration policies focus on the responsibility of migrants to integrate in their new country of residence. They provide services to migrants to encourage and help them learn the language, acquire new qualifications and understand the social and cultural environment in their new country of residence.

On the other hand, in order to ensure that migrants become an integral and productive part of the community, emphasis needs to be also put on the assets that migrants bring, and on harnessing their talents, skills and knowledge (including languages) for their own and the communities' benefit. Besides, integration policies should create spaces and occasions for meaningful intercultural interaction as a way to ensure sense of belonging, active participation and peaceful intercultural coexistence. Access to rights should be the starting point, not the end point of integration – not only because it is a matter of equality and non-discrimination, but also because research shows that full access to their existing rights soon after arrival actually accelerates integration.[10]

New generation integration policies should move forward from labelling and categorising citizens, and rather focus on individual assets and empowerment, which can contribute to the well-being of the whole society.

Integration strategies must prioritise an absolute guarantee of human dignity, while maintaining coordination with public policies for internal security and with external and foreign affairs policies.

This model policy framework has been developed through multilevel dialogue and is underpinned by a review of existing national and local integration strategies and exchanges with policy officials from Council of Europe member states and Intercultural Cities. It is also based on relevant international standards and draws on the established positive results of intercultural integration[11] approaches as a means to achieve real inclusion at the local level.

The purpose of the present model policy framework is to serve as a basis for national intercultural integration strategies that are holistic, based on human rights standards, underpinned by a realistic understanding of cross-border mobility and its impact, and aware of the human, social and economic cost of non-integration. It is therefore to be considered as a tool for practitioners and policy makers working in the field of diversity and inclusion. It offers inspiration from leading practice collected through multilevel dialogue involving Council of Europe member states and cities which have adopted the intercultural integration approach and contribute to greater equality and cohesion, in line with relevant Council of Europe standards. It is conceived as a flexible tool that practitioners should be able to adapt to the specificities of their legal and administrative settings.

While this model policy framework specifically addresses migrant integration, it should be noted that the intercultural integration approach is equally relevant for the integration of other people from different backgrounds and for the smooth adaptation of society to its increasingly diverse fabric. Therefore, while migrants and refugees are the primary targets of this document, the authorities in charge of the drawing up of a national intercultural integration strategy could equally consider those citizens who have been living in the country for two or more generations and are still perceived as foreigners on the grounds of their national or ethnic origin, skin colour or religion.

As this document makes clear, shorthand phrases such as "migrant/refugee integration" should not be misinterpreted as implying that the onus of integration falls only on newcomers and members of minority communities or that intercultural integration strategies are targeted solely at them. On the contrary, a key innovation in the intercultural approach to diversity management which the Council of Europe has led has been to recognise that this is a challenge for the whole of society, including the state and host community – and, indeed, that all of society stands to benefit from the mutual enrichment entailed.[12]

In the same line, this document refers to intercultural integration as a policy model targeting society as a whole through a multilevel, multistakeholder effort of "integration of diverse societies",[13] while inclusion is intended as the outcome of intercultural integration policies, namely the recognition of everyone's equal dignity, identity, contribution and access to resources and opportunities.

Therefore, this model policy framework does not focus on rights and services which newcomers are or should be entitled to, depending on their status (the

10. A number of recent studies by the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) of ETH Zurich and Stanford University demonstrate that gaining citizenship leads to a sizeable increase in income among marginalised immigrants, and that naturalisation promotes their long-term social and political integration (https://pp.ethz.ch/research/citizenship.html).
11. See: Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration.
12. *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: "Living together as equals in dignity"*, Council of Europe, 2008.
13. Cf. Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, HCNM Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies, 2012.

so-called integration services[14]). Instead, it clarifies how public institutions, regulations and policies in all areas can enable migrant integration by becoming more inclusive. By adapting to a context of cultural and social diversity, they can help build community cohesion and social trust, and maximise the benefits of diversity for society as a whole.

The document further outlines the requirements which stem from the standards and values that Council of Europe member states abide by and which should underpin intercultural integration strategies. It also provides a menu of policy measures which can help meet these requirements. In addition, it outlines the framework, which can ensure that an integration strategy is focused, evidence-based and effective in achieving inclusion.

While the concept and practice of intercultural integration has been led by the Council of Europe, the management of cultural diversity in a globalised, individualised world is of course of interest on all continents (as reflected in the spread of Intercultural Cities membership to them all). It is true that the UN Agenda 2030, which was promulgated in 2015 and identified 17 Sustainable Development Goals, is focused on socio-economic and ecological concerns, with the issue of migration only appearing in Goal 10 "Reduce inequality within and between countries": under the subheading of facilitating "planned and well-managed migration". Yet, two specific objectives under Goal 10 are of particular relevance:

> 10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status;
>
> 10.3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

Besides, the preamble makes clear: "We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence." And it recognises that without this sustainable development is impossible.

More specific commitments at UN level are contained in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration agreed in 2018. Its objectives include:

- provide access to basic services for migrants;
- empower migrants and societies to realise full inclusion and social cohesion;
- eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration;
- invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences.

Developing national intercultural integration plans will thus assist Council of Europe member states in meeting their UN commitments and support the efforts of those countries which are already engaged in the multilevel reshaping of their governance in the field of migration. Conversely, as with the worldwide diffusion of the Intercultural Cities network, such innovations on the European continent may well prove of wider global interest as examples of good practice.

Benefits of well-managed migration and integration policies[15]

There is a compelling and solid body of knowledge and research bringing evidence of the numerous advantages of well-managed migration and integration policies. At the same time, attention should be given to potential drawbacks and disadvantages of mismanaged migration and ineffective integration policies.[16]

Migrants have the potential to increase workforces and fill in niches in both fast-growing and declining business sectors; they contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive and they boost the working-age population. In general, they have positive effects on international trade, technological progress and investments in their countries of origin. In high-income areas such as Europe, migrants boost GDP growth over the long term, provided they are rapidly integrated into the job market. Less obvious, it has also been proved that they may have a positive impact on wages when their skills complement those of existing workers.[17]

14. See: Carrera S. and Vankova Z. (2019), "Human rights aspects of immigrant and refugee integration policies: a comparative assessment in selected Council of Europe member states", issue paper published by the Special Representative of the Secretary General on migrants and refugees.

15. This section aims at providing a quick overview of the numerous studies that show the positive impact of diversity under the conditions of well-managed migration and integration policies. It should not be considered as exhaustive. The benefits of migration and diversity are not automatic and may depend on several factors.

16. See: "The effects of immigration in developed countries: insights from recent economic research", CEPII Policy Brief, April 2018.

17. See: Migration Policy Debates, OECD, May 2014, and "The effects economic integration of migrants have on the economy of host countries", by Evert-jan Quak, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), 5 April 2019.

Research also shows that although successful integration policies are expensive in the short term, their social, economic and fiscal benefits may significantly outweigh the short-term integration costs.[18]

A very thorough piece of research on "migrants' role in enhancing the economic development of host countries"[19] assessed and modelled the impact of migration in EU member states in the periods 2000-15 and 2000-19. The main findings suggest that good migration policies which boost education, access to the job market and ultimately migrant inclusion can play "a decisive role in enhancing economic welfare for host countries". This is also confirmed by research published in the World Economic Outlook in April 2020 on the macroeconomic effects of global migration.[20] The main policy conclusions are that integration policies can magnify the positive macroeconomic effects of immigration and that international co-operation is needed to address refugee migration.

Another macroeconomic study covering the last 30 years in Europe confirms that migration has had a positive effect on the economy.[21]

The positive potential of diversity has also been investigated by numerous research studies; there is evidence that diversity can boost financial services,[22] make workers more productive,[23] people happier[24] and neighbourhoods safer.[25] Finally, multilingualism is also widely recognised as a resource in economic terms and in relation to fostering cohesion and enriching cultural life.[26]

18. See for instance "Long-term social, economic and fiscal effects of immigration into the EU: the role of the integration policy", JRC Technical Reports, d'Artis Kancs and Patrizio Lecca, 2017. Other research studies show that immigration had positive effects for 22 of the OECD wealthier economies.
19. See: Noja G. G., Cristea S. M., Yüksel A., Pânzaru C. and Dracea R. M. (2018), "Migrants' role in enhancing the economic development of host countries: empirical evidence from Europe".
20. See: *World economic outlook: the great lockdown*, Chapter 4: The macroeconomic effects of global migration, April 2020.
21. d'Albis H., Boubtane E. and Coulibaly D. (2018), "Macroeconomic evidence suggests that asylum seekers are not a 'burden' for Western European countries", *Science Advances* Vol. 4, No. 6.
22. See: *The other diversity dividend*, Harvard Business Review, by Paul Gompers and Silpa Kovvali, 2018.
23. See: *Spillovers from immigrant diversity in cities*, by Abigail Cooke and Thomas Kemeny, 2015.
24. See: *Do individuals smile more in diverse social company?*, by Vivek K. Singh and Saket Hedge (Rutgers University) and Akanksha Atreay (University of Massachusetts).
25. See: "There's a myth that white people are safer among other whites", *Yes! magazine*, by Mike Males, 2017.
26. See: "Native English speakers being outperformed at GCSE level by those who speak it as second language", *London Evening Standard*, 2018.

Key definitions for a common understanding of the terminology used in this document[27]

Because of the relative novelty of the intercultural approach and because some of the associated issues have become politically polarising, it is useful to clarify the language involved. The following definitions are not offered as "tablets of stone" but to facilitate understanding.

Migrant: At international level, no universally accepted definition for "migrant" exists. The United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM) has developed a definition for its own purposes that is not meant to imply or create any new legal category. According to that definition, migrant is an "umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined, such as smuggled migrants; and those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students."[28] In the past, migration tended to be a once-and-for-all move whereby the migrant lost touch with their country of origin and attempted to make a home for themselves in their country of adoption. In a more globalised and individualised world, migration is often better thought of as mobility: it may involve more than one move and need not imply, given today's technology, becoming cut off from family.[29]

Refugee: The refugee definition can be found in Article 1.A of the 1951 Refugee Convention and regional refugee instruments (including the Organisation of African Unity or the 1984 Cartagena Declaration), as well as UNHCR's statute:[30] A refugee is someone who, "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it".

27. See also the ICC key terminology.
28. See: International Organization for Migration, *Glossary on migration*, IML Series No. 34, 2019, available here.
29. Krings T., Moriarty E., Wickham J., Bobek A. and Salamońska J. (2013), *New mobilities in Europe: Polish migration to Ireland post-2004*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
30. Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.

States have a mandatory requirement to accept a well-founded claim for refugee status from any individual seeking asylum at or after entry, under the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol.[31] In particular, they are obliged to comply with the principle of *non-refoulement*, by receiving and assessing such claims on their individual merits, rather than turning away asylum seekers at their borders.[32]

Intercultural integration: The result of a two-way process based on Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 on intercultural integration and on the Intercultural Cities policy model, consisting in the effective, positive and sustainable management of diversity, on the basis of reciprocal and symmetrical recognition, under an overarching human rights framework.[33] In 2011 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe affirmed that it was "an interactive process based upon mutual willingness to adapt of both migrants and the receiving society", calling on member states to foster opportunities for diverse and positive interactions.[34] The bi-directional, whole-community essence of integration is embedded in the intercultural integration concept. Furthermore, according to the Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008) "[i]mmigrants should, as everybody else, abide by the laws and respect the basic values of European societies and their cultural heritage".

It is important to note that intercultural integration is complementary to other measures, including those seeking to support the social, economic and cultural integration of migrants to their new country of residence. When developing such measures, some states take into account other aspects such as the needs of socio-economic and demographic development, increasing the quality of life of their populations, ensuring security, minimising unemployment for all members of the population, maintaining inter-ethnic and interreligious peace, and promoting and preserving the cultures, languages and heritage of European societies.

Inclusion: Inclusion is the goal of intercultural integration policies that value diversity and aim to afford equal rights and opportunities by creating conditions for the full and active participation of every member of society based on a common set of values, a shared sense of belonging to the city/community, and a pluralist local identity.

Diversity: Historically in Europe, diversity was largely associated with autochthonous or otherwise long-standing communities, such as members of national minorities, Jews or Roma and Travellers.[35] They are protected under UN[36] and Council of Europe conventions[37] as "persons belonging to" such communities, to ensure that such an affiliation is by self-determination, as well as to protect individuals against discrimination, assimilation and oppression. This rich cultural patrimony has been overlain by post-war cross-border migration, thanks to, among other things, freedom of movement within the EU single market and refugee arrivals. And diversity today embraces issues around gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, age, disability status and so on. The result is a "superdiversity", which defies simple and stereotypical categorisations. Cultural identities are at the core of this document. But the advantage of the intercultural approach is that because it focuses on individual rights rather than allocating them to a group, it cross-sects and synergises with policies focusing on other diversity issues.

Equality: The Council of Europe was established in 1949 to promote the universal norms of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. They are all premised on the idea that the individual is the holder of rights and that every individual should enjoy equality of human dignity. Intercultural integration as a policy approach combats all forms of discrimination and intolerance, especially hate crime, not just by judicial and non-judicial redress, awareness raising and public education, but also by promoting the "diversity

31. See: www.unhcr.org/uk/1951-refugee-convention.html.
32. It is worth noting that the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons establishes the legal definition for stateless persons as individuals who are not considered citizens or nationals under the operation of the laws of any country. A person's citizenship and nationality may be determined based on the laws of a country where an individual is born or where her/his parents were born. A person can also lose citizenship and nationality in a number of ways, including when a country ceases to exist or a country adopts nationality laws that discriminate against certain groups. See for reference: www.unhcr.org/statelessness.html.
33. See also the EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027: "The integration process involves the host society, which should create the opportunities for the immigrants' full economic, social, cultural, and political participation. It also involves adaptation by migrants who all have rights and responsibilities in relation to their new country of residence"; and Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation on interactions between migrants and receiving societies (CM/Rec(2011)1) affirming that integration is "an interactive process based upon mutual willingness to adapt of both migrants and the receiving society", and calling on member states to foster opportunities for diverse and positive interactions.
34. See: Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)1 on interactions between migrants and receiving societies.
35. The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "Gens du voyage", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.
36. See the 1992 Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.
37. See the 1994 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

advantage" by ensuring that the talents of all members of society – including those who may otherwise find themselves at the margins – are fully tapped.

Interaction: Interaction, on the basis of equality, is a defining feature of the intercultural approach to integration. Some models assume that newcomers will assimilate themselves into a prevailing ethos or keep apart from the host community – neither of which fosters inclusion or cohesion. Supported by contact theory, interaction is about creating conditions for positive and constructive everyday encounters across people of different backgrounds and lifestyles in a climate of mutual respect, understanding and co-operation. To be meaningful, intercultural integration plans must therefore translate on to the street and into the workplace, the school and so on, where individuals engage in daily encounters.

Multilevel governance: As discussed in more detail below, intercultural integration plans must embrace not only central government but also regional and local authorities and civil society organisations. They must have a bottom-up element as well and imply the setting up of participatory processes that allows for policy co-creation, co-operation and co-ordination among all relevant public authorities, at all levels of governance, and – ideally – with all relevant stakeholders, in areas of shared competence or common interest. Indeed, the main source of good practice to date in intercultural integration has been the municipalities involved in the Intercultural Cities programme, because of their closeness to citizens' daily lives. Yet, multilevel governance of diversity and migration should be sought to ensure policy consistency, knowledge and resources sharing, best-practice exchange and mutual learning. However, the way in which multilevel governance is established may vary greatly from one country to another.

Participation: The vertical process of multilevel governance must be complemented by a horizontal process of public participation, in the design, delivery and evaluation of intercultural integration plans, in line with the wider Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation on the participation of citizens in local public life.[38] Such participation, by individuals and through non-governmental organisations, is essential to match the complexity of the "diversity of diversity", to engender a sense of stakeholding, especially on the part of individuals and organisations of minority backgrounds, and to gain widespread public buy-in to intercultural integration plans.

Intersectionality: The concept of intersectionality[39] recognises that each individual has a complex identity which makes them unique.[40] It is highly unlikely, therefore, that they will think of themselves as defined entirely by one aspect of their make-up. An individual from a minority background may experience exclusion or stigmatisation by their ethnicity, their gender, their perceived sexual orientation or some combination of these. More positively, this complexity of identity allows identifications to be made with other individuals – for example on gender grounds – which cross social dividing lines. This is essential if "solidarity among strangers", in the name of a common humanity which intercultural integration holds out as both possible and desirable, is to be realised. It is particularly important in this context that public authorities avoid homogenising minority communities and ignore their internal diversity. The European Institute for Gender Equality defines intersectionality as an "analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination".[41] This definition applies equally to any form of discrimination.

Finally, in some countries policy documents or legislation may refer to ethnic or cultural communities as members of the overall population who share diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious features, while also showing solidarity and respect for the common values and traditions of the majority population. It should be emphasised though that intercultural integration does not consider communities themselves as targets of policies: it rather targets societies as actors of integration and seeks to empower individuals with their multifaceted and evolving identities to actively participate in all spheres of society.

Multiculturalism: This is another theoretical and policy model that recognises the value of diversity for society, as well as the importance of culture and identities in the integration process, particularly those of minority groups. It creates the conditions for cultural practice and cultural heritage transmission by the majority and minority populations, in an effort to promote equality and non-discrimination. However, by overemphasising differences, and categorising groups by ethnicity, race or religion, it fails to prevent segregation of diverse cultural groups and to build cross-cultural trust and cohesion.

38. See: https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016807954c3. The recommendation defines "citizen" as "any person (including, where appropriate, foreign residents) belonging to a local community".

39. The term "intersectionality" was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American law professor and a leading authority in the area of civil rights, Black feminist legal theory, and race, racism and the law. Her work has been foundational in the field of critical race theory, another of the terms that she coined.

40. See: Maalouf A. (2000), *On identity*, Vintage, New York.

41. https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1263.

Integration measures for migrants (sometimes also called adaptation measures, or harmonisation measures, or introductory programmes): measures to support the "adaptation by migrants who all have rights and responsibilities in relation to their new country of residence", thus enabling them to take active part in all areas of life in society and contributing to their inclusion and to community cohesion.[42]

42. See: EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027.

Section I

Rationale and goals of an intercultural integration strategy

This document suggests a framework of principles and goals as well as a range of policy actions as a basis for holistic, integrated multilevel inclusive policies. Such policies would be a means of achieving, *inter alia,* the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (in particular Goal 10: Reduced inequalities and Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities), the UN 2030 Agenda and the goals of the Global Compacts for Migration and for Refugees.

What is intercultural integration?

Intercultural integration is a policy concept based on the ideas and practice of interculturalism as outlined in Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration. This international standard recognises "that a solid body of research both in Europe and worldwide has demonstrated the value of diversity for human and social development and cohesion, economic growth, productivity, creativity and innovation and that these benefits of diversity can only be realised on condition that adequate policies are in place to prevent conflict and foster equal opportunities and social cohesion". It emphasises that novel approaches to diversity management can "remedy shortcomings of past policies and enable the realisation of the advantages of diversity", and that one such approach – intercultural integration – has been developed through a process of structured policy review, peer learning and evaluation in the context of the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities programme.

The recommendation draws upon the experience of Intercultural Cities and builds upon a wide range of Council of Europe instruments and standards in the fields of cultural diversity, the protection of minority cultures, intercultural competence of public services, the accommodation of the expressions of cultural diversity in policy making, institutional practice including multilingualism, intercultural education, the role of media in fostering a culture of recognition and reciprocity, and the interaction between migrants and receiving societies. The achievement of equality outcomes in the situation and experience of different groups in society, including the fight against racism and xenophobia and the prevention of hate speech, is also taken into account. Furthermore, the recommendation acknowledges that "cities are at the front line of integration and diversity management, are laboratories for policy innovation and that they make an important contribution to social cohesion by adopting an intercultural approach to integration and diversity management". Finally, the recommendation invites Council of Europe member states to mainstream intercultural integration on their territory.

Besides, compelling research evidence[43] demonstrates the value of an intercultural approach to diversity policies for community cohesion and good governance.

Why intercultural integration?

A range of studies have demonstrated that cities which adopt intercultural integration policies give better outcomes in terms of residents' perceptions of cohesion, trust in the administration, safety, quality of services, welfare, good governance and economic growth. Intercultural integration can help national-level policies achieve a shift towards a more inclusive direction.

The underlying principles of intercultural integration are equality, acknowledgement of diversity, support for positive interaction and active citizenship and participation. Understood as policy goals, these principles help address the full range of diversity challenges and maximise the impact of policy and grass-roots action in the field of equality. They also help design a comprehensive approach to diversity and inclusion in general – not just in relation to migrant integration – by applying to other diversity-related policy areas with which interculturalism already intersect, such as human rights implementation, anti-discrimination, gender equality, and equality with regard to sexual orientation.

43. Migration Policy Group (2016), "How the Intercultural integration approach leads to a better quality of life in diverse cities".

When designing integration policies, national authorities should keep in mind that the goal of such policies is to enable active citizenship and participation, in particular for people of migrant origins; ensure respect for their fundamental rights and the equality and dignity of all members of society; and to help build societies which are inclusive, cohesive and prosperous, thanks to the benefits of diversity.

The key operational elements of intercultural integration under a human rights and equality framework are: fostering a pluralist common identity, through a public discourse which recognises the value of diversity and makes explicit equality, democracy and the rule of law as foundational values for all; power sharing between people of different backgrounds but also between public institutions and civil society; fostering cultural mixing and positive interaction in institutions and the public space; active participation and co-creation of public policies; and making institutions culturally competent, receptive to innovation through diverse inputs, as well as resilient and creative with regard to cultural conflict.

These elements take intercultural integration beyond the classical approach of anti-discrimination: the approach outlined requires active intervention by public authorities to demarginalise communities (or prevent marginalisation), seeking to ensure a cultural mix in all areas and at all levels in public institutions and to develop a culture of diversity and openness to change, not only to ensure equal opportunities but as a source of dynamism, innovation, adaptability and competitive advantage. Intercultural integration deals with diversity in the spirit of win-win, as a potential to be realised, not as a problem to be minimised. It aims at building more cohesive and inclusive societies by promoting mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, thus also helping to prevent the spread of all forms of extremist ideologies and radicalisation that can lead to violence.[44]

The content of any intercultural integration strategy will of course be bespoke – not just because states and territories differ in their history, demography, constitutional and institutional set-up and the challenges they face, but also because if the preparation of the strategy is genuinely evidence-based and participative it will embrace those country-specific inputs.

Nevertheless, any intercultural integration strategy should:

- be founded on the **universal norms** which the Council of Europe was established to promote – democracy, human rights and the rule of law – and comply with those conventions, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the Revised European Social Charter,[45] the Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level,[46] and many relevant others, which member states have ratified. Such a strategy must thus embody the recognition of the equality of human dignity of all individuals within the society or present on its territory, regardless of their legal status;[47]
- be **grounded in an understanding of human mobility** as a reality and a projection of the country's population changes in a medium-term perspective. It should also consider the assumption, based on historical evidence, that those who have moved to another country are potentially there to stay.[48] Such a projection should take into account global population movements, including remigration and return migration of nationals, asylum, family reunion and labour migration. It should also take into consideration the capacity of the state to ensure access to services and rights for newcomers, and to facilitate social integration and positive intercultural relations. This is necessary to reassure citizens that economic and cultural processes related to population dynamics are managed best in the common interest, with due regard to international commitments and moral imperatives;
- be inspired by **shared responsibility**: this is a multistranded approach in which public institutions and all citizens should participate, acknowledging challenges to be addressed at individual, social and collective levels. Sharing responsibility means a multiple focus on migrants' own rights and duties to make an effort towards linguistic, economic and social integration, and on the efforts of all citizens to understand, respect and acknowledge diversity in a common framework of rights and duties. It is also the responsibility of the public administration to ensure access to rights, prevent

44. See, for example: EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027.

45. See: Full list (coe.int) with reservations and declarations.

46. See: Full list (coe.int).

47. Huddleston T. (2016), "Time for Europe to get migrant integration right", issue paper for the Council of Europe Commissioner of Human Rights.

48. The cost of assuming that people will not stay (by choice or by coercion) has a higher cost in terms of lost integration opportunity and wasted human potential, than the cost of assuming that people will stay and they don't. The Portuguese "Strategic plan for migration 2015-2020" makes the point clearly: "Studies show the positive effect of immigration on public finances and how immigrants are net contributors. But impact can also be measured by other aspects. In parallel with the investment in the areas of education, research and development of public infrastructures and employment policies, the investment in migration policies directly contributes to innovation, to the management and mobilisation of talent, to technological progress, to attract wealth, to cultural openness and to the increase of the qualification and mobility of human capital."

discrimination, provide the necessary regulatory frameworks, policy strategies and resources and publicly praise diversity as a strength, manage it effectively and create conditions for realising its positive potential. Shared responsibility also means that all institutions – national, regional and local – which are expected to contribute to intercultural integration should also be given the formal authority and the resources to carry out their tasks;

- **foster citizens' participation**: engaging citizens, NGOs and other civil society actors such as enterprises in the conception, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy should ensure that those from outside government are not just the community leaders but do reflect, as far as is reasonably practicable, the rich diversity among migrants and refugees. Besides, enabling citizens' participation and consultation will bring the additional benefit of creating a sense of ownership which will ensure citizens' support and commitment towards achieving the strategy's goals;
- **promote a culture of innovation in public administration at all levels**: encourage testing and experimentation (and allow failure) through model or pilot initiatives whose impact is assessed and critically analysed, including via participatory feedback, and where successful pilots inform new policies. Intercultural integration audits and evaluation should be introduced for policies at all levels to assess whether they foster mixing, interaction and pluralism;
- **ensure transparency and effective communication** between different institutions and levels of government, and towards the wider public. This should ensure an informed public debate and the effectiveness of the strategy. Consultation of the constituencies and groups targeted by specific public policies should become mandatory.

Section II

Principles of an intercultural integration strategy

The four intercultural integration core principles mentioned in Section I aim to achieve equal respect for all as individuals entitled to freedom and responsibility, cultural reciprocity and willingness to accept hybridisation as a factor for change and a purveyor of diversity advantage, in a climate of vibrant democratic engagement.

From a policy-making perspective, "diversity advantage" suggests a shift in the way of understanding diversity, to one in which it is managed as an asset. It presumes that diversity can be a source of innovation bringing valuable benefits to organisations, communities and businesses, when managed with competence and in the spirit of inclusion. It also results in policies which unlock the potential of diversity while minimising the risks related to human mobility and diverse identities. Intercultural integration focuses on how to make cultural diversity relating to newly arriving migrants, their descendants and members of longstanding minorities benefit the wider community.

Ensuring equality

Equality and non-discrimination are fundamental pillars of democratic societies and the *conditio sine qua non* for the effective enforcement of human rights. Equality also enables relationships of reciprocity, respect and solidarity between citizens of diverse backgrounds, allowing everyone to fully access rights, resources and opportunities.

There must be legal and policy frameworks guaranteeing equality of all residents in a member state before the law, and freedom from discrimination and intolerance in all arenas, embracing impartial treatment by public services and tackling all forms of racism and xenophobia.[49] Measures should be adopted to deal with both direct and indirect discrimination, with a special focus on systemic discrimination, on the basis of "visible" diversity as well as inequality motivated by cultural difference, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity and other protected characteristics.[50] Whenever necessary, positive measures should address structural disadvantage and inequality for minority groups.[51]

Integration policies should seek to eliminate all inequalities and direct or indirect[52] discrimination, for instance in access to healthcare, education, housing, employment, entrepreneurship, family life and civic rights, between nationals and foreign residents (with the possible caveat of a reasonable length of residence),[53] including undocumented migrants, as well as between the "majority" and "minorities" (second-generation migrants, national minorities, etc.). Holistic strategies should be implemented to address all forms of hate speech.

49. This requirement is in line with the provisions of Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which has not yet been ratified by the majority of Council of Europe member states (see Full list of signatures and ratifications (coe.int)), the Revised European Social Charter and other relevant instruments, effectively enforced by powerful national equality bodies supported by other equality watchdogs at the local level and in civil society. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has provided guidelines, among others, as to the legislative (GPR No. 7) and administrative (GPR No. 2) requirements of this, and the fight against hate speech (GRP No. 15).
50. See: ICC Policy Research and Policy brief on Identifying and Preventing Systemic Discrimination at the Local Level.
51. See: ECRI GPR No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination.
52. The ECRI recommends member states to take any necessary legislative and other measures and ensure that these comply with the prohibition to discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of grounds covered by ECRI's mandate in accessing housing, healthcare, employment and education. In this context, it is suggested that particular emphasis be placed on duly addressing issues of intersectionality, including gender-related issues; in the ECRI's view, failure to address these issues may lead to the isolation of those concerned and hinder the building of inclusive societies.
53. Relevant standards include: Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)2 of the Committee of Ministers on validating migrants' skills; Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)10 of the Committee of Ministers on improving access of migrants and persons of immigrant background to employment; Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)4 of the Committee of Ministers on strengthening the integration of children of migrants and of immigrant background; Recommendation Rec(2006)18 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on health services in a multicultural society; Recommendation Rec(2004)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of non-nationals to employment in the public sector.

Gender equality policies should be recognised as central in this regard and as a positive resource for the pursuit of integration.[54] Gender equality and mainstreaming policies should also take centre stage in addressing other inequalities, "in particular those happening when two or multiple grounds operate simultaneously and interact in an inseparable manner, producing distinct and specific forms of discrimination," without prejudice to legal frameworks and legal practice.[55] At the same time, openness and a culture of anti-discrimination should be promoted within society as a whole, including by stimulating engagement and participation in the sociopolitical sphere of hard-to-reach groups.

In addition to appropriate legal frameworks and judicial and non-judicial redress mechanisms, it is necessary to address "symbolic" equality – the way different groups of society are portrayed in legal and policy texts and in political and institutional discourse. Language focusing on "majority" and "minorities", or on cultural difference as a factor of social ills or conflict, should be avoided. As a general rule, migrant and refugee inclusion policies should foster mutual recognition and respect between all members of society as a basis for genuine equality and a sense of belonging.[56]

Equality is at the heart of the intercultural approach for intrinsic normative reasons. But non-discrimination and inclusion are also of instrumental value in societies where diversity is well managed. Too often, migrants and refugees find themselves working in the labour market at a level well below their talent, experience and qualifications, while others find their labour-market integration blocked or delayed. Ethnic, gender and social-class inequalities may be compounded, in an intersectional way, intensifying inequality and missed opportunity. Equality as a road to fully availing the talents of all individuals within society – including talents in which the host society may be deficient, thus creating migration demand – therefore provides a social premium of benefit to all.

Valuing diversity

Intercultural integration strategies should recognise the value of diversity for societies' resilience to crises, their dynamism and capacity for progress, and foresee actions and resources for the preservation of cultural diversity in all its forms.

Strategies should also aim at fostering the acknowledgement of diversity in any society. This fundamentally requires that individuals acquire the capacity to decentre themselves, so that they can engage in critical self-evaluation and see the world from the perspective of others, with the potential learning and enrichment this can bring. The recognition of diversity as a resource also fosters the values of dignity and social justice which are fundamental for an inclusive society.

Intercultural integration strategies should encourage political and institutional discourse to refer to this positive potential and should foresee communication actions to convey facts about the contributions of individuals from different backgrounds and perspectives to society, in the past and in the present, combating misinformation, stereotypes and rumours.

The potential of newcomers tends to be undervalued, because as indicated they often find their entry into productive occupations delayed and then become confined to positions for which they are over-qualified. This is linked on the one hand to the complexity of obtaining work permits, and on the other to slow and difficult recognition of qualifications from the country of origin, particularly for refugees who can often arrive without the associated documentation. In order to avoid waste of talent and promote rapid and full inclusion and genuine citizenship, all services should strive to build their support upon the individuals' assets and potential, and not on stereotyped perceptions of the deficits they may have.[57]

While the policies should be able to respond to needs and situations of specific groups in a given moment (e.g. mandatory and subsidised language courses for newcomers in need, until they master the language of the host country), at the same time they should allow for adaptations and exceptions to meet individual specificities through a differential, individualised approach (e.g. exemption from mandatory language course for newcomers who have already mastered the language of the host country).

Much of the discussion around language and integration is confined to newcomers learning the language of their host country, and clearly this is essential if they are to enjoy equal life chances, interact meaningfully with fellow citizens and become full members of society. Many European countries have regions in which traditionally a language other than that of the whole country is used. It is essential that newcomers residing in relevant areas also learn the regional language with a view to participating in social life and facilitating access to the labour market.

54. As per the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy: "Gender equality entails equal rights for women and men, girls and boys, as well as the same visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation, in all spheres of public and private life".
55. See: Fredman S. (2016), *Intersectional discrimination in EU gender equality and non-discrimination*.
56. Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)1 of the Committee of Ministers on interaction between migrants and receiving societies; Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration.
57. Based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention, the Council of Europe has launched the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, a pilot project being successfully tested by a number of Council of Europe member states.

Equally, however, bi- and even multilingualism not only foster communication in a diverse society but also broaden personal horizons and can result in economic benefits when trading in a globalised economy. The development of such plurilingual competences should be a goal of any national intercultural integration strategy, at all levels of education from preschool to lifelong learning, for the whole population.[58] Migrants' mother tongues should be celebrated as an asset in education and training, as well as culture, tourism and business, and their knowledge and learning should be encouraged, including among non-native speakers.

Public officials, even when interculturally competent, will on occasions need to work not just with interpreters but with cultural mediators who can assist communication with diverse users in a manner which is dignified and supportive while not turning such mediators into "community gatekeepers".[59] Public institutions should be organised with enough flexibility to ensure institutional adaptations that take account of the practical implications of difference.

While a diverse society will be much more vibrant and richer if that diversity is well managed, frictions of course will occur, and part of the management process is to ensure these do not escalate into conflicts. Here again, intercultural competence of all public and service officials, as well as the recourse to cultural mediators may play a useful role in allowing different perspectives to be recognised through dialogue on the basis of equality. Furthermore, interculturally competent officials and specialised mediators will not only be able to manage conflict effectively but create the conditions for diversity advantage – the ability of institutions, businesses and organisation to benefit from the diverse perspectives, skills and experiences of diverse citizens and employees.

There is much that public authorities can do to promote diversity throughout society, including in public administration and the private sector. Their own recruitment policies can include positive action to promote more diverse workforces by recruiting from the broadest possible pool on an equal footing. Public-procurement schedules can privilege companies which are signed up to diversity charters or other indicators of commitment. Trade unions can be supported in their endeavours to challenge all forms of intolerance in the workplace. Particular attention should be paid to ensure that the recruitment of migrants is done on equal conditions and does not result in a decrease in salaries or social protection.

Fostering meaningful interaction

Meaningful and positive interaction is a precondition for building trust and connections between people of diverse backgrounds or identities, as well as for realising the diversity advantage.

It has long been established by social science that segregation undermines social trust, solidarity and cohesion. Fostering social and cultural mixing is therefore essential but not sufficient. Sustained and effective effort should be made to bring diverse residents into meaningful contact in the context of educational, cultural, sport, entrepreneurial and other activities, and constructive exchanges/debates about common goals and the principles of living together in dignity and peace.

The level of interpersonal trust, solidarity and cohesion of an inclusive society depends on continuous, meaningful contact between people of diverse backgrounds, and on a shared, not segregated, public sphere.[60] This requires public authorities to apply an "intercultural lens" to their work, looking afresh at their policies and programmes with an eye to whether they do, or do not, foster intercultural mixing, interaction and trust.[61] Especially in the domains of housing, schooling, employment, entrepreneurship, social services and urban planning, it is critical to promote mixing and meaningful interaction in the public space rather than let segregation happen unwittingly through a laissez-faire approach.

More specifically, all children should be able to attend a good, local, public school, where they can learn together with children of different cultural backgrounds and origins and can be taught by a diverse corps of teachers, rather than being *de facto* divided by ethnicity, language and/or class.[62] Social housing should also be of high quality and accessible to all, and integrated into mixed-income and mixed-culture neighbourhoods, rather than ghettoised and relegated to stigmatised neighbourhoods.

58. As endorsed by the Council of Europe Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of 2001 *(Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*.
59. For instance, the Council of Europe/EU programme ROMED has been successful in training Roma mediators with the view to improving the quality and effectiveness of the work of school, health, employment and community mediators, and to supporting better communication and co-operation between Roma and public institutions (school, healthcare providers, employment offices, local authorities, etc.). See also Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)9 to member States on mediation as an effective tool for promoting respect for human rights and social inclusion of Roma.
60. See: *Integration of young refugees in the EU* (FRA 2019), specifically the chapter on housing which covers promising local practices assisting social inclusion through integrated housing policies.
61. See: The intercultural city step by step: a practical guide for applying the urban model of intercultural integration, Council of Europe (2021), p. 39.
62. See: PISA 2015: results in focus, OECD (2018); Integrating students from migrant backgrounds into schools in Europe: national policies and measures, Eurydice Report, European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2019).

All areas, including those with lower-income and vulnerable residents, should offer high-quality public services and opportunities for rich community and cultural experiences. This also inevitably means supporting intercultural projects in the sport and cultural arenas, as well as in social innovation and entrepreneurship, which not only can bring individuals of diverse origins together but build social networks and reciprocal recognition.

Addressing stereotypes, rumours and prejudice, challenging hate speech and promoting intercultural dialogue, for example between people of different linguistic communities or faiths (as well as non-religious people), are a precondition for a successful integration strategy.[63]

The policy-making process should be carried out in a participatory and inclusive manner, avoiding stereotypical ideas about diversity, migration and minority groups. This requires an individualised approach to policy making (as described above), but also fact-based policies which stimulate continuous public information and debate, and cultivate critical thinking, helping to dispel misinformation and false perceptions.

This is particularly important when it comes to law-enforcement and justice systems. There is no more sensitive an area in terms of whether individuals of migrant or minority backgrounds feel "at home" in the society of which they are a part, than how they are treated by the criminal justice and law-enforcement systems, especially the police. The seriousness, on the one hand, with which hate crimes are addressed and victims supported and the responsiveness, on the other, shown towards the socially marginalised and excluded are critical bellwethers. Community policing based on strong intercultural competence is in this context essential.[64] Particular attention should be given to denounce and prosecute discriminatory and/or violent acts by police officers.

Media reporting is also hugely sensitive, particularly where individual criminal acts are stereotypically portrayed as intrinsic behaviours of minority or migrant communities. The intercultural strategy should also engage journalists' associations and media organisations, including community media, with a view to ensuring that coverage of such issues is informed and as objective as possible, including through the diversification of their editorial staff, and ensuring diversity inclusiveness throughout content production and distribution.[65]

Active citizenship and participation

An inclusive society depends on a sense of individual citizenship, based on a clear framework of rights and responsibilities, and on a personal sense of belonging to a whole community, so that individuals feel they are fellow citizens with shared values. Such a sense may not be shared by some newcomers, or by some second- or even third-generation migrants. Nationality is a condition for full citizenship rights, and a symbolic recognition of belonging. Therefore, facilitating newcomers' access to nationality, in line with the Council of Europe European Convention on Nationality of 1997,[66] should be pursued. The right to vote in local elections, in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level,[67] is also an important enabler of citizenship.

Yet the diverse sensitivity and context of the Council of Europe's member states make it difficult to agree on a common definition and view of citizenship law at the national level, as shown by the fact that the above conventions have been ratified by only a limited number of countries. A way to deal with this challenge would be to focus not on formal citizenship but on enlarging the participation rights that traditionally come with it, starting from the right to participation in political and social life for foreign residents as well as for nationals.

It is also true that nationality and voting rights alone do not guarantee the participation of migrants in both political and social life. Not all migrants have the same opportunity or wish to obtain the nationality of their country of residence. Therefore, states should explore and test alternative forms of participation that would enable foreign residents and – more broadly – non-citizens to be involved in shaping at least the local policies that affect the life of the community in which they live. These alternatives can take the form of deliberative forums, permanent roundtables for co-creation, co-implementation and co-evaluation of local policies, participatory budgeting and participatory policy development.

63. In line with the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue.
64. See the Council of Europe (2019), "Manual on intercultural community policing".
65. Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)2 of the Committee of Ministers on media pluralism and diversity of media content; Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on the role of community media in promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue (2009). The Council of Europe Mediane project developed a useful self-monitoring tool for diversity inclusiveness in media.
66. See: https://rm.coe.int/168007f2c8 for the text of the Convention, and Full list (coe.int) for the list of signatures and ratifications.
67. See: https://rm.coe.int/168007bd26 for the text of the Convention, and Full list (coe.int) for the list of signatures and ratifications.

Belonging to a local community involves the existence of a stable link between the individual and the community. The Committee of Ministers recommendation on the participation of citizens in local public life defines the citizen as "any person (including, where appropriate, foreign residents) belonging to a local community".[68] The text also advocates further steps to be taken to "involve citizens more directly in the management of local affairs, while safeguarding the effectiveness and efficiency of such management". These considerations should be taken into account when preparing, planning, implementing and evaluating any intercultural integration strategy, to ensure its wide take-up.

How the intercultural approach works

The intercultural paradigm has a particular "intervention logic".[69] It transcends (while absorbing the best elements of) the prior, counterposed paradigms for the management of cultural diversity, those of assimilationism and multiculturalism. The former was officially blind to the diversity of globalised and individualised societies (though this could also mean impartial), while the latter could unwittingly foster "parallel societies" (while genuinely seeking to valorise diversity). Neither was able to address successfully the emergent tensions of the new millennium, shading into xenophobic and fundamentalist violence. Hence the decision of the Council of Europe member states in 2005 to seek guidance on policy and good practice, furnished in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue of 2008.[70]

The validity of the intercultural paradigm has been tested successfully through the Intercultural Cities programme, as agreed by the Committee of Ministers in their 2015 recommendation. It works by redefining the relationship between the self and the other in a society recognised as diverse but with that diversity being understood in terms of individual uniqueness, not group stereotypes. That relationship must be founded on equality of human dignity and must be such as to foster positive dialogue – hence the principles outlined above.

As in all policy domains, interlinking between the elements of good policy making is essential, so that policy starts from the definition of the problem, establishes clear, desired outcomes and pursues an explicit intervention logic to realise them, thereby allowing the consequent programmes and projects to be monitored and evaluated in a mixed-methods fashion.[71] This is developed in the framework set out later.

Making it happen – multilevel governance

Multilevel governance should be applied throughout the whole life of the intercultural integration strategy, from the needs assessment to the conception, implementation and evaluation of the strategy. Given that many competences and responsibilities are shared between the various levels of governance in different countries, multilevel governance is needed to achieve further collaboration between different administrations, better public policies implementation and a greater cohesion. No single level can deal with the current challenges alone and – with full respect for the respective competences of each level – co-ordinated actions by national governments and regional and local authorities are critical to designing policy solutions that reflect the needs of the citizenry.

Promoting a multilevel and multi-actor approach should improve public policy outcomes, facilitating innovation, participation and a sense of belonging. Multilevel governance should thus be sought to ensure policy consistency, knowledge and resource sharing, best-practice exchange and mutual learning.

Overcoming the traditional top-down (centralist) or bottom-up (localist) models, multilevel governance aims to promote interaction and co-ordination between the various levels of government, engaging them in an overall policy co-ordination. By working together, public authorities can combine their expertise to benefit from the planning process of public policies, as well as from their implementation and outcomes evaluation. Multilevel governance could shift from power defined by a division of competences (i.e. constitutions, statutes) to power based on resources, capacities and strategies.

In decentralised countries, regional authorities can liaise with national authorities and provide technical and/or financial support to local authorities, while the latter can liaise with local communities, and provide local knowledge which can determine the achievability of the intercultural integration strategies and their instruments. In non-decentralised countries, national and local authorities, as well as associations/national representations of local governments, should also improve their positive liaisons to strengthen public policies.

A multilevel approach could:

- help identify and align the strategic needs and goals of all levels of governance in relation to intercultural integration;

68. See: Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)4.
69. See: Sanderson I. (2000), "Evaluating the effectiveness of policy responses to social exclusion", in Percy-Smith J. (ed.), *From exclusion to inclusion: policy responses to social exclusion in the UK*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
70. See: www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf.
71. Sanderson 2000, op. cit.

- ensure coherence between national, regional and local plans on intercultural integration;
- assure the complementarity of actions and the pooling of resources, skills and expertise through different instruments or actions to make limited resources go further, taking advantage of economies of scale;
- create more efficiency in the use of resources;
- stimulate the sharing of expertise, skills, knowledge and know-how to better achieve common goals;
- improve communication of objectives, avoiding confusion and ensuring coherent communication with the general public;
- facilitate more consistent monitoring and reporting systems, to ensure plans are monitored more coherently at different levels; and
- foster the consistent participation of social actors and civil society in all stages of the strategy development and implementation.

To be successful, multilevel governance requires a set of elements, as outlined below, although configured differently in each country.

- Political dialogue: structural or ad hoc instruments should be developed to facilitate political dialogue and commitment between different levels of administration. These should extend beyond established systems of access by regions and prominent cities to the national level, via parliamentary assemblies, local networks or informal meetings. Regional governments should promote similar mechanisms in their own territories to facilitate liaison with local authorities.
- Policy co-ordination: permanent instruments should be developed to facilitate coherence, collaboration and co-operation in developing intercultural strategies. These instruments should also be designed to guarantee that the intercultural approach (ensuring equality, valuing diversity, fostering positive interaction and active citizenship) is a cross-cutting issue in all public policies.
- Social participation: spaces in which social entities and civil society could meet to discuss and identify challenges and needs that should be promoted.

While recognising national specificities, the key features of an ideal approach to multilevel governance of intercultural integration can be identified. The national strategy should be developed in a deliberative and participative way, with a breadth and depth of engagement such as that offered by legislative commissions in Sweden.[72]

The development and implementation of intercultural integration strategies should be a mutual venture between all levels of government and should involve genuine and meaningful public participation. Ideally, it should be facilitated by a "hub" – preferably an independent, expert body with some research capacity and a strong co-ordination mandate. This hub would co-ordinate the inputs of different ministries as well as regional and local authorities and participatory platforms, in order to devise a strategy which is evidence-based and supported across the political spectrum, and therefore sustainable over time. The High Commission for Migration (ACM) in Portugal is a good example of such a hub. Equality bodies and other similar political institutions could also play an important role in multilevel governance as expert sources of guidance for institutional practice that promotes equality and prevents discrimination.

The hub would carry out a needs assessment and analyse how the shared objectives can be pursued innovatively. Data would be independently sourced, objectively reliable and available to all levels. A grassroots-level approach would help in identifying what works and relaying this information to the state.

The hub would also provide opportunities for regional and local authorities to participate in the strategy decision-making process: they would not just provide feedback to the central level, but their know-how and experience would be recognised, allowing them to contribute to decision making. The hub could deliver a national framework strategy setting the tone for the regional and local ones. They would all be complementary, thus enabling each other, and would also pursue the same ultimate goals. Funding would mainly come from the state level, with contributions from the regional and local levels for the matters falling more directly under their immediate competence.

Such a hub would change the dynamic that makes the cities recipients of instructions from the state level, and move policy making forward from a top-down approach to a more horizontal way of working.

The broad public participation element could be ensured by a consultative platform involving civil society organisations and public agencies, with formal, regular meetings, including in terms of the development of strategies, such as the Finnish Multicultural Advisory Board.

The local (and regional) levels should not just have strategies which are derivative of national strategies but should enrich it with more "on the ground" specificity and knowledge. Horizontal networks

72. See: www.government.se/how-sweden-is-governed/swedish-legislation---how-laws-are-made/.

– depending on the autonomy of local authorities – are also valuable among municipalities, particularly for good-practice sharing. There is also a need to involve representatives of migrants and refugees as active agents at all levels, including through joint bodies at municipal level to co-produce the national, regional and local intercultural strategies.

The necessary evidence and data need to be independently sourced, objectively reliable and available to all levels – not sequestered by national government or politically manipulated. Monitoring and evaluation could be done by the co-ordinating hub, whose secretariat can include seconded experts. Funding at all levels should include unrestricted funds for pilot projects, which can stimulate innovation in future strategic iterations – including through micro-projects on the ground feeding up into macro-policy via the role of municipalities in co-designing the national strategy.

Finally, the possibility of short-term staff secondments among all levels of governance should be encouraged. This would ensure short-term mobility between levels, allowing public officers to better understand the respective contexts and constraints, as well as to share knowledge and good practices.

Section III

Intercultural integration policy matrix

The following matrix contains a list of measures undertaken by some states, regions and cities that authorities may consider as examples when planning and implementing their intercultural integration strategies and action plans.

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Ensuring equality	▶ Legislation and policy should be reviewed and – as needed – amended to ensure access without discrimination to education, healthcare, housing, employment, entrepreneurship and voluntary work for all those legally residing in a state's territory. ▶ New and existing legislation and other regulatory texts should be assessed on their potential to take diversity into account, and for their impact on equality and non-discrimination. This should include the cumulative impact of successive or similar legislation or policies. ▶ Family-reunion rules should guarantee the human right to family life and seek to eliminate unjustified obstacles to enjoying this right. ▶ Key public services should be based on the principle of universal provision and ensure that all residents, including those without valid residence permits, are able to access housing, health and education, as a minimum; the principle of minimum accommodation should be considered as a condition for *de facto* inclusion. ▶ Legally arrived newcomers should rapidly be allowed to access the labour market and be granted immediate, preferably free, access to language courses.	▶ Equality bodies and institutions should be strengthened when needed and have strong and independent mandates, as well as adequate resources to promote diversity and equality, monitor and combat discrimination on all grounds, including nationality, visible diversity, sexual orientation and gender identity, religion and language. They should be able to propose policy measures to address systemic direct and indirect discrimination and, as far as possible, reinforce their presence in the field through the setting up of local offices. ▶ Public administration and service professionals, including judicial, law-enforcement, legal and paralegal professionals, should be trained to recognise discrimination and hate crime, including on ethnic, racial or faith grounds, in particular via first-hand encounters with victims in order to understand the impact and consequences for individual and collective well-being. ▶ Effective access to quality education should be granted to all residents. Schools in culturally diverse and socially disadvantaged areas should be resourced to achieve excellence and act as agents of inclusion, and support should be given to educational professionals to develop critical thinking, promote common values and adopt effective strategies against racism, exclusion and hate speech. Schools should as much as possible give the possibility to migrant children to continue studying their home language.	▶ Proper communication strategies should be developed alongside the preparation of inclusive policies. They should seek to underline the advantages of diversity for society as a whole; it should also rely on multipliers and citizens' networks to promote openness and understanding of intercultural policies. ▶ Messages by public authorities should make explicit the value of pluralistic societies where dignity, inclusion and social justice matter, and where racism, hate speech and discrimination are unacceptable. ▶ Political leaders should publicly condemn political hate speech after each incident; effective regulatory and co- or self-regulatory mechanisms should be established for media, political parties, parliaments, city councils and other key actors. ▶ Political leaders should try to find leadership opportunities for people from diverse communities, to demonstrate inclusivity and promote understanding between communities. ▶ Continuous, informed public debate about the fundamental values of equality and non-discrimination, about migration, integration and diversity, and relevant public policies should be promoted, in particular at local level.	▶ Innovation and multistakeholder partnerships to achieve equality goals should be encouraged, including with the private sector, regarding equitable access to education, employment, housing, health, the cultural sector and the media in order to effectively counter and denounce rumours and hate speech. Participatory processes to enable proactive participation should be put in place.

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Ensuring equality	▶ Comprehensive strategies should be put in place to combat hate speech and hate crime, including through public awareness, education, media literacy, self-regulation and co-regulation, with media and internet intermediaries, administrative measures and – in the case of illegal hate speech – criminal investigation and prosecution. ▶ Compulsory equality and diversity planning and auditing for public institutions and private organisations receiving public finance via subsidies or procurement should be introduced. ▶ An intersectional perspective should be included in policy, programmes and institutional initiatives to address the needs and specific challenges of people with multiple disadvantages. ▶ Policies, projects and other actions should undergo proper gender impact analysis.	▶ Anti-rumours and intercultural education training for teachers and students should be offered in order to create a safe intercultural space/environment in schools. ▶ Equality in employment and career opportunities should be ensured, *inter alia,* via intercultural competence training for human resources staff and managers, the creation of diversity labels, awards, etc. ▶ Public and private sector employers should be supported to develop intercultural workplaces that actively prevent discrimination and encourage diversity advantage. ▶ Training on (anti)discrimination and (anti)hate speech and hate crime should include indirect forms and unconscious bias, e.g. those resulting from existing prejudices and stereotypes, or automated decision making based on artificial intelligence, and address them in a way to prevent them, prosecute the authors and repair the prejudice suffered by the victims. ▶ Monitoring and redress for online and political hate speech which can have strong negative impact on community cohesion should be carried out. ▶ Public administrations need to be empowered to identify vulnerability factors specific to migrant and refugee women and offer support and protection as needed.	▶ Research on the economic benefits of migration should be carried out and reference to the economic contribution of migrants to the national and local economy should be made in the public discourse.	

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Valuing diversity	▶ A legal framework should be introduced requiring public authorities at all levels to embed diversity in policy design in order to ensure that diverse needs are catered for, and diverse perspectives are included to increase policy quality and effectiveness. ▶ Integration assistance should be based on a thorough assessment of individuals' qualifications, experience, needs and aspirations, and be tailored to provide an effective pathway into economic self-sufficiency, personal growth and active citizenship. Such assistance should be provided by mainstream services, not services reserved for newcomers/migrants. ▶ Public authorities should gather and rely on quality statistics and research about attitudes and behaviours towards migration and diversity, to devise evidence-based specific policies based on real needs.	▶ Diversity should become a criterion for public financial support for companies over a certain size; enterprises should be actively encouraged to diversify their workforce via skills matching programmes, diversity training for human resources professionals, intercultural training for managers, diversity audits and other actions. ▶ Public authorities could consider establishing observatories or other independent bodies to monitor the progress towards living together in diverse societies. ▶ Public institutions in all fields and services should set annual employment targets for diversification of their staff at all levels, to set the trend for employment opportunities for migrants. They could do so by providing specific internship programmes or targets for migrants/minorities. ▶ Public authorities should ensure that all staff are trained in basic intercultural competence, so that they are able to adequately address diverse users' needs and innovate by listening to diverse views and experiences. ▶ Newcomers should be supported in entering the labour market, e.g. by creating national-level diversity-focused innovation hubs that connect locals and migrants to launch innovative business projects (for profit or as social enterprises). Schemes which enable migrants to take over businesses in need of succession, especially in small towns and rural areas, should be explored.	▶ Local authorities should be encouraged to adopt tools (e.g. charters) to promote democratic values in diverse societies, recognising the equal dignity of all cultures, and nurturing equality, solidarity and shared values among all residents. ▶ Decision makers should be enabled, through training and management changes, to apply an intercultural lens to new policies and encourage the emergence of a creative and flexible bureaucracy, able to find effective solutions to challenges by harnessing the innovation potential of a diverse population. ▶ Investing in the intercultural (diversity) competence of public officials, educators and service professionals as well as those in the law-enforcement and justice systems should be an integral part of the integration strategy. ▶ Intercultural mediation should be used in schools, neighbourhoods, service provision and enterprises, either through the employment of qualified mediators or by training staff in mediation skills. ▶ Public institutions should capitalise on the linguistic and cultural competences of the population in education, the workplace, cultural life and the policy-making process.	▶ Trade unions as well as educational, cultural, professional and business organisations should be supported to reach out to residents of migrant origin and diversify their membership and leadership, and to develop diversity sensitive approaches in meeting the needs of all members. ▶ Innovative approaches to recognition of migrants' qualifications should be thoroughly considered, such as the Council of Europe's Refugees' Qualification Passport. Employment services should assess migrants and asylum seekers' skills and experience, and match skills with local employers.

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Valuing diversity		▶ The notion of diversity as a common value should be integrated into the core principles of the education systems and in all relevant curricula subjects. Multiperspectivity should be adopted in history curricula. Specific education curricula should develop or integrate intercultural education as a cross-cutting approach.[73] ▶ Inclusive education and combating educational segregation[74] should be pursued. The diversity of students and teachers by cultural and social background should be a priority, as a key factor of inclusive education. ▶ Early enrolment of children with a migration background into preschool, mapping their language level at an early age, targeted support for the acquisition of language and other skills in preschool, and appropriate support to children during primary and secondary education to decrease the performance gaps and school dropout rates of children with a migration background should be encouraged as a means to ensuring equal life opportunities and inclusion.	▶ Wherever possible, public authorities should co-operate with employer and employee organisations and conduct, whenever necessary, a needs analysis in sectors with a high workforce shortage, and develop suitable apprenticeship programmes that are accessible also to migrants, including asylum seekers. ▶ Media engagement with diversity should be stimulated, for instance through media training for public officials working on diversity issues, incentives for the employment of minority staff by media and support for minority media.	

73. In the Czech Republic, the Framework Educational Programme includes, among the cross-curricular subjects, multicultural education to familiarise pupils with the diverse cultures, traditions and values of other nationalities living in the country. In Ireland, secondary school students have to attend the Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) course, a Junior Certificate course on active citizenship based on human rights and social responsibilities. In this course, students deal with issues such as gender equality, racism and xenophobia, interculturalism, minorities and conflict situations. *Source*: Fundamental Rights Agency (2017), *Together in the EU: promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants*, p. 43.

74. For example, in Denmark, there are projects to distribute migrant children across districts by operating bus services; in Italy, a ministerial circular that took effect in 2010-11 requires the redistribution of pupils without Italian citizenship among schools and the classes established within each school, so as not to exceed the limit of 30% of foreign students in each class. *Sour*ce: ibid., p. 40.

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Valuing diversity		▶ Educational systems should promote a democratic culture and education for active citizenship and consider the implementation of participatory strategies to ensure the participation of students from minorities in the decision-making process. Also, schools should support migrants, refugees and other members of the educational community in developing effective participation skills. ▶ The realisation of migrants' and refugees' potential through entrepreneurship should be supported, as well as access to tertiary education. ▶ Plurilingualism in education and in the public realm should be strongly promoted; facilitating the learning of home languages (mother tongues) should be considered as an enabling factor of educational achievement and a way to safeguard diversity within society. ▶ The obstacles faced by many migrant women in accessing language learning and professional and vocational training should be recognised, and measures to ensure real equal access to learning and professional opportunities implemented.		

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Fostering meaningful interaction	▶ Investment in segregated and low-income neighbourhoods should be prioritised in terms of infrastructure and connectivity to the wider urban area, as well as in people's skills and capacity, offering high-quality training, services, education, language-learning opportunities, and cultural activities that will contribute to attracting citizens from other neighbourhoods while avoiding the negative effects of gentrification on community cohesion. ▶ The development and application of a community sponsorship approach to migrant and refugee reception and inclusion should be enabled via the adoption of relevant legislation and through knowledge sharing and capacity building for sponsoring communities. ▶ Support should be provided (expertise, financial resources) for community groups receiving refugees based on the community sponsorship model. ▶ Spatial planning, especially in urban contexts should foster positive opportunities for interaction and provides safe spaces for dialogue, rather than encouraging separate, privatised modes of living.	▶ All new policies should be audited for their impact on segregation, gentrification[75] and social inclusion, and ensure they are inclusive, open to both migrants and autochthons, and present no obstacles to intercultural access and use. ▶ Research should be encouraged on spatial barriers to intercultural interaction in public places. ▶ Schools and the educational community should be supported in developing strategies and skills for inclusive citizenship. ▶ The educational community should continue reviewing, together with minority groups, the representation of different groups in textbooks to remove any remaining passages that could foster prejudice and further promote the use of different perspectives in history teaching. History education has a vital role in confronting the current political, cultural and social challenges facing Europe, particularly those posed by the increasingly diverse nature of societies and the integration of migrants and refugees into Europe. Where appropriate, history teaching should also encompass the role played by state authorities in the past in the development of discriminatory practices or violence in any former colonies.	▶ Public discourse should foster a pluralistic collective identity and promote diversity. ▶ Public awareness about the history and impact of migration should be fostered via non-formal education, cultural and social activities, libraries, museums, theatres, festivals, etc. which encourage meaningful interaction between people of different cultural backgrounds. ▶ Intercultural contact programmes and local initiatives that foster positive interaction between individuals of different ethnocultural backgrounds should be resourced. ▶ Cross-cultural task forces and groups should be created among employers to foster understanding of the economic potential of a multilingual workforce, as well as competence in recruiting and managing diverse talent. ▶ Public/cultural events and school programmes which make use of a variety of languages in written and spoken forms, as well as activities which familiarise the population with the basics of multiple languages present in the country should be supported. ▶ Public debates, conversations, consultations, etc. should be regularly held in the spaces where people of diverse backgrounds and origins mingle, such as libraries, museums, neighbourhood centres, etc.	▶ Social partners should be motivated to support the earliest integration of refugees into the labour market – facilitated by minimising the waiting period after claiming asylum – including recognising the leap this may involve for some refugee women. ▶ Civil society groups should be supported to implement anti-rumours strategies across the country.

75. See: Intercultural Cities Policy study and Policy brief on gentrification.

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Fostering meaningful interaction		▶ Relevant authorities should closely monitor any segregation of pupils with a minority background in schools and assist, if necessary, the local authorities in finding workable solutions. ▶ Intercultural community-policing strategies[76] which favour preventive, participatory and whole-community approaches to urban safety should be put in place.	▶ Participatory myth-busting and anti-prejudice strategies such as anti-rumour strategies[77] should be adopted. ▶ Responsible political leadership, constructive media and wider public debate about diversity issues, based on objective information and multi-perspectivity should be fostered.	
	Legislation and policy	**Institutional practices and systems**	**Culture, communication and public discourse**	**Civil society engagement**
Active citizenship and participation	▶ Where possible, legislation should be revised to ensure that foreign residents are able to vote in local elections after a number of years of residency (such as a maximum of five years). ▶ Where appropriate, legislation should be revised to enable rapid, smooth and affordable acquisition of the host country nationality. ▶ Diversity governance should be enhanced by establishing standards for the representation of migrants and minorities on the boards of bodies such as trade unions, school boards, neighbourhood councils, enterprise boards, etc. ▶ Intercultural councils engaging intercultural communities and autochthons alike should be set up at different levels of governance to act as advisory boards on matters related to human rights, equality, immigration, inclusion and diversity, in the interest of harmonious intercultural societies.	▶ Where possible, preparatory courses for citizenship tests for adult migrants should be offered. The provision of language classes for adult migrants is also key to successful integration in the employment market and in a more long-term perspective for passing tests for obtaining long-term residence permits or citizenship, as these almost always include a requirement for knowledge of the host country language(s). ▶ Participatory bodies or platforms should be set up to co-design, co-implement and co-monitor the implementation of integration strategies, involving a range of stakeholders from local and regional authorities, civil society (including migrant/refugee organisations), academia and social partners.	▶ Regular meetings and exchanges with city councils, NGOs and other organisations/institutions that appear as key for ensuring adequate information flow, building trust and networking/partnerships with migrant communities should be held. ▶ Outreach tools should be developed to involve diverse residents, and in particular newcomers, in public debate. These could be social media groups, or online community forums for promoting the involvement of hard-to-reach groups. Emphasise that these spaces are open and welcome to all and ensure adequate moderation to prevent and sanction expressions of intolerance, prejudice and hate.	▶ Support should be provided to projects, particularly at local level, which encourage and empower naturalised migrants to vote and stand in elections, with a specific focus on women and vulnerable groups. ▶ The social and political participation of civil society organisations and initiatives dealing with equality, human rights, diversity and inclusion, including associations of minority groups (in particular those organisations focusing on diversity in their membership and acting as "intercultural connectors") should be supported. ▶ Migrants and minorities should be encouraged to be active in civil society associations (both culture-specific and generalist ones). ▶ Associations should be trained to reach out to migrants and minorities and benefit from their skills and perspectives in shaping their activities.

76. See: Intercultural Cities "Manual on community policing", available in English, French, Italian, Spanish and Ukrainian.
77. See: www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/anti-rumours.

	Legislation and policy	Institutional practices and systems	Culture, communication and public discourse	Civil society engagement
Active citizenship and participation		▶ Training modules for national and local authority employees should be set up and focus on the importance and mechanisms of social innovation and participation as tools for public management. ▶ Migrants, refugees and all other members of society should be empowered and given the possibility to participate in shaping policies, as well as in the design and provision of services as a means to realising the diversity advantage and avoiding the perception that some categories of people are only recipients of social support and not contributors. ▶ Support should be provided to local and national-level platforms for deliberative and participatory policy making open to both citizens and foreign residents, making sure that they are fully involved in all stages and at all levels of the policy-making process. ▶ Newcomers and people with foreign roots should be included in internal management and decision-making structures of organisations receiving public funds (NGOs, etc.).		▶ A collaborative approach which brings together education professionals, parents, social services and the local community in addressing challenges and ensuring students' educational success should be promoted. ▶ Targeted initiatives to encourage migrant women's participation in civil society should be taken, with particular attention to women coming from patriarchal communities.

Section IV

Structure of an intercultural integration strategy

While the substance of any national/multilevel intercultural integration strategy will, by definition, be designed for the member state in question, the model for such a plan can be common across the Council of Europe membership and should be based on best practice for policy making.

Any effective public policy, whatever its content, can be said to have certain elements, as identified in this 10-point structure:[78]

1. an evidence-based analysis of the situation that is to be addressed, through the prism of equality, diversity, interaction and participation;
2. an overarching aim to identify the expected outcome and its advantage for the whole society;
3. a set of specific objectives which would realise that aim if achieved;
4. legislation, policies, programmes, projects and initiatives, already existing or developed with users to implement them;
5. the structures/mechanisms needed to provide a coherent framework and to drive a full and effective implementation of the strategy;
6. designated actors to take responsibility, including co-production by users;
7. the scale and source of resources required for implementation;
8. the vehicles and plan for communication of the policy and to whom;
9. arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness; and
10. the means for review and revision of the policy in that light.

78. The 10 elements of the model correspond to the sequence of agenda setting (1), initiation (2), decision making (3), implementation (4-8), evaluation (9) and revision (10), identified by Andrew J. Jordan and Andrea Lenschow (2008), "Integrating the environment for sustainable development: an introduction", in Jordan and Lenschow (eds), *Innovation in environmental policy? Integrating the environment for sustainability*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK. This policy template has been used with several ICC members in drafting municipal intercultural strategies, e.g. that for Valletta: www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/valletta.

While these are requirements of best-practice policy making in general, they are particularly important for a challenge such as intercultural, inclusive integration, because of its complex, cross-cutting and comprehensive nature. So, for example, 12 ministries are implicated in the Portuguese Strategic Plan for migration. The national High Commission for Migration, ACM (Alto Comissariado para as Migrações), is a key public institution, accountable to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of evidence-based policy in this domain. Similarly, in Québec in 2015, 25 departments were involved in the development of the Together, we are Québec intercultural integration strategy.

What can also be common is a commitment to wide-scale public participation in the design, delivery, implementation and evaluation of the strategy. While only the key stakeholders such as local authorities and specialised NGOs will want to get involved in the detail, or feel confident about doing so, the model lends itself to involving the whole society in the debate about the big issues: the challenges, the benefits and the consequent aim and objectives. This in itself is key to raising the quality of public and political discourse about the challenges and positive potential of integration and ensuring the strategy carries widespread legitimacy and strong traction on the ground. Otherwise, there is a risk that only migrant and refugee NGOs will really participate and the responsibility of citizens and organisations in the wider society for intercultural integration goes unrecognised. Germany's first integration plan emerged in 2007 following a series of integration summits (*Integrationsgipfel*), which "brought the federal government and migrants, especially Muslims, together at the same table for the first time". This reflected a broader shift of opinion away from an ethnocultural definition of what it meant to be German towards a civic conception of "constitutional patriotism". It also reflected an easing of partisan tensions over the meaning of integration, with representatives of different parties describing it as a two-sided process, making demands of the host society as well as of newcomers.[79]

79. Williams H. (2014), "Changing the national narrative: evolution in citizenship and integration in Germany, 2000-10", *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 49, No. 1, pp. 54-74.

Participation as an essential feature of an open governance implies the setting up of channels for direct and participatory dialogue with key social agents, as well as policies aimed at promoting spaces for citizens' interaction and co-responsibility in the design and implementation of an intercultural strategy. Encouraging participation also implies providing instruments and competence training to public officers who are in more direct contact with a diverse population. Moreover, the effective participation of culturally diverse communities is often complicated further by the specific barriers they face. The necessary accommodations should be made to take these specificities into account, including by dealing with linguistic diversity, increasing time flexibility, opening up a wider variety of channels to access information, facilitate accessibility and understanding of the processes, providing mediation and professional facilitation of discussions, etc.[80]

An effective national intercultural integration strategy will inevitably need to embrace all the elements in the model, recognising their interconnection. Under each of these 10 points, five common requirements are set out below, preceded by their rationale. What is proposed here is derived from good practice emerging from existing strategies, both national and municipal.

The strategy development process should be characterised by the involvement of all relevant social actors at all stages, including lower levels of government, and civil society organisations and citizens, with their rich knowledge on the ground. In that sense, the process of drawing up, implementing and monitoring the strategy is almost as important as the outcomes it seeks to realise. This key role for ongoing public participation will ensure that the strategy is relevant, dynamic and evolves over time.

The strategy should also be based solidly on objective evidence, drawing on official statistics but also recognising the value of independent experts in academia and beyond. It should include the facts on demographic diversity as well as survey data on public attitudes to associated issues. It should take account of inequality in the labour market and social circumstances, differential performance in education, segregation in housing, the incidence of hate crimes and so on. The strategy should in turn collect relevant data continuously on the realisation of its outcomes, so that trends too should offer a moving picture.

Furthermore, a model intercultural strategy should incorporate the gender perspective, breaking down the stereotypes and sociocultural patterns that create unequal power relations between women and men, and consider the multiple and intersectional discrimination suffered by women. A gender-balanced approach should be incorporated into the planning and implementation processes from both a transversal point of view (in all planned actions) and a specific point of view (when addressing the specific situations of migrant women). In this field, the city of Bilbao (Spain) can be of inspiration. The Women, Health and Violence programme bases its strategic axis on the empowerment of immigrant women through the prevention of gender-based violence, the promotion of sexual and reproductive rights and health, and the setting up of communication channels with the communities of the women participating in the programme. This helps in raising awareness and informing women in and from their environments, with the so-called multiplier effect that ensures impact on a greater number of women who otherwise would be left aside. The programme further includes a strategic line aimed at the comprehensive prevention of female genital mutilation.[81]

Ideally, a multilevel intercultural integration strategy should thus comprise, in sequence, the following.

An evidence-based analysis of the problem to be solved

The strategy should start from the key diversity and inclusion challenges clearly identified by experts and practitioners working in this area, as they manifest themselves in the particular member state. Stereotypes and false assumptions about numbers of migrants and their impact abound across all society and influence decision making in a direction away from an inclusive, intercultural approach. A statistically accurate representation of the actual demographic diversity of the country is also important to prevent racism, hate speech and xenophobic movements thriving.

Similarly, evidence is needed to measure the extent of inequality which may be suffered by members of minority communities (differentiated by gender) in employment and other fields, which if addressed through positive-action measures could better capture their talents. Degrees of segregation in housing and schooling would also be important to know. Additionally, systematic compilation of hate crime data as distinct from associated crimes (e.g. of assault), as well as hate speech data, and the encouragement by police of full reporting by victims is of great importance in understanding the extent of the challenge of intolerance.

80. See: *La implementación de procesos participativos interculturales en el ámbito local* [The implementation of participatory intercultural processes in the local sphere], RECI/KALEIDOS.

81. For more information (in Spanish) see: www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1279167082824&language=en&pageid=1279167082824&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FPage%2FBIO_Listado.

Research should also aim at bringing forward evidence of the benefits of diversity. In 2008, a study by the Bertelsmann Foundation found that if Germany had invested in migrants' empowerment to achieve education and enter the job market at rates comparable to native Germans, rather than to resources devoted to migrant welfare and assistance, the German state would have saved in the region of up to €15.6 billion.[82]

The **Norwegian** Directorate of Integration and Diversity publishes an overall report of the status of integration and participation of the immigrant population using a variety of indicators (see: www.imdi.no/om-imdi/rapporter/2020/indikatorer-for-integrering-2020/).

The basis for this report derives from Statistics Norway who supply the authorities with relevant statistics. The national government (Ministry of Education and Research – Department of Integration) finance the production of statistics which monitor the situation for immigrants on different variables such as employment, education, housing, income, attitudes, etc. through Statistics Norway (SSB) (see: www.ssb.no/en/).

The OBITen is a joint initiative of the Cabildo of **Tenerife** (Spain) and La Laguna University, launched in 2001 to promote scientific research on migratory movements on the island of Tenerife. It prioritises the need to apply an evidence-based approach to the planning and implementation of diversity policies. Since its creation, OBITen has given public authorities valuable intelligence on the orientation of public policy and resources. OBITen regularly organises technical seminars to deepen understanding of migration flows, management of diversity and interculturalism. It has now acquired a key role within the planning and implementation of the Cabildo's intercultural strategy. The positive outcomes of the setting up of OBITen have shown the benefits of long-term strategic planning based on citizens' participation. It has resulted in the creation of the programme Together in the Same Direction which now forms the Cabildo's intercultural strategy. The strategy is implemented jointly by the local authority, university and civil society, but it is fully funded by the Cabildo and the Regional Government of the Canary Islands.

Finally, the Local Immigration Observatory of **Bilbao** City Council (Spain) regularly carries out a barometer of perceptions towards immigration. This incorporates a specific analysis of the main stereotypes, prejudices and rumours held by the population in relation to immigration and diversity in the municipality.

82. See: Fritschi T. and Jann B. (2008), *Social costs of insufficient integration of immigrants in Germany*, Bertelsmann Foundation, Gütersloh, Germany; and "Integration: what works?", research report by Vidhya Ramalingam for the Institute for Strategic Dialogue with the support of the Open Society Institute.

Key elements:

a. identify the demographic diversity of the country, its variation and trends;

b. establish where existing policies are failing to empower migrant/minority populations to realise their aspirations and potential, and why (identify the equality gap). Particular attention should be given to the assessment of key integration areas such as employment, health, education and housing, with a view to establishing any issues that determine disadvantage. The gender perspective should be an essential component of this assessment;

c. locate sources of actual or latent intercultural frictions and consider the experience of minority groups in key relationships with wider society and its institutions, and with public and private-sector organisations;

d. map the institutions and organisations charged with addressing the equality gap and intercultural frictions and the solutions deployed so far (effectively or not);

e. identify examples of excellence where in specific organisations or territories the gap of opportunity and achievement is smaller and social trust across ethnic and cultural difference is higher, and study the approaches which have contributed to this result;

f. draw widely on independent research to ensure this evidence is objective;

g. ensure voice at this critical initial stage for minority NGOs, as well as mainstream NGOs with adequate expertise, and assess any specific needs that arise from how people choose to give expression to their identities.

An overarching aim related to intercultural integration challenges

The aim of the strategy should flow from the above equality and diversity drivers and challenges. Having a strong, simple aim which clearly fits the national context and which openly addresses the manifest challenges is therefore critical. But it should represent a positive affirmation – the solution – recognising the benefits for social cohesion, affirmation of human rights, economic development, demographic vitality, humanitarian obligations, security and prosperity, and in general the diversity advantage to be captured by the strategy. This is not a matter of engendering

political spin – integrity in dealing with matters of integration is essential. In that context, political leadership is about offering a future-oriented alternative message, balancing the challenges and opportunities of diversity and equality, which most citizens – not just members of minority communities – feel they can embrace.

Such a vision should be based on strong evidence for the value of diversity and equality for social and economic progress. The intercultural approach to integration offers key arguments for such a vision: for example, a study carried out by the Migration Policy Group, correlating cities' performance in the Intercultural Cities Index and the Quality of Life in European Cities Index, found a strong statistical link between local intercultural policies and local well-being and revealed that intercultural policies do not alienate voters. Cities with stronger intercultural policies, especially on mainstreaming interculturalism, are more likely to have populations who believe that foreigners are good for their city and that local services and public institutions are trustworthy and efficient. When citizens believe in their societal framework, they are more likely to engage and play an active role in its development.[83]

An open society will constantly be renewed by those attracted by its opportunities and contributing to its vibrancy. A cohesive society will be one in which all its members can feel more secure – and be able to spend more on social programmes with fewer resources drained off by the criminal justice system.

In **Switzerland**, the Cantonal Integration Programme (PIC 2018-2021) as well as the Agenda for Integration Switzerland (AIS) provide the frame for integration policies and measures including language courses. The canton of Neuchâtel (a member of the Intercultural Cities programme) has been very successful in their implementation by setting up language courses; an ICT literacy programme; capacity building for the professional integration of migrants; the setting up of a network of "social and professional integration advisors" who provide individual and personalised follow-up for people with an asylum background; actions linked to support for parenthood and early childhood (promoting access to childcare facilities, enhancing the multilingualism of parents and children); subsidies for measures to promote living together, understanding of the place of life and the involvement of migrants in the local community; diversity training for professionals in different fields (health, police, employment, social and professional guidance, early childhood); collaboration with the towns of the canton to co-ordinate the reception of new arrivals; the introduction of a citizenship-based procedure (encouraging rather than coercing) for the acquisition of nationality; the setting up of an information system for first-time migrants, particularly in the language of origin; co-ordination of awareness-raising measures on racism and discrimination issues (including the Action Week against Racism); the co-ordination of a "Community for Integration and Multicultural Cohesion", which brings together representatives of migrant communities as well as actors concerned with the integration of migrants.

The State Council of the Canton of Neuchâtel has also decided to include diversity as a resource in its current legislative programme. This ambition of the State Council aims to confirm the canton's historical commitment to interculturality but also to reinforce the exemplary nature of local authorities in terms of diversity management. One of the canton's flagship measures is the implementation of a roadmap for an open and egalitarian state. This roadmap is cross-cutting (as it eventually concerns the entire cantonal administration and several municipalities in the canton) and comprehensive, as it is based on three axes:

1. valuing diversity with an exemplary state
2. valuing diversity by ensuring equal access to benefits
3. valuing diversity by reflecting it as an employer.

It should also be noted that the city of Neuchâtel implements actions in favour of integration and diversity at the municipal level. In 2018, it implemented an intercultural integration policy, the foundations of which are based on the policy frameworks of the Swiss Confederation and the canton of Neuchâtel, as well as on international standards and references. The aim of the intercultural integration policy of the city of Neuchâtel "is to promote social cohesion, equal dignity and well-being for all persons living in the municipality, by creating the necessary conditions, through its political choices, for the maintenance of harmonious relations based on mutual understanding".

The main principle of the Human Rights Policy of the city of **Reykjavik** (Iceland) is based on international human rights treaties, legislation and the principle of equality. The principles of equality and anti-discrimination are also found in Article 65 of the Icelandic Constitution. They stipulate that all people should enjoy human rights, are equal under the law and should not be discriminated against because of certain attributes or other non-objective reasons. When decisions are made that

83. Migration Policy Group (2017), "How the intercultural integration approach leads to a better quality of life in diverse cities", paper for ICC's network.

may have a different impact on people because of their position, the city of Reykjavik must consult the organisations fighting discrimination on the basis of that ground. The Human Rights Policy aims for active participation in society and states that the contributions of each and every person should be valued. The city has been engaging various models and policies on intercultural integration. One of its objectives is to enable all its residents to enjoy a diverse, vibrant culture and a community in which knowledge, open-mindedness, equality and mutual respect characterise the relations between people of diverse origins. All the city's institutions have to adapt to an intercultural society and execute its Policy on Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers in their work plans at all levels.

The **Bilbao** City Council's Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity establishes – as an objective of its strategy – a commitment to "the development of an intercultural society, in which differences can be accommodated within a framework of equality and in which the diversity of resources of each citizen is promoted, in order to add to and contribute together to the development of the city". A city in which everyone participates actively, and in which everyone is offered opportunities to participate in the common project of coexistence. The plan "steers public policies, from an intercultural perspective, to strengthen social cohesion and urban development in the city, making the most of the advantages of diversity".

Key elements:

a. facilitate regular public debate on how the challenges of intercultural integration are best met and what opportunities they bring;

b. set out a goal for the strategy which positively affirms integration as a two-way process founded on equal access to rights and opportunities without discrimination, actions to eliminate disadvantage and inequality for all groups, and brings benefits to the entire society;

c. avoid an overly aspirational vision which cannot be operationalised on the ground;

d. adopt a language of equality and inclusion, conveying the message that discrimination leads to waste of talent and human potential while diversity and equality lead to well-being and a better life for all;

e. assure congruence with other key strategies, e.g. sustainable development and development co-operation; and

f. focus on the benefits of diversity for the whole society.

A set of objectives to help realise that aim

A clear and compelling aim needs to be broken down into a discrete set of defined objectives through which it will be realised – or a clear theory of change expressed. If this process of articulating an aim and associated objectives is not properly executed, what will likely take their place are, respectively, an aspirational vision conjured out of the air which cannot be rendered meaningful on the ground and a descriptive set of policy domains (the labour market, housing and so on) which merely become headings under which long lists of unconnected integration actions are adumbrated. If there is a recurrent weakness in national integration strategies produced to date, it is at this point in the policy process, resulting from a lack of "to do" objectives, which in turn should point to and frame their concrete operationalisation.

Austria has set clear objectives and measures for the integration of migrants within its National Action Plan for Integration (NAP.I – established since January 2010). In addition to general integration policy guidelines, the NAP.I deals in depth with challenges, principles and goals in the following fields of action: i) language and education, ii) work and occupation, iii) rule of law and values, iv) health and social affairs, v) intercultural dialogue, vi) sport and leisure, vii) living and viii) the regional dimension of integration.

The Integration Act of 2017 represents a major advance: with it Austria provides clear rules to ensure social cohesion and social peace. The pursued goal of successful integration is the benefit of the entire society. The Integration Act follows the principle of "integration based on merit". The essential factors are as follows: knowledge of the German language, economic self-sufficiency as well as respect for Austrian and European laws and values. The Integration Act defines rights and obligations for persons entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection, and third-country nationals with legal residence.

A national action plan (NAP) against racism and discrimination is also currently being developed. The main objective is the involvement of all relevant actors (ministries, states, NGOs, civil society), the guiding orientation for responsible bodies and persons as well as the stimulation of public discourse and research, as well as the implementation of the NAP in initiatives, projects and measures.

On the basis of the government programme, a national strategy against antisemitism is currently being implemented with all affected stakeholders.

The very first such plan, for **Spain** in 2007, remains a model to follow, with 10 such objectives, disaggregated into a series of concrete actions, which comprehensively covered a wide range of interventions. The second iteration, running from 2011, reckoned in retrospect that there had been a good coherence among the various elements, from the diagnosis through to the programmes and measures to the results.[84]

The **Bilbao** (Spain) City Council's Municipal Plan for Citizenship and Diversity identifies an overall goal and specific objectives in 15 Areas of Intervention, aligned with the Intercultural Cities Index.

Reykjavik's (Iceland) Policy on Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers mirrors the different roles of the municipality and divides its responsibility into five different fields: the city as an authority, as an employer, a service provider, a partner and in procurement. Actions are then selectively chosen to work on building an inclusive society with full support from the municipality.

Key elements:

a. engage with all stakeholders on the outcomes that the aim entails;

b. define these as a set of discrete objectives focusing on the entire society, not only on migrants and minorities;

c. keep the number of these objectives to single figures;

d. ensure these are "to do" goals, not merely descriptive of policy domains; and

e. make sure each objective is an outcome, not merely an output.

Programmes and projects to be developed and implemented with users

Well-conceived objectives need then to be matched by a finite number of tools including legislation, policies, programmes, projects, measures and actions. These could include already existing resources that would simply need to be reoriented in a structured and co-ordinated way towards the objectives and around individual users, recognising that the latter will in many cases have complex needs. When it comes to programmes and projects, public authorities should bear in mind that NGOs can sometimes be more flexible and responsive as project deliverers than government departments, but the latter must remain in charge of the process and co-ordinate actions, ensuring their sustainability and impact over time.

84. See: https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/?action=media.download&uuid=53CAE156-EC04-F55F-50018C9179C2F7AA (in Spanish).

Care should thus be taken to avoid passing newcomers to the country from one agency dealing with one problem, to another dealing with a different problem, or indeed to conceive the strategy and its objectives from the point of view of addressing problems only.

At the heart of the **German** approach is an integration programme which brings together for individuals the various elements of language acquisition, vocational training and civic orientation in one package. The **Swedish** introduction programme for refugees starts with an individualised introduction plan developed through dialogue between the public employment service and the refugee, based on a mapping of their educational background, previous work experience and need for training and other initiatives. And in **Finland** public authorities are required to develop equality and integration plans, and to consider these together.

The **Portuguese** national support centres for the integration of migrants offer one-stop shops to newcomers, with multilingual services and cultural mediation. Also, the Portuguese for All programme (PPT), which addresses immigrants living in Portugal with a valid title of residence to stay, offers Portuguese certified language courses at no cost to participants, as well as courses in technical Portuguese for different sectors (such as retail, hospitality, beauty care, building construction, civil engineering). Other non-formal educational activities are promoted co-operatively by non-profit public and private entities; these are complementary to formal education, being an extra help for the Portuguese language teaching. The education offer is completed by the ACM who deliver training on intercultural education, intercultural dialogue, migrants' access to health, nationality laws and immigration laws to citizens, professionals and entities that, directly or indirectly, are involved in the intercultural approach to migration. Finally, since 2015, the High Commission for Migration has hosted a working group for interreligious dialogue, aimed at deepening such dialogue as a means to improve migrants and minorities' social cohesion, participation and integration. Currently, this group is composed of 14 religious communities.

The **Norwegian** Government repealed the current Introduction Act and introduced a new law on integration, the new Integration Act, which took effect in January 2021. The Integration Act provides the framework by which immigrants with refugee backgrounds can receive the necessary training for work or education in Norway. The Integration Act regulates the introduction programme and Norwegian language training and social studies. The aim of the introduction programme is to provide each participant with fundamental skills

in the Norwegian language and some insight into Norwegian society, as well as to prepare them for employment or further education. The right and obligation to participate in the programme applies to refugees and their families, in addition to persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds and their family members. The introduction programme is an individually adapted full-time programme. Participants are entitled to an introduction benefit, which amounts to twice the basic amount of the National Insurance scheme on an annual basis. The benefit is taxable.

For the introduction programme the new law proposes, among others, that:

- mandatory skills mapping and career guidance before the introduction programme starts;
- the length of the programme can vary between three months and four years depending on the participant's previous education and the goals for the introduction programme;
- the programme shall contain Norwegian language training, social studies and measures that prepare for work or further education;
- a mandatory course in empowerment for all;
- participants under 25 without an upper secondary education should primarily be supported in getting upper secondary education through their introduction programme;
- the current requirement on the number of teaching hours in Norwegian will be replaced by a requirement to achieve a certain level in the language;
- a skills requirement for teachers providing Norwegian language training for immigrants is introduced.

North Macedonia is currently implementing its first One Society and Interculturalism national strategy, a document prepared in co-operation with 140 NGOs present in the country. The strategy's coordination body has concluded an agreement for co-operation with the Nansen Dialogue Centre in Skopje to create a module for intercultural training of educational staff in the country. Taking into consideration the vision of the national strategy for nurturing intercultural relations and integration processes, as well as creating an educational environment in which cultural diversity will be promoted, the training programme is structured around several specific areas that allow each participant to get acquainted with the concept of intercultural education, and acquire the skills to strengthen interaction, co-operation and trust between teachers, students and parents from different ethnic communities. In 2020, the annual training cycle targeted 180 teachers, associated professionals and preschool educators from all over the country.

In 2016-18 the city of **Gdansk** (Poland) adopted and implemented its Model of Immigrant Integration, conceived with the participation of the city's stakeholders and residents. This model comprehensively combines actions by all departments and city agencies to address the integration of foreign residents and ensure that equal treatment is mainstreamed into the city's policies. These policies have a number of strong points, for instance a participatory character, a long-term goal, a carefully developed methodology and finally a broad selection of stakeholders. In 2019, using a similar methodology, the Model of Integration of Immigrants in Pomorskie Voivodeship was implemented.

The City Council of **Barcelona** (Spain) has adopted a municipal plan to combat Islamophobia, with 28 measures which aim to guarantee social cohesion and protect human rights. The plan has been discussed and agreed upon in a process involving human rights and anti-discrimination experts, specialist municipal staff, social entities and organisations from the Muslim community. The Office for Non-Discrimination (OND) has become the main service run by the City Council for citizens and organisations to document, receive information, train and offer advice on hate crimes and hate speech. The municipal service collates data in order to provide a better snapshot of the situation in the city, as well as activate mechanisms for officially reporting hate crime and hate speech, and litigating in significant cases if necessary. Training programmes are organised for municipal workers in this area, including the city police.

Finally, in **Lublin** (Poland) the Lublin for All project tested a participatory model of diversity management inspired by the Swiss Canton of Neuchâtel. An Integration Support Group was created comprising city officials, NGOs and other institutions to: i) exchange information and develop solutions to support the integration of foreigners in Lublin; ii) carry out research on attitudes towards foreigners in Lublin; iii) deliver intercultural competence workshops; iv) design a social campaign portraying the diversity of the city's inhabitants. A Foreigners Help Desk – highly specialised and one of the first such facilities in Poland – was launched and operated by City Office. Furthermore, some foreigners were employed as civil servants by a municipal office for the first time ever in Poland.

Key elements:

a. indicate under each objective the initiatives required to secure an outcome;

b. avoid lists of unconnected actions, lacking the necessary synergies;

c. ensure programmes are organised around individual needs, not institutional "silos";[85]

d. identify the departments responsible for the action and other key actors involved in its development;

e. avail oneself of pre-existing projects, including NGO-driven ones, proven to work;

f. ensure that the programmes identified are aligned with the principles of the intercultural model: they promote equality, recognise diversity, encourage interaction and include citizen participation in the design, implementation and evaluation;[86]

g. support innovative projects which could be replicated if successful.

The structures/mechanisms needed to provide a coherent framework

The intercultural model must be incorporated transversally into the whole of public action and this determines the need to reformulate the classic structures of internal and external work which are often not adapted to the new challenges that growing diversity brings. Transversality means involving different departments, strengthening the dialogue between public-sector areas, sharing knowledge and involving other key agents in order to achieve a common objective that goes beyond the sectoral competences of each department.

Intercultural mainstreaming is a strategy to ensure that the needs and experiences of all cultural groups are accurately considered in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies, programmes and institutional projects, so that the diverse population benefits under equal conditions, under the basic principles of equity, participation and respect for human rights.[87]

The importance of applying this approach in the set of public policies is supported by two central arguments:

- normative argument: interculturality as an end in itself. Co-operation is based on values that drive objectives and actions towards the recognition and enforcement of human rights – including individual and collective rights – and contribute to social justice;
- functional argument: interculturality as a means to an end. The recognition and management of cultural diversity generates better results and greater sustainability of the impacts of our actions.[88]

While there are specific needs that may require additional and selective measures at certain times (reception process, legal status, etc.), general programmes aimed at the whole citizenry can also promote the integration of migrants if some previous processes or structures are adapted accordingly.[89] Thus, the integration of the principle of equal treatment and opportunities within the framework of general policies would entail a change in two basic aspects of their management, namely:

- at a procedural level, referring to how the administrative services are conceived and carried out, in order to assess the different situations and positions in which cultural groups and diverse individuals may find themselves, so as to meet their needs in an equitable manner;
- at a structural level, referring to the structures and organisational forms of the administration and bureaucracy, in order to eliminate those elements that could cause social inequalities from the outset.

As new structures and mechanisms will be needed to cohere and drive implementation of a government- and society-wide effort, interministerial and interdepartmental arrangements will be necessary, preferably led by an independent co-ordination body (see the "hub" above), to ensure a whole-government approach is adopted. This agency should have a mandate from the highest level of government. Paradoxically, one of the best ways to avoid the pitfall of separate departmental "silos" is to maximise the involvement of non-governmental organisations in the implementation (as well as the design) of the strategy. This is because they can be a transversal force where officials are more used to being contained within bureaucratic boundary lines. In Ireland, this has been found to be valuable in injecting service-user perspectives directly into the process of implementation.

85. Organisational silos describe the isolation that occurs when employees or entire departments within an organisation do not want to, or do not have the adequate means to share information or knowledge with each other.
86. The ICC programme is developing a guide and checklist for the first assessment of project proposals in light of the intercultural lens.
87. See: *Guide to intercultural competencies applied to the development of public administration projects*.
88. German Society for International Co-operation (GIZ) GmbH (2013), methodological guide *Mainstreaming the intercultural approach in governance sector programs and projects*, based on the experience of the Good Government and State Reform programme of Peru, Lima, p. 23.
89. Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security (European Commission) (2007).

A dedicated agency may be required, such as the BAMF (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) in Germany, or at least existing agencies may require new mandates. Either way, legislation may be needed to confer these new statutory duties. It is also important to cohere relations among different levels of government, including the regional and the municipal, avoiding unnecessary disputes over competences, as indicated in the earlier section on multilevel governance. In Norway, for instance, there is a bilateral partnership between the association of local authorities and the national government, which has been able to address "burden-sharing" in refugee allocation, associated with proportionate financial support. Furthermore, supporting horizontal networks on the ground can usefully offset top-down approaches – as the experience of the national Intercultural Cities' networks among the member states already testifies.

Portugal and **Finland** provide good examples of multilevel governance.

In **Portugal**, the Council for Migrations brings together departments and agencies, migrant associations, municipalities, social partners and others. ACM (the High Commission for Migration) has a programme (including funding) for local municipal integration plans which dovetail with the national strategy. It also has Local Centres for Supporting the Integration of Migrants (CLAIM) which are decentralised centres (116), resulting from a partnership between ACM and municipalities, higher education institutions or civil society organisations. Using a multilevel governance and integrated approach, their services include information and support which aim to respond to the needs of migrants in different areas, including regularisation of the migratory situation, nationality, family reunification, housing, employment and social security. Finally, the municipal Intercultural Mediation Project, running from 2018 to 2021, and implemented in 12 municipalities, aims at the creation and development of intercultural mediation teams which facilitate the integration of migrant communities, and Roma and Travellers communities. The mediators are locals, immigrants or Roma people alike. They play a central role in reducing the distance between immigrants and the public services. The mediators work mainly on intercultural communication, dialogue and mutual understanding. They also work on conflict prevention and resolution, using the principles of intercultural mediation.

Finland, meanwhile, has an Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations, under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice, which brings together migration experts from national, regional and local levels, ranging from public officials to civil society representatives. It engages in dialogue with immigrants, ethnic, cultural and religious minorities, public authorities, political parties and NGOs. It is complemented by seven regional advisory boards.

In **Spain**, the Sectoral Conference on Immigration is a semi-structured mechanism (also existing for other policy topics) where regional authorities meet national authorities to discuss public actions on migration. Municipalities are represented by the Spanish Federation of Local Authorities, which has "voice but not vote" at meetings.

The **Norwegian** national authorities address the challenges of integration and pinpoint the responsible ministry or sector through the Strategy for Integration – Integration through knowledge (2019-2022, in Norwegian). The strategy is based on research and lessons learned during the past years, and it requires extraordinary efforts to enable social mobility and avoid marginalisation of migrants. The strategy has four priority areas and 57 measures that are to be implemented within four years. The four priority areas are: i) Education and qualification; ii) Work; iii) Everyday integration; iv) The right to live a free life. The strategy involves seven ministries. More information:

www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/519f5492da984d1083e8047011a311bd/norway-integration-strategy.pdf.

The **Russian Federation** has established national mechanisms and a legal framework for regulating interethnic and intercultural relations. The dialogue of federal, regional government bodies and local self-government structures with public, scientific and cultural associations is firmly established, including within the framework of the implementation of the Strategy of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025. The main platforms for this dialogue are the Council for Interethnic Relations under the President of the Russian Federation[90] and the Government Commission on Migration Policy.[91] In addition, the Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs[92] is closely involved in interethnic issues, including its migration dimension. The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation[93] is also involved in this work as the main body for ensuring the interaction of citizens with state authorities and local self-government.

At regional level, pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 2, of the Regional Law 5/2004, every three years

90. https://sovetnational.ru/.
91. http://government.ru/department/198/about/.
92. https://fadn.gov.ru/.
93. www.oprf.ru/en.

the Legislative Assembly of the **Region Emilia-Romagna** approves, on the proposal of the Executive, a "Programme for the social integration of immigrant foreign citizens". (The region was the first in Italy to record the incidence of foreign residents in the total resident population.) Furthermore, it entrusts a specific interdepartmental technical group with the task of monitoring the state of implementation of the transversal objectives defined by the programme itself, as well as reporting the activities carried out by the various sectors and services of the region.

Recently, the City Council of **Bilbao** (Spain) has set up the Inter-Area Commission for the design, implementation and evaluation of the municipal Citizenship and Diversity Plan. This is an internal, interdepartmental commission for co-ordination, discussion and implementation; it is permanent in nature and made up of representatives from all the municipal areas and bodies. The commission will contribute to the direct involvement of the entire municipal structure in promoting the intercultural approach in all sectoral and cross-cutting areas of the municipal action. It fulfils, among others, the following tasks: i) contribute to the identification, deployment and evaluation of the actions of the Citizenship and Diversity Plan; ii) exchange and share information related to diversity management; iii) promote co-ordination and collaboration between the different areas of work, public bodies and society; iv) identify new actions, needs, spaces and opportunities; v) detect training needs and promote training opportunities in the field of interculturality, coexistence and diversity management. Different local departments participate in this commission: youth, sport, equality, culture, town planning, works, services, social action, housing, police, education, economic development, trade and employment, and health and consumer affairs. The commission is led and driven by the municipal department in charge of intercultural policies.

Finally, the **Union of Polish Metropolises** is an association of 12 of the largest cities in Poland. Since 2017, the UPM has been running a working group on migration and integration. It is within this group that representatives of local governments exchange experiences, support each other and develop comprehensive policies. As a result of this approach, shared experiences, solutions and know-how from local authorities can be voiced across Poland. This framework for co-operation has also allowed for a rapid and harmonious response based on effective shared solutions during the recent Covid-19 emergency, particularly in relation to communication with migrant citizens during the lockdown in March and April 2020.

Key elements:

a. ensure a coherent and co-ordinated approach across government departments and agencies;
b. engage advocates and practitioners, to add perspectives and lived experiences;
c. create new agencies as required, equipped with the skills, resources, capacity and authority to mobilise and co-ordinate relevant departments and levels of governance;
d. provide for multilevel governance, cohering the national, regional and local;
e. support horizontal networks, especially national Intercultural Cities networks.

Designated actors to take responsibility, including co-production by users

It is important that responsibility is clearly allocated for the various strands and actions of the strategy, as otherwise it may remain an official fiction, remote from day-to-day practice by departments and agencies. Ideally, all departments concerned will have to pursue and aim to achieve one or more of the goals of the strategy so that the latter is not the responsibility of a single office. The general level of intercultural competence of public servants can be an issue here, if they are to embrace the challenge. This will be assisted by positive-action measures to open up access to public-sector employment for migrants and foreign nationals, yet research by the Fundamental Rights Agency found that only eight EU member states were doing so.[94]

But the responsible actors should not be confined to government. In Denmark, for instance, the government and social partners agreed a deal in 2016 to facilitate the integration of refugees and reunified family members into the labour market. Against evidence that only 27 per cent (Q3, 2016) of individuals of working age in these categories had secured employment after three years of participation in integration programmes, trade unions and employers agreed a supportive framework. This streamlined and accelerated the assessment and recognition of skills, acquisition of vocational Danish and job placement, including via new requirements placed on local authorities. It also established a training programme for entrants not yet able to command a trade-union reservation wage, while incentivising placements with a bonus for participating companies. Similarly, Sweden has developed a series of "fast tracks" to promote the early employment of refugees through agreements with the sectoral social partners. More than 5 000 refugees had come through these fast tracks, across

94. Fundamental Rights Agency (2017), *Together in the EU: promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants*, p. 48.

14 sectors, by the end of 2017.[95] Beyond this, at the micro level, individual volunteering and activism can be encouraged. For example, in Italy there have been instances of intercultural municipalities sensitively hosting individual refugees or small numbers with local families and groups and encouraging experiments in self-build housing by mixed groups.

In **Portugal**, the Intercultural Education School's Network (REEI) – intercultural education within formal educational settings is promoted by the High Commission for Migration, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Aga Khan Foundation. The network is formed by schools that are committed to host, integrate and promote the academic success of all children and young people, regardless of their cultural or national origins, and promote a culture and practice of openness to difference, by establishing positive interactions between all students and all members of the educational community. Participation in the network means integrating intercultural education practices in the Educational School Project and the Annual Plan of Activities in the following areas: School Organisational Culture; Curriculum (content, resources and didactic) and Community Engagement. Moreover, a National Strategy for Citizenship Education was adopted in 2018/2019 to make intercultural education part of the national. This strategy defines "Citizenship and Development" as a compulsory theme for all schools, and a cross-curriculum topic in all school levels.

Back in 2015 the city of **Erlangen** (Germany) and Siemens AG (25 000 employees) started a partnership to provide eight-week internships for skilled asylum seekers at Siemens. A year later, Siemens had expanded its programme to other sites in Germany, setting up six-month training programmes for young refugees, encompassing intensive language courses as well as pre-vocational training in the areas of mechanics and electronics. The programme was renewed following evidence of a win-win-win situation: first for the asylum seekers who receive workplace orientation and self-check their professional capacities; then for firm employees who can reflect on any bias against refugees and migrants and learn from diversity of skills; and finally for the company itself which can make use of the potential of a diverse workforce.

In 2018 the city of **Bergamo** (Italy) launched the first ever "Academy for Refugee Integration", a project jointly implemented by the city, the local Chamber of Commerce (Confindustria of Bergamo), and several civil society organisations including Caritas and Ruah. The academy provides nine months of training, including Italian language courses, vocational training and an internship in one of the companies that are involved by Confidustria, with the possibility of being employed after the course.

Bilbao (Spain), implements the initiative "Recognition of migrant women of Bilbao", whose main objective is to recognise the importance of the presence of the immigrant woman in the social and public life of the city, as well as to contribute to spreading a general openness to the recognition of diversity. The initiative makes visible and celebrates the work, commitment and contribution of migrant women to the receiving society, in six fields: as community agents, as entrepreneurships, as politicians, as artists, as human rights advocates and activities, as youth empowerees.

Similarly, in December 2013, the **Umbria Region** (Italy) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with most of the economic and social actors present in the Umbrian territory (such as the three main trade unions, the private social sector, the main organisations of the private profit including Confindustria, Confcommercio, Confagricoltura, CIA, CNA, Confimi, Perugia and Terni Building School, Confartigianato), the provinces and the Umbrian branch of the Association of Italian Municipalities. The protocol was intended to promote and support those actions and initiatives aimed at facilitating the effective socio-economic integration of asylum seekers/holders of international protection. The MoU served to connect the working needs and requirements of the beneficiaries with the system of territorial opportunities (training and employment offers) and to raise the profile of the territorial networking system and services by granting effective social rights.

Key elements:

a. give strategic political direction from the highest level of government;
b. involve the social partners, especially in labour-market aspects of integration;
c. assist regions and municipalities to develop dovetailing integration strategies;
d. ensure that intercultural awareness becomes a basic competence for all public servants;
e. foster a culture of civic activism, innovation and dialogue on the ground.

95. See: Government Offices of Sweden (2016), *Fast track - a quicker introduction of newly arrived immigrants*.

The scale and source of resources required for implementation

Finding the resources for an intercultural integration strategy can be a stumbling block, without which it remains only on paper. In principle, this should not be a major problem since an intercultural strategy is to a large extent a matter of applying the intercultural lens to existing policy domains, which may mean revising programmes and projects rather than starting from the beginning. Of course, in some areas targeted funding envelopes may be allocated to innovative projects or structures. The first Spanish intercultural integration plan allocated €2 billion over its four years and this indeed allowed municipalities to pursue pilot projects and replicable actions. Support from the EU may be available (where applicable), including from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, as the Italian national integration plan recognises. However, even if a strategy is first developed with (external) project funding, it is essential that it is endowed with structural funding for its implementation, evaluation and updating.

Additional funding can be reasonably presented as investment in the diversity advantage to be realised, whereas abstaining from such investment will still incur costs but ensure benefits fail to accrue. Asylum seekers in particular may languish for years outside the labour market, as their morale falls and their skills atrophy. There is compelling research that the cost of non-integration is higher than the investment in integration and inclusion.

In September 2017 it emerged that the White House had suppressed a study by the US Department of Health and Human Services, mandated by the president, in a March memorandum implementing his revised travel ban on refugees (and migrants) from certain Muslim countries. The memorandum had sought information on the costs of the refugee programme and how to curtail them. But the study found that, over the preceding decade, refugees had brought in US$63 billion more in government revenues than they had cost.[96]

A German study of 2008 found that the lack of integration of immigrants was costing the state an estimated €16 billion. The state was losing income tax and contributions to pensions and social security due to insufficient language skills, lack of social networks and poor integration of immigrants into the labour market. Thus, the lack of integration was costing federal and state governments €3.6 billion each per year. The cost for the municipalities was about €1.3 billion and for social security funds €7.8 billion.[97]

96. "Trump administration rejects study showing positive impact of refugees", *New York Times*, 18 September 2017.
97. Fritschi T., Stutz H. and Schmugge S. (2008), *Social costs of the non-integration of immigrants in municipalities,* Bertelsmann Foundation.

The multiplier effect of financial support for relevant NGOs is not to be underestimated either – they can uniquely mobilise voluntary activism as a result. UNESCO has recognised the value of such "volunteer initiatives, local cooperatives and collaborative networks that may work with smaller groups and offer more personalized assistance".[98]

Through the Urban Projects programme, the Federal Council of **Switzerland** – with the support of the cantons – provided financial and technical support to small and medium-sized cities and agglomeration municipalities between 2008 and 2015. The implementation of neighbourhood development projects was aimed at sustainably improving the quality of life of residents through an interdisciplinary and participatory approach (www.are.admin.ch/are/de/home/staedte-und-agglomerationen/programme-und-projekte/programm-projets-urbains.html).

In addition, the programme created the Living Neighbourhoods Network (see overview of urban projects on the website: https://lebendige-quartiere.ch/de/Projekte). Several projects (e.g. Schaffhausen, Regensdorf and Vernier) are explicitly aimed at intercultural integration. At its spring symposium in 2019, the network presented several projects, including the project on intercultural mediation by caretakers, which has been implemented in several cities (https://lebendige-quartiere.ch/fr/Manifestations/Colloque_de_printemps_2019:_Le_role_des_quartiers_dans_lintegration_sociale).

Many initiatives have been taken at municipality and city level. For example:

- the Periurban programme (www.periurban.ch/), which has been helping municipalities in rural areas to promote integration since 2008;
- the contact-citizenship programme, which from 2012 to 2019 has supported numerous civic engagement initiatives in the field of migration and integration, thus highlighting the innovative potential of civil society and creating synergies between integration services, associations, the private sector and individuals.

Key elements:

a. present budgetary allocations as an investment in the diversity advantage;

b. repackage existing expenditures looked at through the intercultural lens;

98. UNESCO (2016), *Cities welcoming refugees and migrants: enhancing effective urban governance in an age of migration*.

c. ensure funding is programme-driven, rather than being a substitute for that;

d. have funding follow individual users, so local authorities can finance services;

e. support NGOs mobilising voluntary goodwill as a resource in kind.

The vehicles for communication of the policy and to whom

Public communication of the intercultural strategy is of great importance. One weakness of multiculturalist approaches to managing diversity was that they really only engaged the elite of minority communities, whereas the success on the ground, as well as the legitimacy of intercultural integration, depends on broad public support. While a complex notion, interculturalism can be simply represented as the "inclusion of the other in the self".[99] Citizens can be engaged via their capacity for empathy rather than exclusion, linked to communication of shared values and accessible, satisfying human stories. Yet, communication of the intercultural strategy should not happen organically: it should be carefully planned and sustained over the whole implementation process, in order to build a broad ownership for its content, across institutions or among the general public, and to enhance capacity to champion it among all actors. Proper training on intercultural communication for communication officers should also be organised, to build capacity for positive intercultural messaging and for the development of alternative narratives to counter hate speech. Also, there is now a wealth of experience with anti-rumours work that is challenging popular stereotypes, including by mobilising citizens as "anti-rumour actors" to engage fellow citizens in dialogue on the street.[100]

Without interfering in any way in media freedom, it is also legitimate to engage journalists' associations in discussion, in the context of the national integration strategy, about how associated issues are covered in a fair and accurate manner, for example with reference to their own codes of conduct. The Ethical Journalism Network, working with the Fundamental Rights Agency, the European Broadcasting Union and the European Federation of Journalists, has produced a toolkit on the reporting of migration.[101]

99. Wilson R. (2018), *Meeting the challenge of cultural diversity in Europe: moving beyond the crisis*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK.
100. See: www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/anti-rumours.
101. See: https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/press-release-migration-reporting-toolkit.

Neumarkt (Germany) developed an important mission statement on joining the Intercultural Cities programme: Neumarkt – Intercultural Open City. This was prepared at one of the citizen conferences in view of the adoption of the Impetus for a Sustainable City policy document, which is the city's intercultural integration strategy. This mission statement sets out a commitment to: peaceful coexistence; mutual respect and mutual appreciation; integration as a dynamic two-way process of reciprocation and accommodation; integration as social participation for everyone; a culture of welcome; and opposition to all forms of racism.

Key elements:

a. design a communication plan for the strategy, identifying the most relevant milestones in its development: design process, key actors, approval, implementation of priority programmes, commemoration of annual milestones, progress of results, intermediate evaluations and final evaluation. The general communication plan of the strategy must be complemented with the communication strategies of each action foreseen in the framework of the plan, including an internal communication plan, informing staff of the strategy and objectives, how these have been incorporated into internal policies and reporting structures, and expectations of good working practices;

b. present a simple, consistent, positive values-led political message, in line with the aim, repeated at all levels of governance;

c. develop a non-partisan PR campaign, with an image, slogan, social media presence and events;

d. use supported programmes and projects to "show" as well as "tell";

e. support intercultural integration ambassadors in the on- and offline public sphere;

f. engage journalists' associations and community media to promote ethical journalism in this arena;

g. monitor the way in which media and social media portray migrants and diversity.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness

Monitoring and recurrent evaluation of the strategy is essential to identify any gaps between aspiration and achievement. Again, clearly set outcomes, as defined by the objectives, are essential to avoid a long list of arbitrary targets or meaningless indicators which have a stand-alone character. It is the former whose

realisation, or otherwise, needs to be assessed.[102] Some of the objectives may not be easily measurable, for example social trust or community cohesion. This calls for strong research partnerships and serious investment in developing new evaluation tools. The Basque Country Integration Barometer is one such tool, as is the Vienna integration monitor. It is in the nature of intercultural integration that quantitative measures need to be combined with qualitative evaluation for a rounded picture to emerge – particularly because the experiences of users matter and partly because there will be genuine differences of perspective among different social actors. The focus of the model operationally on programmes and projects lends itself readily to a case-study methodology for assessment. As with all the other elements of the model, monitoring and evaluation needs to be participatory too: if the objectives are apparently achieved, particularly in terms of quantitative measures, this is all well and good but if this does not match the qualitative experience of those who need to implement the plan at grass-roots level then the traction which it carries may be seriously overestimated. The lessons, of failure as well as success, need to be fed back into the revision of the plan over time as experience and confidence grows.

For instance, to continue the example of labour-market integration of refugees, both Denmark and Sweden discovered through monitoring their programmes that female refugees were at a much greater disadvantage in the labour market than their male counterparts, on average. This encouraged both governments to consider why this should be so and to seek to develop remedial responses.

Swansea (UK) regularly carries out residents' consultations both as a planning and evaluation tool. Swansea Council has developed a number of tools to involve and consult all citizens in its decision-making process regarding priorities, plans, budget, social services and civil life. The main structures for consultations are:

- The Consultation and Engagement Strategy, which helps practitioners to engage with residents and service users;
- The Swansea Voices online panel, which consists of a database of residents who are regularly consulted by the Council about its services and local issues. Its membership is continually refreshed to give as many people as possible the opportunity to take part. Recent areas of consultation have included the city centre redevelopment and priorities for the Council's budget.
- The Swansea Reputation Tracker is an ongoing telephone survey undertaken by the council. Every other month 180 people are asked their opinion about the council, the services it provides, council staff and satisfaction with their local area. The information gathered each year is used to inform the council's service plans and is submitted as part of its performance monitoring processes.

Better **Reykjavik** is an online consultation forum where citizens are given the opportunity to submit and discuss ideas on projects that the city is working on. The website is open for everyone to view and participate in. Users participate by presenting their own ideas, checking the ideas of others and/or giving feedback by supporting or opposing them. Better Reykjavik enables citizens to voice, debate and prioritise ideas to improve their city. It also gives voters direct influence on decision making. Within the Better Reykjavik platform different projects operate, the biggest being My District, Reykjavik city's participatory budgeting project, which has been running since 2011, with over €18 million allocated directly by citizens to execute the city's projects.

Through Better Reykjavik, in 2017 the city collected citizens' ideas to co-create its education policy. That was the first time a government policy had been crowdsourced within Iceland.

A similar process is now in action where the city is formulating its first democracy policy and asking citizens to participate by submitting their ideas on improved processes and/or prioritising democracy objectives.

Key elements:

a. define indicators by the desired outcomes of the objectives, including gender mainstreaming indicators;

b. include qualitative assessments, given a user focus and multiple perspectives;

c. utilise case studies examining exemplar programmes or projects, and focus groups;

d. draw on independent expert evaluators for impartial evidence;

e. maximise the involvement of practitioners and advocates on the ground.

Means for review and revision of the policy

Existing national integration plans have varying durations, but a three-year timescale is not atypical. This offers enough time to implement the current iteration of the strategy but not so much that its

102. Sanderson I. (2000), "Evaluating the effectiveness of policy responses to social exclusion", in Percy-Smith J. (ed.), *From exclusion to inclusion: policy responses to social exclusion in the UK*, Open University Press, Buckingham.

implementation becomes "backloaded" as it moves down the political and public-service priorities. As with the design of the strategy, its redesign should be evidence-based – notably the results of independent professional evaluation – and should give voice to the advocates and practitioners on the ground who might otherwise feel marginalised. This may lead to some projects which have functioned poorly being retired while others which have proved innovative and successful may be scaled up, including by redirection of funding – again the modular, programme/project core of the strategy makes this easier. Focusing on the bigger picture, the review of the strategy is also a good opportunity to reconfirm the wider societal commitment to its overall aim and to reinforce public and political consensus around it.

The Republic of **North Macedonia** has established a monitoring and reporting system on the implementation of the Action Plan of the Strategy for One Society and Interculturalism. In the monitoring, specific attention is given to the degree of implementation of priorities and objectives at the level of the cluster/strategic area. Attention is also given to whether the time frame of implementation of measures and activities has been met, the potential risks, incomplete activities as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of funds, and visibility of the effects of policies being implemented. A planned annual result, as well as a baseline, must be identified for each indicator in order to measure and assess success. Here, attention must be paid to selecting gender-sensitive indicator(s). If for any reason it is not possible to establish a baseline indicator prior to the activity, the result (quantitative or qualitative) obtained during the first measurement must be taken into account. Additionally, a separate template for data gathering and monitoring implementation of action plans per clusters/strategic areas need to be established.

The monitoring is carried out by the co-ordination body of the Office of of the Prime Minister, in co-operation with the line ministries and other relevant stakeholders, as well as through public debates. The co-ordination body must submit a report to the Permanent Advisory Body and to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on the implementation of the Action Plan of the Strategy for One Society and Interculturalism four times per year. In the reporting, the following principles must be given due attention: precision and conciseness; relevance; objectivity; and reporting information in a qualitative and quantitative manner. The reports will be published on the government website.

The medium-term evaluation will be carried out by independent experts (two years), as well as after expiry of the Strategy for One Society and Interculturalism 2020-2023. The strategy's action plan will be duly revised based on the reports assessing the level of implementation and the findings, and this will form the basis for the next strategy.

Key elements:

a. set a limited (e.g. three- or four-year) duration, as the optimum for implementation and review;
b. ensure revision is based on the findings of independent, objective evaluation and participatory feedback;
c. retire programmes/projects which are failing and scale up good practices;
d. maximise democratic involvement, by the whole society, in the debate;
e. signal once again to the most marginalised that their voice is being heard.

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