Intercultural cities | **Governance and policies for diverse communities**

Intercultural cities

▰▰▰ Intercultural cities, a flagship Council of Europe programme, supports the application of a new diversity management model called intercultural integration. It is based on the notion of diversity advantage – treating migrants as a resource for local economic, social and cultural development, and not only as vulnerable groups in need of support and services. Intercultural integration implies a strategic reorientation of urban governance and policies to encourage diversity in governing bodies and the administration, positive intercultural mixing and interaction, and institutional capacity to deal with cultural conflict. Intercultural cities offers a comprehensive methodology for helping cities develop their diversity strategies, and a range of analytical and assessment tools, including the very successful Intercultural Cities Index.

Advantages of diversity

▰▰▰ Economic, management and psychological research has demonstrated that diversity brings considerable advantages for organisations and cities in terms of increased innovation, productivity and ability to solve problems. The diversity advantage has implications for urban policies, since involving people of diverse backgrounds in policy design increases effectiveness. From a policy perspective, the challenge is to design and implement strategies for the management of diversity that can help to tap the potential benefits of diversity whilst minimising its costs.

Intercultural integration model

▬▬ The intercultural integration policy paradigm derives from an extensive analysis of city practice and a wide range of international standards. It is a comprehensive and strategic approach driven by committed leadership across political divides and administrative silos. It invites local political, social, cultural and economic institutions to focus on harnessing the skills and talents of all citizens, including migrants, and creating the best conditions for their participation in society and the economy. This model is now being implemented by over 70 cities in Europe, as well as in Japan, Korea, Mexico and Canada, and includes:

▶ public institutions that are culturally competent and foster intercultural desegregation interaction, and inclusion;
▶ fostering a pluralistic and inclusive identity through a public discourse which embraces the diversity advantage and active partnerships with media;
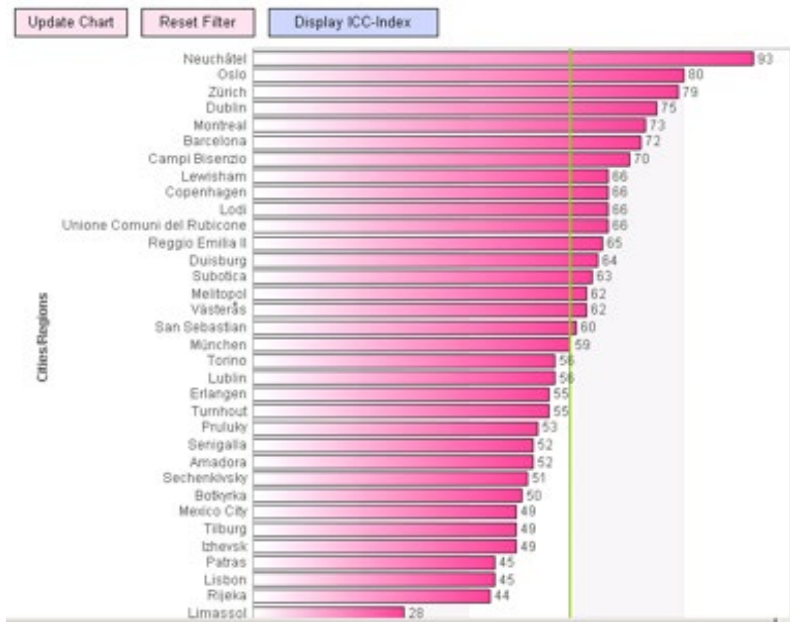▶ a participatory and inclusive governance system.

Intercultural cities toolbox

▬▬ In order to support the process of intercultural strategy development, implementation and evaluation, Intercultural cities proposes extensive city profiles, hundreds of practice examples, a step-by-step guide and thematic papers on the intercultural approach in specific policy areas. These tools enable policy audit and offer hundreds of good practice examples as well as guidelines for active citizen participation in the strategy development process.

The Intercultural Cities Index assesses cities' performance in relation to the intercultural integration model. The results of the index help cities make evidence-based judgments about the impact and outcomes of their policies and resource investment.

Study visits and thematic events expose a range of policymakers, practitioners and advocates from each city to practice-exchange, reflections and discussions with fellow actors from other cities. The events use an interactive, hands-on format designed to bring energy and ideas into the strategy-making process and help build a stakeholder alliance.

The Intercultural cities learning community (network) provides practical help to local stakeholders wishing to:

- ► connect and focus the efforts of city departments and services towards clearly defined and shared goals;
- ► engage positively with citizens;
- ► identify and empower intercultural innovators and bridge-builders;
- ► build a vision for the future diversity of the city and translate it into a workable strategy;
- ► benefit from the advice and support of peers from other cities;
- ► source expertise targeted to the city's specific focus and needs;
- ► develop collaborative projects on specific themes.

Member cities

Member cities map with the following labelled cities: bergen, botkyrka, oslo, stavanger, rotterdam, izhevsk, reykjavik, lublin, limerick, melitopol, dublin, copenhagen, london lewisham, berlin neukölln, neuchâtel, strasbourg, lyon, subotica, san sebastian, limassol, lisbon, haifa, geneva, valletta, reggio emilia, patras

Associated cities

Amadora, Arezzo, Bari, Barcelona, Bilbao, Campi Bisenzio, Capannori, Cartagena, Casalecchio di Reno, Castelvetro di Modena, Erlangen, Fermo, Fucecchio, Forlì, Genova, Gexto, Fuenlabrada, Ivano-Frankivsk, Jerez de la Frontera, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Kristiansand, Lodi, Lutsk, Mexico City, Milan, Montreal, Nizhyn, Novellara, Olbia, Parla, Palermo, Pavlohrad, Pizzo, Pompei, Pryluky, Ravenna, Sabadell, San Giuliano Terme, Senigallia, Turin, Tenerife, Trondheim, Turnhout, Unione dei Comuni del Rubicone, Yuzhne, Venice, Valletta, Viareggio, Vinnystia, Zhytomyr

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The Intercultural Cities Programme supports local authorities in designing governance mechanisms and policies which enable migrants and minorities to become a resource for the local community. The programme applies a unique policy paradigm based on the concept of diversity advantage. Effective benchmarking, diagnostic and information-sharing tools encourage policy innovation, city-to-city learning and the participatory development of local strategies for diversity advantage.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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