



FOREWORD

The European Commission/Council of Europe joint initiative *Intercultural Cities* is a project that is striving to develop a model that supports intercultural integration within diverse urban communities. *Interculturalism* is a concept that promotes policies and practices that encourage interaction, understanding and respect between different cultures and ethnic groups.

The approaches we are using have been built on the wide “acquis” and accumulated experience of the Council of Europe over many years in matters relating to migration, minorities, intercultural dialogue and the management of diversity, complemented by extensive relevant research that has been carried out by *Comedia* and other organisations.

Cities require policies and projects that ensure the practice of equal rights for all, combat discrimination and racism, and actively promote constructive interaction between individuals and groups of different backgrounds, cultures and generations. Unfounded myths and prejudices about minorities need to be dismantled, and certain existing civic systems and strategies must be challenged if they are to promote equality of access, participation and opportunity. The distinctive essence of an *intercultural* approach to cities is its focus on the engagement of all citizens; it emphasises collective responsibility and action.

Much of the work of *Intercultural Cities* has involved the testing, validation and enhancement of a model for intercultural governance and management at a local level. We selected 11 different cities from 11 different Member States of the Council of Europe to work closely with us to examine methods and means that could be applied in practical terms to the “real-life” situations and problems in varied local urban and national contexts.

The outcomes of the pilot phase of *Intercultural Cities* have been inspiring, but the results reflect only one stage of a longer-term process leading to better ways of strengthening community cohesion and improving the social, economic and cultural well-being of cities. In this publication, we are pleased to introduce the key elements of



the intercultural city model, which is still under development. This model is not offered as an ultimate standard, but rather to provoke for further debate and critical reaction.

Intercultural Cities emerged from the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue – a key Council of Europe contribution to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008) and the most authoritative text at the European level of intercultural dialogue as a public policy concept. We are indebted to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe for their continuing support, as well as many organisations and individuals that have been involved in the project, all united by a shared vision for social and cultural change to the complexities of living together as equals in dignity in our neighbourhoods and across our cities.

The *Intercultural Cities* programme has been an exemplary partnership with the European Commission, which we hope can be extended and enhanced for the benefit of all European cities and citizens.

Robert Palmer

*Director of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage
Council of Europe*

Intercultural Cities, a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Council of Europe, was launched in the run-up to the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and has proven to be one of its headline projects, putting into action one of the main messages of the Year, namely the need to think and act "across borders".

The 2008 European Year, an initiative proposed by Jan Figel, European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, was conceived with an ambitious goal; to promote awareness of the ways in which intercultural dialogue can help create strong and cohesive communities in an increasingly culturally diverse Europe. A diversity of cultures, languages and beliefs has always been at the heart of the European project; active engagement is needed to make the most of this and to avoid the tensions and fears which can be provoked by difference and by change.



One striking message throughout the Year has been the need to take a transversal approach to intercultural dialogue, thinking and acting across traditional policy borders. *Intercultural Cities* is a very positive example of this transversal cooperation in action at local level. Policies in fields as diverse as education, housing, policing, the labour market and urban development are examined through an “intercultural lens” in order to develop a more coherent strategy for public policy and civil society engagement in a culturally diverse city.

Recognition of the need to think and act across sectors is reflected in the wide range of EU programmes which provide funding for initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue. These include not only programmes for education and training, culture, youth and citizenship, but also rural and regional development, integration of migrants, and of course external relations. EU Education, Culture and Youth Ministers during the 2008 European Year adopted conclusions calling for the development of a cross-sectoral strategy for intercultural dialogue, with a particular focus on promoting intercultural competences; a good basis for future policy development.

Beyond 2008, intercultural dialogue remains a priority for the European Commission. Together with committed partners in the Member States and in civil society we want to build upon the momentum created by the Year. A continued Intercultural Cities partnership with the Council of Europe will, we hope, be part of our shared vision of an intercultural Europe which values human dignity, civic participation and respect for diversity as the foundation stones for socially and economically strong communities.

Vladimir Šucha
*Director of Culture,
Multilingualism and Communication
European Commission*



The challenge

Background and rationale

Formulating and intercultural city strategy:
the process

Ten elements of an Intercultural City Strategy

Examples of intercultural approaches in European cities



Background and rationale

Building an intercultural agenda for cities

The Intercultural Cities (ICC) Programme began in 2008 as a joint pilot initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. It set out to examine the impact of cultural diversity and migration from the perspective of Europe's cities and identify strategies and policies which could help cities work with diversity as a factor of development. It sought to widen and deepen the parameters of the discussion of these issues, beyond the news headlines, and into the realities of how people are living together and creating their cities on a daily basis. Significantly, it set out to propose practical policies and methods that cities across Europe might adopt and benefit from.

Whilst being far from the only scheme considering these important matters, it is perhaps unique in its scope and approach. It spans the whole of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals; and has been as concerned with the issues of historic diversity and national minorities as with more recent migration. Its conception of the city has been broad and inclusive too, seeking to engage at several levels with politicians and civil servants across a range of policy portfolios, with NGOs and migrant associations, public service, education and culture professionals, and with business and the media.

It set out to achieve in real places the model of an Intercultural City, which is defined as follows:

The intercultural city has a diverse population including people with different nationalities, origins, languages or religions/beliefs. Most citizens regard diversity as a resource, not as a problem, and accept that all cultures change as they encounter each other in the public space. The city officials publicly advocate respect for diversity and a pluralistic city identity. The city actively combats prejudice and discrimination and ensures equal opportunities for all by adapting its governance structures, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population, without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In partnership with business, civil society and public service professionals, the intercultural city develops a range of policies and actions to encourage greater mixing and interaction between diverse groups. The high level of trust and social cohesion help to prevent conflicts and violence, increase policy effectiveness and make the city attractive for people and investors alike.



This definition has been tested by a range of cities which are striving, each in accordance with its history and circumstances, to adopt a positive approach to diversity and manage it as an asset, rather than as a threat. The collective input of these cities, as well as many others which have contributed reflections and good practice, has shaped a unique approach to migrant/minority integration, which was subsequently labelled intercultural integration. This approach is introduced in some detail in the following pages.

The Intercultural Cities was conceived as an action research and policy development programme, designed to deliver the following broad objectives:

- To stimulate an inclusive debate, review and policy reformulation in pilot cities on the basis of an intercultural approach to migration, integration and social cohesion
- To encourage pilot cities to develop comprehensive intercultural strategies for the management of urban diversity
- To elaborate model intercultural strategies and strategy development and evaluation methods as an example and inspiration for other cities in Europe

Following a call for proposals and a competitive selection process 11 cities were short-listed to take part in the pilot programme. They were chosen for the strong commitment of leadership to making diversity work, the availability of a strong network of civil society organisations, interest among public service professionals and local media for working on the issue. The 11 pilot cities selected were:

Berlin-Neukölln (Germany)	Oslo (Norway)
Izhevsk (Russian Federation)	Patras (Greece)
Lublin (Poland)	Reggio Emilia (Italy)
Lyon (France)	Subotica (Serbia)
Melitopol (Ukraine)	Tilburg (the Netherlands)
Neuchâtel (Switzerland)	

Where did Intercultural cities concept originate?

The Intercultural Cities programme was born out of the convergence of three separate but related developments:



Council of Europe White paper on Intercultural dialogue

The Council of Europe has been working on the issue of intercultural dialogue for over 30 years. Its initial approaches focused on intercultural learning as a means for “people diplomacy” and building of a united Europe through youth work and non-formal education. Already in the 1980s the Council conceptualised intercultural dialogue in the context of conflict prevention and reconciliation, and education for democratic citizenship. Linked to this, the organisation has also worked extensively on conceptual and practical aspects of diversity management in education, youth work, social services, and the cultural sector over the past decades.

The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the 47 member states in May 2008, defines intercultural dialogue as an “...open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.”¹

The key preconditions for dialogue the White paper argues are the putting in place of adequate structures of governance, the intercultural literacy of public institutions and social service organisations and the creation of spaces for intercultural dialogue, particularly at the grassroots of society. The White paper is a conceptual framework to guide reflections and decisions of policy-makers and practitioners. It is based on the organisation’s key standards and legal instruments, and draws on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, the expert work and field projects carried out over decades, and a massive consultation with a range of stakeholders at national and European levels.

European Year of Intercultural Dialogue

The intercultural Cities programme was established and run within the context of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.² It was one of the Year’s showcase actions, and also proved to be special due to its pluri-disciplinary approach cutting across a range of policy fields and positioning culture as a motor of social change.

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue made an enormous step towards making the concept of intercultural dialogue an important element of national approaches to integration, and mobilising the cultural community to develop innovative and sustainable models for practicing dialogue.



Comedia

The original conception of the 'Intercultural City' (including the ideas of the 'intercultural lens', the '10 steps to an intercultural city analytical grid' and 'indicators of interculturalism') was by the British think-tank Comedia. It was originally elaborated in a research project funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation³ and in two subsequent publications.⁴

This section explains why, despite the prior existence of other transnational programmes concerned with cultural diversity, it was felt necessary to launch a new programme.

People on the move

Throughout history, people have moved from one place to another in search of a better life. However, there has been a step change in the scale of movement in recent years. Some countries such as France, the Netherlands and the UK have been experiencing post-colonial immigration since the 1950s. Now, however, at least 20 European states have foreign born populations of around 5% or more, and in the case of some states (such as Ireland and Spain) this change has been recent and rapid, and even in several of the accession states the proportion of foreign-born is now no longer a negligible figure.⁵

It is important that in recognising this recent growth in new minorities across Europe, we do not overlook the rich tapestry of 'traditional minorities' who may have lived alongside national majority populations in many European states throughout recorded history or at least over many generations. We might cite national minorities who share a cultural identity with people in one state while living in another, for example Romanians in Hungary, and vice-versa. They may never have moved but have been rendered minorities by the movement of a political border. But we can distinguish from this many ethnic or linguistic minorities for example the Sami in the Nordic countries and Russia, the Basques in Spain and France, speakers of the Welsh language in the UK, numerous groups in the Caucasus and Roma throughout the continent. In some cases they may share the experience of a recent migrant but in others it may be very different as might be the policy of national government towards them.



The regulation and policing of inter-relationships and flows is usually one of the functions of the nation state. Because of this, it is easy to see ethno-cultural diversity as a purely national issue, but this would be mistaken. Most migrants and many minorities settle in Europe's towns and cities and their search for housing and jobs, legal recognition and protection, religious and political expression, education and welfare services is increasingly a local not a national issue. It is in cities where key decisions will be taken determining whether, over coming decades, Europe will be a place at ease with its cultural diversity – or at war with itself. And, furthermore, the 21st century is the century space of the city – since 2007 more of the world's population now live in urban rather than rural settings.⁶

The demographic challenge for European cities

In Europe, the urban scenario is rather complex. Because birth rates are now generally low, the single most important factor driving change in city populations is foreign migration. To generalise, many eastern European cities are losing population which is out-migrating to the west, and this is long-term. The UN projects that from now to the middle of the century countries such as Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania will lose a quarter to a third of their populations. Certain central European countries namely Italy and Germany will receive significant foreign in-migration but it will be outweighed by serious decline in the birth rate which will lead to net population reductions of 7% and 10% respectively by 2050. Finally in several states in the west, there will be generally stable birth rates but they will see net population growth figures of 5% (Spain), 10% (France) and 15% (the UK), which will be attributable largely to foreign immigration.⁷

The picture is clear that in much of western and central Europe, foreign migration is a growing and long term factor that will continue to diversify already heterogeneous populations. But also in the east there is foreign in-migration and this, combined with a declining native population, will make eastern cities far more ethnically varied.⁸

For most cities in Europe, cultural diversity will be an issue they will have to face up to. The Intercultural Cities programme represents a positive vote of confidence in Europe's cities. It is founded on the principle that increasing migration and ethnic diversity



present a profound challenge but also a huge opportunity to cities - which they can and must grasp. Indeed, one of the defining factors that will determine, over coming years, which cities flourish and which decline will be the extent to which they allow their diversity to be their asset, or their handicap. Whilst national and supra-national bodies will continue to wield an influence it will increasingly be the choices that cities themselves make which will seal their future.

Different urban policy approaches to diversity

From the outset, it is important to appreciate that cities operate within widely varying national and local jurisdictions and values systems and that this influences the way they may respond over time to demographic change and cultural diversity.

Despite these differences, what is striking in recent years is that most countries have felt the need to look afresh at the way they do things, whether in response to the demographic change we have reviewed, or in reaction to crisis events in the UK, the Netherlands, France or Spain. The Council of Europe and the European Commission welcome this process of review and the prospect that a new policy consensus may now begin to emerge based upon the principle of *interculturality*.

It is possible to take Europe over the last 30 years and identify several distinct approaches to minorities and diversity in different local and national contexts through time. These can be summarised as follows:

Non-policy

whereby migrants and/or minorities have been regarded by the city as an irrelevant or transient phenomenon with no lasting impact – or they are considered unwelcome – and therefore there is no perceived need for the city to formulate a policy response;

Guestworker policy

migrants are regarded as a temporary labour force which will eventually return to their countries of origin and so policy is seen as short term and designed to minimise the impact of migrants on 'indigenous' citizens;



Assimilationist policy

migrants and/or minorities can be accepted as permanent but it is assumed that they will be absorbed as quickly as possible. Their differences from the cultural norms of the host community will not be encouraged and may even be discouraged or suppressed if they are considered a threat to the integrity of the state;

Multicultural policy

migrants and/or minorities can be accepted as permanent and their differences from the cultural norms of the host community are to be encouraged and protected in law and institutions backed by anti-racism activity, accepting of the risk that this may in some circumstances lead to separate or even segregated development;

Intercultural policy

migrants and/or minorities can be accepted as permanent and whilst their rights to have their differences from the cultural norm of the host community are recognised in law and institutions, there is a valorisation of policies, institutions and activities which create common ground, mutual understanding and empathy and shared aspirations.

These typologies are simplified and do not account for all policy models which may emerge from time to time. For example, one theme which has recurred throughout history is state-enforced racial segregation, and we should not completely discount its re-emergence. Nevertheless, the five models presented are clear and have indeed been empirically tested in research in recent years.⁹ Based upon 25 European cities in 12 countries, one study compared different responses in key areas of local public policy. Its main findings can be summarised below:

	Non-policy	Guestworker policy	Assimilationist policy	Multicultural policy	Intercultural policy
Minority group organisations	State ignores them	Informal co-operation on limited issues	State does not recognise them	State supports them as agents of empowerment	State supports them as agents of integration



	Non-policy	Guestworker policy	Assimilationist policy	Multicultural policy	Intercultural policy
Labour Market	Ignore. Turn a blind eye to black market activity	Minimal regulation limited vocational assistance	General vocational support – non-ethnic criteria	Anti-discrimination policy; Affirmative action on training and hiring	Anti-discrimination policy; intercultural competence and linguistic skills emphasised
Housing	Ignore migrant housing. React to crisis with temporary shelters	Short-term housing solutions; minimal regulation of private rental sector	Equal access to social housing – non-ethnic criteria. Ignore ethnic discrimination in housing market	Anti-discriminatory lettings policy. Affirmative access to social housing	Anti-discriminatory lettings policy. Ethnic monitoring. Encouragement for ethnic housing mix
Education	Ad hoc recognition of migrant children	Enrol migrant children in schools	Emphasis on national language, history, culture. State ignores or suppresses supplementary schooling	Special support for diverse schools. Mother tongue language support. Religious and cultural education	National and mother tongue/ culture teaching. Intercultural competence for all. Desegregation
Policing	Migrants as security problem	Police as agents of migrant regulation, monitoring, deportation	High profile policing of migrant areas	Police as social workers. Proactive anti-racism enforcement	Police as agents of inter-ethnic conflict management
Public awareness	Migrants as a potential threat	Migrants as economically useful but of no political, social or cultural significance	Campaigns to encourage tolerance of minorities, but intolerance of those not assimilating	'Celebrate diversity' festivals and city branding campaigns	Campaigns to emphasise intercultural togetherness
Urban development	Ignore emergence of ethnic enclaves – disperse if crisis arises	Ethnic enclaves tolerated but considered temporary	Ethnic enclaves considered an urban problem. Dispersal policy and gentrification. Oppose symbolic use of space	Recognise enclaves and ethnic community leadership. Area based regeneration. Symbolic recognition eg minarets	Encouragement of ethnically mixed neighbourhoods and public space. Conflict management as key skill for city officials and NGOs
Governance and citizenship	No rights or recognition	No rights or recognition	Facilitate naturalisation. No ethnic consultative structures	Community leadership, consultative structures and resource allocation ethnically-based	Encouragement of cross-cultural leadership, association and consultation. Acknowledgement of hybridity. Emphasis on functional not symbolic use of space