

# 2017

## Intercultural Cities – Annual report



**Intercultural cities**  
Building the future on diversity

[www.coe.int/interculturalcities](http://www.coe.int/interculturalcities)



## INTRODUCTION



INTERCULTURAL CITIES (ICC) is a capacity-building and policy development programme implemented by the Council of Europe to support local authorities across Europe and beyond to design policies and strategies based on the application of a diversity management model called intercultural integration. Based on the notion of “diversity advantage”, these strategies are founded on the assumption that diversity can be an asset for communities if managed in a positive and competent way. They mobilise leaders, policy officials, professionals, businesses and civil society towards re-shaping city policies and services to make them more effective, and engage citizens in building an understanding of the societies’ diversity(ies) as a competitive advantage for all.

The Intercultural Cities’ programme offers a comprehensive methodology for city leaders and a range of analytical and assessment tools, including the Intercultural Cities INDEX. Completed by 90 cities and towns across 28 countries, the ICC Index assesses to what extent local authorities implement interculturalism, and has proved to be a reliable tool also for improving local policies and raising the national debate.

121 cities, in and outside Europe, have already joined the Intercultural Cities Network, a learning community that provides practical assistance to local authorities and stakeholders.

The ICC programme further counts with 6 national networks (in Italy, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Ukraine). National or regional networks are under construction in Quebec (Canada) and Australia.

In 2017, the ICC programme welcomed the following cities: Ballarat (Australia), Mechelen (Belgium), Klaksvik (Faroe Islands), Hamamatsu (Japan), Zaragoza (Spain), Swansea (UK).

The following cities completed for the first time or reviewed the Intercultural Cities [Index](#): Melton and Maribyrnong (Australia), Klaksvik (Faroe Islands), Patras (Greece), Dublin (Ireland), Casalecchio di Reno (Italy), Hamamatsu (Japan), Albufeira and Cascais (Portugal), Barcelona, Cartagena, Sabadell and Santa Coloma (Spain), Botkyrka (Sweden), Izhevsk (Russian Federation), Lutsk, Odessa, Pavlograd (UA), Swansea (UK).

## MAJOR ICC EVENTS IN 2017

### THEMATIC EVENTS

#### ➤ **Conference on Building diverse communities based on shared values – the Intercultural cities approach – Limassol, March 2017**

Organised in March under the Cypriot Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the event "Building diverse communities based on shared values – the Intercultural cities approach" engaged international and Cypriot stakeholders in a discussion on the added value of the Intercultural integration approach for the promotion of human rights, including minority rights, as well as democracy and inclusion in diverse societies. Questions involved how to raise awareness of these values among host populations and new-comers alike, how to deal with dilemmas and challenges for local policy related to cultural difference and how to build a shared and pluralistic identity.



The event included a round table with Mayors from the Intercultural cities' network, and workshops on citizen participation, on inter-faith relations and on building local strategic partnerships to help design and deliver intercultural policies.

Significant insights were shared about the role of Intercultural cities in promoting human rights (by introducing the concept of “reasonable accommodation” of policies and measures to specific situations), and the need to connect human rights, equality and diversity work strands in a coherent, mainstreamed urban policy. The notion of urban citizenship was extensively discussed as a means for ensuring equal access to rights for non-nationals, as well as a basis for a new collective solidarity. To cut across ethnic, religious, linguistic, social and economic divides, such solidarity needs to stem from adhesion of a common set of values, a shared sense of belonging to the city by all residents, and the embracement of a pluralist local identity. Cities should engage with civil society as well as with administrative and political actors in co-designing the narrative and the practical tools for building this value-based solidarity and putting in place effective mechanisms for equal access to rights and for combatting discrimination.

#### ➤ **Thematic Seminar: Human Rights in the Intercultural City – Oslo, June 2017**



Organised on 14-15 June 2017 in cooperation with the city of Oslo, the thematic seminar on “Human rights in the intercultural city” highlighted the strong links between inclusive integration policies and the broader human rights agenda, with a view to encourage cities and local authorities to build stronger alliances with the advocates of human rights. Indeed, safeguarding human rights and ensuring

equity and equality have been prime policy goals for the ICC programme, as well as for the public authorities committed to the development of intercultural strategies. Yet, today more than ever, the positive value of diversity is put at stake by a challenge that affects both the human rights regime and the intercultural policy paradigm: the return to identity politics that threatens, at the same time, our fundamental freedoms and community cohesion. The seminar showed that the inclusive integration approach of the ICC programme is actually an effective tool for the real implementation of human rights at the local level.

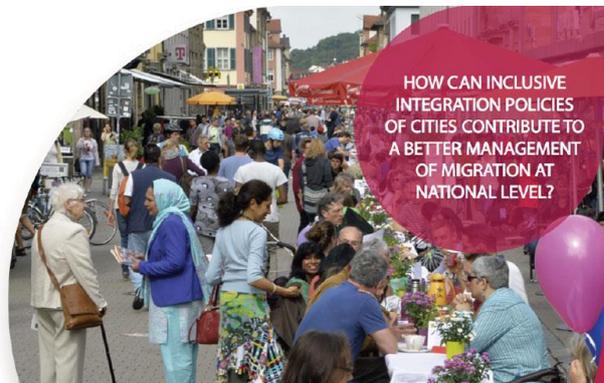
The intercultural integration model is based on the same underlining principles as human rights, i.e. equality and non-discrimination, justice, participation, and inclusion. Operationally, ICC promotes openness and spaces for (physical) interaction, organisation and participation, all factors that are fundamental to the effective enjoyment of human rights. Therefore, the Seminar concluded that there is non-incompatibility between a human rights based approach and the intercultural integration model as they are complementary and reinforce each other. Besides, ICC acts as an enabling factor for making human rights a concern for all, as it promotes dialogue, exchange and mutual learning, making both the societies and the legal frameworks progress and anticipate social change.

The Seminar was also the occasion to showcase examples of intercultural and human rights policies implemented by European cities, being they member of the Intercultural Cities programme or not. It also put forward the experience of civil society movements and organisations active in the field of freedom of religion and of thoughts, gender equality, LGBTi rights, and anti-discrimination. All those contributions nurtured the discussions with concrete examples from the ground, with a particular focus on i) civil rights and non-discrimination, ii) democratic rights and participation, iii) and LGBTI rights. The report of the Seminar is available [online](#).

### ➤ **Urban policies for inclusive integration of migrants – Strasbourg, June 2017**

Pursuing its work towards reinforcing dialogue and cooperation between local and national authorities in the field of inclusive integration, the ICC organised a side event during the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) spring session.

Sponsored by MPs Huovinen (Finland) and Santerini (Italy), the side event on “Urban policies for the inclusive integration of migrants” marked the full-day debate on migration taking place during PACE session on 28 June, as well as the adoption of a new report by MP Susanna Huovinen on “Integration of refugees in times of critical pressure: learning from recent experience and examples of best practice”, by showcasing examples of innovative intercultural policies implemented by ICC cities to deal with the challenges and opportunities of human mobility.



The event engaged PACE members and other participants in a dialogue about how the experience and expertise of cities can help devising policies for inclusive societies, bringing the evidence that diversity can be a source of dynamism and of social and economic development. The speakers were Ms Susanna Huovinen (MP), Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni (Deputy Secretary General, Council of Europe), Ms Snežana Samardžic Markovic (Director General of Democracy, Council of Europe), Ms

Marte Mjøs Persen (Mayor of Bergen), and Ms Diana De Marchi (City Councillor, Milan). The event has been recorded and it's available [online](#).

## STUDY VISITS

### ➤ Prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism through Intercultural Policies – Lyon, October 2017



Study visits and thematic events expose a range of policy-makers, practitioners and advocates from member cities to practice exchange, reflections and discussions with fellow actors from other cities.

In 2017 cities members of the ICC programme benefitted from a study visit to Lyon, on the Prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism through

Intercultural Policies. The study visit took place in October and showcased Lyon and France's approach to current dilemmas, bringing examples of how the intercultural integration model can help mitigating growing fears of terrorism and radicalisation through education, culture, mediation and conflict prevention. It also stimulated a reflection on the role that actors at the local level in intercultural cities can play in preventing violent extremism and long-term radicalisation. Among the conclusions, the participants highlighted the following main principles:

- **Public policies that aim to prevent radicalisation must be planned on the medium and long term and, as far as possible, must be shared and supported across political divides.** The intercultural approach and the valuing of diversity applied to the urban management policies seem to be effective tools for carrying out upstream work to prevent radicalisation;
- Combating radicalisation and violent extremism requires **close and coordinated collaboration between a whole range of stakeholders, at all levels of governance** (local, regional and national) **and with the civil society** working on the ground. Education and training of public service professionals in intercultural competence can clearly foster more consistent work around a common goal.
- **Actions to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism must ensure that the root-causes (often social) that make a particular section of society vulnerable to radicalisation are addressed, not just the ideologies.**
- **Public policies must promote the development among young people of (a) healthy and strong identity(ies) free of any complexes so as to prevent alienation, lack of a sense of belonging, marginalisation and community isolationism from gaining the upper hand and providing a fertile breeding ground for radicalisation.** To this end, States and local authorities should promote a positive image of diversity in all sectors, including in the public and cultural spheres.
- **Social and ethnic mixing must be pursued in spatial planning policies, as well as in social housing and access to education.** Social inclusion policies should be conceived, understood and

developed as **policies “Pro/For”** (inclusion, welfare, peace, development etc.) rather than as policies "Against" (radicalisation, extremism, etc.). This would make it possible to reach out to the whole population and foster the participation of all - without suspicion or mistrust - in building societies where it is possible to live well in diversity.

The full report of the visit is available [online](#).

## **POLICY LAB FOR INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION**

### ➤ **First International Policy Lab for Inclusive Integration – Lisbon, November 2017**

How can inclusive integration policies of cities contribute to a better management of migration at national level? Inclusive integration is not only a moral imperative: it also makes common and political sense, and enables Council of Europe member States to comply with their obligations under various conventions such as the European Convention on Human Rights and the Revised European Social Charter. It is about ensuring both a framework for equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities, and fostering intercultural interaction, understanding and participation. The former is primarily the task of national authorities; the latter relies on cities. For inclusive integration to

happen, **both governance levels must cooperate.**



*Inclusive Integration Policy Lab*  
Family Picture

Still, local and national policies may go in different directions and address different priorities. Nowadays, national integration policies in Europe are becoming more restrictive while local policies are generally more inclusive, favouring a situation which makes it particularly challenging to conceive and implement effective policies to

ensure human rights, equality and non-discrimination, and at the same time unlock the potential of diversity for the development of cohesive societies. **It is therefore essential to put in place constructive and continuous dialogue between local and national authorities, to build coherent policies and an effective multi-level governance of integration and diversity management, with a long-term approach.**

This has been the main conclusion of the first international session of the Policy lab for inclusive integration, an initiative launched by the Intercultural Cities programme in January 2017 to ensure policy consistency and complementarity in the field of inclusive integration and diversity management, and enable transfer of innovation and good practice from local to regional and national levels in areas of competence shared by the different governance levels.

Setting-up a framework for such an ambitious goal is not an easy task, but there are examples of countries that have found the key to success and that could inspire others. Besides, research has demonstrated that countries where integration policies are co-ordinated between the national and local levels, have better overall integration results, and thus more community cohesion, more trust in democratic institutions, more socio-economic development, less populism, and less political and religious radicalism. It is therefore necessary to reflect upon, and explore further, the interlinks between central and local levels to fill-in the communication and co-operation gap.

The first session of the Policy Lab concluded that, for a meaningful dialogue to take place, all relevant ministries and local public authorities should be involved and encouraged to take the lead. Those authorities should fully commit to: strengthen the human rights and anti-discrimination standards, narrative and actions; work together to reinforce an inclusive diversity agenda, creating partnerships and solidarity through a strong value-based leadership, bridging the local, national and international agenda; align priorities and devise and adopt coherent plans for action by creating synergies around specific goals that should be complementary so to reinforce each other; commit to build infrastructures for inclusion and intercultural and interpersonal competence to empower both the people and the institutions.

The Council of Europe is the leading organisation on the continent in the field of human rights, and it has standards to support non-discrimination, social rights and to protect and enhance diversity in equality. The Council was therefore identified by participants as the body which could act as broker of such a learning process, encouraging public authorities at all levels to take human rights, together with their related commitments, as a strategic driver for integration policies thus making sure that insights from the success policies of both cities and states contribute to consolidate more inclusive and sustainable societies.

The meeting's conclusions will be posted online in January 2018, after their review by the participants.

#### ➤ **National Policy Lab for Inclusive Integration – Italy, 25 May 2017**

On 25 May, straight after the coordination meeting of the Italian network of Intercultural Cities (*Città del Dialogo*), the representatives of the cities that collaborate on intercultural policies in the country held the first National Policy Lab for inclusive integration.



The meeting included an exchange between city officials and members of the Italian Parliament, headed by MP Michele Nicoletti, Head of the Italian Delegation to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, as well as with representatives of the Ministries of Interior and of Social Policies and Employment. Participants agreed on the need to speed-up work towards the adoption legislative instruments on access to nationality, that would recognise the citizenship based on a combination of *ius soli* and *ius culturae*. The current draft law - which is still pending adoption - has been considered as an effective tool to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, but also as a way to enhance the full enjoyment of human rights, including LGBTi rights, political participation, access to education, and gender equality for all the residents.

On the national strategy for integration, participants took note of the possible forthcoming adoption at the state level of a National Plan for the integration of refugees and asylum seekers that, once in place, could be used as a frame for a wider integration strategy for all migrants.

Finally, on freedom of religion and the recognition of the places of worship, participants noticed that the issue is so far mainly addressed at the local level through different and not harmonised approaches. Thus, it seemed urgent to work towards the drafting of legislation at national level that would fix the basic requirements for the recognition of the places of worship and the promotion of inter-convictional dialogue. A second meeting is planned to take place in 2018.

## ICC MILESTONE EVENT – 10 YEARS OF INCLUSIVE INTEGRATION

- **Urban policies for migrant integration and diversity advantage – Lisbon, 28-29 November 2017**



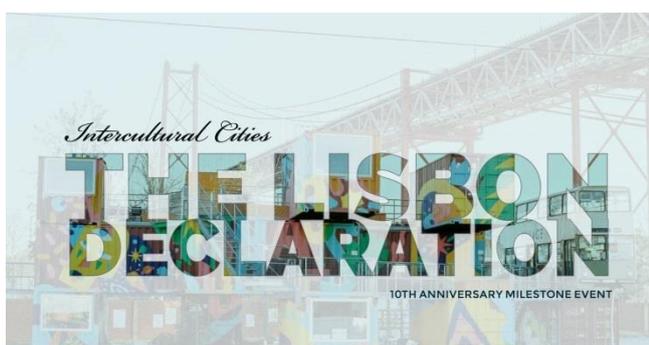
From Oslo (Norway) to Limassol (Cyprus), from Paris (France) to Rijeka (Croatia), from Ballarat (Australia) to Montreal (Canada), from Mexico City (Mexico) to Hamamatsu (Japan), passing by Tanger (Morocco) and Haifa (Israel): in 10 Years (2007-2017) the Intercultural Cities programme developed from a pilot project for 11 cities into a major international coalition of 121 cities committed to making diversity a strength through inclusive integration policies.

Organised by the Intercultural Cities, in cooperation with the city of Lisbon and Portuguese authorities, the ICC milestone event brought together all member cities from five continents, to celebrate what has been a real success story, but also to take stock of achievements and develop new perspectives, approaches and partnerships in order to expand the intercultural integration policy model and better address the challenges and the needs of authorities and citizens. 270 people (121 men/149 women) of 31 nationalities, including Mayors, Deputy Mayors, State authorities, academics, intercultural experts and NGOs participated in the event.

Among the main challenges addressed, a major one is the need for national and local authorities to cooperate and co-act in the field of diversity management and migrant inclusion policies. This has been the goal of a restricted session convened, on 28 November afternoon, under the form of a Policy Lab for inclusive integration. In this framework, Mayors and national authorities committed to work systematically under a co-operation framework to improve the design and implementation of coherent inclusive integration policies, with the Council of Europe acting as a honest broker and facilitator of the process.

Moreover, participants discussed and agreed on an expanded ICC narrative and policy model for the decade ahead, and committed to strengthen work for policy innovation, in particular in the fields of participatory democracy, active urban citizenship, human rights and non-discrimination, sexual orientation and gender identity rights, anti-rumours, and inclusive integration. These issues were all recognised as useful mechanisms to counter inflammatory rhetoric and populism while promoting cohesion trust in public institutions, so as welfare and wellbeing.

Finally, participants made a bold statement in favour of diversity and inclusive integration, and endorsed the "[Lisbon Declaration](#)" to spell out their renewed commitment.



The event was opened by Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, the Mayor of Lisbon Fernando Medina and the Minister of Home Affairs of Portugal, Eduardo Cabrita. A video about the Milestone Event is available [here](#).

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COORDINATORS

The annual meeting of the ICC coordinators (Lisbon, 30 November 2017) brought together the representatives of the cities that are member of the International ICC programme, including non-European cities such as Ballarat (Australia), Montreal (Canada) and Haifa (Israel).

Participants got updated information on the development of the six ICC national networks, as well as on the progress towards the setting-up of new regional and national networks (in Quebec and in Australia). Moreover, they discussed ways for improving the visibility and impact of the work of cities, building bilateral and multilateral connections, and undertaking common initiatives for policy innovation. The coordinators further decided to set up a dedicated working group to update the Index questionnaire so to include indicators to measure progress in the new fields of action, and to appoint ICC “Ambassadors” to increase the network’s outreach. Finally, ICC coordinators agreed on their programme of activities for the year to come and welcomed the offers of the cities of Tenerife, Geneva, Botkyrka and Oslo, Haifa, and Rijeka, to host ICC events in 2018.

The meeting report will be posted [online](#) in January 2018, after its review by the ICC coordinators.

## EXPERT VISITS

Expert visits are organised to assess the level of progress of member cities in the implementation of their intercultural strategies, and to confirm Index results. In 2017 expert visits were conducted to a number of IC Cities (Braga, Cascais and Viseu in Portugal, Klaksvik in the Faroe Islands, Hamamatsu in Japan, Fuenlabrada in Spain, Odessa, Lutsk and Pavlograd in Ukraine, and Swansea in the UK) and a first contact visit was carried out to Madrid. The intercultural profiles of the visited cities are published [online](#).

## ANTI-RUMOUR

### ➤ An online Manual for a standardised methodology for ICC Cities

Successful intercultural strategies require change in the mind-set, attitudes and behaviour of both migrants and receiving communities. Building trust and a feeling of belonging to a pluralistic community with shared fundamental principles is key to achieving cohesion. The difficulty of gaining access to reliable information or grasp the real impact (both negative and positive) of migration on communities is a major obstacle in achieving this goal. As a matter of fact, people often tend to form their views on the basis of unfounded “myths”, on wrong or partial information. These myths are often very specific to a certain locality (e.g. lack of places in kindergartens or social housing because of priority given to migrants).



The “Anti-rumour methodology” has been developed precisely to counter diversity-related prejudices and rumours that hamper positive interaction and social cohesion and that lay the foundations of discriminatory and racist attitudes, sometimes even leading to hate speech and hate crimes. The Anti-rumour methodology promoted by the ICC programme, and understood as a public policy, is composed of a number of elements: identifying major rumours existing in a city; collecting objective data and also emotional arguments to dismantle false rumours; creating an anti-rumour network of local actors from civil society; empowering and training “anti-rumour agents”; and designing and implementing anti-rumour campaigns to raise awareness. Following a first pilot action launched and tested by the ICC programme in some cities, the ICC has developed an Anti-rumours Manual as a tool that cities and other stakeholders can use to ensure the proper and harmonised implementation of the standardised/certified Anti-rumours methodology. The Manual has been launched in December 2017 and it includes an evaluation/assessment guide, as well as a set of examples of best and innovative practices, chosen after the mapping of the anti-rumours projects run so far. The [Manual](#) is available online, so as a set of [didactic videos](#) produced in 2016, that cities can use to build up their own anti-rumours campaigns.

### ➤ Anti-rumours training



Over 2017, and in order to respond to the constant demand in Anti-rumours training, the ICC programme organised three sessions for cities’ officials.

The first one took place for the city of Montreal (Canada) which is about to launch its own anti-rumour strategy within the framework of the methodology defined in the Council of Europe

Manual. A training of trainers’ session was organised in October for the municipal team representing several municipal departments and including different social actors.

A second training took place during the ICC Milestone event in Lisbon, and offered knowledge and skills to around 40 participants from different cities, including from countries such as Ireland, Germany, Japan, Spain, Sweden, and the United States.

A third and last session took place in December in Bilbao, where the Basque Anti-rumours Network ZAS is already well established and counts with anti-rumours agents from ten Basque municipalities. The training targeted representatives of NGOs, social actors, the Government of the Basque Region and the University of the Basque Country. The objective was to provide additional skills and knowledge to trainers acting within the Basque territory.

### DIVERSITY ADVANTAGE CHALLENGE

In March this year, the Spanish Network of Intercultural Cities (RECI), supported by the “*Fundacion La Caixa*”, held the Award ceremony of the first Diversity Advantage Challenge, organised to celebrate projects and initiatives that excelled in demonstrating the concept of the “diversity advantage”.

The intercultural policy model promoted by the ICC programme recognises on the one hand the need to address the complexities of growing socio-cultural diversity, and on the other hand the



advantages and opportunities of diversity for the development of our society. The latter is a concept on which effective communication is still difficult to achieve. That is why the Diversity Advantage Challenge was launched as a way to acknowledge projects, public policies or private initiatives that managed to translate into practice the diversity advantage concept for achieving better results. The event was also a first step towards a more close

cooperation between the RECI and the national authorities, as it was opened by the Spanish State Secretary for Migration.

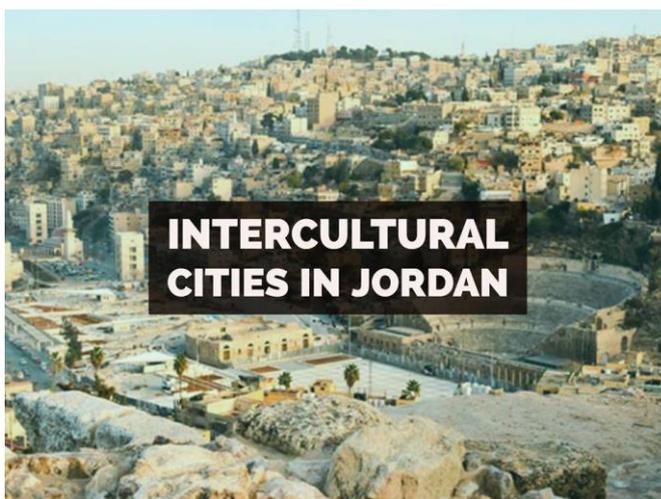
Selected among more than twenty applications, the awarded projects concern initiatives and policies in the field of local police and security, education, business and employment, and culture. The RECI is now working at setting-up an “inspiring library” of good practices in the field of diversity advantage that could be replicated by other cities.

## SOUTH PROGRAMME II

Under the South Programme II (joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Union), a national ICC network was launched last year in Morocco and pilot work started in Jordan (targeting – among others - the cities of Sahab, Wasitayah, Zarqa and Amman).

This year, the programme continued in both countries.

The Moroccan Network pursued its awareness raising efforts, working with numerous associations of migrants towards the long-term goal of transforming Morocco from a transit country to a place to stay, especially for people coming from the Sub-Saharan region. The accent has been put on the role of individuals to foster interactions and fight against the creation of closed communities within the cities, as well as to fight against stereotypes.



In Jordan, local authorities of the cities of Sahab and Zarqa have come up with pilot projects to mobilise the assets already present in their communities. Both cities are hosting a large number of immigrants and refugees from Syria, but also other groups like Palestinians, Egyptians, Iraqis, and nationals of Philippines and Sri Lanka. The projects implemented there are based on the “Asset Based Community Development” (ABCD) approach that implies that migrants and refugees should not be defined only by their vulnerabilities and needs but that consideration should be given to their talents, skills and experiences to contribute to the development of the community where they are resettling.

The pilot project launched in Zarqa will be focusing on entrepreneurial skills for women of different backgrounds. They will be provided by the municipality with small shops, on the basis of

partnerships between Jordanian and Syrian women, within the space of a bazaar re-designed by a mixed team of students from the University of Zarqa.

In Sahab, an anti-rumour component will be added to an on-going awareness raising campaign around recycling and waste management for pupils in schools. This will allow students and their families to start questioning some of the myths around migrants and refugees and to disseminate more and better information to the entire community.

The work carried out in both cities is based on the principles of non-segregation, mixing, and interaction. It applies the diversity advantage lens to focus on the co-creation of well-being for the entire society, to avoid exasperating the social tensions that can lead to hostile feelings towards newcomers, as well as youth radicalisation.

## STEPS : PARTICIPATORY HERITAGE MAPPING FOR COMMUNITY COHESION



Cultural heritage can have an important role for community cohesion and cross-community conflict resolution, as it provides an open environment and opportunities for people to meet and get to know each other, and to discuss complex issues addressing differences and potential conflicts. Besides, urban heritage is the expression of a city's identity. Different to national identities, urban identities can be inclusive, across national

borders or citizenships. An intercultural approach to a city heritage sector allows it to actively open up the urban identity to all communities, increasing trust, mutual recognition and eventually community cohesion.

Launched on 1 December 2016 through an open call, the Joint Programme of the Council of Europe and the European Union "STEPS - Building specialisation strategies on local participation and heritage resources" aims at strengthening community cohesion dialogue and mutual understanding across diverse societies through participatory mapping and mobilisation of cultural heritage resources in municipalities members of the of Intercultural Cities network.

The ICC cities of Lisbon (Portugal) and Rijeka (Croatia) have been chosen to participate in this pilot phase and learn how to design a methodology and tools to develop community cohesion strategies using cultural heritage as a resource.

This year, the two cities set-up, trained and mobilised local teams composed of citizens (including representatives of NGOs, schools, academia, cultural institutions and city officials) that will be in charge of mapping the diverse cultural heritage of a given neighbourhood. During the first training sessions, particular attention has been given to agreeing on a common definition of heritage, cultural heritage, urban cultural heritage and intercultural heritage in the context of the specific neighbourhoods that are going to be mapped. Besides, the project introduced the "Asset-Based Community Development" (ABCD) methodology, for the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials, through an appreciative approach as an alternative to the problem-oriented approach. Finally principles, methods and tools of participatory design have been defined.

The project is implemented using the Council of Europe Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005) and the intercultural integration principles as a basis. It will continue next year and training sessions will be opened to more cities that will be allowed to participate as observers.

## BUILDING INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES (BIS) ACTION PLAN

Adopted in March 2016, the Council of Europe [Building Inclusive Societies Action Plan](#) (2016-2019) aims to assist Member States in managing Europe's diversity. This is done by developing smart policies fostering mutual understanding and respect. In this framework, the ICC programme has launched three pilot projects for implementation in 2016-2017, to address diversity in business and diversity in media.

### ➤ Diversity rating for business



Diversifying company workforce fulfils both economic and social objectives by increasing opportunities for employees of under-represented groups and, in particular, those of migrant background.

[The Diversity Rating project](#) focused on assessing the economic potential of workforce diversity in specific companies to inspire and encourage them to diversify further their staff. The project was implemented last year and delivered an assessment tool for rating and identifying the most diverse companies in a city through surveys and ratings of companies, focusing on the link between diversity in management and the companies' economic performance. Training material has also been produced and it's available [online](#).

### ➤ Diversity connector for Start-ups

Supporting migrant entrepreneurship, inclusive entrepreneurship and diversity in enterprises as means to promoting economic development and migrant employment is one of the key policy areas for intercultural cities. In this field, as in others, progress is only possible via new approaches and instruments.



The [Diversity connector for Start-ups](#) pilot project has explored existing good practice amongst incubators, cities, corporate and philanthropic funders to inform the design of a new type of business incubators which connect migrant/refugee and mainstream entrepreneurs in order to:

- Help migrant businesses grow via a better access to services, finance and partnerships;
- Encourage business innovation via cross-cultural contacts.

The "diversity connectors" will provide general services such as technical training, access to potential funders, meeting spaces etc., as well as specific services for under-represented start-ups. They will

speed up the learning curve for under-represented start-ups while providing expert knowledge of untapped markets to mainstream start-ups. Over 30 managers of incubators, migrant entrepreneurship associations, and city officials have participated in the project and have developed Guidelines for building Diversity connectors, and explored the feasibility of setting up of a network of business incubators with a focus on diversity, that will work to develop a certification scheme (label) for diversity connectors, and a capacity-building programme for aspiring diversity connectors.

[Tutorials](#) and [video interviews](#) are also available online. The Guidance will be available online as of January 2018.

➤ **Diversity Accelerator for Media (Div-A)**



Diversity Accelerator

Run over a year and a half (Jan 2016 – June 2017) [Div-A](#) is a pilot mentoring programme that aimed at testing a new approach to rendering the media landscape in Europe more inclusive with regard to population diversity and more balanced in relation to diversity issues. The programme tested on young media professionals, some of the tools that new media offers to help them creating and selling their own media content. The mentoring experience further served to prepare an [electronic handbook](#) for future journalists committed to diversity and inclusion, with insights about the opportunities offered by digital platforms, for instance crowd-funding platforms. During the project, the team leaders of the 10 selected media initiatives underwent three training sessions (in Lisbon, Berlin, and Perugia) and had the opportunity to exchange with independent journalists and agencies. Last April, they participated in the International Festival of Journalism in Perugia where they also organised a networking event to create business links with potential partners.

**VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS**



In order to increase the outreach and communication impact of the ICC network, a communication strategy has been implemented throughout the year, including the publication of [visibility guidelines](#) for participating cities, and tools for better digital communication and storytelling. The **ICC logo** has been made available in 13 languages; the multimedia section of the [ICC website](#) has been enriched with a few interviews and awareness videos, and many more have been however disseminated through social media; [intercultural champions](#) from ICC cities have been promoted through the website, as well as through the ICC social media accounts.

The **newsletter** has been sustained, with 5 more issues in 2017 (every two months, except summer break), and more than 60 news have been published on the ICC website since January 2017, based on content provided by participating cities. Besides, ICC activities were portrayed three times on the Committee of Ministers “week in brief” information page, and regular contributions were made to the newsletters of the Council of Europe Special Representative for Migration, and of the Social Cohesion Platform. Moreover, information about ICC visits or events have been published in national newspapers in Spain, Portugal, Japan, and Italy, as well as on the independent global media platform [openDemocracy](#).



In terms of learning resources, the collection of examples of the intercultural approaches adopted by the cities member of the Intercultural cities network has been recently updated and published online under the form of [Good practice database](#), to facilitate the development and implementation of similar intercultural strategies by other municipalities. A filtering system allows for a search by topic, city of year, although the list of categories of implemented practices is currently under review.

Also, **joint campaigns** have been launched and implemented together with member cities for raising awareness on a number of International Days (eg. Elimination of racial discrimination on 21 March; international day against homophobia, transphobia and biphobia on 17 May; World Day for Cultural Diversity on 21 May; the World Refugee Day on 20 June and the International Migrants Day on 18 December).



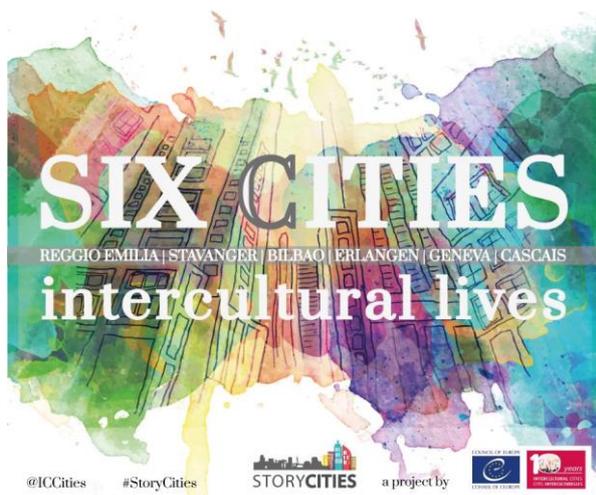
WORLD REFUGEE DAY  
A Voice of Welcome, The Voice of Cities

20 JUNE 2017

Intercultural Cities, Council of Europe



Regarding social media, the number of followers on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) increased sensitively, with respectively a total of 2.475 (+526) and 4.551 (+980) followers (on 15 December). An example of the growing outreach is the fact that during the ICC Milestone event the hashtag **#ICCities** trended second on twitter in Portugal.



Finally, one specific communication initiative deserves a special mention, and that is the **“StoryCities project”**. Launched this year, [Storycities](#) aimed to collect, in a sample of 6 intercultural cities, stories of people engaged with local authorities and that contribute to putting into practice the intercultural policies of the municipality. The goal was to support participating cities in providing relevance and visibility to their work by producing multimedia material (video, audio, photos and stories) to document this effort and, at the same time, celebrate the people and associations that help making diversity an advantage for all the

residents. The project focussed on cities' good practices and helped deliver them into a more narrative and emotional way, using a digital environment like social media, where knowledge, information, and content are consumed by a growing number of users.

Implemented in Bilbao, Cascais, Erlangen, Geneva, Reggio Emilia, and Stavanger, Storycities has not only produced very useful material but, according to the views of the participating cities, it has also fostered the local population's sense of belonging to a common project and to a shared vision for the development of their cities. Besides, Storycities videos proved to be a powerful tool for communicating on diversity advantage and increase the visibility of the ICC Programme.

## APPENDIX

### PUBLICATIONS RELEASED IN 2017

#### Declaration

- [2017 ICC Declaration](#)

#### Policy briefs

- [Participatory and Deliberative Democracy Strategies for the Intercultural City](#)
- [Refugee policies for the intercultural city](#)
- [Migrant-enterprise policies for the intercultural city](#)

#### Scientific studies and research

- [How the Intercultural integration approach leads to a better quality of life in diverse cities: MPG Assessment report](#)

#### Thematic papers

- [Bridging the equality, diversity and inclusion agendas : background paper](#)
- [Migrant representation & participation bodies in the intercultural city: key considerations & principles](#)
- [Study visit to Lyon: Prevention of radicalisation through intercultural policies - Report of the study visit](#)
- [Human Rights in the Intercultural City - Thematic Seminar - Oslo, 14-15 June 2017 - Report](#)

#### Guidance and Manuals

- [ICC Visual identity guidance with examples](#)
- [Anti-Rumour Manual](#)
- [Compilation of Good Practices 2017](#)
- [Arrival of Refugees in Your City: To-Do List](#)

#### Awareness and visibility

- [Intercultural Cities Brochure](#)
- [Intercultural cities – promotional video](#)
- [Newsletter](#)

#### Reports from the national networks

##### ITALY (Città del dialogo)

- [ICC-ITA Action Plan 2017-2020 \(+ Italian version\)](#)
- [Riunione di Coordinamento delle Città del Dialogo - Roma, 25 Maggio 2017](#) (Italian only)

##### SPAIN (RECI)

- RECI – 13<sup>th</sup> Working Session – Sabadell, 8 October 2017 ([Spanish only](#); English soon available)
- [RECI - 12th Working Session - Madrid, 30 March 2017](#) (+ [Spanish version](#))

##### PORTUGAL (RPCI)

- [RPCI progress report 2017](#)
- [9th Portuguese Intercultural Cities Network Meeting - Summary](#) (Albufeira, 8 June 2017)

**UKRAINE (ICC-UA)**

- [Ukrainian Intercultural Cities Network: ICC-UA Action Plan 2017-2018](#)
- [ICC-Ukraine 2017 Report](#)