

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Conference

Warsaw, 30 September- 8 October 2010

Review Session 6: Humanitarian Issues and other commitments

Contribution of the Council of Europe

Intercultural Cities: governance and policies for diverse communities

The Intercultural cities programme emerged from the Council of Europe's significant experience of projects that focus on issues concerned with the management of diversity, and considerable reflection that has been undertaken in relation to the principles and practices of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

Intercultural cities is a capacity-building and policy development field programme complementary to many of the current projects and events (conferences, research, exchanges, and campaigns) implemented by the Council of Europe in partnership with the European Commission. The programme's long-term, comprehensive approach will contribute to the sustainability of the political impetus of one of the Council of Europe's declared priorities concerning the practice of diversity in today's world.

The programme's starting point is the belief that as communities across Europe grow increasingly diverse, their governance models, their public and media discourse, the management of their institutions and their policies determine whether this diversity becomes an asset or a threat. Successful cities (and societies) of the future will be intercultural: they will be capable of managing and exploring the potential of their cultural diversity to stimulate creativity and innovation and thus generate economic prosperity, community cohesion and better quality of life.

The Intercultural cities programme studies successful experiences in a range of cities in Europe (and possibly beyond) and harness this experience to encourage the development of structures, policies and practice in other cities through good practice exchange and city-to-city mentoring. In addition to the direct exchange, good practice will be made publicly available by means of an annual "Intercultural cities share fair" as well as web and print-based publications.

A. Methodological tools

In order to guide cities in the process of understanding the concept of interculturalism, its impact of the policies and actions of the city, and the processes which could lead to the building of a vision for intercultural city development, shared by all main stakeholders, the following methodological tools have been prepared:

- [A Concept Paper](#) explaining the notion of intercultural city and processes which need to be put in place in order to mobilise a range of stakeholders and actors in the city in favour of intercultural vision- and city-building.
- [A Resource pack](#) presenting a variety of conceptual and practical resources related to intercultural mapping, vision building, leadership, strategy development, project planning, consultation and participation, ensuring sustainability, progress review and learning.
- [A Policy assessment grid](#) as a practical tool for intercultural policy development in cities.
- [A media diversity concept](#) has been prepared proposing a set of activities (media monitoring, diversity training, seminars) for journalists in pilot cities, to be carried out by the Media Diversity Institute, if the cities chose to do so, at their own cost.
- [Intercultural city index](#)

The Index is a commonly-adopted format for defining and measuring city performance in relation to intercultural integration of migrants and minorities. This Index is not intended to be a pure scientific tool. It would be impossible to reduce the essence of interculturality to a few measurements, or to establish clear-cut relationships of cause and effect between policies and actions and outcomes in something so subjective. The intercultural city approach is not a science but a general set of principles and a way of thinking. Thus, the Intercultural City Index aims to highlight a few common facts and phenomena - or what we might describe as crucial “acupuncture” points, - which suggest the level of interculturality of a city, and which enable the beginning of a discussion whereby one city can be compared with another. However, it is not the intention of the project to use the Index for the crude ‘ranking’ of cities. Rather it should be used as spur to greater self-reflection, learning and improvement.

B. Activities

- Diagnostic expert visits
- Two expert visits take place in each member city in order to carry out an in-depth assessment, based on interviews and group discussions with various stakeholders and establish intercultural profiles as a reference and a point of departure for activities in the context of the programme.

A representative of another pilot city is also involved in the visits (peer review/mentoring principle) to learn and provide feedback and advice. In addition to experts, representatives of other pilot cities took part in the policy assessment visits in order to provide insights, advice and support for fellow cities with similar profiles and concerns, as well as learn from the experience of the host city (city-to-city mentoring). The expert reports are used by cities as a basis for the development of their intercultural vision and strategy.

- [Thematic Events](#)

Thematic events have been organised in order to further consolidate the conceptual and methodological basis of the programme and identify policy guidelines in specific areas. The events have involved relevant representatives of pilot cities – policy makers and professionals from the area concerned, experts and if appropriate representatives of third cities.

Since the start of the programme in 2008, 25 three thematic events (workshops, conferences) two study visits have been organised. Some of the thematic events serve to discuss and validate key policy documents such as the guidelines on intercultural governance and citizenship, the [key principles and approaches for intercultural governance](#) the [report on cultural policy in the intercultural city](#). Some of the thematic events involve journalists in media production sessions.

- [Intercultural integration model](#)

The results of the pilot phase of Intercultural cities have been presented in a publication which introduces a new model of local-level governance and policy in the age of diversity: the model of intercultural integration.

This model has been built on the basis of experiences in real-life cities and with their active participation. City-to-city mentoring and learning have played a key role in this process.

This volume explains what intercultural integration means in practice: how it affects policies, governance and citizenship, public discourse, media relations, public services, and the urban environment. It reviews the processes which facilitate the development of intercultural strategies and presents a wide range of examples, including the intercultural profiles of 11 cities across Europe.

Intercultural integration adds another dimension to the management of culturally diverse populations, compared to previous models, in particular multiculturalism. In addition to non-discrimination, equal opportunities and cultural rights, interculturalism focuses on building trust and cohesion by encouraging interaction and mixing between cultural groups in the public realm and encouraging a positive discourse and attitude to diversity within the community.

It also focuses on improving the efficiency of public services by making them more culturally sensitive and adapted to the needs of diverse users, and on the need for specific services such as those dealing with intercultural mediation and conflict prevention.

Following the pilot phase (2008-2010), an implementation phase will begin in 2011, with a larger network of cities, possibly on a global level. Interested cities and partner organisations are invited to contact us.

Contact: Ms Irena Guidikova (irena.guidikova@coe.int)

<http://www.coe.interculturalcities/>

Information system on cultural diversity and good practices information on intercultural dialogue and CultureWatchEurope Initiative

Since 1998, the Council of Europe has developed a web-based cultural policy information and monitoring system (Compendium available at <http://www.culturalpolicies.net> and comprising 42 cultural policy country profiles, which also provides a *database of good practices* on intercultural dialogue. Information presented relates to projects undertaken within individual countries to facilitate dialogue among the different cultural groups living there. They are initiated on the national, regional or local level and range from artistic productions to training programmes, awards, festivals, public events, media productions etc.

A new thematic space dealing with “Cultural Rights and Ethics” is being introduced as of 2009 to the system. It will discuss ethical dilemmas and provide links to existing Compendium sections dealing with cultural rights-related issues.

Another focus of the online system is on diversity policies. Cultural diversity is understood as:

- the pluralistic ethno-cultural linguistic identity and origin of cultural creators, producers, distributors and audiences;
- a diversity of artistic and other cultural content which diverse audiences can have access to through the media or other distribution channels;
- the diversity of actors which are involved in decision-making, regulating and /or funding creators and their works.

Since the beginning of the *Compendium* project, cultural diversity as a component of cultural policy making has been treated as a transversal issue with references to relevant sub-sections of *Compendium* country profiles, such as cultural minority groups, language diversity, media pluralism and artistic creativity/content production. [Comparative overviews](#) have also been compiled. Such information assists national governments and NGOs in their efforts to begin monitoring cultural policies and measures which support cultural diversity, as promoted in the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The Compendium system inspires similar information databases that are currently under development in other world regions.

This work is being extended in 2010 through the CultureWatchEurope initiative, which is to enhance cultural governance and policy making Europe-wide, in a human rights driven perspective and in collaboration with civil society partners. Specifically, CultureWatchEurope:

- generates and follows-up policy standards and instruments in the culture and heritage sectors;
- provides online information through joint access to the Council of Europe’s electronic information tools;
- enables rapid consultation of key cultural data;
- offers a platform for creative exchange and synergy between governments, cultural practitioners and civil society; and
- contributes to prospective analysis and forward thinking.

Major CultureWatchEurope conferences dealt with the themes of “Culture and development 20 years after the fall of communism” (2009) and “Culture and the policies of change” (2010).

Contact: Ms Kathrin MERKLE (kathrin.merkle@coe.int)
<http://www.culturalpolicies.net>

Public awareness and participation in European culture and heritage

This programme aims to enable Europeans to appreciate their diverse cultural achievements as a common heritage, through wide public participation in highly visible and high quality events and projects.

The activities organised in this framework are the European Heritage Days (a joint action with the European Union), the Cultural Routes and Arts Exhibitions, educational activities for mutual understanding through heritage and cross-border activities to test the contribution of heritage education to intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention.

The aim is not only to mobilise European citizens to go and visit a variety of sites, monuments and works of art, but in so doing meet other Europeans, and make travel and tourism an intercultural (and in some cases inter-religious) human experience.

The European Heritage Days are an annual event in the 50 States parties to the Council of Europe's European Cultural Convention which open monuments and sites not usually open to the general public free of charge. The programme implemented at European level brings together heritage specialists to the annual European Heritage Forum. In 2010 the Forum will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the European Heritage Days. The theme of this Forum "Cultural Heritage, Participation, Prosperity" will contribute to the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion from the culture and heritage angle. It will be followed by a half-day meeting of the Group of Coordinators responsible for the Days in the member States.

Another flagship project in this respect is the European Route of Roma Culture and Heritage which is being developed. Roma culture is an integral part of Europe's cultural landscape and has made an important contribution to the continent's diverse heritage but this fact is seldom recognised. Prejudice, indifference and hostility against Roma thrive on the lack of knowledge about Roma culture and first-hand encounters with the Roma community. These negative attitudes are a major obstacle to the success of Roma inclusion policies. The Route of Roma Culture and Heritage will help to familiarise the public with Roma culture by providing opportunities for direct encounters with Roma communities and artists, in Roma settlements or in the context of creative and educational events. The Route will originally link places where founding organisations are based, and will eventually grow as new partners join in. The Route will also seek to empower Roma themselves to be presenters (“ambassadors”) of their own culture by face-to-face encounters and through media. The Route is open for partnership with organisations throughout Europe.

Contacts:
Ms Anna Trigona (anna.trigona@coe.int)

www.ehd.coe.int (European Heritage Days)

Ms Mechthilde Fuhrer (mechthilde.fuhrer@coe.int)

www.coe.int/routes (Cultural Routes)

Ms Irena Guidikova (irena.guidikova@coe.int)

www.coe.int/ArtExhibitions/ (Art Exhibitions)