



## OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Conference

Warsaw, 24 September- 5 October 2012

Working session 16 – Democratic governance

Contribution of the Council of Europe

### Intercultural Cities: governance and policies for diverse communities

Widespread criticism of multiculturalism has encouraged the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the European Commission (DG EAC) to develop and test a **novel model of integration** at the local level called “Intercultural integration” which is presented in the publication “[Intercultural Cities: Towards a model of intercultural integration](#)” (2009). Focusing on diversity as an advantage and based on a wide range of European standards, the model involves the review of policies and governance from an intercultural perspective. **It offers a range of analytical and assessment tools**, including the very successful **Intercultural cities INDEX**. The model is now being **implemented by over 60 cities** in Europe and beyond and around 30 others wish to do so.

The **adoption of the model** by major European capitals with a high level of policy sophistication (Copenhagen, Lisbon, Dublin, Oslo, Berlin NeuKölln, London Lewisham...) is a sign of recognition of its validity.

The Intercultural cities model is **sustainable** because it mobilises various city departments, across administrative silos, as well as civil society organisations and professional groups, including media, and involves the development of comprehensive, multi-dimensional intercultural strategies.

‘Intercultural cities’ is **versatile** – the diversity advantage concept is applicable to various diversity contexts, including migration and the presence of national minorities. The cities which have adopted the model cover a pan-European area vary significantly in terms of demography, economy and political context.

During the 5 years since its inception the Intercultural cities has been implemented in the form of a pan-European pilot network, and a series of national networks (Italy, Spain, Norway, and Ukraine). National networks are being set up in Poland and Portugal and there is an initiative for the setting up of a network in the Western Balkans.

National **networks** have adopted action plans and carry out regular exchanges of good practice, thematic meetings and policy initiatives.

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## Shaping perceptions and attitudes to realise the diversity advantage (SPARDA)

Shaping perceptions and attitudes to realise the diversity advantage (SPARDA), a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Union (January 2011 - June 2012), builds upon previous work of the Council of Europe in the field of integration and intercultural dialogue, in particular the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, the Intercultural cities EU / CoE joint action and the *Speak out against discrimination* Campaign.

SPARDA seeks to generate evidence to support the postulate that negative perceptions and attitudes towards migrants/ diversity are not a fatality and that cities can put in place successful strategies to manage attitudes in a positive way. It also seeks to identify the most effective strategies and key factors of success.

The partners of SPARDA are: City of Coimbra (Portugal), City of Had-Dingly (Malta), City of Limassol (Cyprus), City of Patras (Greece), City of Reggio Emilia with the Intercultural Centre Mondoinsieme as associate partner (Italy), Institut des Médias / ISCPA, as partner for covering an arrondissement of Lyon (France) and PACTEM Nord, grouping of 23 cities, as partner for covering the north area of Valencia (Spain).

The project involves the following main actions in each participating city:

- A baseline public perceptions survey to register attitudes to diversity and migration implemented by an independent polling agency before the information and communication strategies:

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/sparda/SPARDA\\_report2011.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/sparda/SPARDA_report2011.pdf)

Follow-up survey to assess the impact of diversity campaigns:

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/SPARDA/SPARDA\\_report2012.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/SPARDA/SPARDA_report2012.pdf)

- Implementation of communication and dialogue strategies conceived and developed by partners. These strategies are specific to each partner. They include different combinations of actions such as official statements, diversity celebration events, awards, cultural events, TV spots, debates and campaigns.
- Media and Diversity training for public officials and media professionals; media production sessions with mixed teams (mainstream and community media); these 2-Day workshops (1 per city) give key elements to define communication and dialogue strategies by better taking into account diversity issues.
- Media Cross-production Sessions – Involving local mainstream media professionals as well as their colleagues of the diversity & minority media sector, these 3-Day sessions (1 per city) aim at delivering media production content reflecting balanced and open-minded approach on migration and diversity as well as integration and community cohesion.

- Control public perceptions survey to register possible shifts in public perceptions and attitudes. The project methodology will be fine-tuned to identify which strategies have had the greatest impact, together with key factors of success.

The project deliverables involved a survey methodology, reports from perception surveys; communication and dialogue strategies and implementation plans, detailed evaluations of each action of the strategies; reports and visibility material from events included in the strategies; an overall reports; a web site and a publication of the results

Such evidence is an important argument to encourage more cities in the future to adopt the model of intercultural integration and sustain intercultural commitment and leadership among those who are already engaged.

The lessons learnt and results of the project:

<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/SPARDA/brochure.pdf>

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<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/sparda>

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

Since 1998, the Council of Europe has developed the online **Compendium cultural policy information and monitoring system**, which comprises 42 cultural policy country profiles and also provides a *database of good practices* on intercultural dialogue. Information includes 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.

Since 2011 a new thematic space deals with “Cultural Rights and Ethics”. It provides links to Compendium sections dealing with cultural rights-related issues. The Intercultural Cities Index (see above) can also be found on the Compendium. Another focus on “Cultural access and participation” will be featured shortly.

Since the beginning of the *Compendium* project, cultural diversity 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 precise information assists national governments and NGOs in their efforts to monitor 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 databases that are currently under development in all world regions, building a comprehensive world-level cultural policy information tool.

This work is being extended in 2012 through the **CultureWatchEurope** initiative.

It provides joint access to the Council of Europe's electronic information tools in the fields of culture, heritage and the audiovisual, enabling rapid consultation of policies in order to compare achievements.

It contributes to prospective analysis and forward thinking by addressing topical issues and emerging trends, developments and difficulties; and offers a platform for creative exchange and policy debate between governments, cultural practitioners and civil society on key issues through the newly developed HOTopics website ([www.hotopics.net](http://www.hotopics.net)) and annual major conferences.

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<http://www.hotopics.net>

### **Public awareness and participation in European culture and heritage**

This programme aims to create a sense in Europeans that their diverse cultural achievements represent a rich common heritage. Through actions that focus on promoting knowledge of, and participation in, highly visible, high quality experiences, it invites Europeans to continue to contribute to the development of a shared cultural identity.

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

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

The European Heritage Days (EHD's) are an annual event in the 50 States parties to the Council of Europe's European Cultural Convention. Over the course of weekends throughout September, the programme makes freely accessible, monuments and sites not usually open to the general public. The EHD's programme includes an **annual European Heritage Forum**. This event brings together heritage specialists to debate and assess how heritage can contribute to the construction of a democratic European cultural community. In 2012, the Forum theme will be "Communicating heritage" and it will consider how new technologies can create greater access and participation in the process of communicating heritage. Fostering democratic dialogue through heritage; the inclusion of new voices in the definition of heritage; education to promote respect for a common European heritage are central themes of this Forum.

The Council of Europe Cultural Routes programme aims to foster awareness of shared European heritage at all levels of society, by creating thematic networks across national borders. The great diversity of European cultures is showcased in the broad scope of the routes, which make heritage more accessible to the public through the dissemination of

information and the modern interpretation of heritage. The routes demonstrate that the today's Europe is the result of a long history of encounters and influences between people of different origins, languages and cultures.

A 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 despite the fact that this is seldom recognised. 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 is open for partnership with organisations throughout Europe.

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