



Policy Lab on Inclusive Integration

Inclusive integration strategies: towards a shared model

This paper is underpinned by a review of existing national and local integration strategies and exchanges with policy officials from several Council of Europe member States. It is also based on relevant international standards and draws on the established positive results of intercultural integration¹ approaches at the local level.

Its purpose is to serve as a starting point for a discussion in the framework of the “Inclusive Integration Policy Lab”² about the principles and constitutive elements of inclusive integration policies so to on the one hand make them fully comply with the member States’ commitment to Human Rights and relevant international standards; on the other hand serve as a tool for member States to efficiently respond to the challenges related to the increase of diversity in today’s societies.

The aim of the Policy Lab discussions is to formulate a “model” inclusive integration strategy to assist member States in their policy-making efforts, including through establishing stronger links with the local level.

This paper first outlines the general principles which should underpin inclusive integration strategies and that stem from the standards and values Council of Europe member States abide by. Secondly, the paper indicates the logical framework which can ensure that an integration strategy is focused, evidence-based, and effective.

General principles of an inclusive integration strategy

The content of any national inclusive integration strategy will of course be bespoke—not just because member states differ in their demography and the challenges they face but also because if the preparation of the strategy is genuinely evidence-based and participative it will embrace those country-specific inputs.

Nevertheless, any such strategy must be founded on the universal norms which the Council of Europe was established to promote—democracy, human rights and the rule of law—and must comply with those conventions, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations Convention and Protocol on

¹ See [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2015\)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration](#)

² The Inclusive Integration Policy Lab is an Intercultural Cities initiative to promote dialogue, coordination and cooperation between national and local authorities to ensure consistency and complementarity in integration policies so that all levels of governance reinforce each other.



the Status of Refugees and many relevant others, which member states have ratified. Such a strategy must thus embody throughout a recognition of the equality of human dignity of every diverse individual within the society, or present on its territory. The European Commissioner for Human Rights published an issue paper in 2016 on 'Time for Europe to get migrant' integration right', whose chapter headings provide a comprehensive checklist of the concerns any adequate integration strategy should address.³

A number of principles will hence be common and should suffuse the structure presented above:

1) **Equality:** The principle of equality and non-discrimination is a fundamental pillar of democratic societies, and the *condition sine qua non* for the effective enforcement of human and fundamental rights. There must be a legal and administrative substratum guaranteeing equality before the law and freedom from discrimination and intolerance in all arenas, including impartial treatment by public services—buttressed by a diversification of their workforce to act as a mirror of society—and tackling all forms of racism and xenophobia. This should be in line with the provisions of Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, the Revised European Social Charter and other relevant instruments, and effectively enforced by powerful national equality bodies supported by other equality watchdogs at the local level and in civil society. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has provided guidelines, among others, as to the legislative (no. 7)⁴ and administrative (no. 2)⁵ requirements of this. Gender equality should be equally recognised as central in this regard and as a positive resource for the pursuit of integration, with its potentiality for commonalities of experience among women of 'host' and newcomer backgrounds. In turn, this demands that gender also takes central stage in addressing other inequalities, in an 'intersectional' way, recognising how gender issues, as well as issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity have been manipulated in divisive fashion in relation to diversity.

As a general principle, inclusion policies should be built on mutual recognition and respect between all members of society as a basis for genuine equality.

2) **Individualised approach:** The newcomer to the society, whether as migrant, refugee or in the process of family reunification, should be recognised as an individual with individual rights and unique and complex needs. Cultural background may play a role in the social integration process: it should be taken into account in terms of specific advantages it may represent (multilingualism, diasporic connections, skills and talents) or needs for accommodation (related to faith and/or beliefs, language requirements, recognition of qualifications, for instance) but not as a basis for ethnically targeted integration policies.

³ Thomas Huddleston (2016), *Time for Europe to Get Migrant Integration Right: Issue Paper*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, <https://rm.coe.int/16806da596>.

⁴ See www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/GPR/EN/Recommendation_N7/default_en.asp.

⁵ See www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/GPR/EN/Recommendation_N2/default_en.asp.

Newcomers should be able to avail themselves of readily accessible information and support, e.g. via 'one-stop shops', which provide information on their spectrum of concerns—legal status, labour-market-integration, educational opportunities and so on—if needed in a range of languages. They should be offered integration programmes which are themselves integrated, in terms of language support, civic orientation, addressing issues of trauma whenever needed, based on individualised assessment of their needs recognising the specific challenges female refugees may have faced, including possible sexual abuse en route to the host country. There should be particular attention to children, including unaccompanied minors, especially those who will need psychological support or intensive language immersion before they can enjoy mainstream schooling. While family reunification as is essential to ensure the protection and well-being of individual family members, it should be carried out using flexible and expansive criteria that are culturally sensitive and situation specific, as reflected in the recommendations by the European commissioner for human rights.⁶

3) Recognition of migrants as an asset for society: There is much evidence that throughout history human mobility has contributed greatly to societal progress and prosperity. However, the potential of newcomers tends to be undervalued, as they often find their entry into productive occupations delayed and then become confined to positions for which they are over-qualified. This is linked to non-recognition of qualifications from the country of origin and refugees in particular can often arrive without the associated documentation. An effective official recognition procedure should be established, which can award an equivalent qualification on the basis of expert assessments, assignments, and the individual's work history. Innovative approaches to recognition should be considered, such as the Refugees' qualification passport⁷. The employment service should assess migrants and asylum-seekers in terms of their self-declarations, and match skills with local employers.⁸ The social partners should be encouraged to support the earliest integration of refugees into the labour market—facilitated by minimising the waiting period after claiming asylum including with recognition of the leap this may involve for some refugee women. The strategy should also support the realisation of potential through entrepreneurship as well as employment, and access to tertiary education, again with particular attention to women.

4) A whole society approach: Inclusive integration is a two-way process and the strategy should be addressed to the whole population, activating local authorities, civil society organisations and individuals across the board—not just minority

⁶ See his 2017 paper, *Realising the Right to Family Reunification of Refugees in Europe*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, <https://rm.coe.int/prems-052917-gbr-1700-realising-refugees-160x240-web/1680724ba0>.

⁷ Information about the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees <https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/recognition-of-refugees-qualifications>

⁸ See European Parliament (2016), *Labour Market Integration of Refugees: Strategies and Good Practices*, [www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/578956/IPOL_STU\(2016\)578956_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/578956/IPOL_STU(2016)578956_EN.pdf), pp. 37 and 39.

individuals, groups and organisations. Even though conceived to address specific needs, the strategy should be able to produce tangible advantage for the whole society. Particular attention should be paid to the mutual perceptions and relationships between members of the host society and newcomers (as well as their descendants) which are shaped by political and media discourse and public policies. Integration strategies should make a strong commitment to creating and/or opening up spaces for meaningful interaction between individuals of different backgrounds, and preventing or combatting socio-cultural segregation in neighbourhoods, institutions and the public space. Local authorities have a particularly important role to play in this respect but the impact of their actions would enormously benefit from the support of the national level. Strategies should ensure all members of society can be enriched by the 'diversity advantage' which accrues where the fact of demographic diversity is managed by a well-governed process of integration. The integration strategies should thus aim not only to encourage a public discourse which underlines the value of diversity, but also to support innovation by connecting economic and industrial policies to the potential offered by diverse workforces.

5) **Social inclusion:** The cultural vibrancy and dynamism of an open society depend on a shared, not segregated, public sphere. This requires public authorities to apply an 'intercultural lens' to their work, looking afresh at taken-for-granted programmes with an eye to whether they do, or do not, foster integration.⁹ Especially in the domains of housing, schooling and urban planning, it is critical to promote mixing and meaningful interaction in the public space rather than let segregation happen unwittingly through a *laissez-faire* approach. According to the OECD¹⁰—all children should be able to attend a good, local, public school, where they can be taught by a diverse profession of teachers, rather than being divided by ethnicity, exacerbated by class. Social housing should also be of high quality and accessibility for all, rather than ghettoised and stigmatised. All areas, including those with lower-income and vulnerable residents, should offer high-quality public services and opportunities for rich community and cultural experiences. This also inevitably means supporting especially intercultural projects in the sporting and cultural arenas, which can not only bring individuals of diverse origins together but build social networks and reciprocal recognition.

6) **Multilingualism:** Much of the discussion of language and integration is confined to newcomers learning the language of their host country, and clearly this is essential if they are to enjoy equal life-chances, interact meaningfully with fellow citizens, and become full members of society. Many European countries have on their territory regions in which traditionally a language other than that of the whole country is used. It is essential that newcomers residing in relevant areas also learn the regional language with a view to participating in social life and facilitating access to the labour market. Equally, however, bi- and even multilingualism not only fosters communication in a diverse society but widens personal horizons and again adduces economic benefits when trading in a globalised economy. As endorsed by the

⁹ See *The Intercultural City Step by Step: Practical Guide for Applying the Urban Model of Intercultural Integration*, <https://rm.coe.int/168048da42>, p. 39.

¹⁰ See www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf.

Council of Europe Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of 2001,¹¹ development of such ‘plurilingual’ competences should be a goal of any national intercultural strategy, at all levels of education from pre-school to lifelong learning.

7) Citizenship and active participation:

A cohesive society depends on a common sense of individual citizenship and on a personal sense of belonging —so that individuals do feel as fellow citizens of a shared community of values. Nationality is a condition for full citizenship rights. Therefore facilitating newcomers’ access to nationality, in line with the Council of Europe European Convention on Nationality of 1997¹² should be pursued. The right to vote in local elections, in accordance to the Council of Europe Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level¹³ is also an important enabler of citizenship. At the same time, nationality and voting rights alone do not guarantee the participation of migrants in both the political and social life. Not all migrants have the same opportunity or wish to obtain the nationality of their country of residence. Therefore, states should explore and test alternative forms of participation that would enable foreign residents to contribute to the political and social life of the community, such as deliberative fora, participatory budgeting and participatory policy development.

The Committee of Ministers Recommendation on the participation of citizens in local public life defines the “citizen” as “any person (including, where appropriate, foreign residents) belonging to a local community. Belonging to a local community involves the existence of a stable link between the individual and that community”¹⁴. The text also advocates for further steps to be taken to “involve citizens more directly in the management of local affairs, while safeguarding the effectiveness and efficiency of such management”. These considerations should be taken into account when preparing, planning, implementing and evaluating any inclusive integration strategy, to ensure its take-up by the target group.

8) Non-stereotyping: Addressing stereotypes and prejudice, challenging hate speech and promoting ‘intercultural dialogue’, for example between people of different faiths (as well as people without confession), in line with the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue are key factors for a successful integration strategy.¹⁵

There is no more sensitive area in terms of whether people with migrant or minority background feel ‘at home’ in the society of which they are a part, than how they are treated by the criminal-justice system, especially the police. The seriousness, on the one hand, with which hate crimes are addressed and victims supported and the

¹¹ See www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf.

¹² See <https://rm.coe.int/168007f2c8>.

¹³ See <https://rm.coe.int/168007bd26>.

¹⁴ See [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2018\)4](#), adopted on 21st March 2018

¹⁵ See <https://rm.coe.int/16800c10cf>. and

https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf

responsiveness, on the other, shown towards the socially marginalised and excluded are critical bellwethers. Neighbourhood policing is in this context at a premium and there is good experience in members of the Intercultural Cities (ICC) network,¹⁶ for instance in Lisbon (Portugal), Botkyrka (Sweden) and Fuenlabrada (Spain), of how this can be delivered.

Media reporting in this area is also hugely sensitive, particularly where crime and minority communities are stereotypically linked, and the strategy should also engage journalists' associations and media organisations, with a view to ensuring coverage of such issues is as objective as possible, including through the diversification of their editorial staff.¹⁷

9) **Competency:** More broadly, within a two-sided conception of integration, all public servants and public service providers need to acquire a basic level of intercultural competence, in line with the Council of Europe Framework of Competencies for Democratic culture and Living together in culturally diverse society¹⁸. This will be assisted by positive action measures to ensure the public service is reflective of the wider society and by the recruitment of intercultural mediators, who can liaise with individuals of various origins. But all officials need to manifest the necessary sensitivity and responsiveness, and a developed capacity for empathy for the individual service user, whatever their background. This is particularly true of those, such as caseworkers working with refugees on individual integration plans, for whom interculturalism becomes a specialist expertise. But it is also very germane to those, such as the custodians of arts and heritage institutions, who may not previously have applied the 'intercultural lens' to their work. Tailored training courses should be provided, as in Norway, where Akershus University College offers courses in intercultural competence for groups ranging from nurses to prison guards. The Oslo-based Council of Europe European Wergeland Centre¹⁹ provides a resource for the promotion of interculturalism among professionals in the education system across the member states.

10) **Multi-level governance:** Last but not least are the institutional requirements of the strategy, in addition to mechanisms of horizontal and vertical co-ordination of government. A national public authority, as in Portugal, can become a repository of technical knowledge about issues of inclusive integration, enabling and assisting regions and municipalities at lower levels of government in their integration tasks. A specific technical institution with a mandate to manage the process of designing, negotiating and evaluating the impact of integration policies, without an operational stake in their implementation, can ensure a better overall policy coordination and effectiveness than a state structure dealing with a specific type of policy (the

¹⁶ See www.coe.int/interculturalcities.

¹⁷ The Council of Europe Mediane project developed a useful self-monitoring tool for diversity inclusiveness in media—see www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/mediane/default_en.asp.

¹⁸ See the Framework of Competences

<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806ccc07>

¹⁹ See www.theewc.org/.

interior, justice, social affairs and so on). Such an approach to governance can to an extent 'depoliticise' an issue where cross-party consensus is desirable and remove some of the emotional charge from what can otherwise become polarised public debates. Engagement of NGOs with officials in the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy, as takes place in Ireland, should ensure those from outside government are not just self-appointed (mainly male) leaders but do reflect, as far as is reasonably practical, the much greater diversity among migrants and refugees than the 'host' population contains.

Logical framework of an inclusive integration strategy

A model strategy

While the substance of any national integration strategy will, by definition, be designed for the member state in question, the model for such a plan can be common across the Council of Europe membership and, indeed, it should be based on best practice for policy-making.

Any effective public policy, whatever its content, can be said to have certain elements, as identified in this ten-point structure.²⁰

1. an evidence-based **analysis** of the impact of trans-border human mobility;
2. an overarching **aim** to identify the outcome understood to be the solution;
3. a set of **objectives** which would realise that aim if achieved;
4. **programmes and projects**, developed with users, to implement them;
5. the **structures/mechanisms** needed to provide a coherent framework;
6. designated **actors** to take responsibility, including co-production by users;
7. the scale and source of **resources** required for implementation;
8. the vehicles for **communication** of the policy and to whom;
9. arrangements for **monitoring and evaluation** of its effectiveness, and
10. means for **review and revision** of the policy in that light.

While these are requirements of best-practice policy-making, they are particularly at a premium with a challenge such as intercultural integration, because of its complex, cross-cutting and comprehensive nature. So, for example, 13 ministries are implicated in the Portuguese Integration plan.

What can also be common is a commitment to wide-scale public participation in the design, delivery, implementation and evaluation of the strategy. While only the key stakeholders such as local authorities and specialised NGOs will want to get involved

²⁰ The ten elements of the model correspond to the sequence—of agenda setting (1), initiation (2), decision-making (3), implementation (4-8), evaluation (9) and revision (10)—identified by Andrew J Jordan and Andrea Lenschow (2008), 'Integrating the environment for sustainable development: an introduction', in Jordan and Lenschow (eds), *Innovation in Environmental Policy? Integrating the Environment for Sustainability* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar), 3-23. The author has honed this policy template through many years of experience as a think tank director and policy drafter, and has used it with several ICC members in drafting municipal intercultural strategies, as well as in other contexts.

in the detail, or feel confident about doing so, the model lends itself to involving the whole society in the debate about the big issues: the challenges, and the consequent aim and objectives. This in itself is key to raising the quality of public and political discourse about integration and ensuring the strategy carries widespread legitimacy and strong traction on the ground.

An effective national integration strategy will inevitably need to embrace all the elements in the model, recognising their interconnection from one to the next and looping back iteratively. Under each of these ten points has been set out above five common requirements, the rationale for which is elaborated below. As with the principles also set out above, it will be noted that there is much overlap between what is proposed here and the good practice emerging from existing strategies, national and municipal, as reported in the parallel document.

The strategy development process should be characterised by the involvement of all relevant social actors at all stages, including lower levels of government and , civil-society organisations and citizens, with their rich knowledge on the ground. In that sense, the process of elaborating, implementing and monitoring the strategy is almost as important as the outcomes it seeks to realise. This key role for on-going public participation will ensure that the strategy is relevant, dynamic and evolves over time.

The strategy should also be based solidly on objective evidence, drawing on official statistics also but recognising the value of independent experts in academia and beyond. It should include the facts on demographic diversity as well as survey data on public attitudes to associated issues. It should take account of inequality in the labour market and social circumstances, differential performance in education, segregation in housing, the incidence of hate crimes and so on. The strategy should in turn collect relevant data continuously on the realisation of its outcomes, so trends too should offer a moving picture.

Ideally, a national integration strategy should comprise, in sequence:

1) An evidence-based analysis of the impact of trans-border human mobility on society.

The strategy should start from the key integration challenges clearly identified by experts and practitioners working in this arena, as they manifest themselves in the particular member state. Xenophobic movements exploit and engender fears about minority communities, including via unregulated online media, and survey evidence shows that members of ‘host’ communities tend grossly to inflate the actual numbers of migrants and refugees in their midst. All policy-making should be evidence-based but this is an added reason why, for instance, a statistically accurate representation of the actual demographic diversity of the country is important. Similarly, evidence is needed to measure the extent of inequality which may be suffered by members of minority communities (differentiated by gender) in employment and other fields, which if addressed through positive-action measures

could better capture their talents. Degrees of segregation in housing and schooling would also be important to know. Or, again, systematic compilation of hate-crime data, as distinct from associated crimes (e.g. of assault) and the encouragement by police of full reporting by victims is of great importance to understand the extent of the challenge of intolerance.

Key elements:

- a) identify the demographic diversity of the country, its variation and trends;
- b) establish where migrant/minority populations are failing to realise their aspirations and potential, and why;
- c) locate sources of actual or latent intercultural frictions;
- d) draw widely on independent research to ensure this evidence is objective;
- e) ensure voice at this critical initial stage for minority NGOs, as well as mainstream NGOs with adequate expertise;

2) An overarching aim to identify the outcome understood to be the solution.

The aim of the strategy should flow from these challenges. Having a strong, simple aim which clearly 'fits' the national context and which openly addresses the manifest challenges is therefore critical. But it should represent a positive affirmation—the solution—recognising the benefits for social cohesion, affirmation of human rights, economic development, security and prosperity, and 'diversity advantage' to be captured by the strategy. This is not a matter of engendering political 'spin'—integrity in dealing with matters of integration is at a high premium. Rather, it is to recognise that xenophobic political and social forces seek exclusively to highlight—and indeed exaggerate and misrepresent—the difficulties associated with integration. In that context, political leadership is about offering a future-oriented alternative message which most citizens—not just members of minority communities—feel they can embrace. This is also proven by a study carried out by the Migration Policy Group last year, using correlation analyses of relations between the cities' performance in the Intercultural Cities ICC INDEX, and the Quality of Life in European Cities Index. The study found a strong statistical link between local intercultural policies and local well-being and revealed that intercultural policies do not alienate voters. Cities with stronger intercultural policies, especially on mainstreaming interculturalism, are more likely to have populations who believe that foreigners are good for their city and local services and public institutions are trustworthy and efficient. When citizens believe in their societal framework, they are more likely to engage and play an active role in its development.

The experience of Botkyrka (Sweden) and Oslo (Norway) inspires an emphasis in the aim on anti-discrimination and inclusion, so that the talents of all can be maximised. An open society will constantly be renewed by those magnetically attracted by its networks and contributing to its vibrancy. A cohesive society will be one in which all

its members can feel more secure—and be able to spend more on social programmes with less drained off by the criminal-justice system.

Key elements:

- a) facilitate a public debate on how the challenges of integration are best met;
- b) set out a goal for the state which positively affirms integration as a two-way process founded on equal access to rights and opportunities without discrimination;
- c) avoid an aspirational 'vision' which cannot be operationalised on the ground;
- d) adopt a language of equality and inclusion, conveying the message that discrimination leads to waste of talent and human potential;
- e) assure congruence with other key strategies, e.g. sustainable development;

3) A set of objectives which would realise that aim if achieved.

A clear and compelling aim also lends itself readily to being broken down into a discrete set of defined objectives through which it will be realised. If this process of articulating an aim and associated objectives is not properly executed, what will likely take their place are, respectively, an aspirational 'vision' conjured out of the air which cannot be rendered meaningful on the ground and a descriptive set of policy domains (the labour market, housing and so on) which merely become headings under which long lists of unconnected integration 'actions' are adumbrated. If there is a recurrent weakness in national integration strategies produced to date, as adumbrated in the accompanying document, it is at this point in the policy process—a lack of the 'to do' objectives which in turn should point to and frame their concrete operationalisation.

Key elements:

- a) engage with all stakeholders on the outcomes that aim entails;
- b) define these as a set of discrete objectives focusing on the entire society, not only on migrants and minorities;
- c) keep the number of these objectives to single figures;
- d) ensure these are 'to do' goals, not merely descriptive of policy domains;
- e) make sure each objective is an *outcome*, not merely an *output*;

4) Programmes and projects, developed with users, to implement them

Well-conceived objectives need then to be matched by a finite number of effective programmes and projects. These should be constructed around individual users, recognising the latter will in many cases have complex needs—in this regard, NGOs can sometimes be more flexible and responsive as project deliverers than government departments, but the latter must remain in charge of the process and coordinate actions. Care should thus be taken to avoid passing newcomers to the country from one agency, dealing with one problem, to another, dealing with a

different problem. For instance, at the heart of the German approach is an integration programme which brings together for individuals the various elements of language acquisition, vocational training and civic orientation into one package. The Swedish introduction programme for refugees starts with an individualised introduction plan developed through dialogue between the Public Employment Service and the refugee, based on a mapping of his/her educational background, previous work experience and need for training and other initiatives. And the Portuguese national support centres for the integration of migrants offer 'one-stop shops' to newcomers, with multilingual services and cultural mediation.

Key elements:

- a) indicate under each objective the initiatives required to secure it as outcome;
- b) avoid lists of unconnected 'actions', lacking the necessary synergies;
- c) ensure programmes are organised around individual needs, not institutional 'silos';
- d) avail oneself of pre-existing projects, including NGO-driven, proven to work;
- e) support innovative projects which could be replicated if successful;

5) The structures/mechanisms needed to provide a coherent framework

New structures and mechanisms will be needed to cohere this government- and society-wide effort. Interministerial and interdepartmental arrangements will be necessary, preferably led by the prime minister and the most senior government official respectively, to ensure a whole-of-government approach is adopted. Paradoxically, one of the best ways to avoid the pitfall of separate departmental 'silos' is to maximise the involvement of non-governmental organisations in the implementation (as well as the design) of the strategy—this is because they can provide a leavening influence, where officials are more used to being contained within bureaucratic boundary lines. In Ireland this has been found to be valuable in injecting service-user perspectives directly into the process of implementation. A dedicated agency may be required, such as the BAMF (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*) in Germany, or at least existing agencies may require new mandates—either way, legislation may be needed to confer these new statutory duties. Also, with the best will in the world, central government can never be omniscient and in what in Italy has been described as the 'polycentric network of services' addressing integration, it is important to cohere relations among different levels of government, including the regional and the municipal, avoiding unnecessary disputes over competences. And supporting horizontal networks on the ground can usefully offset 'top-down' approaches—as the experience of the national intercultural cities networks among the member states already testifies

Key elements:

- a) ensure a co-ordinated approach across government departments and agencies;
- b) engage advocates and practitioners, to add perspectives and experiences;
- c) legislate for new bespoke agencies as required, fit for purpose;
- d) provide for multi-level governance, cohering the national, regional and local;

- e) support horizontal networks, especially national intercultural cities networks;

6) Designated actors to take responsibility, including co-production by users

It is important that responsibility is clearly allocated for the various programmes and projects, as otherwise the plan may remain an official fiction, remote from day-to-day practice by departments and agencies. Ideally, all concerned department will have to pursue and aim to achieve one or more of the goals of the strategy so that the latter is not the responsibility of a single office. The general level of intercultural competence of public servants can be an issue here, if they are to embrace the challenge: this is not an impossible matter of having an encyclopaedic knowledge of the cultural world but of acquiring a capacity for perspective-taking, for putting oneself in the shoes of the other, which should become part and parcel of general staff training. This will be assisted by positive action measures to open up access to public-sector employment for migrants and foreign nationals, yet research by the FRA found that only eight EU member states were doing so.²¹ But the responsible actors should not be confined to government. In Denmark, for instance, the social partners agreed a deal in 2016, supported by government, to facilitate the integration of refugees and reunified family members into the labour market. Against evidence that only 28 per cent of individuals of working age in these categories had secured employment after three years of participation in integration programmes, the unions and employers agreed a supportive framework. This streamlines and accelerates the assessment and recognition of skills, acquisition of vocational Danish and job placement, including via new requirements placed on local authorities. And it establishes a training programme for entrants not yet able to command a trade-union reservation wage, while incentivising placements with a bonus for participating companies.²² Similarly, Sweden has developed a series of '[fast tracks](#)' to promote the early employment of refugees through agreements with the sectoral social partners. More than 5,000 refugees had come through these fast tracks, across 14 sectors, by the end of 2017.²³ Beyond this, at the micro-level, individual volunteering and activism can be encouraged. For example, in Italy there have been instances of intercultural municipalities sensitively hosting individual refugees or small numbers with local families and groups and encouraging experiments in self-build housing by mixed groups.

Key elements:

- a) give strategic political direction from the highest level of government;
- b) involve the social partners, especially in labour-market aspects of integration;
- c) assist regions and municipalities to develop dovetailing integration strategies;
- d) ensure that intercultural awareness becomes a basic competence for all public servants;
- e) foster a culture of civic activism and dialogue on the ground;

7) The scale and source of resources required for implementation

²¹ FRA, op. cit., p. 48.

²² See <http://star.dk/da/English/Social-partners/Tripartite-discussion-in-2016.aspx>.

²³ See www.government.se/articles/2015/12/fast-track---a-quicker-introduction-of-newly-arrived-immigrants/.

As with any plan, finding the resources for the national intercultural strategy can be a stumbling block, without which it remains only on paper. Learning from the ICCs' experience, partly this is a matter of applying the 'intercultural lens' to existing policy domains, which may mean revising programmes and projects rather than starting *ex novo*. Support from the EU may be available (where applicable), including from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund as the Italian national integration plan envisages. If programmes are user-focused, then funding can be similarly structured: it may be particularly important for local authorities that funding should follow the individual (newcomer) user if they are to be able to cope with demand on the ground arising from significant in-migration. Additional funding can however be reasonably presented as investment in the 'diversity advantage' to be realised, whereas abstaining from such investment will still incur costs but ensure benefits fail to accrue, as asylum-seekers in particular may languish for years outside the labour market, as their morale falls and their skills atrophy. In September 2017 it emerged that the White House had suppressed a study by the US Department of Health and Human Services, mandated by the president, Donald Trump, in a March memorandum implementing his revised travel ban on refugees (and migrants) from certain 'Muslim' countries. The memorandum had sought information on the costs of the refugee programme and how to curtail them. But the study found that, over the preceding decade, refugees had brought in \$63 billion more in government revenues than they had cost.²⁴ Nor is the 'multiplier effect' of financial support for relevant NGOs to be underestimated—they can uniquely mobilise voluntary activism as a result. UNESCO has recognised the value of such 'volunteer initiatives, local cooperatives and collaborative networks that may work with smaller groups and offer more personalized assistance'.²⁵

Key elements:

- a) present budgetary allocations as an investment in the 'diversity advantage';
- b) repackage existing expenditures looked at through the 'intercultural lens';
- c) have funding follow individual users, so local authorities can finance services;
- d) support NGOs mobilising voluntary goodwill as a resource in kind;

8) The vehicles for communication of the policy and to whom

Public communication of the strategy is of great import. One weakness of multiculturalist approaches to managing diversity was that they really only engaged the elite of minority 'communities', whereas the success on the ground as well as the legitimacy of intercultural integration depends on broad public support. Oslo's '[OXLO](#)' campaign is a model of non-partisan PR in this regard,²⁶ as is the annual

²⁴ 'Trump administration rejects study showing positive impact of refugees', *New York Times*, 18 September 2017, www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/us/politics/refugees-revenue-cost-report-trump.html.

²⁵ UNESCO (2016), *Cities Welcoming Refugees and Migrants*, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002465/246558e.pdf>.

²⁶ See www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/-/oxlo-oslo-extra-large.

intercultural carnival organised by Patras. Interculturalism is a complex notion but it can be simply represented as the ‘inclusion of the other in the self’,²⁷ in a way that engages citizens’ capacity for empathy rather than exclusion and can be linked to accessible and satisfying human stories. There is also now a wealth of experience with the ‘anti-rumours’ work challenging popular stereotypes, including the recruitment of citizens as ‘anti-rumour agents’ to engage their fellows in dialogue on the street.²⁸ And without interfering in any way in media freedom, it is legitimate to engage journalists’ associations in a discussion, in the context of the national integration strategy, about how associated issues are covered in a fair and accurate manner.

Key elements:

- a) present a simple, consistent, positive message, in line with the aim;
- b) develop a non-partisan PR campaign, with an image, slogan, social-media presence and events;
- c) use supported programmes and projects to ‘show’ as well as ‘tell’;
- d) support ‘anti-rumour agents’ in the on- and offline public sphere;
- e) engage journalists’ associations and community media to promote ethical journalism in this arena;

9) Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness

Monitoring and recurrent evaluation of the strategy is essential to identify any gaps between aspiration and achievement. Again, clearly set outcomes, as defined by the objectives, are essential to avoid a long list of arbitrary ‘targets’ or meaningless ‘indicators’ which have a stand-alone character. It is in the nature of intercultural integration that quantitative measures need to be combined with qualitative evaluation for a rounded picture to emerge—particularly because the experiences of users matter and partly because there will be genuine differences of perspective among different social actors. The focus of the model operationally on programmes and projects lends itself readily to a case-study methodology for assessment. As with all the other elements of the model, monitoring and evaluation needs to be participatory too: if the objectives are apparently achieved, particularly in terms of quantitative measures, this is all well and good but if this does not match the qualitative experience of those who need to animate the plan at grassroots level the traction which it carries may be seriously overestimated. The lessons, of failure as well as success, need to be fed back into revision of the plan over time as experience and confidence grows.²⁹ For example, to continue the example of labour-market integration of refugees, both Denmark and Sweden have discovered through

²⁷ Wilson, *op. cit.*

²⁸ See www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/anti-rumours.

²⁹ This interlinking between the elements of good policy-making is essential, so that policy starts from the definition of the problem, establishes clear desired outcomes and pursues an explicit ‘intervention logic’ (the ‘how’) to realise them, thereby allowing the consequent programmes and projects to be monitored and evaluated in a mixed-methods fashion. This integrated approach to policy-making is discussed in the similarly challenging context of tackling social exclusion by Ian Sanderson (2000), ‘Evaluating initiatives to address social exclusion’, in Janie Percy-Smith (ed.), *Policy Responses to Social Exclusion: Towards Inclusion?* (Maidenhead: Open University Press), 216-39.

monitoring their programmes that female refugees are at a much greater disadvantage in the labour market than their male counterparts, on average. This has encouraged both governments to consider why this should be so and to seek to develop remedial responses.

Key elements:

- a) define indicators non-arbitrarily by the desired outcomes of the objectives;
- b) include qualitative assessments, given a user focus and multiple perspectives;
- c) utilise case studies, examining exemplar programmes or projects;
- d) draw on independent expert evaluators for impartial evidence;
- e) maximise the involvement of practitioners and advocates on the ground;

10) Means for review and revision of the policy in that light

Existing national integration plans have varying durations but a three-year timescale is not atypical. This offers enough time to implement the current iteration of the strategy but not so much that its implementation becomes ‘backloaded’ as it moves down the political and public-service priorities. As with the design of the strategy, its redesign should be evidence-based—notably the results of independent professional evaluation—and should give voice to the advocates and the practitioners on the ground who might otherwise feel marginalised. This may lead to some projects which have functioned poorly being retired while others which have proved innovative and successful may be scaled up, including by redirection of funding—again the modular, programme/project core of the strategy makes this easier. Focusing on the bigger picture, the review of the strategy is also a good opportunity to reconfirm the wider societal commitment to its overall aim and to reinforce public and political consensus around it.

Key elements:

- a) set a limited (e.g. three or four-year) duration, as the optimum for implementation and review;
- b) ensure revision is based on the findings of independent, objective evaluation and participatory feedback;
- c) retire programmes/projects which are failing and scale up good practices;
- d) maximise democratic involvement, by the whole society, in the debate;
- e) signal once again to the most marginalised their voice is heard.

Conclusion

This paper has set out the case for national integration strategies, indicating the value they add by regulating population movement rather than leaving it unmanaged, fostering integration rather than leaving it to chance and making it possible thereby to capture the ‘diversity advantage’. The accompanying document shows how member states have been implicitly accepting this case by showing greater propensity to adopt just such strategies and plans. The paper has sought

further to establish a skeletal framework from which member states can work, while avoiding excessive prescription given the national specificities involved and the need for widespread participation within the state on the design and delivery of such a strategy.

The MIPEX indicator system provides a broad-brush means to benchmark the relative performance of different member states in the arena of integration, as the ICCs index does at municipal level. MIPEX linked the success of one high-performing state to having integration policies that were ‘more responsive and evidence-based, more ambitious, better supported and more effective in many areas of life, relevant for migrants’. In this case, and that of other high performers, there was a political consensus that (non-EU) migrants should enjoy the same rights as existing citizens—for instance to vote (and stand for election) in local elections—in turn encouraging those so activated to seek early naturalisation as full national citizens.³⁰

And it is perhaps worth concluding on this point. One of the elements of success in integration is indeed to foster a *milieu* in which newcomers to the society in question feel subjects of their destiny, rather than simply objects of state actions—that way lies the best prospect that their talents will be fully realised. While integration strategies have many diverse objectives, turning migrants and asylum-seekers into fellow citizens enjoying equal agency can be a common goal of all.

³⁰ Alexandru Kis and Alin Kis (2017), ‘A comparative study on immigrants’ integration policies in Romania and Sweden’, *Journal of Defense Resources Management*, **8** (1), 43-62.

Explanatory note

Intercultural integration—the policy *acquis*

The Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue included among its recommendations the following paragraph:³¹

An inner coherence between the different policies that promote, or risk obstructing, intercultural dialogue should be ensured. One way to achieve this is by adopting a “joined-up” approach crossing conventional departmental boundaries in the form of an interdepartmental committee, a special ministry of integration or a unit in the office of the Prime Minister. Drawing up and implementing a “National Action Plan”, based on international human rights standards including those of the Council of Europe and reflecting the recommendations of this White Paper, can effectively contribute to the vision of an integrated society safeguarding the diversity of its members and set down objectives which can be translated into programmes and which are open to public monitoring. The Council of Europe is ready to assist the development of such National Action Plans and the evaluation of their implementation. Political leadership at the highest level is essential for success. Civil society, including minority and migrant associations, can play an important role. In order to promote integration, consultative bodies could be formed that involve representatives of the various partners concerned. National Action Plans should be inclusive of both recent migrants and long standing minority groups.

This recommendation stemmed from the consultation in 2007 with the member states during the preparation of the white paper, which brought to attention a significant policy innovation emerging among them. Three states—Spain, Germany and Portugal—reported that they had for the first time produced, or were developing, that very year national integration plans, to bring together intercultural approaches across government.

It is important to stress in this context that the white paper understands integration as a process characterised by mutuality—intercultural dialogue—rather than one of assimilation, in which the onus is placed entirely on members of minority communities. The white paper makes this clear in its definition of integration:³²

Integration (social integration, inclusion) is understood as a two-sided process and as the capacity of people to live together with full respect for the dignity of each individual, the common good, pluralism and diversity, non-violence and solidarity, as well as their ability to participate in social, cultural, economic and political life. It encompasses all aspects of social development and all policies. It requires the protection of the weak, as well as the right to differ, to create and to innovate. Effective integration policies are needed to allow immigrants to participate fully in the life of the host country.

³¹ See www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/Source/White%20Paper_final_revised_EN.pdf, pp. 37-8.

³² *ibid*, p11

Immigrants should, as everybody else, abide by the laws and respect the basic values of European societies and their cultural heritage. Strategies for integration must necessarily cover all areas of society, and include social, political and cultural aspects. They should respect immigrants' dignity and distinct identity and take them into account when elaborating policies.

Similarly, the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union, agreed in 2004, defined integration as a 'two-way process'.³³ This two-sided approach is not only an intercultural affirmation of generosity of spirit towards the 'other', valuable though that signal is. It is also now essential, with a decade of hindsight, to avoid the unintended negative side-effect of the prior policy (in some states) of multiculturalism, which could be represented by those hostile to integration as a policy only targeted at the newcomer, going over the head of the 'host' population.

The accompanying paper exploring local and national integration strategies finds 'two-sidedness' to be a recurrent theme among the latter, as they have emerged since the white paper—even if a number have implied their audience is restricted to 'minorities'. It is important to affirm that this is a national project in which all those living in the state concerned can and should have a stake.

The member states endorsed this concept of intercultural integration in a Committee of Ministers recommendation of January 2015, encouraged by the success on the ground since the white paper of the Intercultural Cities programme (ICC).³⁴ Indeed, the recommendation urged member-state governments, *inter alia*, to 'take the urban model of intercultural integration into account when revising and further developing national migrant integration policies or policies for intercultural dialogue and diversity management'.

The attraction to member states of national integration strategies, it became apparent during the white-paper consultation, was threefold:

- they allow committed leadership on this challenge to radiate from the heart of government,
- they provide for a coherent response across the various agencies of government and
- they offer a vehicle for the engagement of NGOs, in the design and delivery of the strategy.

One way of thinking of this is to borrow the concept of 'mainstreaming'. 'Mainstreaming' emerged as a way of thinking about how to tackle gender inequality, given that it stemmed from a series of interrelated sources: the workplace, the home and so on. And so, it was suggested, rather than, say, simply pursuing equal pay in isolation from public childcare provision, these and other

³³ See https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/common-basic-principles_en.pdf.

³⁴ CM/REC(2015)1, https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805c471f

concerns should be brought together in an overall gender perspective, recasting old policy domains in a new light. Similarly, the ICCs programme has thrown up the idea of an ‘intercultural lens’, to be applied by policy-makers across the board.

A substantive gender perspective is equally necessary here, of course, as the Italian national integration plan recognises. Yet research by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency found ‘little evidence of specific references to gender in national action plans or strategies on migrant integration, although a number of positive initiatives and good practices were identified’.³⁵

The Dutch government came up with this ‘mainstreaming’ idea in commissioning comparative research on the experience of France, Denmark, Germany and the UK in mainstreaming their integration policies. The researchers argue that national integration plans have proved ‘necessary yet insufficient’ to date and they contend: ‘In most countries, the integration portfolio has remained a stand-alone policy area with a narrowly defined target group, identified exclusively by immigration status and heritage. But as integration challenges mount, governments are beginning to look for alternative methods of addressing longer-term inequality and segregation within communities.’³⁶

This makes sense, the authors argue, but this approach will only work if three key elements are in place: a political *discourse* setting out the cross-cutting approach, *co-ordination* across government departments and the necessary policy *measures* to put it into practice.³⁷ These are explored further in the elaboration of the model strategy below.

The first of these, the discursive dimension, can be the focus for building cross-party consensus among all parties committed to universal norms, so that integration does not become an issue of inter-party competition—with the threat of a political ‘race to the bottom’—and that the work of integration, necessarily a long-term commitment, is sustained despite changes in the colour of national governments. The second, co-ordination, is essential to avoid the scenario where ‘responsibility is dispersed across government with no clear leadership’, in which case ‘policies will end up languishing on paper’.³⁸ As to the third, measures, a case in point is where a targeted, rather than mainstreamed, approach to dealing with hate crime can perversely focus on Islamist fundamentalism alone while ignoring far-right xenophobia.³⁹

³⁵ Fundamental Rights Agency (2017), *Together in the EU: Promoting the Participation of Migrants and their Descendants*, Vienna: FRA, <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/migrant-participation>, p. 30.

³⁶ Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic (2014), *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe: Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion*, Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, p. 3.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 18.

Developments on the ground

This evolution in policy thinking has been paralleled by practical experiences in recent years. While these have not been without challenges, they have demonstrated how the ‘diversity advantage’ associated with well-managed integration can be captured in terms of economic innovation and social dynamism—and, indeed, that there is a political imperative so to do.

Two related social trends make the potential of national integration strategies, conceived in a supportively collaborative way within the framework of the Council of Europe, increasingly evident. Between them, globalisation and individualisation are remaking European societies in real time. This is changing the nature of *migration* from a single, irreversible movement to the ‘host’ country from one with which it has a traditional association of dependency to a much more globalised and individualised process of *mobility*, where those on the move may exercise rather more autonomy and choice as to their destination(s)—which can mean, for example, that a country such as Portugal can be changed from a country of *emigration* to one of *immigration* within the space of a generation. Indeed, in the context of global capital flows, individual countries will be markedly affected, including economically, by their capacity to attract—and keep—globally mobile, highly qualified labour.

According to the rector of the Norwegian Business School, Inge Jan Henjesand, speaking at an ICCs seminar in Oslo in 2015, ‘Norwegian industry isn’t Norwegian any more’, including necessarily in having to deal with diversity. High salaries in Norway meant Norwegian firms could not compete on price but had to focus on innovation, linked to flat hierarchies and communication, he said. With a nod to Richard Florida’s triptych of technology, talent and tolerance, as the components of competitive success,⁴⁰ Henjesand said talented people would not come to an intolerant place. Since then, a published meta-analysis of studies of the relationship between diversity and creativity has confirmed the robustness of this relationship.⁴¹

In Copenhagen hundreds of companies have signed up to a diversity charter, which Oslo took up as a model. Copenhagen also has an ‘INNOGROWTH via diversity’ project: innovation consultants assist companies and organisations to translate existing diversity within the workplace into innovation and efficiency. Like Oslo and Copenhagen, Neuchâtel is a top performer in the Intercultural Cities Index. The city-canton similarly recognises the value of symbolic analysts in a knowledge economy—which has evolved beyond precision watch-making to microtechnology and nanotechnology. As with Oslo, around a quarter of the population of Neuchâtel now comprises foreign nationals. It puts a strong emphasis on the welcoming and orientation of newcomers.

The significance of this for our purposes is that as individual regions and metropolises compete for success in a globalised economy, those which occupy a national milieu

⁴⁰ Richard Florida (2004), ‘Technology, talent and tolerance’, in Phil Wood (ed.), *Intercultural City Reader*, Stroud: Comedia, pp. 44-54.

⁴¹ Ciaran Dunne (2017), ‘Can intercultural experiences foster creativity? The relevance, theory and evidence’, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, **38** (2), 189-212.

favourable to the attraction of ‘transcultural’ specialist labour will be those which will tend also to act as an investment magnet and be the most thriving and dynamic. A European Parliament resolution on the integration of migrants in 2013 recognised that Europe ‘has to compete globally for the best brains in order to attract and retain talent’ and that ‘diverse, open and tolerant societies are more likely to attract skilled workers who possess the human and creative capital required to power knowledge economies’, requiring a ‘welcoming culture’.⁴² It is no coincidence that Norway has the highest gross domestic product *per capita* in Europe after Luxembourg and Switzerland and that Oslo is Europe’s fastest growing city.

Cities can strive to make themselves attractive, as with the ‘Oslo Extra Large’ diversity-promotion campaign. But a national integration strategy which fosters and manages such efforts can clearly make a big difference to the overall climate of openness and welcoming—indeed the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance recommended Norway develop such a plan in its 2015 periodic report.⁴³ The Finnish integration plan seeks to exploit the capacity of foreign students placed in Finnish companies in this regard. And as the 2015 Committee of Ministers recommendation affirmed more generally, ‘a solid body of research both in Europe and worldwide has demonstrated the value of diversity for human and social development and cohesion, economic growth, productivity, creativity and innovation and that these benefits of diversity can only be realised on condition that adequate policies are in place to prevent conflict and foster equal opportunities and social cohesion’.

Why is this? First of all, it is easy to underestimate the barriers facing migrants, and refugees, especially when it is recognised that integration is indeed a two-sided process on which the onus does not fall entirely on them. Across a range of national contexts, research has identified the following common obstacles: ‘legal status, linguistic competence, recognition of qualifications, restricted access to employment, housing and other social services, and limits to political participation’.⁴⁴ Secondly, and more negatively, this more volatile movement of population, especially when fuelled by refugee flows arising from shocks in the country of origin—such as the Syrian implosion—mean that ‘de-integration’ can also take place under the pressures of crisis situations. This includes in relationship to asymmetric shocks bearing down upon the ‘host’ country, as Greece has suffered economically: between 2010 and 2014 unemployment among its foreign-born population soared from 16.3 to 34.5 per cent.⁴⁵

⁴² European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2013 on the integration of migrants, its effects on the labour market and the external dimension of social security coordination (2012/2131(INI)), <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013IP0092>.

⁴³ available at <https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Norway/NOR-CbC-V-2015-002-ENG.pdf>. Norway produced a national plan for refugee integration specifically in 2017.

⁴⁴ Mary Gilmartin and Bettina Migge (2015), ‘European migrants in Ireland: pathways to integration’, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, **22** (3), 285-99.

⁴⁵ George Mavrommatis (2017), ‘The rise of a hesitant EU host? Examining the Greek migrant integration policy and its transformation during the crisis’, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, **17** (1), 1-15.

If the very real ‘diversity advantage’ is to be captured,⁴⁶ national integration strategies are thus essential to do so effectively, while minimising the associated frictions, readily exploited and exacerbated by xenophobic forces. As the Finnish integration plan puts it, ‘The objective is that actions related to immigrant integration will increasingly be seen as one of the instruments of the Finnish business and innovation policy and development cooperation policy.’⁴⁷

The accompanying paper correspondingly identifies a growing momentum behind national integration strategies across Council of Europe member states. And the rationales which these strategies present for their introduction, albeit varying with the individual country, suggest that the factors behind this momentum are the challenges posed by structural or conjunctural shifts in population movement and the recognised benefits if such movements are better managed. Despite the fact that Sweden has accepted more refugees *per capita* than any other member state in recent years, its view is that the challenges it faces in coping with this movement of people are ‘demanding’ but ‘manageable’. And while its significant investment in refugee integration has not been instrumental in intent, it has had the unwitting spin-off ensuring Sweden had a growth rate 3.5 times that of its Nordic neighbours in 2015.⁴⁸

In June 2017 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe passed a motion on refugee integration. It recognised that ‘increased levels of migration are a permanent characteristic of today’s Europe and that, if well managed, the integration of refugees is a means of contributing to demographic renewal, the acquisition of new competencies and the cultural diversity and enrichment of host societies’.⁴⁹ The European Commission similarly recognised, in a document on refugee integration published with the social partners in December 2017, that ‘labour market integration should be supported as early as possible, as finding employment is fundamental to becoming part of the host country’s economic and social life’ and ‘successful integration efforts should benefit and bring value to refugees as well as to the entire workforce, companies, economy, and society at large, ensuring that no skill or competence is wasted’.⁵⁰

Portugal is an example of where a supportive national integration strategy appears to be helpful to the municipalities as a common overarching framework. Similarly,

⁴⁶ See chapter 11 of my forthcoming *Meeting the Challenge of Cultural Diversity in Europe: Moving Beyond the Crisis* (Edward Elgar), on the economic case for a Europe of ‘hospitality’.

⁴⁷ See

https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79156/TEMjul_47_2016_verkko.pdf?sequence=1.

⁴⁸ Bo Rothstein (2017), ‘Immigration and economic growth: is Keynes back?’, *Social Europe*, 20 June, <https://www.socialeurope.eu/2017/06/immigration-and-economic-growth-is-keynes-back/>.

⁴⁹ ‘Integration of refugees in times of critical pressure: learning from recent experiences and examples of best practice’, resolution 2176 (2017), <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=23966&lang=en>.

⁵⁰ ‘A European Partnership for Integration: offering opportunities for refugees to integrate into the European labour market’, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/integration/docs/20171220_european_partnership_for_integration_en.pdf.

Bucharest is able to frame its work on integration in the context of the national strategy and, as the national capital, play its part in the implementation of the latter. By contrast, consultation with city co-ordinators in Ukraine indicates how the lack of such a national strategy hitherto is felt to hold them back. As a study of integration policies has concluded (emphasis in original), ‘the **capacity of European cities to pursue their individual integration policies is closely circumscribed by their national contexts**’.⁵¹ Hence the case for a model national intercultural strategy.

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Paper edited by the ICC Team

⁵¹ Thomas Huddleston, Judit Tánczos and Alexander Wolffhardt (2016), *Strategic Developments on Migration Integration Policies in Europe*, Compas Global Exchange on Migration & Diversity, Oxford: Oxford University, <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/2016/strategic-developments-on-migrant-integration-policies-in-europe/>.

⁵² Dr Robin Wilson has been an expert adviser to the Council of Europe on intercultural integration since 2002. He co-authored a report on Belfast for the Shared Cities’ project of 2002-04 and then wrote an overall report embracing the five member cities’ experiences. After the member states called for the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue in 2005, he prepared the input from the culture committee into the consultation. He analysed the responses to the consultation from the member states for the head of the white-paper drafting group in the secretariat and assisted him on the drafting, and redrafting, of the document. He has subsequently advised the ICCs programme and in particular has assisted member cities with the preparation of municipal intercultural strategies. He is author of *Meeting the Challenge of Cultural Diversity in Europe: Moving Beyond the Crisis*, to be published in August by Edward Elgar.