



## Working Group Migration & Integration

Brussels | 17-18 February 2014

### Draft Minutes

#### Participants:

Semra Çelebi (Amsterdam), Ramon Sanahuja (Barcelona - Chair), Jana Sancova (Brno), Stanislav Jaburek (Brno), Marc Van Acker (Ghent), Anu Riila (Helsinki - Vice-Chair), Regina Ober (Munich), Sylvain Guillot (Nantes), Tone Skodvin (Oslo), Céline Ziwès (Rennes) Rokhaya Leye (Rennes), Ilona Stalidzāne (Riga), Valērija Zirdziņa (Riga), Ronald Derks (Rotterdam), René Keijzer (Rotterdam), Melinda Lorincz (Rotterdam), Agneta Berner (Stockholm), Marja Nyrhinen (Tampere), Karin König (Vienna), Christof Meier (Zurich), Ana Feder (EUROCITIES), Thomas Jézéquel (EUROCITIES).

Meeting documents available [here](#) (login required). Action points are highlighted in yellow

Minutes from last WG Meeting in Tampere 11 September 2013 were approved, incorporating amendments provided by city of Ghent

- The report of activities for 2013 was approved

#### Work plan for 2014:

- The work plan for 2014 was discussed and general agreement reached on the activities proposed
- It was suggested that the working group play a leading role on the discussion on integration paradigms and link discussion with active dissemination strategy for this and other outputs
- The role of the working group in producing evidence and influencing cities' practices was highlighted

#### EU policy update:

European Integration Forum and National Contact Points meeting, November 2013

- Ramon Sanahuja reported on the presentation made at the closing plenary of the last meeting of the European Integration Forum in November which included the presentation of the ImpleMentoring video from Genoa and Milan on participation of migrants. The report of the event is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/policy/legal.cfm#>
- Eva Schultz from the European Commission DG Home Affairs provided some further feedback on the Integration Forum meeting, highlighting the significance of having discussed such a highly political topic as participation and citizenship in this forum.
- She also presented developments of the 'strategic partnership' on migrant integration between EU and local and regional authorities proposed by the European Commission in 2011. It had been since agreed that instead of creating a new structure or 'network', this process would focus for the time being at opening up existing processes such as the Integration Forum, the network of National Contact Points for Integration (NCPI) to local and regional authorities and their relevant networks.

- As such, the latest meeting of the National Contact Points of Integration (NCPs), who met in Brussels immediately preceding the Integration Forum in November, focused in part on the involvement of local and regional authorities in implementation of integration policy and funding programmes. EUROCITIES and some other networks and regional representations were invited to this discussion. There is willingness from the NCPs to continue this exchange through participation in thematic meetings.
- Ms. Schultz also mentioned the important role given to local and regional authorities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the new programming period of the Asylum and Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).
- In the discussion, WG Chair asked cities the extent to which they had been involved in consultations on the policy dialogues of the AMIF. Aside from some notable exceptions (Rotterdam, Riga, Helsinki and Brno) most city representatives were not aware of any consultation which has taken place with their own local authorities in this area.
- The working group will also continue to strengthen partnership with NCPs - a letter will be drafted the European Commission to disseminate to the national contact points to support continued direct dialogue.
- The working group will move forward with its objective to influence EU by strategic lobbying but also by providing evidence

#### Future of EU Home Affairs:

- Agnieszka Sternik from DG Home Affairs coordination unit (D1) provided an overview of the consultation process to develop future strategic guidelines in the area of justice and home affairs (currently governed by the [Stockholm Programme](#) on the area of freedom, justice and security).
- The process of consultation began in 2013 with an open consultation whereby 70 contributions were received. The contributions, including one from EUROCITIES, are available at [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/public-consultation/2013/consulting\\_0027\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/public-consultation/2013/consulting_0027_en.htm)
- Consultative events were organised by theme in 2013 and culminated in a closing [conference](#) in January 2014
- The Commission will hold an orientation debate on this issue on 25 February
- Thereafter a Communication will be issued by the Commission setting out strategic guidelines with likely adoption by the Council in June
- This strategic document will likely consist of a brief document focusing on implementation and evaluation of existing framework

#### Greek presidency:

- The Greek presidency of the EU has identified migration as one of the priority areas to address during the presidency
- One of the issues that will be discussed at the April meeting of the national contact points is the [Common Basic Principles](#) adopted by the Council in 2004 - their relevance and implementation
- A conference on this topic may be organised in May or June in Athens

#### Free movement of EU citizens:

- This topic is high on the EU political agenda
- A [communication](#) was issued by the European Commission in November, and

- A [conference](#) aimed at local authorities held on this topic on 11 February in Brussels - presenting findings of a [study](#) conducted by Ernst&Young on the impact of free movement of EU citizens at the local level.
- The working group will continue to be involved in follow up of the event and consultations with DG justice on how to bring forward this issue

#### Asylum and Migration Fund (2014-2020):

- An update was given on the agreement reached on the regulations to set up an Asylum and Migration Fund which will be adopted by the European Parliament in March
- Policy dialogues between the European Commission and national governments have been held and countries are in the process of submitting their multi-annual programmes based on this dialogue.
- The working group will provide the European Commission feedback on how the partnership principle in the regulation is upheld and contribute to the implementation and evaluation of this principle and the funds at national and European level
- € 2.75 billion of the funds will go to national programmes. Out of this a minimum of amount is to be allocated to legal migration and integration actions. In practice, this means that approximately € 478.4 million minimum is to be allocated for these purposes for all member states for the period 2013-2020.
  - Working group asked how this can be compared to the current EU integration funding. The current European Integration Fund (2008-2013) has 767m earmarked for national actions. However, these are difficult figures to compare because one is a minimum amount and the other is allocated amount for all member states.

#### Other relevant policy areas:

- EUROCITIES will be working on a lobby strategy vis-à-vis new European Parliament and Commission to take up post in June and autumn 2014 respectively. The 2014 Task Force will lead on development of general messages and, where warranted, will consult with working groups on specific advocacy message towards specialised committees or policy areas.
- A reminder was given to working group members of the importance of city involvement in the development and implementation of the National Reform Programmes. EUROCITIES will continue to address the involvement of cities in this EU governance process and update information provided in 2013 via the advocacy toolkits (see <http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/news/Cities-can-help-shape-EU-and-national-social-policy-WSPO-95JKVT> - member login required). Working group members were asked to update the secretariat with news of consultation taking place within their member states and to disseminate relevant information among their administrations.

#### **Follow-up discussion on integration paradigms:**

- The working group discussed the findings of the integration paradigms survey as well as possibilities for moving this work further and its dissemination
- Among the points raised were:
  - What terms were most relevant to cities (e.g. 'two-way', 'integration', 'anti-discrimination') - and the significance of using these in related policies
  - Relation of this survey and reigning EU discourse in this area (i.e. Common Basis Principles of integration)

- Role of local authorities in addressing the whole population
- Role of the working group to promote an approach to this 'integration' debate
- Use of the evidence collected through this working group to link with other processes and research such as IMISCOE, FIERI, [EU Migrant Integration Academy](#), etc.
- How to promote work on the practical level by building joint projects, build body of evidence and develop statements that are backed up by concrete actions
- Working group members who did not contribute to the survey were invited to provide their responses to the questions (see [WD4](#) for a summary of responses - login required)
- A small group consisting of Anu Riila from Helsinki, Ronald Derks from Rotterdam and Céline Ziwès from Rennes will come up with a proposal on how to bring the discussion forward and use/disseminate information collected through this survey.

### Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:

- Anu Riila from the city of Helsinki was elected as Chair of the working group
- Caterina Sarfatti from the city of Milan was elected as vice-Chair of the working group
- Working group members thanked Ramon Sanahuja from Barcelona for leading the working group for the past five years and commended him for the achievements reached during his chairmanship of the group.

### Mutual update:

- Cities shared latest updates from national and local level affecting practice and implementation of migrant integration. WG members were also asked to highlight what they are working on and the objective of their city for being involved in the working group - some highlights are included below:

### Amsterdam:

- Discrimination in the labour market has become a point of focus for the city given the disproportionate number of unemployed youth from a migrant background. As such the city is developing a project in partnership with other city departments and private sector to focus on diversity in recruitment. This is being done with Utrecht centre for human rights.
- The city is interested in bringing gender dimension of migrant integration to this issue. Cities with experience in this area were asked to provide relevant examples.
- Amsterdam is organising the following activities/initiatives:
  - 21 March - organising event for raising awareness on stereotypes
  - Discussion on Black Pete figure and city response to this debate
  - First Amsterdam event for EU arrivals - 17 February - how to get to know EU migrants and welcome them / informing of services that can be offered as cities - get to know city and rights
  - Preparing proposal on EU-mobility and access to labour market with short deadline. Interested cities contact Semra Celebi.
- The discussion on the 'black Pete' figure was suggested as a relevant point of departure to address how cities can position minority rights in a debate on national traditions

### Barcelona:

- Important national legislative changes are having an impact on migrant and even overall social inclusion (for example restrictions to universal access to healthcare)
- 20% Unemployment rate is having an impact on the social fabric of the city
- The city of Barcelona is helping people navigate through new system and providing basic assistance to most vulnerable such as undocumented migrants from sub-Saharan Africa
- The city is also advocating for transparent management of detention centres to avoid any human rights violations
- Mayor of Barcelona participated at High-level policy dialogue on migration and development at the UN in October 2013. He proposed global mayoral forum to address migration and development. As a follow up, Barcelona will organise such an event and mayors will receive invitation from Barcelona to participate in this closed meeting organised alongside IOM and other UN agencies. The expected result will be a strong statement from mayors on this topic.

### Ghent:

- In may there will be federal and regional and European elections in Belgium.
- There will be 2 organisational reforms affecting integration in the city:
  - One has to do with the provision of services by NGOs which will merge into one to be subcontracted by the city to provide civic integration, language and integration services.
  - The other is a reorganisation of the city administration. The integration office will cease to exist in its current format and a new approach on mainstreaming integration and equal opportunities will be taken forward
- The city is working on an action plan against discrimination in the housing market and is seeking examples from other cities.

### Helsinki:

- There have been structural changes to the administration. The immigration unit has been integrated in the labour and business development department.
- The city is working on the diversity strand of its new 2013-2016 city strategy. This will be finalised in march
- Another major focus for the city is employment, under the context of 11% unemployment rate in the city
  - The city is working on youth guarantee - providing internship with city administration and also on migrant employability
  - The city is also monitoring HR policies. A recent survey showed that the city has employed 6% non-Swedish or Finnish speakers which is an improvement from the past
  - Retention of university students has also become a priority
- 4 mayors of metropolitan region reached an agreement to receive Syrian refugees. A draft implementation paper on reception will be drafted with refocus on arrival of refugees
- Anu reported on the query sent out to working group members on placing 'integration' within labour/employment departments. Some cities reported back and positively on

this trend - the question was raised whether this was a generalised trend in Europe of moving integration into business or employment affairs. A summary of responses received to this query will be circulated to the working group.

#### **Munich:**

- local elections will take place next month - a new mayor will be elected
- the city will be reporting on implementation of intercultural policy on each priority area, including report on indicators
- There are about 22,000 migrants arriving in the city per year. The group is very mixed.
- There is a positive outlook that based on a recent survey, attitudes towards migrants are becoming more positive among people living in the city, with a notable exception of rising hostility towards migrants from Romania and Bulgaria (for various reasons including perceptions, visibility and media)
- As such there is a fear of a calling effect by giving shelter to migrants in winter.
- There are also 40 to 50 people a week to be accommodated who are seeking asylum in a context of housing shortage which is a challenge for the city.

#### **Nantes:**

- There will be municipal elections in March in France
- There are two national reforms to take place on asylum and residence effective from 2015. The national integration law reform will link to local actions
- The city is continuing its training session for newcomers and has published a new guide for foreigners - there has been high uptake of this guide and it will be reprinted
- The city is also piloting phone translation services in migrant languages for front-line service providers
- The city together with migrants council is addressing the issue of elderly migrants and produced a booklet on migrants on access to services for the elderly
- The city is also contributing to a national museum of immigration initiative on migration memory
- As part of its commitment to the diversity label, the city and its services are being audited.
- The city is together with Lyon working on a diversity in procurement initiative

#### **Oslo:**

- Integration is now within business and culture department
- OXLO business charter was launched last year - 35 partners have signed up to implementing this partnership approach. Among the actions are breakfast meetings on topics hosted by city 5 times per year - first topic was report on research of providing Norwegian language education (migrants from Europe do not have access to free language courses)
- The city is working on implementation of integrating cities charter and is making a guide on providing equal services to all - distributed to be distributed to departments and agencies (staff development)
- A group in the city will be tackling hate speech and monitor internet activity
- The city is part of Open Society Foundations' research on Somalis and is looking to follow up on this research

- The city has commissioned research on perceived discrimination of Roma - this will be conducted by Rockwool foundation and include comparisons with other cities in Sweden and Denmark

#### **Rennes:**

- Working on implementing 2009 declared mission of fighting against discrimination. This work is done along three axis:
  - discrimination (positive action and capacity building, NGOs, projects)
  - citizen participation / neighbourhood actions - working on memory and history of immigration - migrant's council (open to all)
  - access to rights for migrants - legal expertise for individuals, language learning
- The city is interested in tools to develop local action in these fields and development of a wider strategy in this issue and how to interact between local and national policies (experiences from other cities)

#### **Riga:**

- new research as follow up on society integration in Riga - to report on results in next meeting
- last year municipal elections, autumn parliamentary elections
- Riga city advisory board on society integration issues - new representatives from 12 NGOs, politicians (11 city councillors) and city staff
- 25 September - sector support to NGOs 'NGO house' opened in Riga - former school building in one of the suburbs refurbished by the municipality, NGOs can use premises - 3500 users so far
- Latvian language courses continuing for free for residents - now other municipalities following lead and providing free courses
- 110,000 Euros in budget for courses in 2014 - 1300 users expected - popular
- First 'inhabitants forum' organised - representatives of NGOs, residents, voice opinions, provide suggestions and citizen initiatives

#### **Rotterdam:**

- There will be municipal elections in 4 weeks
- The city is working on mainstreaming integration policies - participation, diversity, citizenship, trying to keep it action-oriented
- Rotterdam can bring experience - has been through many phases of integration
- The city is becoming involved in practical initiatives such as the DELI project which links migration and labour market, UNITOR social media analytics tool on migrant integration (June/July final conference), ECCAR which will hold its next conference in April in Graz

#### **Stockholm:**

- Parliamentary, county and municipal elections will be held in Sweden in September
- EU migrants (most from the Roma ethnic minority) arriving in the city and living often in precarious conditions / camps are high on the political agenda and very visible in the media

- After the May riots the city is refocusing on suburbs and youth (unemployed and NEETs) - getting people back to school and work
- Speak more of 'inclusion' as opposed to 'integration' and addressing racist groups
- Women far away from labour market - difficult target group to reach. Project how to reach and get women closer to labour market
- Refugees from Syria - housing shortage, remain in asylum centres too long
- How to take care of unaccompanied minors - how to take responsibility across Sweden

#### Tampere:

- The city hosted two Important conferences in 2013 which proved to be a success (Metropolis and Integrating Cities)
- The city is in the process of renewing integration plan - by 1 May
- Research published in Finland on labour markets, had two relevant conclusions that the city is now looking into:
  - After 37, getting into labour market more difficult for migrants
  - Men have higher employment rates as newcomers but women have better development in work - this raises the question whether there should also be a look at migrant men in labour market
- The city is also advocating for support for migrant youth within the National youth guarantee programme
- City has agreed to take in 50 more Syrian refugees
- In March - Anti-racism week will focus on 'love' - positive framing of issue

#### Vienna:

- National elections took place last autumn. Integration affairs now located with foreign ministry
- There will be local elections in 2015
- Vienna wants to declare itself a human rights city
  - Change composition of the city to mirror the population (diversity): is compiling data on the composition of the work force of the city administration
  - Non-discrimination and equality as starting point
  - There will be a political declaration that Vienna declares itself a human rights city. Vienna is interested in hearing experiences of cities in this area.

#### Zurich:

- Christof Meier gave a quick update on the situation in Switzerland, with a focus on explaining the context of the referendum on EU migration.
- The city is undergoing an internal evaluation of integration measures
- There is an attempt to bring together different policies that address anti-discrimination work and develop a policy to address all related areas (such as gender, age, etc)
- A new city government is in place and some reorganisation may occur as a result
- Integration staff of the city visited Munich to share learning and experiences - this was a positive and recommended approach to other cities

- Working group members were asked to provide examples in the following areas to contribute to Zurich's reflection on these issues:
  - Experience on written translation of documents within city administration (into migrant languages)
  - Attitudes towards migrants from front-line city staff and how to provide support for their daily work
  - Getting immigrants involved in cultural institutions

## Integrating Cities:

### Integrating Cities Toolkits :

- A call for contribution was sent and answered by Migration & Integration Group members, ImpleMentoring partners but also cities outside of the group.
- The decision was taken and approved to merge toolkits C (civic participation) and D (political participation) in one Toolkit.
- The publication date will depend on the prolongation of the project but is currently foreseen for 15 of April.
- The Group is asked to provide an introduction for each toolkit. Thomas will get back on it soon, but the deadline for finalisation of texts should be 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

### ImpleMentoring update :

- Since last WG meeting, the visit in Athens took place on 17-18 October with the participation of the cities of Amsterdam as mentor and Helsinki (observer).
- Cluster meetings take place in Oslo, Manchester, Malmö and Genoa. Members are welcome to attend as observer and should contact Thomas if interested.
- Final ImpleMentoring Event will depend of commission approval but might be organised in June 2014. (Likely date 18 June). The group will be kept updated about developments. It should gather ImpleMentoring partners and constitute an opportunity for presenting the conclusions of the project.

### Integrating Cities Charter:

- Lisbon, Leipzig, Paris have signed the charter, joining Toulouse, Montpellier and Brussels for 2014 signatories.
- Toronto confirmed its intent to become a signatory. The Working Group does not oppose this move and is eager to collaborate.
- Future potential signatories include cities of Bergen, Lublin and Bilbao.
- Regarding the next monitoring report, given the publication of the Integrating Cities Toolkits this year, it was deemed that the second implementing report could be published in 2015.
- The secretariat will present a proposal for a method of collecting evidence and producing this report.

### Cooperation among city networks:

- Working group members suggested some points of clarification of the discussion paper ([WD7](#))
- It was agreed that the focus of this cooperation would be among city networks

(namely Intercultural Cities, ECCAR, EUROCITIES and Committee of the Regions) in the first instance and then other relevant networks of academia, etc.

- The proposed cooperation will be to:
  - Share information
  - Access documents
  - Invitation and contribution to mutual events
- An annual meeting of secretariats of these networks was suggested as a way to foster this cooperation
- The Secretariat will amend document based on suggestions and circulate among other city networks

#### Next meeting:

- Next meeting of the working group take place in Zurich on 30 September to 1 October 2014. An agenda will be drafted shortly taking suggestions from this meeting and working group members are welcome to contribute further suggestions for format and content.
- Working group members will be invited to participate in one of the city's 'welcome ceremony' for migrants that will take place in the Tuesday evening. For members arriving early, an informal programme on a topic of interest can be arranged on the Tuesday morning by Zurich.
- [Sarah Spencer](#) from COMPAS will be organising a meeting of cities in Barcelona in the autumn to discuss provision of services to undocumented migrants (based on a research she has conducted with funding from Open Society Foundations). Working group members will be provided more information as soon as this is available, including the report she has drafted as part of her research. Cities interested in participating in the event in the autumn can contact EUROCITIES secretariat.
- The upcoming [Social Affairs Forum meeting in Barcelona](#) (6-7 March) will include a workshop on the topic of migration as well as related site visits. Working group members were encouraged to attend.