



EURO
CITIES



TODOS - caminhada de culturas

EVERYBODY - a walk of cultures

TODOS is an annual festival hosted by the city of Lisbon. It is designed to promote cultural diversity and social cohesion, and build links with the local immigrant community. The event is focused around the Mouraria-Martim Moniz neighbourhood, which is home to immigrants mainly from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India and Pakistan, and has a reputation for crime, prostitution and drugs. Through the TODOS festival, Lisbon invites residents to explore the neighbourhood, meet the locals and experience their lifestyle and culture.

The festival began in 2009, and annual editions are planned until 2013. It costs the city around €260,000 every year and is financed jointly by the city and private sponsors. The city is also seeking funding from the European Fund for Integration of Third Country Nations.

Everyone's invited

The success of the festival depends on the participation of the immigrant community, who either host or take part in a number of events and classes designed to highlight their cultural heritage. Participants are also invited to visit local businesses, such as shops and hairdressers, to see what people's daily lives are really like.

Activities are supported by people and organisations in the wider Lisbon community. For example, Portuguese artists work with the immigrant community, the homeless, schoolchildren and young people to create theatrical and musical performances, and a local association helps young people to make videos

“TODOS is an outstanding festival where we work together, regardless of language, culture, society or mentality! It was an experience I'll never forget. Encouraging residents to join in the festival was the best idea, despite being very tough. The project really brought us closer together - it really was for 'todos'!”

Moin Uddin Ahamed, 26 years old, originally from Bangladesh

cities in action

July 2013

where: Lisbon, Portugal
what: culture, social affairs
when: 2009 - 2013

Examples of the activities on offer include:

- circus and theatre shows
- traditional music performances
- videos made by young people
- tours of local businesses
- demonstrations such as 'how to wear an Indian sari'
- storytelling sessions with elderly residents
- language classes in Creole, Hindi, Mandarin and Ukrainian, given by local schoolchildren
- discussions on how different cultures care for their children

Successful celebrations

The 2010 edition of TODOS attracted around 20,000 people, compared to 12,500 for the first festival in 2009.

As well as the local community, many public and private partners come together to make the event a success. These range from the Lisbon transport company to a museum and the Orthodox Catholic Church of Ukraine.

The project has resulted in several concrete improvements to the local area, as well as a general shift in attitudes.

Notable changes include:

- reduced crime rate
- less prejudice and mistrust of the immigrant community
- creation of a multicultural orchestra
- a new international market
- renovation of the run-down neighbourhood
- mayor's office moved into the neighbourhood
- installation of surveillance cameras
- a new employment centre and museum

- more self-confidence among the immigrant community

Building bridges

The festival's success is built on the cooperation of citizens from the immigrant and the Portuguese communities.

By creating new relationships and improving understanding between the different communities and cultures, the festival has helped the city to alleviate prejudice, crime and mistrust.

It is this cooperation that has delivered on Lisbon's goal of a more socially cohesive society.

Moving the mayor's office into the area is a real indication of the success TODOS has achieved by changing citizens' perceptions.



The TODOS - caminhada de culturas project was shortlisted for the EUROCITIES 2011 award in the participation category.



TODOS aims to revitalise the cultural city of Lisbon. It helps promote good relations between citizens within the neighbourhood and also with the wider city. By involving people from various backgrounds and generations, the festival creates emotional ties and builds mutual respect. By building bridges between neighbourhoods, we will gradually and gently confirm Lisbon's status as an intercultural city!

Miguel Abreu, Academia de Produtores Culturais

