



Migrant Integration at the Local Level

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This presentation

- Some reflections based on research published in 2020 on migrant (and refugee) integration in small and medium sized cities across Europe.
- Practical need to address the needs of migrants and refugees and to develop and implement integration programmes.



European Committee
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Integration of migrants
in middle and small cities and
in rural areas in Europe



Some General Observations

- Publics acknowledge the role
- Generally positive attitude (with a few exception)
- Migration seen as a solution to some of the issues cities (esp. small and medium sized cities) are facing
 - Addressing de-population and ensuring the viability of basic services
 - Increasing diversity
 - Public relations opportunity
- Left to address issues that the national level has failed to adequately address
- Further movement to bigger cities (greater diaspora communities, more employment opportunities) can be a concern. Temporary nature of stays and a desire to move away hinders efficacy of integration efforts.



Some areas to think about

- Inclusion in policy making
- Education
- Employment (including access, skills etc.)
- Housing
- Healthcare
- Social Services
- Language and Culture Knowledge
- Access to institutions (in theory and practice)
- Interaction
- Practice of culture, religion
- Overcoming discrimination
- Genuine involvement
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Sustainability



Measures Undertaken

- Great range of types of integration activities undertaken
 - Soft integration skills (interaction)
 - Language acquisition
 - Cultural competency
 - Employability skills



Overcoming Barriers

- Competence
- Capacity – financial, human – are often limited
- Partnerships with civil society (formal and informal)
- Partnerships with other cities, towns and villages

Networks

- Share Experience and Expertise (Practical Function)
- Build Coalitions (Symbolic) including on points of disagreement with the national level
- Direct and indirect participation (e.g. participation through networks); only cities or cities in partnership with others (e.g. NGOs)
- Many networks are limited (formally or in effect) to larger cities that have the resources to engage
- Informal collaboration have developed between small and medium sized cities
- The proliferation of networks and initiatives makes it very difficult for smaller cities to engage – resources.

‘[A] number of respondents lamented the proliferation of networks as leading to mixed messages and to a too-heavy appeal on the often-limited resources of network participants



Multi-Level Governance

- Greater coordination needed between different levels of government.
- Decisions by national governments do not always consider the needs and constraints of the local level even when making decisions that have a direct impact on the local level



Sustainability

- Monitoring, evaluation and sustainability remain limited
- More emphasis needed on mainstreaming these issues not as an add on but as a core component of projects and initiatives
- Project, programme, service



Advantages of Cities

- Adaptable to changing realities
- Opportunities to test new policy and programming approaches
 - Supported by reduction in institutional structured / barriers
 - Possibility to implement or test projects at a lower cost



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Thank you

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