

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions


The EU's Assembly of
Regional and Local Representatives



Subsidiarity Monitoring
Network

ACTION PLAN 2010 OF THE SUBSIDIARITY MONITORING NETWORK

ANALYSIS REPORT

**Integration of immigrants:
Integration of immigrants in urban areas**

Lead partner:

Parliament of Catalonia, Spain



PARLAMENT DE CATALUNYA

Integration of immigrants in urban areas

Key points

1. Background

Regardless of one's outlook on the subject matter, the integration of immigrants is an issue which requires political attention and action, primarily at the local level. However, it cannot be denied that local responses also require institutional coordination and support at the national and European levels. In the spirit of the subsidiarity principle and applying the notions of multilevel governance, it can be argued that optimal results at the level closest to the citizen cannot be achieved without the involvement of actors at the national and European levels, each within their own respective spheres of competence.

The principle of subsidiarity is all the more relevant here in that the EU is now equipped with an explicit legal basis for assuming a role in supporting and encouraging efforts to promote the integration of legal migrants, excluding any harmonisation of national laws and regulations. Various actions have been undertaken at European level, most recently within the framework of the Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme. The European Commission is now preparing a Second European Agenda for integration, to which the CoR is contributing through a consultation.

The purpose of the working group on "Integration of Immigrants in Urban Areas" organised within the framework of the 1st Action Plan of the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network (SMN) was to foster a dialogue between the group's participants on the best ways to implement integration policies at the local, and especially urban, level. The goal of this dialogue was to identify and present best practices of local (especially urban) and regional policies in the integration of immigrants and thus to highlight the indispensable contribution of these levels to this goal.

2. Group Members and their best practices

The Working Group was led by the Catalan Parliament (Spain) and included the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (Finland) and the Municipality of Patras (Greece). The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) participated in the launch meeting on 28 May 2010 and remained informed of progress throughout the process.

Best practices were presented along the following themes:

- **Proactive local registration policy:** Catalonia
- **Reception services:** NEO Project in Helsinki, Multilingual information and guidance services for immigrants in Tampere, Catalonia
- **Intercultural skills:** "People Acting Towards Respect and Solidarity", Patras
- **Access to work:** Helsinki, Catalonia
- **Strategic planning:** National Agreement on Immigration, Catalonia

3. Conclusions and recommendations

The following topics and recommendations were identified:

- **Decision-making process:** Participation of stakeholders, particularly civil society organisations, and governance are the keys to success in the planning, development and promotion stages. Frequently, stakeholders are in the front line of social and welfare intervention. This strategic position builds specific knowledge which is becoming essential to policymaking.
- **Institutional and structural framework:** Strategic planning is absolutely necessary to manage all public policies, especially integration policies that need to be implemented with a sustainable long-term perspective. Furthermore, integration policies need long-term institutional structures to support short-, mid- and long-term policies.
- **Data collection:** The CoR must stimulate surveys and comparative research on various aspects of immigration, with a focus on assessing public administrations. In particular:
 - The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) should provide information from local and regional authorities;
 - Local and regional authorities should agree on basic data to provide to MIPEX;
 - Proactive registration services should provide full data on the real population.
- **Reception and integration:** Integration of immigrants requires political attention and action from the very beginning of the immigration project. Integration should be seen as a two-directional, dynamic and continual process between the different peoples residing in a territory. As a first step in this process, reception services (including language training and introductory courses on the host society and work) need to be developed to ensure immigrants' autonomy. In addition, although there are many, varied keys to integration, the goal has to be social cohesion and the collective construction of a shared society, through promoting equal opportunities to access public services and participate in all levels of politics or through the recognition of diversity.
- **Funding of initiatives:** Integration policies need to be budgeted for in the short-, medium- and long-term.

In the context of the preparation of the European Commission's Communication on a Second EU Agenda for Integration, it could be interesting to pursue the work on one of the indicative areas proposed for the European Integration Modules, i.e. (i) introductory and language courses, (ii) strong commitment by the host society and (iii) active participation of immigrants in all aspects of collective life.

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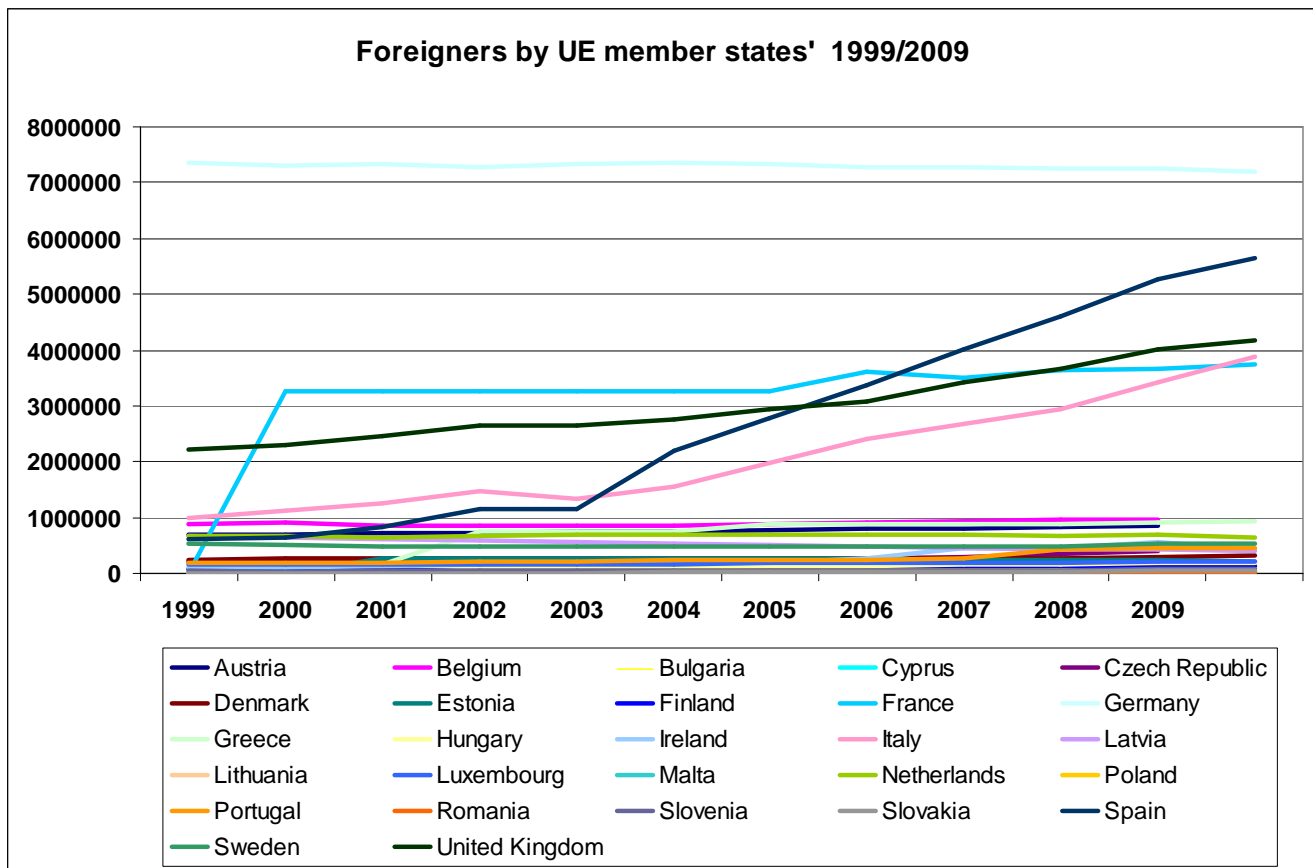
1. Group members

- Catalan Parliament, Spain (lead partner)
- Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, Finland
- Municipality of Patras, Greece

2. Integration of immigrants in Europe. State of play

2.1 Immigration and integration of migrants in today's Europe

During the last decades, Europe has received different immigration processes. For different reasons in different countries and in different periods, most European Union countries have become countries of immigration.

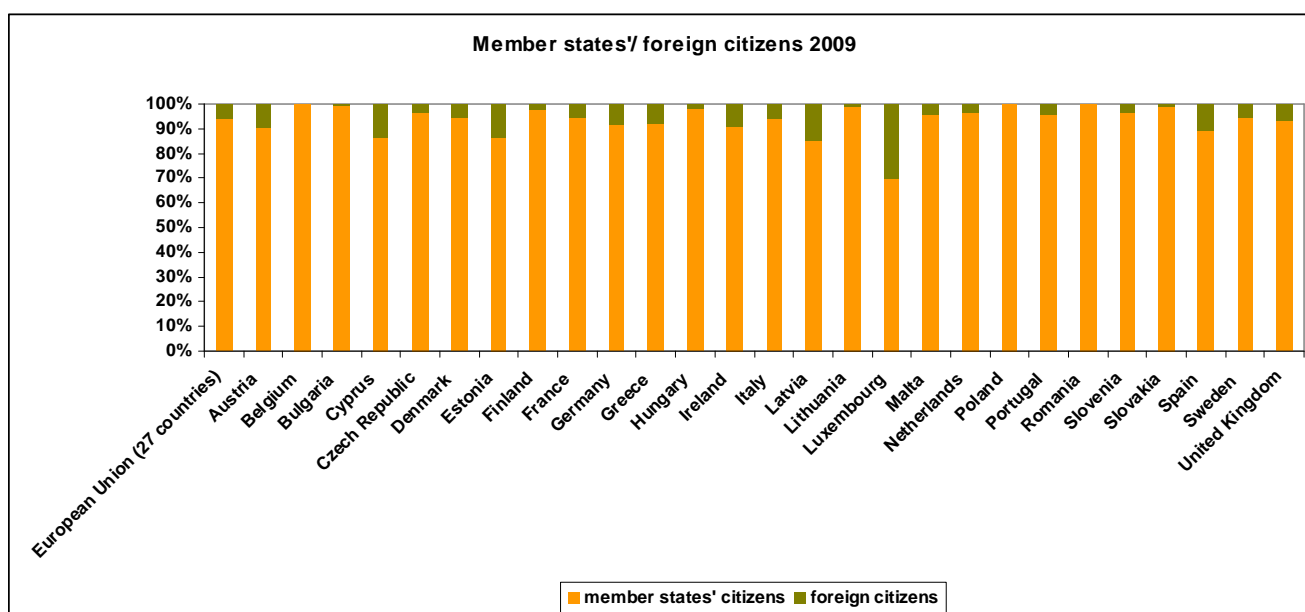


[Source: Eurostat]

Whether immigration is more or less intense or if its causes are demographic, economic (labour force demand) or humanitarian (asylum of refugees), immigration is now a reality in Europe. These dynamics are not only a past issue but a present one and, for the foreseeable future, will remain an issue for Europe.

This reality, a new one in some countries or regions, has given rise to new public policies: not only border policies but those implemented far away from borders, reception policies, integration policies, equality policies or policies against racism and xenophobia. Moreover, these policies have been developed at all levels of governance – local and regional, since it is the spheres where migrants' concrete demand on public services have to be dealt with; central, since immigration policies are a direct expression of national sovereignty; and European, as some dimensions of immigration issues have to be coordinated and regulated at sub-national level.

Concerning integration in particular, in today's Europe, integration of third-country immigrants legally present in the Member States is a challenge facing above all the cities. Cities and regions have responded to this situation in various ways, taking into account the traditions, realities and limitations of the local societies, administrations and economies. Nevertheless, the challenges faced by the immigrant populations are similar and so need responses on behalf of the authorities – municipalities, regions, towns and cities being at the first line of response.



[Source: Eurostat]

Integration is a two-way, dynamic and open-ended process between people who live in a territory, those arrived recently or native-born people.

Integration has a double meaning depending on how one looks at it: for the immigrants themselves integration is acquiring autonomy in the host societies; integration is synonymous with finding jobs and adequate housing, having access to health care and schooling for their children, getting used to new cultural and personal situations. For local societies integration is seen as a challenge for social cohesion, non-discrimination issues, participation of newcomers,

and accessibility to public services, especially social infrastructures or reception services' development.

Regardless of one's outlook on the subject matter, the integration of immigrants is an issue which requires political attention and action, primarily at the local level. However, it cannot be denied that the local responses necessitate a certain degree of institutional coordination and support at the national or European level. In the spirit of the subsidiarity principle and applying the notions of multilevel governance, it can be argued that optimal results at the level closest to the citizen cannot be achieved without the involvement of actors at the national and European levels, each within one's respective spheres of competence.

2.2 The legal and political context at the EU level

The Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, reserves an institutionalised role for the EU in the integration of immigrants in as much as, under Article 79 TFEU, the Union is equipped with an explicit legal base under which to assume a supportive and incentive role in promoting the integration of legal migrants. Article 79 TFEU, however, excludes any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States, which differentiates this area from other aspects of EU immigration policy.

This innovation of the Lisbon Treaty results from an evolution over the last twenty years. Up until Lisbon the EC and EU Treaties did not contain a legal basis pertaining to the integration of third-country immigrants. Nevertheless, it was felt that within the context of the Treaty provisions on immigration, introduced with the EU Treaty in Maastricht and gradually communitarised in Amsterdam and Nice, the nascent EU immigration policy would not be complete without an integration component.

This reality was underlined by the political commitment on behalf of the Member States in the European Council and by their support for the Tampere¹ and subsequent Hague² Programmes. On this basis the EU Council as early as 2004 adopted the Common Basic Principles on Integration Policy³, which aimed to identify the major elements of a Community immigration policy and consist of a political commitment on behalf of the Member States. The European Commission responded to the Common Principles inter alia by announcing a "Common Agenda for Integration" including a framework for the integration of third country nationals within the EU⁴.

Within this framework the Commission has compiled practical Handbooks on Integration for Policy Makers and Practitioners. Both the first edition in 2004 and the second one in 2007

¹ The Tampere Programme: Towards a Union of Freedom, Security and Justice, Presidency Conclusions, Tampere European Council, 15-16 October 1999.

² The Hague Programme: strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union (OJ C 53, 3.3.2005, p. 1) and Council and Commission Action Plan implementing the Hague Programme on strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union (OJ C 198, 12.8.2005, p. 1).

³ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf

aimed to foster the exchange of information and best practice, and highlight the role of local communities and authorities. The second edition focuses on some of the key issues developed in the Common Basic Principles presenting lessons learned in these areas: mainstreaming immigrant integration, housing in an urban environment, economic integration and integration governance and in fact mentions that local authorities can act as a source of inspiration for innovative projects or approaches, which can give rise to indicators or standards on integration if operated in a more structured way. The third edition was released in 2010.

In addition, since 2007 the EU has been equipped with a European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals⁵, which places at the disposal of the EU and the Member States a total of EUR 825 million for the period between 2007 and 2013. The objective of the Fund is to contribute to the Member States' efforts to develop and implement national integration policies enabling third country nationals to fulfil the conditions of residence and to achieve integration in local society along the lines contemplated by the Common Basic Principles. Member States are called on to work in partnership with local and regional authorities for the practical implementation of the multiannual programme.

The Stockholm Programme⁶ and the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum⁷ adds to the integration debate in that it envisages a dynamic immigration policy, where integration is an important component. Emphasis is placed on immigrants' rights in the host country with the eventual establishment of an immigration code being contemplated and a wide collection of cross-cutting activities aimed at facilitating the integration of legal immigrants in the host countries. A common reference framework could be developed along actions aimed at identifying joint practices and European modules aimed to facilitate integration. Language courses, access to employment and education, stronger participation in the social and political life of the host country or city and the promotion of intercultural dialogue would be the main elements. The need for the development of indicators for the monitoring of results of integration policy has also been highlighted⁸. Family unification is also deemed to be a component of the elements contributing to immigrants' integration.

The European Council has endorsed the Commission's view and has invited it to go forward. In particular, the Interministerial Conference on Integration held in Zaragoza (ES) on 15 and 16 April 2010 proposed to encourage implementation of reception services which will provide language, society and participation skills; to develop education systems that have to focus on integration, language skills and parents' participation in schools; to encourage immigrants' participation in civil society.

⁴ COM (2005) 389 final

⁵ Commission Decision 2007/435/EC

⁶ COM (2009) 262 final

⁷ COM (2008) 13440/08 ASIM 72

⁸ Some initial work on indicators has been already done and is accessible through the Migrant Integration Policy Index (<http://www.integrationindex.eu/>)

The European Commission issued a Communication on the Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme⁹ on 20 April 2010, which contains more specific initiatives to be followed up.

In June 2010, the European Union Council pointed out¹⁰ that it is necessary to improve skills interchange, to establish common priorities, to expand integration indicators and to develop common integration contents.

At the date of drafting this report, the European Commission was preparing a Communication on the Second Agenda for integration, due to be released in June 2011.

2.3 The role of local and regional authorities¹¹ and the position of the Committee of the Regions

Although the European Union sets norms and policies at European level respecting the distribution of powers in each Member State, in the area of the policies of immigration and asylum, since the Treaty of Amsterdam, the EU legal and political framework insists on the participation of the local and regional authorities and the full exercise of their responsibilities towards third-country citizens.

Keeping in mind the Common Basic Principles of Integration, adopted by the European Council in 2004, the role of local authorities is crucial for the implementation of measures – in particular in light of their responsibilities, which directly impact on integration. The Common Basic Principles of Integration state that: "(...) policies and measures that include the question of the integration among the competences and levels of government and public services have to be taken duly into account in the elaboration and application of public measures". The need for collaborating or sharing responsibilities among all levels of government was expressed even before 2004, in the development of the Tampere agreements (1999)¹², through the Communication from the Commission entitled "On a Community immigration policy"¹³.

The challenge for municipalities, regions, towns and cities is to ensure that immigrants can play a full part in the local society: their contribution is crucial to the sustainability of the local economy, but they should also contribute to the construction of their host societies, as well as having equal access to public services and to the cultural reality.

Local authorities can play an important role in fostering intercultural dialogue within urban areas. This is an important facilitator of integration measures and can help forge closer ties between the immigrant and host communities. In addition, mastering the language of the host

⁹ COM(2010) 171 final

¹⁰ 10674/10 ASIM 72, 3 June 2010 and Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European and Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions COM(2010) 623 final Vol. II

¹¹ See Conclusions of the CoR Seminar on "The role of cities and regions in integrating immigrants", held in Athens, Greece, on 16 October 2008 (CdR 323/2008 fin)

¹² Op. cit., note 1.

¹³ COM(2000) 757 final, 22 November 2000)

locality is an indispensable tool facilitating immigrant integration, with many urban areas active in providing language lessons. Nevertheless, parallel efforts and resources should be devoted to the continuance of younger immigrants' education in their mother tongue, and – in any case – a respect for cultural traditions from the countries of origin should be ensured. Integration could also go as far as to allow immigrants to take an active part in local politics, under certain conditions.

In view of the above, the CoR has underlined the need to develop a coherent European immigration policy, which comprises integration in its elements. Europe's regions and cities stress the holistic approach to integration taking into account not only the economic and social aspects of integration but also issues relating to historical, cultural and religious diversity, citizenship, political rights and the civic engagement of migrants¹⁴. In this sense the CoR sees it as crucial for local and regional authorities to integrate immigrants and urges a strengthened participation of cities and regions in the setting out of annual and multiannual priorities of the European Integration Fund¹⁵.

In its most recent opinion on the Action Plan implementing the Stockholm Programme¹⁶, the CoR stressed again "the need for a European immigration and asylum policy that has been coordinated with local and regional authorities". It "would welcome the appointment of a European representative for migration, refugees and integration at the European Parliament to deal in particular with the specific problems encountered by third-country nationals. Overall, the CoR welcomed "the proposed measures to promote integration and, to that end, call[ed] for the CoR to be involved from an early stage in drafting the communication on an EU agenda for integration and in developing the proposed coordination mechanism.

In short, the CoR supports the basic principles underlying the EU's integration policies, as follows:

- the adoption of a genuine European immigration policy;
- the coordination of national, local and regional integration policies;
- the evaluation of integration policies;
- the management of economic immigration flows according to labour market needs;
- the inclusion of all stakeholders to ensure integration policies' governance.

Furthermore, the CoR¹⁷ pointed out some recommendations for the development of policies towards the integration of immigrants:

- the subsidiarity principle needs to be ensured for local and regional authorities are in the front line of integration policies;

¹⁴ Own-initiative opinion of the Committee of the Regions on *Local and regional authorities at the forefront of integration policies*, CdR 212/2008 fin

¹⁵ Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on *The Stockholm Programme: challenges and opportunities in view of a new multi-annual programme on the EU area of freedom, security and justice*, adopted on 7 October 2009, CdR 201/2009 fin.

¹⁶ Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on *Delivering an area of freedom, security and justice for Europe's citizens – Action Plan implementing the Stockholm Programme*, CdR 170/2010 fin

¹⁷ CdR 201/2009 fin, op. cit. footnote 15

- the cooperation with countries of origin and coordination between them and European Union's immigration policies needs to be developed;
- immigration and economic policies must fight illegal work and people trafficking;
- integration policies must pay attention not only to economic immigrants but to their families.

Best practices developed by regional and local authorities in the field of the integration of the immigrants are numerous. The European Commission has promoted platforms for collecting and publishing such best practices, since the 2003 European Council of Thessaloniki: the three Handbooks provide a good example about Integration (2004, 2007, 2010); and the European Integration Forum and the European Website of Integration¹⁸ update them constantly.

However, the articulation of competence between the various levels of governance has not been specifically studied yet in the field of integration, especially in the light of the new prerogatives derived from the Lisbon Treaty.

For these reasons, the **CoR Subsidiarity Monitoring Network thought it interesting to set up a working group on this issue. The Working Group on the Integration of Immigrants in Urban Areas** has now approved this document, which aims to identify experiences and best practices in the application of the subsidiarity principle in Europe's regions and cities.

Finally, at the time of drafting this report the CoR has launched a consultation, which is intended to take a closer look at the integration policies implemented at the local and regional level and the challenges faced by cities and regions in Europe. The consultation is also going to look at the legal and policy instruments put in place and aims to feed into the preparation for the upcoming Second European Agenda on Integration.

¹⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/>

3. Subsidiarity Reflections regarding the subject matter

3.1 Multilevel governance and subsidiarity principle with regard to integration policies

As a global phenomenon that impacts at the local level, immigration and the subsequent issue of the integration of migrants require a global approach which implies all levels of governance. Therefore, migration requires all public institutions within EU Member States to analyse whether their policies fit the new more complex and diverse reality, and how their action articulates with the other spheres of governance.

The **Committee of the Regions' Working Group on the integration of immigrants in urban areas** agrees that the demographic and social transformation that Europe is going through must never be a pretext to undermine public policies. There is a risk that the new reality derived from the population increase will lead to a weakening of the welfare state and a progressive erosion of social cohesion, among other reasons due to competition for scarce resources. We therefore deem it necessary to adapt policies and the welfare state, both in terms of their size and organisation, in order to guarantee continuity and improvements to the social-welfare state. To this aim, all spheres of governance have to work together.

In the view of the Committee of the Regions, multilevel governance is meant to be coordinated action by the European Union, the Member States and their local and regional authorities. It leads to responsibility being shared between the different tiers of government concerned and is underpinned by all sources of democratic legitimacy and the representative nature of the different players involved. By means of an integrated approach, it entails the joint participation of the different actors in the formulation of Community policies and legislation, with the aid of various mechanisms (consultation, territorial impact analyses, territorial pacts etc.). Therefore, multilevel governance is not simply a question of translating European or national objectives into local or regional action, but must also be understood as a process for integrating the objectives of local and regional authorities within the strategies of the European Union. Moreover, multilevel governance should reinforce and shape the responsibilities of local and regional authorities at national level.¹⁹

The implementation of multilevel governance depends on respect for the principle of subsidiarity. The principle of subsidiarity has been reinforced in the EU institutional framework by the Lisbon Treaty and is designed to ensure that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen by the most appropriate level where the intended objective(s) can be most effectively achieved.

¹⁹ Committee of the Regions' White Paper on multilevel governance, CdR 89/2009

Under the principle of subsidiarity, according to Article 5(3) of the Treaty on European Union, “in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at central or at regional and local level, but can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action be better achieved at Union level.” Respect for the principle of subsidiarity and multilevel governance are indissociable: one indicates the responsibilities of the different tiers of government, whilst the other emphasises their interaction.

Consequently, the subsidiarity principle, understood as the articulation of shared competences and provision of different services by the closest administration to the citizen and, if not, by the upper administration levels, must guide reception and integration policies.

3.2 Articulation between the various spheres of governance

3.2.1 Catalonia/Spain

In Spain, competences on immigration policies at state, regional and local governments are diverse, reflecting relations between the different levels of governance. Furthermore, the development of immigration policies at the state level can overshadow the very early ones that take place in regional and local levels. Foreign policies (asylum, nationality, passports, borders and aliens) are the sole responsibility of the central state parliament and government. Autonomous communities (Catalonia among them) have established responsibility for integration policies. Catalonia, until approval in 2006 of a new version of its Statute of Autonomy, claimed more executive powers, including reception, integration and first work permit policies that were confirmed in a common-shared long-term vision of immigration management: Catalonia’s National Agreement on Immigration, signed on 19 December 2008.

The Government of Catalonia’s first actions in relation to migration were performed in the late nineteen eighties. Shortly afterwards, in 1992, the Inter-Departmental Commission for Monitoring and Coordinating Actions on Immigration Matters was set up, in agreement with the Government of Catalonia. This commission produced the 1st Inter-Departmental Immigration Programme (1993-2000). In 2001, during the beginning of the ten-year period of immigration increase, the 2nd Inter-Departmental Immigration Programme (2001-2004) was passed, which defined the Catalan way of integration, by balancing respect for diversity and the feeling of belonging to a single community. The 2005-2008 Citizenship Programme was a qualitative leap forward in terms of designing transversal policies in immigration matters, as it structured its actions through acceptance, equality and housing policies, and recognised the principle of resident citizenship (which allows residents, regardless of their administrative situation, to access services).

From a comparative policies perspective, entry in the job market by migrant persons with a work permit for Spain is clearly greater than that of the other OECD countries. The situation regarding labour-market rights and the conditions on access to permanent residence permits for persons with temporary authorisations are also valued positively. On the other hand, the Spanish central government's migration policies are deemed more restrictive in relation to family reunification, the right to both seek and attain employment, democratic participation and access to Spanish nationality. However, the main deficit of national immigration policies has been the difficulties in keeping real migratory flows within the limits envisaged for regular migration. As a result, frequently extraordinary regularisation processes have been turned to, as mechanisms to adapt legality to reality, as has the social-rooting procedure included in legislation.

3.2.2 Finland

Immigration and the challenges that it brings with it have surged vigorously into the discourse in Finnish society. Finland's objective with respect to immigration is to develop an active, comprehensive and consistent policy that takes full account of both labour requirements and the many kinds of starting points from which immigrants arrive and international obligations. The outlines of immigration policy were defined in the Immigration Policy Programme adopted by the Government of Finland on 19.10.2006.

Responsibilities of the state in immigration policy

Integration must be promoted on all levels of administration, and it is the responsibility of all authorities. The needs of the immigrant population must be taken into account on local, regional as well as national levels, across all sectors and in the provision of all public services. In addition, special actions such as language and integration training are needed to support integration.

Nationality and alien affairs are the responsibility of the Finnish state. The state also grants visas, passports and asylum. Immigration affairs have been centralised under the Ministry of the Interior, which thus has general responsibility for the development, direction, monitoring and coordination of integration.

The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) promote regional development by implementing public state administration tasks in the regions. The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment are in charge of duties in the field of immigration, integration and good ethnic relations, among others. They attend to the practical arrangements and organise the relevant services assigned by the Ministry of the Interior. Immigration-related tasks include: issuing regional guidelines concerning work permits for the foreign workforce, tasks related to the integration of immigrants, providing guidance and advice for immigrants who establish businesses, promoting ethnic equality and non-discrimination, and providing information on the European Refugee Fund (ERF).

The Employment and Economic Development Offices (TE Offices) are local government authorities which operate under the ELY Centres. They are in charge of e.g. developing the integration of immigrants. The Act on the Integration of Immigrants states that the Employment and Economic Development Offices have the main responsibility for the integration of immigrants registered as job seekers. They are responsible, jointly with the respective Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres), for the provision of labour market services promoting and supporting the integration of immigrants as well as the education for immigrants registered as job seekers.

Immigrant advisers in Employment and Economic Development Offices and in local authorities support immigrants and their families in obtaining the necessary information and acquiring the skills to cope in society and at work. A profession or qualification gained elsewhere can be made to meet the requirements of Finnish employment regulations through further training or by recognising existing qualifications.

Immigration from the perspective of Finnish municipalities and cities

Looked at from the perspective of municipalities and cities, immigration is important irrespective of whether it is employment-related or based on humanitarian grounds. The number of people who have moved to Finland to take employment is greater now than it has ever been in the past. The importance of economic immigration will increase also due to the tightening competition for competent labour that can be expected in all sectors of the labour market both in Finland and the other EU countries as the population ages.

Rapid growth in the number of non-nationals is focusing new expectations on municipalities and cities. They must have an effective capability to support the integration of immigrants and develop their own services. Responding to the service needs of new residents who have arrived through humanitarian immigration programmes is a major challenge for municipalities and cities, but also other immigrants use and need municipal services. The individual needs of immigrants must be taken into consideration in the services that municipalities provide. Preserving good relations between population groups and promoting multiculturalism on the local level likewise pose a challenge.

Under the Act on the Integration of Immigrants of 1999, a municipality or city bears general and coordination responsibility for the development, planning and monitoring of immigrants' integration into their new home society. The Act emphasises the importance of cooperation between a municipality and the state labour authorities in the integration of immigrants. The Integration Act requires cooperation also with NGOs, which have their own role in the arrangement of complementary services to aid integration.

To promote and support integration of immigrants, municipalities and cities draft an integration plan, which also includes encouraging ethnic equality and good ethnic relations and preventing discrimination. The objective is that integration programmes become an integral part of the

municipality's other strategic planning. Regional cooperation is one instrument in the development of refugee reception and integration of immigrants. Immigration strategies for entire regions have been devised in some parts of the country.

It is in municipal services that the meeting of different cultures assumes concrete form. Immigration affairs touch on all of a municipality's service sectors. The service needs of immigrants must be examined as a totality, the contents of which include education, social affairs and health care, housing and supporting employment.

Humanitarian immigration

In Finland it is the state that bears the principal responsibility for refugee policy. On the basis of a recommendation by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Finland accepts 750 quota refugees each year. In addition, Finland can grant an asylum seeker either asylum or a residence permit on the ground of international protection or another of the grounds specified in the Aliens Act. Members of the families of the aforementioned persons, who come to Finland through the family unification procedure, constitute a large group. In addition, Ingrian Finns, whose ethnic roots are Finnish and who are classed as returnees, have moved to Finland from the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Municipalities that wish to do so can accept refugees or asylum seekers who have received residence permits. These refugees are received on the basis of agreements with the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. Municipalities can receive compensation from the state to offset the costs incurred in receiving refugees.

3.2.3 Greece

There exist three levels of governance in Greece i.e. central-national, regional and local (municipalities). The development of immigration policy is a responsibility of the central government at the national level. Therefore, this policy overshadows the various initiatives (if any) that take place at regional and local levels. Foreign policies (asylum, nationality, passports, borders and aliens) are the sole responsibility of the National Parliament and Government.

In Greece the policy of migrants' integration concerns all migrants and members of their families who are present in the country in the framework of family unification as well as recognised refugees and recipients of international protection. As a matter of priority immigrants whose work is not "seasonal" are concerned by the law. The Greek law provides that Integrated Action Plans are drawn up concerning integration measures for the whole territory. These Action Plans follow the common basic principles of integration and are drawn up by the Ministry of the Interior along with the other co-responsible ministries. The Integrated

Action Plans are supplemented by Special Programmes concerning more specific fields of integration such as education, language learning, access to the labour market etc²⁰.

For the coordination of immigration policy in Greece an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration Policy consisting of the Ministers of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation, Economy and Finance, Foreign Affairs, National Defence, Labour and Social Protection, Justice, Public Order and Mercantile Marine has been established at the national level. This committee is inter alia responsible for the drawing up and the implementation of the integrated action plans [see Art. 3 of Law 3386/2005]. The inter-ministerial committee is assisted by the Special Committee on Migrants' Integration, where a wide range of state actors, social partners, civil society and religious entities are represented. Local and regional authorities are also present through two representatives of the Union of Greek Municipalities and the Union of Greek Prefectures respectively [see Art. 1 of Law 3536/2007].

The recent law on administrative reform ("*Kallikrates*") provides for the setting up of Migrants' Integration Councils at the level of every municipality [see Art 78 of Law 3582/2010]. These are consultative bodies, where municipal councillors, representatives of the local migrants' communities and representatives of local social institutions which focus their action on the immigrants' problems are members. They advise the mayors and the municipal councils on a wide range of issues concerning the local immigrants' communities aiming at integrating immigrants in the local society in an effective way. It is to be noted that the law obliges the non-Greek elected municipal councillors to become members of such councils.

Finally, the 2010 Law on Citizenship [Law 3838/2010] makes the obtaining of Greek citizenship easier for second and third generation migrants. The same law also provides that legally residing third-country nationals shall have the right to participate in municipal elections [both the right to vote and the right to be elected]. However, the same law has very recently been held unconstitutional by the Fourth Department of the Hellenic Council of State as regards the facility to obtain Greek citizenship given to second and third generation migrants. The matter remains to be decided upon by the Supreme Chamber.

Greece faces a uniquely difficult situation. There are high numbers of both legal and irregular migrants within the country's territory. Due to the volatile situation in the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa, as well as to the sea borders which are difficult to monitor, numerous immigrants illegally cross the borders of Greece wishing to bypass the country and search for a better life in western and central Europe. This has caused new difficult circumstances being faced by various Greek cities (including Patras).

In addition, there exist migrants who are legal inhabitants of the cities and who have been living in the country, making their own families, etc. Within this concept there already exists a mixture of populations in various Greek cities, towns and villages which lend the places an intercultural

²⁰ see Articles 65 and 66 of Law 3386/2005

character. Emphasis is put on interculturalism to be treated as a potential for growth and not as a threat. However, it is also true that there are two main issues making the implementation of a strategic plan about intercultural policies difficult at local level:

- The centralised system of finance and governance in Greece leaving the municipalities little to do
- The rising uncertainty and unemployment rate due to the financial crisis.

To be sure, national government still articulate broad policy frameworks. They also put in place national administrative and institutional structures, and engage in international dialogue and cooperation etc. So, whether local actors imitate or emulate these visions, aims, regulatory frameworks and structures, or offer alternatives to them that engage more creatively with the global, national level policy-making remains a key point of reference. In other words, 'local' policy-making -- the tools that it employs and the relations between different kinds of public intervention at the local level -- cannot be analysed in isolation from the national level. These phenomena must be explored in ways that encompass the new kinds of interactions between the various levels of governance.

3.3 Role of local and regional authorities

As indicated earlier, immigration policies are defined at central level, however implementation and the reality of integration takes place at local and regional level. In this context, local and regional authorities must be represented and involved in the decision-making process at central level, to promote the decision-making process at a regional level. Furthermore, integration policies must be included in legislation and in public budgets to ensure the institutional and structural framework that guarantees funding of initiatives.

A dialogue must be maintained between the central and regional /local level. First of all, because of decisions taken close to the citizen and, furthermore, because local and regional institutions respond to a better knowledge of societies. Secondly: because strategies developed at a regional and local level ensure the contact to individuals, who are the key to social changes. Third: because civil society, one of the public policies' stakeholders, is rooted in a territory. Among these and other causes, policies developed by local and regional policies are more effective.

Integration policies are diverse: including reception, integration, ranging from social and cooperation policies to development policies, not only foreign ones. Therefore, local and regional authorities must be involved in planning and development.

In the definition and implementation of integration policies, equally important to service and policy content (the *what*) are organisational and operational angles (the *how*.) The context in which these policies and services take concrete form is characterized by concurrence between different levels of governance (related to the different territorial areas) and also the diversity of agents of social and private initiatives that provide some of these services through delegation by

the authorities. The multiplicity of institutional and particularly social actors is an expression of the pluralism that characterises European society. Any counterbalancing to this context requires clearly defining and delimiting responsibilities, incorporating inter-institutional or multi-level cooperation and also boosting local networks integrating the different agents that operate in a territory. And, first of all, it requires a common goal for all actors.

For these reasons, coordination and articulation between diverse spheres of governance must be a priority at all levels which follows these approaches:

- *Coordination EU – EU members:*
 - By providing a common legislation on immigration issues, to coordinate action plans among EU members.
 - By providing funding for reception and integration planning.
 - By assuring equal access to public services to ensure equal opportunities to all the inhabitants of a country.
- *Coordination EU – EU members – EU Regions:*
 - To assure collaboration, coordination and articulation in integration policies.
- *Coordination EU Regions:*
 - To assure collaboration and coordination in integration policies.
- *Coordination Central – Regional Government:*
 - By providing real data on non-nationals to assure real public services' planning.
 - By providing data on foreign people to assure their participation in reception programs.
 - By providing funding for integration plans.
 - By assuring equal access to public services to ensure equal opportunities to all the inhabitants of a country.
- *Coordination Regional Government – City Councils:*
 - By providing action plans and funding for reception and integration programs.
- *Coordination Central – Regional Government – City Councils:*
 - By providing real data on foreign people to assure real public services' planning.
 - To assure collaboration and coordination in integration policies.

A particularly interesting tool for designing, agreeing and implementing integration policies in a spirit of partnership and multilevel governance are territorial pacts. These contractual agreements bringing together all levels of governance concerned provide a versatile framework to implement integration policies, with due regard to each Member State's constitutional arrangements, the distribution of competences, the subsidiarity and proportionality principles. In addition, such arrangements allow the definition of some common and shared goals, while they also permit the use of tailored monitoring instruments. These can possibly involve a wide range of indicators, which could go beyond traditional GDP- based data.

4. Best practices

The **Catalan projects** "National Agreement on Immigration", "proactive local registration policy", "reception services" are based on the following criteria: such a global change with regional and local impact must be managed at a local level; for this reason, decision-making processes must be taken not only at an EU and Member State level, but at a bottom-up level, including regional and local governments and, furthermore, stakeholders.

The **Finnish and Catalan "Reception Services" projects** are based on the principle that reception and guidance services support immigrants during their initial time in their host country in integrating faster and better.

The **Patras project** (People Acting Towards Respect And Solidarity) is based on managing diversity as a key challenge to the future.

The **Finnish and Catalan "access to work" projects** are based on assuring equal access to public services to ensure equal opportunities to all the inhabitants of a country, especially in the labour market field, one of the keys to integration.

4.1 Proactive Local registration Policy: Catalonia

1. Background information

Catalonia's municipalities and Spain as a whole have two different ways of registering population: census and *padró*.

- The census is a statistical count of people and their socio-demographic characteristics that is carried out every 10 years. It has to count every person, both Spanish citizens and foreigners with regular as well as non-regular status.
- *Padró* is an administrative register of every person living in a municipality. The registration in the *padró* is necessary in order to have access to education, health and basic social services. The register is continually updated and every year, on 1 January, the register provides the number of the inhabitants in the municipality. It has to include all persons, both Spanish citizens and foreigners with regular and non-regular status.

2. Objectives of the project/policy initiative

- A proactive local registration policy (*padró*) provides information to public administrations about all the inhabitants of a municipality.
- It helps plan public services.
- It provides useful information about population: flows, age, gender, country of origin, place of settlement.

3. Description of the project/policy initiative

- It is obligatory: for the people to be registered in; for the council to register.
- Registration can be made with an ID or passport.
- Every city council has a registration service which provides an accreditation document to all the people living in a town.
- This document is useful to have as a health card, to have access to the education system (for children under 18) and to have access to basic social services.
- Local authorities do not provide information about non-regular immigrants to the police unless it is required by a judge.

4. Role for the local or regional authority

- Managing information
- Identity accreditation

5. Resources

- City councils

6. Management:

- City councils

7. Obstacles

- During the last months some municipalities have debated the question of providing information about irregular immigrants to police in order to regulate immigration flows.

8. Results and achievements

Real population data is available every six months (1 January, and 1 July). Official data are those from 1 January: <http://www.idescat.cat/en/>

9. Keys to success

State funding of local administrations depends, amongst other factors, on the number of inhabitants living in a town. This is one of the reasons why city councils are interested in registering all the population living in a city; because the quality of public services provided by city councils depends on the *padró*.

4.2 Reception Services: NEO project, Tampere, Catalonia

1. Background information

Reception and guidance services determine the managing of immigration policies, as they support immigrants during their initial time in their host country in integrating faster and better.

1.1. Helsinki: NEO Project

The NEO Project (Improving Greater Helsinki Area Immigrant Services) is a collaboration of three Helsinki Metropolitan Area municipalities: Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo. It develops the cities' immigrant services, aiming to facilitate foreign nationals' moving and settling in Finland.

1.2. Tampere: Multilingual information and guidance services for immigrants

The City of Tampere offers multilingual information and guidance services for immigrants in Tampere city centre; over 130 languages are spoken in the area.

1.3. Catalonia

Catalunya has experienced a demographic transformation during the last few years (2002-2010). A huge change, but not a new one as during the 20th century alone a phenomenon like this has happened at least three times. In the last decade, rates of foreign people living in Catalonia have increased from 2% to 16%.

At the end of this decade, the Catalonia Government approved the Reception Law, the first such one in Southern Europe.

2. Objectives of the project/policy initiative

2.1. NEO project:

- It develops the cities' immigrant services, aiming to facilitate foreign nationals' moving and settling in Finland.
- To describe and clarify the tasks and functions of different actors in the personal immigrant guidance work.
- To define, together with staff, good guidance practices.
- To provide staff with the necessary skills and tools that they need to give the best possible advice and counselling.
- To make the Metropolitan Area's service systems as consistent as possible.

2.2. Tampere

- To provide immigrants with an advice centre to which they can turn to with any type of problem. The customers have a low threshold to seek out the services, since they can speak their own language and there is no need to book an appointment beforehand.

2.3. Catalonia

- To develop a universal, standardised and homogenous reception service across the territory.
- To promote the normalisation and autonomy of migrants, while reducing uncertainty and informing about social and cultural contexts, existing rights and duties and access to basic services, as well as contributing to training and educating people who arrive in Catalonia.

3. Description of the project/policy initiative

3.1. NEO project:

- NEO organises workshops and training for advisors and builds various guidance models in cooperation with supervisors and employees. The project is implemented in collaboration with the Helsinki area authorities, companies and organisations. In 2010, NEO's subprojects organised workshops and seminars for employees. Staff from different guidance centres exchanged ideas and experiences on how to further develop and improve the services.
- Four subprojects: NEO - Espoo, NEO - Vantaa, NEO - Otaniemi and NEO - Helsinki.
- By combining resources, ideas and innovations, the NEO project hopes to achieve better results more cost-efficiently.

3.2. Tampere

- To guide the client in a way that he or she is involved in the process. Information is sought with the client, not on their behalf. Thereby clients learn to handle the matter on their own in the future, and become more independent.
- To provide assistance in a total of 16 different languages by eight advisers on questions relating to social services, work, health and family matters.

3.3. Catalonia

- Reception services training:
 - Social and cultural contexts (10 hours).
 - Catalan language classes (135 hours)
 - Job market (10 hours).

4. Role for the local or regional authority

4.1. NEO project

- It collaborates with citizen's offices in Espoo and Vantaa, multicultural activity centres in Espoo, the immigrant advice centre in Helsinki as well as the Otaniemi International Network, OIT.
- Close cooperators include the Ministry of the Interior's ESF support structure projects, the Support Project for economic migration in the Uudenmaa region

(INSITE) as well as the Regional Cohesion and Competitiveness Programme for the Greater Helsinki Area.

4.2. Tampere

- The City of Tampere is responsible for management and coordination.

4.3. Catalonia

- Regional authority: Leadership, funding, coordination.
- Following the subsidiarity principle, municipalities provide reception services.

5. Resources

1.1. *NEO project*: Fostered by the European Social Fund, began in May 2009, and continues until December 2011.

1.2. *Tampere*: European Social Fund projects: TYÖMAA (Promotion of economic migration) and Regional Immigrant Client Work (ALMA).

1.3. *Catalonia*: Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalonia's Government)

6. Management

6.1. *NEO project*: Collaboration of three Helsinki Metropolitan Area municipalities: Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo

- NEO operates in partnership with Info Bank (Infopankki.fi), a multilingual web service targeted at immigrants living in Finland as well as the authorities providing them with public services. The site contains basic information, available in 15 languages, on everyday questions, including health care, social services, education, employment and links to other relevant websites.

6.2. *Tampere*:

- The City of Tampere provides management. There are eight advisers altogether. Project staff cooperates with training institutions and EURES.

6.3. *Catalonia*

- Reception services will be provided by municipalities. After a first interview with the "reception agent", reception training will be planned, depending on diverse factors: time of residence, language skills, academic level or social skills.
- Tools:
 - Web-based reception services (available in 10 languages)
 - Language classes
 - Public job service

7. Obstacles

7.1. NEO project

- Coordination can be challenging because so many authorities and institutions are involved.

7.2. Tampere:

7.3. Catalonia

- Lack of funding.
- Difficulties in planning because it is not possible to obtain information on immigrants from the Spanish state before their move to Catalonia.

8. Results and achievements

8.1. NEO project

- Workshops and seminars have been organised for employees. Staff working with immigrants have had the chance to exchange ideas and experiences. In Otaniemi, regular get-togethers and events have taken place.

8.2. Tampere

- A total of 865 events were organised in 2010.
- The most prominent languages being Russian, English, Finnish and Chinese.
- The majority of clients come from the Tampere area (76%) and 7% from elsewhere in the Pirkanmaa area. Moreover, dozens of customers from outside of Finland contact the centre every year. Typically, clients find out about the services from friends and acquaintances.

8.3. Catalonia

- Reception services have been developed for the last ten years by some municipalities and civil society. It has become a public policy since 2005 and since 2010 it is established by law.

9. Keys to success

9.1. NEO project

- Collaboration of different authorities
- By combining resources, ideas and innovations, the NEO project hopes to achieve better results more cost-efficiently.

9.2. Tampere

- Low-threshold service
- Cooperation with online InfoBank services
- Immigrants learn to find services on their own

9.3. Catalonia:

- In partnership with civil society and city councils (reception services are provided by city councils, who can collaborate with civil society organisations to provide them)
- Web-based reception services
http://www10.gencat.cat/WebAcollida/AppJava/ca/Seleccio_idioma.jsp

10. Potential for replication

1.1. *NEO project:*

Within the project, various guidance models are built in cooperation with supervisors and employees.

1.2. *Tampere:*

The advisors' objective is to guide the client in a way that he or she is involved in the process. Information is sought with the client, not on their behalf. Thereby clients learn to handle the matter on their own in the future, and become more independent. The guidance services are very important in all stages of immigration, as they support the client in integrating into a new society faster and better.

1.3. *Catalonia*

Reception services are a common public policy in some countries such as Belgium, Germany or France. In the context of reception countries like European ones, reception services should be the first step to ensure integration of immigrants and intercultural recognition of societies in the 21st century.

4.3 Intercultural skills: Patras, People Acting Towards Respect And Solidarity

1. Background information

As communities across Europe grow increasingly diverse, the way they manage diversity becomes a key challenge for the future. Successful cities and societies of the future will be intercultural: they will be capable of managing and exploring the potential of their cultural diversity to stimulate creativity and innovation and thus generate economic prosperity and a better quality of life. Diversity can be a resource for the development of a city if the public discourse, the city's institutions and processes, and the behaviour of people, take diversity positively into account.

2. Objectives of the project/policy initiative

Within this concept, the Council of Europe in cooperation with the European Commission launched the “Intercultural Cities” programme, formed by 11 cities, of which Patras is the only participating Greek city.

3. Description of the project/policy initiative

- Organisation of expert reviews, study visits, city-to-city mentoring, thematic workshops and public events supported them in this endeavour.
- During the pilot phase of the programme a strong network was established which now aims at sharing its expertise and experience with new cities and partners.
 - International conference “Media and Migrants: “Welcome or Farewell?”, Patras (27–29 November 2008).
 - Decisions of the city council related to the programme and its actions
 - Organisation of a local support group of partners (as described below within field no.4).
 - Participation in a trans-national meeting organised in Patras within the framework of “GRUNDTVIG II” EU programme implemented by the “Achaeco Institute” – this organisation participates in the local support group of Patras and shares valuable experience in the provision of services to migrants mostly related to language learning and familiarisation with Greek culture.
 - Participation through a speech and discussion in a trans-national meeting organised in Patras within the framework of “TIPS: T - learning to Improve Professional Skills for intercultural dialogue” (www.forcom.it/tipsproject) project, coordinated by the Hellenic Open University (21.9.2009).

4. Role for the local or regional authority

- The Municipality of Patras is the leading organisation of the initiative at a local level.
- Local support group of partners operating in the sectors of education (University of Patras, Technological Institute of Patras, EAP-Hellenic Open University, Achaeco Institute), media (ESIEPIN-Union of Editors of Daily Newspapers of Regions of Peloponnese- Epirus- Islands), active citizenship (Local Youth Council, Patras

Office of Volunteerism, ASTO-NGO, PROTASI-NGO) as well as students' associations (BEST, AEGEE). In this way, the organisation of actions in common was achieved by putting emphasis on the intercultural dimension.

5. Resources

The Council of Europe (CoE) covered the costs for the participation of one (or two) representatives of the city for their participation in study visits, conferences, etc. organised abroad for the benefit of exchanging know-how and co-financed the international media conference organised in Patras (27-29.11.2008, please refer to field no.3).

6. Management

- Coordinator through a programming agreement (please refer to field no.4).
- Core working team formed with executive staff members

7. Obstacles

- Data collection.
- Stakeholders' participation. This seems to take more time than expected but it will safeguard long lasting effects.
- The centralised system of finance and governance in Greece leaving the municipalities with little to do.
- The rising uncertainty and unemployment rate due to the financial crisis.
- The lack of funding from a regional or national source.

8. Results and achievements

Procedures in the implementation of this project are as important as pending results. Based on this rationale, the city has strategically decided to involve local social stakeholders in order to enhance a bottom up social intervention.

The activities were mainly related to networking, the collection of data and material, identification of resources:

- "Policy assessment grid".
- Conference materials' publication.
- Study visits.
- web-site <http://www.e-patras.gr/portal/web/common/home>.

9. Keys to success

- Patras has always been the gateway of Greece to the West. The city's modernity has emerged from the coexistence and encountering of differing cultures and mindsets throughout its long history.
- The Patras community values democracy very highly and the city's vision relies heavily on active citizenship so that all citizens are provided with equal

opportunities in employment, entertainment, recreation, leisure and cultural pursuits. In Patras we move one step beyond integration, trying to focus on what we can do together as diverse cultures in shared space, so as to create greater wellbeing and prosperity among all citizens and lay the foundations for the community of the future.

- Networking: the local support groups of organisations that are cooperating with the city of Patras within the framework of the “Intercultural Cities” programme share the same attitude and therefore provide multiple effects to all relevant actions. It is true that this strong local networking has been experienced in all meetings, both local and international ones.
- The efficiency of cooperation with the Council of Europe.

10. Potential for replication

The concept of the “Intercultural Cities” programme, the exchange of know-how and the platform for networking were extremely useful and reveal potential to be transferred through proper adjustment.

4.4 Access to work: Helsinki, Catalonia

1. Background information

1.1. Helsinki: EnterpriseHelsinki

EnterpriseHelsinki is a joint service centre for start-ups and would-be entrepreneurs in the Helsinki region that offers all the services needed on how to become an entrepreneur.

1.2. Catalonia: SARU

SARU is a government funded centre for facilitating the recognition of foreign academic qualifications for immigrants. Catalonia needs to go forward to improve its job market quality.

2. Objectives of the project/policy initiative

2.1. Helsinki

- To give immigrants access to entrepreneurship courses and business counselling free of charge. The business advisers of EnterpriseHelsinki have learned how to deal with diverse clients and have been involved in making the authorities aware of the importance of immigrant entrepreneurship for the Finnish economy, society and for the process of integration. About 35 % of all clients are immigrants.

2.2. Catalonia

- To promote, facilitate and accelerate the academic background of foreign people living in Catalonia, who have completed their studies in foreign universities.
- To promote mobility in job market.

3. Description of the project/policy initiative

3.1. Helsinki

- EnterpriseHelsinki, with its courses and business advisors for immigrants, is a very good centre of expertise on immigrant entrepreneurship in Helsinki and Finland.
- It has developed a special business counselling concept for immigrant entrepreneurs based on the assumption that immigrants sometimes need different approaches than locals:
 - Info sessions
 - Business counselling
 - Entrepreneurship course for immigrants
 - Evening courses for active entrepreneurs
 - Startup Acceleration
 - Incubator services

3.2. Catalonia

- To offer assessment about foreign academic recognition procedures.
- To contact universities in countries of origin to exchange information and to diffuse service.
- To offer orientation about circuits to facilitate academic recognition.
- To diffuse SARU and to network enterprises in order to encourage enterprises for job insertion.

4. Role for the local or regional authority

4.1. Helsinki

- EnterpriseHelsinki is a part of the City of Helsinki's Economic and Planning Centre, Business Development Department.

4.2. Catalonia: coordination of SARU

5. Resources

5.1. Helsinki

- City of Helsinki.

5.2. Catalonia

Secretariat on Immigration covers human resources costs.

6. Management

6.1. Helsinki

- EnterpriseHelsinki has a staff of 17 persons, of which 11 are advisers

6.2. Catalonia

- Coordinator
- 2 academic advisers

7. Obstacles

7.1. Helsinki

7.2. Catalonia

- Coordination of different institutions (state and regional level).

8. Results and achievements

8.1. Helsinki

Figures

2009

Employees	16, of which 13 are business advisers
New clients	3000
Immigrants	35%

New start-ups >1000
 Participants on business courses 60
 Participants on evening courses 180
 Participants information sessions 1500
 Enterprises in business incubator/
 virtual incubator 18/8

8.2. Catalonia

2010	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
consultations	87	282	351	230	235	291	252
opened files	15	100	127	88	75	78	73

9. Keys to success

9.1. Helsinki

- A wide range of services
- Advisers have learned to deal with clients from diverse backgrounds
- Services are especially designed to meet the needs of immigrants

9.2. Catalonia

In Spain the period required to recognise foreign academic background is so long that a service like SARU is absolutely necessary to facilitate job market mobility.

10. Potential for replication

10.1 Helsinki:

EnterpriseHelsinki has developed business tools for new start-ups.

10.2. Catalonia

Replication depends on the time required to recognise foreign academic studies in different countries.

4.5 Strategic planning: National Agreement on Immigration (Catalonia)

1. Background information

After an extensive process of social dialogue and negotiation, the Government of Catalonia, together with parliamentary groups, local authorities, economic and social agents and members of the Citizenship and immigration committee (representing the associations related to managing immigration) signed the National Agreement on Immigration in 2008.

2. Objectives of the project/policy initiative

- Shared analysis on the major transformations experienced puts forward a shared vision and agrees a set of challenges that must be met.
- To identify the actions that must be performed within a framework of social cohesion and opportunities for everyone.
- To respond directly to the demands raised by our society regarding the demographic change undergone and its consequences.

3. Description of the project/policy initiative

- To manage migratory flows and entry to the job market: the mobilisation of domestic human resources in order to ensure the mobility and competitiveness of the productive base; the overseeing of external flows, and aligning of legislation with reality, and a management of migratory flows that is responsible and coordinated with the countries of origin.
- To adapt public services to a diverse society, the document proposes: by creating a universal admission service; sizing public services accordingly to guarantee access to all persons, as well as managing immigration based on transversal and inter-institutional coordination.
- To achieve integration in a common public culture the Agreement suggests: encouraging participation in public life; making Catalan the common public language; living together among a plurality of beliefs; ensuring equal opportunities between men and women; incorporating the gender perspective, and strengthening policies aimed at children, young people, the elderly and families.

4. Role for the local or regional authority

32 agents composed of representatives from the government, parliamentary groups, institutions, signatory economic and social groups and the Citizenship and Immigration Committee made a commitment to implement the actions included in the document and also by monitoring them.

5. Resources

Economic resources: EUR 3 880 000 000

Human resources: Different Catalan Government Departments are involved in developing public reception and integration policies.

6. Management

Leadership: Catalonia's Government, in collaboration with parliamentary groups, institutions, trade unions and entrepreneur organizations and the Citizenship and Immigration Committee.

7. Obstacles

- Lack of funding.

8. Results and achievements

Two years after its signature, more than 40 organizations have signed up to the National Agreement on Immigration.

From all its 57 new measures, more than 49 have been started up and five are completed.

9. Keys to success

The consensus involved in the National Agreement on Immigration represents a further step forward after the many great initiatives that have been performed through the local setting and associations, as well as the different Governments of the Generalitat, in order to encourage the management, reception and integration of immigration.

10. Potential for replication

Writing the National Agreement on Immigration has been a result of a wide participation process based on strategic planning and dialogue.

Strategic planning for a long-term perspective is necessary to manage integration policies that need to be implemented with a sustainable long-term perspective.

5. Conclusions

The purpose of the Working Group on *Integration of Immigrants in Urban Areas* – organised within the framework of the 1st Action Plan of the Committee of the Regions' Subsidiarity Monitoring Network launched in May 2009 as a follow-up to the 4th Subsidiarity Conference organised by the CoR and the Region of Lombardy in Milan – is to foster a dialogue between the group's participants on the best ways to implement integration policies at the local, especially urban level and draw up a reflection on the articulation of the various levels of governance involved.

This document aims to offer not only a shared analysis on immigration issues in the European Union -and, in particular, in its regions- but, further, to offer recommendations on the existing distribution of immigration competences, multilevel governance, the application of the principle of subsidiarity, and the role of the Committee of the Regions.

Consequently, the Working Group on the Integration of Immigrants in Urban Areas has identified the following topics and recommendations:

5.1 Subsidiarity

Subsidiarity is a necessary guiding principle to organise the exercise of shared competences by the European and national/regional/local levels focusing on constructive synergies and solutions: institutions closer to citizens are more efficient because of their reality knowledge and their capability to be flexible and open enough to adapt to diversity. However, the supranational level is also key to design guidelines and broad principles to be followed across the board.

5.2 Decision-making process

Participation of stakeholders, in particular civil society organisations, and governance are the key to success: for planning, development and promotion. Frequently, stakeholders are in the front line of social attention. This strategic placement builds specific knowledge which becomes essential to policymaking.

5.3 Institutional and structural framework

Strategic planning is absolutely necessary to manage all public policies, especially integration policies that need to be implemented with a sustainable long-term perspective. Furthermore, integration policies need long-term institutional structures which assure short, mid- and long-term policies.

5.4 Data collection

CoR must impulse surveys and comparative research in different issues concerning immigration focused on assessing public administrations:

- Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) must provide information from local and regional authorities;
- Local and regional authorities must agree basic data to provide to MIPEX;
- Proactive registration services provide full data on the real population.

5.5 Reception and integration actions

Integration of immigrants is an issue which requires political attention and action, from the very beginning of immigration project: integration, seen as a two-directional, dynamic and continual process between the different peoples residing in a territory, needs to develop reception services - as the first step to this process - to ensure immigrant autonomy (training language, society, work).

Furthermore, the key to integration policies is diverse but its goal has to be social cohesion, the collective construction of a shared society: promotion of equal opportunities in access to public services, promotion of participation in all levels of politics or recognition of diversity.

5.6 Funding of initiatives

Integration policies, as all policies, need to be budgeted at short, medium and long-term.

At the time of drafting this report, the European Commission is preparing a Communication on a second EU Agenda for Integration. In particular, the Second European Agenda for Integration will propose some concrete tools for putting in place integration policies. These could include European Integration Modules, which are standardised but flexible "building blocks" that can be adapted to needs of individual Member States and their communities and would be developed within three main areas, which could indicatively concern the following main areas: (i) introductory and language courses, (ii) strong commitment by the host society and (iii) active participation of immigrants in all aspects of collective life. The CoR is set to contribute to this Communication through a consultation and looks forward to continuing its cooperation with the European Commission on this important topic.

On the basis of this report, which can be seen as an initial approach of the theme, it could be interesting to go further and pursue the work on one of the indicative areas proposed for the modules.