

Intercultural cities index

A methodological overview

As cities embrace an [intercultural approach to diversity management](#), they need to take stock of their achievements and challenges as a point of departure for the development of their intercultural strategies. In order to sustain motivation and adjust their efforts, cities need to assess progress over time and their need to learn from other cities which do better.

The Intercultural cities index supports all these objectives. If it responds to the Intercultural cities [Index questionnaire](#) consistently and repeatedly over a period of time, a city will be able to discern upward or downward patterns in the key indicators and from these will be able to make much more informed judgements about the impact of its policies and its investment.

The Intercultural cities index is based on the elements of the model [Intercultural City Strategy](#) which has been developed and tested over a period of three years by the cities engaged in the [Intercultural cities programme](#). The choice of indicators represents a compromise between the need to limit the scope of the questionnaire, and the need to reflect adequately the complexity of the matter. Indicators with the highest level of centrality for the issue, as well as those with greatest communication power, have been selected.

Although each city started from its own unique position within a different national context, all have contributed to and validated the concept and elements of the Intercultural City Strategy. The Strategy is also underpinned by set of principles derived from international normative documents and research [link to be added].

This Index is not intended to be a scientific tool. It would be impossible to reduce the essence of interculturality to a few measurements, or to establish clear-cut relationships of cause and effect between policies and actions and outcomes in something so subjective. The intercultural city approach is not a science but a general set of principles and a way of thinking. Thus, the Intercultural City Index aims to highlight a few common facts and phenomena - or what we might describe as crucial “acupuncture” points, - which suggest the level of interculturality of a city, and which enable the beginning of a discussion whereby one city can be compared with another. However, the intention is not to use the Index for the crude ‘ranking’ of cities. Rather it should be used as spur to greater self-reflection, learning and improvement.

Whilst the challenge of capturing the essence of interculturality of every city is evident, this index was developed with a maximum effort to reflect the uniqueness of the cultural environment of every participating city in order to better understand their advantages and needs, and to most closely estimate their performance and intercultural policy outcomes on a regular basis.

The Index should help cities to assess the results of their efforts in adopting intercultural policy and governance approaches. It could also be useful as a means to communicate politically about this work, identify priorities, and plan ahead.

The index draws upon three distinct forms of data:

- facts: demographic data in particular (primarily quantitative)
- inputs: policies, structures (primarily qualitative)
- impacts: attitudes and behaviour (primarily qualitative)

Data is collected through a questionnaire to be completed by city officials. Answers are accompanied with examples and references for possible cross-checking. For a comprehensive assessment of city’s policy and its results, a questionnaire for the public has also been designed and is available on request.

The questionnaire contains 66 indicators grouped in 10 indices. The cities which complete the questionnaire receive an analytical report focusing on these 10 areas. The graphic presentation of the results for individual cities or groups of cities is also based on the 10 indices.

1. How has the city council demonstrated its commitment to being an intercultural city?

- Formal adoption of a public statement that it is an Intercultural City
- Adoption of an intercultural city strategy
- Adoption of an intercultural city action plan with funding allocated
- Reference made to the city's intercultural commitment in major speeches by politicians and other important communications.
- Existence of a dedicated webpage that communicates the city's intercultural statement, strategy, and/or action plan.
- Existence of a dedicated body or a co-ordination group with responsibility for the intercultural strategy.
- Existence of a formal process for evaluating the impact of the intercultural strategy.
- Existence of a formal process for acknowledging or honouring local citizens who have done exceptional things to encourage interculturalism in the local community.

2. The city through an intercultural lens

a) How intercultural is the education system

- Ethnic composition of the students' body
- Ethnic composition of the teachers' body
- Involvement of migrant/minority parents in school life
- The existence of school intercultural projects
- The existence of policies to increase ethnic mixing in schools

b) How intercultural are residential neighbourhoods?

- Percentage of neighbourhoods in which the vast majority of residents are of the same ethnic background.
- Percentage of neighbourhoods in which no ethnic group represents more than a half of all the residents.
- The existence of policies to increase neighbourhood diversity
- The existence of policies to encourage inter-ethnic interaction in neighborhoods

c) How intercultural are the public services?

- Degree of representativeness of the administration of the ethnic composition of residents
- The existence of a recruitment policy to ensure representativeness
- The existence of actions to encourage intercultural mixing in the private sector employment
- The existence of services accommodating specific cultural needs

d) How intercultural is business and the labour market?

- Existence of a business umbrella organisation which has among its objectives to promote diversity and non-discrimination in employment.
- Existence of a charter or another binding document against discrimination in the workplace.
- Evidence of action by the city to encourage intercultural mixing in the private sector labour market.

- Evidence of action by the city to encourage businesses from ethnic/cultural minorities to move beyond localised/ethnic economies and enter the mainstream economy.
- Evidence of action by the city to encourage ‘business districts’ in which different cultures could more easily mix.
- Commitment within the city council’s policy for procurement of goods and services to give priority to companies with a diversity strategy.

e) How intercultural is culture?

- The use of interculturalism as a criterion when allocating grants to associations and initiatives and percentage of such conditional grants of the total.
- The encouragement of cultural events encouraging cultural mixing
- The encouragement of cultural productions addressing the issue of diversity
- The organisation of debates and campaigns on the issue of diversity

f) How intercultural is public space?

- Evidence of action by the city council to encourage intercultural mixing in public squares, markets etc.
- Evidence of acknowledgement the ethnic/cultural backgrounds of the city’s residents in the design and management of new public buildings or spaces, or in the planning requirements it places upon private developers
- Evidence that when formally consulting with citizens on future plans for districts of the city, the city council acknowledges the ethnic/cultural background and modulate its consultation procedures accordingly
- The existence of ethnically segregated areas that feel unwelcoming to others or are reputed dangerous

3. Mediation and conflict resolution

- Existence in the city of organisations provide a professional service for mediation of intercultural communication and/or conflict
- Existence of an organisation dealing with inter-religious issues
- The provision of cultural mediation

4. Language

- Provision and type of language training in the official language(s) and minority languages
- Support for minority-language media
- Support of events to highlight minority languages in a positive way

5. Relations with the local media

- The availability of a city media strategy to achieve balanced media attitude to migrants/minorities
- Explicit objective of the city information services to promote harmonious intercultural relations
- Existence of a scheme that provides professional development/training assistance to journalists from minority ethnic groups
- Media monitoring on diversity issues

6. An open and international outlook

- Existence of a policy for the encouragement of international trade and co-operation and a targeted budgetary provision
- Existence of an agency with a specific responsibility for monitoring and developing the city's openness to international connections
- Existence of an explicit strategy by the city seek to attract foreign investment, business, workers and students and encourage them to participate in the life of the city
- Policies to promote economic relations with countries of origin

7/8. Intercultural intelligence and competence

- Existence in the city of a designated observatory or other agency which routinely collects data on diversity and intercultural relations
- Existence of a formal process whereby data and intelligence about the cultural diversity of the city inform the city council's process of policy formulation
- Promotion of intercultural competence within the administration

9. Welcoming new arrivals

- Existence in the city of a designated agency to welcome newcomers.
- Existence of a comprehensive package of information and support to newly-arrived residents from abroad.
- Welcoming support by city agencies and offices
- Existence of a public welcoming ceremony

10. Governance, leadership and citizenship

- Voting rights of foreign residents
- Ethnic background of elected officials compared to the citizens' body
- Existence of an umbrella body to represent ethnic minorities and which is independent of the local authority.
- Existence of a standard for migrant representation in the boards of schools and public services