



ICC PROGRAMME

The Intercultural Cities Programme is a Council of Europe programme supporting local authorities to design and implement inclusive integration policies. The programme is based on the “Intercultural integration policy model” which focuses on enabling communities, organisations and businesses to manage the diversity of people in a way which ensures the equal value of all identities, cohesion and competitive advantage. Intercultural Cities is also a platform to connect cities and leaders globally into a community where initiatives and practice from one city are analysed and shared to inspire the others.

The cities participating in the ICC programme review their governance, policies, discourse and practices from an intercultural point of view. As a result of intercultural policies, **most citizens regard diversity as a resource rather than a problem** and accept that all cultures change as they encounter each other in the public arena.

City officials publicly advocate respect for diversity and a pluralistic city identity. The city actively combats prejudice and discrimination and ensures equal opportunities for all by adapting its governance structures, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population, without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In partnership with business, civil society and public service professionals, the intercultural city develops a range of policies and actions to encourage more mixing and interaction between diverse groups. The high level of trust and social cohesion help to prevent conflicts and violence, increase policy effectiveness and make the city attractive for people and investors alike.

The programme helps cities to:

- **Create a sense of pluralistic identity** embracing cultural pluralism and the complexity of identities through leadership discourse and symbolic actions based on the pride and appreciation of the city diversity.
- Set up a governance model **empowering all members of the community, regardless of their origin or status**, to develop their potential, realise their talents and enable them to contribute to local prosperity.
- Promote **participation and power-sharing**, involving people of diverse origins in decision-making in urban institutions, be they political, educational, social, economic or cultural.

- **Open up spaces and opportunities for deep interaction and co-creation** between people of different cultural origins and backgrounds, to build trust, cohesion and solidarity, and thus realise the creative potential of diversity.
- **Foster intercultural competence and empower intercultural innovators** in public, private and civil-society organisations.
- **Manage conflict, busting stereotypes and engage in a debate** about the impact and potential of diversity for local development.

The **Intercultural cities programme provides expert and peer support to public authorities** which chose to learn how to better manage diversity and benefit from the diversity advantage. It offers an internationally tested and validated methodology and a set of analytical and learning tools, and helps with re-shaping city policies and services to make them more effective in a diverse context.