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Conversations on Integration Archive

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Immigration: A fact-based conversation

By kturner
March 1, 2020
[Opinion](#)



By David Campbell

After we presented the [new immigration strategy](#) to Moncton Council [October 2019] I received several messages and emails from folks around the region and beyond. Their questions revolved basically around three issues: Why do we need more immigrants (my kids have moved to Toronto)? Why should we spend so much taxpayer money trying to attract and retain immigrants, and am I not worried about cultural compatibility?

Let me address the three in order:

1. Why do we need more immigrants?

Primarily because among those born in Canada there are now more people retiring each year than joining the labour market. This is happening across Canada. The difference is simple. Across Canada the born-in-Canada population participating in the labour market (working or looking for work) has dropped by around 65,000 between 2013 and 2018. The immigrant population participating in the labour market has increased by nearly 800,000. Across New Brunswick we have witnessed a rise in the number of immigrants joining the workforce but not nearly enough to offset those leaving it.



Greater Moncton Immigration Strategy 2020-2025

Why do we need to grow the workforce? There is a high correlation between economic growth and workforce growth. There may be a point in the future when this changes through technological innovation and productivity but for now if you want to grow your economy you need the horsepower (human power) to do it.

Why do we need economic growth? Shouldn't we learn to live with it? It's certainly possible. New Brunswick has lived with very weak economic growth for over a decade but tax rates have been increased and federal transfer payment growth has compensated. Annual [federal transfers have risen by \\$500 million](#) in just the past four years. I guess we could keep raising tax rates and expect the feds to pump in even more money (we are now at almost \$13,000 per household in health and social transfers and Equalization). Ideally we (New Brunswick) would have an economy growing at 2-3% per year and that would help foster a strong fiscal foundation for the provision of high quality public services and infrastructure.

So maybe you buy my argument that we need more young people to grow the workforce and boost the economy leading to organic tax revenue growth so that we don't have to soak existing taxpayers for even more tax revenue (currently provincial government spending is running at [around 26% relative to GDP](#)).

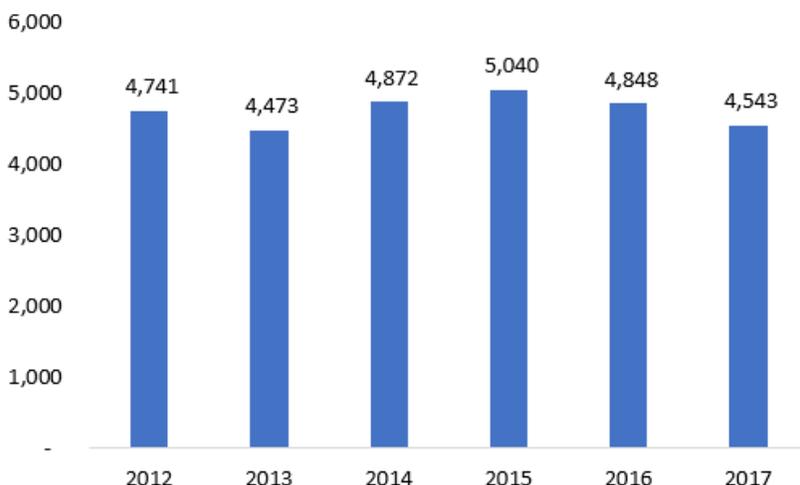
But you wonder about the prickly issue of our kids leaving the region? Why do we need immigrants when our young people continue to leave?

First of all, I feel your pain. Two of my kids have left and are living in Ontario (one in Fredericton). But I take comfort in the data (lol). As shown in the chart below the Moncton CMA loses on average around 4,700 people to outward migration within Canada (elsewhere in the province or other provinces) – every year. That is a non-trivial three percent of the population gone every single year. We don't have great data on who is leaving but it includes recent high school graduates leaving to attend university, people getting promoted out of the region (an historical challenge for the Moncton CMA and many smaller urban areas, and immigrants leaving expecting greener pastures elsewhere.

We do know where they are moving to, at least to the large urban areas. The top CMA for outbound migrants from the Moncton CMA over the past six years has been Halifax. In an average year 330 Greater Monctonians move to Halifax. Toronto is the second main destination (225 per year) followed by Saint John (212), Ottawa (177) and Edmonton (173).

It is important to point out that as immigrant numbers have been rising in recent years the total number leaving the Moncton CMA has been going down, not up.

OUTWARD migrants from the Moncton CMA, intra- and interprovincial



Source: Statistics Canada.

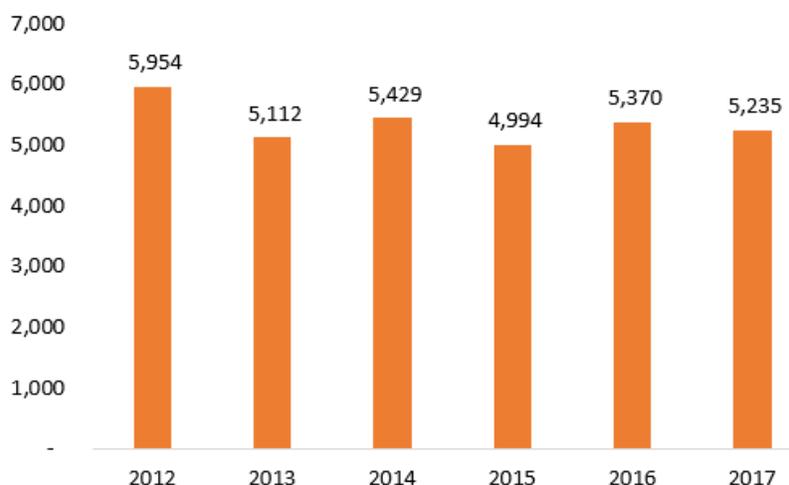
Why am I not panicking? Because this migration is normal. The mobility of labour is considered one of Canada's strengths. Toronto the Great has a negative migration rate every year but it makes up for it by attracting 90,000 immigrants or so.

There are many reasons why people would want to leave a community – the key is to make sure for every one that leaves you have more than one moving in. And that is exactly what is happening in the Moncton CMA.

Oh, BTW, you also want your community to be an excellent place to live – if people leave because they didn't like the community at all – rather than for economic or other reasons – that is a fail.

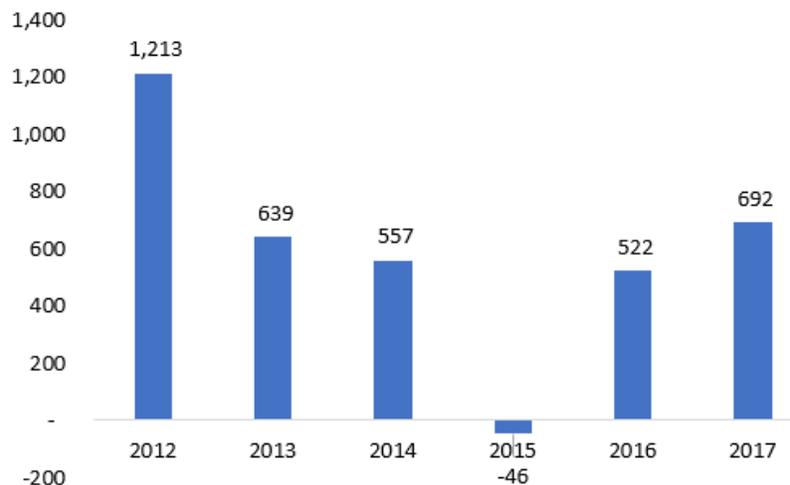
In the past six years the Moncton CMA has attracted an average of over 5,300 per year from elsewhere in Canada, and this excludes immigration – which is on the rise. Where are they coming from? Saint John is the top source with an average of 292 per year – yes lots of folks move between Saint John and Moncton (both ways). Halifax, Toronto and Montreal are the other top sources of inward population migration.

INWARD migrants from the Moncton CMA, intra- and interprovincial



Source: Statistics Canada.

So, on a net basis, from migration within Canada the Moncton CMA population has risen by 600 per year going back to 2012, again excluding immigration which has been rising too.

Net migration, Moncton CMA, intra- and interprovincial

Source: Statistics Canada.

In conclusion, don't fret too much about people leaving. I expect at least one, maybe two of my kids to move back some day just like the thousands moving here each year.

2) Why should we spend so much taxpayer money trying to attract and retain immigrants?

This one has a fairly easy answer. I don't know the exact amount government spends to attract and settle newcomers from outside Canada but I do know that for economic migrants it represents only a few thousand dollars per year per person. They will make this up in less than a year in the form of the taxes they pay – sales tax, income tax, property tax, etc. The ROI on attracting immigrants into the workforce is very good. Refugees cost more tax dollars to integrate but we have a moral responsibility to help the global flow of refugees – we just shouldn't conflate economic migrants with refugees.

3) Am I not worried about cultural compatibility?

This one doesn't really have a data-focused response because I don't know how you would define this. I can't even define 'Canadian values' and I suspect if you asked 100 Canadians you would get variations of 100 different answers. I think tolerance has been a Canadian value – i.e. I may not agree with you but I agree you have the right to think the way you do and we shouldn't discriminate against each other in public sphere because of different viewpoints. This seems to be slipping a bit – tolerance for some seems to be equivalent to you must agree with me on every issue – which, of course, is the opposite of tolerance. The Economist had a good article not that long ago about the tricky line between liberalism and illiberalism.

I think volunteerism and support for related activities could be a core value (defining characteristic?). If you have kids in minor sports, you feel an obligation to volunteer. If you attend a church likewise, etc. I think volunteerism is an important cultural attribute and it is not shared in all countries. In some places when it comes to 'third-sector' activity, the view is "that is the role of government" and in other countries there just isn't a culture of volunteerism.

Anyway, we want newcomers to buy-in to this project we call Canada. In my experience, the immigrants I interact with not only buy-in, many of them are even more enthusiastic about it. If you talk to newcomers I think you will find that one of the things that attracted them here was the culture.

In the end all I ask is that you think about this issue – immigration – from a fact-based perspective. If we want strong communities, high quality public services, economic opportunities for our kids, etc. I think the case is strong that attracting new population will be required.

Reprinted with permission from: [It's the Economy, Stupid \(Oct 12, 2019\). David Campbell: A blog about economic development in Atlantic Canada.](#)



David Campbell is currently President of Jupia Consultants Inc. He was formerly Chief Economist with the New Brunswick Jobs Board Secretariat. In that role, he was tasked with helping to develop economic policy and economic development strategy for the Government of New Brunswick. He has more than 25 years' experience in economic development-related roles working with industry, not-for-profit organizations and governments across Canada. David was recently named by Progress Magazine as one of the foremost economic development thinkers in Atlantic Canada

The Lobster Effect

By ktuner
February 28, 2020
[Opinion](#)



By Talia Stump

The question of whether it is a good thing when new refugees or newcomers from one ethnic group live close to each other is a hotly debated topic. I personally feel it is important to enable people to live close to supports from within their own cultural community when they first arrive, if they so choose. As a refugee who has come to a resettlement country after surviving displacement and persecution, being close to the familiarity of one's own community can be an important source of both practical and emotional support.

But I also recognize that after a period of time this can sometimes lead to isolation from the broader community. That is why the work I have been doing over the past few years is targeting people who have been in Australia for some time and providing them with alternative options.

The Maritimes in Canada is world famous for its lobsters, harvested in the cold pristine waters along the north Atlantic coast. What's the connection? I'll let a team member from the [Multicultural Association of Fredericton](#) explain it in her own words:

“Do you know much about lobsters? It's a known fact that if you take a box, and you put a lobster in it by himself, the lobster's gonna get out. But if you put two lobsters or more in a box, they'll never get out. Do you know why? Because as soon as one gets over the edge, the other one pulls him back.

*That's what happens when people go to big centres and you put them in big groups of thousands of people, their community is always pulling them back. But when you put them into a smaller community they can get out of that box easier, right? **That's the richness of spreading settlement throughout your country** instead of keeping it in one place. To stop people from getting stuck in those places and pulling each other back.*

*It's challenging because **it's hard for these smaller communities** to support people without the monstrous amount of money that's being poured into the bigger centres to deliver services. **But in my opinion, people thrive better in the long run.**”*

For me it's all about choice and empowering people to make decisions about their own lives. Let's think about how we can help people get out of the box, when they are ready, by connecting them with alternative opportunities in other places.

Reprinted with permission from the [City to Country Project blog: Stories and Ideas from Towns that Welcome Refugees Across the World, April 12, 2019](#).

Talia Stump is Principal Policy Officer, Settlement, for the New South Wales (NSW) Government in Sydney, Australia, where she is overseeing the design and implementation of a new approach aimed at supporting regional communities to attract and retain newcomers. In 2019, Talia was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship to conduct research on small and regional towns in Canada, USA, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

Read her report: [The Right Fit: Attracting and retaining newcomers in regional town: A framework for secondary migration based on lessons from around the world](#) (Sydney: City to Country Project, 2019).



Urban Sanctuary Policies and Solidarity Practices in Germany and Switzerland

By ktturner
December 17, 2019
[Opinion](#)



By Harald Bauder & Timo Weisser

The [Urban Sanctuary Policies and Solidarity Practices in Germany and Switzerland research project](#) explores innovative urban approaches that work toward the inclusion of migrants and refugees without full legal status in these European countries. Learning about urban approaches in countries with vastly different circumstances can help other cities in Europe and elsewhere to develop effective and novel responses to the challenges that arise when a portion of a city's residents lack full national status. The research highlights, in particular, innovative urban initiatives in Freiburg im Breisgau and Berlin (Germany), and Zurich (Switzerland).

Freiburg: Rasthaus

The [Rasthaus](#) (literally "rest house") in Freiburg is a central contact point for migrants and refugees with precarious status or no status. Located in an inner courtyard of a housing block owned by a co-op housing syndicate, the Rasthaus offers a certain degree of protection from the enforcement of immigration and refugee policy. Several local activist initiatives offer legal council, German language courses, medical treatment, and housing referrals to vulnerable migrants and refugees at the site. In addition to providing free services to migrants and refugees with precarious status, these initiatives challenge marginalizing migration and refugee discourses. The shared space enables the groups to network closely with each other: "The fact that we have a shared structure like the Rasthaus is probably conducive to supporting vulnerable migrants and refugees," says a long-standing activist.



Berlin: Anonymous Health-Insurance Card

After the elections in September 2016, the new governing coalition in the Berlin Senate approved to provide health-care access to people without medical insurance, including non-status residents. The city subsequently set up an agency to arrange medical insurance for people who lack coverage; if this agency is unable to offer coverage, it will refer clients directly to cooperating medical practitioners and pay these practitioners for the treatment. Since summer 2019, it is possible for practitioners to bill anonymously, which is critical to protect the identities of non-status migrants and refugees. Although this initiative is a step in the right direction, civil society organizations, such as Medibüro, are [demanding](#) that an anonymous health-insurance card for non-status persons is provided not through the mediating agency but rather through an association of public health insurers, with the city-state of Berlin bearing the costs. This mechanism would allow non-status migrants and refugees to freely choose their doctors.

Berlin: Student-Transit Ticket

Since summer 2019, all students in Berlin are able to use public transport free of charge. An interviewee explains that a barrier to education for non-status children and youth was "the way from and to school, because the illegalized (children) ... cannot use the cheaper (Berlin transit) tickets." To ensure that every child going to school has free transportation to school, the free transit ticket was linked to the student ID card. Since every child in Germany has a right to attend school, the ticket is valid for children without a residence permit. According to an activist, free public transit for students is a successful example of "overarching policies" that "do not make a specific policy only for illegalized people" but for all of the city's vulnerable inhabitants.

Freiburg and Berlin: Sea Bridge

The [Seebrücke](#) (sea-bridge) initiative comprises a network of more than 100 local projects that call for an open Europe and promote cities as safe harbours in light of restrictive national and European migration and refugee policies. In addition to organising demonstrations and other media-effective activities, these initiatives work with city councils to demand a more humane migration and refugee policy and publically proclaim the city's willingness to accept more refugees. Freiburg and Berlin have joined numerous other cities calling upon the Federal Ministry of the Interior to permit the local admission of additional refugees.

Zurich: Züri City Card

Following the example of a similar initiative in New York City, the so-called the Züri City Card is intended to provide all inhabitants of the city, regardless of their residency status, access to municipal services and identify themselves to the police without having to disclose their immigration status. During the campaign for the municipal elections in 2018, all candidates were asked to state their position on the Züri City Card. The newly elected City Parliament subsequently adopted the proposal with a large majority, instructing the city administration to implement the card. To avoid that the Züri City Card raises suspicion against anyone using it, all residents of the city, independent of their residency status, should own and use the card. To make the card attractive to everyone, the city administration is considering to offer discounted admission prices to public institutions, program, and events when using the card.

Conclusion

The wide-ranging policies and practices presented above illustrated the complexity of initiatives that can be attributed to solidarity cities. While in Berlin the anonymous health-insurance card is intended to extend access to the medical system to the entire urban community, Zurich seeks to provide legal ID cards to all residents, irrespective of national status. In both cities, the initiatives involve the municipal council or senate. In Freiburg, civil society initiatives have so far taken it into their own hands, without council approval, to support people with precarious or no national status. In these cases, Berlin, Freiburg, and Zurich focus on people who are already in the city but whose residence status denies them access to various rights and services. The Seebrücke initiatives take a different approach. These initiatives concern people who flee to Europe but who have not yet arrived in the respective cities due to restrictive European migration and refugee policies. Seebrücke, too, engages local councils that are prepared to accept additional refugees.

The different approaches of Berlin, Freiburg, and Zurich show that solidarity initiatives adapt to their political, social, geographical and geopolitical circumstances, and that they act flexibly and strategically. Nevertheless, there is a common denominator: urban communities oppose the migration and refugee policies of the nation-state and define belonging independently of national status. At the centre of this approach lies solidarity – not only within an urban community but also between cities.

Read the full report: [Solidarity Cities in Germany and Switzerland: A Brief Overview of Initiatives](#) / Harald Bauder, Timo Weisser (RCIS Research Brief No. 2019/2). Toronto: RCIS, Ryerson University, 2019.

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The Promise of Labour Mobility

By kturmer
[Opinion](#)



The Promise of Labour Mobility: How skills can be a passport out of displacement for refugees

By Steph Cousins, Rachel Lawrie, and Sayre Nyce with Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB)

Excerpts from the TBB report [“The Promise of Labour Mobility: How skills can be a passport out of displacement for refugees”](#) (2019).

Today more than 70 million people are living forcibly displaced from their homes because of war and persecution. That’s twice the level of just 20 years ago. In the past 10 years, the world’s refugee population has more than doubled to over 25 million people. This humanitarian crisis demands global leadership and innovative solutions that go beyond traditional refugee resettlement.

One solution is labour mobility: Opening regular skilled migration pathways to refugees, on the basis of their skills.

Millions of people move around the world for work, achieving career advancement and better opportunities for themselves and their families. Since the birth of the modern refugee regime following the Second World War, refugees have largely been shut out of the global labour market. This is despite their skills, potential, and fundamental desire to rebuild their lives and careers.

Over the past four years, Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) has established an online Talent Catalogue to make the talents and skills of displaced refugees more visible to employers. We have worked with partners to support businesses across Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom to begin remotely recruiting displaced people living in Jordan, Lebanon and Kenya and assisting them to migrate with their families.

These initial efforts demonstrate the promise of labour mobility. In 2019 alone, 41 people have secured international employment through this model: 10 have relocated with their families and are already working and the rest are in an immigration process. But this is not just a solution for those 41 individuals – it’s a solution for the family members who come with them and for the businesses that desperately need their skills.

This is just the beginning. TBB and our partners have proven a market-driven labour mobility model can provide protection and durable solutions for refugees while delivering significant benefits to businesses and the global economy. If embraced by governments and the international community, this solution can scale and provide new futures to more than a million refugees over the next decade.

The Imperative To Act

The system designed to protect and offer safe haven to refugees and other forcibly displaced people in the wake of the Second World War is plainly inadequate for the needs of today. Fewer than three percent of the world’s refugees can access an existing “durable solution. Last year, just 55,680 of the world’s 25.9 million refugees were resettled, the lowest number in more than a decade.

The absence of regular migration routes for refugees to access safety and work opportunities results in poverty, dependence and vulnerability. Desperation has led many to turn to smugglers to attempt dangerous and often deadly journeys.

In 2016, the United Nations General Assembly recognised the shortcomings of current migration systems in responding to the refugee crisis and meeting business and migrant needs. It initiated the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM), which were adopted in December 2018. Both the GCR and the GCM include commitments to explore labour mobility as a solution for displaced populations.

To implement some of the core goals of the GCR, the UN Refugee Agency in July 2019 released its Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways. Labour mobility is a key component of the strategy, which has as a goal moving 2 million refugees to safety during the next decade through complementary pathways.

Creating a Win-win Solution

The global refugee population has a diverse mix of skills, professions and educational backgrounds. A significant proportion have marketable skills that are in high demand around the world. Yet most refugees are living in countries where they cannot legally work in their fields of training or expertise. As a result, their skills are not fully utilised – and their talents often go to waste.

While millions of migrants move each year from their stable home countries to fill work opportunities, refugees are too often shut out of economic immigration pathways because of administrative and financial barriers. With millions of jobs available and the labour market demand growing, refugee labour mobility is a win-win solution for refugees and employers, as well as the broader economy.



Global Benefits of Labour Mobility

Refugees benefit by renewing their careers and moving to stable new lives with their families. Their earning capacity increases as a result of accessing legal work, and they can send remittances to loved ones still living displaced. By maintaining and developing their skills, those who wish to be involved are also better able to contribute financially and practically to post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

Employers benefit by gaining access to a new pool of talented workers who are resilient, loyal and demonstrate high retention. Employers can demonstrate their commitment to addressing pressing global challenges and meeting corporate social responsibility standards.

Destination country communities benefit through the arrival of a diverse and dynamic group of workers and their families, who contribute to the tax base and who tend to be younger and more entrepreneurial than the settled population. Countries of first asylum benefit from being able to share the responsibility for hosting refugees more equitably with other countries.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



A Level Playing Field

Many of the countries with the largest skilled immigration programs around the world apply strict eligibility criteria such as language test thresholds, qualification and identity documentation requirements, minimum years of work experience and skills assessment and licencing requirements.

Some skilled visas also require evidence that the applicant has a threshold of funds in their bank account. Temporary skilled visa programs also often require applicants prove that they will leave the country after their visa expires (even when the temporary visa is an initial step to a permanent visa).

These eligibility requirements were designed without the circumstances of refugees in mind. Displaced people have often exhausted their savings, or are unable to access bank accounts. Many have lost documentation of their qualifications and their passports may have expired. They are living in challenging circumstances often without work rights – making proof of work experience a challenge.

With some assistance, a small proportion of refugees can tick all these boxes and acquire skilled visas through existing programs. In Australia, TBB has successfully assisted employers to secure Temporary Skills Shortage (subclass 482) visas for two Syrian software engineers as well as a management consultant who is stateless. All three candidates plan to transition to permanent residence when they are eligible to do so. In England, we assisted a Syrian software engineer to secure a General Work Visa (Tier 2) which was approved in just two weeks.

Many refugees and displaced people, however, face barriers because of these administrative requirements. Without some flexibility in immigration systems, most refugees will continue to be unable to access labour mobility pathways. Governments can address these barriers. Australia and Canada have already taken actions to open skilled immigration opportunities for refugees.

All countries stand to benefit from making their skilled visa programs accessible to qualified and talented refugees. This includes advanced economies as well as middle-income countries competing to attract global talent. Governments should work together with the private sector to ensure the right policy settings are in place to enable employers to recruit refugees with the skills and talents they need, and to ensure refugees arriving on labour mobility pathways are protected and supported. Employers and communities around the world are crying out for skills and beginning to see refugee talent as an asset, not a liability. Refugees are coming forward to participate in labour mobility with renewed hope. Now is the time to harness this momentum and realise the promise of labour mobility.



Steph Cousins, Australia Director, TBB

Steph has over 12 years of professional experience in human rights, humanitarian and development advocacy and leadership. She has led advocacy and external affairs teams at a number of non-profit organizations including Amnesty International Australia and Oxfam Australia.

Rachel Lawrie, Director of Solutions Strategy, TBB

Rachel has worked with various non-profits in the Middle East focused on empowering marginalized groups through entrepreneurship and economic development. She has experience in vocational training, microfinance, scaling small businesses, and investment consulting.



Sayre Nyce, Executive Director, TBB

Sayre has an extensive background working on refugee response with the UN and non-profit organizations, including the International Rescue Committee and Refugees International. Sayre has worked to improve refugee policy and operations in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.



Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) was founded in response to the Syrian refugee crisis by philanthropists in Washington, DC and Melbourne, Australia. TBB is a global not-for-profit organisation that helps refugees transcend displacement by tapping into international employment and skilled migration opportunities. TBB works with governments, policy makers and employers to overcome the barriers that often prevent refugees from accessing skilled migration pathways. TBB's goal is to complement existing humanitarian pathways, providing refugees with an additional safe and legal option to overcome displacement.

Immigration Matters in Canada: a Social Marketing Case Study

By ktuner
December 16, 2019
[Interview](#)



By David Hickey

Canada's #ImmigrationMatters campaign. How did it begin?

In November 2017, the Government of Canada announced a plan to increase gradually the number of immigrants to be welcomed over the next three years. As a result, immigration will trend toward 1% of Canada's population in 2020.

At the time, our public environment tracking was picking up some shifts in how Canadians view immigration. While Canadians tend to see the value of immigration nationally, they are less likely to understand how it benefits them personally, in their communities.

As a result, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) launched the [Immigration Matters initiative](#) in November 2018, to demonstrate the benefits of immigration at the local level, dispel common myths about immigration and promote positive engagement between newcomers and Canadians. The initiative targets Canadians who are neither strongly in favour nor strongly against immigration – about 60% of the population.

What was the strategy?

The initiative relies on [compelling storytelling to appeal to Canadians](#) on an emotional level. Stories humanise immigrants while pointing out, in realistic ways, how they [contribute to the economy and society as a whole](#). Research shows that stories are effective not only in promoting connections, but also in sharing factual information in a way that helps it to be retained and believed. The initiative aims to make connections between our target audience and immigrants through these stories.

The stories are posted online and promoted via social media, along with facts about [how Canada's immigration system works](#) and economic data showing the impact of immigration on communities. We have reached out to other Canadian organisations, a part of our strategy to help amplify our content and encourage them to develop their own, as the target audience is not one who would normally visit the IRCC website. These local and regional partners bring an essential credibility and reach to the campaign.

IRCC is also supporting guided conversations in communities across the country about the communities' experiences with attracting and integrating immigrants. The goal is to help diverse community members find common ground, and propose local solutions to their challenges, such as the need to fill labour shortages or retain newcomers in rural areas.

What are the challenges and lessons learned?

An important challenge is to make sure the stories and supporting facts featured are honest and balanced, acknowledging both the opportunities and challenges in building immigration levels. Otherwise, the campaign could be criticised for not being realistic. We developed guidelines for the stories we profile, with clear criteria to facilitate partner and community participation.

We also have to make sure the supporting facts are clear and concise. Our research showed that our audience views statistics with scepticism. While some statistics are important, we tried to use them sparingly and in association with the stories that put a human face on the issue. They were also carefully vetted to avoid misinterpretation.

Finally, public opinion does not change overnight. It can take years for efforts to bear fruit and the initiative is just ramping up. Although we've developed a series of diverse stories from across the country and are starting to see the results of our efforts, we anticipate dialling back promotion in the coming months during the 2019 federal election, according to established communications rules.

What are the benefits to date?

The [economic data we prepared to support community conversations](#) is being used by partners to anchor immigration conversations at community "town hall" events. So far, the hotel, restaurant and sports industries have been the most receptive to our outreach efforts, leading to collaboration on the initiative, amplification of our content, and generation of their own content. Our [stakeholder toolkit](#) has proven an invaluable resource in this regard.

Each story we feature gives us an opportunity to reach out to organisations in that region and related to that theme – opening up a wide-range of potential champions for the initiative. We've tapped into new audiences in the technology, charitable and business sectors, among others. Finally, Immigration Matters messages generate a more positive response than IRCC's regular social media posts, leading to positive engagement on our channels.

We're excited to see how the initiative will evolve over the long-term. Overall, it provides a solid foundation for highlighting the ways in which [immigrants continue to benefit communities across Canada](#).

David Hickey is Director General for Communications at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Source: OECD's [Communicating on Migration Integration blog](#). Viewed on: 03/12/2019

The [OECD's Network of Communication Officers on Migration \(NETCOM\)](#) brings together communication officers and political advisers working in OECD member governments, along with other interested stakeholders, to discuss communication objectives and challenges in the area of migration and integration. This is a space for NETCOM members and friends to share experiences and consult integration resources. The site highlights important communications campaigns at the national and international levels, such as Canada's #ImmigrationMatters campaign; provides links to useful data and resources, including the OECD's Indicators of Immigrant Integration and the special 2018 Eurobarometer survey on migrant integration in the EU; and features articles and talks from experts and communications professionals in the field of migration and integration.

Make No Mistake: the Answer to Extremist Violence is Strong Resilient Communities

By Evelyn
November 5, 2019
[Opinion](#)



We do not need to keep minorities under surveillance or to create a climate of mistrust and prejudice.

By: Anna Triandafyllidou, Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration at Ryerson University

The massacre at the Christchurch mosques on March 15, 2019 in New Zealand brought home very difficult memories of terrorism and violent extremism in Europe, both far-right and jihadist in nature. It's been only 18 months since a far-right supporter shot and killed a Senegalese man in my former hometown of Florence, Italy. The victim, Idy Diene, was killed just because he was black.

It happened on March 5th, 2018. A year later, on March 20th, 2019, an Italian citizen of Senegalese origin hijacked a school bus in Milan, threatening to kill the 50 children on board. His apparent aim was to 'vindicate' the people who have died trying to cross the Mediterranean in search of protection or simply a better life. The two children who alerted the carabinieri who managed to stop the bus and arrest the driver, were themselves of immigrant parents. Many called in favour of their naturalisation by merit but the then Minister of Interior Matteo Salvini refused.



Europe has grown increasingly polarised in recent years. This polarisation is both socio-economic and political-ideological. The 2008 financial crisis and a decade of austerity have increased economic insecurity, precarious work, welfare gaps and most notably, anger among both working and lower middle class people across Europe. This has combined with a growing mistrust towards political elites and discontent with parties that have dominated the post-1989 political landscape.

The influx of refugees from Asia and Africa during the last 5 years in particular has further increased popular anxieties. These were quickly manipulated by far-right and populist parties for electoral gains, leading to a significant rise of xenophobia, racism and overall anti-immigrant and particularly anti-Muslim hostility. We have thus witnessed the mainstreaming of far-right ideas and racist discourses offered to the electorate as a new version of 'sincere' political discourse or telling the 'truth as it is'.

While these parties have not invited people to take the law into their own hands directly, many statements of political leaders – such as Italy's Matteo [Salvini](#) or Hungary's Viktor [Orbán](#) – have expressed disrespect towards the rule of law and democracy. These vital principals are deemed less important than a presumed 'national interest' of 'defending' the country from 'invaders' and 'Islamisation'. These parties [argue](#) that there is nothing wrong in violating the law if the reason for it is 'defending one's own people'.

Unfortunately, such discourse fosters polarisation in society, breaks down social cohesion and eventually provides a breeding ground for violence and terrorism. Such discourse also produces legislation that undermines democracy and the independence of the judiciary, as witnessed recently in [Poland](#), [Hungary](#) and [Italy](#). It also breeds both far-right and jihadist extremism and leads to tragic events like those of Paris in 2015, Brussels and Berlin in 2016, and like those of Christchurch in March of this year.

The victims are always normal citizens, of very diverse backgrounds, of different religions and ethnic origins and of different nationalities. Indeed the enemy of extremists is neither Islam, nor Judaism, nor Christianity nor the West nor the East for that matter. The enemy is democracy, the rule of law and social cohesion, justice and solidarity.

Killings like those at Utøya in Norway in 2011, at the nightclub in Orlando, Florida in 2016, at the Quebec city mosque in 2017, at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh in 2018, or the bombs and shootings in Paris in 2015 and in Brussels in 2016, the lorry massacres in Nice and Berlin in 2016, the bombings at Sousse in Tunisia in 2015, and the recent tragic shooting at the mosques of Christchurch in New Zealand – all have one thing in common. It's not about opposing or supporting a religion or culture, it's the desire to kill. To impose one's will through violence. To spread panic. To attack democracy.

When such events take place, we should make no mistake. What we need is not to keep minorities under surveillance or to create a climate of mistrust and prejudice. The answer to these events is to build strong and resilient communities that prevent young people from falling prey to extremism, communities that channel discontent into democratic participation and regular political action. And that is what the New Zealand government has tried to do. Let's hope others, in all corners of the world, will follow suit.

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The opinions expressed in these blog posts are the sole responsibility of the authors. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information or opinions contained herein.

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Migrant Integration in Cities: Learning from Others

By ktuner
October 30, 2019
[Opinion](#)



In a [new report for the Forum of Federations](#), author **Leslie Seidle** reflects on the role of cities and city networks in migrant integration since he directed a multi-author project in seven federal countries, entitled *Immigrant Integration in Federal Countries* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012).

Many countries have national migrant integration policies or programs. Many cities also have integration initiatives, whether sponsored by local government, civil society organizations or both. The programs vary considerably, and limited resources are often an obstacle. It is nevertheless clear that the level of such activity in many cities in North America and western Europe has been increasing.

Drawing on his expertise in federalism and in immigration issues, Leslie Seidle profiles five innovations in migrant integration from Canada, Germany, Spain and the United States. The four countries are either federal or—in the case of Spain—quasi-federal, allowing him to consider city-level practices within a multilevel context. The paper also includes discussion and case studies of city networks – [Intercultural Cities](#), [Welcoming America](#) and [Cities of Migration](#)— that promote the exchange of promising practices and learning among cities.

Seidle concludes his policy analysis with a number of observations about current and emerging approaches to migrant integration in cities:

“Cities as a locus of innovation. In his interview for this project, David Lubell, [\[Welcoming America\]](#), referred to the local as “a welcoming ecosystem.” In many cases, this seems to be true. City governments are often seen as closer to people than senior levels of government, perhaps because cities often have a more open approach to governance. But the local ecosystem extends well beyond city hall. As we have seen in this paper, community organizations, foundations and businesses are the source of creative ideas, financial support and volunteer effort.

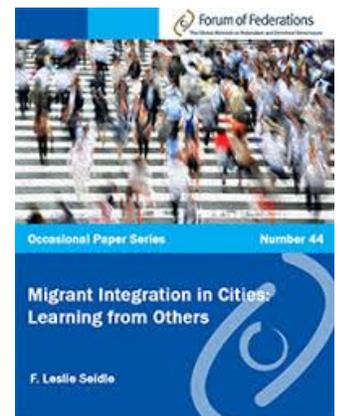
Relative detachment from other levels of government. A five-country study of the local dimension of migration policymaking observed that “the relevance of the local dimension does not seem to be strictly dependent on the . . . countries’ state structures” (Caponio 2010). This also seems broadly true for migrant integration activities. In Germany and Canada, the federal government alone funds and administers each country’s largest integration program (in both cases, language training is a major component). Local organizations are involved as delivery agents, but there are no formal connections with city governments. Cities often have their own programs and services, although they may struggle to finance them. In this context, Peter Scholten (2019) has observed that “local and national migrant integration policies increasingly seem to ‘live separate lives’ as two worlds apart.” This may be broadly true, but further research is needed about the relationship between local and senior levels of government. Among other things, we need to know the degree to which transfers from subnational governments (states, provinces, etc.) enable or constrain city governments’ policy and program choices.

Vision and leadership. Although good ideas on migrant integration originate in different places, they are more likely to come to fruition if they are championed by a highly motivated change agent. Barcelona’s [Anti-Rumour Strategy](#) was developed with leadership from the city’s Immigration Commissioner. [Welcoming Nashville](#) was the brainchild of a local activist in the fight against anti-migrant legislation; its success led to the formation of Welcoming America. Whatever the roots of an initiative, it is important to have a vision: a clear-sighted, even somewhat ambitious, plan for how to achieve results. Implementing the vision requires not only sustained leadership but willingness to adapt to feedback, changing circumstances and other factors.

Partnership and collaboration. Local government seems better suited than senior governments to collaborate with community partners in developing and implementing migrant integration activities. In some cases, this is a necessity: city governments may lack the funds to sponsor even modest integration programs, but NGOs can often deliver services at lower cost than the public sector. Some European cities are less strapped financially than those in Canada and the US because they receive a share of sales and even income taxes; they may also benefit from special-purpose transfers—as for asylum seekers in Germany. However, the rationale for relying on partnerships is broader. Community organizations bring local intelligence to the table when initiatives are being conceived or adapted. Their members can also encourage migrants to take advantage of integration services and to participate in intercultural and other activities.

The relevance of interculturalism. Zapata-Barrero and Cattle (2019) describe interculturalism as a “local policy paradigm.” It has indeed become influential. Even organizations that use other language, such as Welcoming America, employ intercultural techniques. Research suggests that intercultural approaches are having a positive impact on, among other indicators, residents’ views about migrants’ contribution to their city. Paying greater attention to the concerns of the so-called “silent majority” requires adjusting intercultural approaches (as the [Barcelona](#) and [Erlangen](#) cases illustrate). Interculturalism nevertheless has limitations. Advancing integration objectives such as reducing the socio-economic and spatial marginalization of migrants requires other tools. Some of these are in the hands of local government, but action by higher levels of government is usually required.

Diffusion of innovative practices. It is not an overstatement to describe migrant integration as increasingly a shared priority—within governments, between governments, and between governments and other sectors. City governments, often in partnership with others, are an important part of this dynamic. They are innovating and adapting in an environment that is always changing and often quite polarized. In the process, thanks in part to city



networks and similar organizations, government officials and community leaders are learning from others who are working to advance migrant integration.”

For full report (and references): [Migrant Integration in Cities: Learning From Others](#) / by F. Leslie Seidle. Ottawa: Forum of Federations, 2019 (Occasional paper no. 44).



F. Leslie Seidle is a public policy consultant based in Montreal and a senior advisor with the Forum of Federations. He directs the research program Canada's Changing Federal Community for the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP). He previously held senior positions in the Government of Canada, including director general of Strategic Policy and Research, Intergovernmental Affairs, in the Privy Council Office. He is the author of *Rethinking the Delivery of Public Services to Citizens* (1995) and has published numerous articles on immigration, federalism, constitutional reform, public management and electoral reform.

Syrian Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable Pt 2

By kturner
May 2, 2019
[Interview](#)



By Devon Franklin, Hire Immigrants

From December 2015 to early 2017, the Syrian Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable was convened under the leadership of Senator Ratna Omidvar, with a goal to increase Syrian refugees' access to employment opportunities that utilize the talent and skills they bring to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The Roundtable of employers, employment and immigrant serving agencies and government representatives realized numerous successes in their commitment to action-oriented initiatives; [read more about them here](#).

The success of the Syrian Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable demonstrated the benefits of convening motivated community leaders to drive change and meaningful integration of new Canadians. But the work to support positive employment outcomes for all refugees new to Canada is on-going, and there was a clear need to revitalize the model with expanded scope.

On April 16, 2019, Senator Ratna Omidvar called on stakeholders to join a revitalized Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable. She was joined by her new Co-Chair, Darrell Pinto, VP of Research and Innovation at the Canadian Venture Capital Private Equity Association. The newly launched Roundtable was convened with objectives to:

- Broaden the roundtable model to the national level with a focus on improving the employment outcomes of all refugees new to Canada;
- Collaborate with employers, employment and immigrant serving agencies and government representatives to collect a body of best practices that can be shared and easily accessed across regions and business contexts, including smaller communities and smaller employers;
- Explore the capacity for refugee entrepreneurship to grow and flourish; and
- Guide companies that have made commitments to the Tent Partnership for Refugees and amplify their journeys and successes for others to learn from.

The newly launched Roundtable will be expanded to:

- **All refugee** populations in Canada
- Convened locally (GTHA), but **National in scope**: i.e., with engagement across the country.

[JOIN THE ROUNDTABLE](#)

[Read more...](#)



Migrants with Irregular Status: Guidance for Cities

By Niko
May 13, 2019
[Opinion](#)



The following excerpt is printed with permission from: [Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe: Guidance for Municipalities](#) by Nicola Delvino and Sarah Spencer, on behalf of the City Initiative on Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe (C-MISE)*. Oxford: COMPAS, 2019.

While immigration control is primarily a matter for national governments, responsibility for public services is a shared competence. Municipalities across Europe differ in the specific range of services for which they are responsible. Nevertheless, they all bear responsibility for the general welfare of residents in their area. Municipalities provide services such as healthcare, policing, housing, social services and education to a wide range of people with differing needs, while bearing a broader responsibility for maintaining social cohesion and public safety, including combatting racism. Their role in promoting sustainable development and tackling poverty is also increasingly recognised at the national and international level.

Among those living in local communities are people whose immigration status is irregular, limiting their entitlement to work and to public services. National legal frameworks are largely restrictive (see Section 1.2), providing minimal or no access for irregular migrants to most services. This can lead to social problems at the local level, including homelessness and destitution, which municipalities find they need to address. While Europe's municipalities have benefitted from a range of guidance materials on approaches they can take in relation to migrants who are authorised to reside, guidance on how to address the challenges raised by the presence of irregular migrants has not been readily available. One of the aims of this guidance is to raise awareness of the particular challenges municipalities face in relation to this group of residents. It is hoped that this will facilitate dialogue within and between authorities at all levels of governance on effective approaches they can take.



[Continue reading](#)

[Download the full report, related resources and videos](#) from the C-MISE project page at COMPAS.

Executive summary [for download]

- [Greek](#)
- [English](#)
- [Español](#)
- [Français](#)
- [Italiano](#)

Irregular Migrants in European Cities: How to Respond? Watch the video:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



More C-MISE videos:

The main subtitled video: [Irregular Migrants in European Cities: How to Respond?](#) [with subtitles]

The 5 city videos (taken from the main video):

- [Amsterdam](#)
- [Barcelona](#)
- [Frankfurt](#)
- [Ghent](#)
- [Utrecht](#)

**The C-MISE working group, which had its first meeting in Utrecht, in June 2017, is comprised of the following cities from eight European countries: Athens, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Ghent, Gothenburg, Lisbon, Oslo, Stockholm and Utrecht (Chair). The cities of Helsinki and Zurich are Associate members.*

Palermo to Europe: Leoluca Orlando's Political Vision

By Niko
May 14, 2019
[Interview](#)



By: Harald Bauder, Ryerson University

Palermo was once known as the capital of the mafia. When Leoluca Orlando became Mayor in 1985, he took up the fight against the mafia. Today, he is widely credited for ridding this Sicilian port city of organized crime. Now serving his fifth term as Mayor – interspersed with seats in the European, the Italian, and the Sicilian parliaments – Orlando has turned his eye towards fighting for justice for migrants and refugees. His widely celebrated [Charter of Palermo](#) calls for freedom of mobility as a human right and the abolition of the residence permit in the European Union. We spoke with Orlando in his official residence, the Villa Niscemi, at the outskirts of Palermo. He explained that his fight against the Mafia and for refugees and migrants “are related to each other. Being against the mafia and being against the residence permit means having respect for human rights.”

This respect for human rights translates into a political vision for Palermo that revolves around inclusivity, equality, and diversity.

Orlando insists that there are “no migrants in Palermo. If you ask how many migrants are in Palermo, then I do not answer 100,000 or 120,000, but none. If you are in Palermo, you are a Palermitan.” Effectively, Orlando advocates domicile citizenship that includes all people that inhabit the city, independent from where or to whom they were born.

He vehemently opposes excluding people based on their origin or heritage. “May I ask what the difference is between your blood and my blood,” he questions, pointing to the veins in his arm. “It does not matter if my mother or father are Sicilian. I am a Sicilian because I have decided to be here.” He explains, “identity is the first act of freedom” that migrants make when they find a new home.

Orlando sees his city as a mosaic, consisting of diverse pieces that come “in different colors, in different dimensions.” What keeps this mosaic from crumbling is the frame of “respect for human rights.” This vision of inclusion applies to migrants as well as other marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community.

As a pragmatist, Orlando realizes that migration and diversity must go hand in hand with technological advances. Phrased in Orlando's allegorical language, this means that Palermo's “future has two names. One name is Google, or Alibaba or Facebook. The other name is Ahmed – the migrant. The first stands for virtual connections, the second for human connections.” By integrating migration, diversity, and technology, Palermitans will enjoy a just and prosperous society.

Orlando's progressive political urban vision collides with the national politics of the current Italian government. Together with his counterparts, the mayors of Naples, Florence, and other Italian cities, Orlando [has refused to fully implement](#) Italy's national asylum law at the municipal level. In turn, the Italian Minister of the Interior, Matteo Salvini, accused Orlando of [civil disobedience](#).

Political threats do not intimidate Orlando, who was called the “walking corpse” when he risked his life in the fight against the mafia. In early April, [Orlando invited](#) the German rescue boat Alan Kurdi carrying 64 refugees to enter the harbour of Palermo, although Salvini denied the boat and its desperate passengers admission.

Orlando's oppositional politics has been endorsed at the highest spiritual rank. He points to a picture of himself with Pope Francis that is displayed on a bookshelf in his office, explaining that he received a letter “about migrants” from the Pope: “When Minister Salvini said, ‘I will send the army against Orlando’, then the Archbishop [of Rome] said it is a duty to be against this law. And he said we have to organize resistance,” Orlando recounts, chuckling at the Pope's approval. Although Orlando is highly critical of the European Union's migration policies, he knows that the current crisis of dealing with migration cannot be solved by returning to nationalism but must be addressed that the European level. Arguing that Salvini's Decree tramples on human rights, he shouts: “I'm for Europe – for Europe – FOR EUROPE!”



Today, major European municipalities, [solidarity networks](#), and [safe-harbour initiatives](#) are endorsing the Charter of Palermo, and with it Orlando's political vision for Europe.



Harald Bauder is a Professor at [Ryerson University](#) and a Marie Curie Fellow of the European Union at the [Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies](#). He thanks Judith Gleitze and [borderline-europe](#) for helping arrange the interview, which took place on 14 March 2019. The original interview in German is available at [FluchtforschungsBlog](#).

Migration, Cities and Universities

By kturner
January 30, 2019
[Opinion](#)



By **Ratna Omidvar**, Independent Senator for Ontario, Senate of Canada

On August 13 2018, Senator Ratna Omidvar participated in Ryerson University's [WC2 University Network Conference](#) as a keynote speaker and panelist with John Ralston Saul and Haroon Siddiqui as moderator. The theme of the event revolved around the role universities and cities play in promoting and influencing migration.

Here's an excerpt from the Senator's keynote address:

"Like many others, I believe that the future and fact of the world lies in cities – I don't actually live entirely in local la-la land. Here are my five observations about cities and migration.

First, while immigration is a uniquely national and regional experience – people will move from China to the US or from India to Australia – the experience of inclusion and integration or the experience of exclusion and marginalization is always first a uniquely local one. This experience takes place in cities, schools, streets, buses, libraries and of course universities.

Second, we often talk about immigration and managing migration flows as national or multinational constructs. But the public trust in the governance system surrounding them is greatly determined by the ability of the government to translate the national interest into benefits that can be experienced and shared at the local level. Where people feel that national interest is riding rough shod over them, people will begin to see newcomers as a threat. And this is not an abstract conversation. It is not enough to say that immigration is good for the economy. People need to touch and feel the benefits every day.

My third observation is about the political clout of immigrants in their city. The electorate is moving in masses to cities. It may well be that it is from the local level that we are best positioned to strengthen democratic processes and institutions to combat all forms of extremism and populism. Similarly, universities are places where diverse opinions gather. There's a lot of cacophony and noise and disagreement as scholars zigzag between pluralism and populism. Post-secondary institutions will be the great moderators of the discourse, not towards consensus but towards lesser extremes and a more nuanced conversation.

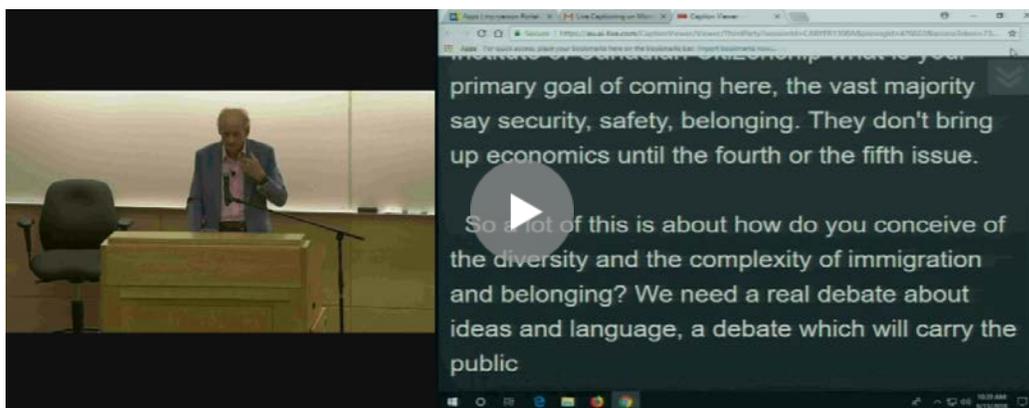
Fourth, I believe that cities and their local institutions such as universities have an inherent advantage. It is far, far easier for cities to come together, to beg, borrow and collaborate around good ideas from each other than it is for national governments to do so. Former mayor of New York Michael



Bloomberg said it best: “while nations talk, cities act.” And cities have acted – on climate change, food security, plastic waste, fast food, and sex trafficking, to name just a few.

Fifth, I’m a huge believer of good ideas. Ryerson is one of the first universities in Canada to install a Vice-President for equity and inclusion. She has a mandate, staff, and an institutional backing. It was under her leadership to Ryerson hosted a few months ago a first ever conference in Canada to discuss the theme of white privilege. It’s a very difficult conversation to have in this country but it is an essential conversation. Further to this point, I think cities and local institutions can play a role in easing national pain. Vancouver is the first city that has taken a deliberate approach in closing the emotional gap between the only two segments of our population that are growing – Canada’s immigrants and Canada’s indigenous peoples and there’s this huge gap between us and we don’t talk to each other. Vancouver has taken the first small step.”

Watch the event in full:



Engaging diverse communities is everyone's job

By kturmer

[Opinion](#)



Opinion by **Bel Schenk**, Welcoming Cities Program Officer, Welcome to Australia

The City of Stirling in Australia has a new network of diversity champions. In local government, engaging diverse communities is everyone's job.

As with many local governments across Australia, the responsibility for engaging and including diverse communities often lies with a stand alone community development department. Generating awareness and sharing knowledge of multicultural communities and their needs is often done in isolation — and without broader council buy-in.

This has been the case with Western Australian city of Stirling, and its council's community development department. In the past, the department's approach to promoting cultural competency in other business units was to offer cultural diversity training and informal consultancy on an "as required" basis. Over time, however, the city recognised that systemic change across the organisation would need to occur.

So, the city of Stirling is now changing course, and implementing a council-wide diversity champion initiative. Already, the results are pointing to a more welcoming and inclusive community.

An inclusive and harmonious city

Stirling's [diversity champions network](#) is intended to help the city work towards its vision of an "inclusive and harmonious city", as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan. This network provides staff from across the entire organisation with the opportunity to get involved in the implementation of strategies that focus on building inclusiveness for everyone.

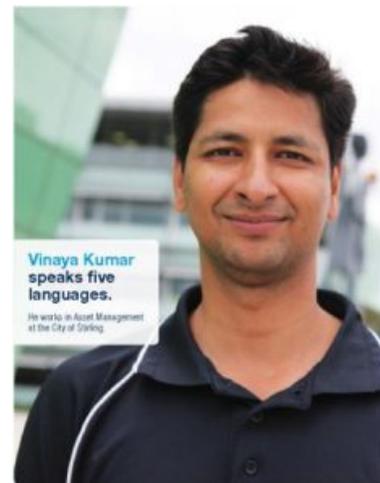
Cultural diversity and inclusion will no longer be the sole responsibility of one department – responsibility for diversity and inclusion has now been delegated across the organisation through these "champions".

Empowering people across the organisation to play a proactive role in responding to multicultural issues in a work context ensures that real change will be implemented.

Sarah Janali, team leader, cultural diversity & community, is an advocate of the council-wide approach. "Diversity champions receive training by specialist diversity and inclusion staff, so rather than this knowledge and expertise being held in one area it is spread across the organisation. The champions also bring their unique perspectives to the table and an understanding of what works and what doesn't in their work environment," she said.

A customer service perspective

To get the city's employees interested in this approach, some diversity champions have delivered short learning or taster activities in their team meetings. Ameen Khan is a customer service officer — and the first point of call for residents to access council services, whether that be about rates, rubbish and roads or community programs and library services.



Though he and his team are trained to help every person with respect and an open mind, he has noticed that the information he shares through his champion role has allowed for the team to have an increased cultural awareness of each person who phones, emails or visits the office.

For example, when the English proficiency of some customers is not high, verbal communication can be particularly open to misunderstanding, and the customer service team now have more awareness about when to use an interpreter.

Ameen's presentations on specifics of different cultures which he has delivered to colleagues have provided support in troubleshooting challenges when they occur. "One of the highlights was when I introduced a Harmony Week celebration for the customer service team... I delivered a presentation on the history of Australia's multiculturalism and welcomed the team to speak about their interesting heritages," he said.

Ameen relishes his role as a diversity champion and finds value in sharing information with other departments, creating further opportunities to increase cultural awareness and to celebrate diversity.

This awareness has flowed into areas outside of work, further spreading knowledge and respect into the wider community. Ameen said, "my colleagues often ask me questions on the best way to approach and interact with people of certain cultures. They have also expressed that the knowledge they have gained has benefitted them in their awareness outside of work and in their personal lives as well."

Strategies such as the diversity champion network demonstrate that everyone has a role to ensure that residents of all abilities have access to city services and are included in community life. The city of Stirling continues to be a leader in welcoming work and as such will reap the rewards of connected and inclusive communities into the future.

"This piece was first published on [Apolitical](#) and can be found [here](#). For more like this, see the [Apolitical refugees & migration newsfeed](#)."

Europe's economy and the migration question

By ktuner
October 29, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By Efthymia Koutsokosta

There are over 250 million migrants around the world living outside their country of birth and this figure is expected to grow. The debate over migration in Europe remains divisive. [Euronews](#) spoke to Louise Arbour, UN Special Representative for International Migration, about the EU's choices.

LA: "Europe now and even more so in the decades to come will have a self interest in opening up legal pathways to its labour market because it's very clear that Europe to different extent in different European countries but across the world will have a very severe deficit of human resources in the years to come".

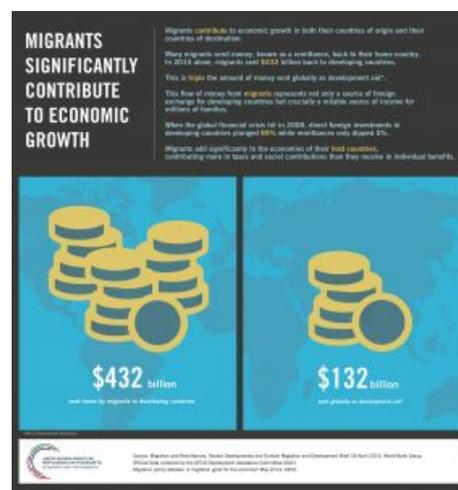
Far from being a burden, the UN highlights the [contribution of migrants to the economy](#).

LA: "The picture of who are migrants I think is very misunderstood. They contribute, migrants spend 85% of their income, they usually earn less than native workers, that's unfortunate but to be expected, they spend 85% of their income in the host community and they send 15% back home. This 15% in 2017 was 600 billion dollars. This is three times more than the official development aid that rich countries send to the developing world," explains Arbour.

With the warnings from the [UN's recent report on climate change](#), Arbour stresses that forced displacement is clearly linked to global warming.

LA: "In the area of climate change is it five minutes to midnight or one minute to midnight? I think scientists fortunately tell us we shouldn't give up because it's not quite too late but it's late enough that I think the kind of mobilisation we need which will have an enormous impact also on migration is that this process should start right now."

Reprinted with permission: [Euronews, Brussels Bureau, October 11, 2018](#)



Louise Arbour was appointed [Special Representative for International Migration](#) by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on 9 March 2017. She previously served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and as Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. She is a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. From 2009 to 2014, Ms. Arbour was President and CEO of the International Crisis Group.

High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour,

Why all pupils should learn migration history

By ktuner
[Education Inclusion, Opinion](#)



Emily Miller, head of learning and partnerships at the **Migration Museum Project (UK)** and former teacher, believes embedding themes of migration within the new curriculum can reignite our interest in history.

“How is it possible we don’t have our own migration museum in the UK?” I asked, as I descended the steps of France’s immigration museum in Paris in 2012. “When we do, I want to run its education programme...”

Never before had I sent such a frank statement into the universe (or been listened to).

As a former citizenship teacher, I was struck by how relevant the exhibition’s themes of migration and identity were to so many of the young people I was teaching, yet how few cultural spaces we had in the UK to explore themes at the heart of who we are – as individuals, as communities and as a nation.

Six years on and still sporting my citizenship-teacher’s hat – for when does a teacher ever really lose that hat? – I am part of a team establishing a national migration museum for Britain, with an active education programme at its core. We are also helping to shape the revised national curriculum, which, for all its challenges, is providing exciting opportunities for pupils to learn about how immigration and emigration have shaped the UK over time.

Embedding themes of migration within the new curriculum enables pupils in our increasingly ethnically diverse schools to see themselves represented in what they are learning about – and as part of a more shared and inclusive national history and identity.



‘Relevant and engaging’

As a student from Aylesbury High School – who is studying the new migration modules in history – said: “This unit was great because I learned a lot about my own family. I had no idea about my grandfather’s moving story before this.”

The student was part of a team that won a joint competition with exam board OCR and a Migration Museum project called Moving Stories. The competition invited teams of pupils to design an exhibit for our museum, with the winners jetting off with me to New York City in July to learn from our friends at Ellis Island and the Tenement Museum.

A competition runner-up from Tiffin Girls’ School said: “Our own parents are migrants who settled in England so a lot of what we study focuses on things they have experienced themselves, which is really surprising.”

This level of relevance and interest has contributed to many schools opting for the new migration modules. Michael Riley, director of the Schools History Project, said that the organisation is really pleased with the uptake of the migration units and has heard lots from schools about how much the students are enjoying them.

Amid heated debate about what form and substance history teaching in schools should take – and amid concern at the large number of pupils choosing not to take history at GCSE – this long-overdue focus on such a relevant and engaging topic could not be more important, particularly against the backdrop of Brexit.

This is a point underlined by Michael Maddison, former national lead for history at Ofsted. “Sixty per cent of pupils give up history at the age of 13. What must they have studied before this point? This is a key question teachers must ask,” he said during a recent meeting. “I’m increasingly convinced that one thing they must have covered in school is an understanding of migration history – the long story, the impact of migration over time. Too many do not yet have this opportunity.”

As Maddison suggests, there is great potential for pupils to learn about these themes at key stage 3 and many are on this journey already.

‘It resonates with their lives’

Sally McCartney, history adviser for United Learning, says that “our KS3 students enjoy learning about our country’s migration story”. She adds: “It intrigues them to find out about the variety of reasons why people moved around, from the Vikings to the Windrush generation.

“Some of our pupils have benefited from workshops at the Migration Museum, which resonates with the society they live in and their lives.”

At the museum, we are deepening our engagements and partnerships with schools, multi-academy trusts, exam boards, subject associations and other bodies, and engaging directly with more students through our workshops and teaching resources. We are also doing a second run of our Moving Stories competition with OCR. Over time, I want to ensure all UK pupils learn about our migration history – all our stories. Let’s hope the universe is still listening to this former citizenship teacher’s pleas.

Reprinted with permission from: [TES, September 4, 2018](#).



Emily Miller is head of learning and partnerships at the [Migration Museum Project](#). For more information, please [click here](#); or contact her by email: Emily (at) migrationmuseum.org

Boundaries of Inclusion

By ktuner
August 31, 2018
[Opinion](#)



2018 David Dodge Lecture: Boundaries of Inclusion

CIFAR held the third annual David Dodge Lecture on May 2, 2018. The 2018 David Dodge Lecture was presented by Dr. **Irene Bloemraad**, Senior Fellow in CIFAR's program in Successful Societies and Professor of Sociology and the Thomas Garden Barnes Chair of Canadian Studies at University of California, Berkeley. **Elizabeth Mclsaac**, President of the Maytree Foundation, moderated the lecture.

An internationally recognized expert on immigration issues, Dr. Bloemraad explored frame resonance and inclusion: how concepts of citizenship and rights and judgements of deservingness shape citizens' support for redistribution efforts. Dr. Bloemraad shared insights from her recent research across jurisdictions. In California, where most of her research is situated, she has found that the strongest frame of resonance emphasizes American values – a finding that defies the premise of national values as necessarily exclusionary. Below are key messages from her lecture and the discussion that followed.

Migration, Human Rights and National Values

American national values and inclusion are not necessarily opposing concepts.

In a recent research study, Dr. Bloemraad presented survey respondents with a hypothetical scenario in which an individual may be experiencing discrimination and then posed a series of questions about deservingness and government action to address the situation. The study found that regardless of positioning, respondents demonstrate a gap in deservingness judgements that is based on citizenship status, with a hypothetical undocumented immigrant judged as less deserving of support than a hypothetical citizen. Significantly, the study also found that when a survey is positioned using a frame of American values, respondents' support for government action to address discrimination increases regardless of the hypothetical individual's citizenship status. This has implications for policy as it may be desirable to promote redistributive policies by couching policies within the language of national values.

There is a tension, although not necessarily a contradiction, between human rights and self-determination.

The concept of human rights emerged in response to the atrocities of the Second World War, and it determines that there are rights every human holds regardless of nationality, citizenship status, race, religion, etc. Self-determination, however, grants rights solely on the basis of citizenship.

Western countries are increasingly tightening spheres of inclusion.

Examples of the move towards this include the development of prototypes for Donald Trump's Wall (a literal shutting of boundaries) as well as the use of facial recognition technology for American border security.

For inequalities to be addressed, important questions about citizenship and inclusion need to be answered.

- Are national values inherently anti-immigrant?
- Does the concept of human rights truly have a universalist impact?
- Can rights claims overcome the boundaries between groups in a nation?

National values framing is likely the best way to generate support for redistributive policies.

Amongst American values, civil rights, and human rights, the frame of American values is the only one of the three frames that boosts support for both citizens and undocumented immigrants in Dr. Bloemraad's study. This outcome is surprising due to the frame's strongly positive effect on Latino American respondents. Civil rights language, by contrast, had no effect on levels of support and human rights framing only reduced the support gap between citizens and undocumented immigrants for certain respondents. Also important was the finding that all three frames reduced support among white respondents below control levels, indicating that in some cases no framing should be used to boost support for redistribution. The implication is that, contrary to expectations, national values may be the best tool policymakers have to advance inclusionary policies.

Canada may be a unique case in which national values promote rather than resist inclusion.

Over the last fifteen years, support for immigration in Canada has been steadily growing, a trend that is in reversal in both the United States and across Europe. When polled, Canadians identified multiculturalism as a high-ranking cornerstone of their national identity. Canada, however, is not immune to anti-immigrant sentiment, and its national values are likely to be tested by a growing stream of American asylum seekers.

There may be a connection between deservingness judgements and status anxiety.

Recent studies suggest that one's personal economic situation is not a good predictor of openness to immigration. Rather, anti-immigrant sentiment may be better predicted by one's level of anxiety about their personal socio-economic status. Higher levels of status anxiety in America are usually found among middle-class or higher working class white Americans and white men in particular.

National values may be a slippery slope, but there's a high political cost to not appealing to them.

National values are often poorly defined and can be interpreted strongly in the favor of the person attempting to appeal to them. Choosing not to engage with national values, however, allows competitors to completely redefine the political discourse in a nation to their own benefit.

The appeal of societal benevolence has its limitations.

Benevolence, for all its potential for good, is sometimes associated with religious views deemed to be problematic. Benevolence comes with certain expectations in terms of moral behaviour, and this may entail harsher deservingness judgements for particular groups of people (e.g. single mothers). Universal entitlements such as human rights make no such distinctions.

Future studies are needed to identify how race and legal status intersect and affect deservingness judgements.

Such research should account for the types of legal status in between full citizenship and undocumented immigrant (e.g. temporary residence). Legal claims may be made more legitimate by certain racial backgrounds, but there are no answers to this question yet.

The 2018 David Dodge Lecture was supported by the Crabtree Foundation and held in partnership with Cities of Migration at Ryerson University and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). Nearly 100 representatives from government, civil society and academic spheres participated in this year's lecture.



Irene Bloemraad is a political sociologist who studies the nexus between immigration, politics and national identities. Dr. Bloemraad is Senior Fellow in [CIFAR's program in Successful Societies](#) and Professor of Sociology and the Thomas Garden Barnes Chair of Canadian Studies at University of California, Berkeley. [More.](#)

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Nothing About Us Without Us

By kturmer
June 24, 2018
[Opinion](#)



BY Sana Mustafa, founder Sana Mustafa Consulting

We don't accept all-male panels on women's issues, so why do we still discuss refugee policy without refugees, asks entrepreneur Sana Mustafa. Beyond tokenistic inclusion of refugee stories, she argues that meaningful participation requires major institutional shifts.

Nothing About Us Without Us: Why Refugee Inclusion Is Long Overdue

I was recently invited to deliver a keynote address at an event on refugee inclusion. A crowd, dressed in business casual, packed out the event space. The master of ceremonies bellowed over the loudspeaker, "Please join me in welcoming a Syrian refugee to the stage."

I cringed. In a fleeting moment the event organizers had undermined the very project they had set out to address: empowering refugees. I had asked them to introduce me like they would anyone else, by my resume. By introducing me by my legal status, they had stripped me of my agency, further entrenching the narrative of dependent, passive refugees.



International Refugee Congress

My name is Sana Mustafa. I am the founder of a consulting company, a co-founder of the international [Network for Refugee Voices](#), and yes, a Syrian refugee.

Today's practice of refugee participation typically equates to a refugee recounting their journey at the beginning of an event. Storytelling can be a helpful tool to shift xenophobic narratives about refugees, but it is not enough. Meaningful refugee participation requires a rethink of the international humanitarian support and development landscape.

We must uproot the traditional, top-down, structure of humanitarian aid and initiate a participatory, bottom-up, approach to refugee policy. Refugees must be given a seat at the table to participate in existing conversations about refugee policy and empowered to create their own spaces.

We must uproot the traditional, top-down, structure of humanitarian aid and initiate a participatory, bottom-up, approach to refugee policy.

This call for inclusion via participation is not new. We have been fighting for decades for the inclusion of minority groups in conversations about their futures. I would like to believe that gone are the days where an international institution would host a conference on women's rights without inviting women to participate.

However, until now, international discussion on the refugee issue has largely tokenized refugees and attempted to make decisions without refugees themselves having a substantive say. At the United Nations, for example, where countries are negotiating a new global compact on refugees, refugees have been allowed into the negotiation room, but only as observers.

I have attended countless panels about the "refugee experience" that had zero refugee representation. Imagine if in this era, there was a women's rights policy being negotiated where women were allowed to observe, but not speak. Or a panel about the "female experience" without any women. Would we, as global citizens, stand for that?

Imagine if in this era, there was a women's rights policy being negotiated where women were allowed to observe, but not speak.

There are some organizations that are doing refugee participation well. Oxfam International recently hosted an [International Refugee Congress](#) that engaged refugee-led groups and host countries as key actors. WeWork hired refugee consultants to advise on their World Refugee Day campaign on cultural sensitivity. The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has formed a [Global Youth Advisory Council](#) of young refugees. Independent Diplomat provides diplomatic advice to refugee leaders to inform their participation in global policy discussions.

Some non-governmental organizations, like the Refugee Council of Australia, that have traditionally been responsible for representing refugee views in international policy discussions are instead funding refugees to travel to conferences to represent themselves.

Perhaps most inspiring, however, is the initiative refugee-led groups are taking to redefine refugee participation and inclusion. Refugees are leading by example.

Next week [25-26 June 2018], a group of over 70 refugee leaders from around the world will descend upon Geneva to convene the [Global Summit of Refugees](#).* The summit will be the first ever strategic-level meeting of refugees, run by refugees, in the interests of refugees.

If there is one message that echoes forth from the Global Summit it will be: "Nothing about us, without us."

**Conceived by group of nine refugee leaders from Syria, Colombia, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar and Afghanistan, living on six different continents, Global Summit refugee participants represent 26 countries of origin and 34 hosting countries.*



Sana Mustafa is the founder of Sana Mustafa Consulting and the co-founder of the international [Network for Refugee Voices](#).

The views expressed in this article belong to the author and do not necessarily reflect the editorial policy of Refugees Deeply.

This article originally appeared on Refugees Deeply. You can find the original [here](#). For important news about the global migration crisis, you can sign up to the Refugees [email list](#).

Toronto: Planning for Diversity, Inclusion and Urban Resilience

By kturner
July 20, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By: Dr. Zhixi Zhuang, Associate Professor, School of Urban and Regional Planning, Ryerson University

Recent waves of global migration have led to profound social, cultural, economic, political, physical, and environmental effects in metropolitan regions of major immigrant settlement. In a [new report from the Building Inclusive Cities project](#), Dr. Zhixi Zhuang describes the important role cities play in the processes of immigrant settlement and integration. Not only do they serve as reception areas for newcomers to live, work, learn, play, and socialize like other city inhabitants; they are also important places for building diverse, inclusive, resilient and equitable communities in the long term. [This report](#) presents key takeaways from Toronto's planning practices for the Building Inclusive Cities initiative.



From arrival cities to welcoming communities: Why do diversity, inclusion and resilience matter to cities?

Toronto has been well recognized as one of the most multicultural cities in the world: its diverse demographics bring the world to the city. The city's motto 'Diversity Our Strength' is often used in city branding and promotion celebrating its multicultural diversity. In 2017, more than half of the three million Torontonians were born outside of Canada and self-reported as a visible minority. However, in arrival cities like Toronto, an ethno-culturally diverse population does not necessarily lead to diverse, inclusive, and resilient communities. Research has revealed that diversity adds advantages and competitiveness to cities by building social cohesion, enhancing economic vitality, fostering cultural belonging, driving innovation and promoting creativity. To realize these advantages equity and inclusion require fostering in every aspect of civic life.

The key to ensuring the success of a multiculturally diverse society is treating immigrants, refugees, racialized and marginalized members fairly. A successful welcoming community ensures all members have equal access to municipal resources, infrastructure, facilities, and services, equal rights to use of public spaces, and equal representation in decision-making processes.

"It has become imperative for municipalities to understand the dynamics and complexity of the global migration phenomenon and tackle the challenges and opportunities it presents locally."

Diverse and inclusive cities and communities have more social, economic and physical resilience in the face of unforeseen challenges because community members are equipped with the values of equity, diversity and inclusion to adapt to changes and create positive opportunities for community-(re)building.

Urban resilience is of paramount importance because it is interconnected to socio-ecological systems and is central in policy-making discourses. Recent climate-induced migration and refugee crises have triggered political and societal debates over security, newcomer settlement, risk assessment and the adaptability of cities. Urban resilience implies a capacity to respond to emergencies and unexpected events like the surge in refugee claimants crossing the Canada-US border and overwhelming Toronto shelters.

How could cities be doing better? [Continue reading...](#)

[Download the case study](#). See also, [webinar and related resources](#).

Toronto: Planning for Diversity, Inclusion and Urban Resilience [July 2018; PDF] by Dr. Zhixi Zhuang, Associate Professor, School of Urban and Regional Planning, Ryerson University, is a case study and selection of international promising practices produced for the Building Inclusive Cities Project at Cities of Migration. The Building Inclusive Cities Project is supported by the Open Society Foundations.

About the author



Dr. Zhixi Zhuang is an Associate Professor at Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning and a Registered Professional Planner in Ontario. Her passion for city- and community-building has led to her research on how ethnocultural diversity affects urban landscapes and municipal policies and planning. Her current research projects explore suburban ethnic place-making practices in the Greater Toronto Area and how municipalities could enhance the advantages of ethnocultural diversity for suburban retrofitting and inclusive community building.

Inclusion of Migrants with Irregular Status

By Evelyn
June 21, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By Sarah Spencer, Director, Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity, COMPAS, University of Oxford

Sarah Spencer explains why cities in Europe, like their North American counterparts, are increasingly exploring ways to enable irregular ('undocumented') migrants to have access to essential services, and tells us some of the creative ways that they have found to do so. She draws on the work of the [City Initiative on Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe](#), a two-year learning-exchange project involving 11 European cities, chaired by the City of Utrecht, which she facilitates with her Oxford colleague, Nicola Delvino.



Why cities reach out to migrants with irregular status

There is a widespread expectation that cities will take steps to ease the integration of migrants who have a legal right to stay. The invaluable guidance that Cities of Migration has drawn together in this Building Inclusive Cities initiative rests on the premise that cities both can and ought to use their influence to do so. Discuss these issues with city policy makers in North America and the conversation will invariably extend to migrants with irregular status. The social and economic exclusion of these residents often presents some of the toughest issues that cities have had to face. Yet in Europe cities have only recently begun to talk to each other, and in private, about the challenges they face in relation to this group of people. In the polarized, heated discourse on migration taking place in Europe, in which 'illegal' immigrants are negatively portrayed, the idea that cities are taking steps to foster their inclusion would surprise and shock many, in equal measure.

So why are cities taking this step and increasingly wanting to learn from others how to navigate this particularly difficult policy arena?

It is rarely acknowledged by European governments that they have themselves recognized a need to permit irregular migrants a minimal level of inclusion in essential services. Mapping national provisions on health care for instance reveals that all EU states allow access to emergency care (albeit in some cases for payment) and a minority of states allow irregular migrants to have access to some primary and secondary health services. Most states allow children with irregular immigration status to attend school. Access to shelter is limited, but provision is made in some states to ensure victims of domestic violence can approach the police for help without risk of deportation; or, for instance, to allow new parents to apply for a birth certificate.¹ There are even examples of recent reforms to extend access to services, as in Sweden in relation to access to health care and education in 2013. Yet the overall picture is highly restrictive. Irregular migrants are largely excluded as a matter of national law from work, welfare support and services.

"The exclusion of irregular migrants threatens the city's capacity to fulfil its broader responsibilities – whether ensuring economic prosperity, public health, community safety or cohesion."

There is no recent estimate of the number of irregular migrants in Europe. The last officially accepted estimate suggested it was between 1.9 and 3.8 million in 2008, some 0.4 – 0.8% of the population of the then EU 27 Member States.² Nothing more definite is known about numbers in cities but research has suggested that they comprise between 3% and 6% of the population in cities like Ghent, Genoa and Rotterdam.³ The recent 'refugee crisis' is expected to add to those numbers when many of those who applied for asylum are refused but do not leave. The rate of returns is currently well below 50%.⁴ Yet, pending detection and removal, they are living in Europe's cities and present challenges which cities cannot ignore.

[Continue reading...](#)

Source: [The Inclusion of Migrant with Irregular Status](#) [PDF] by Dr. Sarah Spencer, Director, Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity, COMPAS, University of Oxford (UK) is a case study published with a selection of international promising practices produced by the Building Inclusive Cities project at Cities of Migration. See also, [webinar and related resources](#).

About the author



Dr Sarah Spencer is Director of the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity, the learning-exchange arm of Oxford University's Centre on Migration, Policy and Society. Prior to Oxford, Sarah was Deputy Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality and Chair of the network of equality and human rights organizations, the Equality and Diversity Forum. Her research has focused on integration and, under the auspices of an Open Society Fellowship, on national and city responses to irregular migrants in Europe. As Director of the Global Exchange, Sarah is responsible for the City Initiative on Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe with her colleague Senior Researcher Nicola Delvino.

The City Initiative on Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe (C-MISE) is a working group of cities meeting over two years to learn from each other and to publish guidance for municipalities across Europe on responding to irregular migrants in their area. The guidance, to be published in Spring 2019, will cover a wide range of services from legal advice and education through health care, shelter, and support for victims of crime. The cities involved are Athens, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Ghent, Gothenburg, Lisbon, Oslo, Stockholm and Utrecht, with Zurich and Helsinki as Associate Members.

Getting Up Close with Migration

By Evelyn
June 14, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, Independent Senator for Ontario, The Senate of Canada

“Getting Up Close with Migration: Local Benefits and Public Trust in a Matter of National Interest”: keynote address presented at the National Conversation on Immigration and Integration Conference, May 17, 2018, London, UK.

Good morning. I'd like to begin by expressing my sincerest gratitude to the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#), [British Future](#) and the [Hope Not Hate Campaign](#) me to speak today.

I'd also like to congratulate British Future and Hope Not Hate for their ongoing work toward completing the [National Conversation on Immigration](#). I'm incredibly impressed with the breadth and scale of the consultations underway here in the United Kingdom. This work is precedent-setting for other parts of the world looking to revamp their immigration systems. Canada is no exception.

It's humbling being asked to come to another country to share my insights. But it is also perhaps an opportunity to engage in a bit of two-way traffic, because our system has borrowed so much from yours, in particular our parliamentary system. When I became a Senator I understood better how much we base our parliamentary democracy on yours. So this is an appropriate opportunity to say “Thank You” and give something back.

I may not have all the answers or the silver bullets that you desire. What I do have is a story to tell, some ideas to share, and a perspective of how my own country manages migration flows and continues to stitch immigrants and refugees into its national fabric. I was born in Amritsar, India – home to the famous Golden Temple. After studying at the University of Delhi, I headed off the West Germany to continue my education there. One day I went hiking in the Alps with some other foreign students. By the time we climbed back down I had met my life partner. He was from Iran, and so after we completed our studies, rather naively as it turned out, we wanted to give his home country a try. Bad idea. We arrived in Tehran during one of the bloodiest and most turbulent periods in Iran's history. Twenty-five hundred years of Persian monarchy was coming to an end with the Islamic Revolution and the overthrow of the Shah. We knew we had to get out but it wasn't going to be easy. We had a child by that time – still a baby – and all air routes out of Iran were closed.

So we decided, with all the courage of youth, to pack our bags, load up the baby carriage and make the long, cold journey by road. After two horrific days, we found ourselves in a small square room on the border of Iran and Turkey. On one side of the room: a portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini. On the other: a portrait of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic.

We were cold, very tired and very afraid. And frankly, we were telling whatever lies we could in order to get to the other side of the room. We omitted the fact that we had money crammed up the legs of the baby carriage. We did not tell the guards that our papers were not quite real. They ripped everything apart – the diaper bag, the milk powder – but they did not think to check the carriage. We made it to the other side. And through Turkey we eventually made it to Germany. Unfortunately they were not accepting a lot of immigrants at the time, so we eventually applied to Canada – and were rejected. But we persisted and thanks to friends in Canada, we were eventually sponsored and made that initial journey across the Atlantic. My story is not special. The details differ from one migrant to another, but we all share similar experiences. We all leave one life to find another. And we all faced the inevitable struggles from rejection to reinvention; from prejudice to persistence. Every immigrant starts in the same four part serial: Arrival, rejection, then slow reinvention and renewal, and then hopefully “redemption”, if not in our lives then through the lives of our children.

Canada has always been seen as a nation of immigrants, and therefore of diversity. In a recent survey, it was further determined that Canadians believe that multiculturalism, diversity and inclusions are our most notable contribution to the world. So now it is less about peacekeeping and foreign aid and more about who we are and how we get along with each other. Multiculturalism, and the acceptance of immigrants and refugees now stand out as the best way Canadians feel their country can be role model for others and as a way to exert our influence on the global stage. Canada is lucky to be situated far away – protected by the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic Oceans, and sharing a border with the United States, arguably the most prosperous country in the world. It's not a country that is easy to come to informally, though this is changing. My country is also fortunate in its history. It is a young country with over a century and a half of holding a nation together despite all the differences and tensions that can tear us apart. We have largely succeeded because of what's in our nation's DNA – incremental accommodation, negotiation, and reconciliation.

Accommodation with Quebec which has its own French language laws. Negotiation with our provinces over authority, money, power. After all, Newfoundland and Labrador only became a Canadian province in 1949. Accommodation with a growing multicultural population with distinct cultures, contexts and needs. And reconciliation with our indigenous peoples, which is still very much a work in progress and frankly, our national shame.

Immigration, a matter of national interest

Canadians, by and large understanding that immigration is in the national interest, because we are a very large country with a very small population and a declining birth rate. We are still in the nation building stage. So whilst we will argue the particularities of the kind of immigrants we need, and sometimes we argue about this till we are blue in the face, we do not argue that we need immigrants.

Needless to say, there is no single Canadian identity. We do not have a fixed sense of who we are, but in the main we are quite happy to have every successive wave of immigrants put their own stamp on our identity. Philosopher Pico Iyer says that Canada has a “global soul”. This “vaporous quality” of the country has led [Mark Kingwell](#), a Canadian philosopher to muse whether Canada is postmodern, post-national or even post-patriotic. He asks the question, whether Canada is indeed a nation or just a notion.

About the only thing we can agree on (outside commonly shared liberal values) is that we are NOT Americans. Those of you who know the famous three words in the American constitution which are “Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” may also want to know the corresponding three words in ours which are “peace, order and good governance”. These three words describe our national character the best. So the Americans send people to the moon, whilst we have public health care.

Our national story of immigration has led us to becoming one of the world’s most diverse and multicultural societies in the world. Toronto, the city I call home is made up of 230 ethnic groups who speak over 160 languages. Close to 49% are immigrants and over half are born outside Canada. It is truly a city belongs to everyone and no one.

And because there is no one dominant ethnic group in Canada, but many, there is a lesser worry that one will dominate the discourse. No political party could ever win an election on a platform that is blatantly anti-immigrant or anti-diversity. Much of this has to do with our electoral map, where no party can win without broad support amongst diverse urban and suburban voters. This luck of geography, history and politics, and the almost accidental porousness of our identity, are important foundations.

There is a mythology that my country welcomes all. But this isn’t all that it’s made out to be: we handpick our immigrants, our refugees, and by extension their families. It is a very high touch process. It’s through strict criteria and good governance that we’ve been able to maintain this image.

Taking the long view

I have not come here to hold Canada on a pedestal though. My country is far from perfect. There are good parts, bad parts, and even truly ugly parts to Canada’s society, much like any other country. Here’s the good thing about Canada: The results of immigration in the long term are very encouraging. The children of immigrants enjoy an exceptional rate of success in school, outpacing the success of native-born Canadians. 60% of immigrants buy homes within six years of arrival. And rates of intermarriage are growing, particularly in urban centres. Many of my country’s future elites are second and third generation immigrants. This will surely continue. The bad: Canada often struggles to recognize foreign credentials. There is a common mythology that internationally trained doctors and scientists drive our taxis and Ubers in Canada. Name-based discrimination is another barrier to entry for newcomers. In Canada you are 35% more likely to be called for a job interview if your name is Matthew and not Sameer. This limits our success greatly. And the ugly truth is that Canada still struggles with racism, particularly towards Black Canadians and Indigenous peoples. Extreme poverty and rising inequality are perhaps the greatest indicators of this ugliness.

Moving to public opinion, Canada and the United Kingdom have a lot more in common than you think with respect to public opinion on migration. And while Canada is seen both within its borders and around the world as a beacon, people are often need to see that multiculturalism is truly working in order to receive their stamp of approval. Work by Canadian academics Randy Besco and Erin Tolley point to a rough rule of thirds.

About one third of Canadians hold clearly negative views. They want less immigration and think minorities should receive less accommodations.

Another third are greatly idealistic about immigration and diversity, and are vocal in their rejections of proposals that negatively target specific groups.

The middle third are ‘conditional multiculturalists’. They will accept those who accept their national values. For instance, they might favour restrictions on the niqab in citizenship ceremonies, but not while accessing public services. They worry that some Muslims pose a threat to public safety, but they also think Muslims deserve equal treatment.

The National Conversation on Immigration here in the UK has observed a similar trend, where the majority of citizens who attended consultations can be described as ‘balancers’. These are individuals who agree that immigration is in the national interest, but have similar concerns about the impact migration – particularly rapid migration – may be having on their communities and public services. Whether balancers or conditional multiculturalists, these are individuals who want to see applications through a formal process that is both fast and fair, based on strict criteria and precedents. They will side with multiculturalism only when they see it is working, particularly in their own communities. For these reasons, they are often difficult people to please, especially when the complexities of our immigration systems show. Emotional responses often rise to the top. Emotion will often trump politics.

I would argue that public confidence in government’s ability to manage migration flows is crucial in both of our countries. This third of the population could swing public opinion towards open-mindedness or closed borders. Together as electors, they are the only thing preventing difficult conversations about immigration from becoming polarized – the true determinants of whether immigration is or is not in our national interests.

[The National Conversation’s Interim Report](#) made a very interesting finding that could be applied to other jurisdictions as well, including Canada: that every community visited had its own local experience with migrants, made up of a mix of positive and negative views. The perspectives of many people are defined greatly by community narratives – on media coverage, popular opinion and the experiences of friends and family.

If there is one significant takeaway from the work currently underway in this country and the ongoing efforts in my country, it is this: public trust in immigration systems are greatly determined by the ability of government to translate and communicate national interest into benefits that can be experienced and shared at the local level. Put another way, should the national interest be perceived to not match the local interest, everyday people will quickly identify government mismanagement. They will see migration as a hindrance to their collective prosperity. And it is from this growing lack of trust in government where hate and economic exclusion fester. This was certainly a factor in your country’s decision to leave the European Union.

Local communities, local institutions

I have always maintained that whilst immigration is a global and national phenomena, integration is a uniquely local experience. People may leave one country for another, but it is the local experience that will be felt first hand. I am talking not just of the newcomers. I believe that the conversation about integration and inclusion has to shift to include three players – first the newcomers, second all existing residents in the local community, and third local institutions. These are the groups that help or hinder integration.

There is a rich narrative of local best practices from the world that lends itself to this idea. [Cities of Migration](#) the world over are experimenting and succeeding with unique local expressions of innovation. For example, [Copenhagen](#) teaches cycling culture to newly arrived Muslim women. [Barcelona](#)

equips local residents with facts to dispel fake news about migrants. And [Toronto](#) matches immigrant job seekers with mentors drawn from the same occupation.

Good ideas have long legs, and some of the best ideas have indeed originated from right here in [London: The London Living Wage](#) as just one example. And because local communities are far better placed than their national governments to nimbly borrow and adapt ideas, the London Living Wage has been embraced by prominent labour unions and activists across Europe and North America.

Conversely, your country has just borrowed an idea from my country that deserves your attention. That idea is to allow everyday citizens to privately sponsor refugees to come to their country.

In Canada, any individual can act as a de facto guarantors for refugee families during their first year of resettlement. Before these refugees arrive, these volunteers raise funds to provide them the necessities – food, shelter. And they develop resettlement plans to ensure these refugees have the support they need to belong and thrive in our country. This can include anything from English language training and enrolments in public schools to weekend museum trips.

As an individual who has privately sponsored refugees myself, I can attest that it is among one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. Today, more than 250 communities across Canada are home to these refugees. One in three Canadians either sponsored a refugee directly or know someone who has. This I think, is a modern nation building strategy, more about social cohesion and less about national infra structure.

This is social engineering at its best.

New localism

Bruce Katz and Jeremy Novak would call this a manifestation of “New Localism” which notes the shift of power in the world: “downward from national governments and states to cities and metropolitan communities; horizontally from the public sector to networks of public, private and civic actors; and globally along circuits of capital, trade, and innovation”.

So in closing I want to leave you with five good ideas which may be helpful:

First, governance matters. Now more than ever the pursuit of the national interest needs to carry through to the local level. And the procedures that govern our processes need to be clear, consistent and easy for the public to understand. It is this confidence that has led the public to support public investments in integration.

Second, local institutions matter. We know that migration issues are local issues at their core. It is libraries, hospitals, schools, parks and bus stops that facilitate or hinder integration. My favourite examples come from Toronto, where libraries are no longer just a place to borrow books, but they also double as job search clubs. In Dublin, it was the bus service that launched an anti-racism campaign.

Third, human nature matters. Time and time again it has been proven that barriers between migrants and other residents fall when they have opportunities to come together. Your report notes it is hard hate up close. In these times of post-truth or post-fact, we have to fight emotion with emotion. Reason over emotion alone will not prevail. And what better to bring emotion and empathy to the front than through human relations. So a bit of social engineering here would be great.

Fourth, language matters. Words give shape to our values and since values shift over time, so must language. Roughly two decades ago, a small whisper campaign started in Canada. It sought to displace the word “foreign” to “internationally- trained”. Just think of the shift in your minds when you use word instead of the other.

Perhaps the time has come to shift some of your language. Here and in Europe, the terminology of the day is “migrant”, whereas we in Canada use the word “immigrant”. Possibly because we are more comfortable with the permanent nature of the phenomena. I have just come from Berlin, from a conversation about diversity and integration. I have left Berlin with a conviction that the words need to shift. Diversity is nothing more than a demographic reality. Integration is no more than a two way or three way process over time. The end goal is always inclusion. As someone has said, diversity is a fact, inclusion is a choice. What good is integration, if it does not guarantee inclusion – economic, social and political inclusion?

And finally, narrative and stories matter. I have always been a big believer in the power of role models and champions. However recently, I have begun to develop a slightly more nuanced view. I believe now that the story of the Immigrant as Hero is ultimately not very helpful. For one, heroes are exceptional, for another most heroes will have feet of clay. We are far better advised to portray immigrants as ordinary people: as taxpayers, as neighbours, as good parents. We need to normalize them and make them more human and therefore more likely to be your friend, your buddy or a member of your book club.

Let me close with a plea. We must stop talking to people who think and talk like us. These echo chambers, which are comfortable and comforting, will not lead to creating consensus on inclusive societies. As your research points out, there is low-hanging fruit here with reference to those one can have a reasonable starting conversation. And it is with the Balancers.

Perhaps as a next step, your work will result in a guide on “How to Talk to Balancers”. And if it does, please be sure to send me a copy.

***The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, C.M., O. Ont.,
Senator, The Senate of Canada***

Ratna is the founding Executive Director and currently a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Global Diversity Exchange (GDX), Ryerson University, and an internationally recognized expert on migration, diversity and inclusion. In April 2016, Prime Minister Trudeau appointed Ratna to the Senate of Canada as an independent Senator representing Ontario.

About the Conference: <http://nationalconversation.uk/immigration-and-integration-getting-it-right-locally/>

Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=137&v=a0nmR6U_Ny4

Two cheers for the Global Compact

By Evelyn
April 30, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By Rebekah Smith

The draft Global Compact on Migration is surprisingly ambitious – but will it be implemented?

The Trump administration withdrew the United States from the talks last December. Hungary's authoritarian nationalist government threatened to pull out too. But the [Global Compact for Migration](#) (GCM) is going forward without the US – and its current draft is a surprisingly progressive document.

The international community now has an unprecedented opportunity to shape the future of migration. Negotiations to finalise the GCM, which opened last month, aim to produce an agreement for signature by the end of the year. A new “[zero draft plus](#)” was published yesterday and the second round of intergovernmental negotiations start on 12 March. As it stands, the draft comprises 22 objectives for “safe, orderly and regular migration,” each underpinned by tangible commitments. But the deal is not done yet. And since it is non-binding, ensuring it is implemented will be a huge challenge.



The wins

The most important advance in the current text is the recognition and acceptance of the need for “options and pathways for regular migration in a manner that reflects demographic and global labour market realities.” This includes tangible commitments to introduce new legal pathways for regular migration, an unprecedented step at the international level. Underlying this statement is an understanding that migration is bound to increase in coming years (as I explain in another [OPEN piece](#)). That is a significant shift from the stance of many receiving countries that seek to deter migration by addressing its drivers (though these attempts also feature in the document as noted below).

The GCM is similarly forward-looking in recognising the need to create pathways for predictable movements of people in response to climate change. It commits to developing “tailored migration schemes of various duration... to facilitate migration as an adaptation strategy to slow-onset environmental degradation.” New Zealand became the first country to introduce such a scheme when [late last year it introduced a climate refugee visa for Pacific Islanders](#) likely to be displaced in the near future. But there has otherwise been little recognition of, or preparation for, the masses of people likely to be displaced by climate change.

While affirming the principle of national sovereignty, this GCM also implicitly works towards balancing it with the sovereignty of the person. It supports the decriminalisation of irregular border entry (making irregular entry an administrative, not a criminal, offence). It also commits states to save lives and prevent migrant deaths regardless of legal or entry status. This extends to relegating migrant detention to a measure of last resort. Given that the last few years have been full of [horror stories of lives lost](#) from the lack of such protections, it is good that the GCM seeks to value migrant lives properly.

The losses

But while the current draft of the GCM recognises the need to open new legal pathways for migration, it also includes an entire section on “minimis[ing] the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.” This not only contradicts the spirit of the document, which recognises migration as bringing benefits and prosperity to all. It is also based on the fallacy that economic development at home can deter voluntary migration, as [Marta Foresti remarks](#) and [Michael Clemens and Hannah Postel point out](#).

More broadly, the GCM could benefit from a deeper emphasis on the agency of migrants themselves and the incentives they face. While its proposals are progressive, they still generally focus on the factors and systems influencing migrants, rather than migrants' agency in shaping their own future. For example, the section on recruitment reiterates existing international conventions insisting on zero-fee recruitment. These conventions position migrants as victims of exploitation, while ignoring their own decision making in what is essentially a market exchange for services.

The way forward

What is this all likely to mean? For the moment not much. As it stands, the Compact is a non-binding agreement that includes tangible commitments but no tangible implementation plan. Of the Compact's 25 pages, less than one is on implementation (and even this is far from clear). So even if all the progressive commitments make it into the final document, how can one ensure they are rolled out on the ground?

With 22 objectives, each with five or more commitments, it is obviously impossible to do everything at once. So what is needed is a coordinated action plan across states and actors with clear priorities and benchmarks.

One priority should be practical innovations that could offer results without requiring difficult policy changes, such as Michael [Clemens' proposal for a Global Skills Partnership](#). This leverages differentials in the cost of training and skilled wages across countries to facilitate skills mobility while simultaneously increasing the skills base in both sending and receiving countries. Low-hanging fruit such as this should be prioritised, while supported by the more difficult long-term policy changes.

Implementing the GCM will also require innovative financing mechanisms. As international migration is by definition a cross-border issue, states may be loath to invest in such mechanisms on their own. Receiving states (for example) can benefit significantly from the investments made by origin countries on their sending systems. A Joint Financing Facility, similar to that put forward by the International Civil Aviation Organisation [here](#), could make it easier and more politically feasible to develop a realistic action plan.

While the GCM has put forward a surprisingly progressive vision for the global governance of migration, it remains to be seen whether this vision is reflected in the final text. Governments also need to recognise that implementing the Compact will require an action plan and commitment mechanisms. Even so, against the backdrop of so much negative news about migration, it is cheering that the global community has recognised migration as a "source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalised world."

Source: Reprinted from Open Political Economy Network (OPEN), [Two Cheers for the Global Compact, March 6, 2018](#)

Rebekah Smith is a development consultant specialising in designing migration policies, particularly in South Asia-Middle East corridors. She is an alumna of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Toronto The Good

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



Toronto's diversity offers a degree of immunity during times of terror

By: Martin Regg Cohn, Queen's Park Columnist, Toronto Star, and Distinguished Visiting Professor at Ryerson University's Faculty of Arts

Terror in Toronto is unlike terror anywhere else.

The impact here is more piercing, for we Canadians imagine ourselves to be exempt from terror — at a safe distance from the geographical and political hot spots that make targets of global cities. Yet we are blessed with a collective defence unique to Toronto.

The difference is that we are different — for our diversity offers immunity, at least partially, from the bigotry and blaming that erupt in times of trouble elsewhere.

Stop for a second, look and listen to what happened, who it happened to, how the city responded. Who were these people?

The victims, eyewitnesses, police and paramedics on the scene were all Torontonians, yes. But the names and faces featured in the news reports, and producing the news reports — eyewitnesses like Ali Shaker, Amir Bahmehyeh, Ham Yu-Jin, Amir Farokhpour; Deputy Chief Peter Yuen — remind us that we are, uniquely, a people from around the world.

From every place, every race, every faith. Which means that while the terror hurts all of us, most of us are in no rush to demonize any one of us.

In Toronto, everyone is a target yet no one is a target. We are so many people that we are almost indivisible, or at least indecipherable.

The old slogan, unity in diversity, is here a reality. If only because we are today too melded to be divided.

The old terminology of terrorism may or may not apply to what befell Toronto this week. The difference between terror (overwhelming fear and anxiety) and terrorism (the calculated use of violence and "terror" to achieve defined political goals) is a clearly defined distinction.

We won't know whether the motives were to merely terrify, or to achieve terrorist goals, until police disclose the results of their investigation. But the effect on the victims — the dead, the wounded, the grieving, the traumatized — is little different whether the motives were political or criminal.

You can't massacre 10 people on a city's main street — and you can't be a copycat killer mowing people down in a van in much the same way as terrorists have in Britain and France — without having a colossal impact. Terror and terrorism have different motives but similar methods, and Toronto's resilience is likely to be much the same regardless.

Consider how Canada's multicultural reality helps mute the backlash against a massacre, and also makes us a less obvious target for terrorists trying to make a statement. For who do you kill when you kill Canadians, if we are everyone and no one — by which I mean, no one particular people?

As a foreign correspondent, I had to cover suicide bombings in the Middle East with a recurring rhythm: A thundering explosion would shake the ground, followed by the cacophony of wailing sirens, and the sight of dismembered bodies strewn across food markets, or buses, or residential neighbourhoods, depending on that day's terror target.

In Israel, the victims were largely Jews (only sometimes did the terrorists miscalculate when their victims were Arab Christians or Muslims killed as collateral damage). The target was obvious, the method unmistakable, the terrorism undeniably brutal for the victims and appealing to the perpetrators.

Message sent and received. We are a world away from the conflict zones, but not insulated from the fallout. The latest death toll reminds us that the world has changed, leaving no one at a safe distance.



For today's internet is the ultimate enabler, linking every loner to global epicentres of terror — directly or indirectly. Individual plotters no longer require collaboration from terror cells to forge intricate conspiracies that required complex explosive devices and specialized knowledge.

Now a man with a plan in a van is all it takes to mow people down with deadly certainty. In Europe, vehicular terrorists have been lone wolfs who were kindred spirits; in Toronto, the terrifying killer may have been a crazed spirit alone in his thoughts.

Either way, it is the new terror, everywhere unstoppable — for no amount of metal detectors, pat-downs, computer searches or water bottle bans can prevent a determined driver from mounting a sidewalk to kill pedestrians, whether on a London bridge or a Toronto street.

Anyone behind a steering wheel now wields a potential weapon of mass destruction, anywhere at any time. The difference is that here in Toronto he can kill people but not turn them against one another.

That is our unique strength. Canadian multiculturalism is a model to the world, an experiment in integration that remains unrivalled.

Now it is being tested, not by the conventional strains of immigration and resettlement, but the unpredictable trials of terror and terrorism — which rely on provocation for a reaction, that we might turn against one another.

That is not who we are, nor who we will become.

[#TorontoStrong](#).

Source: Reprinted with permission from the author. ["Toronto's diversity offers a degree of immunity during times of terror," April 24, 2018, Toronto Star](#)

Martin Regg Cohn writes the Ontario politics column for the Toronto Star. A foreign correspondent for 11 years, he was chief of the Middle East and Asia bureaus, then Foreign Editor, and a world affairs columnist. He has reported from more than 40 countries, from Afghanistan to Yemen, and been nominated five times for the National Newspaper Award. He previously covered national politics from Ottawa. He is also a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Ryerson University's Faculty of Arts.

Taking the Pulse of Diversity

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



By: Will Sloan, Ryerson Today



Denise O'Neil Green joined Ryerson in 2012, and became the first vice-president of equity and community inclusion in May 2017.

Ryerson's first vice-president, equity and community inclusion discusses her journey from Chicago to Toronto

Why do you think Ryerson decided to include a vice-president portfolio that focuses on equity and community inclusion?

Over the last several years, I believe the president's office noticed an increase in engagement from the community on a variety of equity issues. Moving the portfolio from a senior-level to an executive-level position is very significant. I believe that President Lachemi saw this as an opportunity to bring that voice to the table, given its growing relevance in the university environment and important to providing strategic direction.

With your new portfolio came a name change. Why did the department name change from EDI (equity, diversity and inclusion) to ECI (equity and community inclusion)?

Actually, Mohamed—President Lachemi—was the one who came up with the idea of 'equity and community inclusion.' We both thought it resonated very well with where we were trying to go.

The name change helped to signal a new phase for this office. While equity, diversity and inclusion are still important values, our new emphasis on community inclusion signals greater engagement beyond the boundaries of the campus. It's about understanding that every group, every equity group and under-represented groups are essential to community inclusion and is part of the city-building aspect of this university.

What are some of the accomplishments of your office that you're most proud of since becoming the vice-president of equity and community inclusion?

I'm very proud of the work done with Elder Joanne Dallaire with respect to completing the community consultation [external, Truth and Reconciliation report](#). This report will provide the foundation for institutional initiatives going forward. We celebrated the consultation and distribution of the report in January with the full backing and support of the president and provost.

A second accomplishment is the release of our second Diversity Self-ID Report, titled '[external, Our Community, Our Diversity](#).' The report covers two years of data—2015 and 2016. What is unique about this report is that it addresses our community's request to disaggregate the data among women and racialized employees. We're really looking forward to seeing how our community will respond to and use the information. I believe this report will set the trend for future reports.

What's a vivid memory or lesson from your time at university?

I went to the University of Chicago located on the south side of the city, and it is the same university where former President Barack Obama taught law. I have lots of vivid memories. The University of Chicago was the place where, for the first time, I recognized I was a minority. If you know anything about Chicago or Chi-town, there are many African-American neighborhoods in the city. On the south side of Chicago where I grew up, it was mostly African-American—I went to an African-American high school. So, when I got to the University of Chicago, I learned I was one of the eight students in the entering class of 1981 who were Black, and my entering class was over 800 people. I would sit in a classroom and be the only Black person, and that had never happened to me before. That was quite strange for me given the community I came from. However, I took that experience and many like it to move outside my comfort zone and connect with others to create different circles of friends and communities.

What's the best piece of advice you ever received as a student?

When I was a doctoral student at the University of Michigan, I was finishing my dissertation, and I would do revision after revision. One of

my mentors from the University of Nebraska, Dr. John Creswell, said to me, 'Denise—a good dissertation is a *done* dissertation.' So, I heard the message loud and clear: when it comes to work, get it done!

As a student, what was the biggest obstacle you had to overcome?

I went to Princeton for my master's, and I applied for their program when I was in Chicago. I had a hold on my account because there was a bill I wasn't able to pay just yet, and because I had a hold on my account, I couldn't send my transcripts to complete my application. I had to find a way to resolve that problem. After talking with several people, they told me to go to the registrar's office and ask if they would be willing to lift the hold. So, I took a deep breath, found out who the head of the registrar's office was, and basically poured my heart out, and said, 'I'm going to make sure I pay the bill. I'm working this summer to make sure I make enough money to take care of it... but I *really* need you to take this hold off so I can complete this application.'

So they took the hold off, I believe, for 24 hours, and I was able to purchase my transcript and have it sent off. All was done, all was well with the world... I *still* had the bill to pay, but I made sure to pay it, and I was really grateful they were willing to do that. What I learned from this experience is that you should at least try even when it seems impossible.

What teacher or professor had a profound impact on you?

When I went to high school, just about all my teachers were African-American, so I had many role models to look to. There was one teacher, Dr. Lucille Patterson, who was always there to encourage me in so many different ways. She was the one who encouraged me to do public speaking—to take the plunge and get into, not acting per se, but things that required interpretation of poetry or other ways of speaking to an audience. She also encouraged me to write, which was something no one else ever told me to do. Our teacher-student relationship influences me to this day, because she was always affirming—and helped me sharpen—my talents and skills.

What is your hometown?

Chicago, Illinois. Chi-Town!

What was the last book you read?

The Truth About Stories by Thomas King. I thought it was a very interesting book. It's about how stories really set the narrative and tone for the culture we want to have whether the story is accurate or not. Stories can portray particular people as champions or legends and completely overlook or make invisible those who made the difference. King's book really helped inform the work I do, because narratives and stories are very important for truth-telling, and leading and directing an organization.

When and why did you decide to do the work you're doing now?

I didn't necessarily plan to be an executive-level equity officer—these kinds of positions didn't even exist when I was growing up. But I always had a knack for getting myself involved in projects that would help support the community, and help elevate the importance of education. When I was in eighth grade, I was recruited into this program called Upward Bound, which is for first-generation students whose parents didn't go to university. Really, I had no idea about what university was, but the longer I participated in this program, the more I saw the importance of education and how it transforms lives, families, and communities. I think it was a natural trajectory for me to continue in education, and change these systems so that they benefit everyone.

What attracted you to this opportunity at Ryerson?

My family had travelled to Toronto during my doctoral program, and we've visited periodically. I always thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice to work in Canada? Canada has its own kind of swagger going on.'

When I saw the ad in the Chronicle of Higher Education for the job at Ryerson, I showed it to my family, and we were very excited. I felt the position itself actually spoke to me—I thought it said, 'Denise, this is your job.' My whole family agreed I should apply.

When the position came around, I didn't know anyone at Ryerson. But Ryerson was the university willing to create this new kind of role and that was a big plus for me.

You've been at Ryerson since 2012. What's the best and/or most surprising thing you've learned about Ryerson in that time?

Initially Ryerson's location in the heart of downtown Toronto was very surprising to me because I'd never visited the campus before. But since I've been at Ryerson, the best thing I've learned about Ryerson is its growing reputation as a city-builder, innovation university and one that is leading in the area of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Of all your personal and professional accomplishments, which ones are you most pleased with, or meant the most to you?

I'm going to go with a personal accomplishment. My family is here with me, and I strongly believe that our being here helps my husband and I provide our children with better opportunities. Both are now in their twenties.

I love the United States—that's where we are from. There are a lot of challenges in the United States, obviously, and I think that given where things are going, this is absolutely the place where I want my children to be. One day they may decide to go back, but we're very happy here. We became permanent residents in December 2015—I think that was a great accomplishment—and we're all looking forward to becoming citizens.

What app or technology do you use the most?

Oh, it's so sad—it's my iPhone. It's like an electronic tether.

Favourite movie?

The Wiz! Diana Ross, Nipsey Russell, Michael Jackson, and Ted Ross.

Favourite place to travel?

Strangely enough, I like going to Ann Arbor, Michigan—even though that's where I spent my doctoral program at U of M. I just love the place. There are lots of trees, and the feeling there is very nostalgic for me. If there was a place my family would move to if we were not living in Canada, Ann Arbor is probably where we would live.

What are your favourite things to do in your spare time?

I love listening to music. I love rhythm and blues, hip-hop, rap. Jill Scott, Erykah Badu... I can always listen to them and they always provide a really good vibe. I also love watching action and sci-fi movies, and even Marvel movies every now and then. Skip the melodrama and all that. *Back to the Future*—that's one movie I can watch over and over.

What's the one thing you'd like the Ryerson community to know about you?

I want people to know that I'm very approachable. Even though I'm a vice-president, I'm still the same person. I just feel that now that I am a vice-president, I might have a few more tools to help get some things done.

What is your vision for the office in the years to come?

My vision for the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion, is that it's no longer seen as something new, but has become an integral

part of the university's DNA. The way we look at policy development; the way we develop our curriculum; the way we go about hiring; the way we engage students—that it has truly become part of the fibre and culture of the organization.

Source: Reprinted from [Ryerson Today \(April 12, 2018\)](#).

The Time is Now

By Evelyn
March 28, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By Abby Dwommoh, International Organization for Migration

Why supporting migrant women is right for the UK

One-hundred years ago, women were first granted the right to vote in the UK. That same year, women also won the right to be elected into the UK Parliament. It was a year that epitomized a new chapter for women's integration in a story that remains unfinished.

Today, on International Women's Day, we pay homage to all those who work tirelessly to combat injustices they face based solely on their gender. The UN Migration Agency (IOM), stands with each person who demonstrates the courage and resilience to pave the way for women's rights and empowerment.

As they did a century ago, women are once again joining voices to foster change today and for future generations. However, one segment of society is often underrepresented and unheard in this symphony for change: migrant women.

Collective force of potential contribution requires active inclusion

Migrant women face the same disparities all women confront, but may also experience additional challenges. Our gender influences our motivations, approaches and how we balance life through the prescribed boxes of cultural expectations. This factors into how each of us contributes to our family, work, and community. Women also continue to face gender-based violence, harassment and exploitation, especially along migratory routes, signifying deeply-rooted power imbalances that we must all condemn.

Migrant women often must also overcome language barriers, cultural expectations, stereotypes, and knowing how to access resources. The ability to do this can significantly affect a person's contribution to and integration within a community.

Over the last decade, numerous studies have shown the economic impact of integrated migrants on the British economy. While methodologies and conclusions varied among the studies, one common theme that has emerged is the net benefit that migrants have had on the British economy. Over half (52 percent) of the UK's 8.8 million migrants are women according to IOM's Migration Data Portal. The collective force of their potential contribution to our society can only be realised through more active inclusion.

Despite the evidence and potential, migrant women continue to face unique barriers to their full integration into British society. Anecdotal evidence suggests female migrants, including refugees and survivors of human trafficking, are less likely than their male counterparts to actively engage with employers, government and civil society. Causes may vary, but the extent of integration depends upon societal roles, autonomy in decision-making, social biases from migrant and local populations, and knowledge about information access points. Consequently, female migrants may experience social isolation and reduced opportunities for language learning, education and employment which simply reinforces the marginalization.

An essential role in community and family life

Just as we have seen the potential of British women realized over the last century, the potential of migrant women in the UK is also great. Many migrant women have made significant social impacts, like Melody, a social entrepreneur from Tehran who was named "New European Woman Influencer" by the European Parliament in June 2015.



“School years were the hardest years of my life in England. I was lonely and felt misunderstood. I channelled my energy into the UK community and found a way to make a difference in the country and give back,” she said.

Migrant women like Melody play an essential role in community and family life. For example, women are more likely take on more care-related responsibilities in the family, whether their own or for work. A recent study found that migrants working in the adult social care sector contribute 4.4 billion pounds to the English economy annually. The vast majority of these social care workers are migrant women.

So why do some migrant women flourish, while others are marginalized? Some argue that it is the level of integration support provided, either through local authorities or the community. Although some localised integration strategies do exist in the UK, there is currently no national strategy. This reduces the experiences and potential contribution of migrants or refugees to a geographic lottery to access information about education, housing, healthcare or basic services. A national strategy can serve as a guiding principle for local authorities, promote greater engagement and act as a best practices roadmap.

Integration is not a one-way street

Integration is not a one-way street. It takes active acknowledgement from both local and migrant communities of the similarities, differences, challenges and benefits diversity can bring. National self-awareness can help formulate sound policies that address the distinct advantages and disadvantages gender plays during the integration process.

Integration works best when there is a national space for reciprocal conversations about backgrounds, expectations and goals. By doing this, we can counter migrant marginalization, especially for women, and create equal opportunities to contribute to the economy and the community. Through our work, IOM supports those strategies that bring a more balanced world for all of us: women, men, children, migrants and non-migrants. Now is the time to act.

***Reprinted with permission from the author from: [Thomson Reuters Foundation News, Thursday, 8 March 2018](#)**

** Any views expressed in this article are those of the author and not of Thomson Reuters Foundation.*

Abby Dwommoh is the Public Information Officer and Spokesperson for [IOM – the UN Migration Agency](#) in London. She joined IOM in 2015 in the Turkey office, at the height of the Mediterranean Crisis. Prior to joining IOM, Abby served in the U.S. Foreign Service in Morocco, Nigeria and France.

Mediterranean City-to-City Migration

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By Ana Feder, Project Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

A Mediterranean perspective on urban migration

What do the cities of Amman, Beirut, Lisbon, Lyon, Madrid, Tangiers, Tunis, Turin and Vienna have in common?

They are major urban areas, have a significant migrant presence and have committed to improvement of the local migration governance through participation in the [Mediterranean City-to-City Migration \(MC2CM\)](#) project. But, perhaps surprisingly, similarities do not stop there.

Since 2015, [International Centre for Migration Policy Development](#) (ICMPD) in partnership with [UCLG](#) and [UN-Habitat](#), supported by the EU through the Directorate General European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations and by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, have set out to improve migration governance at city level in the Mediterranean.

MC2CM was conceived in the framework of the [Dialogue on Mediterranean Transit Migration \(MTM\)](#), an informal consultative platform between migration officials in countries of origin, transit, and destination along the migration routes in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, hosted by ICMPD since 2002. This State-led dialogue realised the need to hone in on the local dimension of migration, even at a time when the critical role of local authorities in migration was not widely undisputed as it is currently, thus MC2CM was born.

Three years into implementation and through local research, dialogue and action, MC2CM has been able to delve into and contribute to the local dimension of migration in the Mediterranean, producing *inter alia* some relevant findings about what the 9 aforementioned cities (and many others in similar situation) face with respect of migration. Highlights include:

Migration as a historical feature of urban development

Migration has an important historical dimension, including at the local level. MC2CM cities understand migration as an ongoing, historical feature of their local contexts.

This perspective is often lost in crisis-driven/reactive rhetoric of migration. For example the long experience of cities like Amman and Beirut in hosting Palestinian refugee populations since the late 1940s can be called upon to inspire interventions in current contexts of displacement. Tangier's unique situation as a cradle of cultures at the doorstep of Europe provides yet another vantage point on how a city has shifted from a place of departure to transit and destination for migrants.

Cities see migration as an opportunity

Out of the 9 cities participating in MC2CM, none considers migration to be problematic. In fact, migration is conceived as underpinning diversity which is often considered an opportunity and asset for cities. This reality puts an onus on effective migration and integration policy as a tool to maximise



opportunities for economic growth and development. By way of example, Lisbon sees diversity as a cultural asset and part of being an attractive global city that attracts investment, skilled migration and emigrant returnees. [ONLYLYON Ambassadors network](#), an economic development initiative of the city of Lyon, engages more than 19,000 people globally and makes use of diaspora and links created by migratory movements to raise the profile of the city and promote it internationally.

Cities are knowledgeable about migration

Migrants choose to settle in urban areas. The proportion of migrants in cities is higher than those for national territories, particularly for capital cities that attract both internal and external migrants. Both Madrid and Vienna have a proportion of foreign-born population which is just under double the national share of the overall migrant population, and half of all foreigners in Jordan reside in Amman.

While some cities make concerted efforts to collect and report data on migration, as is the case of Turin's Inter-institutional Observatory on Foreigners in the Metropolitan Area and [Vienna's Integration and Diversity Monitoring](#), where limitations and gaps of statistical data exist, cities have a firm grasp of local dynamics affecting migration and integration. This includes knowledge of views and opinions of local populations concerning migrant populations, the situation of migrant populations and their needs as well as constraining factors to effectiveness of local responses to these circumstances.

Challenges persist

While MC2CM has been elucidating to the reality of urban migration in the Mediterranean, including highlighting examples of urban governance, there are persistent challenges that we aim to address as moving into the second phase of the project.

For example, while we know the extent of urbanisation globally and in the MENA region, we are still unable to quantify the urban dimension of the migration phenomenon. Part of the reason is the lacuna in statistics but, also importantly, is the fact that there is no consensus on the definition of 'urban' or even of 'migrant' across cities.

Furthermore, even once evidence is established, this does not always translate into policy. We set for ourselves the ambitious objective to address the negative perception and rhetoric which are hindering the effective implementation of pragmatic, evidence-based migration policies. We thus hope to be able to contribute to rebalance the narrative on migration.

Another challenge we aim to address, is the need for a meaningful dialogue between local and national authorities. Migration policy remains a prerogative of national governments, while the effects are felt locally. Only through multi-level dialogue can effective migration governance take shape.

MC2CM will continue its path to reach out to a broader range of cities, scale up local actions and continue to build up knowledge to make local migration governance a widespread reality in the Mediterranean context.

More information about the MC2CM project, including a more in-depth look at the findings, is available at www.icmpd.org/mc2cm

Ana Feder is project manager for the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) project at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). She has over a decade of experience in migration policy development, having previously worked as policy advisor at Eurocities, the network of European cities, engaging with local authorities working in the fields of social inclusion and migrant integration as well as managing the Mixities project on migrant integration in European cities. Before that, she worked with the philanthropic sector at the European Foundation Centre where she coordinated groups of funders addressing migration, inclusion and diversity issues. She is a migrant living in Malta.

About ICMPD:

Founded in 1993, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) is a European organisation that promotes innovative, comprehensive and sustainable migration policies in 15 Member States and beyond. It does this through dialogue, research and capacity building. ICMPD's working philosophy is based upon the conviction that the complexities of migration can only be met by working in partnership with governments, research institutes, international organisations and civil society in an effort to develop and implement long-term strategies.

Fighting For Immigration: What Foundations Need to Do

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By: **Daranee Petsod**, President, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees

The Fight Over Immigrants and Refugees Is Going to Intensify. Here's What Foundations Need to Do

A year ago, more than 200 foundations from across the United States signed onto our joint statement in support of immigrants and refugees. This rare act of philanthropic solidarity transcended partisan politics, geography and issue area—and affirmed our nation's highest ideals of fairness, freedom, justice, and opportunity.

Following this defining moment, many foundations moved quickly from words to action, committing tens of millions of dollars in new funding to protect and defend immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers against seismic policy shifts that have shaken these and other vulnerable communities to the core.

Restrictive immigration policies that were promulgated in 2017 weaken fundamental rights, put the well-being of children and families at risk, strain our workforce, and undermine the contributions of immigrants and refugees to our society. They fray our social fabric, fuel suspicion and fear, and compromise our global leadership. And they reflect deep divisions and sharply conflicting visions of who we are and aspire to be as a nation.

If the first weeks in 2018 are any indication, hostility and intolerance will continue to drive policy debates this year, propelled by all forms of isms and phobias and polarizing rhetoric at the highest levels of government. We have already witnessed stepped-up border and interior enforcement, along with increased detention and deportation, affecting long-time U.S. residents, parents of U.S. citizens, refugees who fled war and persecution, and community leaders and activists. In addition, plans to reduce legal immigration, from family reunification to high-skilled employment to the diversity visa lottery, are on the horizon.

The outlook is dire, and philanthropic leadership is urgently needed. Foundations that dug deep in 2017 must dig deeper in 2018. Those who are new to immigration must inform themselves of the issues. And ultimately, all funders need to consider how immigration policy changes and an increasingly divided society will affect their funding goals and priorities.

Given this challenging landscape, what should philanthropy consider and prioritize this year?

Protect rights. Dedicated rapid-response funding, general support, and other flexible grants are crucial to effectively address fast-moving policy developments. Immigrant-serving groups also need increased funding for know-your-rights education, family emergency planning, legal services, organizing and advocacy.

Address widespread fear and anxiety. The hostile policy environment—and the real possibility of forcible family separation—have fueled fear and anxiety in communities across the country. Funding for culturally competent mental health services is critically needed by those directly impacted and by the nonprofits working with them. Schools must shore up supports and ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. Local governments must put in place policies and practices to foster inclusion.

Empower and engage. Invest in helping the nearly 9 million naturalization-eligible immigrants become U.S. citizens and engage fully in American civic life. Support integrated voter engagement to ensure that impacted individuals can shape and influence the policies that directly affect their lives. Organize immigrants as part of a broader movement for justice and equity—and lay the groundwork to make sure they and all marginalized communities are counted in the 2020 Census. Engage native-born Americans, both those who are allies and those who see immigrants as a threat.

Promote a narrative of inclusion. How we frame immigration and the role of immigrants and refugees in our society can either build strong, cohesive communities or deepen fissures between various groups. Fund messaging that focuses on what brings people together and uplifts the contributions of newcomers without marginalizing native-born groups. Articulate a generous and expansive vision that welcomes all—from communities of color and working-class whites to undocumented workers and high-skilled immigrants from every corner of the globe—regardless of race, class, religion, national origin, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Strengthen social cohesion. Support innovative programs that bring multiple sectors together to build bridges, reduce tensions and solve problems. Invest in and scale up efforts that reimagine and develop communities where everyone feels valued and included.

The challenges that lie before us are urgent and monumental. Philanthropy must continue to assert bold leadership, walk its talk, and live up to its values. It must deploy every possible strategy and lever at its disposal to defend at-risk communities and build a more inclusive America. The path philanthropy chooses to take this year will not only have short-term implications but will define our collective future for generations to come.

GCIR stands ready as a resource, partner, and catalyst in these extraordinary times.

Reprinted with permission from: [Inside Philanthropy, January 24, 2018](#)

Daranee Petsod has led [GCIR](#) since 1999 and has worked on immigration and social and economic justice issues since 1987. As president of GCIR, she develops and leads new areas of work, in addition to providing programmatic, fiscal, and administrative oversight.



Prior to joining GCIR, Daranee was a program and communications consultant for foundations and nonprofits. She previously held leadership positions at the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and was a program officer at the Field Foundation of Illinois, Inc. and the Sophia Fund, one of the first women's funds in the United States. She has served on the boards of the Donors Forum and the Heartland Alliance, both in Chicago, the Asian Americans Advancing Justice in Washington, D.C.

Daranee has authored and co-authored numerous [research reports](#) on a range of immigration issues, as well as opinion pieces on the role of philanthropy in supporting immigration and immigrant integration issues. Daranee earned an M.A. in social policy from the University of Chicago and is a recipient of the 2014 Professional Development Fellowship from the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation. When not immersed in immigration and philanthropy, she enjoys the great outdoors, savoring gourmet meals, and traveling the world with her family.

Living Diversity – Shaping Society: Reinhard Mohn Prize

By Evelyn
January 30, 2018
[Opinion](#)



This year's Reinhard Mohn Prize on the topic of "Living Diversity – Shaping Society" goes to former German President Joachim Gauck. In awarding him this prize, the Bertelsmann Stiftung recognizes Gauck as a bridge builder in a culturally diverse society. During Gauck's time in office, he focused on the successful coexistence of people from diverse backgrounds and religions in Germany. In word and deed, he continually advocated for a new sense of unity within Germany that includes all people, regardless of their cultural identity.

The citation by the Bertelsmann Stiftung states: "To live together successfully in diversity, we need people who shoulder responsibility and take an active stand for tolerance and understanding." The foundation chose to honor Joachim Gauck as one such person, a leader who forged links among

various societal groups and encouraged people to meet and engage in dialogue. Liz Mohn, vice-chairwoman of the Bertelsmann Stiftung Executive Board, highlighted this, saying, "In turbulent political times, he has strengthened Germany's identity as a land of immigration and championed social cohesion."

[Read the full press release.](#)

Remembering Gauck in Toronto



In 2014, then German President Joachim Gauck visited Toronto, stopping in at the city's iconic Kensington Market, home to generations of immigrants and the symbolic streetscape of diversity in Toronto, Canada's most diverse city with almost half the population born abroad. Here is where Jamaican cuisine collides with Italian, and Hungarian with Thai. Where an elderly couple speaking Portuguese can rub shoulders with their Mandarin-speaking peers. Where students sip kimchi soup and families share latkes. It is also where Gauck, sat down with local community leaders and immigration experts for a discussion on Canada's immigration system. Ratna Omidvar, today a member of the Senate of Canada, led the discussion between the German and Canadian delegations at St. Stephen's Community House in the heart of the Market.

[Read more: "Kimchee to Latkes."](#)

How is your city responding to irregular migrants?

By Evelyn
January 29, 2018
[Opinion](#)



New guidance for European municipalities is on the way.

Migrants with *irregular* status are a reality in cities in Europe and around the globe. Yet, responding effectively to the social challenges they bring is a task that municipalities often struggle to achieve. National or international (as in the case of the European Union) integration strategies only offer a reference framework to respond to *regular* migrants. When it comes to the welfare of irregular migrants, municipalities do not find guidance in national laws; and policies on irregular migration tend to focus solely on enforcement and removals. Cities though can find it difficult to ignore the precarious living conditions of their population with irregular migration status with no right to work or to access social assistance, and the implications of their presence for municipal responsibilities such as tackling homelessness, community safety and child protection. The experiences of Sanctuary cities in the USA shows how municipalities can have an interest in implementing inclusive initiatives for migrants with irregular status. Less is known about the responses of European municipalities. What about your city?

The [City Initiative on Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe \(C-MISE\)](#) is a knowledge-exchange project of the University of Oxford's Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) in cooperation with ten European municipalities exploring how cities in Europe are responding to the challenges presented by irregular migrants in an inclusive way. The COMPAS report [European Cities and Migrants with Irregular Status](#) (2017) identified municipal initiatives for the inclusion of irregular migrants in several areas of service provision, including shelters and housing support, legal counselling, healthcare, education, civic documentation, and support for victims of crime. The report shows how – in the lack of clear guidance and often restrictive national policy frameworks – municipalities have to rely on innovative and often informal solutions to provide access to services without breaching national law.



Call to EU Cities for Good Practices

The C-MISE initiative is currently preparing *guidance* for municipal authorities in Europe on ways to respond to irregular migrants and the social challenges they bring. To do so, COMPAS is reaching out to cities and towns across Europe to know about the initiatives or projects they adopted specifically relating to migrants with irregular status. The C-MISE initiative indeed believes that cities across Europe would highly benefit from sharing experience on what other municipalities are doing in this area. For this reason, if your city is implementing a specific practice or policy in relation to irregular migrants (or you are aware of other municipalities doing so), COMPAS would like to hear from you.

If you believe that European municipalities would benefit from the experience of your city, please write to Nicola Delvino (nicola.delvino@compas.ox.ac.uk).

If you want to know more the C-MISE initiative, please visit: www.compas.ox.ac.uk/project/city-initiative-on-irregular-migrants-in-europe-c-mis/

You can download the report *European Cities and Migrants with Irregular Status* at: www.compas.ox.ac.uk/2017/european-cities-and-migrants-with-irregular-status

Why More is Better: Doug Saunders on 'Maximum Canada'

By Evelyn
January 31, 2018
[Interviews, Opinion](#)



Congestion and expensive housing signal Canadian cities are full. In his new book, [Maximum Canada](#), Doug Saunders argues they're not full enough.

Doug Saunders wants more people in Canada, but the raw number isn't as important as how they're packed in. Preferably tightly.

Underpopulation in Canada is a legacy of attempts to spread people across the land rather than to develop communities, he explains in [Maximum Canada: Why 35 Million Canadians Are Not Enough](#) (Knopf Canada, 2017). Early governments deliberately stymied entrepreneurship and urban residence. As a result, for decades until the Second World War, more people left the country than arrived. Cities grew from the outside in rather than deliberately around clusters of skills and businesses.

The fallout of these policies is most visible in the ribbons of highways that pump people in and out of downtown jobs, and the single-family brick houses that sell for well over \$1 million in city centres. Saunders argues that low density is driving down quality of life in Canadian cities especially for poorer and immigrant residents. Easing these problems requires more people, not less.

"When you're stuck on the highway in a traffic jam in Calgary or Toronto or Vancouver, that's not because there's too many people. That's because there's too low density," he said. "You can't put a subway station in a place that is all single family homes with big yards around them."

Canada got city planning wrong over the last century as its population tripled to 35 million. Getting it right as Canada triples again, which economists and activists have called for by 2100, requires planning with the needs of those residents in mind – and possibly their rights. Picture what planning for future residents of a community would mean. A controversial zoning decision to split a detached house into six units, for example, might weigh the voices of neighbours equally with the voices of whoever could move in.

The practice and politics of high-density growth aren't easy. Dana Wagner talks to Doug Saunders about implementing [Maximum Canada](#).

How do we fix low density?

Doug Saunders: We need to think as if we're going to triple the population over the next 80 years even if we don't. All of the things that need to be done for a tripling of the population need to be done even if our population doesn't grow, because our children and grandchildren are going to be facing the housing supply shortage, the changing supply of the labour market, and the infrastructure shortfall. We need to act as if 100 million is going to happen because even if it doesn't we need to do the things for ourselves that need to be done for that eventuality. And the odds are that we will have 100 million people in Canada, maybe not by 2100, but by not long after that.

Increasing the population and density in Canadian cities isn't an impulse shared by everyone. For whom is this argument a tough sell?

Doug Saunders: One group is people who see population in Canada as being an ecological drain. Canada's ecological and climate commitment limitations, and our inability to make the transition to a carbon neutral economy, are not products of overpopulation but of low population density. Canada cannot transform its economy and way of life to a carbon neutral one with the current low population density.

Doug Saunders: The second group is people who think this is all about immigration and worry about mass immigration and open borders. I looked at what it would entail to triple the Canadian population again. Which is not mass immigration, it's not open borders. Nobody's proposing mass immigration at this point in history, and it would be a bad idea. Even the most radical proposal to triple the population by the year 2100 calls for something in the low



400,000s – slightly more than we have now. So mass immigration is not part of it, open borders is not part of it, very controlled immigration would always be the reality in Canada.

What's the [role of cities](#) in planning for a tripled population?

Doug Saunders: The municipal level is where population growth manifests itself. The municipal governments and the regional governments of the big metropolises of Canada all have very sophisticated population growth models going many decades in the future. And they've planned for that. So city planners know about what needs to be done. There's a very strong consensus among municipal governments in Canada that urban sprawl cannot be the form of growth – it cannot be allowed as a form of growth in the future.

Do cities have the power they need to shift their growth away from sprawl?

Doug Saunders: Municipal governments are stuck in many ways because they cannot create density in the places where they want to because the building approval authority is often with provincial bodies. And it's too easy to appeal decisions on building new housing. A significant percentage of every neighbourhood that has single family houses should be six-apartment units, with a combination of owned properties and rented properties. That should be the transition. Every city government wants to create that mix of density and tenure. But current building approval processes make it too easy for residents of existing neighbourhoods to appeal and stop developments. We need to change the mentality of building approval in Canada so that the voices of future and potential residents of a neighbourhood are incorporated, and not just the voices of legacy and existing residents of a neighbourhood.

As Canada grows, could it have a sudden political shift to a government that wants limited immigration?

Doug Saunders: Yes we could. We could have a period where some political party opposed to growth and immigration is in power. But I suspect that while they may be elected, that would not be sustainable politically and economically. As soon as anybody comes into government the realities of underpopulation are there. I did not write *Maximum Canada* because I came up with some obscure theory. When you're a journalist in Canada talking to people in different areas in government and the economy you quickly realize that low population density is a day-to-day problem: for people trying to create the next Blackberry, for people in cultural and media industries, for municipal authorities trying to plan transit, for people working in ecological areas trying to make climate transitions happen. Canadians trying to make quality of life improve are running headlong against the problems of limited population.

Do policies like Quebec's niqab ban impact the consensus around population growth?

Doug Saunders: There's a danger in them because voters get distracted by symbolic issues that can hurt the consensus around population. There's a risk that policies like Quebec's create the idea that the typical new Canadian is an extremely Conservative person wearing a niqab. Whereas something like a couple dozen women in all of Quebec have ever worn a full face covering of any sort.

I think that in the long run, the Canadian public opinion will not be shifted by policies like this partly because the lived experience of Canadians is always a generation ahead of the policy experience of governments. Our economy demands people, and it gets people. Our families tend to reunite even when it's difficult to. [We tend to take refugees because the Canadian public demands them](#). So yes, we're dealing with debates about niqabs in Quebec, but I suspect that most of the Quebec public and particularly those who live in cities, their lived experience is ahead of that.

Interview conducted by Dana Wagner

Dana Wagner is the Canada advisor with [Talent Beyond Boundaries](#), a non-profit that connects refugees to international job opportunities in an effort to open skilled immigration as a complementary solution to traditional refugee resettlement. She is a Fellow of the Young Policy Network on Migration of the Swiss Forum for Migration Studies and the German Marshall Fund.

Cities are “laboratories” of communal life

By Evelyn
January 23, 2018
[Opinion](#)



By: Johannes von Dohnanyi, [Change Magazine](#), [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#)

Germany has long been the country of immigration that it doesn't yet officially want to be. An unbiased reality-check of one's own personal environment as well as countless social-science studies provide ample proof of this.

Yet Germany's status as a country of immigration didn't begin only when the “guest workers” invited from southern and southeastern Europe in the 1960s simply stopped returning to their home countries. And it certainly didn't begin as those fleeing starvation and war in Africa and the Middle East fled to Germany in recent years. “Foreigners” have always been drawn to the territory that is today called Germany. And they have always brought their gods, rituals, food and customs with them. The construct of a national identity as a source of self-definition as well as a guiding principle in living communally together emerged only with the birth of national states in the 19th century – and since that time, has served primarily as a conscious means of isolation from everyone and everything outside this community. Thus, it connotes confinement rather than capaciousness.



One of mankind's oldest lessons teaches that cultural diversity enriches. It matters not whether this is moral or political, economic or artistic, or even culinary: Diversity implies the opportunity to expand one's own horizons. The Europe of the last century was above all a project of desire for capaciousness, in contrast to the confinement enforced by national states. Yet disruptive contemporary megatrends such as globalization and digitalization have led to uncertainty and anxieties. Familiar living environments are changing. Cultural identities – thus, the canon of values marked by language, religion, philosophy, traditions and practices – appear to be in jeopardy. In times of accelerating diversity, portions of society again seek isolation from the foreign as a protective framework. Because diversity, of course, doesn't simply offer opportunity. It also carries with it a potential for friction and conflict that should not be underestimated. Researchers may have established in theory that societal cohesion is not fundamentally disturbed by accelerating cultural diversity. However, individuals' lived reality shows that living together in cultural diversity cannot be taken for granted, but rather must be actively shaped.

The peaceful coexistence of different cultures and peoples in one state requires a durable cultural pluralism that is secured through constitutional safeguards.

This is the topic addressed by the Reinhard Mohn Prize 2018. Innovative ideas and practices are needed, along with creativity, in order to positively shape the communal coexistence of people with different cultural characteristics, identities and lifestyles. For this reason, the Bertelsmann Stiftung is looking around the world for outstanding examples of urban cultural diversity as a concrete and lived aspect of normal daily communal life.

It is in the cities where cultural diversity – the good and the bad – is experienced with particular intensity. Whether through encounters in a neighborhood, at the workplace, at school, in clubs or especially in local politics, the city as a “laboratory” offers the best opportunity to practice living together in diversity within a manageable and familiar context, and to develop a new self-understanding through new and positive experiences: How does cultural diversity act as an economic factor in a given location? To what extent is it a driver of innovation? What legal regulations are there in Germany for dealing with cultural diversity, and how do such regulations look like in other European countries? To what degree do artistic practices represent a medium or platform for dealing with cultural diversity as a societal challenge? The project team has developed this research focus jointly with recognized experts from the academic, political, economic, media and civil-society spheres. A selection of pioneering strategies and projects will be further examined in case studies, and be illuminated from various perspectives in accompanying studies and publications.

The recipient of the Reinhard Mohn Prize 2018 will be an outstanding personality who inspires others, and who has come to international public attention thanks to his or her impact on how issues of cultural diversity are handled. Indeed, the substantive work done to that point, the expert networks that have resulted, and the public attention generated should serve as a solid foundation in making a positive contribution to cultural diversity. The Reinhard Mohn Prize award ceremony in summer 2018 will thus mark only one – though a significant – waystation on a long and ambitious road.

This article is an excerpt from [change Magazine \(2/2017\)](#). See also [German version](#).

Johannes von Dohnanyi is a German-American foreign correspondent, journalist and author.

REINHARD MOHN PRIZE

The [Reinhard Mohn Prize](#) is awarded in honor of Bertelsmann Stiftung's founder Reinhard Mohn (1921 – 2009). The prize is awarded annually to exceptional, globally active individuals who have played a key role in creating solutions for social and political issues. In order to identify and select a prize recipient, the Bertelsmann Stiftung conducts a worldwide search for innovative concepts and solutions to sustainability challenges with relevance for Germany. Weblink: www.reinhard-mohn-preis.de

Words Matter

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By Westy Egmont, Boston College

On a typical Monday, the social worker at the health clinic is pressed with too many open cases needing immediate attention and along comes Mr. Bayani Reyes. He is one of 1.6 million Tagalog speakers in the US. How will the social worker explain to him why a procedure is necessary? The work of interpreters and translation is a legal obligation, though the interpreters are often undervalued and the protocol not fully developed. Professional communication is protected under HIPAA and from both the perspective of privacy and legal liability, service providers are obligated to prepare to work with a multilingual society in which more than 22 million Limited English Proficient speakers reside. Access is a [civil rights requirement](#).

Do interpreters matter? Beyond the legal threat of 'willful neglect', failing to communicate necessary information, our society in its laws seeks to protect linguistic minorities by setting standards of care.

Employees, contractors and even volunteers are protected as interpreters but they are obligated to insure accuracy, privacy and access. Civil rights laws address interpretation and HIPAA establishes the code. The AMA is attentive to [practice risks](#) but in many community-based social services, staff are unaware of language obligations and best practices. The accompanying current materials are offered as a basis for continuing education to foster staff competency using interpretation and translation services. [The Massachusetts Language Access Plan](#) embodies a positive state model for courts and the [Federal Justice Department](#) created its own court initiative. Each public serving agency should have a language access plan.

While no organization has capacity in all languages (Mexico includes 62 indigenous languages and 15% of Native Americans speak a language other than English at home), all face the challenge. "English Only" rhetoric may have political value but it is contrary to both values and legal obligation in many settings from nursing homes to universities. Providers have limited choices:

1. bilingual staff,
2. written translations of primary forms, explanations and documents,
3. contracted interpreters available by appointment,
4. Video Remote Interpreters (like Skype), or
5. phone interpreters.

Training and budgeting for interpreters is an easily overlooked institutional response to the diversification of a community. The professional development of interpreters and translators is championed by the [American Translators Association](#) and the [National Association for Interpreters](#).

Language inclusion may begin with a website that is available in multiple languages, reflecting preparedness to serve the surrounding community and also symbolizing a welcome of the foreign born. How many landing pages are reviewed for accuracy and clarity? Front desk staff, whether answering the phone or greeting walk-ins, need protocols on how to respond to the individual. Who is asked to interpret? When? The [NY Language Identification Tool](#) is useful at a front desk. Staff who regularly interpret need to be valued for their skill in their remuneration and supported with continued training. The whole organization is served by thinking about a culture that supports interpretation. (See [tips for interpretation](#))

[Google Translate](#), a translation and increasingly an interpretation tool, has improved significantly with its neural machine based (NMT) software that approaches sentences rather than phrases. It serves the tourist well and many families can make their needs known to providers by being encouraged to use this technology. Patient teachers will find it a bridge to any parent asking about their child. As beneficial as is this mobile and readily accessible tool (and its competitors), it is not comprehensive professional translation or interpretation. Some estimates of accuracy are 85% for common subjects but not accurate in specialized communications. It will suffice for many daily functions but if there is a legal element, a medical communication, issues of mental health or government procedure, the limits quickly become evident. (Improving alternatives exist as well).

[Language Line Solutions](#) is the biggest of the remote providers. Recently spending \$30 million on their state of the art system, it offers on-demand access to 11,000 employed interpreters and translators. Language Line's focus on HIPAA standards, security, and array of services gains trust, while it is their ability to provide on demand interpreting in over 200 languages that makes them global. As a major corporate provider one recognizes their encryption protection, record procedures, as well as their vetting of professional interpreters as the industry standard bearer. LLN Interpreters have up to



130 hours of training available and are screened for background as well as passing language skill assessment. More than 50 major cities, thousands of government agencies and all top 10 major US medical facilities use the company.

Cost and desire for a personal connection are major obstacles for many human service and education organizations in providing the needed professional language services. Given the volume of work and lack of attention by central administrations to the issue, many staff are left functioning without access to the deep resources that exist. Building a staff consensus and calling for a strategic investment in proper handling of limited English speakers will protect agencies from future law suits and build a bridge to the changing community, action vital to most agencies mission fulfillment. Even as social service agencies historically were slow to invest in insurances, benefits and technology, the current need is for operating investment in annual budgets to remove barriers – the language walls – that millions experience as insurmountable during critical years of their adjustment to their new country.

*No endorsement is intended by the specific illustration of named providers

The Boston University Interpreter Program

The [Boston University Interpreter Program](#), a part of Boston University's Center for Professional Education, trains individuals to become certified interpreters in a variety of settings. The program offers certificates in the focuses areas of Community Interpreting, Legal Interpreting, and Medical Interpreting. All of the concentrations are offered to professionals who can speak, read, and write Chinese, Portuguese, or Spanish fluently. All courses require an entrance exam and four to five required courses. Interpreting plays a key role in helping immigrants and speakers of other languages have access to critical services and resources. Interpreters act as a bridge between professionals and their clients.

Community: Community interpreters play an important role in facilitating access to resources for immigrants. They serve clients in a range of organizations, from neighborhood clinics to non-governmental organizations. Depending on the client, their workload can consist of interpreting on medical, educational, legal and social services manners.

Medical: The medical interpretation program prepares participants to interpret in a medical setting with compassion and caring. The courses involved role-playing, a review of medical procedures, and material to help interpreters serve as a bridge between medical professionals and patients.

Legal: This certificate acquaints participants with various courts, forums, and procedures where legal interpreting will take place. Students will learn the expectations, protocols, ethics, and vocabulary necessary to interpret in this setting.

OTHER Programs

- Dorchester, US: [Found in Translation](#)
- Boston, US: Catholic Charities: [Community Interpreter Service \(CIS\)](#)
- Providence, US: [DORCAS International Institute of Rhode Island](#)

Source: Reprinted with permission from [The Immigrant Integration Lab](#) at Boston College School of Social Work (December 2017)

Related Good Ideas:

- **Hamburg, Germany:** [Healthcare in a Box](#): A shipping container is adapted to provide healthcare to a population in crisis, refugees on the move
- **Seattle, United States:** [Interpreting Diversity in Healthcare](#): Removing cultural barriers helps patients and providers achieve better health care.
- **Victoria, Canada:** [We Speak Translate](#): Using technology to remove the challenge of language as a barrier to integration and inclusion.
- **Auckland, New Zealand:** [Lost in Translation: Auckland's Primary Health Interpreting Services](#): Interpreting services to better serve the primary health care needs of diverse communities
- **Auckland, New Zealand:** [Take One Hour Before Eating: Pharmacies in Translation](#): A pharmacy association writes a prescription for better health care.
- **Bilbao, Spain:** [Found in Translation: Bilbao's Online Multilingual Resource Guide](#): A comprehensive multilingual online resource guides residents, municipal staff and community NGOs
- **Toronto, Canada:** [Toronto: Cultural Interpreters for Mental Health](#): Helping families cope with mental health issues through cultural health interpreters

Be Subversive!

By Evelyn
December 21, 2017
Uncategorized



The **AntiRumours Handbook 2018** is the result of the work of hundreds of people from more than 25 cities in different countries who have contributed decisively to the development and enrichment of the antirumors strategy ([originally developed by the city of Barcelona](#)): many municipal technicians who coordinate and participate in the day-to-day strategies of the cities; local political leaders who have decided to launch a city strategy that promotes inclusion and critical thinking; professionals from different organisations and civil society actors such as NGOs, schools, cultural and sports centres, associations of neighbours, parents, immigrants and diverse minority groups, trade unions, universities, foundations, entrepreneurs and some companies and the citizens who have decided to become “antirumours agents” to challenge prejudices and stereotypes in their day-to-day lives.

[Dani de Torres Barderi](#) dedicates the new Intercultural Cities **AntiRumours Handbook** from CoE's Intercultural Cities platform “to the thousands and thousands of anonymous “antirumour agents” that exist in the world and who, without being aware of it, contribute to the promotion of critical thinking and to questioning preconceived ideas, even if this often means going against the grain.”

Download the full report (PDF): [AntiRumours Handbook 2018 / by Dani de Torres Barderi \(Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2017\).](#)



Crowdsourcing Refugee Resettlement

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



Mustafa Alio and Ratna Omidvar believe Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees program (PSR) is a good idea worth stealing: not only does private sponsorship give citizens a tangible way to help alleviate the migration crisis, it engages entire communities and produces better outcomes.

Privately sponsored refugees have a built-in support network embedded in the local community, made up of people who are socially and economically established. As a result, they can experience a sense of belonging from the moment they arrive. What's more, program evaluations show that privately sponsored refugees are more likely to enter the Canadian job market sooner and at higher income levels than those who enter as refugees outside of the PSR program. PSR also has served as a pathway for refugee family reunification—an important if unintended result of the program.

Photograph-by-Mustafa-Alio

Read the full article from the [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#):

Innovation Review (winter 2017).

["Crowdsourcing Refugee Resettlement" by Mustafa Alio & Ratna Omidvar](#). In: Stanford Social

Join the #WithRefugees Campaign

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Dear Colleagues,

Cities of Migration has joined UNHCR's [#WithRefugees](#) campaign. You can too.

The historic New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants was signed one year ago, uniting all 193 United Nations Member States in the belief that protecting refugees and supporting the countries that shelter them are shared international responsibilities to be borne equitably and reliably. In consultation with governments and other stakeholders, the Declaration gave UNHCR the task of developing “a global compact on refugee sand migrants”. The Global Compact on Refugees is a unique opportunity to strengthen the international community’s response to the dire needs of people forced to flee their homes.

UNHCR's [#WithRefugees campaign](#) aims to demonstrate public solidarity with refugees in the lead up to the General Assembly’s consideration of the global compact on refugees in November 2018. The campaign invites you to sign the [#WithRefugees petition](#) and encourages organizations standing in solidarity with refugees to show their support by joining the [#WithRefugees coalition](#). You can also showcase how your organization is supporting refugees by adding your story to the [#WithRefugees community map](#).



The #WithRefugees campaign is a global platform for sharing stories, good practices and narratives of solidarity with refugees and migrants. Its international [coalition of over 300 members](#) will help carry the message of refugee solidarity to an ever-widening, diverse global audience. Importantly, coalition membership helps UNHCR showcase practical ways of supporting refugees at a whole-of-society level, especially in the fields of education, shelter, and livelihoods, which are the focus of the petition.

Whatever your field, whether university, sport, art & culture, or NGO, corporation or municipality, if you are supporting or would like to support refugees, please consider joining UNHCR’s coalition to demonstrate your commitment and help spread the message of refugee solidarity to the world. [UNHCR welcomes your support](#) at this important time, both for refugees themselves, and as the international community works towards a global compact to protect their interests as tabled by the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2016.

Consider watching [What They Took With Them](#), the [#WithRefugees invitation video](#), or the video we produced to celebrate Canada’s long tradition of [community refugee sponsorship](#). We hope you’ll share this message with your colleagues and friends.

Join us. [Join the #WithRefugees coalition](#).

In solidarity,
The Cities of Migration team



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



Migration and Cities: We Need To Do Better

By Evelyn
October 27, 2017
[Opinion](#)



By Alice Charles and Dilip Guna, World Economic Forum

Today, there are more than one billion migrants in the world, representing a seventh of the world's population. This level of human mobility is unprecedented and continues to rise at a rapid rate.

This one billion is comprised of an estimated [244 million](#) international migrants and [763 million](#) internal migrants – over three times the number. Yet it is international migration that seems to monopolize the attention both of the media and of politicians.

In 2015, the Ethical Journalism Network published a report entitled [Moving Stories](#), which broke down the media coverage of migration in EU states and 14 other countries across the world. It highlighted the fact that, while India, China and Brazil were experiencing high volumes of internal migration, the phenomenon was often ignored by mainstream media. In addition, it showed how opportunities were missed to raise the alarm regarding the coming refugee influx into Europe, how anti-migrant sentiment and hate speech regularly found its way into stories, and how media coverage of migration was often hijacked by hyperbole, intolerance and distortion.

More recently, the discussion on migration has drifted towards the implementation of immigration controls, and away from the impact of migration (both international and internal) on destination countries – and specifically cities, where the majority of migrants live.

Unfortunately, this shifts the focus away from the actual challenges impacting the population on the ground. Migration has been going on for generations, and given the political, social and economic imbalances in our societies today, coupled with a changing climate, the mass movement of people is likely to continue in the coming decades. The narrative, therefore, needs to focus instead on the means of effectively managing migration in the destinations where they eventually arrive.

Migrants are settling in cities

Migrants continue to be drawn to cities in search of a better quality of life, greater job prospects and ease of access to urban infrastructure and services. A recent study by [PwC](#) showed that population growth in metropolitan areas is often higher than the national average as a result of migration. Between 2010 and 2015, Beijing and Johannesburg recorded the highest growth (about 14 migrants per 1,000 inhabitants) among the top 20 metropolitan areas featured in this study.

Cities address the immediate needs of migrants and respond to some of the challenges related to their integration into society. The presence of migrant communities in cities also accelerates their chances of integration. The projected increases in both urbanization and migration, meanwhile, indicate that cities will continue to play an integral role in human mobility in the coming decades.

And yet statistics on the number of migrants in cities are limited, particularly those pertaining to developing economies, where such information could inform urban planning processes and ensure that cities are better prepared to manage migration.

Increased pressure on urban infrastructure and services

Our recently published [World Economic Forum report on Migration and Cities](#) has found that migration places increased demand on urban infrastructure and services in destination cities. This is particularly observable in relation to housing, healthcare, utilities, water and sanitation, waste, transportation, education, employment and safety and security. In Calgary, for example, the waiting list for housing units has reached 3,000 people; in Paris, you can expect to wait longer than 10 years.

Migration further increases the pressure on infrastructure and services in cities already struggling to meet the demands of existing residents. Migrants, meanwhile, are rarely accounted for in urban planning processes, often leaving newcomers to meet their own needs.

The need for integrated urban planning

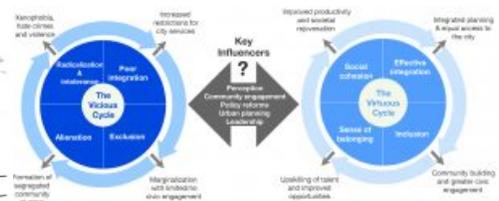
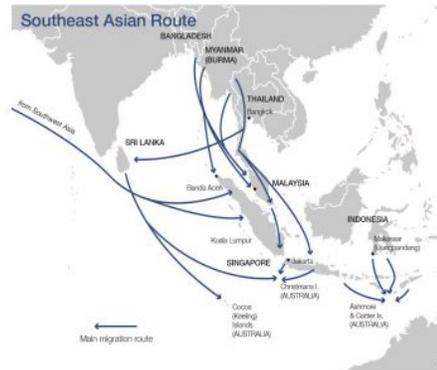
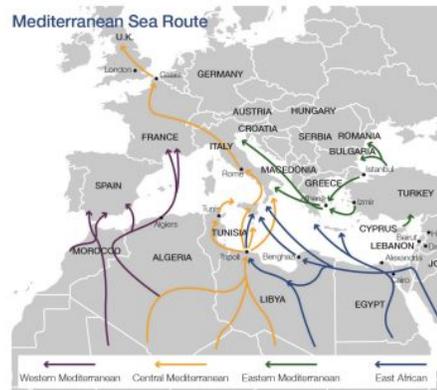
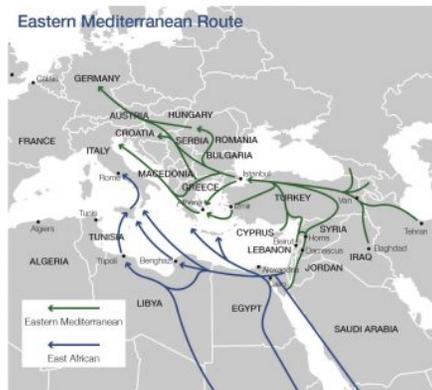
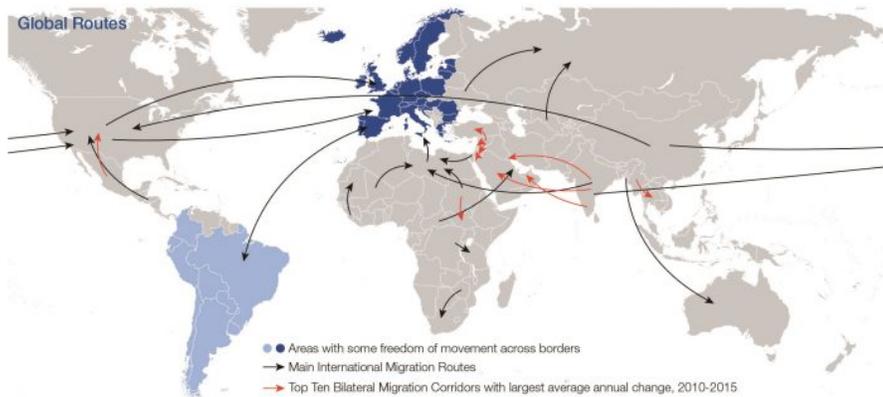
Notwithstanding the issues migrants face due to language and cultural barriers, as well as their reduced knowledge of the environment and social context, they can also face increased marginalization and discrimination from native communities, who often believe migrants consume resources and benefits that are meant to meet their needs. This can lead to the exclusion of migrants from basic urban infrastructure and services, such as housing, health and employment. This alienation process can, in turn, result in the formation of segregated community clusters, which over time become breeding grounds for the radicalization of migrants, leading to hate crimes and xenophobic violence, which make it even more difficult to integrate the new community into the city. The circumstances leading to this vicious cycle are illustrated below.

If, on the other hand, cities choose the virtuous cycle and embrace integrated urban planning, a different result is possible. By recognizing for the needs of migrants and natives collectively, cities can align their focus towards inclusively addressing challenges faced by all communities. Cities that are inclusive are able to solicit active engagement from all communities, and over time can create a greater sense of belonging among migrants, who will see potential benefits in investing their time, efforts and resources into improving their skills, and are therefore able to tap into better opportunities, which will improve their overall quality of life.

The growing focus on migrant integration

Figure 12: Some of the World's Many Migration Routes

Sources: Adams, 2015; Conant, Chwastky & Williams, 2015



authorities are increasingly realizing the potential benefits of integrating migrants, and are starting to plan for migrants before they even arrive at their destination. They have realized that the responsibility of integrating migrants rests primarily with them, and that a plan has to be devised and implemented before a potential opportunity turns into a problem.

For instance, [Welcoming America](#), through initiatives such as [Welcome Community Planning](#) and [the Welcoming Standard and the Certified Welcoming Program](#), assists local governments in implementing multi-sectoral plans to become inclusive places both for immigrants and all residents. Their network spans over 100 local governments in the US, and has triggered the [Welcoming Cities](#) initiative in Australia, which now has nine member cities and more than 50 other local governments on its books.

Some cities are already implementing measures for the long-term integration of their migrants. For example, Berlin has developed a [masterplan for integration and security](#), detailing initiatives covering migrant arrival, housing, education, health, labour markets and security. The city of Gdańsk, similarly, has developed an [Immigrant Integration Model](#), with the goal of paving the way towards a cohesive, inclusive society.

Successful integration of migrants in cities depends on five key influencers

If migrants are to be successfully integrated into cities, the following five key influencers must be considered:

Perception: The perception of migration needs to change – from being viewed as problematic to being viewed as beneficial for the city and its population. It is important that cities look beyond the short-term costs for migrants and focus on their potential contribution to society, and how they can help boost the economic growth of not only cities but countries as a whole. Media organizations can play a

pivotal role by ensuring evidence-based reporting, framing guidelines that avoid stereotypes, incorporating representative voices from migrant communities and challenging xenophobia.

Community engagement: Integration is a two-way process. Cities need to devise strategies that promote the active participation of all communities in public decision-making and incorporate their voices. They need to give political rights to migrants, enabling them to voice and articulate their interests. Conversely, migrant communities also need to actively participate, engage and cooperate with governments in representing the concerns of their respective communities. [Migrants Organise](#) is one such platform, which has been developing leaders and providing channels for the organised participation of migrants and refugees in UK public life.

Policy reforms: City agencies can help identify the relevant priorities for integration, and tailor policies to overcome urban infrastructure and services challenges, implement these policies, and subsequently monitor and evaluate their results. Implementation will require dedicated efforts and support not only from city agencies but also from higher levels of government (state and federal). Lack of policy coherence between various levels of government will only make this task more difficult. A case in point is the US federal government's recent [immigration policies & principles](#), which proposes blocking sanctuary cities from receiving certain grants while also proposing the enhancement of state and local cooperation to enforce federal immigration law.

Urban planning: For most cities, migration usually appears as an afterthought rather than as an integral part of the urban planning process. While most migration-related initiatives continue to focus on inclusion and integration, the effect of migration on urban infrastructure and services is often underrepresented, affecting the city's overall social and economic development. Thus, there is greater incentive for building migration-related issues into the urban planning process. Seoul, for example, has already dedicated a significant amount of its policy resources towards migrant integration through their projects distributed across 14 categories under the [Dagachi Seoul Master Plan](#), devised in 2014.

City leaders need to demonstrate responsible and responsive leadership to meet the needs of migrants. They need to be proactive and acknowledge their role in integrating migrants. They need to assume responsibility for managing migration integration and be accountable for the results. To achieve this, city leaders may need to look outward to other cities around the world that have been successful in their endeavours, through city-to-city partnerships. The [Athens Network Exchange](#), the [Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Project \(Mc2CM\)](#), [URBACT Network: Arrival Cities](#), the [Intercultural Cities programme \(ICC\)](#) and [CITIES-GroW](#) are just a few examples of how cities are learning from each other through information exchange and mentorship programmes.

The World Economic Forum has recently released its [Migration and Cities report](#), covering the different types and causes of migration, with a particular focus on its impact on cities around the world and how cities can be better prepared in the future. The report [can be downloaded in full here](#).

Reprinted with permission from authors: "[We need to get better at integrating migrants into our cities. Here's how.](#)" In: World Economic Forum Agenda, October 25, 2017.

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Dilip Guna is the Project Collaborator – Future of Urban Development and Services, World Economic Forum.

#RethinkingRefugee Housing

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



When I arrived in the UK as a refugee 20 years ago I found a lot of goodwill, but a system which was fragmented and lacking focus on long-term integration. – Fuad Mahamed

So in 2008 I established [Ashley Community Housing](#) (ACH) to support refugees and other vulnerable homeless people by offering them affordable housing, along with training and education, to help them integrate into UK society.

In general, Housing Associations have been good at responding to the refugee crisis, but that goodwill needs to be translated into action.

You cannot integrate tenants by simply offering housing, we need to think beyond simply bricks and mortar. If refugees are to be resettled and integrated into UK society we need to take a more holistic approach.

The existing humanitarian paradigm tends to trap refugees in a system in which they remain dependent.

Whilst there is undoubtedly a humanitarian angle to refugee resettlement, we see refugees as people with talents, skills, and aspirations; assets which will boost our economy and enrich our communities.

To achieve this we work with stakeholders, not only other housing providers and refugee support bodies, but business organisations, local government and the new Combined Authorities.

Increasingly, we are also working directly with individual employers.

Our model stems from almost 10 years of working with refugees.

This holistic model has its heart focused on supporting refugees from arrival to integration through effective employment and enterprise skills. The process comprises 5 key stages: accommodation, support, work skills, enterprising skills, and move on.

ACH provides a diverse range of fully supported housing options to meet the needs of our clients. Our support services are culturally sensitive, available across all tenures and provided as part of our clients occupancy agreement.

We provide an end-to-end, personalised service that is adaptable and designed to empower our tenants to live independently.

We do this by segmenting refugees into 4 categories:

- Skilled and work ready
- Skilled and nearly ready for work
- Open or not yet in business
- Not ready for work

These four broad categories then receive differing levels and types of support, including IAG, personal development and CPD, to enable them to be fast-tracked into employment.

To improve the current way Associations work with refugee tenants, we recommend early language tuition and skills assessment of refugees, developing an individualised integration plan for each individual, and recognition of foreign credentials by employers, including alternative methods of assessing informal learning and work experience.

Although, this all requires investment by the landlord, the cost of non-integration far exceeds the cost of integration.

Enabling refugee tenants to become economically autonomous not only improves their ability to pay their rent, but also enables them to contribute positively to the local economy and community.

Reprinted with permission from the [24Housing blog](#) (October 3, 2017).

Fuad Mahamed, CEO, Ashley Community Housing

Fuad came to the UK as a refugee with no English and went on to obtain a first class degree in Engineering from Bath University followed by an MSc in Management from Lancaster Business School.

When Euro Hostels collapsed and started evicting people, he stepped in, setting up Ashley Community Housing in 2008 in order to support the resettlement of refugees like himself. This accommodation-based refugee resettlement service now spans across 3 cities, employs 50 people and settles 700 individuals a year.

He has since graduated from executive Programmes at the Cranfield School of Management, Aston Business School, SAID business School of Oxford University and is currently a Clore Social Fellow for Refugee and Migrant communities. Together with his colleagues at ACH, Fuad has argued for a new approach to refugee assistance based on development rather than just humanitarianism. He volunteered in Dadaab, world's largest refugee camp in Kenya last summer and advised the Somali government about refugee repatriation and resettlement.

You can learn more about Ashley Housing at www.ashleyhousing.com, or follow on Twitter [@AshleyCHousing](https://twitter.com/AshleyCHousing).

Global Mayors Show the World What Works

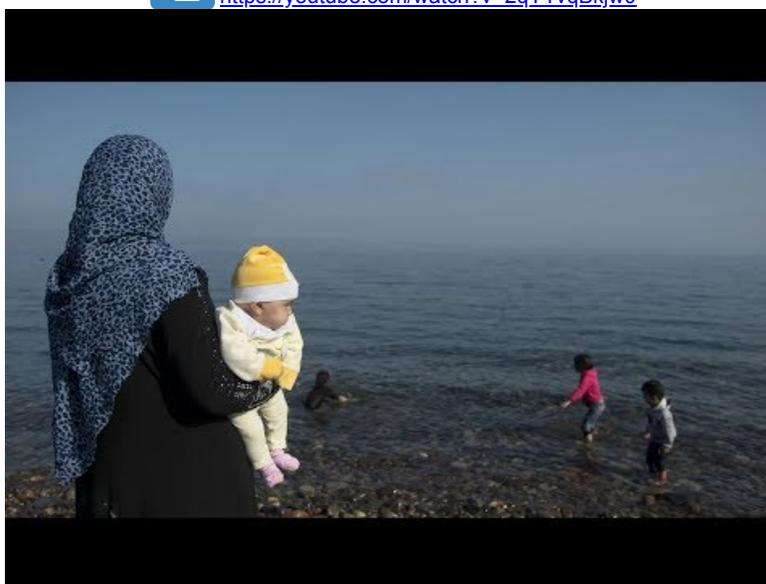
By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By: Maria Teresa Rojas, Open Society Foundations



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=2qYYvgBkjw0>



The Refuge Coffee Company in Clarkston, Georgia, sits by the railway line that runs through the heart of this apparently typical southern American small town, some 20 miles east of Atlanta.

But Refuge, which I was fortunate to visit earlier this year, is not your typical American coffee shop. Its [Facebook page](#), for instance, celebrates the fact that one staff member, Tha, has just received her U.S. citizenship; its annual report notes that last year it hired 10 trainee staff members from Syria, Burma, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Morocco.

Its vision statement talks about the power of welcome, and establishing “a vibrant resettled refugee community in Clarkston, Georgia, where our new neighbors are embraced and given opportunities to thrive through the business of hospitality through coffee.”

Refuge Coffee, now a vital social hub for the people of Clarkston, is a not-for-profit business, and is one of the ways that the small town has embraced thousands of resettled refugees and migrants from around the world over the past decades. Clarkston is now home to people from more than 40 countries who speak more than 60 languages.

Its mayor, Ted Terry, likes to call the town “the Ellis Island of the South,” in reference to the migrant processing station in New York harbor through which so many future Americans passed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The town has enthusiastically welcomed new migrants; its work with resettlement programs have made it a model for other towns and cities across the United States, and helped reverse declining population trends.

Mayor Terry had a recent opportunity to tell the world about what Clarkston has learned along the way.

Mayors, migrants and refugees

On September 18, as world leaders gathered for their annual UN General Assembly with refugees and migrant policy on the agenda, Terry was among the mayors and city leaders attending the [2017 Global Mayors Summit on refugees and migrants](#), hosted by the City of New York’s mayor, Bill de Blasio. Also attending, along with the mayors of several U.S. cities, thought leaders, business leaders, and civil society representatives were the mayors and officials from Mexico City, Quito (Ecuador), Paris (France), Bristol (England), Altena (Germany), Kampala (Uganda), and Ougadougou (Burkina Faso).

The idea is simple: cities are in the vanguard when it comes to receiving and integrating new migrants, both from their own countries and abroad. So as national governments set out to draw up a new Global Compact on Refugees and a Global Compact on Migrants, it is important that the lessons learned by those on the ground, shaped by real experiences rather than theory or dogma, be heard.

Indeed, last year's UN declaration on refugees and migrants highlighted the need for cooperation and partnerships with local government, recognizing "the particular needs of local authorities, who are the first receivers of migrants."

The Open Society Foundations, together with other partners, are supporting the Global Mayors Summit in an effort to make sure that these positive voices from the ground are heard by national policymakers, and to share innovative ideas that are developed at a local level. That includes a particular focus on partnerships—involving local government and private businesses, civil society, and religious groups mobilizing to ensure that new arrivals get the support they need.

And, at a time when the shadows of xenophobia have darkened in both the United States and Europe, the mayors have a positive story to tell—about how their new citizens have enriched their cities—economically, culturally, and socially.

Among the attending mayors, Andreas Hollstein of Altena, in northwest Germany, has stressed the human element of successful integration. In 2015, his small town, recently honored by the German government for its integration efforts, set up an office by the town hall manned by local volunteers to help new arrivals. Local families helped put together boxes of basic household goods and food, and the town paired resettled families with local sponsors to help them navigate their way through the daily business of German life.

With millions of people around the world displaced by conflict, persecution or fleeing poverty, these may seem like small steps. But as governments seek to address a truly global challenge, towns like Altena and Clarkston have something important to show the world.

Reprinted with permission from: [Open Society Foundations Voices, September 18, 2017](#)

Maria Teresa Rojas is director of programs for the International Migration Initiative at the Open Society Foundations. She has previously held several other positions at Open Society, including director of the U.S. immigrant rights portfolio, deputy director of the U.S. Justice Fund, and associate director for communications.

Opening Hearts and Homes to Refugees: Airbnb

By Evelyn
June 22, 2017
[Interview](#)



Airbnb – finding a place where you can belong

[Airbnb](#) recently announced a commitment to provide housing for 100,000 refugees over the next five years. Brian Chesky, CEO and Co-founder of Airbnb, explains why in the company [statement about diversity](#): “At the heart of our mission is the idea that people are fundamentally good and every community is a place where you can belong.”

Cities of Migration spoke with **Kellie Bentz**, Head, Global [Disaster Response & Relief](#), [Airbnb](#), to find out more about their plans and how they’re implementing them.



Why is Airbnb getting involved with the global refugee crisis?

Kellie Bentz: Our mission is around belonging. Belonging and inclusion is something we feel is not only our mission, but is in our DNA. We want to build community around the world. The refugee crisis is a massive issue, and one that is quite divisive. There is quite a lot of misunderstanding around what the crisis is. Many people are fleeing war and conflict and coming into communities. There is a huge challenge around integration. We believe we can make a contribution and it’s our responsibility to do so by engaging our hosts and building a new marketplace and community of hosts who are willing and able to open their homes to newcomers in their community.

Describe Airbnb’s refugee housing program. What have been some of the outcomes for your refugees? What have been some of the outcomes for hosts?

Kellie Bentz: We’ve had 6000 hosts list their space, globally, on the refugee response. We’re still announcing country by country as we roll out. The breadth and depth of agency partnerships range from 100% volunteer led organizations such as [Refugee Bienvenue](#) in Paris to large organizations like the [International Rescue Committee \(IRC\)](#), which has 20 locations across the U.S. Working with that dynamic helps us understand the varied needs of those being displaced and the supports we can offer.

Our Disaster Response Program has been running since 2012, after Hurricane Sandy in New York, and has gotten more intensive over the past two years. We took what we’ve learned through those experiences to build this new program. One of the differences is that refugee serving agencies are able to see the hosts, the people offering free listings. Those listings are not available to the general public. They’re only bookable by verified agencies. That is one clear learning we took from the travel ban in the United States, and other responses around the globe.

We’ve seen a huge impact that we think can help with shifting general bias. For example, during the U.S. travel ban, one host in Denver hosted a family of refugees. Airbnb started to get more requests from their local partner, the IRC. This host went to her neighbours to ask them to host. People realized they could make an impact. Ultimately, these refugees are just new people in our community and we should be welcoming them. That story has helped shape the narrative for Airbnb.

Where in the world do you think you’ll have the most impact? (in 2016 3+ million listings in 65,000+ cities in 191 countries)

Kellie Bentz: We realize that country to country, and even city to city, things are unique.

We're still in the learning process of understanding how our community reacts to this issue. Right now it's been tremendously positive. We've had a lot of feedback from hosts like, "We're glad Airbnb has stepped up to do this. We want to be part of it." Our community is made up of hosts *and* guests. Guests may not be able to open their homes, but want to get engaged in the issue. So the other piece that we're adding is *Suppers With Us*, where they can host dinners with refugees and refugee agencies to learn more about the topic.

The idea is to create a more integrated approach, knowing that if people's education and knowledge level becomes greater, there is a greater likelihood that others will open their homes. We have hosts who have neighbours or friends they want to bring to a meet up to learn more, and they might open their home to refugees.

We're still learning and trying to understand where we can have the greatest impact. We see the need to have an impact, both on the refugees family themselves, but also on the host communities that are opening their doors. It's hard to say where we're going to make the most impact and also how to measure. Is it the number we want to measure, or the quality of the program we actually have, and impact on lives?

Geographically, we're likely to have most impact in Europe and North America. We still have a lot of learning about how we might have an impact in the areas most affected by the refugee crisis, the Middle East and Africa.

How does it work?

Kellie Bentz: Many of the refugees are case managed through their asylum process, as well as resettlement and integration services in their new communities. Having a person on the agency side working directly with the hosts makes it much easier for the refugee. Because the host is communicating directly with people who have all the information, the connection is faster. It's a bit of a shift from previous disaster responses.

In one country or city some of the agencies need more temporary or more emergency accommodation (1 night to a few weeks), whereas in Europe, we're finding calls for longer term accommodation, such as one month. The program is flexible enough to allow hosts to open their homes for any duration. They choose the time frame and they work directly with agencies.

We're trying to figure out all the tools and resources agencies and hosts need to make it as successful as possible without us hand-holding the whole process. We recognize that we need to play a more active role now, to make sure that we're doing it right.

How do you work with local refugee serving organizations?

Kellie Bentz: Ideally we're building a support solution for them, knowing the need for housing is one of the greatest issues for many of these agencies. We also recognize that we are one small piece of the puzzle. Agencies coming on board give us feedback on how we can improve the program, both locally and globally. They connect us with other agencies that are also dealing with similar housing issues, and help us understand how we can make the greatest impact and how we can get more people involved.

Many of these agencies have been dealing with these issues for a long time. We're not trying to reinvent how they do things, just adding a support mechanism for them. They help us understand the differences in need and nuances in different cities for refugees and how we might build out our product to better support agencies and asylum seekers.

They're crucial for information sharing and helping us to build a better tool for them.

How have Airbnb employees and network responded to your refugee program?

Kellie Bentz: We hear a lot about the situation for refugees in Europe, but every region we work in has their own issues. Given our mission, our employees are a very engaged population to start with. The reaction has been tremendous across our global offices. It's been overwhelmingly positive.

We have an incredible story of an employee host in Paris. Before we even started the refugee program, in 2015 he moved out of his apartment to go live with his parents so a refugee could stay his house for 6 months. They became good friends, our employee has fundraised for his school, worked through all the immigration papers with him. They're like brothers now.

His efforts have helped our leaders in different areas see what is possible. It has been helpful internally to have that advocate, to have him explain the experience in his own words.

Where do you see Airbnb fitting in the continuum of the search for permanent, stable housing for refugees?

Kellie Bentz: Our platform was built for travellers, it's short term in nature. Where I think we'll be most helpful is around short term temporary accommodation. However, there are hosts who think they'll just offer their place for a few weeks, but once they have the experience want to host longer term.

Or, Susan in Denver, who couldn't host beyond a month, but was able to talk to a neighbour to take over and host the refugee. We're seeing a bit of a domino effect and the integration component growing. On the short term side, everyone sees this as a housing issue. Over the longer term it's actually helping to build advocates and more welcoming communities.

We see it as an example of our [#weaccept campaign](#), which launched after the travel ban in the U.S. The refugee program has been a powerful example of our philosophy that everyone belongs. We would love people to promote others to become hosts. Even if they're not ready to host in their homes, becoming more informed is important.

What can other companies and groups learn from your approach?

Kellie Bentz: We were one of the first companies to sign on to Chobani [Tent Partnership for Refugees](#), because we believe there is a way for everyone to engage on this issue. We see it as a responsibility that comes with being part of any community. As a global company it's absolutely necessary and critical to be a part of it. We understand that not everyone's mission is about belonging. Our commitment might a bit higher than most. But, from hiring

refugees, figuring out how you can connect with local agencies, all the way to creating a program like ours, there are many ways to contribute and do something.

We find it valuable to be part of the [Tent Partnership for Refugees](#) with other private sector entities committed to doing something. Just doing something starts the conversation. People with decision-making or hiring authority in their companies can figure out how to [hire refugees](#).

That's a significant but easy place to start.

We are committed to this cause. Eventually we will be scaling the product to other causes. We get a lot of requests from causes such as homeless veterans to domestic violence victims and more. We're looking at ways we may be able to support those causes and issues as well, in the years to come.

Sanctuary Cities: Democracy's Last Stand

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



By: Harald Bauder, Director, Graduate Program in Immigration and Settlement Studies at Ryerson University

Cities have always been the hotbed of political innovation — starting with the origin of democracy in ancient Greece. It is no accident that the words “city” and “citizenship” have the same origin. In medieval Europe, serfs gained their freedom from feudal bondage when they moved to a city; after living there for a year, they were free members of that community.

Sanctuary cities today are doing the same thing — at least they try. By embracing residents without federal status, sanctuary cities seek to reframe political membership from the national to the local scale.

Many of America's largest cities, including Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco, are sanctuary cities. Inspired by their American counterparts, several Canadian cities have declared themselves sanctuary cities. Toronto was first in 2013 (although [it struggles to implement](#) the sanctuary-city policies), followed by Hamilton, London (Ontario), Montreal and others. Cities in Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Switzerland, Spain and other countries around the world also have or are considering sanctuary policies.

“Sanctuary cities” is a loose term that applies to cities refusing to cooperate with federal authorities to enforce national immigration law. In the U.S. and Canada, so-called don't-ask-don't-tell policies ban municipal service agencies from asking residents for immigration status and — if they happen to find out anyway — from providing this information to federal authorities. In this way, sanctuary cities aim to provide policing, health, housing and other municipal services to the residents who lack federal citizenship or immigration status. These cities are defining membership based on who lives in their urban community, and not who can be classified as worthy based on federal status.

For undocumented immigrants, life in a sanctuary city is still highly precarious. Agents of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) or the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) continue to operate within city limits and detain and deport undocumented immigrants. The [American Immigration Council](#) therefore warns that the “term ‘sanctuary city’ is a misnomer,” creating a false sense of protection from detention and deportation. Rather than providing sanctuary, these cities only help make life without papers tolerable.

Sanctuary cities, however, are more than a series of flawed municipal laws and administrative directives. They represent an opportunity to strengthen communities, foster democratic participation, and reframe political organization.

Donald Trump's attempt to withhold federal funding from sanctuary cities was met with fierce defiance from city mayors before it was blocked by a federal judge. “We're going to defend all of our people regardless of where they come from, regardless of their immigration status,” proclaimed New York City's [Mayor Bill de Blasio](#). Meanwhile, a recent Texan law that effectively prohibit sanctuary-city policies is publicly opposed by [police chiefs](#) from the largest Texan cities, who argue that this law will make “communities more dangerous.”

The 2006 immigrant marches against the Sensenbrenner Bill that brought out 100,000 people in Chicago and more than 500,000 in Los Angeles showed that undocumented people are a powerful political urban force. The only reason they are not permitted to participate in municipal elections is — again — their lack of national citizenship.

Undocumented immigrants are claiming rights because they are making vital contributions to our urban communities: they are the workers that make our cities function; they are volunteering in community forums and organizing school meetings; and they contribute in many other ways to the public and civic life of our cities.

Which brings me to the issue of scale. The city, not the nation, is the scale that defines community. More than three decades ago, the international scholar Benedict Anderson observed that national communities are “imagined” because they are too large for people to personally know and interact with each other. In the city, however, people intermingle everyday while they are shopping, commuting on the subway or bus, working in the office,



visiting the ball park, or enjoying their children's school concerts. Correspondingly, political communities should also be primarily organized at the municipal scale. Urban membership should outrank national citizenship.

This is what sanctuary cities are trying to achieve: they imagine the city as a democratic space where everyone is included and can politically participate. Sanctuary cities refuse to label some residents deserving and others unwanted because of federal status. All residents — independent of national status — belong in the city.

The current fight in the U.S. over sanctuary city policies reflects a wider struggle over democracy and political inclusion, with cities mitigating the effects of failing national policies. When national leaders such as Donald Trump are challenging the core values of democracy, sanctuary cities are stepping in to defend the principles of liberty and inclusion at the local scale. Cities are proving to be the last bastion of safety for the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

This article originally appeared in the [Huffington Post](#) and has been republished with the permission of the author.

Harald Bauder is a Professor of Geography at Ryerson University and the Director of the Graduate Program in [Immigration and Settlement Studies](#) at Ryerson University. His latest book, [Migration Borders Freedom](#) is available at Routledge.

Kick-Starting Employer Action

By kturner
May 4, 2017
Uncategorized

Syrian Refugees Jobs Agenda

Kick-Starting Employer Action



In a competitive job market and new to Canada, many Syrian refugees, like other skilled newcomer professionals, find it difficult to connect to employers that are hiring and secure a good job.

That was the catalyst for the creation of the Syrian Refugees Jobs Agenda in December 2015, an employer roundtable convened in Toronto by Senator Ratna Omidvar and [Hire Immigrants](#) through the Global Diversity Exchange (GDX) at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management.

Representing sectoral interests of employers across the Greater Toronto Area – business, government and non-profit organizations – roundtable members focused their energies on identifying employment opportunities for Syrian newcomers and matching their talent to the needs of employers. The Syrian Refugees Jobs Agenda quickly emerged as an action-oriented group of local leaders having measurable impact on identifying and creating employment opportunities for Syrian newcomers that arrived as refugees.

One year later, the Syrian Refugee Jobs Agenda has published a new guide for employers on hiring newcomers: [Kick-Starting Employer Action](#), offers employers and cities helpful suggestions on how they can ensure newcomers succeed in the workplace.

Highlights

Job Fair – members of the roundtable put together a job fair in June that included 24 employers with pre-identified vacant positions and an intent to enthusiastically look for candidates to fill those vacancies. Many of the Syrian newcomers who participated were presented with their very first job opportunities in Canada.

Construction Trades Program – roundtable members ACCES Employment, in partnership with the [Labourers' International Union of North America \(LIUNA!\)](#) and the [Refugee Career Jumpstart Project \(RCJP\)](#), created an initiative to support Syrian jobseekers' entry in construction-related occupations. Participants receive sector-specific language training, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and direct access to jobs in the construction trade industry.

Syrian Refugee Fund Project Grant – a sub-committee that formed from the roundtable led to a new project between Magnet, ACCES Employment, TRIEC and the United Way of Toronto and York Region (UWTY). The project includes: the creation of an employment network hub for Syrian refugees, and developing online tools to support the integration of Syrian refugees into the Canadian workplace.

Download the [Kick-Starting Employer Guide](#) (PDF).

Read more about the [Syrian Refugee Jobs Agenda](#) at Hire Immigrants.

Syrian Refugees Jobs Agenda

Kick-Starting Employer Action



The Culturally Competent City

By kturmer

[Opinion](#)



*Keynote speech by **Uzma Shakir**, Director of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, City of Toronto, on the occasion of the Jerusalem Foundation's 50th anniversary event, the "[Jerusalem as a Culturally Competent City](#)" Conference, hosted by the Jerusalem Intercultural Center on May 17, 2016 in Jerusalem.*

In a brilliant, wide-ranging presentation Shakir describes processes taking place in Toronto and throughout Canada regarding multiculturalism and cultural competency, and responses to the country's vastly different population groups, from the native populations to the Francophone community of Quebec to recent immigrants from south Asia and elsewhere. She first defined the role of cultural competency:

"Cultural competency can be viewed in two ways: it can either be seen as paternalistic and prescriptive – something you do for others who have either limited or unequal power to claim their rights; or transformative and critical – consciously producing spaces that address those power differentials in a meaningful manner and eventually lead to an equitable and just society.

In other words, cultural competency can mean being nice to people while maintaining the status quo of inequality or it can mean empowering marginalized people to take control over their own destiny and to change the conditions in society to produce equitable and just outcomes for all.

However, this requires an honest recognition of who is marginalized and then consciously co-creating the conditions for inclusion. In this sense, Toronto has its challenges just like Jerusalem and provides some compelling lessons."



Read or download the Uzma Shakir's whole speech (PDF): [Equity @ Work- A Toronto Story: from Competence to Rights](#).

[Watch Shakir's full speech \(video\)](#) at the JICC Conference, May 17, 2016.

Source: [Jerusalem Intercultural Center website](#).

In Calgary, 'welcoming' immigrants is no longer enough

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



By [Flavie Halais](#)

Reprinted with permission from [Citiscopes](#), April 13, 2017

When Jeny Mathews-Thusoo was tasked with re-designing Calgary's "[Welcoming Community Policy](#)" for immigrants, she asked a colleague at City Hall for some thoughts.

Her colleague's first reaction was telling. Surely, it must be a tourism initiative: The word "welcoming" sounds like you're hosting guests, not helping people settle into a new home. The observation changed the way Mathews-Thusoo thought about her task. "When do immigrants *belong* to the city, or to the country?" she says. "When do they stop being immigrants?"

It's a question that Mathews-Thusoo, herself a daughter of Indian immigrants, thinks about a lot.

In her 12 years working for the city, she has seen immigrants struggle to find their way. While Calgary, an oil town on the Canadian plains, has boomed to a population of 1.2 million, underemployment remains a growing long-term problem for immigrants. Equally worrying, she explains, is that many of them, no matter how long they've been in the country, feel they aren't considered active members of society.

In reshaping Calgary's newcomer policy, Mathews-Thusoo wants the city to take a greater responsibility in fostering a sense of belonging. The first item on her list is to change the policy's name. "I absolutely hate the word 'welcoming,'" noting the privilege it implies for those who came first. "It provides a power imbalance, an idea that 'This is still *my* home'."

The feeling is personal. Although she was born in Canada, Mathews-Thusoo says people often ask her where she's from. "I don't think people understand what it symbolizes," she says. "It means that you still don't belong."

Next on her agenda is to look at the policy's five key areas — employment, community networks, public services, participation in civic life, and safety — and identify the systemic barriers immigrants face with each one of them. She wants to build strategies to remove these barriers.

Mathews-Thusoo has already set out to tackle civic participation. Since 2015, she's been working with a group of about 30 foreign-born citizens who advise the city on programmes and policy making. Each member is tasked with running focus groups in their own communities to report back to City Hall on the needs expressed by immigrants.

The group is currently participating in the review of Calgary's sports policy, which supports and coordinates sports infrastructure, programmes and initiatives. They could be asked to do the same for other city services, such as public transit. "It's about having a voice at the table," she says. "And a meaningful voice, not just a token voice."

But addressing the systemic barriers to inclusion also implies discussing the city's role in fighting racism and xenophobia. That's still largely a taboo in Canada's public sector, but one that cities here can no longer afford to ignore.

The demographics of immigration have been changing in Canada, with more people coming from Middle Eastern, Asian and now African countries. The trend is spurring heated debates on integration, racial discrimination and the accommodation of religious practices. Calgary, with more than a quarter of its population born abroad, is poised to see some of these debates unfold on its own ground.

Mathews-Thusoo believes attitudes are slowly changing at City Hall. The popularity of the city's mayor, Naheed Nenshi, the first Muslim mayor of a large North American City and a second-generation Canadian, helps. Nenshi was first elected in 2010, and then re-elected in 2013 with 74 percent of the vote. "People are recognizing that demographics are changing, that multiculturalism is a strength, but don't know how to support these communities," she explains.

Mathews-Thusoo recently held an informal session with city employees called "Having the awkward conversation about race and racism" to answer some of the questions they had on diversity but were afraid to discuss openly. Employees were given the opportunity to ask questions anonymously. The meeting was so popular that staff asked for a second one.

"There's a level of readiness," she says, "that I haven't seen in a long time."



Jeny Mathews-Thusoo

Montreal: Let's Build Inclusive Cities

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Gain insights from our international panel on building inclusive cities at the 19th National Metropolis Conference 2017 in Montreal.

On March 16-18, 2017, the 19th National Metropolis Conference took place in Montreal. Under the theme, "Looking Forward: Migration and Mobility 2017 and Beyond", over 750 national and city leaders, academics, and practitioners gathered to engage in dialogue on migration.

Cities of Migration co-hosted a workshop on "Inclusive City Building" with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. While addressing the challenging state of migration work globally, our robust international panel shared strategies and tools to help build inclusive cities from the ground up.

Hannah Carswell, a Project Manager of Welcoming America's Welcoming Refugees Project, introduced [Welcoming America's certification standard](#) which drives partnership between the local government and non-profit sector. **Aleem Ali**, National Manager of Welcoming Cities, joined us from Australia to share [The Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities](#) that aims to enable local councils to benchmark their cultural diversity and inclusion policies and practices. **Cynthia**

Lacasse, a Programme Officer for the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, highlights the initiative as a network of city partners that work toward the elimination of racial discrimination. Lacasse invites everyone to build awareness about racism and discrimination and the role we all have to play in eliminating it by participating in [the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's nationwide social media campaign](#).

Vera Dodic, Manager of the Toronto Newcomer Office, discussed their partnership with Euro cities and introduced great ideas, such as the [Toronto for all campaign](#) to spread awareness, challenge stereotypes, and debunk myths about immigrants, fostering social cohesion at the local level. **Jeny Mathews-Thusoo**, an Issue Strategist on Immigrant Inclusion for the City of Calgary, elaborated on the city's Welcoming Community Policy and the role of the local government to create an inclusive city where people can fully participate in civic life. **Cassie Palamar** joined us from The Alberta Human Rights Commission to share its [Welcoming and Inclusive Communities network](#), showcasing the value of communities working together and connecting on issues of diversity and inclusion to leverage assets.

4 takeaways:

- Recognize the role of the city as a key player for integration
- Organize as many stakeholders invested in promoting diversity and inclusion
- Use your individual agency to help spread awareness
- "What gets measured gets done"; engage in standards to track diversity and inclusion in your city



Do You Speak Translate?

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Google Translate and the [Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria \(ICA\)](#) have partnered to formally use the Google Translate App for refugee resettlement and new immigrant inclusion in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Launched on April 12, 2017, the [We Speak Translate](#) project engages community stakeholders, businesses, community agencies, institutions, and the public sector in Google Translate training. Upon completion of the 40-minute training, community stakeholders and partners will receive a We Speak Translate decal, a visible symbol of inclusion and Victoria's commitment to promoting diversity and communication across language barriers. Google Translate training will also be provided to newcomer immigrants and refugees through ICA English language classes and other avenues. Familiarity with the Google Translate App will help to establish a common platform for communication while English language skills develop.

We spoke with **Kate Longpre**, ICA Community Integration Coordinator, to find out more about this innovative initiative, how the relationship with Google came together, and how the project can create more welcoming cities.



Why Google Translate? How did the partnership between ICA and Google come about?

Language is a key issue in settlement. It's a challenge and potential barrier to integration and inclusion. I was researching settlement, integration and inclusion and started thinking about how we use technology as a tool for resettlement and integration.

I thought we could use Google Translate, both as an integration tool, and also a symbol for inclusive and diverse communities. I reached out to Google Translate and they liked the idea.

What is in it for Google? What's in it for the settlement sector?

The idea that Google Translate could become a symbol for inclusion and welcome was new to them. They had a [successful project at the Rio Olympics](#), where waiters and taxi drivers were trained to use the app with tourists.

Attaching their product to a broader mission, symbolizing integration and welcoming communities is a form of Corporate Social Responsibility to show how their technology tools and products can have deeper impact.

In the sector, I wasn't seeing a lot in the field in terms of models of technology use for integration in resettlement in Canada. I was looking for innovative uses of technology to use in our work. Now, we're continuously looking at how tech can be a tool in our work. For example, exploring social simulations and digital storytelling as tools to build awareness for Canadians about what it is like to go through a refugee or migration experience.

For both Google and the immigrant settlement sector, Google Translate as an integration tool can be replicated in any city, anywhere in the world. Google is global. If we are successful, they have the capacity to take it global.

Machine translation is still a work in progress, especially for more complex language or technical interactions. How do you see Google Translate being used as an effective settlement tool?

The project is bigger than machine translation. What could it symbolize in the community when everyone has the We Speak Translate decal in their windows? It's a symbol that our city is a safe, accepting, welcoming place for newcomers.

Google Translate is not a perfect tool. It doesn't allow for in-depth complex conversations at this point, but it can help bridge the initial language barrier to access services, businesses, and other points of contact in the community. Newcomers will know that if they go to a participating business or organization, the people there are familiar with the app and want to welcome and communicate better with them.

It is also an app that many newcomers are already familiar with and use. In some ways, we're building familiarity among community stakeholders, to get trained and to use an app that can improve their interactions with newcomers.

More so than the app being perfect, it symbolizes to newcomers that this community welcomes them, accepts them and wants to communicate with them while they're developing language skills. Language acquisition can take more time with some groups of newcomers. This tool can help bridge basic communication in the community.

I've used Google Translate in my own work. It becomes the moment in time when you connect with someone. The technology allows for that moment, rather than no connection. Community building takes place in that moment.

Have ICA staff started using Google Translate with clients?

Most staff have Google Translate on their phones. We use it for basic communication at the front desk. It's not the same as a translator/interpreter, but those services are not always accessible. We know that Google Translate can create quick and basic communication when it's needed.

People in the community are looking for ways to support and assist with integration and inclusion. This is a very tangible initiative for any community member. They can wear a button on their coat that shows a newcomer that they're approachable, welcoming. It's a tangible, no cost initiative for the community.

Residents of Victoria want to welcome people, and to help them feel welcome. This project won't solve all integration and inclusion problems. But the app is easy enough to download, participants can take 45 minutes of training and they're ready to be part of the newcomer integration and inclusion process.

We are a welcoming community, but it never hurts to demonstrate that overtly to our newcomers. If the We Speak Translate symbol becomes visible in business after business, it allows us to show newcomers that we are welcoming and inclusive.

Google Translate is fairly straightforward to use. What does the training involve?

On one hand, we're creating power users. The training will include an orientation to Google Translate's full capacity as a communication tool, how best to use the conversation function, how to use it offline if there isn't an internet connection.

On the other hand, our goal is also to build awareness about resettlement, integration and inclusiveness. Training is an opportunity to connect with our community about integration and their role in it.

The project is a practical, low-cost initiative that will "improve cross cultural communication and integration of newcomers." How will you measure success?

The community is already showing overwhelming interest. Over one hundred and twenty people have registered to attend the launch. Short term measures will include how many people/businesses/orgs take the training. How many We Speak Translate decals and symbols are visible in the community?

We'll offer ongoing training. If a business wants to train staff and get decal for their storefront, we'll train them and add another symbol of inclusion in the city. We'll also train newcomers in level language classes to make sure they're familiar with Google Translate, as a tool for them, and what the symbol means for them in the community.

As a human service organization, what have you learned about partnering with a technology company like Google?

It's been about relationship building and trust, and recognizing that the project and partnership will evolve. Google has been very receptive to the partnership, but the process can take a long time. The responsibility was on us to be persistent and build trust.

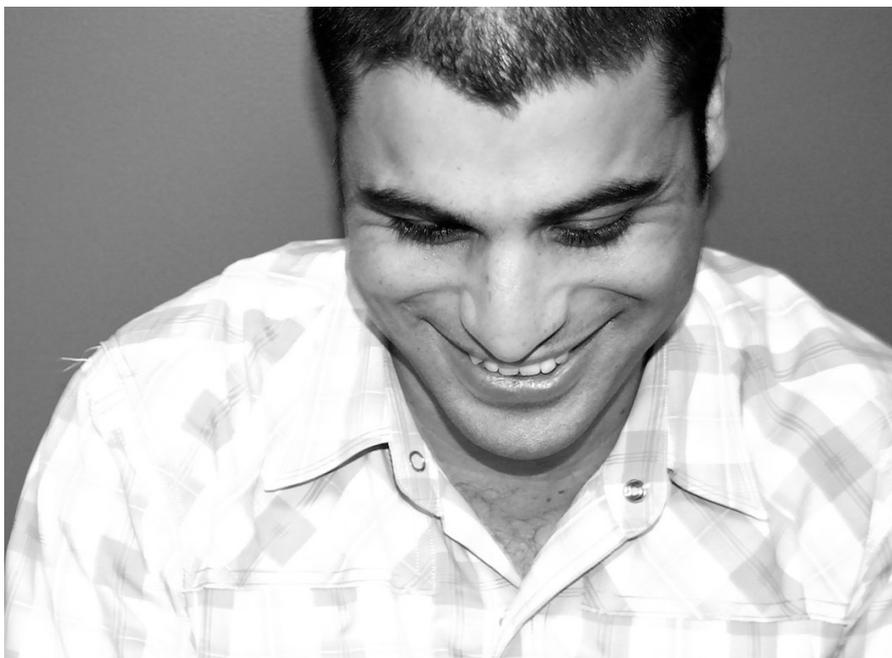
The reality was that Google didn't really need our organization to move this forward. They could launch this project in Europe and likely be successful. But they continued to work with us. Being able to pilot an integration project in our community has benefits for them. Being timely helped. With so many displaced people around the world, with stories about migration and refugees dominating the news, it was something they were interested in right away. I didn't have to try hard to make the case.

Ultimately, there is value in approaching large companies with your ideas. Ask questions and develop a partnership that you are comfortable with. Our community is excited that a small organization like ours is partnering with an influential company like Google.

Read the [ICA press release](#).

Is It Time to Rescue Brand “Australia”?

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By Aleem Ali, National Manager, [Welcoming Cities](#)

A few career changes ago, I managed a branding and design agency. Our primary task was to help our clients communicate their organisation, product or service. We worked to create a strong brand so that people would choose our client's company or service over and above their many competitors.

Since I ran that agency 15 years ago, much has changed in the world. But some things still hold true, and many issues have grown in scale. Talk to retailers, tour operators and educational institutions. Talk to employers. They will tell you that competition is only increasing, not diminishing. And the competition is now global, not local.

Last year, not long after the launch of [Welcoming Cities](#), I received a phone call from the CEO of a Regional Business Council. They outlined their challenge as follows:

“We have a large infrastructure project in our community. When the project is complete, we know that we won't be able to attract enough people domestically to fill all the jobs. So, we need both a national and international solution. But we are struggling to attract people. There is a perception of our community that we are not welcoming. Because of this perception, Australian residents and migrants don't want to move here, live here, or work here. We need to change that perception. We don't just want to be a welcoming city; we NEED to be a welcoming city.”

This story, or at least the sentiment behind it, seems to be a growing challenge.

I recently met with Local Government employees of a major capital city. Their focus is on increasing social cohesion and economic participation in their region. They're concerned by political sentiment and what they perceive to be regressive policies and divisive rhetoric. One of the people in the meeting commented that “Brand 'Australia' is damaged. There's no evidence this will improve anytime soon. We need to do something about it.”

The compelling and disconcerting truth of this statement struck me. Brand Australia needs some serious help. Our international reputation of a fair go, cheering for the underdog, and boundless plains to share no longer seem to ring true. The growing perception is that we demonise people fleeing torture and trauma, are intolerant of diverse cultures, and newcomers risk vilification. Brand Australia is now associated with a fair go for some, but not all.

Tourists, international students, and skilled migrants are vital contributors to our prosperity as a nation. And when it comes to the choice of coming to Australia, or not; perception is everything. If brand Australia ceases to be open, welcoming and generous, then the damage will not only be to our reputation but also the ongoing success of our nation.

The time to address that damage is now. It's time to refuse small-minded, divisive politics. It's time to stop waiting for politicians to cast a vision of a generous, welcoming and inclusive Australia and to grow this work ourselves. It's time to lead. It's time for community groups, small businesses, educational institutions, peak bodies and corporations to come together. It's time to welcome newcomers to our shores and ensure that everyone can take part in social, economic and civic life.

It's time to be deliberate, strategic and collaborative. To put policies and practices in place that value our First People's, long-term residents and new arrivals. It's time to rescue brand Australia. More than a branding exercise, this is a renewed commitment to an inclusive, multicultural Australia.

Source: [LinkedIn](#), February 8, 2017

The New Normal: Interview with Mechelen Mayor Bart Somers

By Evelyn
June 21, 2017
[Interview](#)



Mechelen Mayor Bart Somers is interviewed by an international audience for the [World Mayor Project 2016](#)

The World Mayor Project 2016 invited participants to put questions to Mechelen Mayor Bart Somers, winner of the 2016 World Mayor Prize. From the questions received, a representative selection was forwarded to the mayor. He replies below with candour and thoughtfulness.

Question: While you are a strong believer in and defender of an inclusive society, some other mayors seem to prefer to polarise. When and how did you decide that working together is the only way forward?

Mayor Somers replies: In his famous book 'If mayors ruled the world' Benjamin Barber explained the difference between local politics and national politics. One of the differences is that politicians in parliaments are mainly concerned with ideology and contradictions, while local politicians more often work pragmatic and seek how to connect people. That's why Barber says that the local level is the main political level of the 21st century. Because in a global and fragmented world, that no longer operates hierarchical and in which knowledge and power are spread all over, horizontal networks and connecting factors prevail.

For instance: in parliament we can discuss sewerage systems for weeks. In a city these sewers just have to work. In parliament one can keep talking on integration concepts, great abstract principles; in a city one has to ensure that people get along together, respect each other in daily life. So probably, function creates the human being.

But there is more. Everyone doing politics without historical knowledge is like a ship without a compass. The past has shown how dangerous it is to turn people against each other. to create an external enemy and preach fear of the other. Again and again we see the temptation of that hostile thought lurk around the corner. Especially in difficult times, a mayor must be brave, defend human values ??and not admit that cheap populism.

Polarizing against people is political weakness, even more it is inhumane and does not help society nor the city. This insight I've been carrying along for quite a while, now and always, has been the core of my political beliefs.

Question: The Mechelen model of integrating people from different cultures and religions by combining toughness with tenderness is often used to counter populist, rightwing arguments. Do you think your kind of liberalism can win over voters who toy with the idea of voting for populist parties?

Mayor Somers replies: I don't question myself whether my approach can overcome populism. I refuse to ask that question, because this is not about tactics. It's about fundamental principles. It is my duty – not only as a politician but as a citizen above all – to fight for a humane city and against the lure of populism. The worst thing you can do is compromise with extremists and populists. Defend your principles, human and fundamental values on which our society rests. Rightly, it is said that we need to defend the equality of men and women, the rule of law, the separation of religion and state, freedom of speech. We should not compromise on that. Right-wing politicians often forget to mention some other fundamental principles of our society. For me one of the most fundamental ones – that makes our system dynamic and successful – is this: what counts is not your origin, but your future. That everyone, regardless of origin, parents or religion will have the same opportunities in society. This dream we can offer everyone: roll up your sleeves, work hard and you could win a better future for yourself and your children. But discrimination and racism make it hard, for some even impossible. The populists, who shout out loud about defending Western values, just destroy the very essence of our Western society.

Yes, I believe in the chances of such a consistent approach. It is new, does not belong to a classic left-right axis. It offers people a government that takes their demand for security seriously, invests in it and not abandons them. That applies also to people who don't live in disadvantaged neighborhoods. If people, sensitive to that issue, perceive that their mayor really tackles safety issues, they become more open minded toward fellow citizens. Vice versa a



consistent policy committed to equal chances, non-discrimination, avoiding ghettos, living in diversity, ensures that people can enjoy complete citizenship. That creates a stronger sense of responsibility and commitment. Such an empathetic and fair policy strengthens the credibility of our human law.

Question: During the height of the refugee crisis in 2015, some countries and cities in Europe have shown much greater willingness to accept people fleeing from Syria than others. What kind of co-operation have you received / would you like to receive from governments and others towns and cities? Perhaps even from the EU?

Mayor Somers replies: In Belgium, the federal government is responsible for the shelter of refugees. Last year it urgently had to provide additional capacity because of the large influx. Therefore the government used vacant army barracks and other large (government-owned) buildings. Mechelen was not in the list. Nevertheless, we specifically requested to be allowed to give shelter to some of the refugees. Of course, there were people in Mechelen that didn't think this was a good idea, but a city that strives for justice and humanism should not look away. So we offered a piece of land and buildings so the Red Cross could organise a refugee camp in Mechelen for a year.

To assist refugees we developed a very intensive programme. Reception classes from day one for children so they could learn our language and could visit a normal school as soon as possible. We organized volunteering for asylum seekers in order to integrate them in our society. We set up a network of committed Mechelen residents who organized activities for them to help them integrate in our city. We organized open days for the neighborhood, and so on. Everything went without a single incident. In the end I thanked the refugees, because they have made our city better and not vice versa. They helped some of my fellow citizens to overcome their reservations and created an atmosphere of solidarity.

Our cooperation with the Red Cross and the federal government was successful. I believed that as a city we should not only demand, but also contribute. Our shelter initiative cost us some money and the city administration put a lot of effort into it, but perhaps these were the best efforts of 2016.

Question: Your administration initiated the ambitious Mechelen Power Plan for the reception and integration of refugees, an initiative that has been copied by other communities in Belgium. What role should and/or can towns and cities play in what is, after all, a very international problem?

Mayor Somers replies: European cities alone obviously can't resolve the conflict in the Middle East. However, cities can engage and contribute to alleviate the barbarism by taking seriously our international and human obligations. We need to provide people fleeing war zones with safety and shelter. We need to carefully organise shelter, we need to deal with the understandable concern and fears of our citizens and thus turn their resistance into empathy. That way a city can make a difference.

Mechelen is a very diverse city with more than 138 nationalities. If we manage to turn this living together into success, where people look at each other as fellow citizens, then we offer people a perspective. If we consistently, not selectively, enforce our fundamental principles – I am talking equal opportunities, non-discrimination, in addition to equality between men and women and freedom of speech etc ... into practice, then we make the model of rule of law and democracy more appealing, more attractive than extremist alternatives.

During the past few years, no less than 5,000 young Europeans left their homes to fight in the bloody conflict in the Middle East. If we succeed, as a city, to involve our young people in our society, if we prevent them from fighting in foreign conflicts, if we can convince them of our values so that they renounce totalitarian thinking, then there is less violence there and here. Leading by example.

Question : What have immigrants contributed to Mechelen?

Mayor Somers replies: The immigrant as such does not exist, just as the autochthon does not exist. Some 86,000 people live in Mechelen and they are all unique and all different. There are people with a migration background who have lived in Mechelen for only a few year, while others have lived here for generations. They were born and raised here by parents who were often born here too.

Some enjoyed a university education, others uneducated and everything in between. Some go to the mosque every day, others never set foot inside and everything in between. Mechelen today is a very diverse city. The whole world lives here with us. That makes things sometimes complex, makes occasional misunderstandings and resentment, but at the same time it also creates new dynamics, new insights and thus more freedom for each of us. We have to make new arrangements, new equilibria emerge. But that's just inherent in a society based on freedom. In the world of ISIS (Islamic State) everything should remain the same for 1500 years. In an open society nothing is vested. I often tell that the group that has changed our society, our customs and habits the most, is not migrants but women.

They demanded their full place in society, based on our fundamental rights. Workers also did, gays did. Time and again groups get up claiming their freedom and equality. At first we often experience it threatening. Because we play a zero-sum game: what they get, we lose. But afterwards the freedom of us all turns out to have increased. And we are more consistent regarding our fundamental principles, we are stronger as a society. Now the same debate goes on amongst people with migration background. Again fierce emotions emerge. Not every question is simple. But we are all going to have to move a little on the couch we sit on and give place for even this group. Ultimately, we all have to integrate into the new reality of the 21st century, which is a diverse society.

So to answer your question: an immigrant doctor heals the sick, the deputy director of a school raises our children, the nurse washes our elderly, another one picks up my trash, has a good restaurant with world cuisine, is a police officer, professor of economics, excellent football player, trainer at a boxing club, television host, but most of all this immigrant is a mother or father who raises his children with love, or an adult dreaming of a better future, and sometimes he'll be someone who makes a mistake, makes too little effort to get a degree, not doing his job as he should, committing crime. In short they are like any other, with positive and negative sides. But Mechelen is their home, their city.

Question: Do you think the Mechelen model of integrating newcomers is only possible in smaller cities like yours or could it also be successfully applied by large cities?

Mayor Somers replies: I don't think the size of a city is critical to this approach. It does require a sustained effort and great commitment. Addressing slum areas is important because if criminals rule neighborhoods, if drug dealers become role models and police becomes enemy, if schools and parks look squalid and shabby, if the law of jungle fights down the rule of law, then how can young people and people who grow up in such areas connect with society? Where crime reigns extremism follows. It's like breeding ground for recruiting future terrorists.

A city consisting of ghettos – colored and white – where people do not live together in diversity, but side by side in mono-cultural enclaves, creates alienation and envy: why do they get a park and we don't? Why is police checking here and not with them. Suppose city government just talks to so-called community leaders, it sidelines itself. A city must have connections with all its citizens, must go directly into dialogue, encourage diversity, combating deprivation. Based on clear rules but they can leave no one behind.

This is a model for big cities. Even more, I think it's the only model that can mold diversity into a sustainable value.

Question: How can the City of Mechelen maintain a welcoming culture while at the same time ensuring that the risk of terrorism is kept low?

Mayor Somers replies: The answer has already been given above. In the fight against terror there is much talk about high-tech policing, about bulletproof vests and heavy weapons, soldiers in the streets and tougher punishment. I have no doubt that all of this is useful and much of it is necessary. But the most effective policy against terrorism is prevention. Prevent people from radicalization. This is what cities do better than any other government. With an inclusive approach, stronger citizenship, creating trust. So an open city that respects everyone and doesn't tread people as suspects because they have a different background is a keystone in a genuine security policy. A policy that doesn't show off, but actually binds people to our model of society. This model moves people to defend "their" city against radicalization, even if they or their parents were born elsewhere.

Question: Immigrants in Mechelen often talk about 'living their values'. Can different groups of people live according to their own values and still be part of the same community? How do you handle disagreements between different local communities?

Mayor Somers replies: Of course, they can. Someone once wrote, "liberalism is not a way of life, it is tolerating different ways of life." And you can safely replace liberalism with Western democracy if you ask me. Our society is based on individual freedom. And there is no freedom without diversity and vice versa. Both are sides of the same coin.

The past few months we have heard many paradoxical statements. There were people pleading to restrict our freedom of speech in order to defend the same freedom of speech. The 'burquini' debate is another example. Some wanted to ban this thing, because it proves that you are not free. Such reasoning is the beginning of totalitarian thinking, "if you do not like me, you are not free." So according to those people women can only go to the beach in bikini or monokini. Otherwise, you are not free and you are being suppressed. A strange paradox: these people want to punish the oppressed woman, not the ones supposed to oppress her.

You see, some people abuse basics for people to limit their freedom. In our society fortunately there is freedom of belief and you can make your own choices in your private life, follow your own values.

We do have clear agreements on which we don't give in, like men and women being equal and equivalent, like we must respect the law and like holy books being subject to the law. That freedom of expression exists. Those rights can make sure that everyone can be free.

Living together in diversity is possible if we do not fall into the trap of IS for instance by making human beings one-dimensional. Ahmed is more than just Muslim. He is also a father, his son plays soccer and he is proud of him. He was mechanic and he knows a lot about cars, he lives in my street. We may have different opinions about faith but we still have a lot to talk about soccer and cars and we can both fight for safer streets. By strongly focusing on the Mechelen-feeling, by being proud as citizen one can break through this communitarianism that often locks people into one dimension of themselves.

Question: What do you understand by 'multicultural citizenship' and does the concept actually exist?

Mayor Somers replies: I believe in a free society. But who says freedom, says difference. The right to make different choices, to have other preferences, different beliefs. Freedom and diversity are inextricably linked. Two sides of the same coin. No diversity without freedom, no freedom without diversity. The Turkish writer Mustafa Akyol once said, "liberalism is not a way of life, it is tolerating different ways of life."

Today we live in an era of great diversity. In my town with 86,000 inhabitants, 138 different nationalities live together. "Multicultural citizenship" is about looking at differences as an enrichment, as the product of our freedom. People with different beliefs, different customs offer us alternatives, make us think about our own ideas and customs. They sometimes influence us, sometimes they reinforce our own views. Such citizenship appreciates the diversity of freedom. At the same time a city only functions if there are common rules to organize this society. For me those rules first of all aim to ensure everyone's freedom.

Equality between men and women, freedom of expression, the rule of law, non-discrimination – because the freedom of one ends where the freedom of another begins. It's up to the government to monitor this end to us all to accept it. If cultural or ideological patterns or beliefs fight this, they can be imposed on others. We may not give in on that. At the same time we must not abuse these basic principles as a weapon against others, which often happens today. These foundations of our society are meant to emancipate people, not to stigmatize them.

A workable multicultural citizenship needs something more than these shared basic values. The city should be more than just an archipelago of mono-cultural islands. For a city with only white and colored areas is not a city that lives in diversity, it's a city that lives in apartheid. Where envy is quickly floating above. Why do they get a park and we don't? Together at school, in sports, at work, on the streets, makes us live with each other instead of next to each other. Thus diversity becomes more than something weird that turns us suspicious; it becomes part of our life that enriches us.

Question: How, as a Liberal, do you reconcile liberal individualism with the concept of 'shared citizenship'?

Mayor Somers replies: For me, liberalism is no selfishness. I believe in the Emanuel Kant adage: "Du kannst, denn du sollst". Freedom is not doing your enthusiasm, it brings to each of us a moral assignment: to seek for the good, to use your own talents for yourself in society. As a liberal, I look at man as a social being, who is freely able to act morally. By defending the freedom of others, I defend my one. That way, if I can offer someone the opportunity to develop his talents, I become stronger myself.

* *The interview has been edited and condensed.*

Source: Reprinted with permission from the [World Mayor Project 2016 by the London-based City Mayors Foundation, February 14, 2017.](#)

Facing Hiring Bias

By ktuner
February 28, 2017
Uncategorized



The business case for immigration has never been more pressing as Canada's labour market intersects with an aging population. Though Canada's immigration imperatives focus on attracting economic migrants, labour market integration strategies will have to be examined as skilled migrants in Canada's labour market continue to face barriers to employment.

On January 25th, a dynamic group of city builders gathered at University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs to discuss issues of hiring bias. The event followed the release of a new report called "[Do Large Employers Treat Racial Minorities More Fairly?](#)" co-authored by Rupa Banerjee, Jeffrey G. Reitz, and Phil Oreopoulos. Among the report highlights is the experience of discrimination that is revealed by comparing the success of applications from job-seekers with Anglo-sounding names (Greg Johnson, Emily Brown) with Canadian qualifications, Asian-sounding names with Canadian qualifications (Lei Li, Samir Sharma) and Asian-sounding names with foreign

qualifications. The evidence is unequivocal: the report sampled nearly 13,000 applications for over 3,000 jobs in Toronto and Montreal. Even when applicants have the same Canadian qualifications, Asian-named applicants have a 32.6% lower rate of selection for an interview compared to Anglo-named applicants. No surprise, then, that experiences of discrimination are more likely to occur when Asian-named applicants also have foreign credentials. Worrisome in today's entrepreneurial economy, evidence suggests that discrimination may be even more prevalent amongst smaller organizations, partially due to a lack of resources for advanced HR practices. No matter, discrimination can occur at almost any stage of one's employment including wages and opportunity for promotion.

Seeking Solutions

The [event's esteemed panelists](#) included Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General Integration-Foreign Credentials Referral Office, IRCC; Wendy Cukier, Director & Founder, Diversity Institute; Nicholas Keung, Journalist, Toronto Star; and Jeffery Reitz, University of Toronto's Faculty of Sociology and Munk School of Global Affairs. In a lively discussion moderated by Senator Ratna Omidvar speakers were pressed for solutions ranging from:

- bias free screening using anonymous CV's;
- procurement and representation as a strategy to increase supplier diversity;
- offering companies subsidies; and
- expanding the scope of employment equity to not only review who gets hired but who gets interviewed.

In a discussion of implicit and explicit bias in which speakers shared personal experiences and their experiences as employers, the notion of a "fear factor" was addressed in hiring practices. The "fear factor" (unconscious bias) insinuates that employers are more likely to hire people who are similar to them, people who look like them and who they feel most comfortable with. Mentoring and internship programs such as TRIEC, ADaPT, and FIN were highlighted as effective programs that help overcome hiring bias by exposing the host community to immigrant talent and immigrant newcomers to job opportunities. A constant theme throughout the evening was the ubiquitous nature of biases, and how to deal with them, namely (1) We all have biases and it is our responsibility to challenge them, and (2) the fear factor (fear of "the other") is quickly eliminated when we are given the opportunity to work with people who are different than you. In a closing statement, Ryerson University's Wendy Cukier reminds us that it's time to apply what we know about innovation processes to diversity and inclusion.

What Innovation Can Teach Us About Diversity and Inclusion

Outside Canada, NGOs like [We Link Sweden](#), have put innovation and networking at the core of their newest strategy for newcomer labour market integration. Their pilot employment integration model, the "Entry Hub" looks beyond new technologies that connect skills to employers, to a physical meeting space allows for meaningful face-to-face connection between job-seekers, networks and employers. We Link Sweden identified this lack of coordination between stakeholders as a missed. Today the Entry Hub's physical meeting facilitates regular interaction between key stakeholders. Programming is developed in collaboration with labour market actors in the public sector with the dual goal of connecting employers with new talent, and empowering individuals to fully develop their skills. Among their newest projects is a new approach to hiring bias. Stay tuned!

- Read the full report, [Do Large Employers Treat Racial Minorities More Fairly \[PDF\]](#)
- [Read report and event summary At Hire Immigrants](#)

Cities Raise Their Voices for Migrants and Refugees

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By: Jessica Bither, Program Officer, Europe Program and Paul Costello, Program Coordinator, Urban and Regional Policy, GMF

BERLIN – In the face of increasingly uncertain and less welcoming times for migrants and refugees in Europe and the United States, cities across the Atlantic are leading the charge for more open and fair policies. Ranging from protest or even outright defiance to national initiatives to proactive policies on integration, efforts at the local level are gaining momentum.

Faced with resolute inaction at the national level, over 160,000 protesters marched in the streets of Barcelona on February 18, urging the regional and local governments to take action and welcome refugees. After committing to take in more than 17,000 by September 2017, to date the Spanish government has only actually taken in around 1,100 refugees.[1] In protest, more than 900 civil society organizations, over 100 mayors — including the mayor of Barcelona — and six ministers from the regional government gave support to the Casa nostra, casa vostra (Our home, your home) platform in demanding that the national government take in refugees and allow cities and regions to fulfill commitments and duties in accommodating them.

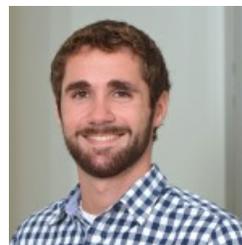
In Germany, several center-left governed states are refusing to deport people whose asylum claims have been denied back to Afghanistan, in direct opposition of orders from the Interior Ministry. While the German government has made the increase in deportations and returns a key priority ahead of the national elections in September, these five Länder argue that Afghanistan does not have “secure provinces” and are using their legal right to issue a temporary moratorium on deportations (Abschiebestopp).[2]

Across the Atlantic, cities from Austin, Texas to Montreal, Canada are adding themselves to the long and growing list of self-declared “sanctuary cities” with the goal of defying federal policies to deport unauthorized migrants. The term sanctuary city refers to cities that limit the collaboration of local police with federal law enforcement authorities by not inquiring about a person’s immigration status. In response, the Trump administration has already threatened to block federal funding for these cities, and is now ratcheting up its efforts by expanding the target group for deportations and extending the authority of local police to act as federal deportation agents.[3]

Beneath this resurgence in municipal defiance of national policies, many cities and towns are already leading the way with innovative policies that are successfully helping to welcome and integrate a growing numbers of migrants and refugees. The 2016 World Mayor Prize was just awarded to the mayor of Mechelen in Belgium for the city’s successful integration policies in one of Europe’s most diverse cities.[4] Also on the list is the mayor of the Polish city of Gdansk, who, in a country known to be highly skeptical to any type of migrants, immigrants, or refugees, set up a pioneering Council of Immigrants to advise the mayor and city administration as part of a comprehensive and robust effort to support integration and make immigrants feel welcome.[5]

However, important legislative and regulatory hurdles still limit the impact of local efforts of migration and refugee matters on a national scale. Last year, the regional government in Barcelona already tried to bypass the national government by reaching out to the EU Commission directly, offering to welcome 4,500 refugees — an action for which it was reprimanded because only national governments are considered a legitimate interlocutor for these matters. Barcelona — together with other cities in Spain and Europe — has repeatedly expressed frustration at the impotence of not being able to accommodate refugees while other European cities are doing more than their fair share and is actively participating in the growing network of rebel cities.[6]

When asked to comment on the recent demonstration in Barcelona — the biggest pro-refugee demonstration known to date — the spokesperson of the EU Commission was not even aware of the demonstration and asked if people were demonstrating against refugee resettlement.[7] In the case of Germany, local governments can only refuse implementation of deportations to Afghanistan for three months, unilateral approval from the federal level is required thereafter. In the United States, the politically symbolic self-designation as sanctuary city will in itself not be sufficient to prevent federal law enforcement from obtaining information on unauthorized immigrants; more will need to be done to ensure these cities are actually safe havens.[8]



With the rollout of the Trump administration's augmentation of deportation efforts, and upcoming national elections in the Netherlands, France, and Germany among others, the migration debate will continue to be a fertile breeding ground for populist sentiment and actions. In such a context, the voices of cities and local level representatives may become the prime advocates for open and inclusive societies. It will be up to cities to provide safe communities and successful integration models that will make or break national migration policies in the years to come. Citizens can hold mayors and local representatives accountable to doing everything they can to make good on their proclaimed status as sanctuary or rebel cities. These cities offer the potential for creating the social glue of tomorrow's diverse communities.

Source: Re-printed with permission from the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), [Cities Across the Atlantic Raise Their Voices for Migrants and Refugees, February 28, 2017](#)

[1] <http://www.efe.com/efe/espana/sociedad/dastis-espana-cumplira-el-compromiso-de-acoger-a-17-337-refugiados/10004-3130798>

<https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/pol...>

[2] <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/migration-rot-gruene-laender-stellen-...>

[3] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-trump-administrations-bluepr...>

[4] http://www.worldmayor.com/contest_2016/profile-mechelen-mayor.html

[5] http://www.worldmayor.com/contest_2016/profile-gdansk-mayor.html

[6] <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/beppe-caccia/european-n...>

[7] <http://www.rac1.cat/info-rac1/20170219/42152729764/europa-comissio-europea-manifestacio.html>

[8] <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/15/opinion/sanctuary-cities-in-name-only...>

Talking Tech for Refugees

By Evelyn
February 26, 2017
[Interview](#)



In a recent Cities of Migration learning exchange, Joséphine Goube, Chief Executive Officer, [Techfugees](#), interviewed Alan Vernon, Project Lead, [Connectivity for Refugees, UNHCR](#), about how technology can empower local refugee communities.

We followed up with Joséphine to learn more about how technology is empowering refugee communities, what Techfugees is currently working on, and what NGOs can learn from Techfugees' rapid rise and work in 25 countries.*

In our recent webinar [[Online/Offline: How Technology Can Empower Local Refugee Communities](#)], you spoke about how data security and the security of people are intimately connected in your work with refugees. What are some principles around privacy and personal security that need to be considered when refugees, NGOs, and the tech community come together to develop solutions?



Joséphine Goube: The reality is that refugees have been targets already, so they don't easily give their data. I haven't seen many refugees who are very open to sharing personal or private information. It's a very Western cultural phenomenon to provide so much personal information online. Refugees seem to have a higher level of respect for privacy. NGOs are also very aware of privacy issues.

It's the engineers and techies who are the most unaware, even though they know how to put security around data. People collect data they don't really need in order to provide their services. There's a need for a different mentality when approaching technology projects with vulnerable populations like refugees. That's what Techfugees provides. You have to look for innovative ways to build your business model.

We're trying to educate the engineering and tech world about the vulnerability of refugees. For the tech world, most business models rely on data, and selling data, because the actual product is the user. This is a bit of an issue. Users provide tonnes of data. When apps that service people are created, it's done by collecting a lot of information on the daily lives of people. And that doesn't work well when building tech for refugees. If your business model relies on selling the data of vulnerable people, you're really putting them at risk.

So, we spend a lot of time explaining the basic principles we have, which are:

- don't collect data if you don't need it to deliver the actual service
- don't base the core of your business model on data

We also let them know that there are different ways to store and ensure security of data that protects peoples' identities. As well, who has access to the data is important, so having security protocols and practices around personal information is essential.

What core ideas do techies need to keep in mind when working on "solutions" related to migration and refugee flows in receiving/host communities?

JG: We [the tech community] don't have the long term view or expertise on the ground with refugees. That's what NGOs have. They have the expertise. We are eager to learn. So, we work in partnership with NGOs to create technology for them. For example, we've been talking with Refugee Council in London about creating an app to deliver information for newly resettled refugees.

We're useful to Refugee Council, because we bring expertise they don't have. But, they're essential to the process. We could create technology without NGOs –but then we would fail! Because we wouldn't be able to fully define the challenge and who the target user is, or what the long-term vision or use for the app would be.

When we work with NGOs, our process looks like this: We work to define the challenge. What's the core of the problem? Who are the stakeholders, users? Then, break down that problem in simple terms, and outline the scope and tech limitations. We identify the right tech for that problem. It doesn't have to be sophisticated. It really is about creating something that can be used and is useful, immediately, on the front line. We also looking for scale, where can tech be used to scale the solution? At the end of the day, we're not using tech for tech. If someone comes with a challenge where technology can't help provide a solution that can scale, what's the point of technology?

Can you share any tips for NGOs planning to use technology to improve refugee circumstances in host communities?

JG: At the beginning, it was rare for the humanitarian sector to be interested in working with the tech community. They didn't have enough techie knowledge and were afraid that techies were interested in replacing workers with technology. There was also a misunderstanding that techies thought they could solve a political crisis, which isn't what was intended. We've always said that we want to support NGOs in their work, to help them optimize their impact.

Tips? Learn about data and what data can do for you. Be open to the possibilities. What's really important for NGOs is to look at how to be transparent, open and develop a sharing culture. We work with less hierarchy, more of a network. It means that we can advance faster, as small decisions are made on the front line, and small errors can be fixed quickly, because we're working in groups. When we fail, it's not catastrophic, because our approach is iterative, always evaluating what's working and not.

We start, and we iterate or pivot based on what we're learning. You could say that we're very "short termist." But, when you have an emergency, it's important to be able to create solutions for short-term progress and focus.

My advice to NGOs is to be curious. Don't be afraid of us. We're here very much to help. We need your feedback into our processes.

What advice do you have for NGOs who need to work techies?

JG: There are clear cultural differences between how a hierarchical NGO works and techies. For example, it's important to be clear about the technical terms we use. What is a sprint? What is a hackathon? What do we mean when we "hack?" The way we talk is different, so we need to make sure we have someone who can speak both languages, a cultural interpreter of sorts. That's a key role Techfugees plays. We speak both languages. We can explain and translate what each other means.

So, refining the language and understanding the timing on how things will work and roll out. NGOs don't generally have a sense of how long even a small solution can take. What looks small and easy to do may take many days and hours of coding, for example.

It's important to communicate effectively, to prepare the groundwork, and that takes time. Technology is not magic. It's hard work. It can be magic when it scales, but it only scales when you've nailed down the user. The user has to understand how to use your tech.

Ninety-five percent of the time spent is about defining the challenge, defining what the core problem is and then breaking it down. Five percent is building.

Find out more about [Techfugees](#) and their current crowdfunding campaign.

** The interview has been edited and condensed.*

About Joséphine Goube

Listed as one of the 30 under 30 Social Entrepreneur of 2016 by Forbes, Joséphine Goube is a hacktivist for migrants and refugees in Europe. As COO at London-based Techfugees, a non-profit coordinating the tech community's answer to the refugee needs, Goube helps structure the organization in 25 countries and focus its activities on tech that makes the most impact for refugees and NGOs. As tech evangelist for a web-based recruitment platform, Yborder, Goube supports the mobility of software engineers within the borders of Europe.

Solidarity Cities

By Evelyn
February 2, 2017
Uncategorized



Witness to the biggest global migration movement of our time, the new [Solidarity Cities](#) initiative welcomes all European cities to work together in a committed effort to support refugee reception and integration. Led by the Mayor of Athens, Georgios Kaminis, and based on the framework of the EUROCITIES network, Solidarity Cities plan to stand as a united front in response to the multiple challenges posed by the migration and refugee crisis. After all, they're saying, integration and social cohesion manifest at the local level and city leaders are prepared to strengthen their role to confront issues of migration through cooperative and collaborative measures, guidelines for social cohesion and a robust support system for developing and implementing good integration practices.

Solidarity, Humanity and Dignity:

Athens Mayor Kaminis talks about [Solidarity Cities](#).*

"Solidarity Cities is the cities' response to the refugee crisis that erupted last year. In a joint statement issued with other large cities of Europe, we declared that our role in dealing with the multiple implications of this major challenge is crucial.

I am proud to say that this is a political initiative that I proposed to the EU capital cities' mayors at our annual meeting last April and it was unanimously endorsed. "Solidarity Cities" overall platform is structured around four main pillars:



1. Information and knowledge exchange on the refugee situation in cities
2. Advocacy for greater involvement and direct funding for cities to manage the reception and integration of refugees
3. City-to-city technical and financial assistance and capacity building
4. Elicit the commitment of European cities to receive relocated asylum seekers

In a nutshell, it is an initiative that captures the ongoing efforts of cities at the local level to receive and integrate refugees. It also highlights and further promotes the need for cities to have a recognized, and stronger role in these areas, being frontrunners in the promotion of coexistence and mutual respect.

The City of Athens has already significantly benefited from this initiative. It has established close cooperation with cities such as Amsterdam, Berlin and Barcelona as well as the Eurocities Network. This has not only enabled it to acquire more expertise on how to deal with this challenge. It has also established a forum where the Athens' municipality can work jointly (with other cities) to advocate for a fair sharing of responsibilities at local, national and EU level, based on the European values of solidarity, humanity and dignity."

**Question from Gisela S., Brussels, Belgium, posted on The World Mayors website. Reprinted with permission from the [World Mayor Project 2016 by the London-based City Mayors Foundation, February 14, 2017.](#)*

Sleeping Giant: Athens, New City of Migration

By Evelyn
February 27, 2017
[Interview](#)



Athens Mayor Georgios Kaminis is interviewed by an international audience for the [World Mayor Project 2016](#)

World Mayor invited participants from the 2016 Project to put questions to Athens Mayor Georgios Kaminis, winner of the 2016 World Mayor Commendation for services to refugees. The mayor responds to a representative selection with candour and thoughtfulness.



Athens: A New City of Migration

Question from George F., New York City, USA: In your experience what are the short and long-term challenges of accepting so many refugees and what are you doing to address these issues?

Mayor Kaminis replies: During 2015-2016, Athens was faced with the short-term challenge of finding temporary solutions in order to provide food, shelter and health care to large number of refugees arriving at or passing through the city. This was a tremendous challenge for our city, as it did not have any existing infrastructure to respond to the needs of the newcomers. The municipality quickly took action to fill this gap. Already in August 2015, when the daily inflow of refugees entering Greece started to peak, the municipality provided a piece of land to the Greek government to create a camp where refugees can be temporarily accommodated. The so-called "Elaionas" camp has been expanded, and currently has the capacity to host up to 2,400 people.

In cooperation with the UNHCR, the Athens municipality has also been running a housing program, in the frame of which privately owned apartment are rented out to refugee families waiting to be relocated in an EU country. We also provide medical care and vaccination to the refugees and their children in our municipal clinics. We have significantly benefited from the presence of many INGOs who help us with their expertise. The solidarity exhibited by Athenians has also helped us cope successfully with the situation without negatively affecting the city's social cohesion.

The long-term challenge still ahead of us though is to promote the successful integration of refugees in the Athens. Learning the language, building a life in a city that was not their intended destination, getting socially active after many months on the move, are all big challenges for the refugee population but also for the local society. The first few steps have been made: children go to school, and Greek and English language lessons are provided through our "Open Schools" program throughout the city. Integration in the labor market is another major challenge, particularly in view of the prolonged economic recession that the Greek economy has experienced from 2009 until 2016.

It must be noted that the Municipality does not have explicit or significant competences on migrant and refugee integration. Nevertheless, we decided to assume an active role and take action. To this end we have also created a new position of Vice Mayor for Refugees and Immigration. We have chosen to work with international partners and with European and private funds to cope with a situation that for us is like "a crisis within the crisis". We welcome the experience of other European cities, with a longer tradition on migrant integration, and we use their best practices in our long-term integration strategy.

We believe that this challenge can also be seen as an opportunity. Seeing it this way, we have sought to draw from and build on the dormant capacity of the city (inactive population, abandoned buildings, new city needs that cannot be covered by the public sector, and so on) in order to find creative solutions that simultaneously cater to the needs of the Athenian population for a better life in the city overall.

Neighbourhood Dialogue

Question from Stelios D., Athens: How does the Municipality of Athens, given its budget constraints, keep a balance between providing support to the refugees and assisting the local population mostly affected by the economic crisis?

Mayor Kaminis replies: For the Municipality of Athens ("MoA"), refugees and local population affected by the economic crisis are both considered vulnerable target groups for social programs and services. Municipal structures, such as the Reception and Solidarity Centre and Municipal Clinics do not differentiate locals and refugees when it comes to providing food, clothing and personal hygiene products or primary health care services including medical prescriptions.

Following the same rationale, access to MoA's Social Housing Network is provided to families on the basis of socioeconomic criteria and independently of their nationality. As already mentioned, refugees are accommodated in rented apartments, in the framework of a project coordinated by the UNHCR, funded by the European Commission and implemented by the Municipality. In this project as well as in others, the aim is to cover refugees' basic needs and to prepare for their social integration (i.e. language classes). Special care is taken to adequately inform and keep an open channel of dialogue with the neighbourhood in order to prevent discrimination incidents.

A unique spirit of voluntary engagement

Question, by George F., New York City, USA: How are you engaging with citizens of Athens to encourage them to continue to welcome the refugees and join you in your commitment to helping and integrating the newcomers?

Mayor Kaminis replies: The Athenian population has shown a unique spirit of voluntary engagement in responding to the overwhelming inflow of refugees. More than 90 different initiatives have been mapped in Athens, for the nearly 15,000 refugees who live within the borders of our Municipality. In this spontaneous effort, a large international population of inspired active citizens has come to Athens to join forces to respond to the countless and urgent humanitarian needs.

However, there is a fine line between such formal organizations and the informal activism that flourishes (which is also accounted for in the above numbers). The role of the Municipality has been to strengthen its official ties with the UNHCR and large NGOs who manage a part of this population, without discouraging some of the positive impact of independent unofficial initiatives.

The Municipality of Athens has also created a platform to bring together an increasing number of creative community groups who have been active since the beginning of the crisis in Greece. More than 2,500 activities from 300 different groups are mapped on a platform named "synAthina", which also empowers these voluntary best practices in various ways. The platform allows independent synergies and networks to develop among those involved in similar activities such as the refugee issue, without patronizing their own committed spirit. But at the same time, it encourages such groups to collaborate and open a constructive dialogue with the Municipality.

In these informal initiatives one finds invaluable impact, inspiration and exemplary citizenship. My role as Mayor of Athens is to incite these active citizens to bring their knowledge forward and build collaborative solutions for the smooth integration of refugees in the city.

I believe that my own initiative "Solidarity Cities" to establish a network of European capitals as host societies and refugee destinations, sends an empowering message on behalf of like-minded citizens of Europe sharing similar values.

Economic Revival

Question from Aristeia T. and Stelios D., Athens: Do you see the arrival of migrants and refugees mostly as a humanitarian issue or could the newcomers provide Athens with new opportunities?

Mayor Kaminis replies: It is self-evident that the refugee crisis is primarily a humanitarian crisis as large numbers of dislocated people have been fleeing their country mainly because of war. Their situation is different in many respects from that of migrants or immigrants arriving from zones of milder political or economic instability.

Financial Impact. Beyond tackling the dramatic increase of the numbers of refugees reaching Greece and responding to the humanitarian crisis, the influx of new populations and groups creates new opportunities for Athens. Already, there we can discern a positive financial benefit for residents of our city who can rent their empty apartments to incoming refugees. This is taking place in the frame of the housing program that the Athens municipality has been running in cooperation with the UNHCR to provide temporary accommodation for refugees. This agreement is a very important contribution of the city of Athens to the management of the refugee crisis. Our municipal authority will continue to work to ensure humane living conditions for refugees, while simultaneously ensuring the social cohesion of the city and its residents.

In the frame of our "Relocation Program", the City of Athens has been implementing the housing and accommodation project that aims at renting more than 260 apartments for 2,000 beneficiaries, and at creating a community center for hosting and promoting the social inclusion of refugees.

The City of Athens "Relocation Program" is funded 100% by the European Union. These funds are allocated to meet the all-around needs of the refugees, which at the end are funneled into the local economy and market. Through the program the local real estate market has benefited by contracting out all these unrented apartments, generating income for their financially vulnerable owners. Every apartment rented has its utility bills paid by the program. Additionally, all of the apartments are renovated and fully equipped with new furniture, electrical appliances, household items, linen etc., by the program, substantially helping the local businesses.

The Program also provides the eligible refugees with financial assistance through pre-paid cards, enabling them to purchase food, basic necessities and city transportation tickets. As a result, this is another significant cash injection into the local market and economy, mainly in neighborhoods of our city that have been severely hit by the economic crisis.

Jobs Creation. In order to implement the Program, new staff had to be hired. Currently close to one hundred young professionals, social scientists, case handlers, apartment supervisors, interpreters, management and administrative professionals, doctors, psychologists, counselors, etc., who were previously unemployed, are hired and offer their services. Hiring more staff becomes necessary as the project needs grow.

Multiculturalism / Cultural Diversity. Refugees inject important human capital for our city. Many of them are skilled, educated people with expertise in a variety of fields and professions. For those who will choose to stay in our country, it becomes a challenge for us to integrate them into our society in the best possible manner, helping the revival of our economy in the city's neighborhoods. The newcomers can become a source of enrichment in the modern multi-ethnic and multicultural urban environment of our city.

New Athenians

Question from By Manos M., Athens: Does the City of Athens have any idea how many of the refugees and/or migrants will make the city their new home? Does the City have any idea how to integrate them and prepare them for a productive and happy life in Athens?

Mayor Kaminis replies: In addition to the tens of thousands of migrants who have been living in Athens since the early 90s, there are currently about 15,000 refugees in the Municipality. Well over 200,000 Third Country Nationals (TCNs) live in the broader metropolitan area of Attica. Some of them have applied for asylum status and are waiting for their application to be processed in Greece. Others are waiting to be relocated in another European country. Athens is not an attractive destination for most refugees because there are few job opportunities for them. Despite of this, some of them chose to file for asylum in our country and will most likely stay or end up in the capital where they have easier access to services, networks, and opportunities.

Greece does not have a long experience in receiving migrants. We were traditionally a nation of emigrants. In the past 25-30 years, even after several waves of migrants have come to our country, we still have not developed any specialized structure for their integration. In addition to that, in the recent years, the national system and infrastructure of social services have been severely affected by the economic crisis. Greece has for a long time been an entry point and a transit country for immigrants coming into Europe. In regard to the recent mass influx of refugees, research confirms that few people want to make Greece and our city their new home.

Now that the refugee crisis has subsided – at least for as long as the EU Agreement with Turkey remains functional – we have a better picture of the next day and we are working on how to best integrate the people who will in the end remain in the city. In view of their relatively small number, the task is very manageable. What is more difficult and challenging and challenging though is how to achieve their successful integration in the context of a severe economic crisis and the rise of populism.

* *The interview has been edited and condensed.*

Source: Reprinted with permission from the [World Mayor Project 2016 by the London-based City Mayors Foundation, February 14, 2017.](https://www.worldmayorproject.com/)

Welcoming Innovation through Transnational Exchange

By Evelyn
February 28, 2017
[Opinion](#)



By: Dan Wallace

Earlier this year, local officials from the United States and Germany took part in the inaugural year of the [Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange](#), an opportunity to share ideas and promising approaches to welcoming and integrating immigrants and refugees into communities on either side of the Atlantic. This exchange, organized by [Cultural Vistas](#) in partnership with the [Heinrich Böll Stiftung](#) North America and [Welcoming America](#), is rooted in the idea that many of the core challenges and opportunities of migration are shared among nations, but also that assumptions about what works best in each country should be tested and examined with fresh perspectives.

And they have been. On [a recent webinar](#), several of the participating U.S. officials—just back from a brief visit to the cities of Mannheim, Stuttgart, and Dresden—shared the ways in which their thinking had been challenged by what they witnessed in Germany, and how they are already beginning to plan new initiatives or refine existing ones based on some of these lessons.

Betsy Cohen, Executive Director of the [St. Louis Mosaic Project](#), found inspiration in the blend of arts, culture and volunteerism in integration efforts in Germany. She shared that Mosaic will work to bring long-term residents and refugees together when the St. Louis Symphony performs concerts at the International Institute of St. Louis.

Now, the Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange and the ideas it sparked are helping to inform a new exploratory project—supported with seed funding from the [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#), [Ashoka](#), and Welcoming America—to examine the different approaches to welcoming in the U.S. and Germany and how to further an exchange of ideas between two countries both grappling with rising social anxiety about the influx of refugees.

Strategies for Successful Integration

Addressing apprehension about newcomers within receiving communities in these and other nations experiencing demographic change will be critical to successful integration. But the strategies for doing so—including the values to which local officials, often on the front lines of integration, appeal—may look quite different. Since 2010, for example, the number of civic, business and political leaders in the U.S. employing economic arguments to further the debate about the value of immigrants and refugees has grown tremendously. Reports citing the economic benefits of immigrants as entrepreneurs, workers, taxpayers, students, and homeowners have sprung up everywhere from [national academic journals](#) to [local newspapers](#) to [White House policy reports](#). These arguments have been made by Democratic and Republican policymakers, business executives and farmers, mayors and non-profit advocates alike. A study by the Pew Research Center found that Americans' views of the impact of immigrants on U.S. workers have grown [more positive over the last 10 years](#), not less. And yet the role that fear about immigration played in the recent U.S. election is undeniable. In other words, this argument alone has not moved the American debate about migration far enough.

On the other hand, the commitment to a humanitarian responsibility towards refugees in Germany remains strong even as social anxiety is on the rise. And, due to the nature of the challenge here, as well as the different legal and policy framework within the country, arguments about the economic

benefits of migrants and refugees remain nascent. A more extensive social welfare apparatus and deeper public sector investment in those arriving, in addition to perhaps higher barriers to entrepreneurship for those struggling to enter the labor force, call into question some economic arguments now taken for granted in the United States. Despite this, communities across Germany, like the U.S., face a demographic cliff resulting from their aging populations that is unlikely to be mitigated without the arrival of newcomers.

The questions of how to reach and engage receiving community members who may be fearful or apprehensive about migration in both societies have new significance in the aftermath of the U.S. election. They will be the primary focus of the exploratory phase of this new project, which has just begun. What has already become clear is that we cannot answer these questions alone.

Dan Wallace is a Project Consultant with Welcoming America and the Bertelsmann Stiftung. He holds a M.Ed. in Community Development and a B.A. in Political Science from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, the birthplace of Welcoming America.

Tolerance and Diversity

By kturner
November 30, 2016
[Opinion](#)



Closing speech by **Minister of State for Europe Michael Roth (Germany)** at the [OSCE Conference on Tolerance and Diversity](#), Berlin, October 20, 2016

Ms Mijatovic, Michael Link, Ladies and gentlemen,

Where better to practise tolerance than in lively debates and discussions? After a long conference day full of working sessions, you will all know a thing or two about that. Since the conference started yesterday you have been engaged in an intensive debate on the need for and the possible forms – and limitations – of tolerance. You have voiced engagement. And conviction. And, yes, the occasional controversy.

But it is precisely this broad range of views and feelings that is the best possible proof of the enriching impact diversity has in practice. Because we are primarily required to show tolerance where differences become obvious, where we see diversity in all its glory, but also where the resulting conflicts emerge.

We have seen this very clearly over recent months in Germany, where hundreds of thousands of people have sought refuge from war and terror. Their arrival has increased the diversity, the cultural mix, in our country. But there is no doubt that this increasing diversity has put many citizens' tolerance severely to the test.

This is the question: how much diversity is possible and how much common ground is necessary for peaceful coexistence in our country, indeed in Europe as a whole? Admittedly, the coexistence of different cultures, religions and ethnic groups is demanding, but it is also enriching and rewarding.

However it won't work without tolerance. Tolerance is very far from being static; it is not a stance you adopt once and never shift. No, tolerance is something that has to be learnt and relived, over and over again. Again and again, it has to adapt to new questions and new developments.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Tolerance and dialogue are inseparably coupled. Without tolerance, without a willingness to respect differing opinions and views, dialogue is simply impossible. And without a real dialogue, without a serious consideration of other opinions and views, tolerance will remain abstract and passive.

Hans-Georg Gadamer, that great philosopher on dialogue, put it very aptly when he said that anyone who focused on differences was at the beginning of a conversation, not the end.

In that same spirit, we regard this conference not as an endpoint, but as a cordial invitation to continue the dialogue embarked on here. The question of how the increasing ethnic, religious and cultural diversity in our societies will affect our day-to-day lives together is one that will occupy us long after the close of this conference.

Tolerance also requires that we are willing to deal with each other with respect and to question our own standpoints. Tolerance is the admission that others might actually be right. And tolerance is the ability to bear contradiction. So to display tolerance is most definitely not a sign of weakness, but rather of self-assurance and inner strength.

Tolerance is a precious commodity. That's why governments and state institutions too must respect, defend and uphold it. Every day anew. Along with all other engaged groups in society. In my work as Minister of State for Europe, I am driven by a commitment to fight the marginalisation of and discrimination against minorities. On almost all my trips, I meet representatives of minorities – be they refugees, Sinti and Roma or members of the LGBTI community.

Each and every one of us must live a life of tolerance, without giving in to the temptation to take what seems to be the easy course. We must not allow tolerance to be abused by those who cite it in order to spread their hatred and prejudice.

Or, as the philosopher Karl Popper put it: "We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant." How right he is. I would add this: otherwise dialogue in an open society will die.

We need the willingness to enter into genuine discussion, also in the international framework, like in the OSCE. We need a frank exchange – one open to criticism – on the best experiences and solutions when it comes to handling diversity and tests of tolerance. This includes our experiences of how to combat hate crime and discrimination on the internet.

And it includes very specific projects designed to promote tolerance and diversity through education. One example you learnt about today was the fantastic online project "[Stories that move](#)", which presents young people's very personal experiences of discrimination and intolerance. These young people were robbed of their dignity. But this project gives them a voice, a loud and articulate voice.

The project also tells the story of the increasing diversity of orientations, affiliations and identities in our societies. It tells of the opportunities inherent in this diversity. And that, I believe, is the most important message at a time when unfortunately many people see diversity more as a threat.

In order to flag up these opportunities, ladies and gentlemen, we must continue and use the dialogue on diversity and tolerance – within the group of OSCE participating States, in cooperation with our civil societies and in our own immediate day-to-day environment. We are all citizens, and we should set a good example.

Thank you very much indeed to all those who organised this conference and made it possible. And a big thank-you to all of you for attending and for your lively contributions to the discussions. Keep talking – for tolerance and diversity!

Source: Reprinted with permission from the [Website of the Federal Foreign Office](#).

Michael Roth is Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office (since 2013. Since 1998 directly elected member of the German Bundestag; 2010 to 2013 spokesperson on Europe of the SPD parliamentary group; 2009 to February 2014 Secretary-General of the SPD in Land Hesse. Since 2014 Commissioner for Franco-German Cooperation, member of the Deutsche Welle Broadcasting Board, member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for European Politics and member of the board of the Franco-German Institute in Ludwigsburg, Chairman of the supervisory board of the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF), member of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation Flight, Expulsion, Reconciliation



Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe

Today's Imperative for Welcoming

By ktturner

[Opinion](#)



By Susan Downs-Karkos, Welcoming America

Excerpted from: [A Transatlantic Perspective: Welcoming Cities and the Policy and Practice of Refugee and Immigrant Integration](#). Baltimore: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2016

The world continues to witness a rise in global migration. Growing numbers of people leave their countries of birth and venture to faraway lands to seek new opportunities. For immigrants and refugees, the process of leaving home for a new and unknown place requires courage and grit. To step on a boat, to navigate a confusing bureaucracy, to cross an uninviting border — no matter the pathway, immigrants risk so much in trying for a new beginning. But what of the communities that will receive them? How will longer-term residents view their new neighbors, who speak a language and come from a culture or religion often so different than their own? To what extent will they welcome immigrants to their community, and to what extent will the arrival of newcomers be met with ambivalence, fear, or even hostility?

These are the questions with which countries across the globe struggle. Whether a sending country, a receiving country, or even both, nations are trying to figure out how to better manage not only migration, but the long-term integration of immigrants and refugees who come to their shores and hope to call it home. Nations are being tested in new ways and are required to reconsider how to welcome and integrate newcomers. The powerful images of children and families fleeing violence and seeking asylum in Europe have been burned into the consciousness of people worldwide. There is greater concern than ever before about the plight of refugees everywhere, and the need to create a more welcoming policy and culture so people can rebuild their lives has rarely been so clear. How can we transform one of the greatest challenges of our time into a significant opportunity — one that can make a difference in the lives of millions of immigrants, in Europe and across the globe — and to the local communities that welcome them?

A growing economic imperative

While the humanitarian need is well known, there is a growing economic imperative for welcoming newcomers. As populations age — whether in the U.S., Italy, Japan, or Germany — governments must ask themselves where they will find the talent to keep their communities vibrant and economically competitive in the years ahead. A growing body of research documents the significant economic contributions immigrants and refugees are making to communities — as employers, workers, and consumers. Yet too many receiving communities remain conflicted about immigrants. Leaders need to recognize the special opportunity to support the dreams of these newcomers and to see how with a little investment, their talents can be harnessed to supply the workforce that 21st century economies increasingly need. Through welcoming investments in language learning, workforce training, and connection building with the receiving society, among others, migrant families' hard work can help fuel national economic vitality well into the coming decades.

The economic benefits immigrants bring also go beyond the workforce — immigrants are also a disproportionate share of small business owners. Their businesses have helped revitalize communities like Columbus, Nashville, and Dayton, where main street businesses like grocery stores, restaurants, and dry cleaners, are employing community members, strengthening the tax base, and growing the local economy. Welcoming newcomers also brings more social and cultural vitality to our communities, with diverse ideas and perspectives helping to fuel innovation and bringing a renewed sense of vibrancy. Common values are also an important part of this conversation. Whether in Germany or the United States, our democratic countries are shaped not by race or religion but by what one brings and how they live their life.

Welcoming communities

While some federal governments have been paying attention to immigrant integration and developing policies and funding streams to support it, in the end it's the local context that determines the extent to which newcomers feel they belong.

How a family is treated in their new home community — in the schools, on the job, and out on the street — will be a major determinant of their trajectory of success. A growing number of local governments fully recognize the importance of promoting a welcoming community.

[Continue to full article...](#)

Susan Downs-Karkos is the Director of Strategic Partnerships at [Welcoming America](#), where she works with organizations and communities to engage Americans in immigrant integration efforts. Susan also leads the provision of ongoing coaching, training and technical assistance to new and existing community partners, with a particular emphasis on the nation's refugee network.

Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Dear Colleagues in Germany,

November 2016. Over the past year, many of us in the United States have regarded your welcome of refugees with deep admiration. When many of Welcoming America's members came to visit Germany this past fall through the [Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange](#), we were struck by the ways in which governments, community-based organizations, and every-day people have mobilized to help resettle a record number of refugees seeking safety and opportunity.

While here in the United States, we've gone through a turbulent election season and recognize there may be tough times ahead as our federal government considers a different direction regarding immigration, rest assured that Welcoming America's efforts to create welcoming communities — where all residents feel valued and contribute — remain strong. Local communities across the nation are energized and recognize the critical role they play in creating greater opportunity and understanding for all of us.

Transatlantic learning is more important than ever as we look towards the future. As immigration continues to be a central focus in elections on both sides of the Atlantic, we are eager to share our experiences and to learn from you. We remain in awe of all that you have accomplished in Germany and look forward to new opportunities for collaboration and dialogue.

Warm regards,

Susan Downs-Karkos

Welcoming America

P.S. To learn more about the Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange and new ideas we've brought back home, [view last week's webinar](#).

Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange – In partnership with Cultural Vistas and Heinrich Böll Stiftung, the *Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange* is an opportunity to share promising approaches to welcoming and integrating refugees into German and U.S. communities. Over three years, [groups of Americans and Germans](#) will visit each other's countries, focusing on communities that have had challenges with significant and unexpected migrant influxes or those with unique and successful approaches to addressing integration. The program aims to build the capacity of local integration leaders and, through them, strengthen the welcoming infrastructure of the communities in which they work.





https://youtube.com/watch?v=xY_wvqVcAxI



Anna Katharina Jacob

University of Duisburg-Essen

But we need to coordinate ourselves first.

Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



By: Parag Khanna, Author of *Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization*

This excerpt has been reprinted from [Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization](#) (2016), with permission from the author

The combination of urbanization and immigration has made Toronto—alongside London, New York, Dubai, and Singapore— one of the world’s most diluted* cities with as many or more foreign-born residents as native populations. Because cities must be open to trade (and traders) to survive, they are what the political theorist Benjamin Barber calls “naturally networked”, evolving from the ancient homogenous *polis* to the connected and diverse *cosmopolis* of today. A world that looks less like Iceland and more like Toronto, less Tokyo and more Dubai, needs a new political frame. Countries will have to hold themselves together through common laws and post-racial identities. When David Cameron was pressured by church groups in 2014 to declare that Britain should be a proud “Christian country,” he faced a backlash from many who cling to Britain as a multi-faith or nonreligious society- something Londoners take for granted. A better articulation came from Tony Blair a decade earlier after the July 2005 Islamist terrorist attack in London, when he declared that there is a “British way of life” that would not bend to cultural enclaves seeking to impose their practices on other or create parallel systems of justice. The former sought an unrealistic exclusivity, while the latter suggested a progressive and inclusive civic pluralism.

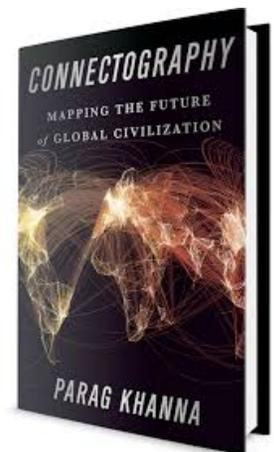
Societies built on immigrant assimilation strive toward common identity despite racial differences. Singapore became a cosmopolitan hub through historical migrations from China and Indians circulating across the British Empire and then by design as Lee Kuan Yew insisted on multiethnic public housing to prevent any ghettos from forming. Today Singapore ranks as one of the world’s most religiously diverse cities, with a surfeit of monuments for each religion. Only half of Singapore’s population is citizens, and more than 20 percent of marriages are mixed race, mostly Chinese-Indian-creating a growing number of “Chindians” each generation. As Indian and Filipino migrant workers mingle in Singapore and Dubai, an “Indipino” race is emerging as well. The more mixed-race families become the social norm, the weaker pleas for ethnically based politics become. One of Lee Kuan Yew’s longest-serving ministers, S. Rajaratnam, rightly said that to be Singaporean “is not a condition but a conviction.”

Such city-states are the incubators of the new mongrel global civilization because they can succeed only through inclusive rather than exclusive policies. For most cities, it is too late to prevent ethnic ghettos, but it is not too late for pragmatic mayors to promote place-based rights rather than identity politics. We have to think less in terms of ideal-type multiethnic states governed through mostly liberal parliamentary factions and more in terms of technocratic tool kits for dense cities, some highly ethnically mixed and others with Balkanized neighborhoods. Either way, the notion of “citizenship” seems a quaint anachronism as foreigners become permanent stakeholders. Jaime Lerner, the Brazilian architect who became a pioneering mayor of the southern city of Curitiba, calls cities “the last refuge of solidarity,” places where many people must build and provide for themselves and thus cannot afford to tear themselves apart. Building common identity requires strategies to promote cohesion amid economic inequality. It is in this context that global cities have become crucibles for experiments such as Toronto’s non-citizens voting in municipal referenda and New York’s ID cards for half a million undocumented immigrants. The rapid feedback loops possible at small scale compensate for any deficit in cultural trust; indeed, they are the agents of building trust amidst diversity.

Even as global cities embody centrifugal cultural forces, they are also the incubators of multiple identities. Their density and diversity allow individuals to explore and adopt multiple identities based on neighborhood and community, ethnicity and race, professional class or other association. In this way, cities do not trap but liberate. It is in geographies that lack choice where the only option is national identity, whereas in cities identity can be cumulative.

Nationalism is viewed as either a powerful human impulse to be celebrated or a dangerous force to be defeated. The former makes it seem immutable to change, and the latter creates a false antagonism between identity and accommodation. The spectrum of nationalist phenomena today spans European-style ethnic nativism against immigrant influxes as well as Asian geopolitical patriotism against historical rivals. That these forces continue to exist does not mean they will prevail.

Indeed, taken together, the surging trends of migration, urbanization, and proliferating identities present global cities as a major alternative to nations and nationalism as the foundations of global social order. The more cities make all residents meaningful participants by virtue of their contributions and obligations rather than differentiating by citizenship or ethnicity, the more loyalty to the city supersedes that to the nation. The Canadian scholar Daniel



Bell calls this rising urban pride “civicism,” a twenty-first century rival to nationalism. Civicism harks back to the ancient world of Athens and other Mediterranean societies where politics was open to all residents.

For today’s mobile and itinerant youth, civicism seems a more fitting ethos than nationalism. Nobody would have believed in the early 1990s that Berlin would emerge as the world’s coolest city, with ultramodern architecture, a buzzing tech scene, and productive cultural collisions unseen elsewhere on the Continent. I’ve been traveling and living in Germany off and on since the Berlin Wall fell. In the 1990s, integration was difficult: Only by learning to speak German like a German did I differentiate myself from the large Turkish population whom I resembled to the native German eye. Today it seems everyone is a foreigner fumbling his way through German- or just defaulting to English. In the 1990s, I had to commute an hour on various trains, trams, and buses to find a good Indian restaurant; today there are several in every neighborhood. In addition to the Turks, Russians, and Poles, Berlin has close to 100,000 Chinese, Vietnamese, and other East Asians.

Berlin thus emerges as Europe’s most future-ready city, not just technologically, but demographically. Situated on the vast northern European plain with ample space to expand in all directions, Berlin has become an urban geography so vast that with only 3.5 million people it would feel vacant with double the population. This accounts for why its property prices have barely nudged in a decade and why it is in such deep debt. Its flamboyant former mayor Klaus Wowereit rightly boasted that his city is “poor but sexy,” but it is not financially sustainable without more people. Officially, most European countries are cynical about the benefits of immigration, but in reality Africans, Arabs, and Asians are streaming in to study, work, and settle in livable cities like Berlin. Berlin’s magic formula has been affordable rent, openness to immigrants and lots of babies: It has the highest birthrate in Germany, especially the trendy areas of East Berlin, where students came in the 1990s and have stayed to raise families. The rest of Europe must learn from Berlin: Exclusive thinking is a recipe for suicide.

**Dilution: the genetic blending of populations through mass migrations*

Parag Khanna is a leading global strategist, world traveler, and best-selling author. He is a CNN Global Contributor and Senior Research Fellow in the Centre on Asia and Globalisation at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. His previous books include *The Second World and How to Run the World*. He is also Managing Partner of Hybrid Reality, a boutique geostrategic advisory firm, and is a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum.

BREXIT and British Values

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



A Local Perspective on the British EU Referendum

In October 2016, Cities of Migration talked to **Michal Siewniak** who works as the **Community Development Manager, CVS (Community Voluntary Services) Broxbourne and East Herts** and who is a local 'community activist' about local responses to BREXIT, Britain's recent referendum and decision to exit the EU, including a negative public narrative and worrisome backlash against immigrants.

Cities of Migration (CoM): Last time we spoke, you shared the success of your work with the [Welwyn-Hatfield Polish Forum](#) when, in 2011, they used the facilities of the Hatfield Fire Station to organize a voting day for parliamentary elections in Poland, with the active support of the local council, the Polish embassy and Broxbourne and East Herts CVS.



Widely reported in local media, with impressive voter turn-out (93%), Hatfield's Polish elections day gave local Polish residents a chance to exercise their civic rights, increased the visibility of the Polish community, improved its connections with the council and the voluntary sector and offered an exemplary model of civic action to all city residents.

Fast forward to October 2016, and a very different scenario: As a community leader in Hertfordshire, England, can you describe the impact that Brexit has had on social cohesion at the local level? What's changed?

Michal Siewniak: It is almost 4 months since the EU referendum. The British people have voted. It was close however the message was clear – 'we want our country back, we want to control our borders, we will be better off outside the EU'.

I found out about the result on sunny morning in Rome where I was attending an interesting meeting of people who are involved in public and civic life. As you can imagine, I was inundated with questions from people from Italy, Spain, Argentina, Slovenia or even South Korea.

As an EU migrant from Poland, someone who doesn't hold British citizenship, I have been part of the referendum debate for quite some time. I couldn't vote, but I was very keen to get the reasons for 'staying' across.

I have lived in a number of European countries but I don't remember seeing anything like this. Hatred. A complete lack of ability to have a proper and mature debate on issues which affect us all, like globalization, migration, the refugee crisis. I thought that the situation would gradually improve however it seems like it is deteriorating. The most recent High Court ruling means that the government and the Prime Minister can't trigger [Article 50](#) (which will formally start the process of leaving the EU) and the whole Parliament must be allowed to vote on this issue. This clearly demonstrated a country which is deeply divided. [Media, newspapers don't help](#). Headlines like 'Enemies of the people', 'Judges against people', are examples in my opinion of cheap sensationalism rather than a pragmatic and open approach to dialogue and problem solving.

It is probably worth noticing that [racist or religious abuse incidents recorded by police in England and Wales](#) jumped 41% in the month after the UK voted to quit the EU, figures show. There were 3,886 such crimes logged in July 2015, rising to 5,468 in July 2016, according to the [Home Office](#).

Hate crime has many shapes and forms. It has to be addressed quickly (e.g. in primary schools). I know that currently the British Values subject is being taught in our schools [which includes the following: "[Pupils must be encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance.](#)"] I think it is really important to embed these values as early as possible so that our young generation can be brought up in a society which respects people from all walks of life. I also know that when you live in a very diverse society, this is not always possible — but if problems arise, I am always up for discussion and dialogue rather than heated confrontation.

I am worried that many EU citizens, who come here legally and for good reasons, will be seen as "intruders" and treated as 'second class citizens' in all walks of life just because of where they come from and irrespective of what they bring.

In my case, as is the case for other EU nationals, living in the UK enabled me to improve my life chances and my language skills. It has also helped me to break down various barriers and recognize the importance of diversity. Settling in the UK, trying to be part of the local community, encouraged me to get to know other cultures and people of other faith groups. The whole experience has broadened my horizons and it made me more tolerant and rounded person.

I am sad that British voters decided to walk away from the European project which overall produced so many positive outcomes. I worry that the UK's status as a modern, forward thinking society where people from all walks of life are treated equally may be affected.

I am upset that liberal Britain which cherishes every opportunity to build bridges and fosters integration has decided, essentially, to take a step back. I am worried that Britain has chosen the 'isolation path' when we are stronger together.

CoM: How do you, as a local community leader, address these issues? What is your biggest challenge?

Michal Siewniak: I will start by saying that I was brought up under communism in Poland. The freedom of my parents in communist Poland was very limited. I remember very well times when I had to queue to get basic products and cooking ingredients. I remember rationing, being taught Russian instead of English. Despite so many difficulties, I had a lovely childhood!

I watched the collapse of the Berlin Wall [1989] and never dreamt that Europe and Poland could change so much in such a relatively short period of time.

I don't want to see Europe divided again. My experience has taught me that we must work together to address the global issues. I don't want us to take a step back. I would like us all to recognize and champion diversity and challenge prejudice.

Challenges? Rebuilding trust, so damaged during this campaign, may take time. I hope Brexit won't affect building the cohesive society which I want to be part of. Cheap journalism, cheap sensationalism, doesn't help. It creates huge walls when we need time to recover from the current mess.

Today in Britain we face the challenge of listening to and building peace with those we disagree with. There are many organisations, including mine, who choose not to turn away from suffering, but to look for ways that we can rebuild our society together with others.

Although we have heard a lot of hateful words in these days, it has also become acceptable to talk about love in the context of politics, particularly as the [legacy of Jo Cox](#) (Labour politician who was murdered few weeks before the elections).

A friend sent us this text: "To all my European friends, sorry about the vote. I still love you. You are welcome to my country. I will continue to cheer for your football teams."

Thank you to all people who stay strong in building bridges among people.

CoM: What advice and practical solutions can you share with city and community leaders facing similar challenges? Can you share a positive anecdote, or example?

We must encourage people listen to each other. We must create an environment and a platform for a mature debate.

We are each asked to decide whether we live for ourselves or for others. Answering that question honestly could bring about the shift in mentality that could start to rebuild (on rock, and not on sand) what the referendum brought crashing down.

I have a very proactive approach to life. If you want to change something, even a small thing locally, you need to act on it and bring other similarly minded people to join your 'team'. Changing perception, using role models as a way to break down barriers, championing what is good in our society is so important!

Examples? There are so many! I will share with you one.

I will be running an event in Hatfield in 10 days' time which will focus on civic activism. [Parliament Week](#) is one of my favourite campaigns in the UK. Parliament Week is a UK-wide programme of events and activities that inspire, engage and connect people with parliamentary democracy and processes.

Our event in Welwyn Hatfield will focus mainly on democracy and young people. We hope that the project will enhance youth's sense of belonging to the local and wider community. We hope that it will help to increase their confidence in terms of engaging with government and statutory institutions. Understanding democracy will enable attendees to build a sense of ownership over their circumstances, and become proactive members of their community.

We don't want this event to be politically motivated but we do hope to engage students from a local school to talk about how democracy impacts their lives. The aim of the event is to increase civic participation within young people (Sixth Form) living in Welwyn Hatfield. This initiative, which will be delivered at the Onslow St Audrey's Secondary School will help to enthuse young people to get involved in democratic processes and intensify the dialogue between institutions and their young citizens. Our joint project will enhance youth's sense of belonging to the local and wider community.

CoM: Last time we spoke (2013) you said: "I passionately believe that societies who are recognizing the existence and contribution of migrants benefit enormously from their regular input – socially, culturally and economically." Has anything changed?

Michal Siewniak: I agree with it 200%! I would like to finish by saying something about 'togetherness'.

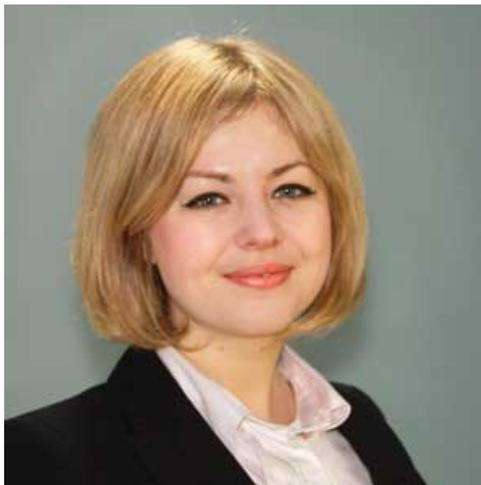
The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and the Archbishop of York John Sentamu said in a [joint statement](#):

"As citizens of the United Kingdom, whatever our views during the referendum campaign, we must now unite in a common task to build generous and forward thinking country, contributing to human flourishing around the world. We must remain hospitable and compassionate, builders of bridges and not barriers."

This statement in such a simple and powerful way describes the society which I want to help create and be part of.

How Tech Could Help Refugees More

By Evelyn
October 26, 2016
[Opinion](#)



This article was reprinted from [Refugees Deeply, There's Not Always an App for That: How Tech Could Help Refugees More](#).

By: Meghan Benton, Senior Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Institute, and Alex Glennie Principal Researcher, Nesta



Refugees are natural innovators. Often armed with [little more than a smartphone](#), they must be adaptable and inventive if they are to navigate unpredictable and often dangerous environments and successfully establish themselves in a new country.

Take Mojahed Akil, a young Syrian computer science student whose involvement in street protests in Aleppo brought him to the attention – and torture chambers – of the regime. With the support of his family, Mojahed was able to move to the relative safety of Gaziantep, a city in southwest Turkey.

Yet once there, he found it very difficult to communicate with those around him, most of whom spoke Turkish, not Arabic or English, and to access essential information about laws, regulations and local services.

To overcome these challenges, Mojahed developed a free smartphone app and website for Syrians living in Turkey. The [Gherbetna platform](#) offers both information – for example, about job listings –

and connections, through letting users ask for help from the app's community of contributors. It is [estimated](#) that Gherbetna has been downloaded by more than 50,000 people since its launch in 2014.

Huge Efforts but Mixed Results

Over the last 18 months, there has been an explosion of creativity and innovation from tech entrepreneurs aimed at making life better for refugees. A host of new tools and resources now exists to support refugees along every stage of their journey. Our [new report](#) for the Migration Policy Institute's Transatlantic Council on Migration explores some of these tools trying to help refugees integrate, and examines how policymakers can support the best new initiatives.

Our report finds that the speed of this "digital humanitarianism" has been a double-edged sword, with a huge amount of duplication in the sector and some tools failing to get off the ground. "Failing fast" might be a badge of honor in Silicon Valley, but what are the risks if vulnerable refugees rely on an app that disappears from one day to the next?

For example, consider [Migreat](#), a "skyscanner for migration," which pivoted at the height of the refugee crisis to become an asylum information app. Its selling point was that it was obsessively updated by legal experts, so users could trust the information – and rely less on smugglers or word of mouth. At its peak, Migreat had 2 million users a month, but funding challenges meant the platform had to fold. Its digital presence still exists, but is no longer being updated, a ghost of February 2016.

Perhaps an even greater challenge is that few of these apps were designed with refugees, so many do not meet their needs. Creating an app to help refugees navigate local services is a bit like putting a sticking plaster on a deep wound: It doesn't solve the problem that most services, and especially digital services, are not attuned to refugee needs. Having multilingual, up-to-date and easy-to-navigate government websites might be more helpful.

A New 'Digital Humanitarianism'

If the new tools are able to adapt to the needs of users, connect better with government services and scale, they could help mitigate some of the most thorny integration challenges, including improving refugees' access to services, helping newcomers enter work more quickly or even strengthening community cohesion.

For example, house-sharing platforms such as [Refugees Welcome](#) and [Comme a la Maison](#) help newcomers settle in more quickly by placing them with families. If taken to scale, we can imagine these initiatives forming the basis for a more collaborative approach to integration, with former migrants and communities playing a greater role in welcoming newcomers instead of immigration and social change being something that is done to communities. They could also reduce pressures on housing – a critical challenge, given the large numbers of new arrivals in countries like Germany and Sweden.

Similarly, coding schools like [REDI school](#), or distance learning programs like [Kiron](#), help asylum seekers address skills gaps while they are stuck in reception centers, housed in rural areas or waiting for their applications to be processed. They could even train refugees for prized digital economy jobs in the future. But these programs currently serve a minority of refugees, specifically those who are well-educated and highly motivated.

Digital technologies could also help [bring jobs to people](#), wherever they are, through freelance platforms such as [Workkeer](#). If these innovations could be scaled and expanded to support people with lower levels of education, they could potentially be disruptive.

Bridging the Tech-Government Disconnect

Many tech and social entrepreneurs jumped on the refugee assistance bandwagon after the images of drowned 3-year-old Alan Kurdi spread through social media. To ensure that this enthusiasm is sustained, governments will need to engage thoughtfully with these efforts. This engagement needs to be a two-way process, with tech entrepreneurs being willing to respond to the needs and priorities of refugees, NGOs and policymakers.

This is starting to happen. For example, [Techfugees](#) – a group that has organized hackathons, conferences and projects to help innovators working in this space – is encouraging its members to support humanitarian organizations such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, rather than continuously developing new third-party apps.

Yet there is still a lack of enthusiasm within parts of the tech sector for working with government officials, who are viewed as being too slow and bureaucratic.

Bridging this disconnect could unlock new ways of supporting refugee integration, by marrying the relative strengths of the tech sector (speed, passion and fresh ways of doing things) with those of governments (resources, coordinating power and the ability to make far-reaching policy changes).

This article was reprinted from [Refugees Deeply, There's Not Always an App for That: How Tech Could Help Refugees More](#), October 20, 2016

Image credit: [Internews Europe](#) (Creative Commons) / Flickr

For the full report from MPI's Council on Transatlantic Migration, see:

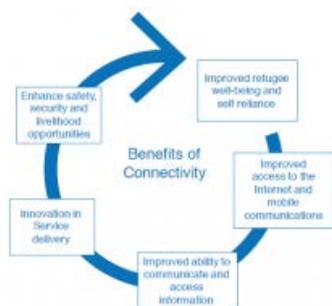
- [Digital Humanitarianism: How Tech Entrepreneurs Are Supporting Refugee Integration](#). By Meghan Benton and Alex Glennie. Washington, DC, Migration Policy Institute, October 2016

Meghan Benton is a Senior Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute, and a Nonresident Fellow with MPI Europe. Her areas of expertise include immigrant integration (especially labor market integration and integration at the local level), citizenship policy, and the role of technological and social innovation in responses to the refugee and migration crisis in Europe.

Alex Glennie is a Principal Researcher on Nesta's International Innovation Team, which examines new global trends and practices in innovation with an emphasis on emerging economies. The team aims to build resources and networks for innovation that will help the UK to flourish in a rapidly changing global economy.

Connectivity and Refugees

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



What role does internet connectivity have on the current refugee crisis? According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), it's vital. Refugees are increasingly using technology not only to stay connected with friends and loved ones, but to survive and thrive. Internet and mobile connectivity are critical tools in their daily lives. They are willing to make significant sacrifices to get and stay connected.

Connecting Refugees. It's time.

UNHCR recently released [Connecting Refugees: How Internet and Mobile Connectivity Can Improve Refugee Well-being and Transform Humanitarian Action](#), a strategic roadmap to ensure that refugees have stable, affordable and accessible internet and mobile connectivity. This connectivity is necessary to help keep refugees safe, learning, and to enhance their well-being and self reliance. UNHCR sees it as crucial for refugee protection, communication, education, health care, self-reliance, community empowerment and other durable solutions.

It's an ambitious and timely strategy. It acknowledges the breadth of refugees' digital needs. It also sees opportunities for refugee-serving organizations and governments to better connect, manage and move refugees into more stable circumstances. For Alan Vernon, Lead for UNHCR's Connectivity for Refugees Programme, that means both impact and efficiency: ["We see connectivity as key to improving the quality of humanitarian work. It will support innovation and help us work more effectively."](#)

Moving forward successfully means much more than connecting refugees and helping them become digitally literate. UNHCR found that "Facebook, Skype, Viber and WhatsApp are the most popular social networking apps among refugees, and yet UNHCR in particular makes very little use of social media to communicate with them." In order to serve refugees technically UNHCR and other NGOs also need to ramp up their technical literacy and capacity.

Mobile is key

Currently, cost and access to stable internet connectivity (let alone reliable electricity) is very much a luxury for refugees. Identifying the technology that refugees use now, and meeting needs in that space is also an important part of the strategy.

Refugees primarily connect to the internet on mobile devices, mainly phones. With an ambitious high tech perspective, it's easy to think that tailoring broadband solutions on devices such as smartphones is the way to go. However, UNHCR notes, "It is important that refugees benefit from all levels of connectivity. For instance, even with a 2G cellular network and access to a basic phone, they can carry out money transactions, access SMS and interactive voice response (IVR) based training, and communicate with their families. Although the ultimate goal is to target broadband speeds and make internet-enabled devices available in order to truly empower refugees, UNHCR will design its interventions so that people can benefit from the full range of available connectivity."

At their core, UNHCR wants strategic ICT interventions to be usable, available and affordable. Knowing how refugees use, and want to use technology, and designing accordingly is essential. It's focused on creating and supporting solutions that impact refugee protection, communication, education, health care, self-reliance, and community empowerment.

Think big, start small

UNHCR's mandate is global and massive. Their proposed strategic approach to technology solutions mirrors that. They recognize that not only governments, but also large private sector actors such as large technology companies and mobile network carriers have an important role to play.

Large tech companies are important for infrastructure and reducing access costs. UNHCR recognizes that partnerships are key— between refugees and host communities, and between governments, civil society and the private sector. In particular, UNHCR is seeking to build strong, multi-faceted partnerships with the technology and telecommunications sectors to ensure that refugees can benefit from the digital advances.

Thinking big is important. It can ensure equitable access to technology, information and services. There is a growing global community of social entrepreneurs and [civic technologists](#) in receiving or refugee host countries that align with this perspective.

They are more focused on smaller interventions and solutions. A key strength is their ability to be more nimble. To shift and iterate when they see a solution needs to be tweaked, modified, or abandoned completely. For their successful ideas to have true impact and scale, they need collaboration from larger state, nonprofit, private companies, and refugee actors themselves. [A new report from Migration Policy Institute](#) recognizes and highlights the need for increased collaboration among all of these integration innovation actors.

Their small scale interventions and projects that can be tested and then scaled nationally and even internationally if they work. They're focused on specific solutions to challenges identified by refugee themselves. As a [recent Techfugees blog post](#) put it, "Solutions can only be found if we understand refugees' needs."

That's a key strength underlying much of the civic tech approaches. It aligns deeply with the UNHCR's connectivity strategy. Closer collaboration between civic tech projects and UNHCR could only benefit both, and, ultimately, refugees themselves.

There are many existing projects and ideas that align with the UNHCR strategy, and can help move it forward in its ambitious global strategy. Here are just a few:

Techfugees

Techfugees started as an effort to coordinate an international technology community response to a growing refugee crisis in Europe. It has spread globally. A platform bringing civic tech innovators together with NGOs and refugees, it has five areas of focus: infrastructure, education, identity, health, and inclusion. Techfugees focuses its work in local chapters, cities in receiving or refugee host countries. There, techies work with nonprofits, government and refugees themselves to use technology to solve specific challenges faced by refugees. [Read more.](#)

Refuchat and the Refugee First Response Center

Language and understanding each other is crucial when working with refugees, especially when they're in crisis. When simple, emergency translation is needed, and where cost is an issue, smartphone app Refuchat can be a useful tool in a first responder's pocket. It builds on an open source translation project, the Refugee Phrasebook. When funding is available and infrastructure isn't as much a barrier, Refugee First Response Center is being rolled out as replicable solution to language barriers to primary health care in refugee camps. Both serve a purpose along the same continuum. Both show the value of small and large innovation in response to immediate needs. [Read more.](#)

The Clothing Exchange

The Mes Amis Clothing Exchange is an example of what a community of neighbours can do when they come together with a desire to help refugees. Social media allowed them to organize themselves quickly and develop an effective way to welcome and address the clothing needs of new arrivals to Toronto during Canada's winter months. While technology wasn't the point, it facilitated the important work of getting Syrian refugees the clothes they needed, gave interested community volunteers immediate opportunities to contribute and helped raise public awareness of both the refugees' needs and the incredible community spirit that was being exhibited. [Read more.](#)

Refugees Welcome International

For asylum seekers, finding a stable and safe place to live is crucial to allowing them to even begin the process of seeking help and moving through the bureaucratic process of applying for protection. In Berlin, a group of friends built a system that connects refugees seeking housing with local residents willing to share their homes. It's more than simply housing, but also promotes welcoming through the experience of living together. Refugees learn the local language and integrate faster. Locals learn more about their culture and help someone. Because of a replicable web and technology infrastructure, the original project has rolled out to more than 20 countries. [Read more.](#)

MigrantHire

Germany has been generous to refugees making their way into Europe over the past year. But that didn't mean the structural barriers to employment for refugees got easier. MigrantHire is one of a number of employment projects that's helping. It's ambitious. Over a million refugees recently arrived in Germany. MigrantHire wants to help them integrate into German society as fast as they can. Along the way, they realized that their technology approach filled a gap in local refugee services. Their platform has led to employment for some refugees. It also helped employers, educators and local NGOs tailor services and education programs that can lead to long term labour market wins for everyone involved. [Read more.](#)

A Humanitarian Investment That Yields Economic Dividends

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Investing one euro in welcoming refugees can yield nearly two euros in economic benefits within five years. That is a key finding of a new report from the Open Political Economy Network (OPEN), the first comprehensive, international study of how refugees can contribute to advanced economies.

On September 16, 2016, **Philippe Legrain, founder, OPEN**, sat down for a one-on-one conversation with **Senator Ratna Omidvar, founder, [Global Diversity Exchange](#)**, to discuss his latest report, [Refugees Work](#), on the economic dividends of refugee integration and employment.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=GnnywCLpslY>



- More about [OPEN](#) -the Open Political Economy Network
- About the report: [Refugees Work: A Humanitarian Investment That Yields Economic Dividends](#) (OPEN and TENT, May 2016)
- Download the [report PDF](#)

German Cities on the Front Lines of Refugee Response

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Refugees Deeply talks to **Bruce Katz, Centennial Scholar at The Brookings Institution**, about German cities on the front lines of refugee response and what we can learn from their experience. This interview was reprinted from [Refugees Deeply, September 29, 2016](#).

Much of the responsibility in caring for refugees arriving in Germany has fallen to local authorities. This has brought challenges, but also successful innovations that must be widely shared – and quickly, says Brookings Institution scholar Bruce Katz.

Between January 2015 and July 2016, 1.3 million migrants and refugees fleeing poverty and economic deprivation arrived in Germany. The arrival of so many people, most of them in need of a home, food and healthcare, posed immense humanitarian challenges for the country's leaders and communities as a whole.

A new study by the Brookings Institution found that much of the responsibilities for accommodating refugees in the country fell to those working at a local level. The lessons learned on the front lines of Germany's response to the crisis could have lasting implications for cities around the world, the study says.

The report, called "[Cities and Refugees – The German Experience](#)," was released last week during the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York. Its authors, Bruce Katz, Luise Noring and Natke Garrelts, examined how refugees have been distributed in Germany in the past 18 months and how cities across the country responded to that challenge.

They concluded that successful handling of the crisis will depend on whether European cities are given a greater voice in international decision making and receive greater financial and political support.

Refugees Deeply spoke with Bruce Katz, Centennial Scholar at the Brookings Institution, about the research.

Refugees Deeply: Nearly 60 percent of refugees today live in urban areas, placing huge responsibilities on local authorities. Yet these cities don't always have the funding or authority to respond adequately. How did that disconnect play out in Germany?



Bruce Katz: Germany is a federal republic with a federal government, 16 states and hundreds of cities and municipalities. Three of the states – Hamburg, Bremen and Berlin – are city-states and combine the functions of a city and a state. Responsibility for substantial domestic activities in Germany, like housing, schools and many of the labor market efforts are locally and state based.

Germany is a highly devolved federal republic and that has meant that cities do have power and agency. Responding to the refugee crisis, Germany's national government has used its powers to open the border, and to reset the rules around citizenship and integration. However, a lot of the responsibility for the response, not just in the delivery of services but also the actual design and financing of them, has fallen to local and state governments, and to a burgeoning network of nonprofits that has emerged in the aftermath of the crisis.

As this crisis goes forward and the focus shifts from short-term response to longer-term integration, there does need to be more of a federal role in investment and finance, and more support so that when one city cracks the code on a particular set of issues or comes up with an innovative response,

other cities know about it in rapid fashion.

Refugees Deeply: How did the cities you studied handle the influx of refugees? What were the successes and what were the challenges?

Katz: The challenges were pretty substantial. The federal government distributed refugees according to a formula that was previously used to distribute research money to different states in the federal republic. That led to higher density in the city-states, particularly in Berlin and Hamburg, and affordability issues with housing.

The biggest challenge initially was finding accommodation for refugees that didn't just provide basic, humane shelter but were a platform for moving forward. We've learned, including from the aftermath of natural disasters in the U.S., that it's really critical to bring normalcy to people's lives as quickly as you can. That means running facilities for refugees in places with access to services and a guarantee that families have privacy and children can go to school as quickly as possible. That's what brings back routine to people's lives.

The old American notion that crisis begets innovation is very much apparent when you go to Germany.

All of these challenges – housing, education, access to services – were magnified in states like Hamburg and Berlin because, as city-states, they have a limited amount of land. To their credit, they moved as quickly as possible to find accommodation and innovative ways to locate facilities. The old American notion that crisis begets innovation is very much apparent when you go to Germany and compare what the crisis looks like today and what it looked like last September.

Refugees Deeply: Could you describe one of the innovations that struck you the most?

Katz: I was struck by an effort in Hamburg called Finding Places, which is a collaboration between MIT, Hamburg City University, the city government and the residents of Hamburg. It's an open access data system allowing citizens to look at available land and buildings and verify whether they're really there. Citizens also help think about how their communities can begin to get past nimbysism and how to communally decide how to use assets so refugees aren't concentrated in particular parts of the city, but instead land and buildings are used smartly to distribute refugees and give them a good start.

In Berlin, I saw the use of shipping containers for housing in a very sensitive way. The community was well-landscaped, and it really felt like housing that a family could live in for a substantial amount of time. What we're always looking for when we're seeing the response to refugees is whether some of these lessons and innovations could be used for other issues: for example, the big homelessness problem in the U.S.

Refugees Deeply: David Miliband, president of the IRC (International Rescue Committee), argued at Brookings last week that it makes economic sense to invest in the resettlement of refugees. Have you found that to be the case in your research in Germany?

Katz: Europe definitely faces broader labor market and demographic issues because of the aging of society, but the response to refugees has been for humanitarian reasons first and foremost. I believe Germany really had a moral conviction to open up its borders and help people fleeing conflict. That requires a short-term response and a long-term response, and there are questions about how efficient and effective that response can be when you're faced with the arrival of tens of thousands of people in a very short period of time.

Integrating large numbers of people into your economic system, let alone your social system, requires an intense focus on education and skills. Going forward, the question of schools and skills is both imperative and incredibly challenging. Germany has a highly sophisticated economy with very rigid credentials, and that's a challenging labor market to integrate refugees in. You need to speak in German and you need to have a serious level of skill to access many of the jobs in the productive sector of the German economy.

Refugees Deeply: Many refugees prefer to resettle in areas where fellow nationals have settled. On the other hand, the potential formation of parallel societies with increasingly segregated urban neighborhoods is a major concern for policymakers. What policies could help refugees benefit from the support of a community and network, while at the same time avoiding patterns of segregation?

Katz: This is one of the most serious questions countries like Germany, France, Belgium and Sweden face – already from prior waves of immigration. It's not surprising refugees want to move to an area where there's more comfort and cultural familiarity when they first arrive in a place, particularly when they don't speak the language. The U.S., with its different migration waves, has seen this pattern repeat itself again and again.

One of the challenges is how this relates to the housing markets. We've seen that housing prices in certain parts of Germany are not just forcing people to specific parts of the cities, but are forcing people outside of the city. You'll find large numbers of migrants and refugees, not only in the core cities but in many small municipalities outside the city. Because housing and labor markets are metropolitan it will require a broader metropolitan response. We're undertaking research right now to thinking about multi-municipal responses, particularly in places like Germany where so much power is devolved down.

Once we start talking about city innovations, what happens in Houston matters in Hamburg.

Where enclaves do exist, we need to think how we can ensure that they're as open and networked as they can possibly be. In the U.S., we've always talked about building neighborhoods of choice and connection. You want people to choose where they want to live, but those communities need to be connected into the broader city and the broader metropolis through labor markets, housing markets and other kinds of services and activities. I'm not saying the U.S. is a shining example, but once we start talking about city innovations, what happens in Houston matters in Hamburg and vice versa. Going forward, in responding to these kinds of humanitarian crises, we're going to see a lot more sharing across cities rather than just beyond national borders.

This interview was edited and condensed for clarity, and reprinted with permission from [Refugees Deeply, September 29, 2016](#).

"Cities and Refugees – The German Experience" was released at a Brookings Institute event in September 2016. Speakers included U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken, President of the IRC David Miliband and former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres. You can read a summary of the [discussion paper here](#) and watch footage of the event below.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=204ACxqxoRY>



Let's Give Cities A Greater Role In Managing Migration

By Evelyn
October 23, 2016
[Opinion](#)



By: Harald Bauder, Director, Graduate Program in [Immigration and Settlement Studies at Ryerson University](#)

The International Organization for Migration estimates that more than 4,300 persons have died or went missing along migratory routes worldwide so far in 2016; more than 3,200 perished in the Mediterranean alone.

The causes of this human-made catastrophe are complex. There is a complicated interplay between national governments and their policies, international organizations, civic institutions, and surveillance and control technologies. Many migrants die as they take ever greater risks to avoid the grip of these "border regimes."

Border regimes operate not only at the physical border between countries, but also in the international waters of the Mediterranean and off the coast of Australia, and along the transit routes through the Sahara desert and out of Syria. They also act inside national borders, at the train stations of Munich and Milano, the bus terminals in Calgary and Chicago, and workplaces and hospital emergency rooms throughout Canada.

Border regimes order our world

Border regimes do more than simply controlling migration: they determine the conditions under which people live, work, and die. They regulate who has rights and access to work and welfare, and they establish who belongs to a society and who is "illegal." Border regimes order our world.

Because of our protected geography, relatively few people are dying on route to Canada. Most migrants realize that crossing the Atlantic or Pacific Oceans to reach Canada is much costlier and riskier than crossing the Mediterranean.

Nevertheless, border regimes are still ordering our country. Estimates suggest that up to 500,000 persons live in Canada without legal status. In Greater Toronto, there may be as many as 200,000 persons without status, and equally as many with precarious status. Their lack of full status often prevents them from claiming basic rights, excludes them from fully participating in our society, and renders them exploitable as workers.

National migration policies play an important part in ordering our society based on origin and status. Canadian temporary foreign workers and international mobility programs have resulted in more than 350,000 foreign workers living in Canada in 2014, often without the same economic rights and entitlements that Canadian citizens take for granted — including the right to stay.

Cities have a different approach to migration

Cities have a different approach to migration. They are not in the business of controlling who crosses and settles within their boundaries, or ordering their communities based on where residents are coming from. Rather, their role is to be inclusive and provide access to resources and services for all residents.

Granted, some city administrations are eager to enforce national migration policies and actively participate in the border regime. Research by my colleague at York University, Liette Gilbert, shows how smaller towns such as Hérouxville, Quebec, and Hazleton, Pennsylvania, have introduced measures that erode the rights of migrants and control their presence.

Many other cities, however, resist exclusionary national policies and border regimes. For example, by declaring themselves sanctuary cities, Toronto and Hamilton have recognized that the residents who are denied status by national policies are nevertheless members of their communities. In this way, dozens of sanctuary cities throughout North America are seeking to build inclusive urban communities in which all residents can equally participate — independent of the order which border regimes impose.

Urban communities are also highly responsive to global developments and the need for people to migrate for work and opportunity, and to escape from war and oppression. Take Lifeline Syria as an example: this initiative was spearheaded by civic leaders of Greater Toronto to mobilize fellow residents to sponsor Syrian refugee families and help these families settle in their communities. While the federal government is an important partner in this initiative, it is the urban community that has demonstrated leadership.

Cities are demanding a greater role in managing migration and are asserting their independence from national migration policies that disenfranchise large portions of their residents.

In a globalized world, nation states are increasingly failing to cope with the human need for security and desire to migrate. As cities fill this void, they must maintain their inclusive approach and resist being absorbed into the deadly border regime.

This article originally appeared in the [Huffington Post](#) and has been republished with the permission of the author.

Harald Bauder is a Professor of Geography at Ryerson University and the Director of the Graduate Program in Immigration and Settlement Studies at Ryerson University. His latest book, [Migration Borders Freedom](#) is available at Routledge.

The Courage of the Refugee Olympic Team

By Evelyn
September 14, 2016
[Opinion](#)



By: Senator Ratna Omidvar, Ontario, Senate of Canada



Every four years, audiences in Canada and across the globe turn their eyes towards the Summer Olympic Games. Thousands of spectators travel to watch the games live and billions more watch at home. Over the past month, the world's attention has focused on Brazil and the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. Audiences have thrilled to the spectacle of the world's finest athletes at the pinnacle of competition, representing over 200 nations across the globe. As we welcome our Canadian athletes home from Rio and celebrate their tremendous success, we also reflect on another team of remarkable competitors: the first-ever Refugee Olympic Team.

This year, 10 refugees from four countries — the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Syria — were selected from a shortlist of 43 displaced athletes worldwide to compete under the Olympic flag. The team included two swimmers, two judokas, a marathoner and five medium-distance runners. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) worked together to support the team as part of an effort to raise awareness of the refugee crisis and celebrate the courage and perseverance of all refugees.

What makes the Olympic Games so captivating are the individual human stories that play out over the course of competition. The athletes of the Refugee Olympic Team provided a uniquely compelling narrative to this human drama. Perhaps the most obvious example is that of 18 year old Syrian swimmer Yusra Mardini. While fleeing Syria via Turkey in 2015, she found herself stranded in the Aegean Sea along with 19 other refugees, in a boat whose engine had stopped; she responded by jumping into the water, along with her sister, and pushing the boat for more than three hours until they reached safety in Greece. Now living in Germany, Mardini draws inspiration from her experience: "I want to represent all the refugees because I want to show everyone that, after the pain, after the storm, comes calm days."

Mardini's story, along with the stories of the other refugee Olympians, are all part of a greater narrative: refugees have the same aspirations and the same potential as citizens of any country, and can achieve great things only if given the opportunity. Sadly, even as we cheered on these athletes we were also aware of the absences — the athletes who didn't make it to safety, such as Samia Omar, the 21 year old Somali runner who drowned while trying to cross the Mediterranean in 2012. Both the triumphs and the tragedies are symbolic of a crisis which affects not just elite athletes, but an entire generation of human talent: doctors, artists, teachers, entrepreneurs, political leaders, all lost to their communities of origin.

While none of the Refugee Olympic Team reached the podium, they captured the attention of athletes and spectators around the world. They received a thunderous standing ovation at the opening ceremonies, and world leaders such as Pope Francis and U.S. President Barack Obama sent messages of support and encouragement. In his closing address, IOC President Thomas Bach said: "You have inspired us with your talent and human spirit. You are a symbol of hope to the millions of refugees in the world. We will continue to stay at your side after these Olympic Games."

As the 2016 Rio Olympics pass into memory, the challenge is to ensure that this support doesn't fade away. Let us take renewed inspiration from these refugee Olympians, and work to ensure that all of the world's displaced people are given a chance to reach their potential and make successful lives for themselves.

This Opinion originally appeared on [SenCAPlus](#), The Senate of Canada



*The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, C.M., O.Ont.
Senator, The Senate of Canada*

Ratna is the founding Executive Director and currently a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Global Diversity Exchange (GDx), Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University, and an internationally recognized expert on migration, diversity and inclusion. In April 2016, Prime Minister Trudeau appointed Ratna to the Senate of Canada as an independent Senator representing Ontario.

Making Protection Temporary? Bad Idea for Cities

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



Thomas Jezequel, EUROCITIES, argues that making protection temporary will be “detrimental to integration and social cohesion in cities”:

To quote the article kicking off this debate, “More and more, the refugee and migratory mobility towards the EU is viewed openly by the EU organs through the lenses of border security.”

Cities do not have this luxury. While member states are often reluctant to act, many major cities are the one taking their responsibilities when refugees inevitably end up crossing borders and settling in Europe. It means that the reception and integration infrastructure in cities must be properly funded by the national and European levels. Any attempt at making protection temporary will be counterproductive and detrimental to integration and social cohesion in cities.

Cities taking responsibilities

Refugees coming to the European Union primarily aim at reaching and settling in Europe's larger cities. This urban reality of migration was made evident in the summer and fall of 2015, when refugees who managed to enter the European Union through the “Balkan road” made their way to Vienna, Munich, Berlin or Malmö.

Nearly [one in five of all migrants live in the world's top 20 largest cities](#). In Europe, the majority of foreign residents settle in large cities. As policy makers, service providers and buyers of goods and services, large cities have an integral role to play in their integration.

The refugee dream is an urban dream, as reception networks (Family, friends, or fellow nationals) economic and education opportunities are located primarily in cities. This is why cities are often why refugees embarked on potentially deadly trips across the Mediterranean, why they walked from Greece to Hungary, and why they, once placed in a reception centre in rural Germany or northern Sweden, try to move further.

Cities play different roles beyond reception and integration. When member states are not able or not willing to take their responsibilities, cities are for example also the ones able to organise mass transit for refugees willing to travel further.

Refugees taking the southern-Mediterranean road all go through Milan train station, in a “transit camp” created, financed and managed by the city of Milan with the invaluable help of civil society organisations and volunteers. Vienna was the entry door to western and northern Europe through the “Balkan road”, and 250,000 refugees and asylum seekers were taken care of by the city authorities before reaching Germany, or staying in Vienna for 50,000 of them. The same scenes were seen in Munich, Berlin, or Malmö, and at an even greater degree in Athens, where 500,000 people transited through the Piraeus harbour in 2015, often spending only a few days in the city.

On the refugee crisis as on migration policy in general, member states take decisions but it is cities which ultimately receive and integrate migrants and refugees, often without any official mandate, almost always without adequate and direct funding from the national level or from the European Institutions.

The urban dimension of the refugee crisis

As the network of major European cities, EUROCITIES started working on integration in 2004, when it published its “Contribution to Good Governance concerning the integration of immigrants and reception of asylum seekers”. Our primary focus is the long term: social inclusion and cohesion, and the integration of all migrants, irrelevant of status. This dimension is emphasised in our [“Charter of Integrating Cities”](#), published in 2010 and signed by 35 major cities.

EUROCITIES started to develop its [position on asylum in cities in 2014](#), at the demand of its members who felt that the urban dimension of the refugee crisis was being overlooked. They were quickly proven right, which emphasises the fact that the effects of European and national decisions on migration are first felt at the local level.

Our statement was published in May 2015, and argued that “Cities in arrival, transit and destination countries in Europe are in a central position regarding the social, humanitarian and financial challenges caused by the refugee crisis. They have a particular role in the guarantee of basic protection to asylum claimants and in the reception and integration of newcomers in our society. Cities are also the places where asylum seekers wait for a decision on their Refugee Status Determination process and where services are provided to them. Finally, it is in cities that asylum claimants often remain as undocumented migrants if their asylum applications are rejected and return decisions are not applicable or enforced. Their exclusion from service provision would have a detrimental impact on social cohesion, public health and order, and protection of fundamental rights”

European cities are where the integration of newcomers will succeed or fail. They are facing this two-fold challenge of providing for the immediate needs of asylum seekers and refugees, whilst also having to organise the more long-term integration process of all newcomers, essential for ensuring social cohesion over the years to come.

The dangers of temporariness for cities

The article “Temporary migration, refugees and the crisis in Europe”, kicking-off this debate, makes in this regard a very valid point. “The revoking of refugee rights is detrimental to the wider political programme of the establishment of the European *acquis* as regards democracy and human rights. The recent developments set in a totally different light the mainstream perception of “others” rights: it imposes the idea that the best way to override the difficulties that their rights confront us with is to get rid of their presence, any time, anyway. This line of thought undermines the prospects for social integration in Europe”.

This is of crucial importance to European cities. It is also our view that integration at local level cannot be achieved if beneficiaries of international protection are under constant threat of being sent back to their countries of origin. The ambition of having more often recourse to the cessation clause or at least to re-examine yearly if the fear of persecution is still “well-founded” will be counterproductive and detrimental to integration and social cohesion.

Migrants have been treated before as “temporary guests” bound to go back to their countries without putting down roots. These expectations have often been proven wrong in the past, and have represented a waste of years or of decades in the elaboration of sound integration policies at national and at local level.

Restrictions to family reunification in some countries for example already have adverse effects to integration, as they push family members of beneficiaries of international protection to make use of smuggler networks to reach Europe, putting their lives and economic prospects into danger. They also prevent beneficiaries of international protection to fully focus on their swift integration in our societies while they fear for their family members.

Cities have a lot to lose from policies that consign asylum seekers to deprivation and exclusion, put them at risk of becoming victims of abusive employers and landlords, smugglers, human traffickers and organised crime, or simply prevent them to become as quickly as possible full members of our societies.

Failing to integrate refugees into our societies impedes the respect of fundamental rights as well as the full realisation of the benefits immigration can bring; it inhibits asylum seekers from making a contribution to host societies and can prove costly in the long term for local as well as for national authorities. As stated in our Integrating Cities Charter “Our vision of integration is one where all city residents can develop their full potential and have an equal chance of a life in safety and dignity”

This is why European cities are unwilling to reproduce past mistakes, and have started, since the beginning of the refugee crisis, to work on “integration from day one” or “fast-track integration”, irrelevant of legal status and irrelevant of perspectives to stay or not. This approach is used at every level in cities’ integration strategies, such as housing (quick transition from shelters to temporary then more sustainable social and affordable housing, while avoiding segregation), care for unaccompanied minors (adequate shelters and professional support, and education (welcome class for refugee children, mentoring).

Investing in the integration infrastructure at local level

However, the much needed reception and integration infrastructure is often insufficient to face what can amount to a demographic change in some cities, especially at a time when many cities have had budgets and resources cut due to austerity policies at the European and national level. Nevertheless, cities have taken many actions to cope with this new and rapidly evolving situations.

As we see from the examples below, gathered from [our work on “cities welcoming refugees”](#) and our first report on [“Reception and integration of refugees in cities”](#), cities see integration as a necessary long term investment and as a process which should be sustained and durable, essential to promote social cohesion in increasingly complex and diverse societies.

Reception and Housing

To respond to the refugee crisis, cities have opened shelters, created reception centres, reclaimed vacant residential or commercial buildings. They also have started, like Berlin, to think about the long term perspective and to the transition between temporary and durable accommodation. In many cities, the focus is on avoiding concentration areas and segregation, in other words on not repeating the mistakes made in the 1960’s and 1970’s which allowed to ghettoization and insufficient integration.

Unaccompanied minors

In countries like Sweden, cities are responsible to care for registered unaccompanied minors. At its most, the city of Malmö had around 2,300 places of transit available for unaccompanied. Nearly 15,000 unaccompanied minors arrived in the city in 2015, compared to just 1,567 the previous year. The city had to hire more than 2,000 people over the course of several months to staff the homes for unaccompanied minors. However, cities sometimes struggle to find qualified staff to fill the gaps. Cities like Gothenburg and Stockholm have also expressed concerns about staff retention, training new recruits, and increased workload on existing staff.

Education

With its rapidly growing population, which includes the large-scale arrival of families and unaccompanied minors, Malmö is planning to build around 20 new schools over the next ten years, at a cost of over €4bn. In Berlin, around 10.000 refugee children attend 900 “welcoming classes” providing fast-track integration. European cities like Helsinki, Espoo and Leipzig have had to increase their educational infrastructure at all levels in order to rapidly accommodate children of asylum seekers and provide specific support to unaccompanied minors as quickly as possible. These measures are also taken with a long term view in preparation for future family reunification procedures.

For a better involvement of cities in migration policies

In order for integration to be a priority on the ground, funding must be made available at the local level without filters or barriers.

As the public authorities closest to citizens, cities are in a good position to determine needs and priorities in the field of migrant integration. As such, direct access to EU funding (such as EU emergency assistance and AMIF) would enable cities to better address the needs that are presented daily both in a way that would allow for pragmatic solutions to everyday needs and with a long-term perspective, to ensure integration and social cohesion.

Furthermore, Multi-level governance and effective and meaningful involvement of city authorities in decision making is a pre-condition of successful integration. This is why EURO CITIES is calling for the concrete application of a true partnership principle for the management of integration funding, involving European Institutions, Member States and Cities in the new European Network on Integration announced in “the [Action Plan on Integration of Third Country Nationals](#)” published in June 2016.

EURO CITIES will continue to gather in depth knowledge about the way cities are coping with the reception and integration of refugees. Its Social Affairs Forum / Integrating Cities Conference organised on 17 and 18 October in Athens, will be an opportunity to take stock of the accomplishments of cities facing the refugee crisis, and to discuss at political level the role of cities within the wider European response to the challenges.



Thomas Jezequel is a Policy Advisor at [EURO CITIES](#), responsible for Migration & Integration, Housing, and Radicalisation.

Source: This article originally appeared in [The EURA-NET project](#). Transnational Migration in Transition: Transformative Characteristics of Temporary Mobility of People (EURA-NET) is an international research project funded by the European Union’s 7th Framework Programme.

With Heart and Mind in Münster

By Evelyn

[Interview](#)



By Steffi Kammerer, [change magazine Bertelsmann Stiftung](#)

In Münster, a concept for the integration of refugees was already developed 15 years ago. It works, and above all now, it is bearing fruit: good housing throughout the city, and no mass accommodation. But with refugee numbers on the increase, things are getting tight for Münster, too.

Böttcherstraße in Münster, an estate of terraced houses. The entrance has been painstakingly brushed, there are monkey bars in the garden, and flowers are growing in front of the windows. It is hard to believe that more than 13 years ago, these houses once prompted the setting up of citizens' initiatives, excited gatherings and poison-pen letters, even in liberal Münster, a university city. There are six houses, and for more than ten years, they have been home to refugees from all over the world. Now the houses are surrounded by other, very similar terraced houses. Private persons have built their houses here – after the refugees were there, and they are proud of this.

The Sedighis, from Afghanistan, have been living in Böttcherstraße for three-and-a-half years. Their son completed primary school education in Münster, while their daughter, Maryam (13), not only attends a German higher secondary school but is best pupil in her class as well. She also plays the violin. An old lady in the neighbourhood gave her an instrument as a present. She is now sitting at the kitchen table and learning for an English test the day after tomorrow.

The family have experienced an eventful journey. They got to Greece via Iraq and Turkey, but then they were separated. The father initially stayed behind, while his then 13-year-old son made it on his own to Austria and the mother, in her late stages of pregnancy, travelled to Germany via Italy and France with her daughters and finally arrived in Münster with her new-born baby. Recently, a court approved the Sedighis' application for asylum — the longed-for certainty that they are allowed to stay. At last father Sedighi can work, and he is now employed by a Turkish butcher. Jamila, the mother, has learnt how to write here; in Afghanistan, she was only able to read. Like a story taken from a picture-book.

Above the dustbins there is a sign explaining in all languages what to put where. Inside the house, the walls are painted in different colours, and a calendar is hanging in the common room with the birthday dates of all the children. Forty-eight people live in these houses. The Sedighis' neighbours come from Kosovo, Albania and Pakistan. Two social workers look after them.

The desire for integration

This refugee facility is one of what will soon be 70 that now exist in Münster. Many of them are only temporary. Jochen Köhnke, Head of the Department for Migration and Intercultural Affairs, developed the concept for refugees more than 15 years ago, applying a lot of common sense: "The houses have to be nice to look at," he says. "The neighbours have to get the impression that it is alright for them to be standing there." The alternative at the time would have been mass accommodation surrounded by a tall fence. He grimaces – not acceptable as far as he is concerned.

By and large, Münster has stuck to the plans drawn up in the past, despite fluctuating majorities in the Council. A glance at the draft proposals reveals prosaic lingo as one would expect in an administrative context. Nevertheless, they consistently demonstrate a clear attitude: the desire for integration. And, as Köhnke argued then and still does so today, integration does not come automatically but requires straightforward rules. Not more than 50 people in one facility. Medium-density building. Kindergartens, schools, sports associations that are accessible on foot. And, what is at least as important: intact neighbourhoods. "Urban districts with a major share of socially deprived inhabitants on low income are not suitable for the reception of these facilities," it was already stated in Münster in 2000.

Jochen Köhnke is proud of what they have achieved here. When Pegida had a go in Münster, they were faced by 10,000 counter-protesters. But he is also worried. For even the best concept will not work if one is overwhelmed by developments. And the notions he has require physical space and much time. Both are lacking at the moment.

There are such endless numbers of people; 700 refugees came last October alone. Even more are expected this year. Even though there were only 400 in January, the country (State of North Rhine-Westphalia??) has announced that there will be up to 300 refugees a week in peak periods.

Good prospects of being quickly integrated in the labour market. Syrian refugee couple Jwan and Peyman Fatah (second and third from right). At home, he was working as an economist, while she is a civil engineer.

Where can they all be accommodated?

For the first time, Münster will now be deviating from the tried-and-tested rule of not accommodating refugees in lower-class areas. Here, every square metre is hotly contested. Münster is a thriving and constantly growing city that is already bursting at the seams without the refugees.

Around 3,800 refugees are currently living in municipal facilities, says Köhnke. Then 360 refugees are accommodated in regular housing. This adds up to about 4,200 people, each of whom with a story of his or her own. Large numbers of houses are reserved exclusively for single men, others for women travelling on their own, and one for the very sick.

Just where and how a house is built for refugees is a tedious process. Once the decision has been taken, Köhnke and his colleagues will soon visit the location to raise understanding and trust, often two years ahead of the first people arriving. This was also the case with the house in Böttcherstraße,



which was then taken over by CVJM. Today, it is one of just under a dozen houses in Münster that are maintained by private agencies

One thing that they have managed in Münster despite the crisis is not to accommodate people in mass facilities. If a prefab house is set up in next-to-no time, like in Gronowskistraße, it will then have room for 100 beds. But it is standing in between family houses in a quiet residential area, and not somewhere on the urban periphery. Jochen Köhnke knows that for the time being, he will have to bid farewell to his notion of a maximum of 50 inhabitants per facility. There is simply too much pressure. “Perhaps we can achieve a figure of 100. But there certainly won’t be 1,000 people, like in many another city.”

Initial joint steps

Since the summer, the refugees have no longer been initially received at Münster’s Social Welfare Office but at Oxford Barracks, which once used to belong to the British. Here, the refugees stay for two to three weeks before they are allocated to the various houses. A taxi is just arriving, and a Bosnian woman is being picked up together with her two little boys. Heavy suitcases disappear in the boot, and half a dozen children wave goodbye to what those who were their friends over the last few days.

Several of the refugees make use of the days they have to wait by taking daily lessons in German. One of the many of the city’s volunteers, Birgit, stands in front of the blackboard, explaining the difference between “Du” and “Sie”, while grown-up men wearing thick leather jackets are sitting on children’s chairs practising strange vowel mutations. They repeat “Münster” in a chorus. They also learn what a “German house” looks like. Their teacher draws a house with a peaked roof on the blackboard.

There are around 800 volunteers in Münster, and their ranks are growing. “This is also coupled to a certain scale,” Köhnke believes. “The reason why we have so many volunteers is that we have small facilities.” When he says something like this, he can usually refer to a survey backing, for instance, the claim that the more people there are, the higher the threshold will be to become involved.

Last year, Jochen Köhnke wanted to be elected Lord Mayor of Münster. It didn’t work. But this has not frustrated him in his efforts to support the refugees. For the future, he would like to see socially balanced distribution maintained across the entire urban area. His vision for Münster is “that even in larger facilities, we can maintain contact between the population and the refugees. And that we enable fair residence for people.” This means in good districts. “Where children are welcome.” Where people can perhaps simply get to know their future boss at their next-door neighbour’s barbecue.

Source: *An exclusive extract, adapted and published with permission from [Change – the Magazine, from Bertelsmann Stiftung](#) (Issue 1/2016).*



Jochen Köhnke is City Councillor for Migration and Intercultural Affairs, Stadt Münster, Germany

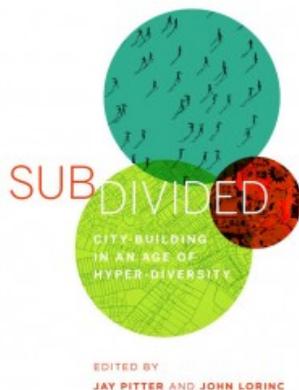
Subdivided: City-Building in an Age of Diversity

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



In the following excerpt from [Subdivided: City-Building in an Age of Diversity](#), co-editor **Jay Pitter** reflects on a formative relationship between herself as a schoolchild and a teacher that expanded “the perimeters of my neighbourhood” and allowed her to imagine herself “beyond its narrow margins.” Today that includes asking uncomfortable questions about diversity in order to move beyond what Pitter calls the “superficial rhetoric, policies and celebrations” of diversity in contemporary discourse.



As I think back to this relationship, which shaped my life, I see how it could exemplify multiculturalism, as championed by Liberal Prime minister Pierre Trudeau. It was an instance of how the lives of two people situated in opposite social locations – Black and white, male and female, child and adult, poor and economically stable – intersected meaningfully within the context of a fast-growing city. It seems like a story that supports our proclamation that diversity does, in fact, work. Yet as I observe today’s teeming city-region, I know that such stories, and the intricate forces that create them, are far too rare to validate the efficacy of diversity and the paint-by-numbers politics of urban identity. It isn’t that diversity is bad; it’s inherent in the urban project’s built environment and natural ecology. But when it comes to the human beings who collectively make up a global city like Toronto – a place with accelerating social, economic and ethnocultural divisions – the over-emphasis placed on diversity is lazy social shorthand, an attempt to smooth over ragged edges we struggle to understand. Civic leaders endlessly repeat the catchphrase ‘diversity is our strength,’ as if it could resolve our issues or conclude difficult discussions.

Cities and Social Diversity

Cities are a constant negotiation of distance and difference. Across time, people have cast their hopes toward these collectively conceived places of possibility that are at once immutable and fragile. Within a few city blocks, towers of industry and influence preside over cars and cyclists competing for space, parkettes constrained by concrete and pedestrians navigating the new homeless – entire families huddling atop street grates.

As a result of unprecedented migration and intensification, we are building global cities in which we literally live on top of one another. We have created a complex convergence of stories that reveal growing social disparities. More than ever, many urban dwellers exist in a daily dissonance of economic despair and polarized ideology, while others revel in an affluent world of chic boutiques, high-end restaurants and impossibly expensive homes.

In recent decades, we’ve wrongly deployed the language and paradigm of diversity to address – or in some instances avoid – a complicated range of issues arising from, among others, improper policing, nimbysism, gendered violence, transit inequality and an increasingly precarious urban labour force.

While there isn’t a single agreed-upon definition or approach to diversity, the phenomenon is generally understood to be a way of defining and responding to the increasing number of ‘others’ within cities. Of course, everyone is diverse: we are all distinct and different. However, in the language of municipal policy and planning, someone like me – a visible ‘minority’ and woman – has come to be understood and widely accepted as ‘diverse’ while my teacher turned lifelong mentor – a white male – would be considered ‘normal,’ the centralized status. Unspoken notions of power, differently valued bodies, spatial entitlement, and economic and social capital are all implicit in a term we have come to consider virtuous.

Using this flawed framework, which reinforces rather than redresses social power dynamics, we've developed public policy, business-based programs and mandated workplace training to increase our collective capacity to deal with difference. In fact, diversity is so knitted into Canada's national identity and its values that, for some, any critique of this rhetoric amounts to a challenge to our collective sense of respectability. But while we've been focused on embracing the identities of 'others' and celebrating their differences, the economic disparities between city dwellers – and not just in Canada – have greatly increased.

In an urban context, accelerating income disparity has created an insidious form of social segregation within and across neighbourhoods. Here in Toronto, the most culturally diverse city in the world, University of Toronto sociologist David Hulchanski's 'Three Cities' research has shown how, over the past two generations, wealthy and poor neighbourhoods have become increasingly concentrated and isolated from one another, producing a social geography that offers a ground-level rebuke to the redemptive rhetoric extolling the virtues of diversity.

Conversations focusing on social disparity are on the rise. ... [but] we've ignored the more uncomfortable matter of economic inequality. ... Our preoccupation with racial or ethnocultural categories precludes a more fluid and holistic way of seeing the world, one that allows us to identify ourselves with other points of reference, such as economics, passion, politics, belief and the kind of society we value.

Race and economic inequality are obviously not mutually exclusive, nor do we live in a post-racial society. However, [such] important and uncomfortable questions should prompt us to strive for a discourse that goes beyond diversity's superficial rhetoric, policies and celebrations.

Source: *Excerpted and reprinted with permission from "Introduction" by [Jay Pitter](#), from **Subdivided: City-Building in an Age of Diversity**. Edited by Jay Pitter and John Lorinc. Toronto, Coach House, 2016.*



Jay Pitter, MES is an author, placemaker and senior stakeholder engagement professional. Throughout her career, Jay has spearheaded noteworthy projects with organizations such as the Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Community Housing, The Health and Safety Task Force, the City of Toronto, the Toronto District School Board and DIALOG, a national architecture firm. Her work has consistently resulted in increasing the capacity, resources and relationships required for co-creating more inclusive, safe, and vibrant cities. Jay has been a guest lecturer and faculty member within post-secondary institutions and has also co-led a number of participatory research processes. Most recently she collaborated with Westbank to increase community engagement in the Honest Ed's redevelopment process, co-edited [Subdivided](#), a Coach House anthology exploring inclusive city-building and signed on to produce a "walk show" with Bell Media.

Migration Governance Index

By kturner

[Interview](#)



Measuring well-governed migration The 2016 Migration Governance Index

A study by The Economist Intelligence Unit



In May 2016, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) published the first ever iteration of [“Measuring well-governed migration: The 2016 Migration Governance Index”](#) (MGI) in conjunction with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

The project involves the development of a policy benchmarking framework to assess the extent to which national migration policies facilitate orderly, safe and well-managed migration, as laid out in SDG Target 10.7.

The framework is composed of over 70 indicators, grouped under five different dimensions of migration governance, and draws upon the Migration Governance Index and Sustainable Development (MiGOF) principles. Research was conducted in 15 pilot countries, the results of which were released on 2 May, 2016 at IOM HQ in Geneva, and 3 May, 2016 at GMDAC in Berlin. The aim is to replicate this initial exercise in a larger number of countries during a second phase of the project.

Cities of Migration asked **David Martineau, Associate Policy Officer, IOM (Geneva)** about the Migration Governance Index and the implications this tool could have for cities.

In a nutshell, what is the Migration Governance Index? And why is it important?

For years, IOM has sought to develop a clear, all-encompassing definition of good migration governance. With the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the timeliness for such a definition became critical given that most of the 17 SDG's are directly or indirectly related to immigration (see below).

Still in its pilot phase, the **Migration Governance Index (MGI)**, developed by the [International Organization for Migration](#) and [The Economist Intelligence Unit](#), is a tool to assist governments in examining the comprehensiveness of their policies while helping them identify gaps in order to prioritize when building institutional capacity and devising programmes on migration.

Fifteen countries were selected for the pilot project, all of which reflect a diverse range of migration contexts ranging from countries of origin, destination, and transit to migration contexts in transformation. The intention here was twofold: firstly, to demonstrate that it is possible to synthesize and compare such complex policy areas for countries in very diverse migratory contexts. Secondly, the intent was to indicate that the SDG's are not only a challenge for developing countries to achieve, but for all countries.

The MGI is not a ranking exercise. Unlike many indices, the MGI is not merely a list of countries to be 'named and shamed' into faring better than their neighbours. Rather, the MGI must be understood as a tool that can help national governments understand specifically where their challenges and strengths lie, and how to effectively measure progress over time. Thus, the MGI can be better understood as a gap analysis tool.

The MGI's methodology is not final. In its current iteration, the MGI uses 5 policy domains to assess participating countries (and ensuing participants) including: institutional capacity; migrant rights and integration; migration management; labour, economics and investment; and regional and international cooperation and partnerships. However, the methodology is not final. In fact, with each additional country launch of the tool, IOM and EIU expect to strengthen the methodology with consultations in all regions of the world. Furthermore, we intend to put together an expert group that consists of representatives of Member States, scholars and migration experts to discuss how the methodology could be improved. A very important and current component missing from the MGI to date is related to crisis migration. The team would most likely like to see this component incorporated in the second phase of the report.

What is the relationship between a country's MGI assessment and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals?

We recognize [SDG target 10.7 on migration policies](#) to be the basis for the successful implementation of all other SDG targets relevant to migration issues, ranging from human trafficking strategies to climate-induced mobility. Without coherent and effective policies at the national level, it is difficult to implement migration-related targets.

The MGI is understood as an important tool that will allow national governments to be able to track and review progress towards their SDG goals and regularly report on the status of these targets using the MGI indicators. By conducting in-depth assessments at the national level against a standard, MGI country participants have a common language that allows them to then discuss and assess their progress in international and supranational forums with greater ease.

Given that it's at the local level that the truism “Migrants Matter” is put to the test, the MGI has little to say about cities. What is the relationship between MGI, SDG's and cities?

What's next for the MGI?

The next step for MGI is to go global. We would like to have an assessment of all countries in the world as soon as possible. However, this requires a lot of resources. In order for the MGI to be a useful tool, we will need to publish regularly to effectively understand and assess the state of migration governance.

What is your favourite city?

My favourite city is the City of Montreal. Montreal is a multicultural city where migrants have historically been the cornerstone of development. Walking through the city you can still feel the influence of Irish, Chinese, or Italian settlements. The city is vibrant because of its history of migration. It is a place where people don't really care where you're from. At the end of the day, the only thing that matters is which hockey jersey you wear.

Migration Governance Index project and report at the [Global Migration Data Analysis Centre \(GMDAC\)](#).

To download the 2016 Migration Governance Index report [please click here](#).



About David Martineau: *David Martineau is an Associate Policy Officer at the International Organization for Migration's headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Martineau mainly works on issues related to migration and sustainable development, with a specific focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. Originally from Montreal, Mr. Martineau holds Master's degrees from the University of Toronto and Queen's University.*

IOM: *Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.*

SDG Target 10.7: *"Facilitating safe and orderly migration through well-managed migration policies"*

Philanthropy and Migration

By kturner
June 8, 2016
[Opinion](#)



By Michael Alberg-Seberich and Diya Khanna

Berlin's former mayor, Klaus Wowereit, was fond of calling the city "poor but sexy." His phrase was inspired by the creative economy and start-up scene, which are defining features of the post-Cold War city. And since the influx of refugees into Europe in 2015, Berlin is demonstrating that creativity and innovation are powerful forces in philanthropy and civil society, as well.

In our January post on the CEP blog, we discussed Berlin's innovative volunteering platform, GoVolunteer. But the list of social enterprises in the city with missions to assist refugees seems never-ending. Berlin is the birthplace of Kiron, a free online university for refugees, and GermanNow!, which trains and coordinates more than 1,000 volunteers who provide language classes for refugees, just to name a few examples.



This may have been the reason why Ashoka, TEDxBerlin, and Street Football World organized the

Hello Festival this March in Berlin. The Festival addressed the lay of the land for what needs to be done by the state, business community, philanthropists, and civil society overall to support refugees and make integration a real possibility in Europe. The Festival is a good example of how a collective effort of various societal actors can stimulate debate and spread innovative thinking.

The Festival kicked off with Ashoka's Innovation Conference on Integration, which brought together successful social entrepreneurs from around the world to share how their experiences could enrich integration and what lays ahead for all of Europe. The following day, 1,600 people attended the TEDx Salon event, "Identity: Chances and Challenges," at the Berlin Arena. Like other TED events, the speakers presented to a very supportive and engaged crowd. The talks, though, also brought to light several recurring themes that are relevant to the wider framework of philanthropy.

First, the talks generated discussion about adapting to the new reality of globalization. The past half-century has been defined by the continual process of increased trade and cultural exchange around the world, and each speaker made the point that we no longer live in isolation, but are amidst a new level of global connectivity. With the movement of goods and the migration of people in this new context also comes an exciting transfer of ideas. Like in other sectors, it is important for philanthropists to recognize that here lies an opportunity to network across borders and collaborate across cultures in ways we haven't been able to before. Now is the time to learn to thrive in this new context.

Second, and relevant to the point above, speakers at the Festival addressed the need for a collective shift in mindset from the cost toward the contribution of migrants. Fear of the unknown can lead to an unfavorable view toward the influx of migrants as a threat, rather than an opportunity, and as a burden, rather than an asset. Overcoming this outlook, philanthropists can play a critical role in providing the right tools that, coupled with a migrant's desire to be independent, can result in diversity, cultural enrichment, and social change that will bring wider benefit. A few countries, such as Canada, in particular, already understand that their economic and social well-being is based on empowering their large influx of immigrants.

Third, the realization of powerful new partnerships was a recurring theme at the Festival. For a long time, single entities have been operating in emergency mode, only to now enter a phase when things are running a little more smoothly. And with this stability comes a tremendous potential in partnering with one other to propel in new directions. Imagine the opportunities that can arise from governments, foundations, corporations, and individuals bringing differing strengths to the table and collaborating.

An important component missing from the discussions at the Festival, however, was inclusion of the voices of refugees themselves. In discussing the issue of migration, it is vital that refugees participate in the dialogue about a path forward. When looking at the realities of an issue on the ground, there is no perspective more valuable to listen to and learn from than that of real people sharing real experiences about their real lives. Philanthropy needs to include and encourage these voices, and also empower them to become innovators in their own right.

Berlin is a city of action. The Hello Festival there last month was not only about innovation, but stressed the need to work together to create and rely upon established solutions to empower and integrate refugees into European society. Philanthropy can play a crucial role in this. Looking ahead, let's hope more events will encourage people to listen to the voices of individuals on the ground, move beyond talk, and move toward action.

Hello from Berlin to the world!

– By Michael Alberg-Seberich and Diya Khanna April 19, 2016

Reprinted with permission from the [Centre for Effective Philanthropy blog](#), April 15, 2016

This post is part of an occasional series on the **Centre for Effective Philanthropy Blog** providing international perspectives on philanthropy and foundation effectiveness. Other posts in the series can be found [here](#).

Michael Alberg-Seberich is executive partner at Active Philanthropy, a nonprofit organization in Berlin that brings together individuals and families from all over Europe who want to make the world a better place. He also is managing director of Beyond Philanthropy, a social business owned by Active Philanthropy that provides philanthropy advice for families, foundations, and businesses.

Diya Khanna is a Canadian journalist, educator and humanitarian with a focus on diversity and migration. She is currently working with Active Philanthropy and several other local organizations toward aiding the integration of refugees in Germany.

How Inclusive Societies and Migrant Integration Look from Baku

By ktuner
June 7, 2016
[Opinion](#)



Jenny Phillimore, University of Birmingham, shares “Notes from the [7th UNAOC Global Forum](#), 25-27 April 2016, Baku, Azerbaijan”

I have spent the last few days at the 7th United Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC) Global Forum “Living together in inclusive societies: a challenge and a goal” in Baku the capital of Azerbaijan in the company of 3000 delegates from across the world. Never before have I encountered such a mix of people – from heads of state and leading figures from all the world’s major religions through to tiny NGOs and young people sponsored by UNAOC to attend.

The opening address brought together the President of Azerbaijan with the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the United Nations Secretary-General, the Foreign Minister of Spain and President of Turkey. Such occasions are frequently an opportunity for politicking as well as showcasing national achievements and this was no different. Critical points were raised about the importance of taking internally displaced persons (IDPs) into account when thinking about the refugee crisis, concerns about developed nations “cherry-picking” the most skilled Syrian refugees and leaving others in camps in countries with minimal resources and the need to move beyond applauding Turkey for taking 3m refugees to providing tangible assistance. What was not said was perhaps as telling as what was, with human rights and freedom of speech off the official agenda yet important topics of discussion in panels and throughout the informal networking conversations that were an important feature of the forum.



Some questioned whether Azerbaijan, which was positioning itself as a leader in the promotion of multiculturalism given its self-proclaimed “tolerance” of many ethnic minorities and religions, was indeed the right place to hold such a forum. Certainly the recent upsurge in violence in Nagorno–Karabakh, the failure to permanently settle 1m IDPs, [human rights abuses](#) and constraints on press freedom gave us plenty to talk about. Despite these concerns we were able to engage in frank discussions with many of the civil servants in attendance as well as young professional locals we befriended in the wider city. All had different versions of the “truth”. Holding the forum in Baku brought a very different mix of people than events held in Europe and the US with Russian and Arabic languages dominating conversation and the opportunity to meet people who are generally unable to travel to West. These perspectives were thought-provoking and sometimes perplexing.

Much of the discussion on living together veered into the issue of terrorism – with definitions of what constitutes terrorist action sometimes conflated with separatism or dissent or stretched to encompass the opposition party of the moment. Thus much of the emphasis was on helping people to live together peacefully after internal conflict and preventing young people from turning to terrorism by ensuring their inclusion. A youth event opened the Forum with discussions about how young people can support inclusion – although some young delegates complained that they had been given no role in shaping the event which was not as participative as they would have liked. In the main forum a wide variety of organisations shared their ideas demonstrating and describing the different ways in which they support living together – through films, apps, awards, sport and music. The [UNAOC Plural](#) + scheme alumni – 100 film makers from across the world showed some of their award winning films including a comedic take on the ridiculous and sometimes downright offensive questions a young woman had been asked about her hijab – a film that she now uses to educate young people about hijab.

Global migration and cities

The panel which I joined was facilitated by Daniel Denvir, staff writer at Salon, with a mixture of academics and practitioners: Ashraf El Nour (IOM), Juliana Kerr (Chicago Council of Global Affairs), Audrey Singer (Urban Institute), Kristen Surak (SOAS), and Dana Wagner (Global Diversity Exchange). Our focus was global migration and cities with a specific emphasis on integration. We explored different influences on integration – with panellists arguing that regardless of how anti-integrative national immigration policies are, integration happens locally and can be facilitated by local action. Examples were given of how, in Chicago, undocumented children had been connected to social services and education with 25% of students at some universities *sans papier*. We disagreed on the importance of language with some of us arguing it was necessary to forward inclusion, certainly my research indicates that migrants consistently seek to learn the language because they know they will be more successful if they improve their English language skills, but others providing examples of neighbourhoods and economies, such as those in Toronto, that thrive despite many people unable to speak English. Much emphasis was placed on using the economic benefits of migration to win over local people and encourage them to appreciate and accept immigrants. Perhaps this works in Canada and the US, but I argued that evidence in Europe shows people are rejecting the economic argument and focussing more on security and culture. One delegate suggested that we should not continually defend migration – in doing so we build on the myth that it is a problem that needs defending. With the rise of the new right, anti-migrant rhetoric in the media and politics (and Trump came up a lot) the panellists were concerned about the implications of not challenging negative rhetoric.

Some delegates pointed out that as a panel we were clearly adopting a global north perspective – in Africa and much of the Middle East migrations exceed that which the EU is labelling “crisis” with people just getting on with life and adapting in an organic way. Certainly the huge migrations into Johannesburg were seen to have been absorbed without overt conflict but the race riots in Durban suggested that too much change too quickly may be greeted with the kind of negative responses currently being witnessed in Europe.

More questions than answers

Questions from the audience enabled the panel to examine a range of moral issues – how many refugees is too many? Should governments let refugees go where they want or forcibly disperse them in order to “share the burden”? The notion of refugees as a burden and the emphasis on tolerance rather than acceptance were seen as problematic. The discussion focused upon the necessity to consider the moral implications of turning people in need away – if, like the UK, we refuse to offer refuge even to children just 25 miles from our shores – who might we turn away next? One delegate asked if the people of Lebanon, lacking the resources of the west, can open their doors to millions of refugees why can’t we. Later in conversation with a delegate from Canada I heard how refugees in Germany, awaiting processing and dispersal, and not permitted to work or study and becoming increasingly disillusioned and depressed at lacking purpose. Dentist, doctors, engineers and students wanted to work and were unable to. She

told he how one young man felt totally out of place, completely unprepared for the “me” culture of the west. He wanted to return to a place where people put others first arguing that in Syrian culture the comfort and wellbeing of others was always the priority.

It seemed to me that when questioning how to justify continued, and as I often argue, inevitable immigration, and encourage people to appreciate the full worth of migrants who are already an integral part of our societies, we might begin to think about the moral values brought by newcomers and how they offer us the possibility to learn to live, and interact with, everyone in new ways, rather than just sticking with tired and ineffective economic arguments. By over-emphasising the economic value of people we lose sight of human value – this further enables “crises” such as that which is so panicking the EU to be constructed as a matter of numbers and costs rather than of moral imperative to offer refuge.

Re-printed with permission from: [The Age of Superdiversity blog](#), May 10, 2016.

Jenny Phillimore is Professor of Migration and Superdiversity and Director of the Institute for Research into Superdiversity at the University of Birmingham.

Upwardly Global: Refugees and Germany

By ktuner
[Opinion](#)



Notes from Berlin: Reflections on Germany's Refugee Integration Challenge

By **Nikki Cicerani**

Two weeks ago I had the pleasure of presenting at the Innovations in Migration Conference in Berlin, Germany. The conference was part of the larger [Hello Festival](#) and aimed to bring together social entrepreneurs from around the world with 400 German innovators, employers, social service organizations, funders, and policymakers to collaborate on solutions for integrating refugees. Upwardly Global was one of 13 global organizations invited to present, and the only one focused on labor market integration. Perhaps not surprisingly then, our presentation was standing room only.

Germany, a country of 80 million, has taken in an estimated 1.1 million refugees fleeing Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere who are on the move as a result of the growing crisis in the Middle East. The country will likely take in another million this year. The news is dominated by this issue. The majority of German citizens are responding with open arms and a cautiously open mind. However, the German system that addresses migrants and labor market participation seems to be audibly creaking under the pressure. It just wasn't built for these numbers or needs.

Over five days we met individually with interested local social entrepreneurs, government officials, talent professionals from German companies, and average German citizens, and we made a visit to a refugee "camp" in a neighborhood of Berlin.

What I learned.

Germany has a very well thought out and intentional labor market system that was not built to support the 1.1 million refugees it just inherited.

Higher education and skilled vocational training is very highly valued in Germany (and free); there are 360 standard apprenticeships that provide vocational training for careers that do not necessarily require a university degree; and German language is the language of business. The refugees who arrived in the last year overwhelmingly do not speak German; in many cases they lack the residency status required to enroll in university; they are too old for the apprenticeships; and most are driven by an urgent need to make money to send home to families and can't see a way through years without pay while they gain higher education or complete an apprenticeship.

The migration system is backlogged and isn't keeping pace with refugees' need to find work. The average time for refugees to get legal status is five to seven months. While some may find employers willing to sponsor them while their cases are being processed, most are waiting, and getting increasingly frustrated by their inability to work and earn.

Of course, refugees don't flee their countries under duress with a long-term career plan in place. The same is true for countries that respond generously to refugee flight. Germany has taken a commendable "book it, then work it" approach—welcoming refugees while working to figure out a long-term solution.

What I saw.

The country has responded. The average citizen is involved—inviting refugees to sleep at their homes, starting up initiatives to help with jobs, or volunteering to teach German language. But there are so many initiatives and each one is so new. In five days we met no fewer than 10 organizations, all started in the last few months, that provide some form of job search and placement support. A recent [SSIR article](#) reports 77 refugee tech training and support initiatives already started in the country. There is overlap in program offerings and strategies, and refugees seem to lack awareness of or access to these services. These small start-up enterprises are largely unaware that similar organizations exist. One can see already the potential in joint efforts, but there is no player today—neither a funder nor lead organization nor government entity—bringing the field together and helping to professionalize or scale the energy and efforts of these nascent initiatives.

What we already know.

Integration is hard. It takes change on both sides. Success stories build confidence that integration is possible, and keep people motivated.

And yet the path to success is paved with disappointments, and for those who wish to see it fail it's easy to spot what's not working. I heard stories of refugees being placed in jobs that they quit shortly after and the disappointment from Germans with that outcome, and the doubt it creates. The refugees have many more psychological and emotional issues than the average migrant, so it will not be enough for organizations to hand over a polished resume and set up an interview for an internship. Refugees will need trusted guides that work with them on acculturation, the subtleties of workplace communication, and to help them gain the emotional readiness to take on a job. Existing government employment service agencies haven't worked with refugees, and are not set up yet to provide this kind of support. In fact, they are just discovering refugees' needs. It's all new.

What I realized.



Nikki Cicerani, Innovations in Migration Conference, Berlin



Nikki Cicerani leads a discussion about labor market integration at the Innovations in Migration Conference



Upwardly Global is ahead of much of the world in thinking about immigrant labor market integration— and this has become an urgent issue in Germany, Turkey and other countries.

We have already embraced three things that will be critical for Germany to implement:

1. **Professionalization and smart, effective use of technology to scale services.** In the year we embraced a technology back end for our work, we increased efficiency 40%. In the year we embraced online learning, we increased our reach and impact by 40%.
2. **Partnering.** Two years ago an organization in Idaho started using the UpGlo model. Today in many of our cities we are approaching partners to use the platform we have built to serve their immigrant communities of workers. This gives us better and richer data, broader talent pools with which to serve employer need, and a cohesive community that can advocate for institutional changes.
3. **Working with a systems change perspective.** Making a market for talent means you have to work on both ends?—?helping the worker learn and adapt as needed, but also helping the system understand how it needs to change and respond as a result. Starting with two-way change in mind will help countries to initiate and scale programs that support real, sustainable change.



Why any of it matters.

There was a video that kicked off the conference. They interviewed several refugees: a dad, a set of young siblings, mostly twenty-something men. They asked the interviewees silly questions and important ones, from “What is funny about German language?” to “What do you miss most about home?” A young man of perhaps 21 or 22 years went from laughing and sharing his observations about German culture to reflecting on what was lost. And behind tearful eyes and a strained voice he looked away and eventually managed to get out the words, “my mother.”

The word “Refugee” can make us think of them as a monolithic group and “1.1 million” as a number that lives only in headlines and policy text. But each and every refugee is a real person. These are 1.1 million people seeking safety and a sense of normalcy far from home and loved ones they may never see again.

The very best thing we can give each of them is meaning in their lives, and I’ve never known anything to give a man or woman a sense of purpose like a good job. What we do here in the U.S. and in Germany to help all our people work, it’s one of the best things we can do for each other and our countries.

Nikki Cicerani is the President and CEO of [Upwardly Global](#). Follow Upwardly Global on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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Does Diversity Drive Prosperity? 2016 GDx Annual Lecture

By kturner
[Interview, Opinion](#)



For the 2016 Global Diversity Exchange Annual Lecture on March 2, 2016, GDx is proud to present speaker Dr. Khalid Koser, MBE, Executive Director of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Like [our inaugural lecturer Pico Iyer](#), Dr. Koser is a global citizen. In his 2016 GDx Annual Lecture he touched on many of the pressing issues surrounding the unprecedented movement of people across the globe: refugees, internal displacement, global governance, human security, community engagement and counter-radicalization. His lecture cast a new lens on the question: *Does diversity drive prosperity?*



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



Following his lecture, Dr. Koser engaged in a lively Q&A with **John Stackhouse**, Senior Vice-President, Office of the CEO, RBC Royal Bank.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



About the GDx Annual Lecture

The GDx Annual Lecture features a notable global thinker with big ideas on diversity, prosperity and migration that matter to a world on the move. The lecture series profiles global thought leadership on issues that impact cities around the world.

To learn more about the 2015 GDx Annual Lecture, [click here](#).

About Dr. Khalid Koser

Dr. Khalid Koser MBE is Executive Director of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) in Geneva, Switzerland. He is also a Non-Resident Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, Associate Fellow at Chatham House, Non-Resident Fellow at the Lowy Institute in Sydney, and extraordinary Professor in Conflict, Peace and Security at the University of Maastricht. Dr. Koser is chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration, and editor of the Journal of Refugee Studies. He was awarded the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to asylum seekers and refugees in the Queen's 2014 New Years Honours List.

Dr. Koser's areas of expertise include international migration, refugees, internal displacement, global governance, human security, community engagement and counter-radicalization.

The GDx Annual Lecture series is sponsored by RBC Royal Bank



Five Steps to Successful Integration

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



The influx of refugees is an omnipresent topic in Germany. Each day brings new challenges – and new reactions. Creativity and expertise are needed if we are to respond effectively to both the large number of newcomers and society’s needs in general. The Bertelsmann Stiftung is launching a series of projects and initiatives designed to achieve this goal.

Aart De Geus, Chairman Executive Board, Bertelsmann Stiftung, shares his opinion.

Exclusive extract from [change – the Magazine from the Bertelsmann Stiftung](#). Issue 1/2016.

Some 60 million people around the world have been forcibly displaced from their homes. UNHCR, the United Nations refugee agency, has been publishing Global Trends, a report that documents the impact of violent conflict, displacement and persecution, since 1951. According to the report, 13.9 million individuals became refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 2014 alone, four times as many as in 2010. Worldwide there were 19.5 million refugees, 38.2 million IDPs and 1.8 million asylum-seekers waiting to hear if their application for asylum had been approved. The upward trend began in 2011 with the outbreak of the war in Syria and, according to UNHCR, it intensified in subsequent years as other conflicts developed in Africa (Côte d’Ivoire, Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, northeast Nigeria, South Sudan and Burundi), the Middle East (Iraq and Yemen), Europe (Ukraine) and Asia (Kyrgyzstan and some areas of Myanmar and Pakistan).

Dangerous transit routes

The situation is difficult and seems insurmountable: crises and wars that never end, producing more refugees and displaced persons every day. In 2014, for example, only 126,800 refugees were able to return to their homes – the lowest number in 31 years. Approximately half of all refugees are children and more than half come from Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia. The routes they must travel to escape are long and are becoming fewer and more dangerous. In 2014 alone, 218,000 people from Africa or Asia crossed the Mediterranean, and 3,500 perished at sea. People on their way to the EU – what critics often call “Fortress Europe” – are drowning, dying of hypothermia or starving to death. Many refugees follow the Central Mediterranean route, which takes them from the city of Agadez in Niger to Libya and from there by boat to the Italian islands of Lampedusa or Sicily, or to Malta. Over the past 10 years more than 10,000 people either died or disappeared while in transit on this route.

Other paths to Europe include the Eastern Borders route, which runs from Ukraine to Poland and Slovakia; the Western Balkan route, which runs from Turkey and Greece to Hungary or Romania; and the heavily frequented Eastern Mediterranean route, which begins in various countries in East Africa and winds through Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria to Turkey, and then continues by boat to one of the Greek islands or across the mainland. Other possibilities include the Western African route through Morocco to the Western Sahara or to Mauretania and the Canary Islands; the Western Mediterranean route through Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish enclaves in North Africa, to Spain; and the route through Apulia and Calabria. Refugees ply these routes full of hope, only to end up bitterly disappointed – since their expectations of what they will find in Europe are high. Smugglers often make patently unrealistic promises to convince them to begin their journey. In addition, refugees often underestimate the bureaucracy and the cultural differences that await them. In the EU, most applications for asylum are submitted in Germany and Sweden. By the end of 2014, there were some 6.7 million displaced persons in Europe; one-quarter were Syrian refugees in Turkey. In 2013, the figure was only 4.4 million.

“The expectations of the refugees coming to Europe are enormous.” – Aart De Geus, Executive Board, Bertelsmann Stiftung

An enormous challenge

The situation in Germany is changing daily. On the one hand, people have demonstrated an unprecedented willingness to help; on the other, there have been numerous instances of xenophobia, including attacks on buildings housing refugees. Many cities and towns are struggling to cope, and the mood has sometimes changed for the worse. At the same time, there have been many success stories, too. The refugee crisis has been affecting life in Germany for months and still no one can say how it will be resolved. Neither is it possible to foretell the long-term effect the world's conflicts will have on the country. And yet Germany has proven more than once that it knows how to respond to a crisis. Even though people in Germany might not realize it, social integration has become part of their everyday lives. According to the Federal Foreign Office, almost three million people of Turkish ancestry are living in Germany, and more than half have a German passport. In total, there are more than eight million non-Germans living in Germany. And if one looks a little further back in the country's past, an estimated 20 million Germans are descendants of people who were forced to flee from former German territories in the east.

Yet, this wave of new challenges, new crises and recurring criticism is putting pressure on the country to implement short-term solutions. Given the demographic changes making themselves felt in Germany – its population is both shrinking and growing older, for example – the arrival of so many newcomers is a valuable opportunity. We in Germany must learn what it means to be one of the world's most appealing destination countries for migrants. Nevertheless, that also means we must set clear goals and develop solutions capable of responding to this turn of events. In particular, it means managing the inflows and shaping communal life as the country grows ever more diverse.

Proposing solutions for Germany

Initially, the main question was how to assist the people arriving in Germany. In recent months the challenge has increasingly become how to accommodate such a large inflow of refugees in such a short amount of time. The policy makers, public institutions and social organizations in Germany's communities were at first unprepared for such a development. In their efforts to respond to the new situation, everyone has been trying since then to do whatever is needed in humanitarian terms, while also acknowledging that resources and capabilities are limited. In view of that, a multifaceted approach is needed. First and foremost, procedures must be put in place that ensure communities can welcome and integrate refugees successfully and smoothly. Second, measures must be implemented to reduce the number of people who are forced to flee from their native countries. And third, a more equitable system must be found for distributing refugees throughout Europe.

"We want to help to objectify the discourse about refugees, which is often marked by insecurity, to find practical solutions and to develop enduring approaches."

In view of the above, the Bertelsmann Stiftung wants to help make the public debate – which is often influenced by the considerable uncertainty many people feel – more objective. It also wants to contribute practical solutions and help develop long-term strategic responses.

In real terms, this means contributing ideas, designing projects, sharing knowledge and developing scalable solutions. The basis for these activities must be a clear differentiation between refugees and migrants and a detailed assessment of existing problems and the measures that have already been initiated in response. Displacement and migration require action at all levels of government. That is why we address all relevant actors – from Germany's communities, states and federal institutions to the EU and the countries whose populations are emigrating or being displaced. In light of the foreseeable developments, we have defined five focus areas that reflect the challenges faced by refugees, migrants and German society, as well as their histories and experiences:

1. Departure and Displacement

In this focus area, we are examining the causes of displacement and searching for shared European responses to today's refugee situation. We in Germany must work with our neighbors if we are to develop common asylum procedures that do justice to both European values and its changing needs.

Beyond our activities in Germany and Europe, we cannot forget that a sustainable solution will have to address the causes of the current crisis. We will therefore be examining the situation in the countries of origin that are suffering from violent conflicts and poverty, since we fully understand that, first and foremost, Europeans must increase their efforts here – together with the international community – if the factors underlying displacement and migration are to be reduced. The nations bordering the countries in crisis must also be given support and the individual risk of displacement must be minimized.

2. Integration in Communities

Here we are developing strategies and practical applications that can help refugees deal with bureaucratic processes and start becoming a part of the community. Civil society organizations play a critical role here. Not only for humanitarian reasons, but in light of Germany's own history, we have an obligation to provide sanctuary to people fleeing violence and warfare. We must demonstrate our goodwill and willingness to help. Many of our projects, such as our Companies in the Community initiative, have shown that people are indeed prepared to assist those who have had to leave their native country and who hope to find safety and start a new life in Germany. Businesses are getting involved in a variety of ways – from aiding traumatized refugee children in Flensburg to offering language courses and assistance finding jobs in Augsburg. One glance at our Engagement Map is enough to show that people in Germany are taking initiative and getting involved.

3. Integration through Education

Education is the all-important first step for entering the job market and participating in society. This focus area concentrates on children and adolescents. Regardless of background, each young person must have access to the best possible educational opportunities. Language skills are of paramount importance here, while music, as a universal language, also has a crucial role to play. The integration of refugees into Germany's educational system also has considerable potential for promoting social inclusion in general. When integration fails, the inevitable result is inertia and exclusion. Nothing is more important than education for gaining a foothold in society and determining one's own path. In addition to our numerous current projects, we have therefore decided to support Kiron, the Berlin-based initiative that works with partners from academia to offer a free program of study specially developed for migrants. Even though a substantial number of the refugees in Germany could theoretically enter university, the country's institutions of higher education would not have room for them, and many refugees do not have the required documents or language skills. This is where Kiron comes in. Its program offers courses in five subjects and students spend the first two years studying online; after that, they can begin attending one of the more than 70 colleges and universities in Germany currently planning to support the initiative. This, together with their previous work, allows participants to obtain a regular degree. A donation of €100,000 by the Bertelsmann Stiftung will make it possible for 200 students to test an internet-supported language course in cooperation with Leuphana University of Lüneburg.

4. Integration in the Job Market

Work is the key to participating in many areas of society and life. We are therefore developing a number of work-related solutions, including tools that can help refugees find a job that adequately reflects their qualifications. Of all EU member states, Germany takes the longest to process asylum applications. At the beginning of February 2016, there were 370,000 applications still pending from previous years at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. Another 300,000 to 400,000 refugees have not even been able to submit an application. It is a disastrous situation, since the lack of certainty

means refugees have to wait to enter the job market. According to a representative survey carried out for a Bertelsmann Stiftung study, 84 percent of Germans want refugees and migrants to be able to start working soon after they arrive. The study proposes a series of measures that would get refugees working faster – primarily, by reducing the backlog of asylum applications. That means hiring more staff and improving the quality of the application process: 13 percent of all official decisions were revised by the courts in 2013. According to the study, the refugees' educational achievement, work experience and occupational prospects must be evaluated and communicated to the Federal Employment Agency. That would make it possible to begin with the job search within three months of a refugee's arrival in the country. It would also help if newcomers were allowed to leave the accommodations designated for refugees and move into a normal apartment after three months, since that would facilitate making the contacts within the community that could lead to finding a job or training course.

5. Social Cohesion

This focus area examines how social cohesion can be maintained and strengthened as Germany becomes more heterogeneous. A key topic is how to respond to religious and cultural diversity. Getting an education and finding a job are the prerequisites to becoming part of society. At the same time, more is required before someone truly "settles" in Germany. Namely, they must be able to create a life in a culture foreign to them; they must become part of German culture without losing touch with their own heritage. This is important since, even though a look at the world's troubled regions might currently suggest otherwise, a sixth focus area could one day be needed, one that remains a source of hope for many refugees and migrants: a return to their native country.

No question about it, the challenges are huge. Yet as Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier put it while speaking at the Bertelsmann Forum in February 2016:

"We cannot fail, which means we cannot fail to do everything in our power to solve this problem." – Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Foreign Minister of Germany

I agree.

– Aart De Geus, Chairman Executive Board, Bertelsmann Stiftung

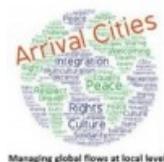
Information about the text:

An exclusive extract, adapted and published with permission from [change – the Magazine from the Bertelsmann Stiftung](#). Issue 1/2016.

Arrival Cities Action Planning Network

By kturner

[Interview](#)



The Arrival Cities Action Planning Network is tackling one of Europe's most urgent issues by looking at how cities can manage the challenges of old and new migration flows. Arrival Cities was initiated by Carla Tavares, the Mayor of the Municipality of Amadora, lead partner for the network.

Arrival Cities Network, or How Can Cities Deal with Old and New Migration Flows?



As Arrival Cities embarks on the six month phase of partnership development and network planning, Liz Mackie, the lead expert for the network, talked to the **Deputy Mayor of Amadora, Cristina Farinha**, about Amadora's reasons for starting the Arrival Cities network, how the network will be developed and what she hopes they will gain from this experience. Ms Farinha became Deputy Mayor in October 2013, her portfolio includes education and training, social development, sport and youth, health, and management of co-financed processes.

Why did Amadora decide to set up an URBACT Action Planning Network?

Amadora was previously involved in URBACT, in the MILE network. We found the experience very useful. It helped us identify ways we could improve our interventions locally. More specifically, we decided to set up the Arrival Cities network because, like many cities, we are experiencing new flows of migration alongside ongoing difficulties in the integration of migrant groups which have been settled in the territory for many years. The URBACT programme provides a very useful vehicle to exchange learning and experience on these issues.

"The Arrival Cities network is dealing with major, urgent policy challenges"

What is the main policy challenge you would like to address in the network?

The main policy challenges for Amadora are related to improving the integration of settled migrants into the labour market; improving school attainment level for certain groups of migrants; dealing with the ongoing negative stereotype that the majority population has of migrants; and dealing with new flows of migrants who are coming from places from which we have had no experience to date. Amadora formally adopted a Municipal Integration Plan in June 2015 which has been agreed by the Municipal Executive and endorsed by a number of local stakeholders. This provides important political weight to the work of the network.

"There are continuing challenges for managing integration, countering disaffection and building diverse cities"

Many cities across Europe are experiencing similar challenges in dealing with new migrant arrivals, in greater numbers and from new countries of origin, whilst still working on the longstanding issues of integration for established migrant populations and the inequalities in social and economic opportunities which persist for second, third and even fourth generation migrant groups. The policy challenges for Amadora are shared by our partners in the Arrival Cities network, although with significant degrees of variation in where the immediate priorities lie. In Vantaa, one of the Arrival Cities partners, the Municipality has a long track record of successful integration projects but is now facing an unprecedented increase in new arrivals; from 3,000 asylum seekers in 2014 to 30,000 so far in 2015. Thessaloniki, another Arrival Cities partner, is facing even greater challenges in the number of new arrivals, with up to 4,000 refugees each day moving through the city in transit to the northern Greek border. At the same time, we are seeing in Amadora, Vantaa and in other Arrival Cities, growing concerns about migrant communities who do not feel that they fully belong to their cities. So there are continuing challenges for managing integration, countering disaffection and building diverse cities where everyone has a sense of belonging.

The Arrival Cities network is dealing with major, urgent policy challenges and we are aware of the need to draw on previous work by European cities, including that carried out in earlier URBACT networks, and not to repeat what has already been achieved. There is already a substantial body of work on migrant integration, particularly in terms of improving labour market opportunities, access to health and other public services, preventing early school leaving, tackling social exclusion and disaffection within migrant communities, and promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. There has also been work on improving public perceptions of migrants, including the very successful "Don't feed the rumour" campaign which we ran here in Amadora in partnership with Barcelona. However, the challenges of managing migrant integration are persistent, not all previous integration initiatives have worked very well, and there is much more to be done in all these areas. We want Arrival Cities to focus on social innovations which build on the good practice identified by previous URBACT networks like MILE and in other initiatives like the Eurocities Integrating Cities projects.

Why did you choose to address migrant integration in the framework of an URBACT network?

It is clear that throughout the European Union there is a growing issue regarding integration and management of migration flows. The events of this year have really brought this issue into the spotlight. URBACT offers an opportunity for us to learn from other cities and also for us to share what we are doing. This cross fertilisation of experience and knowledge is why we have chosen the URBACT programme.

What concrete results do you expect to achieve through URBACT?

We are conscious that URBACT does not provide resources to take any actions on the ground so our ambitions are tailored to what is realistic. We would like to strengthen the Municipal Integration Plan by developing actions that could secure funding from our Operational Programmes for European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund. This issue is a priority in both programmes and as such there are some real possibilities. We also want to strengthen local joint working and build trust between the different local actors that are connected to this issue. We can do this through the

URBACT Local Group (ULG) that we will establish as requested by part of the URBACT networking framework. We are currently setting up our ULG. We have already arranged the first meeting of the group and also arranged the visit of the lead expert to develop the ULG contribution to the baseline study for Arrival Cities. The baseline study will set out the 'state of the art' on migration and migrant integration at EU level along with a local-level profile on this theme for each city in the Arrival Cities network.

How did you set up your initial partnership and why did you choose these partners?

We took part in a study tour in Vantaa focused on migrant integration, organised by the Local Urban Development European Network (LUDEN) of which we are members. During the event we presented a proposal to develop a learning exchange programme on this theme. Other study tour participants, including Vantaa, were eager to be involved in this. To find other cities interested in joining us we sent an outline proposal to cities who we have worked with at EU level in the past. We targeted cities in Greece, Italy and Spain which we know are in the front line of the recent flows of migration into the EU. We also looked for a balanced composition in terms of cities from developed and less developed regions.

How do you foresee working with the partner cities?

Each partner has already sent us details of the key staff and politicians who will follow the work of the network. We know from having managed other EU projects that getting these lines of communication right is crucial. In the first phase we are planning to have two face to face steering group meetings plus one or possibly two telephone conferences as we know that it's important to monitor progress regularly and not leave things too long. In addition we have set up a Facebook group and Twitter account to facilitate working between members of the ULGs that each partner will establish. However, we are aware that we need to explore ways that we can use automatic translation programmes in order to provide access to those members of the ULG who cannot work in English. In addition, at the first steering group meeting we will establish a detailed action plan with clear milestones which will form the basis of joint working with partners to ensure a successful transition to phase two.



How are you going to complete the partnership? Are you still looking for potential partners?

To be honest, we have been inundated with cities wishing to join our network. So far 35 cities have asked to join. We are now in final discussions with cities in Greece, Croatia, Germany, France and Belgium and we expect to complete the partnership by early January.

What will be the next steps for Amadora as lead partner city in the six month development phase?

We are currently busy on several levels. In terms of project management and administration we are busy reading and making ourselves familiar with all the URBACT rules and procedures. We have never managed an URBACT network before so this is a steep learning curve for us. However, we have the support from our lead expert and we have also established an agreement with LUDEN which has many years of experience with the programme. We have also been very busy communicating with partners following the initial training provided by URBACT. This has involved ensuring that they quickly become aware of the key actions that they will need to undertake in phase one.

Our kick off meeting took place here in Amadora in October. This was a very successful event where our network partners explored common issues and started to plan how we will address these through the URBACT programme. We also agreed an action plan for the six month development phase which includes each partner establishing their ULG, the programme of local visits by the lead expert, and a second network meeting which will take place in Riga in February 2016. Before that, in January, our completed network of ten cities will meet on Skype to welcome the new partners to Arrival Cities and to review progress on our action plan.

Because of the urgency of this policy issue, there has been substantial media interest in Arrival Cities. The kick off meeting was covered by local and national media, as well as featuring on Euronews. We want to encourage continuing media involvement throughout the URBACT programme period. This is a good opportunity to promote positive news stories which counter the negative media stereotyping of migrants and migration, and also a chance to share good practice and learning generated through URBACT with a wider audience.

The Euronews feature on Arrival Cities can be seen [here](#).

Interview by Liz Mackie, Lead Expert, the Arrival Cities Action Planning Network, URBACT, with Deputy Mayor of Amadora, Cristina Farinha.

Reprinted with permission: "Arrival Cities Network, or How Can Cities Deal with Old and New Migration Flows," [URBACT Newsletter](#), Dec. 16, 2015.

An [abridged and updated version of the interview](#) was published on the URBACT website on April 14, 2016.

In Atlanta, an Export Agenda for Immigrant Inclusion

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



As cities around the world get more diverse, city builders are asking: How inclusive are we? And, how do we get better?

There's a growing roster of cities of migration, old and new, to learn from. Old hands like Toronto, New York and London. And new diversity labs like Mannheim, Macomb County, Anchorage, and Atlanta.

Here in Atlanta, the birthplace of Martin Luther King, participants from across the United States, Germany, and beyond convened to exchange experience and ideas on immigrant inclusion at a [Welcoming Interactive](#) hosted by [Welcoming America](#). We heard about good practice in use of statistics, employer partnerships, economic planning, and other levers to welcome and include newcomers.

A task before anyone exchanging good practice is knowing the limits of learning from each other. Some cities operate as near perfect opposites. Take for example the integration of unaccompanied youth in Germany and the United States. German cities are required by law to take charge of migrant youth and have infrastructure and resources for integration, while American cities are non-players because exclusive jurisdiction rests with the federal government until youth turn 18. On this file, American cities cannot easily borrow from their German counterparts, which are able to steer a long-term integration process.

But for all of the diversity of local contexts – in policy frameworks or demographics – there is surprising commonality in the integration challenges facing cities. Because of that shared experience, some solutions in diversity and inclusion can be highly exportable.

Here are a few solutions that can travel, that we heard in Atlanta:

Outstanding solutions

From the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, [home to one-fifth of refugees to Germany](#), a network of large employers convened to offer 150 paid internships each to skilled refugees. They are working with the University of Duisburg-Essen to identify a pipeline of qualified candidates. The deliberate approach to sourcing talent recognizes that refugees face big challenges to accessing the job market in Germany, despite having skills that employers need.

In Australia, where migration is a political wedge, a small team decided to speak to “middle Australia” and translate Australian values into welcome for newcomers. They created [Welcome to Australia](#), and developed a communications strategy to communicate messages of welcome and inclusion simply, rationally and compassionately.

In Germany, [a nation-wide network of service providers called the IQ Network is funded to collect data on refugee skills](#), certifications and experience. The data is critical for local-level services planning, and quicker and more granular than more formal data collection methods allow.

In the Italian town of Reggio Emilia, 18 per cent of the population is non-Italian, and a large share are children and youth. After immigrant parents saw their children rejecting Arabic identity, or embracing a dangerous form of it, they approached the City to integrate Arabic culture more formally into public education. The collaboration seeks to mainstream and celebrate Arabic culture – music, art, science, cuisine, and language – benefitting Arabic and Italian residents.

In the United States, Walmart sees the development of its workforce as a business imperative, and in some cities, a priority skill for advancement and retention is improved English language. Walmart is currently piloting a sector-specific English language program to increase English language skills among retail workers in Houston, Miami and New York. The program goes beyond company limits, with partners in the pilot including Kroger and Publix grocery stores.

Outstanding questions

Not every integration question has an answer yet. The Welcoming Interactive brought great minds together to share challenges too. These questions provide insight into some of the emerging migration trends, policies and programming ahead.

Paul Stein, an independent consultant in Denver working on asset development and integration, explained the importance of access to private capital for newcomers. He said, “capital can be as welcoming and inclusive as a volunteer.” The question is how to ensure access, in practice, across the financial



sector including banks and other community lending institutions. How do we implement, in Stein's words, a "no wrong door approach to capital"?

Speaking to the number of refugees entering Germany, Claus Preissler, in charge of integration for the City of Mannheim, challenged the view of the crisis as one of scale. "It's not a high number," he said. "This is a political question ... this is a crisis of EU institutions." If the migration crisis in Europe is as much political as operational, how does that change the role of cities? What local levers are available to diffuse or at least rationalize national politics?

Sticking with asylum and undocumented migrants, Randy Capps of the Migration Policy Institute highlighted a problem in approach in the United States with consequences for healthy integration. Authorities at the federal level view undocumented movement of people as an enforcement problem, not a humanitarian problem, despite some clear humanitarian dimensions. Which institutions might be able to shift this approach? And can change in practice happen without change in law?

Indexing the ability of cities to integrate and include newcomers has been on the agenda of city builders for some time. A number of tools exist to measure migration management at the national level: [MIPeX](#), or the IOM's [new MGI](#), for example. But how do cities fare? Welcoming America is now developing an immigrant inclusion standard, raising its own questions about impact. As [Welcoming America's Rachel Peric](#) asked, is there a role for certification of welcoming? And will immigrant talent vote with their feet, opting in to welcoming communities?

Many of the questions aired in Atlanta are intensely local. But they too have elements in common to many cities of migration. Just like good ideas can travel, good questions can and should travel too.



Dana Wagner is the Project Manager of the [Hire Immigrants](#) program of the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) (GDx) at Ryerson University's Ted Rogers School of Management. She has worked in Toronto, Ottawa, Hanoi and Nairobi. Previously, she worked with the Maytree Foundation, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, and the International Organization for Migration. Dana is co-founder of the nonpartisan political fact-checking site [FactsCan](#). She is co-author of [Flight and Freedom: Stories of Escape to Canada](#), an Open Book Toronto best book of 2015.

Wicked Problems Require Complex Solutions

By kturner
April 28, 2016
[Opinion](#)



Does diversity drive prosperity? Wendy Cukier, VP Research and Innovation at Ryerson University, believes so: “The business case for diversity is absolutely essential.”

“Demographic diversity brings with it a diversity of ideas that is critical to driving innovation.” What’s more, says Cukier, “innovation processes and models can help drive diversity and inclusion.” Understanding the interaction between the two [i.e., diversity and innovation] is critical because “social innovation allows us to attack complex problems without being paralyzed by analysis.”

Our opening keynote speaker spoke on the theme, “Social Innovation in the New Economy,” at COM2016 in Toronto, presenting a rich analysis of the processes that drive social innovation and unlock opportunity. Cukier makes a compelling case for why we have to bring more than the usual suspects to the table. If we don’t engage new people, she argues: “We run the risk ... of talking to ourselves – and that wouldn’t be very helpful.”

Wendy Cukier, VP Research and Innovation, Ryerson University: “Social Innovation in the New Economy,” at COM2016, March 2, Toronto



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=emJyqBsAVp0>



Follow the [presentation \[PPT\]](#)

More on [COM2016 programme and speakers](#).

Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: “Diversity Drives Prosperity.”](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today’s global flows of migration.

COM2016 was a preconference of the [18th National Metropolis](#), Toronto, March 3-5, 2016, co-hosted by the [Association for Canadian Studies](#).

Closing the Opportunity Gap for Immigrant Youth

By kturner

[Interview](#)



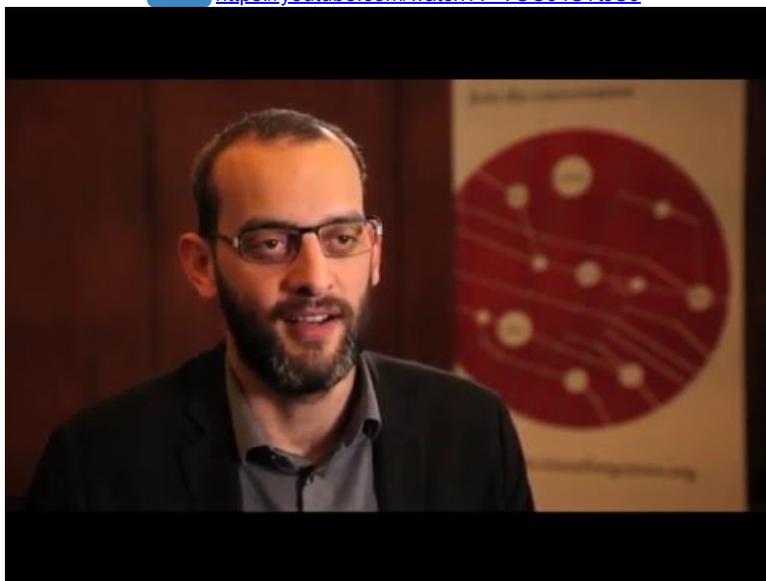
Gabriel Lenot is Head of Apprenticeship and Internship at Mozaïk RH in Paris, an organization that is building a bridge between traditionally overlooked young people from disadvantaged communities and the employers that would benefit from their skill, talent and fresh ideas.

Lenot explains why Mozaïk RH has been so successful in engaging the private sector in this candid interview:

Gabriel Lenot, Head of Apprenticeship and Internship, Mozaïk RH, at COM2016 in Toronto, March 2:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=VUOJ4STtJS0>



Interview with Gabriel Lenot, Mozaïk RH – [in French](#)



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=ObochSFLAf8>



Gabriel Lenot, Mozaïk RH (Paris France) joined us in Toronto on March 2, 2016 for COM2016 to present Mozaïk's work on youth employment in the COM2016 Marketplace of Good Ideas.

- COM2016 Program and [Marketplace of Good Ideas](#) (PDF)
- More on [COM2016 programme and speakers](#).

Read the Good Idea: Paris, France: [Closing the Opportunity Gap for Immigrant Youth](#).

Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: "Diversity Drives Prosperity."](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today's global flows of migration.

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The Weeknd, Culture Shift and Postal Codes

By kturner

[Interview](#)



Cameron Bailey, Artistic Director, Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), joined us at the 2016 International Cities of Migration Conference on March 2 in Toronto to share his views as a leader in the culture sector on “Changing Governance in Changing Times.”

After the panel discussion (see below), Bailey shared his thoughts in a candid interview on why diversity and representation is still an important issue in 2016; what people should know about Toronto and what Toronto can show the world; and, why our postal codes shouldn't define who we are.

What's a tangible sign of culture shift in the arts sector in Toronto?

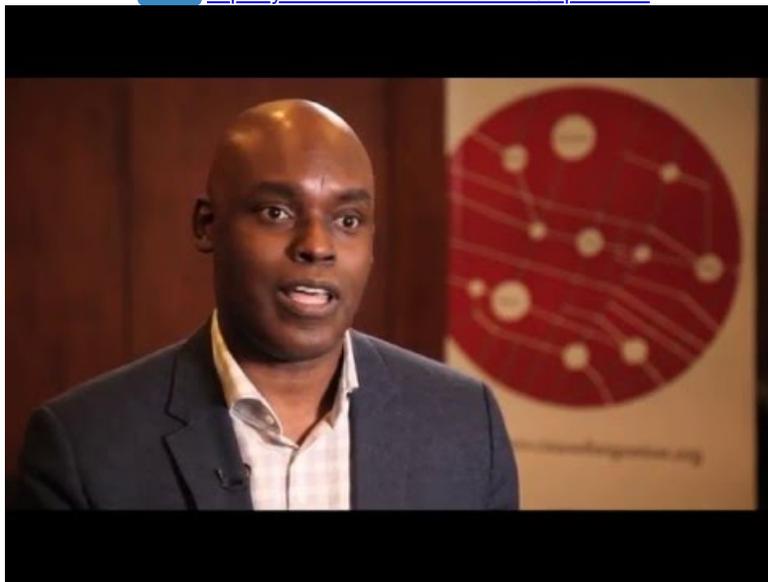
Bailey: *'The Weeknd' is a tangible sign of a cultural shift in the arts sector for many reasons. This is a man who is from an immigrant family from East Africa, he is now one of the biggest stars in the world; [he just performed at the Academy Awards](#); he had what many have called the song of 2015 with "[Can't Feel My Face](#);" and he came out not of the existing infrastructure to develop talent in Canada (musical talent), but out of grass roots, independent, organic organizations that have nothing to do with the typical conduits that get talent to that kind of success. So you know, small clubs, people organizing their own events, kids making beats in their bedrooms and basements in the far outer reaches of the suburbs of Toronto. That produced The Weeknd –and that, I think, is a very positive sign for the health of the cultural shift.*

For more, watch the full interview:

Interview with Cameron Bailey, Artistic Director, Toronto International Film Festival, COM2016, March 2:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MEQuapWU9xA>



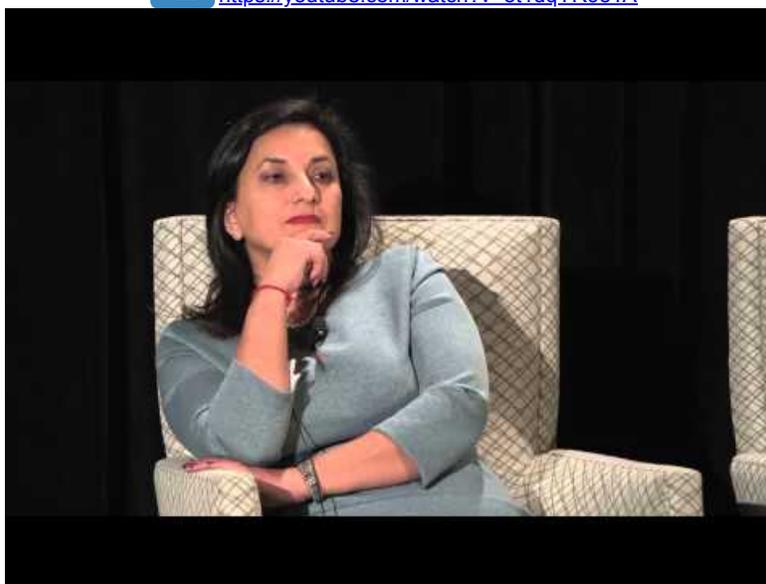
Cameron Bailey, TIFF, joined us as a distinguished expert to talk about “Changing Governance in Changing Times” at the 2016 International Cities of Migration Conference held on March 2 in Toronto.

Watch the full COM2016 plenary panel discussion:

Changing Governance in Changing Times, Toronto, March 2, 2016



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=ot1dqYR95TA>



While our cities and urban regions have become more ethnically and racially diverse over time, their leadership: political, social, cultural or economic, remains pale, stale, and male. This disconnect continues in spite of the overwhelming, global evidence which shows that diversity in leadership leads to innovation, better decision-making, and increased market growth.

How do we harness diversity at the decision-making table? We asked civic leaders about strategies they are implementing to disrupt the status quo and align the power structure of leadership to reflect the lived realities of our shifting populations.

After all, it's 2016.

- Shaama Saggarr-Malik, Founder and Executive Director, DiPA – Diversity in Public Appointments (London, England)
- Sayu Bhojwani, Founder and President, The New American Leaders Project (New York)
- Cameron Bailey, Artistic Director, Toronto International Film Festival
- Myer Siemiatycki, Professor, Ryerson University (Toronto)
- Moderator: Bob Ramsay, President, Ramsay Inc. and Founder, RamsayTalks (Toronto)

The “Changing Governance in Changing Times” plenary session was organized by Cathy Winter, Program Manager, [DiverseCity OnBoard](#), at the Global Diversity Exchange, Ryerson University.

More on [COM2016 programme and speakers](#).

Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: “Diversity Drives Prosperity.”](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today’s global flows of migration.

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Open, Smart, Diverse? What Cities Need To Do

By kturner
April 27, 2016
Uncategorized



In an age of high mobility, how are cities managing the complexity that comes with increasing super-diversity? Are city leaders making the most of the opportunities and challenges that a diverse population brings?

We asked city leaders from Düren (Germany), New York City, Vancouver and Toronto to take stock of how diversity challenges and sustains urban resilience and livability, and to weigh in on the question, does diversity drives prosperity?

Through the wide-angle lens of urban context, history and desire, this COM2016 plenary discussion explores the policy levers and strategies that cities can deploy to build the city we all dream of – open, smart, diverse – asking, what do cities need to do?

Open, Smart, Diverse? What Cities Need To Do – COM2016, Toronto March 2, 2016, Toronto



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=EQcWEbPjCvQ>



Panelists:

- Nisha Agarwal, Commissioner, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, City of New York
- Wolfgang Spelthahn, Landrat (District Mayor), Kreis Düren (Germany)
 - In depth interview with Wolfgang Spelthahn, [in English](#), [in German](#)
- Yuen Pau Woo, President, HQ Vancouver (Vancouver)
- Alan Broadbent, Chairman, Maytree; author, Urban Nation (Toronto)
- Moderator: Tanzeel Merchant, Director, Partnerships and Consultation, Ontario Growth Secretariat (Toronto)

Organized by Kim Turner, Program Manager, Cities of Migration, Global Diversity Exchange, Ryerson University.

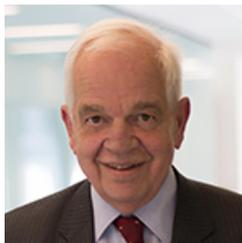
COM2016 [programme](#) and [speakers](#)

Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: "Diversity Drives Prosperity."](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today's global flows of migration.

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Sunny Ways

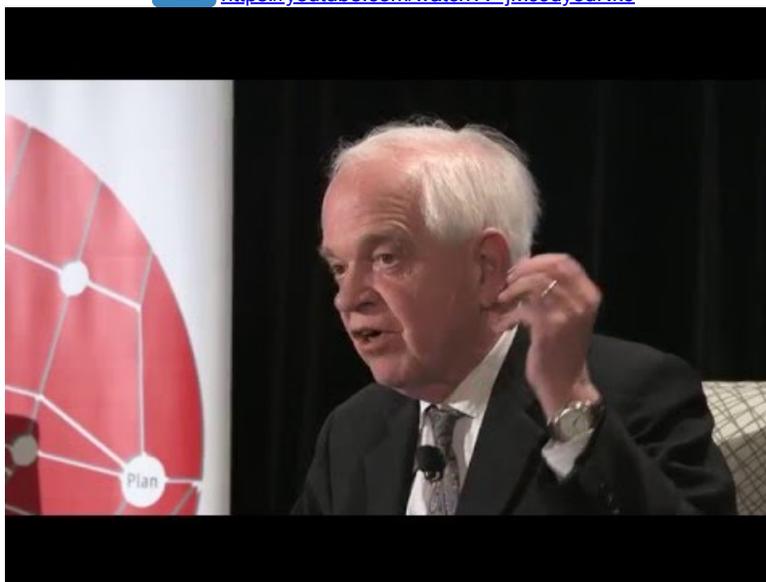
By kturner
April 28, 2016
[Interview](#)



On March 2, 2016, The Honourable John McCallum, Canada's Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Refugees, sat down for a candid one-on-one conversation with Ratna Omidvar, Executive Director, Global Diversity Exchange, at the 2016 Cities of Migration Conference in Toronto.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=jMJJdy6uNk0>



Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: "Diversity Drives Prosperity."](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today's global flows of migration.

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Business Leaders Talk New Talent, New Markets

By ktuner
Uncategorized

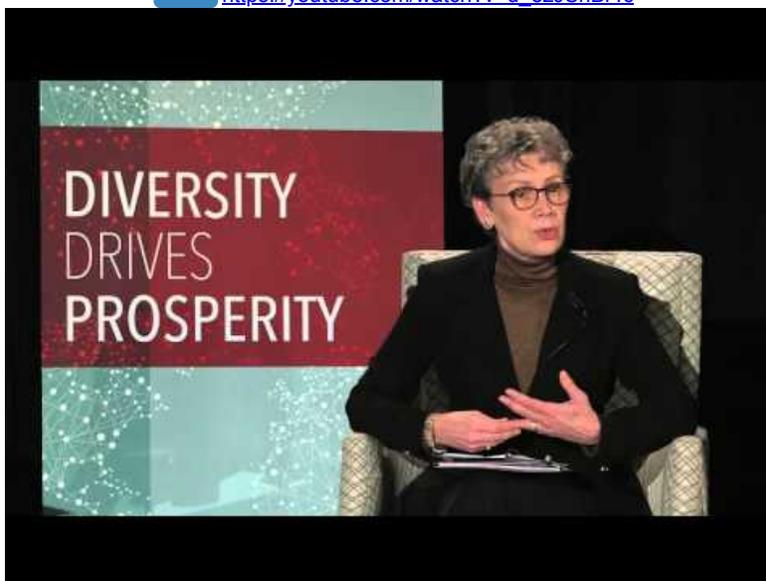
On March 2, 2016, local government, business and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers joined Cities of Migration for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today's global flows of migration. Among program highlights was a "New Talent, New Markets" panel, where business leaders discussed the links between workforce diversity and market opportunity, and the impact of diversity on innovation in products, services, and processes.

Join the conversation as panelists discuss the role of evidence, provide insight on strategies for measuring the return on investment in diverse and inclusive teams and weigh in on emerging challenges and promising solutions in attracting and retaining immigrant talent.

COM2016 Plenary Panel: "New Talents, New Markets"



https://youtube.com/watch?v=d_ezJ5nBrTc



Panelists:

- Robert Hardt, President and Chief Executive Officer, Siemens Canada (Toronto)
- Angela White, Segment Manager and Strategy Implementation, Small Business, RBC Royal Bank of Canada(Toronto)
- Mary Stagaman, Vice President of Regional Initiatives and Executive Director of Agenda 360, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber (Cincinnati)
 - Watch: [In depth interview with Mary Stagaman](#)
- Moderator: Josh Hjartarson, Vice President, Public Sector at KPMG (Toronto)

The "New Talents, New Skills" plenary was organized by Dana Wagner, Program Manager, [Hire Immigrants](#), at the Global Diversity Exchange, Ryerson University.

More on [COM2016 programme and speakers](#).

The [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference](#), Toronto, March 2, 2016, "Diversity Drives Prosperity," was presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#), Ryerson University, in collaboration with the 18th National Metropolis Conference, March 3-5, 2016.

Acceptance, Opportunity and Critical Mass

By kturner
April 22, 2016
[Interview](#)



Mayor John Tory, City of Toronto, gave the opening keynote address at the [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference](#) in Toronto on March 2, 2016, welcoming delegates from cities across Canada, the US, and as far afield as Germany, France, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Israel, Japan and Singapore.

In this one-on-one interview, Tory talks about what makes Toronto a great city:

“What makes Toronto a great city for immigrants is acceptance; we embrace people from around the world from every description.”

Hear more:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=5GOJZI7p5TQ>



Watch **“Diversity Drives Prosperity,”** the full opening keynote address by Mayor John Tory, City of Toronto, at COM2016, March 2, Toronto:

“As migration and immigration to these cities occurs, including Toronto, the question isn’t whether diversity drives prosperity, the question is how you can make certain that you can achieve the prosperity that undoubtedly should come with diversity.”



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=CMqqtFowNec>



Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: "Diversity Drives Prosperity."](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today's global flows of migration.

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Integration is a People Process

By kturner

[Opinion](#)

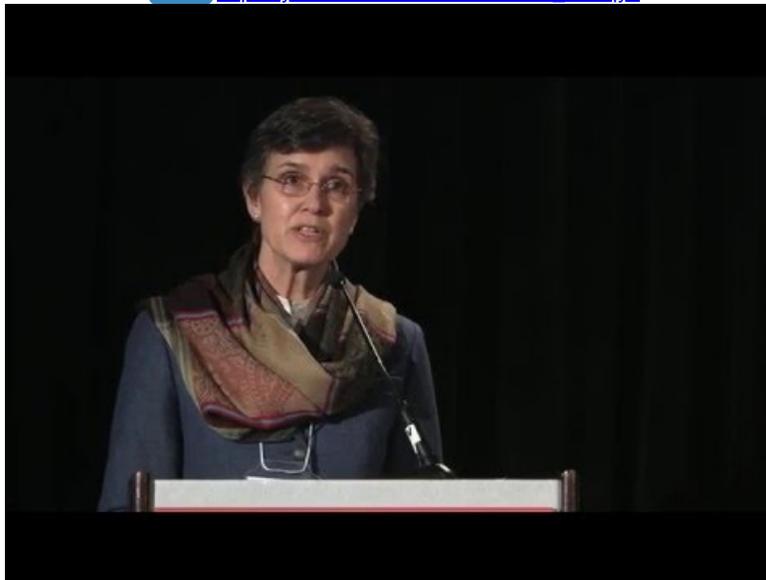


Jill Helke, Director, International Partnerships at the International Organization for Migration, addressed the 3rd International Cities of Migration Conference in Toronto on the theme, “*Migrants and Cities – New Partnerships to Manage Mobility*.” Drawing on the IOM’s long experience in managing human mobility, Helke reflected on the new ‘urban’ development paradigm, sharing lessons from cities as disparate as Mogadishu, Palermo and Athens, and New York, Gaziantep and Quito.

Jill Helke: “Migrants and Cities : New Partnerships to Manage Mobility” – Toronto, March 2, 2016



https://youtube.com/watch?v=HzKs_m-Dqyk



Helke believes local action on immigrant integration and refugee settlement can inspire a shift in policy and practice at the national level, making a compelling case for “whole-of-government” approaches: “National policies that align with the needs and capacities of local authorities can provide the systemic conditions for effective policy implementation.”

Helke includes some key observations on the links between cities and migration [summary]:

- **Cities as dynamic points of contact.** One in 5 migrants world-wide lives in the world’s largest cities, and global mobility is creating new cities of migration every day. Whether for work, safety, education or family, cities are where migrants first come into contact with their new host country. Cities are also where migrants most often settle if or when they return to their countries of origin, bringing with new ideas, skills and tastes.
- **Local authorities as leaders on migration policy and planning.** Migration towards cities will continue over the coming decades – including significant population flows triggered by conflicts, disasters, climate change and other shock. Municipal authorities are ideally situated to strengthen their capacities and establish mechanisms to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from urban crises. Let’s study and strengthen area-based responses to crises.
- **Migrants as bridge builders in urban planning and development – at home and abroad.** Evidence-based approaches, comprehensive urban planning and sound integration policies can result in a “triple win” scenario, simultaneously offering benefits for the migrant, the country of destination and the country of origin.
- **Local leaders as changemakers.** The immense potential and contributions of migrants — and the proven benefits — can balance and ultimately drown out negative perceptions about immigration. While overall discourse on migration tends to be set at the top, local leadership and community actors often play the largest role in promoting positive perceptions toward migration and migrants.
- **The private sector has an important role to play.** Whether as donors, experts in ethical recruitment and labour supply chain management, or as employers, businesses see value in recruiting skilled migrants and enhancing employee motivation, building new and extending current markets, and ensuring current and future brand loyalty.

Jill Helke: Concluding remarks:

“Integration is not an intellectual process, nor is it some abstract concept that can be reduced to fulfilment of administrative requirements, however important these may be. Integration is a people process – it is felt, breathed and lived in an immediate and personal way, both from the point of view of

the migrant and that of the local community. Workplaces, shopping centres, schools, places of worship, community centres and local government offices are the social crucibles where, under the best circumstances, the “alchemy of integration” occurs. Unfortunately, it is also true that under the worst of circumstances, integration can fail, and when it does, the costs are borne on all sides – communities of origin, destination and migrants.

It is therefore important that local governments develop social inclusion policies aimed at providing better living conditions for migrants, thereby promoting more cohesive societies. Migration needs to be included in local development plans. IOM’s latest World Migration Report provides the evidence base for well-managed migration, and the recent Conference on Migrants and Cities clarified the scope and applications of these recommendations. Together, these offer the evidence base and relevant recommendations to comprehensively address ongoing concerns and raise awareness of migration in the contexts of urban planning and development.

This is a starting point for well-governed migration. But what is most important is that migrants should and must be part of the urbanization project; their views and voices should be heard. We must continually ask how best to enable migrants to unleash their potential, how to engage their resources, skills and ideas, to build and revitalize cities. Leadership is key – and not just words, but evident conviction and commitment that infect others with enthusiasm, positive perceptions and engagement, and that spur them to actions.

Congratulations to Canada and to Toronto for having such leaders.”

Video: [Watch the full keynote](#).

Read the [transcript \[PDF\]](#).

More on [COM2016 programme and speakers](#).

Source: [3rd International Cities of Migration Conference, Toronto, March 2, 2016: “Diversity Drives Prosperity.”](#) Presented by the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University, COM2016 convened local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers for a one-day forum and in-depth analysis of the issues and opportunities created by today’s global flows of migration.

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Cities of migration: Three questions with Audrey Singer

By kturner
April 20, 2016
[Interview](#)



Audrey Singer is a senior fellow at the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program in Washington, D.C. Her areas of expertise include demography, international migration, U.S. immigration policy, and urban and metropolitan change. She has written extensively on metropolitan immigration trends, including immigrant integration, undocumented migration, and the changing racial and ethnic composition of the United States. Singer will be a speaker at the 3rd International Cities of Migration Conference on March 2.



Why are you coming to the International Cities of Migration Conference?

I've spent most of my professional life thinking about both cities and migration. Naturally I want to hear what others—especially those from outside the United States—are thinking about in relation to their own contexts and questions, especially around immigrant integration and local response.

On immigration, what are the main areas of policy cohesion and dissonance between Canada and the U.S.?

Both countries share a common narrative about being a “nation of immigrants,” but differ on which kinds of immigrants are invited to join. The Canadian system prioritizes higher skilled immigrants who will succeed in the Canadian labour market; the U.S. system prioritizes family ties over human capital attributes. Admissions policy in the United States doesn't address the lower end of the skills spectrum well—yet the demand for workers remains strong, and therefore approximately one out of every four immigrants is undocumented. Canada has never had to deal with mass unauthorized migration. Another difference is politics and how it spills over into policy making. Canada has swiftly put into place a system to resettle Syrian refugees with broad public support and participation. In the U.S., presidential contenders use refugee resettlement to stir up fear in order to win support.

Cities of Migration is about spreading good ideas and good practice. What do you hope to take back to the United States?

Pragmatic ideas, illuminating narratives, and evidence that open societies are more resilient. I am particularly interested in what is going on in Europe as it responds to migrants and asylum seekers escaping war and conflict. The pace, scope, and magnitude of this moment makes the Syrian crisis the defining migration issue of our time. How cities, and the institutions, communities, and people that inhabit them respond, will shape the inclusion process in all its dimensions—labor, family, culture and fiscal.

The Third International Cities of Migration Conference is a one-day forum to discuss the issues and opportunities created by today's global flows of migration. For more information, please visit citiesofmigration.ca/2016conference/.

Interview re-printed with permission from: [Ryerson Today](#), February 26, 2016.

All Hands On Deck

By kturmer
December 22, 2015
[Opinion](#)



By Ratna Omidvar, Global Diversity Exchange

Canada will welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of February, and many are destined for the work force faster than we might think.

In an optimal situation, job-ready Syrians will enter positions they are qualified to fill, at their skill level or with opportunity for growth. We know this won't be easy.

Our country faces chronic underemployment of immigrants, meaning that newcomers are employed – but driving taxis with engineering degrees. By one estimate, this lost opportunity costs the economy more than \$20-billion. Immigrants who are also visible minorities are systematically underpaid for equal work. And getting a job in the first place is more difficult if your name is Samir, rather than Matthew.

Refugees may face extra hurdles. Not the legal kind – they are permanent residents on their way to citizenship, with the right to work, open bank accounts and open businesses – but situational. In addition to the anxieties of immigrating to a new home, they may be dealing with grief and trauma. Some have been unemployed or working survival jobs since Syria's civil war began. Refugees may not have all their belongings, academic transcripts and evidence of professional credentials and work experience. They may not speak English or French.

The “refugee gap” is shared by industrialized countries. In a review of research in countries with resettlement programs, such as Canada, the United Nations refugee agency found that even after factors such as education, skills and language are controlled, refugees still underperform compared with other immigrants.

Perceptions may play a role. A recent survey of German companies found that employers viewed refugees as largely unskilled workers, and 92 per cent thought lack of language skills would be a barrier to employment. More research is needed to understand the impact of these perceptions, or misperceptions, on the ability of qualified refugees to get hired.

But Canada is not Europe. And we do have something we didn't have before: unprecedented enthusiasm and leadership from Canada's private sector to support the Syrian newcomers. Private companies are front and centre in the Canadian response to this crisis. Many see it as a business and moral imperative.

There have been private sponsorships by groups of colleagues at companies such as KPMG LLP, Goldblatt Partners LLP and Torys LLP. There have been donations by Wind Mobile Corp., financial support by Canadian National Railway Co. and new refugee banking services developed by Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and Bank of Nova Scotia. There have been concrete offers of employment by Danby Products Ltd. and other businesses in Guelph, Ont.

For the thousands of Syrian newcomers willing and able to work, a job will be top of mind on arrival. It's up to Canadians to help leverage their talent quickly and fully. We should bear in mind that 25,000 is just the start – a lot more talent will be on the way.

We will only get this right with all hands on deck.

One step will be to articulate a skills profile on Syrian refugees. Anecdotally, we know Syrians are as diverse as Canadians in their skill sets, languages and education levels. We collect rich data on refugees entering Canada, but it's not aggregated and not publicly available.

Connecting the incoming talent to opportunity will require imagination and change. It will demand innovation in work places, training, mentoring, job-matching, organizational co-ordination and delivery of products and services. This degree of change will leave a lasting mark on economic inclusion in Canada. What a great moment for receiving communities, and for future waves of newcomers.

Ratna Omidvar is executive director of the [Global Diversity Exchange](#) at Ryerson University and chair of [Lifeline Syria](#).

Re-printed with permission. Originally published in [The Globe and Mail](#), December 22, 2016.

Good Health: A Starting Point for Integration

By ktuner
November 10, 2015
[Opinion](#)



Excerpt from Ramazan Salman's acceptance speech on receiving the [2015 European Health Award](#) during the European Health Forum in Bad Gastein, Austria, on 2 October 2015, for the Ethno-Medical Centre – EMZ (Hanover, Germany) and its [MiMi – Health with Migrants for Migrants](#) programme.

I want to thank you for giving this award to MiMi and the thousands of hands, hearts and minds that help migrants and refugees partake in our health systems.

These wonderful people who we love and fully recognize as MiMis themselves and who make the world a little better and healthier every day. For it is them who support those people who need it the most. I am full of admiration for these people and their great contribution to integration and inclusion in Europe. We are all very proud of our MiMis.

[...] We immigrants need and want to take a responsible role in health care and prevention for society. Thousands of us have learned through MiMi how we can achieve that. Therefore today, I am proud to be here as the inventor of a successful social and health integration instrument – not to complain about the obstacles we have to face but to offer solutions. MiMi is an example of social inclusion which we want to reach not only in the field of health care but also in all political areas, since health must be the starting point for any political arena and political consideration.

I understand the award of the European Health Award to serve as a guide and further motivation for us to spread the MiMi-programme to other European countries and other areas of activity, such as education or poverty prevention and promotion of prosperity. We have already begun! We thank you for the encouragement you have given us by this award. This encouragement and appreciation we very much need in this moment. I am sure that we are all very much impressed by the current massive refugee movements taking place in Europe today. People fleeing war, torture and destruction coming to our shores in Europe to find asylum and ensure their survival. Many also come because we need them in order to develop our own societies. Through MiMi (and the projects of the MiMi family), we can help better address these challenges. Let us scale the following example our joint integration and inclusion efforts in the following ways:

We should all work with migrants and everyone else for a peaceful, social and healthy society with equal opportunities for one another. If we go down this road together, we can achieve the goal.

I specially would like to thank two people from Austria because they have taken long ago this common path. When I met the current Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz who was at the time Secretary of State for Integration, he was immediately enthusiastic about the ideas of partnership and integration that embody the MiMi concept and technology. I felt both invited and welcomed by him!

Stephan Amann from the Volkshilfe Wien is our MiMi programme director for Austria. Ever since I met him I have grown to appreciate his warm-heartedness and creativity. These two traits serve as the basis of our wonderful partnership with him and his organization.

My depiction of Austria is dominated by these two personalities and their entrepreneurial spirit and social optimism. Through them I have almost become an Austrian!

Health and education are important pillars of integration. That is why the concept of achieving good health must be a starting point for integration efforts. Health promotion and preventive action offer a variety of activities in which all migrants themselves can find acceptance on equal terms. We all need a lot of compassion, a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of personal commitment to continue our tireless efforts. Health and

I hope that today's ceremony is also an incentive to more transcultural togetherness. I hope that through our award, others can better achieve the path towards integration. And I hope that we continue to earn the right to truly deserve this award.

Excerpt published with permission from Ramazan Salman.



Ramazan Salman is the Executive Managing Director and co-founder of the Ethno-Medical Centre (Ethno-Medizinisches Zentrum – EMZ), the organisation that developed the award winning [“MiMi – With Migrants for Migrants” programme \(Mit Migranten für Migranten – MiMi\)](#).

[Read the press release from the European Health Forum Gastein Awards.](#)

About MiMi. The award-winning MiMi programme recruits, trains and supports individuals from within immigrant communities to become cultural mediators who can help navigate new and different ways of dealing with traditions of health and illness and the body. Read about the [MiMi programme at the Ethno-Medizinisches Zentrum \(Hanover\)](#) and its focus on promoting immigrant health by making migrants experts in their own causes.



Salman accepting the European Health Award at the Forum

Chicago, City Embassies and Global Cities

By kturner
November 3, 2015
[Interview](#)



Cities of Migration talks to [Juliana Kerr](#), Director, Global Cities and Immigration, at the [Chicago Council of Global Affairs](#), about the growing importance of cities on the global stage, migration and the shape of things to come.

You have proposed a really interesting idea – that cities open embassy-like institutions, emulating how countries have embassies in all corners of the world to help their citizens and promote their interests overseas. Tell us more about your “city embassy” idea?

Juliana Kerr: City “embassies” or city representatives overseas are not an entirely new concept. The City of London, the financial district of London, has had offices in Beijing, Mumbai, and Shanghai over the years and currently has an office in Brussels to advise on EU policy developments. Frankfurt has a representative office in Chicago to promote the city as a destination for investment to businesses. Osaka used to have offices in Paris, Chicago, and Shanghai. Chicago also opened a Chicago economic development office in Shanghai. Yet attempts to have city offices overseas haven’t gained widespread momentum, and in fact, most offices have closed due to funding constraints.



A new model could be a city “embassy” that is more integrated and representative of the multiple channels and needs for engagement that a city has with peer cities and countries around the world. It would still conduct traditional tasks focusing on economic development, attracting foreign direct investment, and promoting the city’s investment opportunities. But these offices could also take on other responsibilities.

They could serve as outposts for attracting tourism. They could house information about various study abroad opportunities and upcoming major cultural festivals or exhibits. They could liaise with the US Department of State and represent the city’s interests in broader national policy discussions.

Ultimately, these offices should be viewed as one-stop resource centers abroad, with deep relationships and expertise of the country and leadership where they are located. They would serve as a gateway for businesses, organizations, and the local government when traveling abroad. They would maintain important contacts and develop new ones, make introductions and identify opportunities for collaborations, host events and receptions for dignitaries from the home city, and be equipped with toolkits, data, and materials to represent the city’s assets to a variety of stakeholders throughout the country.

To be sure, city offices overseas don’t come without criticism and controversy on how taxpayer money is being spent. The trick is getting the structure, responsibilities, funding sources, and partnerships right. If cities can calculate the long-term residual impact and develop a model where the economic benefits outweigh the costs, then there is great potential for these “embassies” to be effective and mainstream as global cities become increasingly influential in shaping global political, social, and economic policies.

Cities have been described as “engines of the national economy” but are often left out of national policy conversations. Why is it important to make room for cities at national policy tables?

Juliana Kerr: Cities are centers of global economic, social and political activity. Corporate headquarters, world class cultural institutions and museums, prestigious universities, international airports, and [over fifty percent of the world’s population are in cities](#). As my colleague and Chicago Council senior fellow Richard Longworth writes in *On Global Cities*, “... if global cities monopolize global power, they also struggle disproportionately with the pathologies of a new economy. These pathologies—inequality, terrorism, pollution, climate change, traffic in drugs and human beings, the stresses of immigration—are felt first and hardest in global cities.”

Yet it hasn’t been until recent years, most notably under the leadership of former mayor Michael Bloomberg working [on cities and immigration](#) or cities and climate change, have cities been recognized for their role in developing solutions to pressing global challenges. Increased attention is being given to cities in the lead-up to the UN Conference on Climate Change taking place in Paris. Since they account for roughly 70% of global greenhouse emissions, they clearly have a stake in the issue. But imagine the possibilities if cities were able to organize as effectively around other issues, like security or immigration.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, with a generous grant from the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, will be studying the power and limitations of cities over the next three years, giving particular attention to the intersection with national governments and the importance of cities in policymaking.

Immigration is a national policy area, yet immigrant inclusion, success and failure are profoundly local issues. What role do immigrants play in global cities? And what do you think global cities can do to address national immigration policies?

Juliana Kerr: Indeed, [many definitions of a global city measure diversity](#) and the percentage of the foreign-born population residing in the city. A few economists have tried to calculate the economic value of diversity in cities, but most studies are anecdotal. Many executives who move their headquarters to Chicago, for example, cite the city’s cultural diversity as an important factor influencing their decision.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel has said many times that he wants [Chicago to be the most immigrant-friendly city](#) in the United States. He opened in 2011 the Office for New Americans which helps immigrants access city services and start new businesses, offers internship opportunities to DREAMers, and introduced a Welcoming City Ordinance. Together with the mayors of Los Angeles and New York, he chairs the [Cities for Citizenship initiative](#).

Immigration is a complicated and politicized issue, but cities face the consequences of immigration on a daily basis and need to be responsive. Last year The Chicago Council in partnership with the American Immigration Council published [Reimagining the Midwest: Immigration Initiatives and the Capacity](#)

[of Local Leadership](#). The report highlighted the unprecedented commitment from local leaders in understanding the importance of immigrant integration in the region and put the range of Midwestern initiatives into context.

What city of migration or inclusion do you admire the most? Why?

Juliana Kerr: Every city's history, governance structure, geography, and unique experiences affect its ability to enact new policies or advance innovative agendas. For example, Singapore may receive high marks for diversity and integration, but it is a necessary part of the island's success with workers coming from China, India, Malaysia, Australia, among other countries.

What is important to highlight are the good ideas that might be replicable in other locations. The Mayor of Hamburg, for example, started [sending an invitation](#) to become a citizen to immigrants who had satisfied the criteria. I've read about a number of interesting models, including [Toronto's mentoring programs](#) and [Barcelona's city policy on interculturalism](#), in addition to the work in Chicago. The Chicago Council's work has focused on the [new efforts throughout the Midwest region](#), in places like Dayton, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; and Detroit, Michigan.

Was there an 'aha' moment for you at the [2015 Chicago Forum on Global Cities](#)? An important lesson you took away with you from this extraordinary gathering of world leaders?

Juliana Kerr: I was impressed with the thirst for broader conversations involving a variety of leaders from different pillars vital to urban life. So many conferences focus on city-city networks, or urban planning and the design of cities. Few have elevated the discussion about urban leadership on issues compared to the national government, and specifically in an international context. We convened business leaders speaking with heads of museums and architects talking to foreign policy scholars. The cross-pillar dialogue is crucial. We are already planning the second annual Chicago Forum on Global Cities for June 1-3, 2016.

What innovation or change would you like to bring to Chicago?

Juliana Kerr: Chicago consistently ranks among the top 10 global cities on a number of indexes, but it can do more. The city needs a well-funded, staffed, and structured global strategy office, for example. Graduates of Chicago's schools should have deeper studies in global affairs. I'd personally love to see them all experience some time abroad, at no cost to their families, as part of their high school curriculum. The Chicago Council is publishing a task force report in early 2016 on a global strategy for Chicago that includes several recommendations to increase the city's global stature. We hope other cities worldwide find the report useful to shaping their own agendas.

Juliana Kerr directs the Council's work on [global cities and immigration](#). She manages the Council's publications, research and partnerships on issues related to global cities, urbanization, Global Chicago, and migration. She also helped launch the inaugural [Chicago Forum on Global Cities](#). In a recent blog post called [How Cities Are Shaping International Relations](#) (May 28, 2015), Kerr calls our attention to the growing importance of cities on the global stage.

[Watch videos from the 2015 Chicago Forum on Global Cities](#) featuring thought leaders including Former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, City University of New York's Benjamin Barber and The Hague Mayor Jozias van Aartsen ([Closing Panel: The Foreign Policy of Cities](#)); and Global Diversity Exchange's Executive Director Ratna Omidvar and others ([Inclusive Cities: Poverty, Youth and Immigration](#)).

Migrants Need Cities, Cities Need Migrants

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



*Many places being cited as examples of cities reborn – including London, New York, Los Angeles, Singapore, Sydney – owe their renaissance to growing populations of the foreign-born, writes **William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).***

It's an inescapable truism that's begun to sink in with leaders worldwide and which, very soon, will become obvious even to those most opposed to our current wave of human mobility.

Could a million African, Asians and Middle Easterners really be bound for Europe this year? Certainly—and arguably numbers almost as large are plying migratory routes linking regions of Latin America, East Asia and Africa.

The media images of such mobility can be scary, while the challenges destination countries face integrating these new arrivals are great. Yet mobility, movement, migration – by whatever name we choose to call it – is unstoppable.

It's coming to a city near you – and that's a good thing.

The story of civilization, by and large, is the story of mankind on the move, people migrating mostly from sleepy, conservative villages into bustling cities. The cities need their energy and their ambition. The migrants need what only cities can offer: a chance to succeed.



The next Germany: Multiethnic and multilingual. Berlin, December 2014. [Joel Schalit/Flickr]

Since antiquity human history repeats itself as an unbroken chain of peasants-to-city migration: Across the Fertile Crescent to Mediterranean shores, out of the Valley of Oaxaca into Mesoamerica, or along the banks of the Yellow and Yangtze rivers down to Pacific ports. The young and restless come to better themselves with new jobs, new employers, new mates. They hunger for reinvention and, by doing so, they reinvent us.

“Sophisticated” urban folk are looking, yes, to exploit the newcomers – but also to put their drive into the service of the common good: to work, thrive, spend their earnings and spread their wealth among us all.

Historically – almost up into our present century – the villager entering our midst was one of us, arriving already speaking his new neighbors' language, and sharing their religion. Today the villager coming to our city is almost always a foreigner – a migrant.

Of the approximately one billion human beings my agency, the International Organization for Migration, or IOM; counts as migrants, about half reside in cities.

Think on that: 500 million ambitious peasants filling cities across the globe. This week (October 26-27) IOM will examine this phenomenon in a Geneva conference called “Migrants and Cities: New Partnerships to Manage Mobility.”

Speakers will include mayors, academics, migration ministers, businessmen and, of course, migrants. They'll discuss how migrants already are transforming cities that only recently were being given up for “dead” but that today are being rediscovered as thriving centers of profit, commerce and culture.

According to findings to be presented at this week's conference, many places being cited as examples of cities reborn—including London, New York, Los Angeles, Singapore, Sydney – owe their renaissance to growing populations of the foreign-born. Each of those cities today boasts foreign-born population exceeding 37% of the total, an astonishing degree of imported talent.

Globally, many cities now incubate such imports in even greater proportions. Toronto, one of the world's best-run cities, now has a foreign-born population approaching 50% of its whole. Proportions in Brussels (62% foreign-born) and Dubai (83%) are even higher. Meanwhile in the developing world – where comparable statistics are often not available – the same scenario is unfolding. Gabon's Libreville and Lagos, Nigeria – two examples of West African boom towns – have gained reputations as places with the ability to attract and retain talent from across the continent.

Cities attract migrants because in diversity there is opportunity. Migrants save cities because migrants are more likely to be makers (and spenders) of growing incomes than they are to be takers of public assistance. Migrants, too, are likely to be young adults looking to advance in new careers, with young families looking to buy homes – often even if that means buying in neighborhoods natives have long since abandoned.

It's already happened in US cities like New York and Chicago. In the latter, nearly 600,000 new Americans arriving since the 1970s largely replaced the so-called “white flight” exodus of refugees fleeing to the suburbs, the result of which was a hollowing out of Chicago's old industrial zones, and the shattering of an historic connection between working families and good manufacturing jobs.

In fact, in U.S. cities where migration has been strongest, manufacturing often survives. That's because migrants don't come to steal natives' jobs, but to preserve them. By demonstrating a willingness to be "exploited" at prevailing wages shunned by the educated children of factory workers still on the job, migrants effectively keep those U.S. work-places from traveling offshore – to Asia, say, or Latin America.

In a similar vein, migrants preserve urban wealth. According to research being done for IOM's Migrants and Cities conference, migrants are responsible for boosting – by trillions of dollars – home equity value for all US families, a process occurring most notably in metropolitan areas.

Controlling for other factors, social scientists calculate that for every thousand immigrants arriving in a U.S. city, another 270 native-born residents move there in response. As a result, the price of the average home rises.

Since the typical immigrant lives in a county with 800,000 housing units – that is, a major city – the average immigrant raises the total value of housing wealth in his or her community by \$92,800. The significance of this becomes clearer at the national level: the nation's more than 40 million immigrants have powered an estimated \$3.7 trillion boost to home equity nationwide.

I could go on. In America, where I was born, the rise of entrepreneurship – particularly in poor African-American neighborhoods and Latino barrios – has soared in the past 20 years, a period characterized by foreigners' surge into US cities.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners, the number of "black owned" companies (operated or controlled either by US-born or immigrant entrepreneurs) has exploded to nearly two million in the early years of this century – or roughly one business for every twenty African-American residents. The surge in new-job creation was even more pronounced among Latino and Asian-Americans.

The reasons are varied – among them, Americans' general welcoming response to new-businesses, as well as the trade and marketing synergies available from imported Americans' ties to diaspora communities worldwide. Yet it's the results that matter most, and growing entrepreneurship is certainly one of them.

Cities rarely shrink to greatness. They get better by growing and to grow they must welcome migrants.

In other words migrants don't threaten our cities. They rescue them.



This article was originally published on EurActiv.com on 26 October 2015 and is reproduced here with permission.

William Lacy Swing is the [Director General of the International Organization for Migration](http://www.iom.int). He is currently serving his second five-year term.

William Lacy Swing, DG,
IOM

Why an Anti-Rumours Strategy?

By kturner
October 27, 2015
[Opinion](#)



By Daniel de Torres

In today's world learning to live together in diversity is a global and shared challenge in which the role of cities is crucial. The intercultural approach to manage diversity promoted by the ICC programme of the Council of Europe emphasises, among other principles, the need to promote positive interaction among all citizens.

Avoiding segregation and ghettoisation, discrimination and racism is a fundamental objective. And so it is to promote the "diversity advantage" by creating urban environments that translate cultural diversity in a positive resource for the development and enrichment at all levels.

But this is not possible if there is no positive interaction to relativise the cultural, ethnic or religious differences and strengthen the common things that we share as citizens.

Five years ago we started the [anti-rumour strategy \(ARS\) of Barcelona](#). I couldn't imagine then that five years later I would be helping to adapt and promote this strategy in many cities of different countries.

The ARS aims to reduce one of the major barriers hindering the positive interaction between people. The barrier formed by ignorance, prejudices and stereotypes about "the other" and "the different".

The experience of each city has greatly enriched the whole strategy. Beyond the fundamental evaluation of the specific impact of the ARS on citizens' perceptions, we can identify other "indirect impacts" I think are also very relevant.

The strategy can capture the attention and interest of key stakeholders, from the media, institutions, organizations, sectors such as education and culture and the general public. Speaking of diversity from rumours attracts attention. The ARS uses this interest to deepen participatory processes and generate new collaborative networks that create stimulants bridges of relationship between government and civil society. It provides a methodology that is easily adaptable to many different contexts and also facilitates its sustainability. Reinforces the importance of education in critical thinking and forces us to look in the mirror and identify our own weaknesses that we often tend to hide. We can say that the ARS is partly an excuse to address in greater depth key issues of our society.

But one of the best arguments I found to support the need of an anti-rumour strategy, come from the ancient Greece. Pierre Hadot summarises the most important legacy that leaves the stoic philosopher Epictetus:

"Become aware of our prejudices, ghosts we have created, to combat mirages. That's what will bring us, actually, to be free citizens."

Not bad advice for the idea of Europe that many of us want to reinforce in these times of uncertainty and populism growth. The ARS is one of the tools we have to fight these ghosts.

This article was originally published on the [Council of Europe website](#) and has been reproduced here with permission.



About the author: [Dani de Torres](#) is an expert on intercultural policies and advisor of the “Intercultural cities” programme of the Council of Europe. He also advises other international organisations and several cities. He is Director of the Spanish Network of Intercultural Cities and leads the “Anti Rumours Global” project, an innovative strategy to dismantle prejudices and stereotypes to prevent discrimination and racism. He is also [co-founder of Imacity](#), an organization on cities global development focusing on diversity issues, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Learn more about the [Anti-Rumours Strategy \(ARS\)](#) and the [BCN Anti-Rumour Campaign](#).

Watch the [YouTube Barcelona Anti-Rumour channel](#).

Where is integration in the refugee crisis?

By ktuner

[Opinion](#)



*"What is lost in the debate about refugees, which has hitherto focused on numbers, is a proper discussion about integration." In this article, **Jenny Phillimore** examines the steps that might support a two-way integration process.*

The focus for the media and politicians responding to the European refugee crisis has largely been upon numbers and the debate about how many refugees each country can, will, or should take. Policymakers have responded reactively rather than proactively with limited attention paid to the integration policy and practice that will be needed to help refugees to settle in their countries of refuge.

While it is unclear yet exactly how countries will house refugee arrivals it is highly likely that at least some will be dispersed to wide ranging towns, cities and even rural areas many of who have little experience of diversity and none of refugee resettlement. Getting integration policy right before refugees are dispersed is imperative. This article focuses on the types of actions that might support a two-way integration process. The ideas are based upon 15 years of research into refugee integration including [a recent study for the KING project](#) which looked at integration practice across Europe. In thinking about integration practice we might focus on three phases: reception, orientation to a new social reality and social mobility.

The welcome signs that greeted refugees walking across borders into Germany and Austria are not representative of the reception that most receive when they arrive as asylum seekers having to prove their "genuine" claim to sanctuary. The assumption that all asylum seekers are bogus unless proven otherwise and lengthy determination processes have been demonstrated to contribute to the onset of mental health problems in refugees, many of whom are already traumatised.

They also experience what has been described as bereavement as they leave behind everything that was familiar to them. Reception needs to be humane and positive. Determination processes should be fair, consistent and transparent. Refugees need time to recover from their journey combined with offers of care and support: food, clothes, and medical attention. Fear and uncertainty should be reduced through careful explanation of determination procedures and processes. Access to communication technologies should be made available to help them reconnect with family and friends left behind.

In order to encourage a positive reception work is needed in dispersal destinations to help local people understand refugee experiences, to encourage them to understand the "bereavement" associated with migration and to develop skills to communicate sensitively and interculturally. Local institutions and agencies need training to understand how to access and work effectively with interpreters, how to explain the way that the host country's systems differ from country of migration and to adopt a flexible approach to service provision.

The scale of arrivals means it is inevitable that individuals will be dispersed, frequently on a no choice basis, if they are to be accommodated. [Analysis of the UK's Survey of New Refugees](#) showed that dispersal had long-term detrimental effects on refugees' health and employability. Where feasible, individuals should be offered a choice of destination enabling them to live near friends or family who can offer support.

Once refugees are housed, support is needed to help them orientate to new institutional cultures. Explanation about "how we do things here" is frequently lacking leaving refugees anxious about breaking rules or causing offence. Information should be provided explaining how and when to use the health service, enrol in college, meet and greet local people etc. Provision of mentors matched by age and gender can be a very effective way of helping someone to orientate quickly.

Social networks are important to help refugees access integration resources. In general the wider the social network the more opportunities it provides for integration. Access to wide networks is not [constrained](#) by having strong peer networks which themselves are important for providing emotional support. Faith hubs are important, offering settlement assistance and enabling individuals to retain some aspects of their identities. Social media too is of great importance in ensuring refugees can secure some kind of presence with those from whom they have been separated. Refugees need to be helped to identify the facilities they need for network building and space provided for group activities.

In the longer term resources are required to help refugees achieve social mobility. These include access to high quality language classes with vocational language, volunteering positions in institutions and businesses commensurate with pre-migration occupations, and employability mentoring. Countries such as Sweden, [Germany](#) and [Australia](#) offer comprehensive courses in which refugees access hundreds of hours of free language training and vocational training. Given that many refugees have [high levels](#) of qualifications and skills many of which are in shortage it is important to establish programmes that enable skills and qualification recognition. Evaluations of European Refugee Fund supported initiatives have shown that [supporting women refugees](#) into community-based language classes enables them to help their children to engage with their schooling.

Finally, programmes such as [HACT's Reach In project](#) in which refugees were offered high quality volunteering places combined with training have been shown to enhance employability and help institutions to utilise the insider knowledge that refugees offer to reshape their services to be more sensitive to diverse needs. The KING project demonstrated that engaging newly arrived communities in local partnerships focusing on regeneration and community development can [help foster](#) strong networks and social cohesion.

There are many [examples of successful and unsuccessful approaches to refugee integration](#) that we can learn from (see [Humphries](#) for a full review). However, most integration initiatives tend to operate at local level and receive short-term funding. If Europe is to make a genuine effort to provide high quality reception, orientation and social mobility for refugees then a comprehensive strategic and well-resourced approach is necessary which supports refugees, and the communities and institutions in which they live, to adapt to the inevitable demographic changes arising from what has been described as the biggest refugee crisis Europe has encountered since World War II.

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Jenny Phillimore is Professor and Director of the [Institute for Research into Superdiversity \(IRiS\)](#) at the University of Birmingham.

[Watch YouTube video](#) of Jenny Phillimore talking about her work at IRiS.



“Say it loud, say it clear: refugees are welcome here”

By ktuner
September 29, 2015
[Opinion](#)



By Ellen A. Goldstein, World Bank

I am the World Bank's Director for the Western Balkans, and I live in Vienna, Austria, where thousands of refugees, mostly fleeing from conflict in Syria and Afghanistan, are now straggling across the border from Hungary after harrowing trips on crowded boats, uncomfortable stays in makeshift camps, cramped bus rides and long journeys on foot when all else fails.

My father's parents were refugees to America. They were Jewish peasants from Russia who fled the pogroms of the early twentieth century. My mother's great-grandparents were economic migrants, educated German Jews who went to Chicago in the mid-nineteenth century to seek their fortune in grain futures and real estate. When my parents married in the early 1950s, theirs was considered a “mixed marriage”: Russian and German; peasant stock and educated elite; refugees and economic migrants. I know the difference between the latter two: refugees are pushed out of their home countries by war, persecution and a fear of death; economic migrants are pulled out of their home countries by the promise of a more prosperous life for themselves and their children.

The European Union has been absorbing economic migrants long before the recent surge in refugees. In the past twenty five years, many of these migrants have been from the countries of the Western Balkans, where I work with my World Bank colleagues to support faster growth and job creation. In 2014, forty-five percent of those seeking asylum in Germany were economic migrants from the Western Balkans, with the largest numbers from Kosovo and Albania. In the past, Balkan countries often made the international news for their own bloody conflicts, but now they are at peace and on the nightly news for a different reason: refugees from distant wars are favoring the “Balkan Route” into the European Union, through FYR Macedonia and neighboring Serbia, before finally entering EU member Hungary.



While the Balkan states are no longer generating their own refugees, they remain world champions of out-migration. Fully twenty-five percent of the source population of the Western Balkans resides outside their home countries, compared to only three percent for the rest of the world. Most are in European Union countries, with nearby Vienna being a preferred destination. I meet them every time I need a plumber, electrician or taxi in the city.

Out-migration has been of enormous benefit to the countries of the Western Balkans. Before the onset of the global and Eurozone crises of 2008, the Western Balkans grew by more than five percent per annum, leading to significant income convergence with the slower-growing European Union. Most of this growth in the Balkans was consumption driven, fueled by migrant remittances equaling as much as ten percent of national income each year, dwarfing foreign investment and aid flows. In the aftermath of the Eurozone crisis, as EU member states struggled with recession, out-migration from, and remittances to, the Western Balkans slowed, along with economic growth. Convergence with the EU ground to a halt. Ironically, the resulting lack of growth in the Western Balkans has only served to increase the desire of the young to migrate to the EU, even as the door to Europe has shut tighter with each year of weak recovery. Offering asylum to refugees fleeing violence may further shut the door to economic migrants from the “safe countries” of the Western Balkans.

With unemployment currently running between 40 and 65 percent of the young labor force in the Western Balkans, it is understandable that these countries rely on out-migration to stimulate growth and ensure social stability. And it is understandable that their populations and Governments would react warily when more young, unemployed workers—the refugees of war-torn Syria and elsewhere—start crossing their territory. But few, if any, refugees wish to stay in the small, poorer countries of the Western Balkans. The Government of Serbia has understood this, and thus far behaved maturely in welcoming refugees humanely and ushering them to the EU border, respecting EU policies regarding refugees and asylum seekers.

Even if you are not haunted by the picture of young Aylan Kurdi lying dead on a beach or a truck full of corpses on an Austrian highway, you should welcome the inflow of refugees to Europe on economic grounds. The EU needs people, especially young and healthy workers. Germany, for example, will see its labor force decline by 13 million workers in the next 25 years. With its aging and shrinking population, the country will need to welcome an additional 370,000 workers per year just to maintain the status quo. Germany's future economic growth—and the sustainability of its old age security system—depend critically on this inflow. This partly explains Germany's open arms to the current flow of refugees. But the story is similar in Hungary, where an additional 43,000 workers are needed every year to counteract the graying of society and stimulate economic growth. And while EU countries may prefer to pick and choose their migrants, it's a good bet that refugees with the stamina and courage to flee their homes, face perilous sea crossings and exhausting over-land treks will prove to be highly motivated workers whose children will climb the ladder of economic success in their adopted countries—just as my grandparents and great-grandparents did in America.

It is heartening to see the welcome given to refugees by many in Germany and Austria in recent weeks, even as these countries brace for the costs associated with significant absorption. To some extent, history is repeating itself in Austria as refugees cross the border at Nickelsdorf. This crossing is the very same where thousands of East German refugees crossed into the West from Hungary when the iron curtain began to fall in 1989. Many Austrians take pride that their country has served as the entryway to a better life for so many refugees. Austria has served as an important transit point and destination for Cold War refugees in the past, including an estimated 180,000 from Hungary in 1956, 162,000 from Czechoslovakia in 1968 and 150,000 from Poland in 1981-82. And Austria was a continuous transit point for 250,000 Jewish refugees leaving the Soviet Union between 1973 and 1989, with tens of thousands remaining in Austria, mostly in Vienna. Between 1992 and 1995, 95,000 war refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina were provided asylum in Austria. [1]

But Austrians also live with a darker history that generated refugees and allowed the slaughter of those not permitted to leave when Austria was annexed by Nazi Germany. Everywhere you walk in Vienna, you cannot escape the reminders of this past: the mansions of the wealthy Jewish families

who financed construction of the Habsburg Emperor's famous Ring Road but lost their lives in World War II; the narrow alleys of Leopoldstadt where Jews migrating from Eastern Europe crowded into Vienna in the nineteenth century only to face annihilation in the next century. When we see the contribution to the arts, sciences, politics and business of refugees from World War II—giants like Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud—we can imagine what the world lost from those who were not allowed to live.

As I walk the stately streets of Vienna, I know deep in my core that the moral imperative to save human lives and give refugees asylum is sufficient. It is enough. The bonus for all of us is the long-term growth, prosperity and social security that refugees will bring to the aging populations and struggling economies of Europe. So let's say it loud, say it clear: refugees are welcome here.

[1] [Austria: A Country of Immigration?](#) Michael Jandl and Albert Kraler, Migration Information Source, Migration Policy Institute, March 1, 2003.

This article was originally published on the [People Move blog](#), hosted by Dilip Ratha, lead economist at the World Bank, on 17 September 2015 and is reproduced here with permission.



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Are You up to the Lifeline Syria Challenge?

By kturner
September 16, 2015
Uncategorized



United Nations officials have warmly greeted a citizen-led initiative to resettle 1,000 Syrian refugees in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) over the next two years.

[Lifeline Syria](#) is mobilizing communities to recruit, train and assist sponsor groups to welcome and settle Syrian refugees coming to Canada as permanent immigrants through Canada's unique [Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program](#).

As some of

Toronto's leading citizens, politicians, faith and community leaders prepared to launch [Lifeline Syria](#) on June 17, the UNHCR's Representative in Canada, Furio De Angelis, welcomed the initiative and its potential to make a global impact.

"We welcome this initiative by Torontonians as it is an important step towards UNHCR's global appeal to increase resettlement or other humanitarian admission programs for the most vulnerable refugees from the war in Syria," Mr. De Angelis said.

"Let this be a launching pad for yet another show of generosity and solidarity by Canadians to provide protection to refugees in need, like during Operation Lifeline in the 80's."

Emulating [the success of Operation Lifeline in 1979](#), when Canadians stepped up to resettle 60,000 refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, Lifeline Syria will give residents of the GTA an opportunity to help resolve what has been described as the biggest humanitarian emergency since World War II.

Lifeline Syria has already inspired Ryerson University to launch its own youth-fuelled initiative to help refugees caught up in the Syrian conflict. The [Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge](#) is recruiting student volunteers to work with 25 sponsor teams to bring 25 families or 100 Syrian refugees to Toronto. They have already raised more than \$270,000 and have a number of options available for anyone who wants to get involved.

"The image of three-year-old Alan Kurdi was a turning point," said [Wendy Cukier](#), Vice President Research and Innovation, Ryerson University and Executive Lead on the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge.

"We have been flooded with offers to help: new sponsors, new donors and new volunteers. Students, alumni, faculty, administrators and partners of the university are stepping up. This initiative aligns with our mission to meet societal needs, our focus on city building and diversity, and our commitment to providing meaningful experiential learning for the next generation of leaders and changemakers."

[Learn more about how to join the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge.](#)

Photo by Mustafa Öztürk for UNHCR Relief effort for Syrian refugees in Syria-Lebanon border, March 2012.



Entrepreneurs and New Europeans

By ktuner
October 27, 2015
[Interview](#)



Interview with Sander Loones, Nieuw-Vlaamse Aliantie (N-VA), Member of the European Parliament, and party Vice-President.

By Vincent Escoffier

Before he entered the European Parliament in October 2014 to fill the chair of Johann Van Overtveldt who had been appointed as Belgian Finance Minister, [Flemish MEP Sander Loones](#) was involved in national politics. In addition to being a lawyer specialised in migration, he was very involved in the formation of the last governments in Belgium, both Federal and Flemish.

As an MEP and wishing to follow his predecessor's footsteps, Mr Loones became a member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of which he is also one of the Vice Chairs.

In last June, you personally hosted a [UNITEE](#) event at the European Parliament, the '2015 New European Awards'. Why did you accept to host this ceremony?

The reason why I was particularly honoured to host the ceremony is the fact that it served as recognition of several important issues such as [entrepreneurship](#). The European Union needs people who are innovative, people who take risks, work hard, and stand as role models.

The event also gave a very positive view of migration and put on the fact that migrants can become full members of the society. Nowadays, the debate is always centred on the dark sides of migration and put in a negative context, whereas migration is a great source of added value for Europe. I am in favour of having a strict but fair immigration policy that focuses on the added value of migration and on integration of migrants through hard work and taking initiatives.

In the end, I think it was a very nice event, wonderfully organised, with great nominees and winners.

In the United States, a lot of successful companies were founded by migrants. How important are the New European entrepreneurs to the European Union?

I believe that the first way to look at migrant entrepreneurs is to look at them as entrepreneurs, no matter where they come from, because they are people who are not afraid of taking risks, who dare to create jobs, to put themselves on the line.

Second of all, there are a lot of hard working people in Europe, especially among the migrant community. New Europeans are people who are not afraid to work, not afraid of the challenge and who show the will to hire people.

Typically, in Belgium, we see a lot of migrants starting small businesses, especially in the catering and food industry. But the sector in which you see the most the added value of migrants is the industry of services. The perfect example is the one of [Murat Kiran](#) who won the Award of "2015 most successful New European entrepreneur". He only started with a small IT business in the Netherlands. Now, he has more than 2,000 employees and he is constantly expanding his activities.

As you said, New European are known for their entrepreneurial spirit and always being very active. So what should the European Parliament do in order to facilitate migrant entrepreneurship and to attract New European entrepreneurs?

The European institutions should really focus more and more on entrepreneurship. The line of the new Commission is to be "big on big things and small on small things". Entrepreneurship is one of the biggest things for Europe because it is what creates its growth and what makes it competitive on the global market. Europe needs to take into account the economic, cultural and political factors to create a policy that eradicates everything that keeps people from becoming entrepreneurs. At the European Parliament, we often put the accent on "cutting the red tape" and transforming it into a red carpet for entrepreneurs.

When it comes to migration, what differentiates us from the United States is the fact that we have a very generous – and luckily so – welfare system. But we have to make sure that migrants see our social security system as a trampoline rather than as a safety net. Its purpose must be to push people back



Credit: deredactie.be

up, and not to be a trap. The money people get from it must be an asset and encourage them to get involved and more active in the economic system. European citizens should especially be aware of the fact that there is a global competition of talent. And if we fail in activating people who are attracted by our advantageous social welfare system, there will be no winning way for Europe in that competition.

Changing regulations is not the only way of tackling the issue of integrating New Europeans to society. What can be done on a social level to help migrant entrepreneurs to be better integrated?

It is true that in Europe, we push very strongly on the integration issue. We ask those who come live here to instantly become part of our society. But it has never meant for them to leave their identity and their culture at the border.

I prefer the idea of a layered identity because I know that [people can feel they have several different identities at the same time](#). I personally feel connected to my hometown but I also feel Flemish and European at the same time.

The effort also has to come from the European citizens who have to recognise how hard things are for migrants. They have to overcome so many challenges. I can only hope that the pressure that is put on migrants will not lead them to present themselves as victims. That would be a shame.

In the end, everybody must accept to make an effort. If a tree falls down and blocks the way, you can either stand there and wait for the government to toe it away, or we can all do the work ourselves and clear the road to make sure our society can advance.

I wish that for all entrepreneurs but especially for New European entrepreneurs.

[Contact MEP Sander Loones.](#)

This article was originally published on [the UNITEE Blog](#) on July 22, 2015 and has been reprinted here with permission.

Click here for [more Good Ideas on immigrant entrepreneurship](#).

Superdiversity and Demographic Disruption

By kturner
September 23, 2015
[Opinion](#)



It is said that sometimes questions are more important than answers.

In this thought-provoking [University of Auckland Public Lecture, Mai Chen](#), one of the country's top constitutional and administrative law experts, asks some key questions as she speaks on the law, policy and implications of superdiversity for New Zealand and its capital city, Auckland.

The megatrend to watch, says Chen, is not age or urbanization, but demography. With 44% of its population born overseas and over 200 ethnicities represented, Auckland easily doubles on standard definitions for superdiversity. Migrants and their New Zealand born children now comprise 56% of Auckland's talent pool. According to Chen, the implications for business and society are profound –and the current status quo unsustainable. Too many newcomers are underemployed, unrepresented in business and government, or experience racism in their daily lives. Making Auckland 'fit for the future' –so that it can reap the rewards of super diversity– will require greater investments in social capital to mitigate the disruptive effects of demographic change.

How can governments, businesses, organizations and native New Zealanders manage and adapt to this transition to a new super diverse society? What sort of implications does the changing landscape have on economic performance and social capital?

Demographic disruption is an unacknowledged driver that keeps the country's economy outperforming many others. But this requires a behavioural shift from business, government and citizens because, as Chen says, "there can be no financial gains if you don't work on social capital."

What is social capital? Basically, trust. While there is no single definition of social capital, it is commonly understood to refer to the shared values and relationships in a society that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and work well together. The good news is that New Zealand law and jurisprudence provide a solid foundation for living together as equal partners. The challenge is building trust and equity across an uneven linguistic, cultural and economic landscape.

As the demography of the country changes, some New Zealanders worry that the country's traditional culture and values will be eroded. All the more reason, says Chen, to invest in social capital and civic engagement to strengthen diversity within New Zealand's vibrant democracy. For example, New Zealand ranks high on international measures of transparency and corruption, yet the top source countries for its immigrants perform much less well. All the more important then, says Chen, that migrants understand their rights and responsibilities as New Zealanders. Such investments in social capital can mitigate the disruptive effects of super diversity – and ensure New Zealand sustains its corruption-free culture of transparency — while helping make New Zealand "fit for the future."

Mai Chen speaks on the "[Superdiversity stocktake](#)" she is undertaking in the context of New Zealand but the issues she raises are applicable to any country with rapidly changing demographics; namely, the importance of:

- Understanding global mobility and its implications for a superdiverse society, and that this trend will accelerate over the coming years;
- Securing the 'diversity dividend' by making sure that your law and policy and business practices are fit for purpose in a superdiverse society;
- Identifying key law and policy and business challenges posed by superdiversity; and
- Undertaking a stocktake of your current law, policy and business settings to manage the transition to superdiversity successfully.

View the archived lecture, Mai Chen on “Demographic Disruption”:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



University of Auckland Public Lecture: Mai Chen on “Demographic Disruption.” May 12, 2015.

From the [YouTube Channel](#), published on June 3, 2015.



Mai Chen is an Adjunct Professor in the University of Auckland Faculty of Law. Mai is one of New Zealand’s best-known lawyers with particular expertise in constitutional and administrative law, judicial review, regulatory issues, and public policy and law reform. She is the Managing Partner of Chen Palmer Public and Employment Law Specialists, home of the [Superdiversity Centre for Law, Policy and Business](#).

The Centre is launching the [inaugural Superdiversity Stocktake](#) at an event in central Auckland on 3 November 2015.

Pan Am Games: Toronto's Cultural Diversity on Display

By ktuner
September 16, 2015
Uncategorized



The excitement of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games reached a crescendo at the end of July as nearly 40,000 people – athletes, coaches, volunteers, officials – gathered for the closing ceremony. The 2015 Pan Games (July 10 – 26) brought together 7,500 athletes from 41 countries around a passion for sport – a universal language with the power to overcome cultural and ethnic differences, and foster a sense of connection and belonging.

More than one media report commented on how well the host city of Toronto reflected the rich diversity and talent represented by the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games, the world's third largest multi-sport event. With a booming economy fuelled by immigration, Toronto is heralded as one of the most multicultural and successful cities in the world. Over half of Toronto's population was born outside Canada, making good the City of Toronto's motto: *Diversity, Our Strength*.

Diversity, Our Strength

In the Pan Am stands, Canada's maple leaf mixed wildly with dozens of other national flags. Along with her Canadian flag Giselle Cole flew the flag of Trinidad and Tobago from where she emigrated many years ago. Reflecting on her adopted city, Cole commented: "I think the one great difference to the rest of the world is that we have a little bit of everywhere here and that we love to celebrate in a proud and inclusive manner."



Cole, a former Paralympian who won the gold for Canada in 1980, believes encouraging members of ethnic communities to embrace the games not only makes visiting athletes feel at home but also provides an opportunity for Canadians, particularly youth, to identify positive role models and connect with their heritage: "We're going to be able to celebrate Canada while at the same time welcoming and supporting our athletes from the Pan Americas."

Those in charge of managing the various components of the Games, be it outreach, procurement or the city's tourism, are also making sure that diversity is reflected in the work they do.

Michael Coteau, Ontario Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sports, said Pan Am organizers worked hard to form local partnerships and create programs that would showcase the cultural diversity of the Games and be relevant to local communities: "These Games are successful, not only for people involved in sports and athleticism but also, there's a cultural component to it... we want to make sure that we work with the community, all communities, to get this right." Coteau, whose father is from Grenada, believes that the approximate 250,000 people from Jamaica in Ontario and the African Canadian diaspora at large would "feel a sense of belonging" during the Games.

Employees, Suppliers, Buyers

"Diversity is reflected in both our employee and supplier base because we know it's going to be reflected in our customer base," says Bill Zakarow, Director, Procurement of TO2015, the Organizing Committee established to plan, manage, and deliver the games, and responsible for creating the first-ever Diversity Policy for a Pan Am/Parapan Am competition.

TO2015's Diversity Policy aimed to harness the economic impact of the Games to create a pipeline for segments of the population that have typically been under-represented in projects of this magnitude. Opportunities in the areas of procurement, governance, employment, volunteerism and others will now be accessible to the region's many diverse communities.

When Zakarow was hired, one of the first things he did was develop a procurement strategy with a supplier diversity component. With this foundation in place, TO2015 faced an enormous hurdle right out of the gate: how to get the word out about the Games' business opportunities and how to find the best companies to deliver on hundreds of contracts? As Zakarow puts it, "We had to figure out how to tell our story and set up a network of suppliers."

A Supplier Diversity Advisory Council made up of organizations promoting supplier diversity was created to help organizers identify diverse businesses across different sectors and categories and to spread the word quickly.

Longer term, says Zakarow, "We hope our legacy will be that all we've done to make these Games diverse ends up laying the groundwork for supplier diversity for many years to come."

For good ideas on the role of sport in facilitating immigrant integration and building inclusive communities, see below:

Auckland, New Zealand: [It starts with Soccer](#)

Calgary, Canada: [Hockey Night in Canada – in Punjabi!](#)

Greenwich, United Kingdom: [Giving Equality a Sporting Chance](#)

Melbourne, Australia: [Kangaroos, Football and the Local Community](#)

Munich, Germany: [Buntkicktgut! Integration Through Sports](#)

Projects End But the Migration-Integration Battle Goes On

By ktuner
[Opinion](#)



Opinion by Jim Gibbons, EU Reporter Correspondent

If Europe is to retain its current output of goods and services, it will need to welcome in a further 56 million migrants by 2050 to make up for the shrinking birth rate. That's not the sort of fact that will go down well with some of Europe's populist parties and certain sections of the media, but the figure comes from the International Labour Organization. The ILO's chief of the Labour Migration Branch gave the blunt fact to a large group of people already committed to fighting for integration at a conference to mark the end of two projects aimed at improving the lives of migrants in Europe. The projects may have ended but those involved promised to keep up the fight – even though the current funding is coming to an end. The projects were jointly funded by the EU's Integration Fund and the Council of Europe which also ran them.



DELI: Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration

[Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration](#), known by its acronym, DELI, set out to highlight the position of migrants in the wider economy and to encourage other migrants to set themselves up in business. It was based on the principle of "Diversity Advantage", which sees the variety of different peoples as a way to enrich the range of products, services and ways to do things by offering different approaches derived from the people's differing origins.

The theory behind it was that individual cities could hold the key to making it work, being closer to the people involved, and [a total of ten cities took part](#). City administrations joined with civil society, educators and local businesses to help. A number of very successful migrant-owned enterprises were launched and there has been a high level of interest in learning more. Some migrant businesses have won major tendering contracts with city administrations. The other project, [Communication for Integration, C4i](#), worked on a similar basis, partnering eleven cities with the aim of [countering the sorts of negative rumours](#) that circulate about newly-arriving migrants, training local people to tackle the urban myths about migrants head-on.

The projects launched in January 2014, but those attending the [final conference in Brussels](#) were determined to keep up the work, seeking other sources of finance and getting involved with new partners to carry it out. As one delegate pointed out, there is still a long way to go. Migrant entrepreneurs often find it harder to access capital, to convince banks and potential partners to trust them.

Furthermore, unemployment among migrant groups stands at 22% – twice the EU average, while 44.3% find themselves at risk of poverty and exclusion, compared with an EU average of 24.8%. And yes, even that figure is frighteningly high, but as Irena Guidikova, Intercultural Cities Programme Manager at the Council of Europe told delegates, if society is downplaying the rights of migrants, it means they're also likely to downplay the rights of every citizen, locals included. Across Europe, she said, the commitment to human rights that we once took for granted is being rolled back.

This article was originally published with title, [Two Projects End – But the Migration-Integration Battle Goes On](#), in the [EU Reporter](#) on June 25, 2015 and has been reproduced here with permission.

About the author: [Jim Gibbons](#) has more than 30 years' experience reporting on European politics for a wide range of broadcasters. He won two major awards at the 2004 CNN World Report Awards in Atlanta for his TV reporting from the European Parliament – Best Political Report and Best Environmental Report.

Read [Them and US, or should it be WE](#), opinion by Jim Gibbons, EU Reporter, June 3, 2015. [Watch "Them, Us and We" video film](#) by Jim Gibbons, July 23, 2015.

Learn more about the [Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration \(DELI\) project](#) and the [Communication for Integration \(C4i\) project](#), co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Integration Fund:

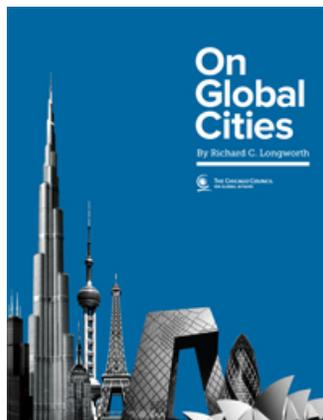
Related Links

- Read the final publication [Enhancing the Economic Potential of Diversity: Management Standards for Local Governments](#), Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2015.
- [Using Purchasing Power to Promote the Socio-Economic Integration of Persons With an Immigrant Background](#) by Jan Niessen and Beth Ginsburg. Brussels: Migration Policy Group, 2014.
- [Cities Free of Rumours: How To Build an Anti-Rumour Strategy in My City](#), edited by Christina Baglai. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2015.

On Global Cities

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



By [Richard C. Longworth](#), Distinguished Fellow, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

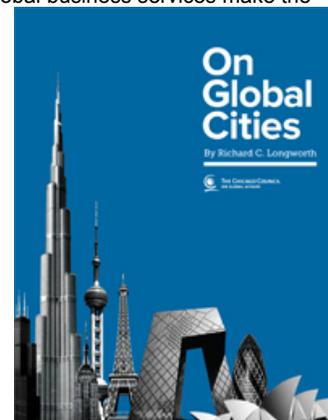
Global cities run the world. Their banks and markets finance the global economy. Their corporate headquarters and global business services make the decisions that shape that economy. Their universities train the global citizens of the future, while their researchers imagine that future. Global communications radiate from global cities. These cities have the finest orchestras and museums, the best restaurants, the latest fads. Global culture throbs to the magnetic beat of global cities.

In short, global cities are where the action is.

It's not a flat world out there. Rather, it's a world of peaks and valleys. Global citizens stand on the peaks, talking with each other over the heads of everyone else below, in the rural hinterlands and post-industrial backwaters which the global economy has left behind. These peaks are called New York, Tokyo, London. They are the global cities.

If global cities monopolize global power, they also struggle disproportionately with the pathologies of a new economy. These pathologies—inequality, terrorism, pollution, climate change, traffic in drugs and human beings, the stresses of immigration — are felt first and hardest in global cities. Like giant magnets, these cities draw the best and the worst and stir them into an urban mix unprecedented in its complexity.

To understand the 21st century, we must understand global cities. If we live in a city that aspires to become or remain a global city, we must grasp what makes these cities global and what makes them different — who lives in them, how they live, how they nurture their own citizens and relate to other global cities. If the true measure of an economy is the well-being of the people who live within it, the evolution of global cities is the key issue of our time.



The global economy created global cities, and any discussion of a global city must focus on where that city fits into the global economy. But there is more to a city than its economy. A city and its global status rest on four pillars — economic, political, educational and cultural. Its commercial power and reach establish its global reputation. Its political and societal structure — city government, of course, but also its communities, its people, its think tanks, foundations, and other non-governmental players — decide how the city engages with the world. Its schools and universities enable the city to join the intellectual conversation that is shaping the century. The vigor of its culture not only defines the city for its citizens, but draws in the kind of creative and educated global citizens who can choose to live anywhere in the world.

[This report will try to deal with these issues](#), drawing on the latest scholarship into global cities. It is necessarily a snapshot. Global cities are still evolving. The leaders of today's global cities will shape that evolution.

- [Read the full report: On Global Cities \(The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2015\)](#)

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is grateful to the Robert R. McCormick Foundation for its generous support of the Global Cities project.

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Richard C. Longworth is a Distinguished Fellow at The Chicago Council on Global Affairs. He is an American author and journalist. He is the writer of [Caught in the Middle: America's Heartland in the Age of Globalism](#), on the impact of globalization on the American Midwest.

Good Ideas in Refugee Integration

By kturner
June 23, 2015
Uncategorized



The movement of people in response to necessity, to war, famine or persecution is an [ancient history](#) and one without borders. The definition of a refugee is modern, cemented in international law in 1951 by the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Human displacement on an unprecedented scale shows no sign of letting up in the 21st century.

International agencies and national governments are keeping track of the source countries, flows and settlement of refugees. But what do we know about refugees themselves? Social media and online journalism have made a huge step towards bringing the reality of the refugee experience into our ordinary lives, sharing their stories and helping us understand who they are. It is heartening that cities around the world are also responding in innovative and spontaneous ways to welcome and protect those most in need.



At best, the word 'refugee' brings to mind neat rows of pitched tents. More often it is a makeshift settlement of people in desperate need of food and medical supplies, or the tragic consequences of trafficked lives.

The reality is that [today more than half the refugees that UNHCR serves live in cities](#). Indeed, journalist Doug Saunders describes Mediterranean boat migrants he has interviewed as [urban, educated and determined](#) to travel towards a safer and better life for themselves and their families.

Why cities?

Why cities? Because that's where an essential level of safety, protection and shelter exists, where a certain anonymity is possible and where opportunity exists at scale.

A growing number of cities have sanctuary policies and access protocols designed to provide services to residents regardless of their status (undocumented or uncounted): Toronto's ["Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policies](#), or [municipal ID programs in New Haven](#) and [a growing number of cities across the US](#), for example.

Unlike migrants who have made a choice to move to a new country, refugees often arrive with significant personal losses and frequently bear scars of traumatic experiences. Local housing authorities [in Sheffield work with mental health providers](#) to ensure refugee settlement addresses the anxiety of the displaced and homeless; [in Bolton they support refugees with employment training](#). In [Birmingham](#) and [Bilbao](#), the maternal health of refugee and migrant women in a top priority, with services shaped to respond to their cultural needs and preferences.

In London, the [Employability Forum](#) helps connect high-skilled refugees to the labour market while running school-based programs to help children and youth dispel myths and stereotypes about refugees. In Wuppertal, the city's ["Partizipation" network](#) promotes language and job-readiness training to populations formerly isolated by joblessness. In [Bristol](#) and [Copenhagen](#), cycling promotes health and bridges divides by bringing newcomers and locals together around shared city values.

It is heartening that many cities around the world are recognizing that refugees have their own special needs and are stepping up to the challenge of fostering their integration into their new communities, often spontaneously, in innovative ways with warm hearts and open arms. Through work, sport, the arts and ordinary acts of kindness, local communities from Wuppertal to Auckland are finding ways to ensure that these newcomers who often fall between the cracks are settled, welcomed and integrated.

Here some refugee stories of welcome and success:

Fort Wayne: Welcome to Little Burma

With the largest population of [Burmese refugees in the US, Fort Wayne, Indiana](#) is both an old city of migration – founded by 19th century settlers from Europe – and a new "gateway city," one of a growing number of mid-size cities, old state capitals and regional hubs across the US and internationally that are becoming target destinations for new immigrants.

Recognizing that the needs of the Burmese were different than the city's founding immigrant communities, the city worked closely with local faith-based groups and immigrant-serving organizations to tailor services and supports to meet their needs.

In addition to a three day pre-arrival orientation session given by the U.S. State Department in the refugee camps, the Burmese arriving in Fort Wayne received additional instruction on health, citizenship, public services, education, employment, laws and other aspects of American life. The city also made sure its newest residents participated in the US Census Decennial campaign in 2009. To qualify for government assistance, the Burmese population had to meet the threshold for services, including benefits such as Burmese language versions of government forms and tests, translation



services, and the ability to qualify for grants, aid and scholarships from foundations and the government. Being counted also has an important symbolic value. Census participation is a form of representation and a good indicator of the civic engagement of newcomer communities. Fort Wayne's success in making newcomers count is a strong endorsement of this new gateway city's openness and accountability to the changing urban landscape.

As Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry states: "Our community has been enriched by the talents, skills and cultures of those that call Fort Wayne home. Our city is stronger and more vibrant because of its diversity. It is hallmark of our All-America City and something for which we all should be proud."

[Read the full Good Idea.](#)

Auckland: The Universal Language of Sport



"Soccer is a universal language and culture. It has its own culture and it doesn't need [a specific] the language. You can play on a team. It's a point of integration. It helps refugees get more involved in the community and it helps them with better settlement," says Dr. Arif Saeid, formerly a medical practitioner in Afghanistan and Community Services Manager for Refugees as Survivors (RAS), an Auckland-based non-profit that provides services that include community development.

In the city of Auckland, soccer helps reduce the social isolation of young refugees and provides a sense of connection and belonging – both with each other and to the wider community.

The Refugees in Sport Initiative was started in 2006 by RAS after conducting a series of community consultations pointed to a service gap in their work with refugee youth. Programs were needed to give refugee kids better access to mainstream sports and a safe place to meet with others who shared and understood their experience. Youth who participate in the program show better integration into the wider society, reduced social isolation as well as improved self-esteem and cultural pride. Today, participation levels are high and the program has diversified to include a

coaching clinics for refugee players.

[Read the full Good Idea.](#)

Leicester: Telling Stories through Theatre Performances

Theatre and performance arts appeal to wide audiences and are powerful storytelling tools. Theatre group audiences can be larger and more diverse than traditional campaigning organizations, potentially reaching members of the public who might be unaware or apathetic to refugee and asylum issues.

Iceandfire is a theatre company that explores human rights stories through performance across four work strands: production, outreach, education and participation. Asylum Dialogues, one of the performances by the theatre company in the city of Leicester, UK, tells stories that show acts of solidarity between British people towards asylum seekers. The dialogues incorporate real conversations and document the positive transformations created by their encounters.

The outreach arm of iceandfire is their Actors for Human Rights, which began as a handful of actors, someone with no initial knowledge of the asylum system who then became ambassadors. A poll indicated that the performances encouraged audience members to become more actively involved in asylum and refugee issues. Likewise, the response from those who shared their stories of asylum has been universally positive.

[Read the full Good Idea.](#)

Wellington: Bridging More than the Digital Divide

In the age of Facebook, Youtube and Skype, living without access to the Internet, let alone basic word processing software, can mean barriers to services and exclusion from an important aspect of mainstream culture. For refugee families with limited resources and language skills, this divide is even greater. Addressing this challenge, New Zealand not-for-profit Computers in Homes (CIH) took an existing program providing low income families with computers and training and modified it to cater specifically to refugee families and their unique needs. CIH recognized an opportunity to make Internet access and basic computer technology a passport to improved integration outcomes for immigrant children and their parents.

Originally established in Wellington, the program has provided training and computers to thousands of New Zealand families across the country. The positive outcomes reported by this innovative program have been many. Families have been thrilled with being able to be connected with the communities they've left behind, keeping in touch with friends and family abroad easily and economically, children use the Internet for homework, schools have reported increased communication between refugee parents and teachers, and parents are able to not only connect with their children's education but also access the wider community.



[Read the full Good Idea.](#)

[Read interview with founder Di Daniels.](#)

London: Breaking down cultural misconceptions

In celebration of Refugee Week in 2010, the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in London offered visitors [unique tours of Museum galleries guided by refugees](#) from around the world. Refugees from Rwanda, Burma, Iraq, Somalia, Darfur, and Uganda presented collections from the Museum's galleries as springboards for their own personal stories and experiences.

V&A's Clare Paul created these tours to engage refugee communities and help break down cultural misconceptions. How? By inviting refugees to act as cultural interpreters and tell their own stories. "People are very engaged. They're connecting with the refugees... and that's changing attitudes. The tours are an opportunity to see the world through someone else's eyes" says Paul.

The successes of the V&A's Refugee Week highlight the important role museums can play in recognizing the contribution of different communities to a city's cultural heart

[Read the full Good Idea.](#)

Wuppertal: From Asylum to Employment

In 2007, changes to the federal Asylum Seekers Benefits Act in Germany resulted in new opportunities for a population formerly denied access to both employment and training. Earning wages sufficient to be independent of social services became a mandatory requirement to qualify for residency and the right to stay in the Germany.

Enter a project like [Partizipation, the Wuppertal Network for the promotion of labour market integration of "abode claimants and refugees."](#) The City of Wuppertal responded by introducing this intensive job readiness project to help asylum seekers find long-term employment – specifically to help them find either training or a job placement.

Within six months of launching the program, city social workers started receiving calls about how to sign on. Over the next few years, successful outcomes reported included changes in attitudes, participants finding employment, improved integration and cost savings for the government.

Essential to the success of the labour market integration program is the scale of support offered to a client group marginalized by lack of opportunity. The city social workers rolled up their sleeves and offered intensive hands-on coaching and counselling to the participants. Appointments, reminders, counseling, guidance and support for the participants are as important as the interactions of project managers with employers and other stakeholders.

[Read the full Good Idea.](#)

For more...

You can view more good ideas in refugee integration by typing in the word 'refugees' in the search box at the top of the page on the [Cities of Migration website.](#)

MIPEX 2015: Is Canada Still an International Leader of Integration?

By kturner
April 16, 2015
Uncategorized



Canada's new MIPEX scores will soon tell. The 2015 edition of the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) will be published in May 2015.

[MIPEX is a fully interactive tool](#) and reference guide to assess, compare, and improve integration policy in various countries, including Canada. The launch of the new MIPEX scores for Canada will provide important information on the impact of important policy changes in Canada's immigration and settlement policies in recent years. How does Canada compare to other countries in terms of granting immigrants access to citizenship, health care, and the labour market? Is Canada still an international leader when it comes to integration?

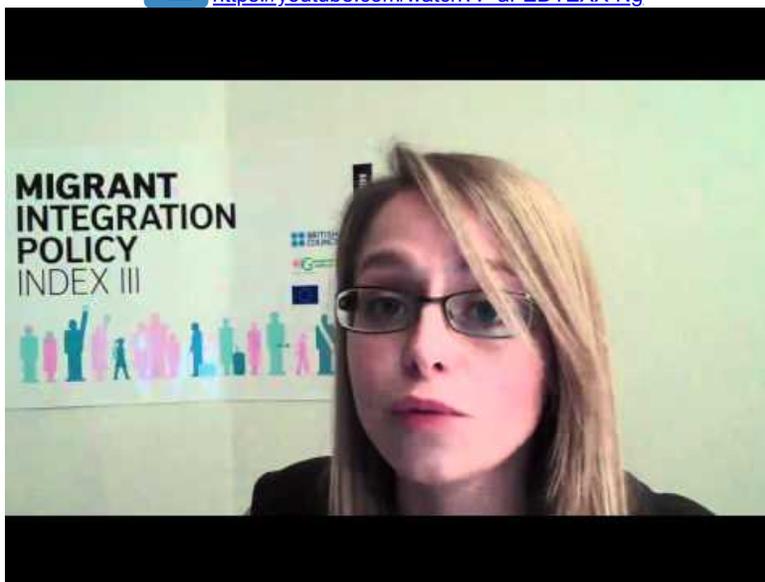
Learn about these issues on May 27, 2015, at the MIPEX Canada launch co-hosted by RCIS and the Global Diversity Exchange at Ryerson University.

Click here to [Register for the May 27 MIPEX launch event](#) (Toronto).

Click here to see the [2011 MIPEX 3 results](#).



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=aFEDTEXX-Ng>



Suzanne Ma: Meet Me in Venice

By Evelyn
April 14, 2015
[Opinion](#)



An excerpt from Suzanne Ma's *Meet Me in Venice: A Chinese Immigrant's Journey From the Far East to the Faraway West* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015):

When my husband's grandfather died, we returned to this ancestral home in eastern China and burned spirit money at his grave. The saffron flames devoured pastel fake euros. Faux American greenbacks were consumed whole. And gold paper ingots glowed like a sunset before they turned black and crumbled to ash. It was important for Grandfather to have foreign currency in the afterlife. For even in death, the dream of making it rich overseas was still very much alive.

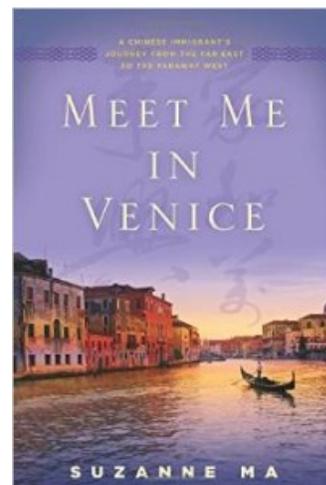
In Zhejiang province, not far from the East China Sea, there is a county shaped by the collective belief that emigration brings wealth and prosperity. Emigration is so common that locals often say: "If you are born in Qingtian, you are destined to leave." People started leaving Qingtian in the seventeenth century when, according to local lore, some of the earliest globe-trotters trekked across Siberia to get to Europe. Today, this is a story that continues to inspire generations to leave. In the beginning people were desperate to escape. Qingtian literally means "green fields," but the county's name was betrayed by a barren, mountainous landscape. With so little fertile land in the region, people were starving and isolated with no roads and little infrastructure. Rugged cliffs carved lines with the horizon, closing in on towns and villages like an army of unmovable stone warriors. The migrants first made their way to other regions in China. Some traveled to Japan and other parts of Southeast Asia. Eventually, they boarded ships and then planes bound for every corner of the globe. The habit of migration spread to surrounding regions. Soon, hundreds of thousands were leaving Zhejiang province,, fanning out to more than 120 countries around the world. But they were particularly drawn to Europe.

Qingtian is not the kind of place the average tourist visits. It's a small and isolated county, three hundred miles south of Shanghai and nearly forty miles from the coast, and so seemingly unimportant that it wasn't even visible on Google Maps until a few years ago. But this is my husband's ancestral home – a place with a long history of emigration to the outside world. What inspired so many people to leave this landlocked county? How did my husband's family end up spread across Europe, in Holland, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain and Portugal; and why would people from Qingtian continue to leave, as China booms and Europe grapples with a debilitating debt crisis and rising unemployment?

In Qingtian, one of the first places we visit the rugged mountain behind his family home. There, we line up for our three ritual kowtows before massive stone tombs carved out of the rock; watching threads of ash swirl around my feet, I think about my in-laws' migration story: how my husband's great-greatfather traveled to Holland by boat and sold peanut candy on the street. The Dutch called such men *pindaman* – peanut men. But in China, he would have been called a rich man. With the Dutch guilders he earned, he returned home to Qingtian to build his family a new house: a two-story structure with an open-aired courtyard and several bedrooms held up by strong wooden beams. His house, which still stands today, was built more than 70 years ago. Listening to the old stories can be inspiring and heart-wrenching at the same time. I imagine how Great-grandfather must have braved the rough seas for months before finally arriving at the port in Marseilles. I think about how he survived in a foreign land, where people spoke a language he did not understand, ate food he had never tasted before, and looked oddly extraterrestrial with their green and blue eyes and blond hair. It is a tale of first contact and first encounters – a narrative shared by immigrants all around the world, even today. There are now more than 214 million international migrants worldwide. That means one out of every thirty-three persons in the world today is a migrant. If all the migrants gathered in one place, they would form the fifth most popular country in the world. Nearly half of all international migrants are women.

In America we understand, perhaps better than anyone, what it is like to leave your home and start someplace new. Why do people migrate? What attracts or repels migrants? Who wins and who loses with migration? Is it true that immigrants steal jobs away from local workers? Or do they provide fresh labor and talent for ailing economies? What happens to the home countries emigrants leave behind? Immigration is one of the most talked about issues in the world, a testy subject that is taking on an increasingly negative tone in light of the global economic downturn. European governments have only recently started to take multiculturalism and minorities imperiously. And with the arrival of so many newcomers, far-right political parties are gaining momentum in immigrant-receiving nations. More than two dozen parties across the European continent have denounced immigrants as invaders, a drain on finite resources, and a threat to already scarce jobs in the workplace. This rhetoric is also heard in America, despite the continent's heritage of immigration, where laws deny undocumented immigrants basic human rights. Still, migrants today will continue to seek opportunities in places they aren't always welcome. Why?

The work of award-winning journalist [Suzanne Ma](#) has appeared in numerous publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *the Associated Press*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Salon*, among others.





A graduate of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, Suzanne was awarded the Pulitzer Traveling Fellowship, which helped fund her fieldwork in China for her first book, Meet Me in Venice.

Born in Toronto, Suzanne was raised by immigrant parents who insisted she attend Chinese school every Saturday morning. Her Chinese lessons continued in Beijing where she met her husband while studying abroad. His family's hometown is also Ye Pei's, and the town's remarkable 300-year history of emigration inspired this book.

Excerpt reprinted with permission from the author.

How a White Working Class Community in Berlin Embraced Its New Immigrants

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



By Andreas Hieronymus and Dušan Ugrina



In the quarter-century since unification, Germany has officially recognized itself as a country of immigration. It changed its citizenship law, implemented EU legislation on anti-discrimination and equality, developed Europe's largest low-paid sector as its white and non-white "working poor" population grew, and has become the leading economic power in the EU.

Yet anti-immigrant movements like PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident) in the eastern city of Dresden have raised concerns about the return of the "ugly German." The collective trauma can still be felt from the early 1990s, when a wave of racist, anti-immigrant pogroms in East and West Germany followed unification.

PEGIDA-like movements have not taken hold, however, in the western part of Germany, or even in most other cities of the former East Germany. Such rallies have mobilized only a few people, while counter-demonstrations number in the tens of thousands. Since unification, in fact, many people have come to support undocumented "Lampedusa refugees," who cross into Germany through Italy. In areas with large immigrant populations, solidarity with new refugees can be seen in both the east and the west.

The report [White Working Class Communities in Berlin](#), part of a comparative six-city study by the Open Society Initiative for Europe, indicates how unification affected identity formation and feelings of "belonging" among the majority local population in the Berlin district of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, once a symbol of the success of real socialism. While recognizing that the phrase "white working class" does not neatly translate into public and political discourse, this project uses the term as shorthand for members of the majority population living in neighborhoods with high indicators of social, economic, and political marginalization.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=dW-6UIIXjhU>



The case study of Marzahn highlights the post-socialist transformation of a local community. Today's Marzahn is largely made up of white Germans, but also has a visible presence of ethnic minorities. And although Marzahn has a negative public image as a racist, East German ghetto, residents there

report a strong and positive sense of belonging. Younger residents, especially, don't see their district's emerging ethnic diversity as a problem. The report also finds that different groups form distinct identities based on available opportunities and the potential to be included and represented in society.

This final point is crucial, because movements like PEGIDA trade on the challenges posed by cultural diversity and immigration, and exploit people's feelings of powerlessness and lack of influence in the political process. The establishment of a reception center for asylum seekers in Marzahn-Hellersdorf in 2013 exemplifies how such feelings can lead to discrimination. The decision by the Berlin state administration to create the asylum-seekers center was made from the top down, and didn't take into account the opinions and feelings of the local community. This process only reinforced residents' belief that their voices are not heard, a feeling that recalled the traumas of unification.

The study shows that, if the local population had been involved in the process of establishing the reception center, it would have had myriad resources at hand to manage the question of asylum seekers differently. For example, the lively local civil society and the sense of belonging and identity among the older generation, which was formed back when Marzahn was built, could have provided a foundation for building solidarity with the newcomers.

The immigration dynamic in Germany is changing. Until recently, these newcomers typically entered low-paid, blue-collar jobs, which put them at odds mainly with working-class people. Today, however, many immigrants enter Germany as skilled labor, challenging two groups already in the country: the emerging middle class of children and grandchildren of the immigrants who moved to Germany in the 1960s and '70s, and the influx of young, skilled, middle-class people from crisis-ridden EU countries who are moving freely to Germany.

If we interpret racism as a social practice to protect one's own social status by downgrading and excluding racialized "competitors," we can understand why groups like PEGIDA are so easily mobilized by the right wing and racists, and why they unite behind a "common enemy" such as Islam and "the Muslim." This perspective enables us to develop alternative practices that emphasize cooperation over competition, produce a good life for all, take into account the experiences of locals, and find a pathway based on mutual respect and openness.

Read the [full report on white working class communities in Berlin](#).

Originally published on April 10, 2015, by [Open Society Initiative in Europe](#). Re-printed with permission from the [Open Society Foundations website](#).

Beyond Banking: Making Migration a Business Issue

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Frank Cui, Head of Migrant and Asian Banking for Bank of New Zealand (BNZ), talks to Cities of Migration's guest editor, Vicky Holder, [Committee for Auckland](#), about the value of diversity in the work place and the practical ideas his team has developed to make Asian migrants feel welcome.



New Zealand's oldest bank, BNZ believes that to continue to be relevant to their customers, large organisations, such as banks, need to reflect the communities in which they operate and the increasingly diverse customer base they serve. This belief has led to a number of diversity initiatives over the last three years, one of which is a dedicated team, operating specifically to cater for the needs of New Zealand's increasing numbers of Asian migrants.

Established in 2010 with two staff members, the [BNZ Migrant and Asian Banking team](#) now has 36 full time staff speaking nine languages. The team is made up of New Zealanders from different parts of Asia who are able to deliver banking solutions in a client's own language and cultural context as well as understand the challenges and fears new migrants face in New Zealand. In addition to traditional banking solutions, support from the BNZ migrant banking team also extends to sharing local information on the best schools, networks or making business introductions.

Supporting new migrants as they navigate a new country and culture starts the moment the client walks through the bank's front doors to NNZ banks across New Zealand. All BNZ staff who can speak a second language can be identified by the country flag prominently displayed on their name badge.

BNZ's, dynamic head of Migrant and Asian Banking, **Frank Cui** describes the circumstances that led to BNZ developing a migrant banking team:

"Asian customers are used to a different pace in terms of service. They interact in a different way to European Kiwis. It's subtle, but important when trying to build a relationship. New Zealand banks – and businesses in general – need to understand immigrants' lifestyles as well as their needs. It is a broader commitment than just providing Asian speaking staff."

"Businesses need to know how to add value to their Asian customers in the way that is valuable to them," says Frank. Moving beyond the fundamentals of transactional banking to providing practical help to new New Zealanders requires proactive thinking. Having team members who were migrants themselves means an instant empathy for their customers.

Frank himself arrived in New Zealand at age 18 with little English and no experience of Kiwi culture so he understands how new arrivals can feel.

"Helping somebody find the right school for their child is just as important as setting up the right bank account and package of financial products," says Frank. "Our customers really appreciate having someone to have a laugh with, who understands. Those are the relationships that last."



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=9kTVy4QGB2Y>



VH: How did you decide on what materials and resources about life in NZ to offer to migrant customers?

"All the information about life in New Zealand -schools, sport, how to buy a house, get a driver's licence etc.- is out there but it is not readily accessible. We put all this information in ONE place for our customers."

Crucially, Frank and his team recognise that it is cultural context and confidence that sometimes gets lost in translation. Providing safe spaces for new migrants to learn conversational English and get to grips with the unique New Zealand idiom shifts the focus from what people say to what they mean and is a vital tool in making Asian migrants feel welcomed.

The focus appears to be on migrants from China. Are there plans to extend the migrant banking suite of resources to other ethnicities? If so, which ones and why?

Asian migrants in New Zealand are not just Chinese. They are from Japan, the Philippines and India. They speak Mandarin, Cantonese and a myriad of other dialects.

As over 25% of new arrivals to Auckland are Asian, the bank will continue to focus on adding value to those communities before expanding its migrant banking suite of services to other ethnicities.

In addition to the migrant banking department initiatives, what does the future hold for BNZ's Diversity Programme?

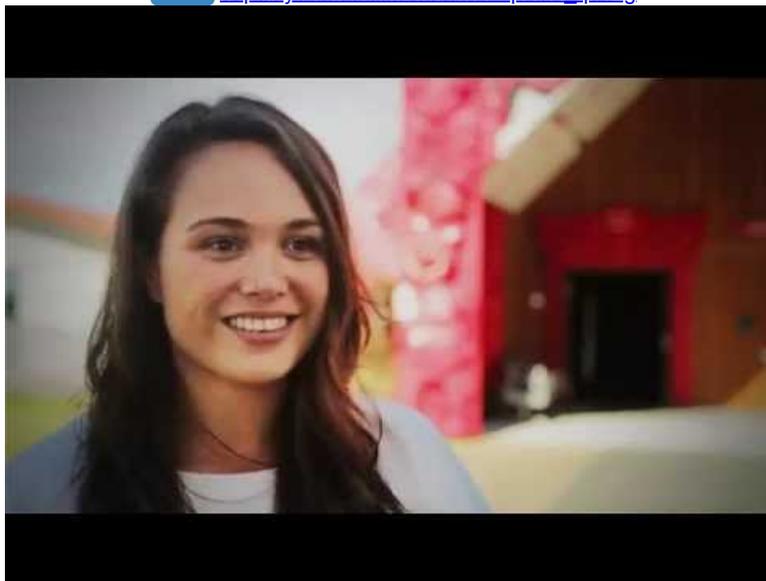
In February 2014 [Bank of New Zealand \(BNZ\) released a study](#) outlining the case for active investment in encouraging diversity in the workforce. The bank argued that diversity is not political correctness, but delivers a distinct competitive advantage for organisations that invest in encouraging a culture

of diversity, flexibility and inclusion.

Over the past three years the bank has been walking its talk and in 2013 was one of five organisations worldwide to be recognised by the United Nations for its progress in encouraging gender diversity. The bank launched the [Te Pihinga Maori cadetships](#) in partnership with Te Puni Kokiri in January 2013 and offers flexible working as an option for all employees.



https://youtube.com/watch?v=tpXeR_qfNEg



BNZ will continue working on initiatives that encourage the development of a balanced workforce which Frank says will lead to competitive advantage.

“At the end of the day, diversity is not about age, gender, style or ethnicity; it is about unleashing the potential of each individual within your workforce.”

Can you describe the practical steps that service institutions in other countries would take to adopt your Diversity Programme and specific initiatives?

1. Focus on adding value in ways that are important for the customers.
2. Create a framework within which you can pilot ideas and expand on successful ones. BNZ's diversity programme was built organically, beginning with two staff, developed strategically and executed well because of a clear implementation framework.
3. “Measurement is vital – what gets measured gets done.”
4. Consistent support from the top down and across the organisation has driven the results the bank has seen so far.

We asked Frank for the secret to his winning formula: *“We have a common commitment – from the board to the executive team right through the organisation.”*

All About the Bias, So Subtle

By ktuner
February 18, 2015
[Opinion](#)



By Manjula Luthria, Senior Economist, World Bank, and program leader for the International Mobility Program of the MENA region's Human Development network.

While the Grammy's gave us the title to this post, it was the Superbowl that made me think of last year's controversial commercial. A one-minute Coca Cola advertisement featuring children and adults—mostly immigrants—from across the United States, singing “America the Beautiful” in multiple languages. The advertisement sparked outrage with detractors calling it unpatriotic and swearing to never buy a coke product again. The contentiousness of migration became more apparent as 2014 progressed, with the election of anti-migration political parties in Europe and widespread disapproval of President Obama's immigration reforms here in the States. At the onset of this year—spurred on in part by the terrifying attacks on Charlie Hebdo—some Europeans took to the streets not only to protest terrorism, but also immigration.

To those of us who work on migration, these events on both sides of the Atlantic pose a mystery.

Data show that the gains to global welfare from more international labour mobility are astoundingly large (much larger than the gains from other development darlings) yet public opinion appears to show a repeated rejection of the idea of more mobility. If this disconnect is cause for worry, the findings of the [World Values Survey](#) are cause for outright depression: in OECD countries the number of people rejecting migrants as neighbors rose from 1 in 12 in 1980 to about 1 in 8 in 2010, a 34 percent increase. Natives' perceptions of a detrimental impact of more migration on their personal lives does not seem to match the mountain of evidence that points to it being globally beneficial.

Meanwhile, economists and demographers tell us that we need to prepare for more—not less—mobility than currently exists. In discussing why we should care about these challenges [in his book Arrival City, Doug Saunders](#) highlights the upcoming “mass movement that will change our world in the twenty-first century.” [The World Bank's Maitreyi Das, in Inclusion Matters](#), describes migration as “one of the most potent forces of social churning” today. Indeed, migration is here to stay.

So with larger migrant flows imminent, the sources of all this resistance to migration require serious attention, which will no doubt take us into the uncomfortable territory of privately held views. This means that the binding barrier to entry needs to be recognized, even though it remains invisible in the form of implicit bias or perceptions. If we don't devote this effort now, labour will remain trapped in locations that do not offer the best return on investment, or will end up choosing mobility at a great risk to their own well-being and lives. And our twin goals of reducing absolute poverty and achieving shared prosperity will continue to miss one of the most important weapons in its arsenal.

In an effort to lay the foundations for more labor mobility—not just international, but internal as well—we in the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice at the World Bank have fostered country engagements on increasing access to overseas markets as well as strengthening the institutional underpinnings that can support this greater access. As we scale up these engagements, we will also start to pay greater attention to policies and practices that can help reduce the resistance to migration, improve the reception that migrants receive, and ultimately improve their insertion into the unfamiliar labor markets of their new host communities in a way that fully utilizes their labor assets.

Identifying such policies and practices will involve a broader conversation amongst various specialists, from those working on hiring practices of employers to housing regulations in urban centers to service access. We are launching this conversation now, in partnership with the Social Inclusion Community of Practice, and will be reaching out to various stakeholders within and outside the World Bank to continue this important conversation.

Join us to discuss emerging work on these issues at [Opening Doors and Minds: Urban Migrant Integration in Policy and Practice](#), a conversation between [Maitreyi Das](#) and [Doug Saunders](#) moderated by Omar Arias.

Manjula Luthria is Senior Economist and program leader for the International Mobility Program of the MENA region's Human Development network. She is based at the [Center for Mediterranean Integration in Marseille](#), France and can be contacted by email at: [mluthria\(at\)worldbank.org](mailto:mluthria@worldbank.org).

Arrival City Readings Take Off

By ktuner
February 12, 2015
Uncategorized



The City Builder Book Club's online reading of Doug Saunders' Arrival City took off on January 13, with an [introductory essay by Mary Rowe, Municipal Art Society of New York City \(MASNYC\)](#) which we have excerpted below:

Arrival cities and the eloquence of human resilience

"Perhaps the most important point of this book, and the exercise of this book club, to remind us to watch carefully what actually happens in the arrival city. People come, as they always have, and now in greater numbers, to cities with an expectation that their lives and those of their families will be more productive, have more meaning and fulfillment. Despite the extraordinary success of the world's cities as engines of wealth creation, guarantors of civil rights, and generators of stunning creative expression, beauty and excellence of all kinds, there are still naysayers, in both hemispheres and all continents (well, six) who doubt the capacity of cities to successfully absorb people, fearing some sort of urban cataclysm.

Arrival City speaks so eloquently to the resilience of the human race, not only as individuals, but as a collective, and to the resilience of what is arguable our greatest achievement: cities. We are a communal species, thankfully, and our future rests with each other, and our collective capacity to understand what kind of problem a city is, and continue to build better. Because a city is never done. Cities enable people. Cities enable hope. Welcome to the City Builder Book Club Volume 2: Arrival City." – Mary Rowe, on Arrival City

For Mary's full text and more from fellow-contributors, visit the [Arrival City reading schedule](#) where you'll find a cast of global contributors, as well as [City Sound Walks](#) and [supplementary readings](#) from the justly famous [Toronto Public Library](#), after Singapore, the world's largest public library system.

Urbanization of the Village

Readers are now deep into the book's [Chapter 4: The Urbanization of the Village, with contributor Tazzeel Merchant, City Building Institute](#) at Ryerson University, who notes that cities and city-dwellers cling to "illusory, romantic associations with rural life" when the reality of rural poverty and deprivation paints a very different picture. Notwithstanding the unrelenting pace of global urbanization, Merchant reminds us, "there will always be a rural constituency." Like Saunders he is optimistic about the future of the rural poor, but also mindful of what we owe them:

"Farms will get larger, more productive, and more efficient, driven by the economics and realities of labour and mechanisation. Discussions and conflicts will arise on simplistic assumptions of governance and power that are premised on size and growth. This chapter clearly illustrates the mutually beneficial relationships between the cities and villages, and how these connections need to be sustained and nurtured to allow both to coexist and support one another. In this march towards urbanisation, let this not be forgotten."

We hope discussions like these will inspire you to add your voice to an energetic dialogue on issues of urban migration from innovative planning, policy and design solutions to social entrepreneurship, rights and advocacy.

Arrival City invites you to respond to the phenomenon of this massive shift. [Join the City Builder Book Club for a global conversation.](#)

Follow us on Twitter [@CityBuilderBook](#) and join the conversation with the hashtags #ArrivalCity and #CityBuilders.



Living Together in Difficult Times

By kturner
Uncategorized

Conversations in Integration, Editorial, February 2015

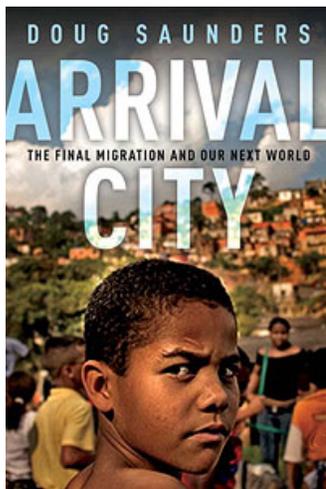
Cities of migration are places of inclusion and exclusion. The chilling events of the new year, from Charlie Hebdo to Pegida, remind us that discrimination and prejudice on all sides remain important challenges to face.

Research shows that people living in diverse neighbourhoods are more tolerant and open to diversity. However, we also know that inequality and poverty of opportunity can lead to alienation and disengagement whatever your background. Findings from Open Society Foundations' seminal work on [marginalized white working class communities](#) resonate with [Rokhaya Diallo's balanced analysis of the politics of exclusion and its impact on extremism](#). Whether it's white flight to extremism (Pegida) or the radicalism of the *banlieue* (Charlie Hebdo), there are no simple explanations for these abject failures.

As [Doug Saunders notes in Arrival City](#), successful cities are always making room for "the other". Inclusion and a sense of belonging are key to immigrant success and critical underpinnings of the social and economic resilience that every great city needs to realize the potential of every citizen, including immigrants, and the promise of shared prosperity for all.

In recognition of these challenges, and in the spirit of fostering a greater sense of inclusion and belonging, this edition of our newsletter is dedicated to "Living Together."

Read the newsletter: Cities of Migration, [Conversations in Integration, February 2015](#).



Correcting a Diversity Gap

By ktuner
Uncategorized

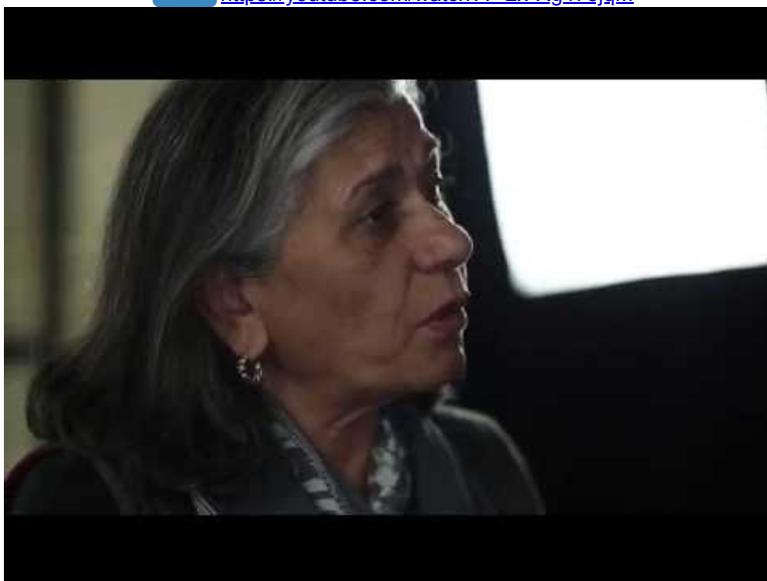


On February 24, 2015, the award-winning [DiverseCity onBoard](#) program will launch nationally, replicating the Toronto model in cities across Canada.

“DiverseCity onBoard is a nimble solution to bridge the diversity gap in governance,” noted Ratna Omidvar, Global Diversity Exchange. “Diversity in Canada is on the rise and is one of Canada’s greatest strengths. Yet, whilst our cities and urban regions have become more ethnically and racially diverse over time, their leadership, be it political, social, cultural or economic is still a reflection of “old Canada”. We need to embrace the full spectrum of skills, experiences and connections available. Capitalizing on our immense talent pool is an imperative for today’s non-profit, public and corporate boards.”



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=2x-Rg47ojqM>



DiverseCity onBoard was the recipient of the international [Intercultural Innovation Award, in Doha in 2011](#), recognized by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group. The award accelerated the program’s replication agenda, and has helped bring together like-minded leaders and organizations for international learning exchanges in Toronto (2013) and Berlin (2014). Today a vibrant international community of practice connects 22 cities in 10 countries to this catalytic strategy for building inclusion and diversity into the fabric of decision-making in our public institutions.

DiverseCity onBoard: DiverseCity onBoard ensures that the governance of agencies, boards and commissions in the voluntary, charitable and public sectors reflects more closely reflects the lived reality of the community. It conducts research, and analyzes the impact and benefits of embedding governance diversity into institutions and organizations. It develops platforms to enable organizations and individuals to connect with each other and build their governance capacity with a focus on diversity and inclusion. It offers self-paced, affordable quality online governance training to all individuals and all sectors. It builds the essential social networks across communities that area a precursor for social cohesion. Started in Toronto, the program has 1500 individuals from visible minority and under-represented communities as its customers and has facilitated the appointment of over 720 individuals to the governance bodies of the GTA’s many agencies, boards and commissions across a range of organizations in the public and voluntary sectors.

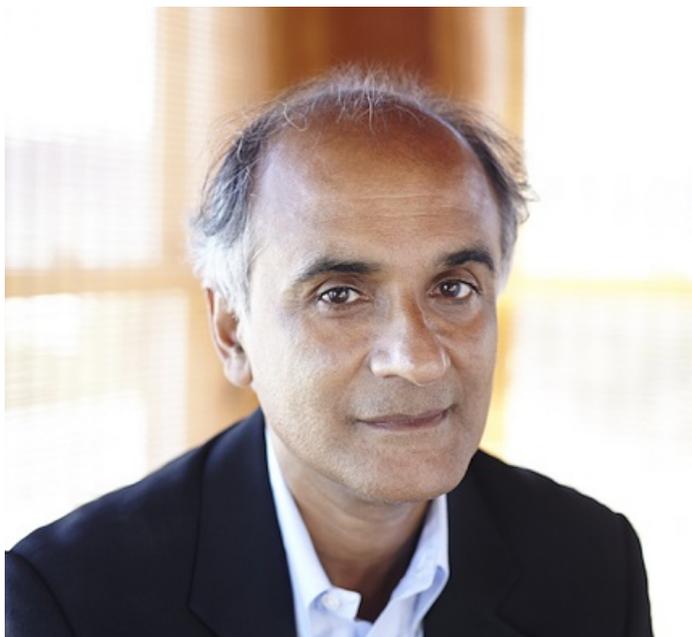
For more information, contact: onboard(at)diversecitytoronto.ca , or visit the [DiverseCity onBoard website](#).

Read the [DiverseCity onBoard 'Good Idea' profile](#) at Cities of Migration,

Pico Iyer: The Foreign Spell

By kturmer

[Opinion](#)



“To be a foreigner is to be perpetually detached, but it is also to be continually surprised.”

Pico Iyer, acclaimed essayist and travel writer, takes on the theme of “the foreigner” in a recent essay in a [Lapham's Quarterly special issue on Foreigners](#), reflecting on his own migrant experience and inviting us to explore the concept of the foreigner as a cultural and historical artefact in a world where diversity is rapidly eclipsing notions of the ‘other’:

“...the very notion of the foreign has been shifting in our age of constant movement, with more than fifty million refugees; every other Torontonians you meet today is what used to be called a foreigner, and the number of people living in lands they were not born to will surpass 300 million in the next generation. Soon there'll be more foreigners on earth than there are Americans.”



Read the full article: [The Foreign Spell. By Pico Iyer In Lapham's Quarterly \(winter 2015\).](#)

See Pico Iyer's TedTalk: [Where's Home?](#) (June 2013)

Save the date! May 7, 2015

[Registration is now open.](#)

Pico Iyer joins us in Toronto for the Inaugural Annual Lecture of the Global Diversity Exchange (GDx) at Ryerson University. GDx is excited to announce speaker [Pico Iyer, travel writer, author, philosopher, and global citizen](#). Mr. Iyer, author of the acclaimed *The Global Soul* and *The Art of Stillness: Adventures in Going Nowhere*, will begin an annual tradition of exploring big ideas on diversity, prosperity and migration that matter to a world on the move.

For more information email: gdx@ryerson.ca

Interview with Ramon Sanahuja, Barcelona

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Ramon Sanahuja, Director of Immigration and Interculturality, Barcelona City Council speaks with Cities of Migration about the [BCN New Families Programme](#), the city-sponsored immigrant family reunification service.

How did you determine that this approach was needed? How has it been received by families?

Ramon Sanahuja: When a migrant decides to reunify their family in the country of residence, is because he or she has been able to gain a minimum status of stability after many years of migration process. When they decide to reunite they need to fulfil some conditions: they need to be stable and getting settled, have a minimum income and job, have a house with minimum conditions, etc. Migrants decide to reunite their relatives when they have reached certain stability. It is a very important moment in their migrant live. It is the turning point: they decide to bring their relatives (mainly descendants and wives or husbands) with them.

So, they decide to build their future in the hosting city rather than in the country of residence origin. It is the time when their start to be a little more open to understand how their new host society is. They want to know about the education system for their children, also the health system, etc. and become more integrated.

Do you have any ideas about why the number of applications for family reunification fell by more than 50% over just four years, specifically from 6,943 in 2008 to 3,452 in 2011? How has this impacted your project?

RS: The authorisation for family reunification is under the jurisdiction of the federal/Spanish government. Applicants must meet certain federal requirements, among them: minimum income, or having a proper house in order to bring their families. Local administrations are in charge to report housing conditions of those who ask permission to bring their relatives.

The decline of the application it is due to economic crisis, austerity policies and increase of unemployment in south Europe. Therefore now there are less migrants who meet all the conditions in order to start a reunifying process.

How important and impactful has it been to provide support assistance before, during and after the reunification process? How has that supported or affected immigrant knowledge or, participation in and sense of welcome in their local community?

RS: Before, it was very important to assess migrants to meet all legal requirement and to help them to go through the legal process with the federal administration. In this initial stage they are only worried about legal process. There are quite complicated procedures applicants must go through. They need the authorisation by the federal government and need some documents from the Spanish consulates in the country of origin.

When they get the initial authorisation is when they start to be worried about what could happen when their relatives arrive. So, while this type of support is not required by families before the legal process, but it becomes very clear from the point of view of our team of professionals that families need some psychological and educational help to manage the new situation. Families have to face new relationships between parents and their kids, or wives and husbands. During the time that the program has been implemented, our team has developed resources and services to help families to deal with this kind of specific challenges in the reunification process.

Beyond specialized programming for youth and women, we are also developing concrete solutions for specific situations in order to ensure reunited family members experience a good welcome in their new community.

What are some of the most important lessons you've learned as you run this project?



RS: The most important lesson has been to realize the very importance of education integration for kids and teenagers, and the psychological process involved in the reunification process for new families relationship. Legal issues are fundamental in the first step, but don't guarantee a successful integration for the all members of the family in the host society. The main objective of this program is to work in favour of integration and wellness of new residents of Barcelona.

We also have learned that it is better to assess immigrants and their relatives on the consequences and impact for their lives to undertake family reunification as soon as possible during the process. There are a lot of things that can be done in the country of origin with their relatives before arriving to our city: For example, they can get the right documents (with the Haig Apostille) of their education system in order to get recognition, or start preparing them for the new language of the country of destination with new technologies, etc.

Have non-immigrant residents of Barcelona had any reactions to your project? What has the reaction been?

RS: In general reactions have been very positive by the hosting society, especially from members of the education system and other public system programs like libraries. In the past they were challenged by having a lot of children arriving by family reunification without any knowledge of the educational system in Catalonia.

If the children arrive through our program, we are able to provide a lot of information. Therefore children, especially adolescents, are more prepared to face the challenge of schools in a new different system and different language.

You pay special attention and specific services to young immigrants and women and mention a need to address family conflict. Why this focus? What challenges had you identified that you've been able to address in the project?

Families with teenagers have to deal with a complicated situation: in a difficult period of growth and development, they start a migration project in a new country, to reach their parents whom they have not seen for a long time. At the same time, the program is focused on a successful integration into school (most of all high school and university). We've noticed that, without this help, youth tend to leave the school from the age of 17 to 18, and they have many problems to enter the university without a good process of adaptation to the new education system.

Women are a key focus of our programme on a double sense:

1. In Barcelona we have many migrant women that have arrive by themselves to Barcelona and after several years of struggling alone in the city have reach a stable situation, so they may become more empowered than in their country of origin. Sometimes, when husbands arrive, they do not expect their wives to be so independent and empowered; they have an old image when they lived in the country of origin. Very often husbands experience unemployment when they initially arrive, and are dependent in their wives income. This can create some tensions in the family. Therefore, we can prepare women for all this and other potentially difficult scenarios.
2. On the other side, cultural rules from their countries of origin may be very different for women from their new host society. This makes it very important to have some cultural competence workshops to explain their rights and possibilities (work, learning language, etc.) in host society.

Currently, we are focusing especially with Pakistani reunited women coming from rural areas. They are at great risk to be isolated at home for a long time before they gain autonomy to go out alone. We are working with their husbands to gain their confidence and ensure that their wives are able to get into the community and begin their integration sooner.

In 2012, you worked with families from 54 different countries and have been doing some specialized work with the Chinese community. What issues or program modifications have you had to make as a result of the fact that the number of immigrants from Latin American has fallen and that of immigrants from Asia has risen?

RS: In the case of Latin American families language is not a problem. But in the case of Chinese families it is a very difficult problem. Then, the programme offers some workshops in Chinese.

Is the same case for the other nationalities with a lower level of Spanish language proficiency. There are workshops with translators who speak Urdu and Punjabi. We have developed specific outreach and approaches for women who live in parts of the city where they have less contact with non-immigrant residents (for example, in Ciutat Vella District), among the women from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

We have some professionals who are able to communicate directly with potential users in Chinese, Urdu and Punjabi. This has been successful and our work with these groups has increased substantially.

Other demographic changes include an increase in mixed households (marriages between a Spaniard and a foreigner). Has this shift had any impact on your project direction or focus?

Not directly, but this tendency to an increase of mixed households provides a positive environment for the integration of new families to the city. It contributes to the normalisation of cultural diversity.

We also have to acknowledge that part of people who start a reunification process are also Spanish nationals who had married a foreigner who is reuniting with a relative.

You also run the anti-rumour campaign, which would seem to be a complement to this project. How do you see the two efforts as related or overlapping, both in terms of mission and in practical terms?

RS: We really see both programmes as a complementary projects working on integration of all newcomers in Barcelona. The anti-rumour campaign is focusing on the consciousness of all residents of the city to respect cultural diversity. On the other side, the New Families Program is focusing on new residents and their specific needs.

What advice would you give to another city looking at your model and experience that might want to replicate it?

RS: As we said, the most important advice from this program is the importance of taking into account the psychological, educational and social needs of the families, not only the legal ones.

At the same time, working between governments is essential. While applications are approved by the federal government, the legal requirements permit the Immigration Services of the city to have contact with each family asking for reunification with their relatives. It is a very important opportunity to reach all new families in the city, before and after the reunification process, and to implement specific services and resources for them.

Any other thoughts or successes that you would like to share about New Families in Barcelona?

RS: Our main objective of New Families program is the integration of newcomers. It is important for the cities to develop new welcome strategies considering the diversity of origins of newcomers, and the specific needs considering the difficulties that reunited families (youth, spouses and parents) face. The future of integration is based on a good arrival process. We have developed a very micro strategy that has proven to have positive results for everyone involved.

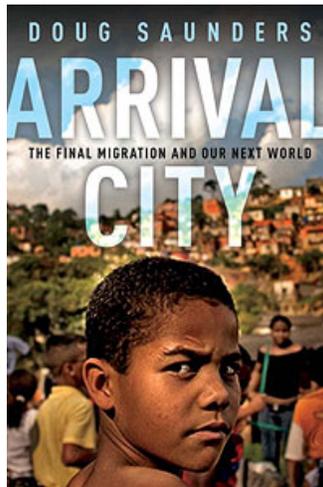
Another important objective is to prepare mainstream services, such as the school system, to receive new reunited students better. It's important to deliver local information to families about their community; information about libraries, sports and recreation centres, youth programs etc. This is why we involve libraries and the local education board in our program.

We think that focusing policy efforts on the moment of family reunification is also key. It has a great impact on the family that has already been here for some time, and reunited family members. Reunification is a turning point for migrants. When they decide to bring their families, they more actively invest their efforts in their host society rather than in their country of origin.

Read the Good Idea profile: [New Family, New City: BCN's New Families Programme](#)

Telling Stories, Moving Pictures

By kturner
December 19, 2014
Uncategorized



Storytelling and sharing good ideas are the bread-and-butter of our work at Cities of Migration. Here are some great reads and films to watch over the holidays from our colleagues and associates at the Global Diversity Exchange.

Talking Truths

Blind Spots: The Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin R. Banaji, Professor of Psychology & Social Ethics at Harvard University. Banaji's keynote and workshop was a big hit at the [Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin](#). Uncovering of the "blindspots" that unconsciously inform our behaviour was a profound learning experience and a precious take home to reset our thinking at both a personal and organizational level.

Arrival City: The Final Migration and Our Next World by journalist Doug Saunders, offers an optimistic narrative of our urban future through an analysis of 'global arrival cities' that mark "the most decisive social and cultural shift since the Enlightenment." "We will end the century as a wholly urban species," notes Doug Saunders, the consequences of which will affect everything from governance systems and financial markets to climate conditions and fuel resources. Join the [online Arrival City Book Club](#) in January 2015!

The Foreign Spell by Pico Iyer. "To be a foreigner is to be perpetually detached, but it is also to be continually surprised." The winter issue of Lapham's Quarterly is on "Foreigners", and offers a wide-ranging romp through historical, cultural and literary notions of 'us & them', from enemy aliens to cultural icon. Excerpted from Iyer's new book, read the [article on "The Foreign Spell"](#).

What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets by Michael Sandel. "The most fateful change that unfolded in the last three decades was not an increase in greed. It was the expansion of markets, and of market values, into spheres of life where they don't belong." ... including in immigration. As Sandel comments "There are some things money can't buy." [Read the Atlantic article](#), excerpted from the Harvard Professor's new book.

Telling Stories

City of Lies: Love, Sex, Death and the Search for Truth in Tehran by Ramita Navai. A story about the social landscape of Tehran, "a city where wealth rises almost linearly along a south-north drive up the tree-lined Vali Asr." A collection of migrant stories about those who migrate back to Tehran, those who leave, and those who stay. For anyone with a taste for Arrival City-type literature. [Reviewed in The Guardian](#).

The Beast by Óscar Martínez. The "beast" that Óscar Martínez writes about in his often harrowing new book is not actually an animal. It's the train on whose roof Central American immigrants ride across Mexico, making their way to what they hope will be a better life in the United States. The beast, though, truly is a monster: It can devour the lives or limbs of its stowaways, and hosts the human predators who target them." [From a review in New York Times](#).

Family Life: A Novel by Akhil Sharma. Described as a "dark, funny novel about the hopes and troubles of an Indian family" that emigrates from Delhi to America. On The Economist's best book of 2014 list.

Moving Pictures

American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs. What does it mean to be an American revolutionary today? Grace Lee Boggs is a 98-year-old Chinese American woman in Detroit whose vision of revolution will surprise you. A writer, activist, and philosopher rooted for more than 70 years in the African American movement, she has devoted her life to an evolving revolution that encompasses the contradictions of America's past and its potentially radical future.

American Promise. American Promise spans 13 years as Joe Brewster and Michèle Stephenson, middle-class African-American parents in Brooklyn, N.Y., turn their cameras on their son, Idris, and his best friend, Seun, who make their way through Dalton, one of the most prestigious private schools in the country. Chronicling the boys' divergent paths from kindergarten through high school graduation, this provocative, intimate documentary presents complicated truths about America's struggle to come of age on issues of race, class and opportunity.

9-Man. This film spotlights the uniquely Chinese-American sport, an older variant of volleyball popular in the southern Chinese city of Toisan and its surrounding region, as well as in Chinatowns throughout North America. Since the 1930s, young men have played this competitive street ball game in the alleys and parking lots of Chinatown. Some 80 years later, today, 9-man still has a lasting connection to Chinatown for a community of men who knows a different, more integrated America.

[Refugee Republic](#) is an 'interactive transmedia' documentary about everyday life in Domiz Camp, a Syrian refugee camp in northern Iraq that aims to enrich the existing image of refugee camps by building an 'anatomical sketch' of everyday life in the camp, through a combination of drawings, film, photography, sound and text to create a sensory experience.

[UNHCR Tracks: Syria's Oldest Refugees](#). An extraordinary photo-documentary Syrian elders born over 100 years ago, ..."some ache for the past. Others pray for peace. And many dream of going home one last time." The photos speak to our universal humanity.

The Promise of Pluralism

By Evelyn
December 18, 2014
[Opinion](#)



*In May 2014, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees **António Guterres** delivered the Global Centre for Pluralism's third annual lecture in Ottawa, reflecting on the promise of pluralism:*

Today, all societies are – or are on their way to become – multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious.

For some this is a source of discomfort and unease. In many societies, populist politicians, playing upon fears to obtain mindless votes and irresponsible media, only interested in market shares and infotainment, manipulate feelings of anxiety and insecurity, creating artificial divisions, disrupting social cohesion and, in extreme cases, provoking persecution and conflict. We can see this in my part of the world, in Europe, where, fuelled by the economic crisis and high levels of unemployment, anti-immigration and xenophobic parties are gaining influence. Mainstream parties are unable, or sometimes even unwilling to oppose this effectively. **Xenophobia, racism, islamophobia or the invocation of false identities diminish us all.** Not only are they unable to ease the fears of what is new and unfamiliar, they tend to exacerbate them. The reality is that with an average fertility rate of 1.5 children per woman, Europe needs immigration to sustain its economy and pay the pensions of its aging population. But this is largely an unrecognized truth.



This is an impossible discourse; an equation without solution. Immigration is not part of the problem of modern societies; it is part of the solution. Without immigration many of our communities would become completely unsustainable.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Globalization has been unfair, its benefits have been distributed unequally and many have been left out. The paradox of today's world is that money moves freely; goods and services also tend to move relatively freely; but people cannot. People are stopped by physical and legal barriers.

One of the things I have learned in my years of public life is that markets work. Supply and demand tend to meet. In the global labour market, supply and demand will also meet, legally if possible, irregularly if necessary.

Despite barriers, millions of people move from one country to another in the hope of a better future, millions of others to save their lives. They often travel alongside each other, creating the so-called asylum-migration nexus. When international migration is managed by border controls only, in an effort "to keep people out", human traffickers and smugglers are bound to prosper. There is something fundamentally wrong in a world where people have to risk their lives to seek safety and where at the end of a dangerous journey, they are not welcome or even turned away. It breaks my heart to see Syrian refugees being pushed back at the Bulgarian border, one of the European Union's external borders, or drown in the Mediterranean, as they have no other ways to find asylum. We need more international cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination and concerted efforts to identify opportunities for legal migration. We also need international trade and globalization to become true agents of development. And we need more targeted development programmes, focused on poverty reduction, job creation and the strengthening of governance, rule of law and public services. Greater efforts should be made to address the challenges of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building, so that when people move, they do so out of choice, not necessity.

Irrespective of cultural, religious or ethnic differences, men and women around the world share a common humanity. Aristotle was among the first to deny that division was the necessary outcome of diversity and this concept has been followed through by many illustrious thinkers, up to today. **Seeking to identify the qualities and experiences that unite rather than divide people, pluralism can be a powerful force that fosters more harmonious, peaceful and prosperous societies.** A common value that can be found in all cultures is the idea of giving protection, of sheltering a stranger in need. The word asylum is derived from the Greek word "asylon", or sanctuary, a designated space in each city, often a temple, where people could find safety.

Flight from persecution and the search for a protected space are central themes in all the three Abrahamic faiths, and can also be found Hindu mythology and Buddhist teachings. The Exodus of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt is a central story in the Jewish faith. In Christianity, the flight of the Holy Family from Bethlehem is studied by all children. And for Muslims, the Islamic calendar starts with the year the Prophet (PBUH) travelled to Medina to seek protection as he and his followers had come under threat. When some of the first Muslims suffered persecution in Mecca, they were given asylum by the Christian Emperor of Abyssinia, who withstood great pressure and declined precious gifts, refusing to return the refugees to their persecutors. Similarly, in the early Middle-ages, Jews from many parts of Europe found sanctuary in Al Andalus, where they were allowed to practice their religion and had opportunities to work and trade. In particular, there is nothing in modern refugee law that was not already explicitly contained in Islamic law and traditions, since the very beginning.

Today, an unprecedented number of people are uprooted by violence and persecution. One of most dramatic situations is Syria, which saw 3 million of its citizens flee the country in little more than three years. Only five years ago, Syria was the world's second largest refugee hosting country, now Syrians are the largest group of refugees worldwide, followed by Afghans and Somalis. The overwhelming majority of Syrian refugees found safety in the neighbouring countries, where communities are showing a generosity that is well beyond their means... The world needs to do much more to support Syria's neighbours, recognizing that this conflict has become a major threat to regional stability.

And let's not forget that contrary to the populist mantra that all asylum-seekers are on their way to the industrialized world, 86% of the world's refugees live in developing countries, compared to 70% a decade ago. Rather than seeing refugees as competitors and a burden, their presence can be an

incentive to advance poor areas. We need to promote the development of refugee hosting areas, involving refugees and local communities, rather than just handing out assistance to the refugees, year after year. Stimulating self-reliance, education and livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities are key to fostering more harmonious relations and a better protection environment. Instead of competing over scarce resources, both communities work together to improve their future. I am convinced that this will, ultimately, help stem the flow of desperate people who move on out of necessity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies are not only inevitable, they are a good thing. Diversity and pluralism enrich societies and should be cherished by good governance, strong civic institutions and policies that promote respect for diversity. The recognition of our common humanity, inclusion and solidarity, tolerance and compromise are key elements of strong, cohesive and peaceful societies.

The mission of the Global Centre for Pluralism is to advance global understanding of pluralism as an ethic of respect that values diversity and to enable each and every person to realize his or her full potential as a citizen. I wish you every success in this important undertaking.

Excerpt, reprinted with permission, from the [Global Centre for Pluralism Annual Pluralism Lecture 2014](#)

António Guterres. [Forced Displacement and the Promise of Pluralism](#) (Ottawa: Global Centre for Pluralism, 2014).

Flight and Freedom

By Evelyn
December 19, 2014
[Interview](#)



Dana Wagner Interviews Ratna Omidvar, Executive Director, Global Diversity Exchange (GDX) on her experience as a refugee to Canada, and the book project, [Flight and Freedom: Stories of Escape to Canada](#) (forthcoming 2015).

Why is it important to write this book now?

Ratna Omidvar: For several years now, the national attitude towards refugees has been hardening. We see it most clearly in the changes to Canada's refugee system at the federal level, where refugee policy gets decided. It is now harder for refugees to get to Canada, and more difficult for them once they are here. There are many reasons why this shift has occurred. But I do not think that one of those reasons is because Canadians are less willing to open our doors to refugees today than we were ten, twenty or sixty years ago. Why? Because we still believe in protecting vulnerable people, and we still value the extraordinary potential of people who have survived the worst of humanity. So if our compassion hasn't changed, maybe it's about better understanding the refugee process, and refugees themselves. And to do that, maybe we need to dust off the stories of refugees who survived the Holocaust, or the Vietnam War, or Year Zero in Cambodia. That's why we're writing this book.



Credit: Ratna Omidvar photographed by Ryan Walker

Why do these stories need revisiting? Explain.

You know what I find interesting? That we call ourselves a country of immigrants, and we are, but we're also a country of refugees. We need to remind ourselves of that. The Canadian narrative overflows with qualities perhaps best known within the immigrant success story: perseverance, resolve, creativity, equanimity. Well, we don't always think of it this way, but these qualities are radiant in refugees who find haven in this country. Part of the importance of revisiting our history is that it helps us think long-term about refugees who are arriving today. We have a tendency to think about refugees as they are when they arrive, so we picture them struggling economically and psychologically. We see them as poor and traumatized. But the transformation that can happen in one generation, and in some cases, in a few years' time, is simply astounding. The book gives us the long-term picture. It's a continuum of refugees who are in different stages of their lives in Canada.

What does that transformation look like?

When your life is threatened, there's barely time to pack a suitcase. Many people leave behind everything. Wealth, assets, family. There's no language course beforehand. No cultural training. Some people step off an airplane in Vancouver or Toronto still in a daze from their escape. But freedom is a powerful thing, and refugees thrive with it. Imagine coming from a place where your children were barred from school, you were barred from a job, your health was expensive, voicing an opinion was unthinkable, and surviving each day was uncertain. Now, imagine these conditions are replaced with access to things, freedom from other things, and opportunity beyond anything that was possible before. So it shouldn't be surprising that refugees do great things, like start companies, raise talented kids, and empower others. But opportunity isn't all that drives refugees. There's something about people who survive. There's a strength of spirit that I think comes with extreme endurance, which makes refugees really exceptional people.

You're describing something that's very intimate, because you and your husband fled Iran in 1981 as refugees. What do you want Canadians to know about the experience of flight?

Yes, these stories are close to my heart. My husband and I made our own escape from Iran when it became clear our lives were not safe under Tehran's new rulers. We couldn't raise a family the way we wanted, and war with Iraq threatened to call my husband to the frontline. So we boarded a bus to Turkey with our young daughter, found our way to Germany, and ultimately decided on Canada. Our escape does not approach the danger and hardship so many others face fleeing countries worldwide including Iran. But a few of the most vivid moments of my life occurred on that journey. One was in a cold customs room at the border crossing with Turkey, when our future was uncertain. Forward, or back? What punishment would we face for attempted escape? The second was in a plane, over a vast land of forests broken by silver lakes. In Canadian skies, I began to breathe again.

This glimpse of the terror involved in escape, and the unparalleled exhilaration of freedom, does not fade fast. It's in everything, a permanent imprint behind my eyelids. There has been a deep link for me between the personal and the professional from my family's experience. I embraced this country,

and because of what it gave me – its protection and opportunities – I will always strive to change it for the better. After a time, I gave myself license to start rearranging the furniture in my new home. The desire to thrive and to give back is palpable in refugees who come to Canada. We think of refugees taking and needing, but they enrich our communities in incredible ways.

There has been public concern about non-refugees using, or “abusing”, the refugee system. Does this book skip some big questions by only looking at people who fit the legal definition of a refugee?

The book shows the diversity of people who are refugees under Canadian law. That great diversity, and all the nuances of their lives and choices and even modes of transit, builds a more complex picture of refugees. In this way, I think the book does challenge us to rethink refugees and what we're talking about when we say things like “abusing the system.” No, we're not skipping big questions. We're asking: What does “abusing the system” mean? Someone who flew directly to Canada instead of sitting in a refugee camp for five years? Someone who paid \$23,000 to smugglers to cross a border? Someone who used a fake passport? The book profiles these people.

You take the question further by asking: “Would they get in today?” Why ask that?

First of all, because the refugee system is quite different today due to recent changes. Second, I think that a lot of Canadians respond to the idea of fairness. Somehow, our idea of fair behaviour has been twisted in the refugee conversation to mean waiting in a refugee camp, having all the right paperwork, and never lying about one's identity. That's not fair – that's completely unrealistic. The same rules that apply to getting your driver's license do not apply to escaping for your life. I think Canada's new refugee system is less fair. We can better understand why when we see exactly how system changes affect individuals. Some of the people profiled in the book would not get in today. Some of them, in fact, would still qualify as refugees, but many of them would have a far harder time finding their feet in Canada because of changes to the system like reduced healthcare and longer waiting times to qualify for permanent residence and citizenship.

Who do you want the book to reach?

Well, this is a truly Canadian book. These stories cover such a breadth of Canadian history that we are all either directly linked to one of these stories, or a few degrees removed. Maybe your family came from Europe after the Second World War, or fled one of the Soviet satellites. Maybe you remember your community's effort to support the Southeast Asian boat people in the 1980s, or you live down the street from a family expelled from Uganda, or you work with someone who fled Somalia. So I want this book to reach Canadians who know refugees, or who are refugees, and who want to place that experience in the bigger history of this country as a place of refuge. I also want this book to reach Canadians who don't know much about refugees but are curious. And this book is for Canadians who love a good read, because these are true and very human stories.

Reprinted with permission from the [Flight and Freedom website](#).

[Sign up](#) to the *Flight and Freedom* newsletter for updates.

Defining Urban Resilience in Christchurch

By kturner
November 30, 2014
[Interview](#)



On December 3, 2014 the [100 Resilient Cities Campaign](#) will announce its 3rd cohort of resilient and liveable cities. The Resilient Cities campaign takes the view that resilience helps cities evaluate their capacity to respond to specific “shocks and stresses” and to develop proactive and integrated strategies to address those challenges and to respond to them more effectively. Most importantly, “resilience is about making cities better, for both the short and long-term, for everyone.”

Cities of Migration would like to applaud the work of the city of Christchurch, New Zealand, which was recognized as a resilient city in 2012.

In 2010, the City of Christchurch experienced a catastrophic earthquake. Hundreds of buildings were demolished and thousands of homes needed to be rebuilt. Extensive damage was caused to schools and hospitals, and essential infrastructure. Yet, the city was able to re-establish essential functions quickly.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, [the New Zealand Police](#) set up their earthquake response headquarters in a Buddhist temple with assistance also coming from mosques and other ethnic community hubs – an example of the goodwill already established between local police and ethnic communities in Christchurch. In previous years the police had worked hard on recruiting new hires from ethnic communities and building better communication lines with marginalized ethnic communities. [Joris de Bres](#), Race Relations Commissioner, explains: “That hard work paid off when the Police were able to quickly respond to the varying needs of communities in Christchurch – from getting Police on the ground that could speak different languages to having frontline staff who are sensitive to specific customs and culture.”

Superintendent Wallace Haumaha spoke to us at the [2014 Cities of Migration conference in Berlin](#) about Christchurch’s cultural transformation. As an organization, says Haumaha, the New Zealand Police’s ability to be “courageous and innovative” and work in partnership with community is what allowed them to manage risk, embrace diversity and support the most vulnerable members of the devastated community:

View the [video interview](#) with Superintendent Wallace Haumaha, Maori, Pacific and Ethnic Services, New Zealand Police National Headquarters at the 2014 Cities of Migration Conference, June 4-6, Berlin:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=-eRX2A1VMs4>



In 2012, the 100 Resilient Cities campaign cited Christchurch and its people as an example of a city “bouncing back” and a model for how a resilience plan developed through a grassroots participatory planning process can aid a city’s recovery by ensuring communities, buildings, and infrastructure and systems are better prepared to withstand catastrophic events.

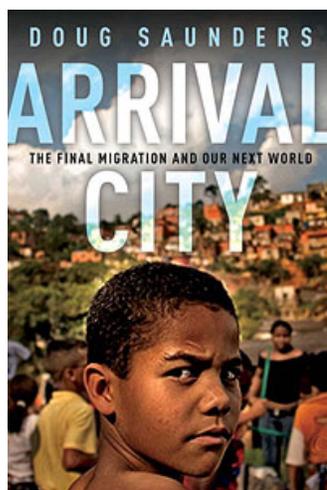
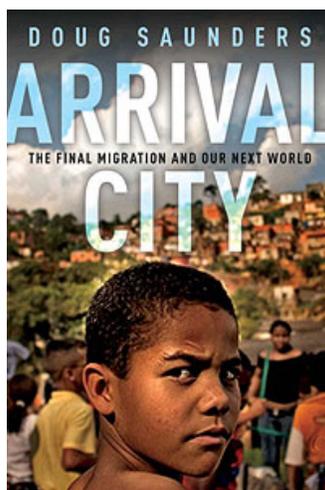
In 2014, Mike Gillooly was appointed the first Chief Resilience Officer of Christchurch, New Zealand. His vision for urban resilience involves working side-by-side with members of the community as equals. We like [Gillooly’s definition of urban resilience](#):

“Resilience needs to be community-driven if it is to be relevant.”

We congratulate the winners of the 2014 cohort of Resilient Cities and encourage them to be as courageous, innovative and inclusive of diversity as Christchurch in setting a course for urban resilience and shared prosperity in the cities they call home.

Arrival City Book Club

By ktuner
November 2, 2014
Uncategorized



This January, join readers around the world for an online reading of Canadian journalist [Doug Saunders' Arrival City: The Final Migration and Our Next World](#), a progressive and optimistic narrative about our urban future that maps a world of "arrival cities", the destination for new migrants.

Most humans on the planet now live in cities and over the next few decades, another quarter to a third of the world will join them. This urban migration marks the most decisive social and cultural shift since the Enlightenment. "We will end the century as a wholly urban species," notes Doug Saunders, the consequences of which will affect everything from governance systems and financial markets to climate conditions and fuel resources.

The City Builder Book Club is launching its online reading of *Arrival City* in January 2015, inviting urbanists, migration experts, practitioners, and advocates from across the world to join a guided reading and global discussion of the book. Facilitated by a cast of global contributors who will respond to each chapter in a [series of weekly readings](#), we hope to stimulate an energetic dialogue with input from people who are working locally on issues of urban migration—from innovative planning, policy and design solutions to entrepreneurship and impromptu social organizations that are responding to the phenomenon of this massive shift.

The [Centre for City Ecology](#) and Cities of Migration are joining forces to bring you an [engaging online exploration of Arrival City](#). In addition to weekly blog posts by international contributors, readers can look forward to free bi-weekly interactive activities and events, and lively online dialogues.

Join the conversation! [Sign up to participate and receive updates, here.](#)

Follow us on Twitter [@CityBuilderBook](#) and join the conversation with the hashtags #ArrivalCity and #CityBuilders.

Diaspora Leadership

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



At a recent academic panel discussion in Toronto on [“The Power of the Diaspora Networks in Canada”](#) at Ryerson University’s Ted Rogers School of Management, Ratna Omidvar, executive director of the Global Diversity Exchange (GDX) chose to focus her remarks on diaspora leadership.

Focus on diaspora leadership

Ratna Omidvar: I want to focus my remarks on diaspora leadership, because I think a discussion on the rise and influence of immigrants in the areas of trade and investment must be about the rise and influence of political and business leaders who are immigrants.

In other words, it’s not the size of the diaspora communities in Canada that makes them influential, it’s the success of individuals within those communities. For example, how does a Canadian bank expand in Latin America? A successful business model aside, they will be better able to attract those markets by employing people who understand Latin America, and just as important, who have business connections in Peru, Columbia, Mexico, and Chile.



The good news is that diverse talent is a Canadian strength. We boast some of the world’s most diverse cities, Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Toronto is Canada’s most diverse city, with more than half its residents not born in Canada. Close to half (47%) are visible minorities. Together, we comprise more than 200 distinct ethnicities and there are over 140 languages and dialects spoken.

It’s worth taking a minute to talk about the natural advantage of immigrant success in a company, which is the attendant diversity. And you’ll notice that I will be interchanging the words “diaspora” and “diversity.” I don’t want the language we use to get in the way of our common goal: To me, to leverage our diaspora is to leverage our diversity.

To leverage our diaspora is to leverage our diversity

My organization’s work on promoting diversity has focused not only on hiring immigrants into entry-level positions, but on addressing the barriers to immigrant employment in management positions. And in our research, what we’ve found again and again is that achieving a diverse workforce makes very good business sense. There is a growing body of evidence, but let me highlight one study particularly relevant to today’s focus on trade and investment:

In research published in 2013 by the Harvard Business Review, authors Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin offer compelling evidence that [diversity unlocks innovation and drives business growth](#). In this study which included a survey of over 1800 professionals, 40 case studies and numerous focus groups, the authors focused on two kinds of diversity; inherent diversity – i.e. traits you are born with such as gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation; and acquired diversity, which involves traits you gain from experience – i.e. travel, learning or studying another language in a different part of the world, or marrying a person not born in your country. They call this 2D diversity. They concluded that companies with 2D diversity out-innovate and out-perform others. Employees at these companies are 45% likelier to report that their firm’s market share grew over the previous year, and 70% likelier to report that the firm captured a new market.

This diversity advantage of “thinking outside the box” – of solving problems in new ways, connecting with new people, and finding new market information – is part of the solution to what we’re discussing today. The typical marker of underperformance by the diaspora is our non-diversified trade: Canada’s top trading partner is the US, at 74.5% of trade, and all the way down in second is China with just 4.3% ([DFATD](#)). To diversify our trade, we need to diversify the teams making those connections.

Let us turn now to diaspora networks. To help me examine their influence, I went to an influential friend to help me understand the different value propositions of his own networks. Loosely speaking, we can group the business networks used by the diaspora into two categories: ethno-cultural-specific, and industry-specific. They don’t have to be exclusive of the other, but more often than not, they are.

Ethno-cultural networks and chambers of commerce are influential in connecting members to employment. It is not the network’s only advantage, but it is a major advantage to members. The social capital that can be accessed by these networks is invaluable in a job market that prizes not only what you know, but who you know. As a business owner, my friend uses the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce to connect with the Indo-Canadian community.

But where does he go for targeted business networking and industry news? He’s a business owner in the food industry, and so he networks with the food industry.

This is instructive.

Our challenge is not only to make ethno-specific networks more powerful in what they do to connect members to employment and mentorship relationships. Our challenge is to saturate Canada’s powerful industry networks with diaspora leaders. That is how we will leverage our diaspora leaders, when they are represented in influential positions in the industry. Think about the trade delegations that are most successful in generating actionable

MOUs. They are not the general meet and greet, ambassadorial types. They are the focused missions, where green tech people from Canada meet green tech people in China.

Our goal should be enabling industry networks to actually function as a diaspora network, and they will do this only with a diverse membership.

Now, if that is our objective, how do we get there?

I ask the private sector: Is your own house in order? Do you have a diversity policy with measurable goals? Does that policy cover senior management positions?

I ask the government: Do our rules have unintended consequences? Does our selection policy serve our goals as a nation? Do residency requirements that prevent immigrants from travelling for business harm their prospects? Are we keeping up with the global competition for international students?

In the areas that call for regulation, is there compliance and education? Should we be asking for "International experience" instead of "Canadian experience"?

Are our immigrant entrepreneurs being supported?

And, finally, I ask individual immigrant leaders: How do you engage with ethno-cultural networks? You are a role model for all of us. Tell your story, share your experience, mentor someone.

For the Ryerson **Power of Diaspora Networks** event description, [see here](#).

For a discussion of diaspora networks in Canada, see [Diaspora Nation: An Enquiry into the Economic Potential of Diaspora Networks in Canada](#), by Maurice Bitran & Serene Tan (Toronto: Mowat Centre, 2013)

Kimchee to Latkes: German President visits Kensington Market

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Kensington Market is the symbolic streetscape of diversity in Toronto, the nation's most diverse city with half its population born outside Canada. Here is where Jamaican cuisine collides with Italian, and Hungarian with Thai. Where an elderly couple speaking Portuguese can rub shoulders with their Mandarin-speaking peers. Where students sip kimchi soup and families share latkes.

It is also where the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Joachim Gauck, sat down with local community leaders and immigration experts for a discussion on Canada's immigration system. Ratna Omidvar, a Torontonian and executive director of the Global Diversity Exchange, led the discussion between the German and Canadian delegations at St. Stephen's Community House in the heart of the Market.

Gauck stopped in Toronto during a state visit in September to learn about Canada's experiences with immigration and inclusion. Germany, he said, had taken its "first steps in recent years to create an open-minded society." He implied there is still much to learn.

copyright-German-Federal-Government-Steffen-Kugler

The Germany-Canada Roundtable

The group sat down at a roundtable in the gymnasium inside St. Stephen's. Germans across from Canadians, and reporters taking notes on the side. Here is a recap of the discussion, led by questions from the German Delegation:

When it comes to immigration and integration what works in Canada and why?

There is a multi-stakeholder approach at work in Canada. Governments, labour, businesses, and nonprofits have a role in immigrant integration and inclusion. Particularly of note compared to other countries is that Canadian business leaders articulate the economic benefits of immigration – and do so quite forcefully. Representing the private sector voice at the table, **Zabeen Hirji**, chief human resources officer with the Royal Bank of Canada, explained that inclusion is not just a social issue, it's an economic issue. Her company, the largest in Canada, is a leader in recognizing diversity as a source of growth and innovation. RBC backs its words with deliberate policies to hire and promote diverse employees, and to reach the newcomer market with products and services that respond to their needs.

The Canadian private sector has more than one reason to make the case for inclusion. "It's not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do," said Ms. Hirji. "Diversity and inclusion have a role in driving productivity, innovation and economic growth. At RBC, we believe to serve the market we must hire the market. So we leverage the diversity of our workforce as an asset that is a competitive advantage in the marketplace." She added that inclusion "is about business success, about preserving our quality of life, and about nation building."

What does multiculturalism really mean for Canadians – what is its lived expression? What aspects of our multiculturalism are transportable to Germany?

Multiculturalism in Canada is an expression on the streets, it's an official policy, and it's a public philosophy, explained **Phil Triadafilopoulos**, associate professor of political science at the University of Toronto. It is something that Canadians both accept and celebrate. Mr. Triadafilopoulos recalled a telling moment in recent years, when someone put a question to Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, asking him to comment on multiculturalism. The German Chancellor **Angela Merkel** had just made her stunning remark that multiculturalism, multikulti, had "utterly failed." That language would be political suicide in Canada. Showing the divide in tone between Germany and Canada, Mr. Harper **responded** of his Conservative government, "we favour multiculturalism." The Prime Minister continued that immigrants "first and foremost want to belong to this country ... they also at the same time will change our country."

The Canadian education system is one vital space in promoting multicultural identity and values. Schools have trained specialists to teach English as a second language. They have rigid policies against discrimination and racism. They receive provincially-funded training and retraining on openness and accommodation. As someone who grew up in an immigrant household, Mr. Triadafilopoulos explained the personal impact of learning from public school

teachers that “you’re just as Canadian as anyone else.” This sense of belonging is the lived expression of multiculturalism. It doesn’t matter what you look like or what accent you have. From the Prime Minister down to teachers, the expectation is that immigrants are Canadians.

What observations can be drawn about the role of citizenship in furthering integration and inclusion in Canada?

Immigrant or refugee, Canada sees its newcomers as future citizens, explained **Harald Bauder**, academic director of the Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement. The assumption is not that people are waiting for economic or political situations to get better at home in order to return. “The expectation is that immigrants and refugees become Canadian – that Canada is their new home and that they become one of us,” said Mr. Bauder. In Canada, newcomers can apply for citizenship after three years of residency (although this will increase to four years in 2015).

“Extending the prospect of citizenship to newcomers has been an important aspect of Canada’s ‘warmth of welcome’, its *Willkommenskultur*,” Mr. Bauder explained. “This warmth of welcome and especially the prospect of citizenship has made Canada a very attractive destination for migrants from around the globe.” The path to citizenship is both accessible and a clearly stated policy.

An important result of the mindset that immigrants are future citizens, is a significant investment in the immediate services needed by newcomers like education, language skills, and job training.

While immigration is a national construct, settlement and integration are uniquely local experiences. What are the priority conditions for local integration? What role do local services play in this context?

The priority conditions for local integration are employment, affordable housing, and community support, said **Bill Sinclair**, associate executive director of St. Stephen’s. On the topic of community support, Sinclair gave examples of programming run from St. Stephen’s, a community-based social service agency. He highlighted childcare, activities for the elderly, and sport and other activities for teens after school. Greater than the individual programs is the resulting whole: Access to community support for the entire family.

How is language in Canada evolving to reflect evolving values?

Language is not only an indicator of changing times, it’s an important tool to signal progressive ideas – not where we are, but where we’re going. Language can change mindsets, and that’s how a culture evolves. Ms. Hirji used the changing lexicon in her own work to illustrate. For example, she favours dropping the phrase “tolerant society” because of its negative connotation (as well as dictionary definition of “tolerate”) that the unpleasant subject is being endured, even withstood. Instead, we describe ourselves as an “inclusive society.” Another example is to move away from “foreign” to “international,” a particularly important shift in the business world. Companies used to call it foreign job experience, or foreign education, but there’s a connotation to that. On the other hand, international job experience or education becomes an asset.

What is not working so well, and why?

Ms. Omidvar posed this question to the Canadian group, reminding the German delegation that Canadians are the first to point out faults in the system.

For one, recent years have seen a trend in Canada of increasing the number of temporary immigrants under programs that are reminiscent of Germany’s guest workers program, *Gastarbeiterprogramm*, of the 1950s to 1970s. “Canada seems to have learned a disturbing lesson from Germany,” said Mr. Bauder. “Unlike Germany, where *Gastarbeiter* acquired the right to stay, permitting them to become de-facto immigrants, Canada is making sure that its temporary foreign workers never acquire the right to stay in Canada.” He explained that only a small number of temporary foreign workers are able to access permanent residence, and that the criteria “mainly revolve around the migrants’ economic utility to Canada.”

Another problem is that far too many immigrants are unemployed or underemployed. “The jobs they’re getting are below their qualifications and they’re stuck,” said Mr. Sinclair. “They’re not catching up.” Others echoed this remark. Many countries including Germany tend to think of attracting high-skilled immigrants as a solution unto itself, but as conditions in Canada show, problems do arise from this policy. High-skilled immigrants are facing a tough time finding employment, some would say even more so than low-skilled immigrants. “It’s our paradox,” said Mr. Triadafilopoulos. Relative to Canada’s history, “today we have the smartest group of immigrants but the worst labour market integration.” Ms. Hirji attributed one level of the problem to systemic barriers to immigrant employment, like the informal job requirement that applicants have “Canadian experience” which devalues relevant work experience abroad.

The last word

For all its individual failures, as a whole, the Canadian immigration and settlement system is a model of success. “In the short term, there are growing pains,” said Ms. Omidvar. “But in the long term, it works.” Closing the discussion, President Gauck agreed.

“We wish that Germany had your problems,” he said. “We want your open-mindedness [for] the Germany my grandchildren will live in.”

Discovering Kensington Market

Tracing the footsteps of different immigrant communities that have transformed Kensington Market, Ms. Omidvar led President Gauck and his delegation through the bustling streets of shops and colourful awnings in one of Toronto’s oldest and most diverse open air markets before sitting down to the roundtable.

Kensington Market is built on the spirit of immigrant settlement, local entrepreneurship, and inclusion. In the early 1900s, Toronto’s Eastern European Jewish community settled into Kensington Market, and it became known as the “Jewish Market” before waves of immigrants from Portugal, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Asia, and Latin America followed. From Kosher butchers to Portuguese fish markets to Latin America street vendors, the Market continues to thrive today as a microcosm of multicultural Toronto.

There are many reasons why waves of immigrants succeeded in Kensington Market. Located in the heart of downtown Toronto, newcomer residents had direct access to the density of commercial activity, affordable housing, childcare, and public transportation. The Market’s mixed land use of residential and commercial space created an informal economy, allowing working class immigrants to open shop, save, invest, eventually move out, and make room for the next group of newcomers.

An immigrant herself, Ms. Omidvar said “My family and I have lived and experienced these stories – stories that are grounded in common experiences of arrival, endurance and redemption. And our loyalty, commitment and appreciation for this country is boundless.”

Cities United for Immigration Action

By kturner
Uncategorized



Cities matter! In an unprecedented show of support, twenty-five US mayors from some of America's biggest cities have formed a coalition to support and help implement President Obama's executive action on immigration. Supporters of [Cities United for Immigration Action](#) include New York's Bill de Blasio, Los Angeles's Eric Garcetti, Houston's Annise Parker and the Washington's Vincent C. Gray.

Why? "The president's action on immigration will strengthen our cities. It will keep families together, grow our economies and foster additional community trust in law enforcement," the mayors said in [a statement](#). "We are ready — and together we're rolling up our sleeves to turn this policy into a better reality for millions of hardworking people in the communities we serve."

For another perspective on the rising profile of cities and local government in the global debate on immigration, listen in to the **Re-imagining the City** session at the recent Cities of Migration Conference [in Berlin](#), where panelists convinced the international audience that [mayoral voices can be a particularly powerful tool to ease the path to inclusion for newcomers](#).

As noted by Jussi Pajune, Mayor of Helsinki, Finland, [equality is a cherished Nordic value](#); where equality is valued and the idea of shared prosperity understood, it is easier for his city to push the idea of helping immigrants integrate. As the largest employer in Finland with more than 40,000 employees, Helsinki is an example of how the city can also be a role model for other employers in newcomer recruitment and development.



For more on the **Cities United for Immigration Action** campaign, follow the new [citiesforaction.us](#) website.

Digital Inclusion: Empowering Newcomer Families and Youth

By Evelyn
November 27, 2014
[Interview](#)



Interview with Di Daniels, National Coordinator of Computers in Homes (New Zealand)

"We often say that Computers in Homes is not about the computer. It is about developing social capacity, promoting social cohesion and building social capital."

Bridging the digital divide means bridging an intercultural divide. Replicated in 19 regions across New Zealand, the [Computers in Home \(CIH\)](#) program provides low income and refugee families with computers and training. CIH recognized basic computer technology and skills as a passport to improved integration outcomes for immigrant children and their parents. During a recent Cities of Migration webinar, [Generation to Generation: Empowering Newcomer Families and Youth](#), Di Daniels, National Coordinator of CIH, spoke to Cities of Migration about the meaning and impact of digital inclusion for refugee communities.

Cities of Migration: Being 'connected' is about a lot more than web smarts. How do your programs connect young people and excluded or marginalized newcomer communities to the mainstream?

Di Daniels: Digital literacy means having essential skills and being able to use technology, but being effectively connected is Digital Inclusion. Being connected is not always about understanding fat pipes, fibre optic cabling, the broadband network. Digital Inclusion is about how people actually get to use that. There's also the rhetoric that anyone can take a mobile device to a library or

hotspot to access increasingly free public Wi-Fi. But youth cannot accomplish School Certificates and University Entrance on a smart phone or tablet, even if they own one. Our work is changing that hegemony and the denial of need.

Families with school-aged children and youth without access is our focus so that those without computer and internet at home can research and produce homework to a standard expected at school and in line with their peers. Excluded and marginalized communities are those who experience the highest unemployment and all social ills that accompany that. No one denies that education is the key to changing the potential of people and communities at risk, but there seems to be an attitude that this will just happen by osmosis. For newcomer refugee families there is only a short window of time to engage high-school aged children in New Zealand education before they find themselves on the street without a job, so these families are given priority onto CIH.

Families are chosen by the NZ Red Cross, approved by the Ministry of Education and referred to the local training provider, usually a Migrant Education Centre or Refugee Youth Centre. Bilingual youth are often engaged as interpreters for the training sessions. Some of these have gone on to being employed as Family Liaison visitors or in other roles by Red Cross. One young man from Burma whose family participated in CIH 18 months ago has been employed as interpreter and trainer for his ethnic language group in the latest intake of CIH in Nelson St. He is 17 years old and has been accepted into Engineering School at University of Canterbury. Another young man, Dhan, took on the same role for the Nepali families and has picked up the job of technician and Family Liaison as well while he studies his Computer Science degree.

Newcomer families can experience an intercultural disconnect as the second generation becomes fluent in the norms and values of the new world their parents have chosen. Why is addressing the inter-generational divide so important and what lessons do you have for others running youth programs?

Di Daniels: The example of the students described above, their expertise and willingness, shows the importance, not just for the elders but for youth themselves, of this sort of opportunity and responsibility. We also find there are holes in the 'Digital Native' argument that believes young people are naturally adept at all things technical and will teach their elders. Actually, young people are very good at doing what they like to do on the computer and internet, like downloading music movies and games, watching YouTube and engaging in social media. But when it comes to being adept at researching information and word processing to accomplish their assignments, their ability is lacking. This is why we stress to the parents that they also need to be good in these skills to help their children with their studies.

The best advice I can give those running youth programmes is to involve the parents in robust training and do not skimp on this. The other 'must' is tech support structures. I always tell parents to watch out when their children are "helping" them at home to never let go of the mouse. "Do not let anyone reach across and take the mouse and do it for you. You must stay in the driver's seat with the keyboard and mouse in your control." I remind the youth to be a coach for Mum and Dad, to be on the sideline coaching like a football or basketball coach. Coaches do not kick the players off the field and play the game themselves. A good coach corrects, encourages and leads from the side so that the player learns

We talk about the importance of young people having an opportunity to "give back" to the community. Why is this important, not just to marginalized youth but any group that may find itself on the margins?

Di Daniels: Some youngsters have volunteered onto local projects to help with training, transport, babysitting and administrative work. This gives them an opportunity to display leadership and to "give back" whilst giving them a sense of ownership and continuity. We often say that Computers in Homes is not about the computer. It is about developing social capacity, promoting social cohesion and building social capital. It is about raising aspiration, about empowerment and contributing to community.

It is about the Dad who looks into our eyes at the information session and says he never knew anyone cared about what was happening to him or his children; about the parent during training who rediscovers the joy of learning and shares her excitement with her community; and about the young Mum who bounces up to us at the end of her graduation and says "so how do I get a job like yours?"

Watch the full webinar recording and find resources for, [Generation to Generation: Empowering Newcomer Families and Youth](#), featuring Di Daniels, the National Coordinator of CIH (New Zealand) and Agazi Afewerki, Agazi Afewerki, Director, Youth Empowering Parents (Canada)

Swedish with your baby – an interview with Karin Bruce

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Cities of Migration spoke to Karin Bruce, Project Leader, [LärOlika](#), at the Tallberg Foundation, and co-founder, [Swedish with Your Baby](#) [Svenska med baby], about why this Good Idea is important for Sweden:



What sparked your desire to create a project that connects parents and children from different neighbourhoods and diverse cultures?

KB: In my job before going on parental leave, I worked with leaders/decision-makers from all over the world, bringing them together for meetings and conversations about global issues, future scenarios and complex challenges (www.tallbergfoundation.org). While on parental leave I really wanted to continue to have those interesting, rewarding conversations that I had so much enjoyed – but now in a new context, with a baby. However, the many activities that target parents and babies in my neighbourhood, were not really about meeting new people, but about exchanging concerns and thoughts about your baby – parent groups for parents in the same neighbourhoods. Then, when I searched for activities that bring together Swedish people and immigrants, I found there were no activities suitable for parents with babies.

I felt this was really a very good idea – but no one was working on it. So I thought here was something I should really do.

Early on I met another new mother with similar interests. Ylva Strander who is co-founder of this initiative. Ylva helped me get the energy to drive this further than if I had been alone.

Together we started developing the idea in September 2012, and the first “Swedish with your baby” meetings started in November of the same year. [As a volunteer] I worked intensely on its development during that first year. Since fall 2013, the initiative has been further developed further by the current manager, Anna Libietis Jacobson.

How did you reach out to newcomer parents?

KB: The first step was to find organisations with venues where meetings could take place. I spent weeks calling and mailing various actors based in parts of the city where many newly immigrated live. This in itself was a very interesting process. The responses varied from “are you from a religious sect?” to “we have not seen any interest for this kind of activity, will let you know if such interest is voiced.” It was a problem: I had an unfamiliar idea and did not represent a well-known organisation –it felt like asking if there was a demand for iPhones before they were launched!

The turning point was finding individuals who thought that this idea was interesting and were willing to test it. These individuals were all librarians, in three different public libraries across the city [of Stockholm].

Attracting Swedish people from the inner city has never been a problem. Reaching out to newcomer parents, or more generally to families living in the target neighbourhoods, was the biggest challenge. Initially, posters were put up, and many contacts were made with women’s centres, health centres, “open pre-schools” (for babies with their parents), and libraries. However, getting information that targets new parents to staff in those organizations did not result in many new visitors. What worked was getting information directly to new parents. Going to shopping centers and public areas near the venues, or to the pre-schools was a better alternative. An important recruitment strategy was to simply stand in shopping centers (with our babies) and approach other parents with babies with a flyer and invitation to join.

Facebook has also been an important tool, and has grown in importance with every new person that likes the Facebook page.

What did you learn from this outreach process? What worked, what didn’t work?

KB: Lessons learned from the initial outreach and recruitment? It is important to target the people you want to reach directly. Going through intermediaries may seem simpler or more effective (and should not be abolished), but to really reach out? Direct meetings need to be prioritized.

You are expanding across Stockholm and to other cities. How do you create truly inclusive gathering and learning space for both newcomers and Swedes?

KB: I see three important keys that make these meeting inclusive:

1. We invite all participants to join the meetings in the same way – no difference whether one is Swedish or newly immigrated.
2. All information about the meetings highlight that the purpose of the meetings is to talk to new people and be curious about each other – whatever your language level.
3. All meetings start with a round of presentations, so that everyone is included in the conversation from the start, and an invitation to all participants to find a new person to talk to.

Why does it attract Swedes, born and bred in Sweden, to participate? What do they get out of it?

KB: Many Swedes are interested in widening their networks, but there are very few arenas to do so. A few quotes from participants illustrate this (in Swedish on the website):

“In the first meeting, we were 14 persons from nine different countries, that was really cool and rewarding, and we had not met if it weren't for this initiative. For me, the mix of people that show up on 'Swedish with your baby' is the most enriching.”

“Interfaces between people living in different parts of town are necessary and 'Swedish with your baby' is a great way to get to know people that you would not otherwise meet!”

“If it were not for 'Swedish with your baby', I would hardly get on the subway to go to parts of town that I do not visit otherwise. One discovers that the distances between people are not that great and the town is not so big.”

Before long, participants start to meet outside the meetings and meeting places. I personally got to know three other mothers (and their families) who are now my friends – people I would never have met if it weren't for these meetings. Other participants have similar experiences.

You recently won the 2014 Aftonbladets Wendela prize and the Stockholm County Council's prize for fighting xenophobia and racism. Congratulations!

KB: The awards have been a great acknowledgement of the strength and importance of the idea, and the hard work to develop and grow the initiative. Also, these awards have helped spread the word about the initiative. Of course, the money is also important. It supports the work, attracts more funding and has made it possible for the current manager Anna Libietis to work full time since the summer 2014.

What does it mean to you personally that your idea has blossomed and had such an impact on so many people in your community?

KB: I understood early on that this idea really provided something new – and needed – in Swedish society. This gave the initiative energy in the early days, when some meetings only attracted one participant, or when I ran into bureaucratic obstacles along the way. The growth of the project – much thanks to the current manager of the initiative – is confirming the strength of the idea. I am very glad that so many meetings that have taken place, and real impact has been achieved – interaction between many people that in the long run lead to integration in society.”

The [Aftonbladets Wendela prize](#) is awarded annually to a hero in women's or gender issues in honour of Wendela Hebbe, Sweden's first female journalist.

Read more about [Swedish With Your Baby, a Cities of Migration Good Idea.](#)

German Order of Merit for a Canadian Immigrant, Refugee and Global Leader

By ktuner
September 2, 2014
[Conversation Stories](#)



Ratna Omidvar, Executive Director of the Global Diversity and Migration Exchange at Ryerson University received the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany at a warm reception hosted by the German Consulate on a rainy night, high above Toronto's sprawling city centre. As Consul General Walter Stechel remarked "Today, Germany and Canada are both countries of immigration. And Germany can learn much from Canada."

Seamless and Shining

From Consul Stechel's remarks:

"You [Ratna] have been to us an important source of knowledge and insight on immigration issues in Canada and Germany, how they compare, what we can learn from each other.... In addition, we appreciate you as a wonderful partner in explaining the Canadian immigrant experience, the strengths and weaknesses of the system. This culminated last Friday in a visit to Kensington Market and a panel discussion at St. Stephen's Community House with President Joachim Gauck and partner, Daniela Schadt. The President and this delegation considered this panel discussion an absolute highlight of their visit to Canada. After meeting with Ratna and benefiting from her insight, the President emphasized that the award could not be more well deserved."

"I'm particularly happy, therefore, that the President met with Ratna because her personal history on three continents, Asia, Europe, North America, work in academia and society are impressive and, I would say, seamless and shining."

The Order of Merit is awarded by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany to draw public attention to achievements that the President believes are of particular value to society. In awarding the Cross of the German Order of Merit, Ratna's longstanding commitments to civil society, especially in the area of immigrant integration and inclusion, are recognized. Of special significance is the contribution that Ratna's international work with German foundations, universities and public institutions has made to a new vision of Germany as a country of immigration, and a nation committed to fostering a culture of welcome.

Earlier this week, after a tour of Toronto's vibrant Kensington Market and a lively discussion forum with local experts and community leaders, [German Federal President Joachim Gauck](#) paused to recognize and summarize Ratna's achievements: "You represent an idea of human progress."

About

The [Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany](#) was instituted in 1951 by Federal President Theodor Heuss. It is the only honour that may be awarded in all fields of endeavour and is the highest tribute the Federal Republic of Germany can pay to individuals for services to the nation.



Ratna Omidvar and Walter Stechel

The Order of Merit may be awarded to Germans as well as foreigners for achievements in the political, economic, social or intellectual realm and for all kinds of outstanding services to the nation in the field of social, charitable or philanthropic work. No pecuniary reward is attached.

Dishing Up DELI: Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration

By ktuner
September 30, 2014
[Conversation Stories](#)



Immigrant entrepreneurs have always played a key role in global trade and the economic success of host countries. Governments and organizations across the world are paying renewed attention to this very element as means towards economic integration of newcomers.

[Diversity in the Economy and Local Integration \(DELI\)](#) is one such effort co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Integration Fund. It aims to foster more efficient local policies in support of immigrant-owned Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and immigrant entrepreneurship as part of wider diversity and inclusion policies.

The project is based on a partnership network of 10 cities, working towards systemic change in the economic integration of migrants and reducing gaps in access to rights. Vienna's Mingo business counselling service and Munich's Phoenix Prize are part of this promising strategy to incubate entrepreneurial success and long-term urban prosperity.

In Vienna, Mingo identified language as a critical tool to address the unique needs of immigrant entrepreneurs. The Vienna Business Agency adopted the "[Let's talk business in your mother tongue](#)" model after earlier outreach failed to attract those with an immigrant background. Mingo Migrant Enterprises was launched to deliver services in the language of the migrants when needed.

Since 2010, [Munich has handed out the Phoenix Prize](#) annually to three winners who exemplify "outstanding economic achievements and social responsibility efforts of migrant enterprises." Their stories are seen as part of the city of Munich's overall success.

The DELI project will also address the under-appreciated potential of procurement and supplier diversity policies to promote greater economic inclusion in awarding contracts. Municipal governments have an enormous economic imprint; cities are not only major employers but also major buyers and sellers of services in the local and regional economy. In Europe, for example, London and Copenhagen have taken an early lead to meet these goals.

In its build-up for the 2012 Olympics, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) had a mandate that included working with the Greater London Authority to ensure the city stood by its commitments to diversity by making the process of getting involved fair and open to all Londoners.

The LOCOG [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) emphasized that diversity and inclusion must be "an intrinsic part of business life" to create a work culture where everyone feels welcome and respected. The LOCOG strategy incorporated these values into all aspects of its day-to-day business activities – from recruitment to communication, decision-making and procurement.

[As the country's largest employer, Copenhagen has a long tradition](#) of working closely with employers and unions on job creation. When developing its first Integration Policy in 2006, it aimed for a positive approach to diversity that was consistent with the city's leadership on good recruitment and management practices in its own offices. That included a proactive procurement policy that instituted the insertion of mandatory "social clauses" in any municipal contract with suppliers of goods and service.

About DELI

DELI is part of the living together in diversity action strand of the [Council of Europe](#) and builds upon the knowledge base developed in the framework of the joint CoE/EU programme Intercultural Cities, as well as the projects INTI-Cities, DIVE and Supplier Diversity – developed by [Migration Policy Group](#). Both the Council of Europe and Migration Policy Group share the responsibilities of the overall coordination and implementation of the project. For more information on the DELI project, visit the [Diversity in the Economy and Integration \(DELI\) website](#).

Join us in Milan at the 2014 International Metropolis Conference

Join DELI and Cities of Migration in Milan at the [upcoming Metropolis Conference for the workshop, "Lessons from Local Leaders: Migration Policy Development at the Municipal Level," November 4, 2014](#). Co-facilitated by the Center for Mediterranean Integration, the World Bank, and the Cities of Migration project, a panel of experts and municipal leaders will review existing municipal policy interventions, evaluate their impacts, and propose an initial set of policy recommendations for local governance of migrant integration and inclusion. Our guest speakers include Kameran Shwani, Program Manager for DELI (Migrant Enterprises), Dept. of Labor and Economic Development, with the City of Munich, home of the city's Phoenix Prize.

Where Local meets Global: Welcome to the Global Diversity and Migration Exchange

By ktuner
September 1, 2014
[Conversation Stories](#)



Cities of Migration has a new home. The Global Diversity and Migration Exchange is a new 'think and do' tank at Ryerson University set to advance the integration and inclusion of immigrants and minorities by connecting local issues to a global agenda for change.

Ratna Omidvar, the founding Executive Director of the new Global Diversity and Migration Exchange (GDMX) at Ryerson's Diversity Institute, said: "This is a brilliant opportunity to take ideas to scale, to connect leaders to local solutions and policy innovations that strengthen integration and inclusion; to connect local to global and global to local; and prepare a new generation for the hyper diversity of our increasingly urban world."

Founded by Maytree, the Global Diversity and Migration Exchange will connect local and global leaders and leading ideas on migration, integration, diversity and inclusion through research, policy analysis and the sharing of best practices. It will also scale up the most successful of Maytree's investments in this field, namely Cities of Migration, DiverseCity onBoard and HireImmigrants to make them dynamic national and international platforms of engagement and inclusion.

For Cities of Migration, it also means embracing the university's entrepreneurial culture, knowledge hubs and extensive networks to work in new and interesting ways to promote social innovation and smart solutions that can make our cities, institutions and urban communities more open, inclusive and prosperous.

We look forward to sharing more news about Cities of Migration @GDMX once we settle in. Questions? Email us at citiesofmigration@ryerson.ca

Read more about The Global Diversity and Migration Exchange @ Ryerson [here](#).



Alan Broadbent: We Are All City Builders

By kturner

September 12, 2014

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Alan Broadbent is the Chairman and Founder of Maytree. This article has been adapted from his opening speech at the [2014 Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin](#) on June 4.

It is a great pleasure for us to be once again in Berlin, one of the world's most vital and important cities. My colleagues and I have had the privilege of being here before, and we always learn something new about city building, and certainly about the power and importance of public discourse.

City building is of great interest to us at [Maytree](#), and in our sister organizations in Toronto. We have been keen observers of the dawn of the urban age. You all know the signs: over half of the world's population now lives in urban settings; in the global north over three-quarters of people live in cities; in the global south urbanization is taking place at an astonishing pace; the global economy has become reliant on wealth creation in our large cities; and global competition is increasingly city-to-city rather than nation-to-nation.

What we have observed in our work on immigrant settlement and inclusion was that the useful conversations were taking place at the city level. Important conversation has always taken place between nations, about immigrant selection systems, quotas, and other policy issues. But on the key determinants of success, like employment, home ownership, success in school, and neighbourhood inclusion, it was the practitioners in cities who were innovating and taking solutions to scale.

Sharing of ideas

But what we also observed was that the opportunities to share good practice were rare. We would often get into a conversation with someone active in the sector in one city and be surprised that they hadn't heard about a good practice that may have been occurring just down the road from their city. Thus the idea for Cities of Migration was born, which we saw as creating an organized way to share stories and good practice.

Our Cities of Migration team, led by Kim Turner and Evelyn Siu, has done a wonderful job in finding and publishing good stories, over 225 of them on our website. And many of you have done a wonderful job of both supplying them and passing them on. But this as you know is only part of the job.

The real impact of Cities of Migration comes from the adaptation and implementation of good ideas in other places. We know stories about a good idea being picked up and implemented, say between the Cardiff and Madrid police services. But we are eager to know more, and to take further steps if we can actually facilitate and promote adaptation and replication.

We know that not every good idea can be simply copied in another place. There is too much specific context, influenced by social, political and economic factors. As Canadians we know that even countries that speak the same language can be as different as those with different tongues. So we don't think simple replication is a goal.

And we know that a catalogue of good ideas and good stories on its own is insufficient. At its worst it becomes just another weapon in what we call the Culture of Complaint, where we describe problems and assign blame, and we use examples of success elsewhere as a way of bolstering our complaint and deepening the blame.

Transformational

And we know it is also possible to use good stories as just so much good reading, interesting for our own edification and conversation.

But at their best Cities of Migration's stories can be transformational and liberating. When they are picked up and applied they can increase the effectiveness of public and private players in city building, and nation building, and can make better lives for countless people, both immigrants and residents. Because the good ideas in which we trade create success for everyone: they create personal relationships, they strengthen neighbourhoods, they bring people and institutions together, and they generate prosperity.

In many ways they provide the energy for the new city age that has prompted such books as Benjamin Barber's *If Mayors Ruled the World*, an optimistic take on the surging urban tide. All of us here have the privilege of being engaged at the vanguard, coming as we do from so many cities around the world, being engaged as we are in this vital work. At Maytree, we look on this work as a great privilege, and a great responsibility. So we're delighted to be with you all this week in Berlin.

Alan Broadbent is also the author of *Urban Nation: Why We Need to Give Power Back to the Cities to Make Canada Strong*. You can [read and watch here](#) more speeches by participants at the Berlin conference.



Mary Rowe: Cities Are About Place

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Mary Rowe is Director, Urban Resilience and Livability, at the Municipal Art Society of New York City. This article has been adapted from her keynote speech on City Building at the 2014 International Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin on June.



I work for the Municipal Arts Society (MAS), a venerable institution and 120-year-old advocacy organization in New York City. It was set up in 1893 when there was something called the municipal arts. That was how we created cities: through design, planning, imagination and beauty, qualities that we often take for granted. In a city like Berlin, we are reminded of these qualities in every place that you turn.

Cities are about place and all the different ways in which things interact to create a city. You have spent the last two days [at the [2014 Cities of Migration Conference](#)] talking about different forms of capital. I want to remind you that what makes capital work in a city is people. Cities are containers for an important principle of urban life called self-organization. Jane Jacobs, the wonderful, adopted

Torontonian and native New Yorker, made her extraordinary contribution to urban planning with ideas like these.

How do we enable self-organization in cities? That is really what you have been trying to do in the past few days. What we ideally want to promote are cities that enable connectivity so we can move from a more atomized interaction to a connected one and on to a really hyper connected one.

The other thing that you've addressed is diversity. Diversity is a broadly held term, one that crosses many domains and underpins civilization. Biologists care about diversity because it's how the species make themselves resilient and able to adapt to change. As you advocate for certain kinds of diversity, remind yourself that cities are about every kind of diversity –cultural, racial and economic diversity; diversity of use, diversity of user and diversity of place.

A sense of place

Diversity thrives as long as it's connected. You see it in natural systems but it also manifests in how our public spaces are organized. Conversations about integration often overlook the city as a physical place. However, your work can also contribute to how physical places are organized and how they enable (or inhibit) the kind of connection and the kind of diversity that you have been exploring and celebrating at this conference.

I spent five years in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina watching how resilience was incubated at the most local level. A sense of 'place' was incredibly important to how New Orleanians re-imagined themselves and configured their cities. When all the pundits and all the experts were saying we couldn't rebuild new Orleans, the people said "excuse me, oh yes we are, this is where I am from and this is where I am going to stay". Urban resilience starts at the most personal level, the places where people live.

Another example of place-based urban resilience is in Medellin, Colombia. Medellin was the home of the world urban forum this year and I was fortunate to be there with a MAS program that connects practitioners around livability and resilience issues. We visited some of Medellin's lower income communities called favelas, or slums.

Medellin's commercial core developed down the valley, but its lower income neighborhoods went up the sides of the mountains, creating a problem for all the lower income communities at the top of the mountain who couldn't get down to work or school. It took too long, the passage ways were too narrow. So what did they do? The city built escalators up into the favelas that have utterly transformed the city's poorest neighbourhoods, allowing people to get to work, get to school, to see their family.

Along either side of the escalators are fabulous murals made by local communities that tell stories of the rural migration into Medellin. Little businesses have sprouted up. You get off the escalator and there is a business selling cell phone minutes or another doing tailoring work. 'Transit oriented development' is what we call it in North America. In Medellin, that includes escalators.

The city also gave residents materials so they could paint their houses, including the roofs which you see from the top of the 13-odd escalator ramps. The success of this extraordinary intervention underscores the capacity of cities to self organize if the enabling conditions are present.

Local solutions

In the United States and elsewhere, we have these arbitrary things called states; arbitrary when you consider how they operate given that most of us live in cities and urban life is really organized around a local unit determined by economics and social kinship ties.

Digital technology is helping us understand that self organization propels itself in spite of what governments might do. Mapping Craigslist users, for example, shows us how communities organize themselves according to trading patterns. Today the largest proprietor of accommodation around the world is AirBnB. It's taken them 10 years to have an inventory of 500,000 units of housing that lets people stay in their properties, rent them out if they can't afford their own mortgage, and for you and I to have a different kind of travel experience.

At the moment AirBnB continues to be illegal in 70 or 80% of the cities that it operates in because our municipal governments do not yet understand that this is actually a viable and sustainable way to accommodate people and help people stay in the homes. It is a brilliant example for those who are fascinated with public policy and think that large systems are the only answer when we should be learning to trust local solutions on particular problems over the big, simple one size fits all approach.

We are all city-builders

I'll leave you with the remark by former London Mayor Livingston, quoted on opening night, that "Cities may be humanities greatest invention" and remind you again that you are all city builders. We are in this great business together: of city-building, of creating a combined, shared life that is only going to get more intense, more demanding and require more from each and all of us. Those of you who come from a rights-based perspective need to remember that urban life is actually place-based. As much as you may want to focus on the larger entitlements and broader issues, remember where the rubber literally hits the road: people's authentic experience, their attachment to place and who they are, how their everyday life gives them meaning and a sense of belonging.

Our associations may be national or cultural, but where that is felt is where we live. It is extraordinarily important for us to take seriously what the physical environment looks like and how we as stewards of these cities can shape that experience for people who are just arriving or for those who have been here for generations. We need to remind ourselves that the city is the great communal experience. It's how we create the civic commons. Isn't it fabulous that around the world we are increasingly voting yes to live in cities, adjacent with one another and to be more proximal, to have more common, shared life?

A global campaign is underway to get the UN's new millennium development goals to focus on cities. There is a concern among urbanists that nationally cities are invisible and that policy between nation-states continues to ignore what is really happening on the ground in favour of large, ambitious, esoteric goals that will actually get lost in cities. The campaign aims to get the UN and UN nations to focus on cities, on place, on local. One of the sustainable development goals must be urban.

So, city builders, google #urbanSDG and have a look.

You can read about audience reactions at the end of Mary Rowe's keynote [here](#) and also [watch the whole event here](#).

Cities in Competition: Cultural Offer Improves Attractiveness

By ktuner
September 29, 2014
[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Philippe Kern, URBACT Thematic Expert

Many European cities are confronted with industrial delocalization, economic transformation and its corollary unemployment. Globalization, the economic and financial crisis and post-industrial constraints are drawing cities into intense competition to attract and develop economic activities.

Cities are setting up departments to recruit foreign investors, they pamper local companies with a variety of incentives, set up hubs, clusters and industrial parks to encourage entrepreneurship, they invest in broadband connections and transport infrastructure to remain connected.

Quality of life and the destiny of cities

Importantly cities take care in ensuring an attractive quality of life with a cultural offer and social animation which stand out. First class theatres, operas, orchestras, music, film or street festivals, restaurants and bars, concert halls and sporting events are imperatives to the destiny of cities.

The art scene has made the reputation of cities such as New York, London, Paris, Berlin or Vienna. New York's Mayor Michael Bloomberg says that cultural activities and quality of life are a key part of maintaining competitiveness: "I have always believed that talent attracts capital more effectively and consistently than capital attracts talents". This justified the 42 million USD investment to guarantee the lease of artists' studios and millions of subsidies to save Broadway or the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Asian and Latin American capitals looking to internationalize are busy developing first rate cultural infrastructures often relying on European talents to run the show in the absence of a strong local performing cultural sector.

The health of a city is recognized by the atmosphere, the parties it is able to stage. The success of the application process to become European Capital of Culture is another testimony of the importance of culture in delivering attractiveness.

The cultural policy of cities has adapted to this intrinsic link between cultural offer and economic attractiveness. Successful cities are cities that integrate culture and creative industries in their development plan. As a result culture policy is no longer about funding art institutions alone or preserving the cultural heritage to attract tourists. It is a policy that aims at:

- Preserving social cohesion through participatory cultural events
- Re-appropriating urban spaces through artistic interventions or localization of creative activities
- Promoting imagination and creativity by stimulating the practice of art
- Developing entrepreneurship and economic activities by supporting cultural and creative organisations whether in the not-for-profit or profit sectors.

Culture and creative industries represent more than 10% of economic outputs in a large number of cities today (Berlin, Barcelona, Paris, Milan, Vienna or Amsterdam). London estimates that the sector is the second largest employer after the financial sector.

Similarly, a large number of medium-sized cities have turned around their image and have become attractive destinations for visitors as well as for enterprises thanks to their investment in art, artists and creative industries: Nantes, Eindhoven, Lille, Bilbao, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Graz, Edinburgh, Ljubljana, Warsaw, Tallinn and Tartu in Estonia to name a few.

New economic drivers rely on the intangible and the cultural

Today economic drivers are linked to the development of the digital economy, health and environmental sustainability. Consumers on the other hand are buying more than products. They are looking for brands, entertainment, meanings or experiences. Services delivering aesthetic, comfort, poetic metaphors, entertainment and social status generate new consumption patterns.

People buy the "Nespresso coffee drinking experience" by stepping into the luxury retail environment. The "Virgin Atlantic in-flight entertainment experience" invented by music business entrepreneur Richard Branson has become the norm in the air-transport business. Steve Jobs has shown the value of marrying technology with art to make Apple stand out from other technology companies. Apple's branding, product design and its entertainment offers are related to culture-based-creativity.

Itunes, the hub to access entertainment is churning out US\$5 billion of revenue each quarter. Google is as much an entertainment giant, disseminating cultural products through its networks and search engine, than an engineering company. These are obvious examples of creative spillovers between culture and creative industries with other economic sectors.

This form of innovation, born from the interaction between art, aesthetic, design and entertainment, is benefiting a wide range of economic activities and enterprises that wish to remain competitive. Creativity is essential for companies to expand or survive.

Large fashion brands have understood the need to link up with artists, designers, crafts and art to give higher luxury status to handbags, perfumes and catwalks. The fashion industry has benefited tremendously from this interaction. It is no longer just about selling garments but it is about providing dreams, emotions and social meanings.



Increasingly other industries are following the production models of the fashion industry. Products are designed to be replaced for little additional functionality but to enable customers to remain “in” as a sign of social status, network connection or brand celebration.

The packaging (the form, the brand) is as important as the content. More emphasis is given to the appearance, the colours, the shape, the message and the user experience from an anthropological and cultural sense. Importance is given to traditional craftsmanship or indications of origins to provide authenticity as well as to give consumption a cultural value.

Reliance on aesthetic, design, entertainment, metaphors gives importance to skills from artists, cultural organisations, and creative professionals. The latter helps businesses to differentiate themselves whether in product innovation, branding, or communication. This form of non-technical innovation is a feature of post-industrial economies.

Cities – the best places to generate creativity

Industries are increasingly outsourcing creative and innovation (R&D) activities. To control costs industries have become essentially financial and distribution centres relying on smaller, decentralized units to develop products or services. The development of such products and services is taking place in universities, labs, clusters, hubs or co-working spaces often established in large urban centres as the latter offer the facilities and lifestyle conducive to creative or R&D activities.

Indeed you are more likely to find creative professionals in an urban context offering networking opportunities, social interactions with peers or investors and cultural enrichment. Cities are places with abundant cultural resources ready to be mined by artists and creative professionals.

Cultural resources take the form of historical and heritage sites, languages, natural landscapes, geography, museums, performing art organisations, food, social behaviours, literature, music or audiovisual. They are essential sources of disruption and differentiation in a world where product life is shorter and consumers in demand of customisation.

Cultural resources are the raw materials that nourish culture and creative industries. In parallel cities, through their cultural assets, whether local or international, have become essential places to generate innovation.

The development of culture and creative industries is intertwined with a city’s cultural and creative ecosystem. Urban ecosystems which privilege the establishment of culture and creative businesses in combination with a strong cultural offering elevate cities to the status of “creative cities”, cities of destination as well as cities enabling the emergence of new economic activities linked to the digital, sharing and experience economy.



Philippe Kern, is the Managing Director, [KEA](#), and Thematic Expert with URBACT, a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development. This article was originally [published on the URBACT website](#) and has been reproduced here with permission.

Follow Philippe Kern on the “Creative Europe” groups on Facebook and LinkedIn. Twitter: [@KEATweets](#)

Swede visits Toronto for Canadian ideas in integration

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



He was a like child in a candy shop. For Maroun Aoun, CEO of [IFS or the Swedish Association of Ethnic Entrepreneurs](#), Canada's largest city presented a sensory overload of things to take back home.

"Toronto is a beautiful picture of diversity. And it is not just confined to the subway. I see it everywhere; in offices, in businesses and in homes with mixed-race families," said Maroun, not too worried that his quest for diversity and integration ideas was gnawing into holiday time with family while on a private visit. He was busy checking out the various initiatives in the Greater Toronto Area that aim to put the region's diversity to work.

"Equal opportunity increases growth" is the IFS motto that guided Maroun on his mission. "It is a truism. A lot can be accomplished when the doors are opened for people with initiative and they are given the chance to realize their visions," he said during an informal chat with members of the [Professional Immigrant Networks \(PINs\)](#), an initiative of [TRIEC](#).



Economic imperative

Maroun was impressed by ideas like TRIEC and PINs, and the presence of many ethnic chambers of commerce and associations that are active in pushing the business case for diversity. He was also full of praise for Canada's structured approach to integration and inclusion that is more grassroots than Sweden's top-down approach. "Unlike Canada's multi-cultural approach, many in Sweden want immigrants to assimilate," he said. "Either way, economic integration and prosperity should come first."

It is this economic imperative that made him keener to focus on jobs and entrepreneurship rather than on how to "integrate" immigrants. "Let's talk about the reasons why immigration benefits Sweden in the long run, and that the country needs a rather large number of newcomers to function."

Maroun pointed out that in 2020 Sweden will have two million seniors. "To meet the consequent labour shortage, we actually need to open our borders even more. And we will have to compete with other countries for attracting people that we today tend to see as a problem."

Sweden should be learning from North America, he said. "I would say that it's not that the conditions in North America have been so much better than in Sweden. It is the attitude that has been different, and they have benefited tremendously thanks to immigration."

Need to attract immigrants

Hailing Canada's attempts to attract immigrant workers and entrepreneurs, Maroun said Sweden too needs to do its best to attract immigrants and allow them to flourish, work, innovate and build more enterprises. "Entrepreneurs with a foreign background are often a key to international markets. Knowledge of business culture and language along with networks in other countries removes many barriers to exports. I have personally experienced the power of the mix of Swedish and Iraqi contractors on a trip to Kurdistan."

Staying with Iraq, a country from which a large number of Sweden's immigrants originate, Maroun held out the example of Namir Zetali. A successful entrepreneur of Iraqi heritage, Namir arrived in Sweden with his entrepreneurial instinct intact. Today he and his brothers run several businesses that together employ over 100 people and have sales of over 200 million kronor (around \$30 million).

But despite the many successes among them, would-be immigrant entrepreneurs face unforeseen hurdles when it comes to contacting financiers and raising capital. This happens mainly because they fail to present their business concept and plan in a convincing manner.

Founded in 1996 to help immigrants overcome these barriers, Maroun's IFS aims to stimulate and increase entrepreneurship and raise competence among individual business owners. It also initiates projects to create networks between migrant businesses and mainstream businesses and organizations in Sweden.

Ideas from Canada

But what were the ideas he intended to take back from Canada? "I would be taking back at least three ideas that would be of help for newcomer entrepreneurs," said Maroun. The three ideas are:

1. [The Connector Program in Halifax, Nova Scotia](#) that helps newcomers to build professional networks by connecting them with established community, business and government leaders.
2. [The Next 36 project](#) that aims to solve Canada's deficit of high impact entrepreneurs and nation-building business leaders. It plans to do this by turning the country's top students into its most successful future business leaders and innovators.
3. [The Newcomer Centre of Peel](#), a multi-service agency that assists the entire newcomer family to settle down, including getting them ready for jobs or starting a business.

Maroun was confident these three ideas can be replicated well in a country still coming to terms with immigration. “It is a new phenomenon for many Swedes. They do not understand why people move,” said the first-generation Swede of Lebanese heritage. “It may be because the country has been ethnically homogenous for so long and does not have a significant colonial legacy unlike other immigrant magnets.”

This story was first published as a [Maytree blog post](#).

Top Ten Bountiful Ideas for Shared Urban Prosperity

By kturmer
September 5, 2014
Uncategorized



Mary Rowe, Director, Urban Resilience and Livability, Municipal Art Society of New York City, gave the [closing address](#) at the 2nd International Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin. In closing, Mary asked an audience of 'city builders' what they had learned.

What Have You Learned?

Mary invited participants to share takeaways from the event and its [Marketplace of Good Ideas](#). What did participants plan to share, adapt or replicate? Audience response was enthusiastic – here are the top ten great ideas they shared with us:

- 1. Hamburg's Naturalization Campaign.** The crowd was unanimous in its endorsement of the personal interest shown by Olaf Scholz, Hamburg's First Mayor, in his letter-writing campaign to help the German city make a success of its ["Ich bin Hamburger" naturalization campaign](#). Scholz wrote letters to eligible immigrants urging them to become citizens as he believes that full status is the key to inclusion for long-time residents. "Naturalization is much more than an administrative act. It is the declared belief in our state and our society," he said on the [Mayors Panel on Re-Imagining the City](#).
- 2. Toronto's Youth Empowering Parents**, better known as YEP. [Mohammed Shafique](#), the co-founder of the [YEP project](#) was on hand in the Marketplace to showcase how YEP's unique approach has already served over 800 participants with a retention rate of over 80% for both youth and adults. [Hans Thieleman](#), of the City of Ghent said he would be sharing the YEP idea with the department of youth in his city. "I also wrote an article in the newsletter of our department with the ideas I picked up and the interesting quotes I heard at the conference. I plan to hand over the book with Good Ideas to my mayor and talk about the conference," said Thieleman.
- 3. Blind Spot: The Hidden Biases of Good People.** The keynote and workshop by [Mahzarin R. Banaji](#), Professor of Psychology & Social Ethics at Harvard University, found its mark among participants ranging from seasoned advocates to those just entering the field. [Uncovering of the "blindspots"](#) that unconsciously inform our behaviour was a profound learning experience for many and a precious take home to reset their minds at a personal and organizational level.
- 4. Nashville's Welcoming Tennessee initiative** also resonated at a personal level with the audience by anchoring notions of 'welcoming' in the expression of local values. [Eben Cathey](#), Communications Coordinator, Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, described the initiative's success at the Marketplace. It is now being replicated across the U.S. by Welcoming America and is ripe for adaption by any city that attracts migrants.
- 5. Racism and Sport.** The [Big Debate on football and racism](#) was a timely topic after the [European Parliamentary Elections](#) and right before the [2014 World Cup in Brazil](#), inspiring one audience member to suggest that all cities should show the red card to racism.
- 6. Toronto's Connect Legal.** Czarina Wilpert of [Initiative Selbständiger Immigrantinnen](#), Berlin found the [Pro Bono Law for Immigrant Entrepreneurs](#) idea from Toronto, Canada worth replicating. "I am a founder of an organisation that supports the self-employment and economic independence of immigrant women. I will communicate this potential to future projects specifically with new arrivals and refugees," she told us.
- 7. Ghent's Youth Ambassadors.** "The idea of the [Youth Ambassador Project](#) [from the Belgian city of Ghent] is similar to my "Round the World Trips through Living Rooms." I will also talk about [Making Connections](#) [Halifax, Canada] and We are Hamburg! with our mayor and business network," said [Catrin Geldmacher](#) of Rheda-Wiedenbrueck, Germany.
- 8. Christchurch's Emergency Response.** Anna I. Vey of the [German Red Cross](#) wants to find out more about [Christchurch's Emergency Response](#) so she can share this with "the persons who are responsible for strategic development of diversity in emergency response. When they are interested in this approach, we can plan further steps."
- 9. Sharing Ideas Across Borders.** Teresa Buczkowska, [Immigrant Council of Ireland](#), was also impressed: "We are planning on partnering with the [Ghent Ambassador Project](#) in Ireland as we have something similar in our organization. We would like to create a space for learning exchange and further development across borders.
- 10. Incubating New Ideas.** Mary Dawson, [Auckland Regional Migrant Services Trust](#), found a basketful of new ideas at the Marketplace of Good Place. Dawson said her organization would be using Cities of Migration Good Ideas as "starter topics" at local settlement network meetings across Auckland. "The [Refugees in Sport](#) and YEP are ones that I will be sharing with relevant organizations. The [Making Connections](#) idea [Halifax] will feature in our deliverables for the coming year. I will also be raising the [We are Hamburg](#) idea with the Auckland Council. [DiverseCity OnBoard](#) and [Diverse Counts, both from Toronto](#), are other ideas that will be given consideration hopefully by Committee for Auckland and other agencies. "

Good Ideas are on the move! With participants taking home such a bountiful, diverse cross-section of Good Ideas from cities around the world, it's easy to see how an event like the [Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin](#) can ignite new thinking and connect local actors in cities across the world to share good practice and move the agenda for inclusive cities and shared urban prosperity.



Let diversity be part of our collective future

By ktuner

September 9, 2014

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Mattias Nord, Kenneth Johansson and others

More and more companies and organizations are realizing the importance of working with diversity in their businesses. The reasons may be different, but it is sure that we are paving the way for an increase in community development through strategic diversity programs. We want to ensure that we incorporate this important issue in our collective future.

Today's [Swedish] society is facing major challenges and unequal access to various social forums is one of them. It could be exclusion from the housing market because a name sounds different than Svensson, it can be exclusion from a network if you haven't lived at a residence for 10 years or more, there may be exclusion from the labour market because "birds of the same feather flock together." This does not only result in negative consequences for the individual, but may constitute discrimination. It also means that we miss out on a nice neighbour, a new business contact and a development idea for the company.

Diversity is all the ways in which we humans are different. There are visible factors such as gender, age, visible disabilities or ethnicity but also invisible differences such as sexual orientation, education, experiences, invisible disabilities, and attitudes and opinions. There are several studies that indicate that focus on diversity within companies and organizations results in a more engaged workplace. This in itself can lead to increased growth but also reduced absenteeism, increased customer satisfaction and retaining a skilled workforce, which in themselves are economically important factors in a workplace.

One size does not fit all

A key to openness and diversity in the workplace and society at large is that we stop limiting our understanding of people on the basis of first impressions filtered through our prejudices and replace it with a culture that allows employees and fellow citizens to use their skills, capabilities and perspectives and express their different needs. Different people with different views allows for questioning, challenging and development activities as well as a broader recruitment base that gives access to the whole workforce and not just parts of it, whether it be a service, a health care business or a political party.

The needs that can be met with increased openness and diversity are many and various activities can testify for that. However, individual organizations have varied needs and one size does not fit all. Each would need to analyze what their needs are, how deficiencies can be rectified or how they can implement a diversity strategy.

Research also shows that in addition to increased growth for an individual company, openness and diversity is also a prerequisite for the development of whole regions as an increased range of services and cultural initiatives follow in their wake along with highly educated people. Added to this is the very serious development across Europe of right-wing populist and extremist parties gaining ground. Hence, to counter them, it is more important than ever to embrace democratic values, diversity and openness.

To create a national forum to expand the diversity agenda, a collaborative initiative was started in June in Karlstad with several partners. We are confident that talks across sectors, a knowledge base, inspiration and good examples are just part of what is needed to manage diversity and meet one of the biggest challenges to our future.

This opinion was first published on the [IFS website](#) in Swedish and this edited translation is reproduced here with permission. The people who have signed it off are: Mattias Nord, CEO Visit Karlstad; Hans Olsson, Chairman of board Brottsförebyggande Centrum i Värmland; Kenneth Johansson, Senator of Värmland; Jan Scherman, debater and founder of Oss alla; Anna Lundmark Lundbergh, CEO Almi Företagspartner Värmland; Johan Engström, branch chief of Swedbank Karlstad; Ulf Sandlund, CEO Ninetech; Tomas Fogdö, advisor; and Johan Plate, advisor.

Khalid Koser: Cities and the Case for Migration

By kturner
July 28, 2014

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Khalid Koser is Deputy Director and Academic Dean, Geneva Centre for Security Policy. This article has been adapted from his keynote speech on Cities and the Case for Migration at the 2014 Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin on June 5.

The Cities of Migration Conference stands out for at least three reasons.

First, it provides focus – today and tomorrow on cities. Too many migration events are too general, and narrowing our focus is important if we want to go beyond a talking-shop and actually try to achieve something.

Second is its sense of purpose. The program is interactive and solutions-oriented.

Third, I am impressed by how inclusive this meeting is. Bringing together a wide range of stakeholders, from government, civil society, the business sector and so on is the best way to generate new ideas. And I think it is important that our discussion here is not exclusively about rich cities, or the urban elite, or highly-skilled migration alone.

What frustrates me most about the migration debate today is a lack of vision, and I hope that our deliberations at this meeting can be visionary.

Because make no mistake, new thinking is required. This meeting takes place in the heart of a continent where migration has become a toxic issue. Governments have failed to make the case for migration in Europe, and allowed far right parties to hijack the debate. Migrants continue to die in deserts and drown in the sea in their efforts to come here for protection or to work. Governments are increasingly securitizing migration, with the risk that this will legitimize and normalize extraordinary responses. The international community has become gridlocked by 60 year old mandates and institutional rivalries.

The theme of my presentation, and I think of this meeting, is that cities have the potential to make a difference – to the discourse on migration, to migration policy, and to the lives of migrants themselves – and not just in cities, but globally.

Cities represent the best and worst of migration: migrant entrepreneurs and migrant exploitation; innovative migrants and irregular migrants; diversity and discrimination; hope and hatred.

Faced with these extremes of the migrant experience, cities again and again have been able to move the needle from negative to positive, from challenge to opportunity.

If cities in all their complexity can realize the potential of migration, then states, and the international community don't have far to look for the success stories and best practices that can help generate a new approach.

But I would argue it is not just up to states and the international community to learn, it is also up to cities to teach. With rights come responsibilities. Cities have benefited from migration; it is time that migration benefited from them.

Policy areas for cities to pursue

Let me outline three policy areas in particular where I think cities can – and should – take the lead on making a difference.

The first is migration governance. We know that with very few exceptions governments struggle to manage migration. They need to resolve competing priorities; they are subject to public and media scrutiny; they are trapped by electoral cycles in short-term policy and planning.

There are also significant shortfalls in the global governance of migration. No dedicated UN agency; no consolidated legal framework; few binding agreements beyond the bilateral and regional levels.

It seems to me that cities are relatively unencumbered by some of the obstacles to governance that confront governments and the international community.

The most important is sovereignty. The main reason that states continue to try to manage on a unilateral basis what is by definition a transnational issue, is that migration strikes at the heart of sovereignty – identity, economic competitiveness, security.

In contrast cities can be – and are – more single-minded in their interaction with migration, and increasingly cities interact to manage migration at the city level.

A second policy area where cities are taking the lead – although more work is required – is on engaging the business sector.



One of my roles is to chair the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration, and our priority has been to engage businesses and governments in migration policy. This has not been easy. Government and business have different priorities; they speak different languages; they are trying to satisfy different stakeholders; they define success differently; and they work to different schedules.

At the city level, in contrast, the dialogue between business and mayors is much more fluent and effective. And one reason may be that unlike our national politicians, many local and city politicians have direct experience of working outside politics.

A third area where I look to cities to take a lead is on promoting an objective debate on migration.

Space for objective debate

One of my main concerns about migration today is that the space for a sensible, honest debate is shrinking. There is a polarization of views, between those at one end of the spectrum who champion migrants and those at the other end who demonize them.

Migrants open businesses and generate employment and wealth; but they also can be over-dependent on welfare. Migrants are on the whole hard-working tax payers; but some are criminals. Diversity excites some people; but it overwhelms other people. If we can't have an open and critical debate on migration, then don't be surprised that the media doesn't.

And it seems to me that cities are best placed to convene this debate. You can find the entire spectrum of views within a few blocks in most cities. Cities have the venues and the community organizers. And whatever their perspectives on migration and migrants, city dwellers tend to be open to debate and exchange.

While states are building walls; cities are building bridges. While states are launching patrol boats; cities are launching ideas. While states are unilateral; cities are transnational.

Cities have a responsibility to promote good governance; engage the right stakeholders; and preserve the space for an objective debate.

Click below to watch Dr. Koser's plenary speech in Berlin, June 5, 2014:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=rD7xxFCyPtQ>



Migrants Give Auckland an Edge over Other Cities: Heather Shotter

By kturner
[Opinion](#)



Heather Shotter is executive director of the [Committee for Auckland](#) and was a participant at the 2014 Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin.

As we become more globally connected, more than half the world lives in cities which are becoming more ethnically diverse.

Immigrants overwhelmingly choose to migrate to cities because that's where opportunities exist on a large scale. Cities feel urbanization and immigration profoundly.

They can be contentious policy issues at national level. But at city level, they are lived realities.

Having listened to many great examples from speakers from around the globe at the [Cities of Migration conference in Berlin](#) [June 4-6, 2014], I am convinced Auckland – with more than 40 per cent of our population born overseas and 12-14 per cent of children born to immigrants – has a huge competitive advantage over other cities.

As one of the most migrant-rich cities in the world, we must court diversity to build on our strength, vitality and innovation. But the growing negative conversation around migrants in this country is threatening the very positive progress as we grow.

The future growth of Auckland depends on migrants and the skills they bring here.

Migrants bring new values and energy to a city. They bring connections to the cities they come from. At an individual level, ethnic entrepreneurs can exploit diasporas to open up international markets. A more diverse population can drive the development of new goods and services and a more diverse urban environment can help attract a creative class of skilled, liberally minded employees. Auckland will continue to grow and become more diverse.

We need to make the most of our expanding population by capturing the benefits of diversity. The fact we've got very skilled people wanting to come to Auckland to provide us with the skills we need is a really competitive advantage on the world stage.

The successes shared at the conference are important for Auckland to hear for a compelling reason. When integration is done well, it fuels economic growth, spurs innovation and talent renewal, creates new knowledge and promotes an open, richer and more inclusive social fabric.

We need to be able to take these diverse communities and their entrepreneurial spirit and capital skills to create better understanding and to make better connections.

We must work collaboratively towards an entrepreneurial and innovative culture in Auckland – one which promotes migrant integration as an effective strategy for inclusion and urban prosperity to benefit all New Zealanders.

If Auckland doesn't take heed and embrace programs that encourage ethnic and cultural diversity we will have lost a massive opportunity.

This article was first published in [The New Zealand Herald](#) on July 24, 2014.



Municipal IDs as a Tool for Inclusion

By ktuner

[Conversation Stories](#)



When New York Mayor Bill de Blasio [signed a new law](#) for issuing an ID card for any local resident who wants one -including undocumented immigrants- on July 10, 2014, he set into motion the largest program of its kind in the United States.

When rolled out in early 2015, [New York City's ID system](#) will offer a photo identification card with less stringent documentation standards than driver's licenses or state IDs. Cities such as [New Haven, Conn.](#), [Los Angeles](#), [San Francisco](#) and [Oakland, Calif.](#), already have similar programs.

Mayor de Blasio sees the municipal ID card as one of his signature initiatives, saying reliable identification is necessary to make the city's libraries, schools and other core services more accessible to groups such as the city's estimated half-million undocumented immigrants, homeless New Yorkers and transgender people.



An end to 'walking ATMs'

The City of New Haven, a city of about 130,000, pioneered the municipal ID card in 2007 based largely on public safety concerns. Unable to open bank accounts, many undocumented immigrants carried cash, or kept it at home, making them easy targets of theft. Afraid of being outed about their questionable status, many were reluctant to go to the police, meaning escalating crime rates were going unreported.

The municipal ID card was essentially a step towards making every resident a recognized member of urban community whatever their legal status. It gave the holder access to licensing bureaus, local banks, public libraries and other city services requiring identification and proof of residence.

Available for \$10, New Haven has so far issued 12,000 cards that double as a library card and help immigrants open bank accounts. When the card was launched in 2007, the backlash was fierce, including what were widely thought to be retaliatory raids by federal immigration authorities, with several dozen undocumented immigrants arrested in the days after the card was unveiled.

"In 20 years as mayor, it generated the most hate mail and the only real physical threats I ever experienced," former mayor John DeStefano was quoted as saying in an interview.

Kica Matos, the former Community Services Administrator of New Haven who led the implementation of the [municipal ID program](#) after extensive [research conducted by Yale University's Law School](#), notes that the city took care not to put any residents at risk. The records are private and kept at City Hall, and the city does not keep track of ID card holders on the basis of status. Often asked if municipal IDs could be used to identify those of questionable legal status by the authorities, [her answer](#) is explicit:

"The information in the database does not reveal anyone's immigration status. Moreover, in 2008, the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission, after a series of hearings, held that information contained in our database falls under one of the Freedom of Information exemptions and thus, cannot be released. Procedurally, to qualify for this exemption, the city received a letter confirming this from the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security."

Today, New Haven's gone one step further to ensure community safety. Local police operate with a 'don't ask, don't tell' policy aimed at encouraging all city residents to report crimes regardless of their status.

Putting Community First

According to Matos, the municipal ID card initiative was really a community-based effort by immigrants, originating as far back as 2004, when Matos was the head of Junta, a Latino-focused community organization based in the neighbourhood of Fair Haven. The original plan was to change the laws to make it easier for immigrants to get drivers' licenses. When that proved too difficult, the municipal ID plan emerged, with a whole suite of new ideas to create more access to public services

In addition to Parxmart technology that allows people to use the ID card to pay for parking on some of the older meters in town, the card was originally intended to also serve as a debit card. Matos said in an [interview with a local newspaper](#). That was "the biggest challenge that we failed to meet." Her successor in the city administration, Chisara Asomugha, is working on making the card a more full-fledged debit card, complete with perhaps a MasterCard or Visa logo.

Municipal IDs doubling up as debit cards combines two smart urban policy innovations: municipal identification for access to essential city services and special banking products for immigrant and poor residents. On the banking part, a [pioneering move was made by San Francisco](#). In 2006, city officials convinced a number of banks to lower monthly fees, remove minimum balances and accept IDs issued by the Mexican and Guatemalan consulates as proof of identification. Since then, more than 70 U.S. cities have adopted the so-called ["Bank on San Francisco" model](#), including [Oakland](#).

Genesis in sanctuary city movement

Municipal IDs and other measures to regularize the lives of the undocumented are part of the "sanctuary city" movement that has gained momentum in North America and Europe. In February 2014, for instance, the Canadian city of [Hamilton](#) unanimously passed a motion making it a sanctuary city for undocumented individuals. The move came exactly a year after [neighbouring Toronto](#) took action to become Canada's first official sanctuary city.

Ideas like these to ensure access to services to immigrants without full status or all required status documents are [successful integration practices](#) that are easy to replicate. [Juan Camilo](#), London Project Manager, Migrants' Rights Network, London, UK., says the New Haven municipal ID plan caught his eye because it is not common to see public authorities devising policies with the aim of including irregular migrants.

"It is also interesting that ID cards are in this case a tool for inclusion, whereas... national ID card in the UK has been strongly opposed by campaigners because of privacy concerns. It shows how the same tools can be used for different effects and that the local context can be determinant for an idea to take hold," said Camilo.

Related:

- New Haven (US): [Urban Citizens: Municipal Identification Cards](#)
- Toronto (Canada): [Access Without Fear: Building a City of Sanctuary](#)
- San Francisco (US): [Bank on San Francisco](#)
- Sheffield (UK): [Cities of Sanctuary, Communities of Welcome](#)
- Webinar: [Routes to belonging: the role of cities in the civic and political integration of immigrants](#)
- Webinar: [Welcoming Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

2010 Conference:

- [City Leadership: A View from the Top](#)
- [Video \(Part one of six\)](#)

Background:

- [Who We Are – The Center for Popular Democracy \(pdf document\)](#)
- [What is the Sanctuary Ordinance? \(City and County of San Francisco website\)](#)

Playing Together: New Citizens, Sports and Belonging

By kturmer

[Conversation Stories](#)



Maria, a new Canadian citizen from Romania, is an avid tennis fan. On settling down in Canada, she was thrilled to have a tennis club across the street from where she lived. But it took her two years to work up the courage to join it.

“Because they were looking so, you know, so Canadian, so [at ease] in their own thing there. I never dressed in a skirt, for example. Just cultural difference, you know? Every woman had [a] short skirt and equipment, very nice equipment, and I usually play like, not so well dressed,” Maria told a focus group for a national study exploring new citizens’ participation in sports.

Her hesitation to take part in sport is one of the insights uncovered by the study [Playing together – new citizens, sports & belonging \(PDF\)](#), released by the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) on July 8, 2014. “This study sheds light on the important role sports can play in effective integration if we focus our attention on removing the structural barriers to new citizens’ ability to participate in Canada’s sporting life,” said Gillian Smith, ICC Executive Director & CEO. “The earlier, the faster we start playing together, the more inclusive and better our society would be.”

With immigration rapidly changing Canada’s demographic profile, it’s more important than ever to listen to new citizens’ perspectives on how Canada can accelerate their path to full inclusion, said Smith. “Our study is focused on new citizens rather than new immigrants because they have more bandwidth to engage with their new country after the initial frenzy of settling down. They now simply want an invitation to play.” The survey includes firsthand accounts from more than 4,000 new citizens collected online and through focus groups.

From ‘New Canadian’ to Canadian

The ability of sports to speed up the path to active citizenship and becoming part of a national conversation was also reemphasized by Karl Subban, father of Montreal Canadiens hockey star P.K. Subban. “An airplane moved us to Canada and [hockey moved us from new Canadians to Canadians](#),” said Subban, who was present at the ICC book launch to share his family’s remarkable story. “Hockey has defined my family as individuals and as Canadians. Playing together supports my belief that sport has the power to unite, embrace cultures and enrich communities.”

Subban said new Canadians must make an extra effort to learn about the national passion for hockey without having to give up their passion for other sports. “The earlier we are able to fit in, the more productive we are as individuals and as a society. We simply need to get in the game.”

Survey respondents said that sport, as a natural and universal connection point, was more welcoming than many other social structures, including the workplace. It also helped them learn the Canadian social landscape and soft cultural skills, while offering access to informal, but vital, social networks.

Locker room wisdom

For many, sport was the starting point for deeper discussions about politics, culture and history. As one survey respondent put it, “[The] locker room is a great place to learn about Canada!” Some others joked that you “score points” with Canadians if you get enough “hockey sense” to pretend to know what you are talking about. Others wanted to participate for the sake of their children’s integration. A participant in a French focus group said, “I want to participate, to go to a hockey game...for my kids to know, to understand what hockey really is about and for them to really have a taste of what being a Canadian athlete truly means.”

Among the new citizens surveyed, 69% of those who played sports within their first three years in Canada believed it helped them learn about Canadian culture. They recognize hockey’s connection to Canadian identity and 71% had “some interest” in watching the sport. Approximately one quarter said they don’t follow baseball or football because they aren’t familiar with the rules. Running (39%), swimming (32%), cycling (26%), soccer (18%), badminton (12%) and tennis (11%) are the top sports they regularly played. More than half have tried a new sport once and are open to playing Canada’s winter sports.

While 44% of survey respondents have children who play organized sports, only 6% have their kids in mainstream Canadian sports like hockey or baseball/softball. Sports like soccer and [cricket](#) are the newest kids on the block.

New citizens love Team Canada as more than half watch the Summer and Winter Olympics. In the survey they also shared their ideas about how Canada’s sports organizations can get them into the game, suggesting opportunities to try winter sports for free and creating a Canadian sports welcome package.

Citing the ICC’s [Cultural Access Pass](#) that provides free admission to many of Canada’s cultural treasures as a model, Smith said her organization was more than willing to broker free or subsidized sporting opportunities for Canada’s newest citizens. “This study shows us just how easy playing together could be if we remove the assumption that everyone knows how it’s done,” she said citing lack of clear information about how one gets involved in organized sports as one of the systemic barriers new citizens face.

Related Good Ideas:

- Auckland, New Zealand: [It Starts with Soccer](#)
- Calgary, Canada: [Hockey Night In Canada – In Punjabi!](#)
- Copenhagen, Denmark: [Integration in Action](#)
- Greenwich, U.K.: [Giving Equality a Sporting Chance in Greenwich](#)
- Melbourne, Australia: [Kangaroos, Football and the Local Community](#)
- Montreal, Canada: [Play It Fair!](#)
- Munich, Germany: [Buntkicktgut! Integration Through Sports](#)

- Toronto, Canada: [CIMA Mayor's School Cricket Tournament](#)
- Toronto: [Citizens for Citizenship \(ICC\)](#)

Other Related:

- **Webinar:** [Levelling the Playing Field: Building Equality and Inclusion with Sport](#)
- [Sport and Community, Maytree Opinion by Alan Broadbent](#)
- [Fair Game: Good Sporting Ideas for Integration](#) [Conversations in Integration]
- [Diversity scores in football](#) [Maytree Conversation]

Mayors Seek More Power to Manage Migration

By kturmer

[Conversation Stories](#)



Mayors and representatives of cities from around the world, European institutions and international organizations are unanimous in their demand for greater decision-making power and more resources for local authorities in managing human mobility.

They endorsed the [Call of Barcelona](#) statement at the first [Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development](#) hosted by the Spanish city in June 2014. The statement shares their conviction that migration is a primarily positive, urban phenomenon and that cities act as magnets and the driving force.

Xavier Trias, Barcelona's mayor, said local authorities are at the forefront in meeting the needs of migrants and in ensuring their productive place within increasingly diverse societies. Cities do so in very practical ways, despite limited access to the decision-making tables where migration policy is shaped and scant resources, says Trias: "We receive migrants but often act beyond our powers; we need more tools."

The assembled mayors agreed to support greater solidarity amongst city leadership around the world in managing human mobility, and to foster links between migration and development. In addition to sharing effective practices, city leaders called for greater role in shaping migration policy, a voice through which practical challenges can be addressed, and increased resources to meet growing diversity in cities around the world.

Migrants often identify with their new city over any other reference point in the country, said the leaders. This fact was also echoed by Mekonnen Mesghena, policy analyst and head of Migration & Diversity at the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, in his [opening speech](#) at the 2014 Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin.

Cities as Change Agents

Cecilia Malmström, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs, agreed on the important role of cities at the front line of migration governance and the need to listen to the voice of mayors. Ambassador William Lacy Swing, the Director General of IOM, said that "large-scale migration is inevitable and necessary; allowing citizens to find the job they want; creating economic development and making humanity prosper." Swing also pointed out that cities respond to the key challenges of human mobility, thus being the "real agents of change."

Sally Fegan-Wyles, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNITAR, stressed the importance of creating a space where cities can raise their voice. "Mayors and cities must, can and will take leadership on the issue of migration and the international community has to find space to listen to the voices of cities on the issue of migration." This was also an important theme stressed by city leaders during a mayoral debate on [Re-imagining the City](#) at the Cities of Migration Conference.

Panelists convinced the Berlin audience that mayoral voices can and should be a powerful tool to ease the path to inclusion for newcomers.

The mayoral forum in Barcelona was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the World Bank's Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with the participation of the European Commission. Read the [Background Paper here](#).

Other participating International Organizations included the EC-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI); the United Nations University Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility (UNU-GCM); United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG); Metropolis; the Council of Europe; the Committee of Regions and The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration (THP).

You can read the [Call of Barcelona statement here](#). This report was written with inputs from [UNITAR](#).



#MigrationMeans campaign seeks global discourse

By kturner

[Conversation Stories](#)



At a time when one in seven people around the world are migrants in one form or another, migration is still, paradoxically, viewed with suspicion, particularly in the developed world.

To dispel that suspicion and encourage positive dialogue, the [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#) has launched a social media campaign, [#MigrationMeans](#), to raise awareness of migration in all its forms and to highlight the positive impact of migration from the perspective of the migrants themselves.

“Migrants bring a lot with them, new skills, cultural diversity and energy. But in crises, migration takes on new associations – shelter, warmth, access to health services, food, water, and so on,” said IOM Director General William Lacy Swing. “The campaign will communicate the meaning of migration across the broadest canvas.”

Social media as a driver

As millions of migrants are now using social media to network, to locate jobs, to figure out the best way to send remittances home or to assess the risks of irregular migration, IOM is inviting migrants to use the platforms like [Facebook](#) and Twitter to tell the world what migration means for them and how migration has changed their life.

The campaign kicked off in June with IOM staff around the world inviting migrants to say what migration means to them, using the [#MigrationMeans hashtag with a photo and a short caption](#).

Each picture includes someone, or several people, holding up signs saying what migration means to them. While the signs can be in any language, IOM is requesting that the posts and captions be in English, French or Spanish.

Suggested examples are:

- #MigrationMeans finding new homes
- #MigrationMeans beginning a new life
- #MigrationMeans new opportunities
- #MigrationMeans my choice
- #MigrationMeans a safer place for me and my family
- #MigrationMeans access to life-saving communications

“This campaign, which will run through International Migrants Day on 18th December, should help to advance the understanding of migration through individual stories,” Swing said.

“At a time when one in seven people around the world are migrants in one form or another, migration is still, paradoxically, viewed with suspicion, particularly in the developed world. We hope that this campaign will dispel that suspicion and encourage positive dialogue.”

What does migration mean to you?



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=tVw9cTITQa4>



On 28 June, IOM attended the International Culture Festival in Kristiansand, Norway. A host of nationalities gathered to share their diverse cultures and cuisines. The event was the perfect space to share thoughts on what #MigrationMeans to people.

No One Should Be Afraid to Say Where They Are From

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Roger Casale, [Chair of New Europeans](#)



At the beginning of April, a young woman came to my door collecting for Battersea Cats and Dogs Home. We have one dog and two cats in our house so we struck up a good conversation.

It turned out that the young woman was a trained lawyer, about to start a Masters course at UCL. "That's wonderful" I said, "I noticed a slight accent in your voice, do you mind if I ask where you were born?"

"I'm afraid I can't tell you that" the young woman replied "in Britain it is considered a weakness if you come from my country."

It may me feel very uncomfortable to think that things had got to this point in Britain.

This young woman, with so much to offer this country, felt that the climate of opinion was so negative in Britain – and this in London – that she was unable to acknowledge where she came from.

"Well you've knocked on the right door," I replied, "because I am part of an organisation called New Europeans, which is working with other groups to change the narrative on migration."

The young woman's name is Mihaela. I gave her the contact details for [New Europeans](#) and she then told me she is from Romania and offered to help with our campaigns. "Thank you, I said, we need you, but don't get distracted from your studies! The UK also needs your contribution and I wish you every success!"

Two years ago, we all celebrated with the world at the London Olympics. Britain showed a face that was warm, open, tolerant, welcoming and strong.

Above all, we celebrated our diversity as a nation – our unity in diversity. There were no trucks driving around the streets at that time with pointy fingers telling immigrants to go home.

Holding a mirror

One reason why this nation needs migration is because men and women from other countries help to remind us who we are.

They hold the mirror up to us. We see our shortcomings but we also see our own potential, including our potential for change. The challenge of change upsets many people – the idea that things can be done differently, that life doesn't always have to go on as before.

The migrant, the outsider, represents change, embodies change in the journey he or she has made to be with us in Britain today.

Without migration, Britain can neither sustain its economy and public services nor grow as a nation and as a community. We are fortunate in Britain that we are a country of migration, a nation of migrants.

We are fortunate in Britain that we are a country in which you can still breathe the air of freedom.

We are fortunate in Britain that people like Mihaela come here to study, to work and to contribute to our society.

This does not make the British better or worse than anybody else – but it does mean that we are a nation, which is able to understand and celebrate difference. Migrants remind us who we are. New Europeans have joined the [Migrants Contribute campaign](#) because we firmly believe that migration is a powerful and positive force in our society.

It is high time that we the 'open', 'tolerant', 'fair-minded', 'diverse', British were shaken up and reminded of that fact.

And as for the politicians who play politics with the issue of migration – well in my view, we need to send a clear, simple, co-ordinated message with these three words "Don't you dare!"

We want to live in a country where Mihaela and others like her feel comfortable and proud to say where they come from, don't we?

Roger Casale is the Chair of New Europeans, a civil society movement promoting the rights of European citizens. Previously he was the Labour MP for Wimbledon and a parliamentary private secretary in the Foreign Office. This opinion was first published in [Migration Pulse web space](#) of the Migrants' Rights Network and is being shared here under [Creative Commons 2.0 license](#).

Outsmarting our Brains to Overcome Hidden Biases

By kturner
June 26, 2014
Uncategorized



Can having a “Mediterranean” nose hinder your ability to land a seat at a university? Apparently it did at no less a place than Yale in the mid-twentieth century, says Dan A. Oren in his book [Joining the Club – A History of Jews and Yale](#).

Such was the prejudice against Jews at this Ivy League institution that the admission panel came up with a “tactful” code to restrict their enrollment: finding fault with a candidate’s nose and making it reason enough to reject an application.

While such blatant discrimination is unimaginable today, the fact that diversity was unwanted in the club-like atmosphere of Yale in the 1940s has a lesson for all of us, said [Mahzarin Banaji](#), Harvard University professor of social ethics, at an RBC Inclusive Leadership event on May 29, 2014.

“We must ask what it is that we are doing today that would look like the ‘Mediterranean nose’ 50 years from now,” said Dr. Banaji, who is also the co-author of the book [Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People](#).

She said we underestimate the degree of influence our unconscious biases have. Most often strong expectations outweigh or push out the evidence. Put simply, our mindset is not as inclusive as we think it is.

It is a distressing claim, one that tends to surprise those who are confronted by evidence that shows their behaviour is out of sync with their intentions. But research conducted by Dr. Banaji and her colleagues reveals that the human brain is hard-wired to make quick decisions based on a variety of assumptions and experiences without us even knowing it is doing so.

“We’d like to believe we are open-minded, fair and without bias, but research shows otherwise. This is an important, even if uncomfortable, realization for most of us,” said Dr. Banaji.

Deadly gender bias

Pointing out the complete irrationality that can arise out of unconscious bias, she cited the case of people judging hurricane risks based on their names. More than six decades of death rates from US hurricanes show that feminine-named hurricanes caused significantly more deaths than those with masculine names. [Research indicates](#) that this is because feminine names lead to lower perceived risk and consequently less preparedness.

“While getting killed in hurricanes is an extreme consequence arising out of widely held gender stereotypes, its implications in everyday life are many,” said Dr. Banaji. Research on hidden bias reveals that in spite of the best intentions, most people harbour deep-seated resistance to the “different,” whether that difference is defined by such evident factors as race, gender, ethnicity, age or physical characteristics, or more subtle ones such as background, personality type or experiences.

Dr. Banaji drew on two news photo captions in the aftermath of Hurricane Katarina to illustrate how we unconsciously put into context things we perceive. The caption for the picture of a black woman carrying goods on her head through the flood waters said she had “looted” it. A similar picture of a white couple with backpacks had a caption that said they “found” the goods.

Outsmarting the brain

As potent as hidden biases can be, the good news is that it is possible to overcome them. Although it requires a courageous approach to inclusiveness in everyday interactions, the solution isn’t complex or costly. Instead, all it takes is a concerted effort to outsmart our own brains through awareness, acknowledgment and consciousness.

The first step to defeat hidden biases is to be honest with ourselves about the blind spots we have. Having a bias is only human. The only shame is in making no effort to improve. “Human beings are an improving species — we have been improving ourselves in every way over millennia,” said Dr. Banaji.

“Comfort with diversity is an acquired taste, just like single malt Scotch,” she quipped. “But we already embrace and encourage it in a variety of spheres. Like for instance diversity in a financial portfolio, diversity in our nutrient intake and the conscious effort to keep the gene pool diverse by not marrying our cousins!”

On June 6, Dr. Mahzarin R. Banaji delivered a keynote speech on [Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People at the 2014 Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin](#).

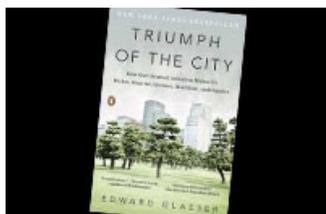
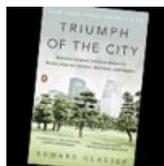
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- [Outsmarting Our Brains: Overcoming Hidden Biases to Harness Diversity's True Potential](#)
Business leaders need to overcome their hidden biases to be more competitive.

Edward L. Glaeser: Triumph of the City

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



Despite the bad rap cities get for being dirty, poor, unhealthy, crime ridden, expensive and environmentally unfriendly, Edward L. Glaeser is keen to prove that they are actually the healthiest, greenest, and richest (in cultural and economic terms) places to live.

In his [latest book](#), Glaeser, a professor at Harvard who studies the economics of cities in particular, says the city is humanity's greatest invention and our best hope for the future. New Yorkers, he points out for instance, live longer than other Americans and have lower heart disease and cancer rates than the nation as a whole. More than half of the United State's income is generated in 22 metropolitan areas. And on average, city dwellers use 40% less energy than suburbanites.

Glaeser says even the worst cities like Kinshasa, Kolkata and Lagos bestow benefits on the people who crowd them, including better health and more jobs than the rural areas they left behind. In a chapter called "What's good about slums?" he says it's not that the people in slums are poor, it's that cities attract people who want to stop being poor.

Urban poverty a sign of strength?

In a recent interview on CNN with Rafeeq Zakaria, Glaeser said urban poverty is actually more of a sign of urban strength than weakness. As cities don't make people poor, most of the time at least, we're missing the alternative when we look down on slums, he said.

"We are missing the fact that while we would never want to spend a week or a month of our lives in these slums, the people who come there are not fools. They are moving from places that are far worse," said Glaeser. "Slums are giving them opportunity, the ability to find a brighter future. Yes, they're hellish by the standards that we're used to, but they are not hellish relative to rural northeast of Brazil. And there's far more future in the city than there is in the dispersed and unproductive farmland of much of the world."

Glaeser compares the similar history of Bangalore and Silicon Valley to prove how essential education is to urban success and how new technology actually encourages people to congregate physically. He tells us why Detroit is dying while other old industrial cities — Chicago, Boston, New York — thrive.

Marks of success

Drawing on the wonders of a city, Glaeser makes a case for nurturing our cities to avoid facing consequences that will hurt us all regardless of where we live. He warns us that cities require management and that even though slums are places of opportunity they are also places of public failure. The challenge of the 21st century is to make our megacities livable and humane.

He says three things — smart people, small firms and connections to the outside world — are what makes cities successful in this century. Smart people are able to use the density and learn from one another. Small firms talk to each other and connect with each other within and outside their cities. And connections to the outside world are what cities are all about. Especially [Cities of Migration like Aachen in Germany](#).

Berlin to Brazil: Diversity Scores in Football

By kturner
Uncategorized



The sudden proliferation of national flags other than the Maple Leaf in Toronto is the enthusiastic reaction to the football World Cup in Brazil. While some may question this reassertion of identities left behind, this multicultural Canadian city is just reflecting the global reach of a game that defies [national boundaries](#) and even [earth's gravitational pull](#).

Starting Thursday, as 32 national teams representing the best in football vie for supremacy at the once-in-every-four-year event, the beautiful game makes fans of us all.

"The 'cup of cups,' as we affectionately call it, will also be the cup for peace and against racism, the cup for inclusion and against all forms of discrimination, the cup for tolerance, dialogue, understanding and sustainability," [wrote Dilma Rousseff, the president of Brazil](#), in an article urging visiting fans to view up-close her country's cultural diversity and ethnic and religious harmony among other things.

But can football be a panacea for some of the ills described by President Rousseff? Can it fight racism, for instance? At the [2nd International Cities of Migration conference](#) held in Berlin last week, two prolific thinkers weighed in on the motion *Be it resolved professional football is powerless to end racism*.

Sites of integration

Arguing for the motion, Sunder Katwala, Director, [British Future](#), a London think tank, said the issue of racism has more or less been resolved within professional clubs as they have become sites of integration. "We have won the argument in the stadium, but not outside of it."

He was afraid that while football may spearhead the fight against racism, it could remain the exception. "Anti-racism messages tend to get ignored. It is like the in-flight safety message we hear in airplanes. We filter it out."

Pointing out the diversity in team compositions, Katwala said two-thirds of the 750 players in the current world cup are migrants playing outside of their country of origin. Only the Russian team of 23 players can be considered *pure laine*. "But then their coach is Italian!"

Katwala was of the opinion that despite the very diversity many teams thrive on, professional football itself has to trudge a very long way before becoming more inclusive. "The stadium should look like the city," he said alluding to the expensive tickets that keep away poorer, marginalized sections of society from games. "If we are going to do the work [against racism], we have to make the links."

'A vision, an opportunity'

Vigorously defending the other side of the debate, David Goldblatt, author of [The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football](#), asked "if you're not going to football, where else could you go to implement anti-racism campaigns?" He said football provides us a glimpse of a society that we could share. There is a level playing field where we pick players based of their talent and not where they come from. "It gives us a vision...an opportunity to staking your place in society."

Goldblatt, who also teaches politics at Pitzer College, London, said football provides us the platform to have the kind of conversations we need to be having when it comes to racism and diversity. "You put it on the pages of the sports press, suddenly they become relevant, comprehensible and important. And until we have that kind of conversations, we are going nowhere."

The "cup of cups" is one such space to celebrate the values of fair play and peaceful coexistence among all peoples. It sure is a celebration of what diversity and being global is all about.

Enjoy the games and flaunt your flags.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



Related:

- [Rooting for Diverse Teams](#) – Read how international students in Canada are looking forward to cheering for their home teams
- [The World Cup: a tournament of nations and migrants](#)
- [David Goldblatt on the Sociology of Football](#)

This article was first published as a [Maytree Conversations](#) blog post.

Mayors on What Makes Cities More Inclusive

By ktuner
Uncategorized



One mayor wrote letters to immigrants urging them to become naturalized citizens. Another saw newcomers as harbingers of fun in his very functional city. [The 2014 Cities of Migration Conference](#) heard them both and wants others to know how leadership matters to cities.

As the level of government closest to the people, city administrations can directly and immediately impact the lives of immigrants. The panelists on the discussion about [Re-imagining the City](#), convinced the Berlin audience that mayoral voices can be a particularly powerful tool to ease the path to inclusion for newcomers.

A good case study is the personal interest shown by [Olaf Scholz](#), Hamburg's First Mayor, to help the German city make a success of its ["Ich bin Hamburger" naturalization campaign](#).

"Seven thousand immigrants became citizens last year, double the figure of 2009," said Scholz who believes citizenship is the key to inclusion for long-time residents. "Naturalization is much more than an administrative act. It is the declared belief in our state and our society."

Human touch

[Jussi Pajunen](#), the mayor of Helsinki, is proud of the personalized integration plan his city offers immigrants. "Every person is treated as an individual by the one-stop-shop service that offers mentoring and guidance with regular follow-ups," said Pajunen. "[The information centre for immigrants](#) is kept open seven days a week at the city hall. It also sends a message to others that immigrants are a positive force in Finnish society."

As equality is a cherished Nordic value, it is easier for his city to push the idea of shared prosperity by helping immigrants integrate. As the [largest employer in Finland](#) with more than 40,000 employees, the city can also be a role model for other employers in newcomer recruitment and development.

Both Scholz and Pajunen were happy with the attention they received from immigrants. "They greet me on the street to ask how I got their names and addresses to write them letters," said Scholz. To which Pajunen added: "While locals ignore their mayors, immigrants love and respect them."

The Helsinki mayor said that while information and communication technology made it easy to identify people, the human touch as espoused by his Hamburg counterpart was essential to address immigrant issues. "We need a person to talk to another person."

'Immigrants = more jobs'

Also contributing to the discussion was fellow panelist [Raquel Castañeda-López](#), Council member from Detroit. Representing a U.S. city which has seen better times, she outlined the steps taken to revive it, the most important being ways to attract immigrants to come and invest. "Immigrants tend to open more small businesses, which leads to more jobs," she said.

Detroit is on a steep learning curve as specialized services for immigrants are non-existent at present. While her city is not able to offer personalized services like its European peers due to budget constraints, it is setting up a virtual office, said Castañeda-López.

"We are keen on starting a new conversation and are learning from [New York](#), which has done a good job in helping immigrants, and are joining [the Welcoming America initiative](#)," said the councilor who represents a district that houses the majority of her city's immigrant communities.

Watch the full panel to get more insights from the discussion moderated by [Melinda Crane](#), Chief Political Correspondent, Deutsche Welle, Berlin. The panelists were also asked questions via video by [Naheed Nenshi](#), mayor of Calgary, Canada, and [Lianne Dalziel](#), mayor of Christchurch, New Zealand.



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This article was first published as a [Maytree Conversations](#) blog post.

Mekonnen Mesghena: An Agenda for Shared Prosperity

By kturner
[Opinion](#)



Mekonnen Mesghena is policy analyst and head of Migration & Diversity at the Heinrich Böll Stiftung in Berlin. This was his opening speech on June 5 at the 2014 Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin:

A week from today on 12 June, the whistle will blow to mark the start of the World Cup.. But while the world eagerly awaits the football championships in Brazil, mass protests have rocked the big cities there. Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators have taken to the streets in Fortaleza, Salvador, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and other Brazilian cities. The protests are not of course aimed at football but at the frustration and daily experiences of social exclusion, corruption and misguided development projects. What people want is simple: better living conditions, security and the mobility to get to work. “An advanced city is not one where even the poor use cars, but rather one where even the rich use public transport,” said Enrique Peñalosa, Bogotá’s former mayor.

Large cities like São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro are dynamic places with major promise and potential for development. Longing and hope drive countless numbers of people into these big cities every year. At least some of them manage to find a better life with access to education, work and better living conditions. For many, however, it remains a distant dream. In Rio alone approximately 1,200 favelas exist in which roughly 1.4 million people live – this represents a quarter of the city’s population. In São Paolo there are roughly 1.3 million people who live on the social, economic and cultural margins of the city. Throughout the whole world, roughly one billion people live in these precarious and extremely poor living conditions.

This situation is likely to come to a head in many cities in the future. Across the globe, city populations are growing by around 70 million people per year – that’s approximately 1.4 million per week. Nowadays more than half the global population lives in cities – and by 2030 this proportion will grow to 60 per cent, and by 2050 to 70 per cent. In coming years, only three per cent of the planet’s surface will generate about 90 per cent of the global economy for around three quarters of the global population. In Europe too, the demography of certain regions is shifting due to migration and changes in age structures: the result is growing cities and shrinking regions.

Freedom of mobility

The growth of cities is, on the one hand, the result of people’s lives shifting to urban areas and on the other, the result of increasing immigration – especially in the EU where citizens enjoy freedom of mobility. This is one of greatest achievements of the European project, against which right-wing conservatives and populist political movements mobilize and stir up fear nowadays. However, the success of the populist parties in Austria, Denmark, Great Britain and France is not only a reaction to the Eurozone crisis and a vote against the loss of national sovereignty. It is equally a statement against “others” both inside and beyond borders, and is therefore another attempt to segregate and exclude by defining European ethnic identity and its territory as markers for membership. This is an attack on the foundation of the European Union – an embodiment of multiculturalism and diversity.

Germany, the geographical centre of Europe, contrary to reason and the facts, has vehemently denied its state as a country of immigration despite every fifth German citizen being from an immigrant family. Thanks to its stable economic situation, according to a recent OECD report, Germany ranks as the second most popular country of immigration after the USA. This is where a populist myth is unmasked: although in the last twenty years the figures for immigration have never been as high as they are today, the jobless figures have never been so low.

In the region of Stuttgart alone, where full employment prevails, some 63,000 jobs cannot be filled because of a lack of labour force. On the other hand, countless numbers of young people have had to leave their families, familiar surroundings and social networks in search of better perspectives to start a new life elsewhere. But the new generation of immigrants to Europe do not necessarily head to sources of work and food. Mostly, they go to cities where they believe they will find functionality, modernity and new opportunities of development. “Many Italians, Spanish and Greeks come to Berlin but the jobs are in West and South Germany,” says sociologist Edith Pichler. On the other hand, people’s choices are not only based on economic reasons but also how to make their ideas and plans come true: migrants don’t just go to Germany, Denmark or Great Britain but quite specifically to Berlin, Copenhagen and London. “Large cities will become increasingly important in the future and people will increasingly define their identities through them,” says the globalization and development researcher Ian Goldin.

Cities have always been laboratories of social innovation and pioneering places of change for precisely the reasons of social and cultural diversity that makes them stand out. Democracy was thought up and experienced in cities, great inventions have been made in them and new lifestyles have been tested. They are places where innovative forms of cohabitation have to be developed such as participation in a diverse, multicultural society. The success of many large cities is largely to do with the fact that the hopes and dreams of those people who have decided to settle in them can come true. If successful, the result can be an urban society that is strong both socially and economically as well as dynamically cosmopolitan. For centuries, migration has played an active part in the urbanization and development of cities.

Liberal and inclusive cities are successful in creating opportunity-oriented conditions that offer integration, participation and upward mobility. Cities and their immigrants can contribute to a social, political and economically successful society. Failure can result in segregation, marginalization, poverty and social tensions.

Channels of access to legal rights and freedom from discrimination on the work market are some of the decisive factors that can help migration have a positive effect on urban wealth. City politics have a great influence on economic opportunities and initiatives that enable migrants to fulfill their potential. Discriminating and racist urban and economic structures not only harm the people that they directly affect; they also have a negative effect on the state and development of the city.

This not only applies to migration, of course. Urban populations are much more heterogeneous nowadays. They are more diverse in every respect: socially, culturally, ethnically, demographically etc. But the extent to which diversity is reflected in the cultural, political and economic structures of cities is a very different story. Cities deal with their heterogeneity in very different ways – and are often quite differently prepared for it.

Incidentally, the liberalism and openness of a city cannot simply be measured by whether and how it attracts and accommodates a “creative class” – as Richard Florida describes the group of highly-mobile and highly sought-after professionals. The openness of a city should be measured above all by the way it accepts people into the community who have little and who arrive with little, who need its protection and help; and by the way it helps those people to stand on their own two feet as quickly as possible. Anything else harms not only the people affected but also the community, giving impetus to marginalization and racism. The public space occupied in Rome, Berlin, Hamburg, Amsterdam and several other European cities by refugees from Lampedusa and refugee activists no doubt presents cities with enormous challenges. But there is also no doubt that the problem cannot simply be erased from the cityscape by excluding refugees from cities, and from the work training and employment markets.

Need for representation

A humane and progressive city requires not only a progressive spirit but also progressive institutions and facilities: kindergartens, schools, universities, the work market, public administration, the media, theater, museums and so on. In all these areas, however, we are dealing with glaring gaps in representation. To different degrees, this continues to affect different social groups: women, the elderly, people from immigrant families, the disabled etc.. Politics and political institutions are just two areas where blatant gaps exist between reality and representation. While every fifth German citizen comes from an immigrant family, German city parliaments are made up of just four per cent of people with an immigrant background. This is precisely where representation forms the nucleus of democracy. The proportion of immigrants in many German cities is as high as 50 per cent.

In the media, the situation looks even direr: only every 50th journalist is from an ethnic community. The situation in city schoolyards is even more dismal. Despite the growing numbers of schoolchildren who have an immigrant biography, and who are culturally and linguistically diverse – in some classrooms, up to 80 per cent of the class – barely 5 per cent of their teachers come from immigrant families. Civil servants are particularly underrepresented.

In the face of rapidly changing city demographics and growing multiculturalism, cities are forced to look for and formulate political and practical approaches that address the entire city population. The progressive and tolerant dynamism that urban coexistence requires must not be forced into parochialism that lacks vision. It has to be made tangible for the rest of the country. A modern city society, characterized by social and cultural diversity requires policies on diversity that raise the visibility, representation and mobility of various population groups in cities on several levels, while creating opportunities to take part in decision-making.

This speech by [Mekonnen Mesghena](#) was first published on the [Heinrich Böll Stiftung website](#).

Hamilton – The Latest Sanctuary City

By kturner

June 2, 2014

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



In February 2014 the city of Hamilton unanimously passed a motion making it a sanctuary city for undocumented individuals. Coming exactly a year after neighbouring Toronto took similar action, Hamilton joins dozens of other cities in the United States and Europe by [“re-affirming its commitment to ensuring access to services without fear to immigrants without full status or without full status documents.”](#)

We spoke to Councillor Sam Merulla, a key government representative who helped move the motion along, and Maria Antelo, community development worker at Hamilton Community Legal Clinic and a member of the Hamilton Sanctuary City Coalition, to find out what prompted the action.

Why is it important to Hamilton to provide services without investigating someone's immigration status?

Councillor Merulla: It's a message to new Canadians that they should feel comfortable living in the city of Hamilton and not fear authority. It's important for a city to come out and say, it's not our authority, nor is it our jurisdiction, to seek out any new Canadians who don't have the appropriate documentation. And nor is it within the city's jurisdiction to report those individuals. At the end of the day, if you're a resident of this city, whether you are documented or undocumented, from our eyes, you're equal in the laws of the city of Hamilton. And I think it sends a clear message that we are a progressive and welcoming community.

Maria Antelo: Hamilton is the third largest city receiving immigrants and refugees in Canada. During the last couple of years we have seen injustices inflicted on people without full status. Recent immigration changes are making it very difficult if not impossible for failed claimants, injured migrant workers or abused caregivers to file for permanent residence status in Canada.

In February 2012 almost 300 community members rallied in front of the federal building asking immigration authorities and specifically Jason Kenney (former Immigration minister) to let Lucene Charles stay in Canada. Ms. Charles had been in Canada for over 16 years. Her Canadian-born children knew no other country than Canada. Her situation was unique, but the Hamilton community came to her support. Over 10,000 people signed the online petition and fundraising efforts paid for her legal fees. At the end Ms. Charles was granted a stay.

Members of what is now the Hamilton Sanctuary City Coalition (HSCC) were very involved in this process. At the time, we knew that our community was ready to stand up for those that are being denied human rights, like the right to live without fear of detention or deportation. When Toronto declared itself a SanctuaryCity in 2013, members of the coalition contacted organizers in Toronto. On May 29 we held a public meeting calling institutions, unions, community leaders and public in general to join forces to make Hamilton the second sanctuary city in Canada. In November we held a public forum. And on February 12, 2014, Hamilton became a SanctuaryCity.

Why do you think HSCC's idea got unanimous support at both the committee and council level?

Councillor Merulla: The fact that it was unanimously supported by members of council who represent various ideologically stripes means we all found common ground on this issue. It's something that we should be proud of.

Maria Antelo: The coalition worked very hard with key community members who are respected both by the City and the community. HSCC worked with the community to make sure they understood what a SanctuaryCity is and why their councillor should support this motion. We worked on building a comprehensive community and agency report, speaking to individuals, students, unions, agencies, etc. Every councillor got calls from members of their ward expressing the need to make Hamilton a welcoming city. This is what the people of Hamilton wanted.

Hamilton Police Service still has to review the motion and its implications. How important is it to have police onside?

Councillor Merulla: At the end of the day, from my perspective, the police are onside. I'm not speaking on their behalf, but my understanding is that they're enforcing the laws and they're not asking for immigration status when they're doing so. I would suspect that they're focused on what their job is and their job is not an extension of the immigration department.

Maria Antelo: HSCC will make efforts to engage with the Police Service to make clear there might be victims without status who need police protection. It is vital that anyone that needs police protection gets it and that status should not have to be disclosed.

What progress has been made to the anti-racism staff training program entitled “Equipped to Serve” and what public education strategy is being created in partnership with Hamilton Community Legal Clinic? Do you know how the city plans to monitor and ensure that the motion is enforced?

Councillor Merulla: The only way you're going to tackle xenophobia and ignorance is through education. We're going to rely on our partners, particularly those agencies responsible for new Canadians, as they spoke pretty vocally on the issue about what their fears are and what they see on a day-to-day basis in dealing with new Canadians.

They really are going to be our eyes and ears in the community, particularly among new Canadians because the new Canadians' circle of trust is very small. The agencies' mandate is to penetrate that circle. I believe building this trust is our ultimate goal. Rather than having that circle of trust when they first arrive being so small, the circle of trust should encompass the city, the province, and the country.

Maria Antelo: The Equity Office at the City of Hamilton has assured us that all city staff will receive proper training. Aside from that, the HSCC will also develop the education piece for the public, agencies, etc. HSCC will also take steps to make the City accountable and that the council's motion is part of its philosophy.

Whether the City does or does not dedicate staff, we believe in working with communities, neighbourhoods, associations, etc. Institutions are important, but people come first.

The council also recommended that the City request the federal and provincial governments to “identify ways to better assist residents with undocumented status in Canada to regain their full status.” What’s your sense of how this conversation might go with your provincial and federal counterparts?

Councillor Merulla: It would go better with provincial than federal, just clearly based on what I've heard to date. From a federal perspective they have an understanding that this is a black and white issue, but it's not and has significant grey area. As a country of compassion, with many coming from immigrant roots, there needs to be recognition that it's not as simple as yes and no. We all have a responsibility from a humanistic perspective to ensure that our residents have access to what they need to thrive in our city.

Maria Antelo: HSCC along with other migrant/refugee groups will hopefully keep this conversation alive. We need to educate our representatives on human rights abuses and workers rights issues. The number of migrant workers right now is greater than immigrants coming to Canada. As a community, we need to realize that injustices are lesser when policies are put in place to make Hamilton a home for those who do not have one.

Hamilton is one of only a small number of cities declaring themselves as sanctuary cities. What is it that you will tell other cities considering similar action?

Councillor Merulla: I think what they need to consider the obvious. Globalization, when it comes to migration, has existed for decades. We were all new at one time, we all need to not forget where we have come from. We need to provide a climate that better serves needs as opposed to the ignorance associated with those who want to subject everyone to their xenophobia.

It's a very local issue in Hamilton with very significant global impact. And we need to look at ourselves as more of a global community, as opposed to isolation locally. Exclusion has historically been destructive, in all aspects of our society.

Maria Antelo: The work is being done first at a local level. Everyone deserves to live in a community where dignity respect and equality is guaranteed. No one is illegal. We are all connected by our common humanity. We have to start at home, from the bottom up.

Related:

[Access to Services for Undocumented Individuals \(PDF\)](#)

Introducing Newcomers to Indigenous People

By kturner

[Interview](#)



[Bringing Maori Culture to Newcomers: The Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy – Judi Altinkaya](#)

[The Vancouver Dialogues Project: Where the Gold Mountain Meets Turtle Island – Baldwin Wong](#)

The two different case studies above in immigrant inclusion were examined in a Cities of Migration [webinar in July 2013](#). Five months later, in November 2013, the program leaders of these initiatives got the opportunity to meet and share professional insights in Wellington, New Zealand.

Henry Yu, Associate Professor of History at the University of British Columbia and Co-Chair of the Vancouver Dialogues Project, met Judi Altinkaya, National Manager, Settlement Unit Immigration New Zealand at an event organised by her unit as part of the Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy, under which the Newcomers Marae Welcomes project was initiated.

At the event, Professor Yu made a presentation to local Maori on Vancouver's experience of bringing new immigrant and indigenous communities together for intercultural learning. The Vancouver Dialogues Project sought to achieve a similar outcome as the series of Wellington Marae Welcomes that were initiated through the Kōpiti, Upper Hutt, Hutt and Wellington City Councils in association with local Maori Iwi (tribes) as hosts.

Although the levels of resourcing for the Wellington project were vastly different from that in Vancouver (where the project was very much based on academic-led engagement and research), both approaches acknowledge that meaningful cultural exchange is an essential component for welcoming communities and newcomer settlement. The November event provided an opportunity for sharing insights from the two projects. The contrast in approaches led to an interesting discussion about the unique political and cultural landscape in British Columbia and their experience of gathering people together to share stories.

The discussion was facilitated by David MacDonald, political science professor at the University of Guelph, Canada. Professor MacDonald has a related interest in the area of indigenous-settler relations and is currently on sabbatical in New Zealand.

Wellington has a resident population of 200,000 compared to Vancouver's 2.8 million. How do you differ from each other in your strategies to "connect" newcomers with local indigenous communities?



The approach in the Wellington region was quite different. Seed funding totaling NZD\$75,000 was split across five local areas, with the project engaging local city councils and Maori in those localities. Local Maori chose Marae-based activities that would provide the opportunities of achieving the goals for newcomer migrants by including them in local communities and workplaces and support the cultural differences they bring. In turn, newcomers learn to respect Maori values and way of life and care for the environment"

The success of the Marae-based activities led to ongoing opportunities for newcomer engagement, beyond the period of the seed funding. It was important that local Maori had strong ownership of the program and could tailor it to local conditions.

All newcomers to the Wellington region were informed about the Marae programmes through the local Settlement Support staff and through advertisements in local newspapers and in local settlement websites and social media.

What can Wellington learn from Vancouver about its program?

Wellington has appreciated learning from Vancouver about the positive sharing that can naturally occur if safe "dialogue spaces" are created between indigenous and newcomer peoples. Specifically, we have

understood the value of creating opportunities for newcomers and indigenous peoples to share their histories, experiences and culture, and find the similarities.

Language can unite communities or divide them and much depends on nuance and who is doing the talking. "Integration" can sound like "assimilation" whereas "inclusion" sounds more welcoming. Are they the same thing or part of a bigger solution and which does your future work program lean towards?

Whatever they may sound like (and people certainly do confuse these terms) integration is the outcome of an inclusive society and this is the outcome New Zealand's settlement approach aims to achieve. If newcomers are welcomed and included they integrate more readily. Integration does not mean giving up your own identity – it means bringing your identity into the new nation you have migrated to, and adding to it from the new nation. Integration is the strength that arises from the combination of what you bring to a country and what you gain from that country.

Assimilation is the opposite – it is the take-over of the newcomer identity by the host society identity, so that the culture, values, beliefs and experience of the newcomer are suppressed and lost over time. Assimilation is not the New Zealand approach to settling newcomers.

Both Canada and New Zealand are countries with along-standing indigenous population. What can First Nations communities learn from the immigrant experience and vice versa?

The immigrant experience is one that Maori readily relate to and empathise with – given that migration to cities is still relatively recent in their own history.

The most important learning for new migrants from engagement with Maori is a better understanding of their history and culture (and possibly even learn a little of their language). This is an important aspect of newcomer integration into bi-cultural New Zealand.

City councils and municipal networks are critically important in the delivery of welcoming and transitioning new immigrants in Wellington and Vancouver. Describe the civic planning strategies for immigrants?

The Wellington Newcomers Marae Welcomes project provided a tangible context for local Maori and City Councils to work together in supporting migrant settlement. Once the seed funding ceased, it was up to these local players to continue the approach. Both parties saw real value in the activities and many of the Marae-based events continue to cater for new migrants.

The Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy, under which the activity was established, is currently undergoing a shift in its delivery model, following a review in 2013. The future for supporting settlement in regions will be based on a Regional Partnership Agreement approach between the local city councils and Immigration New Zealand. This is currently under development.

What were the major lessons learned? Were there any potential cost efficiencies or resource savings you were able to identify through your shared experience?

The opportunity to engage with the Co-Chair of the Vancouver Dialogues Project in November provided a great follow-up to the Cities of Migration webinar. The event in Wellington specifically targeted regional stakeholders involved in settlement activities and delegates attended from a range of central and local government agencies, including the local councils, Human Rights Commission, Office of Ethnic Affairs, Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand Police, as well as Victoria University of Wellington and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

Delegates were overwhelmingly positive about the session, and welcomed the sharing of successful strategies for addressing intercultural understanding within the Vancouver communities and the learnings taken from the Vancouver context. The presentation and discussion helped to reinforce the importance of bringing new immigrant and indigenous communities together for intercultural learning and provided a sound base from which to inform local perspectives when developing new community initiatives in the region.

Continued government and public support and endorsement of immigrant inclusion programs requires evidence of successful outcomes. Wellington's Settlement Knowledge Base monitors engagement and relationship forming indicators of new migrants.

The programs initially seed-funded by Immigration New Zealand have now become integral to local City Council activities for newcomers – and this is the measure of their success.

New Zealand is currently developing an outcomes framework for settlement activity across government at a national level. However, this is unlikely to capture the outcomes of small programs at regional levels.

Welcome to Berlin

By kturner
Uncategorized



We look forward to seeing you in Berlin for the 2nd international Cities of Migration Conference between June 4 and 6, 2014.

The three-day conference will bring together international city and community leaders, experts, practitioners, advocates and policy-makers for a dynamic exchange of ideas on one of the most important global challenges facing cities today: the integration and inclusion of urban newcomers.

Highlights include:

- Opening event at the Embassy of Canada, including a performance by Toronto artists Asha and Ravi Jain of A Brimful of Asha, their true (and very Canadian) story of generational and cultural clash.
- A mayors' panel on re-imagining the city and how to create a foundation for future prosperity for all residents.
- A formal debate between two prolific thinkers on the question of racism in professional football (soccer) and its larger impact on society.
- A hard look by a world-renowned expert at implicit bias and the roots of discrimination, especially "blind spots," that unconsciously informs our behaviour.
- A marketplace of curated good ideas to showcase promising city-level integration practices.
- Urban labs on important issues in city-building and migration: employment, youth, leadership and culture.

The conference is presented by Maytree with the Heinrich Boell Foundation, the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Embassy of Canada in Berlin; and the generous support and participation of Barrow Cadbury Trust, Open Society Foundations, Tindall Foundation, Stiftung Mercator, Robert Bosch Stiftung, the World Bank and others.

For full program, visit the [conference site](#).

Livestream

And if you are not able to be at the conference, the Mayors Panel on Re-Imagining the City and the Big Debate on whether soccer is a Beautiful Game or Racist Quagmire [will be live-streamed](#).

Select plenary sessions may also be live-streamed. If you are interested in viewing, please email Markus Stadelmann-Elder at mselder@maytree.com.

Conference Café: Beyond Welcoming

By kturner

[Events](#)



Embracing diversity and creating inclusive communities is the way forward from being merely a welcoming place for immigrants.

Expect to hear new ideas and strategies for moving beyond welcoming as the second panel on day two of the [International Cities of Migration conference](#) discusses an action-oriented agenda for building an inclusive society.

As you can expect, everyone on the panel has walked the talk on this issue, beginning with keynote speaker [Rita Süßmuth, former president of the German federal parliament](#); moderator [Ulrich Kober, Director of Program Integration and Education Bertelsmann Stiftung](#); and panelists [Naika Foroutan, Head Researcher of the HEYMAT project, Humboldt University of Berlin](#), and [Zabeen Hirji, Chief Human Resources Officer, Royal Bank of Canada \(RBC\)](#).

Wanted: More head scarves

When asked about a good idea in integration he would most want to see implemented in his home city of Berlin, Ulrich Kober picked Sweden's National Diversity Plan. He recalled being stumped by an answer from a school principal in a Stockholm neighborhood populated mostly by refugees from Afghanistan. Asked if she had problems with head scarves in her school, she said "Yes, we need more head scarves, especially among teachers." [In stark contrast, some German provinces exclude teachers with head scarves.](#)

The Stockholm principal's answer is an illustration of the exemplary implementation of the diversity plan in Swedish schools. [The city of Malmö](#) offers a good case study on the plan's implementation. The city's efforts were recognized in 2008 when it was shortlisted as a nominee for the Carl Bertelsmann Prize.

'A job for all'

Like the principal in Sweden, Berlin researcher Naika Foroutan is also optimistic about transforming attitudes towards ethnic integration in Germany, her home country.

For instance, after Muslims pushed for the right to offer religious education in schools on par with other religions, the government took steps to promote German Islamic education.

On how to counteract negative attitudes that persist, Foroutan says it is a job for all Germans. [In an interview, she said](#) "We need alliance partners who change our visions of what it means to belong. They can be found in politics, in academia and in the media – but also in sports clubs and schools. Many children and young people are given the impression that they do not belong and are not wanted here. Once these prejudices have been eliminated, we will also succeed in developing a common language."

RBC's Zabeen Hirji will have much to share with Foroutan coming as she does from Toronto, a city with "Diversity is our strength" as its official motto. Hirji says her bank's diversity strategy, in place for many years, is grounded in being both the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. "We now look at it as diversity and inclusion. Having diversity is interesting but it's only when you do something with it that it becomes powerful," she said in a recent media interview.

More such powerful ideas are sure to fuel a robust question and answer session at the amazing Beletage Conference Centre.

More coffee, anyone?

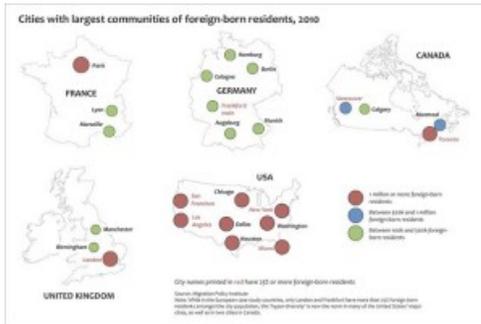
Is Diversity a Threat to Freedom?

By ktuner

[Opinion](#)



By Edward Mortimer



Diversity is both a condition and a result of freedom. Without it, there would be no alternatives for people to choose freely between; and since in practice people make different choices, their freedom produces a diversity of outcomes.

Yet in the last few decades many people living in liberal democracies have come to see certain kinds of diversity as a threat to freedom. They see some other groups within their societies as placing a lower value on freedom than they themselves do (or think they do), or even as being actively hostile to it. Or they may feel that, in the name of “respect” for other people’s beliefs and customs, they are being prevented from exercising their own freedom to live as they choose and say what they think.

With support from the Open Society Foundations and other funders, the Dahrendorf Programme for the Study of Freedom at Oxford University undertook a research project to see how such tensions had been handled in five major Western countries, and whether specific policies or approaches had

worked better than others. This culminated in a major conference of experts—academics, policymakers and journalists—held in Oxford in May 2013. Three of the participants—Timothy Garton Ash, Kerem Öktem, and myself—then undertook to distill some general lessons for future policymakers, while recognizing that circumstances differ from country to country, so that there can be no “one size fits all” solutions.

We deliberately avoided taking a position for or against “multiculturalism,” since we found that meanings assigned to this term vary with the speaker and the context. Nor have we taken a view on immigration policy as such. Our concern is with the policies required to make a success of societies which are, as a matter of fact, multicultural, as a result of migrations that have already happened and could not be reversed even if that were considered desirable. (In fact, for a range of economic and political reasons, there is every reason to believe that they will continue.)

The extent of this diversity is well conveyed by the graphic above, which shows that 24 cities in the five countries we studied now have more than 100,000 foreign-born residents, 14 of them more than 500,000, and 11 more than one million, while in eight of them these residents form a quarter of the population or more.

Ten Lessons

We believe that diversity of type can indeed coexist with freedom, both benefiting from it and contributing to it, but only if certain principles are respected. These principles are set out in our report, [Freedom in Diversity](#), in the form of ten lessons. Rather than attempt to summarize them all here, I will focus on two, the seventh and eighth, titled respectively “Representation in the media” and “The duty to speak out.”

Treatment of minorities in the media is harder to quantify than some other aspects of integration, and there is a lack of comparative or easily comparable data. It is therefore not always easy to make objective judgements. In many contexts good news is no news, and the media see their main task as being to report what is wrong. Consequently almost every group that attracts media attention feels that it is misrepresented, with undue emphasis on the negative.

Yet even after allowing for that, some media do seem to go out of their way to highlight stories in which “immigrants” (usually including people who are not strictly immigrants but the children or grandchildren of same) figure as criminals, welfare scroungers, or terrorists. Other media may not seek to reinforce these stereotypes deliberately but are influenced by them and therefore do so in practice. Certainly they have a responsibility to report on minorities—as on any other topic—fairly and objectively, but the line between responsibility and political correctness, or even self-censorship, is not always easy to draw.

Partly for this reason, our report focuses on representation not only by the media but in the media. It is important that minority faces and voices should be well represented among media professionals—those who can be seen and heard on TV and radio, those who report and comment in print or online, and also those with editorial or gatekeeper functions who decide what the public should or should not see and hear.

Hearts and Minds

But it is also important that the public in general, and especially those whose celebrity or profession gives them privileged access to the public eye or ear, do not leave it to media professionals or to the law courts to “set the record straight.” Our report seeks to make a clear distinction between what must be required by law in a free country and what is merely desirable for living together in a free country in mutual enrichment.

This latter category of obligations cannot be compelled: it needs to exist in people’s hearts and minds. Thus a better common life in today’s diverse societies ultimately depends less on legal compulsion, and more on enabling people of different cultures and persuasions to feel that they actually need to live together, and can do so without feeling threatened, because they are all members of the same society and nation.

The battle for public opinion does not belong mainly in the law courts. But that only makes it more important to fight it where it does belong, namely in the media and public debate. Slanders and stereotypes should not be left unanswered, as they may have a corrosive influence on social cohesion and our chances of living together in freedom and diversity.

This may be particularly true in social media, where there is currently a tendency to compensate for perceived or real constraints on what may be said in the mainstream media by indulging in hurtful and inexcusable forms of racist and sexist abuse. That is why we strongly recommend that “public figures, and people with a significant presence online, should challenge stereotypes and misleading generalizations about any group.”



Edward Mortimer is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford and senior program adviser to the Salzburg Global Seminar. This content is published by the [Open Society Foundations](#) and is published here under its content use policy.

Willkommen in Berlin

By ktuner
April 29, 2014
Uncategorized



If you haven't registered yet for the 2nd international [Cities of Migration Conference](#), please do so today as only a few seats are left. And if you've already registered, we look forward to welcoming you in Berlin between June 4 and 6, 2014. Together we will explore the practical realities and opportunities created by today's hyper-diverse cities.

[Our Marketplace of Good Ideas](#), for instance, will showcase the best of the "Good Ideas" collection at Cities of Migration. Discover successful strategies and promising city-level integration practices. Ask questions, make connections and learn how you can transfer these good ideas to your own city of migration.

Around 10 good practices from as many cities will be showcased across core thematic areas in this signature event.

[Register today](#) to set an agenda for shared prosperity.

Wicked Failures? Cities Offer Local Solutions

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Dana Wagner

When failure in religious inclusion of immigrants makes headlines, the story is typically about a place, a city, where things are (or aren't) happening. Addressing "wicked failure" of immigration policy is not an exclusively national-level conversation. Cities can and do step up with clever solutions when national governments don't get it right.

That's because city governments are closest to the people and responsible for day-to-day, tangible services. If something goes wrong, they face it right away. If there's a demonstration? City streets get blocked. Racist graffiti? The city cleans it up. Violence? City police departments deal with that. A developer plans to build a mosque, and it's controversial? City planners get that file.

Unlike national governments, cities simply can't afford to get bogged down by immigration 'politics' for all the above reasons.

The stakes are high. The health and literal functioning of cities cannot ignore the importance of good immigrant integration, especially in cities like Canada's Toronto, where almost half the population is foreign-born.

Here are two examples of good practice – in Marseille and Hamburg – that respond to national failure.

Marseille

The city of Marseille, in the south of France, is forecast to become the first Muslim-majority city in Western Europe. Would this demographic reality go against the French model of republican assimilation?

One of the tenets of assimilation is the policy of *laïcité*, or secularism, meaning that the state prohibits the recognition of ethnicity or religion in political life. This is a rigid secularism, forbidding, for instance, data collection on ethnicity or religion. It fails to account for distinct needs of religious groups in public policy, and is accused of creating, not erasing, disruptive ethnic divisions.

So in 1990, the Mayor of Marseille established a forum, a body called [Marseille Espérance](#), that formally acknowledged the importance of religious identities in the public space.

Members include the city's religious leaders (Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists), who meet regularly with the mayor to address the city's social needs. It's a fairly standard forum, but it's also outright dissent. Here is a municipal leader rejecting a rigid secular identity out of recognition that religious communities have a stake and, to live peacefully, they need a voice.

Not surprisingly, this practical approach to governance has been successful. For one, the forum unanimously approved building a long-stalled mosque, which is to have the largest capacity in Marseille and is now under construction. The forum worked as a mediating body to diffuse community conflicts.

A marker of success in the city's approach was a non-event. The riots that hit Paris and other French cities around 2005 did not occur in Marseille. Astrid Ziebarth, of the German Marshall Fund, wrote in *The New York Times* that "Marseille held its breath — to then exhale slowly when Marseillaise youths did not join the uprisings. To many, this was a sign that the city, where it is estimated that every fifth person is born abroad and about every third person is Muslim, was doing something right in fostering social cohesion among a diverse population."

Hamburg

Hamburg in Germany offers another such example of policy correction. Over 20% of residents in Hamburg are immigrants. Like in the rest of Germany, Turkish Muslims form the largest ethnic minority and a sizeable population are not citizens. Researchers noticed that over the last decade, even though many qualified for citizenship they had not applied. The naturalization rate was low and falling. Why?

Germany has been making a transition from viewing immigrants as "guest workers" to future citizens. But citizenship rules have been slow to catch up with the new, welcoming agenda. Compared to Canada, it takes longer for immigrants to be naturalized, and for many immigrants, dual citizenship is not an option as choosing to be German means forfeiting another identity.

Without the ability to change citizenship rules, the City of Hamburg decided to at least intervene with a welcoming message. The city began a campaign in 2010 to encourage immigrants to naturalize, under the motto "[Hamburg, my port. Germany, my home.](#)" The focus was on communicating the benefits of citizenship and breaking down the complexity of applying. All over Hamburg billboards sprang up featuring cultural stars who were also immigrants, there was a website with step-by-step guides, the Mayor's Office sent personal letters to prospective citizens, and the city recruited counselors from immigrant communities, notably the Turkish community, to guide people through the process.



An interesting campaign strategy embedded in its motto was to promote a local identity alongside a national one: to be a Hamburger and a German. [Ricard Zapata-Barrero](#), a Barcelona-based professor who heads a research group on immigration, notes the importance: "This sense of urban identity needs to be better explored and politically managed. Here lies one of the driving forces behind the success of cities in the accommodation of diversity."

The fact that a naturalization campaign was a city initiative says a lot about the city's perceived stake in having engaged residents: ones who vote, who receive full services, and who feel attached to their communities. And the effort paid off. Naturalization of Hamburg residents increased by 45% between January and March 2012 over the same period in 2011.

Don't Overlook Cities

There are several other examples of diverse cities in liberal democracies where rock-star mayors with pro-immigrant agendas buck the national narrative. Places like Thessaloniki in Greece, and Lampedusa in Italy.

Can city leaders also swing towards anti-immigrant rhetoric? Indeed they can. But there is likely less appetite because of the reinforcing relationship between immigrant integration and healthy, safe cities.

On the search for immigration solutions by governments, don't overlook cities. They're sometimes ahead of their national counterparts, and can certainly innovate in spite of them.

This article is adapted from a presentation to a panel on Failures in Integration and Religious Diversity in Liberal Democracies at the Munk School of Global Affairs 2014 Graduate Student Conference: Wicked Failures: Lessons Learned and Looking Forward in the Global System.

US cities race to attract immigrants

By kturner
April 24, 2014
[Opinion](#)



By David Lubell, Executive Director of Welcoming America

In October, I shared a stage with Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed at the historic Georgian Terrace Hotel, where “Gone With the Wind,” the epic 1939 film based on Margaret Mitchell’s novel on the war-torn American South, held its opening gala. Surrounded by local civic and business leaders, Reed announced plans to make Atlanta’s immigrant population feel more welcome in order to boost the city’s “cultural fabric, economic growth and global competitiveness.”



Atlanta is not the only city in the South embracing a vision that recognizes the potential benefits of demographic change. Memphis and Nashville, Tenn.; Charlotte, N.C.; and Louisville, Ky. have all pledged to create an immigrant-friendly climate, bucking not only a recent trend in the region but also the rhetoric on immigration coming from some corners on Capitol Hill. These cities are joined by dozens more pursuing policies that celebrate their diverse communities and ensure inclusion and opportunity for all people, including immigrants.

This recognition comes as a growing body of research and evidence points to positive economic impact of immigrants on local communities. A recent study from the National Bureau of Economic Research established a correlation between increased immigration and better earnings for American workers and an overall benefit to the community.

As consumers, entrepreneurs and home buyers, immigrants’ contribute their formidable purchasing power, which boosts the local economy. There is also a growing sensibility among local leaders that they don’t need to wait for Washington to initiate policies that promote a culture of inclusion.

Many local governments in places like [New York City](#) and [San Francisco](#) have undertaken such initiatives for some years — by developing policies and programs that make government services easily accessible to newcomers, by bringing immigrants into business sectors like the banking system, by creating programs to celebrate diversity and by encouraging new immigrants to work on collaborative community projects with natives in order to build trust. However, communities where immigrants are relatively novel are just beginning to undertake this work.

Global cities

This year my organization, Welcoming America, launched an initiative called Welcoming Cities and Counties that offers local governments the opportunity to commit publicly to advancing a welcoming culture and policy agenda. With 25 municipal governments representing regions with a total population of 24 million and with several mayors and county executives on board, civic and business partners have shown a willingness to join in collective efforts to promote a more welcoming atmosphere.

Many cities are responding to a challenge put forward by Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who declared that his city would make itself the most immigrant-friendly in the world. In 2011 he created [Chicago’s Office of New Americans](#) to help the city achieve this ambitious goal. In partnership with an advisory committee made up of business leaders, academics, representatives of civic and philanthropic organizations, the city came up with set of initiatives called the Chicago New Americans Plan, which outlines strategies for welcoming immigrants and maximizing their contribution to the city.

Now we have put that challenge out to all U.S. cities — and many are already entering the race.

Immigrant entrepreneurs and immigrant workers of all skill levels want to reside in places that welcome them. Thus creating an all-inclusive environment becomes a key to attracting businesses that are vital to economic development. Some cities are already seeing the economic benefits of immigrant-friendly policies.

Some of these cities, like Nashville, have had to do some work to get locals to buy into this enlightened vision. In 2008 a handful of city councilors in Nashville responded to a rapid influx of immigrants by proposing an English-only referendum aimed at making English the only language used by city departments and employees. Fortunately, local leaders — including me — worked to build bridges between locals and newcomers and ultimately persuaded Nashvillians to reject the referendum and embrace [a more welcoming ethos](#).

This effort proved a turning point for the city’s approach to its immigrant community. A slew of new welcoming policies and programs, shepherded by Mayor Karl Dean, followed. For example, in 2009 a New Americans Advisory Council (NAAC) was established to create a stronger connection between local government and newer Nashvillians.

This was further bolstered by the creation the MyCity Academy program in 2012, which helps new immigrants better understand and participate in Nashville’s government. Around the same time, a program launched by the Metro Nashville Police Department, called El Protector, began to be recognized as a national model. Launched in 2004, El Protector fosters dialogue and builds trust between local police and the Spanish-speaking community of Nashville.

Set on a new course, Nashville was able to position itself as a global city, attract and retain international investment and talent and create a flourishing cultural scene that celebrates both the old and the new. Thanks in large part to its global positioning, Nashville led the country in job growth in 2012 and attracted significant corporate investment and entrepreneurial start-ups. The city’s growing economic strength shows how a welcoming culture creates benefits not just for the immigrants but for the community as a whole. Nashville has even been named the friendliest city in the nation by Travel + Leisure magazine, an identity that encapsulates the pragmatic thinking that is driving more and more communities to recognize that inclusion and growth are inextricably linked.

Leaders in Tucson, Ariz., are hoping to communicate a similar message to its residents. In 2012, Mayor Jonathan Rothschild and the Tucson City Council adopted a resolution saying that the city was an “immigrant welcoming city,” and it launched a new Web portal with resources for immigrants. “Tucson is a city with roots in many cultures,” Rothschild said at the time. “That diversity adds to our strength. It helps us not fear change even as we celebrate our traditions.” The city’s proactive efforts are motivated by what is right as much as by what is practical: Many leaders in Arizona have now learned that an unwelcoming climate that drives immigrants out has disastrous economic consequences.

The initiative gives Tucson an opportunity to attract new investment and demonstrate that, despite the state’s approach to immigration, that they can take a proactive approach that represents the values and interests of their community. Such commitments to local policies that support immigrant integration help Americans — both immigrant and native born — foster stronger economic and social ties. In other cities, strategies have run the gamut from helping grow small businesses to organizing English-language programs supported by community volunteers. These measures have allowed immigrants to bring new businesses to the tax base and step forward to give back to their communities.

Local initiatives

Several U.S. cities are also following suit by embracing immigration as the centerpiece of their economic-growth efforts. For example, in June, St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay and a coalition of business and civic leaders launched the [St. Louis Mosaic Project](#) with the support of the St. Louis County Economic Council to remake the city into “a cultural mosaic, a place that is truly welcoming” to new immigrants, according to its website. Over the past decade, St. Louis lost more than 25,000 jobs compared with cities like Nashville, Indianapolis and Baltimore, which have gained roughly three to four times as many jobs. With the initiative, leaders in St. Louis hope to transform the city into the fastest-growing U.S. metro area for immigration by 2020.

During National Welcoming Week this September, Slay emphasized immigrants’ contributions to the city, saying, “Immigrants bring work skills, add to our neighborhoods, pay taxes and buy goods in our region. We need new residents to add to our own multicultural perspectives, so our regional enterprises can compete effectively in the widening global market.”

Another Midwestern town, Dayton, Ohio, is a postindustrial Rust Belt metropolis facing a declining population. In 2011 the community created the Welcome Dayton Plan, an initiative that promotes immigrant-friendly policies and practices. These policies range from increasing English-language classes and multicultural soccer tournaments to the creation of a community-wide campaign on immigrant entrepreneurship that seeks to facilitate start-up businesses, open global markets and restore life to Dayton neighborhoods.

A recent study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation recognized Welcome Dayton as a key strategy for building prosperity, noting efforts to create a more welcoming culture that are already attracting new immigrants to the city.

Compared with the vitriol and enforcement-focused immigration laws that were passed by leaders in Alabama and Arizona a few years ago — displacing hundreds of workers from Alabama farms and disrupting children’s schooling — the current trend in immigrant-friendly policy-making is a hopeful sign. Along with the groundswell of local welcoming initiatives across the country — from Florida to Nevada, Arkansas to New Jersey — the trend is clear. It is a new dynamic that Welcoming America is working to foster, one in which cities are competing to absorb and attract all the talent and drive that our newest neighbors bring.

Communities across the U.S. and around the world are in a race to the top to attract the human capital they need to thrive in a globalized economy. Becoming a more welcoming place for immigrants can give the United States an edge in that competition. For cities, it demonstrates how, even as other levels of government are gridlocked, municipal leaders can continue to innovate and lead. As the debate over comprehensive immigration reform continues, leaders in Washington cannot afford to ignore the fact that so many local elected officials are recognizing the economic imperative of welcoming and inclusive policies.

If your community is ready to help write this next chapter, we hope you will join us.

David Lubell is the executive director of [Welcoming America](#), a U.S. nonprofit based in Decatur, Georgia. This article was first published by [AJazeera America](#) and is reproduced here with the author’s permission.

Including Migrant Votes Is Good for Democracy

By kturner
April 23, 2014

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Paul Spoonley, Massey University

Robert Peden, the chief executive of New Zealand's Electoral Commission, [made a plea](#) [in the New Zealand Herald] for voter participation as fundamental to a healthy democracy. Of course, he is right, but the decline in voter turnout reflects a number of factors. One is whether new arrivals to New Zealand are engaged in the political process.

The 2013 Census confirmed the ever-growing significance of immigrants to New Zealand (a quarter of the population) and especially to Auckland (40%). But the origin of those immigrants is also changing. Recently, and for the first time, the largest groups of arrivals are not from the UK but are from either China or India. And the Census also confirmed the range of immigrant and ethnic groups in New Zealand – there are 230. Overall, nearly 12% of the country's population is Asian while 23% of Aucklanders identify with an Asian ethnicity.

How inclusive and responsive is our political system to these communities? Do they feel encouraged to take part in elections?

The answers are complex but there are some clues. The New Zealand General Social Survey asked whether respondents voted in the 2011 general election.

For New Zealand European/Pakeha, the non-vote was nearly 17%, for Maori it was nearly 27%, for Pasifika it was close to 18% and just over 35% of Asians didn't vote.

Those who had been in New Zealand fewer than five years had a non-vote of 60% but this dropped to 14% for long-term migrants. The Electoral Commission's own survey shows that Asians were the second only to youth in non-participation.

Another source of information is Longitudinal Immigrant Survey: NZ, which shows that voter enrolments among Indians and South Koreans is high (91% and 87% respectively), and compares well with British migrants (93%). Chinese are lower at 77%. But casting a vote is another matter with little over half of Chinese and Koreans voting, while two-thirds of Indians vote. Only 55% of British immigrants bothered voting.

Citizenship not required

All of this suggests we need to make sure immigrants, particularly recent arrivals, are encouraged to participate. This is underlined by the fact that New Zealand is virtually alone in allowing those who have been granted permanent residency the right to vote, as long as certain voter eligibility requirements have been met. Citizenship is not required.

The responsibility lies with a number of organizations and communities. The Electoral Commission has an important role to play in encouraging immigrants to vote. It has, in the past, run workshops for Kiwi Asians and provided information in a range of languages. But given the above statistics, there is obviously more to be done.

Are political parties doing their bit? Most are aware that the immigrant and minority ethnic vote is – and will – make a difference, especially in Auckland. Candidate selections, the use of ethnic/immigrant media and participating in community events all indicate that political parties are taking a much greater interest in these communities. Whether it is adequate is another matter.

And what about the media as a forum for discussing political matters that are of interest to these communities – and in a way that engages them? One of the difficulties here is that there has been a proliferation of media that serve the interests of immigrants, so that there has been a fragmentation between mainstream and sidestream (immigrant/ethnic) media. Questions need to be asked about what the effect has been on voter interest and participation. My view is that some media do a great job but others do little to provide a forum, or they sometimes misrepresent issues and political viewpoints.

What about the communities themselves? They, too, have a responsibility to inform themselves and to become involved. There are signs that some communities are active. [Manying Ip](#) has talked about the Taiwanese immigrants who began to mobilise in the 1996 general election and went on to organize pre-election rallies and seminars – and to seek candidacy.

Given the significance of immigrants and immigration to New Zealand, it is critical that those involved in politics help encourage their participation in the political process – as voters, as commentators and as candidates. Whatever cynicism there is about voting, it is still at the heart of the democratic process.

Paul Spoonley is pro vice-chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University and the project leader for a research program looking at the future population shape of New Zealand. This article was first published by [The New Zealand Herald](#) on April 3, 2014 and is reproduced here with the author's permission.



Conference Café: Mayoral Voices in the Immigration Debate

By kturner
Uncategorized



“Cities attract people and talents from all different places. It is the spirited process of immigration and integration that makes great cities thrive.”

— Mayor Olaf Scholz, Hamburg, Germany

Cities know and feel the twin forces of urbanization and immigration profoundly. In the cool, thin air of the national legislature, these may be tense (or neglected) areas of public policy, but at the municipal level, these global forces are primary lived experience.

City leadership matters. As the level of government closest to the people, local governments are most directly and immediately impacted by the lives, successes and challenges of newcomers.

The good news is that cities have a range of levers to ensure the future prosperity of all residents. Progressive leaders understand this and respond by proactively building inclusion into public policy and putting policy to work -from responsive service delivery to business development and infrastructure design. By organizing around success and action instead of failure, crisis and inaction, local governments often succeed where many national governments are challenged.



Mayoral voice

Mayoral voice can be a particularly powerful tool or the opposite in advancing an inclusive city agenda and accelerating the path to shared prosperity. So, what are progressive city leaders doing? And what are they learning from each other?

Hamburg, the Germany port city, is using the [naturalization campaign, “Ich bin Hamburger,”](#) to make German citizenship the key to inclusion for long-time city residents. “Naturalization is much more than an administrative act. It is the declared belief in our state and our society,” says [Olaf Scholz, the First Mayor of Hamburg](#). “Those who have lived here for a while and have met the requirement should also become German citizens. Because only then do all the possibilities of participation exist.”

The Hamburg initiative includes an innovative marketing campaign to recruit diverse staff into local government while promoting inclusion across the city.

[Hamburg also hosts a unique education network](#) that supports teachers with a migrant background and promotes intercultural education in German schools. The idea being that the multicultural and multilingual heritages of these teachers are a great asset against stereotyping. These teachers are also [exemplary models of immigrant integration and essential role models](#) for the children they teach.

Diversity dividends

Reforms undertaken by the City of Auckland in New Zealand are another good example of changes that are grounded in a mayor’s vision for his city. “Auckland will be an inclusive place of opportunity for all,” says Mayor Len Brown while initiating the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy that plays an important role in supporting his plan to make it one of the most livable cities in the world. [A large part of the city’s livability stems from its diversity](#): 37% of Aucklanders and 46% of its working age population were born overseas.

Early on, in 1998, Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston in the United States opened the Mayor’s Office of New Bostonians, the first of its kind in the country. [It was founded on the premise that a growing number of residents were immigrants](#), and that more coordination of city services was necessary to ensure that they felt at home and had the chance to be fully integrated into all areas of civic life.

“I created the Office... because I recognized how important diversity is to our city,” Mayor Menino was quoted as saying. The Boston initiative became a national model for other great US cities, including New York and Chicago, with many regional and state capitals and new gateway cities soon following suit.

In New York City, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs has rolled up a legacy of success in its [“Blueprints for Immigrant Integration” project](#). “Immigrants are an economic engine – starting companies that are the cornerstones of our economy, and the corner stores of our neighbourhoods,” says then-mayor Michael Bloomberg. In 2011, Chicago opened [the Office of New Americans](#), and within the year Mayor Rahm Emmanuel had tabled an ambitious plan, with measurable targets, to make it the “most welcoming city” in America.

From Hamburg’s naturalization campaign and multicultural classrooms to [Chicago’s inclusive vision of the New American city](#), city leaders are going all out to re-imagine their cities and immigrant integration as a process that makes us all better citizens, more welcoming, open and prosperous. Some of these leaders will be panelists at the [2014 International Cities of Migration Conference](#) on the topic of [Re-Imagining the City: Setting an Agenda for Shared Prosperity](#).

This article was originally published by the [Migrants’ Rights Network on their Migration Pulse](#) web space and is part of a series in the build-up to our 2014 Cities of Migration conference in June. It brings together people and Good Ideas around various conference topics and programs for a more informed conversation.

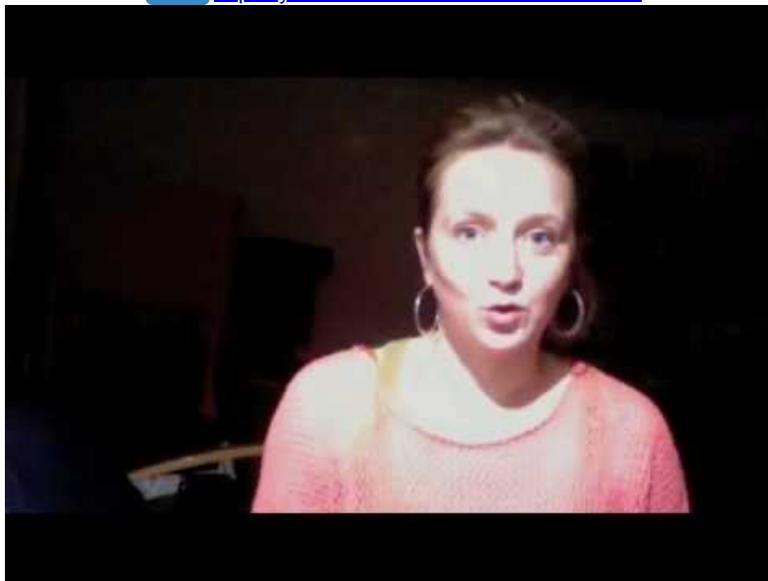
The Mathematics of Immigration

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=bJX5XHnONTI>



A poem by Hollie McNish

He says "those goddamn Pakistanis and their goddamn corner shops
 Built a shop on every corner took our British workers jobs
 He says those goddamn Chinese and their goddamn china shops
 I tell him they're from Vietnam but he doesn't give a toss
 I ask him what was there before that damn Japan mans shop
 He stares at me and dreams a scene of British workers jobs
 Of full time full employment before the goddamn boats all came
 Where everybody went to work full time every day
 A British Business stood their first he claims before the Irish came
 Now British people lost their jobs and bloody Turkish are there to blame
 I ask him how he knows that fact
 He says because it's true
 I ask him how he knows the fact
 He says he read it in the news
 Every time a Somalian comes here they take a job from us
 The mathematics one for one, from us to them it just adds up
 He bites his cake and sips is brew and says again he knows the spot
 The goddamn Caribbeans came and now good folk here don't have jobs
 I ask him what was there before the goddamn Persian curtain shop
 I show him architectures plans of empty goddamn plots of land
 I show him the historic maps
 A bit of sand, a barren land
 There was no goddamn shop before those Pakistanis came and planned
 Man I'm sick of crappy mathematics
 Cos I love a bit of sums I spent three years into economics
 And I geek out over calculus
 And when I meet these paper claims
 That one of every new that came
 Takes away ones daily wage I desperately want to scream
 "Your maths is stuck in primary"
 Cos one who comes here also spends
 And one who comes here also lends
 And some who comes here also tend
 To set up work which employs them
 And all your balance sheets and trends

Work with numbers not with men
And all your goddamn heated talk
Ignores the trade the Polish brought
Ignores the men they gave work to
Not plumbing jobs but further too
Ignores the ones they buy stock from
Accountants, builders, on and on
And I know it's nice to have someone
To blame our lack of jobs upon
But immigration's not as plain
Despite the sums inside your brain
As one for one, as him or you
As if he goes, they'll employ you
Cos sometimes one that comes makes two
And sometimes one can add three more
And sometimes two times two is much much more
Than four
And most times immigrants bring more
Than minuses.



Hollie McNish is a published UK poet from Reading, based between London, Cambridge and Glasgow. She has released two poetry albums and has appeared in venues as diverse as Glastonbury festival, Ronnie Scotts Jazz Bar, London's Southbank Centre and Cambridge University. This poem, published here by permission, is based on her personal experience and studies. It owes a lot to a book by economist Philippe Legrain titled [Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them](#).

Willkommen in Berlin

By kturner
March 28, 2014
[Events](#)



If you haven't registered yet for the 2nd international Cities of Migration Conference, please do so today as the [early-bird registration is ending soon](#).

And if you've already registered, we look forward to welcoming you in Berlin between June 4 and 6, 2014. Together we will explore the practical realities and opportunities created by today's hyper-diverse cities.

Our [Urban Lab sessions](#), for instance, will offer in-depth discussions led by outstanding international experts and practitioners on some very special topics:

Politics: Participation in the Urban Polis;
Economy: Access to Employment;
Replication: DiverseCity on Board;
Culture: Breaking Through the Fourth Wall;
Policy: Putting Local in Focus.

Each 75-minute breakout session will bring participants with similar interests together to explore shared challenges, drivers, solutions and emerging issues in the immigrant inclusion field. A moderated discussion, led by experts and practitioners in the field, will engage participants and provide practical insight and strategies that can be applied locally.

[Register today to set an agenda for shared prosperity.](#)



Cities in the Forefront of Fight against Racism

By kturner
Uncategorized



On March 21, 1960, South African police opened fire on black protesters who had surrounded a police station in Sharpeville, killing 69 people. The protest was over the ruling regime's pass laws, which required blacks to carry passbooks with them any time they traveled out of their designated home areas.

The shooting sparked protests and riots and was a turning point in the history of apartheid. It also brought international condemnation on South Africa. In 1966, the United Nation proclaimed March 21 as "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" and has been urging member states to organize events during the "Action Week against Racism."

Cities across the world, from Auckland to Montréal, marked the week through various programs like the "I am Aotearoa New Zealand ... te ranga tahi, together we grow." For many [cities in Europe](#) and other parts of the world, campaigns against racism and xenophobia are year-round efforts.

Dublin's publicity campaign, *Transport Links, Racism Divides*, runs across the city's buses, trams, trains and taxis. It was launched after [reports emerged of racial abuse](#) of the Irish city's transport workers.

Similarly, the city of Edmonton decided to challenge the often polite Canadian conversation on multiculturalism and the idea that racism is no longer a problem in the community. [Edmonton was among the first cities](#) in the country to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD).

To create a welcoming and inclusive city, the [Belgian city of Ghent](#) has also been doing exceptional work. Ghent's Day against Racism campaign, a ten-point action plan to eliminate racism and discrimination, includes an innovative Youth Ambassador project led by young immigrants eager to promote an open society and motivate others with their success stories.

In classrooms across [Germany](#) and [Spain](#), the All Kids Are VIPs program challenges children to think up ideas for promoting equality and a discrimination-free environment. And it rewards them with visits from their heroes – football stars, music icons and movie stars.

Interested in doing your part in fighting racism? The UNESCO-sponsored [Ten-Point Plan of Action](#) for the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism (PDF) is a good starting point to understand what can be done.

This post was first published on [Maytree Conversations](#).

Fair Game: Good Sporting Ideas for Integration

By kturner
Uncategorized



Italian club AC Milan was playing a “friendly” exhibition match with lower league Pro Patria in early January of 2013 when their star player Kevin-Prince Boateng became the target of a crude display of racism from the stands that included monkey noises, taunts and finally a banana thrown across his path.

As in the past, Boateng ignored it at first. But then something inside him snapped. He kicked the ball in the direction of his tormentors before storming off the field — followed by his teammates. Boateng later stated: “I decided to walk off the pitch because I said to myself, in this kind of environment, in this situation, I don’t want to play football anymore.”



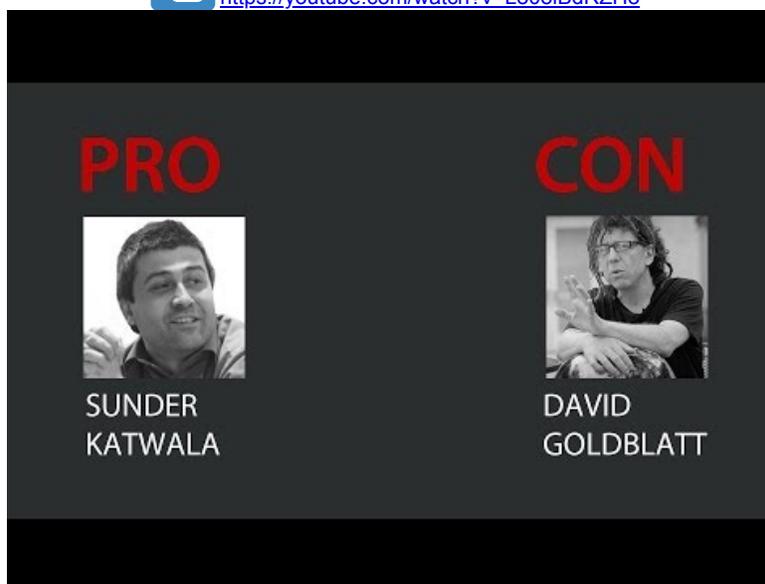
The game may have been over, but Boateng’s protest was a tipping point that led to a [raft of reforms to combat racism in football](#).

Beautiful game or racist quagmire?

At the upcoming International Cities of Migration conference in Berlin, two prolific thinkers will weigh in on this game-changing event and the larger question of racism in professional sport: is professional football powerless to end racism.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=L808iBdRZH8>



To help you address this unsettled question and prepare for a thunderous debate between Sunder Katwala, Director, British Future in London, and David Goldblatt, author of *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football*, we’ve selected some Good Ideas from around the world that use the power of sport to ease the process of migration and integration.

In Auckland, New Zealand, soccer is used to help young refugees connect with each other and to the wider community. [The Refugees in Sport initiative](#) was started in 2006 by Refugees As Survivors (RAS), a non-profit refugee mental health agency.

Believing that sport has universal appeal, RAS made soccer its tool of choice. Through soccer RAS helps refugees overcome some of the barriers that can prevent them from participating in community life, such as language and cultural differences.

“Soccer... has its own culture. It has its own culture and it doesn’t need [a specific] language. You can play on a team,” says Dr. Arif Saeid, Community Services Manager for RAS. “It’s a point of integration. It helps refugees get more involved in the community. And it helps them with better settlement.”

‘Universal language’

The same sentiment holds true in Munich, Germany. “Precisely because where silence reigns, football [soccer] is a medium where understanding is possible,” says Rudiger Heid, Buntkicktgut co-initiator and project manager. “Buntkicktgut,” which translates loosely as “colourful kicks well” or “fancy footwork,” is the name of the [intercultural street football league in Munich](#). Founded in 1996 by two social workers at a refugee home as a means to promote integration, today the program includes over 150 teams with approximately 1,500 players.

Buntkicktgut has achieved national and international reputation as a model for successful and purposeful integration work. It has also become a “social tourism” landmark of Munich and its network has spread in Germany. International collaborations are in place in Switzerland, Austria, UK, Poland, Serbia, Cameroon, Togo, China, Lebanon and Iraq.

Language can also be actively used to overcome cultural barriers and need not hinder participation of immigrants in the activities of host societies. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) is using Punjabi, the fourth most spoken language in Canada, to expand the fan base for ice hockey. By expanding the franchise of its iconic *Hockey Night in Canada* program for obvious business benefits, [Punjabi Night in Canada](#) also helps new immigrants to culturally connect with the mainstream. People like Raj Singh, who emigrated from India and now works at a small IT manufacturing plant in Mississauga in the Greater Toronto Area. For Singh, "watching and understanding the Saturday night hockey game gives me something in common to talk to my colleagues about on Monday mornings – it makes me feel more at home and a part of the group."

The success of the Punjabi broadcast has led to CBC to televise *Hockey Night In Canada* in Mandarin, too. Jason Wang, who provides the Mandarin commentary, remembers how, newly arrived from Taipei at the age of 9, he used to watch the program to improve his English. Now he will be the one helping new Chinese-Canadians improve their knowledge of hockey and become better acquainted with Canada's national pastime. "It has all come full circle," says the young Vancouver journalist.

Leap of faith

Acknowledging the changing demographics brought about by immigration has also helped an Australian-rules football team, nicknamed Kangaroos, rebuild itself after suffering financial difficulties mainly caused by its inability to grow the audience.

When a 2006 fire destroyed part of the historic playing field belonging to the North Melbourne Football Club, the [Kangaroos began a new effort at rebuilding its identity](#).

The challenge of how to recruit local support to redevelop its facilities into a new training centre quickly morphed into a more strategic conversation about how to make the project relevant to the local community.

Soon, with support from foundations and the provincial government, the Club was able to build a Learning and Life Centre as part of the redevelopment. Now known as *The Huddle*, it includes a classroom, a multi-purpose court, meeting rooms and a lecture theatre. The programming is not just about football, but has a much broader focus to engage the community.

Hope you are inspired by the ideas we shared above. You can join our debate in Berlin by [sharing your thoughts on sports](#), in particular football, being an instrument of good or a quagmire of racist politics.

Score with your points of view!

Immigrant = The New Mainstream

By kturner

March 25, 2014

[Conversation Stories, E-zine, Opinion](#)



By Emilia Wanat

Would Switzerland qualify for the World Cup if they got rid of immigrants? [This photo](#), that went viral on Twitter, shows that native Swiss are less than half of the first squad of their football national team. Their biggest stars are Gökhan Inler, of Turkish origin, and Xherdan Shaqiri, born in Yugoslavia to Albanian parents. But if the World Cup in Brazil goes wrong for the Swiss, these two stars will probably take the whole blame as it happened when the French team was knocked out in the group stage in South Africa in 2010. Public opinion then questioned if players like Nicolas Anelka, Samir Nasri, Karim Benzema or Hatem Ben Arfa are French enough. Surprisingly, no one questioned the “Frenchness” of Zinedine Zidane, Youri Djorkaeff or Lilian Thuram when the team won the World Cup in 1998. Human memory can be short and selective.



But the number of foreign-born players on the Swiss national team will probably drop thanks to the newly introduced laws that would limit the influx of immigrants from the European Union by introducing strict quotas. EU officials are upset as Switzerland is bound by trade and labour agreements with them. The referendum that brought in the law is a great success for the Swiss People's Party (SVP), infamous for initiatives to ban burqas and the construction of minarets.

Economies benefit from immigration.

Immigration is not a problem for the U.S. elite. The country experienced rapid economic growth when American technical might and mass production went hand in hand with slavery and illegal immigration. The industrial development at the turn of the 19th and 20th century that made it the most powerful economy in the world was the result of unlimited immigration, mainly from Ireland and southern and eastern Europe.

It is beneficial for the entire European Union when immigrants are illegal, because then they are easier to control and are cheaper. This conclusion comes from the book *A Suddi Lampedusa* (South of Lampedusa) by Italian journalist Stefano Liberti. A large part of the Italian economy, such as agriculture, is based on illegal immigrants and the phenomenon of slavery exists even in such “civilized” places like London.

We cannot stop immigration. Building a fortress around the Mediterranean Sea will not scare people away, but only increase the danger. Immigrants and refugees are often educated, but the European system forces them to exist on the margins of society even as the ageing continent needs young blood.

In a contemporary age, where revolutions are inspired by social media and the Arab Spring leads to the Occupy Wall Street movement, people will travel and communicate with each other. This is the reality of the world in which we live and nostalgia for the uncomplicated world of yore will not change anything. In the meantime, the issue of immigration becomes increasingly a matter of political wrangling and not the subject of potential laws. And the problem is still there. We are just not looking at it.

Emilia Wanat is an independent columnist and American Studies postgraduate. She experienced emigration during a year spent abroad in London.

This article was [first published by Cafebabel](#) on February 18, 2014, and has been edited and reproduced here by permission.

Conference Café: Cities and the Case for Migration

By ktuner
March 18, 2014
Uncategorized



Cities have long been the primary entry point for immigrants. That is where opportunities exist at scale. Like others before them, immigrants flock to cities for success – economic and personal. In the process, they contribute to the vitality of local neighbourhoods and the growth and development of urban regions that drive a nation's prosperity.

It is in the interest of cities to manage this process well and help newcomers settle and integrate. How to shape and influence this process and related topics will be debated at the second International [Cities of Migration Conference in Berlin](#) this June.

[Khalid Koser, Deputy Director and Academic Dean, Geneva Centre for Security Policy](#), will launch the conference with a keynote about the case for migration. It will set the tone for the opening plenary which will examine the [role of city leadership](#), the impact of demographic change on cities, and how diversity and inclusion contribute to urban prosperity.



Charters of Belief

Throughout the conference, many speakers and panellists will likely discuss [the charters and planning documents adopted by cities](#) that explicitly value the contribution of diverse and immigrant residents. These charters, which view diversity as an asset and not a problem to be solved, demonstrate a commitment to the integration and participation of all residents. They form the basis of action taken by local governments across policies, services and programs.

The Eurocities Charter on Integrating Cities, which Toronto among others is working to adopt, is a good way of pledging commitment to integrate immigrants. "It is in keeping with the Toronto Newcomer Strategy adopted by Toronto City Council earlier this year [2013]... [It] speaks of the four strategic pillars [of immigrant integration] – labour market participation, health of newcomers, access to services and civic engagement," [says Chris Brillinger](#), the City of Toronto's Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration.

Another charter, the 1998 European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City, was specifically created to prevent the violation of the human rights of newcomers and was based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Similarly, the [Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities](#) states that the values of human dignity, tolerance, peace, inclusion and equality must be promoted among all citizens.

[Copenhagen's diversity charter](#) asks corporations to promote inclusion at work. [The Hume City Social Justice Charter](#) lays aside questions of national, religious or cultural identity to "encourage community participation, strengthen community well-being and reduce the causes of disadvantage."

Charters can celebrate inclusive values in increasingly diverse communities. In fact, many models exist to assert the democratic values of equality and fair representation, as in [Oslo](#) and [Barcelona](#).

A Tale of Two Cities

In Chicago, [being a welcoming city](#) is central to its vision of future prosperity – the rewards of inclusion rather than the cost of exclusion. Indeed, cities around the globe are waking up to the challenges of rapid urbanization, an aging population and unparalleled human mobility with practical plans and smart strategies for building cities for the future.

As Jehad Aliweiwi, the recently appointed Executive Director of the Laidlaw Foundation of Toronto, [said in an earlier interview](#), "settlement is a local and mostly urban phenomenon. A document like the proposed charter [for Toronto] will embed immigration and settlement into city planning and building process and more importantly, it will commit the city to specific actions with measurable, realistic and achievable objectives."

To understand what planning for diversity and inclusion means in real terms, [Aliweiwi's experience visiting Alexandria in Egypt](#) is a telling example of what can go wrong. "[Once] a cosmopolitan and beautiful city by the Mediterranean..., today only [its] monuments and relics [reflect the] glorious and diverse past. Its once celebrated diversity can only be seen in the names of its streets like Lourane, buildings like St. Stefano and neighbourhoods like Stanley. One loves Alexandria for its glorious history but worries about its future. [We need to ensure] that Toronto will never be a new Alexandria."

This post is part of a series in the build-up to our [2014 Cities of Migration conference in June](#). The series brings together people and Good Ideas around various conference topics and programs for a more informed conversation.

Willkommen in Berlin

By ktuner
February 26, 2014
Uncategorized



Join us in Berlin, June 4 – 6, 2014, for the 2nd international [Cities of Migration Conference](#) and explore the practical realities and opportunities created by today's hyper-diverse cities.

Our **Urban Lab** sessions, for instance, offer participants an in-depth discussion led by outstanding international experts and practitioners on some very special topics:

- Politics: Participation in the Urban Polis;
- Economy: Access to Employment;
- Replication: DiverseCity on Board;
- Culture: Breaking Through the Fourth Wall;
- Policy: Putting Local in Focus.



Register today: [Migration, diversity, inclusion: An agenda for shared prosperity](#)

New ideas for winning the migration debate in Europe

By ktuner
February 25, 2014
Uncategorized



Don Flynn, Director of the Migrants' Rights Network



Switzerland's population of 8 million includes just over 1.7 million foreign nationals, giving it one of the largest immigrant portions – 22% of the total – in the advanced industrial world. A small nation which has prospered through its mixture of high labour specialisation in industry and services, it has the reputation of being one of the most stable economies in the world. Unemployment is low, at just under 3% measured in 2012, and the standard of living is high for the 92% who live above the official poverty line.

Like many European countries it is aging rapidly, with 30% of its people aged 60 or over. A steeply declining fertility rate has been partially arrested in recent years by migration, but at the current level of 1.46 children born on average to every woman it is still far below the 2.1 needed to ensure that the resident population replaces itself.

Diversity is built into the fabric of Swiss society, with the native population comprised of three main language speakers – German (64%), French (20%) and Italian (7%). The country's sense of national identity comes less from an image of ethnic homogeneity and more from its distinct political institutions which are amongst the most democratic and localised in the world.

So why has this in many ways admirable country now put itself in the naughty corner by its vote earlier this month to impose caps on all migration into the country, affecting even those EU nationals who currently enjoy free movement rights?

Narrow margin

It is important to get things in perspective. With a victory margin of 0.6% for the anti-immigration camp, the referendum did show that fully 49.7% of those who cast their ballot were in favour of a regime of relatively open borders. Given what is so often reported to be the current mood of nationalistic pessimism that is allegedly sweeping Europe this seems to suggest that a good fraction of at least one population is in a relatively strong position to resist these developments.

Burrowing more deeply into the figures it becomes clear that the vote represents a split between the western half of the country and the more rural east. Votes in the west were in favour of maintaining the current open border regime by an average 55% margin. The northern cantons around the country's largest city, Zurich, aligned with the west on this point, revealing the fact that all of Switzerland's major urban regions, from Geneva, Lausanne, Berne, Basel, through to Zurich and Winterthur, were on the 'yes' side ('yes' = 'maintain open borders') of the vote.

What the Swiss referendum seems to have revealed is a pattern of anxiety that exists in many parts of the continent, including the UK. People living in regions where migration has made only a marginal impact are more likely to register fears than those in the places where it has actually happened and the business of living with diversity has become a part of daily life. In the towns and big cities where the migrants have settled, after the initial period of turbulence associated with immediate arrival, local communities consistently find that they have resources which allow people to find a way to live together in relative peace.

The problem with politics across Europe at the present moment is that the confused and messy business of assembling parliamentary majorities has less to do with opening up challenging visions of progress and improvement, and more to do with mobilizing fears about the future and a desire to slam the door shut against new and unwanted risks.

Opportunities for challenge

Yet there is a good case to be made that the Swiss system of ultra-democracy, castigated by mainstream politicians in the rest of Europe for its use of frequent referenda and decentralized governance, has in this instance acted at least as a partial block on anti-immigrant sentiment and has thrown up a considerable bulwark against its expansion. This seems counter-intuitive, but here is the argument.

The three years which the Swiss government has been given by the result of the referendum to bring immigration caps back into its system of border management are going to prove most testing, not for the supporters to the current system of relatively open borders, but for those who want to roll back the advantages which have come from operating in this way for the last decade and more.

Until now the sort of strident advocacy of anti-immigrant viewpoints has been a comfortable sort of affair for protest parties which have not expected to take responsibility for implementing what they have called for anytime soon. Their main achievement has been to nudge the centre parties rightwards, producing an incremental tightening up of the details of immigration regulation. By and large, the type of immigration that has sustained the flexible labour markets and the GDP growth that is taken for prosperity has been allowed to continue on a sizable scale.

Against the outcome of the Swiss referendum the gains won by the new populist right parties in many European countries register as small beer. The Swiss vote means that the populist right has to move from rhetoric geared to extracting concessions from the centre through to a comprehensive re-design which, if it is to appease its own supporters, will have to achieve the impossible task of both sustaining current levels of prosperity whilst pegging back the numbers of migrants who have made this possible.

We can be confident that they will fail in this task. The scrapping of a multi-billion dollar research and student exchange deal between Berne and Croatia, announced over the weekend, is the first of what will prove to be many straws in the wind indicating the dilemma that the Swiss now find themselves confronting.

Challenges

There are two things that supporters of open borders will have to be weary of as they mobilize to resist these measures and bring the issue of a progressive approach to migration policy back onto the agenda. The first of these is the danger of repeating the mistakes of the cordon sanitaire which the EU attempted to impose on Austria back in 2000 when that country brought the extreme right-wing Freedom Party into coalition government. Inept handling of that situation had the effect of demobilizing the opponents of the Freedom Party within Austria, presenting the issue instead as a fight between a Brussels elite acting against the country's native democracy.

In the case of Switzerland the success of open border supporters in winning arguments at cantonal and federal level, and forcing a fundamental reconsideration of the referendum result, is the very essence of the matter. The shortcomings of this fraction of Swiss opinion to date to do this have been due to over-reliance on the opposition of the considerable weight of country's economic elites to the closure of borders. What are needed are robust and evidence-grounded arguments which show what migration has meant for the welfare of ordinary citizens, and the larger gains that come from the benefits of diversity and inter-connectedness with the wider world.

There is no question that the Swiss vote has done anything but up the ante on the immigration and borders debate in Europe. But we should be alert to the real possibility that it could also provide the opportunity to turn the whole argument around with a concrete case example of the need to maintain and extend all the gains that have come from open borders in recent times.

Don Flynn, MRN Director, leads the organisation's strategic development and coordinates its policy and project work. He also chairs the UK Race and Europe Network (UKREN) and the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM). This blog was originally published by the [Migrants' Rights Network](#) and is reproduced here with permission.

Putting our immigrant roots on display

By kturner
Uncategorized



(The Toronto Star declared 2014 the Year of the Idea and reached out to a diverse group of community leaders and big thinkers, academics, entrepreneurs and regular folks to ask them to share their top idea to transform Toronto into a city that once again works. This is Ratna Omidvar's Big Idea.)

What if ...

... Toronto celebrated its international status as the world's most diverse city by showcasing the memories of hundreds of thousands of immigrants who arrived here over the last century from around the globe? What if, through words, photos, video, art and performance, Union Station and Pearson Airport resonated with these voices, and became the symbolic hub of our shared immigrant experience? What if on an annual basis, old and new immigrants gathered at these places with one object — a suitcase, a letter, a picture of their arrival in the city — to share with each other stories of their arrival, their endurance and their success.

Toronto is home to more immigrants than any other city in Canada. More than half of Torontonians were born outside the country, speak another language or share a different cultural geography. The story of Toronto's success — of how this great city was made — belongs to them and deserves to be celebrated.

Union Station is being renovated. Pearson Airport is facing calls for public accountability. The rail link that connects them is being constructed. The time is right to rethink these public spaces as the vital heart of the city and remake them as a symbol of arrival and hope.

How would your big idea transform Toronto?

By seeing their lives and realities reflected back to them in these displays, Torontonians will register a greater sense of pride in and ownership of the city. For the thousands of tourists that visit Toronto annually, the displays will provide a rewarding experience, a window onto our city and an enticement to return.

How much will the idea cost?

Creating this experience would require investment, which could be achieved in innovative ways. Exhibition space could be donated by GO Transit, Greater Toronto Airports Authority and the City of Toronto. Material could be crowdsourced from residents. The cost of infrastructure and curation could be funded by corporate sponsorship, the provincial and federal governments. And the city could contribute some of the revenue from its billboard tax. After all, all orders of government would share with the city's residents the rewards of adding a new tourist attraction that reflects back to us who we are.

Originally published in [The Toronto Star](#) on February 5, 2014.

Beyond Pizza & Kebab Entrepreneurship: Immigrant job creators

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Most immigrants are risk takers, ready to explore the unknown. Their entrepreneurial spirit has always played a key role in global trade and the economic success of host countries. Governments across the world are paying renewed attention to this very element in the immigrant psyche to make up for their own populace's flagging interest in entrepreneurship.

Doug Saunders, fresh from a conference in Berlin on the [future of integration in Germany](#) where he was a speaker along with Maytree President Ratna Omidvar, has pointed out how Europe is becoming a continent full of people who want to work for somebody else. Germany, in particular, as Mr. Saunders writes, has become one of the least entrepreneurial places in the Western world. In the best-performing economy on the continent, only 5.3 per cent of Germans ever attempt to start their own business.

However, there are programs in place to counter this worrying trend.

Portugal is among the countries starting to look at immigration as a way of bringing in employers and not merely "guest" workers as in the past. As Mr. Saunders wrote, to attract newcomers who want to launch shops and factories, the Portuguese cities of Lisbon and Porto have set up a ["one-stop shop"](#) program, an idea that was featured by Maytree's Cities of Migration initiative. And the results have been encouraging, with a 14% rise in the immigrant entrepreneurship rate.

Fading stereotype

The process of encouraging immigrant entrepreneurs is pushing aside the aging stereotype of immigrant businesses being mere purveyors of pizzas and kebabs. "Immigrants don't just establish restaurants or cleaning companies," says Elie El-Khouri, Project Manager of EnterpriseHelsinki, a [Finnish agency that offers various classes and workshops on starting a business](#). Apart from Finnish, they are also offered in Swedish, English, Russian, Estonian, German and Arabic. "Now they [the immigrants] start up IT companies just like Finns."

At the Berlin conference, Ms. Omidvar made her presentation on how Germany can reset its reputation as a destination for permanent migration. She also held a workshop to showcase good ideas like the Finnish example featured on the Cities of Migration website.

Vienna's Mingo and Barcelona's Activa are two other examples of city-led business counselling services helping immigrant entrepreneurs. Like Helsinki, Vienna uses language as a tool to address the unique needs of immigrant entrepreneurs. It adopted the ["Let's talk business in your mother tongue" model](#) after earlier outreach failed to attract those with an immigrant background. The city added the Mingo Migrant Enterprises to deliver services in the language of the migrants when needed.

By not offering migrant-specific support services beyond initial reception and settlement, Barcelona has taken a different track. In the belief that what's good for business is good for new immigrants and entrepreneurs, services in the Spanish city are provided by mainstream providers and then adapted to social diversity when needed. [The Barcelona Activa](#) service responds quickly with programs and advice to channel the entrepreneurial energy of migrants.

Immigrant successes recognized

Cities in "risk-averse" Germany are also reaching out to immigrant entrepreneurs to help promote small businesses and build a network of leaders.

Since 2010, Munich has handed out the Phoenix Prize annually to three winners who exemplify "outstanding economic achievements and social responsibility efforts of migrant enterprises." Their stories are seen as part of [Munich's success story](#).

Aachen, on its part, has established a [local immigrant network to develop international economic opportunities](#). To stay competitive in a globalized economy, the North Rhine-Westphalia city looks towards its entrepreneurs, and in particular to immigrant-run companies in knowledge-intensive sectors.

Guiding immigrant energy

Across the Atlantic, the United States has always thrived on immigrant entrepreneurship. With Ellis Island as the gateway to immigrant dreams woven into the collective conscience of the nation, New York City has always lived off the energy of its newcomers, wave after wave.

In New York, immigrants account for 49% of all self-employed workers. So when the city of New York's Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) talks about "leveraging the City's assets to drive growth, create jobs and improve quality of life," they have no trouble recognizing immigrants as one of the city's greatest resources.

[Competition To Help Reach Immigrant Ventures and Entrepreneurs \(THRIVE\)](#) is an immigrant entrepreneur support program launched by NYCEDC in 2011 as part of its mission to "make the city stronger." The project generates financially sustainable business plans to address the challenges faced by immigrant entrepreneurs in New York City.

Further up the coast in Boston, immigrant-owned businesses are fueling its urban economy. The [Boston Back Streets Program](#), designed to provide a range of land use and business assistance strategies to the industrial sector, has helped residents set up businesses that are critical in achieving greater inclusion and equality for newcomers and minority groups in the city.

Closer to home in Toronto, Canada, [Connect Legal](#) offers a Free Lawyer Matching Program to help immigrant entrepreneurs like Binu George, owner of Translife Battery Solutions Canada Ltd., navigate the legal structures of his new country.

Founded in November 2009 by commercial services lawyer Marion Annau, Connect Legal fosters entrepreneurship in the immigrant community by providing legal education workshops and pro bono commercial legal assistance to low-resource immigrant entrepreneurs.

The services provided by Connect Legal are all the more important as many immigrants are accidental entrepreneurs. A 2010 Statistics Canada study found that [33% of self-employed immigrants became self-employed due to a lack of job opportunities](#) in the paid labour market, compared to just 20% of those self-employed who were non-immigrants.

This piece was first published on the [Maytree blog](#).

Stephen Fotopulos: Making Nashville a City for All of Us

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Stephen Fotopulos, Director of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition

Five years ago today, national anti-immigrant forces tested a proposition: Could they put misinformation and \$100,000 into the hands of an opportunistic, local politician and convince a city to cast a vote against itself? The proposition proved false, Nashville passed a monumental test, and we declared to the world our intention to be a welcoming and inclusive city.

The truth is, not many people believed we could do it. English is such a vital, emotional part of our cultural identity, and the vote was seen simply as a referendum on its importance. Early polling suggested broad support for English-only across demographics. But the more community meetings we had, the more Nashvillians realized that we weren't talking about the value of learning English. We were deciding whether to create artificial barriers between citizenry and government. We were deciding between excluding people from the public conversation or making more room at the table. And we chose wisely.

The victory against English-only is a testament to what can be accomplished when elected officials demonstrate true leadership, when business, labor and civic groups come together with universities and faith institutions of every creed. The victory showed the power of immigrants participating directly in the process, sharing their experience with friends and neighbors, making announcements at Sunday service and Friday prayer, knocking on doors and getting people involved. More than 10,000 new American voters were directly engaged during the campaign, greater even than the winning margin.

In the five years since the special election, our city has taken steps to further open the dialogue and promote immigrant integration. Mayor Karl Dean established a New Americans Advisory Council in 2009, creating formal channels of communication between his office and Nashville's many immigrant communities. The Advisory Council partnered with the metropolitan clerk in 2012 to implement MyCity Academy, a program for immigrant leaders to see how government operates and to become effective ambassadors to their communities. In late 2012, Sheriff Daron Hall ended his devastating 287(g) deportation program, finally easing some tension between immigrant families and local law enforcement. And in 2013, Nashville for All of Us collaborated with NashvilleNext to chart a course for the next 25 years of our city's growth, furthering the dialogue with immigrant community members and promoting equality and inclusion.

It's human nature for people to move, and it's a sign of great prosperity when immigrants choose our city as the place to invest energy and raise a family. Between 2000 and 2011, Tennessee had the fastest-growing foreign-born population of any state in the country, with Nashville clearly leading the way. And it's no coincidence that every few months another national publication recognizes our city as one of the friendliest, most vibrant places to live. This wouldn't be true if English-only had passed five years ago, and it won't remain true without continued efforts to identify and remove barriers to full participation.

Strong communities, like relationships, are built on good communication, and our measure of success will be the degree to which everyone is engaged in the conversation.

Stephen Fotopulos is the director of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition and the Welcoming Tennessee Initiative, the former co-chairman of the Mayor's New Americans Advisory Council and a founding member of Nashville for All of Us.

This article was originally published in [The Tennessean](#) and is being reproduced here with permission.

From Barcelona to Toronto: Myth-busting and migration

By kturner
January 28, 2014
Uncategorized



The City of Toronto plans to take a leaf from Barcelona's anti-rumour public awareness campaign to tackle myths and misconceptions around newcomer settlement issues.

*"Newcomers tend to speak in their own languages amongst themselves at voting centres to ensure block voting."
"Immigrants coming from 'corrupt' and non-democratic countries bring with them illegal practices to distort elections and functioning of our democratic institutions."*

These are just two of the negative opinions expressed at an Open Dialogue session held by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) and the City of Toronto on January 16, 2014. The discussion centred on facilitating the civic participation of newcomers, including the introduction of voting rights for permanent residents who are not Canadian citizens yet.

Misconceptions and prejudices around newcomers are common across cities that attract immigrants. Barcelona is one city that decided to combat such negative attitudes with a unique approach – an anti-rumour campaign. And Toronto is now planning to follow this Spanish city.

"There is lots of misinformation floating around," said Chris Brillinger, the City of Toronto's Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration. "We plan to build [a fact-based system to give citizens good information](#)."

The Spanish idea will be part of the report that will be submitted in 2014 to update city council members about the implementation of the Toronto Newcomer Strategy they [endorsed in 2013](#).

Trained anti-rumour agents

To improve co-existence among locals and new immigrants, the Barcelona city council relies on a clever [public service campaign to contradict misinformation](#).

Among the Spanish city's "weapons of myth destruction" (WMD) are trained anti-rumour agents who contradict wrong ideas about immigrants with facts and good humour. Working through local organizations, they spread their message while negotiating through the business of daily life in the city's neighbourhoods.

The agents, or community facilitators, are equipped with accurate information about newcomers and are quick to address misconceptions at work, home or in the street. So, when someone complains that "subsidized apartments go mainly to foreigners," an agent can quickly interject: "Today only one in 20 immigrants receives such a benefit."

One of the more unusual approaches used to publicize its message is a comic book series about Rosita, an elderly Spanish woman who lives with Blanca, a young Peruvian caregiver. Each volume explores a theme. For example, the pair's visit to the doctor aims to dispel the myth that immigrants overuse or have easier access to health and social services. A "Did you know?" section then provides official data about the subject.

Handling implicit bias

Toronto City staff could also find [inspiration from Botkyrka](#). This Swedish city's intercultural strategy aims to incorporate a non-discriminatory and intercultural approach as a core competency for its managers and employees.

Disrespect and discrimination faced by newcomers to Toronto when they try to access city services was one of the main issues that emerged at the Open Dialogue. Adapting the Swedish idea could mitigate this problem.

Botkyrka offers its staff "intercultural dilemma workshops" where participants can analyze situations of conflict and learn how to overcome them. The intent is to break down stereotypes and accept differences while developing "intercultural intelligence" to respond appropriately to implicit bias in new or unexpected situations.

Related:

[All Parisians, All Citizens: City government establishes a council of non-citizens to ensure the voice of all residents is represented at the decision table](#)

Simon Woolley Is the Pride of Britain

By ktuner

[Interview](#)



Congratulations to this year's recipient of the Pride of Britain Award. Simon Woolley is Director and a founding member of Operation Black Vote (OBV), whose West Midlands Civic Leadership Programme we featured in our Good Ideas in Integration series.

Simon Woolley, Director of Operation Black Vote (OBV) in Britain, has been awarded the GG2 [Pride of Britain leadership award](#).

Mr. Woolley is one of the founders of OBV, which launched the West Midlands Civic Leadership Programme in April 2013 that we featured as a [Good Idea](#).

Founded in 1996, OBV has long-standing experience of running projects to support democratic participation among ethnic minorities. Its recent work builds on the past work of running shadowing and mentoring schemes to include practical skills training aimed at giving participants an even better chance of success.

For OBV Deputy Director Francine Fernandes, the Civic Leadership Programme tackles an important set of issues: "The UK population is set to be increasingly diverse, and we have to make sure that our civic leadership reflects that. There have been so many barriers in the past, but OBV's work shows that when minorities are supported to step forward in public life they can really challenge the gap in representation."

The success of OBV's civic leadership programs has attracted numerous awards in Britain including the Local Government Chronicle Award, the Channel 4 Political Award and the Ebony Business Recognition Award.

Speaking after winning the latest accolade at an event in London, England on November 27, Mr Woolley said it is essential for communities to have [racial and social justice](#).

You're Welcome

By kturner
Uncategorized



On January 1st, 2014, the newest members of the European family gained admission to the EU. In an open letter to the citizens of Bulgaria and Romania, The Economist welcomes them to Britain, and invites them to come, work and flourish.

"My God. Man, I don't come here to rob your country. I come to work. To make money to go home," said Victor Spirescu, supposedly the first Romanian migrant to enter Britain in January following the lifting of immigration restrictions in the UK and other European countries on nationals of Bulgaria and Romania.

Quickly dubbed "Romanian migrant No 1" by some in the partisan media, a bleary-eyed Mr. Spirescu was greeted at the Luton Airport by flashing cameras and journalists eager to interview him. To many in Britain he epitomized the imagined threat posed by the opening of barriers to the newest EU members.

While freedom for citizens of member nations to migrate within the union is a central pillar of European integration, existing member countries are allowed to limit entry of people from new member states for a maximum of seven years after they join the EU. The entry restrictions that were put in place in 2007 when Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union expired on January 1, 2014.

A Letter of Welcome

In response to alarmist attitudes among some politicians and media, editors at The Economist were prompted to write an [open letter](#) of welcome to the citizens of Bulgaria and Romania.

"Politicians claim they [the immigrants] are a burden on public services already stretched thin by austerity. Nonsense: being young and able-bodied, they don't use them much. And because they contribute more to the Treasury in taxes than they take out in benefits and services—about 35% more, according to a plausible estimate—they save our schools and hospitals from deeper cuts. They don't depress wages much, and mostly among other immigrant workers. They make our economy bigger, lowering our debt-to-GDP ratio. If you are even remotely like them, you will be an economic boon," the open letter said.

Indeed, the alarmists will be disappointed. The migrants aren't actually arriving by the thousands. Mr. Spirescu was not just "Romanian migrant No 1." He was the only one who arrived that day. Perhaps the underwhelming economic growth in Britain and widely publicized anti-immigrant sentiment are keeping his compatriots away.

Ich bin ein Berliner

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Migration, Diversity, Inclusion: An Agenda for Shared Prosperity

Berlin (Germany), June 4 – 6, 2014

Join us from June 4 to 6 for the [Cities of Migration Conference](#) in Berlin alongside local government and community leaders, practitioners, experts, activists and policy-makers to explore practical realities and opportunities created by today's hyper-diverse cities. And of course find out what it means to be a Berliner.

[Program Highlights:](#)

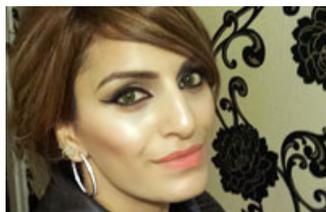
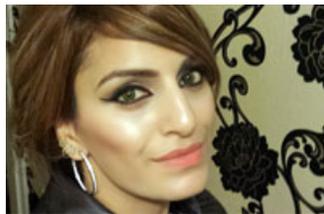
- Opening reception at the Embassy of Canada to Germany
- Mayors Panel: Re-Imagining the City: An Agenda for Shared Prosperity
- Policy Forum: Beyond Welcoming
- Big Ideas: Implicit Bias
- Marketplace of Good Ideas
- Urban Lab Workshops

Feeling Lonely? Take the Talking Cure

By kturner

December 20, 2013

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Language can be a barrier to social participation in UK, contributing to increased loneliness among people from ethnic minority groups, says Nageena Khan, Facilitator, Neighbourhood Approaches to Loneliness Programme, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Language is the human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communications, a vital part of everyday life. Without language how do we communicate? If we do not share a common language, [loneliness](#) can really affect individuals, families and communities. Culture identifies you with the ideas, customs and social behaviour of a particular people or society. It shows you 'belong' within a certain way of thinking and living.

Living in a multicultural city means I see people from all backgrounds, cultures and religions. This identity is evident through dress, skin colour, practices and most importantly language. When there is not a universal language to share, this ultimately sets barriers between people and restricts their ability to communicate and make those personal and professional relationships. This severely affects self-confidence and can lead to frustration when information cannot be communicated and people feel misunderstood.

In a society where English is the preferred language, some people from ethnic minority groups really struggle to communicate and need an interpreter when communicating with professionals. Older generations from a South Asian background often rely on their children to communicate and almost 'run' their lives. This can lead to physical and emotional isolation for the older generation and a responsibility for their children.

There is often no one to talk to other than family and this can become more about dependency than enjoyable relationships. Not being able to communicate through language prevents new relationships being formed and restricts those relationships that are formed to those within the same culture. This keeps cultures segregated and does not allow for barriers to be broken. There are not enough opportunities for communities to share their different cultures.

The real key is to build personal and community confidence to reduce loneliness. Eliminating barriers will ultimately reduce segregation. Creating opportunities for people to be able to share their cultures and languages would help break down some of these barriers and improve community cohesion. Confidence allows individuals to feel more empowered and therefore able to be more proactive within the community.

There is a lot to learn from different cultures such as amazing cuisines, languages, dress codes and traditions and we should proactively embrace these as a community rather than being ignorant and then having to deal with issues that arise from cultural barriers. Providing as many opportunities for people to come together with a universal interest (for example cuisine) allows communication to take place in some form and gauge more of an understanding of different cultures.

The more opportunities that communities have to showcase culture and share their skills and ideals, the better the relationships between different cultures will be. Confidence will be instilled within multicultural communities if there is better understanding and this in turn will lead to stronger support networks and reduce loneliness and isolation overall. There will also be a stronger sense of community spirit and children will grow up learning about the values and benefits of a positive multicultural society.

Re-printed with permission: [More Multicultural Community Events Would Help Reduce the UK's Loneliness Epidemic](#). By Nageena Khan, Facilitator, [Neighbourhood Approaches to Loneliness Programme](#), Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Source: [JRF Blog](#), November 13, 2013.

Re-Wiring Cities for Democracy

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Imagine Atlantic Canada's city of Halifax denying its entire population of 400,000-odd residents the right to vote in its municipal election. Unreal, yes, but that's about how many tax-paying residents and consumers in Toronto, the country's largest city, do not get to vote and elect their local representatives because they are not yet citizens.

As society becomes more diverse, this type of disenfranchisement has become an issue of growing concern for cities in Canada, Europe and elsewhere. It invites us to explore new perspectives on participatory democracy at the local level and the need to shift from a citizenship-based model to one based on residence.

[Maytree's](#) Katarina Vukobratovic was in Strasbourg on November 27, 2013 for a conference titled [Residence-based participation: a new reality of modern democracy](#). It was co-organized by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe and the City of Strasbourg within the [World Forum for Democracy](#) framework. The aim was to identify appropriate methods and forms to encourage and enable residents to engage in community building regardless of their origin and legal status.

Discussions focused on the role and place of migrants and foreign residents in the local community, their contribution to community building, [political participation](#) through representative structures such as [councils of foreign residents](#) and their [right to vote in local elections](#). Intercultural policies and plans to engage migrants at a

local level were also debated.

For European societies, the current challenge is to link up all the aspects of democracy in a coherent manner. They see a need to guarantee greater respect for human rights through broader participation of residents while promoting education in intercultural dialogue and setting up effective inclusive policies to integrate people. There was consensus on the need to restore an increasingly frayed social fabric against the backdrop of economic crisis and growing diversity.

Bringing on board diversity

The concept of participatory democracy raises the question of the role migrants have in the development of a community and their place within it. Katarina drew on her knowledge of Toronto's efforts to engage migrants and foreign residents as one of the most diverse city in the world and focused on [DiverseCity onBoard](#), the diverse leadership initiative spear-headed by Maytree and now gaining international recognition through a growing community practice. It is a good example of a project that brings more members of underrepresented groups to decision-making tables.

Another important theme of the conference was the question of voting rights for non-citizens. The Council of Europe is trying to promote the participation of immigrants in local and regional councils through the right to vote in local elections, says Katarina. "They believe that no integration policy can be said to have succeeded unless migrants and minorities are involved in local life."

Sweden has set a good example in Europe. Among the very few countries that allow non-citizens who have permanent residency to vote in local elections, its "democracy ombudsmen" project actively promotes that right. Volunteers meet non-citizens in public places to educate them about the benefits of voting and its effects are obvious. In parts of cities where the ombudsmen have been active, the percentage of non-citizen voting was substantially higher than in other parts.

Voting rights for non-citizens

Extending voting rights to non-citizens is a well-worn subject of debate in Canada too. Giving permanent residents the right to vote is an ongoing debate in Toronto. The conference was of the opinion that local authorities have a major role to play in integrating migrants into the community as they are in the best position to take positive action to promote the process of participatory democracy.

It is imperative that society must interact with newcomers and gear its institutions to their needs to avoid inflaming social conflicts, which are a potential threat to local cohesion. [Municipalities are the main protagonists in this process](#) as consistent local policies and innovative methods would lead to a new form of active citizenship.

Promoting active citizenship in local communities through education about democracy and human rights and raising public awareness about the contribution of migrants to the local community might help fight prejudice and overcome discrimination and reluctance to engage them in community life.

"The consensus was to stimulate participatory democracy by involving non-citizens in a community's projects," said Katarina. With global migration increasingly creating a world of "transnational urbanism," it is time to redefine cities as sites of citizenship in their own right. Just like in ancient Greece which gave rise to the Western concept of citizenship through its city states.

Speaking the Language of Inclusion on International Migrants Day

By ktuner
Uncategorized



One in 33 people on the planet is a migrant in search of dignity, safety, a better future, and sometimes even adventure. With 232 million people living outside their country of birth, this is not a small number. Put together, they would form the fifth most populous nation on earth. International Migrants Day on December 18 is therefore a good time to acknowledge their role in our societies and economies.

In Canada, the immigration and settlement sector is well established. Various policies and programs are in place to present a welcoming environment for migrants. However, we cannot rest on our laurels. Several other countries are increasingly coming up with good practices that we could adapt. They can guide us in our efforts to integrate migrants based on the values of inclusion and respect for cultural diversity.

Dispelling misconceptions

Singapore's fight against the stereotyping of low-skilled workers is one such good practice. The city-state's weapon of choice: a multi-media arts project called [Beyond the Border, Behind the Men \(BTBBTM\)](#).

The mission is to expand the dominant and singular narrative of the faceless foreign worker and to uncover more about an economic group that makes up almost one-fifth of the country's population. Through music, theatre, photography and film, the BTBBTM project works to remind viewers of the individual and human stories behind the construction worker, the shipyard worker and the cleaner.

Or take the case of Barcelona, where the city council unveiled its long-term strategy to improve coexistence among locals and new immigrants by launching a clever public service campaign to dispel rumours, misconceptions and prejudices that many local people held about minorities and immigrants.

Among the Spanish city's "[Weapons of Myth Destruction](#)" are trained anti-rumour agents to contradict uninformed ideas about immigrants and combat discrimination. Working through local organizations, they spread their message while negotiating through the business of daily life in the city's neighbourhoods.

Like Singapore and Barcelona, the "[City of Sanctuary](#)" movement in Britain too was started with the intent to dispel misconceptions around refugees and create an environment of broad-based support and understanding for their reality. Its aim was to build a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary. Sheffield led the way for an increasing number of towns and cities in the U.K. like Bradford, Bristol, Coventry, Leicester, London, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield and Swansea to embrace the concept.

Fostering cohesion

And what better form of sanctuary can a newcomer get than a secure job? But most face hurdles in finding suitable work in line with their experience and qualifications. Research in several countries has indicated that bias in hiring is most likely to happen in the initial stages of the process. Often, a brief glance at name, gender or age is enough for human resources staff to discard an application. In particular, these biases affect people with a migrant background, women with children, and older workers.

In 2010-11, the German city of Celle was one of eight public and private sector employers that took part in a pilot project initiated by the federal government's Office Against Discrimination. The results were similar to those from projects in other parts of the world: ethnic minorities and women are demonstrably more likely to be invited to an interview when their application is submitted anonymously. The pilot was so successful that the city of Celle has continued to use anonymous job applications, and [this good idea has now spread to other German cities and states](#).

Rapid demographic changes can also create friction in communities. Some long-time residents resent the change and newcomers feel unwelcome as a result. The Town of Richmond Hill, north of Toronto in Canada, faced this problem when its population doubled to 185,000 within 20 years, and the visible minority population grew to constitute almost half of the town. Outreach to diverse communities soon became a top priority.

In 2007, the town embarked on a plan guided by a single phrase, "We are a welcoming community." To ensure its citizen committees reflected this diversity, it reached out to [Maytree's DiverseCity onBoard](#) project for help. Created to bridge the growing gap between the diversity of the region's population and its leaders, DiverseCity onBoard helped to create a new appointments process for Richmond Hill. It opened doors to citizens who might otherwise have never become involved in municipal governance. Visible minorities now account for 22% of the membership of all citizen committees in the town.

The power of language

Tennessee (U.S.) faced a problem similar to Richmond Hill's. To counter an overwhelming growth in anti-immigrant sentiment and rhetoric, the state launched the Welcoming Tennessee Initiative (WTI). It used language as a tool to shape perception.

WTI developed a Welcoming Tennessee Pledge to overcome the sense of the "other," and the "us versus them" dynamic that negatively affects public discourse on immigration. The pledge identified traditional Tennessee values and connected them to immigrant integration.

As hospitality is the hallmark value of the American south, WTI shows how [welcoming immigrants can be an expression of a distinctly Tennessean value](#) — one that local residents already embrace. The initiative has shown great results and has been replicated across the U.S. by Welcoming America, a nationwide organization dedicated to immigrant integration.

Along with these success stories at the micro level, the Migration Policy Institute's Transatlantic Council on Migration is also attempting to harness the power of language at the macro level. It has focused on the creation of a new definition of "we" based on a more inclusive idea of national identity and belonging, and to convince the broader society that investing in integration is an investment in a shared future.

The council has [ten key recommendations for fostering greater cohesiveness](#), from urging leaders to hone their listening skills to truly understand their electorate's anxiety about immigration, to signalling both with words and body language that it is in society's interest for immigrants to be productive and completely engaged members.

Originally published on [Maytree blog](#).

Living Your Languages

By ktuner
November 28, 2013

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



The Canadian current affairs program, [The Agenda](#), has asked people across the province of Ontario to share their stories, photos and videos of learning and living in languages other than English. Maytree President Ratna Omidvar responds by describing her multilingual life.

I have the incredible good fortune of speaking many languages. I was born in multi-lingual India so I acquired Punjabi, English, Hindi and a smattering of Urdu naturally. Others I acquired through a disciplined course of grammar, sentence structure, idioms and metaphors – like German. Yet others I learned on the go, picking up bits here and there in order to survive in a new country – like Farsi in Iran.

By the time I arrived in Canada (sadly not speaking French), it was natural for me to speak in one language and yet think in another. Our young two-year-old daughter had a completely different reaction to the variety of languages we had put her through in her short life. She decided to clam up (we believe in protest) for 18 months. In fact, the first few intelligible words out of her mouth were Mandarin, which she picked up from her best friend in day care. In our early years in Canada my husband and I would revert to German when we did not want the kids to listen in. Or to Farsi when we visited Gerrard Street and wanted to discuss the variable quality of the food or the final price of an item. Or to either German or Farsi when we did not quite understand something that puzzled us about English Canada and needed to quietly consult with each other without being rude.

Over time, some of this has faded. I still speak Hindi at home with my mother. She will often correct me when I make mistakes and so I become much more of her child when I do so. When I speak Urdu, it is automatic to become more elegant, more deferential, more courteous – because that is the nature of the language. When I speak German (less and less fluently), I have to struggle to be more precise. And when I speak Farsi, I am reminded that some languages have innate hospitality ingrained in them, because a cup of tea will soon follow. But it is English that gives me confidence. This is the language which frames my foundational values of freedom and equality.

Some of my colleagues here at Maytree, who speak more than two or three languages, have a different perspective. As one of them so eloquently said: “When I speak English, I am at work and doing business. Tamil is for life, love and pleasure.”

Yet, even for me with my multi-lingual identity, some expressions of culture are ingrained into my DNA by virtue of the languages I grew up with. When someone asks me to sing (thankfully not often) or to think of music, I will always revert to the songs of my youth in Hindi. When someone asks me to name a book that I most admire, I will always think of Charles Dickens. Some people, fluent in English or French, are only able to count in Chinese. Others still dream in Serbian or Arabic or can only find their funny bone in Spanish. And as people grow older and become more dependent, I have witnessed that they revert to their mother tongues more and more.

One of the most moving pieces on this theme comes from [Dragan Todorovic](#), a Serbian journalist and editor who emigrated in 1995 from Yugoslavia to Canada. In an audio clip in his piece “[In My Language I Am Smart](#),” he addresses a woman he’s trying to woo: “If we spoke in my language, you would have fallen in love with me three hours ago. Can you just love me now and understand me later?”

All this to conclude that we are the language we speak.

Originally published on [The Inside Agenda Blog](#). [The Agenda is asking people across Ontario to share their stories, photos and videos of learning and living in languages other than English.](#)

Auckland's Future: Super-Diverse City

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Members and representatives of several academic institutions and ethnic advancement organisations in New Zealand attended the [Committee for Auckland's](#) re-launch of the Cities of Migration program in Otara, Auckland on October 23, 2013.

The launch was hosted by the [Manukau Institute of Technology \(MIT\)](#), one of six universities with campuses in the Auckland region. Otara is New Zealand's first major multi-racial community and its residents benefit in several ways from having such an influential educational facility on their doorstep.

To date MIT has boosted the welfare of Otara residents significantly. Their [Future Learning Village program](#) allows local families to access MIT programmes in a friendly setting. Adult family members study subject areas of their choice, such as computing, English, mathematics, communication or financial literacy.

In September 2013 MIT gave its visual arts students a real-world learning opportunity to address pollution in the local Otara Lake. MIT students are designing a creative partnership document, with

the Otara-Papatoetoe Local Board, that aims to spur the local community into action over restoring the polluted lake. The Committee for Auckland will monitor this initiative with the hope that it will evolve into a Good Idea that can Travel, but there is no doubt that MIT and the Otara community are making a real contribution to Auckland as a City of Migration.

Super-Diversity in Auckland

In 2013 immigrants and their children comprise 55% of Auckland's resident population and the wave of immigration has changed what it means to be an Aucklander according to [Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley](#). Prof Spoonley has been researching and writing on New Zealand's immigration and employment trends for more than 30 years.

In his presentation he addressed Auckland's current and future role as a "super-diverse" city and described how super-diversity has affected life as an Aucklander in the 21st century. Super diversity refers to cities where more than 25% of their resident population is comprised of ethnic migrants.

2013 Census figures for New Zealand, released on October 15th, show the Auckland region had a census usually resident population count of 1.42 million, up about 8 percent since 2006. Auckland's population grew by over 110,000 people since the 2006 Census and just over half of New Zealand's population growth since the last census occurred in Auckland. More detailed information will be available in December 2014, including data on ethnicity, sex, age, and dwellings.

Professor Spoonley is confident that the 2013 census data will show Auckland had more than 40% of its resident population comprised of ethnic migrants which will make it one of, if not THE most, ethnically diverse cities in the OECD.

Super-diversity is a challenging and revitalising process, he says. His work in population modeling for New Zealand's central Government explores how cultural diversity and citizenship affect everything from food habits to sport. For example, if Auckland has fewer young migrants from countries such as South Africa and India and increased populations from Asian countries, Auckland schools will field fewer cricket teams and more individual sports such as golf and badminton.

There is a key learning from the changing face of immigrant communities which is that institutions need to be especially responsive to youth communities whose needs and preferences represent the future communities who will serve in the city.

Changing demography in immigrant communities will continue to enrich Auckland's cultural scene. Already, festivals such as Diwali and Pasifika are growing their audiences substantially year on year and Aucklanders are eating foods and patronizing restaurants that didn't exist ten years ago. And the rest of New Zealand is catching up as migrants move to centres where their unique skills are in demand and areas where their families have been repatriated.

Professor Spoonley also highlighted the fact that most countries in the developed world are below population replacement in terms of their percentage of people who are aged over 65. This means that countries will increasingly compete with New Zealand for skilled migrants as their populations continue to age. For New Zealand this means that our residents aged 65+ will grow from 600,000 to 1,500,000 over the next 20 years.

As Auckland's profile changes with increased Asian migrants and a focus on skills-based attraction of migrants versus family reunification, Auckland will need to work at being a welcoming immigrant city. One aspect of this is succession planning in businesses where mind-sets need to change to reflect the employees and customer profiles of our current and future super-diverse city. Auckland and New Zealand can learn from cities like Toronto who are more advanced in migrant integration.

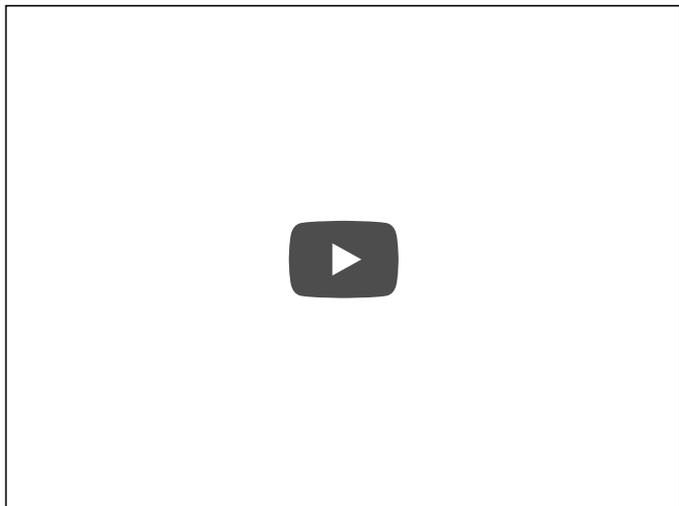
Welcome to Cities of Migration

Cities of Migration, the idea of joining cities worldwide through finding and telling the stories of good integration, originated with President of the Maytree Foundation, Ratna Omidvar (Order of Canada), five years ago on a visit to Birmingham, England. On a tour she saw how a local women's group was refashioning the use of community space, drawing isolated women into the local gym and so into community life. Simple. Easy. Practical.

Omidvar realized how easy it would be for other cities to adopt this practical idea for themselves. And so Cities of Migration was born. Cities have a unique capacity to learn from one another because they are nimble, their governments are closest to the people, they deal in practical and grounded issues and city to city learning travels fast.

Today, Cities of Migration has a world-wide network of 8,000 experts, city leaders and practitioners. Under Omidvar's leadership, Maytree has been recognized for its commitment to developing and implementing programs and policy solutions related to immigration, integration and diversity in the workplace, in the boardroom and in public office.

Omidvar took the time to record a personal message for Auckland as a 'city of migration' and share her vision as well as acknowledging New Zealand's past and potential contribution of good ideas in migrant attraction and integration.



The Committee will schedule a webinar with Professor Spoonley for 2014, after full 2013 Census data is available which will provide an expanded platform for discussion of Auckland's skills requirements, changing demographic profile, and recommendations for improved inclusion of migrants.

A report by Suzanne McNichol, Communications Manager, Committee for Auckland

Turning Migration Policy from Failure to Opportunity

By ktuner

January 28, 2014

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



By Dr Khalid Koser, GCSP Deputy Director and Academic Dean, and Chair of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Migration. This article was originally published on the [World Economic Forum Blog](#).

The challenges of managing international migration have been consistently underestimated. It is by definition a transnational phenomenon that states still try to manage at a national level. It is a truly global issue that affects every country in the world and almost every person in the world, either directly or indirectly.

International migration is part and parcel of globalization, driven by disparities in development, demography and democracy. Yet, governments still insist that it can be controlled in time to win the next election. It impacts every aspect of the economy and society – from employment and education, to integration and identity – yet all too often is approached exclusively from a border management and security perspective.

Perhaps it is no wonder that international migration is characterized by inconsistencies and contradictions. Migrants' rights are abused while their remittances lift people out of poverty; migration drives enterprise and innovation, but migrants face a rising tide of anti-immigration sentiment and xenophobia; migrants consistently do not find jobs commensurate with their skill levels and education; and advanced economies increasingly rely on the work of irregular migrants.

This week's second [UN High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development](#) in New York represents a very significant step in the right direction for better managed migration. It signifies real understanding that multilateral approaches are required even to achieve national goals, and represents a global commitment to find the best approaches by discussing, sharing experiences and promoting the contributions of migration to development. It is of particular note that migrants' rights are the focus for one of the four roundtables at the meeting, a topic seven years ago at the First High-Level Dialogue that was considered too controversial to confront directly.

But overcoming divisions and forging closer cooperation between states is not enough. The effective management of migration also requires the inclusion in the policy process of other stakeholders, including migrants themselves, civil society and the private sector. To exclude the people targeted by policy, to ignore those who try to assess its impact and not to engage those who drive the entire process, are ingredients for policy failure.

The Council's recent publication, [The Business Case for Migration](#), has been distributed at the UN High-Level Dialogue, and we have co-hosted a side event bringing together government, private sector and civil society to discuss the role of migration in the global competition for skills.

Migration represents one of the great global opportunities. Governments have begun to overcome their differences and are talking to each other. The next step is to achieve deeper confidence and harmony between governments and other critical actors, such as companies and civil society.

This article was originally published on the [World Economic Forum Blog](#). [Dr Koser will be speaking at the Cities of Migration conference in Berlin](#).

*[Dr Khalid Koser](#) is Deputy Director and Academic Dean at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy. Dr Koser is chair of the UK's Independent Advisory Group on Country Information, chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration, and editor of the *Journal of Refugee Studies*.*

Elham Seyed Javad: Sports Hijab Takes Off

By kturner

November 28, 2013

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



In 2009, Montreal-based, Iranian-born industrial designer Elham Seyed Javad had an idea. A controversy disrupted amateur sporting events in Canadian cities over the wearing of the hijab by young female athletes. Her response was to [design a sports hijab that handled "so-called" safety concerns](#) which was accepted by FIFA in 2012. Cities of Migration checks in with the Iranian-born designer to find out about the impact of her work.

Were you surprised when FIFA accepted your design for the sports hijab?

I was very happy when [FIFA](#) accepted the [ResportOn Pro Release](#) we presented to them last year. [Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein of Jordan and his team worked very hard to get the ban on headscarf lifted](#). They got FIFA's Health Committee to test different designs for safety. We were, in a way, confident that if a safe solution was brought to them, it would be accepted. They proceeded to a strict testing of our sports headscarf and the Pro Release was then officially accepted!

What was the initial response from local sports clubs? Are there more young Muslim women playing amateur sport?

The response from local sports club was very positive and many athletes are purchasing ResportOn for their favourite sports. Many also tell us they have been looking for a solution like this for many years, and that they now feel more confident to practice sports.

In the past, some soccer clubs used FIFA's lack of rules on the hijab to keep young female athletes off the field. What was their reaction to FIFA's acceptance of the sports hijab?

I have to say, that since the beginning it has been a very positive journey. Reaction from most of people has always been one of unity and mutual respect.

Since FIFA accepted your design, are more players wearing the sports hijab? Has the response been different according to country?

I think the number of Muslim women athletes is going to grow every year, and many countries are responding positively to it. More specifically, a lot of associations around the world are working to empower women through sports, and we can witness a great deal of achievements from them.

Have other sports federations reacted?

We were recently approached by the Canadian Hand-Ball Federation. What is also very exciting is that not only are sports federations interested, but also organizations from fields that have nothing to do with sports, like laboratories or professional kitchens.

As someone who is Montreal-based, what's your response to the [Quebec Charter of Values](#)? If legislated, what impact would it have on soccer, and other sports, in Quebec?

Since the beginning of this project, we wanted to find a safe and comfortable solution to empower Muslim women athletes, and we wish to continue to do so. I do not think it is possible to compare a design project to a legal and political project. We work in totally different fields.

What can sport teach us about living in a multicultural society?

Sports teach us that you should never judge a person based on appearance because it doesn't matter what your beliefs or cultural backgrounds are. What counts on the field is the game you are playing. We are all the same and we can all express our passion for sport through our personal background in mutual respect.

What's your favourite FIFA team?

Iran of course 😊

Related:

- [Montreal: Sports hijab helps girls make the team](#)

Report from Rabat: Building Better Cities

By ktuner
October 31, 2013
Uncategorized



Mayor Mohamad Maliki Bin Othman (Singapore) and Ratna Omidvar (Toronto)

UCLG is the mouthful that stands for United Cities and Local Governments. Cities of Migration was in Rabat, Morocco, last month at the UCLG [World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders](#). Under the theme “Imagine Society, Build Democracy,” 3500 mayors and city leaders gathered to talk shop, build alliances and explore issues of inclusion and representation in urban development.

Cities of Migration was represented by Ratna Omidvar at a thematic roundtable on “Promoting Diversity,” that marked the first time the concept of diversity has been addressed directly within UCLG’s agenda to promote economic development, the autonomy of local and regional government and sustainability. For UCLG expert Yves Cabannes, University College London, the significance of diversity in urban governance is huge, cutting across all issues and critical to UCLG’s mission to create a “roadmap” for cities and regions in the 21st century.

Recognizing diversity as a source of innovation and social capital was a familiar topic to session panelists, whatever their particular interest or point of departure. In [Singapore](#), where diversity is enshrined in the city’s constitution, policy that mandates a mix of ethnicity and culture in public housing has played a critical role in promoting social cohesion. The bigger challenge, according to Mayor Mohamad Maliki Bin Othman, is retaining the migrants that the city so successfully attracts to its booming economy. Mayor [Jürgen Roters, Cologne](#), similarly described the importance of embedding formal structures for managing diversity across the city’s administration and public services.

Bilbao Deputy Mayor, Ibone Bengoetxea Otaolea, spoke passionately about how [the lives of women and children](#) are shaped by the services provided by local governments. Gilbert Hounbo, Deputy Secretary General of the [International Labour Organization](#) (ILO), talked about the importance of city-to-city cooperation on developing standards and best practices for an increasingly mobile global world of labour.

Ratna Omidvar, [Maytree Foundation](#), described the contribution that immigration has made to Toronto’s social and economic development, citing the cultural and economic success of the Toronto International Film Festival, city leadership around gay marriage (including the tourist-friendly Gay Pride festival), and Toronto City Council’s recent adoption of [sanctuary policies for undocumented residents](#).

Also addressed was the importance of sharing good practice and city-to-city learning as a way of keeping pace with global mobility in an age of accelerating urbanization. Maytree’s [Cities of Migration project](#) has profiled over 200 examples of excellence in local integration practice and policy – from [London’s Living Wage](#) to [Barcelona’s Anti-Rumour campaign](#) to [Singapore’s Community Mediation Centre](#). The success of the project’s online learning exchanges attests to the appetite that exists for city-to-city peer learning (over 4000 learners, with “no carbon footprint”).

New Ideas, New Realities

Events like the UCLG World Summit are important for introducing new ideas as well as new contexts for our work. Pat Horn, of [StreetNet International](#), helped delegates comprehend the size and significance of the informal economy through the lens of her work with “street sellers.” Horn invited us to re-think this neglected sector of the economy that creates opportunity for employment, often functioning as a buffer between employment and unemployment, contributes to the local economy, provides essential services in the developing world and helps alleviate poverty by providing survival strategies for the poor. She asks whether we can really afford to ignore a sector of the economy that’s this big, or the rights of workers, often migrants, within it. Cities of Migration will be following-up on the impact of Streetnet’s work on cities in South Africa.

The second prong of the Sharing Diversity roundtable addressed the topic of “valuing diversity as a political opportunity,” dovetailing easily into the Summit’s broader theme of building democracy. The extent to which the city’s diversity is reflected in its services, planning and economic development policies, and use of public space is an important indicator of its commitment to good governance and representative democracy. Another is to look at how citizens are engaged and participate in local decision-making.

[Fathallah Oualalou, Mayor of Rabat](#) was passionate on the subject of youth, reminding us that 60% of urban dwellers may be under the age of 18 by 2030, and emphasizing the tremendous opportunity and potential of the young: “Youth are key actors, the great alliance moving forward.” Like many leaders at this conference, his remarks underlined the importance of urbanization to development, describing our cities and towns as “schools of democracy” with great political significance in the years to come.

Dakar’s local hero, [Khalifa Ababacar Sall, Mayor and President of UCLG Africa](#), made a powerful case for the role and practical wisdom of “la collectivité” in shaping local development, starting with of the right and authority of all citizens to participate in fiscal decision-making. For Sall, effective local development requires transparent, inclusive, and participatory government and, above all, “financial emancipation” from old development models in favour of the financial autonomy of city and regional governments. The inclusion and active participation of local citizens in local government is an essential step towards ending what he describes as the “infantalisation” of local interests in the current development paradigm. Rather, Sall argues, “local culture must become the vector of development.”

Equally impressive was the women’s lobby, in the person of [Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women](#), who admonished delegates to remember that democracy was about representation (noting the gender imbalance in the room). “Women’s and girl’s realities are shaped by local government,” she continued. “The genius of women is their commitment to family, to community, to intergenerational perspectives. These are invaluable to local government.”

[Keynote speaker, Roger Bruce Myerson](#), Nobel Prize for Economics winner, University of Chicago (who uses game-theory analysis to study political systems) explained how local expressions of democracy “lower the barrier for entrance” to national politics. By improving the quality of local

administration and providing services that are responsive to community needs, for example, local governments build connection and gain the trust of the people, strengthening national democracy in the process. Perhaps, he suggests, we should encourage more mayors to seek higher office.

Mayor Xavier Trias of Barcelona would agree. Trias argues that it is city council's responsibility to ensure we don't go "the path of 'two solitudes.'" About the newcomers that flock to Barcelona for jobs and a better economic future (albeit in dwindling numbers), he says: "we must respect these people and ensure we have shared goals. We don't want to impose our culture on them but at the same time we want them to love our country." In times of austerity, he notes, the cost of inclusion is high. He also suggested we may need more mayors as parliamentarians. That way, for example, "the VAT generated by 7.5 million tourists to Barcelona every year" could benefit the city's diverse residents instead of the national debt.

If Rabat is a modern city that reflects the aspirations of its people and government, then a chance encounter with a young engineering student named Khadija Ettahi tells a great story about the next generation that today's cities and local governments will serve. A full 50% of Khadija's university class are women. She speaks four languages, is fiercely proud of her Berber identity, and has her eye on practicums in Europe and North America to complete her studies. Her grandmother, who lives in a town outside the desert city of Marrakesh and speaks only Berber, delights in Khadija's success.

About UCLG

UCLG has an important role as the international advocate of democratic local government. It is the foremost global organization for promoting democratic local government throughout the world.

The Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (SIPDHR) was established by UCLG in 2005 and tabled its most important document in Florence in 2011, the [Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City](#).

The Charter-Agenda is a tool for local governments to build "more inclusive, democratic and solidarity-based societies in dialogue with urban dwellers." As Dakar's Mayor Salli observed, this is the new paradigm for development, firmly anchored in place-based, local expressions of government and community action.

An important companion to the Charter is the searchable [Inclusive Cities Observatory](#), a searchable repository of sixty case studies from cities around the world on innovative policies for community development, access to basic services, social inclusion, gender equality and poverty reduction, among others. Click here for [UCLG's Global Observatory for Local Democracy project – GOLD](#).

Resetting the Way We Work on Migration

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



*It is time to rethink migration, says **Manjula Luthria** of the World Bank's International Labour Mobility program. A new series, [On the Move](#), aims to re-frame the debate around migration through new perspectives on how to realize its many potential gains.*

International labour markets are perhaps the last bastion of protectionism. We know that easing restrictions on the movement of people, especially the less skilled, can unleash huge welfare gains which by some estimates dwarf the gains from complete trade liberalization. And yet, progress on this front has been too slow.

In attending the numerous conferences and events on this topic I've come away frustrated by how we haven't been able to move the discussion forward in effective ways and struck by the consistency of certain ways of thinking that just keep pulling us back.

To be able to really move forward we need to put our intellectual and convening powers towards facilitating the death of three long held views and then become matchmakers in facilitating a wedding ceremony.

The three funerals we need

The first idea that has fossilized these discussions is that development must only be about places. Hence the questions being asked in the research and policy making world essentially come down to one question: what has the migration of people done for the development of the places they come from? Whereas if development were already phrased in human development terms then all that matters is that migration offers an expansion of employment opportunities, an expansion of choice and agency, an increase in income, and often diversification of household risk. If this isn't development, then what is?

The second unfortunate idea that has crept into our vocabulary and enjoys a unique brand name that even Coca Cola would envy is that of "brain drain" – which conjures images of loss of human capital from poor towards rich countries. The counterfactual as many labour origin countries will readily testify to – is "brain down the drain!" When human capital cannot find a suitable use, it moves to another location where it does, providing an economist's dream come true of good resource allocation.

In fact, the very prospect of radically increasing earning potential through migration can boost enrollment in certain fields of education which are internationally marketable, hence actually increasing the supply of brains. And yet, the predominant footprint this term "brain drain" has left on policy making is to give rise to paternalistic thinking that some countries "need" their emigrants more, so they should either be sent home or their recruitment should be discouraged in the first place.

These lead to the third idea that has done us more harm than good – the innocent looking AND that is found between migration AND development. This implicit assumption behind the use of this conjunction is that the words on either side are not to be treated as synonyms and hence must be linked to each other through some other channel.

This has given rise to a cottage industry that proposed these channels were either remittances or return, i.e. if migrants remitted money back home, then development was visible, or if migrants returned home armed with skills and knowledge then they had contributed to development.

Of course, both these flows can have positive effects, but chasing them as the missing link between migration and development has set us up big time! Measuring the development friendliness of migration through remittances is treating an intra-household transfer as development if it crosses an international border (if families were separated) but not so anymore if this occurs at the breakfast table (if families were not separated).

The other channel of return is also a dead end and many well-meaning efforts have tried to incentivize return and convert returning migrants into entrepreneurs. However, if the push and pull factors that drive migration haven't been altered, then this is at best a marginal issue.

And now a wedding

What if we redefine our starting point to be something like this: Migration is development.

The relevant policy questions then focus on what can sending and receiving countries do together that puts migrants at the center of this discussion in a way that helps realize the human development potential of mobility.

This would mean we move away from worrying about remittances and return, and instead focus on policies and institutions that can help create better systems for migration – from recruitment, job search and matching, worker protection, portability of social rights and skills, training standards and certification, and ultimately successful insertion and integration of migrants into international labour markets in order to achieve the best possible human and economic outcomes.

Building these systems requires immense coordination between host and origin countries and such coordination is now virtually absent because migration policy is made so often through the eyes of national security. We could jump start this coordination by forging dialogue and partnerships at three levels:

The foremost priority is expanding mobility options for the poor and relatively unskilled and this will require that confidence is restored in bilateral labour arrangements. To do so, we will need to lead with policy experimentation in the design and implementation of such schemes – often in the nature of temporary mobility of persons (TMPs) which offer circumscribed access to labour markets in selected sectors and for a specific duration such as for seasonal work in agriculture. Such schemes offer a palatable compromise to all parties and have provided employment to vast numbers of poor people from the Caribbean and Pacific islands. But such schemes are too few because they are difficult to design, coordinate and manage. Here the Bank can take the lead in creating the public goods that are needed to foster trust and manage such schemes well, as we did in the Pacific region some time ago. This is crucial if the poor are to ever have a chance to access global employment opportunities.

For the mid-skilled, we need to create systems that allow their skills to travel with them and prevent the devaluation of skills with mobility – this will mean attention to the standards of the global labour market in tandem with better coordination between policies and private sector needs.

For the high-skilled for whom mobility is easier but who are at the root of concerns about the impact of migration on the provision of vital services – such as in health care — we need to offer innovative co-financing mechanisms where future beneficiaries invest in the education and training systems in poor countries in a way that augments the global supply of scarce skills .

Such enlightened partnerships will help turn zero-sum thinking on its head and help broker a regime that unlocks opportunities for human development in significant ways.

In my view this reset is already long overdue. Changing our approach to migration now will allow the Bank to be effective in an area where our intellectual leadership and convening power are urgently needed. We have made a start through our international labour mobility (ILM) program in the Middle East and North Africa region – please visit our website to see what we're working on. We will also engage more deeply on the issues flagged here through a series of blog posts to follow – so please stay tuned and share your thoughts with us.

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[Manjula Luthria](#) is Senior Economist and program leader for the International Mobility Program of the MENA region's Human Development network. She is based at the Center for Mediterranean Integration in Marseilles, France.

Pluralism: A Key Opportunity for the 21st Century

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Kofi Annan is a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and the former United Nations Secretary-General. In this excerpt from his 2013 Pluralism Lecture at the [Global Centre for Pluralism](#) (Ottawa, Canada), he talks about importance of managing “the conflicting pressures that pluralism invariably brings.”

Your Highness The Aga Khan, Excellencies, fellow members of the Board, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be with you today. The Global Centre for Pluralism has an extremely important mandate, and I feel privileged to participate in its work.

Globalization has brought us closer together. In the 21st century, we live for the first time in one global community. But it is a community composed of many strands which must be carefully woven together into a whole. If diversity is seen as a source of strength, societies can become healthier, more stable, and prosperous. But there is another side of the coin if we fail to manage the conflicting pressures that

pluralism invariably brings. Without the institutions and policies to manage diversity, whole communities can be marginalized and oppressed, creating conditions for conflict and violence.

This is why pluralism is a key challenge for the 21st century. Some look at recent developments and claim that our world is becoming fragmented into different civilizations. I strongly disagree. I see the world coming together in one global civilization, to which each of us brings our own traditions, cultures, and beliefs. My long experience has taught me that, whatever our background, what unites us is far greater than what divides us.

My experience has also taught me that strong, healthy, cohesive societies are built on three pillars – peace and security; development; and the rule of law and respect for human rights. Unfortunately stability and economic growth have, for far too long, been the principal responses to national and global problems. We must not fall into this trap. For there can be no long-term security without development and no long-term development without security. And no society can long remain prosperous or secure without respect for the rule of law and human rights. For a society to manage pluralism successfully, it must embrace and give equal weight to each of these three pillars.

But ladies and gentlemen, we must not shy away from the fact that plural societies, by their nature, are challenging to govern. They bring with them competing claims or entitlements – each of which can be justified and defended, but which are not always compatible. And it is important to recognize that no society – however democratic or respectful of the rule of law – resolves these challenges perfectly. Europe, for example, has well-established legal systems and arrangements to protect minorities and reach acceptable compromises. Yet even within Europe, pluralism is sometimes seen as a threat. Levels of social prejudice have been rising against religious and cultural minorities and new immigrants.

We have also seen a fall in trust and confidence in political institutions which has led to increased support for more extreme political groupings. These trends underline how important it is for countries to entrench democratic principles and norms, adopt inclusive policies to build and sustain trust, increase inclusion and reduce insecurity. And just as no country is born a democracy, no one is born a good citizen. Mutual respect and tolerance have to be fostered and taught. We have to promote dialogue to combat fear, intolerance, and extremism.

We have to learn from each other, making our different traditions and cultures a source of harmony and strength, not discord and weakness.

[Read the complete speech.](#)

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Kofi A. Annan was the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, serving two terms from January 1, 1997 to December 31, 2006 and was the first to emerge from the ranks of United Nations staff. In 2001 Kofi Annan and the United Nations were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace with the citation praising his leadership for “bringing new life to the organisation.” In addition to his work with the Kofi Annan Foundation, Mr. Annan serves as the Chairman of the Africa Progress Panel (APP) and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). He is also a Board member, Patron or Honorary member of a number of organisations, including the UN Foundation and The Elders. Mr. Annan currently serves as the Chancellor of the University of Ghana, a Global Fellow at Columbia University in the United States, and Li Ka Shing Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore.

Ideas Exchange: Participation

By kturner
Uncategorized



Cities around the world are described as the great laboratories of social innovation, engines of our economy and a central force for democracy. As the level of government closest to the people, they have significant capacity to be flexible and innovative in how they meet the day-to-day needs of their constituents. By opening the door to active forms of participation, shared decision-making and fair representation, local governments also give everyone, including immigrants and marginalized groups, a voice and make cities a vital space for public life.

Many of you know about Maytree's work to promote diverse leadership and the civic engagement of people in Toronto's newest communities – whatever their political stripe or inclination – such as [School4Civics](#), [Building Blocks](#) and [DiverseCity onBoard](#).

It's exciting to see projects that foster a more equal, inclusive society from other cities of migration, too. Three good examples

are:

- [Ghent's Youth Ambassador Project](#)
- [Barcelona's anti-discrimination agents](#)
- [Dortmund: Participation, Politics and Impact](#)

All three engage immigrants in participatory processes that contribute to greater equality, fairness and more equitable representation. They make us better neighbours, colleagues and citizens. We like to say: it's not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do.

Do you have a great example of a participatory process, activity or strategy that promotes diversity and inclusion at the local level? Share your good idea with [Cities of Migration](#)!

Toronto: Why the Integrating Cities Charter Matters

By ktuner
September 24, 2013
[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



Is the [EUROCITIES Charter on Integrating Cities](#) coming to Toronto? We asked two proponents to explain the need for a charter in a city celebrated for its diversity. Chris Brillinger is the City of Toronto's Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration, and Jehad Aliweivi is the Executive Director of the Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, a multi service non-profit organization.

Why is a charter a good idea and what difference will it make?



Chris Brillinger: The [City of Toronto](#) was built on historical waves of immigrants coming into the city. We have seen newcomer settlement as an opportunity to enrich the city, economically, socially and culturally. More recently, we have seen some fundamental shifts in the class of immigrants coming into Canada which is a global phenomenon, shifting towards a greater acceptance and reliance on the economic class rather than those entering the country on humanitarian grounds. This has resulted in more temporary workers coming to Canada, and Toronto, rather than permanent residents. The development of a City Charter that reaffirms the rights of its residents and the obligations of a city seems timely given this shift. It is in keeping with the [Toronto Newcomer Strategy](#), adopted by Toronto City Council earlier this year, which speaks to the four strategic pillars – labour market participation, health of newcomers, access to services and civic engagement. The vision of the strategy is that “all newcomers reach their full potential to thrive and contribute to their local neighbourhood, community and city, ensuring Toronto's continued success and prosperity.”

There is a growing recognition that the successful integration of newcomers in our city is critical for our success. We have to look at ways to be innovative about how we best facilitate that. While our influence over federal policies and legislation, which ultimately impact on who immigrates here, is limited, we have a great impact on the settlement experiences and integration of those who choose Toronto as their new homes. A charter would formally confirm our commitment to the successful integration of immigrants and would establish principles and priorities to guide the work and the approach of the City in meeting this commitment.

Jehad Aliweivi: The City of Toronto is a wonderful example of a major city that recognizes its diversity as a source of strength and pride. However, Toronto is less embracing of its immigrant and refugee residents. Diversity and immigration, while related, are not the same thing. In addition, settlement is a local and mostly urban phenomenon. A document like the proposed charter will embed immigration and settlement into city planning and building process and more importantly, it will commit the city to specific actions with measurable, realistic and achievable objectives.



The recent adoption of the Toronto Newcomer Strategy is a positive step. The introduction of a charter that clearly establishes benchmarks to measure the city's support for the civic and social integration of immigrant and refugees will enhance newcomer success and improve the city's ability to utilize the skills and expertise they bring to our communities and neighbourhoods.

Should the Charter be adopted by Toronto City Council, what kind of accountability framework do you foresee?

Chris Brillinger: The City of Toronto is committed to accountable and transparent government. We are accountable to all Toronto's residents and stakeholders. In the process of developing a Charter, we will be studying approaches to accountability that signatories of the EUROCITIES Charter have adopted. We know that cities across Europe have not implemented the charter in the same way, although their commitment to migrant integration is shared. It is great that we can learn from them and utilize what may work the best for our context.

An example may be the approach that Nantes took, where city council is held accountable to the Charter commitments by their Council of Foreign Residents. Nantes is a much smaller city, and it may not be feasible for us to have such a council, but we already have a [Newcomer Leadership Table \(NLT\)](#). This consists of the community-based sector, senior representatives from the Governments of Canada, Ontario and Toronto, and institutions such as school boards and hospitals. There are about 30 members. They meet quarterly to share information, strengthen interconnections and address gaps in the human services system related to the settlement of newcomers. In fact, the idea to develop a Charter similar to the one of EuroCities came from one of the NLT members.

Why this European model in particular and what difference will it make?

Jehad Aliweivi: The more I learn about European cities' commitment to integrating immigrants and refugees the more I believe Toronto can benefit from this model. The main appeal for this document is that it is simple, realistic and thorough. It focuses on the areas where the local government has full jurisdiction over. This frees the City from intergovernmental squabbles. This document will make a significant difference in changing the culture of municipal social and economic development planning. It will, hopefully, add a settlement dimension to all of its work. It would be remarkable to be able to subject all aspect of city building, planning and services to settlement and integration analysis.

What's on your wish list for improved immigrant integration and a more inclusive Toronto?

Chris Brillinger: Two years ago, Toronto's Local Immigration Partnerships and the Toronto Newcomer Initiative conducted extensive research and consultations with a range of stakeholders to identify priority areas for improved immigrant integration. Unfortunately, significant gaps and areas of improvement were identified. One of those is access to municipal supports. From the perspective of a senior manager, my wish list has to begin with that. Newcomers may not be well informed about City services, limiting their access to the programs and services we provide. This is a lost opportunity and is unnecessary. An inter-divisional work group is working on developing tools to improve access and streamline information on City services for both newcomers/immigrants and the settlement sector

Jehad Aliweivi: The wish list is best described by “we imagine a city where immigrants come for the opportunity and stay to build a community.” Inclusive Toronto means immigrants and refugees are successful, connected and included. City policy and practices, like a charter on integration, can

enable that.

How does a general charter get adapted to the challenges of an individual city and its particular jurisdictional responsibilities?

Chris Brillinger: Such adaptation is a critical step, in particular in a city as complex as Toronto. There are not that many cities in the world where approximately half of its residents were born outside of the country and over 140 languages are spoken. This diversity creates an enormous potential, but also creates complexities for local service providers. For example, our diverse population needs to be reflected in the services we provide which creates resource demands that most other cities do not have. Adapting the charter in this context will challenge us to work more effectively with our key stakeholders such as the NLT to ensure transparency and inclusiveness and the successful implementation of our plan.

Jehad Aliweawi: This will be a creative challenge for all of us. This will be an opportunity for us to learn more about our city. The charter needs to be Torontonized. It also needs to reflect the city's past and aspirations for the 21st century. It has to reflect a robust city of the future that considers immigration as a source of economic growth, social vitality, cultural vibrancy and civic entrepreneurship.

How does a city translate aspirations into action? Is this akin to the relationship between policy and practice?

Chris Brillinger: Many cities around the globe are facing similar issues to us as far as immigration and integration of newcomers is concerned. Urbanization and globalization have created similar trends and issues across different regions, countries and continents, which provide opportunity to learn from national and international best practices. The Charter is one such opportunity and the signatories have already demonstrated a great deal of innovation when it comes to translating vision into action. Toronto has a great deal of experience in integrated approaches to social policy issues. We also take a neighbourhood or place-based approach in translating policy into meaningful action on the ground, in the neighbourhoods where newcomers reside.

Translating aspirations into action is always challenging, particularly with constrained resources. One of the objectives of the NLT is to identify opportunities to leverage existing investments to achieve better outcomes for newcomers. System change can have as significant an impact on the lives of newcomers, just as much as new investments.

Jehad Aliweawi: The charter will include, in addition to the inspirational statement, a clear set of actions that the city needs to take in specific areas of jurisdictions. The City commits to simple and achievable outcomes that the council as a whole is held accountable for.

Which cities are using the Charter well?

Chris Brillinger: It may be too early to identify particular cities that are using the Charter well, considering that it was only introduced in 2010. Currently, there are 27 cities throughout Europe who are signatories. Each city is responsible for designing and implementing its own plan to meet its commitment to the charter. An implementation report published this year shows innovative and unique actions across signatory cities, which highlights how each city is using the charter well but in completely different ways. Some interesting activities across Europe include Barcelona's public awareness campaign tackling rumours and stereotypes about immigrants, Helsinki's procurement strategy, which includes social criteria and equality principles and [Copenhagen's establishment of a multi-sectoral Diversity Board](#) to work towards the goal of becoming the "most open and inclusive major city in Europe."

Jehad Aliweawi: Berlin and a number of German cities are good examples of using the charter well. One of the things that we need to do is to learn where and how well the charter is being used. We should learn how cities like Berlin developed and implemented a document like this, what works and what doesn't. We need to know the best examples of success in this area.

What is your favourite city and why?

Chris Brillinger: Toronto of course! Immigration and newcomers have always been core characteristics of our city. Toronto becomes richer and more complex with every wave of newcomers. The process of how newcomers settle and change once here and how they change Toronto is fascinating. There is much work to do to improve outcomes for newcomers. Equally there is much success to build on. "Diversity Our Strength" is the perfect City Motto!

Jehad Aliweawi: I just came back from a three-week visit to Alexandria which was once the world most cosmopolitan cities. It's a beautiful city by the Mediterranean with an unmatched boulevard along the seashore and a breathtaking library. Today there are only monuments and relics of its glorious and diverse past. Its once celebrated diversity can only be seen in the names of its streets like Lourane, buildings like St. Stefano and neighbourhoods like Stanley. One loves Alexandria for its glorious history but worries about its future. This is why Toronto is a city to whom, in many ways, the future belongs. Planning for a diversity and inclusion to be part of city building will endure that Toronto will never be a new Alexandria.

[Chris Brillinger is the City of Toronto's Executive Director of Social Development, Finance and Administration](#), and [Jehad Aliweawi is the Executive Director with the Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, a multi service non-profit organization.](#)

New Report! Good Ideas on Economic Inclusion: Access to Banking

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Why is access to banking an important issue for immigrants? It leads to increased opportunities from taking out a loan to cover the cost of updating credentials to using a bank account to pay everyday bills. The cost of exclusion is too high to ignore – especially in times of economic austerity.

Our new Cities of Migration report shows that solutions are already on the ground. [Good Ideas on Economic Inclusion: Access to Banking](#) includes [expert commentary by Omar Khan, Runnymede Trust](#), and highlights innovative programs and organizations that put newcomers first – whether it is offering a microfinance fund in Calgary, using international ID cards to open a bank account in San Francisco, or building a credit history “pre-arrival.”

This is the first report in a series that examines issues related to the economic integration of immigrants in the neighbourhoods, high streets and workplaces of today’s cities. Future reports in the Economic Inclusion series will showcase smart practices that promote access to employment as well as entrepreneurial success.

Download [Good Ideas on Economic Inclusion: Access to Banking](#).

Omar Khan: What is Financial Inclusion?

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



What is financial inclusion and why is it an important issue for immigrants? In our new report [Good Ideas on Economic Inclusion: Access to Banking](#), Omar Khan, Runnymede Trust, U.K., offers expert commentary and context for a selection of good practices that illustrate some of the multiple and overlapping strategies being developed by innovative city leaders, civil servants, business and community organizations in cities across Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

Across cultures, ancient parables explain the importance of saving when times are good and borrowing when times are bad to minimize our individual and collective suffering. Of course, some people were better able to build up savings or to see their debts honoured. Today, financial products have become both more necessary and more complex. And yet, the situation for lower income groups and migrants is similar – they are no more likely to be financially included than their ancient counterparts. In modern societies, however, the importance of financial products and services means that people who cannot access them are also excluded from participating fully in economic and social institutions.

The cost of financial exclusion

Financial exclusion is here defined as poor access to affordable financial products and services, most notably banking, savings, credit, insurance and advice. This exclusion affects many aspects of an individual's life. For example, people who don't have a bank account might have difficulty accessing basic services such as heating, water and other utilities. Workers who are paid in cash are vulnerable to unscrupulous employers and to criminals who target these "walking ATMs." Further, the "unbanked" might be forced to rely on other parties – such as "payday" or predatory lenders that charge extortionate rates to cash cheques and provide other day-to-day financial services. Building credit ratings and savings become essentially unattainable goals.

Two possible reasons explain financial exclusion. First, some groups are either more risky or less profitable for financial institutions; in other words, institutions believe it is more "costly" to design products for these people. Second, existing financial institutions are unable or unwilling to design new products and services for groups that don't fit into their existing practices.

This, then, suggests two strategies for responding to financial exclusion. The first is to accept or slightly adapt existing practices; the second is to design new institutions or ways of doing things so that everyone is financially included.

Towards financial inclusion

Real world interventions to ensure migrants are financially included now typically adopt both perspectives: working with existing institutions and practices and reforming them to include migrants, and at the same time developing new policies and practices. At the policy level, strategies include improving employment opportunities by adopting wide ranging or targeted education, and labour market policies that address for example, equality, discrimination or precarious work. Other interventions include ensuring access to affordable housing and healthcare.

In terms of practice, a common way of adapting is to provide financial education or financial literacy through which participants better understand ideas and concepts such as interest rates, insurance, mortgages and basic accounting. This is particularly common in development contexts, and for [people who may have less experience of financial institutions and practices](#). Successful practices, such as microloans, are being adopted from these contexts and used in developed nations.

Basic Banking – Three examples of financial education are [Durham's Latino Community Credit Union](#), [Offenbach's Fit for Finance](#), and [Capital Area Asset Builders \(CAAB\)](#) in Washington, D.C. In each of these cases, the financial institution or intermediary organization provides further education and literacy on financial issues, with the expectation that more informed consumers will take up more affordable financial products, be less likely to get into debt, and be better able to plan for the future.

Significantly, in each case migrants are provided more than information on how to navigate finance: in Durham, local residents can open a bank account in a credit union without immigration documents; in Offenbach, Germany, migrant participants (mainly Turkish and Russian) could meet with a mentor for financial advice; and in Washington, D.C., CAAB offers a matched savings scheme as well as money management and financial coaching services.

Other good practices focus on existing products, and particularly on basic banking (see [Scotiabank's StartRight Program](#), [Bank On San Francisco](#), and the U.K.'s basic bank account). Access to banking may be likened to a utility or even a "right" given the need for a transactional account to participate in any kind of economic activity. And because migrants may not have the official identity documents demanded by many banks, practices that focus on access to banking can have a great impact.

Matched savings – [Individual development accounts \(IDAs\)](#) and microfinance are arguably the two most prominent alternative products to improve financial inclusion. Matched savings deviate from mainstream savings products by offering a "match" for each dollar saved (say 1:1 or 4:1) rather than an interest rate. This idea was first promoted by Michael Sherraden (in *Assets and the Poor*, 1991) and piloted in the ["American Dream Demonstration"](#) in 1997 to enable "low-wealth families to save and enter the financial mainstream...build assets and reach life goals.... These savings can be used to buy a home, pay for post-secondary education, or start a small business."

Internationally, such matched savings schemes have been adopted in countries including the U.S. (see the CAAB), Uganda, China, Israel, Japan, Singapore, Kenya, Hungary and the United Kingdom. Typically, such schemes do not focus exclusively on immigrants, though some U.S. programs focus on groups experiencing significant wealth and savings gaps: Native Americans (see Washington University Native Assets project), Latinos and African Americans (see Closing the Racial Wealth Gap; also New America Foundation).

Home ownership – One of the major aims of IDAs is to build up savings for a deposit for home ownership. Those who build up savings, seek home ownership, and invest in their children through education and other skills are thereby choosing to settle in their country of residence; for migrants, savings and wealth accumulation may be viewed as an indicator of successful economic integration.

An example of how policy both adapts existing practice (in this case mortgages) but also invents new ideas is the development of services since the 1990s for those Muslims who interpret the Islamic prohibition on interest as rejecting the interest rates underpinning mainstream mortgages. U.S. financial institutions have since developed a variety of services in response; for example the Chicago Reserve Bank offers interest-free “loans” in the form of joint-owner partnerships or by charging lease fees instead of interest.

Access to credit – Microfinance was originally piloted in developing countries as an alternative to modern forms of credit that are rarely available outside major cities. In countries including the [U.K. \(Fair Finance\)](#), [Canada \(Immigrant Access Fund\)](#) and Germany (Evers and Jung) microfinance has targeted migrants as well, who may either be excluded from mainstream sources of credit or face extortionate interest rates (often above 200% annual percentage rate (APR) in the U.K.) due to their lack of credit history. Fair Finance is a good example of the approach: the organization is locally based in a part of London with a large number of migrants, and hires a significant number of people from the local area. This local intelligence ensures that Fair Finance understands why particular clients need money, and any support they need to repay the loan or grow their business. Wherever it’s developed, microfinance is typically based on more face-to-face interactions between the microfinance institution and the debtor to ensure a lower interest rate than those calculated by statistical risk-scoring. Fair Finance founder Faisal Rahman says, “We are returning to old style banking – relationship lending – and putting humanity back in the lending process.”

The Immigrant Access Fund (IAF) in Calgary takes a similar approach to loans that aim to prepare immigrants for employment. The IAF takes a holistic view of both the borrower and “employability.” As a result, loans are used for a variety of expenses – from tuition and exam fees to transportation to general living expenses. Loans are based on trust and good character, with an eye towards the borrower’s potential. According to Dianne Fehr, executive director of the program, “We lend to people not based on where they are today, but where we believe they will be in the future.”

A broader vision of financial inclusion

We need to distinguish strategies that more or less accept or adapt existing financial institutions and practices from those that seek more wholesale reform or even new institutions and practices. Given the dominance of mainstream finance, the importance of banking for those seeking work beyond the limited opportunities in the cash economy, the need for everyone to build up savings and wealth to realize their life goals, and the wider social participatory effects of financial inclusion, practices must seek to engage mainstream institutions to do more for migrants and other disadvantaged groups.

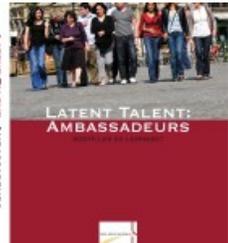
On the other hand, if we frame these questions solely in terms of financial inclusion, we are vulnerable to existing institutions and practices declaring some customers or clients are too risky or costly to receive their services. As we have put it elsewhere “financial inclusion should be more expansively conceptualized to include economic well-being, personal autonomy and citizen participation.” (Financial Inclusion and Ethnicity, 2008)

[Omar Khan is Head of Policy Research at The Runnymede Trust U.K.](#) where he leads, among other projects, Runnymede’s financial inclusion program. Omar sits on the U.K. Department for Work and Pensions’ Ethnic Minority Advisory Group. He is also a 2012 Clore Social Leadership Fellow.

Good practices: Ambassador Project Ghent

By kturmer

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



"Hearing the life story of someone who has overcome a lot of difficulties, and who has become successful in the labour market despite all difficulties, is very captivating. A life story makes broader social problems more concrete and personal. For many people it's a real eye-opener."

The City of Ghent has found success with its initiative to dispel stereotypes about immigrant youth through the [Ambassador Project](#). Employed young people with a North African and Turkish background share their stories about their path to success and the challenges they have overcome. Cities of Migration asked Ghent's Integration Office to discuss how the Ambassador Project opens minds to the lives of migrants.

The Ambassador Project is a youth-based, peer-to-peer project, focused on second and third generation of immigrants. How has the project impacted their lives?



Ilse Neyrinck, Policy Advisor on Participation: The people who participate in this project really believe in it and are idealists. Nevertheless, it's not easy to tell your life story to a group of strangers. Therefore we provide training to help them develop different skills: speaking in groups, how to make a presentation, how to build your own story. They also get information about the labour market and unemployment.

It is an enriching experience that enhances their social skills. They get to know a lot of interesting people and partners. Their social network is extended. The volunteers get individual coaching and we organize group meetings for them where experiences are shared and can be discussed.

How have those communities embraced the project?

Ilse Neyrinck: We appeal to the migrant communities and associations for volunteer recruitment. They help us find volunteers because they highly value the project. Every day they experience the problems migrants face at work and at school. They're convinced that the ambassador project can help improve the situation of young migrants in the labour market and in education.

How has the broader community reacted to the project?

Ilse Neyrinck: It's difficult to measure the broader "impact" on society, but wherever we present the project we receive very positive responses. Hearing the life story of someone who has overcome a lot of obstacles and who has become successful in the labour market despite all the difficulties is very captivating. A life story makes broader social problems more concrete and personal. For many people it's a real eye-opener.

This project targets many groups – youth, parents, teachers, and employers. Why is it important to include all these groups?

Ilse Neyrinck: The reason for this is complex. We call it "statistic differentiation." There is a negative image of migrant groups in society. The majority of migrants don't have a post-secondary education diploma. This negative image of the group reflects on every individual. Employers and recruiters therefore have a tendency to ignore them for job interviews.

The individuals in these groups are important for improving the situation of young migrants in the labour market. Young people need to be motivated not to give up, but to go to school and get at least a high school diploma. Meeting a role model from their own community – someone who is successful – is important. In their own immediate environment they do not always meet positive examples, they often don't know anyone who has a high school or post-secondary diploma.

In 2011, the Ambassador project became part of the Integration Department of the City of Ghent, a sign of the commitment of the city to the project. Why did the city adopt this initiative?



Marc Van Acker, Communications Officer: The Ambassador project is important on different levels. It tackles the still widespread prejudices and misconceptions about migrants that linger among some of society's important leading persons such as teachers or employers. At the same time it is a motivator for young migrants who all too often seem to become unmotivated and disappointed. Ambassadors make a plea to society to offer opportunities to migrants and to the latter to seize these opportunities. They are a constant reminder of the hard work that still has to be done. Paying lip service to the fight against racism is not enough.

Why is it important for the city of Ghent to be recognized as a welcoming city?

Marc Van Acker: Being recognized as a welcoming city is crucial for the development of any city. An open climate has been proven throughout history to attract investors and innovators – be it social, cultural or economical. Ghent has always tried to promote itself as a welcoming city, offering opportunities to migrants who find themselves here. This city policy is both a translation of and a catalyst for a very vivid civil society that supports this idea of Ghent being a warm and welcoming city. So there is this kind of almost historical inclination to being an inclusive city.

How important is it for you to look outside of Ghent for ideas and inspiration?

Marc Van Acker: Cities all over the world face similar problems and challenges in the field of integration. That's why Ghent is a strong advocate for exchanging ideas and inspiration. Ghent is an active participant in European networks such as EUROCITIES and ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities against Racism). We are also involved in several projects that bring cities together to cooperate on issues of migration, integration and anti-racism. In some cases, Ghent initiated the collaboration, such as the Roma Inclusion Task Force of the EUROCITIES Working Group Migration & Integration.

You offer the Ambassador curriculum and videos to teachers outside of Ghent. Has the Ambassador project travelled to other cities in Belgium, or outside of Belgium?



Anja Van den Durpel, Head of Integration Office: The Ambassadors tell their stories in Ghent schools, organizations and companies. They are not embedded outside the territory of the city. On special requests, to promote the project (the design, experience, outcome for the individual Ambassador) an Ambassador can participate in conferences outside Ghent. One example is the promotion of the Ambassadors Project during the ECCAR's (European Coalition of Cities Against Racism) General Conference in Uppsala in 2010. An Ambassador was invited to tell his personal experience within the frame of a working group on "building local partnerships."

Your 2013 Day Against Racism campaign video is brilliant. You appear to have gotten the participation of high level politicians, religious leaders, pop culture performers, sports celebrities and others. How has this work been received?



Marc Van Acker: The Day against Racism campaign and the Ambassador project are both part of the city's strategy and action plan against racism. It was produced for the 2013 International Day Against Racism in response to a call of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) of which Ghent is a member. Famous Ghent citizens from the fields of music, theatre, literature, film, religion, sports and politics show Ghent and the world their dedication to a society free of discrimination and racism. The Day against Racism campaign did enjoy extensive media coverage both on the local and the national level – the video clip only needed one weekend to rise above 100,000 views!

Anja Van den Durpel is the [Head of the Ghent Integration Office](#); **Ilse Neyrinck** is the Policy Advisor on Participation; and **Marc Van Acker** is the Communications Officer.

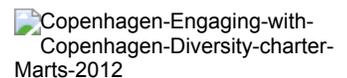
Looking beyond the Charter of Quebec Values: The City Charter

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Charters are used to express a community's values and intentions towards its residents, but not all are alike. The province of Quebec has proposed a ban on the wearing of religious symbols by all public sector employees, such as kippas, turbans, hijabs and crucifixes. This stands in opposition to a growing city charter movement that emphasizes inclusiveness and anti-discrimination. Whereas the Quebec charter is meant to legislate the values of the majority population to promote assimilation, many city charters are used to show commitment to increased diversity.

They are about inclusion, not exclusion.

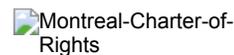


Our Cities of Migration report, [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership \(PDF\)](#), positions city charters as a way to embed [principles of diversity and equality in all city policies and activities](#):

“Many cities adopt charters that explicitly value diverse and immigrant residents, and confirm that immigration is an asset to the community, not a problem to be solved. These charters demonstrate a commitment to the integration and participation of all city residents. These principles should also form the basis of action taken by local governments across policies, services and programs.”

Today, the most prominent example of demonstrating a commitment to integrating immigrants is the [Eurocities Charter on Integrating Cities](#) which the City of Toronto is working to adopt. Another, the [1998 European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City \(PDF\)](#), was specifically created to prevent the violation of the human rights of newcomers and was based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Cities of Migration has profiled many examples of city and business charters that promote diversity, including one in Quebec:



- [The Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities states that the values of human dignity, tolerance, peace, inclusion and equality must be promoted among all citizens.](#)
- [Copenhagen's diversity charter asks corporations to promote inclusion at work.](#)
- [The Hume City Social Justice Charter lays aside questions of national, religious or cultural identity to "encourage community participation, strengthen community well-being and reduce the causes of disadvantage."](#)
- [The 2008 London Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games developed a Diversity and Inclusion Business Charter as a procurement document for suppliers to follow.](#)

Charters can celebrate values in increasingly diverse communities. And many models exist to suggest it may be more prosperous to celebrate inclusion over exclusion.

First published on the [Maytree blog](#).

The Queen and I

By ktuner

July 31, 2013

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



[Maytree President Ratna Omidvar's op ed](#) was originally published on July 22, 2013 in [the Globe and Mail](#).

HRH Queen Elizabeth and I have a complicated relationship.

I was born in India, barely two years after independence. The British may have left, but their influence on Indian culture and society had not. I grew up devouring books by Hardy and Dickens, wrestled with Milton and Donne and chuckled with P.G. Wodehouse and Oscar Wilde. I knew about the War of the Roses, read about the Charge of the Light Brigade and Britain's courageous roles in the First World War and the Second (in which Indian regiments fought and perished alongside their British comrades).



When I finally visited the United Kingdom in my early 20s, I felt, in an odd sense, that I was coming home: I knew the landscapes, the narrow streets, the rain-drenched gardens, the history, the people.

But just as India was slowly awakening to its new-found freedom, so was my awareness of its years of colonization under the British. In Amritsar, where I grew up, I was taken to visit Jallianwala Bagh, not far from the Golden Temple, where Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer and his soldiers drew fire on 15,000 men, women and children in 1919, killing at least 379 and wounding 1,100 (these are British numbers, Indian estimates were much higher).

For this, he was celebrated in Great Britain as a hero of British Raj. I learned that my grandfather was imprisoned, along with thousands of others, for the simple act of burning Western clothes and donning Indian homespun. I learned that Winston Churchill, whose speeches I so admire, dismissed Mahatma Gandhi as a "half-naked fakir."

And most horrifically, I learned that in Louis Mountbatten's rush to meet his Aug. 15, 1947, deadline for the declaration of independence, whole communities, families and villages were separated by seemingly arbitrary lines to partition India and Pakistan. More than a million people perished brutally as a result. I remember devouring books such as *Freedom at Midnight* and *Train to Pakistan*. And so grew my complicated relationship with the Queen. Admiring on the one hand, horrified on the other.

Many years later, I found myself as a new (and very grateful) resident of Canada. I knew that Canada, too, had a historical relationship with the Queen. I knew that her representative in Canada was the Governor-General. I learned that before the patriation of the Constitution, every amendment to the supreme law (the British North America Act) wanted by our Parliament in Ottawa had to be ratified by parliamentarians in London.

I learned that Canadians were wildly enthusiastic about the Queen and her Royal Family, but that this enthusiasm was not necessarily shared by francophones and many in the aboriginal and native communities. Still later, I learned that Rideau Hall kept a permanent suite of rooms reserved for the Queen and her family whenever she chose to visit us. Kept perfectly, of course, and dusted every day.

When I received my much-prized citizenship, I swore allegiance to the Queen. It was a wonderful day in my life, but I remember wondering why I was not swearing allegiance to Canada. And it occurred to me that this was the first time in my complicated relationship with the Queen that I was formally her subject.

History has its place. We must learn and understand our history, cheer it and cherish it when deserved, learn from it, accept our mistakes and correct them if we can. But we need not be held hostage by it. To stride confidently into the future, we must know where we came from, but we don't need to be constrained by the past.

As a country made up of so many different peoples – francophones, aboriginals, anglophones, Acadians, new and old immigrants from all corners of the globe – Canada has found a particularly successful narrative in absorbing difference. As Pico Iyer says, we have a "global soul." We have learned to discard rigidity in favour of gradual accommodation. The citizenship oath could be a much valued opportunity to draw us together in an oath of allegiance to Canada, its laws and its institutions.

Naysayers use the argument that if we don't like it here, we should stay away. This only serves to draw the lines between us more deeply. I like to invoke the image that new immigrants make Canada their home and in time have the right, nay, the obligation, to rearrange the metaphorical furniture in our new home as part of an engaged citizenry.

But there is middle ground. Let the royalists keep the symbols, the portraits of the Queen, and insert the word "Royal" in front of Canadian institutions such as the Air Force. Let's wave the Union Jack when a member of the Royal Family visits. Let's go wild about the Duchess of Cambridge's newest dress. But let's change the oath of allegiance, much along the lines of Australia's. This middle-ground approach can (and should) be imitated in Canada.

Australian Senator Philip Faulkner gave the views of his Labor government when that country shed the sovereign from its citizenship oath in 1994, instead asking for commitment to Australia and its values. He called it "unifying" that "the process of nation-building is enhanced by reinforcing the notion of an 'Australian' citizenship. Australian citizenship, with its attendant rights and obligations, is part of the glue which binds the nation and its citizens in a manner that gives adequate recognition to the reciprocity of that bond."

How true this is of Canada, too.

Originally published on July 22, 2013, as an op-ed in [the Globe and Mail](#).

Ratna Omidvar is [President of Maytree](#), a private foundation in Toronto. She is the chair of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and the co-chair of *DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project*. In 2011, she was made a Member of the Order of Canada for her advocacy on behalf of immigrants and for her devotion to reducing inequality.

Not Migrants and Immigration, but Mobility and Movement

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Is it time to drop the word migration? [Profs Ibrahim Sirkeci and Jeffrey H. Cohen think so](#). They argue migrant scholarship uses “worn out language” and needs a reset. Let’s use “mobility and movers” instead of “migrants and immigration” to replace words which carry negative or jaded associations with the general public. [Profs Sirkeci and Cohen are authors of the book, Cultures of Migration, published by University of Texas Press](#).

We have been advocating for a change of terminology regarding migration since about 2005. Of course we were not alone in criticising the worn out language of migration scholarship. This is evident now as we see more and more studies and courses using “mobility” rather than migration. Although it is obvious that for a while, both terms will be used simultaneously to avoid confusion. Nevertheless, a change is critical if we are to better capture and understand what migration means in the contemporary world.

The reason for changing how we talk about movement arises from the fact that “migration” suffers from two critical problems. First it has developed into a pejorative term with a range of negative connotations that tend to associate movement with criminal activity and sees most movers as risky, questionable people. Second, and more importantly, migration does not fully capture the dynamic nature of human mobility.

Lets begin with the latter. Migration literature is full of studies referring to the phenomena as a “process”. It is a process and often a continuous one, rooted in short commutes and often with no clear end. Mobility captures this fluidity. People move between places and many do so time and again throughout their lives, crossing local, state and international boundaries as they go.

Movers balance their expectations and hopes, consider highs and lows in their current circumstances and potentials elsewhere. The needs, wants and desires of individuals, their families, households and communities influence decisions and some will achieve their goals by moving elsewhere. There are forces (cultural, ecological, economic, political and religious) that drive mobility and temper outcomes.

Humans when faced with challenges can move. Conflicts, tensions, restrictions, and disagreements all influence and inspire mobility. However, the move from one place to another is never intended solely to add to someone else’s burden; rather movers are careful as they balance needs, demands and opportunities; otherwise the costs of moving are too high.

Finally, although we are often focused on the migrant and mobility, we must remember the majority of people worldwide never move. Only a tiny fraction, that is 3% of people live in a country other than the one in which they were born. The high costs of moving are one source of this very small population. This point highlights an important aspect of moving: Only those who are able, capable and resourceful move. Mobility is about ability despite the fact that many people face challenges at home and our debate should focus on how best we can enhance the strengths of movers, potential movers and non-movers rather than demagoguery and fear.

Immigrant has been used as a swear word. This is a direct result of immigration defined as a problem in public discourses in media and politics. This is why we need to change the language of speaking about and studying movers and human mobility. Our decades long research provided enough evidence to show the ways in which movers contribute to and enrich the sending, receiving and transit societies in the long run. Social and financial remittances are just one outcome of human mobility which contributed to human development around the world.

Mobility and movers are what we need to celebrate. These are talented, skillful, and resourceful people who are courageous and stubborn and increasingly persistent at the face of tightening migration rules and toughening borders around the world. There is hardly any burden to us. Immigrants have built countries, nations, and opened new horizons in science, art and politics. Lets enjoy the ride.

This article was first published on the [Migrants Rights Network website](#) as part of the Migration Pulse series. Reprinted with permission.

[Ibrahim Sirkeci](#) is Professor of Transnational Studies at Regent’s University London and Director of Regent’s Centre for Transnational Studies.

[Dr. Jeffrey Cohen](#) is a professor of Anthropology at the Ohio State University. His research focuses on three areas: migration, development and nutrition.

Local Integration Requires Long-Term Commitment of All

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



[Ulrich Maly, the Mayor of Nuremberg](#) and President, [Deutscher Städtetag](#) (German Association of Cities), together with other prominent members of Germany's leading municipal associations, addresses the critical role cities play to integrate immigrants through language classes, education and participation. He argues that this work needs the full commitment of federal and state governments to ensure success.

On the occasion of the recent Integration Summit of Municipal Associations (*Kommunale Spitzenverbände zum Integrationsgipfel*) in Berlin, the presidents of Germany's leading municipal associations ([Ulrich Maly, Deutscher Städtetag](#); [Hans Jörg Duppré, Deutscher Landkreistag](#); and [Christian Schramm, Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund](#)) made the following statement on the importance of municipalities to the success of integration in

Germany:

Integration takes place mainly in cities, counties and towns and it is at this level that priorities must be addressed and commitments made to sustain the significant resources required by integration projects. However, significant conditions are imposed by federal and state governments and, therefore, federal and state policies must be improved.

For the vast majority of cities, counties and towns, integration is a matter of high to very high local political importance and demands appropriate action. This is confirmed by a study by the [Institute for Democratic Development and Social Integration \(DESI\)](#) on the state of local integration policies in Germany. According to the report, 70 % of the municipalities surveyed supplement federal and state funding with additional support to language and educational services. Three quarters of all municipalities have implemented cost-effective social and cultural activities. Many local programs are available to promote entry into the labour market, support local networks and cooperation with migrant organizations, and are contributing to civic engagement and overall social inclusion.

“Demographics tell us that integration is an ongoing commitment that is crucial to peaceful social coexistence, to the future of our society and to our prosperity. Municipalities are aware of their great responsibility [in this area]. They promote a multifaceted approach to the integration process focused on core competencies that include the German language, the highest possible and most effective education as well as support for successfully entering one's occupation. At the same time, it is important for migrants to actively participate in a wide variety of activities related to specific community planning and design processes.

Under the National Integration Plan and the National Integration Action Plan, the municipal associations have made a commitment to promote and further strengthen community integration processes. To achieve this, member organizations share ideas and information, ensure the dissemination of best practices and organize regular exchanges of experience. Many cities have now implemented integration objectives or are developing municipal integration strategies. More and more often, dedicated neighbourhood groups are involved in the settlement and coexistence of all residents. Funding programs such as the federal-state “Social City” program are indispensable to this work, as are the programs of the European Social Fund.

Integration is not a one-way process, but requires the commitment of all parties involved. It involves people with a migration background. It involves not only cities, counties, municipalities, but also civil society, associations, trade unions, churches and businesses and, of course, state and federal governments. To promote the potentials of people with a migration background, local authorities require adequate financial resources. This puts municipalities that are economically weak in a difficult situation.

Statement by [Dr. Ulrich Maly, Mayor of Nuremberg](#) and President, [Deutscher Städtetag](#); [Hans Jörg Duppré, District Chief of Landkreises Südwestpfalz](#) and President, [Deutscher Landkreistag](#); and [Christian Schramm, Lord Mayor of Bautzen](#) and President, [Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund](#). (28 May 2013)

Reprinted with permission from the [Deutscher Städtetag website \(modified in translation\)](#).

Welcoming The Committee for Auckland

By kturner
July 30, 2013

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



Nau mai! We are delighted to welcome our new community partner in New Zealand, [The Committee for Auckland](#).

The Committee describes itself as a not-for-profit organisation set up to contribute to making Auckland one of the world's great places to live and work. It is an independent, evidence-based, thought leadership organisation promoting an innovative approach to a range of complex issues.

[Heather Shotter, Executive Director](#), explains why Auckland's diversity is important to the city's prosperity.

Why is immigrant integration important to the Committee for Auckland?

The Committee for Auckland's work is founded on 5 basic principles: igniting leadership and momentum; creating a dynamic and collaborative region; accelerating liveability; promoting talent and knowledge; and building an international city of significance

All these principles are encapsulated in the work of the Cities of Migration. We see it as a perfect fit for us and the significance of migrant integration for our regional development has been thoroughly referenced in our Auckland Skills Agenda study in 2012.

The Auckland Council's vision for Auckland is that the city will be the world's most liveable city by 2040. In multicultural Auckland with a population that is 40% foreign-born what does that mean? How is the city changing?

Auckland is one of the most multicultural cities in the world. We believe this provides us with a unique competitive advantage. Migrants who bring their talent, investment and their unique cultural perspective to Auckland add a vibrancy and richness to our city. They make Auckland an exciting and prosperous place to reside, visit, do business and get an education. As a result we have seen Auckland's cultural and social context change, reflected in the types of entertainment offered and the new [arts festivals](#), street markets and restaurants that our migrants bring to the City's landscape. On a deeper level the new talent inherent in our migrants has also changed the face of entrepreneurship and investment opportunities that Auckland offers.

What is Auckland doing to address the challenge of recruiting and retaining global talent to ensure the city's future prosperity?

There is a lot riding on Auckland's success. Auckland is New Zealand's economic centre and international hub. Our population is growing, and aging. Internationally, cities like Sydney and Stockholm are dressing up their reputations to do battle for skilled immigrants. Our 2012 [Auckland Skills Agenda](#) study highlighted that the movement of talent is a two-way street and that Auckland needs to pick and choose the right talent to support its growing industries, just as other cities do. Auckland has an excellent reputation as a clean, safe city where you can raise a family in comfort and live no more than 20 minutes drive from a beach or the native bush.

But to attract skilled talent we need to do more than this. As a Committee we are working with central Government and local council organisations [to attract the world's best and brightest](#) to our shores and to do this we need to hone our offering into compelling sound bites that enable Auckland to compete with other international cities. The Committee firmly believes that Auckland needs to establish its own brand, complementary to that of New Zealand but recognizing the needs of all stakeholders, from exporting businesses based in Auckland to educational institutions attempting to attract students to residents who must collectively manage all the trade-offs involved in living in an urban environment.

Auckland should coordinate a focus on industry/cluster development with migrant recruiting, aligning national focus, migrants' skills, and industries targeted for growth with investment in industry development and migrant recruiting activities. This should incorporate the export education industry to establish links and provide a feeder pipeline.

What can Auckland learn from the example of international cities?

Labour is mobile. We will continue to export skilled people and new New Zealanders from South America, Africa and Asia (to name just some areas) are critical to driving our economy forward. Other cities focus on attracting migrants in the long term by targeting students in the hope that they will settle where they studied once they have qualified. Foreign students can play a greater role in enhancing the employee skill base for Auckland.

At present we believe the role of foreign students in our ecosystem is underdeveloped. Enhancing the employee skill base could be achieved by improving the transition rate from study to residence for highly skilled post graduate international students. Knowledge of a smooth residency transition with the achievement of a post graduate qualification (in specified fields with known skill needs) may make NZ a more attractive option for international students.

Auckland is pursuing improved economic performance to fulfill its role as a critical economic engine in the broader New Zealand economy. How can Auckland punch above its weight globally in attracting and welcoming immigrants?

Our Government understands that when Auckland succeeds, so does New Zealand. Our city at 1.5 million is one third of the whole country's population. We are the only international city of significance and we are the first stop for most visitors and new residents to our country. On a world stage New Zealand has always punched above its weight because we are a nation of migrants on the worlds edge away from both large and traditional markets to sell our products. We have had to be clever and nimble to compete on a world stage whether that is in business (Air New Zealand) sport (Rugby) or culture (Weta Workshops). Now as the world's economic balance has shifted we are closer to significant economic powerhouses such as China and that is a great advantage for us. [OMEGA \(Opportunities for Migrants in Greater Auckland\)](#) began developing these relationships at the grass roots level a few

years ago. Now the Committee for Auckland is using the heft of its national and international members to have meaningful dialogue with industry leaders across all sectors.

The Committee for Auckland works internationally with [Committees for Cities & Regions](#) – across New Zealand and Australia. What can cities learn from one another?

Committee for Cities offers us a platform to exchange learnings from other cities with similar populations and to share best practice examples of projects and thinking around issues of significance. Cities matter because by 2025, about 1.2 billion people will live in Commonwealth cities. These cities will double in size in a generation. New Zealand is unusual amongst these countries, not for being highly urbanized – 87.5% of our people live in urban areas already, nor for urbanizing very fast – third fastest in the OECD after Turkey and Mexico and faster than Australia and Canada, but because so many New Zealanders live in one city, Auckland.

What's next for the Committee for Auckland?

Working with iwi (indigenous Maori tribes) to develop a range of commercial collaborations and full economic integration of local iwi with Auckland's commercial environment. Producing a compelling international brand for our international city. Benchmarking the social and economic value of the creative sectors to Auckland for retaining and attracting residents. Developing a set of scalable performance indicators that enable us to measure our development and successes against international criteria s well as our progress year on year. Working with Central and Local Government to present funding solutions for the infrastructure required for our future city of 2 million people.

What's your favourite city? What would you like to bring home to Auckland?

New Zealanders and Australians are renowned world wide as great travellers , maybe it's the tyranny of distance but we seem compelled to ' see the world' and like my fellow citizens I have had the opportunity to visit many beautiful and exciting cities around the world. No matter how big or small I have always been able to find something that inspires me and whether its a great restaurant, show, shop, building, view or even a road, yes, I am inspired by infrastructure!! And of course the people. I am always interested in getting off the tourist track and seeing what inspires the locals about their own city.

Related links:

- Good Ideas in immigrant integration from cities in [New Zealand](#) at [Citiesofmigration.org](#)
- Report: [New Zealand – Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(PDF\)](#)

***Heather Shotter** is the Executive Director for the Committee for Auckland. She has had a successful career in the corporate sector. She has spent 12 years at SKYCITY Entertainment Group, where she held responsibility for the day to day running and growth of all New Zealand operations and for Group Marketing across Australasia. Her career has also included tenures at Telecom New Zealand and Shell Oil New Zealand. Heather was previously the Executive Trustee of the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation.*

for a long time and have a deep-rootedness in the city. The fact that many of the city's ethnic Chinese understand and speak English due to Hong Kong's colonial past further contributes to the city's international feel.

Chungking Mansion

The 'linguistic soup' through which a person wades each day, while on the city's Mass Transit Railway (MTR) or in the streets, can often seem mind-boggling. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Chungking Mansion, a rundown 17-story building located in the heart of the city's booming tourist and shopping district. Chungking Mansion is central to the swirling ebb and flow of low-end globalization. Home to traders from across the developing world and the shop-keepers and small businesses in the informal economy with whom they do business, Chungking Mansion is a potent symbol of Hong Kong's robust socio-economic and cultural diversity. Inside, a world resembling the markets of Karachi, Kolkata, or Lagos – or a mishmash of each – reaches from the entrance of the building to the far corners of the upper floors. A majority of the South Asians are shop owners, selling everything from samosas to cellphones to traders of low-end goods, often Africans buying inexpensive goods to transport home in bulging suitcases — unbelievably, this is how many independent traders move cargo transnationally. Also present in large numbers are asylum seekers willing to work for low wages in this "cash-in-hand economy" while waiting for their claims to be processed.

Hong Kong's civic identity

Modern Hong Kong began to take shape in the years after the communist revolution in China when thousands of mainland Chinese sought refuge in the city. The flood of new arrivals acted as an engine, driving the industrialization and economic renewal that pulled Hong Kong out of its post-war slump. The city's booming economy also attracted non-Chinese migrants from Europe and South Asia looking to Hong Kong for business and job opportunities. In this Asian melting pot and microcosm of the world's different socio-economic, demographic, and cultural strata, a robust civic identity emerged. Together these migrants gradually contributed to the emergence of a new identity – the "Hong Konger." And although still relatively young, Hong Kongers exude an almost palpable confidence.

Hong Konger identity thrives in spite of the gradual "mainlandization" of the former colony since the return of Hong Kong to China by the British in 1997. An average of 150 mainland Chinese immigrants re-locate to Hong Kong each day, about 54,000 per year. Additionally, a mass influx of Chinese tourists from the mainland, about 25 million each year, further amplifies the Chinese presence in the already tightly packed city. The flood of mainlanders into Hong Kong since the handover has caused some tensions between Hong Kongers and mainland Chinese, with mainlanders regularly blamed for everything from a shortage of school slots to a hyper-charged property market. Although most Hong Kongers were from mainland China themselves in the past, or have ancestral roots in greater China, over the years, the identity of the "Hong Konger" has made its presence felt. A prime example is when in 2012 tens of thousands of protesters in Hong Kong rejected a Beijing-backed plan for a "moral and national education curriculum." The protests were a defining moment for the distinct identity of Hong Kongers in the face of the growing mainland Chinese influence.

Rapid change in recent years in this fast-paced, capitalist city has created its fair share of problems. Hong Kong's multicultural society is home to many ethnic groups – not just mainlanders. While cultural sensitivity to other ethnicities in the city is predominantly a challenge to the older generations, many of whom have had less exposure to the rapidly globalizing scene in which they live, discrimination is rare and more likely to erupt over language barriers than ethnicity, socio-economic standing or the colour of one's skin.

In 2009 Hong Kong introduced anti-discrimination laws and programs to protect its citizens against race-based discrimination and minimize race-related conflicts across the population. How the diversity of the city continues to unfold will be a fascinating subject given that social integration policy is a relatively new concern for the Hong Kong government and its social sectors.

For example, it is a surprise to learn that [migrant domestic helpers from South East Asia](#) are a source of much public controversy in Hong Kong. Numbering over 300,000, domestic workers represent the largest community of non-Chinese ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. Unlike foreigners working in other industries who are eligible for permanent residency, domestic workers are denied such entitlements. Unfair, and for many exhibiting undertones of racism, the policy is also reflective of a city deeply concerned with the impact of so many potential new residents (and their families) on the city's spatial footprint and service infrastructure.

As the city government and its social sectors start to move past the basics, such as the recent establishment of support service centers for immigrants across the city, I hope we'll see more "Good ideas" for integration that are truly innovative and safe-guarded by policy. At the top of my wish list for Hong Kong is the preservation of the city's distinctive identity, and that its multicultural, shifting, dynamic character will continue to accept and embrace its diversity.

Related links:

- [Sunday in the Park: Domestic workers and public space in Hong Kong](#)
- [Singapore in Photos](#)
- [The Ethos of Cities: The Spirit of Singapore's Diversity](#)

Photo Credit: JT Singh

JT Singh is an urban-geographic explorer and next-generation thinker about the value and impact of 21st century cities and their 'city-zens'. JT's insightful reconnaissance of hundreds of emerging cities offers a lens on where 'things are heading' for the urban world in which we operate. JT Singh is co-founder of Thrilling Cities, a global city building lab based in Shanghai, London and Singapore.

Improving the Global Media Narrative about Immigration

By ktuner
June 25, 2013
Uncategorized



By Marco Campana, Maytree

Interested in how the media is covering immigration? Do you think coverage needs improving? Then follow the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations' (UNAOC) just launched social media campaign, [#coveringmigration](#).

The campaign will run through mid-July and cover the following themes:

- What are best practices for covering immigration stories?
- What helps journalists establish context?
- What resources are available for journalists?
- What work is still needed to improve coverage?

[According to the UNAOC \(PDF\)](#): "For the necessary changes in migration coverage to occur, the media as a whole has the largest role to play. Journalists and editors alike must pay close attention on how they use the information acquired in their reporting and reinforce good media practices when covering the issue. The media should encourage newsroom diversity and reward journalists for quality coverage of the issue."

Media must change, yes. We looked at media diversity in our [DiverseCity Counts 2 report](#). We found that visible minorities are under-represented both in positions of leadership and in the newsroom. But the UNAOC believes that help and support from governments and non-governmental organizations is also crucial. UNAOC suggests that we advocate for a framework to shape a more positive discourse, increase access to data and work with media outlets to allow quality reporting. We can also provide easy access to documents and people that will enhance the content in media reports.

As Frank Sharry from America's Voice outlines in this video, we need to actively work with the media to help them understand what our case is and how they can provide more balanced coverage of immigration stories.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=http://www.youtube.com/embed/Ccsd|pyXLFo>



Frank's perspective is important. The narrative we craft is essential. And, [as Jason Mogus recently wrote](#), many feel that we're "getting creamed on messaging." Frank expands on his message with practical tools and models in [How to Communicate: Strategic communication on migration and integration \(PDF\)](#).

What can you do? Recently, the UNAOC convened a meeting of immigration experts and media professionals in Switzerland to discuss this issue. They came up with recommendations in four key areas, including practical action you can take for each:

1. Encourage a working knowledge of immigration by journalists when reporting on immigration
2. Establish networks, synergies and outreach on the issue and between key actors
3. Reinforce good media practices in media coverage of immigration
4. Become actively involved and recognize your responsibility to ensure better media coverage

[Covering Migration: challenges met and unmet: a look at Switzerland \(PDF\)](#).

How to be part of the campaign

Throughout July, you can find the campaign using [#coveringmigration](#) on twitter, the [@UNAOC](#) and [@UNAOCMigration](#) twitter accounts, and the [UNAOC Facebook page](#). You are encouraged to share the campaign with those you think may be interested in the subject.

Watch this longer video as Frank Sharry, Executive Director of [American's Voice](#), explains how we can and need to change the channel on the immigration debate.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=http://www.youtube.com/embed/CxA6fO3JznM>



Let's work together to improve the narrative about immigration.

Source: [Maytree blog](#)

Related:

- [Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue](#)
- [How to Communicate: Strategic communication on migration and integration \(PDF\)](#)
- [Can we please stop getting creamed on messaging?](#)
- [Changing the Channel on the Immigration Debate](#)

Celebrating Good Ideas for World Refugee Day

By ktuner
Uncategorized



A discussion for World Refugee Day – by Dana Wagner, Maytree

In December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly declared that June 20 of the following year would mark the first annual World Refugee Day. June 20, 2001 marked the 50-year anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

As Canada observes [World Refugee Day on June 20](#), we reflect on our contribution and responsibility as a safe haven country. It is a day for Canadians to reflect on the refugees living in their communities.



With any luck, you will know one of these exceptional people, whose courage and resilience seem impossible when held up to their experience. The stories of refugees in Canada are as unique as the individuals, but they share a common path: empty-handed arrival, often with one suitcase or less, to a lifetime of big and small successes in rebuilding careers, family and community.

Refugees show us how survival transforms into thriving, how the human spirit can recover or at least persevere. It's a remarkable process that goes beyond individual impact. Our communities are directly strengthened by the skills and cultural diversity of refugees, and by their endurance and drive to build more for their children.

Cities worldwide have recognized the potential of refugees as a tremendous resource, and the need to work hard at removing barriers to resettlement and integration.

More freedom=more security=more opportunities

We know that it is in cities where settlement, integration, inclusion and opportunity happen. Our Cities of Migration website offers some good ideas on creating opportunities for refugees:

When Germany introduced changes in refugee policy that required economic self-sufficiency as a precursor to residency, the City of Wuppertal responded by introducing an intensive job readiness project to help asylum seekers find long-term employment. The [Wuppertal Partizipation Network](#) uses a proactive approach to recruiting clients and identifying employers and, with community partners, provides support like job coaching and training courses.

The [Maytree Scholarship Program](#) is designed for students who are protected persons, or permanent residents who were protected persons, and living without their parents in Canada. The program is both intensive and participatory. In addition to funding, the scholarship provides support through mentoring, opportunities for skills development, and a peer network that encourages students to create bonds both with each other and with their new communities. Scholarship recipients undertake incredible journeys from newly arrived young refugees to Toronto to roles as Canadian physicians, lawyers, nurses, journalists and philosophers.

The beautiful game is used in Auckland as a tool to reduce the social isolation of young refugees and to help them feel a sense of connection and belonging. The [Refugees Sport Initiative](#), created by a non-profit refugee mental health agency, sees soccer as a universal language and culture. It enables refugee youth to access mainstream sports and have a safe place to meet with others who share and understand their experiences.

The [City of Sanctuary](#) movement builds a culture of city-wide hospitality for people seeking refuge in the United Kingdom and dispels misconceptions around refugees. It creates an environment of support and understanding. In 2007, the City of Sheffield became the UK's first City of Sanctuary with the support of City Council and over 70 local organizations that pledged to provide welcome, support and inclusion. Today, 14 cities and towns across the UK are part of the movement and over 30 cities in the United States plus Toronto, Canada, are designated Sanctuary Cities.

Source: [Maytree blog](#)

Related:

- Participate in an [event in your city](#) for World Refugee Day.
- See the [Proud to Protect Refugees](#) campaign from the Canadian Council for Refugees.
- Maytree report: [Fast, Fair and Final: Reforming Canada's Refugee System](#)

Why Loans for Immigrants Make a Difference

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



“We lend to people not based on where they are today, but where we believe they will be in the future.”

Community-based loans have a flexibility that mainstream banking does not. [Calgary's Immigrant Access Fund \(IAF\)](#) gives new opportunities to skilled immigrants with compelling drive and character, but no credit history, no assets, and no success with mainstream lending institutions. IAF sees incredible potential in its newcomer population and is willing to put its credit where its confidence is. The IAF Loan Program provides internationally trained newcomers, regardless of occupation or training, with loans of up to \$5,000 to help cover costs to get back to work in their field in Canada.

Cities of Migration speaks with Vanessa Desa, President of IAF Canada, and Dianne Fehr, IAF Alberta Executive Director, to learn more about how small loans can make a difference in the lives of newcomers.

Vanessa Desa, Dianne Fehr - Immigrant Access Fund (IAF) C...



Related links:

- [Investing in Character: Calgary's Immigrant Access Fund](#)

Rachel Steinhardt: Promoting Prosperity by Welcoming Immigrants

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



[Welcoming America](#) Deputy Director Rachel Steinhardt's article, "Promoting Economic Prosperity by Welcoming Immigrants," is in the latest issue of Communities & Banking, published by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. [Reprinted with permission \(PDF with endnotes\).](#)

Civic leaders are catching on to what savvy businesses already know: diversity and immigration are opportunities that can improve prosperity for all.

When it comes to running a business, maintaining competitive advantage involves adapting quickly to an increasingly diverse employee and consumer base. In the global economy, attracting the right talent and reaching today's demographically changing consumer market is imperative. With the Hispanic and Asian markets in the United States expected to reach a combined \$2.5 trillion in buying power by 2015, strategies that welcome newcomers as employees and customers are a recipe for growth for Fortune 500 businesses and smaller firms alike.

A growing number of cities today are working to create a more immigrant-friendly culture. From Boston to East Providence, from Dayton to Salt Lake City, more civic leaders are promoting their communities as welcoming places that can attract and retain a global workforce and maximize the local economic development and growth opportunities that newcomers bring.

The Business Case

A growing body of research demonstrates how immigrant-friendly cities can create positive opportunities for all. Immigrants from across the skills spectrum contribute economically and are often highly sought after to fill critical gaps in the labor market. Immigrants are also more likely to start a business than nonimmigrants. Consider a Fiscal Policy Institute report indicating that small businesses owned by immigrants employed an estimated 4.7 million people in 2007 and were generating more than \$776 billion annually.

Some studies have correlated increased immigration with increased earnings of American workers. Other research has documented immigrants' significant purchasing power, which translates into more demand for local consumer goods. Moreover, by helping to balance the ratio of workers to retirees, immigrants give cities and the nation as a whole a structural advantage over many trading partners. And immigrants' home purchases have helped boost housing prices.

Although it is more difficult to quantify, immigrants also contribute to localities through a "diversity advantage"—the potential for greater innovation, creativity, and even cultural renaissance that results when communities and businesses manage diversity well.

Researcher Richard Florida has written about the diversity advantage, concluding that "nations that are more accepting of and better at integrating new immigrants have a higher level of economic growth and development." In 2007, the U.S. Congressional Budget Office calculated that the fiscal impact of immigrants as a whole is positive, with the tax revenues they generate exceeding the cost of the services they use.

Research also has shown that over the last two decades, the metropolitan areas with the fastest economic growth were also the places with the greatest increase in immigrant share of the labor force. Similarly, a study by Global Detroit found that immigrants in southeast Michigan "provide enormous contributions to the region's economic growth."

A Movement Grows

More cities are seeing immigrants as offering a competitive edge. Take Dayton, Ohio, which made headlines last year with the release of its Welcome Dayton plan. Dayton city manager Tim Riordan's comments reflect why other cities should take note: "Immigrants are more than twice as likely as other citizens to become entrepreneurs and create jobs. We want to make every effort we can to not only attract more of these creative and industrious people, but also to encourage them to stay in our community and plant deep roots." Welcome Dayton includes strategies aimed at fostering a welcoming climate and increasing immigrants' access to the kinds of services (banking, English classes, and the like) that can help them contribute at their full potential.

Meanwhile in Chicago, [Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced plans in 2012 to make Chicago the "most immigrant-friendly city in the world."](#)

"Throughout its history," says [Adolfo Hernandez, director of Chicago's Office of New Americans](#), "Chicago has benefited from the immeasurable economic contributions of its immigrant populations, and from the rich fabric of distinct and vibrant neighborhoods they helped to create. ... As we build a thriving 21st century economy, we must work together to attract and retain immigrants by helping them to succeed and grow in a safe and welcoming city."

In the Great Lakes region, initiatives such as [Global Michigan/Global Detroit are working to revitalize the regional economy by making the area more welcoming to immigrants, international residents, foreign trade, and foreign investment](#). The effort includes programs to retain international students, micro-enterprise training and lending, a network of immigration and social services, attracting foreign investment (for example, through a cultural ambassadors program and ramping up investor visas) and the Welcoming Michigan initiative, which promotes understanding between native and foreign-born residents.

Says Welcoming Michigan Director Steve Tobocman, "If Michigan is to compete, we have to welcome the investment, the jobs, the workers, and the ingenuity of immigrants and refugees. Welcoming Michigan is the foundation of a global economic growth strategy to return prosperity to our state."

Cities such as Houston and Boston have similar initiatives. More recently, Baltimore declared itself a welcoming city and committed to investing in support for immigrants, while ensuring that long-time residents garnered benefits from new vitality and talent. Said [Mayor Rawlings-Blake](#), "It's about all of us growing and getting better and being successful together."

Since 2009, the nonprofit Welcoming America has been working with a nationwide network of member organizations and partners to promote a welcoming atmosphere—community by community—in which immigrants and native-born residents can find common ground and shared prosperity. Welcoming initiatives have been launched in 22 states. Welcoming America has worked with government leaders in 11 states to pass or issue Welcoming proclamations—formal statements that articulate openness to immigrants and the need to create a positive climate that benefits the whole community. The proclamations are important steps toward creating more actionable and comprehensive welcoming plans.

In New England, where demographics have changed significantly over the past decade and immigrants account for the majority of population growth, Welcoming initiatives in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Maine are creating a climate that is not only about attracting immigrants, but about helping them to stay and thrive. As [Boston's Mayor Menino](#) has said, "It is not enough to just welcome immigrants. ... We must make a collective effort to ensure that immigrants feel welcomed." In 2012, governors in Massachusetts and Rhode Island both signed Welcoming proclamations, and resolutions have passed in Boston, East Providence, and other communities in the region.

More than ever, efforts like these are a recognition that our communities are most likely to be economically successful when all members are welcomed and supported to offer their potential.

** "The views expressed are not necessarily those of the [Federal Reserve Bank of Boston](#) or the Federal Reserve System. Information about organizations and upcoming events is strictly informational and not an endorsement."

[Rachel Steinhardt](#) is the Deputy Director of Welcoming America. Prior to Welcoming America, she served as Executive Director of the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL), a capacity building and advocacy organization supporting adult ESOL and literacy programs in suburban Washington, DC. Contact her at rachel@welcomingamerica.org. See also www.welcomingcities.org.

Singapore in Photos

By admin2
May 29, 2013
Uncategorized



Toronto-born “urban-geographic explorer” JT Singh has a passion for discovering what makes global cities tick. For a special Cities of Migration assignment, he visited Singapore and now shares his views on this multi-ethnic city-state, its success as well as the tensions that changing migration patterns bring.

“A single image doesn’t tell you much, but as a collection, a pattern emerges to form a meaningful narrative. This photo essay is a narrative of the human drama and spirit of Singapore’s unique sort of diversity.” JT Singh

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The vertical concrete jungle of Singapore. Laser lights shine in the background from the world famous Marina Bay Sands hotel.

Photo Credit: JT Singh

JT Singh is an urban-geographic explorer and next-generation thinker about the value and impact of 21st century cities and their ‘city-zens’. JT’s insightful reconnaissance of hundreds of emerging cities offers a lens on where ‘things are heading’ for the urban world in which we operate. JT Singh is co-founder of [Thrilling Cities](#), a global city building lab based in Shanghai, London and Singapore.

Fatima Shama: Blueprints for Immigrant Integration

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



After years of modeling immigrant integration success to other cities, the City of New York has launched [Blueprints for Immigrant Integration](#), a set of open source tools and shareable strategies that any local government can use “to integrate and ensure the success of their immigrant communities.”

Cities of Migration spoke with Fatima Shama, Commissioner of the [Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs](#), about this important project and its place within Mayor Bloomberg's legacy to New York.

Tell us about the Blueprints for Immigrant Integration series and your plans for a network of cities across the US committed to making immigrant integration a success?

After Mayor Bloomberg launched the [Partnership for a New American Economy](#), we had a lot of cities and mayors who were signing up to be members of the partnership and starting to ask: “Yes, we want comprehensive immigration reform, but what can we be doing now?” And my colleagues doing the national work on immigration reform would say, “Well, you should talk to our office in New York.”

As we started to talk to cities, the conversation inevitably was about what we have done in New York, showcasing specific policy and programs that were quite innovative. It seemed like a great opportunity for us to capture what we've done well in New York and give other cities a little step-by-step guide on how to meet the challenges and opportunities. Mayor Bloomberg has not only supported immigration reform but also advocated for the role that cities can play in innovation, in community development and in really supporting economic vitality.

This is also our last year in office as an administration. The amazing leadership that Mayor Bloomberg has demonstrated over the past eleven and half years is unparalleled. New York has always been an immigrant-friendly city with a history of immigrant integration, but the policy and programs that were implemented during Mayor Bloomberg's time have been landmark. We want to share what we have been able to accomplish with the rest of the country. Hopefully, we'll energize other cities to do the right thing when they realize that immigrant communities are true assets.

What has working with other cities taught you about immigrant integration?

It's taught me that immigrant integration is something city leaders want –although some cities don't realize that it's also their responsibility. It's been interesting to hear from cities that have been struggling about what to do. We have also been contacted by advocates in cities where the municipal leaders are not ready to have that conversation. Other cities want to engage in thoughtful immigration integration, but don't want to leave it to a not-for-profit community-based network. They see it as the responsibility of a local government.

It's taught us a lot about different strategies and approaches that work in cities. It has also taught us that cities have to be ready, otherwise it is not going to end well. It is great when the folks on the other end of the conversation are committed to thinking innovatively, to pushing the envelope or, honestly, are just ready to change some of the work that they have done. There are many places that recognize that the future of their cities needs to include these immigrants. These folks really do want to build a diverse beautiful rich city that has respect for all communities that call the city their home.

What have international cities learned from New York and what has New York learned from them?

I think international cities are struck by the vastness of the diversity that we have and the fact that we really do allow people to celebrate where they are from and where they are today. We have a lot of people who say, “You think it's okay for someone to go into a pool wearing a head scarf?” And the answer is yes. There are rules depending on where that is, but if that's the way that someone is most comfortable, the answer is yes.

It has been interesting to witness reactions to our openness and commitment to inclusivity, integration and not assimilation. Mayor Bloomberg likes to say that New York is a place that people look different, dress differently and ... as he says: “Go to different houses to worship, eat different cuisine and speak different languages.” That is normal for us and we don't want to change it. But there are many places where all that uniqueness has never been welcomed, where people are expected to change and conform. I hope we are helping others understand that you don't need to do that. In fact, the richness of these communities and their ability to thrive in your city is strongest if you just let them be.

Learning to look through a different lens is good. In Spain and the city of Valencia they are working hard to make sure that everyone speaks Spanish. I was really struck by their commitment to provide language instruction. Because encouraging the success of new communities means giving them the ability to navigate and feel more comfortable. I think there is something very rich about that.

I was recently in Turin and had a chance to meet the city's Deputy Mayor. Turin has a large North African Muslim community. When city leadership realized that Muslims needed a place for communal prayer around the religious holidays, they said, “We're going to make this very large park available to you and it's going to be your day and you can have the park.” The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and many thousands of residents came out to support this community on their day of celebration and to congratulate them. “We come out to wish you an Eid Mubarak [a blessed Eid],” as the Deputy Mayor said. In this way, it becomes a festival for the whole community, not just something the government has facilitated. That's really important. The reality is that you must create a place where people are welcomed. The only way you create immigrant-friendly cities is through examples like this.

The NYC Blueprint series offers city managers a rich menu of options they can tailor to their specific needs. Where do you suggest a new gateway city get started?

I think there are two things that need to happen. One is understanding what the city wants to accomplish. In some cities it's about the economy and in some cities it's about public safety and police community relations. So first you need to sit down and figure out what the focus is going to be. Creating some form of an agenda or action plan is really important –and it will look different in every city.

Next, city managers need to understand their new communities. It is more than a needs assessment; it's also a kind of asset assessment. What does this community have to offer? Also, remember to ask: How can existing services be slightly altered? How can they be enhanced to better support the communities?

What are some of the challenges facing cities that want to implement the strategies in the Blueprints?

We hear that money is a challenge. The reality is that there are lots of opportunities to leverage existing resources once cities understand community assets and can anticipate their needs. Strategic partnerships can leverage existing dollars. There's also the reality of local philanthropy and the role it can play as a source of support, depending on the economic realities and vitality of the immigrant communities.

Communities tend to react to change, that can be a challenge. Leadership can help communities understand that change is a reality and isn't always bad. There is an opportunity for leadership to utilize its voice to say, "Here's how it's done, here is what we need to do." A fundamental American value for many communities is that Americans always take care of each other. We have always done that and we will always do that in the times of crisis. It shouldn't take a crisis for people to take care of each other.

During our convening, the Mayor of Atlanta said, "I want to get ahead of this before it's too late." This was his chance to build one united Atlanta and to help people understand that "one Atlanta" was just as beautiful. The tone that leaders set and the language they use make a huge difference. Silence actually instigates controversy! Being able to talk comfortably and responsibly about diversity as an asset is really critical.

Partnerships are an important part of the strategies listed. What do suggest that other cities do if there is no private foundation support?

There are always these larger entities around with an ability to impact change, whether it's a Wal-Mart or a Target store or local banks. All these corporate entities have dollars that they put towards community development and are looking for 'consumers.' That includes the immigrant communities we are talking about. When a city recognizes the value of that consumer base, it can persuade local institutions with access to private capital to share. Sometimes it's money; sometimes in-kind support; sometimes a sponsor for an ad in a community paper with their logo on the bottom.

Groups across America love volunteerism and situations that help carve out a space for community engagement. For example, community gardening, a community clean up or beautification project is a great way to engage the whole community in that process.

What's really important about partnerships is not the money, but the relationships – creating and cultivating relationships with immigrant community leaders or with faith-based leaders, for example. As those relationships develop, they will provide access to philanthropic networks and other new forms of capital that may not have been used before.

You have already published six blueprints online and held a convening of city mayors in New York City. What is next in the short term and long term?

The response to our convening was phenomenal: over 20 cities and ten mayors attended. We've had wonderful feedback from everyone with a whole lot of "we want more" – so that was very promising. More blueprints will come out in the coming months, on education, health care, public health, the roles that libraries can play, financial empowerment and on domestic violence prevention.

The plan is to release each blueprint with a webinar to reconvene the cities that we have met so far and to add the ones that are contacting us now. In the long term we'd like to help make cities more open to learning about immigrant integration. We've got the website, the blueprints and we really want other cities to take advantage of these resources and put their own spin on how to develop integration strategies. When we hear "but we don't know how?" we can say, "Well, take a look at this and see if this helps you." Then trust that they're off to a good start.

Tell us about your favourite city.

My mom is from Rio and so Rio has always been a very special place for me because it always feels like I'm going back. It's beautiful. I can be with my grandmother in the mountains and my aunt by the beach. It's just such a happy place. Rio is my childhood, the equivalent of what comfort food is. But from the perspective of food and beauty, I love Florence.

Related Links:

- [Engaging Newcomers in City Parks](#)
- [Staying in Touch: The Library Responds To A Changing Community](#)
- [Competition THRIVE: Making the City Stronger](#)
- [We are New York Project](#)
- www.nyc.gov/integration

Fatima A. Shama has been the Commissioner of the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs since August, 2009. Commissioner Shama had previously served as Senior Education Policy Advisor at the Mayor's Office. Prior to joining the Bloomberg Administration in 2006, Ms. Shama served for four years as Executive Director of the Greater Brooklyn Health Coalition. Ms. Shama earned a Bachelor of Arts from Binghamton University and a Masters of Public Administration from Baruch College's School of Public Affairs Executive Program.

Welcoming America's Susan Downs-Karkos on Preparing a Culture of Welcome

By kturner
Uncategorized



[Last month we talked to community leaders in Boise \(Idaho, USA\) and Erfurt \(Germany\)](#) about programs that brought young people together to learn more about their adopted homes. For American middle school learners, whether recent refugees or native-born, as well as international students and their host families in Germany, the experience meant making new friends, learning about a new culture and expanding everyone's view of themselves and the world we share in the process.

Bringing newcomers and established residents into contact with each other is an important part of creating a welcoming environment where the two-way benefits of immigrant integration can contribute to healthier, more prosperous and resilient communities.

*Cities of Migration asked **Susan Downs-Karkos** of [Welcoming America](#) to share her thoughts on why cities across the US and around the world are waking up to the benefits of diversity and ready to work towards a more open, inclusive and welcoming society:*

Recognizing that immigration is a force that can be harnessed for positive community change, cities across the globe are increasingly focused on creating welcoming, immigrant-friendly environments that maximize opportunities for economic growth and cultural vitality and position localities as globally competitive, 21st century leaders. Today, a growing number of cities and municipalities in the United States and Europe acknowledge the economic and social benefits of fostering a welcoming culture. Unlike traditional efforts that may focus exclusively on providing direct services to residents, creating a welcoming environment requires finding ways to overcome language and cultural barriers by promoting stronger connections between immigrants and more established city residents.

[The recent webinar Receiving Communities: Preparing a Culture of Welcome](#) is the first in a series of Welcoming Cities webinars co-hosted by Cities of Migration and Welcoming America. Good practices from Erfurt, Germany and Boise, U.S.A. demonstrate the real, practical ways in which municipalities can support efforts that promote meaningful contact and greater understanding between diverse community members, promoting inclusive and vibrant civic spaces along the way.

[Erfurt's program Strangers Become Friends](#) brings together international students and the local community in a unique co-mentoring effort that helps newcomers feel welcome and connected to Erfurt, and opens up the cultural horizons of Erfurt residents themselves. It benefits from growing support from the business sector, which provides internships, mentors and a variety of activities to supplement the program. [Boise's International Summer Youth Program](#) is a unique partnership between the City of Boise, Idaho Refugee Office and Parks and Recreation Department that offers opportunities to foster confidence, cross-cultural friendships and greater understanding between refugee and U.S.-born children in this increasingly diverse city.

During the webinar's Q&A, both presenters of these programs spoke about a common misconception that receiving communities are not welcoming. In their experiences, people are mostly open to newcomers and intercultural learning when given the right opportunity. Simple, but highly personal, intercultural exchange programs like Erfurt's Strangers Become Friends and Boise's International Summer Youth Program are exactly the kind of opportunities welcoming cities can invest in.

"People are actually quite receptive to meet people from other backgrounds. Others need to see the commonalities," said Jan Reeves, Director of Idaho's Office of Refugees. "We don't focus enough on what refugees and immigrants bring to our communities. We have to make the other become the 'we'."

In Erfurt, Germany, Petra Eweleit, Project Director of Strangers Become Friends, said that participating German hosts take this opportunity to "to improve their international language skills. They want to learn more about other cultures first hand. For example, they want to learn more about Islam. Media very often focus only on negative things, but our hosts get a different picture while meeting our international students."

In the U.S., Welcoming America and a number of partners are convening a cohort of innovative, immigrant-friendly local governments like these to join the Welcoming Cities project. Participating city and county governments will connect with their peers through a community of practice that will share good ideas, develop new tools, and receive recognition for their efforts to create more welcoming communities that improve the quality of life and economic potential for immigrants and non-immigrants alike. Welcoming America and Cities of Migration will be working together in the months ahead to feature other good ideas from cities like Boise and Erfurt during upcoming Welcoming Cities webinars. We hope you will join us for these ongoing discussions of Welcoming Cities. For more information, visit www.welcomingcities.org or email [susan\(at\)welcomingamerica.org](mailto:susan(at)welcomingamerica.org).

[Susan Downs-Karkos is the Director of Strategic Partnerships at Welcoming America](#), where she works with organizations and communities in engaging mainstream Americans in immigrant integration efforts and in promoting a positive community climate for newcomers and established residents alike. She also leads the [Receiving Communities Initiative](#) and the provision of ongoing coaching, training and technical assistance to new and existing community partners, with an emphasis on the nation's refugee network. She is a former national board co-chair of [Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees](#) and is a member of the selection committee for the [Migration Policy Institute's E Pluribus Unum prize](#). She is the author of the [Receiving Communities Toolkit](#) and has spoken widely about the importance of immigrant integration and strategies for promoting it. Susan holds a BA in psychology from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine.

Rapid Growth in Singapore's Immigrants Brings Policy Challenges

By ktuner

[Opinion](#)



*Singapore's multi-ethnic citizenry is a source of pride for this modern Asian city state and its booming population of expat professionals as well as low-skilled migrant workers. In this excerpt from the Migration Information Source, * **Brenda Yeoh** and **Weiqliang Lin** (National University of Singapore) weigh in on the future challenges for this highly globalized city as its population climbs due to new immigration policies.*

Ongoing Issues, Challenges, and Social Change

Having greatly liberalized its borders in the past few years, it is not surprising that Singapore's migration reality has become more complex. The influx of large numbers of new immigrants into the city-state seems set to continue, even as emigration accelerates and fertility rates fall to a new low (1.15 children per female in 2010, down from 1.60 in 2000). In this context, attracting skilled foreigners to live, work, and settle — while keeping low-skilled workers under thumb — will likely remain a priority for the foreseeable future.

With the prospect that increased immigration could bring new challenges to Singapore socially, the government is working hard to maintain a state of harmony within what is already a multicultural nation. In several high-profile ministerial speeches in 2011, [including Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's National Day rally speech](#) as well as former-Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew's recent reminders about

the nation's reliance on immigrants for growth, Singaporeans were encouraged to take a long-term view; continue to welcome talent; and, at least for a while, to "accept the discomfort" of having more foreigners around. While not expected to relinquish their cultures and languages, immigrants have been urged to participate in local events so that they can learn more about the traditions of their adoptive communities.

In 2009, Singapore's [National Integration Council](#) was established to promote interaction and national solidarity between locals and newcomers. Notably, a S\$10-million (US\$7.95-million) [Community Integration Fund](#) was created to sponsor activities that foster bonds between Singaporeans and immigrants. Additionally, 2011 saw the launch of the [Singapore Citizenship Journey](#), an enhanced orientation program for new citizens comprised of online elements, field trips to heritage sites, and community sharing. [The People's Association, which appoints "Integration and Naturalization Champions,"](#) further engages new citizens through home visits, grassroots activities, and community work.

Another point of contention relates to the belief that immigrants compete with Singaporeans for jobs. While the state insists that only jobs unfilled by citizens are assumed by foreigners, the government is still frequently criticized for not curtailing the uptake of managerial and professional positions by non-Singaporeans. Suspicions that the labor market is giving preferential treatment to the foreign born — described as "cheaper" and "harder-driving and harder-striving" than Singaporeans — are not helped by certain official statements. In particular, unemployment figures are routinely published as an aggregate comprising citizens and permanent residents, which obfuscates the actual unemployment rate among Singaporeans.

Paradoxically, a more tolerant side of Singapore emerges when it comes to the rights of unskilled and low-skilled foreign workers. Civil-society action has sought to address the adverse working conditions of foreign-born domestic workers — about 200,000 in Singapore today, mostly women and mainly from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka — since the early 2000s. Many have benefited from the social and advocacy support offered by nongovernmental organizations like [Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics](#) and [Transient Workers Count Too](#). Not only have these groups raised public awareness about the plight of foreign domestic workers, state agencies are now more inclined to attend to cases of abuse.

Similar help has also been extended to the other 670,000 work-permit holders. Some issues being addressed include workplace safety, wage and foreign-levy policy, accommodation standards, and the regulation of unsafe truck transport for migrant workers.

While their efforts are comprehensive in scope, the success of civil society in Singapore remains tied to the will of a strong state. Foreign-born domestic workers, for instance, have long been deprived of regular days off as part of their employment. This particular aspect of domestic work will change in 2013, when a new law mandating days off will take effect. But such extended, hard-fought battles highlight the difficulty that advocacy groups face in lobbying within a depoliticized space. They also hint at how citizens' distrust towards immigrants can further rigidify officially sanctioned surveillance curbs on foreign workers.

In sum, as Singapore comes of age in its development, new opportunities and problems have once again opened up the former colonial city to mobilities. While Singapore has long depended on external resources to satisfy its needs — for its workforce, jobs, education, talent, and even marriage — the country's goal to augment its population today presents much more complex risks, uncertainties, and challenges, often exacerbated by inconsistent policy outcomes. Indeed, the streams flowing through the highly globalized city have become decidedly more turbulent in recent years. With wisdom, perhaps the nation's political leaders can weather the storm that is now brewing.

[Brenda S.A. Yeoh](#) is a Professor at the Department of Geography, National University of Singapore and Principal Investigator of the Asian Metacentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis (funded by the Wellcome Trust, UK) at the Asia Research Institute. Her research foci include the politics of space in colonial and post-colonial cities; and gender, migration and transnational communities.

[Lin Weiqliang](#) is a doctoral postgraduate at Royal Holloway, University of London. His research interests converge around issues of mobilities, in particular air transport, urban transport, migration and transnationalism in the Asian context. In 2010, he won the Wang Gungwu Medal and Prize for best Masters thesis at the National University of Singapore.

*Excerpted with permission from: [Rapid Growth in Singapore's Immigrant Population Brings Policy Challenges](#). By Brenda S.A. Yeoh and Weiqiang Lin (April 2012). Originally published on the Migration Information Source, the online journal of the Migration Policy Institute, www.migrationinformation.org.

Related Links:

- [Singapore in Photos](#)
- [The Cuff Road Project: Meals and a Friendly Ear for Jobless Migrants](#)
- [Heritage and Modernity in Singapore's Urban Renewal](#)
- [Cook and Share a Pot of Curry Day](#)
- [Beyond the Border, Behind the Men](#)

The Ethos of Cities: The Spirit of Singapore's Diversity

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



Toronto-born “urban-geographic explorer” [JT Singh](#) has a passion for discovering what makes global cities tick. For a special *Cities of Migration* assignment, he visited Singapore and now shares his views on this multi-ethnic city-state, its success as well as the tensions that changing migration patterns bring.

You describe city in terms of their unique ethos, or “city-ness.” Describe the ethos of Singapore:

The first thing you notice when arriving in Singapore is the unique Singaporean accent. It is the truly captivating tune of English known as “Singlish” – a crossroads of Indian and Malay with a Chinese-Hokkien inflection. When entering the subway stations, you will hear announcements and see signs translated into English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil. Across the city landscape are stunning Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist temples, mosques and churches. You’ll find a wide range of culturally diverse programming on the TV and radio, as well as the live performances you will inevitably stumble across while exploring the city. As every visitor will be quick to notice, the cuisine of Singapore is also an important source of pride and identity for Singaporeans. A multitude of smells emanate from restaurants in every corner of the city. In short, Singapore is a veritable living and breathing, culturally diverse ethnoscape.

So who makes up the diversity in Singapore’s ‘ethnoscape’?

Since national independence in 1965, Singapore has been constitutionally defined as a multiracial state. Unlike the mono-ethnic culture of many Asian nation-states continue, Singapore takes pride in being an immensely pluralistic one. Among the mix of local Singaporeans you’ll also find high-skilled foreign professionals and their families from all over the world as well as low-skilled workers drawn from neighboring countries. These include Malaysian factory workers, Chinese bus drivers, Filipino and Indonesian domestic workers, Thai and South Asian construction workers and so forth.

What’s the attraction? How do you explain this diversity?

Singapore has always been an economic magnet to migrants due to its strategic location at the crossroads of the main shipping routes of the world. It’s a major regional center for global shipping and trade activity. For many years, Singaporeans have openly accepted migrant-labour as a necessary means of fueling the economy. Clichéd as it may sound, “racial harmony” does, for the most part, exist amongst the various ethnic groups in this city-state.

Singapore’s strong state policies on grooming world-class local talent and for attracting foreign skills are all about maintaining a competitive economy. Concerted efforts are made to court and retain high-skilled internationally trained workers, including the benefit of permanent residence status. Nonetheless, the high-end professional labour force is typically a “flow through” population. Few of the foreign professionals you will meet in Singapore have taken up Singaporean citizenship and the vast majority have no plans to do so. While many expats are drawn to employment in Singapore because of attractive salaries or economic need at home, for most the destinations of choice for long-term settlement are Australia, Canada, USA and other Western countries.

A booming economy like Singapore’s depends on more than high-skilled workers. What about the ‘builders’ at the other end of the spectrum?

At the other end of the labour spectrum, you’ll find the far more numerous unskilled migrant workers performing 3D work (dirty, dangerous, and difficult) who are not permitted to take up Singaporean citizenship. Nevertheless, from a regional perspective, Singapore’s hardline bio-politics are preferred to tough immigration policies that prevent low-skilled labour from entering Singapore altogether. There are substantial benefits for migrants from the poorer, labour exporting countries in and around Asia. Temporary employment in Singapore provides massive flows of money in the form of remittances back to sending countries, a much welcomed source of transnational income.

How has the city succeeded in creating a diverse and multicultural mainstream?

Singapore’s complex multicultural and “migranhood” reality didn’t just happen. Immigrant integration is taken very seriously and is embedded in the deeper substance of Singapore. For example, spatial and social integration is implemented by the government through a program known as the [HDB \(Housing Development Board\)](#). Through a process of ‘squatter clearances’, older economically-deprived immigrant enclaves were broken up and residents were re-housed in public housing estates using a quota system that re-distributed the different ethnic groups proportionately into each housing estate and into each block of public housing. Today 82% of Singaporeans live in HDB flats and there are no ethnic “enclaves.” Hence, Singapore’s distinct ethnoscape, compared to many other multicultural world cities.

Another highly symbolic policy area are the measures adopted by the government to increase the political representation of minority groups. Again, it’s all part of Singapore’s singular agenda to promote the benefits of integration. Minority candidates are guaranteed a seat in multi-seat constituencies under a system termed the Group Representation Constituency (GRC). This dynamic and continuously evolving sense of Singaporean identity permeates city thinking and strategy.

Any last thoughts on Singapore’s multicultural spirit?

Singapore has worked tirelessly to maintain racial harmony and a sense of collective identity in Singapore’s multiethnic society. The watershed moment that catalyzed the government’s position was the 1964 riots between Chinese and Malays residents, which left thirty-six dead. Since the mid-60s, the Singaporean government has come down hard on any signs of “ethnic chauvinism” threatening to pull apart the hard-won cohesion of the social fabric.

Urban identities are continuously evolving. Many of Singapore’s new arrivals are mainland Chinese who don’t always share the multicultural ethos of the small nation. While many Singaporeans are anxious that the foundations of their young multicultural identity are challenged by Mainland “Chineseness,” the reality is that integration takes time. And many of these Chinese immigrants, particularly the younger generation, already show strong signs of

integrating into Singaporean society. For example, within a year of settling in Singapore, the distinctive “Singlish” accent is already audible among newer Chinese migrants.

Related Links:

- [Singapore in Photos](#)
- [The Cuff Road Project: Meals and a Friendly Ear for Jobless Migrants](#)
- [Heritage and Modernity in Singapore's Urban Renewal](#)
- [Cook and Share a Pot of Curry Day](#)
- [Beyond the Border, Behind the Men](#)

***JT Singh** is an urban-geographic explorer and next-generation thinker about the value and impact of 21st century cities and their “city-zens.” JT’s insightful reconnaissance of hundreds of emerging cities offers a lens on where ‘things are heading’ for the urban world in which we operate. JT Singh is co-founder of [Thrilling Cities](#), a global city building lab based in Shanghai, London and Singapore.*

Run Local: New Americans and the 2013 Municipal Elections

By ktturner
April 17, 2013
Uncategorized



"Elections are a strange beast – they go silently into the night in too many cases. Low voter turnout is a major issue in local elections in particular, and our report emphasizes the critical role that new Americans can play in those elections, by running for office and voting."

In the the [New American Leaders' Project](#)'s latest report, [Run Local: New Americans and the 2013 Municipal Elections](#), founder and director Sayu Bhojwani makes the case for increasing representation by first- and second-generation Americans in local office, challenging the electorate to come out with a roar: "2013 can be a key year for new Americans in municipal elections."

The New York City-based organization asserts the importance of targeting resources to identify and groom promising candidates from these communities at the local level, mobilize and engage diverse voters, and support the development of policies that are responsive to all.

Looking ahead to the November 2013 US municipal elections, the report's recommendations include:

- Making change for New American communities at the federal level starts with building a pipeline of energetic and values-driven APIA (Asian Pacific Islander American), Arab American, Caribbean, and Latino leaders at the state and local level.
- Increasing the chances of new Americans being elected to public office requires changes in political factors at the state and local level.
- Continuing to invest in voter engagement and registration and get out the vote efforts in 2013 can help to build on the momentum of the 2012 elections.
- Preparing new legislators for governance ensures that they will have the tools to represent their communities effectively.
- Conducting additional research on the demographic composition of districts can provide more insight into a community's ability to elect a co-ethnic representative.

Related links:

- [Run Local: New Americans and the 2013 Municipal Elections](#)
- Toronto: [DiverseCity's School for Civics](#)
- [Webinar: Ballot Box to the Podium: Mobilizing Immigrant Voters and New Leadership](#)
- Los Angeles: [Mobilize the Immigrant Vote!](#)
- Dublin: [Count Us In!](#)
- Dublin: [Did You You Can Vote? Cities and Democracy At Work](#)
- Hatfield (UK): [The Polish Forum and the Fire Station](#)

Mentoring Improves Employment Outcomes for Skilled Immigrants

By ktuner
Uncategorized



The results are in. Mentoring helps newcomers find jobs that match their skills and talent. Mentoring is built on a simple idea: connecting an internationally-trained professional with their local counterpart. An effective mentoring relationship opens networks, builds relationships and increases social capital. low-cost, high impact intervention that delivers on the promise of opportunity made to newcomers.

As a new Maytree report shows, one year after the start of their mentoring relationship, unemployment for participating skilled immigrants fell dramatically while average full-time earnings increased. The ALLIES-Accenture report, [The results are in: Mentoring improves employment outcomes for skilled immigrants \(PDF\)](#), confirms the positive impact and success of eleven mentoring programs across Canada on newcomers and the economy.

Mentees had significantly improved employment outcomes, earning trajectories and shorter times to find employment. Twelve months after the start of their mentoring relationship, unemployment dropped from 73% to 19%. In addition, 71% of mentees were employed in their field, compared to 27% pre-mentoring. Average full-time earnings increased by more than 60% from \$36,905 to \$59,944.

Additional Findings:

- Successful mentees find employment faster than the average newcomer.
- Most mentees find work in their field. This means that their starting salaries (and future salary trajectory) are likely higher than those working outside their field of expertise and experience.
- Most mentees find permanent work. They likely receive employee benefits from their company which increases their effective earnings.

Mentoring is a low-cost, high impact intervention that delivers on the promise of opportunity made to newcomers.

[ALLIES \(Assisting Local Leaders with Immigrant Employment Strategies\)](#) is a Maytree project that supports local efforts in Canadian cities to successfully adapt and implement programs that further the suitable employment of skilled immigrants. Mentoring programs are currently active in the following cities: Fredericton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Niagara, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, North Bay Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. ALLIES engaged Accenture in a pro-bono capacity to measure the impact of mentoring on skilled immigrants.

Related mentoring resources:

- [The results are in: Mentoring improves employment outcomes for skilled immigrants \(PDF\)](#)
- [Watch the webinar recording, The results are in: mentoring skilled immigrants works!, with leading experts as they discuss the results](#)
- Toronto: [Building Professional and Occupational Networks: The Mentoring Partnership](#)
- Copenhagen: [Women at Work: the KVINFO Mentor Network](#)
- Halifax: [Making Connections](#)
- Auckland: [From Alpha to Omega: Innovating in the Workplace](#)
- Montreal: [The World On Our Doorstep: Short Term Mentoring Opens Doors To Employment](#)
- New York: [Interviewing the Up and Coming at Upwardly Global](#)

Creating Spaces of Safety and a Culture of Welcome

By kturner

[Conversation Stories](#)



The [City of Toronto's surprise decision last month to formalize its long-standing Access Without Fear policy](#) has given it the status of Canada's first "sanctuary city," garnering attention across the country, as well as travelling at speed across networks in North America and Europe. We take this occasion to reprint a December 2011 interview with Sarah Eldridge, by Casper ter Kuile, at Common Cause, on the UK city of Sheffield's and its official status as a Sanctuary City. [Sheffield's City of Sanctuary is a Cities of Migration Good Idea.](#)

[City of Sanctuary](#) seeks to build a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary in the UK. Over the last six years, they have created a network of towns and cities throughout the UK where asylum seekers and refugees can contribute and participate fully in the life of their communities.

What did City of Sanctuary set out to do differently?

Sheffield had a number of organisations providing services for asylum seekers and refugees – everything from volunteers who give up spare rooms to legal assistance. What City of Sanctuary wanted was to bring about a cultural change within the city – to appreciate the situations asylum seekers and refugees find themselves in, and to welcome them into active participation in community life.

The aim of City of Sanctuary is that those seeking sanctuary can easily build relationships with local people as neighbours, friends and colleagues. Through these relationships, local people come to understand the injustices refugees face, and become motivated to support and defend them.

How are the organisational values expressed in the way they work?

- **Inclusion:** Much like Transition Towns, the network grew out of one initial hub. Now that there are more than 20 towns and cities, a new national governance structure was needed. The new National Committee of seven people includes representatives from local government, human rights law and faith organisations – but most importantly two refugees.
- **Empowerment:** Resources created are shared on a [public hub](#) for any group to use. Logos, posters, checklists, and a handbook are all available. Although the logo is kept as a standard theme among different groups, local City of Sanctuary groups can choose their own colour combinations.
- **Independence:** Each town and city focuses on fulfilling a local need, rather than rolling out a uniform project. The accreditation process has also changed over time to represent the on-the-ground reality.

What has most surprised the team?

As well as becoming a valuable community for those seeking sanctuary, City of Sanctuary has also become a center of social contact for people who have lived in Sheffield for a longer time but who have felt socially isolated.

Local 'conversation clubs' and events where everyone shares their traditional food (including Yorkshire puddings) have been central to building bridges among communities – especially once the music and dancing starts! Young families and elderly people have especially benefited.

They've also heard back from destitute asylum seekers who have been supported by partner organisation [Assist](#) that it makes an extra difference to know that the individuals coming to help them are doing so as a volunteer – because they want to, rather than because they're being paid to do it.

What would they do differently if they were doing it again?

At the beginning, there was a real focus on scale – especially the number of organisations involved in each new City of Sanctuary. Now, the emphasis is on what signed-up organisations will actively do to create a welcoming city.

What does this mean for us as change-makers?

City of Sanctuary's approach is rooted in community feeling – which we know is part of a constellation of values that underpin systemic expressions of concern about a wider range of social and environmental issues. By building stronger communities and enabling people to be kind to one another, City of Sanctuary is also encouraging values of equality, freedom and social justice.

[Reprinted with permission from Common Cause.](#) Common Cause is a UK-based network of people working to help rebalance cultural values to create a more equitable, sustainable and democratic society.

Related links:

- Sheffield: [Cities of Sanctuary, Communities of Welcome](#)
- Toronto: [Access Without Fear: Building a City of Sanctuary](#)
- [Webinar: Welcoming Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

Policy, Politics and Participation

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Interview](#)



How does policy influence the political integration of migrants in Europe?

Cities of Migration asked Fidele Mutwarasibo, Integration Manager of the Irish Immigrant Council, to comment on his Institute of Public Affairs report, [The Challenge of Dealing with Third Country Nationals' Political Participation \(Warsaw, 2012\)](#).

You describe diversity as the norm in many European cities and towns, yet note that this diversity has not been reflected in urban political institutions so far. What is the impact of leaving diverse communities out of the picture?

In many European cities, there is diversity in a descriptive sense – you can see diversity in the streets and neighborhoods. This is not the case when it comes to acknowledging diversity in a normative sense, i.e., in some quarters within the majority situation, and in many European countries the imagined identity is based on *ius sanguinis*, or identity based on the blood line.

In terms of the visibility of diversity in urban political institutions, there are a few challenges, including the fact that some countries in Europe don't allow migrants to vote and stand in the local elections. Even in countries where the migrants are allowed to vote, they may be excluded from becoming candidates unless they meet certain criteria.

Some cities have been creative and set up migrant forums in the interest of some form of migrants' political participation. There are other factors that one has to keep in mind such as the lack of political education during the integration process that results in a low level of understanding of political rights of migrants even in countries where they are allowed to vote. The diversity within the migrant population also implies that even in districts where there are many migrants, there is no reason to believe that they will vote for a migrant candidate *per se*. This is why most successful migrant candidates in Ireland, for example, have stood for issues that are espoused by the wider public. Another important element is that political cultures are different in various countries and this has implications when it comes to migrants' political participation.

You explore arguments for and against migrants' voting rights. What can your experience in the City of Dublin teach us?

Allowing migrants to vote in local elections enables migrants to acquaint themselves with the political culture and the political institutions in the countries of residence. A survey conducted by the Immigrant Council of Ireland in 2012 revealed that 73.3% of the naturalized citizens who participated in the survey had participated to some extent in possible elections; only 26.7% had not participated in any elections in Ireland. The general voter turnout in Irish general elections was 70.05% in 2011, 67.03% in 2007 and 62.57% in 2002. Based on the data available, being on the voter register soon after arriving in the country of residence may influence positively political participation of migrants in the long run.

The election of Rotimi Adebare and Dr Taiwo Matthew to the Portlaoise and Ennis town councils respectively in 2004 was widely reported in the Irish media. As a result there was a huge increase in the numbers of migrant candidates in the 2009 local elections. The election of Rotimi Adebare to the position of mayor of Portlaoise in 2007 was also widely reported and was seen as a good example of political integration. Overall, allowing migrants to participate in the local election is a very good indicator of migrants' inclusion in society and demonstrates the need to move away from too much focus on economic and social integration (and to some extent cultural integration). It also helps in starting the important debate on national identity in diverse societies.

Much is made in Europe of the distinction between EU nationals and non-EU, or third country nationals. How relevant is this distinction? If you live and work (legally), pay taxes, shouldn't everybody have the right to vote on decisions that affect daily life such as schools, roads, and safety?

The distinction between EU nationals and third country nationals is enshrined in the EU Treaty Rights. The EU Treaty Rights provide for mobility within the European Union and, as such, give more rights to migrants from the EU who choose to move to other EU member states. Note that they have to be economically active to avail themselves of these rights. As to whether third country nationals with residency should have the same rights as EU nationals, this would mean changing the legislation and this is not likely to happen soon. Moreover, the right to vote in local elections for all the migrants (including third country nationals) is recommended by the European Commission and the Council of Europe. If it were to come into effect in all EU member states, I don't see why third country nationals would feel politically excluded because the only elections where they would be excluded would be the general elections, the European elections, the referenda and the presidential elections where they are provided for. [In 2009, the Immigrant Council of Ireland made a presentation to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution](#) and called on it to examine ways to extend voting rights to migrants who are established residents in the State. In my view, there is a case to be made for those who have permanent residency but I am not sure I can sway the public on this!

You list some of the main arguments for extending voting rights to resident foreigners – such as no taxation without participation; equal treatment over time; more political participation of the whole society; immigrants are permanent members of society; and pathways to citizenship. Which of these arguments is most persuasive?

I have to highlight the case for and against voting rights in local elections. In terms of the argument I feel strongly about, the permanency of diversity is very important. [The Rotterdam Charter drawn up in 1996 highlights the importance of ensuring that public institutions especially the police should mirror society at large](#). It is interesting to note that in countries like Canada, the USA and the UK when you arrive at the immigration desks you find immigration officers who reflect the diversity in these countries — whereas in other countries you don't get the same sense of diversity when you land. The visibility of diversity in the police, politics, media and classroom highlights to the current and next generations of migrants that they are part of society. Symbolic representation in my view is very important.

You write, “Non-electoral political participation and representation is important, but political participation through the electoral process brings migrants into mainstream political institutions and decision-making circles.” What is the distinction between migrant “voice” and “vote?”

There is a difference between the migrant voice and vote in so far as you can have a voice without having necessarily a vote — for example through an elected migrant forum at the level of the city, or through trade unions and other civil society platforms. For me, the vote implies voting and standing in mainstream elections. This does not necessarily lead to representation, especially if and when the candidates you vote for are not elected. We also have to distinguish the elected representatives in two broad categories – the trustees (representatives who act in the national interest) and the delegates (agent of the constituents). Having delegate representatives might offer representation (voice) on migrants’ issues even when migrants don’t have the right to vote and stand in the elections.

In Ireland most of the Irish elected officials are delegates in their practices and on the national issues they tend to follow the party whip. That is why there is a vacuum when it comes to political leadership on issues pertaining to immigration, integration and diversity. Finally, it is important to note that having visible minorities in elected position doesn’t necessarily means a voice for these communities because the visible minority elected officials might act according to what they feel will get them votes next time around. Having said that, there is no doubt that descriptive representation is very important though! Look at the effect of Obama’s election on the visible minorities in the USA for example.

Gaining the right to vote for all residents, regardless of status, requires great political will. What argument is most likely to sway local leaders?

When it comes to winning the argument, it is very simple! By including current migrants, we are including their children. By promoting political inclusion today, we will reap the benefits in 20 years time. The riots in France in 2005 and 2007 and in the Northeast of England in 2001 and the most recent riots in London highlight why we need to have channels of communications with all the citizenry. Failure to include the migrants in the long term leads to infra-politics (i.e., “any individual practices that resist the elite’s domination on a material or symbolic level, by adopting low profile and using its weaknesses strategically” (Scott, 1990:183)). It is argued that “the incentive for immigrants to vote tends to strengthen in tandem with the degree of an individual’s psychological and material investment in a given society... Alienation and/or apathy, undoubtedly, play a role in depressing voter turnout among immigrants. Alienation often springs from the failure of the political system to deliver the desired symbolic and material outcomes to immigrants” (Messina, 2004:8). Furthermore, “the promotion of migrants’ and refugees’ involvement in mainstream civil organisations is the duty of the whole society: legislative bodies should reduce hindrances for the civic and political engagement of migrants and refugees. Civic organisations should develop strategies to encourage migrants’ and refugees’ membership and active engagement. Political parties should be more active in trying to attract migrants and refugees and offer training in political processes” (ECRE, 2007).

Most of us vote daily one way or another, usually with our hearts. Who are you “voting” for in...

...the FIFA World Cup. If people are included they will identify themselves with society and will not necessarily identify themselves with the countries of origin. Furthermore, it is possible to have multiple identities at any given time. For example, being a parent, supporting the same sports club, members of a gym, sharing political views (liberal or conservative), liking the same kind of food, being in the same profession and so forth. So supporting the Mexico team in the world cup especially when they are playing against a team other than Canada (if you are a Canada resident) should not be an issue. For example, I support Brazil because of their flair (in the past that is) and yet I have never been to Brazil and indeed I don’t have any member of my extended family in Brazil. Feeling included in the country of residence would enhance identification with the national team in the case of the world cup – remember only 32 team qualify – and I have to say it is a fraction of the countries we have in the world.

Fidele Mutwarasibo is an advocate, activist and public academic based in Dublin, Ireland. His main areas of interest are: human rights; equality; immigration; integration; diversity; inclusion; representation; and participation. He works currently as the Integration Manager at the [Immigrant Council of Ireland](#). He holds a PhD in Sociology (University College Dublin) and is an alumni fellow of the [Transatlantic Forum on Migration and Integration](#), an initiative of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Robert Bosch Foundation.

Read the full report: Mutwarasibo, Fidele. [The Challenge of Dealing with Third Country Nationals’ Political Participation](#). Warsaw: Institute of Public Affairs, 2012.

Ensuring Diversity Becomes an Asset for Everyone

By kturner

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, believes that the key to integration is the interaction between migrants and the receiving society. Empowering newcomers to build their sense of belonging is the “only appropriate policy choice in a democratic society.”

Read Thorbjørn Jagland's opening essay to the Council of Europe's [Guide for Policy-Makers and Practitioners – Building Migrants' Belonging through Positive Interactions](#).

Europe today is a continent of diversity.

Today, few topics attract more public attention than the struggle to accommodate this diversity and draw enrichment from it. Whether or not governments decide to replace their shrinking populations of working age by large-scale immigration, this diversity is likely to increase in the years to come.

Governments are responding by developing integration policies and the Council of Europe has been very active in providing support. The Council of Europe has itself been an important actor in accompanying and generalizing this process. In 2002, the Ministers of the Council of Europe member States responsible for migration affairs undertook to develop and implement integration policies founded on the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

But, whilst much has been achieved, two alarming trends appear to have taken root. On the one hand, many people consider that the core objectives of integration policies have failed, leaving in their place unfulfilled promises of equal treatment and polarized or fragmented societies. On the other hand, the failures of these policies have strengthened the voice of those who only see in migrants and their different traditions and customs a threat to public order, national identity and their own security.

Indeed, the simple recognition of diversity cannot be sufficient in itself. Whilst diversity acknowledges difference within our societies and our own multiple and complex identities it does not provide a guarantee for social justice or harmony. This can only be achieved through the processes of social cohesion.

Giving migrants a voice, recognizing their true value and building their sense of belonging to receiving societies, in short empowering migrants, is the only appropriate policy choice in a democratic society. It is this choice that will enable us to ensure fair and just societies for all, and allow migrants to both be integrated and feel integrated.

The key is interaction, enabling migrants to engage with people in the receiving society as well as with each other, whether it be in the workplace, in their neighbourhood, at school, in the hospital or doctor's surgery or in the offices of the local administration.

Migrants have an essential role to play in our societies and economies and we cannot afford to allow the advocates of racism and intolerance undermine our democratic values and negate the human dignity we owe to everyone whatever their nationality, origin or race. Promoting interaction between migrants and host societies will, through greater mutual understanding, help break down barriers and dispel xenophobic sentiments.

This is the thinking behind this publication. I hope you will find it helpful in your efforts to ensure diversity becomes an asset for everyone.

Mr Thorbjørn Jagland is the [13th Secretary General of the Council of Europe](#). The Secretary General has the overall responsibility for the strategic management of the Organisation. Mr Jagland was elected in September 2009. The former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Norway, Thorbjørn Jagland was also the President of the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) and the leader of the Norwegian Labour Party. He is currently the Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, which awards the Nobel Peace Prize.

Source: Orton, Andrew. [Guide for Policy-Makers and Practitioners: Building Migrants' Belonging through Positive Interactions: Connecting Recognition, Participation and Empowerment to Improve Social Cohesion](#). Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2012.

What Cities Said: Bremen and Saskatoon on Recruiting and Managing a Diverse Workforce

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Find some learning takeaways from our last webinar, [Cities at Work: Recruiting and Managing a Diverse Workforce](#) to see how the City of Saskatoon, and the City of Bremen are taking a lead on developing a workplace where diversity is valued.

Communicate a transparent hiring process to external applicants using open and creative outreach

Getting creative with their hiring campaigns, the City of Bremen engaged in a city-wide public campaign, from online videos on training programs, public transportation ads, to multi-lingual booklets about public service careers, to reach out to young migrants and migrant families who were unaware of employment opportunities in civil service. The City of Saskatoon hired a diversity coordinator who offered face-to-face pre-employment consultations about the city's hiring process, tours of city hall, information on foreign credentials, mock interviews and resume reviews.

Talk to staff about HR diversity in relation to organization-wide strategic objectives to build buy-in

The City of Saskatoon saw a rapid rise in the diversity of its population, recognized a need to respond, and saw an opportunity to brand itself as one of the country's top diversity employers. For Saskatoon, open communication between the HR department and the city's strategic initiatives from the top was essential for improving diversity and buy-in from senior to junior staff.

Make your staff feel included when developing new HR Diversity models and tools

The City of Saskatoon conducted focus groups to have dialogues about diversity and identify intercultural awareness training needs. To showcase positive interventions in the workplace, the City created an inclusive workplace champion recognition program that awarded staff members who showed leadership or commitment to diversity and change.

[Watch the full webinar video and find related resources >>](#)

Deborah Littman and Citizens for a Living Wage

By Evelyn
March 19, 2013
Uncategorized



By Alejandra Bravo, Manager of Maytree's School4Civics (Toronto)

We've been following the London Living Wage campaign for some time on [Cities of Migration](#). Since November 2005, London Living Wage has brought together a diverse alliance of active citizens and community leaders from across the city to pressure employers to start paying all their employees a "living wage" and to encourage consumers to support businesses that do. And, they've been successful.

Deborah Littman When we started to think about what project from outside of Toronto might be of interest and inspire the attendees of our upcoming conference, [CollaborAction: Building Blocks Learning Exchange](#), the Living Wage campaign immediately came to mind. We're happy to announce that Deborah Littman, one of the campaign's original leads, will be joining us on March 20.

About [London Living Wage](#):

"The Living Wage Campaign calls for every worker in the country to earn enough to provide their family with the essentials of life. Launched by London Citizens in 2001, the campaign has won over £70 million of Living Wages, lifting over 10,000 families out of working poverty. The Living Wage is a number. An hourly rate, set independently, every year (by the GLA in London). It is calculated according to cost of living and gives the minimum pay rate required for a worker to provide their family with the essentials of life. [...] The Living Wage Foundation has now accredited over 100 Living Wage Employers. Leading organizations like KPMG and Barclays, the Olympic Delivery Authority and the Greater London Authority have gone Living Wage and become influential advocates. The Living Wage Campaign and the Living Wage Foundation work is funded primarily by the Trust for London."

A good idea that's travelling – from London to Vancouver

London Living Wage logo There is keen interest here in Canada – and beyond – in what has been achieved by the living wage campaign in the UK. To date, 27 organizations, including PriceWaterhouseCoopers and Lloyd's of London insurance, have committed to paying a Living Wage. They placed 1,200 people into Living Wage jobs for the London 2012 Olympics.

What makes the campaign relevant to such a wide range of actors is the broad-based community support for the campaign that London Citizens was able to build. The ability of the campaign to show that low pay hurts the whole community, not just a narrow group of low paid workers, has drawn in very diverse allies and helped build relationships with business and political leaders in London.

The large and diverse nature of the campaign supporters have made the issue a feature on debates on poverty alleviation and social exclusion and pushed the topic into the recent London's recent mayoralty race.

Deborah is now working with [Metro Vancouver Alliance \(MVA\)](#), a broad based alliance of community groups, labour, faith and educational institutions working together for the common good. MVA is organizing a broad-based group of community groups to pursue a living wage, and other campaigns for the common good.

Find out more about the Campaign and see Deborah in action:



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=http://www.youtube.com/embed/vbxKdN4j8dM>



Related:

[The London Living Wage Campaign](#)

Source: [Maytree blog – Creating possibility](#)

Good Ideas in the News: March 2013

By kturner
March 14, 2013
Uncategorized

Facing 2020: developing a new European agenda for immigration and asylum policy. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Europe launches a flagship series offering an analysis of the changed empirical and policy environment in which the European Union (EU) finds itself and the role the EU plays with respect to immigration policy. [More](#)

Council of Europe's Anti-Racism Commission: Ireland. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published its fourth report on Ireland. [More](#).

Recycling Hatred: Racism(s) in Europe Today. ENAR has launched episode three of its Recycling Hatred series: Are racist crimes really an issue in Europe? [More](#)

The Intercultural City Step by Step. The Intercultural City guide is designed for city leaders and practitioners wishing to learn from the "intercultural cities" experiment, a three-year pilot program run by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, in developing an intercultural approach to integration. [More](#)

Global Detroit Annual Report 2013. Global Detroit is an effort to revitalize southeast Michigan's economy strengthening Detroit's connections to the world and making it more attractive and welcoming to immigrants, internationals, and foreign trade and investment. [More](#)

Data Journalism Migration Coverage Project. Data-based pilot study by UNAOC and the European Journalism Centre looks into characteristics of migration coverage. [More](#)

Welcome to Canada! Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration

By kturner
 March 19, 2013
 Uncategorized

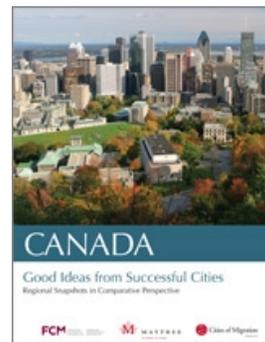


The latest snapshot of city leadership and innovation in our municipal good practice series is ready! Find stories from Canadian cities large and small – Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Saskatoon and Richmond Hill. From fighting discrimination to mentoring newcomers, local governments are addressing important community concerns.

In her introduction to [Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Canada](#), Maytree President Ratna Omidvar writes:

“Leadership is about change. It is not about preserving the status quo, but finding new opportunities to allow all residents to thrive. For example, Montreal’s city charter promotes urban citizenship, and Vancouver’s new inclusionary take on multiculturalism brings together immigrant and Aboriginal communities. Toronto City Council’s surprise decision to enact the *Access Without Fear* policy makes Toronto Canada’s first city of sanctuary for irregular and non-status residents or temporary workers whose status is in flux.”

[Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Canada](#) is the newest addition to our report series on Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration. The city-led good practices described in these reports offer a compelling narrative about how local governments are leading the way, using their considerable power and authority to leverage their diversity, unlock opportunity and jump start the economy with immigrant skill, talent and hard work.



The current series of short country “snapshots” are companion reports to Good Ideas from Successful Cities, and provide a further selection of municipal good practice in comparative perspective. Visit our new [Publications](#) page to see the entire publication series.



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And don’t miss [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership](#) where international experts provide policy insights for city leaders and their community partners.

Cities Are the Unofficial Welcome Wagon for Newcomers

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Getting immigration policy right has never been more important to Canadians and the communities we live in. Canada is counting on newcomers to replace retiring workers, keep our businesses growing, and help meet the needs of an aging population. With an aging population and slowing birth rates, by 2015-2016, [Human Resources and Skills Development Canada notes that 100% of our net labour growth will come from new immigrants.](#)

What draws immigrants to a particular place? Canadian-based studies consistently identify “family or friends” as the top reason for a newcomer’s choice of city, with “job or job prospects” typically identified next. The reality is that in their first years here, newcomers are first and foremost settling into life in a city where people, employers and organizations can make a real difference in creating that sense of community.



Canadian municipalities are at the very heart of the immigrant experience in Canada. Cities are the unofficial welcome wagon, directly and indirectly providing services, and delivering a quality of life that is essential to creating welcoming communities and ensuring the success of new Canadians.

Our economic future depends on attracting, retaining and integrating immigrants into our communities over the long term. The sooner new Canadians can find their feet and put their skills to work, the better it is for our entire country.

Locally delivered services like housing, recreation, library services, child care, and public transit are being used by new immigrants and play a significant role in their settlement process.

For example, without stable housing, families experience greater difficulties finding jobs, and enrolling children in school and becoming part of community life. Inadequate transit service affects where newcomers can live and work and whether they connect to the community. Municipalities are finding innovative ways to remove these and other barriers to successful settlement and engage newcomers to ensure their meaningful participation in our communities.

In a competitive world where talented workers are highly mobile, Canadian cities are working to meet these needs, deliver the core services that ensure newcomers start on solid ground, and have the greatest opportunity to establish roots in our communities.

[The Federation of Canadian Municipalities \(FCM\)](#) is pleased to support the work of Cities of Migration to highlight leadership in cities and communities across Canada in the [Canadian edition of Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration.](#)

New immigrants are essential to maintaining strong communities in a prosperous Canada. Helping newcomers to achieve their potential and their dreams is a role that many communities perform well, and sharing best practices such as the initiatives explored in this report will help communities everywhere to embrace and foster all that newcomers have to offer.

[Karen Leibovici is the Federation of Canadian Municipalities \(FCM\) President and a Councillor, City of Edmonton.](#) FCM has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901. FCM represents close to 90% of the Canadian population – almost 2,000 municipal governments across the country.

Focus On Youth: an interview with Natalia Chan

By Evelyn
November 10, 2009
[Interview](#)



Interview: Natalia Chan, Research Associate, Young Foundation
City: London
Good Idea: [Dealing With Diabetes: The Maslaha Project](#)

1. Our project Cities of Migration is about urban integration, what's the best example that you've seen recently?

Spitalfields City Farm where I was surprised to see the number of community activities happening. It felt like integration on a much bigger scale – not only bringing together groups of people from different communities, but also bringing nature into an urban environment.

2. Your projects, “Maslaha Engage” and “Thinking Allowed” are about engaging “youth”, so how did you get them interested in your work?

Maslaha has been built on and inspired by conversations with young people right from the start. Our early research showed a lack of accessible resources to answer the questions from young Muslims living within a western society.

Natalia Chan

Young people can be our harshest critics, but also our most important advisors, making sure we really address the key issues, and in a way that makes sense to them. For example, feedback from young people have informed the development of our website all the way through to ensure it's something they will use and find interesting and exciting as well as useful.

3. With blogs and the web it seems easier than ever for youth voices to be heard, but who is listening to them? And if you asked them, who would they say they wanted to have listening to them?

Muslim communities have experienced a lot of negative media over the past few years. Many young people have told us that they just wanted to grab a camera and shout down it, to be given some kind of forum to have their voices heard. Maslaha "Engage" is both a window into what it's like to be a young Muslim in Britain today, and also a mouthpiece.

Who they want to be heard by? That would depend on the young person you talk to – some express a keen interest in politics, with others it's about being able to open up other sectors, express yourself in the arts, or have the opportunity to participate in all areas of society without being labelled or stereotyped.

4. In person/online or over the phone – whats the best way to connect with this age group? Are you using Facebook or Twitter ?

Sure, you have to bring all of these media together, using the web and film, social media. But you also have to get out and talk to people who are already working with young people, organising events and discussion groups through schools, youth groups and more.

5. What have you learned from working with these different youth groups?

Well, they're not backwards in coming forward! They have been given free reign to criticise our website and tell us what they want! They are great at reminding us about what really matters, in keeping us in tune with the real issues that need to be addressed by Maslaha. For example, one of our Engage films is essentially a health message around the use of Khat in the Somali community. This project was entirely driven by a young woman who felt passionate about that subject and it taught us a lot in the process. We are constantly blown away by their creativity and ideas. They are definitely worth listening to.

For more on the Mashala Project see: [Dealing With Diabetes: The Maslaha Project](#) and [Dealing With Diabetes and Other Everyday Dilemmas: The Maslaha Project](#)

In Dublin with Intercultural Cities: Local Strategies for diversity advantage

By ktuner
February 20, 2013
Uncategorized



From February 6 to 8, 2013, representatives from over 60 European cities met in Dublin to celebrate five years of the Intercultural Cities initiative (ICC) and its mission to test "a culturally competent approach to integrating diverse communities." Cities of Migration Project Leader Kim Turner reports back from [Intercultural Cities' Milestone event](#) on how European cities are putting diversity to work and what's ahead for cities that want to realize the "diversity advantage."

The Council of Europe is one of modern Europe's oldest institutions, founded in 1949 in a world still recovering from the ravages of war with a mission to uphold human rights, democratic development, the rule of law and cultural co-operation. Today it represents 47 member states with some 800 million citizens. While the Council's values remain essentially unchanged, its people are increasingly urban, mobile and diverse, their historic linguistic and cultural diversity further enriched by more recent migrations from old and new worlds in Africa, Asia and the Americas. [The Intercultural Cities project](#) (ICC) embodies the Council's vision while reflecting Europe's new experience and shared goals for a more inclusive society.

Intercultural Cities: Local Strategies for diversity advantage

The working theme of the conference and milestone event was *Intercultural Cities: Local Strategies for diversity advantage*. 250 representatives from over 60 cities gathered to review the success of ICC's intercultural model for urban renewal and city leadership on immigrant integration, to take stock of what ICC cities have achieved, what works and what doesn't, how to measure success and explore what challenges still lie ahead. The 3-day event included panels, workshops, brainstorming and conversation with a healthy mix of ministers, mayors and deputy mayors, councilors and senior city officials, as well as academics, civil society leaders, business leaders, artists and students.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=http://www.youtube.com/embed/oFxISoVfd5E>



The Intercultural Cities (ICC) project was founded in 2008 by the Council of Europe and the European Union, as a joint action designed to help cities develop and exchange good intercultural practices that contribute to social cohesion while reducing racism and xenophobia. Importantly, [the intercultural cities approach](#) promotes local strategies that focus on diversity as an opportunity. ICC has developed a practical program model that starts with the formal commitment of city leadership, includes an in-depth benchmarking process based on an assessment tool and [Intercultural City Index](#) developed for the project by [BAKBASEL](#) (building on the seminal work of the [OpenCities](#) project), and is followed by an action plan keyed to the gaps and opportunities uniquely shaped by each city's history and profile.

Cities are learning from cities

Intercultural cities, like cities everywhere, are leading the way with innovative policies and programs that ensure immigrants are welcomed and integrated into their new hometowns, where they can contribute to the local economy and culture. Doing this well, collapsing natural time frames, avoiding the pitfalls of bad policy, reaping the rewards of good practice – this is what the conference organizers must have meant when they said they were "putting diversity to work."

We heard much about the leadership of cities like [Copenhagen](#), [Oslo](#) and [Rotterdam](#) whose success in developing inclusive, sustainable local solutions is all the more remarkable given the troubling national narratives that often dominate their media. How old cities of migration like Lisbon are now being enriched by immigrant investors from old world colonies. [Barcelona](#) and [Montreal](#) are exploring intercultural identities shaped by the experience of coexistence in minority-majority societies. And from [Neukölln in Berlin](#), while much of Europe agonizes over the entry of new states into the Union, we heard about the work of [neighbourhood mothers](#) working with the city and school officials to ensure no child is left behind.

It was also exciting to see the number of smaller and new gateway cities, from Scandinavia to eastern Europe, that were bringing new ideas to the table. For example, the [action plan developed by Botkyrka, Sweden](#), to guide the city of 80,000 from "coexistence to cooperation," and its innovative use of "Dilemma Workshops" to address issues that arise along the way.

Opportunities for reflection are rare these days, and can be ponderous affairs, so I really appreciated the spirited, creative way in which issues and milestones were addressed in the program. Phil Wood was there, co-author with Richard Landry of the groundbreaking publication, [The Intercultural City: Planning for Diversity Advantage](#) (Comedia, 2007), the big screen Twitter feed was buzzing, a local cartoonist translated key messages into action figures, and a city-building activity turned ideas into neighbourhood streets, schools and public space on a giant, folding city plan.

Dublin played the perfect host. Outside its magnificent Georgian buildings, it rained, the river Liffy meandered, early daffodils were in bloom. Chinese New Year celebrations were a blast. In a country that has historically known more about the "grief of emigration" than immigration's new world, most people here seem to grasp the notion of living together intuitively and are open to cultural hybridization. If your beer's not Guinness, then maybe a Pilsner will do.

Toronto Explores Municipal Voting for Non-Citizens

By ktuner
Uncategorized

Last month, Toronto City Council re-opened a discussion on the issue of municipal voting by non-citizens, joining cities like Dublin and Oslo where all residents have the right to cast their ballot at the local level and are actively encouraged to vote.

Indeed, [Dublin's city framework for integration makes voting rights the key to immigrant empowerment](#). In Oslo, non-citizens who have resided legally in Norway for three years have the right to vote in local elections, and Oslo's City Hall has been used for citizenship ceremonies since the revision and expansion of the Citizen Act in 2006.

This is Toronto's second attempt to bring non-citizen voting rights to public attention. A local councillor brought the surprise motion to give all permanent residents (according to the federal government) the right to vote in the 2014 municipal elections to the city council's Community Development and Recreation Committee. The session included a panel presentation and the tabling of three new reports: [the Toronto Newcomer Strategy, Undocumented Workers in Toronto, and Federal Changes in Immigration Legislation and Policy](#).

Extending voter rights is not a new idea. Fifteen European Union countries, such as Belgium, Denmark, Spain and the UK, permit EU and third-country nationals to vote in local or regional elections. New Zealand gives legal immigrants full voting rights in local and national elections after one year of residency.

Myer Siemiatycki, contributor to the Cities of Migration report, [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, pdf\)](#), believes voting rights is critical to building an inclusive society:

"What exactly does Toronto (one of the world's great immigrant cities) gain by preventing hundreds of thousands of immigrant residents from voting on municipal election day? We certainly know what is lost. A few years back, while visiting Toronto, Dublin's Mayor Michael Conaghan was asked how immigrants there feel about being able to vote in that city's elections before they become citizens of Ireland. He replied: "They like the idea of being asked for their vote. They feel a part of the city, and I think that's important...I suppose they feel they're not being dismissed.""

Related links:

- [Dublin: Did You Know You Can Vote? Cities and Democracy at Work](#)
- [Diversity in Europe: The Challenge of Dealing with Third Country Nationals' Political Participation \(Fidele Mutwarasibo, Institute of Public Affairs\)](#)
- [Municipal Voting Rights for Non-Canadian Citizens \(Myer Siemiatycki, Mowat Centre\)](#)
- [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, pdf\)](#)

City to City Learning: From Boston to Toronto to Chicago

By kturner
Uncategorized



Since receiving an [Intercultural Innovation Award from UNAOC last year](#), [DiverseCity OnBoard](#) has been hard at work sharing its success at diversifying board governance with other interested community organizations. Cities of Migration had a chance to catch up with one of its new partners, Eva Millona of the [Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition \(MIRA\)](#). In this video, Eva reflects on learning from the success of others, about bringing DiverseCity onBoard to Boston, and a MIRA project that's travelling to Chicago.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=http://www.youtube.com/embed/geO3MFjNrbM>



Related Cities of Migration links:

- Boston: [MBoston: MIRA: Media Advocacy With A Human Face](#)
- [Building a Movement of Diverse Decision-Makers Internationally](#)
- [Eva Millona: Media as a Tool for Change](#)
- Toronto: [Changing the Face of Leadership: DiverseCity onBoard](#)

Chicago's Plan for a Thriving, Welcoming City

By kturner
[Interview](#)



In the year since [Chicago's Office of New Americans](#) opened, Director Adolfo Hernandez has spearheaded Mayor Rahm Emanuel's ambitious plan to make Chicago "the most immigrant-friendly city" in the U.S.

[In a Cities of Migration webinar interview with Suzette Brooks Masters](#) of New York's J.M. Kaplan Fund, Adolfo describes how the 27-point New Americans Plan emerged through intense community consultations and the need to find innovative solutions to program funding in a tough economy.

Suzette Brooks Masters: Let's dig a little deeper on Chicago's New Americans Plan. First, how did the plan come to be? What was the role of the new mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel?

Also, when you first took the position of director, you reached out to many stakeholders before engaging them formally in an advisory committee with accountability for the plan. Tell us about your process for ensuring immigrants and immigration issues were front and centre? What are the roles of NGOs and other advocates in pushing local governments to do more?

Adolfo Hernandez: I did a lot of work during the mayoral campaign to create a clear vision for what a municipality could do and what a candidate could do to make Chicago the most immigrant-friendly city in the country. The campaign strategy of a local advocacy group, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, included laying out some tangible goals. The idea for creating something like an Office of New Americans came out of one of their meetings with the then-candidate Mayor Emanuel.

"An important role for NGOs to play is to give our elected leaders... clear ways that they can be supported and tangible things that they can do."

This is one of the important things that NGOs can do. Instead of saying that the status quo isn't working or that we need to do something more, it is developing ideas and strategies for our elected officials to implement. You may have an elected official who is open to an idea or is willing to listen to an issue but may not have a clear idea of how to move forward. I think that an important role for NGOs to play is to give our elected leaders, as well as some of our other municipal leaders, clear ways that they can be supported and tangible things that they can do. This is one of the most difficult things that a NGO could tackle, but it's probably one of the most effective and useful.

In terms of the accountability, it was so important to me to make sure that we had community buy-in – from NGOs, the private sector, faith groups and academics. I wanted community buy-in for several reasons, partially for selfish reasons. I don't think any city has a large bucket of money to dedicate to immigrant integration. It was absolutely clear to me from the onset that we would need strong partnerships with people across sectors to implement any of these initiatives. There are very few parts of the initiative which would rely on city governments or services alone. A lot of it would have to rely on really creative and innovative partnerships – the private sector, small businesses, NGOs and city government.

This can add some challenges to the process – having 50 voices in the room and trying to build consensus is not an easy process. But what you end up with is a much better quality product. And you also end with community buy-in, partners and people sitting at the table who are willing to roll up their sleeves to get the work done. This is absolutely critical. We have a great NGO community in the city of Chicago and they have all been willing to sit at the table and become partners to help implement this plan.

Suzette Brooks Masters: Chicago has been leading a movement of cities seeking to attract and retain immigrants as a key factor in preserving their economic vitality. There are a number of initiatives in the Chicago Plan that have to do with economic vitality and making sure immigrants can contribute. But there is another element – "the secret sauce" – that can make for a really coherent and successful integration initiative, and that's the welcoming component. What are your recommendations for other cities who want to be more welcoming? How can leadership make sure that the whole community is working well together and immigrants feel included? This is about more than services or getting loans to start businesses.

Adolfo Hernandez: What is clear to us is the economic story hasn't been told as often or as prominently. I think of our plan as an economic plan for the city of Chicago and its primary strategy is that of supporting our immigrant population. This may seem counter intuitive to many folks in the advocacy world. As a son of once-undocumented immigrants, it's not the reason I do this work, but this is a message that's going to win over people who aren't advocates.



That's a really important point to make. We need to tell the story of immigrants being assets and contributors to our cities and to our country, and not people who rely just on our services or the goodness of other peoples' hearts. They are people who take risks to come here and work and sacrifice and make our cities richer and stronger. That is a really important story to tell. That is why we focus on economic messaging. But I think you are absolutely right about the special sauce – making sure we are a welcoming city. Just last week I was in a meeting with some of the newest

tech businesses in our city – 25 % of all new tech start ups are led by immigrants and that's across the country – but one of the things this group kept talking about was that there was more to quality of life than just the business environment. There was how they felt when they walked into a library, when they interacted with police, when they went to one of our Chicago public schools, when they went into one of our city agencies, and whether they can talk to someone in their language. These were prominent business people from and around our city who were talking about quality of life, this "welcoming."

This is one of the things that we have been thinking about actively. As we developed policies and programs, we were also thinking about what this culture looks and feels like. We want to make sure that we are creating opportunities for exchange within our business corridors and that we are developing training for our police officers and teachers. So much of what I want is to make sure that we are institutionalizing some of these changes and not just doing a one-day workshop or one-day community exchanges. But rather that we are creating opportunities and venues for these exchanges to happen on a regular basis and that we are doing them in prominent city locations which sends a very clear message to the city as a whole – we are an international city, we are a city of immigrants, we are a welcoming city – and that is one of the reasons that we thrive economically and socially as well as culturally.

Suzette Brooks Masters: Can you reflect on how different cities and city conditions may require different policy solutions. If you were just starting out, would you do it differently?

Adolfo Hernandez: One of the ways that I describe what is happening in Chicago is that I feel like we are in a bit of a bubble—we have a city, a municipality, a county and a state that all have taken very progressive stances on immigrants and immigration laws in general. We have also felt a bit of a responsibility to push further, harder and faster, and to set models for other places around the country. But what is also very clear, that even just 30 minutes outside of Chicago, there may be a suburb where the environment is completely different. As we were creating a plan for the city, we wanted to have a plan that could be shared, where pieces of it could be adapted to different political and cultural realities. That's something that the NGO community particularly, should be attuned to.

I think there are plenty of opportunities to do things that are immigrant friendly and aren't necessarily controversial. I'm incredibly proud of our naturalization initiative in partnership with a local NGO It specifically focuses on helping people who are here legally. Even the staunchest anti-immigrant legislator would say we need a legal process. We have in the state of Illinois about 300,500 people who have undergone that legal process and just need a little more help to become citizens.

When residents become citizens they earn more, pay more in taxes and tend to own homes at a higher rate. We see poverty levels decrease and we see more women in the work force. These are all things that are great for cities. The naturalization initiative focuses on helping 10,000 people to become citizens over the next two and a half years. It is beneficial and non-controversial because we are helping people who have already taken the legal steps to become citizens. We also have a Welcoming City Ordinance, which makes sure that we don't have our local law enforcement enforcing federal immigration law, which is very difficult to do politically. Because of our status as a gateway city, we decided we could take that approach.

What is really interesting is that I've seen smaller cities around the country that have experienced an inflow of immigrants take these positions as well. There are active NGO communities that are building relationships with local law enforcements and getting local law enforcements to understand that there is an overall detriment to public safety when a large segment of the population doesn't feel safe interacting or communicating with police. As a municipal employee and someone who works at the mayor's office, I feel a responsibility to go out into communities and not be afraid to have difficult conversations with community organizations – with churches, individuals and immigrant communities.

We don't differentiate between legal immigrants and undocumented immigrants in our plan and that's very much on purpose. We think immigrants as a whole contribute to our city. Again, that's something that may not be true for all municipalities depending on their history, size and scale, but I think it's something that you really need to be attuned to. What are the political realities? What are some of the shifting demographics? Where are their potential allies within city government and how do you build on those relationships? Maybe by doing things that are seen as slightly less controversial, you can build towards some of the more difficult policies – the ones that might be harder to implement.

Suzette Brooks Masters: Tell us about the work you are doing with other cities in this new Welcoming Cities initiative. How is it helping cities in different parts of the country, often with very different agendas or contexts, to move forward on greater immigrant integration and community inclusion?

Adolfo Hernandez: One of the things that was clear to me was that this [Plan] couldn't just be about what's going to work for Chicago. The mayor and city has a national profile. So, what could we do for other cities and municipalities across the country? We also wanted to throw down a challenge. Mayors and cities are competitive and our mayor has set an ambitious goal. So we have been sharing. I have learned so much about my counterparts in cities around the country about different initiatives – in New York, Miami, San Francisco, Boston, Houston – and what they were doing. This isn't a completely original plan. What is original about it is that it's looking in a comprehensive way at how a city can support immigrant integration.

We have been co-leading an effort with Welcoming America to create a dialogue and a space for cities. My counterparts from around the country have a space for information-sharing on best practices – what initiatives are working really well, what's not working as well. Welcomingcities.org was recently launched and we are working on ensuring cities have that opportunity to learn from each other, share our best practices and lessons learned, as well as up-to-date information about what's happening at the federal level that effects us on the local level and vice versa.

For more information about Chicago's New American Plan, you can always feel free to reach out to me directly or visit <http://cityofchicago.org/newamericans>.

Related Links:

- [Big Ideas: Chicago's New Americans Plan: Building a Thriving and Welcoming City](#) – Webinar video and resources
- [Chicago Opens Office of New Americans](#)

Adolfo Hernandez is the Director of [Chicago's Office of New Americans](#), an office dedicated to making Chicago the most immigrant friendly city in the world by better leveraging the contributions of immigrants through enhanced collaboration with community organizations, academic and faith based institutions, and the private sector. Under his leadership the ONA has launched the New Americans Small Business Series, an innovative series of quarterly events that will foster small business growth in ethnic communities by delivering language accessible information in community settings; launched the Chicago New Americans Initiative with the goal of offering assistance to 10,000 legal permanent residents to become naturalized, U.S. citizens; and spearheaded Chicago's Welcoming City Ordinance, preventing law abiding Chicagoans from being unfairly detained and deported, while reaffirming basic protections and access to services.

Since 2007, **Suzette Brooks Masters** has directed immigration-related grant making at the [J. M. Kaplan Fund](#), a private family foundation in New York City. At the Fund, she focuses primarily on immigrant integration issues, including innovative state and local policy, educational access, professional workforce integration, and receiving community engagement. Prior to joining the Fund, she consulted with non-profit organizations working on behalf of immigrants and refugees, and published extensively on immigration policy subjects. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Ms. Masters practiced corporate and environmental law in New York City until 1999 when she decided to focus exclusively on immigrant issues. She has been active in civic matters since the late 1980's when she co-founded New York Cares. Ms. Masters has served on a number of non-profit boards, including the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the National Immigration Forum, Lawyers Alliance for New York, and New York Cares. Ms. Masters also obtained degrees in Economics from Kings' College, Cambridge University, where she was a Marshall Scholar, and Amherst College.

Brookings Institution: Metros Are on the Front Lines of Immigration Reform

By kturner
Uncategorized



Last month, U.S. President Barak Obama's second inauguration speech thrilled the country's immigration reform sector:

"Our journey is not complete until we find a better way to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants who still see America as a land of opportunity; until bright young students and engineers are enlisted in our workforce rather than expelled from our country."

As a response to these few sentences and a new bipartisan proposal from members of the Senate, four experts from the [Brookings Institution](#)'s Metropolitan Policy Program (including Audrey Singer) have published a reminder that national leaders remember that cities are critical in this debate.

"Bipartisanship aside, the ultimate success of any reform effort will hinge on how changes are implemented at the local level. Although reforming immigration is a federal issue, the myriad of state and municipal actions in recent years are a pressing reminder that localities are where the effects of immigration, both negative and positive, play out.

National leaders should focus on the experiences of the country's metropolitan areas, home to 95 percent of the nation's immigrants. Metropolitan areas are the engines of our national economy, our hubs of research and innovation, our centers of human capital, and our gateways of trade. As such, they have been and continue to be on the front lines of the debate over immigration policy."

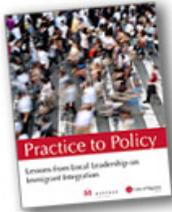
- Read the complete post: [Metros on the Front Lines of Immigration Reform](#)
- Read Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Audrey Singer's essay: [Migration and the Metropolis](#), part of the Cities of Migration [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#).

Why We Need Lessons from Local Leaders

By ktuner
Uncategorized



– By Bonnie Mah, *Cities of Migration*, Maytree



The lived experience of immigration is intensely local. Today, immigrants around the world are choosing to settle in urban areas. They live, work, study and raise their families in cities and their surrounding areas. Consequently, local governments play a powerful and critical role in immigrant integration. Community organizations are in a unique position to support and encourage local governments to fulfill that role.

As the level of government closest to the people, local governments influence how immigrant residents are welcomed and integrated. Successful cities value diversity and these local governments encourage conditions in which immigrants and all residents thrive. As policy makers and service providers, they are responsible for areas that affect our daily lives – such as schools, emergency services, swimming pools and soccer fields, parks and streets. As democratic institutions, they draw on community input and create opportunities for all residents to participate in transparent and accountable decision-making.

Local governments also drive economic development to ensure that the city prospers. As major employers, they can institute good practices in hiring immigrants and managing a diverse workforce. As major procurers of goods and services, they can implement supplier diversity programs to ensure that immigrant-owned or immigrant-friendly businesses have a fair chance to compete for contracts. In these ways, local governments contribute to labour market integration and the success of diverse local businesses, and model good practices to the private and nonprofit sectors.

Successful cities take action across these areas of responsibility. The [Cities of Migration](#) project recently looked at how [local governments](#) in the [U.K.](#) and across Europe, North America and Australasia are taking the lead in welcoming immigrants. These cities are creating conditions that encourage inclusive social, economic and political participation. For example, [Birmingham](#) formed a strategic partnership to improve access to public maternal health care for refugees and vulnerable migrants. In [London](#), the Living Wage Campaign seeks to ensure that all workers are paid a living wage. The campaign targets a class of workers in which immigrants, women and other minorities are over-represented. And in [Blackburn with Darwen](#), the Meet Your Neighbours program brings girls from Muslim, Roman Catholic and secular schools together on a weekend trip. The girls get to know each other and can discover all that they have in common.

In our most recent publication, [Practice to Policy: Lessons for Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#), four international policy experts explore the work that local governments are doing to welcome and integrate immigrants, the conditions that influence their work, and trends in local level immigrant integration.

[Audrey Singer](#) (Washington) paints a picture of shifting metropolitan immigration patterns in North America and internationally. [Roland Roth](#) (Magdeburg and Stendal) explores the ways that cities are recognizing immigrants as a key to urban prosperity, while [Myer Siemiatycki](#) (Toronto) explores the ways that integration influences and is influenced by our public spaces. Finally, [Jan Niessen](#) (Brussels) looks at the ways that national policy interacts with local policy by examining global policy trends and commenting on gaps and convergences.

Certainly, national governments are important. They set the terms of immigration and citizenship, and influence how immigration will build the nation socially and economically. National policies provide the framework in which we work. Too often, though, the conversation around immigration gets stuck at the national level, with local leaders placing all of the responsibility – and possibility – on higher levels of government.

Local governments themselves might not always recognize how much influence they have in integrating immigrant residents, or the range and power of the tools at their disposal. Further, local governments must contend with multiple competing priorities.

Community organizations that work with immigrants and refugees are, therefore, in a critically important position to encourage, support and work with their local governments on immigrant integration.

To this end, *Cities of Migration* makes [10 recommendations for community organizations](#) to guide efforts to work with local governments to accelerate immigrant integration and social, economic and political participation. From connecting local governments with immigrant communities, to helping shape the integration agenda, to proposing program and policy solutions, community organizations can work with local governments to make immigrant integration a priority.

* [First published in the Migrants' Rights Network's Migration Pulse Blog](#).

Bonnie Mah is a Policy and Communications Officer with [Maytree](#), a private foundation based in Toronto, Canada. [Cities of Migration](#) is an international Maytree initiative that shares good ideas from cities that are working on innovative and practical ways to foster inclusion, diversity, and shared urban prosperity.

What Cities Said: Montreal and Greenwich on Building Inclusion with Sport

By Evelyn
March 19, 2013
Uncategorized



In our last webinar, [Levelling the Playing Field: Building Equality and Inclusion with Sport](#), presenters from the [Play It Fair \(PIF\) program](#) in Montreal, Canada, and the [Charlton Athletic Race & Equality Partnership \(CARE\)](#) in Greenwich, UK, shared strategies around the use of partnerships and a participatory approach in developing their sport and recreational programs that promote cross-cultural understanding, collaboration, and equality.

The presenters shared these insights:

Use sport and games to illustrate teamwork and a participatory approach to problem solving

The Play It Fair (PIF) program promotes fair play in games by creating concrete experience for youth to understand inclusion, tolerance, cooperation, and respect for diversity. For example, it promotes a different version of musical chairs. When the music stops, a chair is removed, but instead of excluding a player, the children have to cooperate together to include all the children in

the activity. The children have to work together to figure out how everyone can share and develop a sense of fair play.

Find strategic partners whose mission aligns with yours to help your program grow

Both programs, PIF and CARE rely on the efforts of partners to deliver and expand their work to new audiences. CARE's partnership with the local professional football club was instrumental in bringing in a celebrity football player as a champion for the project, which instantly boosted participation rates. PIF partnered with the City of Montreal's Parks & Recreation programming as part of the city's vision and response to its growing diversity. Having the City as a key champion gave PIF the credibility to expand into other local jurisdictions.

Engage key partners in the monitoring and evaluation process as part of the stakeholder engagement strategy

All programs need to show their impact to partners and funders, but also need to maintain multi-level buy-ins from stakeholders. Integral to CARE's work is a standard monitoring and evaluation system used to collect data and measure against key targets in the program including the use of exit interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and case studies. The monitoring and evaluation process allows CARE to make necessary interventions and adjustments to the program, but always in consultation with their partners to ensure targets are met through a collaborative process.

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Recommendations for Local Governments and Community Partners

By ktuner
January 9, 2013
Uncategorized



In [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, pdf\)](#), we look at what good practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration. Four international experts contribute analysis and policy insights on the range of municipal levers available to promote both immigrants and city success.

- [Recommendations for Local Governments](#)
- [Recommendations for Community Partners](#)

Recommendations for Local Governments

As the essays in this report demonstrate, local governments in leading cities are taking action to encourage conditions that welcome and integrate immigrants into economic, social and political life. Drawing on these analyses, Cities of Migration recommends the following principles guide the immigrant integration efforts of local governments:

1. Recognize the important role that you play in immigrant integration.

Too often, conversations around immigration and integration focus on national policymakers. Local governments, however, have an enormous stake in the settlement outcomes of immigrants. As the level of government closest to the people, you have the best view of how immigrants are integrating, the challenges they face, how to facilitate their success and how to ensure that the city benefits from that success. While it is important that local governments engage with national and sub-national levels of government to inform broad immigration strategies, you must also focus on taking action on immigrant integration across all policy areas that are within local authority.

2. Develop immigration and integration strategies that recognize your city is competing for immigrants.

Even established immigrant gateways cannot assume that they will remain a destination of choice for today's highly skilled and highly mobile immigrants. The number of new and emerging destination cities means that today's immigrants have choice. They use a variety of criteria to choose a new city to call their home. A broad range of factors inform these decisions, and cities can aim to attract immigrants by investing in these areas. When immigrants are welcomed and supported to integrate socially and economically, they will spread word of their success to other potential immigrants.

3. Embed the principles of diversity and equality in all city policies and activities. Put measures in place to hold yourself accountable.

Many cities adopt charters that explicitly value diverse and immigrant residents, and confirm that immigration is an asset to the community, not a problem to be solved. These charters demonstrate a commitment to the integration and participation of all city residents. These principles should also form the basis of action taken by local governments across policies, services and programs. Accountability measures can help ensure that principles do in fact influence city activities.

4. Encourage the mayor to become a public champion for immigrant integration.

Mayors are public symbols of the values and aspirations of a city; their leadership sets the tone for the city's policies and activities. Mayors can show leadership by publicly stating their support for immigration, building broad political consensus and multi-partisan cooperation among elected representatives, and supporting non-political city staff in their immigrant integration efforts.

5. Ensure that immigrants, including non-citizens, can participate in democratic processes. Establish multiple ways for all residents to participate in city governance, and advocate for the right to vote for all city residents.

In many cities, immigrants and especially non-citizens have limited opportunities to participate in the local decision-making that affects them daily. Local governments can include immigrants and non-citizens on councils, boards and consultative bodies to ensure that you hear the voices of immigrant communities. Extending the right to vote to non-citizens ensures that these residents can make their voices heard, and demonstrates your commitment to immigrant residents.

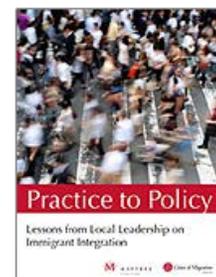
6. Replicate or adapt approaches that have proven successful other cities, including new, smaller and emerging immigrant gateways.

Long-standing immigrant gateway cities have developed and tested strategies over their histories of receiving immigrants, and emerging gateway cities have the benefit of starting fresh with new and innovative practices. Take good ideas from each and adapt them to suit your city's needs and conditions.

7. Target initiatives to multiple demographic groups with similar needs and experiences.

Policy and program initiatives can achieve multiple objectives simultaneously. For example, employment programs that support new businesses might be suitable for both young entrepreneurs and immigrant entrepreneurs who are unfamiliar with local laws and regulations. Similarly, poverty reduction initiatives aimed at low-income workers might also benefit marginalized immigrant and refugee communities, through targeted outreach or a tailored stream of programming.

8. Adopt good client service practices from the private and community sectors.



The desire to access new domestic and international markets has driven many private sector companies to improve their ways of doing business. Leading businesses create specialized products or services for specific client groups and target their marketing accordingly. They also adapt customer service processes to meet the needs of specific groups – for example, by providing multilingual services. Community organizations have intimate knowledge of their client groups and can be a good source of responsive practices.

9. Provide city services in many languages.

City residents who do not speak or read the majority language well will face barriers accessing city programs and services. Local governments can provide services in many languages – by translating written materials, providing telephone or in-person interpretation, and by hiring employees who speak immigrant languages – and ensure that city staff have the cultural competencies needed to serve all residents.

10. Lead by example and set the new standard for inclusive hiring practices.

As major employers, local governments should implement and innovate inclusive hiring and promotion practices. As the competition for skills and labour increases, inclusive hiring practices will ensure that you continue to access talented employees. Further, a diverse workforce enhances your ability to serve the public and create sound policy that reflects your constituents.

11. Use your procurement power to facilitate opportunities for immigrant business owners and immigrant-friendly businesses.

Local governments are also major purchasers of services and supplies, and thus wield considerable procurement power. Establish a procurement policy that values suppliers with immigrant ownership and/or good immigrant employment practices and outcomes. Similarly, the procurement policy can be used to encourage demographically diverse (in gender, age, ability and so on) suppliers more generally.

12. Promote immigrant entrepreneurship as a route to economic integration and to prosperity for all city residents.

Self-employment and business ownership are viable paths to economic integration for many immigrants, including those who were entrepreneurs in their country of origin. Local level policies affect the ability of immigrants to build successful businesses. For example, review planning and zoning regulations to ensure that immigrant entrepreneurs do not face unfair barriers to starting businesses that will contribute to the economy and employ other residents.

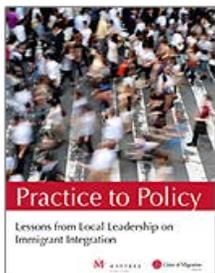
13. Look to public spaces as facilitators and indicators of integration.

People come together in public spaces such as parks, streets, libraries, community centres, and public transportation – areas that are typically governed by local governments. These public spaces are the stage where integration can happen, and can also indicate how city residents interact with each other. Ideally, programs and services that centre on public spaces benefit a wide variety of residents who are welcomed and included in those spaces.

14. Set targets and measure the impact of your programs and services, using international benchmarks where appropriate. Couple this with reliable, longitudinal data that you or other levels of government collect. Analyze and share this information.

Measuring the impact of programs and services will help to allocate resources effectively. Tools such as the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) and the Global Cities Indicators Facility (GCIF) provide international benchmarks and comparators that you can use to measure your progress against other cities of your size and character. Together with longitudinal population data, this information will inform policy and program development and indicate how well large scale or long-term measures are working. Further, sharing the information and analysis allow the community and private sectors to target their activities as well.

Recommendations for Community Partners



While this series focuses on the role of local governments in immigrant integration, community sector organizations can play an important role in influencing local policy by working with local governments. To this end, Cities of Migration recommends that the following principles should guide organizations' efforts to work with local governments on immigrant integration:

1. Understand how local government works, and their role in immigrant integration.

Local governments can be large, complex organizations. Identify the departments that are most relevant to your work, and the individuals who influence decision-making in this area. This will help you target the different channels or pathways to access them. Further, understanding which policy areas come under local jurisdiction, how funding is allocated, and the processes and timelines that they use to make decisions will help you to effectively tailor your work and relations with your local government.

2. Identify champions within local government.

Individuals who understand and support your work can give you insight into decision-making processes, as well as access to decision-makers. Champions who are in senior positions and/or are well-regarded can also give your organization credibility.

3. Tell your story using evidence and anecdotes.

Many groups and issues are competing for attention from local government. To bring your issue to the forefront, tell a compelling story using evidence and anecdotes. Evidence can include research or statistics that demonstrate the importance of immigration in your city or country, the need for and outcomes of your own work, and successful initiatives from other sectors or jurisdictions. Anecdotes demonstrate how your work affects individual city residents. Your story should clearly demonstrate what you bring to immigrant integration.

4. Aim to influence local governments on their agenda and priorities.

Local governments have different methods of taking input from community sector organizations when planning and setting priorities for their work. If you can provide input during these processes, you can help to put immigrant integration on the agenda that affects all city activities. Even if you are not yet able to influence the development of the city's agenda, positioning your work within their existing agenda could open opportunities for them to support or partner with you on your work.

5. Propose solutions and plans to implement them.

Local governments must take action to serve city residents. Too often, community organizations focus only on describing problems. This leaves local governments with the task of trying to solve the problems. Instead, draw on your knowledge and expertise in immigrant integration to propose programs,

services or policy changes that could help to solve these problems. In addition, propose realistic plans for what local governments could do themselves, or how they could partner with or fund other organizations to do the work.

6. Articulate what the local government can do to support you in your work.

Consider the different ways that the local government could support your work. For example, it might fund programs, provide information or data, convene stakeholders or other levels of government that you want to talk to, participate as an employer in employment programs, and so on. Determine what the most valuable and realistic contributions would be, and ask for them.

7. Articulate what you can do to support your local government's work.

Often, community groups approach government only to make requests. However, you have much to offer your local government – for example, intimate knowledge of the community you serve, innovative ideas, the ability to carry out programs outside of the city's infrastructure, and so on. Knowing what assets you bring to the table can help you to position yourself as a partner in achieving mutual objectives. This can also encourage a collaborative, reciprocal relationship and lead to formal partnerships with the local government.

8. Put forward your greatest asset: the community and clients you work with.

Although they are the level of government closest to the people, local governments tend to lack the direct, trusted and open access that community organizations often have with the people they serve. By facilitating access between the two groups, you can help local governments hear the voices of their constituents, and provide opportunities for community members to use their power as civic actors. For example, you might be able to help connect local governments with community members to serve on public agencies, boards or commissions.

9. Encourage the local government to promote and value the civic engagement of immigrant residents.

Civic and political engagement is a cornerstone of immigrant integration. Local governments and institutions benefit from hearing the voices of all residents. By supporting immigrant residents to engage with local civic processes – for example, school boards decisions, local elections and so on – you help local government develop sound and responsive policies and help immigrant residents shape their community.

10. Develop a strategy for government relations; set goals and measure your progress.

As with all of your programs and activities, think strategically about your relationship with your local government and develop a plan to achieve your goals. Measure your progress and adjust your approach as needed.

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- [full report, pdf] [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

National Policies and Local Realities in Immigrant Integration

By ktuner
January 8, 2013
[Opinion](#)



In [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, pdf\)](#), we look at what good practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration. Four international experts contribute analysis and policy insights on the range of municipal levers available to promote both immigrants and city success.

Jan Niessen
Migration Policy Group

This short essay explores the dynamic interplay between the global and local dimensions of integration policies. It opens with a reminder that mobility is among the main characteristics of city life, and that this calls for comprehensive policy responses. Next, it looks at the distinction between public, civic and private sector policies that cuts across all levels of governance, and argues that these sectors should reflect the diversity of the population in the way they operate. It looks at how national policies can create favourable integration conditions at the local level. Finally, it examines international trends in migration policy.



Modern migration is local, fluid

Integration is about changes in societies and city landscapes, in the lives of individuals and communities. It takes place where people live, interact and must constantly adapt to changing situations. Local communities are safe havens and cities are economic motors in a seemingly borderless world, in which people, capital, goods, services, knowledge, information and ideas move around with varying degrees of freedom and speed. As a result, it is becoming increasingly difficult for individuals to locate opportunities and confront challenges in one place alone. They must be prepared to be mobile and to move both long and short distances and for varying periods of time. Faster and cheaper means of transportation enable them to work and live in more than one place and travel frequently within and between countries and cities. Millions of people across the world work and communicate with each other without ever meeting in person. Cultural and scientific exchange, as well as tourism, continue to grow.

Cities of migration are learning to recognize and capitalize on the fact that migration is not necessarily linear but often becomes a circular process. Migration is more than the geographical movement of people because it leads to the circulation of social and financial capital and to cultural exchange. It leads, in many cases, to the upward social mobility of immigrants and their families. Consequently, as a multi-faceted, long-term and rather open-ended process, integration requires a confluence of global and local, general and specific policy interventions.

Public, private and civic sectors all have a role to play

Public policies, as well as policies of civil society and private sector organizations, can create favourable, less favourable or unfavourable integration conditions. As regulator and policy-maker, national governments adopt anti-discrimination laws, review existing general policies and laws through the lens of equality, allocate resources and implement policies facilitating equal access to employment, education, health and other public services, decision-making and citizenship. Civil society and private sector organizations operate at local and global levels as, for example, commercial firms, social enterprises, welfare and community organizations, sports clubs, civic and political organizations, or cultural and scientific institutes. These organizations knit society together. Their social commitment can find an expression in the implicit and explicit acknowledgement of society's diversity, which inspires compliance with anti-discrimination laws; the screening of internal regulations on provisions preventing or facilitating the participation of specific groups of individuals; the adoption of programs, projects and products from which a diverse population benefit; and the setting of clear targets for specific categories of people within the population. The public, private and civil society sectors can work together and learn more from each other more than they often seem to realize. Cities often function as successful laboratories.

Despite the differences between public, civil society and private sector organizations, they have much in common, not only in what they can do to promote integration, but also in how they go about doing it. As societal entities they can promote integration in the way they operate and reflect the diversity of the population. For the public sector this is a democratic duty, for civil society and the private sector it is a matter of good citizenship. By including diversity considerations in their employment, procurement and service delivery practices, governments at all levels not only demonstrate their social commitment, but also set a powerful example that may attract followers in other sectors.

Political parties' role to promote the inclusion of immigrants cannot be limited to designing, adopting and reviewing the implementation of public policies. They can also promote the implementation of these policies by political institutions (such as, parliaments, city councils, national and local implementing agencies, etc.) and by parties themselves. Parties can be asked whether as organizations they reflect the diverse population they want or claim to represent. They can also be asked to demonstrate a systemic and pro-active approach to opening up their organizations to people with a migrant background. This entails the application of diversity principles in electoral strategies, in recruitment and trainings for members, leaders, elected officials and employees and in the engagement of suppliers. Cities have demonstrated themselves to be ideal testing grounds for such an approach.

National policy influences local integration

Integration at the local level is made much more difficult when the residence status of immigrants is not secured, their labour market mobility is restricted, they cannot live with their families, they do not have equal access to education, they cannot participate in decision-making or acquire citizenship, and when they are not protected against discrimination. Therefore, city governments have a big interest in the creation of favourable conditions in all of these areas. Many of these areas fall within the authority of national governments, which can be inspired by international standards and practices. That is why in many countries cities are working together to have their voices heard not only at national level, but also at international level.

Global trends in national migration policy

The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) provides local integration actors very useful contextual information. This web-based tool compares in great detail national integration policies of more than 30 countries across the globe. It shows that integration policies change little by little despite regular calls and plans for more dramatic changes. It finds strong positive correlations between the various policy areas. Most countries that do well (or poorly) in one

area of integration do well (or poorly) in the others. With the help of MIPEX, local integration actors can establish how national policies play out on the local level and whether or not they create equal or favourable integration conditions. The comparative index and rating scale helps local actors set targets and influence national policies. The following provides examples of where this can be applied for a number of crucially important policy areas.

Securing immigrants' residence and protecting family life helps to create stable local communities. What does it take to grant long-term resident status, and therefore the ability to work, study, retire and live in the country just like nationals? In many countries, immigrants must pass many different eligibility requirements and conditions, some of which are more restrictive than others. Many cannot apply, even when they live in the country for five years or more. Countries with restrictive definitions of family tend to also impose burdensome conditions on the sponsor. Those with inclusive definitions often limit conditions out of respect for family life. Normally, applicants must prove a "stable and sufficient" income, but why – as is the case in many countries – does that need to be vague and higher than what nationals need to live on social assistance? Few countries impose language or integration conditions. But as more countries do, they are extending these to spouses before arrival. Once admitted, families must, and indeed tend to, acquire both a secure residence permit and equal rights, but, to get an autonomous residence permit, they face significant waiting periods and conditions.

Getting people to work and contribute to the local economy is a crucial concern. Not all immigrants have equal access to the full labour market, education system or employment services. For instance, national laws often restrict opportunities in the public sector to citizens, who may also have better procedures to recognise their foreign degrees. Most immigrants can use public employment offices. But are these general services able to address specific needs, especially for migrant women and youths? Does allocation of national funds allow city governments to provide the much needed targeted measures?

Education enhances immigrants' capabilities. Do all children have the right to attend kindergarten and basic education? How many school systems are actually making professional assessments of what newcomer children learned abroad? Are immigrant children able to access general measures to help disadvantaged students? Local authorities and schools often retain broad discretion on whether or not to address the specific needs of immigrant pupils, their teachers and parents. However, without clear, nationally defined requirements or entitlements, pupils do not get the support they need throughout their schooling or across the country, especially in communities with many more immigrants and/or many fewer resources. Few countries have systems to diversify schools or the teaching staff; most schools are therefore missing out on new opportunities brought by a diverse student body. National and local authorities can join forces to change that situation.

Political and civic participation enhances the sense of belonging among immigrant communities. Immigrants have limited opportunities to inform and improve the policies that affect them daily as many countries still have laws denying immigrants basic political liberties and voting rights. However, in many countries consultative bodies exist at local level. These bodies provide some meaningful opportunities for immigrants to improve policies. National and local authorities fund, to a greater or lesser extent, immigrants' civic activities and inform them of political rights.

Citizenship promotes integration. However, procedures to acquire citizenship often discourage or outright exclude many immigrants from trying. In Europe, for example, an immigrant must wait an average of seven years simply to apply for citizenship. National laws make citizenship conditional upon income and high fees. Applicants are normally required to know the language, often at high or unclear levels. Language and citizenship tests rarely come with the support to pass them. Only after these rather discretionary procedures can applicants enjoy some protection from statelessness and withdrawal.

In conclusion, the question of whether public policy can address the needs of local integration can be answered along the following lines. Integration processes are too complicated to locate policies in one place alone. It is necessary to distinguish between levels of governance and formulate policy responses where they are needed; to address problems and seize opportunities where they arise or originate. Ideally, these responses are complementary: addressing the economic, social, cultural and civic sides of integration; considering the local, regional, national and international dimensions of it; and dealing with its social and legal aspects.

[Jan Niessen is director of the Migration Policy Group](#), an independent policy organization in Brussels, Belgium. His professional activities include designing and conducting international campaigns and comparative research projects (such as MIPEX, the Migrant Integration Policy Index); undertaking feasibility studies; establishing and managing international expertise networks and authoring , reports, handbooks and manuals for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the European Parliament. He advises public and private sector organizations on matters related to international migration, integration, anti-discrimination and diversity.

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Taking It to the Streets: A Municipal Role in Immigrant Integration

By ktuner
January 9, 2013
[Opinion](#)



In [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, pdf\)](#), we look at what good practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration. Four international experts contribute analysis and policy insights on the range of municipal levers available to promote both immigrants and city success.

Myer Siemiatycki
Ryerson University

Streets are the defining characteristic of cities and urban life. What distinguishes cities from rural and small-town sites is the street – at once both a reflection and embodiment of all that is unique about cities. Urban population, architecture, infrastructure, economics, society, culture, order and disorder all are manifest on the street. This essay examines how the street can become a path to immigrant integration.



Cities divided, cities united

We are living in “the age of migration.”¹ More humans than ever now live outside their country of birth. More countries than ever are now major senders or receivers of migration flows. And whatever part of the world immigrants move to, they overwhelmingly settle in cities.

Cities have always been composed of diverse populations. Deyan Sudjic reminds us: “The tension between different ethnic groups has been the essence of big city life for 3,000 years. By definition, cities are places that attract outsiders, and which form a meeting place between different cultures.”² On what terms do these different cultures converge in the modern city? Sharon Zukin speaks for many urban scholars in replying that the well-being of cities now depends on whether they “can create an inclusive public culture.” Such successful integration may well begin on the street, as “accepting diversity implies sharing public space.”³

City streets and public spaces can reflect either social inclusion or social exclusion. Landscapes of exclusion are typically characterized by such features as:

- immigrant ghettos;
- unequal access to institutions and spaces of employment, learning, government, etc.; and
- municipal planning policies that are unresponsive to the distinct residential, recreational, religious and cultural needs of diverse communities.

Such patterns inevitably create polarized and divided cities.

There are many risks in such a situation. They include social strife and the lost opportunity to fully benefit from the human capital of a diverse urban population. Streets can either divide or unite urban residents.

Municipal leadership: Landscapes of inclusion

Municipal governments generally have limited powers, as assigned by a senior level of government. Typically, municipalities have very little direct role in immigration policy. National governments set policies related to immigration admission, status and citizenship; they frame the terms of integration around approaches ranging from marginalization to assimilation to multiculturalism, depending on the country.

But it is cities that are the destination point of migration journeys. In Canada, for instance, 95% of all immigrants in the country live in a census metropolitan area – the most populated urban places. And more than 60% of all immigrants in Canada live in just three cities – Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

Immigrants make cities their home. The record shows there are many steps – big and small – that cities can take to promote the integration of immigrants in their new urban home. Some of the most creative and effective initiatives assure that urban space – streets, but also parks, schools, libraries – serve the entire population. As Valerie Preston and Lucia Lo state, good things happen “when immigrants successfully transform the city’s built environment, creating places that signify their presence and testify to their rights to occupy public space.”⁴

Because municipal governments typically regulate the use of urban space, they play a critical gatekeeping role in what can be built and happen on the street and other public spaces. Let’s look at some examples of how cities are promoting integration, sometimes street by street.

Taking it to the street

Local initiatives can be taken by anyone with a good idea. As the examples below show, this can involve leadership from municipal officials, newcomer communities and members of the broader urban community. What all these examples have in common is an attempt to use urban space as a pathway to equitable integration.

Planning – Municipalities are increasingly becoming committed to “multicultural planning,” which Mohammad Qadeer defines as “sensitivity of the planning process to cultural diversity.”⁵ This leads to better responsiveness by cities to the distinct spatial needs of immigrant and minority communities.

Zoning – The “[Boston Back Streets Program](#)” is a City of Boston government commitment to preserve zoning areas for small and mid-sized light industry and commercial supply firms typically owned by immigrant and minority residents. Often located off the beaten track, these firms were being displaced by



urban re-development. Recognizing their importance to immigrant employment and enterprise, Boston has taken steps to assure space is available for the operation of such businesses.

Enterprise – Cities are now also showing greater commitment towards ethnic retailing. “Ethnic retailing,” Zhizi Zhuang observes, “is fluid, dynamic, and complex in nature.”⁶ It can operate from stores located on some of the city’s oldest streets, or in shiny new suburban malls built on different scale and design than traditional western malls. Recognizing the importance of local ethnic economies, city governments are now more flexible in their approach to retail location, size, signage, parking, etc.

Culture and faith – Thanks to migration, non-Christian religions are the fastest growing faith communities in cities of the global north. This has given rise to applications to build new mosques, gurdwaras and temples. In many cities, such plans have generated tensions and conflict with neighbours and municipal officials. Successful cities, Annick Germain declares, are creative in “reconciling new places of worship with their environment.”⁷ In this fashion, Engin Isin and I concluded in a study of building mosques in Toronto, “[c]ities often open themselves to the world one building at a time.”⁸

Living together – Many cities promote walking the streets as a way for immigrants to get to know their new city, and longer-term residents to become familiar with newcomer communities. [In The Hague, the city organizes tours](#) of immigrant places of worship, neighbourhoods and markets. In Toronto the local school board takes teachers on “[Community and Faith Walks](#),” visiting newcomer neighbourhoods and places of worship. In Wellington the local council promotes cross-cultural exchanges and business networking between newcomer immigrants and the indigenous Maori population.

Healthy neighbourhoods – The City of Auckland has developed a most ingenious walkway to integration – “[the Walking School Bus](#).” With more than 300 different routes and networks across the city, children and parents walk a set route and schedule to school every day, picking up more participants as they proceed just like a real, motorized bus. In the process diverse families connect, know each other’s homes, and become neighbours.

Multiculturalism – Many cities provide public space for immigrant or multicultural festivals. [When the growing Sikh community in the northern Spanish city of Badalona requested municipal permission](#) to hold a Sikh parade through city streets, the city government first organized community dialogue between the Sikh community and its adjacent neighbourhoods. This built goodwill leading to a successful parade with non-Sikh neighbours and city officials participating in the parade.

Speaking out – Talk or graffiti on the street can sometimes express anti-immigrant sentiments. Barcelona has adopted a creative “[Anti-Rumour Campaign](#)” to counter such views. Working with grassroots organizations, the city trained more than 350 “anti-rumour agents” to deliver public speaking and perform street theatre countering anti-immigrant prejudice.

Libraries – Many cities use their municipal libraries as sites to promote newcomer integration. Typically this includes language and reading circles, offering materials in many languages, and even the provision of settlement services such as employment counseling. Particularly creative is the “[Living Library](#)” program in [Valongo, Portugal](#). It travels to high schools presenting each class its own “book” – which is a real immigrant telling his or her migration story and experience to the class. Students then get to comment and ask questions, based on the slogan “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”⁹

Parks, sport, recreation – Many cities also pro-actively use their parks as sites of immigrant integration, through special programs or making space available for non-traditional activities (e.g. cricket, capoeira, tai chi). [New York, for instance, has a policy to promote newcomer use of parks](#) through such initiatives as special outreach to local newcomer communities, diversity training for park staff, providing more diverse food menus in park restaurants and offering more immigrant-friendly programs. [In Barcelona, an abandoned hospital site in a newcomer neighbourhood](#) was recently converted to a park that has enlivened the area and earned the city an international award for advancing an important “integrative task in a rapidly expanding and multi-ethnic quarter of Barcelona.”¹⁰

Successful integration: A two-way street

Successful integration requires flexibility, goodwill and generosity by both immigrants and their receiving society. Cities are the stage on which this encounter of diverse identities plays out. The essence of city life, Iris Marion Young states, is “the being together of strangers.”¹¹ In this age of migration, cities play a major role in determining whether urban strangers will live together equitably or unequally, harmoniously or in conflict. You can find clues to how your city is performing on the street.

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[Myer Siemiatycki is professor of politics and public administration at Ryerson University](#) in Toronto, Canada. He is the past and founding director of Ryerson’s graduate program in Immigration and Settlement Studies, and past Community Domain Leader at the Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS) in Toronto. His research explores immigrant and minority community civic engagement. Topics of interest have included immigrant and minority political participation, transnationalism, minority religion in the public realm and temporary migration. Much of his research has focused on the immigrant experience in Toronto.

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'Rich and Happy' – Good Local Initiatives for the Integration of Migrants

By ktuner
January 8, 2013
[Opinion](#)



In [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report..pdf\)](#), we look at what good practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration. Four international experts contribute analysis and policy insights on the range of municipal levers available to promote both immigrant and city success.

Roland Roth
Magdeburg-Stendal University

"We are rich and happy because we have so many immigrants," explained Wolfgang Schuster, Mayor of Stuttgart. This came as a surprise to the jury of Germany's first national competition on local integration policy.¹ The competition "Successful integration is no coincidence – Strategies for community policy" showed that cities and towns were starting to think differently about immigration. Previously, integration and migration had long been viewed as a nuisance, a peripheral issue, and, above all, as a problem. The untapped potential of immigrants and their economic and strategic significance had long been overlooked. This new positive, asset-based approach took the jury by surprise.



Following a phase of restrictive migration policy in many Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, the last few decades have seen more open immigration policies that focus on skilled labour. We are experiencing global competition for information technology professionals, creative artists and high skilled individuals upon whom to place our hopes for future prosperity. "Brain gain" rather than "brain drain" is the driving force in today's migration policies. Since the financial crises that started in 2008, the pendulum has begun to swing in the opposite direction. Long-term demographic trends will continue to strengthen the case for immigration even after the economy cools down.

This discussion of the economic framework for migration policy requires both regional and national lenses.² While we must not succumb to economic reductionism, economic considerations crucially influence both migration policy and key policy decisions at the national level, generally. Local communities, especially large cities, similarly cannot escape the impact of global competition for goods, services and labour, and are developing economic strategies and principles (e.g. the entrepreneurial city) and taking action directly, as the examples in this series demonstrate.³

The economic significance of metropolitan regions is gaining wider recognition. The worlds of experience offered by colourful, multicultural urban areas have drawn the attention of growing tourist industries. The informal and ethnic economies of immigrants are in full swing. The new, knowledge-based economy has long discovered cities and identified their diverse neighbourhoods and districts as hubs of skill and innovation.⁴ "Creative cities" are just one of the many ways in which the economic and social benefits of diversity have been expressed.⁵ This asset-based, human capital approach to immigration is starting to replace older, problem-oriented attitudes and approaches to immigrant integration. Cities increasingly recognize immigrant skill and potential as sources of hope.

As cities adjust to changing economic conditions, they also remain central to the social integration of immigrants across all areas of everyday life. Unlike business enterprises, cities and towns must also seek approaches that are sustainable, inclusive, ecologically sensitive and globally responsible.

Targeted economic integration strategies and immigrant recruitment initiatives therefore require broad social integration policies and must be supported by all residents in the receiving community. All local integration policy fields – ranging from education to widening of intercultural horizons to antidiscrimination and the promotion of equality – can contribute. These complementary measures are necessary for economic integration initiatives to be successful at the local level and must address local conditions and economic prospects. Even among major cities, there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Good local migration and integration policy will definitely contribute to better economic integration of immigrants. You can find international examples of good local practices throughout this Municipal Leadership series.⁶

Looking in, looking out



Basically, two approaches are at work here. On the one hand, local governments must look inward, and invest in a diverse urban society in all its potential. On the other hand, cities and towns are also looking outward, making themselves attractive to potential immigrants and creating the conditions for investment. A welcoming culture is one that contributes by helping immigrants and their families overcome obstacles in all areas of life while also providing targeted employment and business start-up assistance. The collection of good ideas demonstrates just how innovative local governments can be in their approaches and responses across a spectrum of different city contexts and experiences.

Cities are developing founding principles that stress the economic and social rights of immigrants and opt for diversity. In doing so, they are overcoming traditional approaches that restrict urban citizenship to nationals and certain status groups of immigrants.

For example, Montreal (Canada) established a "[Charter of Rights for Urban Citizens](#)." The Greater London Authority has joined a [London Living Wage Campaign](#) launched by the citizens' action initiative "London Citizens." The slogan "Making London a Living Wage City" addresses a central problem of major cities, where the cost of living is often significantly higher than the agreed minimum wage, assuming that the latter even exists. It also addresses a class of workers in which women and minorities, including immigrants, are over-represented.

Cities are recognizing immigrants as active and productive members of society, that enhance the economic prosperity of the city. Community programs and institutions are promoting immigrant employment, training immigrants for high skill sectors of the local job market and supporting fair and equitable business practices. This includes recognizing their credentials, training, experience and language skills. Many cities have initiatives that address the specific needs of immigrants.

Building on the success of Toronto's [TRIEC \(Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council\)](#), highly qualified immigrants seeking employment in the Auckland Region (New Zealand) can access mentoring and training through [OMEGA \(Opportunities for Migrant Employment in Greater Auckland\)](#) in partnership with municipal executive staff. The local economic development agency in Turin (Italy) succeeded in defusing conflict among vendors at a local market at the [Porta Palazzo](#) by creating a regulated zone and a legal status for unlicensed merchants as

“non-commercial vendors.” In Wuppertal (Germany), the [Wuppertal Participation Network](#) works with asylum seekers in Germany during the period of time they are not permitted to work; the time is used for training that prepares them for the local labour market.

Diversity as a productive force: promoting immigrant entrepreneurship is becoming a priority for integration policies around the world. Cities and towns are increasingly helping immigrants to start businesses, fostering small business incubation and supporting their development – from the back streets to Main Street success.

In Munich (Germany), the community-based [MEM \(Migrant Entrepreneurs Munich program\)](#) supports entrepreneurs with an immigrant background by providing advice, training, networking events and promoting their recognition and appreciation with an annual award for successful immigrant enterprises. Vienna (Austria) has established an elaborate welcome program for immigrant entrepreneurs. The city's agency for entrepreneurs, [MINGO](#) (“move in and grow”), provides multilingual services for immigrant entrepreneurs in a “one-stop shop.”

Local communities are leading the way by using municipal offices, agencies and services to model good practices for diversity. Increasing cultural competencies and inclusion while improving the quality of public service has already been on municipal agendas for some time. While it is difficult to implement these policies at a time when public services are shrinking under pressure for fiscal retrenchment, these initiatives ensure the city will be accountable to its residents and competitive in the long run.



[Bremen \(Germany\)](#) has set up an education and training centre for public services that specifically addresses the recruitment and training of minority youth for the public sector. [Copenhagen's Diversity Charter](#) not only governs the development and management of local community services but also includes mandatory social clauses around procurement and supplier diversity.

Cities have taken up the issue of securing the economic rights of immigrants. They have also adopted such courses in clear pursuit of their own interests, knowing the burden of the social and economic cost of economic discrimination and financial exclusion. For the average citizen, this area includes everyday things like opening a bank account, credit and other forms of microfinance for workers who are precariously employed or without legal status, or for entrepreneurial start-ups. In times of harsh and sometimes deadly border regimes, local communities have set themselves the task of contributing to the more humane treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and non-

status immigrants that conforms with human rights. Many of the frequently well-qualified civil war refugees from Europe's periphery also deserve better prospects on the EU labour markets.⁷

[Bank On in San Francisco](#) (U.S.) provides free-of-charge or low-cost accounts to low income individuals and families. In Durham (U.S.), the [Latino Community Credit Union](#), a co-operative bank, goes one step further. On a community basis, it offers credit to immigrants with low income and runs a large number of branches to facilitate day-to-day money transactions. A similar approach in London (U.K.), [Fair Finance](#), awards microcredits to immigrants to protect them against the extortionate rates of interest charged by private moneylenders. In New Haven (U.S.), the city issues [local identification cards](#) for all city residents, including undocumented migrants, to facilitate access to essential city services, including banking.

Today, cities fluctuate between adaptation and obstinacy when it comes to economic integration. Given the success of local efforts to adapt to economic trends and the number of policy guidelines in many cases and in many places, there remains a surprising reluctance among some cities to embrace their traditional role as places of integration. Going forward, we must continue to develop resources to support new immigrants and their integration into the urban economy so that they really can help make all of us “rich and happy.”

Roland Roth is professor of political science at Magdeburg-Stendal University, Germany. He has also served as a research fellow at the University of California at Santa Cruz and the Social Science Research Centre, Berlin, and as a visiting professor at the University of Vienna. His scholarly and political work focuses on democracy, social movements, integration, and civil and human rights. He is one of the founders of the Committee for Basic Rights and Democracy in Cologne, and serves on several advisory boards on democratic development, child and youth participation, integration and right-wing extremism.

Practice to Policy report – Related articles:

- [Ratna Omidvar \(Maytree\), Introduction](#)
- [Audrey Singer \(Brookings Institution\), Migration and the Metropolis](#)
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- [Recommendations for Local Governments and Community Partners](#)
- [full report, pdf] [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

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Migration and the Metropolis

By ktuner
January 9, 2013
[Opinion](#)



In [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, pdf\)](#), we look at what good practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration. Four international experts contribute analysis and policy insights on the range of municipal levers available to promote both immigrants and city success.

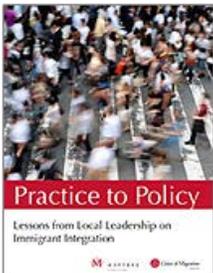
Audrey Singer
The Brookings Institution

In the 21st century, immigration continues to change cities and nations worldwide. One-fifth of the world's immigrants live in the United States where the foreign-born population now exceeds 40 million, making up 13% of the national population. Over the last two decades, nearly 20 million immigrants arrived in the U.S. These unprecedented levels of immigration have changed the character of many places, urban, suburban and rural. And the U.S. is not alone – no less than 15 European Union nations have foreign-born populations exceeding 10%, while in Australia and Canada, immigrants make up 22% and 20% of the general populations, respectively.

While we often think of immigrants as moving from one country to another, really they arrive from a particular place and settle in a particular community, usually a metropolitan area. In the U.S., for example, the vast majority of immigrants (95%) live within one of 366 metropolitan areas, which vary considerably in size, industrial structure, and demographic composition. And within metropolitan areas, where they live varies: they reside in primary cities, dense and mature suburbs, and emerging suburbs and exurbs extending to the urban fringe. Where an immigrant arrives and settles is very important to the immigrant integration process, which largely takes place on the local level. Immigrants live in neighborhoods, go to work, set up businesses, and send their children to school – all of which happens at the local level.

These metropolitan contexts are important for understanding how immigrants fit into local labour and housing markets, and how they interact with institutions such as schools, transportation systems and healthcare systems. In many countries, especially those built on immigration, several metropolitan areas have had a continuous history of receiving immigrants. In the United States, the cities of New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Boston are the largest continuous immigrant gateways. In Europe, major capitals like London, Amsterdam, Berlin and Paris have played similar roles. These places have been incorporating immigrants for over 100 years and have a thick social service infrastructure and strong identification as immigrant destinations. In the United States, Los Angeles, Houston and Miami are among the largest immigrant destinations, yet their experience began only after World War II. Other cities, such as Dublin and Calgary, have just recently begun to receive immigrants in large numbers in the past two decades or less, and may be less prepared for the changes that affect major institutions.

In the United States, due in part to economic restructuring and “new economy” industrial growth in technology and service sectors, metropolitan settlement trends have taken at least two new turns over the past two decades. After decades of just a few established places drawing the majority of immigrants, new opportunities in metro areas with little history of receiving immigrants saw significant spikes to their foreign-born populations. Coming out of the 2000s, metropolitan areas that experienced the greatest numeric growth of their foreign-born population held some surprises. These “second-tier” metro areas emerged as immigrant destinations beginning in the 1990s such as Atlanta, Austin (Texas), Phoenix, and Las Vegas. In Europe, cities like Barcelona, Copenhagen and Malmo have experienced a similar process. Some old immigrant gateways have now re-emerged as major destinations; for example, Philadelphia, Seattle and Sacramento (California) in the United States. Counterparts elsewhere include Bremen (Germany) and Winnipeg (Canada).



In a second shift, immigrants in the U.S. and Canada are bypassing cities in great numbers and settling directly in suburban areas. In the early 20th century wave of immigration, during the great period of industrialization, immigrants moved to cities to be close to jobs. Now as jobs have decentralized and as suburban opportunities have opened up, there are more immigrants residing in suburbs than in cities. Housing availability and affordability, the presence of ethnic communities, and the ubiquity of the automobile influence immigrants' decisions to settle in suburban areas. Even three decades ago, similar shares of immigrants lived in the cities and the suburbs of the largest metropolitan areas in the United States, for example, but by 2010, only 33 % of U.S. immigrants lived in central cities of the 100 largest metro areas, while 51 % lived in their suburbs. Similarly, in 2006, of recent immigrants to the traditional gateway of Vancouver, Canada, 46% actually lived in the suburbs Richmond, Burnaby and Surrey.

Immigrants have made inroads to new destination areas, large and small, urban and suburban. The shift to suburban areas means that central cities are no longer the dominant entry point for immigrants and the consequence is that suburban areas are becoming more diverse places with regard to race and ethnicity, language, and religion.

These new patterns are not without conflict and stress. Major institutions in new metropolitan destinations now confront serving this diverse population. Many areas in the United States have yet to recover from the affects of the recession and immigrants are often viewed as competitors for jobs and scarce public resources. In some of those places that experienced recent fast immigrant growth, state and local measures to control immigration, especially unauthorized immigration, have been proposed or legislated.

Many urban areas have welcomed immigrants, including places with well-established foreign-born populations, and those that started receiving and integrating immigrants more recently. Metropolitan areas are on the front lines of the economic integration of immigrants. Increasingly, some cities such as former U.S. gateways Detroit, Pittsburgh and Cleveland are endeavouring to attract and retain immigrants to stem population loss and to stimulate economic activity. Some areas are also investing in immigrants that are already here, as a strategy to help local businesses and economies, as well as immigrants, their families and the communities in which they live. Cities that are the most forward-looking, that have the most pragmatic view on immigrants, are the ones that are reaching out and creating environments that immigrants can not only survive in but thrive in. They are putting out the welcome mat for immigrant newcomers.

[Audrey Singer](#) is a senior fellow in the [Metropolitan Policy Program](#) at the [Brookings Institution](#) in Washington, United States. Her areas of expertise include demography, international migration, United States immigration policy, and urban and metropolitan change. Her work currently focuses on the new geography of immigration, the economic, social, political, and civic integration of immigrants, and state and local responses to immigration. The Brookings Institution is a nonprofit public policy organization that conducts research and provides innovative and practical policy recommendations.

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- [full report] [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

Practice to Policy Report: Introduction

By ktuner
[Opinion](#)



In [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration \(full report, PDF\)](#), we look at what good practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration. Four international experts contribute analysis and policy insights on the range of municipal levers available to promote both immigrants and city success.



Introduction
Ratna Omidvar
Maytree

Immigrants overwhelmingly choose to migrate to cities and their suburbs. Consequently, the local experience plays a defining role in their settlement. Yet, too often, the immigration discourse focuses solely on the levers of national policy as key instruments in selection and integration. Certainly, national governments have a big role to play, in setting the terms of immigration and citizenship, selecting potential immigrants and developing strategies about how immigration will build the nation, both socially and economically. But too often, national policy informs an abstract public discourse that fails to account for the realities of lived experience.

Local policy-makers have a critical role to play. As Jane Jacobs wisely observed, the level of government closest to the people is best positioned to serve the people. Indeed, around the world, cities are on the front lines of immigrant integration. These municipal governments are leading the way with innovative policies and programs that ensure that immigrants are welcomed and integrated into their new hometowns, where they can contribute to the local economy and culture.

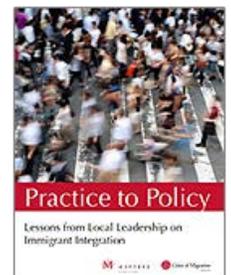
This volume is the last in our series, [Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration](#). The series highlights more than 70 promising practices from cities in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Some of the featured cities are old hands at integration – such as Toronto, London, and New York. Many are newer immigrant gateways – such as Helsinki, Bremen, and Barcelona. These emerging leaders are leap-frogging over traditional steps in integration policy and making immigrant inclusion a top priority. They are welcoming their newest residents and facilitating their social, economic and political participation.

In this collection of essays, international experts examine what these practices tell us about municipal integration policy and discuss the roles that local governments can, and should, play. Audrey Singer (Washington) paints a picture of shifting metropolitan immigration patterns in North America and internationally. Roland Roth (Magdeburg and Stendal) discusses the slow but steady shift in the way that cities think about immigrants – one that recognizes that immigrants bring significant economic benefit and opportunity, and are key to urban prosperity.

Myer Siemiatycki (Toronto) explores the ways that integration influences and is influenced by our public spaces. His essay illustrates how integration expresses itself across multiple policy areas. Jan Niessen (Brussels) looks at the ways that national policy interacts with local policy by examining global policy trends and commenting on gaps and convergences.

Finally, we conclude with some lessons and recommendations that we've gathered from our work on this series. While cities are powerful agents of change at the local level, they must also engage with policy makers at the sub-national, national, and international levels. They must tell their stories so that effective policies and successful practices can be adapted and replicated by others. From these local practices, we can move to policy solutions that make sense in both local contexts and within the frameworks of national immigration strategies.

Ratna Omidvar is [President of Maytree](#), a private foundation in Toronto. She is the chair of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and the co-chair of *DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project*. In 2011, she was made a Member of the Order of Canada for her advocacy on behalf of immigrants and for her devotion to reducing inequality.



Practice to Policy report – Related articles:

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- [Recommendations for Local Governments and Community Partners](#)
- [full report, pdf] [Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

In Conversation: Top Stories in 2012

By ktturner
December 21, 2012
Uncategorized



In 2012 Cities of Migration launched a new version of the Conversations in Integration to better highlight the Opinions, Interviews and stories that are published online and through the monthly newsletter. We've put together a list of the top stories, many of which fall under our Thought Leadership category!

[**Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration**](#)

Demetrios Papademetriou, Migration Policy Institute and The Transatlantic Council on Migration

[**Building a Movement of Diverse Decision-Makers Internationally**](#)

DiverseCity onBoard Learning Exchange

[**Quince buenas ideas: gestión de la diversidad cultural en las ciudades \(PDF\)**](#)

[**\(Good Ideas: Diversity and Inclusion in Cities. Barcelona 2012.\)**](#)

Fundación Bertelsmann and Cities of Migration

[**Intercultural Cities**](#)

Irene Guidikova, Council of Europe

[**Myth of Tolerance**](#)

Ricard Zapata-Barrero, GRITIM-UPF (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration), Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona)

[**Super-diversity and the City**](#)

Sarah Spencer, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), Oxford University

Readers' Choice: Top Webinars in 2012

By ktuner
Uncategorized



The [Learning Exchange](#) is another section of the website that got a refreshed look this year. We held eight webinars featuring presenters from 12 cities including our first-ever Spanish language webinar and a policy-focused presentation based on our upcoming report, *Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration*.

Antwerp and Waltham Forest

[Living Together: City Strategies for Social Inclusion](#)

Barcelona and Sheffield

[Welcoming Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

Brussels and Toronto

[Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

Dublin and Toronto

[Count Us In: Building Citizenship through Participation](#)

Munich and Philadelphia

[Investing in Urban Prosperity: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration](#)



Readers' Choice: Top Good Ideas in 2012

By kturner
Uncategorized



Good Ideas are the heart of the Cities of Migration. In 2012 we spent much of the year with a special focus on [Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration](#) with a resulting series of [reports](#). Take a look through the most popular Good Ideas this year!

Aachen

[Relying on Immigrant Networks: Business Network Aachen](#)

The city establishes local immigrant network to develop international economic opportunities

Barcelona

[Fighting Fiction with Facts: the BCN Anti-Rumour Campaign](#)

City council enlists community agents to dispel myths about immigrants and fight discrimination with facts and good humour

Copenhagen

[Engaging in Copenhagen](#)

Taking a Diversity Charter to the business community

Frankfurt

[Diversity Moves Frankfurt](#)

Hitting the virtual highway for a public consultation on integration

Helsinki

[Immigrant Businesses Get a Helping Hand](#)

Supporting immigrant entrepreneurs before problems arise

Toronto

[Citizens for Citizenship](#)

Citizenship ceremonies bring communities together in celebration

Wellington

[Bringing Maori Culture to Newcomers: The Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy](#)

A collaborative approach connects newcomers with Maori, the people of the land

* Top stories tabulated through an analysis of website metrics



Five Reasons Canada Leads the World on Immigration

By kturner
December 18, 2012
[Opinion](#)



Maytree Opinion by Alan Broadbent, Chairman of Maytree Foundation, and Ratna Omidvar, President of Maytree Foundation



December 18 is International Migrants Day, a time to reflect on the 214 million international migrants in countries around the world. If migrants all gathered in one place, they would constitute the fifth most populous country in the world.

It is also the eve of a new year, a time when we take stock of what we've done over the past months and look forward to what we will do in the coming year. Now might be the right time to take a look at the success that Canada

has made out of immigration.

While we are not perfect, Canada has made determined and deliberate efforts to encourage conditions in which newcomers can flourish. We are recognized internationally as a leader in immigrant integration. Here are five reasons why:

1. Immigrants become Canadian citizens at one of the highest rates in the world

Not only has Canada traditionally welcomed newcomers as permanent additions to this country, we have also seen immigrants as "citizens in waiting." At 89%, Canada has traditionally had one of the highest naturalization rates in the world. High rates of citizenship are associated with better employment rates, and being a citizen is a prerequisite for many aspects of civic and political participation. It also gives immigrants and refugees protection and assurance that their commitment to Canada and being Canadian is reciprocal. Recent changes to our citizenship policies make it more difficult to become a Canadian citizen, which should concern all of us.

2. Immigrants achieve long-term economic success

Although immigrants might initially suffer an earnings penalty, traditionally they have caught up over time, so that the average wage for immigrants comes within a few percentage points of the Canadian-born. Employers report strong satisfaction with immigrants who are chosen for their human capital through the points system. While we must continue to work to shorten the initial period, both of these suggest that once immigrants are able to get into the labour market, many are successful. Similarly, immigrants own homes at nearly the same rate as the Canadian-born – an anomaly among OECD nations. Owning a home is one expression of the emotional and financial commitment that immigrants make to Canada and their local community, and is therefore an important factor in successful integration.

3. The children of immigrants attain high levels of education and earnings

In fact, second generation immigrants outperform children of non-immigrants. Second generation Canadians attend post-secondary education at higher rates than non-immigrant Canadians, which results in higher earnings. One study showed that nearly 55% of second generation Canadians go to university, for example, compared to 38% of non-immigrant Canadians. The second generation also tends to improve on the lot of their parents. On average, they earn more compared to their parents at a similar time in their lives.

4. We get along with each other

Canadians of all stripes go to school together, work together, walk the same sidewalks and play in the same parks. Increasingly, we are seeing immigrants making inroads into leadership positions in our boardrooms, city halls and parliaments. Isolated incidents of interethnic conflict make headlines because they are shocking and contrary to our norms and values.

Another way that we know that we get along is that we marry each other. Mixed unions (in which one partner is a visible minority and the other is not, or between two people from different visible minority groups) are growing rapidly – at more than five times the rate of growth for all couples. While immigrants are not necessarily visible minorities, statistics show that of first generation immigrants who are visible minorities and in a couple, 12% are in a mixed union. By the second generation, that figure rises to 51%, and by the third generation, 69% of coupled visible minorities are in a mixed union.

Further, mixed unions are more likely to have children in their household. These children, even more so than Canadians at large, will grow up with diversity as a simple, given fact of life. And that bodes well for our continued social harmony.

5. Canadians support immigration

Surveys and polls consistently show that the majority of Canadians believe that immigrants make positive contributions to our country and to our communities. Canadians recognize that immigration is not a threat to our jobs or way of life. In fact, our own poll on the meaning of citizenship found that Canadians value being active in the community, volunteering, helping others and accepting others who are different – and that being a good citizen was unrelated to where you were born.

Moreover, while multiculturalism is hotly debated elsewhere in the world, it persists as a foundation of Canadian values. A recent survey suggests that three-in-five Canadians believe that multiculturalism has been good for the country. Younger Canadians believe so at an even higher rate, which, again, bodes well for all of us.

This public support is the result, in large part, of positive messages from our governments over the years about how immigration helps to build our nation, and open discussion about immigration policies that do just that.

We cannot take this support for granted. Negative messages that obsess over marriage “fraud,” “bogus” refugees and “queue-jumpers” needlessly undermine public confidence.

Indeed, we cannot become complacent about any of these achievements. Our nation’s success depends upon our continued deliberate and thoughtful efforts to create conditions where all Canadians prosper.

Reprinted with permission from [Maytree Opinion](#), December 2012.

Sara Llewellyn: Old Cities, New Cities

By kturner
November 30, 2012
[Opinion](#)



Sara Llewellyn is Chief Executive of the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#). Her essay introduces the UK edition of *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*.

The London 2012 Olympics presented many in the UK with a fresh and optimistic view on migration. Over a third of the Team GB medal winners have a migrant background, and athletes such as Mo Farah and Jessica Ennis have been embraced as role models for the nation.

The UK is a country built on migration from within Europe and the Commonwealth. The rich cultural diversity created by this is visible in so many of the country's cities. London promotes itself as one of the most diverse cities in the world, with more than 300 languages spoken within it. In the next five years the city of Leicester will become the first English city which is "majority minority" – by 2015 it is estimated that the adult population will be less than half white. Cultural and ethnic diversity has become a huge source of pride to the UK. The food we eat, our cultural pastimes, social networks and working lives have all been influenced and enhanced by migration in some way.

Diversity caused by migration has happened over hundreds of years in some cities while in others it has been more recent. Urban areas such as Lincoln, Peterborough, Edinburgh and Sheffield have attracted migrant workers from the European Union and/or received asylum seekers through national dispersal processes. Population changes have been rapid and in some cases unwelcomed by established communities. Local services can be stretched and in a time of economic strain migrant communities can become easy scapegoats in the media. Some new communities have found themselves marginalized, isolated and without a voice in local democratic structures. Established migrant communities that have lived in cities for several generations can unfortunately experience similar challenges. Cultural sensitivities, social stereotyping and poverty can all affect integration and cohesion in urban areas.

In UK cities, local authorities and civil society groups have been instrumental in ensuring that the complex and varied needs of new and established migrant communities are considered within the provision of services such as education, housing and health, as evidenced by the West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership. As well as addressing practical areas of need, local authorities and civil society groups have sought to improve emotional well-being and cohesion by creating youth advisory programs like the [Youth Independent Advisory Group in the London Borough of Waltham Forest](#).

Regardless of how long they have lived in a city, migrant communities all wish to build a life and make a positive contribution to society, which the projects featured in this UK Snapshot enable them to do. "Good ideas" such as these are in no way standard across cities in the UK, and it is crucial to share them, if elements are to be adopted by others. The Cities of Migration project is vital in ensuring that good integration practice is disseminated across sectors and networks. Projects featured in this UK Snapshot demonstrate that migrant communities can contribute to and be part of an active and diverse city life. Cities of Migration reminds us of the best things about living in a city – cultural diversity, tolerance, opportunity and friendship.

Sara Llewellyn is Chief Executive of the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#) and therefore responsible, with the Board of Trustees, for the strategic direction and social justice impact of the Trust. Sara is on the Governing Council of the European Foundation Centre, is the Vice-Chair of the Association of Charitable Foundations, and is a trustee of Charity Bank and serves on its Credit Committee. Sara was formerly at the City Bridge Trust for a number of years and before that was the Chief Executive of St Giles Trust in South London. Her background is in social justice activism.

Good Ideas in the News: November 2012

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Five principles of integration: policies and inclusion. A COMPAS blogpost describes integration as “a dynamic, multi-actor process of mutual engagement that facilitates effective participation by all members of a diverse society in the economic, political, social and cultural life, and fosters a shared and inclusive sense of belonging at national and local levels.” [More](#)

Our Day: Standing together for International Migrants Day. Migrants Rights Network’s campaign for organizations and individuals to show a united front in support of migrants in the UK for International Migrants Day. [More](#)

Belgium: A Country of Permanent Immigration. Migration Policy Institute profiles Belgium’s last three decades of immigration and settlement. [More](#)

Journeys of Belonging. An original multimedia project that takes an in-depth look at the personal narratives of women and men of diverse age, faith and cultural backgrounds. It has been jointly developed by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the British Council, the University of Missouri School of Journalism and the Reynolds Institute. [More](#)

Cities of Tomorrow, Action Today. URBACT’s Annual Conference 2012 in Copenhagen, Denmark, December 3-4, 2012, presents URBACT project results and lessons, and invites cities to weigh in on key issues. [More](#)

EUKN Annual Conference 2012, Essen, Germany, December 7. The 5th annual conference of the European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN), looks at the topic of shrinking populations in EU cities. [More](#)

The Costs and Benefits of the London living wage. A new research report by Queen Mary University of London and Trust for London. [More](#)

Video: Looking for New Ideas

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



“Spain is in a deep economic crisis.... We have so much talent from newcomers coming in and we’re not making a good use of it. There’s a big potential for new innovation, creativity and new ideas.”

Michaela Hertel, Director of Fundación Bertelsmann (Barcelona), talks about the importance of looking for new ideas to improve diversity in leadership in Spain. She was interviewed at the [DiverseCity onBoard Learning Exchange in Toronto in October 2012](#).



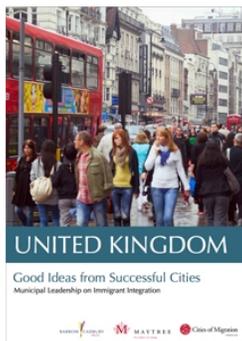
<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



Michaela Hertel is the [Director of Fundación Bertelsmann](#). She has been the Head of the Fundación Bertelsmann since 2004. She is a member of the Management, Committee of Bertelsmann Stiftung; deputy chairwoman of the Biblioteca Can Torró Foundation in Alcúdia, Mallorca; deputy chairwoman of the board of the Foundations Association; and Coordinadora Catalana de Fundacions in Barcelona.

Good Ideas from Successful Cities: UK Edition

By kturner
Uncategorized



The latest snapshot of city leadership and innovation in our municipal good practice series is ready! Find stories from the UK from cities large and small – London, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Hatfield, and Blackburn with Darwen Borough. Whether promoting maternal health or attracting new business opportunities, local governments are addressing important community concerns.

In her foreword to the report, [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#) Chief Executive Sara Llewellyn explained:

“Regardless of how long they have lived in a city, migrant communities all wish to build a life and make a positive contribution to society, which the projects featured in this UK Snapshot enable them to do. Projects featured in this UK Snapshot demonstrate that migrant communities can contribute to and be part of an active and diverse city life. Cities of Migration reminds us of the best things about living in a city – cultural diversity, tolerance, opportunity and friendship.”

The UK report is the newest addition to our report series on Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration. The city-led good practices described in these reports offer a compelling narrative about how local governments are leading the way, using their considerable power and authority to leverage their diversity, unlock opportunity and jump start the economy with immigrant

skill, talent and hard work.

The current series of short country “snapshots” are companion reports to Good Ideas from Successful Cities, and provide a further selection of municipal good practice in comparative perspective. Visit our new [Publications](#) page to see the entire publication series.



Spain

- [English](#)
- [Spanish](#)



Germany

- [English](#)
- [German](#) – new!



United States

- [English](#)



New Zealand

- [English](#)

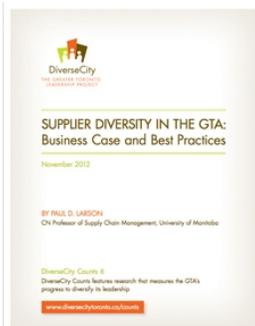
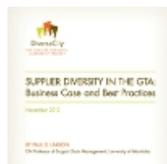


United Kingdom

- [English](#) – new!

DiverseCity Counts Research Rates Supplier Diversity

By ktuner
Uncategorized



“This ground-breaking research represents the third pillar of the diversity conversation. Many of us have embraced the value of employee and leadership diversity. But diversity in procurement remains a lever we have yet to exploit.” Ratna Omidvar, Co-Chair, DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project

Improving the diversity of suppliers has become a growing area of interest. The [City of Copenhagen](#) and the recent [London Olympics](#) both developed diversity charters to guide procurement. In Toronto, the latest DiverseCity Counts report, *Supplier Diversity in the GTA: Business Case and Best Practices*, shows that while most organizations have employee diversity policies, significantly fewer have supplier diversity programs. Not having such a program in place is a missed opportunity..

The latest DiverseCity Counts research, by Dr. Paul D. Larson, CN Professor of Supply Chain Management at the University of Manitoba, examines whether, why and how organizations have embraced diversity in their purchasing and supply chain strategies, policies and practices. The research focused on organizations that buy goods and services from other organizations that are at least 50% owned and operated by visible minorities.

Organizations that do have a supplier diversity program credit much of their success to top management commitment and efforts to work closely with current or future suppliers. Some organizations report difficulty finding qualified minority suppliers or determining which organizations are led by visible minorities. Of those organizations with a supplier diversity program, 29% do not track how much they spend on goods and services provided by visible minority owned companies.

When the largest GTA companies are compared to large Chicago headquartered firms, Chicago companies are three times more likely to have a supplier diversity program – 77.4% versus 23.3%. This difference can be partly explained by U.S. federal and state policies which encourage companies to make supplier diversity a priority.

Read the full report, [Supplier Diversity in the GTA: Business Case and Best Practices](#), or download [the summary of the research](#).

Source: [DiverseCity](#)

Mayor Naheed Nenshi: Community Building as Nation Building

By kturner
March 13, 2013
[Opinion](#)



Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi made headlines when he became the first Muslim mayor elected in North America. In the 2012 John Kenneth Galbraith Lectureship in Public Policy at Memorial University (St. John's, Newfoundland), he talks about pluralism and diversity, the role of cities, and citizen engagement.

In this excerpt from his talk, "Leader/Citizen/Leader: Community Building as Nation Building," Nenshi recalls how voters were more interested in his views on policy than his background, and appeals to all Canadians to share Canada's success story.

The great success of Canada is how we have been able to embrace pluralism and diversity in a way that very few other places have been able to do.

October 19th, 2010, the day after I was elected mayor, I suddenly found myself famous. People wanted to talk about me on CNN, Time magazine. What they wanted to talk to me about was something very strange. Not about the fact that I'm the first non-white mayor of a major Canadian city. Not about how young I was to be mayor. What they wanted to talk about was my faith.

The fascinating thing is that during the election, nobody talked about it. It just wasn't an issue. My ethnicity, my faith, my background, none of that was an issue. There were a grand total of two incidents during an intense six-month campaign when it became an issue. One instance of vandalism to my campaign office may or may not have been racially motivated. That was such a horrible incident for me – it happened on the anniversary of September 11th which is why some people thought it had something to do with that – and it led to a giant outpouring of support from the community. One of the letters to the editor said the best thing anyone has ever said about it. "I hope that those guys were just jerks and not racist jerks." The incident led to a giant outpouring of support from the community, and actually helped me a lot because people said "that that's not the kind of Calgary that we want to live in" and "that's not the Calgary that we live in."

The second time was when the Calgary Herald published an interview with me that focused on my faith. The writer wanted a positive story about someone who might be the first Muslim mayor [of Calgary and in North America]. When asked, I said "You know, growing up in this city I never for one minute thought that there was any job I couldn't have because of where I worshipped." That's all I said about it and it became this huge story. The Calgary Herald got more calls to their newsroom than for anything else that they published that year. 1% or 2% of the calls were racist and the other 97% or 98% of the calls were: "Why did you publish that? We want to know about where he stands on transit, we want to know what he thinks about poverty, urban planning and the growth of the community, etc. Who cares about what his faith is. He grew up in Calgary. He knows the city better than any of us."

So, after my election I really had a choice to make. I could ignore all the media requests or I could use them as an opportunity to tell a story about Canada, a story about Alberta, a story about Calgary that is an important story to be told.

The Aga Khan once said something I think is worth us thinking about. What he said was "what the Canadian experience suggests to me is that identity itself can be pluralistic. Honouring one's own identity need not mean rejecting others. One can embrace an ethnic and religious heritage will also sharing a sense of national or regional pride. To cite a timely example I believe that one can live creatively and purposefully as both a devoted Muslim and a committed European (he might have said, a committed Canadian)."

Since the Aga Khan said that, we've had people like the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the then president of France and the Chancellor of Germany say that multiculturalism has been a "failure." It is not up to us to question their context – it's their reality after all – but it is up to us as Canadians to be role models for the world, to talk about a place where diversity works, where pluralism and multiculturalism work.

That place, of course, is right here. Let's start by saying that [multiculturalism] is a good thing and that it works. When the forces of the small minded and the intolerant want to talk about whether women should wear a niqab in public or whether a baptized sikh should carry the kirpan, as Canadians we have to fight against small minded intolerance and ask "why are we having this discussion?" We have to say to the small minded and intolerant: we are far, far beyond that as a community.

[Watch the complete video of the talk here.](#)

[Printed with permission from Memorial University](#)

Mayor Naheed Nenshi is a passionate Calgarian, an accomplished business professional, and an active community leader. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree (with distinction) from the University of Calgary and a Master in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he studied as a Kennedy Fellow.

The John Kenneth Galbraith Lectureship in Public Policy brings outstanding figures to Memorial University, whose work reflects their commitment to excellence in scholarship and public affairs. The lectureship is held under the auspices of the President, and is coordinated jointly by the Dean of Arts and by the Director of the [Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development](#), or their representatives.

CARE anniversary marks launch of Cities of Migration UK Snapshot

By kturner
November 30, 2012
Uncategorized



Senior figures from the world of football (soccer) joined members of the Greenwich community earlier this month at an event marking the twentieth anniversary of the Charlton Athletic Racial Equality (CARE) Partnership. CARE is the only project of its kind in Europe, led jointly by a local authority and professional football club – and working to foster a climate of respect in which prejudice is not allowed to flourish.

The partnership has been delivering its program since 1992, giving young people, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, the opportunity to interact with people from different backgrounds. Opportunities range from accredited sports coaching qualifications and film production to women's football and digital photography.

The event also saw the launch of the [Cities of Migration's UK Snapshot, Good Ideas from Successful Cities](#). In her foreword to the report, [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#) Chief Executive Sara Llewellyn explained:

“Regardless of how long they have lived in a city, migrant communities all wish to build a life and make a positive contribution to society, which the projects featured in this UK Snapshot enable them to do. Projects featured in this UK Snapshot demonstrate that migrant communities can contribute to and be part of an active and diverse city life. Cities of Migration reminds us of the best things about living in a city – cultural diversity, tolerance, opportunity and friendship.”

Rob Berkley, Chief Executive of the [Runnymede Trust](#), represented Cities of Migration at the event and commented afterwards:

“Given football's recent and ongoing struggles with addressing racism in the game, it was a real pleasure to be part of the recognition of the ground-breaking work that CARE Partnership had been undertaking for two decades in South London. What is especially heartening about CARE's work and approach is that it leads to real change. It is not merely about producing strategy documents, but about real partnership between the football club and the local authority to take action that young people from across the communities that surround Charlton Athletic's ground recognize and value.”

The success of the event has led CARE to explore the potential of organizing an annual conference focusing on sport, equality and inclusion, in partnership with The FA, KIO, and other key partners. Says Michael Seeraj, CARE Program Manager:

“I feel in the current climate, principally in the context of inequality and sport, and the high profile debate surrounding football, that the CARE model shows very clearly what can be done, and the positive role that football can take in tackling discrimination and promoting social inclusion, particularly with disadvantaged communities. The CARE model provides an excellent template that can be transferred and translated across a wide range of different contexts”.

Source: [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#) and [CARE Partnership](#)

Related Links:

- Webinar – [Leveling the Playing Field: Building Equality and Inclusion with Sport](#)
- Good Idea – [Giving Equality a Sporting Chance in Greenwich](#)

Good Ideas in the News: October 2012

By kturner
October 24, 2012
Uncategorized

[“Investing in the Human Capital of Immigrants, Strengthening Regional Economies.”](#) Audrey Singer of the Brookings Institute examines how regions can invest in the human capital and economic advancement of immigrants who are already living in their jurisdictions, and highlights programs and partnerships that work to unlock and build skills of immigrants.

[“Shaping the Future: Canada’s Rapidly Changing Immigration Policies.”](#) In the new Maytree report, Naomi Alboim and Karen Cohl describe recent federal government changes could have a dramatic impact on both the social and economic fabric of Canada and how the country is perceived by potential immigrants.

[“Cutting out an Irritating Word.”](#) PressEurop reports that the Belgian newspaper De Morgen(Walloon) will no longer use the term ‘allochtoon’ – “a term used in the Netherlands and Dutch speaking Belgium to designate immigrants or their descendants, but contested by those who believe it to be a stigma.”

[Our Day: Standing together for International Migrants Day.](#) Migrants Rights Network launches its new campaign for organisations and individuals to show a united front in support of migrants in the UK for International Migrants Day.

[URBACT Annual Conference 2012](#), Copenhagen, Denmark. December 3-4, 2012. The conference will drawing on evidence from URBACT project results and lessons to discuss how cities can tackle key issues.

[2012 E Pluribus Unum Prizes.](#) The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) announced the winners in September. The awards recognize exceptional immigrant integration initiatives in the United States. Each winner receives \$50,000.

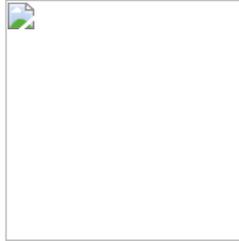
[2012 Create UNAOC Challenge.](#) Launched by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, this contest invites developers to create new apps and mobile games that raise awareness and enable new opportunities for intercultural dialogue. [More](#)

[Citizens’ Resistance!](#) For its 19th meeting, the Banlieues d’Europe network will examine the place and the role of culture as a form of citizen’s action and participation. November 21-23, 2012, Turin.

[EUKN Annual Conference 2012](#), Essen, Germany, December 7. The 5th annual conference of the European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN), looks at the topic of shrinking populations in EU cities. Organized with the Ruhr Regional Association and the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

Los Angeles to Adopt New Haven's Municipal ID Card

By kturner
October 25, 2012
Uncategorized



What began as a ground-breaking initiative in New Haven by Mayor John DeStefano looks like it has the makings of a movement. Los Angeles is the latest city to announce it will adopt a municipal ID card for all Angelenos, including undocumented residents, to provide access to city services as well as banking.

Writes the New York Times:

" The Los Angeles ID cards, like those in some other cities, will also function like a prepaid debit card for those who want one. City officials estimate that more than 12 percent of residents do not keep their money in a bank, in many cases because they cannot open a bank account without ID. Instead, they carry around large sums of cash, which renders them targets for robbery, activists said."

In July 2007, [the Elm City Residence Card was launched in New Haven](#), available to all citizens regardless of immigration status. There are similar municipal ID cards in Oakland and San Francisco.

Source: ["IDs for Illegal Immigrants Take a Step in Los Angeles," New York Times \(October 16, 2012\)](#).

Building a Movement of Diverse Decision-Makers Internationally

By ktuner
Uncategorized



By Tina Edan, Maytree Foundation

It was an exciting moment when Maytree's [DiverseCity onBoard program won a United Nations Alliance of Civilizations \(UNAOC\) Intercultural Innovation Award in late 2011](#). It opened a new chapter for the program, which helps match governance bodies with qualified diverse candidates, to be replicated both nationally and internationally.



It was equally as exciting to meet Riana Shaw Robinson (pictured on the left) from [Urban Habitat who runs the Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute \(BCLI\)](#) in Oakland, California.

Why?

She's doing what we're doing: addressing the disconnect between the leadership of agencies, boards and commissions and the communities they serve.

Together with UNAOC and the BMW Group, we invited Riana, along with 25 other delegates from 20 cities around the world, to the recent DiverseCity onBoard Learning Exchange. Since we launched the program seven years ago, we've made more than 600 board appointments. The result? Participating organizations have benefited through better decision-making, increased creativity and improved financial outcomes as well.

While in Toronto, participants learned in-depth how the DiverseCity onBoard program works. According to Maytree's President, Ratna Omidvar, "we brought people together to share what we learned and build an international community of practice on good governance. It was an opportunity for our global partners to learn from each other and recognize that when matched with governance, the benefits of diversity are powerful."

They also heard about the good work being done in Oakland where Riana and her colleagues noticed "[h]istorically and still, people of color and low-income communities have little say in the decisions that most (negatively) affect their lives." And, "there's only so hard you can push from the outside."

Riana describes the result: "Urban Habitat launched BCLI in 2009 to identify, train, place, and support low-income people and people of color for priority boards and commissions in the Bay Area region. By priority, we mean those decision-making bodies that influence our core equity areas of transportation, public planning, land use, housing, health, and jobs. We target those boards and commissions that have the most potential to have an impact on the communities we advocate for."

While each delegate at the Learning Exchange is operating in a different context and at a different stage of the diversity in governance journey, common to all was the importance of shifting from influencing decision makers to being decision makers.

Another common point was the desire for action. And, action is what some of them committed themselves to. Here's what's next for a few participating cities:

- Boston: [The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition](#) – MIRA will take a leadership role in implementing DiverseCity onBoard in Boston.
- Calgary: United Way, Calgary, and the [Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary](#) will start to make the business case for diversity among allied organizations and find champions for the cause.
- Copenhagen: [KVINFO](#) will work with the women in their network to become decision makers, starting with finding the right funding partners and allies.
- Dublin: The [Immigrant Council of Ireland](#) will brief the City of Dublin, Department of Justice and Public Transportation Dublin on the importance of diversity in governance and propose an advanced leadership training for people with migrant backgrounds.

Building on the momentum from the Learning Exchange, delegates will stay connected as a community of practice. As the decision makers begin to change, so too will the decisions.

Source: [DiverseCity Blog](#)



Talking Cities of Inclusion: From Toronto to Almeria, Spain

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Alejandra Bravo, Manager of Maytree's [School4Civics](#) (Toronto) shares impressions and lessons learned from Almeria, Spain, where she attended the "Urbanism Planning: An Instrument for Social Integration" conference hosted by MENARA. She shares the Canadian experience of immigrant integration and what Canada can learn from Europe.

By Alejandra Bravo

Cities evolve and are shaped by the people who inhabit them.

Immigration and the resulting diversity of its people are both a source of creativity and hold great potential, as long as urban leadership ensures full integration of the newcomer and long-time resident.

According to organizers of the conference "[Urbanism Planning: An Instrument for Social Integration](#)," as cities become more diverse, policies and practices at the local level must be more inclusive. The process of integration is a shared and negotiated responsibility, it cannot be defined unilaterally.

The conference is organized by Spanish think tank MENARA, a project of [Fundación Tres Culturas](#). It takes place in Almería, a city in the autonomous community of Andalusia, in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Moroccans living abroad.

Within the last 13 years, the foreign-born population has grown ten-fold in Spain. In the province of the same name, Almería, the predominant group is Moroccan. Similar growth has been registered across Andalusia.

MENARA focuses on migration and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. Its mission is to understand the reality of Moroccan immigration in Andalusia and to generate intercultural dialogue, employing a number of strategies, including research. Through the creation of networks and the promotion of immigrant integration and belonging, the goal of the organization is to create cooperation and exchange between Andalusia and Northern Morocco.

This transnational conference is one of a series of meetings this year that have examined themes like the relationship between entrepreneurship or citizenship and diversity.

Presenters are focusing on good ideas and experience of city-led policies and practices – in areas such as urban planning, housing, public space and participation – that promote immigrant integration and maximize the potential of diversity in cities. The participatory event asks all attendees to debate [issues and key points in the program \(PDF\)](#).

Maytree was invited to participate alongside students, academics, immigrants and other international guests to share the Canadian experience of immigrant integration. We're also brought good practices in local immigrant integration drawn from Cities of Migration's collection of over 150 stories from global cities, over 100 of them already published in Spanish.

The contexts may vary from city to city, but in substance, the challenge and opportunity of immigration and diversity are consistent, whether in Toronto or Almeria.

As a practitioner, bringing the experience of [DiverseCity Toronto](#)'s work to accelerate regional diversity in the Greater Toronto Area with practical interventions to promote diverse leadership, I expected to learn a great deal from the rich debate taking place in Almeria this week.

For example, unlike most other OECD countries, Canada has no national housing, transit, child nutrition or child care strategies. While these would not be aimed exclusively at immigrants, they would certainly contribute to their integration and success.

We also have much to learn from each other – city to city. That is a my key take away from the MENARA conference. Government officials, foundation partners, students, academics and immigrants want to be connected to each other and to good ideas in immigrant integration. They will continue to look at Cities of Migration, in particular, as a platform for exchange.

Source: [Maytree blog \(Building cities of inclusion and Five inspiring ideas about the way we promote immigrant integration and inclusion\)](#)

Uniform, Transparent, Effective? Foreign Credentials in Germany

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



Although Germany can look back on a decades-long history of immigration, the subject of the accreditation, or 'recognition' (in German: Anerkennung) of international qualifications has received growing attention over roughly the last five years. Daria Braun of the [Otto Benecke Stiftung e.V.](#) shares her analysis of the current situation.

The issue of accreditation, or the recognition of professional qualifications acquired abroad, is becoming a hot topic as demographic change continues to increase the shortage of skilled workers that is already apparent in Germany and other European countries. According to the calculations of IW, the Cologne Institute for Economic Research [Wirtschaft Köln], in 2011 there was already a shortage of over 158,000 highly qualified workers, particularly in the industrial sector of MINT professions (mathematics, informatics, natural sciences, and technology). In order to counteract this shortage of skilled workers, in June 2011 the German federal government reached an agreement on five strategies for recruiting skilled workers. Included in its strategic recommendations was the improved, full utilization of domestic labour potential, particularly that existing in the population of Germans with immigrant background, which in 2009 represented approximately 15.7 million people. While some three million people in this group had occupational qualifications acquired abroad, only about 500,000 of these had had their qualifications recognized.

Educational certificates and professional credentials acquired abroad often cannot be put to use in Germany; such qualifications are either not recognized or accreditation procedures are wanting. This means that many educated foreigners are employed below their level of skill and qualifications, resulting not only in the loss of valuable human capital but also making the integration of the respective individual significantly more difficult.

Against this background, in 2011 the German federal government introduced legislation leading to the passage of the "Act for the Improvement of the Establishment and Recognition of Occupational Qualifications Acquired Abroad" (in short, the Professional Qualifications Assessment Act, or the BQFG). The BQFG received parliamentary approval on November 4, 2011, and went into effect on April 1, 2012, and aims to make the practice of accrediting qualifications acquired abroad more uniform, transparent and effective, thus enabling better integration of the holders of such qualifications into the German labour market.

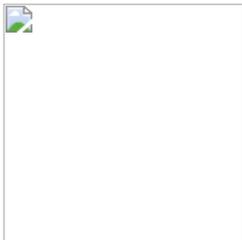
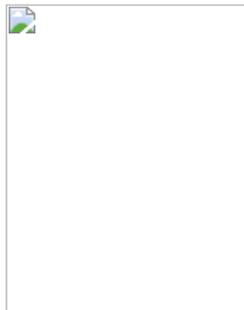
This is an important step towards the recognition of foreign credentials and the importance of the contribution of internationally trained talent and skill to the German economy and society.

This overview of the new legislation and related issues published in July 2012 as part of a new policy brief and entitled, [Einheitlicher, transparenter, effektiver? Das Verfahren zur Bewertung von im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen im Wandel](#) (English: [Procedures for the Assessment of Qualifications Acquired Abroad in Transition](#)).

First published by the [bpb \(Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung\)](#) and [IMIS](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas with Ayse Özbabacan: Toronto to Stuttgart

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Good Ideas about successful integration are traveling from city to city. This month meet Ayse Özbabacan, Policy Officer [European City network for Local Integration Policies \(CLIP\)](#), Department for Integration Policy, City of Stuttgart.

Ayse Özbabacan: The Cities of Migration Good Idea that really caught my eye was the "[The Building Citizenship Program](#)" from Toronto.

Why? The city of Stuttgart is an international and multicultural city. Thanks to the high percentage of Stuttgarters with migrant background (40%), the city has maintained its population size in the past decade. Early in 2001 Stuttgart developed a holistic integration policy concept called the "[Pact for Integration](#)" to further promote participation opportunities for its migrant population. In this regard, the intercultural opening of the city administration is one of the key fields of activity to reflect the high share of the migrant citizens within the city and hence adapt its services to the needs and challenges of this population

group. A successful initiative is our naturalization campaign "[PASS Auf, lass Dich einbürgern!](#)" ([Go for Naturalization!](#)) started in 2009 to inform the 90.000 non-citizens eligible for naturalization about the naturalization process and motivate them to apply for the German citizenship.

Every year, the city organizes a naturalization ceremony in the Stuttgart Town Hall to celebrate this achievement [bringing] together with the mayor, members of the municipal council, the naturalized persons and their families. This ceremony is highly appreciated by the new citizens as a sign of recognition by the city.

However citizenship is more than just a naturalization certificate of belonging, it is about appreciating and valuing this crucial step towards a "new identity" and a more inclusive approach. This also requires the involvement of the established society to interact and congratulate the new citizens for [taking] this important step. How to do that?

To make the naturalization ceremony more inclusive the city will organize future ceremonies according to "[The Building Citizenship Program](#)" from Toronto. This is a good practice which is more reflective of the community and involves established as well as new citizens.

Related:

- [On the Trail of Good Ideas: Kerpen to Boston](#)
- [On the Trail of Good Ideas: Montreal to Barcelona](#)
- [Good Idea: The Stuttgart Pact For Integration: the Power of Planning](#)

Do you have a story to share? [Submit a good idea!](#)

Webinar Video: Investing in Urban Prosperity in Munich and Philadelphia

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In our last webinar [Investing in Urban Prosperity: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration](#), presenters from the City of Munich and Philadelphia shared tips for how local governments can foster immigrant entrepreneurship and contribute to economic development:

Promote the benefits of migrant entrepreneurship and your city as a business hub

Both City Councils in Philadelphia and Munich recognized that immigrants are a benefit, and not a drain to the economic development and health of the city. Philadelphia recognized that immigrants are 30% more likely than native-born Americans to start their own businesses. The City of Munich will be launching a media campaign, "Munich Speaks Many Languages" to promote migrant entrepreneurs and Munich as a business hub.

Customize delivery of services for migrant entrepreneurs who may have different challenges

Recognize that migrant entrepreneurs may have different needs. The challenges small immigrant businesses face may include linguistic, cultural, and systemic barriers, including accessing financial institutions and understanding how governments work. The City of Philadelphia offers complimentary business technical assistance programs customized to address the needs of immigrant entrepreneurs. They offer group saving/lending circle financing model, Rotating Savings Credit Association (ROSCA), along with resources on financial literacy, business compliance, sustainable investing.

Identify key supporters and partners both inside and outside the municipality

Both cities saw the importance of seeking external partnerships; Migrant Entrepreneurs in Munich (MEM) went out to build platforms for dialogue and networks between migrants and mainstream business institutions in the city. MEM reaches out to multiple migrant communities to disseminate information; the more multicultural the target group is, the better it is for networking. The City of Philadelphia relies on cultivated ethnic media contacts to push program out to the public.

Watch the webinar video: [Investing in Urban Prosperity: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration](#)

New Publications! Good Ideas from Successful Cities

By kturner
September 13, 2012
Uncategorized



In *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration*, we share nearly 40 international good practices from city governments across Canada, the US, Europe and Australasia.

Migration is re-making our cities. Successful integration of urban migrants is a pressing issue for all cities around the globe. While immigration is national, integration is local. It is at the city level where we find the political and community voices that embrace immigrants, knowing they bring strength, vitality and innovation. That's why city governments play an essential role in the integration of newcomers.

Find out more on our [Publications](#) page!

Why Municipal Leadership Matters: Alan Broadbent

By kturner
[Opinion](#)



By Alan Broadbent, Chairman and CEO, Avana Capital Corporation
Chairman, Maytree Foundation

Migration and urbanization were two dominant and intersecting trends of the 20th century, and they have picked up speed in the 21st century. As people move within and between the countries of the planet, urban regions have become home to more than half of the world population, and the figure increases every day.

People move to cities because that is where opportunity exists at scale. They move for work, school, entertainment, acceptance and love. They go to the city for economic success, as they move into and upwards in their careers. They extend their education in higher learning, meet their mates and begin families, and find a place in neighbourhoods and communities. In the city they find people interested in the same things they are, and culture in a vast array of expression.

They move from the hinterlands and rural areas in a relentless internal migration.

And they move from around the world, historically from farms to farms, then farms to cities, and now from large cities to large cities. In every country the biggest cities are becoming bigger at a faster rate of growth than secondary or tertiary cities.

Cities know and feel both urbanization and immigration profoundly. At the national and sub-national levels, urbanization and immigration are policy issues. At worst, they become xenophobic political issues as politicians stir fear of immigrants. At the municipal level, though, they are primary lived experience. And at the city level is where we find the political and community voices that embrace immigrants, knowing they bring strength, vitality, and innovation.

So at the municipal level, in our cities and urban regions, managing the settlement and inclusion of newcomers is vital. Managing it well can make a city prosper. Managing it well helps newcomers succeed at work, school, in the neighbourhood, and at the sports field or concert hall. Municipal governments provide essential services that impact day-to-day living, and can be flexible and responsive in their design and delivery. They exert their influence in a myriad of other ways, as employers, providers of good and services, and as wealth creator and policy-makers.

It is of great interest to city leaders, then, to know the key tasks of settlement and inclusion, how to capture them in policy and programs, and what constitutes good practice. What are the large scale programs, and what are the smaller scale innovations? What cities have a program worth emulating or adapting? Who is it important to talk to in order to learn lessons from other places?

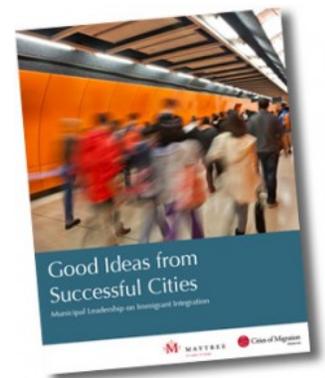
We know that civic leadership matters. Where you see a newcomer population thriving in an inclusive way, you see leaders in city government, in local business, in community organizations and institutions showing the way. For there is no doubt that leadership matters, whether it comes from the head of the city government or from other, often surprising, places in the community.

Cities of Migration illuminates these stories of city leadership and successful practice. It has built an international network of local practitioners sharing their work. It connects them in a variety of ways, so that good ideas travel at the speed of light, with the click of a button or the sound of a voice over a telephone line.

We hope you will find new ideas to inspire your work at home.

- This essay is part of *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*
- [View the entire list of publications from the series](#)

Alan Broadbent is Chairman of [Maytree](#), the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, and the Tamarack Institute. He is also Chairman and CEO of Avana Capital Corporation. Alan is the author of *Urban Nation: Why we Need to Give Power Back to the Cities to Make Canada Strong*. In addition, Alan is Chairman and CEO of Jamsco Inc.; Chairman of the Tides Canada Foundation; Chairman of *Diaspora Dialogues*; advisor to the *Literary Review of Canada*; Co-chair of *Happy Planet Foods*; member of the *Governors' Council of the Toronto Public Library Foundation*; Senior Fellow of *Massey College* and Member of the *Order of Canada*.



Coming Soon! Good Ideas from Successful Cities

By kturner
August 24, 2012
Uncategorized

In September, look for our new report on Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration, a selection of nearly 40 city-led policies and practices that are accelerating the settlement and integration of newcomers and helping build resilient, welcoming communities. Together with a series of short country reports, these stories of innovation and city success demonstrate how local governments are leading the way, using their considerable power and authority to create an equal, shared and just society. Themes include:

- Inclusion, Participation, Belonging
- Cities at Work
- Welcoming Communities
- Urban Prosperity
- Leadership

Learn more about [Good Ideas from Successful Cities!](#)

Steven Wray: From Philly to Hogtown

By kturner
August 23, 2012
[Interview](#)



Cities of Migration spoke to Steven T. Wray, Executive Director, [Economy League of Greater Philadelphia](#) as he visited [Toronto as part of the Greater Philadelphia Leadership Exchange in July 2012](#). This project takes city leaders out of their everyday work to introduce them to new ideas and leaders in other cities. Past exchanges have included Chicago, San Francisco, and Atlanta.

What is the Greater Philadelphia Leadership Exchange and why was it created?

The GPLE is a project of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia. The Economy League is a business lead civil organization in Philadelphia we've been around for a 103 years. We focus on sound public policy and good economic practice to make a more globally competitive region. The Leadership Exchange grew out of a good business practice called benchmarking. To advance in your own practice, it's good to see what your competitors and friends are doing and identify what you can take back to Philadelphia and apply.

We take 100 leaders from Philadelphia and bring them to another city and invite that city to tell its story and then we try to channel that knowledge into action in Philadelphia when we go home. The value of the leadership exchange? First, you steal some good ideas; second, you look back at your region through the lens of another; and third, you get 100 Philadelphians out of town talking to each other and good things actually happen.

The Leadership Exchange takes city leaders from various sectors to another city– what kind of people attend and what happens when they participate?

It's a real diverse mix of Philadelphia and that's intentional. We have business leaders, non-profit leaders, foundation leaders, people from economic development and tourism promotion, and museum executives. What they all have in common is a passion for making our region great. Their diversity is actually what makes it special. I don't know how many people come to me and say "I've learned a lot about Toronto but what I've really learned about is Philadelphia." That's important. You get that chance to step out of your own element.

You've been to Chicago, Atlanta, San Francisco and now Toronto. What's an example of a Good Idea from Toronto that you are bringing back to Philadelphia?

One example is this region's approach to newcomers. That was a very important. Just the term 'newcomer' versus immigrant. Everybody is a newcomer. I was a newcomer to Philadelphia coming from Pittsburgh seventeen years ago – I didn't know anyone and no one knew who I was. I could speak the language and I knew some of the culture but I didn't have a social network or a business network the way others did. Understanding that newcomer mentality exemplifies the Toronto approach, which is to create a welcoming open environment, and it provides opportunity for people to advance more quickly.

Philadelphia isn't an immigrant city like Toronto, we have 10% foreign born but we are seeing that number creep up. We do have diversity challenges – we have a large African American and Hispanic population. Toronto's approach offers us lessons about how immigrants or newcomers in the region are isolated from power structures or networks. I think we can take some of those lessons and apply them for young African American leaders or someone who came to study at one of our 101 colleges and decided to stay or someone who was transferred by their company. I think the lessons about inclusion and leadership development seen in the Mentoring Program that [TRIEC \(Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council\)](#), [Maytree](#) and [CivicAction](#) are all working on is something that I expect to be replicated in some version in Philadelphia.

You describe Toronto as a city that is working to make diversity and immigration an asset. What are the lessons for Philadelphia?

We see the wave coming. The US will be majority-minority by 2040. Our fastest growing population in the US is people of colour mainly by birth rates. We think immigration and our diversity can be a key strategic advantage for Philadelphia. It's something we have to consider as we look at our position on federal immigration policy. Philadelphia has 101 colleges and universities, many internationally known. A lot of foreign students study in Philadelphia. Right now it's very hard for them to stay. If we had more skills-based immigration opportunities, Philadelphia could become a hot bed of population growth, like we haven't had in decades. We could see entrepreneurs and others coming to Philadelphia and creating new opportunities.

Philadelphia is a great landing spot for foreign company. We are halfway between New York and Washington – the global financial capital and the federal capital ninety minutes away. If you're starting a new business, we are cheaper than either of those cities but you still have access to them as well as to a good work force and good schools and other things. There is great potential for Philadelphia to be really unique and a business asset. Learning the lessons early will help us get there and something to pay attention to as we are developing.

What is the [World Class Greater Philadelphia initiative](#)?

"World Class" is a 15-year strategic planning effort that the Economy League is leading in Greater Philadelphia.. We develop global scenarios that will impact Philadelphia over the next 15 years. We're working through massive civic engagement – over 1000 leaders participating in roundtable are working with one of our country's leading scenario planning firms. A smaller team of leaders is developing four scenarios that we call "future stories of Philadelphia." Stories of what could happen and what might happen.

The two pivot points are globalization and the impact of energy prices and availability. On globalization, we have scenarios that pivot on the rise of China and India, and the US being a secondary power. We have one where US is the primary power. We have one where the entire global economy collapses. And a fourth, where everyone muddles along but people start working together in different ways. Each of those has different implications for Philadelphia. The goal of scenario planning isn't to predict, but it's to develop strategies that are robust enough to succeed across all the scenarios or to help you succeed better across all the scenarios.

We take those scenarios back out to our roundtables and ask our region – what would you prioritize for Philadelphia to succeed in each of those areas? So, we identified three big priority areas. First was business growth. How do you get your economy to grow – more entrepreneurship, more innovation into existing businesses, more trade globally. The second was talent development. How you make sure you have access to a developing workforce that is able to adapt to changes in both a global and regional environment. And third was infrastructure? We now have strategy teams working in each of these three areas in partnership with other major civic organizations.

The Economy League is not a program running organization; we're a convening and catalytic organization. We try to galvanize action by working with partners, and finding folks who are ready to take action, who are ready to lead and to fill a gap if there is one. And there seems to be a movement. It's interesting how many cities are trying variations of this – Civic Action in Toronto and Global Detroit. We're in a global economy so, we don't have much choice. Like other cities, we'd like to be globally competitive and we need to be authentically Philadelphia as well.

There is a lot of discussion these days on welcoming communities.

We have a model for that – the [Welcoming Center of New Pennsylvanians](#). It's a place that helps newcomers navigate the system. They also help employers understand the benefits, the values, and the special needs for newcomers. How we support our newcomer communities to our region is very important.

The thing I found interesting about Toronto is – America always had this goal of the melting pot – Toronto appears to be more of mosaic. You want everyone to be Canadian, but you also want them to cherish value and honour their own traditions and backgrounds. It sounds altruistic, but there's also economic and practical benefit. When a company or individual comes here from overseas, there will be a community they can be comfortable in very quickly, and that helps that welcoming part. That's something our folks are trying to develop in our system.

What about the idea of receiving communities so that locals don't feel so threatened by newcomers?

Thinking about the receiving community is important because that's where tension can arise. Perhaps more so in Philadelphia than Toronto because we don't have much economic growth happening right now.

The Welcoming Center plays that role. They work with the individual or the family of the folks who are coming into the community, and also bridge the gap to employers or government services who are working with newcomers. For example, the local leader of our labour union movement is on the board and an honouree of the Welcoming Centre.

We recently profiled a [Good Idea on microfinance from the city of Philadelphia's Department of Commerce](#). What else can Philadelphia teach other cities?

Our current mayor has a very strong and positive attitude towards immigration. The mayor wants to understand how we can do better. Annually, on the 4th of July, he presides over the swearing in ceremonies of new Americans at Independence Hall – linking these events is important. Another example is the small community in the suburbs called Upper Darby that is home to 68 different nationalities. It's an incredibly diverse area. They worked with the Welcoming Center to reprint their business services brochure in at least seven languages. It was also a unique kind of public-non-profit partnership – and they gave the Welcoming Center office space out in the community

Given this is Republican county, that's not what you might have expected in [Upper Darby](#). But they recognize, particularly the business services folk that these newcomers wanted to start businesses that could fill empty space among vacant commercial quarters – ethnic food stores, small businesses – and that they needed to create a more welcoming attitude to make it work.

So the Upper Darby police chief has taken a whole different approach to how he does things. The mayor has learned to play cricket, learned things that he never thought. It's more than just come out and kick off the opening ball or throw out the opening pitch. You have to get to know the community, learn who the true leaders are in the community. That is a shift. That is not party-based. It is understanding where the different power levels are within a community. Sometimes it's nationality, sometimes religion, it could be wealth or it could be family. So how you navigate that and understand that is unique each time and you need some guides to help you along with that.

I think we will see a lot more happening after being in Toronto. There were a lot of eyes opened and new thinking. I mean when you have 50% of your folks foreign-born, you're going to have that.

What is the next big idea for Philadelphia? What is top of your wish list?

First is a regional talent partnership, focused on the whole continuum of talent development from birth to pre-kindergarten all the way to adult education, recognizing the inter-connectedness between all levels. If you don't start early and provide a good foundation, it's difficult for the public school system to succeed. If the public system doesn't succeed and isn't producing good graduates then the workforce isn't going to succeed. We tend to work in silos around those things so we are working with our United Way to develop a business plan for how that partnership would be created, how it would be supported, how it would be sustained, and who would be involved.

I view talent as the real differentiator into the future. If your region is able to adjust and adapt to the changes in the economy, you're going to be in a better position. And if your people are ready to do that, you're going to have more success. And they are going to have more success. That's the big one.

What is your favourite city and why?

I think Philadelphia is just starting to realize its potential for great things. My home town is Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh is one of those places that plays bigger than it is. It has transformed its economy in a way that no one would have imagined. It's an incredibly liveable, affordable place with all of the amenities of a big city. The working ethos of Pittsburgh is in its attitude, "I'm not going to let this city die. We're going to move it forward." They have made a smoother transition than a lot of other industrial cities to a talent-based economy. It's a great mid-sized city.

[Steven T. Wray](#) is the Executive Director of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia in 2006. He works with a board of more than 70 senior private sector leaders from the region's leading companies and institutions and a staff of 10. Wray also is Managing Director of the Pennsylvania Economy League, Inc., the corporate home of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.

This interview was edited and condensed for publication.

Good Ideas in the News: August 2012

By kturner
August 22, 2012
Uncategorized

2012 National Immigration Integration Conference. Register for NIIC 2012, the signature event of the National Partnership for New Americans. NIIC 2012 is hosted by CASA de Maryland in Baltimore, from September 22-25, 2012. [More](#)

2012 Create UNAOC Challenge. Launched by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, this contest invites developers to create new apps and mobile games that raise awareness and enable new opportunities for intercultural dialogue. [More](#)

“Canada’s future success closely linked to a successful immigration program.” Maytree’s Ratna Omidvar and Sandra Lopes on how Canada cannot continue to view immigration in a policy silo. rather, by 2020, immigration must be fully integrated into all aspects of Canadian public policy. [More](#)

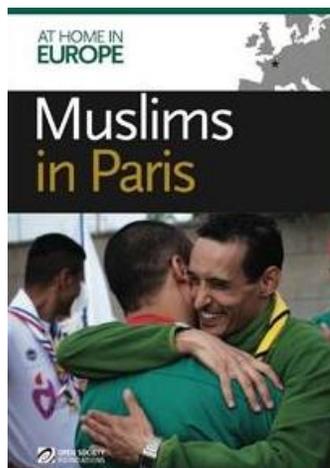
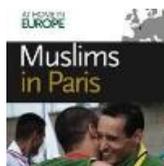
Global Detroit. Launch of new website includes profiles of Detroit immigrants, the Global Detroit Study, and links to the organization’s eleven local initiatives. [More](#)

Citizens’ Resistance! For its 19th meeting, the Banlieues d’Europe network will examine the place and the role of culture as a form of citizen’s action and participation. November 21-23, 2012, Turin. [More](#)

Call for papers, The Intercultural City: Exploring an Elusive Idea, Venice, Italy. November 29-30, 2012. The SSIIM UNESCO Chair invites the submission of papers on the notion of the “intercultural city” within the context of increasingly diverse urban societies. Deadline for submission: September 9, 2012. [More](#)

Two New Reports from Open Society Foundations

By kturner
Uncategorized



The Open Society Foundation's At Home in Europe project has released its final reports in its eleven-city *Muslims in Europe* series.

"This neighbourhood has always been a neighbourhood of arrivals; people who come and are in need, trying to move into a more welcoming neighbourhood." —Focus group respondent in Paris

[Muslims in Paris](#) highlights the everyday experiences and rarely heard voices of Muslims living in the neighbourhood of La Goutte d'Or, situated in the city's multicultural 18th arrondissement while [Muslims in London](#) highlights the complexities around belonging and identity amongst Muslim and non-Muslim residents living in [Waltham Forest](#), one of London's 2012 Olympic boroughs.

In Paris, the qualitative research reveals that both Muslim and non-Muslim residents share a keen sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, city and country. In London, the research reveals that local not national identity is strongest for Muslims in Waltham Forest, but it is the reverse for non-Muslims in the borough.

Muslims in Paris is the eleventh report in the Muslims in EU Cities series produced by the Open Society Foundations At Home in Europe Project. It is the result of research that examines the level and nature of integration of Muslims in 11 cities across Europe (Antwerp, Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Leicester, London, Marseille, Paris, Rotterdam, and Stockholm).

- Read the full report, [Muslims in Paris](#)
- [Key Findings from Muslims in Paris Report](#)
- [Muslims in Paris: Finding and Recommendations](#)
- Read the full report, [Muslims In London](#)
- [Muslims in London: Finding and Recommendations](#)
- Good Idea: [Mapping Community Cohesion in Waltham Forest](#)

Source: [Open Society Foundations](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas with Sister Lena Deevy: Kerpen to Boston

By Evelyn
[Interview](#)



Good Ideas about successful integration are traveling from city to city. This month meet Sister Lena Deevy, Executive Director, [Irish International Immigrant Center \(IIIC\)](#), Boston. We spoke with her at the 4th annual National Immigrant Integration Conference (NIIC) in 2011.

The Cities of Migration Good Idea that really caught my eye was the [Integration Workshop for Inclusive Cities from Kerpen, Germany](#).

Why? What I really liked about it was it was a very thoughtful, well-planned process of involving people at different levels, like the city level. It was really good for me because I work with bringing grassroots people together. So this gave me an idea of the real importance of involving all the stakeholders of the city together.

Everyone had to be a participant at all levels of the city: the politicians, business people and advocates. I really liked this. It said everyone was on the journey together: everybody had a stake, everybody realizing their interdependence and what every person has to offer to build a healthy city.

How do you plan this share this Good Idea?

I feel very passionate about people coming together and the idea of people mutually respecting one another, so I plan to share with my own organization, the other organizations I work with. I certainly would like to talk to a group of people about using this model in our city.

Do you have a story to share? [Submit a good idea!](#)

- Read about the other Good Ideas presented at the [Cities of Migration Marketplace at NIIC](#).



What Cities Said: Tenerife and Toronto on Civic Participation

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In our first [Spanish-language webinar, From Integration to Civic Participation](#) in June, presenters from [Together in the Same Direction](#) (Tenerife) and [DiverseCity's School4Civics](#) (Toronto) shared their experiences with projects that encourage civic participation in political life through network-building and training. The presenters offered these insights:

Integration at all levels of society creates a more united, highly developed, richer society

Maytree's School4Civics offers non-partisan training designed to develop the capacity of a new generation of civic leaders and diverse politicians who reflect the varied society they represent, keen to drive a progressive social change.

Community participation is the first step towards integration of newcomers

Together in the same direction sees community participation as the first step towards improving integration of newcomers in an island city and is having some significant results, particularly in terms of networking between associations and social cohesion.

Use networking to increase the reach and impact of your work

The two initiatives point to networking as one of the keys to their success. This will be a way of continuing to work together after the programme finishes as well as being a way to be stronger when it comes to achieving common objectives. Recognizing and integrating the voices of new citizens is a great source of wealth to societies.

See the video of the [webinar: From integration to civic participation \(in Spanish\)](#)

Intercambio de experiencias: La participación cívica como vía de integración

En nuestro primer [seminario virtual en español](#) en el mes de junio, responsables de las iniciativas [Juntos en la misma dirección](#) (Tenerife) y [School4Civics de DiverseCity](#) (Toronto) compartieron sus experiencias en dos proyectos que promueven el compromiso cívico mediante la creación de redes o la formación para la participación en la vida política.

La integración a todos los niveles de una sociedad la convierte en una sociedad más cohesionada, desarrollada y rica

School4Civics (Escuela de civismo) de Maytree es un programa de formación no partidista diseñado para desarrollar la capacidad de una nueva generación de dirigentes cívicos y políticos diversos que reflejen a la sociedad diversa a la que representan, deseosos de impulsar un cambio social progresista.

La red de participación comunitaria refuerza a las entidades para lograr unos objetivos comunes

Juntos en la misma dirección concibe la participación comunitaria como un primer paso hacia la mejora de la integración de los recién llegados a la ciudad insular dando resultados importantes, especialmente en términos de interconexión de las asociaciones y cohesión social.

Ambos proyectos desatacan el trabajo en red para lograr sus objetivos

Las dos iniciativas destacan el trabajo en red como uno de sus puntos clave para el éxito. Bien como una forma de seguir trabajando juntos una vez ha acabado el programa o bien como una forma de conseguir más fuerza a la hora de lograr objetivos comunes. Reconocer e integrar las voces de la nueva ciudadanía aporta una gran riqueza a las sociedades.

Vea el video del seminario virtual: [La participación cívica como vía de integración](#)

DiverseCity Counts 5

By kturner
June 28, 2012
Uncategorized

The most recent report, [Leadership Diversity in the Nonprofit Sector: Baby Steps, Big Strides, and Bold Stances](#) was conducted by Carleton University's Chris Fredette.



The research is based on three surveys of more than 420 organizations in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). It finds that a diverse board contributes to overall board effectiveness by, for example, safeguarding and fulfilling the mission of the organization and enhancing fiduciary oversight. Board diversity also improves stakeholder relationships, increases the organization's responsiveness to the community and their clients, and brings fresh perspectives to decision-making. The report also finds that once a critical mass of 30% leadership diversity is reached, there is an increase in reported benefits.

Despite the overwhelming advantages of leadership diversity, the research found that visible minorities continue to be underrepresented in nonprofit boards in the GTA. While visible minorities make up 40% of the GTA's population, of the 4,254 board positions examined only 15.6% are held by visible minorities.

The report includes a number of recommendations for organizations that wish to strengthen their board, including understanding and communicating the benefits of leadership diversity and aligning diversity efforts to the organization's mission and mandate.

For more information, visit [DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project](#)

Celia Okoyino da Mbabi: A Soccer Star goes VIP

By ktuner

[Interview, Interviews](#)



Soccer is in the air as the 2012 Euro Cup reaches its climax. To celebrate, Cities of Migration speaks to [Célia Okoyino da Mbabi](#), a midfielder with the German women's national soccer team. Our star is a school ambassador with the internationally-acclaimed "[All Kids are VIPs](#)" program. The interview was conducted by our German partner, [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#).

Why did you become an ambassador for "All Kids are VIPs?" Have you got special reasons for participating in "Alle Kids sind VIPs?"

Kids are our future. I really enjoy their company. I perceive them as being extremely open-minded. Children have to be encouraged and supported – they are the true VIPs.

How does your cultural background help you with your soccer-career or your everyday life?

My mother is French, my father comes from Cameroon. I was born in Bonn, Germany. My background enables me to handle different situations in very mature ways. Because of where I come from, I am able to see further than the end of my nose, to consider different views. My cultural upbringing has been a huge benefit to me.

What's your secret of success? What would you tell kids who are in a similar position to yours a couple of years back?

Always believe in yourself and what you do. Bring a lot of fun, energy and passion to what you're doing. That applies to school as well as sports or other hobbies. There might be drawbacks. But as long as you are passionate about what you do, you'll succeed!

Why is this important for you to get involved with VIPS Kids?

Children are great and they deserve to be supported. I love sharing my time and experiences – they have a very big place in my heart.

What is your favourite city and why?

There are a lot of beautiful cities, like London, Paris or smaller cities like Dubrovnik. They are all beautiful in their own ways.

Related Links:

- [Menden, DE: All Kids are VIPs](#)
- [Reaching for the Stars: VIPs go to School](#)
- [Webinar: All Kids are VIPs: Immigrant Integration at School](#)

Embrace the Choices Before You: Ratna Omidvar

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



Embrace the Choices Before You Convocation Address by Ratna Omidvar President, Maytree Foundation

When Maytree President Ratna Omidvar received an honorary doctorate from Toronto's York University earlier this month, she had the opportunity to address the graduating students and send them off with some words of advice.

She told students about the challenges she faced as a refugee in Canada and reminded them of the incredible privilege they have to exercise many choices in their lives. She encouraged them to not merely enjoy this luxury of choice, but to embrace the responsibility it offers them, to be active and take the small steps necessary to create a better world. Here is an excerpt with "five good ideas for your life."

As you go out into the so called real world of work, you don't need me to tell you the uncertain future you are facing. I am not a vocational counsellor. I can't predict where the job market is headed. What I can predict is that you will be faced with many choices, and that these choices will play a far more important role in forming your future than any trends in the labour market.

You are indeed lucky. You have the privilege of exercising many choices, choices that you may well take for granted. You can go wherever you want, be whoever you want and be with whomever you want. You can choose if and who you marry or date; you can define family in your own in your own unique way. Your parents may well have something to say about this, but nobody is going to put you in jail for exercising your choice. You are the architect of your own future which is not entirely reliant on your social class to propel you forward or conversely hold you back. And you have the power to vote governments in and out as you please.

Some of you will say "Big Deal." But, yes, these are indeed big deals.

Growing up in India in the 1950s, I didn't have the luxury of all these choices. I was for the first two decades of my life someone's daughter, someone's sister, someone's student, someone's responsibility. And then my life changed as I chose to strike out on my own. At first, it was scary as hell, but then I tasted freedom. And claiming freedom, I made many choices, some of them foolish, like a summer I spent hitchhiking with truckers in Italy, a few of them wise. And it is from these choices I have made in this new life that I wish to draw my comments.

Some of my choices were purely coincidental or accidental. I did not set out to come to Canada; I had no intention of leaving home, until a famous revolution in Iran forced my family to look for a new home. Even then, my husband and I, who is in the room today, made a thinly researched but ultimately very smart choice – we chose Canada, and Canada chose us, over Australia (too far) and over the US (too imperialist).

Other choices were thrust on us from day one of our arrival. Almost the first choice I had to make was whether to keep my name or change it. Like all anxious immigrants, we were fixated on getting work. And an old family friend, a successful and powerful immigrant, who I thought I should take my new life lessons from said to me: "Ratna, you must change your name. It is strange and does not roll easily off Canadian tongues. It will stand in the way of getting a job. People will not remember you because they will not remember your name."

That was serious for me. After all, I was only three days old in the country. Here was someone who had changed his name from Ashok to Ash ... maybe he was right. And to be perfectly honest, I did mull it over, made up a list of names ... Rhonda, Rita, Rosa ... but in the end, I could not do it. My name is as much part of me as the colour of my skin, so I chose to keep it. And, yes, I do correct its pronunciation many times, but the very act of doing so reminds me of where I came from and where I am going.

My next difficult choice was my career. I qualified as a teacher of German as a second Language from Germany. But even I realized that no one in Canada would want to learn German from an Indian who had just arrived as a refugee from Iran. So I did what I felt was the only course that was open to me – I reinvented myself. I don't say this to pretend that I had a clear formula, in fact quite the opposite.

In retrospect it felt like the game of snakes and ladders, up four, down three – I was a sales clerk selling tubes and pipes, I was an assistant to a film production company where I learnt to make the perfect cup of coffee, I tried my hand at working for a writer, I thought about becoming a real estate agent ... and then one day I realized that the best career was literally staring at me in my face ... and that was working in the not-for-profit world. I found incredible strength in working with and for people who were on the margins. I found wonderful mentors. One thing led to another, and my path as a social activist emerged, took shape, grew and flourished, and here I am today

So before I let you go, I thought I would leave you with five good ideas for your life, derived loosely from the lessons I have learnt. Why five? Because it's an easy number, and if even one of them sticks with you, then I will have done my job:

1. Embrace risk with both arms. I know it is scary, but it is only by opening yourself to possibility and reality of failure that you will grow and find and reach the depths of your own capacity. And when you find them, you will be in wonder of yourself. I have learnt far more from people who have said no to me than from people who have said yes, and I know that what I don't know is so much more important than what I do know. Remember that today you are students and teachers, but that tomorrow you may well be poets, inventors, entrepreneurs, lawyers or simply travelers. Your degree is not a formula for the future, rather it is a passport to possibilities.

2. Don't let perfection stand in the way of good. I often think that the pursuit of perfection in our lives holds us back from being excellent, because we are so frightened of not being perfect. There is something rigid about perfection, and it gets in the way of being good or very good. In the immediate next few months remember that there is no such thing as the perfect resume, the perfect interview or the perfect job. You can always recover from failure, but I don't quite see how one can recover or go forward from perfection.

3. Help yourself to free advice and find a mentor. I have a small secret list of advisors, I call them my personal board of Directors, they just don't know they are on it. I call on them for advice, feedback, guidance, perspective. They help me see things differently and often unpack the written and unwritten rules of engagement. They have, over time, become my champions. So create your own personal board list of advisors, change the list every now and then, shake it up every now and then, and one day, because someone will have helped you, remember to pay it forward to the next person standing in line.

4. Remember the most important privilege you have: the privilege of exercising your vote. Your generation knows how to make our generation sit up and listen to: you made us sit up in York a few years ago, and we are certainly listening to you in Quebec. You are remarkably willing to walk in protest, as is your right but you are also remarkably unwilling to walk to the ballot box, as is your responsibility. Exiting from politics, leaving government and governance in the hands of my generation is not a good choice to make and works against your self-interest. My generation's interests are in health care, home care, pensions, benefits ... boring stuff for you. Yours are in the cost of education, the environment, child care, investments in the work place ... and the only way the pendulum will swing is if politicians hear from you. And if you don't like what they do, well then, the next time around, you have the power to vote them out, or run for office or create your own new party.

5. Action trumps inaction any day. We live in a world that is dedicated to describing, re-describing and re-re-describing problems, instead of progressing to imagining and implementing solutions. Winston Churchill, the man famously credited for turning the tide in the Second World War said: "I never worry about action, I worry about inaction." If he had indeed worried about action, then our world today might look very different. I hope that you don't have to face a war, but living in this world, you will have cause for fear, cause for hope and cause for anxiety. If you are concerned about the environment, about human rights in Afghanistan, about your local school or hospital, about Canada's relations with the world, about growing poverty and exclusion, or anything else that twigs your fancy or strums your guitar, then translate your fears, concerns and hopes into action, imperfect as these might be. If you have an idea, then implement it, if you have a thought, put it on paper, if you have a concern, then shout out about it, if you have a solution, then test it, even if it fails. Your action may not lead to nirvana, but remember that the great work is done through small steps which create incremental change which ultimately lead to the solution.

Viola Desmond, an African Canadian teacher in Nova Scotia in 1946, refused to sit in the balcony of the theater instead of the main floor reserved for white patrons. She could see better from the main floor so that's where she sat. The police came, put her in jail; she was not advised of her rights. Viola remained sitting upright, wearing her white gloves (a sign of sophistication and class at the time). She was charged with defrauding the Government of Nova Scotia for the difference in the tax between a ground floor and a balcony seat, which amounted to one cent. And then she took the Nova Scotia government to court.

A fascinating story of one small step that unleashed an avalanche of change.

So feel free to freak out, don't let the nay-sayers or fear-mongers hold you back. Keep your name, it is your personal PIN. Embrace the choices before you. Don't take yourself too seriously; the more you are able to laugh at yourself, the happier you will be. Welcome the unknown.

This time won't last forever, and tomorrow, thank goodness, it will be something else.

[Read the full address at the Maytree website.](#)

[Related story: Inclusion Means all of Us \(Ratna Omidvar\)](#)

Watch Lessons from Welcoming Cities

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In our last webinar, presenters from the [City of Sanctuary movement \(UK\)](#) and the [Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network](#) shared some tips for developing city-led public service campaigns to create welcoming communities and challenge stereotypes about immigrants and refugees.

Find allies to sell positive messages and stories

You can't win over everyone. Identify like-minded people or organizations, include the voices of migrants, and build on what is already there. The Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network strategically looked for allies in the Media who had previously covered immigrant stories in a positive light. The City recruited "anti-rumour agents" from different professions, NGOs, local leaders and famous people to push their anti-rumour campaign to the general public. Anti-rumour agents received training which included role playing various situations so that people could build dialogue and tools around countering negative rumours. In Sheffield, the City of Sanctuary movement trained

asylum seekers in public speaking so they could confidently share their stories first hand in schools and other public forums.

Get local authorities to back your plan and spread the campaign

NGOs and city councillors need to work closely to develop strategies together. The City of Sanctuary movement prepared a manifesto that offered city workers and councilors a plan and ideas of how to create a culture of welcome. The Anti-Rumour Campaign was part of Barcelona's Intercultural Plan which developed a MOU with other city administrations across the regions to take the campaign even further.

Counter stereotypes with facts and information using all available media

The Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network created websites, comic books and humorous videos to engage youth, and anti-rumour agent manuals for local community leaders.

Watch the full webinar video for [Welcoming Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration](#)

What Is a Welcoming Community?

By kturner
May 31, 2012
[Interview](#)



De-bunking myths about immigration can unlock the potential of American communities and individuals to respond proudly to the country's fastest immigration growth rates since the early 1900s. In this short video clip, David Lubell, Welcoming America Executive Director and [new Ashoka Fellow](#), talks about how [Welcoming America](#) is helping US communities overcome their fears and uphold the country's national tradition and historical legacy of welcoming immigrants.

Related Links:

- Read more about Welcoming America in [Shelbyville's Ambassador's of Welcome](#)

Learning Exchange: Building Citizenship through Participation

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In our April webinar, [presenters from Count Us In Campaign \(Dublin\) and Building Citizenship Program \(Toronto\)](#) shared tips for how they deliver successful programs that have made a difference in engaging new citizens and building their sense of belonging.

Engage the host community in concrete ways to make new citizens feel welcome

The Building Citizenship program engages a network of volunteers from established communities to host community-based citizenship ceremonies in partnership with the government. New and old citizens come together, celebrate, and have roundtable discussions about what it means to be Canadian. Community ceremonies are held in public spaces to make all new citizens know they are welcomed.

A strong media campaign needs to be supported by facts and involve different actors

The Count Us In Campaign developed a strong communication strategy to include the support and the voices of Dublin City Council, political candidates, naturalized citizens, second-generation migrants, professional PR firms, and used naturalization statistics/research to show the experiences and need for stronger migrant political participation

Offer support mechanisms for your volunteers and for people who will be affected by your program/ campaign

Both programs rely heavily on volunteers to deliver the impact it has achieved. It is important to provide them with resources, a point-person to follow-up with / ask questions, and keep communications line open and healthy, allowing them to see that they are appreciated and valued stakeholders in the process.

>> [Watch the full webinar video for Count Us In: Building Citizenship through Participation](#)



Stephen Frost talks Supplier Diversity at the London Games

By kturner

[Interview, Interviews](#)



Cities of Migration spoke to Stephen Frost, Head of Diversity for London 2012, the organizing body for the upcoming Olympic Games and keynote speaker at the recent [Canadian Supplier Diversity Conference 2012](#) in Toronto.

Under the theme “Diversity, our Economic Strength,” Frost was joined by leading executives from the public and private sector across North America to talk about the key strategic benefits of supplier diversity and how they are addressing diversity in their procurement strategies.

Tell us about the Diversity and Inclusion Business Charter and why it is important to the City of London.

We launched the [Diversity and Inclusion Business Charter](#) in November 2009 for three reasons. The first was basically opening up the supply chains by putting our opportunities as much as possible online – to increase competition, to increase quality, lower costs and allow new entrants from small businesses. The second thing was getting the big guys to put their subcontract opportunities back into the system as well – then all the subcontracts are available to all, are transparent, and it helps increase quality levels, lower costs and get new people involved. The third reason was to improve diversity performance. Aligning businesses with an online diversity assessment – to assess whether they are really good or not so good – allows them to know where they are, so they can move forward from there and reach their goals by Games time.

So it was an attempt for us to become very commercial and to be sensible about it – to make it clear to prior business that they had nothing to fear, no costs. But also that it would add significant social value to all of us.

What is the Charter’s impact on diversity? Do you have an example of its impact on immigrant-owned businesses that you can highlight?

In terms of immigrants, we have to be careful not to overstate our case that we are affecting UK immigration; but in terms of the diversity of London, yes. There are lots of examples where diverse-owned businesses have won contracts. For example RedLine, an Asian-owned bus company based in Bedford has won a contract to supply busses for the games. Another example is Klouatic, suppliers of cleaning products which employs vision-impaired folks. So there are lots of examples of minority-owned businesses, or small businesses that have won contracts, and that’s been great. There has been a lot of outreach and work done by all of us.

What advice would you give to other cities that want to implement a charter like this?

I would say ground it in the commercial realities of your city. Don’t try to do something which is not right for your city. Try to do it in terms of what commercially works for the businesses that make up the economy of that city. And then mainstream it. Don’t have a separate Charter that is only for public sector companies – make it commercial, make it relevant to all companies that operate in that city.

Is the Diversity and Inclusion Business Charter catching on? Who is copying you?

You know, we learn from each other. It’s not just a one way street for us. But in terms of legacy – which is the real question – we’re working with partners and government, we’re working with Rio [2016 Olympics], we’re working with anyone who wants to work with us to pass on best practice.

What’s an idea from another city that you would like to bring to London?

You know, I learned a lot from Alejandra Castillo’s presentation; she’s the Deputy Director of the [Minority Business Development Agency](#) in the US. There are some really interesting ideas there that I would like to explore further and think about for the UK. They did a lot of work on this Billion Dollar Club where companies want to get involved. It’s a positive to get involved rather than stay outside – to actually be involved in putting forward real contracts open for tender to minority and small businesses.

That’s an interesting idea on a big scale. It would be interesting to look at that.

What’s your favourite city and why?

London obviously! How could I not say London? London is the most diverse city I know apart from Toronto. The thing about London is that it’s the best of times, it’s the worst of times, but it’s the world in a city, right? Whatever kind of food you want to eat, whatever kind of person you want to meet, whatever kind of cultural activity you want to do – London has got it.

What’s nice is that it works. Whatever people say, whatever the cynicism about diversity and inclusion, it is kind of ironic that people say one of the best things about living in London is the diversity.

Related Links:

- [The World in a City: The Olympic Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) – Good Idea
- [The Secret to Leveraging Multi-sport Games to Advance Diversity and Inclusion](#) by Naki Osutei, Lead, Diversity & Inclusion at Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games Organizing Committee

Stephen Frost is the Head of Diversity & Inclusion at the [London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Ltd](#). He is responsible for incorporating diversity and inclusion across the workforce, volunteers and contractors as well as in procurement and all aspects of

service delivery. He graduated from Oxford and Harvard and has a background in advertising and consulting. He developed the Workplace Equality Index, the UK's first LGBT leadership programme. Prior to his current role, Stephen worked directly for the CEO of LOCOG across all aspects of delivering the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. He is a Fulbright Scholar and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Orkan Kösemen: Learning from Each Other

By Evelyn
[Opinion](#)



Dr. Orkan Kösemen is a project manager at [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#) and works on issues of migration, integration and democracy. He is currently in Toronto visiting [Maytree](#) to learn more about Canadian approaches in these matters and to share new perspectives from Germany.

Arriving in Toronto from Germany at the end of March, I didn't expect to have any problems adapting here. Why should I? It's Canada after all, I thought. This is part of the image every traveler has in his or her mind when coming to this country: a society born out of global immigration, yet with a common identity; people from all over the world, yet peaceful and embracing difference. "Diversity is our strength" is the official motto of the City of Toronto.

In Germany, the closest to that might be the city of Cologne. The people of Cologne have a distinct self-understanding that expresses itself in the saying "*Jede Jeck ist anders*." It means everybody is different and that's ok.

A few Canadians have told me that their country is not perfect, and everything has two sides. While I can see their point, I came here to explore what Canada does differently compared to other countries where the issue of immigration is usually handled tediously and is more conflict-laden.

Maytree has a history of international exchange of ideas and practices, as we have at the Bertelsmann Foundation in Germany. Learning from each other is a good way to develop your own ideas further without making the mistakes others may have experienced.

Classic immigration countries like Canada have shifted to the centre of attention after immigration became a major issue in Europe at the end of the 1990s. This is actually your chance to shine.

But even in Germany the times are changing, and sometimes these changes are not perceived by others when they happen. I understand that most people won't put Germany on top of their priority list when it comes to look for examples on how to handle immigration. Still, it might be useful to know that not all German stereotypes are true anymore. Maybe you are following the changes we have experienced in the last years, maybe you aren't. But let me clarify three aspects about immigration in Germany you may think you already know but are in fact not longer true.

Three myths about immigration and Germany:

1. Germany is a country of guest workers: Well, maybe it was originally. Germany even coined the term "guest worker." But that was back in the 70s and 80s. Today, nobody uses this term anymore, and neither the German public nor the immigrants themselves think that any of the former guest workers and their offspring will leave Germany. It was a painful process until everyone involved realized (and accepted) that Germany in fact turned into an immigration country. That was almost 10 years ago. Since then "integration" has become one of the big topics in German domestic politics.

2. Germany is a homogenous country: Not true. Apart from the fact that no country on earth with a population of 80 million can be called homogenous (especially in modern times when individualism and urban sub-cultures are just normal phenomena), Germany is not even homogenous under ethnic viewpoints. Nowadays, roughly 20% of the German population (16 Million) have – in one way or another – non-German roots. That includes foreign citizens, foreign born Germans, as well as people born in Germany who have been naturalized. And this part of the population is growing.

3. Germany wants to assimilate its migrants: Even though some people in Germany think that would be the best way to handle immigration, that's not what happens in Germany. Germany is proud to have a civil society where every social group can express its interests and is encouraged to take part in shaping the country. Everyone has the right and the freedom to live a self-determined life as long as you meet some basic requirements, like speaking German and honouring the constitution. What is true is that there is growing public pressure on religious Muslims to adapt more to secular mainstream.

Of course, Germany is far from being a perfect immigration society: We still don't have impactful anti-discrimination regulations, there is no offer for migrants to be part of a new German identity, diversity is still not being perceived as a societal advantage and the education system filters those children out who aren't native German speakers. But considering the progress that Germany has made in last the 20 years, we are – though slowly – on the right track.

Even though in the past immigration has been experienced differently in Canada and Germany, the future of immigration will be much more similar due to matching migration flows. The more migration regimes all over the world become mainstream and similar, the more we can learn from each other how to shape migration societies for the better. The next decade will be decisive for Germany if it wants to successfully mend an aging and fragmented population. I'm sure that it will be interesting for other countries to see how we tackle that challenge.

Related links:

- [Good Ideas in integration from Germany](#)
- [Good Ideas from Toronto: An Exchange of Immigrant Integration Practices with Germany](#)

This article first appeared on the [Maytree blog](#).



London: Living Wage Campaign Succeeds Again

By kturner
April 25, 2012
Uncategorized

The [London Living Wage Campaign](#) scores another success!

The Daily Mail reports:

“The Lloyd’s of London insurance market has become the latest employer to sign up to a campaign to pay contracted staff – including cleaners and catering workers – above the legal minimum wage.

The insurance market has joined more than 100 organisations, including Barclays, the City of London Corporation, accountancy KPMG and law firm Allen & Overy, in backing the Living Wage Campaign, which calls for every worker in the country to be paid enough to provide their family with the essentials of life.”

The newspaper points out that while the official minimum wage is £6.08 an hour for workers over 21 in the UK, the London Living Wage is £8.30 an hour.

Since November 2005, the campaign has brought together a diverse alliance of active citizens and community leaders from across the city to pressure employers to start paying all their employees a “living wage” and to encourage consumers to support businesses that do.

This success comes after London Citizens, the organizing group behind the campaign, placed [1,200 people into Living Wage jobs for the London 2012 Olympics](#).

Source: [Daily Mail](#)

Listening to Local Leadership in Cologne: Mayor Jürgen Roters

By ktuner
May 31, 2012
[Opinion](#)



As part of our *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*, we ask mayors and city leaders for their views on immigration, local initiatives and the future of their cities.

Jürgen Roters
Mayor of Cologne (Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Köln)
In conversation with Claudia Walther, [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#)

Why is the theme of migration and integration so important for your city of Cologne?

Cologne has been a migration city for many centuries. People from over 180 different nationalities are living in the city and almost one third of the population has roots in another country and culture.

That's why it's important that this segment of the population, this segment of the society, can participate in what's happening in our city. As well, we want to see this variety as a big enrichment. That is really important to Cologne.

What we also see is how all these people from different cultures, ethnicities and religions can live together in peace.

In your opinion, which immigration initiative or program, that the city of Cologne introduced, has been successful?

We recognized early that we have to welcome all newcomers with respect and acceptance. The first advisory council for foreigners was founded in 1984. At that time it was organized rather informally, and it worked next to city council.

Since then, we've learned from our experiences and have now a migration council, which is part of our parliamentary system. This migration council consists of 22 elected candidates with migration background and 11 city councillors.

What's next on your agenda regarding integration of newcomers and people with migration background?

What's positive about Cologne is the fact that we have a multitude of initiatives where people work on a voluntary basis and where migration plays an important part.

But migration is not the only focus – others are questions of social participation and civic integration, and not just for foreign residents but also for Germans. That's how we achieve some equality of interests.

Also close to my heart is that we don't just create programs for migrants, but that they overlap with a focus on mutual participation, and a right to education for all.

Which project or program would you like to bring to Cologne (or initiate)?

What's close to my heart is the theme of "Neighbourhood Mothers." We recognized, similar to other cities, that we need to win over the mothers from migrant families and to interest them to be partly responsible in the education opportunities of young people.

They then become "multipliers," even work full-time, and go to families to promote the importance of graduating from school, how important it is to be part of the community, and that there should be a focus on taking advantage of all opportunities.

Because we need everyone.

Looking at our democracy, we can't allow for young people with migrant background to have a much higher school dropout rate than the others. That's why we need to make a special effort.

We have the "Project Backpack," where mothers work together with their kids on their home work. We've had very positive experiences, and the kids, the mothers and the teachers have a lot of fun.

Which other cities inspire you in the area of integration and migration?

I believe it's very important that you look across borders. Of course, first you have to look at your own city and understand what you can realize within your own walls – what experiences a city has, what traditions, what cultural traditions. But you can always learn from others.

For example, take Berlin Neukölln, a municipal district with many social hardships, but one that has brought to the forefront many issues through hard work in the area of city development and the organization of the education system.

Also our sister-city Rotterdam, to look at a city outside of Germany, shows us for example how to set up a health network. This really is a very important topic for migrants to focus very early on health issues. We know that young migrants contract diseases more easily than non-migrants.

When you recognize that there are disadvantages in education, in social social services and health care, then you have to do something about it. And that's where Rotterdam sets an example.

[Jürgen Roters](#) was born in 1949 and studied law. In 1978 he became commissioner with the regional government in Muenster (Germany, federal state of Northrhine-Westfalia) and in 1981 head of division with the ministry for culture in Northrhine-Westfalia. A year later he took over the chair of the Cologne Administrative College. In 1988 he changed to the home ministry of Northrhine-Westfalia as head of the minister's office. He became superintendent of the Cologne police in 1995 and in 1999 president of the regional government until 2005. Until his election as mayor of Cologne he worked as freelance author and surveyor. Mr. Roters is member of the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

Montreal: Play It Fair!

By kturner
April 25, 2012
Uncategorized

We recently received a project update from Julie Kon Kam King, Senior Program Officer, Canada for Montreal-based Equitas ([Play It Fair!](#)):

Play it Fair! is a human rights education program that uses interactive games and group discussions to promote children's rights and participation through play. Since the program began in partnership with the City of Montreal in 2004, there are now 9 municipalities, and 18 communities across Canada participating in the program spanning from British Columbia to Newfoundland.

Each year, over 80,000 children in Canada take part in the program and more than 5,000 staff working with children are trained on the [Play it Fair! Toolkit](#) and participatory approach. Play it Fair! is helping to strengthen communities and promote respect for diversity, by giving children a space to express their ideas and opinions, and by making sure that all children are included and respected in schools and recreation programs. The program is growing internationally and is also being used by Equitas' partners in Indonesia, Haiti, and the MENA region.

We have recently launched a new program called Speaking Rights, which is currently being piloted in Montreal, Vancouver, Victoria, and Winnipeg. Speaking Rights engages 13-17 year old youth in exploring human rights issues and identifying strategies to combat discrimination and exclusion while promoting respect for diversity. The program centers on the active participation of youth by developing their ability to discuss issues that are important to them and to work collaboratively on activities that community-build and solve conflicts peacefully.

As a result of being featured on the [Cities of Migration website](#) and in the [Good Ideas: Diversity and Inclusion in Cities](#) publication we have new interest in the program from Spain and Portugal.

Ideas on the Move: Peel Children's Aid and DiverseCity onBoard

By kturner
Uncategorized



When we highlight the characteristics of good practice in a new Good Idea profile, we like to identify whether the practice has been replicated or adapted elsewhere. Has it travelled to a new city? Why? And how does this actually happen?

For Toronto's [DiverseCity onBoard](#) (DoB), the process of replication is under way, particularly after its work was recognized by the [UN Alliance of Civilization-BMW Group's Intercultural Innovation Awards in December 2011](#). Over the next year, DiverseCity onBoard will be developing a community of practice with the goal of replicating its 'ready to go' board development program in other organizations, in other cities and countries.

We'll check in periodically to record their process as part of an ongoing series about replicating good practice. To start off, we'll introduce you to [Peel Children's Aid](#), one of the organizations that have successfully used DiverseCity onBoard to improve its governance by increasing the diversity of its Board of Directors.

When Peel Children's Aid began to explore how to introduce diversity into their organization, staff made an important realization: the very services they delivered were seen as oppressive by some members of the community they serve.

The social service agency decided it was imperative to undertake an organization-wide initiative to incorporate both diversity and anti-oppression, "into our DNA."

For its efforts, Maytree awarded the Peel Children's Aid a Diversity in Governance Award in 2010. The award honours nonprofit organizations and public agencies, boards and commissions, that have made tangible steps to promote diversity at their highest levels.

Related Links:

- [DiverseCity onBoard receives UN Intercultural Innovation Award](#)
- [Cathy Winter, Manager, speaks about DiverseCity on Board](#)
- [DiverseCity on Board](#) – a Cities of Migration Good Idea in immigrant integration

The Myth of Tolerance: Ricard Zapata-Barrero

By kturner
April 30, 2012
[Opinion](#)



Understanding tolerance in the first decades of the Europe of the 21st century sets the frame for a new study of diversity combining the many theoretical debates and policies in Europe. We spoke to Dr. Ricard Zapata-Barrero, co-editor with Anna Triandafyllidou of [Addressing Tolerance and Diversity Discourses in Europe: Comparative Overview of 16 European Countries](#) (Barcelona: CIDOB/GRITIM-UPF, 2012).

Prof. Ricard Zapata-Barrero is the Director of GRITIM-UPF (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration) at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain.

Here is an excerpt from the book, followed by our interview:

“During the first decade of the 21st century, we need to undertake an intensive debate on the reasons underlying racist and discriminatory behaviour towards minorities and what can be done to enhance societal cohesion in European societies and to limit growing ideologies seeking to segregate the population into “good” or “bad” persons according to their national origin, religion, language and culture.

The question that is being posed, sometimes in more, and others in less politically-correct terms, is what kinds of ethnic, cultural or religious diversity can be accommodated within liberal and secular democracies and in what ways.

Our focus, in *Addressing Tolerance and Diversity Discourses in Europe: Comparative Overview of 16 European Countries*, is not only on diversity but also on whether we reject, tolerate or accept/respect specific diversity claims. We question tolerance as a concept, discuss its meaning in different contexts, and look at the practices of tolerance in different countries and towards different minority groups.

We propose tolerance as a concept and practice that stands between intolerance (the non acceptance of individuals, groups or practices) and acceptance, respect and public recognition of minority individuals, groups or practices.

We distinguish between:

1. **Non-tolerance:** Individuals, groups and practices who seek or for whom/which claims of toleration are being made but to whom/which toleration is not granted, and the reasons given in favour of or against toleration;
2. **Toleration:** Individuals, groups and practices who seek or for whom/which claims of toleration are being made and to whom/which toleration is granted, and the reasons given in favour of or against toleration;
3. **Recognition, respect as equal and admission as normal:** Individuals, groups and practices who seek or for whom/which it is claimed that toleration is not enough and other normative concepts, namely those that focus on majority-minority relations and the reform of institutions and citizenship, are or should be more relevant. They also include claims and processes towards the reconsideration of difference as a ‘normal’ feature of social life. Such concepts include equality, respect, recognition, accommodation and so on, and the reasons given in favour of or against these propositions.

The role of democracy in the development of a city’s culture is to foster a critical spirit and to develop the values of democracy, dialogue, deliberation, respect, pluralism, trust and tolerance, among others. By incorporating diversity in cultural policies, these values are activated and the link between society and culture is developed in both directions: the social development of culture and the cultural development of society.

The relationship between tolerance and respect or recognition of “what is categorized as different” is not necessarily a hierarchical one. Respect is not necessarily nor always a better institutional or practical solution for accommodating difference. However, while tolerance may be appropriate for some diversity claims, respect and public recognition may offer a better ‘fit.’”

Cities of Migration interviewed Prof. Zapata about his work:

Your new book argues that tolerance has not always meant acceptance of minorities; rather, the ‘myth of tolerance’ can also conceal gaps in policy and forms of discrimination by institutions or governments.

We are asking whether there is a ‘European’ position on diversity that can help us understand how to deal with society’s diverse cultures and traditions. We thought it would be useful to look for common practice by analyzing responses across Europe on how we deal with diversity — to a diversity of traditions, diversity of cultures and so on. In the process we discovered that the concept of tolerance in Europe is not cut in stone and has many policy expressions.

So, the first important point about tolerance we learned is that it is a contextual concept. There is no, so to speak, ‘European’ concept of tolerance. Its meaning varies with context. Tolerance practices have social, political, historical, dimensions in each country. Our specific methodology is conflict-based, that is we analyze tolerance by selecting specific conflicts in each country which have a semantic potential of expressing tolerance practices. We then show how different countries, however similar the conflict analyzed, produce different responses to these conflicts, are more or less accepting, or tolerant of conflict. The main purpose of this book is to show how our ideas and institutions around tolerance are shaped by this diversity of context, including country and historical context.

And there are different ways to define tolerance –the book shows the practice of tolerance in the discourse of 14 European countries. All the contributors identify different expressions of tolerance in their country and analyze what local practices can tell us about the policy discourse. The common theoretical framework that guides us is a core notion of tolerance defined not in universal principles, but in three main potential policy practices: non-tolerance; toleration, or acceptance; and, finally, what we call recognition and respect.

Your book suggests that historically, tolerance generally refers to the “absence of persecution of people but not their acceptance into society as full and welcomed members of community.” Are our ideas about tolerance changing?

One of the difficulties we had was the recognition that the semantics of tolerance always includes some sort of power dynamic. This is why we introduced the idea of ‘respect’ to our definition of tolerance. The concept of respect is what most people mean when they talk about tolerance — respect and acceptance. This is why the project is part of the [Accept Pluralism project \(Tolerance, Pluralism and Social Cohesion: Responding to the Challenges of the 21st Century in Europe\)](#).

If the concept of respect and acceptance is central to the idea of tolerance, then we can start to ask about the limits society puts on ‘acceptance’ when it comes to diversity. What can we accept? What is under negotiation when we talk about ‘acceptance’ and so on. The dividing line between what can we accept and what can not accept is the core of the semantic of tolerance we are exploring. We are of course aware, and we discuss it in our periodic meetings, that the concept of tolerance has a long European tradition, from the Enlightenment until today. But today, the normative liberal and democratic framework means the discourse of tolerance has many challenges to address through political debate and policy practices. For instance, the institutional discourse in Spain today does not speak explicitly about ‘tolerance’, however the notion is there, the practice is there. So we look for policy responses to diversity conflicts, encapsulate them under the categories of tolerance and then address issues of what we can and can not accept, what we can recognize or not, and where the limits of acceptance/non-acceptance lie in current policy practices in Europe.

In Spain, policy makers emphasize the concept of interculturality – respect and recognition for cultural, religious and ethnic differences. What is it about Spain that seems to have resulted in a more positive narrative on diversity?

First, the concept of interculturality is basically a concept related to city policy-making and tries to emphasize the importance of interaction among people of different origin. For example, within the [Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities project](#) – I coordinate the network of cities in Spain. [We work with ten cities](#) on how to frame an intercultural programme and examine how good practices in the area of intercultural policy have been applied in different cities. What is important in this term is the “inter.” “Inter” means interaction. The concept of interculturality emphasizes the importance of interaction between different people having different languages, nationalities, religions, cultures. The basic premise of intercultural policy is the idea that without public and political interventions that address the social dynamics of diversity, segregation can develop very quickly. The intercultural approach is seen as a policy strategy for bridging differences and to foster what I call a culture of diversity as the basis for social capital in diverse societies.

The other idea is that the accommodation of diversity is basically a local affair – in Spain, as elsewhere. Our research takes a city-based approach to identify the basic factors that have influenced the position of different cities in Spain towards diversity: linguistic, historical traditions, and – when we are speaking about the Spain -we are also speaking about a tradition based on the Catholic religion and Spanish language.

In Spain, we have this concept of Spanish-ness (Hispanidad) that is one of the driving forces of our diversity policies. “Hispanidad” tries to keep together the notion of a community that has been separated: Spain and the last of its Latin-American colonies. The concept originated at the end of the 19th century when Spain was losing its last colonies in Latin America, in the Philippines and so on. The concept of Hispanidad was created to keep together the idea of this extensive Spanish community that no longer had political links but shared a common language and a common religion, Catholicism. ‘So this idea of Hispanidad includes the concept of a community of diverse origin, made up of different countries that were politically completely distinct.

With Spain’s transition to democracy in the 1980s, these two categories [language and religion] were put aside as potentially a source of conflict and divisive to Spanish society. Questions formulated during the transition have re-emerged in the context of current diversity and immigration-related issues, and press both policymakers and society to seek specific answers to potential dilemmas such as: what is the role of the Catholic Church in education and in a public sphere made up of different religions? How to formulate coherent policy responses to practical demands related to dress code, religious festivities, worship, etc.? Is Spain composed of nations or of cultural communities without legitimizing claims to nation or statehood? Is Spain multinational? What is the political role of other languages in Spain such as Catalan, Basque and Galician? Should they enjoy the same level of recognition as the Spanish language? The contextual dependence of Spain on its recent past is at the core of these difficulties. Spain’s dilemma is to decide what model for society it aims to follow given the current diversity of national languages, religions and cultures.

This is the main focus of my next book (the provisional title is ‘Spain as a laboratory of multiple diversities’) where I suggest that what Spain is witnessing today is the intersection of two diversity models — each with its own public opinions and political narrative. And this is a unique case in Europe. Its central premise argues that Spain’s recent past and its diverse traditions play the role of an iron cage, limiting institutional innovation and structural change, and forcing Spain to follow a ‘practical’ approach characterized by a willingness to provide practical responses to current diversity-related conflicts, without any long-term model for a diverse society. I argue this limits the possibility of both institutional innovation and structural change in Spain.

You describe the city as the great laboratory for the management of diversity.

Cities have the power to manage certain issues freely, outside the framework of national policy and institutions. Local responses to diversity and tolerance make cities a laboratory for diversity practice. This local autonomy, while essentially positive, can also become a problem when, for example, it leads to a range of local policy responses to such essential issues as religious conflict and results administratively in dis-coordination between local governments, or impacts social cohesion. We cannot have different local policy responses to the burqa affair, for example. And this is what it is

happening in Spain in this moment. How do we create cohesion as a society when local governments respond differently to common issues? We have a problem of coordination here. What are the limits of local authority around such diversity issues as they relate to the practice of tolerance?

Can you give us an example of a city that best expresses – at a personal level – what it means to “Live Together” w respect for difference and equality?

The idea of living together can be measured as the absence of conflict. In this sense, Barcelona is a good example of a very rapid, recent experience of migration with no conflict. The challenge was how to create a feeling of identity and belonging. The city government recognized it had to create this sense of city identity beyond the diversities in the city. One of the keys to Barcelona's success is the network of associations and people working together to identify potential conflicts and to have answers ready in advance. It was easy for all these groups, Chinese, French, Catalan and so on to come together because they share the same urban space and have the same feeling of belonging to the city. This is what I always refer to as Barcelona's "community of citizens." This sense of urban identity is much more important and contributes very directly to cohesion and the desire of immigrants to feel Catalan/Spanish or even European. This sense of urban identity needs to be better explored and politically managed. Here lies one of the driving forces behind the success of cities in the accommodation of diversity. Barcelona, consciously or not, is a good example of how cities manage well.

In Europe, Barcelona and Berlin share this kind of cosmopolitan and interesting interculturality.

This interview was edited and condensed for publication.

[Dr. Ricard Zapata-Barrero](#) is a Professor at the Department of Political and Social Sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain). In 2009, he founded GRITIM-UPF (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration), a multi-departmental group of researchers interested in the aspects of innovation in research and management of change processes arising from human mobility and immigration. That same year, he also set up the Official Master of Immigration Management that is accredited by the Spanish Government. He is a regular contributor to media and policy debates, and has served on a number of commissions and government committees. He is currently member of the Advisory Board for family and social policies of the Government of the Generalitat de Catalunya (2011).

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Montreal to Barcelona

By kturner
April 25, 2012
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration are traveling from city to city. This month meet Julie Kon Kam King, Senior Program Officer in Montreal, Canada, for [Equitas \(Play It Fair\)](#).

The Cities of Migration Good Idea that really caught my eye was the publication by Cities of Migration partner, Fundació Bertelsmann: [Good Ideas: Diversity and Inclusion in Cities](#).

Why? This publication gets the word out, highlights best practices with concrete steps, and provides fresh ideas on how to make cities inclusive, vibrant, livable places to be. During a recent visit to Barcelona, I met with Monique Dissarz (Cities of Migration, Spain). We talked about her work promoting diversity, civic engagement and dialogue with municipalities.

She described how an idea from Germany is taking shape in Spain as part of the [Stars Go to School Project](#) and also how the local [Fundació Tot Raval](#) is providing community spaces to support the active participation of immigrants in Barcelona. I shared insights from Equitas' work with children, youth, and municipalities through our [Play it Fair!](#) and Speaking Rights programs. I think the publication will spur the sharing of more good ideas, and the replication of established projects that are leading to social change.

How did you share this Good Idea?

In Barcelona, [Monique and I did an interview with the Ara newspaper \(a regional Catalan newspaper\)](#), which will profile the new publication, and the work my organization is doing with municipalities and community-based organizations here in Canada. Since returning I have shared information about the resource with my colleagues, and we are profiling links to the resource on our e-community, an international network of over 1800 individuals working for human rights and social change.

Anything else?

As a result of being featured on the Cities of Migration website and in the [Good Ideas: Diversity and Inclusion in Cities](#) publication we have new interest in the program from Spain and Portugal.

- For a further update, read the [City Dispatch – Montreal: Play It Fair!](#)

Do you have a story to share? [Submit a good idea!](#)

Cities of Migration User Survey

By Evelyn
Uncategorized

Are Good Ideas traveling?

We would like your feedback! Help us learn more about your experience with Cities of Migration and how good ideas are traveling from city to city.

[Please take our survey \(8 minutes\)](#). Thank you!

This survey is also available [en español](#). For assistance in German or French, contact citiesofmigration@maytree.com



Learning Exchange: Immigrant Integration at School

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In our March webinar, [All Kids are VIPs: Immigrant Integration at School](#), our presenters from Germany and Spain shared tips for how to create a successful school-based program that can empower immigrant youth, educators, and “celebrity” ambassadors to raise awareness about cultural diversity. The *Alle Kids sind VIPs* program (Germany) is a competition where schools submit their best ideas for promoting diversity. Successfully replicated in Spain as *Eres joven, ¡triunfarás!*, this traveling Good idea inspires a new generation to share positive messages about immigrant integration.

Here are some of the tips our experts shared:

1. Engage teachers

Provide resources and information to teachers on how to include integration into lesson plans. In Spain, the *Eres joven, ¡triunfarás!* program partnered with the Ministry of Education to develop resources. The program also included teacher in the activities of the competition. School competitions are great door openers to exploring new ideas and creating team efforts between teachers and students.

2. Invite the “unusual actor” in integration as ambassadors

It is important to find the “unusual actors” and different role models to participate and represent immigrant integration projects. The *Alle Kids sind VIPs* invited ambassadors who are public figures from the German music, theatre, or sports world to meet with students winners. Celebrities were able to talk about their own immigrant experience, and serve as role models. Media partners are also essential in promoting the cause.

3. Replication of an existing program comes in many forms

Start by replicating only the part of the project that your organization can manage. Try to recycle your own resources/contacts from other projects. Analyze the context and adapt the project based on the needs of your particular your city or country.

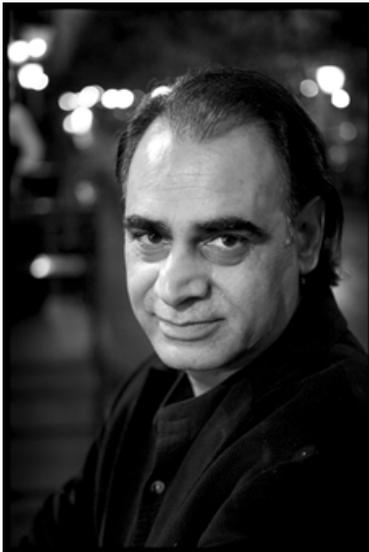
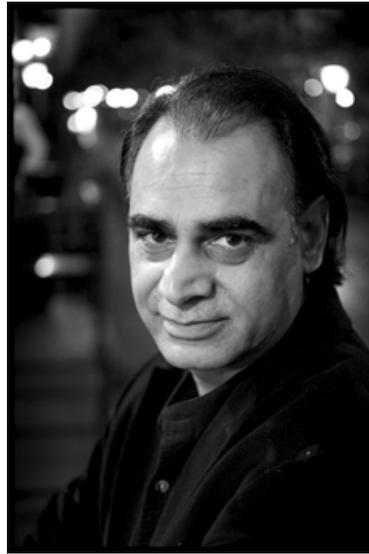
Celebrate and share your success!

Watch the webinar video and find online resources for [All Kids are VIPs: Immigrant Integration at School](#)

Ziauddin Sardar: In Defense of Multiculturalism

By kturner

[Interview, Interviews](#)



Multiculturalism is an idea that appears under attack these days. Professor Ziauddin Sardar argues it has been “very good for Britain as a whole, but particularly for Muslims.”

A leading British intellectual, who specializes in Muslim thought, science policy, and cultural criticism, Sardar sat down with Cities of Migration’s Kim Turner to talk multiculturalism, interculturalism and integration. Their conversation began after a lecture called, “Writing Connections: Bridging the Divide between Islam and the West,” at the University Club of Toronto in April 2012.

What will it take for that transformative moment to come when people stop thinking about Muslims within our communities as “the other,” but as “we?”

I think part of the problem lies in the fact that we see integration as a one-way process. There has been a mantra in Britain, for example, that Muslims must integrate. The fact is Muslims have integrated because nobody actually wants to live in a ghetto. Some Muslims, especially new arrivals do go to places that we may think of as ghettos. And they go there for a very specific purpose – because they find security, they find help, they find support, including financial support. But their first thought, once they have settled in this community, is to get out of it. Everybody wants to leave the ghetto.

What we need to do is to actually provide them with enough support and incentives to leave the ghetto. And that is what we have failed to do. In Britain, we have seen immigration as a one-way process; it is the Muslims who must integrate. But integration by definition is a two-way process. It involves at least two communities – two communities come together to integrate. And what the host community needs to do is to realize that they too need to integrate so the movement is towards each other. Once the host communities start moving towards Muslims, they will discover the Muslims will move towards them even faster and there will be even quicker

integration. The tipping point will be reached when the host community actually says, “Right, integration involves us too. We have to go out and integrate as well.”

What can the Muslim experience of identity and belonging in a multicultural society teach us about creating more inclusive communities?

Multiculturalism has been very good for Britain as a whole, but particularly for Muslims. For example, I am a product of multiculturalism. There was a specific multiculturalism policy that established Channel 4 in Britain with a mandate to promote and support ethnic minorities in television and media. I got my first break in television because of Channel 4. Now when you switch on the television, there are many Muslim faces – reporters, presenters, and of course, behind the camera, so many Muslims who are producers, associate producers, directors, cameramen and so on. Muslims can be found in all walks of society. We have several Muslims as Members of Parliament, in the House of Lords, in judiciary, in media, as bankers. One of the key indicators of successful multiculturalism is that we now have Muslims appearing on television not as Muslims but as experts in their own field. That is a true indicator.

The first lesson is that multiculturalism in Britain has succeeded and not failed. The perception of failure comes from the point of view of terrorism. People think that because some British Muslims become terrorists, the whole multicultural project is doomed and has been a failure. I just do not think so. If that was the case, then what about France, where there is no multiculturalism, but they still produce people who are born in France who go on to become terrorists? Or in Holland, or in the United States? You cannot link terrorism to multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has been a very successful project. Multiculturalism has increased the sense of belonging amongst Muslims. Every research and every opinion poll has shown that Muslims regard themselves as more British than the actual white community. Something like 70 to 80% of Muslims actually said that we are totally loyal to Britain and identify with Britain more than the host community does.

Lesson one: multiculturalism has definitely been very successful. The examples given of its failure or not examples off multiculturalism, but, in fact, we need to look elsewhere, maybe foreign policy. And lesson two: I would argue that multiculturalism has increased the sense of belonging amongst Muslims. It is clearly indicated in almost all the opinion polls and research that have come out over the past five to ten years.

In Germany they have done similar polls and they have discovered in migrant communities that there is an overwhelming strong attachment to and trust in German institutions – even higher than in the German population – but they don’t experience the same sense of belonging.

What it is about the UK. How do explain the sense of belonging, expressed by British Muslims?

I think first of all in Britain, we have a longer history of attachment. And I think the sense of equality in Britain is much, much greater. If you want to become a British citizen, the hurdles are not that many. But if you want to become a German citizen, well, that is not easy to do.

You have said that multiculturalism is concerned with transforming power to non-western cultures and allowing those cultures to speak for themselves. Please elaborate.

It is important to realize that multiculturalism is not about dominance of one culture over another. It is not about the dominance of a single culture over a multiple of cultures. It is about equality of cultures. And that means two things. One is that you have to allow equal opportunity and access to power to other cultures. Second, you have to allow other cultures to speak for themselves. You cannot assume that you will speak for other cultures; the other cultures must be allowed to speak for themselves. They must have their own voice. I think the success of multiculturalism in Britain is because these two factors have been there.

We are hearing a lot about interculturalism as a different paradigm in opposition to multiculturalism. Do you have any thoughts on this?

"Interculturalism" and other ideas, frankly, are essentially rewriting the same thing in different terms. I think multiculturalism is a great idea and it is an idea that is going to be here for a very long time. It is an idea you cannot oppose very easily. First of all, you can see it in action. There is hardly a city in the world that is not multicultural. You can walk around in Toronto and you can see any ethnicity. There is a realistic multiculturalism out there that is very grounded within our cities. To come to terms with that, we need concepts which are also grounded like in the theory of multiculturalism. At the end of the day, those people who oppose multiculturalism, what is really being said is that we still fear the other. In essence, the fear of the other has not gone. And in some circles, the success of multiculturalism translates into even greater fear of the other.

In the current climate of political tension and global recession, how can we continue to ensure equal rights and sustain social cohesion, the kind of gains I believe have been made in the last little while?

We know from research that particularly in times of global recession, racism and fear of the other increases. People who get unemployed because of the financial situation often blame immigrants and refugees. So we need to be even more vigilant during these times of political tension and economic recession that we pay attention to the rights of minorities.

But multiculturalism is not simply about minorities; multiculturalism is also about the host community and their rights. It's about equality. Multiculturalism does not say you should treat minorities as more equal than others. That is the part of the equation that is often missing. This is one of the reasons I object to a strong connection between multiculturalism and ethnicity – ethnicity becomes a fetish. And ethnicity emphasizes difference. There are times when you may need to emphasize common interests and you may have people who are unemployed in the white community, people who are unemployed in the Muslim community or in the black community or in the Turkish community. The problem here is unemployment, not the individual communities. You need to treat unemployment across the board. If you pay attention to rights across the board, we can do something about the xenophobia that often emerges during times of economic recession.

In the US and Canada, there is an emerging interest in the idea of "welcoming communities." Many cities and community organizations are starting to work with receiving communities to help create the conditions for success in both newcomer and host communities. How do you think those receiving communities need to change?

One of the most important ways that receiving communities need to do is not to see new immigrants in ethnic terms. They need to see them in human terms. A human community has the full spectrum from extreme left to extreme right and all the moderates and liberals in between. A human community will have criminals as well as righteous people. If you see them in human terms, you will not demonize the entire community because of one thief because all human communities have thieves. We need to see it in human terms, and not simply say this is a cultural stereotype or a cultural trait that this or that community has. The basic thing is to not fall in a trap of seeing new people in ethnic boxes, but as human beings who have the same desires and expectations and aspirations as you. They want to have a better life just as you. They want their children to be educated just as you. They are desperate for jobs just as you. They want to have good community relations just as you. They wanted to be respected and recognized for their talents and abilities just as you.

You have travelled and written widely. Is there a city that comes to mind for you that is a model of positive interactions with their neighbours, with local government?

It is difficult to say. Most cities have good points and bad points. I know, for example, in London, there are certain neighbourhoods which fulfill the model that you describe. If you look at Tower Hamlets, the Bangladeshi community is one of the most thriving communities in Britain. The Bangladeshi community over the past twenty years has transformed East London. Think of Brick Lane and its Balti restaurants are on the itineraries of all the visiting people to London. The area has become very affluent. However, the same Bangladeshi community three-four miles down the road in Kings Cross is a totally different phenomenon. It is very isolated and it is not very inclusive.

The reason is very simple. Regeneration funding was put into Tower Hamlets, while Kings Cross, which had the same problem, did not get that funding. Another interesting point is that the Bangladeshi women have created a very important role in promoting inclusiveness in Tower Hamlets. When Mrs. Thatcher introduced the idea that you can buy your council houses, the women persuaded their husbands and brothers to actually buy the council house. They themselves were highly educated so they worked in the City, which is nearby, did up the council flats, gentrified them, rented them out at very high rents, and then moved to the outer parts [of the city] and generated income. They were financially savvy. A lot of wealth was created by the Bangladeshi women themselves in Tower Hamlets. So a certain kind of state intervention is necessary to act as a catalyst. But the same community in Kings Cross and is not as thriving and not as inclusive. It hasn't had that catalyst and is state intervention or state funding does serve as a catalyst and in some cases it is essential.

Finally, what is your favourite city and why?

I have lived in Kuala Lumpur which is a great multicultural city and is incredibly diverse. I've lived in places like Cairo, and I have also lived in Saudi Arabia, in Jeddah, which is a very monolithic city. But I really feel at home in London. London is absolutely thriving. Perhaps it is the most successful multicultural city in the world. There was a time, for example, when in London you would assume that all people of Pakistani and Indian backgrounds would vote Labour and they had conventionally did. But the success of multiculturalism has generated lots of interest in Pakistanis who vote Conservative and some who vote Liberals. You cannot, for example, take an average Indian or Pakistani for granted. They have become multicultural in their own perception – why should we all vote Labour, they ask. So you find that across the board. The stereotypes are being broken. We often assume that Muslim women tend to be more repressed, but London is one place where you find very dynamic Muslim women who are changing society. If I look at the generation of my daughter and her friends, they are highly educated, highly motivated, all in professions, and frighteningly clever. They will change the landscape of London in the next ten, fifteen, twenty years. I have to say this is a very biased and prejudiced opinion but I really find London to be perhaps the ideal multicultural city.

[Professor Ziauddin Sardar](#), a leading British intellectual, who specializes in Muslim thought, science policy, cultural criticism and the future of Islam, is Professor of Law and Society at Middlesex University. He is Co-editor of the quarterly *Critical Muslim* and Consulting Editor the journal *Futures*, and has made numerous programs for British television, including the BBC and Channel 4. He was a commissioner of the U.K.'s Equality & Human Rights Commission and a member of the National Security Forum. A former columnist for the *New Statesman*, Professor Sardar has published over 45 books, including the international bestseller *Why Do People Hate America*. His latest books are [Balti Britain: A Provocative Journey through Asian Britain](#) and [Reading the Qur'an](#).

This interview was edited and condensed for publication.

Sarah Spencer: Super-diversity and the City

By ktuner
 March 21, 2012
[Interview, Interviews](#)



High immigration levels have greatly increased the diversity of our largest cities. The term 'super-diversity' has been coined to describe a condition in cities where diversity may mean over one hundred nationalities, but also a diversity of legal statuses, of socioeconomic conditions and a greater diversity in how people choose to live and define themselves. As rural and smaller municipalities begin to experience this trend, leading academics like Dr. Sarah Spencer invite us think about how 'super-diversity' can shape new thinking on migration and better strategies for immigrant integration.

We spoke with Sarah Spencer, Senior Fellow at the [Centre on Migration, Policy and Society \(COMPAS\)](#) and author of [The Migration Debate](#), in a wide-ranging discussion about super-diversity, belonging and the role of local authorities. She was in Toronto attending the [14th National Metropolis Conference](#) to speak about Diversity, Super-diversity and Belonging.



What is super-diversity?

The concept of "[super-diversity](#)" was introduced to help us re-conceptualize the nature of migration in European countries over the past decade. Essentially, our experience of migration has changed from when migrants largely came from a relatively narrow number of countries. In the UK, for example, migration had historically been from the Indian subcontinent and parts of Africa, a relatively narrow range of countries of origin, language and faith and led to longstanding minority ethnic communities. Over the past decade that has all changed due to the significant number of asylum seekers that Europe saw in the early part of the decade, but also due to the range of international students and the expansion of labour migration. In a short space of time we suddenly have people from a plethora of different places, with different faiths, languages and immigration status.

In London more than 300 first languages are spoken in our schools. This is also the experience in cities in many other parts of Europe, including new countries of immigration like Spain and Ireland, which simply hadn't had that tradition of immigration. For them this super-diversity is new. One reason the concept of super diversity is important is because the old approaches to multiculturalism and its structures don't necessarily fit anymore. It's difficult, for instance, to identify community leaders when you're not talking about a small number of long-standing communities but a more diverse and mobile migrant population.

So super diversity is an important concept that helps us recognize a new reality. But it is crucial that we don't restrict our notion of diversity to issues of ethnicity, faith and immigration status – as though it were in a separate silo from other kinds of diversity – disability, gender, age and sexual orientation – which is what people in the equality field also mean when they talk about equality of opportunity and inclusion. Over in our migration field, when we talk about super-diversity, we tend to mean race, faith and country of origin and we talk about "integration" (vs. inclusion). It's a different language.

The question is, shouldn't we broaden the concept of super-diversity to be more inclusive and recognize that these other forms of diversity are also present within migrant communities? They also have disabled people, differences of gender, age and sexual orientation. In this as in other respects, migrant communities have a lot in common with the rest of the population. In fact, your sense of identity as a gay or disabled person may be stronger

than your identity as a migrant. So if we want to build solidarity across communities, we need to challenge this rather exclusive concept of super-diversity that may reinforce the perception of migrants as set apart from the rest of the population. Recognizing that all these forms of diversity are interconnected would be a way forward.

I will mention two other things about super-diversity. One is that new migrants often settle in places which have had little prior experience of ethnic diversity or of recent migrants; rural areas, for instance, or small towns. These municipalities have neither the experience of managing diversity nor the integration programs that may exist where immigration has been around for decades. In the UK, for example, we're talking about rural areas where people from Central and Eastern Europe came to work in agriculture and food processing. Partly because they were white and European, no one anticipated that any integration issues would arise. So another good thing about the super-diversity concept is that it recognizes that newcomers can be white and can face some of the same challenges as any other migrant. They can still face barriers to integration that other migrants face.

Whether it's cities that had their first significant experience of migration over the past decade, like Dublin or Barcelona, or towns that are new to migration in countries with a long history of migration, municipalities really have had to run to catch up.

Peterborough is an interesting example because they have a long-standing Asian community of Pakistani origin that is also a significantly Muslim community. Over the last decade when new migrants arrived who were also Muslim but from completely different countries of origin, there were some tensions between the new and old communities. It wasn't only among white residents that there was some hostility to newcomers but also among the long-standing communities of former migrant origin.

There are municipalities across Europe which are, in various ways, taking steps to address negative attitudes towards newcomers and their underlying causes.. This is the subject of research we are conducting with partners across six countries in Europe, called [AMICALL \(Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership\)](#), funded by the European Union Integration Fund. We are looking at what local and regional authorities are doing to address negative attitudes in their communities and who in the authority is taking the lead. In Breckland [Norfolk, UK], for example, we found it was the environmental health officers who had taken the initiative because the integration issues had to do with rubbish and noise- so fell within their department. To reach out to the migrant communities and talk to them about how things worked in their area, the staff chose to go to language courses so that they could communicate with the migrants and ran advice sessions in local cafes and so on. The Government was very interested in this work.

Are there differences in how cities approach the challenges arising from super-diversity?

Cities and smaller municipalities often take the lead on integration, sometimes counter to the rhetoric of national government. Cities face the challenge of integration on the ground. Taking the lead often means doing things in a more positive and inclusive way than messages from central government would suggest. In fact, cities say that a national political rhetoric that is negative, or political leaders who espouse negative messages, make it much more difficult for them.

Early findings at AMICALL suggest there is a plethora of different kinds of activity being undertaken by cities ranging from communication activities such as leaflets to Facebook messages and video games; to contact activities where you bring people together so that they can have direct experience of each other, through mediation or buddy schemes and the like; to broader intercultural activities like international festivals.

Another emerging finding is the inconsistency of approach and attitude across the administration that city managers and officials can face in communicating on these issues. You may have a very enthusiastic individual or team leading on the issue while other parts of the local administration are doing nothing or taking a more negative view; and sometimes momentum is lost when attempts are made to mainstream integration across the authority. One of the particularly interesting initiatives we've seen is that authorities are recognizing that it's a problem if they are officially putting out a positive message that "we all belong" – but their staff are not all reflecting that approach. After all, the public is more inclined to follow the lead of officials than posters about how nice migrants are. So for instance in Spain and in Scotland we have seen authorities that are training frontline staff to get the message across that migrants are welcome while sharing messages with the public that counter myths and rumours about migrants. Others are training community volunteers to do this. These authorities are taking a very interesting and innovative way forward, something that could only happen at the municipal level.

However, there is clearly a role for national government. I have some concerns about the new integration strategy recently published in the UK. The thrust of the strategy is that integration is a local issue, so national government must stop 'interfering'. It argues that there must be a re-balancing, from the national to the local and from the public sector to the voluntary non-for-profit sector. However, no one is proposing to put a lot of money behind that. The national strategy is right about what has to happen at the local level, but I would argue that we also need leadership from central government in terms of positive messaging and identifying barriers to integration that can only be addressed at the national level.

A national strategy that recognizes integration is best done at the local level sounds like good news...

I think it is good news to recognize that integration needs to be a shared responsibility – it's not only on the migrant, it is not only on central government nor is it only on cities and municipalities, it's also employers and trade unions, it's migrant community organisations and migrants' families – and it's mainstream civil society, the sports organizations, the drama groups and so on that really have the capacity to be welcoming and inclusive. But it's also important that central government does not renege on its responsibilities in this area.

There are some things that only central governments can do: for example, ensuring the effectiveness of anti-discrimination laws . Only central government can deal with the recognition of qualifications of internationally educated and trained immigrants. Only central government can ensure that all the evidence and data we need is available on a national scale to see where the barriers are and monitor what works and what doesn't work. And perhaps most important, it is central government that can set the tone of the debate, an inclusive tone, one which isn't blaming migrants, doesn't see immigration as a deficit but can actually talk up the successes of multiculturalism, without overlooking the issues that need to be addressed, and by giving a very positive tone build confidence that multiculturalism can work. Everything we hear from cities is that it would be very helpful if governments contributed more in that direction.

Tell us more about the role of local authorities?

Let me mention the work I am just about to start with the support of an Open Society Institute Fellowship for the next year. I'm going to look at how cities relate to irregular migrants. How do they cope with the reality of a significant number of residents in their area whose immigration status is irregular? Whether they are over-stayers or weren't supposed to be there in the first place, their needs can be a source of tension between central and local government. Central government puts a higher priority on immigration control whereas cities tend to put higher priority on making sure residents have access to education, to health and other social services. However, providing services to irregular migrants can also present great difficulties for them. They can be restricted by laws governing what they are allowed to do and they certainly have financial constraints to consider.

So while central government often recognizes the need for irregular migrants to have a certain level of access to services, local municipalities often go further, but the reasons for this and the implications are generally quite unexplored. There would be value in looking at practice across Europe and North America to understand more about what the pressures are on cities and other local service providers to provide access to services. What are the

implications? The costs? Good practice projects like Cities of Migration and other good practice websites haven't had a lot to say as yet on that particular issue.

However difficult it is for cities to talk about, it is one of today's realities about migration which won't go away.

Last year you published [The Migration Debate](#). How can cities contribute to the “us versus them” debate about immigrant integration?

I think cities can certainly help by sending an inclusive message. It is hugely important that they enable people to feel they belong in the city even if they don't yet feel like they belong in the country. What I argue in the book is that governments can help to build public confidence that migration is being well managed by engaging the public in the policy choices and trade-offs to be made.

One of the reasons for the resistance to migration is that European publics don't trust governments to manage migration well. That's what opinion polling like [Transatlantic Trends: Immigration](#) shows: a lack of confidence in government. The public doesn't understand why migration continues when governments keep promising to cut it. For example, in the UK, our government promised to bring net migration down below 100,000 and yet this year, two years after they were elected, it is still running at 250,000 a year. So the public can feel betrayed, that the government didn't mean it, wasn't being honest, or that the government is incompetent because it has failed to do it. Either way they have no confidence in governments to deliver.

But of course there are reasons why government can't stop migration. There would be a huge price to pay if they did – for individuals and families, but also for business, for universities, for our international reputation, for the tourist industry if it there were further barriers to entry. Every time the government looks at an area to cut back migration, somebody jumps up and says, “Hold on a minute, don't do that.” Universities jump up and say, “We need these students.” Or big business jumps up and says, “We need skilled immigrants.” Or the hospitals say “We need the skilled doctors.” So there are real, good reasons why it's difficult to cut back immigration, not to mention issues like international human rights standards, protecting the rights of refugees for instance, and our reputation if we do not comply.

The governments have never shared these realities with the public. They have never engaged them in that debate. The public don't know why immigration remains high, what the reasons are. Our governments haven't trusted the public to say, “look, we've got these difficult choices to make, we've got trade-offs, competing priorities. We want to know what you think – what is more important?”

If governments were to lead that debate in an evidence-based way, they'd enable the public to see the implications of different options while informing the public about who and what we are talking about. We know, for instance, that the public think that there are vastly more asylum seekers than there are. An evidence-based, calm debate would give the public more confidence that immigration was being managed well. But the governments would have to stop over-promising and under-delivering. To build confidence, the public needs to understand why government does what it does, as well as the limits on what it can do. If the public doesn't have confidence in immigration control, they feel a sense of threat. And that's not conducive to feeling confidence in multiculturalism.

So public confidence is the game-changer in the migration debate?

Right now, the public doesn't trust government to deal with it. If migrants are coming without government wanting them to come, then they could start looking like a threat, couldn't they? Whereas if we understand immigrants are coming because they are international students, because they are skilled workers or because they are the loved one of a family member – and if we've been consulted about those choices, I think it would help to build confidence even if the public don't agree with all the decisions that are made. It makes it easier to believe there's a system in place and that we're not -in the case of the UK- just a small island that is about to sink. Which is the impression you often get when you talk to people.

Understanding why immigrants come to our cities, to our countries is important. Then people don't feel so threatened. They are coming for good reasons.

How can we have a more honest debate about immigration?

We have to change the narrative. Sometimes our political leaders in Europe don't play it in a way that builds reassurance. I'm not suggesting that we should ignore real challenges. It has to be an honest debate.

How to do this? [Demetrios Papademetriou has just published a statement \[on behalf of the Transatlantic Council on Migration\]](#) in which he argues that some of the concerns and tensions over immigration are based on real issues and if we pretend that they are not, they won't go away, they will just fester. So we do need to address the causes of negative attitudes and that is what many municipalities are trying to do.

Related content:

- [Ayesha Saran Talks Transatlantic Trends: Immigration](#)
- [Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration: Demetrios Papademetriou](#)
- [The 5 Estates Project: Bringing Diverse Communities Together](#)
- [Fighting Fiction with Facts: the BCN Anti-Rumour Campaign](#)

Sarah Spencer is Senior Fellow and former Deputy Director at COMPAS, primarily working on projects in the Urban Change and Settlement and Welfare clusters. Her particular interests are in migrant integration and equality issues, and in the policy making process. She is the author of a critical analysis of UK migration and integration policies, [The Migration Debate \(Policy Press 2011\)](#), and is currently exploring issues relating to irregular migrants in Europe. Sarah is also Chair of the Equality and Diversity Forum, the network of equality and human rights organisations, and a member of its academic research and policy network. She is a Visiting Professor at the Human Rights Centre, University of Essex; a member of the Royal Society working group on People and the Planet, and a Trustee of the National Flood Forum. She is an advisor to Atlantic Philanthropies in Dublin.

Sarah was Deputy Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, where she oversaw its work in the public sector, and is a former General Secretary of Liberty (the National Council for Civil Liberties). She is currently serving on the advisory group to the Government Equality Office (GEO) and on the advisory committee to the British Institute of Human Rights. She has formerly been a member of Government task forces on Gypsies and Travellers; the Human Rights Act and the Commission on Equality and Human Rights. In 2007, Sarah was awarded a CBE for services to equal opportunities and human rights.

Facing Financial Futures: Birmingham 2012

By kturner
Uncategorized



Last month we highlighted the Runnymede Trust's report, *To Stay or Not to Stay? Retirement Migration and Older Ethnic Minorities in the UK*.

The accompanying video, *Facing Financial Futures – Birmingham 2012*, highlights the concerns of older people, worried about making ends meet, receiving pensions abroad or whether they can simply afford to heat their homes. Fifty people gathered in Birmingham to discuss these issues with the [Runnymede Trust](#).

Related content:

- [Omar Khan: On Financial Inclusion](#)
- [To Stay or Not to Stay? Retirement Migration and Older Ethnic Minorities in the UK](#)
- London: [Banking on Affordable Credit](#)

FutureChallenges: The New City

By kturner
Uncategorized



Photo taken from user Tom Olliver on Flickr, CC BY-NC 2.0

“Cities are our future,” writes [Steven Watson at the FutureChallenges blog](#) in an essay about how today’s unprecedented migration of people is redefining the city, how we live together and how we seed ideas for a better future.

“Our mass migration towards cities means that we need to get large-scale urban living right. That’s easier said than done – the infrastructural challenges alone are formidable – but cities have always been places of innovation, and as people travel to them from all over the world, they bring with them ideas that will redefine urban living.”

[Read the full article at FutureChallenges.](#)

Comment: Toronto’s Visible Minorities? or the New Mainstream?

Watson points out that “the transplantation of ideas between the world’s cities can help steer us towards the peaceful and prosperous future we all want,” and cites Cities of Migration as one of several organizations that are working to make “the transfer of ideas easier and more successful.”

He quotes Claudia Walther, the [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#) representative on the Cities of Migration project about how good ideas still need to be adapted for local circumstances, raising the issue of the language we use to describe the new urban mainstream:

“Every city has its own conditions, so if you adopt a good idea you have to find your own way to make it work. For example, Toronto has a diversity monitor that we’re very impressed by. We want to establish something like that in Germany, but in Toronto it’s set up for visible minorities [people with physical characteristics, like skin color, that mark them out]. That makes sense in Toronto but it would be no good in Germany, because we have a totally different picture of migration. In Toronto they have lots of people from Asia, lots of people from Africa, whereas in Germany the biggest migrant group comes from Eastern Europe and the second-biggest from Turkey, so this question of visible or not visible doesn’t make sense for us.”

Walther is referring to the annual [DiverseCity Counts](#) project that measures the levels of diversity in leadership in the Greater Toronto Region. For DiverseCity, diversity refers to visible minorities that make up close to 50% of the population. Clearly, this group is soon to be the majority rendering the term obsolete.

Perhaps it’s time to re-think the language we use to describe ourselves in the “New City.”

For more on Toronto’s new mainstream, read [Visible minorities shut out of leadership positions](#), a recent OpEd by Ratna Omivar and John Tory, co-chairs of the DiverseCity – the Greater Toronto Leadership Project.

Related content:

- [Read the full article at FutureChallenges.](#)
- [Diversity in Leadership in the Greater Toronto Region](#)
- [Visible minorities shut out of leadership positions](#) (The Toronto Star, March 19, 2012)

Good Ideas: Diversity and Inclusion in Cities

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In an era of globalization and unprecedented urban growth, stories of migration are about open, inclusive cities that are creating opportunities for all, and include a palpable sense of excitement and opportunity.

A new report from the [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) takes a Spanish lens to the Cities of Migration collection and highlights good practice in the areas of young people, culture, public space, education and police services. Enjoy!!

- Read the publication in [English](#)

- Read the publication in [Spanish](#)

Ashburton, NZ: The World Has Come to Our Town!

By kturner
March 20, 2012
Uncategorized

“The world has come to our town!” proclaimed Elizabeth Ashford, Trustee of [Advance Ashburton Community Foundation](#).

“The last census in 2006 showed that 10% of Ashburtonians were born overseas, with a startling 37% arriving within the previous three years. This trend has accelerated. For example, the number of Filipino dairy workers has increased from 21 in 2006 to 200 in 2009.”

These newcomers come to Ashburton to work and to join family. But settling into a new town and district isn't easy, especially as many are facing a different culture and language. Agencies in the community of 30,000 were concerned about their well-being and came together to establish [Ashburton's Newcomers Network](#).

The Advance Ashburton Community Foundation, with support from The Tindall Foundation, have engaged a Coordinator to raise the profile of the Network, provide information, and organize classes and events, such as craft and cooking classes, walking and playgroups. One of the most popular events is the Multi-Cultural Bite, where the rich cultural diversity in Mid-Canterbury is celebrated with food, dance and costume.

As a Community Foundation, [Advance Ashburton](#) provides a simple and long-lasting way for individuals and families to help each other in the Ashburton District.

Source: [The Tindall Foundation](#)

Living Together: City Strategies for Social Inclusion

By Evelyn
March 21, 2012
Uncategorized



In our last webinar, [Living Together: City Strategies for Social Inclusion](#), the city councils of Antwerp and Waltham Forest (borough of London) shared some successful tips for how local authorities can step up their game and bring a renewed focus on building social cohesion:

1. **Make cohesion a priority at every level and in good governance structures.** Waltham Forest renewed their Community Cohesion Strategy and made cohesion a core business for city service areas. Community cohesion is complex and requires a thorough understanding of issues and buy-in at all levels to deliver outcomes
2. **Develop new partnerships with key voluntary and independent community organizations.** The city should maintain on-going engagement with community partners and enable them to identify priorities. The City of Antwerp approached an independent watchdog Minderhedenforum ('Forum of Ethnic Cultural Communities') to identify issues, and provide recommendations on local policy issues.
3. **Research and develop evidence about community needs.** Mapping, measuring and tracking demographic change is key to interpreting and responding to the economic and social needs of your community.

Watch the webinar video and find online resources on [Living Together: City Strategies for Social Inclusion](#)

Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration: Demetrios Papademetriou

By kturner
 March 20, 2012
[Opinion](#)



Demetrios Papademetriou of the Migration Policy Institute's Transatlantic Council on Migration shares the 2011 Council Statement on what policymakers can do to create stronger and more cohesive societies during a period of rapid social change that is often associated with immigration.

Large-scale immigration has led to unprecedented levels of diversity around the globe, transforming communities in fundamental ways and challenging long and closely held notions of national identity. In recent years, this rapid transformation has coincided with a set of deeper challenges — first and foremost among them the most severe economic downturn in decades. Political leaders thus find themselves having to navigate a tangled web of complex policy dilemmas, from how to respond to economic insecurity; to how to continue to draw benefits from (and make the political case for) globalization; to coming to terms with hybrid identities — all challenges that have caused enormous anxiety and even social unrest.

In the past two years, the backlash against immigration has manifested itself in vocal criticisms of “multiculturalism.” A chorus of European leaders has claimed that the very policies that aimed to weave societies together have instead split them apart, emphasizing difference rather than building community. And as people feel the social fabric of their communities fraying, they have tightened their grip on the things they hold most dear — their identity, language, culture, and values. In response, many countries have narrowed the rights to residence and citizenship and attempted to more rigidly enforce cultural conformity, taking steps whose (predictable) effect has been to isolate — or in some cases penalize — those who fall outside these norms.

The seventh plenary meeting of the Migration Policy Institute's Transatlantic Council on Migration, which brought together high-level officials from Europe and North America in Berlin in November 2011, focused on what policymakers can do to mitigate the disorienting effects of rapid societal change — especially change tied or perceived to be tied to immigration — in order to create stronger and more cohesive societies. For governments, both the challenge and opportunity has become to create a new definition of “we” based on a more inclusive idea of national identity and belonging, and to convince the broader society that investing in integration is an investment in shared futures.

The Council's key recommendations for fostering greater cohesiveness are as follows:

1. Leaders must hone their listening skills to truly understand their electorate's anxiety about immigration (and related issues); not all concerns are illegitimate, and efforts to ignore or dispute these concerns will only inflame them.
2. Countries that emphasize a process of belonging and “becoming,” rather than a static sense of “being,” are better able to manage diversity to advantage.

3. One way of overcoming concerns that large-scale immigration has eroded national identity is to involve all citizens in shaping the identity of the new “we,” thus giving them a sense of ownership in the integration process.
4. Efforts to curb plural identities are beyond the reach of state authority and will be counterproductive; accepting such identities does not erode social cohesion, whereas limiting their expression can make them more salient.
5. States must create clear and transparent pathways to permanent residence and citizenship. This will encourage immigrants to make a long-term commitment to society.
6. Governments should offer practical integration assistance that genuinely helps immigrants negotiate their new environment more effectively and access the same opportunities as natives.
7. Even though some of the “fault lines” of the identity crisis may point to cultural “conflicts,” the solution may not be in the realm of culture. At their core, integration problems are socioeconomic in nature. Therefore, governments must make their most sustained investments in workplaces and schools.
8. When a state’s own citizens are suffering, it may be difficult to argue for investments in policies seen as benefiting newcomers. Instead, governments should consider gradually targeting sets of circumstances, like poverty and lack of education; such initiatives (if effective) will benefit immigrants disproportionately.
9. Legislating cultural practices should be a last resort, not a first impulse. States should create incentives for individuals to move toward certain norms rather than restricting or banning unwanted (but nonetheless legal) cultural practices.
10. States should signal, both with words and body language, that it is in the society’s interest for immigrants to be full, productive, and completely engaged members of the community in which they live.

This Council Statement results from the meeting of the [Transatlantic Council on Migration](#) in November 2011 in Berlin. The meeting’s theme was “National Identity, Immigration, and Social Cohesion: (Re) building Community in an Ever-Globalizing World.” The Council is an initiative of the Migration Policy Institute undertaken in cooperation with its policy partner, the Bertelsmann Stiftung. The Council is a unique deliberative body that examines vital policy issues and informs migration policymaking processes in North America and Europe. The Council’s work is generously supported by the following foundations and governments: Carnegie Corporation of New York, Open Society Foundations, Bertelsmann Stiftung, the Barrow Cadbury Trust (UK Policy Partner), the Luso-American Development Foundation, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and the governments of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden.

Excerpted from: Papademetriou, Demetrios G., [Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration, Council Statement from the 7th Plenary Meeting of the Transatlantic Council on Migration](#). Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012.

Demetrios G. Papademetriou is President and Co-Founder of the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), a Washington-based think tank dedicated exclusively to the study of international migration. He is also President of Migration Policy Institute Europe, a nonprofit, independent research institute in Brussels that aims to promote a better understanding of migration trends and effects within Europe; and serves on MPI Europe’s Administrative Council.

He is also the convener of the Transatlantic Council on Migration and its predecessor, the Transatlantic Task Force on Immigration and Integration (co-convoked with the Bertelsmann Stiftung). The Council is composed of senior public figures, business leaders, and public intellectuals from Europe, the United States, and Canada.

Baltimore: Mayor Takes a Stand on Immigration Status

By kturner
Uncategorized

From our friends at America's Voice comes news of a new executive order signed by the mayor of Baltimore, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake.

The Executive Order, [Advancing Public Safety and Access to City Services](#), includes these policies:

- No City department, agency, officer or employee shall discriminate against any resident of Baltimore City based on confirmed or suspected race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, immigration status, and/or inability to speak English.
- It shall be the policy of the City of Baltimore Public Safety Agencies not to inquire about the immigration status of crime victims, witnesses, or others who call or approach the police or other City employees seeking assistance.
- The City of Baltimore calls upon Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents performing official business in the City to identify themselves as federal immigration officers and to make clear that they are not officers, agents, or employees of the City.

"Throughout Baltimore's great history, we have strived to be a place that welcomes foreign-born residents to participate fully in civic life, recognizing that our city's ethnic and cultural diversity is a key element to strong and growing neighborhoods," Mayor Rawlings-Blake said in the city's press release. "This new Executive Order clarifies existing anti-discrimination policies and local law enforcement practices in Baltimore and makes clear that discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances."

"Most importantly, this Executive Order will make clear that all victims and witnesses of crime in Baltimore, regardless of immigration status, must be treated with human dignity and respect. This policy will ensure that victims and witnesses can continue to feel safe reporting criminal incidents to Baltimore Police Officers," Mayor Rawlings-Blake said.

Source: [America's Voice](#)

Related News:

[Put Out the Welcome Mat: Baltimore can grow only if attracts foreign immigrants willing to settle here.](#)

Source: Baltimore Sun (January 21, 2012)

Listening to Local Leadership in Stuttgart: Lord Mayor Wolfgang Schuster

By ktuner
February 16, 2012
[Opinion](#)



As part of our Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration, we ask mayors and city leaders for their views on immigration, local initiatives and future plans.

Dr. Wolfgang Schuster
Lord Mayor of Stuttgart

Why are immigrants important to Stuttgart?

Because in the 21st century we will be an international city or we will be a provincial city with no chances. That's very clear. Either we are open, open to people from all cities and counties in the world, or say what? That we are not interested in people? That we just want to sell our own products and have no contact with the people? See, that's no way. Either we are open and live globalization through our industry, research and universities or we do the contrary –and tell the people what the consequences are. For me, it's clear, we are a city that must be an international city, that we are an international city. No city in the world is without products from Stuttgart.

Walk through the streets. [Immigrants are] not only in Toronto. People from all countries are coming and living here in Stuttgart and that's an incredible achievement.

Successful cities, in this century, are cities that are open, international, that really promote tolerance, and intercultural dialogue. Through this they also promote creativity [innovation], promote opportunities to increase their exports, have better chances to understand the culture of customers. So even if you don't think about the humanist or social perspective, you must think about the economic perspective which is an advantage.

Can you describe one initiative or program that you are very proud of that relates to immigrant integration?

I think, for me, the most important thing is the common understanding that everybody living in Stuttgart is a Stuttgarter. We do not have foreigners, we have just citizens. And if you think in this way, it becomes clear that [you must also consider] what are the living conditions, what are opportunities are there? especially for the children. For example, we started a program called [Bildungspaten gesucht!](#) which means 'become a godfather' to a child. We have promoted this for quite some many years, and now have thousands, most of them older, retired people, who are engaged in this program. For the next 30 years, this program will add value to their lives, while giving youngsters a chance. Being with them, learning with them, reading with them, taking them around in the city to cultural activities, helping them be successful in school, and then to find a job. Then you can really say, I have given a youngster a good future and that's a great feeling. This way we also link the generations and create a family connection. The feedback we have received from this project has been very positive. At the moment this is my favourite baby.

If this is your favourite 'baby' at the moment, what comes next?

First, we want to improve the opportunities of children whose parents may not be very well-integrated -because of migration background, language or whatever – and may have psychological challenges [refugees] or experienced hatred [racism] in their life or at school, for example. Now we want to figure out how to improve and empower the parents. So we will start a program for the education of parents, outside what you can do in a school. It's a very informal way of helping the parents.

Can you give me an example of something happening around integration in other cities where you said to yourself, I would like to do this in Stuttgart?

I always thought of Canada as a very open and intercultural country. As a result you have less tension in your society, because of its openness and flexibility. So that's just one example.

At the moment we are seeing differences between economically strong cities and many cities, even here [in Europe], with terrible problems –in Greece, parts of Spain and Portugal, where 50% of their people are jobless. It's not acceptable to have in the European Union over 5 million young people without jobs. We need them, we need the youngsters. Yet they get left out and are not a part of our society, without opportunity. This feeling, to be without a chance, of not being welcome, is an awful feeling. At the moment, because we have a demand for qualified workers, we are trying to help to bridge with some of these cities. They can send their youngsters to us where they stay for some years, become more qualified and then go back. That is one of the projects I am working on

Today is a very special day for you, do you want to tell us why?

Yes. We are launching a very important [traffic project \[Stuttgart 21\]](#) to improve the railway station and connect Stuttgart to a high-speed train system in Europe, so that trains coming from Paris to Vienna will stop in Stuttgart as a central city. That's a major investment by the European Commission and the federal government, with a small part from the city of Stuttgart. It's major investment of about seven billion Euros. [In Stuttgart], it means the tracks can disappear (since its going by tunnel) and the city will have about 1000 acres of land for new development the next 10 to 20 years. I think it's great for our children and grandchildren because it is a very important environmentally to the future development of the city. It's my vision, my wish to build a carbon-free city centre, free from construction, from traffic. So it's a very ambitious project.

As you know, here in Stuttgart we are ambitious. We have to be, and that's a great project for our future.

The interview was conducted by Ratna Omidvar, President, The Maytree Foundation as part of the Maytree's German Exchange – [Good Ideas from Toronto: An Exchange of Immigrant Integration Practices](#).

[Dr. Wolfgang Schuster](#) has been Lord Mayor of Stuttgart since 1997. He graduated in 1969 in Tübingen, Geneva and Fribourg Law and Political Sciences. He was deputy chairman of the Senate of the University of Freiburg and has received his doctorate in civil law. He has also studied at the École nationale d'administration in Paris.

Amsterdam: Integrating Cities Conference

By kturner
Uncategorized

EUROCITIES, the network of Europe's largest cities, will gather around 200 delegates including mayors, vice-mayors and local government leaders for its fifth [Integrating Cities conference](#), taking place in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on March 8-9 2012.

The conference theme, "making integration work in European cities," will focus on cities as areas for social cohesion and intercultural dialogue – addressing the strategic partnership between Europe's cities and the European Union to implement the EU migrant integration agenda.

Integrating Cities V is an exploration into how local authorities address the challenges of integrating migrants into the host society through policies and projects which respond to the needs of citizens.

Expect a high-level policy dialogue between mayors and top officials, workshops, masterclasses and site visits. The cities of Rennes and Riga will add their names to the list of cities that signed the Integrating Cities Charter in 2010.

The conference will feature keynote addresses given by:

- Stefano Manservigi, Director General for Home Affairs, European Commission
- Ricard Zapata-Barrero, Professor of Political Science, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain
- [Saskia Sassen](#), Robert S Lynd Professor of Sociology, Columbia University, USA
- Eberhard van der Laan, Mayor of Amsterdam
- Ahmed Aboutaleb, Mayor of Rotterdam

Source: *EUROCITIES*

City Stories

By kturner
Uncategorized

Thank You! The call for submissions of [city-led practice](#) is closed. Now comes the hard work of sifting through over forty entries. This spring we will publish highlights from the municipal collection, followed by a series of region-focused “snapshots” of good municipal practice. In the fall, look for a report with recommendations for city leadership and lessons for community partners.

We've joined [Facebook](#)! Make sure to “like” us so that we can share your news with our audience and continue to broaden the conversation network-to-network, one click at a time!

Toledo: Police Diversity Management Awards

By kturner
February 15, 2012
Uncategorized

At the first [national meeting of local security chiefs](#) in Toledo, Spain, the Platform for Police Diversity Management gave out its awards for “Management of the Diverse Society” on February 9, 2012.

The awards included:

- Recognition of Good Practices in Police Management of the Diverse Society
The Local Police in Fuenlabrada (Madrid): for the set of measures and actions for the Management of the Diverse Society that the Local Police in Fuenlabrada has had in place since 2007, making a very important contribution to guaranteeing the rights of the most vulnerable social groups and equal, non-discriminatory police treatment. It is an international reference among police institutions in diversity management.
- Recognition of Police Training for Management of the Diverse Society
Instituto Valenciano de Seguridad Pública (IVASP) of the Government of the Autonomous Region of Valencia: for drafting and implementing the 1st Action Plan for Local Police Forces in the Valencia Region in possible cases of racism and xenophobia. The Platform was particularly impressed with its innovative nature, this being the first Plan of this type to be approved by an Autonomous Region, the training is already ongoing and its potential as future integral action.

To Stay or Not to Stay? Retirement Migration and Older Ethnic Minorities in the UK

By kturner
February 16, 2012
Uncategorized



The Runnymede Trust recently published a research report [To Stay or Not to Stay](#), which looks at the retirement migration decisions among older people in the UK, and is part of a series of research reports showing the different ways in which ethnic minorities experience disadvantage and financial exclusion.

There is a growing population of older ethnic minorities in the UK, many of whom were born abroad and so may consider "returning" to their country of birth when they retire. In this context, it is important for policymakers to improve their understanding of how people make the decision about where to live during retirement. Such an improved understanding will help the government to plan for a future in which large numbers of older ethnic minorities will be living in, and leaving, the UK, and the associated demands on the state, in terms of pensions,

healthcare and other public services.

To explore this idea, Runnymede undertook a qualitative study to explore the considerations that influence how older ethnic minorities decide where to spend retirement. Runnymede ran focus groups with over 80 people across the UK, including Caribbean, Moroccan and white British people to talk to communities with different migration experiences. The researchers found that the participants thought about retirement in a variety of ways, prioritizing different considerations and coming to different decisions – returning 'home', staying in the UK, or splitting their time between the two. There were also findings distinctive to each ethnic group, as well as some commonalities.

The research found there were three most important factors that were taken into consideration when deciding where to spend retirement. Family and friends were often a central consideration and were mentioned by participants much more frequently as a reason to stay than to return. Access to good-quality and affordable healthcare was one of the most important considerations affecting people's decision of where to retire. For some groups, financial considerations such as access to state pension and welfare benefits acted as a major barrier to return, for others, this was less important.

Of central importance was also the finding that migrants feel they should receive some benefit from the economic and social contribution they have made to Britain. Yet there appears to be no logic to the UK Government's designation of those countries in which you can or cannot receive an uprate to your UK pension as an overseas resident. Because on retirement people often move away from the country to which they have made substantial contributions, the report argues retirees of all ethnicities should be able to derive the same benefit from the contributions made through their working lives, regardless of whether they continue to live in the UK or not. It also calls for the UK government to annually update state pensions to all British pensioners living overseas.

The report has particular implications for UK policy in the context of a rapidly ageing and increasingly diverse society. But the question of how people can receive fair recompense for societal contributions made throughout their lives, is an issue of international relevance in a hyper-mobile world in which migration continues to increase in scale and diversity.

Source: *Runnymede Trust*

Ayesha Saran Talks Transatlantic Trends: Immigration

By ktuner
February 13, 2012
[Interview](#), [Interviews](#)



Against the backdrop of the global economic crisis and the “Arab Spring,” the release of the [2011 Transatlantic Trends: Immigration](#) survey analyses attitudes toward immigration remain stable in the United States and five European countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK).

According to the December report, most respondents in Europe and the US see immigration as a problem yet remain optimistic about immigrant integration.

Cities of Migration talks to Ayesha Saran, Programme Manager, Migration and Europe, at the Barrow Cadbury Trust (UK), one of TTI’s project partners about this year’s findings.

In the latest Transatlantic Trends: Immigration survey, it was reported that most respondents, who may see immigration as a problem, “remain optimistic about immigrant integration.” What is the difference?

The survey found that public attitudes are more complex and nuanced than is often reported. Although it’s true that an overall majority considered immigration to be more of a problem than an opportunity, many recognized both its potential costs and benefits.

In most countries respondents considered that immigration positively rather than negatively affects their national culture and the majority of those surveyed in Europe and the US are not worried about legal migration. But there was more ambivalence about its impact on jobs. In the US and the UK in particular, concerns about labour market competition with immigrants were more strongly expressed than in other countries in Europe. Over half of British and US residents think that immigrants take jobs from native workers and lower the wages of citizens. On the other hand, the British are more likely than their European neighbours to say that immigrants help create jobs and set up new businesses.

On a more optimistic note, respondents were asked to consider how well migrants are fitting into society. In both Europe and the US the public tended to think that they are integrating well. They were even more positive about their children.

From a British perspective, Transatlantic Trends has consistently shown that as a nation we are more sceptical about immigration than North Americans and other Europeans and the most likely to rate it as the most important issue facing the country. It’s clear that these anxieties need to be addressed and some workable solutions proposed, particularly in cases where people perceive injustice.

However in the UK I think that the differences can partly be explained in terms of how we frame these two issues. Immigration is frequently discussed in relation to macro-level debates about how our labour market is structured and our immigration system works. Integration is less frequently mentioned in national debates. Beyond the headlines, at local level, my impression is that we manage pretty well, albeit in an understated and at times haphazard way. There are tensions but, ultimately, Britain’s sense of itself as a proudly diverse society has become firmly entrenched.

The survey also reports on public disapproval of government management of immigration. What does the survey indicate about this tension?

This survey can’t explain why people think that immigration is not being managed well. It also doesn’t tell us to what extent discontent with this area of public policy is related to the popularity of individual governments. What it does perhaps highlight is that we don’t know enough about whether public opinion on this subject is influenced more by perceptions than realities.

Transatlantic Trends detected widespread misperceptions about migrant numbers. In all countries, the public grossly overestimate the number of immigrants. On average the British estimated that immigrants constitute 31.8 per cent of the population, significantly higher than the official estimate of 11.3 per cent. A recent poll by British Future even found that four out of ten British people believe that more than ten per cent of the population are refugees.

This is important because Transatlantic Trends has found that knowledge affects perceptions. In 2010, the survey gave some respondents official estimates of the foreign-born population and others no information. In many cases this did make a difference. British respondents were significantly less likely to think there are too many immigrants when they were given the official figures.

Of course I’m not suggesting that, if given all the facts about immigration, government approval ratings would rise and public anxieties about immigration would dissipate overnight. However, in the UK case, it’s clear that some concerns are fuelled by a debate that is too often characterised by hyperbole and misperceptions.

Each country deals with immigration issues in a unique way. Yet, for a growing number of stakeholders “All immigration is local.”

I’m not sure I agree that ‘all immigration is local’ although it is clear that many countries face similar challenges and opportunities when it comes to maximising the benefits migration can bring. There is also a lot to be learnt from exploring why integration has been more successful in some local communities than in others.

To me what’s interesting is the disjuncture between local and national level debates and experiences. Crudely sketched, the British debate often places immigration in the context of the labour market or welfare provisions. Immigrants are frequently accused of taking jobs or benefits. Or both. But this doesn’t necessarily mean that concerns about immigration are a direct response to people’s lived experience.

In fact areas most affected by immigration are not necessarily those where it is viewed most negatively. Hopes and Fears, a poll by British Future, noted that 57 per cent of Londoners consider that immigration has been good for entrepreneurship and business start-ups, compared to 47 per cent across

Britain. The Migration Observatory at Oxford University also found that Londoners who identify themselves as white and British were less likely to support reducing immigration than white British people living elsewhere in the country, even though nearly half of all migrants in the UK live in the capital.

So, from a British perspective, I'd welcome a greater emphasis on the local context and hope that this might lead to a more reasoned, less fraught national immigration debate, one which addresses frustration and concerns about local impacts while also recognising that the country has a positive story to tell about its migration history.

What has surprised you about this year's results?

One surprise was that the Arab Spring, rising unemployment and polarised immigration debates in countries such as the US did not have a discernible impact upon how people view immigration.

The public response to the Arab Spring was also interesting. The survey found strong support for European Union burden sharing in response to migration caused by the turmoil in North Africa.

On labour migration, there was a strong preference for highly-educated migrants over those with lower levels of education. Unexpectedly, when questioned further on this subject, respondents in all countries would prefer to admit lower educated migrants with a job offer to highly-educated migrants without jobs.

This is the fourth Transatlantic Trends: Immigration survey. Why is it important to track public opinion on immigration?

One important reason is that a deeper understanding of how public opinion changes over time may help inform future policy-making and debates. The survey was started before the global financial crisis and has shown that attitudes to immigration have remained relatively stable for the last four years, thus challenging the widely held view that public opinion would inevitably scapegoat migrants in straitened times.

If you had a crystal ball, what trends do you see for immigrant integration issues in 2012? What will impact public opinion most?

I think this will very much depend upon the national context. In the UK, practitioners and experts are likely to focus on the impact of ongoing public sector cuts and whether they will affect integration. An issue that will generate public debate and perhaps a few headlines is marriage. Government plans to set a minimum income level for citizens wishing to marry their foreign partners will divide public opinion.

What's the best thing immigration has done for London?

Immigration is such an integral part of the city's identity, infrastructure and economy that it's impossible to pinpoint one thing. For centuries, successive waves of migrants have cemented the capital's position as a global, open city. More recently, London won the bid for the 2012 Olympics partly on the basis of its reputation as a diverse, global hub. Hosting the Olympic Games is likely to benefit not just Londoners but the country generally: a British Future poll revealed that sixty four per cent of people think that the Olympics will have a positive effect on the mood of the British public and will also favourably influence how Britain is viewed abroad.

What is your favourite city and why?

London, although I wish that I had a less predictable choice than my hometown. I've lived in various European cities and, in my experience, nothing beats what Samuel Johnson described as its "wonderful immensity." It's a fascinating blend of history and modernity.

I also have fond memories of living in Tirana. It's a chaotic, vibrant and welcoming place. In many ways, it's the opposite of London, as it is a new city and only became the capital of Albania in 1920. Even during my time there it grew and transformed at a dizzying pace.

Ayesha Saran is Migration and Europe Programme Manager at the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#), managing and actively contributing to the Trust's research and policy work as well as its grant-making in the UK and internationally. Prior to joining the Trust, Ayesha worked for intergovernmental organisations for eight years, in both the UK and Albania. She also spent some time working as a freelance journalist in London.

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Finding Financial Inclusion

By kturner
February 16, 2012
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration are traveling from city to city. This month meet Stephanie Mestrallet, Head of Business at London's [Fair Finance](#).

The good idea that most recently caught my eye was a fantastic Community Finance Organization based in Charlotte and Durham in the US, [The Latino Community Credit Union](#). They are providing small and affordable loans and financial services to people excluded from the banking system.

Why? The reasons why I was really impressed was 1) their impact on the community and 2) their rapid and efficient growth (ten branches).

They were initially created to tackle violence towards people (mainly the local Latino Community) who received their pay in cash weekly and had no bank to put it to. As such those people became easy targets for thieves and were robbed frequently. Before the start of the project the level of violence in the area was really high.

By opening Bank accounts and providing a trustworthy access to finance to the local community, they managed to drop the violence rate in the area and improved financial inclusion.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I did share this good idea with my colleagues during our weekly workshops so that they could be inspired by this idea. There are many ways of tackling violence and financial inclusion is one of them!

Dialogue on Diversity: Jane Allen, Chief Diversity Officer, Deloitte Canada

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Jane Allen, Partner and Chief Diversity Officer, Deloitte Canada promotes the importance of diversity and creating greater cross-cultural competence in today's business climate. She shares some tips for putting ideas into action from our [December 2011 webinar](#).

1. Leadership buy-in

There needs to be a large movement to get employers to start changing. Major employers have a responsibility to that. Start with the board and senior levels of management: start with the CEO! Deloitte went through an intensive education program with top 50 leaders in the company so they could be comfortable on the issues. It is important to develop a business rationale and to get to leaders' heads, not just their hearts. Have the facts and statistics to show how diversity is good for the business.

2. Create employee resource groups

Liked-minded employees can create formal mentorships within the company or create informal networks to pass on unwritten knowledge. Helping employees understand newcomer experiences can be cost-effective by using existing employees as cultural resources. Deloitte has piloted a buddy system to help new immigrants integrate within the company by assigning "buddies" to help them through their first year.

3. Share lessons learned

There may be resistance to change, but be persistent. Keep communicating and educating leaders and employees about the value of diversity of workforce. Deloitte hosts round tables once a quarter to share new information, research, and experiences in this field, and also works with organizations like [Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council \(TRIEC\)](#) to learn about the barriers that immigrants face and what employers can do to overcome them.

To learn more, watch the [webinar video with Jane Allen, and find related resources](#)

Living Together in the City

By kturner
December 15, 2011
Uncategorized



This month, we introduce a new collection, [Living Together: Good Ideas Promoting Inclusion](#). These local initiatives show us how great cities prosper and thrive on the values of openness and inclusion. They convey an important message: participate!

Cities are the economic engines of today's economy, but they are also the neighborhoods and city spaces we call home. Whether it's enjoying city parks, sharing a meal or community volunteering, the way we participate and interact in the urban spaces of daily life is important to our sense of identity, belonging and quality of life.

Inspired by the work of the [Open Society Foundations' At Home in Europe Project](#), this collection focuses on initiatives that bring us together, foster mutual understanding and help dispel myths and prejudice. What a great way to herald in a new year!

Best wishes from Cities of Migration

Auckland: The OMEGA Diversity Perception Audit

By kturner
December 14, 2011
Uncategorized

This month, [OMEGA \(Opportunities for Migrant Employment in Greater Auckland\)](#) released its first diversity report, [OMEGA Diversity Perception Audit 2011](#).

It highlights the views and perceptions of over forty New Zealand CEOs and HR Directors in relation to the diversity landscape of New Zealand.

Key findings:

- New Zealand businesses lack indicators, benchmarks and tools to measure, develop, monitor and interpret the business impact and contribution of diversity within organizations.
- Challenges in relation on to corporate culture are emerging and will continue to intensify without an investment in appropriate solutions.
- Increased workforce diversity within businesses has been an unintentional result of labour market supply related to migration and changing global demographics. While New Zealand businesses are tolerant of diversity as a social norm, they are complacent about recognizing and leveraging the business advantage and economic benefits of diversity.
- Skills shortages continue to plague the strategic development, resilience and prosperity of businesses. Yet, diversity management – a key solution to this skills shortage – continues to be a low executive priority, deepening the impact of an empty talent pipeline.
- Business leaders are not particularly engaged or proactive in advancing diversity or in capturing the benefits associated with diversity. NGOs and HR professionals have “filled in the gaps” when it comes to diversity management and future workforce planning.
- New Zealand’s diversity landscape is haphazard with “knee jerk” programmes and mechanisms which do not adequately capture the business value of the diverse talent that exists in the workplace.

Source: [OMEGA](#)

DiverseCity onBoard receives UN Intercultural Innovation Award

By kturner
December 13, 2011
Uncategorized



At the fourth UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) Forum in Doha, the [DiverseCity onBoard project](#) won second prize in the Intercultural Innovation Awards. DiverseCity OnBoard was chosen from over 400 proposals from 70 countries considered for the award.

Watch video of Cathy Winter, DiverseCity onBoard Manager, receiving the award:

[According to the UNAOC](#): "This award represents a new kind of partnership between the private sector and the UN system, aiming to select highly innovative projects that promote dialogue and inter-cultural understanding and to make a vital contribution to safety and peace in societies around the world."

"We are extremely honoured to receive this award," says Maytree President, Ratna Omidvar, "but also excited about the possibilities of bringing this project to the attention of global partners working towards similar goals in civil society. We encourage all of them to look at DiverseCity onBoard as something they can replicate in their communities."

More about DiverseCity onboard with Cathy Winter:

[Replication information](#) for the project can be found on their site.

Related links:

- [Intercultural Innovation Award](#)
- Announcement – [International Recognition for GTA Diversity Initiative](#)
- [DiverseCity onBoard](#)
- DiverseCity on Board – [a Cities of Migration Good Idea in immigrant integration](#)
- [DiverseCity – the Greater Toronto Leadership Project](#)
- Maytree blog – [celebrating DiverseCity onboard](#)
- [Replication toolkit for DiverseCity OnBoard](#)

The DiverseCity onBoard project is a partnership of Maytree and the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance, with funding support from the Province of Ontario.

Nazia Hussain: Cities Leading by Example

By kturner
December 14, 2011
[Interview](#)



Nazia Hussain is the Director of the At Home in Europe Project at the Open Society Foundations.

We asked Nazia about her work and the role of local government in promoting effective integration policies and practices.

The role of the city is crucial to responding to the urban challenges in Europe today, including the changing demographics, the diverse communities, a multiplicity of identities and the impact of rapid change on government structures and institutions. They are integral in creating or reframing narratives and debates on the impact and reality of diversity and equality in their environments.

Open Society Foundations' At Home in Europe Project works to identify issues that residents in Europe's urban spaces share as common concerns regardless of their ethnic or religious background and where they differ, a better understanding of these differences and how they can be overcome. Through strategic policy reports and advocacy activities we examine how the city engages with and consults its residents against a range of issues.

Since 2007 we have focused part of our work on Muslim integration and have released a number of reports under the series title, Muslims in EU cities. These reports focus on participation and citizenship, their role and impact in the media, education, employment housing, health and the criminal justice system. They offer the direct voices of residents from different communities and recommendations from living conditions and opportunities.

The key aim of our work is extract model of good practices regarding social inclusion that can be promoted to policy-makers, civil society and communities in European cities and beyond.

What have you learned about the role of local government in creating inclusive and welcoming communities?

The issue of identity and belonging is integral to successful cohesion in any city or country. A key finding from our research on Muslim integration in European cities has been the issue of belonging and how it is stronger at the local and national level but the perception of being seen as a Brit, Dane, Swedish, etc by members of wider society is fraught. This is an area where we have learnt that local government can play a role in responding to concerns and finding innovative ways to address them – policies which respond to difference can be pragmatically addressed by local government where engagement and participation requires genuine consultation with all people and communities. This is where leadership at the local, regional levels provides a powerful and crucial attitudinal framework. They must lead by example.

We also know that the city authority is a significant player and employer in terms of economic and social integration. They are crucial in creating and implementing key local policy targets including cohesion and employment. They can create initiatives which target barriers to participation and ensure that their workforce reflects the full diversity of their local population.

Within the range of legislative powers available to local government, are there instruments of public office that have surprised you?

There are many tools available to local government. Anti-discrimination laws are in place, civil society actors are present and working on combating concerns but what is needed is the political will to actually implement these tools. A key component of public office is the protection of its residents and citizens and city government are doing this through consultation mechanisms, forums which bring people from different communities together and funding of some initiatives.

However, community building requires spaces and places to meet and this is something that local governments can provide. At the same time, policies must provide for all but at times they don't reach out to particular groups that are not engaged with mainstream policies. Sometimes interventions are required, tailored interventions, which are about improving the achievements of all people without being viewed as offering special treatment to some groups. Some cities have understood this whilst others operate an ethnic blind policy which granted does not always work but which at times may be the one way to pursue participation.

In the current economic crisis, is there a special role for cities?

The economic downturn has an impact on all communities and severely tests policies towards community cohesion and integration. Insecurity leads people to feeling vulnerable and finding a reason for this insecurity. Financial insecurity does fuel tensions and the longer the recession, the more aggravated the feeling of hardship. If policies are tightened (immigration in particular), then all groups in society and its systems, will suffer. The city administrations have a special role in this time which is to ensure that short term solutions do not impact on longer term prosperity and cohesion.

Strengthened labour market and integration policies at the city level are vital at this time and one key role of local governments is to reverse attitudes to migration and the discourse on it. How the city responds at this time is important in reducing the risk of minority communities being viewed as problematic and as scapegoats.

Another key impact of the recession is on civil society organizations which are state funded in some cases. Local authorities can ensure that civil society growth is not affected as these are the groups which enable greater participation in cities and countries.

Neighbourhood level activities help community building and diversity and simply cannot survive without funding. This is an example of where short term solutions have had an impact on longer term cohesion. In these times, private foundations and organizations need to step up and work with the

authorities in supporting this sector.

Nazia Hussain provided the introductory remarks to the webinar, Closing the Gap: City Leadership on Employment and Workforce Diversity, November 23, 2011, Cities of Migration Learning Exchange. Interview conducted: December 6, 2012.

Nazia Hussain is the Director of the [At Home in Europe project at the Open Society Foundations](#). As part of the Open Society Foundations on-going work on minority rights and non-discrimination in Europe, Nazia is directing research and leading advocacy efforts on integration policies/practices in various EU cities and the impact of these policies on identity and belonging. Prior to joining the Open Society Foundations, Nazia worked for over eight years in various post-conflict countries. She was deployed as a human rights officer with the United Nations in Afghanistan, with the OSCE in Kosovo and Croatia and the EU Monitoring Mission in Macedonia. She also worked for a number of years at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International as their researcher on Afghanistan. Nazia holds an MSc in political theory and political sociology and a BA (honours) in English literature.

The Open Society Foundations is an organization that works to build vibrant and tolerant societies that are accountable to their citizens. We work with local communities in more than 70 countries and we support rule of law and human rights, including justice, education, public health and freedom of expression. The At Home in Europe project is a program of the Open Society Foundations. Doing research and advocacy, we work to advance the social inclusion of vulnerable communities in a changing Europe by exploring the political, the social, the cultural and the economic participation of minorities and other marginalized groups in Western Europe. This is done through engagement with residents, with civil society policy-makers and city authorities.

Deputy Mayor of London, Richard Barnes

By ktuner
[Opinion](#)



As part of our *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*, we are asking mayors and city leaders for their views on immigration, local initiatives and future plans.

Richard Barnes
 Deputy Mayor of London

What work is London doing regarding refugees, migration and integration?

We developed the Mayor's strategy for integration in London after taking office three and a half years ago. Called [London Enriched](#), it identifies seven core themes of integration and it sets out broad objectives for each of them. The seven core themes are: English language; housing; employment, skills and enterprise; children and young people; community safety and cohesion; health; and community development.

Each year, I lead a group called the [London Strategic Migration Partnership](#) that agrees to an action plan for implementation by the partnership members. The partnership includes key regional bodies from all sectors and advice they've received from the migrant and refugee advisory panel, which is made up of community members – a whole range of community-based organizations are dealing with refugees and migrants. The Partnership includes the UK Border Agency. I get out and meet the grass root organizations as well. It is important to hear both sides of the coin and it's best that they work in harmony.

Having a strategy is a success in itself. It sends out a clear message to Londoners that integration is important, sets out the Mayor's vision for integration and provides a framework for making the partnership work on delivering that strategy. Getting people to sit and talk together is really important. We based the strategy on as much evidence as we could possibly gather.

Last year we commissioned a couple of evidence-based studies on migration and integration in London. We interviewed over one thousand refugees in London. We also initiated a project to highlight the role played by communities and organizations in assisting integration. The outcomes are obviously going to be long-term, or medium to long-term, rather than provide immediate tangible results.

I was really surprised by the lack of numbers, the lack of knowledge about the who, what and where [of the refugee population]. So the Mayor commissioned the London School of Economics to do a survey to find out how many people had been here more than 4.5 years, or had long term residence, who were considered irregular, or without any real status. They came back with a figure of over 500,000 living in London. If you take that figure, that is like [the population of] one and a half to two London boroughs. Put in those terms, people can understand it.

We have also brought together providers and commissioners of English ESOL, so they can agree on better strategies for not only improving the availability but also the quality of English instruction. This was done in the context of new policies and funding mechanisms. It is surprising how this varies across London, both in quality and outcomes.

Why it is that you feel immigration is important to London?

A city can not survive in isolation. London has always been a trading port, a trading city, right from the time the Romans first arrived here. We have always been a city of migration with an ebb and flow of people. The streets of London have always been painted gold with opportunities, attracting people from across the United Kingdom, across Europe, and from across the world. And it's brought with it a richness and a diversity of attitude, an openness of attitude, not to mention the culinary opportunities and the music people share with us. Diversity has really lifted London. All the surveys we do of Londoners' attitudes show us that they regard our diversity as one of London's most important qualities.

Next year, it's the 2012 Olympics and there are 43 different communities here in London with over 10,000 people in London. What that means is that 43 countries have communities of support for their teams already living in London! This creates a vibrancy which you simply don't find across the vast majority of cities.

There are over 300 languages spoken in London. London works at harnessing the challenges of integration – and I talk of integration, not assimilation, two vast differences. No one should deny their heritage; they should enjoy and celebrate it. They've chosen to live in this city as a place of safety, and a place of opportunities. And they must take part in two-way integration.

What has been the city's most successful integration initiative to date?

That is the most difficult to measure, because the approach can't be based primarily on specific initiatives for integration. We've got to aim for integration, inclusion and participation. The challenge is to ensure mainstream services and wider initiatives also include refugees and migrants.

We have the [Team London project](#), which is a volunteering initiative. One of its priorities is to build stronger neighbourhoods with an emphasis on inclusion and contact between communities.

I remember when the Mayor [Boris Johnson] asked me to be responsible for this area [inclusion], I said, "You know, we'll never be able to measure when we're successful. We'll only know when we failed." And he laughed and said, "Yes."

When there is a breakdown in community relationships, if there is violence on the streets of London, if communities are targeted for whatever reason, then we know we're failing. That's measurable.

What else is on the agenda for immigrant integration in London?

We are developing our implementation plan for Year Three of London Enriched which will be based on the seven core integration streams. The priority now is access to English and English-language training. And then promoting the role of community-led organizations and ensuring that mainstream services and initiatives are accessible to refugees and migrants. Not necessarily access to English via colleges, but should we be offering it in schools where mums take kids and could be spending time there learning. We need to be more imaginative. That's our challenge.

What practice or program would you like to bring to London next, and is it inspired by any other city?

I recently came back from Oslo, from a diversity and communities conference. They're asking us what we are doing in London. People are looking to us for advice, help, inspiration, experience, simply because of the sheer volume of work we are doing here.

We have also really engaged in the [EUROCITIES project](#), which looks at the role of local and regional government in integration across Europe. Indeed, [we were the lead on the signing of the Integrating Cities Charter here at city hall last spring, when 17 EU cities came together to sign this charter](#). We brought and wrote it for Europe so there could be a common approach, common objective to integration across Europe. That was one of the most inspiring things that we did. Such a vast range of cities coming together and agreeing on a broad charter is inspiration in itself. That's what we're all committed to, whatever the economic challenges that surrounds us.

[Richard Barnes](#) was leader of the Conservative Group of the London Assembly in the last administration and previously leader of the Conservative administration in London Borough of Hillingdon. He has a degree in economics from the University of Wales, and speaks a number of European languages and has a particular interest in Business Continuity and Resilience issues. Richard leads on the Mayoral social justice policies.

New Webinar Video: City Leadership on Employment and Workforce Diversity

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



The cities of Copenhagen and Hamburg are leading examples of local authorities who are pursuing policies and campaigns which recognize the diversity of its residents, its benefits, and the utilization of their skills. "Participation in the labour market remains at the heart of economic integration, which in turn is a powerful driver of social integration...The city is where the pragmatics of policy is realized. Cities understand their communities, understand the nuances," says Nazia Hussain, Director of OSF's At Home in Europe project.

To counter the negative national debate on immigrants, Copenhagen takes charge and declares, like the green movement, "Copenhagen is now ready for the Diversity movement." [The city successfully introduces its first Diversity Charter](#) by engaging like-minded corporations in their inclusion policy and powerful media campaign: diversity means growth.

"Diversity...may lead to better service. Heterogeneous teams are better than homogeneous teams," Stefan Müller, city of Hamburg. [City administrators in Hamburg wants their city staff to be model of cultural diversity](#), encouraging other employers to follow. Their goal: increase workforce diversity to 20% by 2012. From policy to communications, Hamburg learned in order to build a strong awareness for their campaign, they needed to reach out to the institutions that young migrants trusted from schools to parents to other migrant organizations.

[>>To learn more, watch the video and presentation](#)

Auckland: Alan Broadbent on Cities and International Collaboration

By Evelyn
November 22, 2011
Uncategorized

In September 2011, Alan Broadbent, Chair of the Maytree Foundation, met with a number of civic leaders in New Zealand to talk about various urban issues, including [Len Brown, the Mayor of Auckland](#) where they discussed transit funding (infrastructure) and Bob Parker, the Mayor of Christchurch, where they talked about the rebuilding of the city following the [devastating earthquakes](#) (including funding for transit and housing).

Cities in New Zealand are important drivers of the economy and the social and cultural engines of the country. New Zealand is probably even more urbanized than Canada (approximately 85% to Canada's 80%). Most people live in the top ten cities in the country.

In addition, Alan spoke about Maytree's relationship with New Zealand Tindall Foundation, ideas about immigrant integration that have traveled from Canada to New Zealand ([TRIEC to ALLIES to OMEGA](#)), developing stronger urban voices and the importance of learning and sharing from other cities and countries.

Listen (21:29):

Related links

- [Maytree blog](#) – for Alan Broadbent's complete interview and more Maytree news
- [Inspiring Communities](#) – a New Zealand version of the Tamarack Institute's Vibrant Communities project
- [OMEGA](#) – the TRIEC model travelled to New Zealand and was replicated locally as OMEGA
- Cities of Migration's [Good Ideas from New Zealand](#)

More Good Ideas Go on the Road!

By kturner
Uncategorized

[The Maytree Foundation](#) is taking "[Good Ideas from Toronto: an Exchange of Immigrant Integration Practices](#)," on a four-city tour of Germany starting November 28, 2011. Stuttgart, Hamburg, Berlin and Cologne will learn about what is working from a Toronto perspective on immigrant integration.

Take a look at the [Good Ideas from Toronto programme](#) and read about some of the presenters, including [CBC Radio](#), the [Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council](#) and the [Toronto District School Board](#).

Cities are the destination of choice for most immigrants. The welcome cities provide to their newest residents is key to successful integration and, in the end, vital to their social and economic health. It's also essential to the ongoing prosperity of the cities themselves. It's not surprising then that cities world-wide are eager to learn from each other about what works in integrating immigrants.

In each city, the delegates will also have an opportunity to visit with staff of German projects to learn about local immigrant integration practices.

This exchange of ideas is organized in partnership with the Canadian Embassy in Berlin. We also thank our German partners, the Robert Bosch Foundation and the City of Stuttgart in Stuttgart, the Körber Foundation in Hamburg, the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin, and the Bertelsmann Foundation in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Integration and Social Affairs, North Rhine-Westfalia, in Cologne.

Phoenix: Congress of Cities

By kturner
Uncategorized



At the [Congress of Cities](#) in Phoenix, Arizona. Celia Muñoz spoke about the need for immigration reform. She is the Assistant to the President, White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs as well as lead staff for the President on immigration issues. Here is an excerpt from the [National League of Cities](#) on Muñoz's remarks during the opening general session:

"If the United States is going to become a society in which everyone is fully integrated, there must be a national debate on immigration reform, Muñoz told attendees at the Congress of Cities... America must choose between two alternatives; a vision of a nation of immigrants, or a colony of aliens approach, in which people focus on fear.

Throughout history, the country has done an amazing job of integrating immigrants, and it has made the nation strong, she said.

Two-fifths of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Many Nobel laureates are immigrants, as are nearly half of engineers.

A number of states are trying to restrict immigration, making it more difficult for immigrants to integrate.

Such laws aim to control illegal immigration, but have side effects that impact legal immigrants or others who are not immigrants, "but are mistaken for immigrants because of what we look like, or because we've got those funny letters like the one I have in the middle of my last name," said Muñoz.

As a result of the recently enacted Alabama law, about 2,000 American children disappeared almost overnight from the school systems. Businesses are losing qualified employees. They are also losing access to talent they need in order to grow."

Source: [Laura Turner and Cyndy Liedtke Hogan, National League of Cities \(November 21, 2011\)](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Mentoring Takes Rank

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration are traveling from city to city. This month meet Patrick Voss, a Commissioner of Police at the [Netherlands Police Agency](#).

What Good Idea caught your eye?

The Good Idea that most recently caught my eye was [Family Mentoring for Migrants](#) where German families volunteer to “sponsor” immigrant families as mentors in order to help them get started and adjusted to their new lives. Along the way, both groups have the opportunity to learn about each other and build their relationships. So one minute the mentor is helping the mentee with insight and information about culture, language, work, politics, shopping, etc. and the other minute – so to speak- vice versa.

Why?

I think this will result in a life-long friendship and understanding differences, respecting them and give value to those differences.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I shared this idea within my own organization, not family-to-family but at a leadership level. Police officers who want to become leaders within the Police Service join an intense program with senior leaders. Both parties are mentor and mentees at the same time. It is very refreshing to speak openly and transparently in a secure environment; different insights, different approaches and feedback to each other is very important to learn and to be surprised. It improves your awareness and it keeps you alert. It is also about understanding differences, respecting them and give value to those differences.

Feedback?

Think ahead and organize a group meeting on a regular basis with several participants and local government to share the results and best practices. The circle of learning will increase as will getting to know each other! To make it successful – take care and provide different styles of food of the participants. It is the best way to feel at home!

Resources

- Good Idea from Bremen, Germany: [Family Mentoring For Migrants: MEMI](#). Successful integration means long term residents as well as newcomers are at home in a changing city
- Good Idea We Are Watching from Amsterdam, The Netherlands: [Amsterdam: A Dutch police officer's field trip to Toronto](#)



Deloitte's Dialogue on Diversity: Setting the Stage for Business Growth and Innovation

By Evelyn
November 21, 2011
Uncategorized



Big Ideas @Cities of Migration

Join us in an [online conversation](#) with **Jane Allen, Partner and Chief Diversity Officer, Deloitte Canada**, to talk about why diversity is important and what organizations can do to successfully integrate skilled, internationally-trained workers and fuel economic growth. Interview host: Justin Treagus, CEO, OMEGA (Auckland, New Zealand)

Deloitte was selected as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2011. Read the newest report from Deloitte's 2011 Dialogue on diversity: [unlocking the potential of immigrants for business growth](#).

To learn more, [join us for a webinar](#) on December 5 (North America) / December 6 (New Zealand, Australia)!



Toronto: Diversity Gap in Local Politics

By ktuner
November 22, 2011
Uncategorized



The fourth [DiverseCity](#) Counts report was released on November 9, 2011, measuring levels of diversity in leadership in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). [The Diversity Gap: The Electoral Under-Representation of Visible Minorities \(PDF\)](#) showed that the highest rate of visible minority representation occurred at the provincial government while the lowest was within municipal governments.

[Ryerson University's Myer Siemiatycki](#) conducted the research, which finds that while visible minorities comprise 40% of the GTA population, they only represent 11% of those elected to office.

The report goes deeper than previous studies on diversity in elected office and finds:

- The highest visible minority representation rate can be found in provincial government;
- Visible minorities are woefully under-represented in municipal government;
- All sub-groups of visible minorities are under-represented, but Arabs, Filipinos, non-white Latin Americans and Southeast Asians have no representation at any level of government;
- South Asians and Chinese are the most elected visible minority sub-groups;
- Electoral success varies by region within the GTA, with the City of Toronto elected fewer visible minorities than the outer regions;
- There is not a fixed ethnic vote favouring a single political party; and
- Electoral diversity is improving overtime, but only modestly.

Read this [report \(PDF\)](#), [summary \(PDF\)](#) or [news release](#).

Source: [DiverseCity Counts](#)

Marketing Good Practice in Seattle

By kturner
Uncategorized



You've heard about the Cities of Migration Marketplace of Good Ideas, but do you know it really is? Watch our latest video that recounts our October travels to the 4th annual [National Immigrant Integration Conference](#) in Seattle. It's a live showcase of ten of the international practices that we have profiled at Cities of Migration.

Participants had the opportunity to learn from a series of 30-minute sessions where two presenters (American and international) spoke and answered questions about their practices. The format gives the audience the ability to sit in on up to four pairs of presentations – a true whirlwind trip through the American [E Pluribus Unum Prize](#) winners and the other international practices from Toronto, London, Barcelona, Kerpen, and Auckland. The marketplace, co-presented with the [J.M. Kaplan Fund](#), demonstrated the power of local initiatives to make immigrant integration a success.

Read the Good Ideas (or view the entire [Marketplace workbook – pdf](#)):

- Kerpen, Germany: [Integration Workshops for Inclusive Cities](#)
Developing integration strategies with migrants, not for migrants
- Auckland, New Zealand – [From Alpha to Omega: Innovating in the Workplace](#)
Importing a successful labour force integration model saves time and money
- Toronto, Canada – [Changing the Face of Leadership: DiverseCity onBoard](#)
Promoting urban prosperity by diversifying leadership
- London, United Kingdom – [Banking on Affordable Credit](#)
Fair finance means affordable credit for everyone, whatever your gender, race or postcode
- Barcelona, Spain – [Reaching for the Stars: VIPs go to School](#)
Local heroes reward students for good ideas about immigrant integration in schools
- Durham, United States – [Financing Immigrant Futures: The Latino Community Credit Union](#)
Help new immigrants access formal banking infrastructure
- Chicago, United States – [Interviewing the Up and Coming at Upwardly Global](#)
Diversity training is a two-way street
- San Francisco, United States – [Welcome Back to a Healthier Community](#)
Training and support to link culturally diverse health care professionals to employment and healthier communities
- New York City, United States – [Language-Wise in the Global Classroom](#)
An innovative urban high school invites immigrant youth back to the classroom to learn from one another
- Nashville, United States – [Shelbyville's Ambassadors of Welcome](#)
Community ambassadors use traditional American values of hospitality to improve perceptions of immigration

To learn more about the E Pluribus Unum Prizes, [read the Cities of Migration interview with Margie McHugh](#), the Co-Director of the Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, which coordinates the prizes.

Margie McHugh: Talking E Pluribus Unum Prizes

By kturner
November 21, 2011
[Interview](#)



Margie McHugh is the Co-Director of the Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. The Centre coordinates the [E Pluribus Unum Prizes](#), an American awards program that provides four \$50,000 prizes annually to exceptional initiatives that promote immigrant integration.

Tell us about the development of the E Pluribus Unum Prizes?

[The Migration Policy Institute's National Centre on Immigrant Integration Policy](#), opened in February 2007 and we announced the prizes in 2008. We created the Centre with the idea of building a more knowledge-driven field. We realized that part of the work is to create a more public profile for immigrant integration policies and practices. We need to provide people with concrete examples of what we are talking about when we even use the words immigrant integration, because in the US it really had not been a term or a concept used outside of academic circles

To create a more coherent and knowledge driven field, we have to popularize the idea of immigrant integration. The E Pluribus Unum Prize is a means of accomplishing several goals at once: raise the profile of immigrant integration issues on a national stage; provide people with an image and practical sense of what integration means; and help us convey the diversity of the field. The truth is that immigrant integration is not one unified policy field but a sub-field across several dozen existing policy fields. It's a great challenge to convey all of that diversity. The prizes, through the generosity of the [JM Kaplan Fund](#), allow us to honor several organizations each year and then build out the public profile of the extent of the issues and policy that immigrant integration touches on.

Why does showcasing practice matter?

At its most basic, showcasing practice matters because people learn most quickly by hearing stories and seeing real-world examples. Sharing a story about people in an organization is a much more effective way of conveying a package of information than asking people to read a series of reports. It creates an 'a-ha' moment where people say, 'So, that's what we need to be thinking about!'

The prizes are a component of a much larger set of policy and program efforts at our Center on Immigration Integration Policy. The prizes program sits within a larger body of comparative research and policy analysis that simultaneously is building knowledge about immigrant integration policy and practices. It contributes immensely to our other work – it makes it more real, it gives people ideas, it engages other stakeholders, but it's not meant to be a shortcut to a policy prescription. It's meant to highlight implications for policy and practice.

What can policy-makers learn from this work?

In undertaking the awards, we've been cautious about suggesting that winning practices can simply be parachuted in to address a similar need in other parts of the country. Some practices may sound similar and be vastly different. As a research and policy organization, we know it is not as simple process. But we hope that elements of the winning initiatives – the thinking around creative solutions – will be exciting, relevant, and be a guide to better integration practice.

Look at the terrific practices happening in New York, Toronto, and Berlin for example.. These cities have more of a history with migration and may have a more organized social service sector. They often have funding streams that can be leveraged over a period of time. This may not be the case for new migration destinations. Infrastructure cannot be developed overnight in newer areas. It's a learning process that each locality has to undertake on its own. What we're doing with the prizes can be a key contributor to the learning.

What have you learned after three years of the E Pluribus Unum Prizes?

What we are most impressed with is the breadth of activity all across the country. At the national level in the US, there has not been enough appreciation of just how much integration work is going on, how many mainstream organizations or systems are actively learning and being very entrepreneurial about how to adapt old ways of doing things to new populations, and the different challenges and opportunities this all presents.

People may expect integration projects in places like Chicago or San Francisco, Los Angeles or Miami, but when they hear it is happening in Portland, Maine and Omaha, Nebraska or [Nashville, Tennessee](#), that paints a very different picture of who we are as a country.

There's still an enormous amount of energy and work to be done to help people learn English, but the prizes are also showing that this isn't just about teaching people English. For example, it's about teaching English that will help immigrants earn a college degree or English that puts them on a pathway to a lifetime of supporting their family. It's not just learning survival English for shopping at grocery stores.

What has been the impact of the awards?

We're delighted that the awards have become so prestigious so quickly. It has helped the winners open doors to new funders, receive greater media interest and to be taken more seriously as spokespeople within the community of integration providers and sources of training and information on these issues.

Within the field of immigrant integration, whether it touches on early childhood education, elementary, post-secondary education, or healthy care access, all those areas have a life of their own in terms of their leaders, policies, and sense of practice. The prizes are helping create recognition for those fields of work and the population with which they are engaged. This transition is accelerated by recognizing exceptional practice. For example, immigrant children are now 25% of children who are in the US – their education is no longer a boutique issue. The work recognized by the E Pluribus Unum Prizes is affecting the children at the heart of the discussion and raising the profile of the winners as leaders in the field.

Without a doubt, one of the great unexpected impacts has been how quickly the prizes program has raised up immigrant integration issues in federal policy circles. Our 2011 winners were invited to speak with members of a task force on immigrant integration created by the Obama administration, and were featured by the White House as "[Champions of Change](#)." It has helped set in motion a structured approach to these issues within the White House and federal agencies. We've are delighted to see this kind of effect in such a short period of time.

José Ramón Fernández-Peña of the [Welcome Back Initiative](#) speaks as a Champion of Change

Is there a gap that needs to be filled?

One area is family and community asset building and that's a bit of a puzzle for us. This field includes financial literacy, access to banking, and community economic development efforts. A part of that may stem from the idea that it's riskier, or higher stakes work, because of the dollars that are involved in creating those services. It is an area where a lot of good things are happening, but there doesn't seem to be much of a system in place to share those learnings among organizations working on these issues, or to get groups doing immigrant community building work to feel confident to take on those issues.

It's especially relevant now when we look at what has happened with the mortgage crisis in the US and the like. We would like to help stakeholders in the immigrant integration field move into this work more quickly.

Another issue that stands out is the question of who is responsible for what. What is the responsibility of immigrants when it comes to immigrant integration and achieving self-sufficiency? What is the responsibility of different levels of government? The federal government sets immigration policy – how much of immigrant integration then should it be responsible for? We can see that conversation happening all over the country, between the federal, state and local governments, and then between state and local governments and their immigrant community leaders and organizations. We see different approaches being taken all over the country depending on the issue or area.

We are very eager to share more of the thinking and action on these issues in the writing that we are beginning to do about the prizes and the applicants.

What are some of the lessons for the field?

One of the most fundamental lessons from this work is how important it is to actors in the field to have a sophisticated analysis of their local community's profile, its history and the strengths of the community. We see our work as providing a roadmap that makes it easier for people to engage and deal with the complexity of these issues and really see themselves as leaders. We are helping to develop the thinking around this work – building on the examples

set by these winning organizations to learn how to do this work better. So we encourage them to become leaders and thinkers on these issues rather than expecting that somebody else might have a solution for a problem they are facing. There will always be lots of relevant information, but the solution has to be homegrown.

Margie McHugh is the Co-Director of the [Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy](#). Prior to joining MPI, Ms. McHugh served for 15 years as Executive Director of [The New York Immigration Coalition](#), an umbrella organization for over 150 groups in New York that uses research, policy development, and community mobilization efforts to achieve landmark integration policy and program initiatives. She is the recipient of dozens of awards recognizing her efforts to bring diverse constituencies together and tackle tough problems, including the prestigious Leadership for a Changing World award. She has served as a member and officer on the boards of directors for both the National Immigration Forum and Working Today; on the editorial board of Migration World Magazine; and has held appointive positions in a variety of New York city and state commissions.

Listening to Local Leadership in Auckland: Mayor Len Brown

By kturner
November 22, 2011
[Opinion](#)



As part of our *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*, we are asking mayors and city leaders for their views on immigration, local initiatives and future plans.



Len Brown
Mayor of Auckland

Why is immigration important to Auckland?

I have a vision for Auckland of making it the world's most liveable city, and our migrants are a vital part of that. I want Auckland to be an inclusive city, where every community is recognized and respected.

Auckland is home to more than 180 ethnicities, and is the largest Pasifika city in the world. We are a nation and a city of migrants – be it from the great Maori migratory voyages across the Pacific, our European colonial forbears to more recent arrivals from around New Zealand and the world.

We value the diversity our migrants bring to Auckland. It helps us build relationships with the rest of the world, and gives us a vibrant, rich cultural life.

Our new Aucklanders come here with a positive spirit – to get a new life, a job, an education, start a new business, or to find freedom. Our diversity and that positive spirit is the wellspring of our future prosperity. We are proud that our migrants have chosen Auckland.

What is your city's most successful immigration integration initiative to date?

Auckland is a newly-amalgamated city. We have inherited the relationships of our legacy councils and are forging our own new relationships with migrant agencies and advocates. We are reviewing our programmes, to see which work well, and are initiating new ones where needed.

Amongst the initiatives we have are the Pacific People's Advisory Panel and the Ethnic People's Advisory Panel, which give voice to a diverse range of communities. These panels identify and communicate the preferences of the Pacific and ethnic communities across Auckland, and advise us how to best engage with these communities in relation to council strategies, policies, plans and bylaws.

In addition, the panels also provide representation to the joint Social Policy Forum. The forum has been set up to ensure that Auckland Council and central government work closer together on shared social sector issues and solutions. These issues include those faced by migrant and refugee communities in Auckland.

We are setting up specific ethnic workshops for different communities, where members of the community have the opportunity to provide feedback on the Auckland Plan, the blueprint for the future development of Auckland over the next 30 years.

Auckland is part of an Inter-Agency Regional Migrant Settlement Policy, supporting and working closely with agencies which help new arrivals enter the workforce, communicate and get by in their new home, find and access the information and resources they need to establish themselves here, and encourage participation in local activities.

When we all work in harmony, identifying issues, allocating resources and aligning outcomes, we can do so much more. This coordination is crucial for our new arrivals.

Our libraries provide learning environments for local communities, as a first point of contact for information and a community hub. Local libraries respond to local needs, developing community language collections, calendars of events and projects, and partnerships with community groups, while our Citizens' Advice Bureaux provide information for migrants in a number of languages.

We support an exciting calendar of cultural events, such as Diwali, the Chinese New Year Lantern Festival, Pasifika (the largest celebration of Pasifika culture in the world), Vaisakhi, and our annual International Cultural Festival.

What is next on your city for immigrant integration?

We are currently forging the blueprint for the next 30 years of Auckland's future. The Auckland Plan covers not only our built and natural environments, but the cultural, social and community well-being of our city.

The draft plan explicitly includes a number of directives aimed at improving life for migrant and refugee communities. These include promoting inclusion, reducing discrimination, and removing barriers to opportunity and participation. It encourages the ongoing support of community events and cultural festivals to reflect diversity of the cultures in Auckland, and also recognises the need of Pasifika and minority ethnic communities to have safe, affordable, healthy and sustainable housing, which meets their specific needs.

We are asking all Aucklanders to let us know what they think of the Auckland Plan, and how we can improve it to help this city reach its potential as an inclusive and engaged community where everybody feels they belong.

[Len Brown is the first Mayor of the Auckland Council.](#) *He studied arts and law at Auckland University before joining the Auckland law firm Wynyard Wood, where he became a partner. He also co-founded the Howick Free Legal Service. Len entered politics in 1992, when he was first elected to the Manukau City Council. He was elected the mayor of Manukau in 2007. After the government decision to merge Auckland's eight previous councils, Len stood as Mayor of the new Auckland in 2010.*

Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration

By kturner
October 20, 2011
Uncategorized

Cities are major players on the global migration stage. Local governments are waking up to the impact of immigration on urban culture and community with smart responses to the business climate, infrastructure design, and political leadership. They have considerable authority to promote inclusion and build resilient prosperous communities: from integration policy to zoning, from anti-discrimination campaigns to employment, housing and education.

Mayoral voice and leadership can direct policy and change hearts and minds. City leaders like Mayor Bloomberg of New York are helping re-frame how we think about immigration.

We want to know more about how local governments use the instruments and authority of public office to promote immigrant and city success.

Starting this month, Cities of Migration invites you to share outstanding examples of city leadership on immigrant integration. No single idea stands behind a great city. So how do successful cities do it? Share your city's story and be the next **Big Idea @ Cities of Migration!** Entries will be accepted until Jan 30, 2012.

The Rising Phoenix in Arizona

By kturner
Uncategorized

“Immigrant Integration in localities” is the theme of the upcoming Congress of Cities on November 9-12, 2011 in Phoenix, Arizona. The National League of Cities (NLC) confirmed its decision to hold its signature fall event in Phoenix as a show of support for the City.

NLC has joined Phoenix in opposing the State of Arizona’s anti-immigration law, and continues to advocate with the city for constructive local action in local governments across the country through programs like [MAIL: Municipal Action on Immigrant Integration](#).

The 2011 Congress of Cities aims to move the immigration reform agenda forward by promoting a positive relationship between local government, immigrant communities and knowledge-sharing about effective strategies for immigrant integration and naturalization.

Read all about it in [NLC’s new e-weekly](#).

All Immigration is Local

By kturner
Uncategorized



All Immigration Is Local

Receiving Communities and Their Role In Successful Immigrant Integration

Michael Jones-Correa September 2011

WWW.AMERICANPROGRESS.ORG



All Immigration Is Local
Receiving Communities and Their Role in Successful Immigrant Integration
Michael Jones-Correa, September 2011

"How do we expect immigrants to integrate successfully if they feel unwelcome or if their neighbours are not prepared to accept them?"

And how can we expect their neighbours to welcome them if no effort is made to manage the confusion, fear, and anxiety these neighbours feel about the changing nature of community life."

These questions guide a new report and toolkit from the [Center for American Progress](#). They are the result of an effort to broaden the discussion regarding immigrant integration to include receiving communities that began in December 2010 at a meeting of key advocates, practitioners, academics and officials from all levels of government, which is now known as [The Receiving Communities Initiative](#).

The *Immigration is Local* report highlights four strategies for immigrant-receiving communities:

- Encourage leadership to address the changes that take place locally and to manage them effectively
- Foster contact between immigrants and the native born
- Build partnerships between state and local governments and new residents
- Reframe the issues to counter misconceptions about immigrants

One particular area of emphasis is highlighting local projects that are working and considering way they can be replicated or scaled up. [Welcoming America](#), one of the leads of the initiative, is one such example, which we have referred to in our Good Idea, [Shelbyville's Ambassadors of Welcome](#).

- [Immigration is Local: Receiving Communities and Their Role in Successful Immigrant Integration](#)
- [The Receiving Communities Toolkit: A Guide for Engaging Mainstream America in Immigrant Integration](#) (pdf)

Webinar Video: Incubating Immigrant Entrepreneurship

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



What can the cities of Vienna and Helsinki teach us?

More cities and local authorities recognize that immigrants are a fast growing group of new entrepreneurs. City-led business agencies in Vienna ([Mingo Migrant Enterprises](#)) and Helsinki ([EnterpriseHelsinki](#)) are taking the lead in finding new entrepreneurs and being the first to ask “how can we help you?” in the language they understand. By offering a multilingual one-stop shop with business counseling services, loan advice and coaching, immigrant entrepreneurs are trained to understand their new business environments.

Our newest [webinar](#) video shares the strategies behind incubating immigrant entrepreneurial success

London: TEDx EastEnd Talks Migration

By kturner
Uncategorized

One of the latest TEDx events took place last month in [London's East End](#). Called *Society Beyond Borders*, it looked at the 'opportunities and benefits that arise from migration' and was sponsored by the [Migrants' Rights Network](#). Eighteen speakers were featured including Omid Djalili, an actor and comedian; Mihir Bose, a sports journalist and author; and Barbara Roche, Chair of the [Migration Museum Project](#).

Here is [Fair Finance's](#) Faisal Rahman speaking on the need to revolutionize personal finance when up to 12 million people in the UK borrow money outside the formal banking system. He points out that some people feel more comfortable borrowing from community members than mainstream institutions.

[TEDx EastEnd](#) took place on September 8, 2011. [The individual talks are now online.](#)

Calgary: When a Mayor Mentors

By kturner
Uncategorized

We came across this wonderful story about mentoring in a mayor's office. [Calgary's Naheed Nenshi](#) has become a sort of city leader superstar in Canada and not because he is the first Muslim mayor in the country, but for his passion for city-building.

Watch as he tells a story of a refugee-turned-construction worker and the fateful telephone call from a local community college running a mentoring initiative to place him in the mayor's office.

Video recorded at 2011 [ALLIES](#) Mentoring Conference in Calgary, Canada in the spring 2011.

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Developing a Diverse Workforce in Hamburg and Hamilton

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month meet **Tim Rees**, Manager of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, Canada.

Tim Rees: In sometimes being overwhelmed with the local challenges of addressing the integration barriers faced by immigrants, reviewing the 'Good Ideas in Integration' website is, in and of itself a "good idea!" It is always a refreshing, reassuring and stimulating source of program ideas. Seeing the innovative work being done around the world also strengthens ones sense of professional collegiality and of being part of a global network.

[The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council](#) is a community collaborative involving key sectors in this city of half a million people to create a more welcoming environment for newcomers. In these times of fiscal cutbacks, a partnership working across different sectors is more critical than ever in achieving progress.

The good idea that most recently caught my eye was "[We are Hamburg! Won't you join us?](#)"

Why? The municipality of Hamilton has just completed a work force audit. In finding that the municipal workforce is not representative of the diversity of the population it serves, the City's Human Resources Department is considering appropriate methods to address this.

Having shared the Hamburg model, I am pleased to report that the innovative way that Hamburg has approached this is now being incorporated into the City of Hamilton's strategy.

Listening to Local Leadership in Manchester: Sir Richard Leese

By kturner

[Interview](#)



As part of **Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration**, we are asking mayors and city leaders for their views on immigration, local initiatives and ideas that inspire from cities around the world.



Sir Richard Leese
Leader of the Council
Manchester City Council

Why is immigration important to your city?

Manchester has a style that is creative, innovative, vibrant and ambitious. The City developed through the energy and enterprise of migrants. Manchester was the first industrial city and grew in the 18th and 19th centuries through waves of migration.

Today, Manchester continues to welcome people from all over the world because of the contribution they can make and the opportunities we can offer. We continue to be dynamic and creative because of our diversity. This is key to our economic success.

What is Manchester's most successful immigrant integration initiative or programme to date?

Given our history, integration has been a continuous process since the industrial revolution.

One of our more recent examples, which may be of interest to other cities, was work between 2003 and 2006 to integrate Somali communities. This involved work across a highly complex range of Somali communities based on clans and an existing, mainly Afro-Caribbean, community. The work involved in co-ordinating action across a wide range of public services to support the existing community and the newly arrived Somali community. Key parts of the programme were integration through education, training, skills and, ultimately, employment; action in relation to crime and social behaviour and reducing barriers such as language.

What is next on the agenda for immigrant integration?

Manchester's economic base is now highly diversified requiring a level of skills, for example, in knowledge based industries such as life sciences, creative, cultural and media and specialist manufacturing. One of key priorities going forward is, therefore, to increase the speed in which migrants can develop high level skills.

What practice or programme would you like to bring to Manchester next (and inspired by what city)?

Identity plays an important part in the life of Mancunians. We are aware that Rotterdam has developed an [Urban Citizenship and Identity initiative](#), which explores whether the concept of integration is in the past and 'contribution' being the future. Manchester would like to learn more about this initiative to identify good practice that it can embed into local campaigns such as [I Love MCR](#).

Note: [The I Love Manchester campaign was a response to the city riots that occurred earlier in the month](#). August 26 was the official I Love MCR day.

Sir Richard Leese was born, brought up and went to school in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. After graduating from the University of Warwick, worked as a teacher in Coventry and as an exchange teacher in the USA before moving to Manchester to take up a post as a youth worker. Employed variously in youth work, community work, and education research 1979-1988. Elected to the City Council in 1984. Deputy Leader from 1990 to 1996 having previously Chaired the Education Committee (1986-90) and Finance Committee (1990-95).

Political interests include the links between economic development and social policy, developing open democracy and the community leadership role of local authorities; and the role of cities in creating a sustainable future.

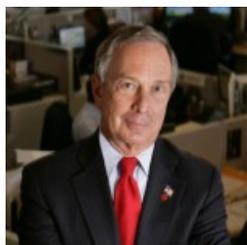
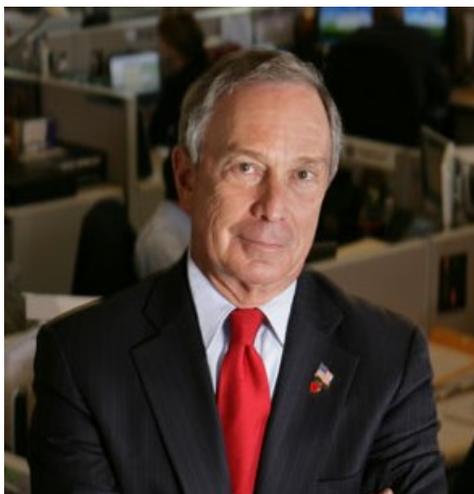
Heavily involved in regeneration activity including being on the board of the Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company. Chair of Manchester Airport Group Shareholders Committee. Deputy Leader of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and became Chair of the Regional Leaders' Board (RLB) in March 2009.

Interests outside politics include cinema, music, and sport as a spectator (principally football and cricket), a regular runner and cycling to the Town Hall most days.

It's the Economy, Stupid! Mayor Michael Bloomberg

By kturner

[Mayors on Migration, Opinion](#)



New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg delivered the keynote address at the Immigration and American Competitiveness Conference sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Partnership for a New American Economy on September 29, 2011. This is a condensed version of the speech, reprinted with permission.

We all know from our [Partnership for a New American Economy](#), which is the name of this organization that we have formed of business leaders and mayors from across the country, there is an emerging consensus between Democratic and Republican mayors and business leaders on how to tackle immigration reform. And it boils down to a saying that once again will define a presidential election: It is the economy, stupid.

As the two parties are locked in a stand-off over how to create jobs, immigration reform based on our national economic needs offers a unique opportunity, I think, to both of them. It does not require either party to walk away from its position on

taxes or spending.

Instead, the two parties could produce legislation that is consistent with their political principles, that reflects sound economics, that would put thousands of Americans back to work and that would be popular with voters back home.

And today, I'd like to talk with you about **four ideas** that I think should form the basis of that legislation. They are not a panacea – there is no such thing. But there is no doubt they would strengthen our economy, and put us on track to create the jobs that our country needs.

Align visa distribution to economic needs

Allocating only 15 percent of visas based on economics is just terrible public policy – and it really is holding our economy back. In today's global marketplace, we cannot afford to keep turning away those with skills that our country needs to grow and to succeed. It is sabotaging our own economy. **I've called it national suicide – and I think it really is.**

That's why I think we should dramatically expand the numbers of green cards available for the best of the best – the highest-skilled workers we need to join the U.S. economy permanently. These high-skill workers will not only help create thousands of jobs, they'll also give us knowledge of foreign markets that will help U.S. businesses increase their exports.

One study found that a one percent increase in immigrants working in managerial and professional jobs leads to a three percent increase in U.S. exports to their home country.

Foreign students in technical fields should be eligible to work here permanently

Foreign students account for nearly two-thirds of those who earn a computer-science or engineering Ph.D. from a U.S. institution – two-thirds. These are the individuals who make the discoveries and innovations that propel business and create jobs for Americans. And they're already here on our soil.

But when they graduate, our immigration system has no permanent path designed for them. After a brief grace period to stay and work, our laws allow most of them only cumbersome temporary visas and a long, uncertain path to a green card, limited by a tangle of restrictive rules and quotas.

Turning these students out of the country is, to put it bluntly, about the dumbest thing that we could possibly do. Other countries are bending over backwards to attract these students. The fact is: there is no such thing as too many engineers, too many scientists, or too many technological innovators. We need all of them in this country.

Stop turning away entrepreneurs

Immigrants are more than twice as likely as those born in America to start a new company – and a recent study shows that U.S. job creation in the last 30 years is entirely attributable to startup companies.

One-quarter of U.S. engineering and technology companies started during the dot-com boom had a foreign-born founder; 40 percent of all venture-backed, high-tech companies successful enough to conduct a public stock offering had an immigrant founder. And out of last year's Fortune 500, including many longstanding giants of American business, more than 40 percent were founded by immigrants or the children of immigrants.

Our immigration system has no real path for foreign entrepreneurs, even if they have a bright business idea that has already attracted investors. So these entrepreneurs are finding other countries that are smart enough to take them and their new businesses. And to double the pain, U.S. capital – capital that could have seeded economic growth here at home – disappears overseas with them.

This is just craziness – but we can stop it by offering a conditional visa to immigrants who have capital to back their business ventures. If their new company successfully creates jobs for American workers, the entrepreneur would receive a green card to stay and grow the business into the future.

America already has some of the most enterprising individuals on Earth, but entrepreneurs are like engineering Ph.D.'s and computer scientists: You just can't have enough of them, particularly when we have an enormous number of people unemployed in this country. People say, 'Why bring more immigrants into this country when you have unemployed?' Because that's the solution to the unemployment problem in this country – more jobs being created by more businesses.

Expand and streamline our existing tools for attracting talent to our country

Temporary visas like the H-1B program help fill critical gaps in our workforce, but the numbers are too few and the filing process too long and unpredictable. This leads to critical shortfalls not only in the software industry, but also in fields like engineering, electronics, pharmaceuticals, medical research, and aerospace. This is just absurd to deny American companies access to the workers they need.

Now the government doesn't know how many skilled workers are needed each year – only the market does. So let the markets work. And you can do that by eliminating the cap on H-1B visas.

Another arbitrary cap we should eliminate at the same time is the one that limits employment green-cards by country. Right now, Iceland gets the same quota as India. It just makes no sense.

Why should we care what country a skilled immigrant comes from? These quotas mean that high-skill employees from China and India can face a wait of up to ten years for a green card – and during that time, they are prohibited from getting a promotion or taking a new job. No wonder why many return home.

That's a loss not only for American companies that invest in them, but for our entire economy – because they return home to help our competitors, these other countries.

Putting the nation's future at risk

Each of the four steps that I've just outlined would help the U.S. economy and the American worker. Each would create more jobs. And if we don't take them, we not only will be undermining our economy – we are putting our nation's future at risk.

Now, with too few jobs to go around today, why should we let people from overseas compete for slots that could go to U.S. workers? I just want to repeat the real facts here.

As the data clearly show, immigrants don't take away jobs; they make jobs – and that is especially true for high-skilled immigrants. For example, one study has shown that for every H-1B position, U.S. technology companies increase their employment by five workers.

And it's not that the U.S. workforce doesn't already have many extraordinary individuals, but the global economy is changing everything. People and resources are moving more freely than ever before. Offices and factories can increasingly do the same work anywhere. And information technology is creating unprecedented cross-border opportunities.

And as a result, America no longer is the inevitable crossroads for enterprise and innovation. Countries from Asia to South America now beckon with opportunity. So the United States simply has to compete like never before for talent. That's a competition we can win if we work at it – and we must win if we are going to remain the world's strongest economy, and a beacon of hope for people around the world.

America has always been that beacon. Exactly one month from today, New York City and the entire country will mark the 125th anniversary of America's greatest monument, the Statue of Liberty. Since 1886, Lady Liberty's torch has brought light to the darkest corners of the earth, beckoning to our shores all those 'yearning to breathe free.'

Yet it is not Lady Liberty's torch or her crown or her broken chains that have inspired so much awe: it is her location. The power of her symbol lies in the reality of New York City as a gateway – a golden door – to the land of opportunity that is the United States of America. That reality is our history. But it also must be our future.

We desperately need immigrants who want to come here to work, who have the skills our companies need to succeed. The American dream cannot survive if we keep telling the dreamers to go elsewhere.

Today, we may have turned away the next Albert Einstein or Sergey Brin. Tomorrow, we may turn away the next Levi Strauss or Oscar de la Renta.

And we certainly will be turning away many of the people who – like my ancestors and no doubt many of yours – came to this country with almost nothing, except one thing: A desire to work – and work and work and work – to build a better life for themselves and their families.

To read the complete speech, click [here](#).

Michael R. Bloomberg was elected the 108th [Mayor of the City of New York](#) in 2001. He began his career in 1966 at Salomon Brothers, and after being let go in 1981, he began Bloomberg LP, a start-up financial news and information company that now has more than 11,000 employees around the world. As Mayor, Bloomberg has cut crime 35 percent, revitalized the waterfront, implemented ambitious public health strategies, including the successful ban on smoking in restaurants and bars, and expanded support for arts and culture. His education reforms have driven graduation rates up by 40 percent since 2005.

The Mayor's economic policies have helped New York City avoid the level of job losses that many other cities experienced. Since October 2009, the nation has gained back only one out of every four jobs that were lost in the national recession. Meanwhile, New York City has gained back nearly all of its lost jobs. Mayor Bloomberg attended Johns Hopkins University and Harvard Business School, and is the father of two daughters, Emma and Georgina.

Antwerp: At Home in Europe

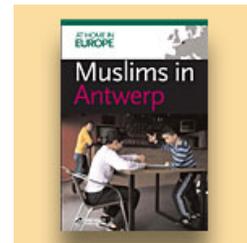
By kturner
September 15, 2011
Uncategorized

I feel very much at home in Antwerp, but there are moments when I don't. For example, the headscarf—people are talking about it more and more and think of you negatively when they see you wearing it. —Open Society Foundations questionnaire respondent, Antwerp

The newest report from Open Society Foundations' [At Home In Europe](#) project looks at the Muslim community in the City of Antwerp. [Muslims in Antwerp](#) confirms the deep sense of belonging to the city among Muslim residents and the city's strong commitment to innovative programs that promote diversity and inclusion. It also reveals, however, that discrimination continues to be a serious barrier to full and equal participation for Antwerp's Muslim and minority communities. In particular, the implementation of supposedly "neutral" city policies (such as the ban on headscarves for city personnel in public functions, which particularly impacts women and girls) often undercuts the city's commitment to diversity and social inclusion, and works to further exclude Muslims and minority groups.

Muslims in Antwerp is the seventh in the Muslims in EU Cities series produced by the Open Society Foundations' At Home in Europe project. It is the result of research that examines the level and nature of integration of Muslims in 11 cities across Europe (Antwerp, Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Leicester, London, Marseille, Paris, Rotterdam, and Stockholm).

The report and a fact sheet based on the report's findings are available from the [At Home in Europe website](#). All publications are available in English, and the full report and fact sheet will soon be distributed in Flemish and French.



Incubating Change

By Evelyn
September 14, 2011
Uncategorized

Innovation is rarely the mythical accident hatched on the chemistry bench or in the culture lab. It's more likely the product of a search for solutions, or an insightful response to change. This month we bring you stories that invite you to think about how innovation is changing our world.

[Ian Goldin](#) makes the case for the 'exceptional people' at the heart of global change. From Madrid, [Carmen Garcia de Andres of the Fundacion Tomillo](#) describes how a [participatory budgeting](#) model taps the entrepreneurial spirit of street youth. [Immigrant entrepreneurs and business incubation](#) is an urban affair for local governments in Helsinki and Vienna (upcoming webinar).

For [Rob Berkeley](#) at the Runnymede Trust, commenting on the recent London riots, incubating change also means taking time for reflection.

The best ideas are borrowed and re-invented by context and application. Cities of Migration travels to Seattle next month to share ten outstanding integration practices with the US National Immigrant Integration Conference. We hope you can join us at [NIIC2011 for our Marketplace of Good Ideas](#) and take a fresh perspective home with you.

Post- conference update!

Watch our latest video that recounts our October travels to the 4th annual National Immigrant Integration Conference in Seattle. It's a live showcase of ten of the international practices that we have profiled at Cities of Migration:

Read the Good Ideas (or view the entire [Marketplace workbook – pdf](#)).

Raising the Curtain on Cultural Diversity: Integrating Inclusion into the Arts

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Diversity is the norm for arts organizations who are bringing new creative voices to the city like [Diaspora Dialogues](#) (Toronto) and [People in Your Neighbourhood](#) (Auckland). In our last [webinar](#), we learned how their success is rooted in smart community engagement strategies. From getting multilingual artists to translate posters to developing new relationships with ethnic media, presenter Gareth Farry tells us “community engagement involves ongoing communication and a desire to empower and provide opportunity.” At Diaspora Dialogues, creative mentorship for culturally diverse artists builds professional networks, while strategic partnerships with cultural institutions opens up resources and new places to showcase newcomer artists.

[Watch the webinar video and find related resources!](#)

Dublin: One City One People Campaign

By kturner
Uncategorized

Dublin City Council's Office for Integration (OFI) reports that it will lead this key initiative for the city again in the autumn of 2011 focused on city's immigrant population to promote inclusion, integration and to combat racism and discrimination. [The One City One People Campaign](#) will use a variety of mediums to promote the message that Dublin is an open city, a city which respects and embraces difference, is accessible, safe and equal and does not accept racism and discrimination.

Related Good Ideas:

- [Count Us In! \(Dublin\)](#)
- [Did You Know You Can Vote? Cities and Democracy at Work \(Dubin\)](#)
- [Fighting Fiction with Facts: the BCN Anti-Rumour Campaign \(Barcelona\)](#)

Putting citizenship into practice: Carmen Garcia de Andrés, Fundación Tomillo

By kturner

[Interview, Interviews](#)



An interview with Carmen Garcia de Andrés, General Director of the Fundación Tomillo, Madrid.

Fundación Tomillo launched the street youth program, Tiempo Joven, in 2003. What was happening in Madrid at the time to trigger so much interest in youth culture?

[Tiempo Joven, Inmigración y Ciudadanía](#) was created in 2003 in response to different social organizations working in the Orcasur neighbourhood of Madrid (government agencies, private bodies, schools and colleges and social entities) and an increase in the number of immigrants in our community. 44.81% of all immigrants on the census in Spain are found in three provinces, Madrid, Alicante and Barcelona.

Numerous studies warned that some neighbourhoods to the south of Madrid were at risk of becoming immigrant 'ghettos'. In the Orcasur neighbourhood this situation was exacerbated because of the number of residents who earned low incomes had lower levels of education. Orcasur has one of highest rates of unemployment in the city of Madrid.

Our most pressing concern at the time was to stop culture [ethnicity] and country of birth from becoming new forms of exclusion. We were concerned about how young people were banding together based on their backgrounds in school playgrounds and in neighbourhood squares and parks. This included young immigrants who were asserting themselves around negative aspects of their culture as well as "local" youngsters banding together around xenophobic and racist-type ideologies.

Generally speaking, these young people feel excluded and have little faith in a society that does not offer them opportunities to take part. Our approach at [Tiempo Joven Inmigración y Ciudadanía](#) was to teach young people how to take part. How is this done? By actively engaging these young people by creating spaces for meeting and coexistence, where they can share interests –Break dancing, percussion, dance, theatre, graphic arts, blogs and social networking pages — and develop friendships and learn to see their differences as assets that enrich society. By taking part, these young people become committed to integrating their new neighbours. They also learn to stand up for freedom of choice and to protect their own identities while endeavouring to understand each other.

The result is that these once passive young people who were at risk of social exclusion become active people over time. Their example is helping transform their neighbourhoods.

The activities in the programme include rap music, break-dance, theatre and radio. Why the performing arts?

One of the main problems facing young people these days is a serious lack of motivation and a feeling of impotence caused by frustration about their expectations and their reason for existing. This can result in a search for new experiences, often not channeled appropriately.

Our programme focuses on developing artistic expression as the ideal setting in which these youngsters can develop their potential and skills because it offers endless possibilities for working on concepts such as responsibility, taking on roles, decision making, autonomy, participation, respect and co-existence, all of which are essential to their training and will have a positive impact on their personal, individual and community development.

The OECD LEED programme looked for solutions to the high levels of youth unemployment last year, including entrepreneurial spirit strategies. How have your programmes prepared the young people of Madrid for the difficult job market?

Our programmes, like the LEED programme, focus on training to develop skills and competencies among young people that will give access to the job market. We also promote employment and self employment as tools for integration.

We operate both social and work integration programs for young people and adults. We design personalised itineraries that cover technical training (intermediate level Professional Qualification and Vocational training) as well as occupational training aimed at more specific jobs. For the last ten years, in partnership with the business sector and with private funding, we have been developing specialist training programmes for these groups which allow them to access better quality jobs. For example, highly specialised IT training with Microsoft and the new "Job Bridge" programme with Johnson & Johnson, both aim to improve young people's skills within a specialty that enhances their chances in the job market.

The objective is to show young people that they can meet the challenges ahead. Many of the adolescents who come to our classrooms have not finished their secondary school or baccalaureate studies, so this means we are giving them a new opportunity, one that requires them to take responsibility. Compare this to standard educational models focused on curriculum learning. This is a cross-cutting aspect of our work at the Fundación Tomillo and why we are also part of the European Network of Second Chance Schools.

Our Community Development programs help young people enjoy healthy leisure activities while learning about social entrepreneurship, participating actively in improving the conditions of their environment and interacting with other groups (the elderly, unemployed, etc.). This is another way of developing competencies that improve employability and entrepreneurial skills at the same time.

Lastly, as with the LEED programme, we develop strategies that can be replicated and transfer this knowledge to other social contexts, or to increase the impact of the programs in a more local context. To do this we have an Advice area and an Economic Studies Centre whose mission is to build bridges between "action" and "social research." Standardized approaches will help governments, non-profit organisations and business take better action on local issues, ease decision making and result in more effective economic and social policies.

I would like to know more about the Young Entrepreneurs Council.

The Young Social Entrepreneurs Council – neighbourhood assembly – is a powerful structure for democratic youth participation that has been created so neighbourhood youth can organise themselves, analyse projects and talk about their most pressing problems. Starting up their own initiatives helps then resolves conflicts.

The young people design the community activities themselves, manage the resources, request the spaces and take part directly in the forums and alliances created around these events. This has meant adapting our facilitation style to make room for young people in the networks and neighbourhood platforms [associations] so they can speak with their own voice and not through the Foundation.

We have invested in specific training in participation and entrepreneurship that has enabled joint responsibility for the project. For the last three years, the young people who are part of the project have been trained as community facilitators. This allows many of them to stay active in the project as volunteers, managing almost autonomous lines of activity such as the theatre workshop created three years ago, or a youth association that presents its own initiatives.

Making music, being an artist also requires a good business sense. What about the participatory budgets used by the Foundation with the programme participants?

The participatory budgets are more than just a management instrument. They guide and distribute programme resources but they also contribute to project objectives by putting citizenship into practice. Participatory budgeting uses the mechanisms of direct and representative democracy to generate shared commitments and responsibilities among young people. This dynamic makes them aware of the importance of good management to the sustainability and success of their projects. It also contributes to the development of competencies of youth entrepreneurship, as set down in the EU's catalogue of basic competencies.

Your work has been recognised by private benefactors, all levels of government (from local to national) in Spain, and internationally by UN Habitat. What is the key to Tiempo Joven's success?

On the one hand, the support we have received from the Orcasur citizen platform [neighbourhood association]. As a recognized community development project, Tiempo Joven benefits from the coordinated action of all the entities involved in the development of the neighbourhood and is guaranteed greater publicity and impact in the zone.

On the other, we have created a culture of effective action through the participation by young people in the neighbourhood. By bringing together groups of young entrepreneurs and then developing their capacity to operate in formal organizational structures, we have given these young people the autonomy, initiative and leading role required for success. These young people are their own best advertising! and highly motivating role models for their peers.

Related Good Idea:

Madrid, Spain: [Timing, Tempo and Beat: Youth Leading Youth](#)

Carmen García de Andrés, General Director of Fundación Tomillo, Madrid, and member of the Board since 2008, has a degree in Economics and EE.. Formerly PwC partner and director of the Department of legal and tax advice for businesses. Member of the Board of the AEF (Spanish Association of Foundations).

The Fundación Tomillo works for the development of the individual and the social integration of vulnerable individuals and groups. The 473 member operational foundation offers programs and funding across a wide field, including education, employment vocational training initiatives, and has a special focus on children, young adults and family and older people. Since 50% of Tomillo's clients have an immigrant background, integration and intercultural strategies are applied horizontally across all its service and program area.

More information at: www.tomillo.org

Cities of Migration takes the 'Marketplace of Good Ideas' to Seattle!

By Evelyn
September 13, 2011
Uncategorized



October 25, 2011 – The Maytree Foundation and the J. M. Kaplan Fund are proud to host the [Cities of Migration Marketplace of Good Ideas](#) at the [National Immigrant Integration Conference](#) (NIIC) in Seattle this year. Both foundations, one located in Canada and the other in the United States, recognize the importance of effective immigrant integration work in creating cohesive, vibrant and dynamic communities across the globe.

As its name suggests, Cities of Migration shares stories from cities – from old capitals and rustbelt cities to new gateways and emerging urban regions – that are reinventing themselves for the 21st century, animated by the energy and opportunity that immigration provides. Accordingly, the Marketplace of Good Ideas brings you ten immigrant integration success stories from ten great cities: five are winners of the [E Pluribus Unum Award winners](#), in the United States and five more are outstanding international practices from Toronto, London, Barcelona, Kerpen, and Auckland. Each of these innovative practices has harnessed the power of good ideas to develop winning strategies and practical solutions to the challenges facing our immigrant-receiving cities. All of them are ready to be adapted and transferred to new cities and new audiences across our urban neighbourhoods, workplaces and public spaces.

The successes we choose to share are important for a simple and compelling reason. When integration is done well, it fuels economic growth, spurs innovation and talent renewal, creates new knowledge, and promotes an open, richer and more inclusive social fabric. New forms of social, economic, cultural and political capital are creating benefits for thriving urban communities globally.

This year our conference hosts invite us all to widen the field, to bring in new allies and partners and take the conversation about immigrant integration on the road. It is in this spirit that we join you here in Seattle for a dynamic tour of outstanding immigrant integration practices. We urge you to start a conversation, ask questions, discover new colleagues, and take home some fresh ideas and approaches.

Read about Good Ideas in the Marketplace:

- [Integration Workshops for Inclusive Cities](#) Kerpen, Germany. Presenter: Claudia Walther, Integration and Communities Program Manager, Bertelsmann Stiftung
- [From Alpha to Omega: Innovating in the Workplace](#) Auckland, New Zealand. Presenter: Pauline Winter, Chairperson, Opportunities for Migrant Employment In Greater Auckland (OMEGA)
- [Changing the Face of Leadership: DiverseCity onBoard](#) Toronto, Canada. Presenter: Cathy Winter, Manager, Diversity OnBoard, Maytree Foundation
- [Banking on Affordable Credit](#) London, United Kingdom. Presenter: Stephanie Mestrallet, Head of Business, Fair Finance
- [Reaching for the Stars: VIPs go to School](#) Barcelona, Spain. Presenter: Michaela Hertel, Director, Fundacion Bertelsmann
- [Financing Immigrant Futures: The Latino Community Credit Union](#) Durham, United States ([E Pluribus Unum Award winner](#)) Presenter: Luis Pastor, Chief Executive Officer, The Latino Community Credit Union
- [Interviewing the Up and Coming at Upwardly Global](#) Chicago, USA ([E Pluribus Unum Award winner](#)), Nikki Cicerani, Executive Director, Upwardly Global
- [Welcome Back to a Healthier Community](#) San Francisco, United States ([E Pluribus Unum Award winner](#)) Presenter: José Ramón Fernández-Peña, Director, and Kris Mason, The Welcome Back Initiative
- [Language-Wise in the Global Classroom](#) New York City, USA ([E Pluribus Unum Award winner](#)) Presenter: Claire Sylvan, Executive Director, Internationals Network for Public Schools
- [Shelbyville's Ambassadors of Welcome](#) Nashville, United States ([E Pluribus Unum Award winner](#)) Presenter: Stephen Fotopulos, Executive Director, Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition

More information:

Read all the Good Ideas profiles in the [Marketplace of Good Ideas Workbook](#)

Conference website: [National Immigrant Integration Conference](#) (NIIC)

About Cities of Migration: www.citiesofmigration.ca

London: Talking Riot

By kturner
September 14, 2011
[Opinion](#)



In the midst of last month's London riots, Rob Berkeley, the director of our partner [Runnymede Trust](#), wrote a commentary where he stated:

"Runnymede warned of the impact of inequalities on our society. We highlighted the alienation and hopelessness among large swathes of young people facing discrimination, without prospects of employment, low levels of skills, and poor relations with the police.

But we never supposed that the despair was as widespread as it now appears to be or even that so many people simply do not care enough about the neighbourhoods and spaces where they live or the moral consequences of their actions to desist from destroying them.

We have to admit that this is a new phenomenon about which we know very little. Speculation is not helping."

The full commentary, [Speculation can wait: The priority is to stop the rioting](#), was published at Left Foot Forward, a political blog in the UK for progressives.

- Rob Berkeley also wrote a post for the Runnymede blog, [Tottenham – a tragedy we should have seen coming?](#)

Rethinking Migration: Ian Goldin

By kturner
[Opinion](#)



Ian Goldin is the Director of the Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford, and professorial fellow at Balliol College, Oxford. He has served as vice president of the World Bank and advisor to President Nelson Mandela. His many books include *Globalization for Development*.

We live in a dynamic age of global integration, where the reconnection and mixture of the world's people is challenging dominant norms and practices in many societies. Disintegration and integration are simultaneous and interwoven. Cultural codes adapt. New economies emerge. Innovation prospers. Social institutions struggle to adapt.

To many, the challenges associated with migration are characteristic of our age of postmodernism, multiculturalism, and aspiring cosmopolitanism. Some are nostalgic for an illusory past when people had more in common. Outsiders have always encountered opposition from their adoptive societies. Nevertheless, the direction of history points to the persistent expansion in the boundaries of community. Our cultural and political frontiers have gradually receded.

In the current period, "migration" is defined as cross-border movement, and it has come to be seen as something to be managed—a cost to be minimized rather than an opportunity to be embraced. My view is that it is a key driver of human and economic development and that our future will be strongly influenced by policies regarding migration. How governments craft and coordinate migration policy will determine

Photo credit: Robert Judges

whether our collective future is defined by a more open and cosmopolitan global society or one that is unequal, partitioned, and less prosperous. Public debates about migration are limited by a lack of perspective of its historical role, contemporary impacts, and future prospects.

Let's shift discussion on international mobility away from narrow national-level immigration debates, toward a more global view of migration. The terms "immigration" and "immigrant" can obscure more than they reveal, because they imply that people move once, permanently—from outside the country to inside—when migration for the most part is temporary, repeated, or circular. This perspective also ignores the dynamism of human movement: countries that accept large numbers of migrants also typically send similarly large numbers across their borders. Migrants are uncommon people, and they often move several times in search of opportunity and safety. Viewing cross-border movement simply in terms of immigration limits a broader appreciation of how networks and economies function in an increasingly integrated world.

I question the received wisdom that an increase in the flow of international migrants is undesirable. The rapidly growing field of multidisciplinary scholarship on the dynamics, flows, and impacts of migration makes the case that current ad hoc regulations are poorly suited for a world economy that thrives on openness, diversity, innovation, and exchange.

Five Principles

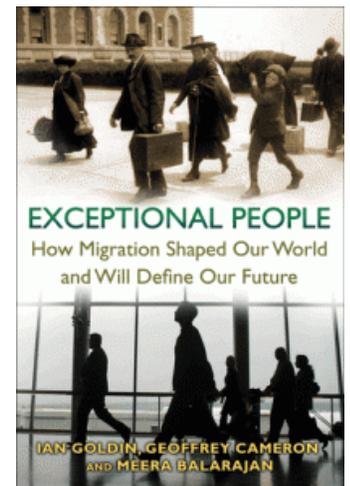
We propose five key principles that should guide engagement with migrants and migration by governments and international organizations:

1. Extend transnational rights.
2. Promote social and economic advancement for migrants.
3. Widen the umbrella of legal migration.
4. Combat xenophobia and migrant abuse.
5. Improve data collection.

A global migration agenda need not be advanced only by official agencies. It should also include businesses, labor unions, diaspora groups, religious communities, and civil society groups. These objectives reiterate recommendations made elsewhere, and there is particular resonance with some of the proposals made by the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM). Together, they touch on policy areas that require reform in the medium term if the ideal of freer movement will be achievable and sustainable in the long term.

Excerpted from *EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE* by Ian Goldin, Geoffrey Cameron, and Meera Balarajan. Copyright © 2011 by Princeton University Press. Reprinted by permission.

Extra! Ian Goldin discusses the dangers of globalization and technological advances that are often dismissed in this TEDTalk below.



URBACT Cities: Stepping Up

By Evelyn
July 27, 2011
Uncategorized



In URBACT's summer newsletter, Jean-Loup Drubigny, Secretariat Head, writes:

“In a number of European countries, summer holidays began in a context of financial austerity. By choice or by imposition, the majority of local authorities are now also tightening the belt. And this is occurring, no matter the national economic situation, in countries where the economy is running at full steam and where unemployment has never been lower just as it is in those where the economy is stagnating and unemployment exploding....”

“The major financial battles leave little room for cities, even though they are major players in innovation, growth and the fight against the effects of climate change. And they play a major role in social integration.... However, from my small perspective—that of URBACT partner cities— I can bear witness to the impressive results stemming from a synergy among local players and various levels of government, including in cities that economists have declared as definitively “out of the market”...

[Read about URBACT projects](#)

Source: Editorial of the URBACT Newsletter, no. 18 (July 2011).

La Convivencia

By Evelyn
July 26, 2011
Uncategorized

The Spanish concept of *La Convivencia*, or Living Together, emphasizes the shared experience of living and working in today's urban societies. This was the lived experience of Norwegian youth before the horror on Utøyo Island.

But Norway also inspires. As Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg said, "We will never give up our values. Our response is more democracy, more openness, and more humanity."

We take this to heart as we announce our upcoming season. This Fall Cities of Migration hits the road with a lens on city leadership and how local authorities contribute to inclusive, open cities. From procurement and zoning policies to city services, look out for new ideas and a chance to submit your city success story to the mix.

In October you'll find us in Seattle at the [4th US National Immigrant Integration Conference](#) with an international Marketplace of Good Ideas.

Webinar Video: Opening Doors: Innovative Strategies for Immigrant Student Success

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



In our last webinar poll, our participants told us that parental support and intercultural curriculum education were key priorities to immigrant student success.

Making sure that families are put at the centre of education has been a successful strategy behind Frankfurt's Diesterweg Scholarship, a program aimed at immigrant families. While from Malmo, we learn that a bilingual education system, which allows immigrant students to learn in their mother tongue and in the language of their adoptive country, creates a unique intercultural experience and increases dialogue between teachers and parents. Both Good Ideas require leadership from education administrators and policy-makers, so that no child is left behind.

[Learn more => watch the webinar video and find related resources!](#)

Can Immigrants Save Detroit?

By kturner
Uncategorized

It's a provocative question, but one that was asked at the recent [Immigration and Michigan's Future conference](#). Co-sponsored by [New Media Michigan](#) and [Global Detroit](#), its aim was to "make the case for a diverse, international agenda for metro Detroit and Michigan."

Detroit, aka Motor City, is recognized to be "in crisis" with its population dropping by 25% in this last decade, from 951,000 in 2000 to 713,700 in 2010. In 1950, the population was 1.8 million.

One unusual speaker was [New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg](#) (via video link) who re-iterated his call that America's policy on immigration was 'national suicide.' In May, he pitched a controversial idea to increase immigration with the added caveat that new arrivals would have to live in Detroit to help improve its economic situation. While Detroit's mayor, Alan Bing, distanced himself from the idea, stating the city had too high unemployment for such a proposal, other city leaders found it worthy of discussion.

Other speakers included [Michigan Governor Rick Snyder](#) whose [Global Michigan initiative](#) (launched in January 2011) aims to attract highly educated immigrants; [Steve Tobocman](#), [Director of both Global Detroit and Global Michigan](#) as well as city councillors and foundation representatives.

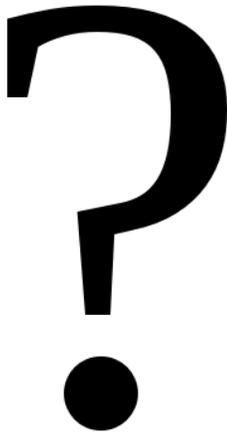
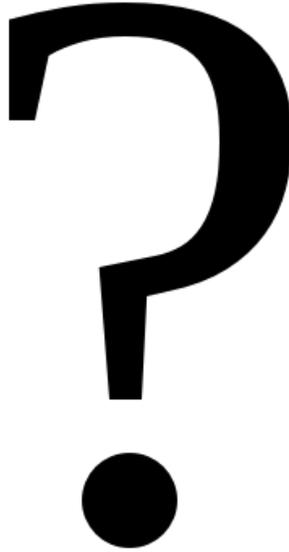
Global Detroit is part of the [New Economy Initiative for Southeast Michigan](#) which was started by ten foundations who contributed \$100 million to "fund and spur efforts to shift Southeast Michigan to an innovation-based economy." The Global Detroit Report was released in May 2010 and is [available here](#).

Watch the Immigrants Save Detroit session recorded on July 18, 2011 at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Also, take a look at the [Strong Cities, Strong Communities \(SC2\) pilot program](#) launched in July. It aims to 'spark economic growth by extending federal resources.' Six US cities were chosen including Detroit.

Learning Exchange: What's Next? You tell us!

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



The Learning Exchange takes a break before launching a new programming season in September. Thank you to everyone who joined us online, asked questions, found the chat box or connected post-event for a private screening. And a special thanks to the incredible presenters who shared their valuable time and expertise with us.

We'll be back in September with a new program calendar, and a special focus on how local authorities contribute to successful immigrant integration .

Please tell us what webinar topics interest you! Pick your top themes using this 1 minute survey [>>Go to survey!](#)

This year, over 800 registrants joined us to explore these topics:

- [Raising the Curtain on Cultural Diversity: Integration Inclusion into the Arts \(Arts & Culture\)](#)
- [Opening Doors: Immigrant Student Success \(Education\)](#)
- [Listen up! Media Strategies for Diverse Cities \(Media diversity\)](#)
- [Community Policing: Finding Common Ground with Immigrant Communities \(Community Policing\)](#)
- [Healthy Communities: Immigrant Access to Health Care \(Health\)](#)
- [Ballot Box to Podium: Mobilizing the Immigrant Vote and New Leadership \(Political Participation\)](#)
- Missed an event? Browse our [past video webinars](#).

What's next? To help us develop our programming calendar, we want to know which topics interest you! Thank you for completing our survey!

[>>Go to survey!](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Community-Building from Duisburg to Melbourne

By kturner
September 14, 2011
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month meet **Catherine Rinaudo**, Manager of Community Cultural Development from the city of Whittlesea (Melbourne), Australia.

The department promotes the importance of culture with a focus on process to identify, reflect, strengthen and support cultural values, capacity and the identity of the city's diverse communities.

The Good Idea that really caught my eye? [The Miracle of Marxloh: Bringing A Community Together Around A New Mosque](#) from Duisburg, Germany

Why? We have a number of inter-faith groups that are very effective in promoting understanding across faiths and across cultures. They visit each-others places of worship, learn about different faiths and practices and have developed creative projects that use symbols and communicate values and shared experiences. Because of the work of our inter-faith groups

I was interested in the case study presented on the building of the mosque in Germany. It was a good story that illustrated how the different faiths worked together on the premise that it is one city and all the different religions exist within the city.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I shared this idea with my colleagues who work very closely with many diverse communities and we can see the benefits of sharing knowledge and of inter-cultural exchange.

[Visit Good Idea!](#)

Barcelona: A New Immigration Social Network

By kturner
July 22, 2011
Uncategorized



Anna Terrón and Michaela Hertel

At the beginning of July in Barcelona, the [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) presented the social network 'Comunicación y Diversidad' (Communication and Diversity) aimed at journalists, communicators and institutions specializing in immigration. The aim is to create a meeting point to share experiences and to improve the media's approach to immigrants and the information provided.

The Secretary of State for Immigration and Emigration Anna Terrón opened the event, saying that the vocabulary used to talk about immigration "is created by everyone, including institutions, citizens and the media, which have an essential role. Our shared objective should be to understand how we can exchange data, news and views to build a real discourse on immigration, a discourse that is neither black nor white, but which reflects a situation with a thousand facets."

The presentation featured a discussion between journalists Francesc Triola, Managing Director of [COMRàdio](#); Esther Fernández, Social Responsibility Manager at TV3; María Jesús Cañizares, Manager of ABC in Catalonia and Desirée Ndjambo, a news anchor for TVE1. Both the members of the panel and the audience appealed for reflection and responsibility and for the media and political institutions to reject stereotypes, to be as objective as possible and to ensure that reporting facts takes precedence over sensationalism.

The social network launched by the Fundación Bertelsmann, an innovative tool for managing immigration with 2.0 web potential, is intended to encourage the exchange of specialised content on the subject of diversity, such as reports, links and studies; analyze good and bad communication practices in immigration matters and to foster debate through a virtual forum, among other activities.

Any journalist receiving an invitation from the Fundación or from another participant can [access the portal](#). The aim is to involve all the individuals, associations and institutions connected with immigrants so that we can increase the flow of information on their situation and the problems they face, thus helping new citizens to integrate.

This initiative is part of the Cities of Migration project, an international scheme run jointly by the Fundación Bertelsmann and the [Maytree Foundation](#). In Spain it works with the media to propose a common approach to news coverage of diversity and integration. The project involves events such as [the roundtable held in Barcelona in March, at which journalists from all parts of Spain discussed media handling of diversity issues](#).

Article submitted by Monique Dissartz, Fundación Bertelsmann.

Related Good Idea:

- [Barcelona: COMRàdio Syndication model delivers the village square](#)
- [Webinar: Listen up! Media Strategies for Diverse Cities](#)

Article In Spanish

LA FUNDACIÓN BERTELSMANN PONE EN MARCHA UNA RED SOCIAL PARA MEJORAR LA INFORMACIÓN SOBRE INMIGRACIÓN

A principios de julio, en Barcelona, [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) presentó la red social 'Comunicación y Diversidad' dirigida a periodistas, comunicadores e instituciones especializados en inmigración. El objetivo es crear un punto de encuentro para intercambiar experiencias y mejorar la información y el



Speakers (María Jesús Cañizares, Desirée Ndjambo, Francesc Triola and Esther Fernández)



enfoque que se ofrece en los medios sobre este colectivo. El acto ha sido inaugurado por Anna Terrón, secretaria de Estado de Inmigración y Emigración, quien ha afirmado que el vocabulario que se usa para hacer referencia a la inmigración, “lo creamos entre todos, desde las instituciones, pasando por los ciudadanos, hasta los medios de comunicación, que ejercen un papel fundamental. El objetivo que deberíamos proponernos entre todos es conseguir ver cómo intercambiamos datos, noticias, y visiones que nos puedan servir para construir un discurso real sobre la inmigración. Un discurso que no es blanco o negro, sino que refleja una realidad que tiene mil caras”.

La presentación ha acogido un debate entre los periodistas Francesc Triola, director general de COMRàdio; Esther Fernández, directora de Responsabilidad Social de TV3; María Jesús Cañizares, directora de ABC en Catalunya, y Desirée Ndjambo, presentadora de uno de los telediarios de TVE1. En la mesa se ha establecido un diálogo en el que participantes y público han hecho un llamamiento a la reflexión y a la responsabilidad de los medios y las instituciones

políticas para dejar de lado estereotipos, y que de este modo se busque la máxima objetividad posible y se trate de impedir que la inmediatez “pase por encima de la veracidad de los hechos”.

La red social que ha lanzado la Fundación Bertelsmann, una herramienta novedosa en gestión de la inmigración y con el potencial de la web 2.0, pretende fomentar el intercambio de contenidos especializados en diversidad, como informes, enlaces y estudios; analizar las buenas y malas prácticas en comunicación sobre temas de inmigración y fomentar el debate a través de un foro virtual, entre otros.

A la red, <http://comunicacionydiversidad.ning.com>, puede acceder cualquier periodista que reciba una invitación, ya sea por parte de la Fundación o por parte de otro usuario que participe en la misma. De este modo, se pretende integrar a todas aquellas personas, asociaciones e instituciones que estén vinculadas con la realidad de los inmigrantes, de forma que aumente el caudal de información sobre la situación y los problemas que vive este colectivo, favoreciendo la integración de los nuevos ciudadanos.

Esta iniciativa se enmarca en el proyecto “Cities of Migration” una colaboración internacional de la Fundación Bertelsmann con la Maytree Foundation, y que en España trabaja con los medios de comunicación para proponerles una reflexión conjunta sobre la cobertura informativa de la diversidad y la integración. Este proyecto se desarrolla a través de acciones como la Mesa de Reflexión con periodistas de medios de toda España que tuvo lugar el pasado mes de marzo en Madrid, sobre el tratamiento que ofrecen los medios en temas relacionados con la diversidad.

Related Good Idea:

- [Barcelona: COMRàdio Syndication model delivers the village square](#)
- [Webinar: Listen up! Media Strategies for Diverse Cities](#)

Dear Sir Lawrence Hill, I Plan to Burn Your Book

By kturner

[Interview](#), [Interviews](#)



Cities of Migration asked author **Lawrence Hill** to comment on the threat in the Netherlands to burn his internationally-acclaimed novel, *The Book of Negroes* (also published in the USA as *Someone Knows My Name*).



Photo Credit: Lisa Sakulensky

A man emailed me last week to say that he will bring his followers to a public park in Amsterdam on June 22 and burn *Het Negerboek*, which is the new Dutch edition of my novel *The Book of Negroes*.

Roy Groenberg, a Dutch man of Surinamese descent who called himself “Chairman, Foundation to Honour and Restore Victims of Slavery”, wrote:

“We, descendants of enslaved in the former Dutch colony Suriname, want to let you know that we do not accept a book with the title ‘*The Book of Negroes*.’ We struggle for a long time to let the word ‘nigger’ disappear from the Dutch language and now you set up your ‘Book of Negroes’! A real shame! That’s why we make the decision to burn this book on the 22nd of June 2011. Maybe you do not know, but June is the month before the 1st of July, the day that we remember the abolition from the Dutch, who put our ancestors in slavery.”

Burning books is designed to intimidate people. It underestimates the intelligence of readers, stifles dialogue and insults those who cherish the freedom to read and write. The leaders of the Spanish Inquisition burned books. Nazis burned books.

My novel has appeared in various translations but this is the first time it will be burned. In most English speaking countries it carries the original, Canadian title but in the USA, Australia and New Zealand it is known as [Someone Knows My Name](#). In Quebec it was published as *Aminata*. The Norwegian title derives from the American. I am not yet sure what the Turkish, Arabic, Hebrew or Portuguese editions will be called. With Canadian film maker Clement Virgo, I have recently co-written the screenplay for the film adaptation of the novel, but I have no idea what the movie will be called when it comes out.

Mr. Groenberg wants to eradicate racially offensive language in The Netherlands. He led an effort to get the Dutch to stop using the term “NegerZoenen” (which translates loosely as “Negro kisses”) used to describe a popular chocolate treat. Mr. Groenberg and his followers – I hope there will not be too many applauding, when he burns my book next to a monument to slavery and freedom in a beautiful park in Amsterdam – are also disturbed by the Dutch participation in the slave trade.

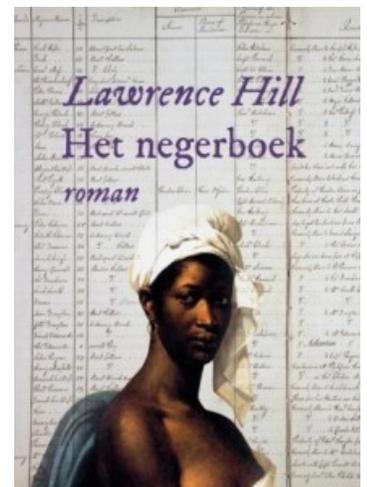
During a publicity tour in Europe last month, I was welcomed and fed by the members of a group of Dutch people of Surinamese origin who invited me to talk about my novel and its history. They reminded me that Holland did not abolish slavery in its colonies until 1863 – the same year, coincidentally, of Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. On the same tour, I visited the Middelburg Zeeland Archives to inspect the original records of Dutch slave ships. The Middelburg Commercial Company alone sold 270,000 Africans into slavery in Suriname in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Netherlands, like Canada, has its own history of slavery and Mr. Groenberg and his followers have a right to their arguments.

Racial terminology will always fail, because it is absurd to try to define a person by race. In North America we have witnessed a kaleidoscopic evolution of racial terminology over the last 50 years. When my own father, Daniel Hill, was appointed a chair of the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1973, *the Globe and Mail* ran a headline saying “Commission appoints Negro chair”. He was born in 1923 and proudly called himself a Negro for most of his life, but you can be sure that he would not be using the term today, if he were alive. And our own grandchildren are sure to laugh at the terms currently in use, such as Black and African Canadian. When they are running the country, they’ll bring their own terms into play. I like to imagine what people will be saying, instead of “Negro”, “Black” or “African-Canadian”, in fifty years.

I tell my own children that no single word is entirely out of bounds. One must simply know the heft of each word, and use it appropriately. If that means employing discretion around archaic or racist terms, so be it. I don’t use “Negro” in day to day language. To this day, I still cringe at the sound of “Nigger” or “Nigga” in hip hop lyrics. But there is sometimes room to use painful language to reclaim our own history.

Black people have been in this country for more than 400 years. The first massive wave of Black migration into Canada took place in 1783, when 3,000 Black Loyalists who had served the British on the losing side of the American Revolutionary War had their names entered into the British naval document known as “The Book of Negroes” and were transported by ship to Nova Scotia. They came to Canada having been promised freedom, autonomy, land



and provisions. Many met with slavery, segregation, land shortages and an anti-black race riot in Shelburne, Nova Scotia. Such was their hardship that ten years later, 1,200 of them accepted a voluntary offer from British abolitionists to set sail once again, leaving Halifax in 1792 to found the colony of Freetown in Sierra Leone.

Housed in the National Archives of the UK, "The Book of Negroes" offers details — physical descriptions, names, ages, children, spouses, former slave owners, ships travelled on and so forth — about the Black Loyalists, some of whose 18th century travels spanned Africa, the United States, Canada and Great Britain. I named my novel "The Book of Negroes" because my heroine, Aminata Diallo, must have her name entered into the historic ledger before she is allowed to flee Manhattan for Nova Scotia.

Rather than flinching from a document that addresses the history of African people, Mr. Groenberg and his followers should put down their matches, respect freedom of speech, and enter into a civil conversation about slavery, freedom and contemporary language. On that subject, Canadians and the Dutch have much to learn from each other.

Note: On June 22, 2011, Roy Groenberg did burn a photocopy of the cover of the novel. The publisher states there are no plans to change the title.

Copyright Lawrence Hill 2011

[Lawrence Hill](#) is the author of seven books, including the novel [The Book of Negroes](#), which won the 2008 Commonwealth Writer's Prize. He lives in Hamilton, Ontario and can be visited at www.lawrencehill.com. [His opinion piece about the burning of The Book of Negroes first appeared on June 21, 2011 on page E-1 of the Toronto Star.](#)

Imagine the Other: John Ralston Saul

By kturner

[Opinion](#)



John Ralston Saul, the International President of PEN International and co-chair of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, invites us to re-think immigration policy as “citizenship policy.”

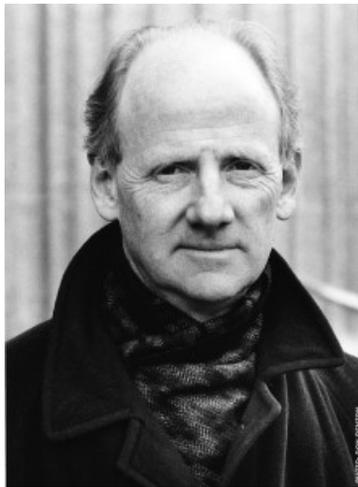


Photo Credit: Don Denton

Imagine *the other*. Most philosophy can be boiled down to those three words. The capacity to think beyond ourselves to the reality of others – their emotional state, their needs, their demons, their strengths – that is what takes a group of people to the status of civilization.

When I read most mainstream commentaries about immigrants and new Canadians, I am amazed by how much it is all about those of us born here. About us, not about *the other*. Of course we do need to talk about ourselves. We are the majority. More to the point, we are also each other's other. And we have spent a lot of time putting this civilization together; centuries in fact. And we have produced a very unusual sort of democracy – non-monolithic – which suggests we have always had to embrace this idea of the other.

Yet even when the message at the heart of our commentaries is friendly to newcomers, there is an underlying concern that our carefully woven particularity might come apart. This isn't surprising. Journalism is like the rest of society. It is dominated by the majority. So is academia. So are politics and the civil service. You could call this stability or social conservatism. And it isn't particularly shocking so long as it isn't driven by fear or populism, which are more or less the same thing.

But this concern with our possible fragility is odd in a society which invites the equivalent of one percent of [the Canadian] population to join us every year. This one percent puts us on the international cutting edge of social creativity. And eighty-five percent of those immigrants become citizens within five years.

These two facts put us in a very different frame of mind from our neighbours and our allies. The US figure is around forty percent. The Europeans are roiling with anxiety over single digit numbers.

So we really are out on the cutting edge when it comes to social construction, which is very exciting. We need to think of ourselves accurately as doing something exciting; a society creating new concepts of human fellowship.

I'll give you a simple example of this. When we are looking around the world for that one percent we aren't really looking for immigrants, we're looking for citizens, for the simple reason that one becomes the other. Our immigration policy is really a citizen policy. Landed immigrant status is like getting engaged to get married. This is a philosophy – a national state of mind – which shapes all the rest.

Other countries are looking for migrants not immigrants, for workers who can be sent away; or they are endlessly debating the status of the outsider. Or they are looking for immigrants, but in a limited way, and they are doing so without fully embracing the citizenship half of the equation. Often, they think of the legalistic concept of nationality, rather than citizenship. Nationality is about getting the status which gives access to rights. This is a passive idea. Citizenship is supposed to be about an obligation to participate. It is active, not passive.

Citizenship means that the newcomer will be deeply changed. But so will the established citizen. Everyone will be faced with the need to deal with difference. That need to deal with *the other* obliges all of us to open up, to be more imaginative and hopefully more generous as humans.

But here is the point: this process has been with us for almost half a millennium. The first immigrants – largely from France and Scotland – were deeply changed by the dominant peoples here – the First Nations. The whole approach we have to immigration and citizenship has its roots in the aboriginal idea of being adopted into the circle. This is quite different from the Euro-US idea of the melting pot designed to produce a monolithic people.

Francophone society is fascinating in this context because it is probably the part of Canadian society most changed and shaped by the aboriginal point of view. And then it was changed by the Germans, Scots and Irish in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, just as those three were even more profoundly changed by the francophones. So the irony is that the part of Canadian society most often presented today as being nervous about that sort of change brought about by new Canadians is actually the part of society that invented our model of change. And so I would have to get that it is not nervous in any profound way.

Of course everyone must be vigilant about the place of French, just as we are about democracy and women's rights and so on. But that has to do with the obligations of all citizens, not immigration. Historically, the threats to democracy and women's rights have come more often from within than from newcomers.

So let me go back to the question of imagining the other. First, what do we expect from ourselves as citizens? Conscious engagement, courage, a sense of the needs of others. In this context, what can we say of the newcomers we have invited here to become citizens? For a start we know that they have chosen to change countries, to build new lives. They have done this for a variety of reasons. But surely this reality of making a choice demonstrates a remarkable level of consciousness and courage, a willingness to engage, an understanding that they will have to learn to live with the other – those already here.

What about those of us born here? Have we ever had to prove these qualities of citizenship? Rarely. Few of us have been faced with such daunting, radical changes in our lives. And so when we first try to imagine the other we may at first see complex cultural differences. But beneath these lies the far more fundamental characteristics of courage and consciousness, which represent a great contribution to our civilization.

John Ralston Saul's most recent book is [Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine and Robert Baldwin](#), in Penguin Canada's [Extraordinary Canadians series](#). John Ralston Saul is the [International President of PEN International](#) and co-chair of the [Institute for Canadian Citizenship](#).

Related Good Idea:

- [Toronto: Citizens for Citizenship](#)

Living Together: Politics of Proximity

By Evelyn
June 27, 2011
Uncategorized

World Refugee Week was celebrated around the world last week. Stories about sanctuary and support for [refugees](#) make a rich contribution to Cities of Migration, and bring a global perspective to how cities manage immigrant integration locally.

This month [António Vitorino](#), former EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, shares his thoughts on migration, living together and the politics of proximity, while in a letter from Venice, [Marcel Balbo, UNESCO Chair \(SSIM\)](#) challenges the 'fortress of Europe' to re-think migration and diplomacy in light of the 'jasmine revolution' that has swept through the Arab spring.

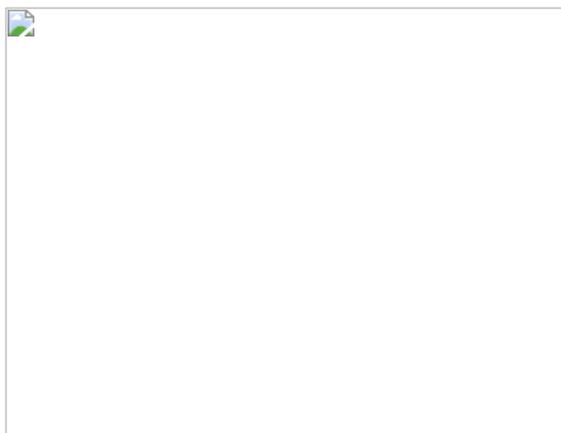
School's out! During this month's learning exchange, educators from [Malmo](#) and [Frankfurt](#) shared ideas about immigrant student success in and outside the classroom. [Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt](#) explains why a scholarship for the whole family is a passport to full participation in German society.

Related Good Ideas

- [Accommodate Sheffield – Better Together](#) Sheffield, United Kingdom
- [Asylum Dialogues](#) Leicester, UK
- [Bridging More than the Digital Divide](#) Wellington, New Zealand
- [Cities of Sanctuary, Communities of Welcome](#) Sheffield, United Kingdom
- [Gateway to Little Burma](#) Fort Wayne, United States
- [Making Their Mark: Unlocking Educational Opportunity for Young Refugees](#) Toronto, Canada
- [The Key To France: Not All Roads Lead to Paris](#) Paris, France
- [Time Together: Mentoring for Daily Life](#) London, United Kingdom

Toronto: School4Civics Provincial Election Bootcamp

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Update on the Good Idea, [School4Civics](#)

Who spends a sunny, Saturday morning in June indoors learning about how to volunteer in an election campaign that doesn't officially start until after Labour Day? The answer is a group of forty committed, dynamic and engaged emerging leaders from Peel Region and the City of Toronto.

Diverse in every sense of the word, and falling across the political spectrum, they are all active in some capacity in making change in their communities. Some have previously volunteered in campaigns. One is weighing a municipal by-election run. Two will stand as candidates for Member of Provincial Parliament on October 6.

Their participation in electoral politics enriches and strengthens our democracy. It matters who is within the corridors of power. It matters who our political leaders are. Those who lead and make decisions shape the future of our communities. Leaders are a powerful symbol and political leadership is particularly visible.

But, to ensure all sectors of society can participate, the political process needs to be demystified.

That's where the School4Civics Bootcamp comes in. So often political involvement is fleeting, short-term and confusing.

This is particularly true of election campaigns. Volunteers work in campaigns, carrying out an endless list of tasks, without understanding their purpose within the larger context of the campaign. And after the ballots are cast, most will walk away having experienced an intense period of participation but without a plan to remain involved and indeed to become more connected and influential.

In our Bootcamp, participants gained insight into the process and practical tools to participate. Together with Sean Meagher, we packed the day with participatory training and exercises focused on volunteering with purpose, understanding the key elements of a campaign, and understanding how a campaign is built and executed.

Above all, through School4Civics we encourage participants to stay engaged and build a network that will allow for a lifetime of making social change through the political process. We hope that they will remain interested in political engagement over the long haul, which is when change can really happen.

The Bootcamp participants are off to do just that. They'll volunteer on provincial campaigns. They'll join a political party. They will become involved in their riding associations. Sooner or later many will be candidates.

We will offer another School4Civics Bootcamp in September, just as the candidates are knocking on doors and the campaign signs start to dot the lawns and balconies of homes across our region.

Expect new faces on your doorstep.

Related links:

- [Preparing diverse leadership for political life](#)
- [Webinar – Ballot Box to the Podium](#): Mobilizing Immigrant Voters and New Leadership

Reposted from [Maytree Conversations blog by Alejandra Bravo](#)

Listening to City Councillors

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Credit: coastphoto.com

Put a group together of Canadian city councillors from cities large and small to talk immigration and it turns out their concerns are surprisingly similar. All were looking for solutions to improve the way newcomers can integrate into their new communities. And some just needed to share their views.

At the beginning of June, Cities of Migration participated in the [Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#) Annual Conference. Over 2,000 delegates including mayors, councillors, and other city staff arrived in Halifax for their annual conference. We were part of the Diverse Cities Marketplace where conference participants were there to learn about good integration practices from a range of Canadian cities and organizations.

At the Cities of Migration booth, talking about Good Ideas and our newsletter stories jump-started some great discussion.

For example, [the findings from a Copenhagen study](#) got the audience nodding: skilled immigrants will leave if they feel lonely. A delegate from New Glasgow, Nova Scotia explained how his local

hospital eventually lost an immigrant Chief of Surgery for that very reason and what lessons the community learned from the experience.

The Good Idea about a family scholarship in Germany with its emphasis in taking families on field trips to city institutions caught the attention of one councillor. He spoke of his desire to introduce a city program that brings newcomers into City Hall to meet with councillors and give them the opportunity to identify with the city.

Another fascinating conversation was between representatives of three different municipalities – tiny Brooks, Alberta; Toronto; and neighbouring Peel Region.

The small town mayor complained that the major cities received all the federal government settlement money.

The Toronto councillor's rebuttal was that the neighbouring suburb was the big winner since the money was tied to where immigrants landed (in this case, the suburb won because the city's international airport was located there.)

Then the councillor from Peel added, "But half of those people stay here!"

It was quite the opportunity to learn about the pressures that all kinds of municipal actors face, regardless of size.

At the conference, Cities of Migration took the opportunity to invite Canadian municipalities to share good practices in immigrant integration. [Read the call for submissions here.](#) The call will be expanded to other countries this fall.

To learn more about the Diverse Cities marketplace, read the [Marketplace Workbook PDF](#) (filled with practical tips and resources).

Making Refugees Count in Scotland

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Earlier this year, the [Scottish Refugee Council](#) published new research examining the opinions of refugees living in Scotland towards the UK citizenship process and their views on becoming British citizens

Now they have followed up with an analysis of refugee integration in Scotland.

We asked Scottish Refugee Council Research Officer Gareth Mulvey to comment on the [two reports](#):

“The citizenship report highlights a number of instrumental reasons for refugees to decide to take British citizenship. These were primarily about attempting to access rights, for example to travel, to work and to services. The report also highlights the reasons some refugees do not wish to become citizens.



One of the more surprising findings was that some refugees who become citizens feel that they did not do so for positive reasons but actually felt they lacked choice, whether due to being stateless otherwise or because they did not decide to come to the UK in the first place, and thus British citizenship was an accidental outcome of their lives.

The Integration Report is from stage 1 of a longitudinal study into refugee integration. It compares asylum seekers to refugees and women to men throughout and finds many problems in terms of overall integration. Unemployment and underemployment are problems and the asylum system has a long hangover effect for many respondents. In terms of neighbourhoods, communities and housing, perhaps surprisingly, asylum seekers, who have no choice in relation to these matters, are more satisfied than refugees.”

Rethinking the Fortress

By Evelyn
June 24, 2011

[Conversation Stories, Opinion](#)



The Jasmine Revolution that has seen the downfall of governments in Egypt and Tunisia, as well as the de-legitimization of governments in Libya, Syria and Yemen, stems primarily from a generation of young people who stepped forward, determined to live a different future from that of their fathers and grandfathers. In a region stretching from Morocco to Syria, 200 million people are waiting for a more equitable distribution of resources, and for the political and social reforms that will make their potential part of the new global economy.

While national governments are busy convincing countries of origin to close their borders, local governments are asked to set up camps for the migrants and asylum seekers. Whether they like it or not, local governments are on the front lines of globalization, the first to respond to the current situation and cope with the new wave of migrants and their “right to the city”, i.e. housing, services and public space to meet, play and pray.

Yet, says **Marcel Balbo**, UNESCO Chair of SSIM, countries like Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria are also destined to become countries of immigration. The “Fortress of Europe” is no longer defensible: “The history of the Polish plumber should have taught us something about the relationship between democracy, development and migration....”

Read more from [The Fortress is No Longer Useful](#).

Marcello Balbo is the UNESCO Chair of the [Social and Spatial Inclusion of International Migrants: Urban Policies and Practices \(SSIIM\)](#)



On the Trail of Good Ideas: Mentoring Families from Bremen to Seattle

By Evelyn
June 27, 2011
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month meet: **Kris Mason, Director, [Puget Sound Welcome Back Center](#)**

E Pluribus Unum Award

[It's quite an honour. After 10 years of our program \(Welcome Back Centre Initiative\) up and running and it is just growing and growing by leaps and bounds.](#) It's just great to be able to be recognized for the work we are doing. From what I understand we are the only network of organizations doing this type of work, helping folks who are trained in medical professions to get re-licensed in the United States.

So it is just amazing to me that everyday we get new participants. We are up to 500 participants and we have only been open 2 ½ years here at this particular centre (Welcome Back Puget Sound). Everyday we get calls and it's a huge word of mouth.

Which Good Idea really caught your eye?

[Family Mentoring for Migrants in Germany \(MEMI\).](#) That one just makes so much sense. We need something like that here.

Why?

It is a personal service. It is working in Germany and it could be replicated everywhere. It builds relationships. It lets people know about the plight of the immigrant in their area. A lot of people who don't work with immigrants and refugees have no idea what they've been through and then there is a lot of bad press out there with conservative groups about immigrants and refugees. Until you really work with them and get to know them you have no idea what kind of assets they bring to your community.

That is something that if I had the time and the money I'd try to set something up like that.

How did you share this Good Idea?

Well, I came back to my community college and I sent the link out to everyone and said here are some best practices that we learned about while we were presenting. In fact, just this morning I talked to a graduate student at Seattle University who has to put together a graduation project. I was talking to him about some of these things that I have learned about. If you are interested in learning about working with immigrant and refugee agencies, this is something you might be able to create for your graduate project. I think in Seattle, there are a lot of people who like to volunteer and give their time. I think this will be a fun project to start. So, maybe when I retire...

Feedback?

Yes, everyone was very interested in where I went and how I learned about it. Right now, we're going through a lot of budget cuts. There isn't a lot of extra money to create it at the school, but you'll never know where it will end up. It was just recently that I sent that out. It takes time to get things going, but it could result in some kind of project. We could take the model and create something like that here.

Related Good Ideas:

- [Family Mentoring For Migrants: MEMI](#) Bremen, Germany
- [Building Professional and Occupational Networks: The Mentoring Partnership](#) Toronto, Canada
- [From Alpha to Omega: Innovating in the Workplace](#) Auckland, New Zealand
- [Interviewing the Up and Coming at Upwardly Global](#) New York City, USA
- [Meeting, Mediating and Mentoring: The Power of Peer Mentoring](#) Birmingham, United Kingdom
- [Women at Work: the KVINFO Mentor Network](#) Copenhagen, Denmark



Paris: Breaking into the Museum

By kturner
Uncategorized



Manifesta first came to our attention through its [Belonging film project which we profiled as a Good Idea](#). With the support of the Runnymede Trust and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 43 films were made by young urban migrants that provided insight into their views on “belonging in London and in Paris.”

In 2010, Manifesta started a new pilot project called [Breaking into the Museum](#). This time, 14 young people from diverse backgrounds created short films based on their understanding of the Galleries of Modern London at the [Museum of London](#). The aim was to reflect on their relationship to connect with the city’s ‘official’ history as well as how they experience museum collections.

The project has traveled to Paris in April 2011. Twelve migrant youth, between the ages of 15-19, repeated the process at the [Musée Carnavalet](#), which documents the history of Paris.

A l'Assaut du Musée: The 12 short films produced in Paris during the Easter break are now available online on the [Manifesta website](#).

With support from the European Cultural Foundation, Manifesta is currently in discussion to expand the project to other city museums throughout Europe.

Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt: Don't forget the Families!

By ktuner

[Interview, Interviews](#)



Cities of Migration asked Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt, Chair of the Stiftung Polytechnische Gesellschaft Frankfurt am Main to give us his opinion of what makes the [Good Idea, the Diesterweg Scholarship](#), work so well.

Strengthening immigrant families by showing them appreciation promises long-term success

I'm a bit experienced in setting up programs fostering integration of migrants in Germany. [In 2001, when I was working for the Hertie Foundation](#), I launched the START-program for talented 14 – 18 year old students with a migration background, not at least with the *arrière pensée* to make the chances of immigration in our country understandable to a broader audience.

But in 2006, when I was invited to develop programs for [the new 'Foundation of the Polytechnical Society' in Frankfurt](#), I received a cry for help from a schoolmaster in a difficult part of the town.

"We need something attractive for the immigrant families," she said. "Many of these families withdraw from public places and stay in their narrow flats. They don't come to the parents' evenings. We don't reach them anymore. We need to show them ways into our city and into the educational system!"

She was definitely right. Don't we know that many families can't find their way into our well organized cities? Quite often they get used to live in a sort of restricted area, where they feel secure. We don't reach them by the internet, by hotlines or flyers. But we need to reach them if we want them to be successful in our country. We want them to use our libraries, our Popular Universities, our museums. We want their children to be successful at school. We want the parents to understand our educational system – in their own interest and in the interest of our country.

As a young foundation aiming at giving impulses to progress, we decided to start the first education scholarship for families in Germany, the Diesterweg Scholarship, named after the man who invented the German primary school in the 19th century. We support both children and parents. Most of them are immigrants. The families are recommended by the primary schools.

They are willing to get on the way to integration into the educational system, but they need support. We offer them academies for children and for parents, excursions with the whole family, accompaniment of teacher discussions, holiday courses.

But most important for the families are personal relationships and appreciation. They are all officially scholars of our Foundation. We welcome them in a big ceremony. Our two project managers accompany them to school discussions, to the museum, to the public library.

And this is what we have learned: Many of these families need a personal companion to institutions, they need a personal relationship to the education system; but once they have established this relationship, they get on their way together with their children. And this will become a long-term effect, because families – as we know from research – do have the deepest influence on their children's success. Considering the good results of two rotations of Diesterweg scholars, I recommend: Don't forget the families!

Related Resources:

- [Scholarship for the Entire Family](#) Frankfurt, Germany
- [Webinar: Opening Doors: Innovative Strategies for Immigrant Student Success](#)

Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt is the Chairman of the Stiftung Polytechnische Gesellschaft Frankfurt am Main. He studied at Cologne and Paris University. He holds a degree in Romance and German studies and Ethnology as well as a doctorate title in Linguistic studies. He worked as a lecturer for German language and literature at the Sorbonne and headed the "German Foundation Heinrich Heine" in Paris. For 6 years, he was the spokesman of Public Relations for the "Bertelsmann Foundation" in Gütersloh, Germany. From 1999 until 2006, he was managing director of the "Hertie-Foundation" in Frankfurt. He developed several projects with the focus on Integration of Migrants and Education for Democracy and started a nationwide Youth Debating Competition. Since August 1st, 2006, he has been a member of the managing board of the "Foundation Polytechnische Gesellschaft" and responsible for topics, projects and communication. Since December 1st, 2008, he was the chairman of the "Foundation Polytechnische Gesellschaft". Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt is a member of the board of directors of the "National Council of German Foundations" (BVDSt) and heads the "Initiative of Foundations in Frankfurt."



Migration and the Politics of Proximity: António Vitorino

By kturner
June 21, 2011
[Opinion](#)



António Vitorino, former European Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, shares his thoughts on multiculturalism and migration in Europe.

I believe that the democratic transitions in North Africa are a unique opportunity for the European Union to develop a partnership with those countries, build upon shared values, economic development, social cohesion, and also mobility between the two margins of the Mediterranean Sea.

What we cannot deny is that there is an overall sense of pessimism – cultural and economic pessimism – in European societies that includes migrants and a certain rejection of migration. But our societies have become – in an irreversible way – multiethnic societies. So the challenges of integration do not disappear just because someone says multiculturalism is dead.

Living together is a challenge both for the host societies and for the migrants themselves. It is a two-way street. It has never been completely achieved. It's a permanent process that requires new stakeholders and policies of proximity.

I believe that civil society has a key role to play. Governments today are too much obsessed with border controls. Border controls are extremely important but they are not the solution to the need for regulation of migratory flows.

Therefore, civil society needs to mobilize NGOs (organizations that represent the migrants themselves), foundations, business associations and trade unions. They have a role to play in the integration process that needs to be at the local level [and include] the involvement of local authorities, municipalities, the workplace. And, with civil society, [they need] to be mobilized by policies of proximity.

Dr. António Vitorino's [video interview](#) (below) was recorded on May 27, 2011 at the 2011 European Foundation Centre's Annual General Assembly and Conference in Cascais, Portugal. It is printed with his permission.

For more information, see ['Diversity in Europe: a Crisis of Tolerance?'](#), a debate organised jointly by the EFC's Diversity Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIIG) and the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM).

Dr. Antonio Vitorino is a former Portuguese EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs. António Vitorino was previously a law professor, a judge, a Secretary of State of the Macao Government, Vice-Prime Minister of Portugal and Chairman of European Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee.

Christchurch: Post-Earthquake Report

By kturner
May 25, 2011
Uncategorized

The events of February 22, 2011 had a profound effect on immigrants within the city of Christchurch [reports Justin Treagus, Executive Director of OMEGA in Auckland](#):

“It has been encouraging to see the swift action taken by numerous players to support the migrant community. These include:

- Language support – Free information, advice support and advocacy on issues such as housing, employment, debt, benefits, immigration, education, health, relationships, and communities. [City authorities] can talk to you about the issues you are facing as a result of the Christchurch earthquake or refer you to appropriate response agencies.
- Ethnic community support – Evacuation support which includes other cities response to supporting. The Danish community network is currently providing accommodation support for families and students affected due to the quake in Christchurch. The Japan Society of Auckland is offering accommodation support, interpreting and translation services as well as transportation to all Japanese people who are coming up to Auckland from Christchurch. They are also visiting victims who have been transferred to Auckland hospital to provide emotional support. The Buddhist Compassion Relief – Tzu Chi Foundation is offering \$500 worth of Cash Cards, blankets, medicine Kit Bags, instant Noodle and rice, biscuits and other items. The Korean Society of Auckland is providing accommodation support, legal information, liaison with consulate general, and overall support to international students who have come up from Christchurch. The Chinese Mental Health Consultation Services Trust is providing psychological care for survivors, rescuers, and members of public who have been affected by the quake. Hindu Niwas based in Mangere has opened its 63-bed facility for affected families moving out of Christchurch. They are providing vegetarian meals to residents and will be able to arrange culturally/ linguistically appropriate support for victims of the earthquake during their stay.
- Contingency plans for migrants whose journey to Permanent Residence was dependent on jobs that are no longer due to the quake are busy being explored.

Impact on Refugee Intake

One unfortunate result of the Christchurch earthquake has been the need to postpone the next UNHCR quota intake of 150 refugees. Christchurch was no longer a resettlement region following the September 2010 earthquake. This latest disaster has meant that all possible Housing New Zealand houses need to be available first for people from Christchurch with no homes. A decision on when the next intake will now take place will be made in due course, but it is unlikely to be before May, and the postponement will realistically mean New Zealand will take fewer refugees over the next 12 months. It is important that support agencies, already busy responding to the earthquake, are provided with some breathing space prior to full refugee intakes being re-established.”

From a report dated April 19, 2011

Essen: Transatlantic Trends in Immigration

By kturner
Uncategorized

Last month, Cities of Migration was in Essen, Germany, to attend the annual meeting of the DMIIIG, the Diversity, Migration and Integration working group of the [European Foundation Centre](#). Before the group got down to business, a number of new reports were presented, offering candid analysis on the state of immigrant integration in Europe, Canada and the United States:

- [Transatlantic Trends: Immigration 2010](#) (German Marshall Fund and partners, 2011)
- [Immigrant Integration in Europe in a Time of Austerity](#) Elizabeth Collett (Transatlantic Council on Migration, 2011)
- [Migrationsland 2011](#) (Berlin: Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration, 2011). In German. [Migration Report 2011](#) in English

Maximum Cities

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



This month, we are excited to put a spotlight on renowned urbanist and global thought leader [Saskia Sassen](#) about 'unscrambling' today's immigration policies. Over twenty years ago, Sassen positioned cities as vital nodes in global networks powered by the dynamism and mobility of a new Urban Age. In this highly connected paradigm, "citiness" means ideas and people working together to drive creativity and invention. [In this month's Opinion](#), Sassen returns to the mutuality of action and actor in a critique of immigration policies that fail to bring all of us to the table.

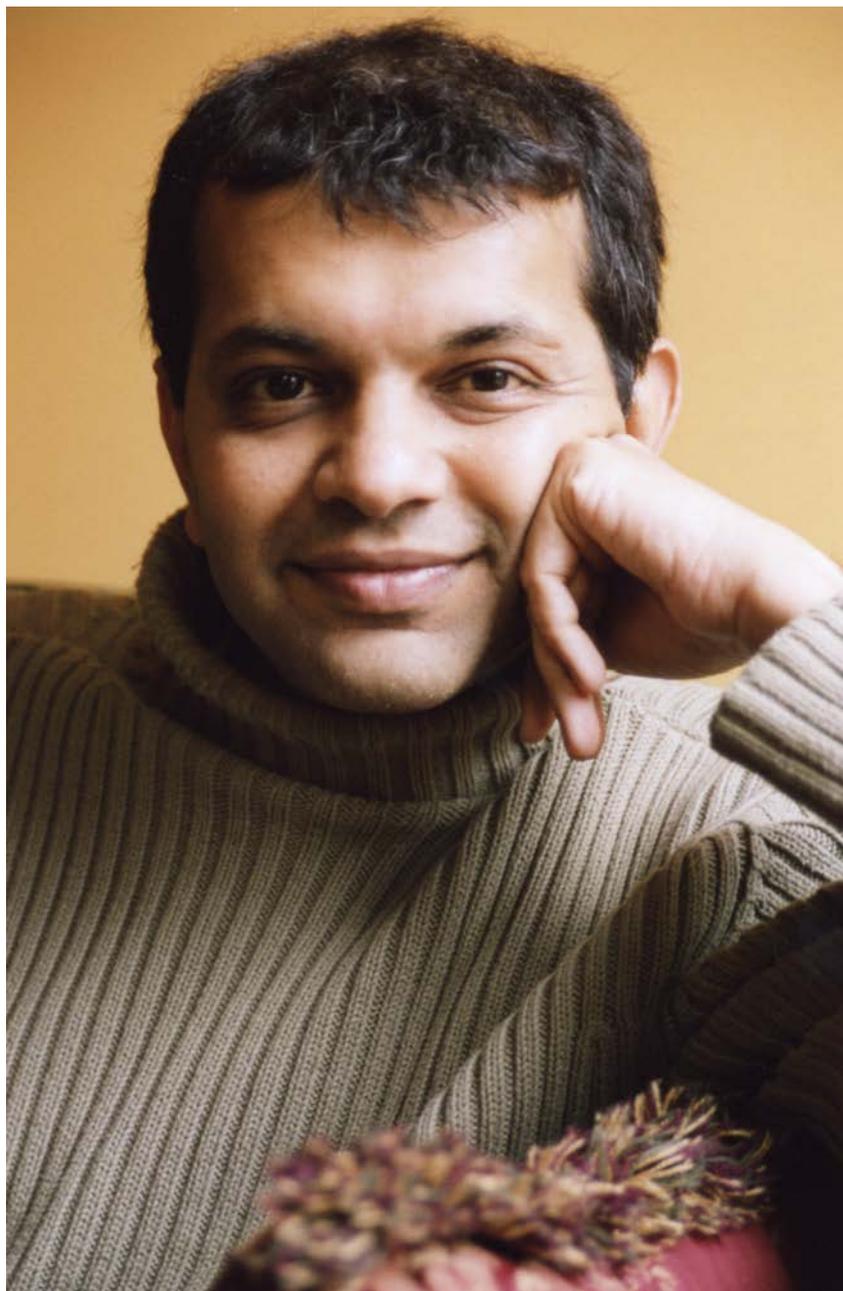
Internationally-acclaimed author, [Suketu Mehta](#) (Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found), talks about wooing immigrants in Detroit, urban villages within Mumbai and New York and why places like Jackson Heights and Hamtramck are the new cities of arrival. Also in the mix, Cities of Migration listens in to media stories from Barcelona and Toronto about the business case for diversity and how smart ideas are taking local innovation to national heights.

Summer is almost here. Before school's out, take a lesson from Malmo and Frankfurt about helping children succeed at school – Join us on June 22 for a webinar, [Opening Doors: Strategies of Immigrant Student Success!](#)

Happy cycling,
Cities of Migration

In Conversation with Suketu Mehta: The City Speaks

By kturner
May 19, 2011
[Interview, Interviews](#)



The city has become an obsession for [Suketu Mehta](#), who won international acclaim for his book *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found*, published in 2004. Now he is turning his focus to the stories of what he calls the 'new New York', a city to which he immigrated at the age 14 with his family from India.

Cities of Migration's Piali Roy sat down with the writer to talk about cities, migration and how today's migrants have a new relationship with their adopted homes.

Watch an excerpt from the interview – How do you take all these people who are very culturally grounded and turn them into New Yorkers?

Listen to the complete audio interview:

The City Speaks (Abridged)

Piali Roy: It looks like you are becoming a chronicler of cities, from Bombay in India to New York City in the US. They have both been your homes. Why have cities caught your attention?

Suketu Mehta: It is very simple. I like people and cities contain a lot of people. There are many writers who don't like people so they go off to houses in the country –I am not one of them.

I was born in Calcutta and raised in Bombay and New York. I've lived in Paris and London. The only time of my life that I lived in a smaller town was in Iowa City which is not really a city at all but it still calls itself a city.

I like large concentrations of people, crowds, and the anonymity that cities afford. I like thinking about the ways in which these masses of people come from all over and attempt to make connections. For me, a city is like a very large extended family that sometimes quarrels, sometimes gets along, and most often ignores each other.

PR: You have written about Bombay/Mumbai, a great megacity of relentless internal migration. What can cities in the west dealing with international migration learn from Bombay?

Suketu Mehta: I think there are two great groups of cities on the planet today. One is the great megacity of the developing countries such as Bombay, Sao Paulo or Jakarta or Lagos and these cities are marked by huge influxes of migrants from the countryside or neighbouring countries. Greater Bombay adds about one million new people every year. These migrants essentially come together to form villages in the city. They are drawn by the hope of economic opportunity and also by something called freedom – which, in a city like Bombay, means it is possible to marry someone who is not of your caste or for a woman to dine alone in a restaurant or possibly bump into a Bollywood star on the sidewalk. So the call of the city is about money, freedom and glamour. All of these things are very attractive to young people from the countryside.

The second group of cities is the great cities of the rich countries, which are New York, Toronto, London, Sydney. These cities are experiencing historically unprecedented immigration from other countries. So 2 out of 3 New Yorkers are foreign-born, and New York City is will grow from 8 million to a city of 9 million in the next 20 years. This is a huge thing for cities like New York to prepare for. But as I pointed out, this influx of 1 million people happens just about every year in Bombay.

What follows are very different types of development. The cities in the developing countries have to figure out how to provide essential civic services to these new migrants – water, sewage, sanitation, security, transport – much of which are essentially privatized. Whereas in the rich countries, they have to figure out how to take in all these people from countries like Azerbaijan to Zimbabwe and make them part of a civic unit, make them Torontonians or New Yorkers.

PR: Yet even in the megacities, the cities of Asia, the newly arrived populations are quite diverse and have to manage the same integration and inclusion issues of cities like Toronto or Lisbon.

Suketu Mehta: That's right. In cities like Bombay the population is internally diverse. Today, 30% of the population of Greater Bombay is North Indian from the impoverished northern states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In both cases, there are populations that are more or less welcome, and there are people who are demonized and scapegoated for everything from people's inability to get a taxicab to rising crime.

Whether or not the city is prepared for these arrivals, people will come. And it's not a bad thing that people do come. This fear that is manufactured about these hordes "overwhelming" the city is a little exaggerated. In the '90s there was much talk of Bombay as a dying city because it was just going to get "overwhelmed" by all these people. And it is true that 60% of the city is composed of slums and one mustn't romanticize the slums, they are really awful places to live. You and I would not want to live in a jhopadpatti, a bustee, principally because not many of them have indoor toilets. But these slums or communities or bustees are attractive enough to people who will put up with enormous hardship to come and live in these cities, in these "villages" in the cities. And they don't find them as inhospitable as one might think.

PR: When Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York City was invited to speak to the US Senate he basically said that without illegal immigration his city could not survive. Given how virulent the immigration debate is in the United States, were you surprised that someone like him would come out and say this?

Suketu Mehta: I am actually quoting that exact comment in my next book. Mayor Bloomberg spoke to the Senate, when he was a Republican right after the mayor of Hazelton, Pennsylvania said, "People should be locked up for renting to illegal immigrants," and then went on to equate immigrating and sending food to your family with crime. So that is one trope in the United States. Mayor Bloomberg went on after the mayor of Hazelton and said if it had not been for illegal immigration, New York's city's economy would have collapsed after 9/11. And there is statistical evidence to prove that. But the immigrants who came to New York, both legal and illegal, weren't really phased by the catastrophe because many of them had seen worse in their own countries, so they took it in their stride, stayed in the city, kept their kids in the schools and New York today is thriving. It weathered the recession better than most other American cities. New York City is a textbook example to show that immigration works.

Detroit is another example. Detroit is one of those shrinking cities where it has lost 25% of its population in the last decade. [Now look at a smaller neighbouring city called Hamtramck](#) that is flourishing because Hamtramck aggressively goes out and woos immigrants. The population of Hamtramck comes from everywhere – from Bangladesh to Yemen to Mexico – and it's a welcoming city for immigrants. So I think these cities like Detroit or Cleveland, which are losing their industrial base and losing their population, would do well to be more welcoming to immigrants.

Here is a radical proposal: there are 12 million undocumented or illegal immigrants, what if there were some kind of amnesty? Stay in Detroit for 5 years and we'll put you to the path of legalization. The city of Detroit is embarking on a plan to demolish 10,000 homes over the next few years. Now these are homes which if they were given to these immigrants, they would put sweat equity into their homes, refurbish them and shore up the fabric of the city. We really need radical, bold approaches to the problems of our cities and to the question of what to do about 12 million people living in the shadows in the United States.

PR: You are an immigrant. You came with your family at the age of 14 from Mumbai to New York City. Has being an immigrant affected how you see cities and the world?

Suketu Mehta: Well, 14 is a strange age to change countries because you haven't finished growing up in one country and you are never well 'in your skin' in the country you've moved to. When I was 14 my parents came to Jackson Heights in Queens and they put me in a school where I was one of the first minorities in this all-boys Catholic school. I was meat thrown to the lions. It wasn't a pleasant experience.

Because I came to New York in my teens, I've always longed for Bombay. I missed Bombay like an organ of my body. So I kept going back. I'm like a pendulum, always going back and forth. It is what one might call Generation 1.5. Not the first generation or the second generation but somewhere in-between.

And that is what has made me a writer. I am always betwixt and between, happiest in transit. I've come to think of this as an advantage now because I can go into Bombay and I can go into New York and not entirely belong, but somehow be a part of both. I went back to Bombay for two and half years when I was writing my book [Maximum City].

Home isn't a geographically intact entity. I have an apartment with many rooms. I have a living room in New York, and a bedroom in Bombay, a study in London, and another room in Paris. Not literally, I'm not that wealthy. I've come to think of my home as an apartment with many rooms and in the end, my home is a palace, it is the Earth.

There are an increasing number of people like me who move between different cities in the planet. We are a kind of inter-local group, that is, you could put any of us in Dublin or Toronto or New York or Bombay and we would find our feet within a matter of weeks. Traffic between these global cities is increasingly possible now and inevitable.

PR: Now you are writing a book this time about New York City, specifically on immigrants. What are the stories that you are planning to write about?

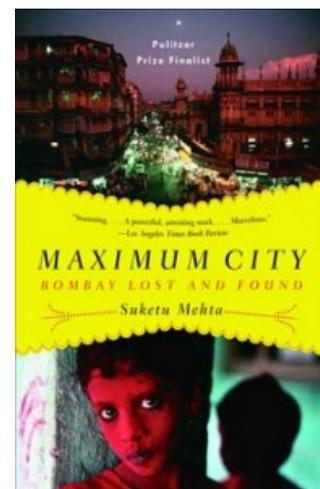
Suketu Mehta: The frame is much like Maximum City, that is, the story of a great city and my life in it. I've been living in New York since I was 14 and every time I leave, it's like there is this giant rubber band attached to me and it snaps me back to this amazing city of over 8 million where 2 out of 3 residents or their children are immigrants. I've been speaking to Congolese and Bangladeshis and Guyanese, and even the native born! anyone who has an interesting story.

I wasn't trained as an urbanist, a demographer or an economist. I began as a novelist. For me it is very important to understand the city as a story or a collection of stories. Collecting New York stories, new stories of arrival which are somewhat like the older stories, but also different because these newer immigrants have experienced a much more continuous transit between where they came from and where they live than the earlier generation.

In the late 19th century, an Italian or an Irish person coming over in steerage to Ellis Island might dream of one day returning to their homeland. An Indian or a Mexican today can go back and forth two or three times a year. These new immigrants, I'm realizing, live not in American or Mexico, not necessarily in New York City or Mexico City, but in Sunset Park neighbourhood of New York and a village of the Puebla district in Mexico. That is their allegiances are to very specific localities (that's why I call them the inter-locals). They move from one neighbourhood in one city to another neighbourhood in another city – it could be halfway across the globe. Their cultural roots are very strong. That also poses a challenge to the city of New York. How do you take all these people who are very culturally grounded and turn them into New Yorkers?

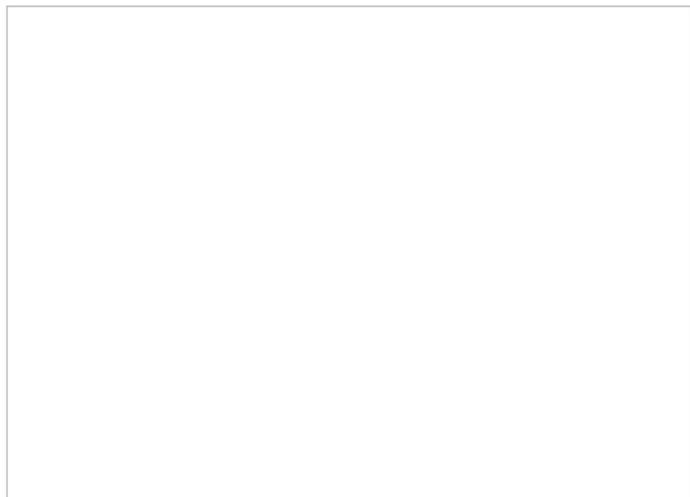
See the video above for his answer or listen to the complete audio interview.

The interview was recorded on March 31, 2011 in Toronto.



Copenhagen: How do we Retain Skilled Immigrants?

By ktuner
May 18, 2011
Uncategorized



It's the question asked in cities around the world: It may be one thing to attract skilled immigrants, but how do cities ensure they stay and not leave for other jurisdictions?

In Copenhagen, the Danish government asked MindLab to investigate this issue. [MindLab describes itself as a "cross-ministerial innovation unit which involves citizens and businesses in developing new solutions for the public sector."](#) Made up of designers, sociologists, anthropologists and others with a public sector background, the group aims to create new ways to examine such problems.

By using media like video to interview recent immigrants about the problems they faced in adjusting to life in Denmark, MindLab was able to show policy-makers the challenges faced by newcomers at a human level. One problem was the inability to find free Danish-language classes easily in Copenhagen neighbourhoods; another was the Danish system of approved names for newborn babies – a name too "different" would not be on the list!

MindLab found another reason why many skilled immigrants left: they felt isolated and lonely. Listen as [Christian Bason, head of MindLab](#), tells the story of an Indian engineer in Copenhagen and the solutions they offered (this section of the talk runs for approximately 5 minutes).

[Christian Bason was invited to speak presented as part of Toronto's MaRS Global Leadership Series at the MaRS Discovery District on May 9, 2011.](#)
The full talk includes an introduction as well as a Q&A. He is also the author of [Leading Public Sector Innovation: Co-creating for a Better Society](#) (2010).
[Social Innovation Generation also has a blog post about Christian Bason's visit which includes his slide presentation.](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Swapping Cards in London and New Haven

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month meet: **Juan Camilo**, London Project Manager, [Migrants' Rights Network](#), London, UK.

The Good Idea that really caught my eye was: [The Municipal ID Cards for Inclusive and Safe Communities](#) by the New Haven Mayor's Office.

Why?

This idea caught my eye because it is not common to see public authorities devising policies with the aim of including irregular migrants. It recognizes that even though many migrants may be in breach of immigration rules they are still a part of local communities and that their vulnerability and exclusion can have negative effects on an area. It is brave for a Mayor to take this approach when public debate is so polarized.

It is also interesting that ID cards are in this case a tool for inclusion, whereas across the pond, a national ID card in the UK has been strongly opposed by campaigners because of privacy concerns. It shows how the same tools can be used for different effects and that the local context can be determinant for an idea to take hold.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I wrote a blog on the [Open Democracy: People on the Move blog](#) where I put this idea as an example of how local authorities can be creative in being inclusive towards migrants even when national policies are generating exclusion.

Feedback?

Irregular migration is understandably an issue that generates controversy and apprehension. Ideas like this one illustrate the potential for policies to address the abuse and exploitation of the most vulnerable and improve local areas. They show that there are actions that can be taken locally to protect residents who are excluded by national policies.

Related Good Ideas:

- [New Haven: The Municipal ID Cards for Inclusive and Safe Communities](#)
- [Did You Know You Can Vote? Cities and Democracy at Work](#)
- [Mobilize the Immigrant Vote!](#)
- [Oslo Extra Large](#)
- [DiverseCity's School for Civics](#)



Unscrambling Immigration: Saskia Sassen

By kturner
May 19, 2011
[Opinion](#)



Opinion by Saskia Sassen, the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology and Co-Chair, The Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University. She is one of the leading thinkers on globalization, immigration and global cities.

“Designing better policy to govern immigration means abandoning an array of cherished policies and beliefs about how the world works and what are desirable aims.”

We have an “immigration crisis” every time we have a crisis about no matter what – high unemployment due to the economic recession of 2008-2010, the uprisings to demand democracy in North Africa, the attack on the World Trade Center, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and on and on. Much of this is not related to immigration. But mostly we blame the immigrants for contributing to the crisis. It is axiomatic in the history of the US and that of the major European countries.

This raises several questions.

One is that we should know this by now and not need to scramble in response to the sudden influx of 25,000 refugees from North Africa as are the French and the Italians, or have the US government paralyzed on the matter of immigration reform, or Arizona’s governor authorizing (unconstitutional) searches to establish the legal status of people stopped for matters not related to immigration. Our (still) rich and highly developed countries, with solid histories of electoral political systems, have simply not been able to address immigration in a reasonable and workable way.

A second question raised by what seems to be a permanent link between immigration and whatever crisis affects us, is whether this axiom is a projection from our receiving societies or is capturing a reality. In either case it indicates we are not handling immigration adequately. If it is a projection it is a sort of ideological exit from confronting the real world. It is mostly easier for politicians to believe that the cause of major crises is external –such as too many immigrants coming into one’s country. It is easy to blame immigrants for everything. However, if it is a reality, we should roll up our sleeves and go to work on designing better policy.

Designing better policy to govern immigration means abandoning an array of cherished policies and beliefs about how the world works and what are desirable aims. Here I include such diverse policies as opening up largely traditional economies to foreign multinationals and financial services firms, and pushing these countries to take on loans they do not need and will only be able to repay by cutting government spending on health, education, and other people’s development goals. Both of these policy goals have been the key frame that rich countries have imposed on poor countries. The result has been a large-scale destruction of labour intensive economies that may have been “inefficient” but were also a sticky web that incorporated vast numbers of people –where nobody was allowed to sink in complete hopelessness. Emigration became the only way to feed the family. This explains the beginning of whole new migrations from Africa’s sub-Saharan countries. In short, we actively made the conditions that generated these new migrations into Europe.

Better policy will also mean addressing the fact that our current immigration politics rest on the unilateral power of national states and on a sort of *carte blanche* to violate the human rights of immigrants. This is unsustainable in the long run. These types of violations are a cancer at the heart of our liberal democracies that will only grow, and eventually hurt all of us, including the legal residents.

If my son, a graduate and prize-winning student, decides to write a great American novel, a new [The Grapes of Wrath](#), and spends time on a California farm working with undocumented immigrants, what will happen when mounted patrols raid the farm and pursue the fleeing workers? He will run with them. He will have no time to show his passport. He will run and jump into the river and drown along with his undocumented fellow workers; incidents like this have happened in the US.

This is just an extreme example to illustrate that citizens, i.e., everyone, will eventually get caught up in raids against undocumented, just as it is happening right now in Arizona or in France, unless we roll up our sleeves and go to work on designing better policy.

Saskia Sassen is the [Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology](#) and co-chairs [The Committee on Global Thought](#), Columbia University (www.saskiasassen.com). Her recent books are [Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages](#) (Princeton University Press 2008), [A Sociology of Globalization](#) (W.W.Norton 2007), and the 4th fully updated edition of [Cities in a World Economy](#) (Sage 2011). *The Global City* came out in a new fully updated edition in 2001. Her books are translated into twenty-one languages. She contributes regularly to www.OpenDemocracy.net and the [Huffington Post](#).

Calgary: Talking Mentoring

By kturner
May 18, 2011
Uncategorized



On May 5 and 6, [ALLIES \(Assisting Local Leaders with Immigrant Employment Strategies\) held a mentoring conference in Calgary](#), Canada to celebrate the successes of current mentoring initiatives. Participants shared their experiences, explored new opportunities, and continued to build mentoring initiatives that impact the lives of skilled immigrants and local employers across the country.

[Here is an excerpt from Maytree's blog.](#)

On day one of the ALLIES conference (May 5, 2011), participants spent the afternoon in roundtable discussions on particular issues related to mentoring programs for skilled immigrant professionals.

Here is a quick report of the ideas that emerged:

Intercultural Communication

- Cross-cultural competencies are important for both groups, not just for mentees. Each side needs to develop those skills equally. Change needs to come from both sides
- Need for a toolkit on how to prepare small and medium enterprises to deal with intercultural communication issues.

Job Readiness for Mentees

- Communicate Canadian employers' expectations on English language level pre-immigration.
- Activities need to be developed to manage expectations of both mentees and mentors on what job readiness entails.

Building Partnerships

- Beg, borrow and steal. Use what has worked in other programs and adapt it to your context.
- Establish a common front for employers.
- Allow for coordination among multiple funding bodies to avoid competition where there should be collaboration on the field.
- Engage several stakeholders: small and medium enterprises, private and public sectors, industry sectors, targeting high-growth industries that are in high demand and recruiting. In these partnerships there must be a range of diversity, a level of expertise.
- Each stakeholder's expectations must be clear.
- Constant follow-up is important for partnerships. This entails resources.

Mentoring for Regulated Professions

- Embed mentoring into professional development plans for mentors who come from employer partners.
- Offer e-mentoring pre-arrival from professionals within the regulated professions.
- Work with regulatory bodies to embed mentoring as a qualifier for their members professional development and re-certification credits.

Marketing

- Marketing for Mentees: connect with mentees through ethnic organisations, faith organisations, public library talks, and before they get to Canada.
- Marketing to employers: set up an advisory committee of initial employer champions who can recruit other employers to the program. "Speak to the choir first."

[The complete list of topics including pre-mentoring and post-mentoring activities to make mentoring more successful; professional development for mentors; and evaluation are available on the Maytree blog.](#)

Also check out the curated tweets for [Day One](#) and [Day Two](#) from the conference!

A full report about what was learned at the conference will be released by the beginning of June and will be available on [the ALLIES website](#).

Welcome Back Initiative, 2011 winner of the E Pluribus Unum Award!

By Evelyn
May 19, 2011
Uncategorized



Cities of Migration congratulates the [Welcome Back Initiative](#), 2011 winner of the E Pluribus Unum Award!

We profiled the [Welcome Back to a Healthier Community](#) in San Francisco as a Good Idea because of its work to close gaps in immigrant access to healthcare by connecting internationally-trained health care professionals to employment.

We also featured the program in our webinar, [Healthy Communities: Immigrants Helping Immigrants Access Healthcare](#).

Listen to Welcome Back Initiative's webinar presentation by Founder and Director, José Ramón Fernández-Peña:

On May 17, 2011, the [Migration Policy Institute \(MPI\)](#) announced the winners of the third annual [E Pluribus Unum Prizes](#), which recognize and honour exceptional immigrant integration initiatives around the United States, with a public awards ceremony in Washington, DC, featuring a keynote address by US Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

The [E Pluribus Unum Prizes](#) program is administered by MPI's [National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy](#) with support from the [J.M. Kaplan Fund](#). MPI received hundreds of applications from a large variety of outstanding initiatives, hinting at the volume and diversity of immigrant integration programs working at the state and local level across a range of domains: including language instruction, immigrant entrepreneurship, and refugee resettlement. All best practices are characterized by the potential to be replicated by others elsewhere.

E Pluribus Unum means 'Out of Many, One.'

- Read the [press release \(doc\)](#)
- Visit the E Pluribus Unum [website](#)

E Pluribus Unum Award winners @Cities of Migration:

- San Francisco (US): [Welcome Back to a Healthier Community](#); and watch the webinar, [Healthy Communities: Immigrants Helping Immigrants Access Healthcare](#), featuring Welcome Back Initiative!
- Durham, NC (US): [Financing Immigrant Futures: the Latino Credit Union](#)
- New York (US): [Staying in Touch at the Queens Public Library](#)



Copenhagen: How Do We Retain Skilled Immigrants?

By kturner
May 25, 2011
Uncategorized

It's the question asked in cities around the world. It may be one thing to attract skilled immigrants, but how can cities ensure they stay and not leave for other jurisdictions.

In Copenhagen, the Danish government asked MindLab to investigate this issue. MindLab describes itself as a "cross-ministerial innovation unit which involves citizens and businesses in developing new solutions for the public sector." Made up of designers, sociologists, anthropologists and others with a public sector background, the group aims to create new ways to examine such problems.

An Inside Look

By using media like video to ask questions of recent immigrants about the problems they faced in adjusting to life in Denmark, MindLab was able to give policy-makers an inside look at the challenges faced by newcomers. One was the inability to find free Danish-language classes easily in Copenhagen neighbourhoods. At the other end of the spectrum was the Danish system of having a list of approved names for newborn babies – a name too "different" would not be on the list!

MindLab found out that one of the reasons skilled immigrants left was simple: they felt isolated and lonely. To learn more, listen as Christian Bason, head of MindLab, tells the story of an Indian engineer in Copenhagen and the solutions they offered (this section of the talk runs for approximately 5 minutes).

Christian Bason was in Toronto sharing his experiences with MindLab at the [MaRS Discovery District on May 9, 2011](#). The full talk includes an introduction as well as a Q&A.

Webinar Highlights: Community Policing: Finding Common Ground with Immigrant Communities

By Evelyn
May 17, 2011
Uncategorized



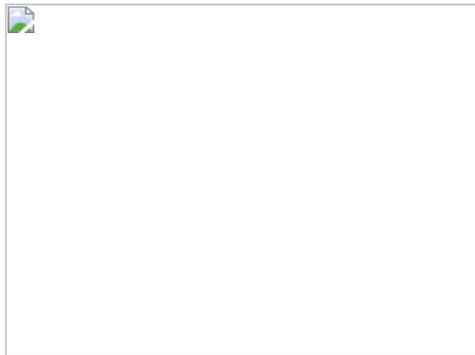
In the recent Learning Exchange webinar, we invited Constable Vince Donovan (Cardiff, UK), The Cardiff E.S.O.L. Police Project and and Sergeant Xavier Falero (Newport News, US), Hispanic Outreach Initiative, to discuss community policing in immigrant communities. What's the secret to their success?

Watch or listen to the [webinar recording](#) and find related resources online!

Turn up the Volume! Media Stories with Impact

By Evelyn
April 19, 2011

[What Cities Said: April 2011](#)



The impact of new media on social change today may be a fresh chapter on an old story, but getting your message out with 'volume and velocity' to move your agenda forward is as critical as ever. This month's interview asks [Frank Sharry, America's Voice, for an insider's view on using smart media to tell your story.](#)

A diversity of opinion is as important to an informed democracy as it is to good conversation. [His Highness the Aga Khan invites us to reflect on 'effective pluralism,'](#) or what it means to bring that diversity into our daily lives.

Choose your channel! This month, conversation lights up the grid at the virtual [Dialogue Cafe](#). Radio brings diverse voices into the mainstream in [Barcelona](#) and [Toronto](#). Here at Cities of Migration, our [Twitter](#) and [Youtube](#) channels are introducing our work to new audiences – and helping us hear your stories.

Surprise is an effective messenger! Read about how police are contributing to safe, inclusive communities in [Newport News](#), [Amsterdam and Toronto](#), [Cardiff](#), [Wellington](#) and [Madrid](#).

Spring greetings! From all of us here @Cities of Migration

Generation 3.0

By Evelyn
[What Cities Said: April 2011](#)



[Generation 3.0](#) is a multimedia project, the brainchild of leading UK race equality thinktank [The Runnymede Trust](#). It brings together children and older generations to explore ordinary people's suggestions on how to end racism in the UK for good.

The under-25s and over-55s were the two groups targeted for discussion and each individual produced a short 'video testimony'. There are seventy films in total, each one a couple of minutes long, and these were on hand to watch via a video art installation at the [project's launch](#) in January 2011.

The choice to use visual content in this way to tell stories has allowed Generation 3.0 to appeal to a wider audience, particularly among younger people, rather than relying on people's willingness to read long written

documents.

The interviewees' ages range from ten to 84 years, and together they come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. What they have in common is that they are all local to [Handsworth in Birmingham](#), an area that was chosen for this project because of its racially charged history, including the [riots of 1981 and 1985](#).

The Generation 3.0 project also produced a research report entitled [Passing the Baton](#) that looks at the ways in which attitudes to race have changed over generations. However, the main and most widely disseminated output has been the [Generation 3.0 website](#), from which anyone can watch and comment on the videos. The plan going forward is for the site to become more interactive, with discussions and user-uploaded content.

There is also talk of the Generation 3.0 project being taken to different cities in the UK, as a means of providing a shared space online for people from different backgrounds in the same neighbourhood to come together.

At the time of its launch, the project caused a stir in the UK press, with write ups in the [Guardian](#) and the [Voice](#), as well as coverage on local and national radio stations.

Contributed by Nina Kelly, The Runnymede Trust

- Find more Good Ideas and related resources on [media](#)

Healthy Communities: Immigrants Helping Immigrants Access Health Care

By Evelyn

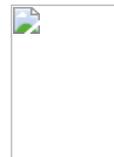
[What Cities Said: April 2011](#)



Last month's Cities of Migration webinar series presented Healthy Communities: Immigrants helping Immigrants access health care, a city-to-city conversation between Ramazan Salman, [MiMi- with Migrants for Migrants program](#) (Hannover), and José Ramón Fernández-Peña, [Welcome Back Initiative](#) (San Francisco). Their insightful strategies address the need for better outreach for both immigrant communities and immigrant health professionals. These Good Ideas have traveled across 8 cities in the United States and 52 cities in Europe!

To find out the secret to their success, watch or listen to their [webinar recording](#) and find related resources online!

Webinar Q&A Highlights from our presenters



Ramazan Salman, Executive Managing Director and Co-founder, [MiMi- With Migrants for Migrants](#) (Hannover, Germany) trains cultural mediators from within local ethnocultural communities to promote health literacy and improved health outcomes.

On community outreach and partnerships:

- Recruit leaders or key persons in the communities as mediators to do outreach (they have presence in cultural clubs, schools, local businesses, religious centres): word of mouth is important!
- Build trust and train community leaders; makes it easier for them to reach out to their networks
- Institutional outreach requires more time to build relationships
- Broaden political networks to include local and national policy agendas
- Important to engage cooperation from various institutional levels and cross-sector networks from health to welfare, NGOs, local integration services, migrant community organizations, universities

On the concept of "Cultural Sensitivity":

- Professionals cannot assume what the problems of their patients are based on a general understanding of their patients' cultural backgrounds. This could lead to misconceptions of "needs of migrants" (anti-violence, AIDS); when asked, migrants wanted to learn about children's health, women's health, how to find translators
- It's about an openness to learn and ask. Don't make assumptions

On secret to success: "My secret is I believe in the potential, the resources of migrants, and the people who are professionals. I believe in their knowledge. I have respect that people are very complimentary because in our program, we have a focus on diversity. We say...difference is a resource. Difference is the best thing we have."

More information:

- Watch the [webinar recording](#) and find new related resources online.
- Read the full Good Idea profile on [MiMi- With Migrants for Migrants](#)s (Hannover, Germany)



José Ramón Fernández-Peña, founder and director of [The Welcome Back Initiative](#) (San Francisco, United States), seeks to close gaps in immigrant access to healthcare by connecting internationally-trained health care professionals to employment.

On community outreach:

- Work with employers (direct beneficiaries), regulators (address their requirement needs), and participants (understanding their needs at all levels to enable all their systems of supports are available, e.g. legal assistance, scholarship opportunities, child care)
- Informal networks are important: 70% of Welcome Back participants have found them through word of mouth!
- On program benefits to host communities: besides the increased professional mobility of the participants, this work facilitates immigrant integration into the fabric of society by increasing quality of life. Impact: improves living standards for immigrants and their families, better educational opportunities for their children, access to better housing, increased contribution to the tax base in their area of residence, etc.
- See immigrants as peers. It levels the playing field to work as equals

On the concept of "Cultural Sensitivity":

- Concept of "cultural sensitivity" should be relabeled as "cultural humility"
- Professionals are not the holders of truth; park assumptions

- Speak in a respectful, non condescending way: not just about being “sensitive”

On secret to success: “The secret to our success is we are a very participant-centred model of service. This means we are completely flexible to understanding the needs of the people we have to work with and the people we have to work for. And, a wonderful staff, of course!”

More information:

- Watch the [webinar recording](#) and find new related resources online.
- Read the full Good Idea profile on [The Welcome Back Initiative](#) (San Francisco, United States)

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Catching the World from Cranford, New Jersey

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month, Dr. Nicholas V. Montalto, from Cranford, New Jersey in the US, highlights the importance of sharing examples of what works across international networks. Do you have a story to share? [Submit a good idea!](#)

Dr. Nicholas V. Montalto, President, [Diversity Dynamics, LLC](#), and [American Immigrant Policy Portal](#), Cranford, New Jersey, US

Which Good Idea really caught your eye?

I am interested in all the Good Ideas that have been gathered by Cities of Migration, and the effort to share these ideas with an international audience. It's remarkable, for example, how the "one-stop shop" approach, pioneered by the [High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue \(ACIDI\) in Lisbon, Portugal](#), in 2005, has gained ground in the United States, both in terms of recommendations made by policy councils on immigrant integration appointed by several governors and also in actual new programs in states like Illinois and Maryland.

The "independent invention" of good ideas in different national contexts also suggests their enduring value. For example, when I read about the international walking tours organized by [City Mondial in The Hague](#), it reminded me of a similar program that we had organized in Jersey City, New Jersey, more than 20 years ago. And isn't it interesting that some communities are reviving approaches used almost a century ago? The [Chicago Community Trust](#), through its partnership with municipal governments in the Chicago suburbs to promote immigrant integration, is bringing back an approach it pioneered back in 1919!

Why?

I think it's extremely important to build a strong evidence base for our work in the area of immigrant integration, if for no other reason than to justify the investment of public and private funds in programs of this type. We need demonstrate positive outcomes in people's lives and real benefits to the broader community. I think Cities of Migration is helping in this task by spotlighting approaches that work and helping people to network across national boundaries.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I am pleased to be able to help publicize the work of Cities of Migration through the monthly newsletter of Diversity Dynamics, which features capsule summaries of the latest research in the field of immigrant integration uploaded to [The American Immigrant Policy Portal](#). Anyone wishing to subscribe [can send me an email](#).

Any feedback?

I applaud your emphasis on actual practice, as opposed to theoretical discussions or policy debate. I like your connections to the real world!

Related Good Ideas:

- Lisbon: [One Stop Shop: Mainstreaming Integration](#)
- Chicago: [Partnering for Success: Investing in City Governments](#)
- The Hague: [City Mondial: Looking Forward from the Past](#)



In Conversation with Frank Sharry of America's Voice

By kturner

[Interview, Interviews, What Cities Said: April 2011](#)



Few people know the American immigration reform scene as well as Frank Sharry, first as the Executive Director of the [National Immigration Forum](#) and now as founder of [America's Voice](#).

An advocate for 11 million undocumented immigrants, he calls America's Voice the “communications war room” for the immigration reform movement. He now sees its future in city mayors, police chiefs and undocumented young people growing up in America.

Frank Sharry sat down with Kim Turner, Project Leader of Cities of Migration.

Watch Frank talk about:

[What is America's Voice?](#)

[Mayors and police chiefs are leading the immigration debate](#)

- Media: Friend or Foe?
- How does America's Voice target the media?
- Guns or Roses?
- [“The dynamics \[of immigration\] are eerily similar in most places...”](#)
- What is your favourite city?

What is America's Voice?

America's Voice is an organization that I founded with the support of many other leaders in the immigration reform movement in the United States in early 2008. And we are the communications war room for the immigration reform movement...

Mayors and police chiefs are leading the immigration debate

...you are seeing tremendous leadership from many of the cities in the United States. The classic example is Mayor Bloomberg of New York City, known as an independent, a businessman, who is kind of a no-nonsense manager and he thinks immigration is the best things since apple pie...

Media: Friend or Foe?

Trust the media? *Well, it's a little bit different, I don't actually say trust the media...what I say is don't blame the media for asking tough questions. They are professionals and that's their job...*

How does America's Voice target the media?

The discourse and the narrative in media really define how much political space there is for good policy. The media discourse in the United States has been pretty negative for most of the last decade and we are working to change that...

Guns or Roses?

We have always been hopeful that hope would win out over fear. I'm afraid that given how polarized this debate has become that we are probably going to achieve a breakthrough when the Republican party, our conservative party, is scared of continuing to alienate the fastest growing group of new voters...

“The dynamics [of immigration] are eerily similar in most places...”

Yeah, I used to be a skeptic on the issue of comparative migration studies and whether there was a lot to learn but I've had the opportunity to spend time in Ireland, in Brussels, in London...

What is your favourite city?

My favourite city? Well, I live in Washington, DC, but I have to say it is not my favourite city just because it is steeped in the broken politics of America these days. I love the metropolises of Canada and Europe...

Interview between Frank Sharry, Executive Director of America's Voice and Kim Turner, Project Leader, Cities of Migration, in Toronto, April 7, 2011.

Additional Resources:

- [America's Voice](#)
- [Changing the Channel on the Immigration Debate – Maytree's Ratna Omidvar interviews Frank Sharry on stage.](#)

Barcelona: Journalists On Media Responsibility

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



Spanish journalists are joining forces to promote the production of more responsible news on the subjects of integration and immigration in the media. The growing influence of media on the public debate on immigration, including politics, has prompted journalists to think about ways their reporting practices on immigration issues could contribute to a more positive and inclusive environment for coexistence.

At a recent meeting in Barcelona (March 15, 2011), the [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) took the lead, convening thought leaders around the issue of a more responsible media by organizing a Reflection Forum on the Treatment of Cultural Diversity in the Media. The panel consisted of 16 leading journalists, all working on immigration issues with major media sector organizations, such as [Televisión Española](#), the [Cadena SER radio station](#) and newspapers like [El Mundo](#) and [ABC](#). Also in attendance were journalists working in regions with a high percentage of immigrants in the population, such as Catalonia, Andalusia and the Canary Islands.

During the Forum debate, the journalists tabled their ideas and recommendations for courses of action for their own professional and other media groups. Included were training initiatives and activities to raise media awareness across different Spanish regions and sectors by involving not only writers but also area editors and chief editors. This latter group includes the people with decision-making power around content and the form in which it finally appears. The journalists were also in favour of measures for self-regulation, such as creating “diversity committees” for each media type and drafting specific style manuals on suitable language to use when writing news about immigration and integration issues.

However, perhaps the most outstanding Forum outcome was the journalists’ decision to create a social network that will initially engage the panel members themselves and then be extended to include other groups issuing news about immigration. This will be particularly interesting because it will include non-Spanish nationals and international media personalities that can inform and facilitate the exchange of different perspectives and new ideas. It is hoped this ‘interculturality’ will be mutually enriching while making it possible to breakdown stereotypes.

The Fundación Bertelsmann has accepted the task of coordinating this social network for journalists, which will soon go online in one of the main 2.0 platforms. Look out for this interesting conversation with the experts!

Article submitted by: Monique Dissartz, [Fundación Bertelsmann](#). The Fundación Bertelsmann is a partner in Cities of Migration.

- Find related Good Ideas and resources on [media](#)

Effective Pluralism Requires Effort: Aga Khan

By kturner
April 14, 2011
[Opinion](#)



Opinion: His Highness the Aga Khan, based on a lecture at the 10th Annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium.

A pluralistic environment is a kaleidoscope that history shakes every day.

What was once beyond our view is now at our side – and, indeed, to use the popular expression, “in our face.” Almost everything now seems to “flow” globally – money and credit, goods and services, microbes and viruses, pollution and armaments, and of course, people.

It has never been easy for people to live together. Wiping away superficial misunderstandings will not by itself allow a spontaneous spirit of accommodation to blossom. To do so will require concerted, deliberate efforts to build social institutions and cultural habits which take account of difference, which see diversity as an opportunity rather than a burden.

We can begin by looking at the structures of public governance. Too often, democracy is understood to be only about elections – momentary majorities. But effective governance is much more than that. What happens before and after elections? How are choices framed and explained? How is decision-making shared so that leaders of different backgrounds can interactively govern, rather than small cliques who rule autocratically?

We must learn to write more effective constitutions and develop good institutional arrangements that can help resolve political deadlock, build social coherence and avoid the dangers of “winner take all.”

Independent judicial and educational systems are also essential to effective pluralism, and so are non-governmental agents of influence – the institutions of civil society, particularly the independent news media that can build and sustain public attitudes towards diversity.

But institutional reforms will have lasting meaning only when there is a social mindset to sustain them. Historic identity must reinforce the worth and contributions of all communities both old and new. Our leaders can influence these narratives by working to bridge divisions – or widen them.

We must seek and share a readiness to accept the complexity of human society — to embrace pluralism as a way of looking at a diverse and changing world. The world we seek is not a world where difference is erased, but where difference can be a powerful force for good, helping us to fashion a new sense of cooperation and coherence in our world, and to build together a better life for all.

[His Highness the Aga Khan spoke on October 15, 2010 at the 10th annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium in Toronto.](#)

- For the full text of the speech, [click here](#).



Inclusion Means All of Us

By admin2
April 5, 2011
[Opinion](#)



Inclusion Means All of Us

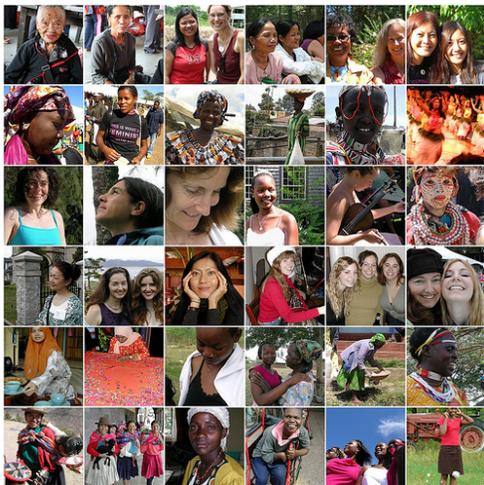
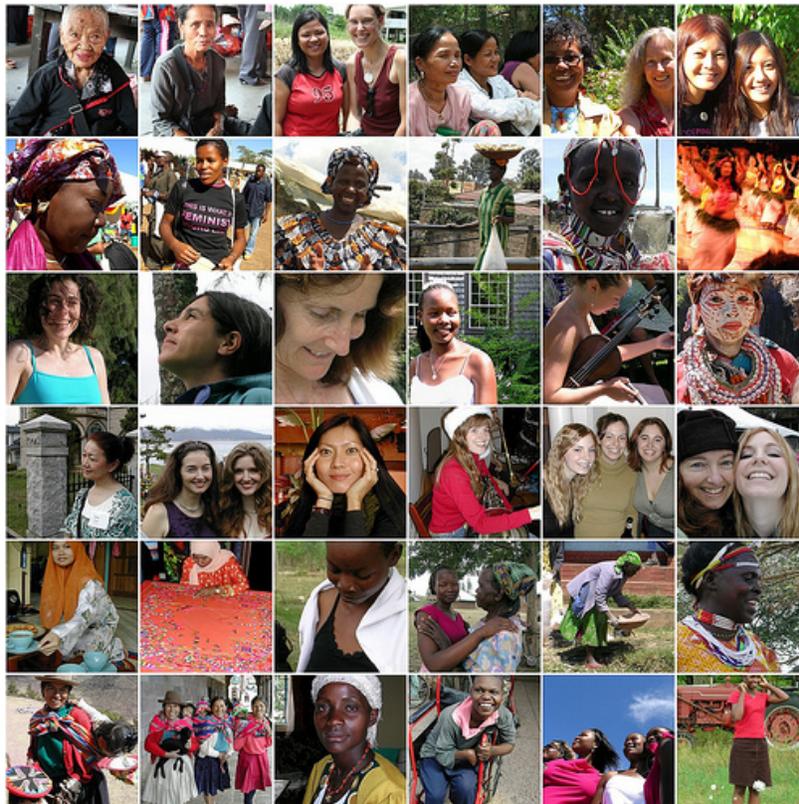
Ratna Omidvar
@Maytree Foundation

[Read more...](#)

TenSquared: Maslaha celebrates 100 years of international Women's Day

By kturner
March 8, 2011

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: March 2011](#)



2011 is the centenary year of International Women's Day and to commemorate this, [UK-based Maslaha](#) is launching [TenSquared](#), a project exploring and celebrating the lives of some of the [amazing Muslim women in Britain](#) today.

Throughout the year, TenSquared will be chronicling the lives of ten inspirational Muslim women, each of whom are making important, tangible changes to their communities. Using photography, fine art and other media, the project aims to provide a deeper understanding of these women's lives and the scale of their achievements.

The first of these portraits will be unveiled on March 31, 2011 at a launch event in Whitechapel with more to follow throughout the year.

[Maslaha is looking for contributions](#). Do you know (or are you) a Muslim woman who is making a difference, bringing about change or pioneering in her field?

For more information about Maslaha's new project on the role Muslim women have played through history in parallel with the powerful achievements of Muslim female role models today, visit [Women at Maslaha](#).

About Maslaha (A Cities of Migration Good Idea)

Maslaha is an exciting new organisation which connects technology with the community to create inventive and effective resources to tackle issues around health and education, with a particular focus on Muslim communities and their service providers.

Maslaha works with artists, historians, scientists, young people, community leaders, religious scholars, ethnographers, dynamic local charities, teachers, doctors, film makers, and plenty of unashamedly proud geeks to bring interesting things to life! Maslaha also uses a range of media to break down barriers and increase understanding of Islam and its contribution to society in a broader context.

Visit www.maslaha.org for more information.

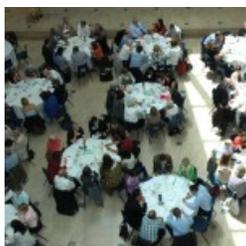
Good Ideas for Women

- London (UK): [Dealing with Diabetes: The Maslaha Project](#)
- Montreal (Canada): [Sports Hijab Helps Girls Make the Team](#)
- Frankfurt (Germany): [School for Mama and Me](#)
- Copenhagen (Denmark): [Women at Work, The KVINFO Mentor Network](#)
- Antwerp (Belgium): [Betet Skara, Reviving an Ancient Art for Entrepreneurial Success](#)
- Oakland (USA): [CEO Women: A Soap Opera for Success: Grand Cafe Telenova](#)
- London (UK): [Kalaayan, Putting Justice to Work for Domestic Caregivers](#)
- Barcelona: [Odame School of Entrepreneurship for Women](#)

Toronto: The City goes Big with the CivicAction Summit

By ktuner
March 3, 2011

[Conversations In Integration](#)



On February 10th and 11th, Toronto hosted the [CivicAction Greater Toronto Summit 2011](#), engaging over 700 civic leaders from Toronto, Mississauga, Markham and Hamilton.

CivicAction describes itself as coalition of thousands of civic leaders “committed to acting collectively to tackle tough issues and big opportunities facing the Toronto region.” Once known as the Toronto City Summit Alliance, its aim is work across sectors and assess priority issues that face the region.

Although the main themes of the conference included economic cooperation; affordable housing; labour markets and labour force readiness; and the value of diversity in corporate leadership, the first day buzz centred around Canada’s new superstar mayor Calgary’s [Naheed Nenshi](#). His keynote speech on Canada’s “diversity advantage” helped make the summit a trending topic on Twitter under the subject heading (also known as a hashtag) #GTASummit with over 100,000

tweets sent on day one.

DiverseCity – Year 2 Review

Also, during the conference, DiverseCity: the Greater Toronto Leadership Project, one of the projects that had come out of an earlier summit, released its report, [Year 2 Review – creating a more prosperous GTA through more diverse leadership – PDF](#) (we profiled [School 4 Civics](#) and [DiverseCity on Board](#) as part of our Good Ideas network).

Prepared by [Ryerson University’s Diversity Institute in Management and Technology](#), the results showed that while some progress had been made, only 14 per cent of leaders within the Greater Toronto area were from visible minorities.

In spite of that fact, discussions revolved around the topic of multiculturalism. Another keynote speaker, Gordon Nixon, President and Chief Executive Officer of RBC, reminded the audience that the Toronto region “is a shining example of how multiculturalism actually works,” adding, “It’s a huge opportunity to generate growth and a real win-win for everyone.”

Participating at the Ballot Box

By kturner
 March 8, 2011
[What Cities Said: March 2011](#)



Civic engagement? Active citizenship? What's another phrase for political participation? This month's conversation invites [Cem Özdemir, co-chair of the German Green Party](#), to talk about political life in Germany and the influences that shape his world view.

While popular democratic uprisings sweep across the Maghreb and Egypt, citizen [campaigns in Boston](#) and [classrooms in Toronto](#) are taking strategies for registering the immigrant vote all the [way to the ballot box \(webinar\)](#).

In the US and Canada, grassroots movements to mobilize city leaders behind local voting rights can look to [Dublin](#) and cities in 18 EU member states for inspiration. Political participation is one of the seven themes addressed in the [new MIPEX III report](#): Canada ranks third behind Sweden and Portugal in integration policies for migrants.

The power of ideas to shape change is celebrated all over the world today. For [International Women's Day](#), we visit a [new project from London-based Maslaha, and showcase women in integration](#).

The best thing about politics? Like spring, change may be just around the corner.

From The Cities of Migration team.

The Good Idea Index: Connect

- [Advocacy](#)
- [Citizenship training](#)
- [Civic engagement](#)
- [Community building](#)
- [Media](#)
- [Political participation](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
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If you have good ideas, feedback or other information to share, please contact us at citiesofmigration@maytree.com.

Hamburg: SchlauFox wins The Tulip!

By kturner
March 3, 2011

[Conversations In Integration](#)



On March 31, the Hamburger Tulpe was awarded to [SchlauFox](#) for its contribution to raising intercultural awareness and outstanding commitment to education and the children and young people of Hamburg.

Look for a full story on SchlauFox's achievement in next month's newsletter. For now enjoy the energy at the [awards](#) ceremony.

Intercultural encounters are part of everyday life in today's cities – in neighbourhoods and city events, on the sports field, in youth centres, at the workplace, in schools and kindergartens. However, moving from co-existence to a shared sense of community based on mutual respect, intercultural understanding and the transformative “we-feeling” can be harder to achieve. It helps to have great examples to learn from.

The award is called the Tulip for a good reason. It was chosen because the tulip “itself is an immigrant and is perfectly integrated,” as the Foundation puts it. The first tulip bulbs were brought to Western Europe from the Ottoman Empire about 450 years ago in the luggage of early European ambassadors.

Since 1999, the annual Hamburg Tulip prize has recognized community leaders and projects that are making positive contributions to multi-ethnic diversity in Hamburg. The annual award of 10,000 € helps ensure the sustainability of this work – and inspires others to follow their example. The patron of the Hamburg Tulip is the President of the Hamburg Parliament, Dr. Lutz Mohaupt.

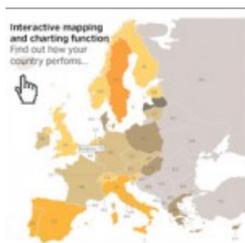
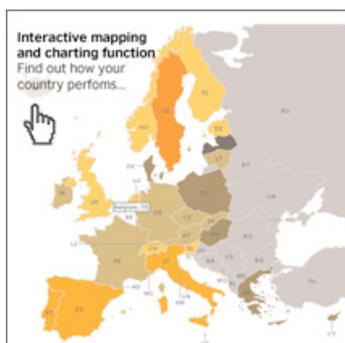
Inspired by the Hamburg Tulip, the [Berlin Tulip](#) for German-Turkish community spirit was inaugurated by the Körber Foundation's in 2006 (annual award of 10,000 €). Klaus Wowereit, the Mayor of Berlin, is the Patron.

Related Good Ideas:

- Rüsselsheim, Germany: [Older but not Overlooked](#)
- Auckland, New Zealand: [Last Words: Cultural Approaches to Death and Dying](#)

Integrating immigrants – Canada is third, but we can do better (MIPEX)

By kturner
March 4, 2011
Uncategorized



“While policymakers may change their messages from day to day and create a lot of news in the press, we actually see that making a policy or legal change takes a substantial amount of time. It then also takes time to implement that policy and then see the actual effects on immigrants’ opportunities in society.” Thomas Huddleston – Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Group

On February 28, Maytree hosted the Canadian release of the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX). This was the third [MIPEX release of data](#) that compares Canada to 30 other countries (mainly EU & the US).

Canada scored third, which is worth celebrating. But, as with all data, scratching below the surface tells us that we have areas for improvement. You can view the recording of the online press conference below.

Featured speakers at the MIPEX press conference were Jan Niessen and Thomas Huddleston of the Migration Policy Group (Brussels), Howard Duncan of the International Metropolis Project & Jack Jedwab of the Association of Canadian Studies (Canada).

Here are the major points our webinar speakers discussed, some key data and links to more information.

Background

MIPEX is the Migrant Integration Policy Index. Researchers reviewed 148 policy indicators in seven policy areas, covering 27 EU member states, Norway, Switzerland, Canada and the USA. Policy areas are labour market mobility, family reunion for third-country nationals, education, political participation, long-term residence, access to nationality, and anti-discrimination. Future reports will include Japan, Australia and New Zealand. For a quick visual overview of the new report, watch this MIPEX online tour, which covers some background about the report and the major, interactive features of the MIPEX website.

Why MIPEX is important

Howard Duncan of the Metropolis Project commented how the policy areas covered by MIPEX are increasing in importance around world. There has been much anxiety recently related to immigrant integration, and how it differs from multiculturalism (especially in Europe). The European dichotomy between integration and multiculturalism is not as evident in Canada. To illustrate, Howard mentioned that Canada just recognized the 40th anniversary of official multiculturalism policy.

Howard went on to say that competition for migrants will be won or lost based on integration policies countries implement. With that in mind, countries are taking immigrant integration more seriously than ever before, but they're also struggling and looking for help and advice.

Within the policy indicators and theme areas, MIPEX seeks to answer this key question: do all residents have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities to help them improve their integration outcomes? It's important to point out that this report is a discussion of policies, not outcomes, although the likelihood of outcomes is taken into account.

What can you do with MIPEX III?

- Analyze seven policy areas which shape a legal resident immigrant's journey to full citizenship;
- Examine how policies compare against the standard of equal rights and responsibilities for migrants;
- Find out how one's country's policies rank compared with other countries;
- Track if policies are getting better or worse over time;
- Dig into real examples of how to improve policies; and
- Use it to design and assess new laws and proposals on an on-going basis.

The key findings include changes since MIPEX II. Comparative data is available in the [Play with data](#) section of the MIPEX site. You can also view country-specific reports. Start with [how Canada did](#)

Where Canada leads

Canada has improved because of increased policy work on foreign credential recognition. Canada leads in labour market mobility, family reunion (but because of our backlog issue we scored the same as MIPEX II). Canada and the US have the strongest anti-discrimination laws and equity policies. European countries are catching up in anti-discrimination. It is important to note that MIPEX measures integration policies (not outcomes or actual status) up to May 31, 2010. Time will tell if recent issues and legislative direction in Canada (such as changes to family reunification) will have an impact on our position in these standings.

Where Canada is weak

While Canada is generally strong, it is weak in some areas. We know that immigrants face challenges on the ground. MIPEX points to the following important areas where Canada could improve:

- The need to remove the large backlog for processing immigrant applications; in 20 countries under study, there are legal time-limits to do so;
- The recognition that non-citizen residents should be given the right to vote in local elections; 18 EU Member States have extended this right to their non-EU residents; and
- The importance of giving leaders of immigrant associations the chance to inform integration policy through immigrant consultative bodies; 14 European countries and leading US states and cities have formal structures in place to seek the views of newcomers.

Our policies, in terms of legal framework, are generally free of discriminatory approaches. But, we can't divorce this from the day-to-day experience of newcomers in Canada.

Webinar Q&A with: Jan Neissen, Thomas Huddleston and Jack Jedwab

How could the Canadian government respond to this report, especially in areas where we're weak?

There is some value in debate being organized on issues about political involvement and engagement. We need to do more work around policy involvement and engagement of immigrants in Canada.

Has health policy been considered for MIPEX?

Such a comparative study moves slowly, but has expanded from four to seven policy areas. It would take time to determine proper research questions. For example, what, specifically, would we want to cover regarding health? Some aspects, such as anti-discriminatory access to services are covered

indirectly.

This is the third year. How did Canada do compared to previous years? Did this study take into account some of the more recent policy shifts in Canada?

Research reflects the situation as of May 31, 2010. Canada only went up one point because of the pan-Canadian framework on credential recognition. Researchers recognize that this is a massive undertaking. Very few other countries have been doing this kind of work on credential recognition. Changes after May 2010 will be factored into the next MIPEX study, in two years time.

What were your findings of how well new Canadians (and immigrants elsewhere) fared in the job market?

The study looks at legislative framework, not actual labour market integration, unemployment rates, etc. This type of information is available from Canadian Census data, and other reports. However, the study encourages dialog around these issues, including expert exchanges between countries.

Which of the MIPEX indicators is most useful to addressing issues of immigrant integration in local communities?

Integration is not uniquely local, national policies are essential. Cities do have a big stake. MIPEX can be used to review national policies. Cities can lobby national government to enhance policies. When a legal framework is in place, support is delivered locally. Cities can create targeted measures, develop the systems, work to get funding to implement, work with local actors.

[In Canada] Education is an example of provincial responsibility, which needs support nationally for even support across the country. National and local connections do exist. Stakeholders can decide on the importance of a particular area and do their own weighting. Play with MIPEX data at www.mipex.eu/play.

Will MIPEX look at the gap between legal structure/policy framework and social and economic integration of immigrants in reality?

Yes. It is important to determine how good policy translates into good outcomes. This will be looked at during the upcoming Metropolis conference and other gatherings. Future plans include to connect policy inputs and policy outcomes.

Source: [Maytree Conversations](#) (February 4, 2011).

Related links:

- [Canadian MIPEX immigration data released \(Maytree\)](#)
- [Canadian MIPEX: les données canadiennes sont maintenant disponibles \(Maytree\)](#)
- [Comprehensive MIPEX mainstream media coverage](#)
- [MIPEX Press Conference, February 2011](#), British Council Brussels, on Vimeo.

MIPEX

Rome: How Rome became La città di Asterix

By kturner
March 3, 2011

[Conversations In Integration](#)

A lovely video recently caught our attention. In December 2008, journalist Carlotta Mismetti Capua met four four Afghanistani boys on a city bus. They had travelled 5000 km to get to La Città di Asterix, their name for Rome.

Although they would soon split up and mostly scatter throughout Europe, Capua was captivated by their story and wrote about it on Facebook. What began as a quick post has become an award-winning project through [a Facebook group](#), [a blog](#) and video, which has allowed Italian students to learn about their lives.



YouTube video player

https://youtube.com/watch?v=http://www.youtube.com/embed/9pLgJL4_HBU



As Capua points out in the video, “This story is by no means unique. 10,000 kids walk or cross the sea alone to reach Italy.”

The trailer won an award in the documentary category from RomaFictionFest while last year, the Facebook project was recognized in the social media category by the Ischia Prize for Journalism, Italy’s major journalism awards. Now a book is coming out including writing inspired by La città di Asterix.

Related Good Ideas:

- Chicago, United States: [Youth on Stage: Real People, Real Stories, Real Community](#)
- Leicester, UK: [Asylum Dialogues](#)
- Madrid, Spain: [Timing, Tempo and Beat: Youth and Community](#)
- Paris, France: [Narratives of Belonging](#)
- Sheffield, United Kingdom: [Cities of Sanctuary, Communities of Welcome](#)

The vote is in! Political inclusion for all!

By Evelyn
March 7, 2011

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: March 2011](#)



Last month Learning Exchange webinar presented "[Ballot Box to Podium: Mobilizing Immigrant Voters and New Leadership](#)." This city-to-city conversation between Alejandra Bravo, manager of leadership programs at Maytree and manager of the School4Civics program, and Eva Millona, executive director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) in Boston, focused on the political participation of diverse communities. Watch the [webinar recording](#) and find new related [resources](#) online.

73% of webinar survey respondents have told us they would adapt these good ideas in their own cities. So, what does it take to start your own political training program and leadership network, or run a successful political and media campaign? Here are some highlights of transferable lessons from our presenters!



Alejandra Bravo, Manager of the [School4Civics program](#), shares her tips for building a successful non-partisan mentoring program and leadership network that trains new candidates to run for office or manage a campaign:

- Design a training curriculum that offers leadership development (identifying values and impact); practical election and campaign workshops (fundraising, communications, identifying and getting out the vote); and participatory learning styles including hands-on exercises and online formats
- Leadership: find someone with political experience and broad political network across party lines to run the program
- Find trainers, mentors and coaches with a multi-partisan spirit who can share their experience to bring practical lessons from the field.
- Train the trainers – provide trainers with tools – they may have strategic, fundraising, communications, or other expertise, but they may not be teachers. Equip them with interactive exercises and other learning tools.
- Invest in success... especially with limited resources, it makes sense to invest more (support, time, opportunities), in people who will truly benefit.
- Partner with other organizations working to promote political leadership and participation of other underrepresented groups
- Wait for long-term impact: the program may end, but the political journey just begins, so remain connected. The success of the leaders you trained, and their social impact, could be months or years in the making.
- Share the stories of success of the leaders you train to garner media attention
- Maintain a network and be deliberate about connecting people, not just with each other, but also with people in positions of power and influence (this could be an elected official or a well-connected activist behind the scenes).

Watch the [webinar recording](#) and find new [related resources](#) online.

Read more about Toronto's [School4Civics](#), a Good Idea for developing diverse political leadership, and how to get in touch.



Eva Millona shares success tips for mobilizing new immigrant voters for political participation from the campaigning experiences of [Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition](#):

- Build strong ethnic media contacts over time to reach targeted constituencies, including utilizing your own network (members and staff) for connections.
- Excite the media by pitching compelling stories of success (from voter turnout and engagement to positive stories about active immigrants participating in civic life)
- Speak the language: find celebrities and allies to reach out in various languages and conduct multilingual interviews
- Give voters the information they need to make informed decisions (i.e. voter guides that outline issues from health to safety)

- Find the new voters (e.g. make use of naturalization ceremonies for photo opportunities and story pitches), while maintaining and growing your voters database from previous campaigns
- Spread the word using many channels, many formats – direct-mail, door-to-door, telephone, postering, postcards
- Reduce physical and language barriers for new voters by offering transportation services to polling stations, translation services, weekend hours

Watch the [webinar recording](#) and find new [related resources](#) online.

Read more about Media Advocacy at MIRA, the [Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition](#), a Good Idea from Boston, and how to get in touch.

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Mobilizing from Los Angeles to Copenhagen

By kturner

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: March 2011](#)



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month Beatriz Hernandez de Fuhr, from Copenhagen, Denmark, finds some answers from a Good Idea about mobilizing the vote from Los Angeles. Do you have a story to share? [Submit a good idea!](#)

Beatriz Hernandez de Fuhr, Mentor Network Coordinator, [KVINFO \(Danish Centre for Information on Gender, Equality, and Ethnicity\)](#), Copenhagen, Denmark

The Good Idea that really caught my eye was: From Los Angeles, [The Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action's \(PILA\) Mobilize the Immigrant Vote Toolkit](#) for mobilizing people into action.

Why?

In Demark, not enough women, and of course, not enough immigrant women, are involved in political life; so [in 2009 KVINFO used mentoring as a first step towards encouraging political participation of immigrant women at the municipal level](#) and it worked! However, after reading PILA's MIV Toolkit I realized that there is a lot to be done to mobilize voters.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I've sent the link to all the individuals and organizations in Denmark for whom I thought the PILA's experience could be relevant.

Related Good Ideas

- Toronto: [Building Professional and Occupational Networks: The Mentoring Partnership](#)
- New York: [Interviewing the Up and Coming at Upwardly Global](#)
- Bremen: [Family Mentoring For Migrants: MEMI](#)
- Birmingham: [Meeting, Mediating and Mentoring: The Power of Peer Mentoring](#)
- London: [Time Together: Mentoring for Daily Life](#)

In Conversation with Germany's Cem Özdemir

By ktuner
March 3, 2011
[Interview](#)



Cem Özdemir, Co-Chair of The Green Party/Die Grünen (Germany) is the first party leader in Germany to come from an immigrant background. The son of Turkish “guest workers”, he has become the *de facto* expert on immigration and integration issues for his party.

In January 2011, [Maytree](#) President Ratna Omidvar spoke with Cem Özdemir about life as a politician in Germany.

Ratna Omidvar: Let's start at the beginning. Where were you born?

Cem Özdemir: I was born in the city Bad Urach in the south west of Germany in the state of Baden-Württemberg.

RO: Are your political perspectives influenced by your migrant background? Or do you feel fully German?

Cem Özdemir: Both. It's not a contradiction! When I started to become active in politics, I was politicized like other people in my age group mainly through the environmental movement. I just felt like anybody else committed to saving the planet and fighting for peace.

But there were two important things that affected my future political activities. One occurred during my school years, when we had an exchange program with the UK and we traveled through Belgium by train. Although I grew up in Germany and speak the local language I needed a travel visa since I had a Turkish passport. [Until that moment] I wasn't aware of this. So I had to leave the train. The border police gave me a travel visa, so at the very last second I boarded the ship to the UK for the exchange program. That was the first time in my life that I realized that although I speak the language, that whatever I do, in the end, the passport matters. Citizenship certainly matters.

When I became active in politics I was focused on environmental questions. However, people were always more interested in talking to me about immigration issues, about integration problems with Turkey. I was asked by people even in my own party about Turkey even though I didn't know a lot about Turkey. Even now that I am party leader, responsible for every topic in the political arena, I still get a lot of requests by journalists in Germany on integration.

RO: What was the political landscape like back then for someone with a migrant background?

Cem Özdemir: I grew up with [Helmut Kohl](#) as chancellor. And a very interesting moment in my life was when I first entered parliament in 1994. Speaking in parliament, I was 2-3 metres away from Helmut Kohl and he had to listen to me. Try to imagine my parents, growing up as guest workers, working class people, and here is their son appearing on TV, standing so close to all these figures from history books.

I don't think that I was treated differently because of my Turkish background at the beginning [of my political career], but over the years I have been constantly reminded of my ethnic roots. When I ran in the Stuttgart local elections, that was the first time in my life that I was confronted with hate mail because of my ethnic origin. I speak [German] like other politicians, I know the local problems like the others. I am active like the others—so what's the difference? Does it really matter that my parents come from another country?

RO: So let's talk about changing demographics: Germany has the highest percentage of “foreign born” in Europe today, language we don't use in Canada.

Cem Özdemir: Even that is progress! [There was a time that we called them 'guest workers' or 'foreigners.'](#) So we are slowly moving in the right direction.

RO: [Germany has had a national integration plan since 2005](#) and describes itself as a country that wants immigrants. What is the best thing that Germany had done on this issue? And what is the most important thing for Germany still to do?

Cem Özdemir: Obviously, one of the turning points was [when Germany recognized birth rights \[to citizenship\] in 2000 when the Green Party first came to power](#). That was a challenging situation for Germany. [Politically], it's unfortunate that we couldn't go as far as we wanted as we lost the state election and had to make difficult compromises. Today, this means that 100,000 children are born every year to “foreign parents”, but only half of them get birth rights [to citizenship]. Why? Because you need to have 8 years of legal status in Germany to be eligible. So the children of refugees and asylum seekers are excluded; people who have lived less than 8 years in Germany are excluded. So Germany is still producing “foreign babies” which is absurd. I mean if you are born in this country, you should be a citizen by birth. So I believe this is one of the tasks we still have to deal with. If we come into power again, I would like to extend citizenship rights and increase the number of those who can apply for citizenship.

Another crucial question that still needs to be addressed in German politics is whether it is good news or bad news when the number of citizenship applications goes down. It should be our goal that foreigners become citizens. Unfortunately, the current government still thinks it is good to introduce hurdles that make it less attractive to become a citizen. I don't say that we should give citizenship in the market square to everyone. Of course, we need conditions. People have to speak the language. People have to stick to the constitution. There is no doubt about that. But why make it less attractive to become citizens? It is easier to talk citizen-to-citizen than to talk citizen-to-foreigner. But there is no consensus about that yet in German politics.

But there is also good news. I believe it was crucial that the current government, which is led by Christian Democrats under the former Minister of Interior, Mr. Schäuble, has stated [on record] that Islam is part of this country. [Schäuble held a conference with Muslim organizations to discuss the relationship between state and religion](#). In Germany, there exist [traditional] agreements between the two Christian churches and the state. So he stated that we should do something similar with the Muslims. This is something to applaud – although I might disagree with some details. It was also good that Madame Chancellor [Merkel] invited immigrant organizations to the chancellorship to discuss immigrant integration policies. I believe these are steps forward. I know it's not easy for conservatives to do these kinds of steps.

RO: If I were an immigrant wanting to come to Germany, what advice would you give me? Which city should I go to?"

Cem Özdemir: [Laughter] I have to say [Stuttgart](#), of course. I ran for office in Stuttgart. But I also believe Stuttgart is a good case because of its economic success. Without economic success, the kinds of things you can do as a politician are limited. [To be a 'city of migration'] you need a welcoming community, and welcoming city leadership: the two parts belong to each other. That is what we have in Stuttgart. Although the city is led by Christian Democrats, when it comes to these integration policy areas, we cheer them.

There is a long tradition in the city of Stuttgart, independent of party politics, of working together in this area because we believe it is crucial. [Historically], what helped was that we had international companies in Stuttgart. These international companies cannot afford to have racism. They cannot afford to have people working for the company and having difficulties with each other. The business has to function and can only function within a culture accepting of diversity. So I believe the economic era also helped policy-makers deal with these issues.

RO: Describe a city where immigrants are integrated and part of society.

Cem Özdemir: The city of my wife! Buenos Aires, where she was born. Let me give you a reason for that. I have always admired how you have Armenians and Turks living side by side in the same country; you have Arabs and Jews, living in the same country, in the same city. There is one thing that unites them. Whatever the problems back there in the country of the forefathers, here we are all newcomers ... a new life has started. So let's try to build a better world and leave behind all the difficulties that we had in our suitcases when we arrived. I believe there is much to learn from the experience of countries of immigration – how they dealt with these difficulties without having people attacking each other. This is something to cheer, to learn from and how to build a new identity. Looking at Buenos Aires and similar cities, we can learn from how to create a new identity, an umbrella that everyone can share. Therefore I believe cities are crucial.

RO: Migrant communities are now becoming mainstream communities. What can they do to change what appears to be a German fear of migration?

Cem Özdemir: One thing I believe is crucial: stop talking about diasporas. You are part of the country, it is your country and when you discuss its problems, start with 'we', not 'us and them'. That's crucial. If you describe something, describe it as a German, as a European, as a Berliner, but don't describe it as somebody who is not part of the larger community. Of course, you can have your sub-identity, there is nothing wrong with that. But we also need an umbrella identity and the umbrella identity for me is being a republican, being a German, being a European – that's what unites us. And then of course, I have my Turkish roots, but that's the 2nd part of it. The first part should be what unites us. In this matter, it is not only the majority community, but also the minority communities themselves who need to work and challenge themselves.

Let me give you an example about what I try to promote. There are so many stereotypes of Islam. When you go out into the street and ask any German what are the first five points that come to your mind when you talk about Islam – it would be terrorism, it would be forced marriage... and all the kinds of things we see in the news. I don't say these things do not exist, unfortunately they exist. But that is not the whole reality.

So try to do something paradoxical, surprise people. For example, there was a local Muslim community in the state of Bavaria who put solar panels on top of the mosque and invited me over for the opening session. Our response was to say, listen, not only Christians but everyone should be concerned about the environment, about energy consumption. If what unites religions is to be responsible citizens, then part of being responsible is to save the planet. Everybody was so surprised because it's not what you expect when you see a mosque. This is the kind of thing that we have to do. Don't talk about what should happen, do it.

RO: You are speaking of [the Marxloh mosque in Duisburg, which we describe in Canada as an example we can all learn from \(See our Good Idea\)](#). So I'm with you, Germans need to talk more about what's happening locally, about examples of city success.

Cem Özdemir: I was at the opening session. This mosque in the Marxloh district of Duisburg was never controversial. Why? Because the mayor supported it, the state did, the local community was involved in a very transparent process. The Muslim community did everything right. They brought the whole neighbourhood together to talk about their concerns. What is interesting is to see [in Cologne, at the same time, another mosque project where everything went wrong](#).

However, if you look to the mosques themselves, the mosque in Duisburg-Marxloh is a very traditional one, a copy of a mosque in Turkey in the Byzantine basilica-style. There is no such thing as a traditional mosque! It is an invention! Whereas the mosque in Cologne is architecturally very modern, a very transparent building, using geothermic energy. But its construction was extremely controversial.

My point is if we live here in Germany, it is also important not to copy the old models of the countries of our forefathers. Why not build a mosque that is a combination of the cities in which we live, of the kind of architecture we find here, together with the cultural roots we bring with us. Muslims can build mosques that are modern mosques with modern architecture. So that would be my wish to Muslim communities.

RO: As a national political leader, you are a role model. And there are an increasing number others like you. Do they get a profile in the media?

Cem Özdemir: Yes, there are many success stories in this country – in sports, media, business, cinema – we have lots of cases. But there is a problem of perception within the majority community. The majority community thinks they know exactly what a real Turkish lady and a real Turkish man looks like. The real Turkish lady is uneducated, not successful, oppressed by her husband, by her brother, by her father or whoever, by the whole community. And the real Turkish man is a macho man, doesn't love his wife, it's a forced marriage, and so on.

Everybody else is an exception. Except, I happen to know a lot of those exceptions! Then, [that means] none of us is a 'real' Turk. We are all exceptions if you insist on describing the 'real' Turk in such negative terms. That's not an attractive model to follow. Just imagine if the Turkish community, or any community, were to describe Germans with those kinds of stereotypes. You obviously can't do that with every community group. That doesn't help.

The more people you see that have "made it", the more attractive it becomes for others to follow their path. This way when I get to the municipality and see people of colour, it shows me that it is also my municipality. I think that is crucial. We need a colour-blind society where people of all backgrounds are represented, all over the place. An inclusive society.

Excerpts from an interview between Cem Özdemir, Co-Chair, The Green Party/Die Grünen (Germany) and Ratna Omidvar, President, The Maytree Foundation, in Berlin, January 19, 2011.

Additional resources:

- [Cem Özdemir official website](#)
- [People and Politics: Cem Özdemir: The New Co-Leader of the Green Party: A Report and Video](#) by Deutsche Welle (English)
- Cem Özdemir, Bundesvorsitzender, [BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN](#)

Hamburg-Mitte: Muslims in EU Cities

By kturner
February 1, 2011
Uncategorized

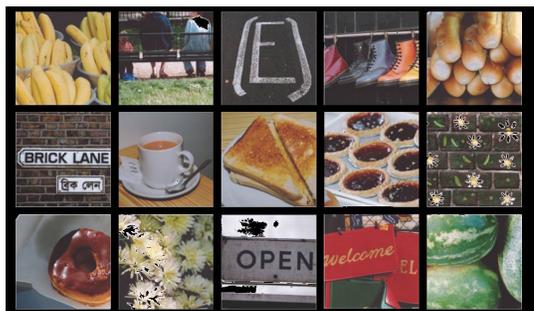
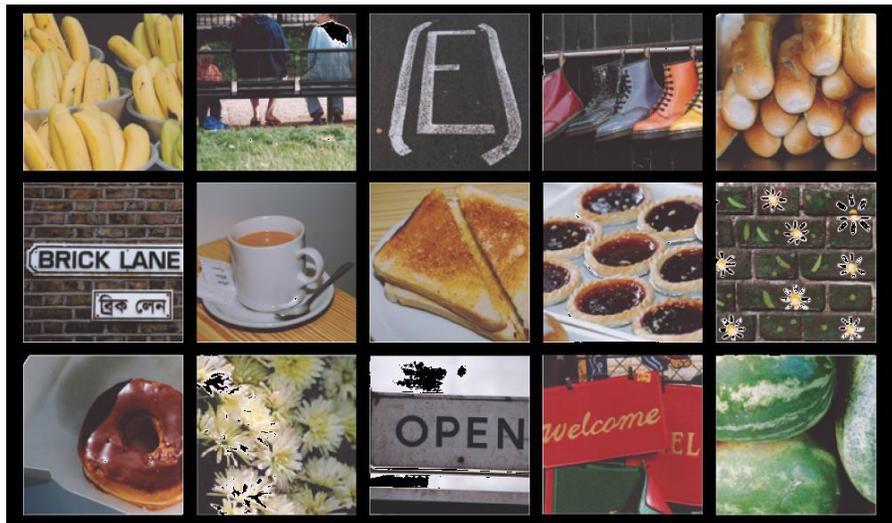
Muslims in EU Cities: Hamburg-Mitte

The Open Society Institute's "[At Home In Europe Project](#)" recently released its report on the district of Hamburg-Mitte. The report was launched in partnership with the British Council [Our Shared Europe](#) project at Hamburg City Hall on June 29, 2010. Through engagement with policy makers and communities, "[Muslims in Hamburg](#)" examine the political, social and economic participation of Muslim communities in Hamburg. It is the fourth report in the Muslims in EU Cities series. The research also examines the level and nature of integration of Muslims in 11 cities across Europe (Antwerp, Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Leicester, London, Marseille, Paris, Rotterdam, and Stockholm). An overview report, [Muslims in Europe: Muslims in Europe: A Report on 11 EU Cities](#), is also available.

Fair and Affordable: The Better Banking Campaign

By Evelyn
February 7, 2011

[Conversations In Integration,What Cities Said: February 2011](#)



[London's Fair Finance](#) (a Good Idea @ Cities of Migration) is one of nearly 500 organizations calling for fundamental reform of the banking system. Established in 2009 in response to the catalytic impact of the economic crisis on public financing, the [Better Banking Campaign](#) is working to ensure that this opportunity is not missed.

For campaign member organizations like Fair Finance, the financial crisis has presented a “once in a generation opportunity to transform the banking sector so that it works in the interests of us all. If we are able to take it, it could help eradicate long-term problems such as financial exclusion which have affected some of the most disadvantaged communities in our society for many years” ([Better Banking Campaign website](#)). The wide spectrum of third sector organizations represented in the coalition reflects the far reaching implications of financial exclusion: it increases poverty levels amongst the lowest income groups, which has a huge negative impact on those struggling with debt, poor housing, old age, ill-health, physical

and mental disabilities and social exclusion.

The London Rebuilding Society, which is overseeing the coalition, suggests that financial institutions do not always understand the needs and potential of certain types of borrowers when it comes to risk management. Educating both the consumer and banking institutions on these issues is part of their mandate. For supporters such as [The Barrow Cadbury Trust](#), the Better Banking Campaign creates opportunities for a more “mutually beneficial relationship between the banking sector and low income communities” that can encourage the provision of finances for the business and communities that need it most.

Four measures have been identified by The Better Banking Campaign which they believe will help ensure financial institutions serve the interests of all people, businesses and third sector organizations equally. These are:

- Transparency from banks about the communities they do and don't serve
- An incentive structure to encourage banks to fully engage with people and businesses in all communities
- A cap on extortionate lending rates
- A commitment from banks to re-invest 1% of their profits for social benefit

For more information, visit the Better Banking Campaign [website](#).

Related Good Ideas:

- London (UK): [Banking on Affordable Credit](#)
- Faisal Rahman, founder of Fair Finance has a column in The Guardian (UK) called [Hard to Credit](#)

Auckland to Seattle: Walking to School for Health and Safety

By kturner

February 8, 2011

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: February 2011](#)



Auckland's [Walking School Bus](#), a Cities of Migration "Good Idea in Integration," has traveled to Seattle!

In Seattle, the [Harborview Medical Center](#), an academic facility managed by the University of Washington, has partnered with the [Seattle Children's Hospital](#), the Seattle Public Schools and a pedestrian advocacy group called [Feet First](#), to develop a "walking school bus" programme to encourage urban kids to get to school, and get more exercise, safely.

A walking school bus (WSB) is a group of children who walk to and from school chaperoned by responsible adults, usually parents. WSB programs address parents' safety concerns by combining adult supervision with opportunities for learning pedestrian safety skills. Auckland's community-based initiative promotes child health and safety, while building an integrated community with parents and children around the daily ritual of traveling to school. In Seattle, the long-term goal of the community health initiative was to demonstrate that walking to school is a promising form of physical activity with potential to make population-level changes to improve child health.

Healthy, Happy, Safe

Walking School Bus

Childhood obesity has become a major public health problem in the United States, and is especially problematic in urban, socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. Southeast Seattle, for example, is a racially and ethnically diverse area where more than 27% of Southeast residents are immigrants and 12.4% of the population lives below the Federal Poverty Line. Increasing children's physical activity has been shown to decrease obesity and is a major goal for a number of US national health initiatives.

In Seattle, the WSB program worked with local schools to increase children's daily physical activity in a safe setting. The first [pilot project](#), involving 25 students at one urban elementary school, was so successful it later expanded to four more schools. In fact, Seattle Public Schools and [Feet First](#) were able to obtain a grant from the state U.S. Department of Transportation to hire a part-time coordinator who recruited parent volunteers and develop the route to and from school.

Success

The Seattle "walking school bus" was successful in two ways. First, the students walked up to a mile and half at least once a week. One year later, almost 18% more students at the pilot school were walking compared with schools without the "bus".

Secondly, parents began to feel more connected to the school and to each other, particularly as the pilot school was in a culturally diverse area with families from East Africa, and Central and South America. Parents were able to participate as volunteers even if they did not speak English well. Not only did they get to meet other members of the community, some of the "walking school bus" parents became volunteers within their children's classrooms.

The successful implementation of a walking school bus program also highlights the enthusiasm of school personnel to welcome and work with community partners like Harborview Medical Center. Today, the [Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Seattle](#) is a unique partnership between Harborview Medical Center, Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center and Public Health Seattle & King County that mobilizes resources and personnel in support of collaborative projects on behalf of children in Central and Southeast Seattle.

Related Good Ideas:

- Seattle (US): [Interpreting Diversity in Healthcare](#)
- Auckland (NZ): [The Walking School Bus](#)

Inclusion Means All of Us: Ratna Omidvar

By Evelyn

February 3, 2011

[Conversations In Integration, Opinion, What Cities Said: February 2011](#)



Inclusion Means All of Us

Opinion by: Ratna Omidvar, President, Maytree Foundation

There are numerous organizations engaged in the struggle for justice and equality, and I'm privileged to have the opportunity to lead one such group. Maytree is a small, private foundation dedicated to promoting diversity and fighting poverty, with a particular focus on migrant integration and inclusion. While it normally takes one or two generations to reap the benefits of migration, it is Maytree's ambition to do it sooner, faster and better.

Every successive stream of migrants enriches our communities. The sooner migrants are both integrated and included in society, the sooner our cities and our country can benefit.

Integration is not an accident

As a relatively new country, Canada is not hindered by a long history of ethnic conflict or strife.

Canada does have a history of civic tension between French and English, and between both of them and our First Nations. However, over time we have learned to accommodate those tensions in increasingly peaceful ways and have reached a level of tolerance for difference which has helped us develop a number of constitutional and legal frameworks to encourage migrant integration.

Our immigration successes, significant as they are, are clearly in the mid to long term, as signified by the number of immigrants who buy homes, intermarry, take up citizenship and send their children to university. But it is success in the short term that alludes us. Canada, whilst being the most tolerant and successful multicultural society in the world, a model to all, is not yet an inclusive society. Inclusion is our next challenge.

From integration to inclusion

Integration and Inclusion are not the same, although they are very closely linked. Integration sets out to ensure that the immigrant fits in, speaks the language, obeys the law, works, pays taxes and votes. Inclusion goes a step further, where the immigrant is an active partner in shaping and changing institutions and society. Think of one as participation, the other as ownership. In integration, the onus is for the greater part on the immigrant. Whilst integration asks a great deal of the migrant, inclusion asks the host society to change and shift. Neither integration nor inclusion can happen accidentally or wishfully, they require the discipline of intentions, instruments and investments.

But it is inclusion that will guarantee equality of opportunity, belonging and contribution. It has the power to turn "me and you" into "us and we".

Maytree has developed an international project, [Cities of Migration](#), which showcases good practices on integration and inclusion from cities around the world. By describing their accomplishments, we show that cities can be successful with the right inputs and under the right conditions. We also demonstrate how good ideas can be replicated. And, perhaps most importantly, we show that the aspirations of inclusion can be grounded in reality. After finding and publishing more than 85 ideas from cities around the world, we can say a few things about the integration and inclusion of migrants with confidence.

First, place matters. While migration is a national or regional phenomenon, integration and inclusion are uniquely local experiences. The local welcome is a living example of whether a country's migration system succeeds or fails.

Second, inclusion is a two-way street. Just as the migrant must change and adapt, so must society and its institutions. In Toronto today, we are building more cricket pitches than baseball diamonds.

Third, cities can chart their own path, even if it is contrary to national sentiment, national media and national policy. The sheer necessity of living and working side by side and getting on with the business of daily life is a natural driver for solutions, arrangements and compromises.

Finally, everyone is an inclusion actor – the postman, the business down the street, the teacher, the unionist, the politician, the migrant. Each has a role that can only be accomplished with the active participation of the other. And each benefits from the diversity and shared prosperity that migration brings



to their cities.

On January 17, Ratna Omidvar, President, The Maytree Foundation, delivered the second Martin Luther King Lecture, at the Stiftung Koerber in Hamburg. This Opinion excerpts Ms. Omidvar's views on: Inclusion: The Next Dream.

- For the full text of Ms Omidvar's remarks, *Inclusion: The Next Dream*, [click here](#).
- To listen to the full speech, [click here \[podcast\]](#)
- Körber Stiftung: [Martin Luther King Lecture](#) – Thema Immigration, Integration und Einbindung, mit Ratna Omidvar, Maytree

London: Migrants for London, London for Migrants

By Evelyn
Uncategorized



[Migrants for London, London for Migrants](#): A new video on immigration in contemporary London highlights the contradictions in a city where migrants are essential to fill the hundreds of thousands of jobs that keep the city functioning yet often face restrictions that place them in a state of extreme vulnerability. Behind the veneer of London's image as a global economic centre and a cosmopolitan and convivial city there is a reality of low paid jobs too often filled by migrant workers with precarious immigration status and facing barriers in accessing public services.

Yet, the film also emphasizes the potential for a fairer deal for both migrants and London's settled population and shows some of the activities that migrants and non-migrants are already carrying out to try to bring about changes to some of these issues. 'Migrants for London' encourages us to reflect on the role of immigration in a city like London and the prospects for a different approach towards migrants and the contribution they make to our cities.

This video is based on a [new report 'Migrant Capital'](#) which was published in June by [Migrants' Rights Network \(MRN\)](#), a national resource in support of migrants' rights work underway across the UK (and internationally), providing a platform for debate, policy analysis and campaigning. MRN hopes that the film will encourage watchers to stand back and "reflect on some of the underlying reasons why immigration continues to play a key part in the city's economy" and on the effects of immigration policy on many of the migrants living in London.

If you would like a DVD copy of 'Migrants for London' and/or a hardcopy of 'Migrant Capital' please contact Juan Camilo at j.camilo@migrantsrights.org.uk

Kudos for Kalayaan

By Evelyn
February 7, 2011

[Conversations In Integration,What Cities Said: February 2011](#)



In 2007, the Trust for London, marked the bicentenary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade with a special initiative aimed at improving the position of people vulnerable to exploitation in the UK. The Tackling Modern Day Slavery Initiative was tasked with exposing and examining forms of 'modern day slavery', including people trafficking. Five organizations, each with a particular area of expertise, whether it be adults, children, domestic workers or women in sexual exploitation, formed the of heart of the project which has recently published its final report, [A Chance To Be Free](#).

The report was launched at an event marking the end of this initiative and included a rehearsed reading of a new script from [iceandfire](#), created from the testimonies of three people who had experienced slavery or exploitation in the UK.

[Kalayaan](#), whose work supporting Migrant Domestic Workers was part of the Trust's Modern Day Slavery special initiative, is one of five organizations to win the [Guardian Charity Awards 2010](#).

Both [iceandfire](#) and [Kalayaan](#) are featured as Good Ideas in Integration at Maytree's [Citiesofmigration.ca](#).

The New “Fortune 500” at DiverseCity onBoard

By Evelyn

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: February 2011](#)



Extra! Extra! 500 new perspectives in the boardrooms of the GTA! The [DiverseCity onBoard](#) roster has just hit an important milestone. The program has connected 500 city leaders with opportunities to serve on boards, agencies and commissions across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Why is this important? Because it means that more than 500 minority leaders in Toronto have been propelled into positions of leadership closer to the corridors of power.

In politics, media, and business, in corporate board rooms, public institutions or even foundation boards, the leaders who set the pace and the agenda are almost uniformly white and male. Even in offices and boardrooms within the region of Toronto, where 50% of the population were born outside the country, 86% of leaders are white. Migrants have found themselves trapped between the floor and the glass ceiling.

Diversity OnBoard works with city governments and provincial bodies to help them seek qualified talent to sit on their boards, agencies and commissions.

The good news is that an increasing number of organizations in both the public and non-profit sector recognize that diversity in leadership is not only the right thing to do but makes good business sense in today's complex global economy.

Success at the Top

After just under five years, [DiverseCity OnBoard](#) has facilitated over 500 matches to agencies, boards and commissions across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), has 1500 qualified individuals, and over 430 organizations registered on its roster. These individuals are highly skilled and trained professionals, including lawyers, doctors, accountants, entrepreneurs, social administrators and marketers. More than 60% has board governance experience; more than 60% operates at the senior management level and 70% has business experience. Together, they are changing the face of city leadership and putting diversity to work – for everyone.

Follow the [DiverseCity onBoard](#) story on the Maytree blog!

More Resources:

- Learn more about the [DiverseCity, The Greater Toronto Leadership Project](#), and its eight signature programs.
- Read our Good Idea: [Changing the Face of Leadership: DiverseCity OnBoard](#)
- VIDEO: Meet Patsy Russell, a DiverseCity onBoard candidate who leverages her financial services background by serving on three boards.

The New Haven Promise: Mayor DeStefano Strikes Again

By ktuner
February 2, 2011
Uncategorized



We last featured New Haven, Connecticut, Mayor John DeStefano in our Good Ideas collection where he introduced [a municipal ID card](#) for all residents, regardless of immigration status.

His latest project, The New Haven Promise, is aimed at students. Although the city is home to the wealthy and prestigious Yale University, [it has a high school drop out rate of 38 per cent](#). And of the students who do go on to college, [only half remain in their second year directly out of high school](#).

The programme aims to develop 'college-going ambition' within the school system by providing scholarships to state colleges and universities to local high school graduates, [all funded by partner Yale University](#).

The New Haven Promise, announced in November 2010, was the result of a key question that was circulating in the mayor's office: What does it take to help move an entire city forward into the next

generation?

The answer, according to Mayor DeStefano, was simple: "The most powerful way that we as a city can organize and envision our future is around the aspirations and potential of our young people."

[Modelled on a similar program that was first started in 2005 in Kalamazoo, Michigan](#), eligible high school students graduating this year will have 25% of their tuition at state colleges or universities paid by funding partner Yale University. The following year's graduates will have 50% of their tuition covered while the class of 2014 will receive their entire higher education for free.

The New Haven Promise is part of a broader move towards educational reform as well as a means to revitalize the city by attracting new families to New Haven. Even immigration status will have no bearing on a student's participation in the program.

Says Mayor John DeStefano, Jr., "[This is a] contract that says to kids: If you work hard, you demonstrate academic achievement and display appropriate behaviours, we'll give you the tools to go to college and therefore inject choice and opportunity in your lives."

Source: [Public School Kids Get A College "Promise" In New Haven Independent, November 9, 2010](#)

Source: [New Haven, Seeking to Get More Students Into College, Will Pay Tuition In New York Times, November 9, 2010](#)

More like this:

- [Video: Conversation with Mayor John DeStefano at The 2010 International Cities of Migration Conference](#)
- [Good Idea: Urban Citizens: Municipal Identification Cards \(ID\) For Inclusive And Safe Communities](#)
- [Learning Exchange: Routes to belonging: the role of cities in the civic and political integration of immigrants, March 2009 \(\(archived webinar\): featuring Good Ideas and city representatives from Dublin and New Haven](#)

Re-thinking Equalities: In Birmingham with Joy Warmington

By Evelyn
February 3, 2011

[Conversations In Integration, Interview, Interviews, What Cities Said: February 2011](#)



Joy Warmington, CEO of [brap](#), an equalities and human rights charity based in Birmingham, discusses her organization's commitment to developing more progressive and inclusive approaches to equalities that can benefit everyone, irrespective of their 'race'.

Cities of Migration: Outside of London, Birmingham is one of the UK's most 'diverse' cities. It is also a city with one of the biggest gaps between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots.'

In your recent comments on the UK's new Equality Act, you cautioned that "legislation is not a magical panacea" and that we will have "to change the way we think about equality" to enjoy the benefits of a fair society. Can you elaborate on this distinction?

Joy Warmington: Whilst I'm pleased that more people are potentially protected by expanded provisions in the Equality Act, I am also worried about the people who aren't. People suffer discrimination based on all sorts of factors, not least their socio-economic background. We have to find a way of designing legislation so it doesn't just cover certain people in certain situations, but provides protection and security for all people, regardless of who they are.

Connected with this point is the question of what equalities legislation actually does. So far our laws have worked well – perhaps very well – in protecting people from discrimination. But eradicating discrimination is not the same as promoting equality. Equality is about recognizing that we don't all start from the same position in life. As much as we like to think otherwise there isn't a level playing field in society, and, as such, we have to provide some people



with additional resources and support so they can achieve the things in life they truly value. Ensuring this support is provided as a right is central to creating a fairer, more equitable society. I don't think it can be done through legislation alone.

The biggest challenge is to rethink what we expect of ourselves and society. Inequality and unfairness have become so pervasive that people think they're inevitable, a necessary fact of life. I don't believe this. There is evidence to suggest that inequality has many consequences: higher levels of crime, mental illness, child poverty, and so on. However, I don't believe we should accept this as an acceptable side effect of the way we've chosen to construct society. We need to have the courage to challenge the media, politicians, and other people who tell us this is the case. We need the courage to believe that better is possible.

Cities of Migration: You challenge us “to reinvigorate our pursuit of equality” by removing the barriers that hold people back. Give me an example of how that might look to a Birmingham constituent?

JW: Often, the barriers that hold people back are complex – they change depending on the individual person and the context. One of the things we do at brap is spend some time thinking about what barriers are relevant to who, how they play out in service delivery, and how they can be dismantled. We've recently finished some research, for example, looking at the impact of social networks on reducing poverty amongst BME people. The results were pretty surprising!

The example I remember from my teaching days is how quickly children who were labeled as 'underachievers' or 'trouble makers' were marginalized within the system. They were rarely encouraged or challenged to do better. They were expected to behave badly and they did behave badly – it didn't occur to many of them that another option was available. Often, the worst poverty people can experience is poverty of aspiration, to believe that they aren't capable of achieving something better.

At brap, one of the things we try to do is to make equality real for service providers in this way: to show them what equality means for their day-to-day role and how they go about changing the way they do things to ensure the barriers holding people back are removed – even if this is one teacher at a time.

Cities of Migration: At the 2010 Cities of Migration conference, Frank Sharry of America's Voice talked about the importance of recruiting the “skeptical middle.” How has brap gone about bringing the ordinary Birmingham resident on board?

JW: Most people don't like to disagree with the pursuit of equality. No one wants to be labeled a 'racist' or a 'sexist.' At the same time this is not the same as our united acceptance that equality is a good thing. brap has been using human rights as a concept to engage the people in understanding how equality can be meaningfully applied to their lives. We have developed a [toolkit](#), which can be used to re-assess service quality and create better benchmarks of service delivery. Once people see how equality can be applied to make things better for all – not just for some – they are more likely to engage and to develop ownership for this agenda.

Cities of Migration: What were some of the more important lessons you took from the Cities of Migration conference?

JW: I really enjoyed the conference. There were some very cutting edge ideas there. I especially liked the marketplace idea. It was an opportunity to figure out what's happening and to take some really good practical ideas away. And a really good opportunity to network!

The thing that struck me actually wasn't so much a particular good idea from the Marketplace, but how we evaluate our ideas. I found myself asking why there weren't more opportunities to examine our understanding of what works. What ideas or practices can really progress opportunities for migrant communities?

So that's my good idea! I'm going to set up an evaluation conference in Birmingham when I get back.

Cities of Migration: Any surprises?

JW: I'm surprised it doesn't happen more often, given the critical issue of 'under opportunity' and under-utilization of talent, discrimination, and far right issues in Europe. I think more of this should happen. More dialogue, more exchange and opportunities.

Cities of Migration: Are there lessons from Birmingham for other cities of migration?

JW: In Birmingham, it used to be the case that when public bodies wanted input on a new project or initiative, they would consult with people from particular communities. This was based on an assumption that there is something different about people from a BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) background which must be uncovered to ensure 'fair' service delivery. Through brap, I spend a lot of time arguing against such 'identity-based' thinking, pointing out that it reified cultural divisions, reinforced stereotypes, did not recognize the diversity within communities, and did little to encourage serious, structural reform of public services.

The argument has not been won by any means, but representation and engagement with BME communities has changed significantly over the last ten years in the city. Now at least we're asking the right questions – what are the principles behind fair and transparent engagement? This is already leading to more effective involvement of the public.

Cities of Migration: What do you love best about your Birmingham?

JW: The fact that people still talk to you whilst your standing at a bus stop!

Cities of Migration: What is your favourite city?

JW: I'd have to say Birmingham, but Toronto comes a very close second.

Good Ideas using a human rights approach to education:

- Montreal: [Play if Fair! Equitas](#)
- Toronto: [JumpMath](#)

Putting a human right approach to work @brap:

- Birmingham: [Using human rights to achieve fairer cancer outcomes](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas: Mentoring Champions of Change

By Evelyn
February 7, 2011
Uncategorized



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month, a Good Idea, The [Mentoring Partnership](#), travels from Toronto to The Hague to Round Lake Park in the USA. Do you have a story to share? [Submit a good idea!](#)

Meet:
Carolina Duque, Executive Director, [Mano a Mano Family Resource Center](#), Round Lake Park, Illinois, USA

The Good Idea that really caught my eye was:
[TRIEC's Mentoring Partnership](#) from Toronto is an innovative way to bring together skilled immigrants and professionals to develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

Why?

I think that by facilitating a relationship between skilled immigrants and established professionals, you are helping immigrants get connected, start a network of support and learn about opportunities for their own professional development. By sharing and developing a relationship of trust, non-immigrants become more aware of the power and benefits of diversity and the invaluable contributions that immigrants bring to their communities. I think that developing mentors is the best way to gain advocates and champions that have a better understanding of the challenges that immigrants face and are willing to provide them with the support they need to succeed.

How did you share this Good Idea?

I attended the Cities of Migration conference at The Hague on October 3-4, and the [Marketplace of Good ideas](#) made it possible to visit 3 different "Ideas" (booths). TRIEC's [Mentoring Partnership](#) caught my attention.

In December I had the opportunity to visit Toronto and meet with Elizabeth McIsaac, the Executive Director of [TRIEC](#), and the person who is implementing The [Mentoring Partnership](#). I was fascinated by the project. Coming back to Lake County, the area that Mano a Mano serves, I see many opportunities for this type of program.

Although most of the immigrants that we support are not professionals, The Mentoring Partnership is a model that can be replicated and adapted to other communities. In our case, we are developing a system where math tutors help immigrants prepare to pass their GED test. We realize the importance of having a skilled labor force and the role that immigrants play in helping their communities advance economically.

Any feedback:

We have seen that the volunteers and tutors that help our clients with English, citizenship or GED, learn so much about their students' families, their struggles, their potential, and their dreams and hopes for the future, that they become the best advocates. I truly believe that these types of programs help not only immigrants but the community as a whole because it is the best way to bring the cultures together, to learn from one another and to build community and trust.

Related Good Ideas

- Toronto: [Building Professional and Occupational Networks: The Mentoring Partnership](#)
- Copenhagen: [Women at Work: the KVINFO Mentor Network](#)
- New York: [Interviewing the Up and Coming at Upwardly Global](#)
- Bremen: [Family Mentoring For Migrants: MEMI](#)
- Birmingham: [Meeting, Mediating and Mentoring: The Power of Peer Mentoring](#)
- London: [Time Together: Mentoring for Daily Life](#)

Town Hall Perspectives on Integration

By kturner

December 14, 2010

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)

Speakers at the 2010 [Cities of Migration Conference](#) represented a wide range of sectors and interests, from city governments, to local and international NGOs, advocacy groups and media, to the private sector and academics. We share some of their key points with you here, and invite you to watch the highlights from our [video gallery](#).

Integration Town Hall Panel:

Kica Matos, Tufyal Choudhury, Francesca Froy, Andries van Rozen, Ayse Ozbabacan

Kica Matos, Program Executive, The Atlantic Philanthropies (New York)

- City leaders need to ensure that immigrants feel part of the city, that they contribute to the city's richness and are being respected.
- City officials (police, elected officials) should visit immigrant communities to learn about what issues are important to them.

Tufyal Choudhury, Senior Policy Advisor, Open Society Institute (London)

- Local identities are very important in the integration process, as it is here that we can experience how it feels to be part of the community.
- Attitudes do change. In the case of Leicester, in the 1970s there was newspaper advertising on why East African Asians should not settle. Now, the city sees diversity as a positive asset and they market the city's strength on its diversity.
- The brightest and best of young people are more mobile and they will go to places which are more friendly to them – for example, Turkish second-generation is doing well but choosing to leave Germany for other European cities.

Francesca Froy, Senior Policy Analyst, OECD Leed Programme (Paris)

- Need both a local and a national strategy on integration.
- National programs need the flexibility to adapt to the special needs and particular issues that present in the local context
- Small specialized local projects and flexible mainstream national projects that work together so NGOs aren't only doing the work.
- The key focus on promoting migrants' employment are "RNA tools" where R = the recognition of skills and how those skills can be useful to employers; N = networking to break down boundaries; and A = adaptation to the labour market.

Andries van Rozen, Diversity Officer, PwC PricewaterhouseCoopers (Amsterdam)

- Diversity promotes innovation in the workplace. In order for companies to foster and retain diversity, they need to work on their employment practices and work culture to break through traditional and conservative models of work.
- Companies can have good practice and recruit the most experienced and qualified but to retain the right people the company needs to adapt its organizational culture, its policies and practices so that they value and can leverage diversity.

Ayse Ozbabacan, Coordinator, European Cities Network CLIP and the Department of Integration Policy, City of Stuttgart

- Integration will only happen when different partners and actors are able to work together to cover all aspects of the integration process – for example in service delivery.
- Education is a priority area for integration because the institutional environment creates opportunities to provide good support to young migrants.
- Given the current reduction in financial resources available for projects, peer mentoring is a sound, affordable integration strategy to consider.
- It is important to include parents in early childhood education to help them teach their children and prepare them for school within the home.

Media Lessons for Local Leaders

By kturner

December 17, 2010

[Conversations In Integration](#), [Conversations In Integration Archive](#), [What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



Speakers at the 2010 [Cities of Migration Conference](#) represented a wide range of sectors and interests, from city governments, to local and international NGOs, advocacy groups and media, to the private sector and academics. We share some of their key points with you here, and invite you to watch the highlights from our [video gallery](#).

Media Panel:

Bashy Quraishy, Susan Marjetti, Rokhaya Diallo, and Frank Sharry

Bashy Quraishy, Chief Editor, MediaWatch, and Chair, Advisory Council, European Network Against Racism-ENAR (Copenhagen)

- Creating a healthy and robust media includes promoting more ethnic minorities in both mainstream and ethnic minority media (this includes minority languages).
- Diversity in the media must be present on all levels – managers, editors, journalists – and include all types of media, including newspapers, TV, and websites.
- To achieve integration success, civil society must engage media proactively and demand greater balance and more neutrality in the media

Susan Marjetti, Managing Director (Toronto), CBC-Radio, TV, Online

- Engage your audience (and potential audience) by listening to the stories that they want to hear or that are relevant to them.
- Having a diverse production team means that different stories emerge, and it is less likely that only one staff member will have to argue for the story's relevancy.
- The public has a role to play in promoting diversity in the media – people need to be willing to come forward and share their stories when asked.

Rokhaya Diallo, President, Les Indivisibles (Paris)

- Humour can be used as a tactic to deconstruct prejudice and stereotypes. One way to evolve perceptions is to make fun of them.
- Journalists don't think their reporting is racist unless they are challenged. However, the point is not only to point out racism but to present an alternative discourse so people can form a more balanced position on the issues..
- Well-placed volunteers can be used for successful campaigning. Les Indivisibles have used well-know celebrities for award ceremonies and for anti-racist mock events like a casting call for 'white people' at a French city hall.
- It is not enough to only have non-white media hosts; the entire production team should reflect the diverse backgrounds that make up the audience. It is the team that decides what gets reported and how the reporting is delivered.

Frank Sharry, Founder and Executive Director, America's Voice (Washington)

- Online media has the potential to be a media watchdog and shape the narrative on issues by bypassing the mainstream. For example, through reporting corrections.
- Online media (when a communications strategy is in place) allows for fast pick-up on issues with the potential for the media reports to go viral through the wired social network. It is less about begging the press for attention than about following and framing the issues so the press is getting your message along with the news.
- A way to influence policymakers is through journalists – influence them and reach policymakers.
- Stories that make it through to media have to be interesting or presented in unusual ways. You need to have interesting content to break through the information clutter, for example, through using humour and making fun of people.

City Leadership: A View from the Top

By ktuner

December 16, 2010

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



City leaders were challenged to share their vision of what it takes to create successful cities of migration at the our recent conference in The Hague, [From Migration to Integration: An Opportunity Agenda for Cities](#).

Notwithstanding language, geography and the perennial question of size, all our panelists agreed on the essentials: Migration is both an opportunity and driver of city success and diversity is among its greatest assets.



<https://youtube.com/watch?v=>



Here are some of the lessons that our esteemed speakers shared with us:

Greg Clark, Lead Advisor, OPEN Cities, and Chair, OECD LEED Forum on Development Agencies and Investment Strategies

- City leadership needs to align the story of immigration with the future success of the city.
- Cities need a long-term approach to immigration which withstands electoral cycles. This is vital to building an inclusive sense of belonging.
- City leaders must engage local and national media to communicate positive impact of immigration.
- There is a global role for city governments in the migration story. Migration is dynamic yet a permanent reality and it is necessary to prepare for both the present and the future

Listen to Greg Clark's full speech on "Why Cities Matter"

To download Greg Clark's full speech, [click here](#)

Julia Deans, Chief Executive Office, Toronto City Summit Alliance

- Positive messaging on immigration cannot only come from government. The discussion must include a diverse set of voices, from business as well as grassroots and non-governmental organizations.
- Notwithstanding much present success, civic leaders can not afford to be complacent.
- Civic leaders need to understand the global context of net migration and how migration flows change over time. They need to be ready to respond proactively to challenges like the recent economic crisis.

John DeStefano, Mayor, City of New Haven, Conn.

- Immigration is good for markets and workers, it fuels competition and leads to innovation.
- Immigration is not a zero-sum game where existing residents lose out to immigrants. It is important for city leaders to emphasize the opportunity immigration brings to overall wealth and shared city prosperity.
- Cities are not just destinations for migration, but passageways from other cities, across generations, to citizenship, local prosperity.
- Locally elected leaders have to take the lead in building the story of the city.

Marnix Norder, Deputy Mayor, The Hague

- It is important to learn from and build on the successes of other cities on how to frame immigration and mitigate the concerns of the residents.
- Cosmopolitan/international cities have an integration challenge not just in terms of low-skilled migrants but also with high skilled immigrants, the new global migrants (i.e. diplomatic and international organizations). This creates additional challenges in very transitory cities.

Daniel de Torres, Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, Barcelona Municipality

- It is important to include the indigenous population in the immigration and integration strategy.
- Leadership must prioritize positive interaction and myth busting in innovative ways that reach people, such as visual media as opposed to print media.
- Governments need to recognize the reality of undocumented migrants and the challenges it brings to public service provision, in essential areas like health and education

Vijaya Vaidyanath, Chief Executive Officer, Waitakere City Council

- It's not only about migration and settlement, but also inclusion.
- Cities need to empower immigrants to participate in the electoral process and take on leadership roles themselves.
- The emphasis in this debate should not be 'tolerating diversity', but rather how to 'harness diversity': we need to work on the strengths that ethnic and cultural diversity brings.

Sir Richard Leese, Leader, Manchester City Council

- In terms of community relations, it is important not to only frame relations between migrants and indigenous (white English) communities. With increasing diversity for example, effective integration also means working to bring different migrant groups together, such as Romanian Roma with Pakistanis, and Somalis with African Caribbean groups.
- It is important to address gender in inclusion strategies. There are particular issues relevant to migrant women, such as economic exclusion and language proficiency, that are important.

Listen to the full City Leaders Panel audio-recording

To download the City Leaders Panel audio, [click here](#).

Watch the City Leader Panel video summary, [click here](#).

Eva Millona: Media as a Tool for Change

By kturner

[Conversations In Integration, Interview, Interviews, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



Using media as a tool for change has been a winning strategy for MIRA. Social media is the next step towards engaging the skeptical middle and gaining political clout.

Eva Millona, Executive Director of [Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition \(MIRA\)](#) discusses her organization's success in using the media as a tool for change.

Kim Turner: Moving an agenda forward is about persuading and recruiting the “skeptical middle.” What tactics has MIRA used to do this?

Eva Millona: First, let me say how much we appreciated the conference in The Hague. It really reinforced the importance of 'local' on these issues. And some of the examples in the Marketplace of Good Ideas were in my own backyard! Now I know where to find them!

Here in Boston and at MIRA, the failure of the Immigration Reform Bill and the more recent loss of Senator Kennedy's seat to a Republican was a shock. We don't want Massachusetts, with its long successful history of support on these issues, to be feeding into the anti-immigration hysteria. We want to take the tarnish off our hugely successful record on integration in Boston and in this state. We are working to change things.

Starting with support for [Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick](#). He is the first governor to see the economic benefits of immigration to the state and how much immigration contributes to our well-being. 14.9% of the population is foreign-born (6.5 million). Immigrants make up over 17% of the workforce. 50% of all PhDs in the state are immigrants! We'd suffer without them.

So we are working closely with the state office to support their integration agenda. We are inviting migrant voices to the hearings, working with media ahead of time, so all the facts, the stories, the right messages are ready to go.

Reaching out and educating media is important. Successful media engagement helps move the legislature and is proactive to the needs of the immigrant community. The governor is very concerned about Arizona. Patrick is a visionary and an important ally.

KT: Blogs and social media are becoming a media of choice – what impact have they had on your work and what advice do you have on the new 'channels of change'?

EM: MIRA is like other nonprofit organizations, with our feet in social media (FaceBook, Twitter, MIRA Blog). It is important because it's a way of networking a constituency that's NOT in the immigrant community, groups that can change voting outside cities, and in the middle of the state.. It's one more tool you need in your arsenal when you launch a media campaign.

Social media is really about building relationships with allies and coalitions. We need to get more involved with Twitter as a media channel. Media is increasingly using Twitter to follow news. It's important to how we tell our story.

KT: Paris-based Rokhaya Diallo, television host and president of Les Indivisibles, uses irony and humour to combat racism and stereotypes. Is it a tactic that you see MIRA using?

EM: We don't use humour at MIRA, no. The issues are so grave. But we really stress storytelling, telling true stories. Using theatre to tell true stories is very effective.

You need a variety of ways to reach audiences. For example, Facebook audiences are part of a “John Stewart” generation (popular talk show host and comic) that likes wry attitudes. Blogging has also taught us to take a more relaxed tone. You have to step up and find the right voice.

KT: In the New Bedford campaign, MIRA's ability to co-ordinate various agencies and immigrant groups to speak with a consistent message had a huge impact. What advice do you have for others who want to replicate this success?

EM: That received a lot of media attention. The first thing we did was pull together key people and members from across the state. We did a press release every week with a new story every time, a story people could relate to, about ordinary people. This was empowering -to our members and to the wider community. It encouraged them to tell their stories.

When the state government came on our side, it became a story about the power of the state to influence a national agenda. MIRA wound up developing humanitarian guidelines for how to help people and families in detention centres, especially women and children, for the US Dept of Homeland Security.

KT: How can we bring more immigrant voices more actively into this discussion so that others are not speaking for them?

EM: Media training is highly recommended. Identify community members who can speak to issues. Choose successful people who have a great story to tell. Their eloquence will generate more support for the community.

Look at the social technologies that are raising the issues and the profile of immigrants who might not otherwise be heard, like YouTube, blogs. Be aware of the constraints of language. Good communication counts.

KT: What was the most important lesson you took from the Cities of Migration conference?

EM: The power of best practice to convince and the focus on local and committed leadership. We can all come up with models of great integration practice that can make a difference.

KT: What makes Boston a great city and what can other cities learn from Boston?

EM: Boston is the most diverse city in the state of Massachusetts. We have 146 languages that are being spoken by 30% of the city population. No single ethnic group dominates the city -Irish, Russian, Venezuelan -it is a wonderful place.

And we have a wonderful mayor. Mayor Thomas Menino was one of the first mayors in the US to create an Office of New Bostonians.

KT: Favourite blogs?

EM: [America's Voice](#), [Migration Policy Institute](#), [Immigrant Impact](#)

KT: Favourite city?

EM: Paris!

About MIRA

MIRA works to advocate for the rights and opportunities of immigrants and refugees. In partnership with its members, MIRA advances this mission through education, training, leadership development, organizing, policy analysis and advocacy.

Related Good Ideas:

- Boston: [MIRA: Media Advocacy with a Human Face](#)
- Webinar: [Ballot Box to the Podium: Mobilizing Immigrant Voters and New Leadership](#)

Boston: Celebrating the Immigrant Family

By kturner
Uncategorized



Thanksgiving is a special American holiday, a time to reflect and celebrate the blessings of family and friends. Most Americans, regardless of religion or background, celebrate this holiday by sharing a traditional meal, honoring the first Thanksgiving of the pilgrims and the welcome they received as new immigrants on these Massachusetts shores.

[MIRA's](#) 4th Annual Thanksgiving luncheon at the State House brought together a rich tapestry of immigrant families from diverse backgrounds. Over 425 hundred people shared a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Invited speakers from the community gave moving testimonies on their journeys to America. The Great Hall resonated with the stories of struggles and achievements in reuniting with families from distant shores and becoming American families.

Sophea Srun spoke about her experiences coming to America with her husband and daughter as refugees from war-torn Cambodia twenty years ago. She is proud of her American citizenship, and grateful that her husband was finally given his American citizenship this year. "I have learned about

American culture, holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. I have not lost my own culture, because we also celebrate Cambodian New Year. This helped me to feel at home."

Ridha Jaber Al Saadawi came from Iraq when he was a teenager. Now in his thirties, Rhidha has spent all his adult life here, and has gone through the long process of obtaining his American citizenship. He has passed his test, and has been waiting to take his oath for four years. He is unable to travel to see his family and his aging mother while he is stuck in his current limbo of administrative delays. "I realize here there is freedom, it's a great country, so I decided to stay here and start my life here," he stated. Al Saadawi summarized his desire succinctly, "I love this country and I want to be part of it."

Jacob Smith-Yang, the Executive Director of Massachusetts Asian-Pacific Islander for Health served as the Master of Ceremonies and shared his own personal story:

"The most memorable Thanksgiving we had was when my 73 year-old grandmother, my Ama, finally became a naturalized U.S. Citizen after three tries. When she went to the exam, she was not doing so well even on her third try, but the examiner looked at her notebook and saw all the answers she had written out and was able to understand how hard she was trying. Becoming a citizen was very important to her, and was very important for her sense of belonging in the United States, and it was a very moving Thanksgiving to have that happen."

Immigrant families enjoyed the meal with a number of their state legislators and the former Governor of Massachusetts, Michael Dukakis and his wife Kitty.

Ali Noorani, Executive Director of the [Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition \(MIRA\)](#) stated, "It does not matter whether one's family celebrates Thanksgiving with rice, jalapenos, or curry. it's not what you have for Thanksgiving, it's who you have it with. All across America, we all want to be joined by our families over Thanksgiving. That's what makes this holiday so special."

Source: Edited MIRA [press release](#), November 19, 2010.

Local in a Multi-Ethnic World: Bhikhu Parekh

By Evelyn

December 17, 2010

[Conversations In Integration,Opinion,What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



Local Identities in a Multi-Ethnic Britain Opinion by: Lord Bhikhu Parekh



Photo credit: Vijay Jethwa

To mark the 10th anniversary of [The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain](#), I want to explore some of the big questions that appear on the public agenda today so far as multi-ethnic Britain is concerned. Many of these big questions were dealt with in the report, but we are now in a different historical and political context and it is important to revisit what has been said and go beyond that. There are three and four big questions we need to address: the role of religion in public life, the best ways to deal with cohesion and respect for cultural diversity, terrorism in the context of multiculturalism and the local versus national identities. Here, I will focus on local identities and their place in building a multi-ethnic Britain.

We live in Britain but we also live in a particular spot in Britain, such as London, Bradford and Manchester. Much of our life is lived locally and has a local character, and national identity is built on defining the foundation of local identity. It is striking that those young Muslims who say they do not feel British also say that they cannot imagine themselves living outside Bradford or Birmingham.

Local identities are generally more open and more loosely scripted than the national identity. Britishness immediately invokes historical stories of empire. London or Bradford does not. Britishness has cultural associations like race and religion, which requires a great deal of effort to remove, while local identity has no such cultural associations. London belongs to all its residents, and has no religious, racial or cultural or other associations. It has no other identities than what the Londoners chose to give it through their patterns of interactions.

The local identity is more easily accepted and it less contentious than the national or British identity. It has therefore a great role to play in sustaining a multicultural society – a greater role than generally recognized by the theorists of the nation-state. I think it is very important to bear in mind that it is not fully appreciated; that a culturally homogeneous society which underpins the nation-state, generally focuses on the nation-state and the national identity. In the multicultural society, the logic points in a different direction. While central identity has a role to play, local identities are extremely important. And nationally, local identities need to be integrated and go together.

As far as multicultural Britain is concerned, we have made much progress in certain areas and not much in others. The future of the multi-ethnic Britain depends on three things: our ability to consolidate and build on the progress we have made, our ability to tackle areas of life where we have been negligent, and finally our sensitivity to ability to deal with new problems that are beginning to appear on the horizon and our ability to confront them with the requisite clarity. If the past is any guide we can be cautiously optimistic on all three accounts. I might be proved wrong, but pessimism is not a luxury permitted to those of us who are politically active.

- Speech taken from Revisiting the [Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: the Parekh Report 10 years on](#), Department of Sociology and [Runnymede Jim Rose Memorial Lecture](#)
- Full speech recording available as [mp3 \(42 MB; approx 89 minutes\)](#)

Biography

Bhikhu Parekh
Centennial Professor in the Centre for the Study of Global Governance at the London School of Economics

Educated at the Universities of Bombay and London, Lord Bhikhu Parekh is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and of the Academy of the Learned Societies for Social Sciences and a Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Westminster. Lord Parekh was chair of the Runnymede Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (1998-2000). He is vice-chairman of the Gandhi Foundation, a trustee of the Anne Frank Educational Trust, the Runnymede Trust, the Institute of Public Policy Research and a member of the National Commission on Equal Opportunity. Professor Parekh is the author of a number of books, is emeritus professor of political theory at the University of Hull and has held visiting professorships at many other universities. He was vice-chancellor of the University of Baroda from 1981-84. Professor Parekh was elected British Asian of the Year in 1992, was awarded the BBC's prestigious Special Lifetime Achievement Award for Asians in November 1999 and was appointed to the House of Lords in March 2000.

Winnipeg: Small but Mighty

By Evelyn
February 8, 2011
Uncategorized



Big cities tend to attract large numbers of immigrants and a range of professional and skilled workers to choose from, but what about the small cities?

In a competitive market, all cities, big or small, need to remain attractive to newcomers as a way to build a healthy and sustainable labour force.

Just ask Winnipeg.

It starts with a right attitude. [Winnipeg](#) is a city, population 683,200, located in the prairie province of Manitoba, Canada, where the provincial minister of immigration, Jennifer Howard, often gets asked, "How can we bring in more [immigrants]?"

An article published in the [New York Times](#) highlights how a small city like Winnipeg is strategically competing with big Canadian cities of migration like Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver (nicknamed "M.T.V.") for their share of immigrants.

The report shows that by adapting local immigration policies and programs to local needs, smaller cities can address local skill shortages. [Manitoba's provincial immigrant program](#) expanded the criteria of the Canadian federal point system which values professional degrees, and alternatively looks for semi-skilled newcomers to fill in local job markets demands for major industries like agricultural, mining and forestry. The Manitoba program has attracted 50,000 people over the last decade.

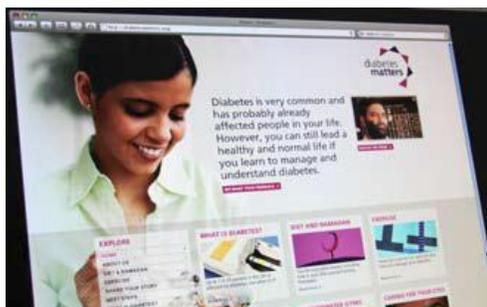
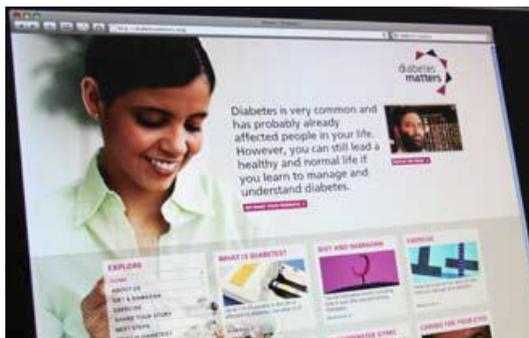
Local settlement programs like career planning, job placements and language learning are helping immigrants build lives as permanent residents in these small cities. Winnipeg now boasts large cultural festivals, ethnic newspapers, and Asian produce in the markets. An increasingly more attractive quality of life and distinctive local economies build competitive advantage in smaller cities, which not only mean good news for long-term immigrant retention, but for enhancing the cosmopolitan characters that help define world cities.

Related Good Ideas:

- Paris (France): ["The Key to France: Not all Roads lead to Paris"](#)
How small cities in France are encouraging immigrants to settle in geographic areas with skills shortages outside large urban centres.
- Fort Wayne (US): [Gateway to Little Burma](#)
- More on new [Gateway Cities](#) (webinar).

London: Update on Maslaha

By Evelyn
December 16, 2010
Uncategorized



[The Maslaha Project](#) works with both Muslim and non-Muslim communities to improve access to knowledge, address inequalities, and enable a richer understanding of Islam.

Maslaha, an Arabic word meaning 'for the common good', is the concept driving the London-based project's work. The Maslaha Project brings together a wide range of voices across generations, sectors, professions and cultures to provide practical support and help create a shared understanding of Islam within the context of today's society.

New project highlights:

- Working closely with teachers and schools to provide curriculum resources showing the contribution of Islam and Muslims to many subjects. They are also currently working with the [Princes School of Traditional Arts](#) and the HRH Prince Khalid Al-Faisal bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud's Painting & Patronage Foundation to build an interactive resource in Mulberry School of Girls.

- Exciting online exhibitions built in partnership with the British Council as part of its [Our Shared Europe](#) programme, spanning numerous countries and highlighting the constant influence and sharing of ideas that has occurred between Muslim and European individuals, illustrating how Europe today would not be the same without the Islam of yesterday. Their most recent exhibition – '[Evliya Celebi: Book of Travels](#)' – was very recently opened for a second time by the President of Turkey in London and will be touring internationally
- Dynamic health resources which address health inequalities in Muslim communities by providing information in a way that resonates with every day life and thinking, bringing together medical and Islamic advice – www.caringforyourheart.org, www.diabetesinwestminster.org, www.yourhealthypregnancy.org, www.diabetesintowerhamlets.org. Maslaha has won awards from the London Health Commission, based at London City Hall, and Diabetes UK for these resources.
- [I Can Be She](#) – pioneering project exploring the role Muslim women have played through history in parallel with the powerful achievements of Muslim female role models today

To learn more about promoting health to religious communities with culturally sensitive resources and tools, read:

- [Dealing With Diabetes: The Maslaha Project, Tower Hamlet Primary Trust & The Maslaha Project](#)

Trafficking in Ideas: Ali Eteraz on multiple migrations

By Evelyn

December 17, 2010

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



Ali Eteraz, US lawyer, writer and global nomad, traces his personal journey from a madrassa in Pakistan, to the contrasting (and similar) realities of the US Bible Belt before moving on to post 9-11 New York and a newly-minted, not quite multicultural Europe. His stories address the identity and cultural conflicts he faced along the way with humour and insight.

Last October, Eteraz, award winning author of "[Children of Dust](#)", joined us as a featured speaker at the 2010 Cities of Migration Conference to talk about his experience in "trafficking in stories" – particularly those that reflect the increasingly complex and shifting nature of multiple migrations.

In his talk, he crisscrosses the globe, artfully describing how the mash-up of traveling ideas (and people) are changing communities and cultures.

You will enjoy the wry insights of a man who can describe his mother as "a Punjabi born Pakistani, a woman whose first languages are Punjabi and Urdu and now works teaching Hispanic children US English...in Spanish."

Ali uses a writer's perspective to show us how race and identity are fluid and changeable. Like language, music and even faith, they are richly ornamented and informed by diverse cultural influences and history.

He wisely reminds us that it is the narrative that is transformative. How we tell our stories of migration can make a difference. The story itself may resist being pigeonholed and, like everyday life, stay fluid, possibly messy and usually deeply personal.

Listen to Ali Eteraz speaking at the 2010 Cities of Migration Conference, [here](#).



Politics of Optimism: Highlights from the Cities of Migration Conference

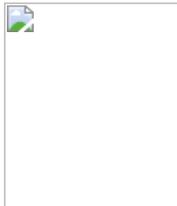
By Evelyn

November 16, 2010

[What Cities Said: November 2010](#)

Highlights from the conference include Alan Broadbent, the Chairman of Maytree, speaking on the politics of optimism, and Ratna Omidvar, president of Maytree, on the power of good ideas. Our closing keynote, Wim Kok, the former Prime Minister of The Netherlands and President of the Club de Madrid talked about the importance of a shared society.

Alan Broadbent, Chairman and Founder, Maytree, opened the Conference by thanking Deputy Mayor Marnix Norder and our host city of The Hague, “a legendary city that has a special meaning to all of us who are interested in justice and progress.”



Broadbent described Canada, like most countries, “as a nation increasingly reliant on the energy of immigrants and actively seeking to attract the best and the brightest from around the world.”

Doing this well and for the right reasons is important, he continued: “Integrating immigrants quickly and effectively is a vital obligation to nation building we all share. It does nobody any good to integrate newcomers slowly and grudgingly and that I think we must reject outright. Cities of Migration is a significant initiative in this process; it aims to catch people doing something right....it’s a salutary change [to focus on] people doing something right and getting

them to share it with each other.”

To listen to Alan Broadbent’s remarks, [click here](#).



Ratna Omidvar, President, Maytree, told stories from Cities of Migration to show the power of good ideas: “To change the discourse, we not only have to aspire to a better idea, we have to show success on the ground. Cities of Migration looked... and we found gold.”

To watch a videoclip of Ratna Omidvar’s remarks, [click here](#).

Shared Societies: Wim Kok, Club de Madrid

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: November 2010](#)



Wim Kok, Former Prime Minister of The Netherlands and current President of the Club de Madrid delivered the closing speech at the 2010 International Conference Cities of Migration (The Hague, 3-4 October), a call to action on the importance of building shared societies.

Speaking to an audience of international city leaders, migration experts and local practitioners, Wim Kok highlighted the need to find ways of confronting the challenges that migration brings to societies in order to avoid tensions: "In times where people feel uncertain about the future... mis-perceptions of people who are different easily can create tensions even if reality differs from perceptions. When tensions grow, then perceptions easily become reality, rather sooner than later."

His remarks emphasized the essential role that political leadership must play to build more cohesive societies: "Leadership is important to make the cogent argument that our society is a better place for all of us if we embrace diversity even if it is initially challenging. But political leaders cannot replace the contribution of individuals in their own communities and the work of local

organisations. Political leadership often needs to be enabling leadership which encourages or makes it possible for attitudes to change and communities to act."

Wim Kok closed his remarks with a call to action to global cities to build shared societies at all levels, based on greater tolerance for differences and good citizenship.

For more on Wim Kok's remarks:

- Read a [summary](#).
- Read [Wim Kok's full speech](#)

The Club de Madrid is an organization whose members include 75 current and former heads of state from 54 countries who are committed to promoting democratic leadership for social cohesion and shared societies. Read the Call to Action for Leadership to build [Shared Societies](#).

Ready, Set, Go! The Opportunity Agenda Takes Off!

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: November 2010](#)



From city leadership to municipal levers of power, media management to mainstreaming new audiences, from the marketplace to the corporate boardroom, ideas were flying off the shelves at the [2010 Cities of Migration Conference](#) in The Hague last month. 175 migration experts, practitioners and city leaders from over 75 cities and 22 countries took the conference's opportunity agenda to heart and made it their own. Over two short days, participants from cities as far flung as New York and Berlin, Birmingham, Singapore, Auckland and Montreal shared their stories of local integration success. It gave us the opportunity to imagine how these ideas might travel home with us and make a contribution to the prosperity and well-being of our own cities of migration.

Conference feedback has been positive, with a strong endorsement of the "politics of optimism." Participants want to continue to hear positive messages about the value of diversity and practical lessons based on the success of local integration initiatives by police, health professionals, municipal leaders, educators, activists and media -and many other city actors.

For those that couldn't join us, we invite you to look at what our participants and local media reported out from cities like London, Paris, Toronto and Barcelona.

Conference Resources:

- Lessons from the [City Leaders Panel](#)
- [Media Lessons](#) from local leaders
- [Townhall perspectives](#) on integration
- Download [Conference Programme PDF](#)
- Download [Marketplace of Good Ideas Workbook PDF](#)
- View the [Video Highlights](#) and [Photo Gallery](#)
- Read, listen, and watch excellent [Media reports by conference participants](#) in English, French, and Spanish!
- Go to [Conference website](#)

Kim Clark: CBC Sports and Diversity with Joel Darling and Saphia Khambalia

By Evelyn
September 2, 2010
[Interview, Interviews](#)



This month, **Kim Clark, Director, Inclusion & Diversity, at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)** in Toronto, invites her colleagues **Joel Darling** and **Saphia Khambalia** from [CBC Sports](#) to talk about the role that sports programming has on diversity.

Saphia Khambalia -Reporter, 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™

Saphia Khambalia brought her diverse experience to the interactive Pulse of the Nation desk during CBC's coverage of the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™. She joined the CBC in 2009 and has produced and written stories for the CBC News Network, The National and Power and Politics. She has also worked as a reporter/videographer for CBC News in Windsor Ontario.

Joel Darling – Director of Production, CBC SPORTS



Joel Darling, an award winning producer, was appointed to the position of Director of Production for CBC SPORTS in August 2007, after having been the Executive Producer for CBC'S HOCKEY NIGHT IN CANADA for the previous seven years. A sports television production veteran, Darling was the Senior Executive Producer for CBC Sports for three years, from 1997-2000, and he was also the Executive Producer of the 2000 Olympic Summer Games in Sydney and the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

Tell us about the role of diversity at CBC?

Kim Clark, Director, Inclusion & Diversity, CBC:

Well, as a national broadcaster, CBC sees our role as reflecting Canada back to Canadians and so diversity is an essential part of that mandate.

CBC has incorporated diversity as part of our strategic focus and over the past 5-7 years we have had some real successes with both radio and television through great work of teams and individuals like Susan Marjetti, Managing Director CBC Toronto and Alden Habacon, Manager Diversity Initiatives CBC Television.

For instance, in Toronto Susan Marjetti made deliberate decisions in programming the station 99.1 and specifically the morning radio show, [Metro Morning](#) to be more reflective of the city's changing population and saw the show's ratings soar. It is now the number one show in the city.

Internally, CBC renewed and expanded the Inclusion & Diversity Steering committee and created the role of Director, Inclusion & Diversity to make sure we are able to build on existing successes and have a team that also reflects the face of contemporary Canada.

And our sports programming is part of that.

Diversity initiatives in television programming are ultimately about building audiences. Can you tell us how the CBC approaches this and the success that they have had? How much do you know about the preferences of Canadian immigrant communities? Does everyone love hockey equally?

Kim Clark:

To better understand the interests of our audience, we recently did a research survey that examined the media consumption of ethnic Canadians. This provided us with a sense of what sports programming they were watching, how often and through what media platforms. Soccer and hockey were the top sports in all ethnic communities –in fact, soccer is slightly more popular. This would not be the case for Canadians in general, where hockey is clearly the #1 sport.

Joel Darling:

We have now completed two full seasons of [Hockey Night in Canada in Punjabi](#). Hockey Night in Canada in Punjabi has allowed us to directly connect to a new community in their own language and through our sports coverage. The response had been incredible. Families are sitting around watching hockey in their own language and the older generation now has a chance to enjoy something “Canadian” with the younger generation. We believe that is a wonderful thing to offer people.

Our success with hockey has allowed us to expand to basketball as well offering soccer coverage in Punjabi as well as Farsi. We have also been able to expand the hockey coverage to Mandarin, Cantonese and Italian.

How is sports programming different than other genres of diversity programming?

Joel Darling:

I think sports differs because of the “live” aspect. We are creating live sports experiences that can build allegiances, create new fans and inspire the next generation of athletes. Our hope is to not only build our fan base, but to also reach an audience that may eventually help grow the game in their community.

CBC TV has had great success in bringing “mainstream” Canadian sports to more diverse audiences. How about success the other way? Is cricket catching on with Canadian viewers?

Joel Darling:

We have been exploring cricket and are very interested in trying to find some programming to air. We had some success with a cricket weekly magazine show that we aired a few years ago. With the changing culture in this country, cricket has a place in the CBC sports line-up – it’s just a matter of time.

Saphia Khambalia:

I have high hopes that cricket, its terms and players, will become household words for many viewers. Why not? in a diverse country like this we have the perfect foundation to groom and nourish all types of sports!

With the entire world participating in the same online conversation its only a matter of time before interest is perked for sports like cricket, that are very popular overseas.

The World Cup has been described as the ultimate in diversity programming, and is enjoying incredible media coverage in Canada. Why is that?

Joel Darling:

The World Cup has been an incredible platform to reach new viewers. The sport is so well loved across many different countries and cultures that no other sport can compare.

The event has grown so much over the years and especially in Canada where record number of people are watching games. The diverse population of Canada has really added to the growth and popularity of the event by creating enthusiasm and excitement that has been felt coast to coast. Sports television is a wonderful example of how people become heavily involved in an event. More than 25 billion will watch the World Cup this year around the globe. It is the “World’s Game”.

Saphia Khambalia:

Well, it’s the greatest sporting event on the planet hands down. Not only do entire nations get to come together all across the globe as they witness their teams battling it out on the pitch but [here in Canada] as an incredible, diverse multicultural country, we all get to take part in each other’s heritage.

Canada did not have a national team playing this year but from coast to coast flags from every other participating nation could be seen waving proudly on street corners.

It is not the just the game that makes people take the day off work to gather around the TV set, it is the history, the pride, the generations of family from the motherland ... that’s what the world cup is. It’s life.

Can large scale sporting events like the World Cup and how they are covered by media have an impact on public attitudes about diversity and community cohesion? Or is that expecting too much from sports?

Joel Darling:

I am not sure what the impact is in the end. I think there is a “copy cat” type of mentality sometimes with sport. People tend to get involved in things if they know others are passionate about it and they want to be involved. The support many countries have had inside Canada has been incredible to see and the popularity of this event continues to grow because of people’s passion and emotion. People are able to stand up and cheer on their team or a team from another country they have adopted. It seems to bring people together in a wonderful way. Sport can bring communities together unlike anything else and this event is no different.

Saphia Khambalia:

I don’t think that is too heavy a statement at all. Cohesion and inclusion are part of the beauty that our World Cup coverage brings. It mirrors the experience Canadians are having this World Cup. And I’ve seen it first-hand. As the host of CBC’s [Pulse of the Nation](#) segment, we’ve been able to show traditional Ghanaian meal celebrations before world cup games, we’ve been able to show Brazilian folklore music, Korean cheers -you name it. I’ve never seen community cohesion like I have this World Cup.

It’s a great honour and privilege to talk to fans from every ethnicity, whether on the social media forums, or on the street as they cheer on their home nation.

[During the World Cup,] as far as one can see everyone is reveling in the same moment, the same coverage. Every television set is on the same CBC Sports shot and with every kick of the ball entire communities come together. Win or lose, they’ve experienced the same moment and will go home feeling their family just got a lot bigger coast to coast.

Do you have a favourite? Which team are you supporting in the World Cup?

Joel Darling:

I was pulling for England. Mainly because they are the birthplace of soccer and I thought it would be exciting to see them in the final.

For now, I am pulling for the Dutch, as they have been close before. Would be nice to see them win it.

Saphia Khambalia:

I knew this question was coming! Well I'm torn really. First of all my heritage is Indian/East African, so I really wanted an African team to do well this year. It is the first finals on African soil, after all! However, every time I meet another group of fans from a different nationality, I'm totally over-taken with their passion and emotion for their team and their home country. I'm easily swayed – how about that?

It's a treat to be in soccer-mad Toronto

By Evelyn
July 29, 2010
Uncategorized



By: Markus Stadelmann-Edler, Toronto



On Saturday, John Doyle, Globe and Mail television critic and author of *The World Is a Ball: The Joy, Madness and Meaning of Soccer*, wrote that Toronto is probably the best place to experience the World Cup if you cannot be in the host country.

I couldn't agree more. And it is easy to see why.

One of the obvious reasons is that Toronto is a city of immigrants. For many, it's soccer that helps them integrate. New immigrants search out soccer fields to meet people. It's a place where your struggle to find employment can be left outside the pitch and your heavily accented English doesn't matter. It's a place for new friendships and networking. At least, that's how it was for me over 20 years ago.

Soccer is an easy game to play. You only need one ball, a couple of shirts for goal posts and a few players willing to run up and down a field. Watch some people playing a game of pick-up soccer and you're sure to be invited to join in. It doesn't matter what country you're from, what language you speak or what job you have. All you need is love for the beautiful game.

In Toronto, if your country hasn't qualified, you just adopt another (or you are adopted by another – just visit its headquarter, be it Chez La Belle Africaine for Cameroon, the Prague Deli for Slovakia or Teranga for Ivory Coast). And if your team has failed to make it to the next round, you just have to adopt another then and keep cheering. Soccer fans, while passionate, seem to be friendlier and not necessarily adversarial. So, Germans get together with the Dutch at the Madison to marvel at Klose's extraordinary header (you would never see that in Europe), the Swiss Consulate invites representatives from Chile to join the Swiss fans at the Foxes Den when they play each other and turn the game into a fundraiser for the earthquake victims, and everyone dances with the Brazilians long after the final whistle has blown (okay, I guess, that happens pretty much around the world).

When this year's World Cup started on June 11, my colleagues at work, like so many in offices around Toronto, organized our own party for the opening ceremony. As we were sitting in the boardroom, I was once again struck by our city's diversity, which is very much mirrored in our staff. We started to count the languages that we spoke – and lost track after 25. No wonder that every four years, this city turns into one big celebration.

But enough of that – now the real fun starts. MY team plays its first game. I'm ready to face the Spanish team (and hopefully my team is ready, as well). Unfortunately, the injury bug has hit the Swiss. Alex Frei won't play and neither will Valon Behrami. Then again, so many other teams have to deal with the same. Just look at Germany without Michael Ballack. No predictions, but I'm looking forward to a wonderful game. I'm sure the Spaniards are more than happy to comply.

Hopp Schwiiz.

Source: CBC.ca, 2010 FIFA World Cup Soccer SuperFans Blog, June 16, 2010

Related Articles:

- [Toronto Football Club \(TFC\) – "All for One" Multicultural Brand](#)

Barcelona: Improving Integration In Large Cities

By ktuner
September 2, 2010
Uncategorized



On June 24 – 26, 2010, Barcelona hosted the workshop [“City and Diversity: Challenges for Citizen Education”](#) which brought together experts on citizen participation, diversity and intercultural management to examine the specific challenges to social cohesion that result from rapid demographic change in the ethnic and cultural diversity of European cities today.

[Phil Wood](#), a leading international specialist on cultural diversity and urban policy, and adviser to [Intercultural Cities](#), a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, gave the opening talk on “Planning for the Intercultural City” which emphasized that “cities – and their citizens – will have an increasingly more important role to play.”

Carsten Moser, the secretary-general of the [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) pointed out that “the debate between city and diversity has proven very popular in the last year; it is a debate that is felt very closely by citizens that can not be dismissed with easy solutions or formulas informed by electoral strategies that might lead us down paths that complicate coexistence.”

Innovative initiatives on citizen education and civic commitment, such as the [EMILIE project](#) (France), were presented, as well as the MNEMOTOPIAS project (Croatia), the [Fundació Tot Raval project \(Barcelona\)](#) and the [Cities of Migration](#) project, promoted in Spain by the Fundación Bertelsmann.

The main themes of the event addressed issues such as the impact of globalisation on urban development, the influence of diversity and immigration on citizen identity and how citizen education can respond to these changes at European level in order to adopt new models of participation and coexistence.

The workshop also outlined European approaches to multicultural citizenship and education policies, emphasising that cultural diversity is society’s most valuable asset. As the EU becomes more heterogeneous, we are challenged to address why the relationship with diversity is increasingly perceived as difficult.

The event ended with a preview of recommendations for the [NECE Conference: “Opportunities for cultural and citizen education within the context of developing cities and urban spaces”](#). These recommendations will be presented next October when the conference is held in Trieste, Italy.

The “City and Diversity” event was organized by the [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) in cooperation with the [German Federal Agency for Political Education](#).

On the Trail of Good Ideas: cycling from Copenhagen to Dublin

By kturner

September 1, 2010

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. This month **Gerry Folan**, from Dublin, Ireland, gears up for a Good Idea on city cycling from Copenhagen. Do you have a story to share ? [Contact us!](#)

Name & Position:

Gerry Folan, Head Office for Integration, Dublin City Council

The Good Idea that really caught my eye was:

The [Copenhagen Cycling initiative](#) for immigrants in the city.

Why?

Well, it's an integration idea that the City of Dublin could replicate –particularly given the recent policy shift to create a bike-friendly city.

In 2009, Dublin launched the City Bike scheme that established over 40 stations throughout the city where you can rent a bike. Similar to Paris, Brussels and Barcelona, the City Bike scheme has increased bike usage in the city. It has had over 300,000 users since the September launch. Once registered, the first half hour on any journey is free (and statistics indicate that 95% journeys undertaken are free).

In Dublin, over 15% of city resident population is of immigrant origin.

In terms of [Dublin's integration strategy](#), our objective is to mainstream integration measures for immigrants within the broader policy objectives and services of City Council. This is the approach we have taken with regards to customer services, motor taxation, housing, libraries for example.

A cycling initiative targeted to the immigrant population would be innovative and a way to open up the city to new residents. Just as it did in Copenhagen, it would promote integration, accessibility to information and service provision.

How did you share this Good Idea?

The concept was communicated to our policy officers working on Road Safety and Cycling. The plan is to take the idea forward with a pilot initiative that would have funding support from [Office for Integration](#).

Any feedback?

Feedback is positive! Now we will collaborate over the coming months to identify how best to achieve the objective. For additional info on Dublin's City Bikes, see [www.dublinbikes.com](#) and [www.dublincycling.ie](#)

For more good ideas from Dublin see:

- [Dublin: Did You Know You Can Vote? Cities and Democracy at Work](#)

On the Trail of Good Ideas...

At Cities of Migration, our [Good Ideas](#) about successful integration practice are traveling from city to city. With proven solutions, tested program models and peer recognition, they all add up to better outcomes and reduced risk.

Our Good Ideas also travel from reader to reader. We want to share these stories with you.

Do you have a Cities of Migration story to share ? contact us: citiesofmigration@maytree.com

Good Idea Update: The London Living Wage Campaign

By ktuner

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



Mayor of London Boris Johnson has announced a welcome expansion of the [London's Living Wage](#) campaign. A further 17 city employers have signed on to pay the Living Wage – including Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan. Read our [Good Idea profile here](#).

London Citizens who run the campaign also unveiled the new logo for the Living Wage Foundation, which can be used by accredited employers.

It seems the [London Living Wage campaign](#) is gaining increased recognition and traction in the UK on a national political agenda.

For the past several years, the campaign has been led successfully by the activist organization, [London Citizens](#) and was making excellent progress in its campaign to ensure fair wages and better living and working conditions for some of the city's lowest paid workers -many of them newcomers to the city.

However, it's national profile loomed large when [Ed Miliband](#), the former Energy and Climate Change Secretary, made the call for a living wage part of his campaign to become the next leader of the Labour Party.

The impact registered in the form of renewed media interest in this [Good Idea in Integration](#) and greater attention to the potential impact that the living wage could have countrywide, if fully implemented.

The current national minimum wage, although expected to rise to £5.93 per hour in October 2010, is still much less than the £7.16 that is accepted as the amount needed for living costs in the UK. Meanwhile in London, much higher rents and other necessities spike the estimated minimum London living wage to £7.85.

The Director of the London Living Wage campaign is in regular talks with the London Mayor Boris Johnson, who has pledged his support for the campaign publicly on several occasions. After the two met, [an increase of 25 pence](#) on the previously judged minimum amount required to live in London was announced, to great celebration from campaign supporters.

More recently, UK Prime Minister David Cameron has described the London Living Wage as “an idea whose time has come” (May 2010).

Another driver that has greatly aided the London Living Wage's effectiveness in the capital is the city's successful bid to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games. The tender was sealed, in large part, on the premise that London is one of the most diverse cities in the world. The London Mayor at the time said: “There is no city like London. It is a wonderfully diverse and open city providing a home to hundreds of different nationalities from all over the world. I can't think of a better place than London to hold an event that unites the world.”

If the Olympics can tell a story here, it is how the Living Wage Campaign went on to become a national call to action with potential for replication in cities across the UK — and out into the international community as whole.

K'naan: From Mogadishu to Toronto and then the World: K'naan

By kturner

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)



"When I get older, I will be stronger, They'll call me freedom, Just like a Waving Flag"

Johannesburg. This past summer in cities in over 100 countries, people were singing the uplifting and catchy lyrics to [K'naan's hit song](#), "[Wavin Flag](#)" which was selected as the anthem for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

His music mirrors his personal life, an uplifting and inspiring story of migration and integration – on his own terms.

Born in Somalia, K'naan spent his childhood in Mogadishu (and was there during the Somali civil war). When he was 13, he left Mogadishu with his mother and three siblings, and relocated to New York City and then Toronto. In Toronto, K'naan began learning English by listening to hop hop albums.

In 1999, K'naan performed a spoken word piece before the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in which he criticized the UN for its failed aid missions to Somalia. His talent (and bravery!) won the attention of a Senegalese singer in the audience, who later invited him to both contribute to the album and join the world tour.

K'naan is once again touring the world but this time, he is the feature act of the World Cup Trophy Tour.

Fellow musician and FIFA performer, John Legend, explains: "Football and music are universal languages that bring diverse people and cultures together."



Earlier this year, K'naan's song, "Wavin Flag" was also selected by Young Artists for Haiti to support the Canadian relief efforts for [Haiti](#).

K'naan also works to help reframe the North American perception of Arab cultures and in 2009, participated in [Arabesque: Arts of the Arab World](#) in New York. This three-week gathering, was the largest showcase of Arab art ever held in the US.

UK Cities and Refugee Week

By kturner
Uncategorized

[Refugee week](#), an annual multi-agency campaign to counter negative stereotypes and fear-mongering around refugees in the UK, this year fell between 14 and 20 June 2010.

The campaign, which is supported by several voluntary and community sector heavyweights, including [Amnesty International and Oxfam](#), is nationwide, with related events taking place in cities up and down the country.

The week was kick-started by a number of opening events, among them [an intercultural arts fun day](#) in the south-west city of Bristol, including performances of music from all over the world.

Up in the north of England's self-claimed capital of Manchester events, [including an Eritrean and Ethiopian morning at a local library](#), began early in June.

In London's prestigious Victoria and Albert Museum an interactive event saw refugees acting as guides, allowing visitors to follow in their wake and view the artefacts on exhibition through new eyes, learning the individual's story along the way.

Meanwhile, in Glasgow [photographer Matthew Bisset](#) used images to depict the destitution faced by asylum seekers whose bids for sanctuary in the country have been met with opposition from the Scottish authorities.

As well as arts-related events, Glasgow also hosted a [comedy night](#) in honour of Refugee Week, tickets for which rapidly sold out.

Neighbouring city Edinburgh hosted landscape painter [Frances Walker's](#) work on the struggle of communities surviving in some of Scotland's northernmost reaches, the Highlands.

For those unable to make it to an exhibition or event in one of the participating cities, [Refugee Week Radio](#) provided an alternative way to participate, with content drawn largely from the week's theme, the [Simple Acts Campaign](#).

The campaign, which encourages ordinary citizens to indulge in small and simple acts of integration, kindness or sociability with refugees, has fittingly chosen [playing a game of football](#) as its simple act of the month. The aim is to reach 20,000 logged 'simple acts' by UN-organized [World Refugee Day](#) on 20 June 2010.

Auckland: Report On Recruitment and Retention

By kturner
July 29, 2010
Uncategorized

The International Migration, Settlement, and Employment Dynamics ([IMSED](#)) Research Team is responsible for the Department of Labour's research on, and evaluation of, immigration and settlement issues facing New Zealand in a globally competitive environment.

IMSED recently released a report based on a survey of New Zealand employers about the benefits and challenges of hiring migrants and the factors that contribute to their retention.

A total of 942 employers from Immigration NZ's database took part in the survey and below are the key findings.

- More than four-fifths (87 percent) of employers said they rated their migrant employees as good or very good.
- Employers who had tried to find a New Zealander before hiring a migrant reported not being able to find someone with the right skills (83 percent) as the main reason they didn't hire a New Zealander.
- Employers reported that language difficulties are the greatest challenge and most common issue when hiring a migrant (43 percent).
- Almost half (44 percent) of migrants that had left an employer in the previous 12 months had worked there longer than 12 months, whilst 17 percent had worked there less than 6 months.
- The most common reason for a migrant leaving was to return to their country of origin (23 percent).

Justin Treagus, the CEO of [OMEGA](#) added a comment on these findings, saying, "What stands out to me is that eighty five percent of those who had employed a migrant in the last 12 months had tried to find a New Zealander to fill the position. Those who had tried to find a New Zealander first reported not being able to find someone with the right skills (83 percent) as the main reason they didn't hire a New Zealander.

These findings support the view of many skilled migrants that there is a significant disconnect between earning the right to work in New Zealand, and finding the right work in New Zealand. 85 percent of migrants hired by this group in the last year were at first ignored while business tried to find a New Zealander to fill the role. Despite these employers actively looking for local skills, 83 percent of these employers could not find the right skills to fill the role – a sure sign that NZ's skills shortage remains very real. As the economy picks up and the demand for international talent intensifies through demographic changes, businesses will need to significantly shift their thinking and practices with regard to employing migrant employees."

To view the full report please see: [Employers of Migrant Survey 2009: From Recruitment to Retention](#)

Toronto: What Gets Measured Counts

By kturner
September 1, 2010
Uncategorized



Just 14 per cent of leaders in the Greater Toronto Area are members of a racialized group, compared with 49.5% of the population at large. This is just one of recent findings of [DiverseCity Counts](#), a research report which measures diversity in leadership.

This under-representation is a missed opportunity, [explained the lead researcher](#), Dr. Wendy Cukier, to media and an audience of more than 150 leaders from the corporate, voluntary and public sectors.

[Research](#) has shown that diverse leadership fuels organizational performance, expands access to global talent pools and new markets and is linked to innovation. Organizations which track diversity in their organizations, recognize its benefits, and make diversity a priority can reap these benefits.

[DiverseCity Counts](#) is a research project being conducted over three years by [Ryerson's Diversity Institute](#) to study diversity in leadership in the Greater Toronto Area. It is part of a larger initiative that is being led by [Maytree](#) and the [Toronto City Summit Alliance](#) to promote leadership diversity in regional institutions.

Mapping URBACT Cities

By ktuner
May 26, 2010
Uncategorized



URBACT's [interactive map of EU cities, programs and projects](#) is now online. This dazzling look at the new Europe ignores regional and jurisdictional divisions in favour of city networks organized around urban issues such as Active Inclusion, Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods, Metropolitan Governance, and Human Capital & Entrepreneurship, to name just a few. From the URBACT website, click on a city on the map to see associated URBACT projects, or choose one the projects listed in the right column to map the city constellation of its project partners. Lead cities for each project are marked with a star.

Discover, for example, that the mid-sized industrial port city of [Duisburg](#) is the City Lead city for the RegGov program which looks at governance issues in the development of deprived urban areas. The RegGov program prides itself on its integrated approach to urban development but laments that "good practice examples of how to develop, implement and

fund such policies are rarely known at a wider European level."

Good practice and policy is worth sharing. Duisburg is also home to Germany's largest and least controversial mosque. Opened in 2008 in the city's Marxloh District, the Merkez Mosque was planned and built after a broad public consultation using a participatory approach that involved the whole community. For more about Duisburg city success, see [The Miracle of the Marxloh Mosque](#) at Cities of Migration.

What is Urbact?

Established in 2002, and renewed in 2007 with a dynamic slate of work distributed across a network of 255 city partners, URBACTII is a European exchange and learning programme that promotes sustainable urban development, and enables European cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges.

"We help cities to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions..., reaffirming the key role cities play in facing increasingly complex societal changes."

URBACT brings together 255 cities and 5,000 active participants with financing from the EU's European Regional Development Fund and 29 Member States. Visit the [URBACT website](#) for more information.



The Changing Face of American Cities

By kturner
May 28, 2010
Uncategorized



URBAN TRENDS. Cities in the United States are usually grouped together geographically. We have East Coast or West Coast Cities, Sun Belt or Rust Belt cities, Midwest or New England cities.

Now the US [Brookings Institute](#) has found a new way to evaluate and group cities. In the recently released [State of Metropolitan America](#) report, Brookings identifies seven categories of metropolitan areas based on their population growth rates, their levels of racial and ethnic diversity, and the rates at which their adults have earned college degrees. Together these [indicators](#) say more about the [metropolitan areas](#) than their geographic location (the report includes an [interactive map](#) that allows for a comparison of the different indicators).

The report's focus on these [demographic changes](#) is considered to be a preview of the social changes and trends that the 2010 Census will reveal.

"We see a new Metropolitan map of the nation is emerging," says Brookings Institute's Alan Berube. "If you want to know where our nation is heading in the next ten, twenty years, all you have to do is look at these cities."

The report is the work of three Brookings Senior Fellows in the Metropolitan Policy Program [Alan Berube](#), [Audrey Singer](#) and [William Frey](#).

Source: The Brookings Institute and [2020cities](#).

Banking on Newcomer Futures in Toronto

By Evelyn

September 2, 2010

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2010](#)

At Cities of Migration, we are interested in how [good integration ideas](#) travel from city to city. Or, in this case, from bank to bank.

Recently, we profiled [StartRight With Scotia Bank](#), a financial program designed to help newcomers adjust to their new lives in Canada while building the customer base for the bank's financial products. The model is appealing because it makes good financial, and business sense.

So it is no surprise to find other banks jumping on board. Like-minded banking giant, the Bank of Montreal, has recently launched [a suite of banking products](#) specifically designed to assist landed immigrants. This includes offering credit projects based on recognizing net worth based on past employment rather than local credit history or current employment.

An interesting idea that banks on the future. According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in 2008 the cities of Toronto and Vancouver alone attracted some [87,000 and 37,500 immigrants, respectively](#), making ideas like this, good business.

For more on financial services that support newcomer populations see:

- Chicago: [Muslims and Mortgages: American Home Ownership Through Flexible Financing](#)
- London: [Banking on Success: Diversity at Lloyds TSB](#)
- Lisbon: [One Stop Shop: Mainstreaming Integration](#)
- Or watch a webinar or download the presentation from: [The Price of Admission: Financial Inclusion Strategies for Migrants](#)

Other Good Ideas that are traveling:

- During its 2010 decennial census, the [US Census Bureau](#) used the popular format of the *telenova*, Latin America's traditional soap opera, as an effective channel for reaching immigrant communities with the message that being counted mattered. We featured CEO Women's innovative approach dium to , an approach we featured in, ["A Soap Opera For Success: The Grand Cafe Telenovela."](#)

Understanding OPENCities

By kturner
May 25, 2010
Uncategorized



The British Council has launched the [Understanding OPENCities report](#). Featuring case studies from Amsterdam, Auckland, Dublin, Madrid, and Toronto, the new report compares and contrasts their strengths and weaknesses, and highlights how each city has embraced openness in its bid to build a successful world brand.

Greg Clark, city expert and lead advisor on the British Council's OPENCities programme, sees a bright future for cities with strong leadership and the determination to evolve and grow:

“OPENCities encourages the exchange of positive ideas between forward-thinking world cities. Creating an environment where locals and new migrants can live in harmony is another key element of the programme. For the first time, cities will have a specific way to gauge their openness and help their leaders develop successful strategies to compete on a world-stage.”

Read the press release for more information, or download your free copy at www.opencities.eu.



Congratulations! E Pluribus Unum Awards for 2010

By Evelyn
[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



E Pluribus Unum Awards for 2010



Upwardly Global

Cities of Migration would like to congratulate the 2010 winners of the [E Pluribus Unum Awards](#)! We are especially excited to report that two of the winners have previously been featured as Cities of Migration Good Ideas: from the City of Durham the [Latino Community Credit Union](#), and from New York City, [Upwardly Global](#).

The E Pluribus Unum Prizes were established last year (2009) to recognize excellence in the immigrant integration field in the United States and help us learn more about US initiatives working to strengthen the relationships between native-born and foreign born Americans in order to create stronger, more unified and successful communities.

The awards program is coordinated by the Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy (NCIIP) – a hub for groups and individuals around the United States who seek to build their knowledge and skills in the area of immigrant integration. The four annual \$50,000 USD prizes are funded by the [J.M. Kaplan Fund](#) with the goal of inspiring and providing program models to others around the United States who might also undertake such efforts.

For further examples of E Pluribus Unum Award Winners, see also:

- New York City: [Staying In Touch: The Library Responds To A Changing Community](#)

Dispatches from Canadian cities

By Evelyn
May 19, 2010
Uncategorized

From recent immigrant to integrated citizen: cities across Canada share solutions that work

Local leaders in cities across Canada take action to integrate skilled newcomers into the workplace to ensure future prosperity in our cities and communities.

On May 6th and 7th, 175 delegates from urban communities across Canada met in Halifax at the 2010 ALLIES Learning Exchange to share and discuss practical and successful solutions for immigrant employment that can be adapted to other cities.

“Through ALLIES, we are proud to be building a pan-Canadian project that is connecting employers across the country and leveraging their capacity to tap into the talents of skilled immigrants,” said Ratna Omidvar, President of Maytree.

In Halifax, the [Connector program](#) has opened professional networks to over 100 skilled newcomers in the past year.

In [Edmonton recent immigrants are matched to professionals in their field through mentoring](#). In Montreal, employers are sharing their best practices on the recruitment and retention of skilled workers through round tables.

In Calgary, an [immigrant employment council](#) is bringing employers and immigrant agencies together for a coordinated approach to mentoring.

In Toronto, employers who actively embrace newcomers are recognized in a [yearly award ceremony](#).

Across the country, online videos and roadmaps guide employers to recruit diverse employees through [www.hireimmigrants.ca](#).

The ALLIES 2010 Learning Exchange is a catalyst for sharing ideas, connecting with others, and inspiring action from the participants from 12 cities across Canada. Funded by the Government of Canada and hosted by ALLIES, a joint project of Maytree and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the 2010 Learning Exchange will allow delegates to learn how to engage employers, set up successful and sustainable programs, and work with all levels of government.

By 2011, Canada will rely 100% on immigrants for our net labour market growth. Proactive local action is key to ensuring that the integration of this new labour force is as seamless as possible.

Details on the [2010 Learning Exchange can be found at here](#).

ALLIES (Assisting Local Leaders with Immigrant Employment Strategies) is a five-year project jointly funded by [Maytree](#) and the [J.W. McConnell Family Foundation](#). ALLIES provides the information, learning and funding required by communities to adapt and implement successful immigrant employment approaches used by multi-stakeholder initiatives across the country. The project brings local players together to develop their own practical solutions for the integration of skilled immigrants into the labour market.

Longing and Belonging in NZ cities

By Evelyn
June 1, 2010
Uncategorized



Author [Edwina Pio](#) draws richly on the diversity of her home in Auckland, New Zealand in her new book, "[Longing and Belonging](#)," which captures the stories of immigrants living in cities across New Zealand.

For instance, there is the story of Juthika Badkar, an Indian woman from Botswana who has lived in New Zealand for many years. Although Juthika has made many local friends, she realised that people were constantly making assumptions about her based on how she looked. For instance, in response to a dinner invite, a Kiwi friend added, "I take my curry mild." Juthika laughed and said, "Okay – but I was planning to make a lasagna."

Breaking down stereotypes such as this is one of the purposes of [Longing & Belonging](#), a book focused on Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American and African peoples in New Zealand. By sharing their stories, the author hopes to offer insights into issues of heritage, employment and identity and cultures.

Published by Dunmore Publishing in March 2010, [Longing & Belonging](#) is a mix of hard facts, stories of adaptation by recent and older immigrants, as well as "Think Pieces" – 14 articles written by individuals from specific communities and pertaining to the migrant/refugee work experience, with a focus on identity and work and the lived-through reality of being in New Zealand.

Endorsed by the [New Zealand Race Relations Commissioner](#), Joris de Bres, the book is described as a resource that "opens a window onto the diverse peoples of Asian and MELAA origin who are a part of contemporary New Zealand – their authentic voices, their stories of settlement, the challenges they face and the vision and hope that sustains them."

For more on stories and fostering belonging see:

- Chicago: [Youth on Stage: Real People, Real Stories and Real Community](#)
- Leicester: [Asylum Dialogues](#)
- Paris: [Narratives of Belonging](#)

Fundació Tot Raval

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



El gato de Raval

Like Toronto's Kensington Market, or China Town in New York and San Francisco, Barcelona's Raval is a neighborhood created by waves of immigrants who first came seeking jobs in the city's 19th century textile mills and today continue to contribute to the character and energy of the district. Almost half of all neighbourhood residents have a migrant background.

Located in the heart of the Ciutat Vella (old city) district of Barcelona, the influx of new immigrants and migrant workers to Raval's cramped streets has not always been easy. Over the years, a large and varied network of services, associations and ad hoc initiatives came in or were created to address emerging social problems and stresses.

Today, says Nuria Paricio, Director of the Fundació Tot Raval, "Este és otro mundo" (this is another world).

[Fundació Tot Raval](#) is the community foundation and umbrella organization at the heart of the Raval neighbourhood. Since it was founded in 2001, Fundació Tot Raval has acted as a coordination platform for the people of El Raval, empowering the community by working to support and coordinate the efforts of over 60 neighborhood organizations, associations and other initiatives actively engaged in the revitalization of the Raval neighborhood. The foundation's membership includes organisations such as the Islamic Cultural Council of Catalonia, the National Library of Catalonia and the A. Rosa Sensat Teachers.

The Fundació provides a variety of work spaces and forums to support community participation (board of trustees, committees, project work groups, seminars, etc.) and collaborative efforts to identify issues and reach common solutions –as well as to pool precious resources.

By enabling the diverse members to work together, the Fundació Tot Raval makes sure that initiatives aren't duplicated and reinforces the success they achieve. By networking and generating synergies among the neighbourhood agencies and local authorities, the foundation is having a positive impact on the general population.

Fundació Tot Raval encourages cross-cutting actions and multicultural projects that boost coexistence and social cohesion, promote networking, and contribute to better education and employment outcomes. In the entrepreneurial spirit of [Barcelona Activa](#), the Fundació also fosters cooperation between businesses and works to invigorate the local economy and culture with a view to helping make the Raval an inclusive, dynamic neighbourhood committed to the future of all its residents.



Consell Islàmic de Catalunya

Fundació Tot Raval's unique approach to local development, cross-cutting nature of its activities, the quantity and diversity of its members, and the participatory spaces it stimulates make it a Good Idea worth watching closely.

For more information,

Fundació Tot Raval
Pl. Caramelles, 8

10/19/21, 3:30 PM

Conversations on Integration Archive

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info@totraval.org
www.totraval.org

Meet the Fundación Bertelsmann

By Evelyn
May 27, 2010
[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)

Fundación Bertelsmann

Fundación Bertelsmann Meet the Fundación Bertelsmann, our new partner in Spain. We are delighted to be able to introduce you to some of the foundation's history, their mission and our work together.

Located in Barcelona, Fundación Bertelsmann was founded in 1995 as the independent 'sister' of our German partner, the Bertelsmann Stiftung (Gütersloh), with a focus on developing the reading and media culture in Spain. This work resulted in major efforts to benchmark 20 public libraries and promote cooperation between public libraries and schools in seven Spanish cities.

Strong economic development during these years made Spain one of the top immigrant-receiving countries in the European Union, requiring cities like Barcelona to devise and implement new initiatives that are redefining neighbourhoods like [Tot Raval](#) and community relationships on a daily basis.

As part of its ten year anniversary, Fundación Bertelsmann responded to these new realities by shifting its focus to the promotion of civic engagement in Spanish communities and enhanced dialogue and exchange between different cultures. In partnership with the Fundación Bertelsmann, Cities of Migration will be bringing more Good Ideas to you from cities around Spain in the months ahead and making them available in Spanish!

Fundación Bertelsmann: A Pioneering Institution in Civic Responsibility

Since it began its work in Spain in 1995, Fundación Bertelsmann has become a catalysing institution for social reflection and a meeting point for intellectuals, business men and women, politicians and citizens, always seeking to foster the positive progress of Spanish society through a combination of analysis and action.

The initiative, developed by Reinhard Mohn and now led by his wife, Liz Mohn, has shaped a pioneering institution in social development, whose work is based on three major objectives:

1. Promoting social change by identifying latent social challenges;
2. Preparing society for the future by providing it with the competences that will enable sustainable development; and,
3. Contributing to the promotion of social responsibility, based upon the conviction that community involvement is the essential pillar of social progress.

These objectives are being fulfilled through innovative projects for creating community foundations, managing cultural diversity, raising awareness of a value-based business culture and the fostering of youth participation.

The common denominator in these four large projects is the Foundation's capacity to lead its ideals forward and attract specialised talent in each subject, thus enabling it to create multi-disciplinary work teams that are in direct contact with the social reality. After leading the phases for identifying challenges, proposing and broadcasting solutions, the Foundation stewards the transfer of successful projects to independent institutions in associated areas of interest, thus leading to the consolidation and sustainable development of the concept.

In the areas of immigration and cultural diversity, Fundación Bertelsmann pours its efforts into spreading good practices among different groups, with the aim of achieving a strong social impact: on the one hand, it engages in activities focused on children and young people, whose primary setting is the school; on the other hand, it is partnering with the international Cities of Migration project to identify examples of good integration practices on Spain where active community engagement has actively contributed to local success.

Community foundations, institutions devised and managed by citizens to improve their surroundings, are the instrument through which the Fundación Bertelsmann promotes community involvement. Five foundations in Spain have already joined the network created in 2009 and another two are in the process of joining. Thanks to this initiative, towns all over Spain have managed to involve numerous institutions, businesses and people, confirming that involvement can serve as a powerful generator of development. Cities of Migration will be profiling the work of Fundación Bertelsmann with Spain's first community Foundation, [Fundacio Tot Raval](#), in the coming weeks.

With regards to promoting a value-based business culture, we highlight our in-depth analysis of the current situation in this area through publications and meetings: the most notable example of these being the annual Dialogue and Action conference that Fundación Bertelsmann organises to encourage debate about an active civil society.

In the youth area, Fundación Bertelsmann drove the "TO2 for youth participation" initiative, a project that began in 2007 to promote young people's participation in society. Its innovative philosophy has succeeded in awakening the interest of numerous public and private Spanish institutions. The Foundation has also made numerous materials available to the educational community, families and many young people to guide them towards success in their entrepreneurial activities. From a youth website (www.todosporlaparticipacion.org) to a comic book ("Jóvenes emprendedores sociales"), we explore different forms of communication to raise awareness among Spanish youth and to create a growing culture of young social entrepreneurs.

For Spanish Good Ideas see:



- [Barcelona – Barcelona Activia](#)
- [Barcelona – Tot Raval](#) (a Good Idea We Are Watching...)

For more information about Cities of Migration in Spain, please contact:

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Interview: Irene Guidikova at Intercultural Cities

By Evelyn
[Interview, Interviews](#)



This month we talk to **Irena Guidikova**, the Head of Cultural Policy, Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue Division, Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage, Council of Europe about intercultural integration and their 11 city pilot project.

1. You use the term “intercultural integration” to describe your project’s goals. What does “intercultural” mean in this context and why is it important?

For several decades, European countries and cities have focused on what we call the “integration hardware” – the provision of basic services for migrants (health, education, housing etc.), and support for migrants to be able to function in their new country such as language and citizenship courses. [Read more](#)

The emphasis has been on the changes migrants need to make in order to become a part of the community. Very little attention has been paid to the “software” or the cultural dimension of integration – the perceptions of the other, the readiness to embrace diversity and the capacity of the host community to adapt to the changing cultural profile of the community. I

Intercultural integration stands for a comprehensive approach which takes into account more than just the economic and social aspects of integration. Ultimately, integration policies and services cannot be effective if people are hostile to the other, if the cultural groups are segregated, if cultural conflicts are not managed properly and if different cultural groups in a city do not interact.

2. What is interesting about the 11 cities that you selected as pilot cities is that they are not the “usual cities” instead you have cities such as Lyons (France), Lublin (Poland), Oslo (Norway) Reggio Emilia (Italy) and Tilburg (the Netherlands), can you tell us a bit more about why you selected these cities?

Intercultural cities began as a pilot programme – a laboratory for developing the concept and practice of intercultural integration. We decided to work with medium-size cities where it is easier to mobilize all relevant stakeholders – elected officials, professionals, civil society – around a process of policy change. We also wanted to have a wide geographical spread – the Council of Europe has 47 member states. But the most important factor of choice was the commitment of cities to participate seriously in a complex and demanding process that understands diversity as an advantage and looks for ways of positively taking migration into account – to the benefit of all citizens.

3. The work that Intercultural Cities is doing is based on the growing need for cities to think and act across traditional policy and institutional silos , as well as geography . From the experiences of the pilot cities, what are the greatest challenges in realizing on this approach?

Indeed, one of the main methodological pillars of Intercultural cities is this inclusive approach. We realized that the best way to break across the silos is to begin by constructing a group of intercultural champions or innovators made up of a diverse groups of people and not just elected representatives or people in power.

At the same time, the strong leadership of a deputy Mayor has been essential to keeping the momentum and motivation over time. In all cities the programme has been conceived, steered and run by these informal consortia of politicians, policy officers, professionals and citizens, and through continuous interaction with the departments, institutions and organizations concerned to ensure their support and contribution. Horizontal and vertical interaction is for me the key.

4. Again, based on the pilot cities, what were some of the greatest successes and how were these cities able to learn from each other?

There are many success stories. The first prize of the Intercultural Neukölln float at the Berlin Festival of Cultures . Kids from different backgrounds looked at their district from an intercultural perspective and designed the float together. This was the first time people of Turkish background participated in this massive event. The design of an intercultural park in Melitopol as a focal point and meeting place for the different cultures of the city; the refocusing of cultural work in Izhevsk, Lublin and Patras around intercultural issues are only some examples. But the most important success is represented by the intercultural vision statements and action plans many cities finalised or are currently working on, because they are a guarantee for a lasting policy change.

5. What cities do you think are most effectively leveraging “the diversity advantage” and why?

All are, although in different ways. Reggio Emilia and Neuchâtel are attracting a lot of foreign workers and investments, Lublin is becoming more attractive for foreign students. But most importantly, the cohesion and positive atmosphere in all of the cities help them to look to the future with confidence and reinvent themselves by using the talents of all their citizens.

6. Successful integration is helped by good policy, but in your experience what local practices stand out as touchstones of success?

Among the most important preconditions are the possibility for foreigners to participate in the local political and cultural life. There are many inventive ways of encouraging them to do this – look for instance at the intercultural profiles of Oslo and Reggio Emilia and for stories in our newsletter.

7. At Cities of Migration, we like to say we are all integration actors. Tell us about your favourite, or the most surprising “unusual actor” you have met in your travels with Intercultural Cities?

The representatives of the Church of Norway. They had such sophisticated understanding in which public space and neighborhood planning affected relationships between cultural communities.

8. What is your personal favorite city and why?

I have no favourites, all cities are equally important and all have made excellent contribution to our common work. All those cities have different needs and strengths. In the network the cities can learn from each other through experience and knowledge exchange. We established together a very useful tool, the "intercultural city index" that visualizes exactly the specific strengths of each city, and allows to match it with cities with learning needs in that area. You can find it on our web site and cities who are interested in can test their ["interculturality"](#) to see in what areas they can improve.

Thank you, Irena!

To learn more about the Intercultural Cities project and its city partners, visit the [Council of Europe website](#).

Traveling Good Ideas....

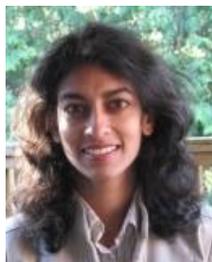
By Evelyn
May 28, 2010
[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



Good Ideas about successful integration practice are easy to export and are traveling from city to city. It makes good sense. Proven solutions, tested program models and peer recognition all add up to better outcomes, reduced risk and cost savings. At Cities of Migration, our Good Ideas also travel from reader to reader. We want to share these stories with you.

On the trail of Good Ideas...

This month Valeisha, from Toronto, connects a Good Idea about Chinese textile workers in Bologna to Mauritius and French Europe. Do you have a story to share ? contact us: citiesofmigration@maytree.com



Name: Valeisha Sobhee, Human Resources & Communications Professional

Her Cities: Vacoas to Cambridge to Montreal to Toronto

The Good Idea that really caught my eye was: [Bologna's "Social Justice Is Better Business: Integrating the Chinese Business Community Into the Mainstream"](#).

Why: Mauritius welcomes temporary Chinese workers; the good idea acknowledges the presence of a foreign community and actively seeks to build a bridge, through translated manuals, and by using Chinese radio programs to transmit ideas and tools to help that community integrate better. This leads to improved quality of life for the workers and businesses, rather than letting them live in an artificial and isolated bubble within the country.

How did you share it: I forwarded it in English to some of my Mauritian friends through social media. Those are people who somewhere down the line may be policy makers or are already socially involved. Such practical ideas can be adapted and implemented locally. I also forwarded the French version of the article to my French family. They are based in Europe, and it can be interesting to open their perspective to this reality and the actions that can be taken.

Any feedback: Some people were surprised at the realisation that "Made in Italy" can also be "Made by Chinese". The whole idea of proactively integrating foreign workers is still a work in progress and the feedback was that it's refreshing to see how easy it can be.

We are interested in what you think about our Good Ideas, and your own experiences. If you have a story to share, please contact us at citiesofmigration@maytree.com.

Save the date! The 2010 International Cities of Migration Conference

By Evelyn

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



Our first international conference, **From Migration to Integration: An Opportunity Agenda for Cities, The Hague, October 3-4, 2010**, is a two-day event that brings together international city leaders, migration experts and local practitioners in a practical dialogue on one of the most important global challenges facing cities today: the integration of urban newcomers.

Join us for a dynamic event designed to engage urban leadership on this essential dimension of city prosperity and growth. Explore the opportunity agenda, find out why cities matter and what we can learn from 100 Good Ideas in Integration.

The conference is convened in association with the City of The Hague and the 15th International Metropolis, "Justice and Migration, Paradoxes of Belonging."

For more information, visit the [2010CoM conference website!](#)

Webinar Recap: The Price of Admission: Financial Inclusion Strategies for Migrants

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



Last month, our learning exchange showcased two good ideas which support financial inclusion by creating opportunity and providing financial tools. The webinar featured, [Fair Finance](#), a Good Idea that began in Dhaka Bangladesh and made its way to the streets of East London to address unethical lending practices. From the City of Barcelona, we featured [Barcelona Activa](#), a good idea that is supporting the entrepreneurial spirit of newcomers.

- Missed it? You can download the [Presentation \(PDF\)](#)
- Why not re-play the whole event? [Watch the Webinar Recording!](#)

Earth Day, Going Global!

By Evelyn
May 25, 2010

[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



On April 22, global cities and local neighbourhoods around the world celebrated Earth Day and our shared role in supporting our planet. At Cities of Migration, we take pride in the way our webinars are able to connect global cities and bring people together around good ideas -with no carbon footprint. In recognition of Earth Day, we invite you to look at some Good Ideas on environment and stories about healthy cities.

Newcomer populations are often the most vulnerable to environmental hazards, due to deficits in local housing and neighbourhood or in workplaces where they may be unaware of their rights and responsibilities (see, for example, [Bologna's Chinese textile workers](#)).

Cultural diversity and the environment are still terms that don't always overlap. However, this is changing. Groups like [People Organising to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights \(PODER\)](#) from San Francisco's Southeast neighbourhood recognize that economic, environmental and racial justice are interconnected and can be addressed effectively by unifying community voice.

Healthy cities? Explore [community gardening](#) in East London, or follow [Copenhagen's lead](#) and get on your bike! Toronto has.

The Toronto Cyclist's Union and CultureLink are making their city a healthy, safe place for all Torontonians. This spring, the Toronto Cyclists Union and CultureLink received the [2010 Innovation of the Year Award](#) from US-based

Alliance for Biking and Walking for its Partnership for Integration and Sustainable Transportation. The partnership promotes cycling among newcomers to Toronto with posters, a Cyclists Handbook, and workshops available in 16 of the city's most commonly spoken languages.

Yvonne Bambrick, Executive Director of the Toronto Cyclists Union: "This project is helping us to grow roots in Toronto's diverse communities, and to exchange knowledge about sustainable habits here and around the world."

For more environmental Good Ideas see:

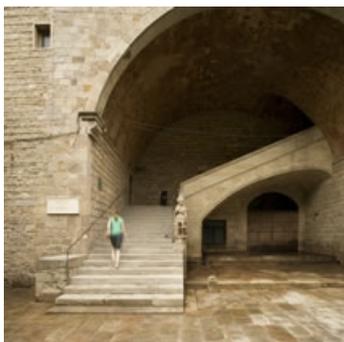
- [San Francisco – Traffic! Advocating for Environmental Health](#)
- [Auckland – Twin Streams Project: Common Ground for Environmental Sustainability](#)
- [East London: Digging in for Community](#)
- [New York – Engaging Newcomers in City Parks](#)
- [Copenhagen – Integration in Action: Cycling Lessons for Better Social Inclusion](#)
- [Bristol – The Bristol Bike Project](#)

Greetings from Barcelona

By Evelyn

June 1, 2010

[What Cities Said: May 2010](#)



Hola y bienvenido! Cities of Migration se complace en anunciar que su sitio está ahora disponible en español.

This month, Cities of Migration welcomes a new partner, the Barcelona-based [Fundación Bertelsmann](#) and its ambitious new program to promote good immigrant integration practice in cities in Spain. Spanish speakers can now explore the Cities of Migration website, [en español](#), whether they are in Madrid, Miami or Los Angeles. Our readers can look forward to more Good Ideas from urban Spain like our recent profile of [Barcelona Activa](#) and its [ODAME program](#), or the community-based energy of [Tot Raval](#).

Cities talking to other cities is an important part of learning how to improve integration outcomes at home and create a vibrant urban culture. Whether it's about business incubation in [Helsinki](#) and [Antwerp](#) or crossing cultural divides in [city classrooms](#) and [sporting fields](#), it's what Cities of Migration is all about.

This month we talk to [Irene Guidikova](#), Council of Europe and Intercultural Cities about her work with eleven of Europe's new immigrant gateway cities, including smaller and medium-size regional centres like Oslo and Neukoln. These "intercultural champions" understand diversity as an advantage and are piloting strategies and developing policies that use the talents of all their citizens and make migration a benefit for everybody. We will be keeping our eye on this rich source of ideas about urban success.

For more on the growing role of gateway cities in transforming the immigrant experience, join us on May 19th for a [webinar discussion on Local Gateways to Citizenship](#), with new Good Ideas from the cities of Fort Wayne and Oslo (co-hosted by the National League of Cities).

Dispatches from UK Cities

By Evelyn
April 12, 2010
Uncategorized

Settling In. Pulling together more than three years' research on emerging communities, a new report [Making a Contribution](#) explores migrants' sense of belonging and identity within UK cities. As for [new migrants](#), a new report by independent researcher Dr Zubaida Haque, finds that success in integration remains intrinsically linked to the existing situation of settled migrant communities. In this context it is interesting to note that [short-term migration](#) is becoming the new norm in the UK according to a new report by policy and research organization ippr.

Insider Perspectives. The use of visual media to connect migrants, both new and settled, with their neighbours is becoming increasingly prevalent in British cities. Recent exhibitions in [London](#) and [Preston](#) have focused on ethnically diverse and economically deprived areas, creating photo and video projects that give a sympathetic slice of their life from an insider's perspective.

Financial Literacy. Money management and advice has been the government's major focus this month, with the launch of Financial Services Authority (FSA)'s [Money Guidance](#) scheme. Particularly popular is its online incarnation [Moneymadeclear](#), which has been much-lauded on popular [money-saving websites](#).

However, as a new report from the Runnymede Trust's [Financial Inclusion](#) team will explain, ethnic minorities and new migrants are best placed to lose out on the benefits the scheme has to offer.

Corporate Partners. It seems that certain multinational private companies are also exploring the role they have to play in providing networks and advice resources for migrants. Shipping company [Anglo pacific](#) is holding a series of seminars on migration in cities up and down the UK, using the international nature of its business as a springboard for discussion, not to mention good marketing.

In the world of remittances, greater legitimacy has been given to mobile payments as the UK Department for International Development (DFID) has partnered with an independent microfinance centre based at the World Bank to encourage mobile remittances.

Further evidence of the dominance of mobile payments for developing world remittances can be found in Filipino telecom company Globe [widening its net](#) so that UK residents can now make mobile transfers to the Philippines.

Good Ideas. Back in the capital, the [London living wage campaign](#) is running a spin-off website encouraging businesses to become recognised as living wage employers.

Meanwhile Faisal Rahman of [Fair Finance](#), who will be contributing to our upcoming [webinar on financial inclusion](#), has written for the [Guardian newspaper's website](#) about UK banks' lack of impetus to service the country's poor.

This Regional Dispatch is from Nina Kelly, Runnymede Trust.

Good Ideas on the Move: Maslaha's Dealing with Diabetes in London

By kturner
April 11, 2010
Uncategorized

Congratulations! [Maslaha](#) has been awarded the [Diabetes UK Shared Practice Award 2010](#). Developed to serve a pre-dominantly Muslim Bangladeshi community in London's Tower Hamlets, Cities of Migration recognized Maslaha as a Good Idea in Integration for its innovative and practical approach to developing culturally sensitive resources and tools for health promotion.



- Read the Good Idea: [Dealing with Diabetes: The Maslaha Project](#)
- Re-play the Webinar: [Dealing with Diabetes and Everyday Dilemmas in London and Chicago](#)

More updates on our Good Ideas:

- [Auckland](#): OMEGA finds Mentoring Programme suits New Zealand's labour market. [Read more](#)
- [Oakland](#): C.E.O. Women launches new multimedia series. [See the video.](#)
- [Sheffield](#): Cities of Sanctuary produces a short film on places of welcome and safety. [See the video.](#)
- [London](#): New Support for the Living Wage Campaign. [Read more.](#)

Dispatches from Canadian cities

By kturner
April 12, 2010
Uncategorized

The Changing Face of Canadian Cities. Statistics Canada recently [released projections](#) which show that in the coming two decades, the population and diversity of Canadian cities will significantly increase.

By 2031, between 25% and 28% of the population could be foreign-born and the vast majority (96%) of people belonging to a visible minority group will be living in cities. By 2031, visible minority groups would comprise 63% of the population of Toronto, 59% in Vancouver and 31% in Montréal.

In Canadian cities [“visible minorities” are becoming “the new majority.”](#) begging the question of what “visible” will mean in the future.

Coinciding with the release of this research, the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) polled 2,000 Canadians to examine their [views on racial discrimination](#). The overall results were positive: Canadians see themselves as an accepting culture, and as one that is growing more tolerant.

International research by [Transatlantic Trends](#) also confirmed that [few Canadians consider immigration a hot-button](#) issue and most dismiss the notion that immigration has become more of a problem than an opportunity. However, as much as Canadians believe in an open and inclusive society, the reality is that many new [immigrants struggle](#).

The Canadian online forum, The Mark, recently convened a group of actors to comment on the challenges and opportunities of the [changing Canada](#). The discussion included Ratna Omidvar, Maytree Foundation, [on creating sustainable and inclusive cities](#), and other local experts on why we need to advocate for [letting non-citizen immigrants vote in local elections](#), as well as thoughts from the private sector on how to [break the cycle of poverty](#) that many immigrants find themselves in.

What is measured is what counts, goes the old adage. Examining public attitudes to immigration, helps us understand the challenges faced by new immigrants to our cities.

Education in Integration: Webinar Recap

By Evelyn
April 11, 2010
[What Cities Said: April 2010](#)

Webinar agenda

Municipal Action on Integration: Exploring Public Private Partnerships

- 1) Introduction of the **Cities of Migration** project
- 2) Introductory Remarks by **Daranee Petsod** (Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees)
- 3) Presentation by **Clare O'Shea** (Village of Mount Prospect)
- 4) Presentation by **Luca Cianfriglia** (City of Turin)
- 5) Moderated Q&A

Note: Webinar recording will be available on the website to view:
www.citiesofmigration.ca

Webinar agenda

Municipal Action on Integration: Exploring Public Private Partnerships

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Last month, our learning exchange featured the [Toronto District School Board \(TDSB\)](#) and the [Quality in Multicultural Schools \(QUIMS\)](#) program from Zurich. It was a positive session that showcased practical approaches to integration through education, demonstrating that it's not only possible to help immigrant children succeed, but also that effective integration supports institutional change and helps empower whole communities.

The session was introduced by Ulrich Kober, Director, Integration and Education Programm, at the Bertelsmann Foundation, in Gütersloh, Germany. From the City of Toronto, Lloyd McKell, Executive Officer, Student and Community Equity, discussed how the Toronto District School Board continues to respond to the challenges of migration and demographic changes in the culturally diverse city of Toronto. From the Canton of Zurich, we had Selin Öndül, Quality in Multicultural Schools (QUIMS)

Programme Officer for the Ministry of Education, sharing strategies for local success.

Although implementation differed based on the needs of local populations, both projects shared similarities that anchored and shaped their program approach. This included the belief that schools are at the heart of the community and an essential channel for integration. In both school systems, educators clearly recognised diversity as a normal dimension of the classroom experience.

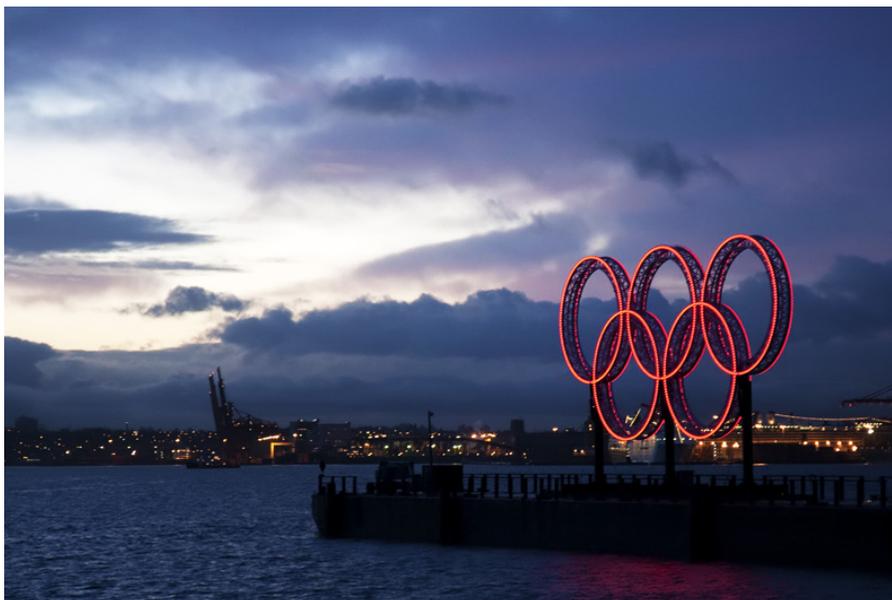
Interested in more detail? Download the Integration Through Education [PowerPoint Presentation \(PDF\)](#); or view the complete webinar: [Watch the Webinar Recording!](#)

For more good ideas on education, please see:

- Frankfurt: ["School For Mama and Me!": language lessons For parents](#)
- Montreal: [Play It Fair! a human rights approach to education!](#)

Vancouver: Winter Olympics and Dual-ing Citizens

By Evelyn
April 12, 2010
[What Cities Said: April 2010](#)



During the recent Vancouver Winter Olympics, Kirin Kalia, Editor, [Migration Information Source](#), found herself thinking about what citizenship means as she watched country-switching athletes demonstrate the same global mobility as other skilled immigrants. Between bobsled and snowshoe events, Kirin shared her thoughts:

Like many people, I probably spent too much time watching the Winter Olympics over the last two weeks. Among the facts commentators noted about certain athletes, and which caught my attention: their citizenship.

In most cases, the athlete became a citizen of another country either for training purposes or because the competition for a spot on the other country's team was less intense. For some athletes, this has meant giving up their original citizenship because their "home" country does not permit dual citizenship; others are dual citizens, giving them the freedom to choose which country to represent.

However, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), concerned both about countries essentially buying athletes and about maintaining the spirit of the games, has rules in place that do not allow athletes to switch their allegiances all that easily. After representing one country in the games or other international competition, the athlete generally must wait at least three years after changing/acquiring a new citizenship to represent the new country ([see rule 42 of the IOC rules](#).)

The citizenship issue comes up regularly during the Olympics. [The Los Angeles Times](#) gave various examples of country-switching athletes in its piece from August 2004, as did [Time](#) magazine in its 2006 article, which focused mainly on Canadian hockey players getting Italian citizenship thanks to their immigrant past.

In Vancouver, the most controversial dual citizen was skier Dale Begg-Smith, a Vancouver native with Canadian and Australian citizenship who won gold for Australia in 2006 and silver in 2010. Some Canadians consider him a traitor and even [booed him](#) during the medal ceremony. Yet some Australians wonder if Begg-Smith's less-than-boisterous personality means he's [not a real Aussie](#).

Lawyer and economist Ian Ayres, however, sees mainly the benefits of such situations. In an August 2008 post for the *New York Times* [Freakonomics](#) blog, he argued that the fluidity of citizenship has already improved the quality of Olympic competition and that the IOC should change its citizenship rules.

Kirin Kalia, Editor, Migration Information Source

Reprinted with permission from: [Migration Information Source \(Migration Policy Institute\)](#), March 1, 2010, Editor's Note, source@migrationpolicy.org.

For Good Ideas on the role of sports in integration please see:

- Calgary: [Hockey Night In Canada – In Punjabi!](#)
- Munich: [Buntkickgut! Integration Through Sport](#)

Measuring Up: PWC and Cities of Opportunity

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: April 2010](#)

How does your home city compare globally for diversity, easy of entry or purchasing power? PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) has just released its third [Cities of Opportunity report](#), and has given us a new perspective on the state of 21 global cities.

PWC believes that cities are home to most of the world's population and that the intellectual, social and economic capital this represents makes cities important drivers of our future prosperity and well-being. The Cities of Opportunity report benchmarks city performance to answer questions on, "What direction will cities go in the years to come?" and "What are the key ingredients needed to make a city strong and resilient to financial downturns and other risks?"

Their overall findings are that the better balanced a city is for both business and residents, the better it will fare. Quality of life is a tangible economic asset. The cities of Chicago, Stockholm, Toronto, Sydney, Singapore, London and New York City are among the cities that demonstrate this balance.

For this edition of the report, diversity indicators were added to the set of 58 variables against which cities were ranked. Toronto popped to the top of the rankings, leading the study in city livability, with high quality of life and health and a diverse population with advanced education. The study suggests that diversity maps well to creative knowledge-based economies –and that diversity, innovation and social cohesion are entirely compatible outcomes of urban migration.

PWC researchers have made this data fun to play with. The study also includes an [interactive database](#) that allows you to compare 21 cities against key city indicators –from purchasing power to the number of medical schools to which cities ranks as the top global fashion capitals.

We tested the model on our home city here in Toronto. Toronto comes in third just behind New York and London for demographic diversity. Singapore topped the list for ease of entry, followed by Hong Kong and Stockholm. Alas, for fashion, Toronto was a more distant 16th on the list...

Related Good Idea:

- Gütersloh, Germany: [A Community Roadmap: the Wegweiser Kommune](#)

Omar Khan: On Financial Inclusion

By kturner

[Interview](#), [Interviews](#)



This month we interview Omar Khan, Senior Research and Policy Analyst at the Runnymede Trust (London), about financial inclusion, what it means, how it impacts everyday life and helps build a just society.

RS: Let's start here, how would you define "Financial Inclusion"?

OK: Financial inclusion starts with access to essential banking products, this includes the ability to open a bank account or to qualify for credit. Financial inclusion is also related to financial capability, or the knowledge, attitudes and decisions people have towards financial institutions, products and services.

In our view, however, financial inclusion has widespread consequences for people, beyond how they experience financial institutions or products. We may need to look deeper to understand and respond to the problems that many financially inclusive products are hoping to solve. For instance, in our most recent publication, [Why Do Assets Matter?](#) Runnymede found that that black and minority ethnic people are twice as likely as white people to have no savings, with 60 per cent of Black and Asian people in the UK having no savings at all. To create genuine financial inclusion, we also need to look at the "why" behind statistics like these, and address larger social justice issues such as access to education and skills training or the ability to secure decently paid employment.

RS: Can you expand on that idea, how is financial inclusion related to social justice?

OK: Financial inclusion policy will only be effective if understood from the perspective of social justice. For instance, people need a basic level of income to live a decent life. However there is also clear evidence that disadvantages in education, employment and housing -which we see in so many BME and immigrant populations- has a direct impact on an individual's ability to access financial services.

Social justice work also creates an environment that fosters social cohesion. Runnymede's recent report, *Why Do Assets Matter?* includes both behavioral and citizenship arguments for financial inclusion. This refers to how financial inclusion -whether that means owning an ATM card or having a savings account -can create confidence and contribute to one's sense of belonging and participation, and ultimately help create greater community cohesion.

RS: The impact of the global economic crisis has affected everyone. What comment do you have for the critics or cynics who suggest that it is not just newcomers or immigrant communities that are financially excluded?

OK: I can't disagree but that doesn't mean that immigrant and BME communities aren't still in need. I don't think it's an either/or question.

RS: What does your research tell us about the informal economy and the lending that often springs up in newcomer communities?

OK: Since many newcomers find employment in cash-based sectors like the food and service industry, entering the informal economy is often not a choice.

Being "unbanked" also pushes newcomers into the informal economy and can become a vicious cycle. Being "unbanked" makes it more difficult to gain regular and stable employment, and to receive benefits. The identity requirements for opening a bank account can pose a problem for BME people, since is often a trust issue and a reluctance to supply the requisite identity documents (passports, driving licenses, utility bills).

And then there's the reality that even when banks adopts more inclusive policies at the top, it doesn't necessarily trickle down to the front lines. As a result, newcomers and certain ethnic groups continue to be denied access to financial services and often have a lack of trust in financial institutions.

Difficulty in accessing affordable credit means newcomer and BME groups can easily fall into informal lending options, almost by default. The cost of credit can be higher for poor people because the risks of lending to them are considered greater. Many of the reasons that BME and other disadvantaged groups are financially excluded stem from the way risk evaluations are done - and this is a systemic issue that we could look at as an area for change. For instance, postcode risk scoring is increasingly used across a range of financial products. To the extent that BME groups are often clustered in particular postcodes, this type of evaluation indirectly discriminates against them. Is this fair? Certainly not. Reasonable? I don't know. Maybe it's time for financial institutions to address the ethics of risk management and come up with better, more inclusive solutions. We need to make it harder for predatory lenders to do business.

RS: Who can help make financial inclusion a reality for newcomers and immigrant populations?

In addition to financial institutions, credit unions and community institutions have a significant role in improving financial inclusion. Financial regulators also implement policy that provided additional support to community credit unions. Another idea would be to require large financial institutions to disclose who they are lending to by group and by postal code.

Community activists also need to play a larger role - our research has shown that financial exclusion impacts mental health and family life, and so these organizations also need to be a part of the discussion.

RS: At CoM, we are interested in social and economic innovation that creates better outcomes for migrants and for cities. So on that note, what would be the most innovative or surprising success story you have seen recently?

OK: For many migrants, mainstream financial institutions such as big banks may be intimidating for new migrants. They may, however, be more willing to access local institutions that provide more face-to-face advice and support. In this context, I've been very impressed with the East London based, [Fair Finance](#) a social business initiative that is providing low cost loans in a sustainable and completely transparent way to financially excluded groups. Faisal Rahman, their Managing Director, has taken his experiences at the Grameen and World Bank and found a way to make those principles work here in London.

For more Good Ideas that support Financial Inclusion, please see:

- Durham: [Financing Immigrant Futures: The Latino Credit Union](#)
- New Haven: [Urban Citizens: Municipal Identification Cards \(ID\) for Inclusive And Safe Communities](#)

Rethinking Remittances

By kturner

[What Cities Said: April 2010](#)



"Migrants sent 32 billion euro to their former country of residence"- Eurostat's [newest figures](#) say a lot about the generosity and industry of Europe's migrants and invite us to think about the untapped economic and social capital that immigration represents.

Money sent by migrants to their former country of residence is referred to as workers' remittances. In 2007, the level of recorded remittances sent to developing countries were estimated at USD\$ 240 billion dollars – double the value of official development assistance. Some estimates suggest that upwards of one billion people, or one in six of the planet's population, benefit from remittance flows.

Remittances are now one of the largest cash flows in the world. What's new is that they are supporting local economies, as well as families, by financing the infrastructure needs and economic development of the cities and towns of receiver communities.

The sheer size and impact of remittances invites us to re-think how we frame this important contribution from migrants to local, and global prosperity, especially when migrants are paying taxes like everyone else –whatever their status. Indeed, a recent study from the [Public Policy Institute of California](#), reports that up to 85% of the undocumented population is also contributing to the economy's tax base.

New thinking

In Amsterdam, the [Mama Cash Foundation](#) produced a ground-breaking 2006 study of the contribution of migrant women to this massive global cash flow. In, [She Gives Back: Migrant Women's Philanthropic Practices From The Diaspora](#), remittances are re-described as 'diaspora philanthropy' and the impact of this financial contribution by some of society's least wealthy women is analyzed in diaspora communities in Italy, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and France.

[The Western Union Foundation](#) (the charitable arm of the global wire service) partnered with The Economist to see where all the money goes so that it can help local communities leverage its full value with financial literacy and micro-lending programs. The report found that a growing number of remittances are being channeled into community-directed 'collective' funds (vs. intra-family) that finance specific projects in the receiving countries, and not just extended family members. The study, "[Building A Future Back Home: Leveraging Migrant Worker Remittances For Development In Asia](#)," reports that collective remittances support community infrastructure development, from schools to roads, and that local leadership and capacity development could further leverage the value of this global funding trend.

Both of these examples suggest that it is time to start rethinking remittances and the change power of diaspora communities.

For related ideas on remittances, please see some recent articles in the [Integration News Update](#):

- [EU: Migrants sent 32 billion euro to their former country of residence](#) (Source: December 18)
- In Mexico, [Mother's Education and Remittances Matter in School Outcomes](#) (Source: Migration Policy Institute)
- [Workers' Remittances Fall Less Than Expected in 2009, But 2010 Recovery Likely To Be Shallow](#) (Source: World Bank)
- ["Migrants sent 32 billion euro to their former country of residence"](#) (Eurostat's newest figures)

Financial Inclusion = Financial Opportunity

By ktuner
 April 13, 2010
[What Cities Said: April 2010](#)



Financial inclusion and financial opportunity are two sides of a coin when thinking about the economic integration of migrants in today's cities. [This month's interview takes us to London where Omar Khan](#) at the [Runnymede Trust](#) talks about how financial inclusion underpins a range of social and economic issues and translates meaningfully into fairness and participation for newcomer and marginalized populations alike.

New Good Ideas in Integration include a look at [Fair Finance](#), a London NGO that is offering a range of loan products to the 'unbanked' in London's East End – and coming up in the black. At [Barcelona Activa](#), a dynamic business incubator weaves social inclusion into the financial opportunities that immigrant entrepreneurs create for city growth and prosperity.

You can learn more about these Good Ideas during this month's webinar, [The Cost Of Admission: Strategies For Financial Inclusion](#). Join us on April 13, 2010, for fresh thinking, good questions and insider tips.

Browse the Cities of Migration [e-zine](#) for more on this topic, or see more Good Ideas on Financial Inclusion from [Bologna](#), [Chicago](#), [Boston](#) and [Helsinki](#).

Leveling the Playing Field with Education

By kturner

February 11, 2010

[What Cities Said: February 2010](#)



Second generation learners are a litmus test for integration success. The educational achievement of the second generation relative to their native peers tells a compelling story of how some communities are succeeding and others are falling behind.

This month we profile Good Ideas in the area of education. We look at the [Toronto District School Board](#) (TDSB), winner of the prestigious international 2008 Carl Bertelsmann Prize, and the canton-wide success of the [QUIMS program from Zurich](#), also nominated for their work in city schools in Switzerland.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) was recognized by the Carl Bertelsmann Prize in 2008 for its exemplary work in promoting social integration and improving equal learning opportunities at its schools. According to data from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) the TDSB has successfully closed the average achievement gap between second generation students of immigrant origin and their Canadian peers.

In Zurich the QUIMS program is tailoring supplementary teacher training and classroom support to the needs of school communities in areas of high diversity (40%+). Their targeted 'quality standards' approach improves academic outcomes in the classroom and promotes social cohesion within Swiss communities.

Educational outcomes do not tell the whole story. Matriculation to post-secondary education, for example, doesn't always mean higher rates of success in accessing the labour market, as the [TIES research program](#) at the University of Amsterdam has shown.

In Canada, young second generation women are more successful than their native peers, earning higher grades and higher wages. But this is not true of their male counterparts, where lower labour market outcomes for visible minorities may point to lingering forms of racial discrimination in Canadian workplaces; see [Statistics Canada report](#).

But the data is less important than what we choose to do with it. The good news is that individual families, communities and institutions are using school, sport and other everyday activities to ensure that no one and no child is left behind.

Browse our [Good Ideas in Integration collection](#) for ideas and inspiration for your community!

- Frankfurt: ["School For Mama and Me!": Language Lessons For Parents](#)
- Toronto: [Making Their Mark: Educational Opportunity for Young Refugees](#)
- Cardiff: [Language from the Law: The Cardiff E.S.O.L. Police Project](#)
- Auckland: [Walking School Bus](#)
- Toronto: [Jump Math](#)
- Singapore: [Tuition Program for International Students](#)

Dispatches from Canadian cities

By ktuner
Uncategorized



Local solutions to national issues: skilled Immigrants and the Canadian labour market.

Current concerns about the state and future of the economy is a common issue among global cities. In Canada, that includes the role that skilled immigrants will have in securing Canada's economic growth.

According to Canada's Immigration Minister [Jason Kenney](#), "The reality is that immigrants could account for virtually all labour force growth in Canada within the next decade."



Baby boomer retirement and a skills deficit in the current labour market means that Canada will have as many as 425, 000 jobs opening up and employers will be [looking for skilled immigrants to fill these jobs](#).

However, even when skilled immigrants are available to meet demand, a gap remains between the skills that many newcomers have to offer and the number of job offers they actually receive. For instance, between 50 and 60 per cent of Canadian newcomers are working in fields other than what they trained for. Further, two-thirds of skilled immigrants report they have been told they will require further education in Canada in order to obtain professional jobs here ([Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#)).

Recommendations for the reform of Canada's policies on skilled immigration and related issues were recently tabled by Naomi Alboim, Maytree Policy Fellow, in [Adjusting the Balance: Fixing Canada's Economic Immigration Policies](#). The report recommends that the federal government articulate a national vision for economic immigration in which a revised Federal Skilled Worker Program becomes the priority.

Addressing the skills gap

Skills recognition is one of the issues, but there are others. Immigrants often lack the professional or personal networks that enable them to hear about or be considered for opportunities.

In Canada, organizations like the [Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council](#) (TRIEC) are trying to overcome this barrier by connecting skilled immigrants with their employed counterparts to help build their social and occupational capital.

In Montreal, short term mentoring is offered by the [Montreal Board of Trade](#) to help introduce immigrants to smaller and mid-size companies that may not be aware of the market for skilled immigrants. The program also offers support for employers to help them retain diverse talent.

Overcoming the challenge of the skilled immigrant gap in Canadian cities, will also be easier when corporate leadership becomes more reflective of the city population and workforce. [DiverseCity onBoard](#) is a Toronto based program that is working to do this by "match making" pre-screened, qualified candidates from diverse communities with board opportunities with organisations and agencies from across the city.

For a recent analysis of diversity in city leadership in Toronto, please see the [DiverseCity Counts project](#), a three year benchmarking study that sets high expectations for urban leadership in Canada's economic capital.

Helping Hands: Haitian Canadians in Montreal

By kturner

[What Cities Said: February 2010](#)



Like other Canadians, Haitian Canadians are responding to the recent earthquake disaster with doctors, journalists, police, community volunteers and the ordinary acts of generosity that distinguish established, well-knit communities.

Nowhere is this more true than Montreal, home to the largest Haitian community in Canada. Between 100,000 and 140,000 residents of Canada's largest French-speaking city were born or have family in Haiti. 90% of all Haitians in Canada live in the province of Quebec.

Haitian immigration to Montreal is part of the first wave of modern francophone immigration to Quebec. Large scale migration from Haiti to Montreal accelerated in the early 1970s when politics shifted the balance of power from anglophone to francophone Quebec. Until then, immigrants gravitated to Montreal's Anglophone community and the English language.

The historical and symbolic importance of the Haitian community is not lost on one of Montreal's most important institutions -the Montreal police force. After the devastating earthquake, Montreal police responded quickly to a local community in distress, providing assistance and building trust in a community that will soon be integrating a new influx of family survivors and homeless refugees.

Through [Operation Koudmen](#), from the créole word meaning "coup de main" or helping hand, 61 of 105 Montreal police officers of Haitian origin have been assigned to new temporary support roles working exclusively within Montreal's Haitian community. Officers like [Lyonel Anglade](#) were instrumental in organizing fellow officers to launch Koudmen because he understood how much the community needs this show of support. Anglade spends time visiting local Haitian community centres and churches to assess on-going community needs and to look for ways the police can help, both today and in the weeks ahead.

Before the disaster, Quebec already had 2,000 people from Haiti approved for immigration. This number could increase significantly with a humanitarian provincial decision to widen immigration eligibility for members of extended families of Haitian origin.



Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada

Notable Canadians of Haitian origin include the Right Honourable, [Michaëlle Jean, Canada's Governor General](#), who arrived in Canada in 1968 as a refugee and went on to build a successful career in public broadcasting before taking public office. Jean is Canada's first Governor General of Caribbean origin, and the third woman to hold this position.

Other prominent Haitian Canadians include [Luck Mervil](#), the popular Quebecois celebrity and Haitian-born singer-songwriter, who organized a special benefit concert on Jan. 21 for victims of the earthquake; novelist, [Dany Laferrière](#); and [Samuel Dalembert](#), a professional basketball player who plays center for the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers.

Source: [Local Cop's New Beat](#) (Montreal Gazette, January 22, 2010)
Source: [The Haitian Community in Canada](#). (Statistics Canada, 2007)



Luck Mervil

Dispatches from Australian cities

By ktuner
Uncategorized

Social cohesion. Scanlon Foundation and Monash University have released the second round of a major longitudinal survey on social cohesion in Australia. This research is focused on monitoring how Australia will maintain the “immigration with social cohesion” success story of the last five decades as the country travels towards 30/50, i.e., a population of 30 million projected for 2050. Download the 2009 [Social Cohesion Summary Report](#). For the 2007 population forecasting report from the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering, see “[30/50 The Technological Implications of an Australian Population of 30 Million by 2050](#)”

Education. Understanding the school experiences of young people facing racism who are from Indigenous, migrant or refugee backgrounds is the subject a new report from the Foundation for Young Australians and the Institute for Citizenship and Globalization at Deakin University. The study focuses on the role local schools play in fostering “values and behaviours that contribute more directly to building a diverse and dynamic nation” and makes recommendations for systemic change. See, [The impact of racism upon the health and well-being of young Australians](#).

Immigration reform. On 8 February 2010, the Australian Ministry of [Immigration and Citizenship](#) announced major changes to the General Skilled Migration program. Australia will dump 20,000 low-skilled migrant applications to re-focus its immigration intake on high-skilled jobs critical to the economy. The switch will be a blow to Australia’s overseas student education sector, the country’s third largest export earner worth \$13 billion. Read all about it in the [Sydney Morning Herald](#) or in [Reuters India](#).

Celebrating Diversity. Australia celebrates [National Harmony Day](#) on 21st March 2010. Since 1999, thousands of local schools, community groups and organisations across Australia have hosted Harmony Day events. This year, businesses and workplaces across Australia are invited to explore the 2010 theme, “Express Yourself,” over lunch! Everybody’s favourite import, food, is at the heart of the Scanlon Foundation’s highly successful “[Taste of Harmony](#)” campaign (March 15-21) which celebrates diversity and common values at work.

Webinar Summary: Municipal Action on Integration: Exploring Public Private Partnerships

By kturmer

February 2, 2010

[What Cities Said: December 2009](#)

Webinar agenda

Municipal Action on Integration: Exploring Public Private Partnerships

- 1) Introduction of the *Cities of Migration* project
- 2) Introductory Remarks by *Daranee Petsod* (Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees)
- 3) Presentation by *Clare O'Shea* (Village of Mount Prospect)
- 4) Presentation by *Luca Cianfriglia* (City of Turin)
- 5) Moderated Q&A

Note: Webinar recording will be available on the website to view: www.citiesofmigration.ca

On January 19th, the Cities of Migration and the Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR) joined the cities of Chicago (US) and Turin (Italy) to explore how public / private partnerships can help cities achieve their integration goals. The event had a fantastic online turnout and we were joined by participants from the cities of Austin, LA, Philadelphia, San Jose, Budapest, London, Madrid, Calgary, Dublin and others.

The speakers included Daranee Petsod, the Executive Director of GCIR, Clare O'Shea, Senior Planner from the Village of Mount Prospect, Chicago, and Luca Cianfriglia, Director, "The Gate Project" of Turin.

For the complete city success story, see their Good Idea profiles at CitiesofMigration.ca:

Chicago: [The Chicago Community Trust](#) partnership involved three municipal governments within the larger Chicago region. The funding model was designed to address the needs of growing newcomer communities while securing wider investment from both community and private sector stakeholders to build local capacity for the long-term.

Turin: [The Gate Project at Porta Palazzo](#) from the City of Turin is an urban regeneration initiative that uses a flexible, participatory approach to community development. With a wide platform of public and private participation and support, the city of Turin has transformed The Gate from a pilot project into a local development agency that integrates a commitment to poverty and crime reduction to the primary goals of social inclusion and sustainable urban renewal

To view the complete webinar including the Q&A portion, visit: [Municipal Action on Integration](#) or access just the [power point presentation](#).

Highlights from the discussion included:

- What are the benefits and risks of partnering with local government? Some of the benefits discussed include: leveraging government infrastructure, longevity, credibility and reach. Some of the risks? The political agenda driving the decision, the risk of a change in leadership (and accompanying shift in the political agenda) and accountability.
- Tips for effective public/private partnerships from the City of Chicago included: open communication, cultivating a network of relationships, the importance of credibility, sustainability and the need to educate elected officials and community.
- Porto Palazzo shared their multi-stakeholder success story; highlights included: the importance of mixing the formal with the informal, including reaching out to informal networks and community leaders; and creating the opportunity and space for casual programming; for example, Sunday language classes in the piazza in Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Romanian...and Italian!

For more Good Ideas on Public and Private partnerships, see also:

- Boston (US): [From Boston's Back Streets to Mainstream Success](#); and
- Stansted (UK): [Bringing People to Jobs: Runways to Work Programme](#)

Ulrich Kober: Education and Integration

By Evelyn
February 11, 2010
[Interview, Interviews](#)



An interview with Ulrich Kober, Director, Programm Integration und Bildung at the Bertelsmann Foundation.

Each year the Carl Bertelsmann Prize honors innovative ideas and exemplary solutions to pressing social issues from Germany and internationally with the mandate of learning from the best examples in the world.

In 2008, the prize was focused on the theme, "Integration depends on education." The Bertelsmann Foundation carried out an international search to identify the practices and approaches that are the most successful at increasing equal opportunity in schools for the children of immigrant families and, by doing so, promoting the children's integration within their adopted country.

Click here to read about the [2008 winner of Carl Bertelsmann Prize](#).

1. Like Cities of Migration, the Bertelsmann approach is about cities learning from other cities. When did Bertelsmann first start looking outside Germany for ideas and what led to this approach?

Well, after WW II, Reinhard Mohn, the founder of the Bertelsmann Foundation, spent time in the US as a prisoner of war. In addition to being impressed by what he experienced overseas, it also led to his view that the new post-war Germany could and should learn from the world at large. In fact, "To Learn From The World" was the title of his last book.

And so, the Bertelsmann Foundation has always had a deliberate focus on how the success of international practices could be used to address the challenges Germany is facing.

The annual Carl Bertelsmann-Prize honours those international models that inspire social innovation in Germany. For instance, in the field of integration and education, Germany must adopt policies that reflect our new reality of Germany being a country of immigration. At the moment, Germany has a lot to learn from countries that better integrate migrant and newcomer children in the educational system and this was one of the reasons why the 2008 Carl Bertelsmann Prize was awarded to the Toronto District School Board for its outstanding educational equity policy.

2. Education systems and curriculum requirements vary enormously from city to city and can have a huge impact on the classroom experience. With all these differences, does it make it difficult to actually apply a practice that may have worked in Toronto to the situation in Germany?

Indeed, the process of transferring a model from one specific context to another is always tricky.

It 's true that education systems vary a lot – the German school system is a multi-track system with tracking (or streaming) beginning at the very early age of 10 years.

In contrast, the Canadian system is comprehensive. In Germany, the regional or local level of government is not as important or involved in the education system as it is in Canada, since German cities are responsible for the maintenance of the school building but not in charge of curricula or teaching staff.

However, German cities like Berlin or Hamburg face similar integration challenges as Toronto and so, the way Toronto faces these challenges is highly inspirational for them.

Having said that, it is clear that the solutions must be adapted to fit into the German context – and that ultimately, they will be different from the answers given in Toronto. In Toronto the belief in integration through education is supported by a Canadian climate of valuing diversity and a national "multicultural" consensus.

There is no such thing in Germany.

The country has been – until very recently – reluctant to integrate migrants. Migrants were seen as "guest workers" that would return to their countries of origin and not as residents or Germans.

This viewpoint is what framed the national and regional discussion. And so, the change that we hope to encourage in Germany is really a change in mental models and not just introducing new teaching methods or pumping more money in schools with a high proportion of migrant children.

3. In your experience, what are some of the common issues that schools with high newcomer and immigrant populations face – regardless of city and geography?

I see two common issues: language and social capital. Language acquisition is the key to integration. All cities and countries need to establish effective systems and programs for migrant students to learn the new language.

Migrants also lack social capital in the new environment – meaning, they often don't have relevant professional contacts, networks and friends and so need effective systems for social support.

4. What have been some of the successes that you have been able to bring back to Germany?

The German educational system has been undergoing deep changes over the last years. The OECD's global evaluations, the PISA's (Programme for International Student Assessment) have really helped to open up the country to international experiences.

Some of the changes that we've seen implemented in Germany include the extension of the school day which has been helpful for migrant students. Another idea, that was also inspired by international best practice and adopted in almost all German states, is to test the language ability of all four year old children. Students that need additional support are identified early and so, by six when they start school, have been given the opportunity and means to catch up.

Our global research and international involvement has also raised the profile of this issues nationally. Through our recommendations, we have also been able to engage a broad range of German stakeholders. For instance, the state commissioner for integration spoke at the event when the Carl Bertelsmann Prize was awarded to the Toronto District School Board. I was recently invited to the commission for schools of the parliament of Northrhine-Westphalia, (the largest German state), to discuss ways to improve immigrant integration in schools.

Last autumn I was invited to international commission of the Stuttgart council to speak about the integration of migrant children. These are just three examples which show that our work is perceived at a national level, the state level and the regional level.

5. What do you see as the most significant challenge to immigrant integration in education?

In Germany, it is the gap between migrant students and native students. According to the PISA studies, by the age of 15 migrant students currently lag two school years behind their native peers. As a result, the proportion of migrant students that enter university is much lower than the proportion among their native peers. Furthermore, the proportion of school leavers among migrant students is much higher and the proportion of those finding a place in the vocational system is much lower. These gaps have to be closed and at the same time the bar for all students in Germany has to be raised.

6. Is there a key message you would like to share about what needs to be done to move this agenda forward?

The key message is that every child – regardless of his social or ethnic background – matters and has to be enabled via the educational system to develop its potential. Individual support by teachers and schools is the key to deliver equity and excellence in education.

7. Good ideas aside, of all of the cities you've looked at and travelled to, what would you most like to bring back to your home city?

Well, When we went to Stockholm, Sweden we spoke to a principal in a neighborhood populated exclusively by refugees from Asia, particularly Afghanistan. We asked her whether she had problems with head scarves in her schools. Yes, she answered, they needed MORE head scarves especially among teachers ... we were stunned because in some states in Germany teachers with head scarves are not allowed to teach. In Toronto we saw signs with the slogan "Diversity is our strength" – in Germany people think that diversity is causing trouble. These Swedish and Canadian examples could help Germany to develop a new approach to immigrant integration in the education system.

Read more about [Bertelsmann Foundation](#).

Congratulations: Ratna Omidvar, Nation Builder

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: February 2010](#)



Earlier this month, The Globe and Mail, Canada's pre-eminent national newspaper, recognized the top 10 [Nation Builders of the Decade](#).

Ratna Omidvar, the President of the Maytree Foundation (the lead foundation behind the Cities of Migration project) was honoured for her influence and impact in shaping the Canadian approach to and understanding of immigration.

Other Nation Builders included the inventors of the Blackberry and globally acclaimed writer Margaret Atwood.

From the [national citation](#):

"One of the remarkable features of Canada's last decade is the degree to which a widespread consensus on immigration has taken hold. Ratna Omidvar, a leading advocate for settlement and integration, has been particularly influential in nudging Canada toward this new consensus." (The Globe&Mail)

Ratna's success in building a consensus owes much to her focus on the economic argument: when systems and other barriers result in the underemployment of immigrants, Canada, and especially Canadian cities, loses billions from our economy. Her logic and practical solutions have resonated with the highest levels of Canadian government and business.

The [Toronto Region Immigrant Council](#) (TRIEC) was created by Maytree to break the cycle of immigrants being overlooked for jobs because they lack Canadian experience. The program resulted in over 5000 skilled immigrants finding jobs and the endorsement of the CEO's of one of Canada's largest national banks and insurance companies.

Similarly, Maytree's practical public policy suggestions such as pre-immigration orientation on Canadian culture and labour markets are being implemented by Canadian offices overseas. The recent guarantee by the national government to evaluate the credentials of foreign-trained professionals within a year of their arrival also bear the influence of her work.

For more on recent Maytree work on immigration reform in Canada: see, [Adjusting the Balance: Fixing Canada's Economic Immigration Policies](#) and [Fast, Fair and Final: Reforming Canada's Refugee System](#).

More about The Maytree Foundation

Established in 1982, Maytree is a private foundation that promotes equity and prosperity. Its focus is on the reduction of poverty in Canada, with a particular focus on immigration, integration and diversity.

Maytree believes that immigration and integration must work both in the short term and in the long term. The short term is about basic settlement needs and participation in the labour market; the long term is about a broader sense of participation and inclusion in Canadian society. This is a matter not simply of individual effort by the immigrant, but must be accompanied by institutional change. In other words, inclusion is a two way street that leads to social cohesion, nation building and citizenship.

Maytree programs and funding areas include:

Major poverty reduction initiatives: The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) and the [Tamarack Institute](#).

Immigrant employment: The [Toronto Region Immigrant Council](#) (TRIEC) and [ALLIES](#).

Leadership: [DiverseCity onBoard](#), one of 8 urban leadership programs in the [DiverseCity initiative](#).

Educational Opportunity: [The Maytree Scholarship Program](#).

Diverse Voices: [Diaspora Dialogues](#).

For more about the Maytree Foundation, visit the [Maytree website](#).

Education at Play: EQUITAS

By Evelyn

[What Cities Said: February 2010](#)



To live inside an inclusive community means removing the concept of the “other” and re-framing how people think. When commonalities outweigh difference, it’s easier to get on with the game, whether you are in the playground or sitting in a corporate board room.

Cultivating empathy and a sense of fair play in children reduces social intolerance, bullying and other forms of discrimination and helps take the “other” out of the equation. Working in conjunction with the city of Montreal, the NGO Equitas, has developed an educational toolkit that uses games to teach children to focus on their commonalities and not their differences.

Games, the ordinary tools of childhood.

[The Play It Fair! Program](#) is designed for children and youth between the ages of 6-12 and is being used at summer day camps and after school activities. Part of its success comes from using children’s innate and common interest in what is “fair” in games to prompt the development of this

same attitude in all aspects of their lives.

Related Good Idea:

- Berlin: [Dolls and Diversity: Fighting Prejudice with Empathy](#)
- Munich: [Buntkicktgut! Integration Through Sports](#)

Post Webinar Discussion: Municipal Action on Integration

By kturner

January 19, 2010

[What Cities Said: December 2009](#)

Thank you to everyone who joined us for [Municipal Action on Integration: Exploring Public Private Partnerships](#). The complete event, a summary and the power point presentation will all be posted here shortly.

In the meantime, if you have any other questions or comments that you wanted to add, feel free to post them here and we'll get back them as soon as....

Telenovelas and the US Census Bureau

By kturner

December 17, 2009

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2009](#)



At Cities of Migration, we're always looking for examples of good integration ideas that have been replicated and are travelling from city-to-city. The recent news that the US Census Bureau is making strategic use of telenovelas (soap operas) is a fantastic, and unexpected, example.

Earlier this year, we featured, "[A Soap Opera For Success: The Grand Cafe Telenovela](#)," about a vocational training initiative for immigrant women developed by the organization C.E.O. Women in Oakland, California.

The Grand Cafe is a telenovela written and filmed by [C.E.O. Women](#) as a way to teach immigrant women practical entrepreneurial know-how and basic English skills. The telenovela is a hugely popular form of melodramatic television series from Latin America.

The Grand Cafe

Hispanics now surpass African Americans as the largest minority group in many U.S. states and are the majority ethnic group in cities like Los Angeles and Oakland, California (Census, 2000). Media analysts report that roughly sixty percent of Hispanics in all age groups watch an average of 2.5 telenovela episodes (2.5 hours) per week. Research also suggests that telenovelas can be useful vehicles to transmit information on a range of issues –from health-related issues to adult education and vocational training.

Now the US Census Bureau is also taking its [message](#) to the telenovela by adopting this innovative approach for its 2010 Census campaign. The telenovela was identified as an effective way convey information and build trust among the Hispanic community, a group that has been wary of the census process in the past. In addition to the typical public service announcement and advertisements, the Census Bureau is having their message of, "Don't be afraid to be counted" incorporated into the popular Spanish telenovela, "*The Devil Knows Best*," broadcast by the Telemundo network.

What dramatic character plays the messenger? Ms. Perla Beltran is a young widow in New York City who's down on her luck. Her husband, a thief, was just murdered and she's living on the "wrong side of the tracks" until her life takes a turn when she decides to become a recruiter for the US Census Bureau. Tune in for more!

An additional twist on this story is the business angle. The campaign's partnership with Telemundo is not merely about civic participation. Higher Hispanic participation is also likely to mean more advertising revenue for Telemundo and other Spanish language networks over time. We'll be watching how this initiative and Ms. Perla's story both play out.

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Cities march to their own (integration) tune!

By kturner

December 16, 2009

[What Cities Said: December 2009](#)

Cities of Migration profiles innovative ways in which today's cities are dealing with rapid urbanization, global migration and the challenges of good immigrant integration. Tomorrow's prosperous cities recognize immigration as an opportunity to access skills, recruit talent and compete globally. With the vision and good sense to know that success takes time, they use smart practices and strategic planning to ensure immigrants are welcomed and integrated into the life of the city.

In recent weeks Switzerland has voted in favour of a binding referendum to ban the building of any 'more' minarets on mosques in Switzerland. There are currently four minarets in Switzerland. The Muslim population is approximately four percent.

Denmark and other EU countries have announced cash incentives to entice immigrants who "can't" or "won't assimilate" to return to their homelands (although how they intend to judge this status remains unclear).

However, notwithstanding national policies and sentiment, cities seem to march to their own tune. Some of our Good Ideas come from places that may surprise you. In the Canton of Zurich for example, has mandated a Quality in Multi-ethnic Schools program ([QUIIMS](#)) to prevent newcomer children from being disadvantaged. For example, in Chicago [innovative banking products](#) help build a new customer base by allowing religious communities to become home owners. Simple solutions include school-based programming for new families in Frankfurt where mothers and children [learn language skills together](#), and a culturally sensitive [health promotion](#) campaign in London for communities dealing with high levels of diabetes.



Duisburg, Germany

Ironically, we found some great ideas in Denmark: a women's leadership network building bridges to immigrant success through [mentoring partnerships](#), and Copenhagen's [environmentally friendly cycling program](#) for its newest citizens.

Other Good Ideas include a community-wide consultation in Duisberg, Germany, that successfully concluded with the building of the beautiful new [Marxloh Mosque](#) — with a minaret "no taller" than the local church bell tower. In northern Germany, the city of Rheine has adopted a policy of openness to religious and cultural differences to offset the alienation that intolerance creates —and the community cohesion it disrupts. [Open doors means open communities](#), whether the institutions are secular or religious.

So as we can see, there are alternatives to banning minarets.

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Copenhagen's COP15: Integration and Environment

By kturner

[What Cities Said: December 2009](#)



With world leaders gathered in Copenhagen to discuss climate change at the COP15 Summit, it's time to think about environmental issues closer to home.

In [New York City](#), municipal officials have launched a program that encourages immigrants and newcomers to use city parks, a first step toward developing a broad consensus on the importance of our green spaces and how they contribute to individual well-being as well as the health of our cities.

In San Francisco, [PODER's "Immigrant Power for Environmental Health & Justice Initiative"](#) took on the city over the heavy traffic pollution in low-income and immigrant neighbourhoods. They succeeded in requiring the city to plan for environmental justice and galvanized a vibrant, informed community lobby for future action in the process.

In Auckland, [Project Twin Streams](#) brings together diverse groups around the shared goal of restoring and reclaiming local streams, the "lifeblood of the planet."

And let's not forget Copenhagen's very own [environmentally friendly cycling program](#) for its newest citizens -and the genius of simple solutions to daunting challenges!

Do you have a good idea, local project or city program about engaging newcomers on environmental issues? Tell us about it! Email us at citiesofmigration@maytree.com.



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Dispatches from NZ cities

By admin2
Uncategorized

December 2009. Hello from Aotearoa New Zealand!

As we look back over the year, we can see that 2009 has been a big year for the arts as a way of communication among and between the diverse communities that share this land. Here is a small sample from our three largest cities:

Wellington: Mixing the mediums of writing, radio, film, photography and online media, [Yunited Voicez](#) is a youth media project based in Wellington. The November launch displayed the candid stories produced by participating young people from a wide variety of backgrounds through prints; [short films](#); [written stories](#); and [audio recordings](#) which will be played on [Wellington Access Radio](#).

Also in Wellington, the [Migrating Kitchen Trust](#) re-staged their successful 2007 exhibition at the [Pataka Gallery](#). Featuring a variety of ethnic communities, the exhibition celebrated food, families and festivals through an interactive visitor experience that provided a chance to step inside neighbours' kitchens to hear their stories, taste their food and take away their recipes.

Further south, the **Christchurch** Arts Festival brought together both local and international acts including [Pacific Underground](#), who also contributed to the Samoan tsunami benefit concert '[I Love The Islands](#)'; and staged the world premiere of the Samoan comedy play '[Angels](#)' this year.

In **Auckland**, [Prayas Theatre](#) group have produced annual productions showcasing fine contemporary Indian Theatre for a New Zealand audience since 2005. The [2009 production](#) highlighted one of the more intimate challenges of migration to Auckland through the voice of a young and handsome man from Bombay. Young artists and performers from Auckland's ethnic communities were invited to work with acclaimed UK string collective Urban Soul Orchestra in the British Council's [People in Your Neighbourhood](#) project. Seen as a vehicle for intercultural collaboration in the arts, the project created a [free downloadable album](#) and performed live music shows in Auckland and at the [WOMAD Festival](#) in Taranaki.

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Focus on city partnerships: with Ricardo Gambetta

By admin2

[Interview, Interviews](#)



An interview with Ricardo Gambetta, Manager, Immigrant Integration Programs at the US National League of Cities.

The [National League of Cities](#) is the oldest and largest national organisation representing municipal government in the United States. It works in partnership with 49 state municipal leagues, and advocates for more than 19,000 cities and towns than it represents.

Q1. Connecting global cities is one of the key goals of our project, Cities of Migration. What's one of the most successful examples of cities partnering for change?

While several come to mind, I would really highlight the work that the municipal government in Boston has done. Boston was one of the first cities to effectively use partnerships with the private sector, with faith-based groups, community groups and others to both create and sustain a series of leading municipal programs that have subsequently been replicated in other cities. [Note: for a Cities of Migration profile, see [Boston Backstreets Program](#)]

In terms of partnering or working with each other, recent examples are the cities of Fort Wayne, Indianapolis and Littleton, Colorado. In August 2009, we launched pilots in both these cities for our new program, the Municipal Action for Immigrant Integration (MAII) project. As both cities roll out MAII programs, they will be able to share with each other what they learned about what worked and even more importantly, what didn't.

Q2. America is a nation of immigrants, its in its DNA. So why do we need a program like MAII? and why is it important to the NLC?

At the National League of Cities (NLC), we are focused on connecting our 19,000 cities so that they can learn from one another. To support this, we provide them with networking opportunities and forums to exchange information as well as tools, sources and training to learn from one another about: what works and what doesn't.

Really, we need programs and opportunities like this more than ever before. Immigration is no longer just something that happens in the the larger or coastal US cities. Today immigrants are coming to cities and towns of all sizes, many of which don't have extensive experience in how to best integrate newcomers into the fabric of their community.

Since the national government has yet to provide cities with a national immigration policy, our hope is that by providing the tools as well as practical opportunities for learning and dialogue between cities, we can give Mayors and their offices some of that missing support.

Q3. What is your advice for an organisation or municipal government interested in partnership relationship like this?

To be successful you need to make sure that the Mayor's office is fully on board and then make sure that you can get representatives from the private sector, from community organisations and any other sector all to the table.

What is essential is to bring them all to the table and to keep the lines of communication open. Which brings me to my next piece of advice: creating an effective partnerships ultimately just takes time and can't really be rushed.

Q4. Your program, Municipal Action for Immigrant Integration (MAII) has joined efforts with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Can you tell us more about this partnership?

It began informally at the beginning of this year and it progressed from there. We see this partnership as both an indication of how serious this [Obama] administration is on the immigrant integration issue as well an an opportunity to have the federal government begin to work with municipal governments. This is an area that is federal in nature (i.e., the US immigration system) but is really being addressed municipally and locally.

Q5. What are the main issues that you see facing cities?

The main issue now is that although mid-sized and smaller cities all receive immigrants, they often have very few resources with which to create a successful environment for newcomer integration.

Q6. Could city partnerships help with this?

Yes certainly to a degree. Larger cities with longer histories of successfully being able to integrate immigrants can provide some guidance to cities that are just facing these questions today. The caveat is that the history, dynamics and resources of these cities and the new immigrant communities are often quite different.

Q7. What your favorite city – and why?

Well, I'm not going to choose from the cities in our network, so outside of the US.... Well, I'm still not going to choose just one, but I will say that Barcelona, Frankfurt and Copenhagen are all cities that I enjoy culturally. I have been very impressed with many of the programs they have.

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What We Are Watching: Municipal Action For Immigrant Integration (MAII)

By kturner

December 17, 2009

[Conversations In Integration, What Cities Said: December 2009](#)



The [National League of Cities](#) (NLC) is the largest organization in the US focused on promoting cities as centres of opportunity, leadership and governance. With a membership of over 19,000 US cities and towns, the NLC new immigrant integration program has plans to make a big impact.

In August 2009, just one year after the launch of the [Municipal Action for Immigrant Integration \(MAII\)](#) project, the NLC rolled out new pilot programs in a push to promote civic engagement and naturalization among immigrant communities. Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Littleton, Colorado, are the first two cities in an ambitious national plan.

The MAII program has two components: the NewCITYzen Naturalization Campaign and the CITYzenship Community Initiative.

The NewCITYzen Naturalization Campaign highlights the benefits of naturalization, including voting rights and provides the pilot cities with a campaign toolkit. This includes outreach material and public service announcement to help launch naturalization campaigns.

The program's CITYzenship Community Initiative helps cities develop an action plan for managing immigrant integration challenges, as well as define a strategy to increase immigrant outreach in advance of the upcoming 2010 Census.

The City of Fort Wayne has a population of nearly 250,000 residents, nearly six percent of whom are foreign born. Over the past decade, Fort Wayne has become home to the [largest population of Burmese refugees in the US](#), increasing the need for immigrant services in the city. The MAII pilot will also provide technical assistance and training to Fort Wayne's new Hispanic and Immigrant Liaison.



In [Littleton](#), nearly nine percent of the city's 43,000 are foreign born. Littleton will be using NewCITYzen Naturalization Campaign materials to promote the idea of naturalization in the immigrant community, and will also receive technical assistance to prepare for Census 2010.

Cities of Migration will be watching both of these cities and reporting back to you on the success of these initiatives. We will also be profiling some great ideas from the city Indianapolis where a comprehensive immigrant integration campaign is paying big dividends for the city.

For more information, see the NLC MAII [Indianapolis case study](#) and updates here at Cities of Migration.

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Introducing the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival

By kturner

November 15, 2009

[What Cities Said: December 2009](#)



Our recent Cities of Migration webinar on [Youth Participation and Migrant Voice](#) included opening remarks by Florence Laufer of the UN Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC) in New York and an introduction to the UN AoC's exciting new project, PLURAL+, an international youth-produced video festival on migration, diversity and identity.

On December 18th, 2009, in honour of International Migrants Day, the UN AoC announced the three International Jury Award winners at the [PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival Awards Ceremony](#) at the Paley Center for Media in New York.

Over 150 videos produced by youth age 9 to 25 from 39 countries representing all areas of the planet responded to the PLURAL + call for entries that were vetted by an international jury which includes youth representatives, film critics and critically acclaimed filmmakers such as Abbas Kiarostami.

The winning videos will be presented at a number of conferences and festivals as well as broadcast around the world throughout 2010.

For further information on PLURAL + and this year's award winners, please visit: www.unaoc.org/pluralplus.

