



7-8/10/2020, WG Migration and Integration

Meeting report

Tampere, 7-8 October 2020 - The Eurocities Working Group Migration and integration met to build on the city of Tampere's good practices in the field of international talent attraction to transfer know-how among participating cities, with more than 65 participants from 31 cities and other participants from the EU institutions and universities.

The aim of this meeting was to discuss innovative measures for international talent attraction and labour market integration. The meeting was designed as a digital mutual learning event/policy transfer, with Tampere as host city and Solna and Grenoble as transfer cities. It also included a particular focus on translating these discussions into key policy measures to be used in Eurocities engagement for the development of the EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027.

The key messages from the meeting were:

1. International talent is a key factor in promoting business and innovation. At the same time, the skills, competences and needs of people with a migrant background take centre stage when matching them for a good employment position.
2. Cities occupy a key role in engaging employers to better tailor employment measures and meet skills shortages, and to tackle their insecurities (red tape, insecure status, language deficits, etc.) about hiring refugees.
3. Direct and structural funding for cities, independent from national governments, remains a key priority for cities for the consolidation of existing local initiatives.
4. Funding should be more flexible and support from different sources should be more compatible, and not determine policy design by its administrative logic.
5. Opportunities for transnational learning and multi-level venues in which cities sit at a table with national governments and the European Commission are of strategic importance for cities and should be intensified.
6. Particularly when views on migration differ radically between cities and national governments, creating funding and cooperation structures independent of national government is crucial for cities to stay involved in the EU discussions on migrant and refugee integration.

In detail

All presentations from the meeting are available here:



*This report has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>*

- The [recorded videos](#) of the meeting (as a private playlist on Youtube)
- Tampere’s presentation [slides](#) and a short [case study](#) overview of Tampere’s practices, as well as [information](#) on SIMHE services (Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland) that was shared during the meeting
- Solna’s presentation [slides](#) and a [video](#) on the Solna Model
- Grenoble’s presentation [slides](#)

1. Official welcome/Opening of the event



Lauri Lyly, Mayor of Tampere

2. Session I - Learning from Tampere’s Strategic Programme for international talent attraction and labour market integration

Cities are looking into new ways to attract international talent and provide incentives for migrants to settle and work in their territories. European societies are ageing fast and are therefore in need of immigration to uphold socio-economic standards, counteract the pressure put on social systems and maintain the essential infrastructure of our economies.

One tool to achieve this is Tampere’s Strategic Programme on International Talent Attraction and Migration, a first of its kind in Finland. Mari Taverne, leading Tampere’s work on this topic, says the city’s vision is: “Tampere - the best for you - an attractive and renowned city for international talent”.

By creating a strategic, cross-sector holistic management model for internationalisation, the city focuses on bringing their local ecosystem to life. Tampere sees international talent as a key factor in promoting business and innovation. At the same time, the skills, competences and needs of people with a migrant background take centre stage when matching them for a good employment position.

To put these concepts into practice, Tampere has built a unique coordination structure that supports the settlement of international experts and steers job seekers with a migrant background towards open labour markets:



*This report has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>*

- Migration Info Centre Mainio: giving advice and guidance for newcomers and settled migrants
- International HUB Tampere: matching local business and global talents
- the International Skills Centre: speeding up the educational and employment paths for migrants and facilitate their access to the labour market in the region

3. Session II & III - Transferring good practices from Tampere to other cities

The cities of Solna and Grenoble also have strong measures in place the integration of migrants into the labour market. Solna's Solna Model on labour market integration works through strong ties to employers, while Grenoble's Refugee Inclusion and Employment Integrated Programme (RISING) builds on individualised employment coaching to ease access to employment.

These initiatives of the three cities illustrate their key role in personalisation and service orientation of labour market support beyond what national integration programmes can deliver, e.g. through individual job coaches, on-demand training, mapping and validating formal qualifications and non-accredited skills, one-stop-shops, or multilingual support. They also show how cities are forging partnerships and initiating joined governance processes: with actors from business, university, NGO and government sectors to jointly steer talent attraction and labour market inclusion from the local or metropolitan level. Finally, it is clear from these practices that cities occupy a key role in engaging employers to better tailor employment measures and meet skills shortages, and to tackle their insecurities (red tape, insecure status, language deficits, etc.) about hiring refugees.

The refugee arrival in 2015 boosted the adaptation of municipal services to diversity. It helped to initiate further processes of intercultural orientation of services, and to forge new alliances (e.g. with employers and chambers of commerce) on refugee integration.

Mural from the parallel transfer sessions with Solna and Grenoble, also available [here](#).



*This report has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>*



4. SESSION IV High-level political panel debate: ‘What role for cities in the new EU policies on migration and integration?’

These local level experiences were connected to the EU policy agenda on migration and integration. Cities engaged in a panel discussion with European Commission representatives Michael Shotter, Director for Migration, Protection and Visa, and Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director for Social Affairs, as well as Tampere’s deputy mayor Jaakko Stenhäll and Amsterdam’s deputy mayor Rutger Groot Wassink.

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum and the upcoming Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion were the main two policy files discussed, specifically in how they relate to cities’ integration efforts at the local level. With respect to the former, questions were raised about the compromise character of the proposal and whether the balance was struck between border management funding and integration funding. Connected to this, the Commission encouraged cities to engage in national level discussions on the importance of



This report has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

including migrants as a priority in member states' National Reform and Resilience Programmes in the context of the pandemic recovery. The discussion also touched on the upcoming difficult negotiations on a common approach to migration and asylum and the need to find solidarity between member states.

With view to the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027, the discussions highlighted that:

- Direct and structural funding for cities, independent from national governments, remains a key priority for cities for the consolidation of existing local initiatives.
- Funding should be more flexible and support from different sources should be more compatible, and not determine policy design by its administrative logic.
- Opportunities for transnational learning and multi-level venues in which cities sit at a table with national governments and the European Commission are of strategic importance for cities and should be intensified.
- Particularly when views on migration differ radically between cities and national governments, creating funding and cooperation structures independent of national government is crucial for cities to stay involved in the EU discussions on migrant and refugee integration.

These and other points are taken into account in a Eurocities submission to the [public consultation on the integration and inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background](#).

The Commission also highlighted that the European Pillar of Social Rights and the upcoming Action Plan on its implementation were key documents that will set the long-term future of social policy in the EU. As migration plays a crucial role in many of its principles, a mainstreaming approach to migration and integration is indispensable.

5. Follow-up and Impact in the EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027

The key messages from the WG Migration and Integration meeting of 7/8 October, after subsequent submission to the policy development of the Commission, were clearly taken on board in the European Commission's recently published [EU Action Plan Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027](#), which includes many of Eurocities' main advocacy points. The plan takes inclusion for all as its basis and outlines several objectives and actions to build inclusive and cohesive societies.

The action plan includes proposals to ensure easier access for cities to EU funding through increasing involvement in national programmes and specific national funding calls for cities. It specifies the strong involvement of cities in multi-governance partnerships and displays a clear recognition that cities play a key role in welcoming and integrating newcomers. Indeed, the importance of the local level in integration measures is a red line which runs through



*This report has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>*

the entire action plan. It covers the main policy areas of relevance throughout the integration process: education and training, employment and skills, health, and access to adequate and affordable housing.

This [summary](#) and analysis of the responses to the Commission's public consultation, to which Eurocities also [responded](#), makes it clear that there was an impressive showing by local authorities, and that a large number of respondents echoed the fact that cities must receive more support from the EU. That these voices were heard and included is evident from the final wording of the action plan. Eurocities also prepared a [short policy briefing](#) on the main points of relevance to cities.



*This report has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).
For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>*