

Learning from the Inclusive Cities programme

Phase One:
March 2017 – June 2019

October 2019

COMPAS



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Introduction

Inclusive Cities is a Knowledge Exchange initiative hosted by the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity and funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Shared Ground Fund. The first phase of the project ran for two years. It supported six UK cities¹ and their local partners to achieve a step-change in their approach towards integration of newcomers in the city. Drawing on ideas and experience from within Europe and innovative approaches from cities in the United States, Inclusive Cities aims to support the development of an approach that is as follows:

- Strategic across the city administration
- Consistently uses positive messaging to develop an inclusive narrative for the city which informs and drives practice
- Local authority led, working in close partnership with business, public and voluntary sector organisations – including those not usually involved in integration – to achieve shared goals
- Identifies a number of priority areas leading to practical initiatives which broaden opportunities for inclusion of all residents across the economic, social and civic life of the city
- Recognises in particular the needs of children and young people

The project is a knowledge exchange initiative which, in phase one, helped cities to reflect upon and develop their thinking in a number of ways:

- Peer learning and support between the participating cities
- Dedicated support from a project manager at the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity who informed the projects with specialist input – data, evidence,

¹ The five participating cities were Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool and Peterborough. London participated in some aspects of the project as an associate member.

and examples of worldwide good practice and provided ongoing support to each of the cities

- Learning exchange with two US cities, hosted by Welcoming America, a highly acclaimed initiative which supports the development of a shared narrative and inclusive practices among city administrations and their partners

This is a learning report outlining some of the key learning points from the first phase of the programme.

What we learnt about the work

The Global Exchange's model of knowledge exchange embeds learning into both the design and delivery of its programmes, aiming to both facilitate social change and learn from it. The project manager both facilitates the programme and is involved in identifying and clarifying learning from it, brokering the interface between research and policy making. Insights from research were brought in to inform the policy making process and to feedback the evidence generated into the policy making process at each stage. This meant that evidence from the project was constantly used to refine the project, to develop tools and guidance co-productively and to inform future research and project design. These tools included:

- An action planning template used by all the cities
- Co-produced guidelines for designing and implementing city narratives
- The Inclusive Cities framework (to be launched in October 2019, please see Annex 1 for a short description)

The project has also produced a number of research outputs which will generate learning, including:

- A confidential survey of participants which will be used both to inform the development of phase two of the programme and which will be used as the basis of forthcoming research on the 'city working group model' of knowledge exchange
- Forthcoming academic research by Jacqui Broadhead drawing out emerging lessons from the programme (which is currently going through peer review and it is expected to be published in a special issue of the Comparative Migration Studies journal in early 2020)

- Forthcoming article focussing on London's Social Integration Strategy to be published in Hommes et Migrations (in French)

The Global Exchange's model of knowledge exchange will allow the findings of these academic research to be fed directly back into the policy making process, including as part of phase two of the programme.

The learning from phase one of the project has been embedded in the design of the second phase. This includes continuing to have two officials from each participating authority on the project; the structure of the action plan process; the core knowledge exchange focus between research, policy and operations; the international exchange through continued partnership with Welcoming International; and the Taskforce model of bringing together cross-sectoral stakeholders to ensure that the process is shared.

What difference the work made and what we learnt from the experience

The project aimed to deliver a 'step change in the approach to the inclusion of newcomers in the community' and the feedback from participating cities is that this has been the case.

The following anonymous feedback from participating cities, summarised below, was collected by survey in January 2019 and identifies key strengths of the programme in meeting its aims:

Table 1: Feedback on Phase One of the Inclusive Cities Programme (Strengths)

IC Aim	Selected responses
IC has acted as a catalyst for change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sped up and reinforced existing integration processes. - Provided practical and tangible ideas about what could be done differently on integration and welcoming as well as new impetus to act. - Inclusion and welcoming now embedded within cities' key strategic documents. - Ensuring political leadership raised the profile of integration and welcoming across city council and elsewhere. - There is now a wider and more diverse group of stakeholders taking part in the discussion.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shift in perspective from a 'city council view' to a 'city wide view'. - New models deployed to support a range of services, including foster care for UASCs, ESOL, employment pathways and wrap-around support for refugees. - Working groups created to ensure all departments recognise the needs of migrants when developing policies and programmes.
The programme has helped to build new networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The IC network was conducive to shared learning and partnership. - All of the partner cities added to the richness of the network and provided peer support. - Good level of trust, shared challenges and understanding developed among the partner cities. - More partners from within and outside of city council came together – partners bring ideas to the table in a cooperative spirit.
The cities took inspiration from the US exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Borrowed from examples of tangible initiatives (e.g., Global Minds and Welcome Back). - Inspired to leverage more resources and be more ambitious in funding bids. - Expertise developing migration- and diversity-positive narratives shared and brought back to the UK. - US cities encouraged participants to consider how they could become more active in influencing national policy.
The IC process has helped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well-paced, intuitive and straightforward. - The action plans provided accountability, structure and a tangible framework helpful in securing political support. - Goal setting was ambitious but achievable, and always grounded in the local context. - The support provided ensured deadlines were met and progress was evident to participants and the wider council.
Having an academic partner has added value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The guidance and support were helpful without being overbearing. - The skill sets and resources of COMPAS complimented those of the cities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COMPAS was able to marshal relevant and valuable academic research and make it applicable to individual cities to help informed decision-making. - An academic partner added credibility and gravitas.
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The survey also identified a number of areas for development:

Table 2: Feedback on Phase One of the Inclusive Cities Programme (Areas for Development)

IC Aim	Selected responses
Moving beyond the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taskforces worked well but in some cases but had limitations. - Difficulty engaging with business community. - Sometimes seen as too council led. - Bringing in new partners requires a lot of extra briefing and support to bring them up to speed. - Capacity to manage the process is an issue. - Helpful where part of a larger initiative/ strategy.
Mainstreaming, making sure the work 'lands' and ensuring the work is sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remains a work in progress. - Resources to plug gaps in our action plan not identified. - Unclear how to gauge whether new initiatives are sustainable or provide long-term impact. - Lack of requisite funding, investment and officer time to do any of the development work to make progress in this area. - A major challenge to maintain (and improve) inclusive economic growth in an era of financial instability. - Taskforces did not always work well together.
Navigating the national policy landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political challenges, such as elections, which may occur mid-way through the implementation of a project and affect what is feasible practically and politically. - Policy challenges such as the hostile environment, budget cuts, Brexit and Windrush, and their implications on local and national priorities such as xenophobia, distrust, isolation and knife crime.

Key themes and what we learnt from the experience

The activities undertaken in phase one are detailed in Annex 2: Project Milestones. They allowed for certain integration and inclusion themes to emerge as particularly salient. The learning connected to these themes is detailed below.

Table 3: Thematic learning on integration and inclusion at the local level

Theme	Learning
The development of local leadership on inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As demonstrated in research literature, most integration takes place at the local level. The development of local leadership, alongside the generation of high level buy-in for the project within local authorities, is crucial. - There is anecdotal evidence from the project that integration has risen in policy salience within the cities. However, capacity remains severely limited, in particular within the context of local government austerity. - There is no natural 'home' for integration within local authorities: the project has been placed in different departments in each city and a mixture of politicians, advisors and officers support the project. This is in some ways a strength as it means that the work is tailored to the priorities of each city, but also points to the difficulty in leveraging resources and traction for the project and other integration initiatives. - There are a number of cross cutting city priorities that the project fits into: inclusive growth, tackling poverty and inequality and managing demographic change. Cities are starting to build integration considerations into these strategic priorities, but there are sometimes challenges.
The importance of place shaping and developing a city-wide narrative of inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative change has emerged as a key priority for all cities. There is a sense that this is a timely discussion and has resonance within the cities. - As part of the project, a workshop was held examining the research on understanding narrative frames and public opinion on migration. This resulted in the development of draft principles for developing a citywide narrative, which can be found here.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusive Cities focuses on newcomers and host or receiving communities as part of its model. It appears that this leads to a broader focus within and beyond the local authority, advancing traditional community cohesion activities into wider areas of city life.
The potential galvanizing role of local authorities as convener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The taskforce model brings together partners and empowering local authorities to use their convening powers to effect change. - However, this has proved easier in some sectors than in others; there is still work to do to build broader partnerships, in particular to ensure representation from both new communities and longer standing residents and to include business and employers. - There is a strong desire to mainstream inclusion as 'everybody's business' and ensure that it is a shared responsibility. However, the role of the local authority remains vital as a driver in this and there is a great deal to do in order to reach this goal, both within services in the local authority and beyond. Systematised action planning is being used as a tool to facilitate this within the project. - The shared community experience of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme has emerged as a case study in which the local authority and partners have been galvanised in all of the participating cities. It appears the scheme has had an impact above and beyond the direct numbers supported. There may be wider applications for this model of working and local investment.

Future plans

Inclusive Cities has been awarded an additional three year grant by Paul Hamlyn Foundation to build on its work. In this second phase we will build on the learning from the first phase, continuing to work with our six founder cities (who have all committed to continuing their involvement) and recruiting up to six new cities.

Phase two of the programme will very much continue the successful model of phase one, with a number of additions including wider learning from international practice as a founder member of Welcoming International (which also works with similar projects in the US, Australia, New Zealand and Germany), bilateral learning partnerships between founder and phase two cities and the use of the Inclusive Cities Framework.

Annex 1: Inclusive Cities Framework – Overview

The Inclusive Cities framework draws on the learning from the first phase cities, academic research and international learning. It is intended to support UK municipalities and local authorities to develop their approach to the inclusion of newcomers in the city as part of their work to build inclusive communities. It is not intended as a definitive guide, but simply as a resource to support local areas in the development of their approach and its implementation and monitoring.

The Framework sets out 5 core principles and 5 key themes:

Principles

1. Provide local leadership to create change
2. Inclusion is a shared responsibility delivered in partnership
3. Work with newcomers and longer standing residents
4. Use available data and evidence to understand the local context in order to identify local priorities, set goals, monitor impact and update strategies as needed
5. Take action at the local level, provide advocacy at the national level, learn from best practice internationally

Themes

1. Leading in the development of a shared local story of inclusion
2. Supporting and driving inclusive economic growth
3. Connecting Communities
4. Mainstreaming and building inclusive public services
5. Encouraging civic participation and representation

It is hoped that this Framework will act as a guideline for municipalities in developing this work and will showcase the progress made by participating cities.

Annex 2: Project Milestones

March – June 2017: Recruitment

A shortlist of cities was developed based on UK cities with a recent history of significant migration and with the aim of recruiting five cities that are diverse in terms of size, demographics, geography, and political make-up.

Discussions were had with the shortlisted cities about their ideas and commitment to the project. Each city committed to the lifespan of the project with a letter from the Leader, Chief Executive or Mayor and nominated a senior sponsor and operational contact for the project. London became an associate member of the project – participating in some aspects of the project, such as the convenings and learning exchange. This allowed the other cities to benefit from the work happening in London, such as the Citizenship Initiative, whilst allowing the project to support a full complement of other UK cities.

City	Department where Inclusive Cities sits	Strategic Sponsor for the project
Bristol	Mayors' Office	Deputy Mayor
Cardiff	Communities	Director of Communities, Housing and Customer Services
Glasgow	Economic Regeneration	Leader
Liverpool	Community Safety and Cohesion	Executive Member for Housing, Fairness and Equalities
Peterborough	Housing, Communities and Youth	Cabinet Member for Communities
London (Associate Member)	Social Inclusion	Deputy Mayor for Social Inclusion

June – October 2017: Charting a course

In this facilitative phase of the project, cities worked to develop their initial priority areas and ideas for the project. Supported by the project manager, each city established a 'baseline' of their existing activity and engagement to begin developing their action plan and to brief the other cities and Welcoming America.

[A working paper](#) was published, providing an overview of the UK policy context, current research in relation to integration and additional resources for cities to draw on, as well as examples of innovation from overseas.

19th – 20th October: First meeting of the Working Group

Hosted by Glasgow City Council, this meeting brought together representatives of each city and the project partners to:

1. Formally start the project, allowing city representatives to get to know one another, to outline their interest in the project and to share their priorities, concerns and aspirations for the project
2. Discuss and take inspiration from examples of good practice raised by the six cities, Welcoming America and the working paper
3. Begin to shape their action plans and understand how the Taskforce can contribute to the delivery of the actions plan
4. Identify areas in which the Global Exchange can provide further research input and support

October 2017 – May 2018: Early achievements

Each city worked intensively to establish a Taskforce, identify priorities and put together an action plan. Cities set up their Taskforces to be representative and bring in new partners for this area of work, such as arts and cultural institutions, employers, housing associations, local media, sports organisations and universities.

The Global Exchange worked on a bilateral level with each city to collect feedback, further develop ideas and provide a range of measures to support activities, such as holding and attending events, facilitating knowledge exchange through Welcoming America, identifying funding opportunities and servicing the cities' data and analysis needs by working with [the Migration Observatory](#).

21st – 25th May 2018: Welcoming America and the US Learning Exchange

Twelve representatives of the six cities attended a five-day learning exchange with **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania** and **Montgomery County, Maryland**, as well as meetings with policy makers in **Washington DC**, which was developed in partnership with the two US cities and Welcoming America. The cities were chosen specifically to match areas of interest for the six cities and the exchange was fruitful, later feeding into the action plans of the six cities. A full report of the exchange is available [here](#).

11th – 12th October 2018: Second Meeting of the Working Group

Hosted by Liverpool City Council, the second meeting of the cities marked the midway point of phase one of the project, bringing together representatives for each city as well as David Lubell from Welcoming America / Welcoming International and other partners for an intensive two-day convening. The aims of the meeting were:

1. For each of the cities to present their draft action plans and receive feedback on the plans
2. To identify and discuss emerging learning from the project, including reflections on the US exchange
3. To look forward to the next phase of the project, including input from Welcoming America / Welcoming International on developing a Framework (see Annex 1 of this report for further details).

January 2019: Action plans finalised

The action plans of the six cities were signed off and published on the on the [Inclusive Cities project](#) page on the COMPAS website.

February 2019: The final convening of phase one

The third and final convening of the Inclusive Cities was hosted by Bristol and provided the opportunity for cities to share learning and consolidate their action plans. The meeting also provided the space to elicit and collect feedback on the first phase of the programme, to develop the Inclusive Cities Framework (to be published in October 2019 as part of the launch of phase two of the programme) and to discuss and agree on plans for phase two of the Inclusive Cities programme.



The Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity is an ambitious initiative at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) opening up opportunities for knowledge exchange and longer term collaboration between those working in the migration field.