



Action for Inclusion in Europe City Working Groups

Research Paper 6

Lessons Learned Report:
Cohesion and Belonging
City Working Group

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December 2016



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1. Introduction

The Cohesion and Belonging strand of the *Action for Inclusion* Initiative brought together COMPAS researchers with senior officials responsible for cohesion and integration in five different European cities to consider their responses around how Europe's cities can manage diversity dynamics for urban liveability and urban sustainability under the force of massive economic, social, cultural and political change, and how we can learn to build inclusive cities and inclusive urban citizenship.

This is an important topic, because the last two decades have seen the demographic transformation of Europe, driven primarily by international migration. It is in cities where diversity is experienced most intensely, to which the majority of migrants move, and where mobilisations against diversity are symbolically rooted. And it is also at local level where the possibility for new forms of identification and belonging emerge. As cities become more diverse and more unequal, municipalities face the challenge of how to ensure that all citizens feel they have a stake in a common civic culture. Local authorities increasingly recognise their "place-making" role alongside their statutory service delivery functions. A city in which all residents feel they are valued increases residents' wellbeing and satisfaction, and creates a climate in which municipal measures are more effective.

The project

Within the *Action for Inclusion* group, we provided research evidence on the topic and asked officials to share their own experiences of working towards inclusion and active citizenship. The participants were asked to plan tangible reform in their cities. The focus of reform was envisaged as flexible; it could involve developing new programmes or content or adapting existing strategies, or it might involve planning strategic approaches within municipalities to win support and develop resourcing for these initiatives. Across three meetings, we shared feedback on the plans, offering constructive criticism and shared resources among participants. As a result of the collaborative process, we aim to share the examples of the city plans to improve cohesion and belonging with other European cities in order to seek better results for all residents and citizens. These plans can be seen here: www.compas.ox.ac.uk/project/action-for-inclusion-in-europe/.

This particular report summarises the experience of working with senior staff as they developed their reforms, reflects on the experience of the process, summarises the main issues that arose from research scoping and practice, and then considers the extent to which, within this process, the cities were successful.

2. The selection of cities

The Action for Inclusion project sought to engage cities that were at various stages of development in their work in these fields and implement an action plan for change. A call for places was advertised through various networks, and cities were invited to submit applications explaining the city background and interests in the topic. Cities were selected in a competitive process, using criteria for selection based upon not only quality of application, but other criteria.

- Challenges and practices: All of the cities had identified challenges, often to do with: building a sense of local and national belonging among migrant and minority populations (including Muslim populations in the context of recruitment to warzones overseas); intervening at neighbourhood level in areas experiencing tensions; and engaging less included groups in mainstream and participatory democratic platforms. All of them had some experience of successful and even innovative practices, but all are also putting into place new practices which were appropriate to supported by the project.

- Demographic profile: We aimed to include a range of city sizes, although most of our applications came from medium-sized cities. The smallest in the group is 220,000, the largest nearly 900,000. Most of the cities that applied had some long experience of migration, including internal labour migration, but were more notably characterised by dramatic increases in migration and migration-driven diversity in the last two decades, including the very recent arrival of Syrian refugees. Migrant populations vary, but are mainly between 10% and 30%.
- Spread: We aimed to have a range of cities from different countries. However, we privileged the quality of the application and the aforementioned criteria (e.g. especially experience and practices) and so worked with two cities in Finland, although these contrast with each other sharply.
- The cities chosen offered different practices, states of development, experience with migrant populations and offered strong applications with senior buy-in.

On this basis, the following cities were chosen: Aarhus (Denmark), Brighton (England), Helsinki (Finland), Tampere (Finland) and Torino (Italy).

3. The cities and their plans

1. Aarhus, Denmark

Participants: **Anne Marie Larsen**, Chief consultant, Mayor's Department, City of Aarhus; **Mads Hjorthnæs**, Jens Winther, City of Aarhus.

City background: Aarhus is Denmark's second city, with 325,000 inhabitants, of whom over a tenth are "of non-Western origin". It has had an integration policy, based on equal opportunities and shared values, since 2007, and is now formulating a policy of local citizenship, to be presented at the end of 2015. The city had some interesting practices to share, including "Democracity", a project on new methods to strengthen dialogue with citizens and local actors directly in the development and planning of neighbourhoods. The original participant worked in the Mayor's department, dealing both with disadvantaged neighbourhoods and (jointly with the social affairs department) integration and deradicalisation; her involvement was backed by the manager director of the city.

Action plan: "Rethink the Village: Trige – a modern village"

Trige is a divided village on the far periphery of Aarhus, with a high migrant population and a disengaged "native" population. The plan is to use culture to build cohesion and belonging, and the city has started planning this concretely and building its stakeholder network locally to ensure ownership by residents. The plan includes a "cultural path" based around series of co-designed monuments, intended to create connections across the village, and other arts activities co-designed by residents and workers (e.g. choirs bringing together different groups). The project is tied into Aarhus as City Of Culture 2017 and this provides the basis of the sustainability of the project.

2. Brighton and Hove, England, UK

Participant: **Lucy Bryson**, Community Safety Manager – Refugees and Migrants, Brighton & Hove City Council

City background: Brighton and Hove has 280,000 residents, over 20% of whom are minority ethnic and nearly 20% of whom are born abroad. As well as long-established practices in city branding (as a LGBT-friendly city) and active citizenship (a robust multi-agency refugee and migrant forum), the city has interesting *new* practices to share, including One Voice, which aims to create dialogue and build trust between Muslim residents and the city, in the wake of the death in Syria of three local young Muslim men. On application, Brighton was in the process of becoming a City of Sanctuary, signalling its openness to refugees and the diversity they bring.

Action plan: “Engaging with the community through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for International Migrants”

The initial conception was for a comprehensive integration strategy, tied in with reception of Syrian families, but discussions within the municipality have shown this to be impractical as there is an existing high level ‘Sustainable Communities’ strategy that is being redesigned by more senior officers. However, the discussions around an integration strategy have shown the extent to which work is needed on the “community cohesion” section of the strategy. Directly shaping this, though, was clearly outside the remit of the participant’s role in the municipality, so a more concrete and immediate plan was developed to use the conceptualisation of integration developed in the CWG to shape a process of engaging with under-represented migrant populations through a specific piece of research and engagement around health: a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of the city’s international migrant populations, being undertaken by the Public Health department over the next 18 months. The Needs Assessment will present evidence gathered from statistical data (local and national) and desk-based research. It will also gather the ‘voice’ of migrants and those who work with them in paid roles but also as activists in the community. Recommendations for service commissioners and service providers based on this evidence will build on strengths and address needs.

3. Helsinki, Finland

Participant: **Johanna Seppälä**, head of unit for promoting participation, Helsinki city council

City background: Helsinki has a population of 624,000, within a metropolitan area of 1.4 million. Foreign citizens make up 8.0% of the population, while foreign born make up 11.1% (up to 20% in some neighbourhoods), and speakers of languages other than Finnish or Swedish make up 12.2%. The city has several interesting practices to share, especially in face to face participatory democracy (ten Experiment for Local Democracy pilots) and online platforms for engaging citizens (e.g. Open Ahjo). It is also beginning to develop work to address issues in neighbourhoods where migrants and minorities (including Muslims) are concentrated, including neighbourhood mediation and migrant participation in mainstream democracy. The recruitment of local young people as foreign fighters in Syria has brought into focus the need to strengthen a sense of belonging among younger Muslim residents. This is all in the context of an equality plan which the city is developing that will encompass all diversity strands.

Action plan: “Promoting e-Participation for Immigrants”

The plan is about getting migrants who are relatively digitally excluded into the mainstream e-Participation platforms developed by the city, in the context of the imminent switch-off of many services now being delivered non-digitally. The plan is to intensify a new partnership with a local non-migrant citizen-based NGO at the different service points of the city, so that they can offer guidance to digital services in the future to migrants, with delivery beginning before the end of May 2016. An innovative dimension of the project is working to bring together two communities – migrants and older people – which have members at risk from digital exclusion, thus building cohesion at the same time as civic participation.

4. Tampere, Finland

Participants: **Marja Nyrhinen and Eija Uurtamo**, Purchasing, Developing and Planning Department, City of Tampere

City background: Tampere is a city of 220,000, of whom over 6% speak a language other than Finnish or Swedish. Some neighbourhoods have migrant populations of up to 18%. Before the project, Tampere had strong platforms for engaging citizens in decision-making participatively, both face to face (Alvari, which involves neighbourhood representatives in city planning) and online (the Valma forum). It also has an elected migrant council. However, it had not yet engaged migrant residents in the mainstream participatory mechanisms and aimed to use the CWG to push this forward. Two officials participated in the CWG, one

funded by the city itself: a coordinator of immigrant specific issues, and an expert on participation issues who is responsible for developing participation policies for all groups.

Action plan: “Inclusion as a tool for deeper integration – How to prepare migrant communities for civic participation and local elections”

This plan is to involve migrants in mainstream civic activity by supporting migrants to become involved as candidates and informed voters in elections, working with existing migrant representative structures, with existing mainstream participatory structures and with political parties. The city has developed a very concrete project plan based around engagement of marginalized communities which began late in 2015, and with a clear theory of change and a clear sense of what success will look like, has begun consultation on this beyond the “usual suspects” and is working towards municipal elections early in 2017.

5. Torino, Italy

Participant: **Giovanni Ferrero**, Urban Regeneration – Project and administration office, Servizio Arredo Urbano Rigenerazione Urbana e Integrazione, Città di Torino

City background: Torino (Turin) is a large (899,000) Northern Italian post-industrial city with a history of internal migration from Southern Italy and a recent history of intense international migration, with 16% of the population now foreign nationals. It has valuable experience in developing branding strategies (the “Torino grows plural” initiative in 2010). It has been one of Italy’s leading cities in developing migrant integration policy, and has for some time merged its urban regeneration and integration departments, recognising that migrant integration is a mainstream issue for diverse neighbourhoods. Torino came to the working group with interesting current practices to share: involving migrant associations in active citizenship, promoting the “social use of public spaces” (e.g. through multi-use/multi-user neighbourhood houses – a “functioning practice” highlighted in the EU-MIA project), and work on “care, shared management and regeneration of the urban commons”.

Action plan: “Intercultural city and urban regeneration: Urban Barriera and the Turin’s Interfaith Centre”

This plan focuses on a deprived multi-ethnic inner city neighbourhood, Barriera di Milano, where the municipality is developing a new multi-use community space in a former industrial site, to be managed by an NGO - “Service centre for the collectivity” in the Incet building. The proposal is to include an interfaith space within the new building. This will address the need for civic and devotional space of some smaller and more marginal migrant communities in the city, but also provide a laboratory for intercultural exchange. The intended impact is therefore on both the immediate users, but also on how the city’s own practices. So far, as part of the project, the city has conducted a preliminary analysis of needs and stakeholders and issued a call for expressions of interest in managing the centre, and is now assessing the responses. The project will support the city in its selection of an NGO partnership to manage the space and in defining the terms of reference.

4. What we learnt from the research

There is evidence that neighbourhood, city and national belonging and identification varies greatly between ethnic groups, between generations, and between places. Civic participation and active citizenship are also unevenly distributed across groups. Some cities have seen trends towards ethnic segregation, driven sometimes by discrimination and sometimes by particular groups’ own choices. Public attitudes to migrants and minorities can constrain cities’ ability to deliver the best integration outcomes.

It is in neighbourhoods where the difficult work of residents learning to live with diversity occurs. Efforts by authorities to recognise and celebrate different “communities” which live in a city do not always find ways to celebrate the common civic ties that bind different groups. Some neighbourhoods – including diverse areas with large numbers of migrants, but also areas where “native” working class populations live – can be stigmatised in local and even national media discourses. Changing the narrative, at both neighbourhood

and city level, has been one of the key strategies that cities have taken to build shared and inclusive forms of belonging.

At the same time, some cities struggle to include all residents equally in civic life. New migrants, particular racialised minorities, second generation youth and also marginalised members of majority populations (including the white working class) are among the groups often found to be excluded. Creating platforms for dialogue and active engagement, where excluded groups can participate in municipal decision-making, enables cities to govern more effectively and meet the complex and diverse needs of changing populations. And platforms for dialogue and engagement in turn make previously excluded residents feel part of the city.

In reviewing the literature for this project, we identified a number of factors promoting or hindering cohesion and inclusion, and number of areas where intervention has been seen to work.

Factors promoting or hindering cohesion and inclusion

Social interaction: Contact between groups leads to improved attitudes towards the other – but only in certain optimum conditions: those where meaningful positive contact is possible, rather than simply fleeting contact. Public space and “micropublics” are critical to the possibility of such optimum conditions. In these conditions, social capital – including, crucially, “bridging capital” between groups – can grow.

- **Cultural integration:** The evidence shows that culture is a key domain of integration, conceived as a multi-dimensional process in which *both* migrant/minority and “receiving” populations are transformed.
- **Civic participation:** The participation of migrants and minorities – in associational life *within* migrant/minority populations *and* in mainstream civic life – is a key domain of integration, with a range of forms of involvement possible, from the most superficial manipulation to the most meaningful citizen control. Several barriers exist for migrants and minorities to move up this “ladder of participation”, including cultural and personal but primarily institutional and economic barriers.
- **Identity and belonging:** Neighbourhood, city and national belonging and identity varies greatly between ethnic groups, between generations, and between places, but there is evidence across Europe for the deepening of identification of migrants and minorities with civic and municipal identities.

Areas where intervention has been seen to work

- **Smart mainstreaming:** Research shows that an evidence-based understanding of population needs (including those of vulnerable and emerging population groups) in order to bend mainstream practices can avoid the dangers of both target-focused models and “colour-blind” models.
- **Inclusive identities:** Research shows that local and regional authorities can effectively act to promote forms of identity that are open to and inclusive of migrants and minorities, including through “city branding” (and “sub-city”, e.g. neighbourhood, level branding) approaches when these approaches draw on bottom-up initiatives and mobilise locally rooted narratives and residents’ emotions.
- **Intercultural models:** Interventions which emphasis multiple, cross-cutting, dynamic connections *across* groups (rather than emphasising group identities) are increasingly demonstrating their effectiveness in European cities. Some interfaith initiatives take this approach, although there are few examples of interfaith spaces in Europe’s cities. Opportunities for meaningful contact, spaces to take risks and giving people the skills to have difficult conversations are among the identified benefits.
- **Cultural approaches:** There is an extensive and growing literature demonstrating the value of the arts for promoting integration across several domains, including the social and the civic. The arts have been shown to provide a range of “soft” benefits: opportunities for dialogue and mixing, for taking risks, to build confidence, to narrate shared stories of place. And they have been shown to

provide tangible economic benefits too, as diversity can become an asset in some areas, e.g. through migrant entrepreneurialism or by drawing a visitor economy.

- **Designing integration into places:** A turn to place – including neighbourhood-based initiatives and a focus on public spaces and “micropublics” – has been a feature of recent integration policy. The calibration of regeneration policy and integration policy is a good example of the “smart mainstreaming” mentioned above. This includes community development and community organising models, as well as more planning- or architectural-based approaches to designing integration and cohesion into the urban landscape. The creation of neutral spaces in which people can take risks and develop shared narratives and, crucially, shared projects, are among the key elements of this.
- **New modes of civic engagement:** New forms of formal – but also increasingly informal – and representative – but also increasingly participatory – civic engagement are emerging, some using new digital technologies. The multiplication of channels and platforms for engagement appears most effective, with different channels and platforms reaching different stakeholders at different times.

5. Lessons learnt about building cohesion and belonging

The action plans within the *Action for Inclusion* project build on and demonstrate some of the key elements identified in the studies referred to in the previous section. In particular, the projects notably contribute to:

Smart mainstreaming

Several of the action plans take a smart mainstreaming approach. **Brighton’s** Joint Needs Assessment, for example, is focused on building an evidence base on the specific needs of vulnerable and marginal populations in order to bend mainstream delivery. **Aarhus’** work is all about involving the whole geographical community while drawing neglected groups in to it. And **Tampere’s** work aims to both strengthen the migrant council *and* bring migrants into mainstream civic activity.

Inclusive identities

With the rise of anti-migration sentiment, including a backlash in some areas against the #RefugeesWelcome movement, made the creation of inclusive identities (which speak to “marginalised majority” – e.g. older white working class – populations as well as to migrants) a priority for our city participants during the project period. All of our cities have already done work on city-branding, but now see a need to move beyond this, and in particular to build the bottom-up dimension of it. The work in **Turin**, for example, sits within a range of activities under the banner “Turin is my city” which aims to embed an inclusive municipal identity. The action plan, however, is focused at the neighbourhood level (on *Barriera di Milano*), as is **Aarhus’** rethinking of the suburban “village” *Trige*, but within a bigger municipal “City of Culture” initiative.

Although this was not a core part of **Tampere’s** plan, an unplanned output was to start to write the history on migration in Tampere, which had not been done before and was inspired by the example of Turin; the expectation is that this will increase the self-esteem of the migrant population and prove that migration in Tampere is a long term phenomenon and has brought many good things to the city.

Intercultural models

Torino’s plan is for an interfaith space, bringing groups of different faith together in a new neighbourhood building. This is located within an explicit commitment to interculturalism as a model, as part of the Council of Europe’s Intercultural Cities network.

However, **Helsinki** is also drawing on an intercultural approach by using the project to bring together the complementary skills and needs of different sections of the community, across both ethnicities and generations. This is also a dimension of **Aarhus'** work.

Cultural approaches

The **Aarhus** action plan focuses on culture, using the European City of Culture as a hook to create a "cultural path" in Trige, drawing on and enriching the range of cultural resources of actual residents.

Designing integration into places

Aarhus' "cultural path" and **Torino's** interfaith space are both framed in terms of neighbourhood work: Torino as part of an explicit commitment to the "urban commons" and a local regeneration programme (Urban Barriera, which started in 2011 and is being phased out now), Aarhus as a "rethinking" of the village.

New modes of civic engagement

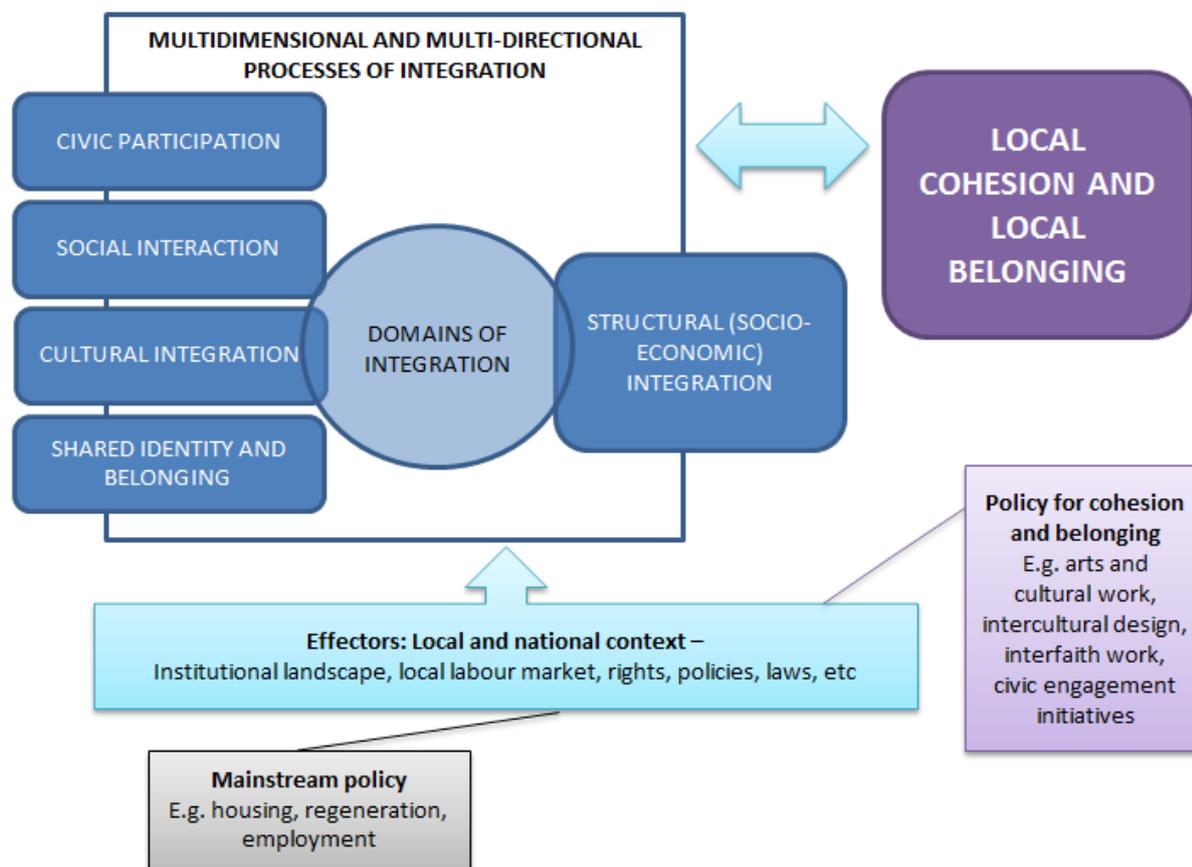
The **Helsinki** and **Tampere** projects are focused on civic engagement, Helsinki in an online context, Tampere face to face. Helsinki is moving municipal services online, which opens up the risk of civic exclusion for digitally excluded groups, so the action plan seeks to combat this actively. In Tampere, the action plan brings together formal representative structures for migrants (a migrant council) with participatory mechanisms (Alvari groups) to engage migrants in the civic process. Tampere and Brighton are both trying to develop new engagement methodologies. For instance in **Brighton**, a series of successful "learning walks" have taken place in schools, where members of migrant communities have sensitised teachers to ways in which the visual culture of their schools could be made more welcoming to migrant children. And in **Aarhus**, the "Art of Hosting" participatory leadership process was used to engage residents in decision-making.

Brighton aims to use a health investigation to build the civic capacity of excluded groups, as part of an increased focus on the city authority as a "co-operative" council looking at social partnership and democratic engagement with residents, with the public servant seen in the paradigm as a "resource weaver", networker and broker rather than a provider of services.

All of the projects aim to empower individuals within the migrant and non-migrant populations to provide social links from communities to the municipality, for instance **Helsinki** by training residents in digital skills, **Aarhus** by developing "keyholders" in different community groups, and **Tampere** by supporting potential migrant electoral candidates.

6. A model for building cohesion and belonging at city level

In the background paper prepared for this project summarising the existing research (Gidley 2016, drawing on groups Spencer and Charsley 2016; Oliver and Gidley 2015), I set out a model of integration multi-dimensional: as a *set of processes* which occur in different *domains* of life, in different ways and at different speeds, for individuals and for groups. Clearly, all of these processes overlap with cohesion and local belonging: integration, particularly in the civic, social, cultural and identity domains makes possible high levels of cohesion and belonging; and low levels of cohesion and belonging will block integration in these domains. As with the domains of integration, policy and law at both a local and national level acts as a key effector of change, creating both barriers and opportunities. This includes but is not limited to policy and state action specifically in the field of cohesion; it might also include policy and action in mainstream fields such as housing and employment.



The projects in the city working group intervened at several different points in this landscape, including by seeking to change the way that policy effectors work (**Brighton**) or by initiating more specific activities to create opportunities for intercultural integration (**Torino, Aarhus**) or civic engagement (**Helsinki, Tampere**). The diversity of the projects illustrates the complexity of this particular field of inclusion and integration work.

7. Challenges of the projects

The action plans are, at this stage, in the early days of implementation, so it is difficult to assess “success” as such. This is true in all the City Working Groups, but seems especially true in this group due to the “softer” and multi-disciplinary nature of the policy field, which means the action plans are focused on developing long-term strategies rather than delivering quick benefits. However, even in these early stages, there have been several challenges experienced by those managing the projects that have changed the course of the work, or influenced their outcomes in some way. These factors can be summarised as follows:

Timing

The development, planning and funding arrangements of new initiatives take time to organise before implementation can take place. All of the action plans in this CWG were ambitious plans with a far longer timeline than the funding of the *Action for Inclusion* programme. Consequently, all of the projects are in mid-phase of the planning process or only now entering implementation at this stage. For example, in **Aarhus** the timeline is towards an event opening the City of Culture in early 2017; in **Brighton** and **Helsinki**, the action plan has developed a piece of work that will be delivered over 18 months from now; in **Tampere** the timeline is towards elections in 2017; in **Torino** the complexity of commissioning and then entering into a contract for the development of a public space takes time, let alone the actual delivery of the space.

Multiple actors

All of the projects involve multiple actors, sometimes with competing priorities and approaches, which is both an opportunity and challenge. In **Aarhus**, several local agencies and associations have been involved. Getting buy-in from key local stakeholders in the village was a significant risk, which was navigated sensitively and therefore enabled real local ownership of the work. In **Brighton**, several stakeholders within the state and non-state sectors have had to be engaged. Public health agencies needed to be won over to the work, and now the task of sharing ownership of the action plan between these agencies and representatives of potential beneficiaries is starting. A lack of any central database or directory of migrant associations hampers the work; bringing one together will be one of the first tasks and outputs. In **Helsinki**, local associations were drawn into the project, with one association chosen to deliver the training at the heart of the action plan. In **Tampere**, existing participatory fora (including the Migrant Council and political parties) had to be engaged, in a way that showed the project could add value to their work. In **Torino**, the success of the project is dependent on identifying and building a positive relationship with a local association with the capacity to manage a complex new public space.

Research evidence suggests that working with residents involves risks: an over-reliance on the “usual suspects”, who can act as gatekeepers as well as enablers, and who can burn out due to carrying the burden of representing their communities. However, we have not seen this in the City Working Group yet.

Contextual turbulence

The context changed dramatically during the project period. After the cities had come on board, the summer 2015 refugee crisis – and the wave of public sympathy embodied in the #RefugeesWelcome movement – occurred. All of the cities now had to focus on the immediate, urgent needs of arriving refugees, and try to mobilise public support. Public support later dipped, with the growth of an anti-refugee backlash in some of the countries, and this in turn created new challenges. Changing levels of threat around “extremism” and “radicalisation” also form part of the context, impacting on policy priorities at city level.

Institutional and policy turbulence

All of the cities faced restructuring during the life of the project. This is a feature of a time of austerity, but is perhaps especially a feature of the policy fields of cohesion and integration, which often don't have clear institutional locations. In one of our cities, for example, this was at first an opportunity, as the idea for the project came from the bringing together due to a restructuring, of expertise on civic inclusion with expertise in meeting migrant needs. However, it is now a threat, as further restructuring may move the colleagues to different roles.

Some of the cities have seen a change in political leadership during the project, or may see one in the near future, creating risks for the work as policy priorities dramatically shift. In Brighton, for example, the work had been conceived under a Green council leadership, but the strategies of it was part (City of Sanctuary and One Voice) fortunately had secured cross-party support so the work continued when council leadership changed to Labour.

8. Future: Anticipating results, further work to come on action plans, ideas for future research?

A considerable amount has been achieved by participants of the cohesion working group within the timeframe of the *Action for Inclusion* in Europe project, including development of high-level strategy, new intra- and inter-agency partnerships, building new platforms for policy change within municipalities, direct engagement of migrant and non-migrant residents and citizens, the initiation of innovative service models, and research evidence to support change. The work is on-going, particularly with the larger, longer-term

objectives, and the initiative has enabled the cities to embark on a new leg of their journey in building cohesion and belonging, which will bear fruit in the coming years. Updating on the project will be provided within a year of the project's completion (by June 2017).

9. Conclusion: What have we learned from the Action for Inclusion Project on cohesion and belonging at city level

In conclusion, we have learnt a number of lessons from the project. We can group these into two headings: what we learnt about approaches to integration, and what we learnt about the governance of city-led initiatives.

Approaching integration

The work demonstrated the value of neighbourhood or "village" focused cohesion projects - synchronising integration with regeneration. The work showed the value of creating welcoming narratives, but in more meaningful and, crucially, more bottom-up ways than through superficial place-branding. By calibrating bottom-up stories of place with top-down narratives, areas can build their resilience to the kinds of fear and fragmentation which is sometimes associated with migration-related change.

Building a shared welcoming narrative and building cohesion through neighbourhood or "village" level projects works well, we saw, when agencies prioritise concrete shared visions and tasks, which local non-migrant and migrant people buy into, rather than when they simply celebrate the (separate) histories and identities present in a locale.

The projects also demonstrated the value of new channels and platforms for integration work: faith, sport, singing, art, gardening, humour, emotion, mixed media and others. At the same time, mobilising the professional skills and institutional capacities of more conventional channels – and in particular bending the mainstream resources and attention of key professionals within the municipality towards cohesion goals – remains indispensable.

Governance

The projects demonstrated the value of building a strong local evidence and intelligence base, to make sure action is driven by evidence of local need and of what works locally. Municipalities are often the best placed agencies to hold that kind of intelligence base, both in terms of the qualitative knowledges built up by frontline workers and in terms of more formal quantitative and qualitative data.

The projects demonstrated the value of bending mainstream municipal services towards cohesion goals, and the value of stable, sustainable anchor organisations (whether municipal or civil society) in communities, to serve as a neutral or shared resource that can be used by established and arriving residents, as a force for resilience in contexts of diversity.

The projects successfully used both representative and participatory modes of governance, and built both extensive and intensive forms of engagement from migrant and non-migrant residents. Finding trusted voices and building and harnessing networks has been central to the early success of the projects. They showed the value of mobilising multiple – and new – stakeholders: working with established anchor associations, but also identifying and empowering new voices and non-traditional constituencies, both in communities and in agencies. This is bound up with understanding which stakeholders (in the bureaucracy and outside) have to be mobilised to make an initiative effective. Underpinning this has been the decisive intervention of political leadership (e.g. at mayoral or other senior levels) and building cross-party support for cohesion and belonging.

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