AMICALL

ATTITUDES TO MIGRANTS, COMMUNICATION AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP:

FINAL TRANSNATIONAL REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

COMPAS

Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL)

Final Transnational Report

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Executive Summary

The key message of the AMICALL project is that the local matters. Places differ, and the integration challenges vary by locality, at every geographical scale. Local leadership on integration is therefore essential. Although the landscape mapped by the research was very uneven, we found striking examples of Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) taking a lead in integration, even where national governments were retreating from the field. In a context marked by high levels of anti-migrant sentiment across Europe, the role LRAs play in ensuring that receiving societies play their part in creating the conditions for integration remain vital.

We found a range of activities being undertaken by LRAs: tackling misinformation and misapprehensions and creating a more informed public debate; avoiding, mediating and defusing tensions and conflicts; creating understanding between different communities which share common places; and building a shared and inclusive local sense of belonging and identity for all citizens.

AMICALL was a transnational action research project exploring the role of LRAs in communicating with their citizens about the difficult questions raised by migration. Funded by the European Union's Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals and led by a partnership of six European research institutions, with the Council of Europe as an associate partner, AMICALL provided a platform for the sharing of good practice and the development of new strategies for the communication of positive attitudes towards migrants and towards migrant integration at the local and regional level.

The research was undertaken in six EU Member States: Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. Work began in early 2011 with each partner identifying the context within which LRAs in the six target countries are working, producing country context reports to ground the comparative research. The partners then embarked on fieldwork, including desk research and interviews with key LRA officials, NGOs and experts to ascertain what, if any, communications activities have been undertaken by local government in each of the countries, focusing on a series of in-depth case studies. Each partner sought to identify successful initiatives as well as barriers to success in each country, region and city involved, which were reflected on in technical workshops with practitioners. The second half of the project focused on the policy lessons that can be drawn from the initial research: each country team presented their findings, as well as those from other AMICALL research countries, to a round table of national and local policy-makers, non-governmental organisations and experts for their feedback.

The national findings of AMICALL are presented in country research reports available from the project website, and a handbook of promising practices with a benchmarking checklist of design considerations has also been published. The final transnational report brings together findings from across the case studies.

To download all reports,
see **http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/research/amicall/**

Findings

Although **public attitudes** to migration vary across Europe, negative attitudes prevail in most countries and examples of local tensions and conflicts are widespread. The research found that **context matters,** at both national and local scale, with significant differences across countries and between cities within countries – but there are also resonances and commonalities in different locations. How integration is framed in public debates also matters, and again varies across contexts, with municipalities in some countries not yet focusing on migrant integration while others are moving away from the paradigm and framing their work in terms of cohesion, inclusion, participation or citizenship. Different **catalysts** have given rise to initiatives, including critical incidents as well as national and EU funding.

LRA activities identified by the project included communication campaigns, as well as hands-on projects facilitating intercultural communication between groups in a community or face to face communication between individuals. Different forms of activities give rise to different design considerations.

- **Goal:** The research highlighted the dangers of undirected communications strategies, which can at best be ineffective, and at worst, counter-productive. Several different goals are valid, but LRAs need to have a strong sense of what they are trying to achieve if they are to succeed.

- **Target group:** Different strategies involve communications targeted towards migrant groups, towards the non-migrant community, at the whole community or inwardly towards public officials.

- **LRA role:** Some LRAs build on their democratic legitimacy and specific competences to develop a strong leadership role, but most effectively working in partnership with other stakeholders (e.g. from business sector, trade unions, NGOs or migrants themselves). In some cases, there were valid considerations that led LRAs to encourage other partners to take a leadership role, for instance if particular actors had greater credibility with the target audience.

The research identified several trends in **LRA leadership and planning.**

- Those countries with **designated officers** taking a lead strong and **internal co-ordination** within administrations appear able to deploy more effective strategies.

- Often **small teams or individuals** are acting alone, leaving initiatives vulnerable and unsustainable.

- **Non-governmental stakeholders** play a key role across Europe, but face barriers to becoming full partners in the process.

LRAs everywhere see a need for **strategic development** beyond ad hoc responses to critical incidents or one-off programmes in response to funding streams; such strategic interventions are the exception not the rule, but there is evidence of a shift to longer term approaches emerging.

A **lack of evaluation** has left LRAs struggling to clearly identify outcomes and impacts of their work, but several **factors influencing success or failure** were clear from the research:

- **Financial resources:** Fiscal austerity has been a barrier to successful implementation and sustainability, with integration discretionary in most countries and too often seen as a dispensable luxury.

- **The public debate:** Lack of political will at a national level, as well as the entering of xenophobic discourses into the public debate, has also impacted on LRAs' freedom of manoeuvre, making some initiatives harder to implement. LRAs reported that national media often works as a barrier to success, while local media more often has a positive role, and some LRAs had successfully built productive partnerships with local media.

- **Personalities and individual commitment** drive positive work forward, but this makes it vulnerable to contingencies compared to mainstream approaches.

- **Regulatory frameworks** are a key factor, with complex bureaucratic structures, barriers to inter-agency working and LRA workforces that don't include migrants all preventing effective intervention.

There was a clear demand for **learning** opportunities with regard to communication and shaping attitudes towards migrants expressed by LRAs we engaged, including platforms for sharing learning both within and across national borders.

Recommendations

The handbook of promising practices published with our final report details specific concrete steps LRAs can take in designing and delivering communication activities. The project also had more general recommendations, aimed at LRAs themselves and at other levels of governance, including the European Union.

- LRAs should consider their role, responsibility and unique position to provide **local leadership** in communication work to create the conditions for integration and foster positive attitudes – and other stakeholders should recognise and support this.

- **Joined-up working** with administrations is required to achieve this, as well as co-operation with other LRAs, other layers of governance and also non-governmental stakeholders.

- LRAs should **mobilise all the stakeholders,** building networks and coalitions across sectors. Civil society might require additional time and resources to contribute fully.

- LRAs should move beyond ad hoc responses to **strategic approaches,** based on clear goals and a tested understanding of how to achieve these goals, intelligently targeting relevant sections of the population and tailoring methodology to the goals and audiences. LRAs should consider a range of methodologies, including fact- and emotion-based approaches, using culture, humour and intercultural contact where the goal requires it.

- Strategic approaches should be **evidence-based** and include **consistent messaging, balanced information,** a range of **communication channels** including face-to-face, and **partnerships with media.**

- LRAs should promote **strong, inclusive identities,** based on shared concerns and shared futures of all citizens. Strategies should build **cross-partisan** support.

- Effective development of communications activity in the integration field needs robust **evaluation and impact assessment,** as well as platforms for sharing learning and practice within and across countries.

Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL) was an eighteen-month transnational project funded by the European Union's Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals. Led by the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), at the University of Oxford, the research was undertaken through a partnership of six European research institutions, with the Council of Europe and the Migration Policy Institute as associate partners. The project aims to provide a platform for the sharing of good practice and the development of new strategies for the promotion of positive attitudes towards migrants and towards migrant integration at the local and regional levels. Thus it addresses two core areas of integration policy and debate: the role of local and regional authorities (LRAs) in integration, and the importance of communication and public attitudes.

The goal of the AMICALL project was to contribute to the debate on integration in three ways:

- **Map existing LRA practice on changing attitudes towards migrants** in six European countries (including both new and old migration countries, with a range of integration philosophies and forms of governance), showing the opportunities and barriers that exist, and understanding the factors in each country that facilitate this work.

- **Engage LRAs in learning exchange on good practice and challenges** faced, and also involve civil society organisations and representatives of third country nationals in this process. This process will explore the scope for national action to support the development of LRA practice.

- **Share this knowledge across Europe and develop a rigorous transnational comparative framework** for analysis, demonstrating what can be generalised from the case study countries to Europe as a whole, in order to inform local policy-making across Europe as well as to inform evaluation and benchmarking of practice at local, national and European levels.

A number of initiatives at a European level have already worked on this broad topic, notably EUROCITIES, but also the CLIP Network, and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, as well as the EU's Committee of the Regions. Building on this work, the AMICALL project aimed to provide a platform for local and regional authorities across Europe to participate in knowledge exchange, share their practices, reflect on their strategies and develop better practices. In this spirit, the project contributes to policy debates on benchmarking practice in Europe, drawing out practical lessons from the research, focused on the efforts made at local level to develop communications activities in the area of immigrant integration.

The body of work focusing on the local and regional state has not included much emphasis on attitudes and communications. The Eurocities *Cities Accommodating Diversity* report suggests some member states have examples of developed initiatives while others have less experience. Existing practice varies from isolated initiatives (e.g. after a terrorist incident) to a municipal dissemination of factsheets, transparency on issues such as housing allocation where perceptions of unfairness can fuel resentment, and local mediation projects.

The research was undertaken in six EU Member States, with a diverse range of contexts and interests: Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. A key premise of the AMICALL project has been that integration happens primarily at a smaller geographical scale than the nation-state. Thus the research element of the project began in early 2011 with each partner identifying the context within which LRAs in the target countries may develop communications activities, including the immigration profile of each country, the political debates and policies surrounding migrant integration, public opinion towards immigrants (where tested), and the relative responsibilities of regional and local government in the area of migrant integration. Having established the context for each country, the partners then embarked on field research, including desk research, individual interviews and workshops with key LRA officials, NGOs and experts to ascertain what, if any, communications activities have been undertaken by local government in each of the countries. As part of this research, each partner sought to identify successful initiatives as well as barriers to success in each country, region and city involved, with case studies of several promising practices and in-depth case studies of the work of a small sample of LRAs.

The AMICALL project is an action research project: reviewing practice in case study countries as rigorously as possible, and then using this research to provide a space for reflection and development for LRAs. Thus, rather than test academic assumptions, the project instead explored how LRAs themselves define and understand good practice. AMICALL partners then assessed the knowledge, assumptions and available evaluative evidence present in LRAs around such practice, and considered whether and what general lessons might be worth sharing with other LRAs, as well as with policy-makers at higher levels of governance.

The next phase of the project focused on the policy lessons that can be drawn from the initial research: each country team presented their findings, as well as those from other AMICALL research countries, to a group of national and local policy-makers, NGOs and experts for their feedback. Each country team produced a country research report, which describes the country-level research process conducted by each partner, as well as case studies. This transnational report draws on this country-level work. It compares both context and LRA experiences, and highlights the key findings from each of the country reports. It offers a review of how LRAs have developed communications activities across Europe, outlines the factors which affect both the design and effectiveness of identified communications initiatives, and underlines some critical success factors, before drawing the conclusions and making recommendations.

Our conclusions are subject to two key limitations. First, the research methodology focused on gathering information about projects and then producing a framework for understanding them, rather than categorising activities according to a pre-existing conceptualisation. As such, the initial typology of activities outlined through the research has evolved throughout the project. The research is based on fieldwork identifying what happens in the real world rather than testing academic theory. As a result, the findings of this research are tentative, and should be considered a foundation upon which further research and learning can be based.

Second, it was clear from the outset that identifying good and promising practice is a nebulous activity at best, particularly in the field of communications where impact is difficult to isolate. For the AMICALL project, 'good practice' was defined as an initiative that might work in all circumstances, whilst 'promising practice' was defined as an initiative that might work in some circumstances, or when properly adapted. As will be seen in this report, the paucity of independent evaluation and the pre-eminence of particular contexts in determining success means that the AMICALL researchers have only identified 'promising practice', and on an occasional basis.

For more detailed information about the research methodology and findings in each of the six AMICALL countries, please see the national reports that are available on the AMICALL website: **http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/research/amicall/**

The Common Basic Principles on Integration, agreed by EU Member States in 2004, define integration as "a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States". But whilst the EU Commission and Member States have taken the lead in identifying the key components of integration policy across Europe, they have also recognised that "local authorities play an important role in shaping the interaction between migrants and the receiving society". National governments design immigration policies, and the framework for integration policy, but it is left to local actors to ensure that immigrants are supported and diverse communities thrive.

This section outlines the context in which LRAs in the six AMICALL countries are working. Patterns of immigration, national debates and attitudes towards immigrants all affect the local context, and subsequently how LRAs develop integration policies; in addition, the governance structures in each country highlight how much autonomy and support LRAs have whilst implementing integration strategies.

Immigration patterns

The migration narratives in the six AMICALL countries represent much of the diverse history and experience that exists across Europe. Some of the countries, such as the Netherlands and the UK have received large numbers of immigrants throughout the post-Second World War period until present day, while other countries have been relative newcomers as countries of immigration, such as Spain and Italy. Germany, though it has experienced immigrant inflows for over 50 years (since the first guest-worker programmes), only acknowledged its position as a significant country of immigration at the turn of the century. Hungary, however, remains a relatively homogenous country, with a low percentage of immigrants within its population, the majority of whom emanate from neighbouring, familiar regions.
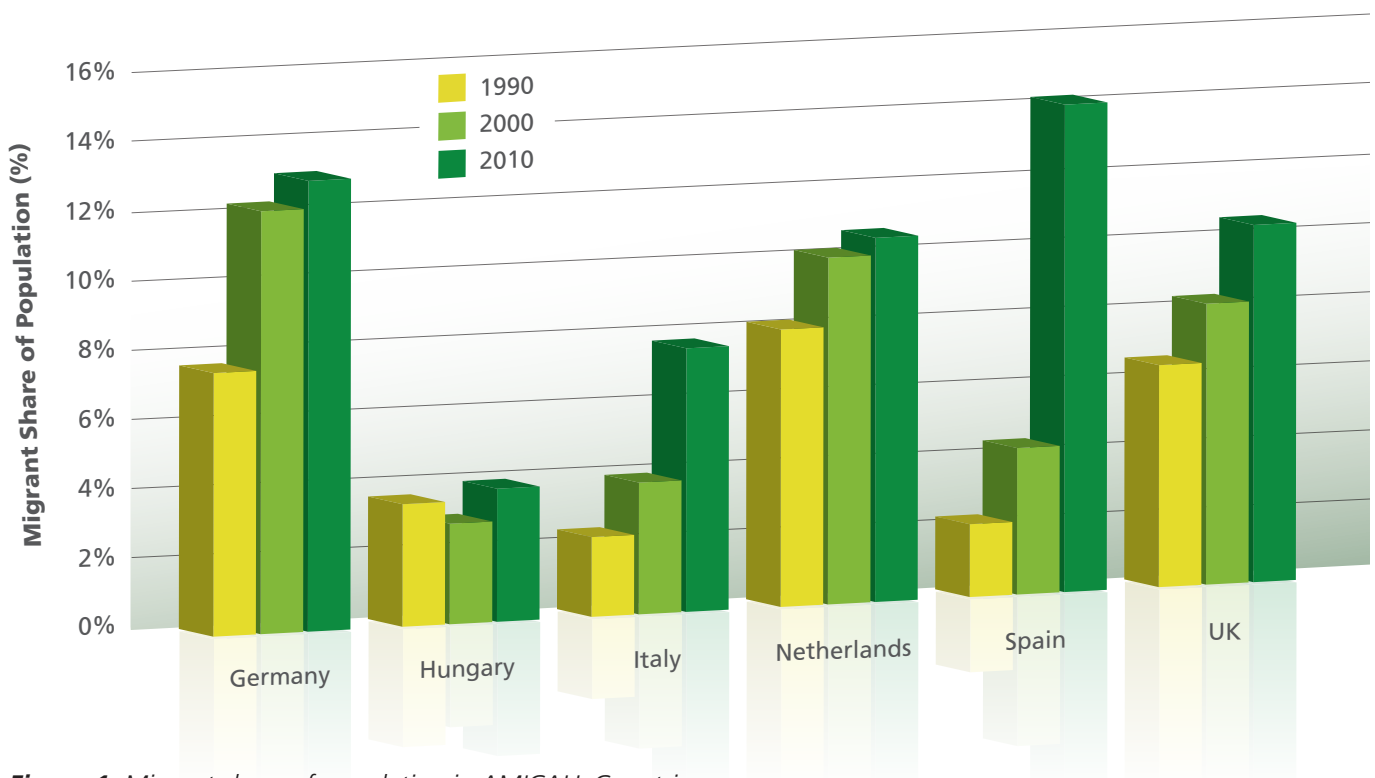

Figure 1. Migrant share of population in AMICALL Countries 1990-2010, in % (Source: UN Population Division)

In terms of stocks, also, the six countries differ considerably with respect to the diversity that exists within their communities, as well as the total percentage of people with a migrant background living in the country. The UK has a large number of immigrants from new Commonwealth states, including a large African, South Asian and Caribbean communities. This has been complemented more recently by a wave of humanitarian migrants from a broad range of conflict countries, and over the past seven years by a large inflow of mobile workers (and their families) from the newly acceded Member States of Central and Eastern Europe. A notable aspect of the migrant population in the UK is its 'superdiversity', despite a historically strong inflow from South Asia. This contrasts with other countries, such as Germany and Italy, where the immigrant population is dominated by one or two key nationalities, Turkish and Romanian respectively.

These trends have changed somewhat over the past decade. In long-standing countries of immigration, family migration has become a stronger proportion of the inflow (though policies have tightened concurrently), as family members join economic migrants and others already resident. This is contrasted with the dwindling number of asylum seekers, since the numerical peaks of the early 1990s. However, while numbers have dropped significantly in Germany and the UK, they have risen overall in Italy and Spain. During the past few years, the dominance of economic migration to Spain over the past decade has meant that, post-recession, unemployment amongst (particularly young, male) immigrants is now extremely high. It has also meant that for most countries, with the notable exception of the UK, immigration flows have diminished overall. This is particularly clear for Spain, and to a lesser extent Hungary and Germany.

	Total Foreign-Born (%)	Born in another EU Country (%)	Born in a non-EU country (%)
Germany	12.0	4.2	7.8
Hungary	4.4	2.9	1.4
Netherlands	11.1	2.6	8.5
Italy	8.0	2.6	5.3
Spain	14.0	5.1	8.9
United Kingdom	11.3	3.6	7.7

Table 1. Foreign-born population by group of citizenship and country of birth, 2010 (Source: Eurostat)

While all six countries have increased their stock of foreign-born over the past decade, in Germany and the Netherlands this has been relatively minor, 4% and 9% respectively. By contrast, the Spanish foreign-born population has increased by 192% over the past decade, with slightly less intense shifts occurring in Hungary (41%) and the UK (43%). In all countries, immigration flows from within the EU are a strong element, particularly from Poland and Romania, with economic and family migration also present.

Public attitudes towards migration

Survey after survey and poll after poll reveal high levels of anti-migrant attitudes across Europe. In many countries, migration has become a "toxic" topic, and is manipulated by populist and extremist political entrepreneurs, as can be seen in the electoral rise of xenophobic political parties across Europe. More and more Europeans are opposed to the cultural diversity associated with migration – in 2005 the EUMC found that about one quarter of the EU-15's population does not share the notion that "the diversity of a country in terms of race, religion or culture is a positive element and a strength" and that there had been a significant increase (to two-thirds) who are convinced that "multicultural society has reached its limits." However, a closer look at the evidence reveals a more complex and nuanced picture.

There are wide disparities in opinion on immigration in different national contexts, and a considerable body of data allows us to see this. However, it is harder to get data on local or regional differences, partly because sample sizes at smaller geographical scale are often not representative and not available. Similarly, the literature on how politicians and policy discourse interact with attitudes tends to focus on national rather than local contexts, while the literature on local contexts tends to focus on formal party politics rather than on local and regional authorities holistically. This means that much of the emphasis has been on anti-immigrant parties and on elections, rather than local government actions. There is some literature around changing attitudes towards migrants. This includes a "how to" literature of toolkits and guides to changing attitudes, and a much smaller literature on the impact of attempts to change attitudes.

At the national level there are two ways of digging into available surveys that incorporate the AMICALL countries. First, there are several cross-country surveys, undertaken by the European Commission (Eurobarometer), Ipsos Mori, the Open Society Foundation (OSF - At Home in Europe) and the German Marshall Fund (Transatlantic Trends), which can offer a snapshot of attitudes across Europe, occasionally over time. Second, in-country analyses in each country can ask more searching questions about the drivers and beliefs of both the native and migrant population.

Figure 2. *Immigration is more of a problem than an opportunity, % (Transatlantic Trends, 2010, 2011)*
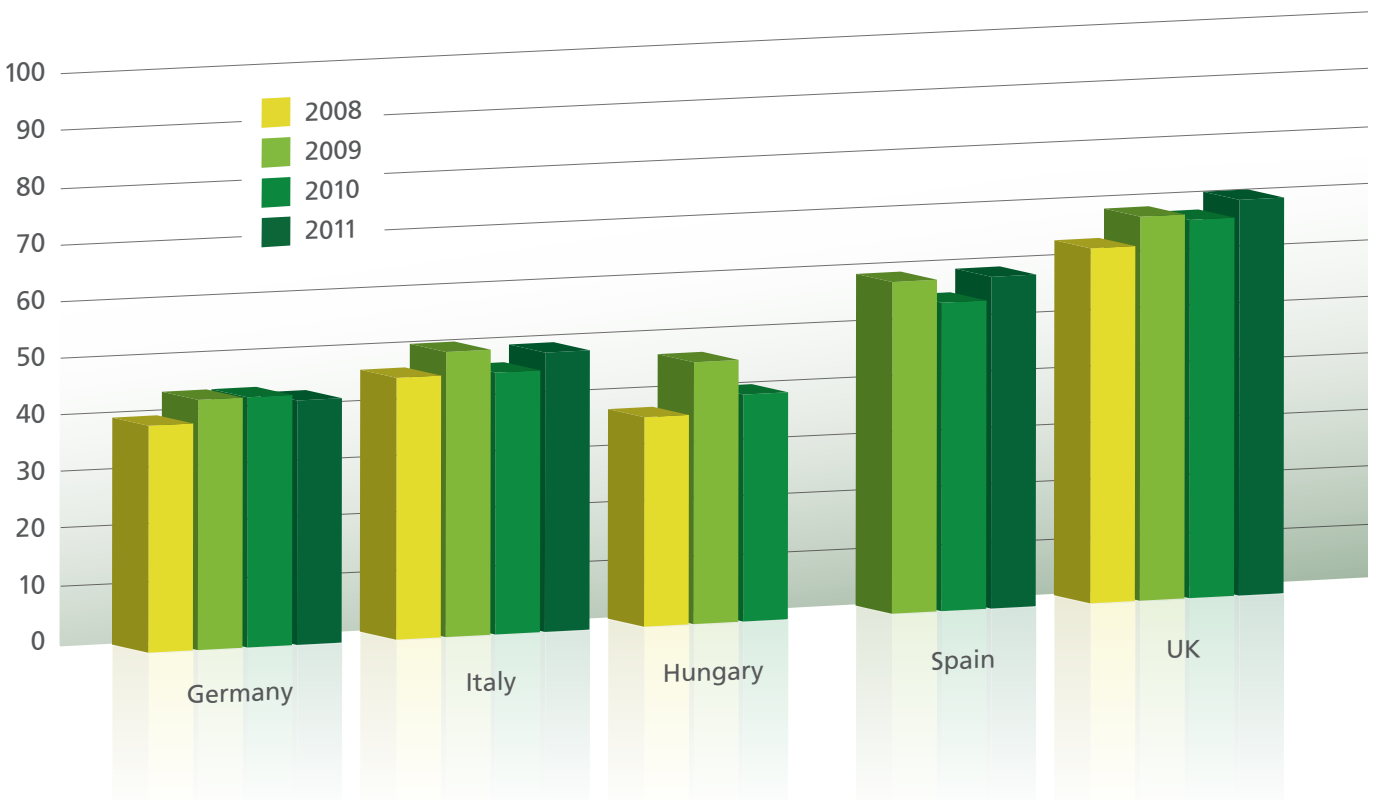
***Figure 3.** Would you say that immigration has generally had a positive or negative impact? % (Ipsos Mori, 2011)*
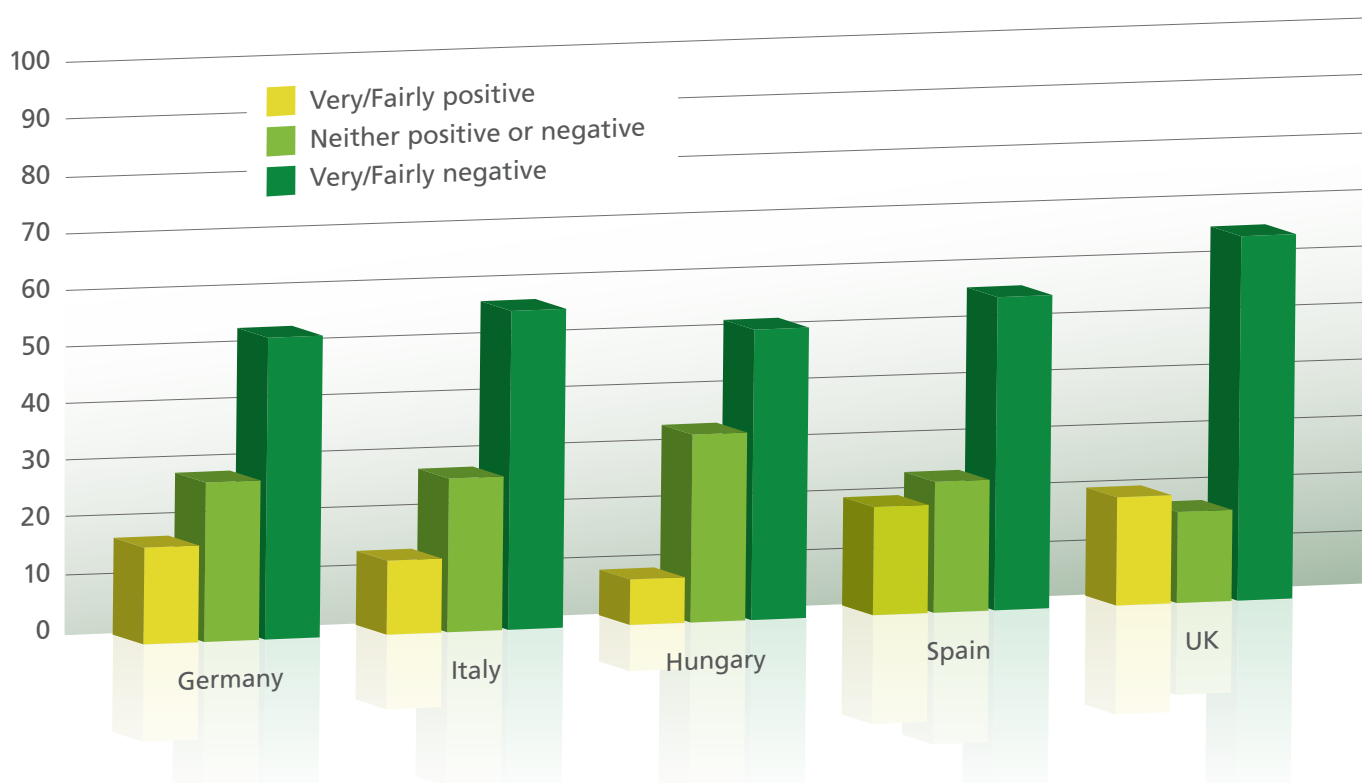
Cross country-analyses highlight that attitudes towards immigrants are negative (Ipsos Mori), but stable (Transatlantic Trends). However, these differ across Europe, with the UK found to be the most consistently negative towards immigrants. Given the political context in the Netherlands, negative attitudes toward migrants are comparatively low. The Transatlantic Trends data also suggests some nuanced opinions: respondents are more positive towards asylum seekers fleeing armed conflict, towards permanent rather than temporary migrants, and prefer high-skilled migrants (though only if they already have a job offer). Both Transatlantic Trends and a 2011 Eurobarometer highlighted the importance of language learning in integration, and respect for fundamental values. The At Home in Europe research noted amongst the Muslim populations in 17 cities across Europe, values are already deeply held, though this is not always recognised by the native population.

Within each country, the picture can be filled in further. For example, research in Germany highlights that German citizens tend to be much less tolerant of Muslim and other non-Western cultures within their communities. This is mirrored, to a lesser extent, in the Netherlands where negative attitudes towards so-called *allochtonen* (foreigners) have become strongly linked with Islam. In Hungary, the focus is on ethnicity also. While most

Hungarian citizens are in favour of ethnic Hungarians moving to the country, many are strongly against the immigration of other cultures, particularly Roma groups.

In Spain, attitudes are associated with flows; public opinion worsened when high numbers of migrants were travelling from West Africa to the Canary Islands, but this since subsided. Interestingly, attitudes do not yet seem to have worsened with the economic crisis, though this might be due to the greater preoccupation with the crisis itself. In the UK, also, public opinion seems strongly linked to numbers rather than ethnicity, most recently linked the arrival of EU mobile workers from Central and Eastern Europe. However, here, the economic recession does seem to have worsened public opinion.

In all countries, attitudes towards irregular immigration are worse than those towards legally residing immigrants. In Italy, the focus on criminality is a particular feature, with strong links made between immigration and a range of issues from irregular work to petty crime and prostitution. This link is mirrored to a lesser extent in the UK and Germany.

Political salience of migration

Immigration is high on the political agenda in almost all Western European countries, and rising on the agenda in Central and Eastern Europe. However, this manifests in a number of different ways.

In the UK, the focus has been upon numbers and the labour market, with particular focus on large inflows from the new Member States post-2004. Meanwhile in the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent in Germany, the emphasis is less upon new inflows and numbers, and the educational and employment outcomes of the existing immigrant population, and the second generation. In these countries also, there is additional political concern about citizens and non-citizens from Muslim countries, which is clear from both mainstream and fringe political statements.

This is in direct contrast to Spain: while the Southern state has also received a large number of immigrants from North Africa, and there is certainly a less welcoming sentiment towards this group, a significant concern about isolation and failed integration has yet to emerge. Indeed, this might be attributed to the fact that these migrants are more recent arrivals, and the stock of Spanish citizens with migrant background has yet to emerge. In Spain, immigration is mostly of political concern in terms of the extraordinarily high levels of unemployment within the immigrant population, but is not as negative in the national debate as elsewhere. However, pockets of discontent are emerging in urban areas where the recession has hit particularly hard. In Italy, the major national debates centre around illegality, not least flows of undocumented migrants from across the Mediterranean. This is a slightly schizophrenic argument, given the large numbers of undocumented workers present in Italy's domestic and agricultural labour markets. It also contrasts with Spain, where the debate concerning mixed flows from Africa is minimal.

Finally, Italy and Hungary are also set apart in that any anti-immigrant or populist/nationalistic sentiment towards immigrants tends to be overshadowed by anti-Roma sentiment. Certainly violence towards this marginalised group – who are often also migrants – is of significant concern, but also dominates political discourse.

The national political debate is hardened in almost all of the six countries by the presence of a far-right or populist political party. In some countries, such as the Netherlands and Italy, these parties have a significant political influence. In the Netherlands, the informal coalition with the PVV has allowed its leader, Geert Wilders, indirectly to affect Dutch political positions on immigration, the economy and the EU. In Italy, the experience is more direct, and the ruling coalition depends on the active participation of Lega Nord, which has led to a number of restrictive immigration policies being put in place over the past five years. While in Hungary the Jobbik party also has significant influence, its main focus is on national minorities, as the predominant group present within the country, rather than immigrants per se.

Of less immediate influence is the far right in the UK. Though vocal, neither the British National Party nor the English Defence League has substantial influence over the political scene. However, mainstream parties have seemed to adopt a defensively restrictive policy towards immigrants in recent years, perhaps as a reaction to this. In Germany and Spain, far right influence remains quite muted. However, there are attempts and discussions going on in Germany to ban the most anti-immigrant party, the NPD, following the uncovering of a neo-Nazi group responsible for a number of murders within the migrant population. In Spain, to date, no national anti-immigrant party has emerged, though a number of neo Nazi groups in the metropolitan areas of Barcelona and Madrid, such as Plataforma de Catalunya and España 2000, are beginning to mobilise politically.

Integration policy development

Just as immigration flows have shifted over the past few decades, integration policy approaches have changed. Three broad trends can be identified amongst the AMICALL countries, which reflect broader trends across Europe.

For those countries that have long-considered how best to manage diverse communities, such as the UK and Netherlands, there is a sense of dissatisfaction combined with a sharper policy approach designed to require more from both newly arrived and established migrants. In terms of specific policy, for those arriving from outside the European Union, language requirements and short orientation courses have become the norm, while higher levels of integration are now required for those seeking permanent residence and/or citizenship. This has been coupled with a reduced level of investment, and a broader public debate as to the ultimate goal of integration policies should actually be. 'Multiculturalism', however defined, has become the political watchword for policy failure.

In other countries, the concept of integration is relatively new, albeit for different reasons. In Germany, the enduring belief that the immigrant population was not permanent was finally overhauled around the turn of the century, with concomitant investment in integration programmes, not least education and language. In Spain, the need for integration policies arrived alongside a significant increase in immigrant flows; while concepts remained on paper for the first few years, the government has invested time and energy in developing full integration plans, as well as anti-racism policies over the past five years. This has become particularly important during the recession, as the immigrant population has been particularly hard-hit.

However, while Italy has also experienced a rise in the proportion of foreign-born within its population over the past decade, policies have been far slower to develop. In the case of Hungary, migrants remain largely non-existent outside urban areas, and so the national response has been underwhelming. This is compounded by the fact that much of this population is considered 'ethnic Hungarian' and thus not in need of integration policies.

One other dynamic should also be considered: approaches towards the second generation, or residents with a migrant background. While for Germany, Netherlands and the UK, there is a strongly established second and third generation of citizens whose relative inclusion is a topic of concern, in Spain, Italy and Hungary this is merely an emerging idea yet to manifest strongly. This has a knock-on effect for the focus of both integration, and communications policies across Europe, and whether the children of immigrants are also considered to be a target of such policies. In some countries, Roma groups are an additional minority, frequently comprised of both immigrant and native populations.

Governance of integration at local level

Governance of integration within each of the AMICALL countries is very specific and linked to a) the pre-existing governance structure and responsibilities in the area of social affairs, and b) the development of integration policy itself. All countries have complex layers of governance, and the regions have at least some responsibility for integration policy.

In Italy, the absence of a strongly coordinated national policy means that each region has developed its integration governance differently. Broadly, regions are responsible for planning, funding and coordinating programming, while provinces and municipalities are responsible for implementation and working with relevant partners. This is not dissimilar to Hungary, where a national strategy has yet to emerge. However, here, the majority of the counties and sub-regions have had to provide little with respect to integration of migrants, as few migrants are resident. In more urban settlements, where there are numbers of migrants, the role of the local government is primarily to ensure access to public services and non-discrimination.

In the Netherlands, the difference in governance is striking. While the national level espouses a strongly ideological 'model' of integration, the municipalities are increasingly diverse in their interpretation and implementation of integration policies, as well as increasingly creative and responsive. In the UK, while there is a strong national rhetoric regarding what integration should and should not be, in reality oversight (and funding) of integration policy is left to the Department for Communities and Local Government, with local authorities exercising discretion over policies as long as they fall within the scope of national laws.

In both Germany and Spain, the Länder and Autonomous Communities respectively hold the responsibility for key policy areas such as education, administration and public service provision. Funding is provided at the federal level, but there is wide discretion as to how this is dispersed; as a result there is a wide variance in terms of policy implementation. A number of regional governments have developed their own integration strategies, adapted public services to match, and municipalities, cities and administrative districts work within this framework.

In many countries, the recession has affected integration programming in terms of the financial resources made available at national level. This has become a source of tension between national and local authorities, as many cuts have been passed directly to regions and municipalities, particularly in the area of integration and cohesion policy.

In addition to describing the range of initiatives documented through the AMICALL research, it is important to note the context and framing of these activities. What is the background against which activities need to be seen, and what is the philosophical frame for each activity? Without understanding how these shift across the target countries, it is impossible to make a reasoned comparative assessment.

In addition to offering a contextual background, it is also necessary to highlight the specific design questions that LRAs tend to consider when embarking on communication activities. Three of the most important questions can be highlighted here:

- What is the initiative designed to achieve? (Goal)

- Who is the initiative communicating to/with? (Target Group)

- How is the LRA engaged in the activity? (Role)

A broad typology of communications activities

One of the major challenges of the research has been to draw out and organise a comprehensive typology of activities undertaken by LRAs. Research on existing projects and networks related to improving attitudes towards migrants in Europe shows that there are a wide range of campaigns and projects promoting diversity across Europe.

Existing city networks, such as Eurofound's CLIP network and the Intercultural Cities group, have collected relevant information on communications activities as part of broader research endeavours. Meanwhile, a number of more specific projects, such as SPARDA, and OSF's At Home in Europe project have focused on public attitudes and encouraging communication at city level. There is also a broader literature concerning communication on migration generally, such as Unbound Philanthropy's Changing Minds work. From all of this, the AMICALL researchers distilled a wide range of practices and initiatives from across Europe, with the goal of mapping out how the AMICALL countries fit into a broader pattern of activity within municipalities.

- The greater experience of historically migrant-receiving countries such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are reflected in this broader review. In addition, the AMICALL output seems to confirm the emerging trend of local project development in cities in Italy and Spain. Alongside these countries, Scandinavian cities can be highlighted as increasingly responsive to their immigrant communities.

Based on the in the AMICALL countries, and the broader review of other city network projects, the AMICALL researchers assessed a wide range of interventions, according to three main groupings.

The first category is **communications campaigns,** narrowly defined. These can range from concerted efforts to inform communities through poster or leafleting campaigns and websites, to more sophisticated public relations and media strategies, engaging stakeholders and professionals. Examples of these can be found in most AMICALL countries, such as a poster campaign in Brescia, Italy, to the development of a website in Kaposvar, Hungary to inform about NGO activities and cultural events. More sophisticated communications strategies include working with various media outlets to produce TV programmes, radio stations, as in Glasgow, UK ('One Scotland, many cultures') or by using social networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube.

*In **Spain**, Barcelona organised an "anti-rumour" campaign as part of the Local Plan for Interculturality in order to fight prejudices, discrimination and xenophobia. The strategy was promoted in hard copy (a handbook, comic strips, and various other documents), and via audio-visual media (TV and radio programmes, as well as a website and YouTube channel). In addition, a training programme was implemented where volunteers could participate in seminars and receive a certificate as an "anti-rumour agent" to take part in the "anti-rumour network".*

- Campaigns with a view to stimulating positive attitudes towards diversity, and migrants more specifically, are widespread in Europe. This is particularly the case in Copenhagen [VI KBH'R campaign], Antwerp ['This city is for everyone'], Zurich ['Living Zurich'], Istanbul ['Yours Istanbul'], Kirklees ['Belonging to Dewsbury'] and Vienna [Feeling at home']. Communication campaigns have focused on a double message: to highlight and celebrate the city's diversity, while strengthening inclusion and dialogue between citizens. These may be reactive. After a racially motivated murder in 2001, Oslo launched a high-level awareness raising campaign called "Oslo Extra Large – OXLO", which introduced a number of city-wide measures to increase tolerance, such as diversifying city government's hiring criteria, promoting political participation through citizenship and supporting increased cooperation between different agencies and levels of government.

- A number of cities in Europe have actively engaged with media channels such as television and radio broadcasting for their diversity campaigns. Barcelona adopted an innovative approach by broadcasting a cooking programme ['Karakia'] on the regional television channel. The cooking show featured recipes from all the different communities in Catalonia, and managed to reach an audience across the entire region. In Germany, Berlin used to have a multilingual radio station, Radio Multikulti, from 1994 to 2008, which was broadcasted in 21 languages and reflected the different languages and communities present in Berlin. Similarly, Multicultural Television Netherlands, which operates in the four largest cities in the Netherlands, produces programmes that are directed towards a multicultural urban audience, promoting inclusion and a positive attitude towards diversity.

- Alongside the campaigns, a plethora of activities and projects have been organised aimed at promoting positive attitudes towards diversity, both in the traditionally active cities but also in cities in Scandinavia and Greece. In Athens, the city's Intercultural Centre of the Migrant Services Department collaborates with the Athens Scouts to integrate migrant children into the scout movement. In Sweden's Sundsvall the city supports the project 'Fotboll Plus' which aims to include immigrant children in one of the football clubs in the city in order to extend their social networks and counteract isolation. In Malmö, the Mayor has launched a Forum for Dialogue to bring together various (religious and minority) representatives in the municipality with a view to prevent racism and intolerance. In Finland, the city of Turku has been organising the 'new citizen of Turku' and 'Multicultural actor' awards annually to raise awareness about the advantages of immigration and to create links between the migrant and native community. Similarly, Helsinki launched the 'Ourvision Singing Contest' in 2007 to highlight the talent and creative skills of Helsinki's immigrants, which received lots of media attention and a positive reception by the public.

This more focused work falls into two closely related categories – intercultural communications activities and face-to-face communications activities. First, **intercultural communications activities** that seek to celebrate different cultures in one community, and thus improve understanding of other residents. Actions here range from theatre to sporting events, art exhibitions and cultural festivals. Some of these are stand-alone activities, as in Cosenza, Italy, where La Kasbah Cultural Association has worked with local theatres to develop plays; one of these projects also resulted in a documentary. Others may be annual events that become a new local tradition, such as the soup festival in Marburg, Germany. Some activities are designed to become a permanent element of the local community, such as the Neighbourhood House in San Salvario, Italy.

*Each year, in Marburg, **Germany**, the city district of Richtsberg hosts a 'soup festival' bringing together its many residents from different cultural backgrounds to enjoy the various spices and flavours from around the world. The festival accomplishes the dual goal of promoting a local identity and pride in a local activity, while overcoming prejudices that might exist between communities. The idea for the soup festival originated in Lille, France.*

The third category is **face-to-face communications activities.** These are efforts that aim to bring together different sections of the community as individuals, for instance through public forums and debates, classes and training, structured dialogue and mediation. The goal of many of these is to improve attitudes in the long-term by bringing different elements of the community together to strengthen their awareness of the other, and forge stronger relationships overall. Debates may be organised to inform and discuss, as with the multi-level dialogues developed in Rotterdam, Netherlands, to cover a broad range of topics from education to citizenship. Other more interactive projects include the development of buddy systems and forums for residents to meet to discuss common issues of interest, as in Slough, UK. Other initiatives may have a learning component, such as language classes, or classes introducing residents to other cultures. A key element of this is network-building, and establishing long-term relationships that can be the source of additional communications initiatives over time.

*The city of Neu-Isenburg in **Germany** launched the "Living Diversity" initiative in 2010 as a reaction to the public debate about the controversial and polemic book "Deutschland schafft sich ab" ("Germany resigns") by Thilo Sarrazin. Rounds of talks were organised about different themes related to the area of migration and integration with a view to creating dialogue and contact between various population groups in the city.*

- Within both media campaigns and activities/projects promoting diversity, certain city policies have been specifically oriented towards intercultural mediation, training of public officials (mostly police), and religious audiences. Cultural mediation programmes can mostly be found in Italy, Spain, Germany and the UK. In Italy, the city of Bologna offers a centralised intercultural mediation service to people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and to resolve intercultural conflicts in general. Similarly, Barcelona set up the Intercultural Mediation Service in 2002 to provide a bridge between immigrants and the host administration and population, as well as between communities of different cultures. In Germany, the Hamburg Sport Federation offers training for a training licence B in migration sports, aimed at raising awareness about intercultural organised sport and producing trainers qualified in responding to cultural diversity. Rome's mediation programme also targets schools, having mediators facilitate communication between people from different backgrounds at various levels in school. In 2003, Birmingham (UK) set up a peer mediation programme, 'Voices of Aston', providing a platform for local youths to engage and collaborate on joint solutions.

- Training of public officials to work more effectively with people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds is widely spread across Europe. For instance in Cardiff (UK), an English course 'Police ESOL' brings together both law enforcement officers and the new migrant community: the students receive lessons in English language on UK laws and practices, while building up confidence in the police. Germany also has several intercultural training schemes for its Senate staff and police employees to prepare them to work more effectively with people from different backgrounds – the latter also being in place in Rotterdam. In Switzerland, Zürich has established the Quality in multi-ethnic Schools (QUIMs) programme which aims at reducing inequality in schools and raising the education standard in all schools, by having trained QUIMS officers preparing and coordinating QUIMS activities for the entire teaching staff in a school.

• Diversity-promoting projects with a religious approach at local level are very common in Germany and the UK, but are also in place in Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Sweden and Ireland. A very successful initiative has been the Islamforum in Berlin, which was launched in 2005 to provide an opportunity for representatives of Muslim organisations to meet and liaise regularly with senior officials of the Berlin government and civil society. In the UK Borough of Oldham Metropolitan the Oldham Interfaith Forum has been established, including members from different religious communities. The Forum organises various events where the residents of the Borough can share information and become familiar with people from different religious communities.

Whilst these categories broadly describe the types of action that are available, they fail to capture the full continuum of activities that were discovered in the six AMICALL countries. Indeed each research report categorized activities differently. The table below outlines the range of communications tools utilized by different LRAs, beginning with the most narrowly focused through to those that are part of a broader scheme. Depending on context, and goals, the content, leadership and relative success of these activities can change markedly. A handbook of promising practices has been published with this report, with a checklist of design considerations for LRAs working to develop similar types of activities.

Type of Activity	Examples
Press releases or media conferences	All LRAs
Stand-alone information campaigns • Information about migrants • Information for migrants	 Migrantas poster campaign (DE) New Link, Peterborough (UK); Health guide, Essen (DE)
Web presence	Kapsovar (HU)
Multimedia communications strategies	Barcelona Anti-Rumour strategy (ES); One Scotland: many cultures (UK)
Media engagement • Sensitising journalists • Promoting positive coverage	 Media guides (IT)
Diversity training for officials	City Council of Parla (ES)
Intercultural festivals/celebrations	Marburg soup festival (DE); San Salvario Mon Amour (IT)
Physical spaces for intercultural dialogue (long-term)	Reggio Meeting Centre (IT)
Dialogue processes	Rotterdam (NL); Neu-Isenberg (DE)
Conflict resolution/mediation	Hospitalet mediation service (ES)
Network development • Between LRAs and migrant organisations • Between communities	 Delft (NL)
Neighbourhood regeneration strategies	Reggio station area (IT)
City branding strategies • integration focus AND general	We are Amsterdam (NL); be Berlinternational (DE); We are Wuppertal (DE); I love Hackney (UK); I love Reggio (IT)

Finally, the AMICALL research highlights that policies designed to change attitudes towards migrants can be divided into two broad sets. Either their aim is part of a larger integration or inclusion policy of diversity; or it is part of a larger strategy to revive a certain (poor and deprived) area and improve overall social cohesion (i.e. migrants being one element of a broader target group).

Most urban revival campaigns and activities (which tend to offer disproportionately beneficial effects for migrants) have been developed in the Netherlands and Germany primarily, as well as in Southern Europe (Italy and Spain), West (Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, and United Kingdom) and Northern Europe (Norway, Sweden, and Denmark). In these approaches, the ultimate target of the policy is the resident of the city/neighbourhood, and the focus lies on the inclusion of all, rather than differentiating between residents' origins. In the Netherlands, the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam have been pioneers in developing socio-urban policies. For instance, Amsterdam has been organising the Waterfall Festival since 2004, which takes place in the park area around Sloterplas Lake, with a view to bringing together people from different backgrounds and to improving the image of that city district. Similarly, in Frankfurt, Germany, a children's football competition was organised in a district with a high percentage of migrants, and helped demonstrate how differences and racial conflicts can be overcome in sports and daily life.

Context

The AMICALL research feeds into an already existing framework of networks and studies on diversity inclusion at city level. What most cases seem to show is that communication strategies are never really stand-alone policies. Even with seemingly autonomous and direct information campaigns, they are usually linked to a specific neighbourhood, local government department or public audience with a view to obtaining concrete outcomes in that target area. It is also important to note that even those LRAs which do not consciously, or deliberately, communicate on integration will have an impact on the communities they serve. The absence of communication, in this regard, is evident.

Overall, the success in most of these projects and campaigns depends on how much they are intertwined with or connected to, tangible policy areas such as employment or education, and how much they are responding to the specific needs of certain communities. In this respect, similarities can be found between different cities in different countries. This is not necessarily because communities have a similar composition, but because they share similar practical needs creating comparable challenges, such as deprivation.

LRAs in the six countries implement integration strategies in very different contexts. In the different case studies, context was significant in three different ways:

- providing the necessary conditions under which LRA communication activities have any effect;

- mediating or moderating the impacts of LRA communication activities;

- initiating LRA communication activities.

All these factors operate at different scales, including national and local.

National contexts are important, in particular national structural contexts such as migration structures and political structures. The size, type and longevity of immigration flows in each country, economic and social well-being, newly or long-adopted national models of integration, tense political dialogue regarding immigration and shifting public attitudes towards migrant, are all factors affecting the choices concerning, and design of, community interventions as well as the eventual outcomes and their effect.

In most AMICALL countries, LRAs are responsible for significant elements of the integration process from delivering services on education and health to designing community cohesion programmes. These may be mandated by national government, but there is considerable discretion with respect to the goals that may be set by LRAs and the means employed to attain them. This devolution is a result of the oft-repeated but little considered truism that 'integration is local' and LRAs are best placed to understand their populations, as individual communities get influenced by their national context. For example, as noted above, the Dutch and UK contexts allow municipalities considerable freedom to develop their own approaches despite strong national-level articulations of what integration should look like, while in Hungary and Italy the absence of such national-level articulations has given municipalities and regions the scope to develop their own approaches or ignore the topic altogether, and the German and Spanish contexts give Länder and Autonomous Communities respectively considerable powers compared to in other countries.

The AMICALL research also highlighted the difference between cities within a single country, and the effect this might have on the design of communication activities. Again, structural contexts are especially significant. Size is the most obvious factor: for large international cities, such as London, Berlin and Amsterdam, diversity is a long-standing element of the local identity, revealed through broad-based branding exercises such as BeBerlin. For other large cities, such as Budapest and Barcelona, immigration is still a relatively new phenomenon, and less central to the daily lives of their residents.

However, most of the country reports highlight the wide diversity of cities and towns engaged in communication activities with immigrant groups. For example, in the Netherlands, Arnhem and Enschede are smaller municipalities (circa 150,000 residents), with significant immigrant populations (circa 17%) resulting from the recruitment of guest-workers into local manufacturing, whilst Leeuwarden (93,000 residents) has a much lower proportion of immigrants (9%). This variance exists across the six countries researched, and has a certain influence on both the priority afforded and sophistication of the LRA activity. A lot of the reports, including the UK, Italy and Germany, highlight strong examples of smaller towns and regions committing to communications activities regardless of the size of the town and/or immigrant population.

Political and policy context is also important. In the UK, officials from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland noted that they have a strong positive consensus towards immigration – and indeed, Scotland is running a campaign to attract immigrants – which is less evident in England. In the Netherlands and Italy, cities and regions highlighted that many interventions were, at least in part, an effort to counter-balance a negative national debate on immigration.

There are myriad additional contexts, such as experience, that affect whether and how LRAs develop communication activities. In Hungary, a number of officials stated that even when they did have formal responsibility for equality issues, they had little experience in practice. In Germany, LRA officials expressed discouragement at the complexity of addressing attitudes towards migrants, and highlighted that lack of knowledge and experience was one of the reasons for not engaging in communication activities as a specific field of integration programming. In this regard, it is also important to note that even those LRAs which do not consciously, or deliberately, communicate on integration will have an impact on the communities they serve. While the AMICALL project focused on the LRAs that 'do', there may also be lessons to learn from those which 'do not'.

Framing

The frame for the AMICALL research was broadly defined as a focus on communication activities to promote immigrant integration. Over the course of the research, this shifted in a number of ways.

First, few LRAs in the six countries identified with the term 'integration', with Germany being an exception. For a number of countries, particularly the UK and the Netherlands, using other frames, such as 'social cohesion' or 'urban citizenship', are more useful and flexible. This can also vary within countries: in Wales, the term 'inclusion' was preferable to 'cohesion', a term more commonly found across the UK. The reluctance to use the term is influenced by the public debate on integration, which has become negative in recent years, and particularly the idea that 'integration' is an assimilative process whereby migrants change their behaviour, whereas 'social cohesion' and diversity concepts focus on the community as a whole.

It also became clear that different LRAs define the migrant group through a variety of lenses, and sometimes use several at the same time. In some contexts, the idea of focusing exclusively on migrant groups was anathema; instead some officials highlighted that communicating on diversity was far more useful, and more inclusive. However, one can also see distinctions between countries, and over time. In the Netherlands, the target group is perceived to be the non-Western immigrant population, even those who are 2nd or 3rd generation and have been born in the Netherlands. While LRAs have moved away from the divisive terminology of allochtoon (foreigner) versus autochtoon (native), understanding the symbolic meaning of such words, the focal point of many of the interventions remain the ethnic minority population. In Hungary, populations are more clearly defined by origin and ethnicity: ethnic Hungarians born in another country; nationally recognized minority groups, such as Roma and Serbian; and other groups such as Muslim and Chinese communities. The indication is that the third group is of lesser importance for authorities, whilst the first group is considered to be equal to Hungarian citizens. By contrast, the activities described in the UK and Spain focus more on newcomer populations, particularly those arriving over the past decade. These differences in conceptualization also affect the type and goal of communication activities undertaken.

Design considerations

There are a number of considerations that LRAs make – explicitly or implicitly – when designing a communications activity. All of these questions have to be understood against the backdrop of the specific context of the municipality, and the LRAs own frame for integration policy, as this will also affect the choices made, and the relative success of the investments made. We spell out design considerations in more detail in the benchmarking checklist we provide in the Handbook of Promising Practices which is published online, alongside this report.

Goal

The AMICALL research highlighted the dangers of undirected communications strategy, which can at best be ineffective, and at worst, counter-productive. A number of projects began with great intentions, but failed because the goal was either mismatched to the community needs, or was unclear in what it sought to achieve.

LRA interventions to address public attitudes towards migrants can be diverse, and often the central goal is not necessarily to change minds directly. In Italy, for example, it was highlighted that citizens found overt efforts to shift opinion offensive, which in turn bred further animosity rather than reducing it. LRAs in other countries highlighted the complexity of attempting to change attitudes towards migrants, particularly when communities are exposed to a wide range of media on the topic. Conversely, improving the integration of migrants should in itself have a concomitant effect on the attitudes of the broader community; indeed this has been the philosophy adopted by Dutch local officials.

Where the goal is to improve integration of immigrant groups themselves (particularly newcomers), then providing information has proved very useful. Beyond this specific goal, in the majority of countries, LRAs preferred not to design communication activities that focused specifically on migrants, or the integration process. Instead, the focus is on broader social cohesion, looking at the health of the community as a whole. For example, in Germany, LRAs articulated a goal of creating 'intercultural opening' within a municipality, through setting a good example and developing a welcoming culture.

There are also indications that LRAs make more specific distinctions as to what they want to achieve. These goals can include:

Informing communities – sometimes, direct information provision about migrants (as opposed to toward migrants) runs the risk of reinforcing rather than reducing stereotypical or misguided beliefs, particularly if these are trying to bust 'myths' about immigrants. LRAs highlight that providing balanced information about immigration, rather than attempt to directly influence opinion, tended to be more successful.

Improving interaction within the community – in many cases the goal was to bring community members together, whether to improve mutual knowledge and understanding, or achieve a common community goal.

Defusing community conflict, respond to crisis – in a number of cases, LRAs had intervened in order to reduce conflict in the community, either in response to an event or particular dispute, or to address bubbling unrest or dissatisfaction.

Building community networks and capacity – in some cases, the goal is an indirect one, an investment for the future. A number of municipalities have developed community networks, between different stakeholder groups from migrant organisations to privately owned businesses, and supported the development of organisations directly. These networks and groups then develop their own communications activities.

*In the **United Kingdom,** the London Borough of **Hackney** responds to its vast diversity by focusing on the delivery of services to migrants, rather than attitudes. However, the local authority's work is mostly oriented towards deprived areas lacking social cohesion (which happen to host a large number of migrants) rather than targeting migrants as such. The objectives of their activities are to promote a shared sense of belonging, equality of life chances, and delivering good services.*

Target Group

Another key input factor is who the activity is targeted toward. This has several dimensions. As highlighted above, the broad migrant population under discussion shifts from country to country, most frequently related to the history and background of immigration. Beyond this, communications activities may have a number of different audiences:

Communications targeted towards migrant groups – this can take the form of broad information and orientation programmes and websites. In some cases, the target group is further narrowed to groups with particular needs or rights. In Spain, migrant women, migrant children and Roma groups are subset target groups, while in Italy, unaccompanied children, refugees and trafficking victims were cited. In the Italian municipality of Reggio Emilia, officials sent letters to 18 year old foreign nationals to remind them of the opportunity to acquire citizenship. In Italy, it was also highlighted that migrant groups, particularly the second generation, can be important messengers as well as target groups, and in countries such as the Netherlands, significant effort has been made to engage migrant associations in communications activities.

Communications targeted towards the non-migrant population – these activities can also be characterised as being about migrants, such as the Barcelona anti-rumour strategy. Few initiatives have broken down this community into subsets. It is clear that there may be a range of opinions held within this community, from those who are broadly positive, to hardliners. In the Netherlands and the UK, for example, LRAs mentioned so-called 'white anger' and the existence of hard to reach populations. In a number of countries, LRAs expressed scepticism that these entrenched opinions within the community could be affected through communications activities alone, particularly when there is negative media.

Communications targeted at public officials within LRAs, and others in the public eye – in a number of countries, such as Spain, officials themselves have received training. Whilst in Italy, the UK and Germany, efforts had been made to work with, and/or sensitise journalists and media outlets. In Germany, also, LRAs mentioned efforts to support the communications capacity within civil society itself, acting as a bridge between migrant organisations and the local media.

**Communications targeted at the whole community – ** Most often communications activities were targeted at every member of the community, regardless of origin, particularly in the case of dialogue mechanisms and intercultural festivals and celebrations. In some cases, different members of the community have differentiated roles; in Berlin, for example, migrant women were invited to express their feelings and conflicts of identity through pictograms that were then printed as posters and hung up across the city (for the wider population to enjoy). Meetings and meeting spaces, such as Rotterdam's Dialogues on Urban Citizenship and the San Salvario Neighbourhood House are focused on bringing the whole community together in a common activity, though it should be noted that Italian LRAs encountered difficulties in engaging migrants in this process.

Some LRAs also highlighted that the size of the target audience could be relevant. Whilst some communications campaigns were effective at city-level, especially the branding exercises, LRAs in Italy and the Netherlands found that activities could often be most effective if targeted at neighbourhood and even street level.

LRA Role

LRAs also have to decide what role they wish to play in terms of managing and implementing each particular activity. In some cases this is decided by circumstance, as certain activities can only be carried out by public officials.

The clearest role is one of public leadership, where the LRA is core to the effectiveness of the activity. In Italy, the symbolic role of LRA communication was highlighted, particularly in a political context where there are few value-neutral statements on the topic of immigration. Such leadership can be demonstrated through public statements from political leaders, or through the central ownership and coordination of the project by LRA officials.

In other situations, it may be more expedient for LRAs to involve third parties in the coordination and implementation of an activity, or delegate to third parties entirely. In most of the AMICALL countries, non-governmental actors have been critical to integration policy, frequently working in close coordination with local government. Taking a less visible role may be more successful in cases where the LRA has less direct knowledge and experience of particular immigrant groups, or where community leaders have more credibility. In Hungary, a new migration country, civil society organisations play a particularly important role in driving the agenda forward and supporting LRAs' limited competencies concerning transcultural communication.

Beyond the centrality of the LRA in the process, there are a number of other considerations related to role. For example, is the LRA a mediator of conflict, a facilitator of intra-community communication, or a standard-setter? Is the LRA using its own resources, or merely channelling resources from elsewhere (such as the EU, or private contributors)? Finally, how much political commitment accompanies the initiative?

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Leadership and Planning Processes

The idea that there is either consistent leadership or an established planning process amongst LRAs is misleading. The AMICALL research revealed a number of trends, but also highlighted the ad-hoc nature of communications development in this field.

Organisation

According to most of the LRAs surveyed in the six countries, there are few organizational entities specifically mandated to carry out communications activities in the area of integration. Italian officials, in particular, noted the plethora of activities that had been developed in the absence of any coordination, with the exception of more developed LRAs such as Turin and Reggio Emilia. Despite the lack of formal entities within local government, it is clear from the research that frequently a number of actors need to come together to put an initiative in place, across departments and from elected officials to public service providers. Indeed, a failure on the part of public officers to communicate across departments could have a detrimental effect on integration communication. Interestingly, in most countries, communications units within city councils had rarely been involved in communications activities, and never in the lead.

However, some figureheads can be found. In Germany and to some extent Spain, a number of cities have appointed Integration Commissioners with responsibility for the well-being of immigrant populations within the wider community. In the Netherlands, Hungary, Germany, Spain and the UK, the relevance of mayors as leaders on the topic was highlighted, not least in big cities such as Rotterdam, Amsterdam and London. However, this was not all positive: in a number of countries, examples were given of politicians opposing activities, or undermining communications strategies with their own, conflicting public statements.

Aside from this, there were plenty of examples of a single official, or small group, single-handedly developing an activity after having identified a need. A good example of this can be found in Breckland, UK, where Environmental Health Officers developed innovative activities based on their day-to-day working experience.

Catalysts

In many cases, the initial catalyst for developing an activity is unclear, or depends on particular commitment of an individual. Nonetheless, it is notable that many activities at LRA level may be designed reactively, responding to a particular event or perceived crisis, though these vary in intensity and profile.

Violence can be a driver, whether an isolated incident such as the murder of an asylum seeker in Glasgow, UK, or that of key political figures Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands, or fear of more widespread violence. Having witnessed the 2005 suburban riots in Paris, Madrid city was encouraged to sign a European Declaration of Cities against Ghettos. Other conflicts are more cultural in nature; in Weinheim, Germany, emerging conflict over the building of a minaret sparked an LRA-led community resolution process. Finally, national debates can spur action, such as the publication of an inflammatory book by Thilo Sarrazin in Germany, attributing a loss of national identity to Muslim immigration.

*In The **Netherlands,** the campaign **"Wij Amsterdammers"** ("We Amsterdammers") ran from 2004 to 2009 and targeted several issues related to radicalisation, polarisation, lack of social cohesion and social deprivation at the same time, as well as all of its residents. The project was an immediate reaction to the assassination of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, aimed at countering increasing potential for conflict and intercultural tensions.*

However, exogenous incidents are not the only drivers for LRAs. In Italy, initiatives have been developed in reaction to the national political and media landscape, and the desire within local authorities to change the public debate. In Spain, the anti-rumour strategy in Barcelona was devised to counter the proliferation of urban legends and negative messaging. Similarly, in the Netherlands, at least part of the motivation behind communications activities at municipal level is a desire to differentiate from the messages and policy of the national government. However, this is not the case everywhere; in Hungary, the nationalist position of prominent political parties has not yet sparked a serious reaction from municipal politicians.

In Hungary, EU funding has been a strong catalyst for developing communications and intercultural activities. As municipal budgets diminish across Europe, one can expect EU funding sources to become more critical in the future for this kind of activity.

Strategic development

Whilst LRAs in all countries acknowledged the importance of taking a strategic approach, most admitted that such planning tended to be the exception, not the rule. However, one can also identify an evolution. In the beginning activities may be ad hoc, but over time these can develop into a more comprehensive approach. This was highlighted in the Italian research, and the need for the 'plethora of small day-by-day activities' to be brought within a unified framework. In countries with more extensive experience, such as the Netherlands and the UK, one can find more evidence of a concerted strategic approach at city level. Indeed, the existence of inter-agency communications mechanisms, such as the Community Planning Partnerships in England, seemed to have helped some LRAs develop a multi-agency approach. In Münster, Germany, communication is a highly elaborated and multi-faceted area of municipal integration policy.

In the Netherlands, a number of programmes are proactively designed as part of a structured and comprehensive programme, as in the 'InburgerenAndersom' (becoming a member of society, the other way around) project in Delft, Netherlands. In some cases, an event has catalysed activities that have then, over time, fed new thinking about the municipal integration strategies, as with the WijAmsterdamers project conceived in the aftermath of the Theo Van Gogh murder in the Netherlands. In this way, Dutch LRAs can respond to both changes in the environment as well as long-term needs.

A strong, integrated approach was advocated across the research countries, but in addition to this, a number of countries highlighted the need for a) continuous engagement over time, and b) strong political and institutional commitment across the municipality. A good example of the latter can be found in Spain, where the political parties in Mataro, South Madrid, formed a pact to avoid controversy regarding immigrants and immigrant integration in the local political debate.

*In **Mataro, Spain,** a municipal plan for new citizens officially recognizes the contribution of newcomers to the receiving society, and intentionally avoids making a distinction between migrant and non-migrant (other Spanish) newcomers to the area. In addition to the plan, a commission was created to facilitate contacts between the local administration, social organisations and migrant organisations, in addition to a political pact between parties to abstain from causing public controversy on immigration issues.*

Involvement of non-governmental stakeholders

Civil society organisations are key partners in all the AMICALL countries. In Spain and the Netherlands, for example, this occurs at the municipal level and is thought to be a defining feature of local integration policy. In other countries, such as Hungary, non-governmental actors fill gaps left through an absence of established government service provision. In the UK, NGOs are frequently used as sub-contractors for government policy; this is less of a collaboration model, and means that many of these actors have been directly affected by national budget cuts. This has a knock-on effect for those local authorities wishing to experiment with new policy ideas or outreach programmes.

In Germany, Italy and the UK, there is a strong private philanthropy sector, which supplements many of the local government activities; in Germany particularly, foundations tend to have a strong regional focus. However, in other countries, such as Spain and Hungary, there is very little in terms of philanthropic investment, which means that dependency on outside and/or government resources is very high.

*In **Hungary** the role of civil society and of the city Mayors is paramount in stimulating social cohesion at city level, though their activities are not strictly migrant-oriented. In Budapest a community centre was created in the 8th district, a socio-economically deprived area inhabited predominantly by Roma and migrants. Private and public actors cooperated to create a children's playground, though the initiative experienced problems in attracting enough people. Given that migrant representation in the Hungarian local media is still somewhat negative, there are no local or regional comprehensive communication activities in place yet.*

Identifying clear outcomes was a challenge in each of the AMICALL countries. This is due to a number of evaluation challenges.

Few of the identified initiatives had undergone any formal evaluation processes to assess their effectiveness. Some of the bigger long-term initiatives have been evaluated, from the Rotterdam dialogue processes in the Netherlands to the One Scotland campaign in the UK, but there are rarely spare resources for smaller initiatives. As national and local integration budgets tighten, it is unlikely that additional resources for evaluation will be allocated by LRAs in the future, though EU funding stipulates the need for some evaluation of any projects funded.

*Elements of the **We Amsterdammers** initiative in the **Netherlands** have been evaluated, and three critical success factors were identified: trust as a necessary precondition before LRAs act; LRA commitment; and the use of external thematic expertise. The programme also led to the creation of new urban networks (not all of which have lasted), and positive contacts across groups at events. While the evaluation report concluded that activities need to be integrated and systematic across policy areas to be successful, it also highlighted the difficulty in assessing the effect of meetings on attitudes.*

Besides the lack of resources, a number of LRAs highlighted the difficulty in establishing cause and effect with respect to communications, particularly activities designed to influence public attitudes. Whilst LRAs can highlight outputs, such as attendance at particular events and festivals, and media coverage, assessing effectiveness through stakeholder surveys and broader datasets can be a difficult and often inconclusive undertaking. This was a drawback of the annual survey for the One Scotland project, for example.

***Oldham Borough Council** in the **UK** has conducted one of the few long-term evaluations available, five years after civil disturbances in the town had inspired a new national community cohesion policy. The report found that, despite concerted efforts at local level, traditional communications activities had had little impact. Instead, the report recommended more grassroots engagement, which seemed to be having more success. The evaluation was based on desk research, interviews and focus groups, but even here the report cannot be said to provide evidence of a direct causal relationship.*

The UK has more experience than other countries with respect to evaluation. Some LRAs had commissioned independent researchers to evaluate local programmes, while broader datasets such as the English Place Survey (now sadly discontinued) had apparently provided slim, though useful information on attitudes. Other countries highlighted more indirect methods to assess success, not least awarding prizes for projects (in Germany), or the inclusion of projects in Spain's good practice website, though this may be a subjective method of evaluating effectiveness.

However, beyond formal evaluation processes, LRA officials were able to draw some tentative conclusions based on their extensive experience and informal review. For example, the research highlighted a consistent belief that sustained, multi-faceted and comprehensive campaigns were far more effective than one-off efforts. More specifically, it was clear that efforts to date with respect to media engagement had been ambivalent at best. However, those projects that aimed to link journalists with potential stories and contacts, as in the UK and Germany, rather than more passive efforts to sensitise media outlets, seemed to have greater success.

Finally, it would seem that failure is easier to identify than success. This has two implications for LRAs hoping to learn: first, that failure does not necessarily signpost the correct design for initiatives; second, that repeated demonstration of failure, or indifferent effect, reduces political will to invest in any new communications activities.

Financial resources

In many countries, the recession has affected integration programming in terms of the financial resources made available at national level. In Spain, this has become a source of political tension between national and regional governments. In 2009, the national government sought to halve resources available for integration in the regions and municipalities, and in May 2012, the central government reduced funding for integration to zero. In the Netherlands, funding from national government for municipal programming on integration has been severely reduced, though some of the larger cities, such as Amsterdam, have their own budget lines for such activities. Finally, in the UK, the budget for the Department for Communities and Local Government has been reduced considerably, which means programming on social cohesion has also been cut.

Equally concerning is the fact that in many countries, LRA spending on integration is discretionary; Italian LRAs can choose not to allocate resources from the National Fund for Social Policies for immigrant integration, following legislation in 2003. As this research has focused on what LRAs are doing in this field, rather than those that are not, it is difficult to tell what proportion of LRAs are not active, and whether availability of resources has any impact on decisions to develop communications activities.

A second, linked, financial aspect is sustainability. While there was consensus that integrated, long-term strategies work best, funding is usually only available for time-limited projects, and there is an increasing need to demonstrate success. During the AMICALL research, LRAs gave examples of project money running out, which hampered the continuance of a project. In the midst of recession, it is clear that communications initiatives will be particularly hard-hit, as LRAs are now focused on essential services and infrastructure. LRAs will need to find more innovative ways to maintain a communications element to their work, through collaboration, or integrate initiatives into everyday service provision. Other sources of funding, or outside expertise, may become more important in this context.

The public debate

While the political willingness to address integration challenges is key, so is the rhetoric that surrounds immigration at all levels of government. Across the AMICALL countries there is a wide disparity in terms of the rhetoric employed by political parties. Openly negative positions such as those adopted by Lega Nord politicians in Italy, or Geert Wilders in the Netherlands have an obvious impact. However, other debates, such as those concerning 'failed' multiculturalism in the UK and the uncertain role of Islam in Germany have a more insidious effect on the broader population, including the attitudes of immigrants themselves. The interplay between national and local debates, is an additional complexity. LRAs reported that national debates and national or local news stories could eclipse the messages of a carefully designed communications campaign.

Pre-existing attitudes towards immigrants make some initiatives harder to implement than others. If a community is already pre-disposed towards diversity, and merely seeks the opportunity to interact, then the outcomes of face-to-face community projects will be very different than if there have been incidences of tension or violence. This affects the way LRAs choose to engage, particularly in the preparatory stages. A number of LRAs expressed concern that they were 'preaching to the converted' and not reaching populations with more entrenched views.

Currently, the existence of far-right groups at all levels of government, alongside a tougher mainstream debate, has an effect on the ability of local governments to pursue policies. In a number of countries, opposing political parties might be in office at national and local level. This is the case in the Netherlands, but also to varying degrees in most of the AMICALL countries. If the national policy approaches differ significantly from local philosophies of integration, this may either have a dampening effect – reducing the effectiveness of local interventions – or may encourage local governments to work in spite of contrasting national approaches. There are examples of both in the country research reports, yet local authorities demonstrate surprising resilience in the light of opposing opinions at other levels of governance.

The media plays a strong, role in the national vs. local political dynamic. Negative press, both national and local, can affect the outcomes of particular local projects. In Italy, it was highlighted that the strongly negative press means that LRAs may have an uphill battle in engaging citizens. However, the local press may be more supportive in efforts to promote a more balanced debate. In Hungary, an analysis of media reporting on immigrant integration found that many national stories were replicated in local press, though when the story was a local one, the city newspaper was more likely to report positively.

While the interplay between national and local politics and media is too complex to analyse sufficiently within the confines of this research, it is clear that politics can quickly overshadow local initiatives to the point of rendering them ineffective.

Personalities and individual commitment

Time and again, it is clear that the particular investment of an individual or team has driven a project. In some cases this was a committed individual or NGO from the community, or a LRA official, but it can equally be a political figure on the local or regional scene. Such individuals tended to be capable of sustaining a project with little or no funding (or finding funding from unusual quarters), bringing different officials and community members together, or inspiring a community to join a particular activity.

It was also highlighted that such commitment could be undermined just as easily by dint of being in the hands of a small number of individuals. If a project is the responsibility of just a handful of people, it remains a fragile endeavour once those officials or community members move on, and no one else has adopted the ethos behind the project. Similarly, a number of examples were highlighted where a promising activity had been undermined by a speech or action from a local politician communicating a conflicting message from the project. The process of changing attitudes is slow and complex, and relies on solid support over a long period of time. Whilst an initial surge of activity from a small group is inspiring, over time it needs to consolidate.

Regulatory frameworks

A number of interviewees highlighted that the bureaucratic context in which they were working was frequently too complex to allow for successful initiatives. Inter-agency coordination is essential yet hard to achieve, particularly when there are no mechanisms for communicating on particular crosscutting issues such as migrant integration.

Several countries highlighted the need for greater ownership from the immigrant population, and the relatively low numbers of immigrants and minorities working in the public sector. This is particularly the case in Italy and Hungary, but still a challenge in most European countries. In order to communicate openness and inclusiveness, LRAs themselves need to be open, inclusive and representative of the communities they serve.

Finally, in many countries, there is a paucity of information regarding who is within a particular community. Without this information, or expertise, LRAs are limited in terms of understanding the particular tensions and needs that exist and may design initiatives that have little or no relevance to the issues actually at hand. In the UK, a number of LRAs have invested in partnerships with local universities and research organisations to improve their knowledge of the local area and develop workable strategies.

LRAs are enthusiastic to learn more about how to improve their work in this area, and one can see evidence of that learning within countries, across countries, and over time. Indeed, the AMICALL project itself has inspired the General Assembly of Budapest to invest in the training of officials in intercultural awareness. Similarly, LRAs in the UK welcomed the opportunity to discuss this issue, as for them there is no other forum within which they can do so.

Nationally, several AMICALL countries flagged the use of handbooks and other toolkits in developing their own programming. In the UK, for example, LRAs have used guides produced by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), and the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG). In Spain, the central government has developed a website highlighting all the projects funded between 2007 and 2011, and distinguishes good practices in a range of thematic areas.

Transnationally, several countries have invested in international networks. In Italy, active participation in the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities network has led to the development of a smaller sub-network of Italian municipalities, highlighting the desire of the country's local authorities to engage with each other in the absence of national guidance or coordination. In Spain and Hungary, transnational learning has developed in part through participation in EU funded projects. For example, both Spain and the Netherlands have participated in a project entitled 'Living Together: European Citizenship against Racism and Xenophobia', funded by the European Commission's Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme. There are an increasing number of projects and networks emerging on this topic, from the European Coalition of Cities against Racism to Eurocities' Integration Working Group, which have opened the door for exchange and learning.

The AMICALL project itself highlights the value of learning from other city activities. Indeed, a number of the initiatives identified in the report can be mapped across Europe, and numerous LRAs cite different projects and peer authorities as inspiration. City branding exercises, particularly those emphasising diversity as a core element of urban identity have learnt from each other: officials in Reggio Emilia noted that their branding of the Station Area was inspired by Amsterdam's We Amsterdammers initiative. The Marburg soup festival in Germany originated in France, and has been replicated in numerous cities across Europe.

*The 'Federal Migrants' project, rolled out across a number of cities in **Germany,** sought to promote understanding of the living situation of migrants in the receiving society by developing a series of pictograms in collaboration with local groups of migrant women, describing their lives and feelings about being migrants. The resulting images were then displayed across the city, as posters, advertisements and postcards in bars and cafés. The project has been transferred to a number of cities such as Cologne and Hamburg, and been introduced during international conferences in Spain, Hungary and the UK. The universality of the concept, alongside the specificity of each city's output (based on the thoughts and ideas of local migrant women) the project can be transferred easily to new locations.*

The challenge associated with assessing learning through replication is that it may not be the most successful practice that proliferates, but ones that have been communicated repeatedly through networks or have an obviously transferable set of characteristics. Given the importance of national and local context, outlined above, it is thus important to note that LRAs are also learning over time. Formal, one-off, communications activities are increasingly eschewed for more in depth, long-term investments in whole of community activities in most countries. While the UK has some of the most developed strategies, LRAs expressed a desire to learn more, while in Germany, municipalities saw themselves at the beginning, rather than the end, of a learning process. Thus, while identifying promising practices is useful, drawing out broader factors for success may be more useful in the long-term.

Conclusions

The key message of the AMICALL project is that the local matters. Places differ, and the integration challenges vary by locality, at every geographical scale. Local leadership on integration is therefore essential. Although the landscape mapped by the research was very uneven, we found striking examples of LRAs taking a lead in integration, even where national governments were retreating from the field. In a context marked by high levels of anti-migrant sentiment across Europe, the role LRAs play in ensuring that receiving societies play their part in creating the conditions for integration remain vital.

As repeatedly affirmed in European Union statements in the last decade, integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents. As set out in the first of the EU's Common Basic Principles, integration demands the participation not only of immigrants and their descendants but of every resident; it involves the receiving society creating the opportunities for migrants' full participation as much as it involves the migrants themselves. The debate, especially at national level in European countries, in stressing migrants' rights and responsibilities has too often neglected the role of receiving society.

Meanwhile, the debate has also too often framed integration as a national question, and only recently recognised the extent to which integration happens locally, and thus unfolds differently across our towns, cities and regions.

The AMICALL research shows that cities are taking a lead across Europe, even in contexts where national governments are retreating from the integration agenda, to push forward integration by working with the receiving society and not just with migrants. This includes: tackling misinformation and misapprehensions; avoiding, mediating and defusing tensions and conflicts; creating understanding between different communities which share common places; and building a shared and inclusive local sense of belonging and identity for all citizens.

The work is being developed differently in each country and city, due to several initiator variables – such as incidental context (e.g. response to crisis) and structural context (e.g. size of city, political situation or migration history) – and the efficacy of the work varies, again due to various mediator and moderator variables. It is obvious from both the country reports and the broader pan-European overview of initiatives that the number and sophistication of initiatives vary between countries, but also within countries. While initiatives have been developed in most of the cities of North West Europe and Scandinavia, there is much less development in the South of Europe, and particularly in Central and Eastern Europe. Within countries, large urban areas are more adept at developing a range of integration strategies, but this is not always the case. There may be a range of explanations for this, including differences in the number and length of residence of the migrant population in each country.

The use of communication activities depends on the political relevance attributed to integration policies in the society as a whole, its current state of development and dominant basic political colour of governments – but it also depends on local factors, such as city-level politics, institutional architecture and histories. There were some practices that are frequent and often apparently successful in some countries which are undeveloped or totally absent in others. For example, in the UK, there are several examples of programmes aimed at fostering better coordination among different sectors of local administrations, which are lacking the Italian context – while in Germany and Spain dedicated integration commissioners champion work within local administrations, a practice absent in the UK.

However, certain features seem to resonate across the case studies. What most cases show is that communication strategies are never really stand-alone policies. Even with seemingly autonomous and direct information campaigns, these are usually linked to a specific neighbourhood, local government department or public audience with a view to obtaining concrete outcomes in that target area. Overall, the success in most of these projects and campaign depends on how much they are intertwined with or connected to a tangible policy area (such as employment or education), and how much they are responding to the specific needs of a certain community. In this respect, similarities can be found between different cities in different countries, not necessarily due to a similar composition of communities but rather to similar practical needs of deprived communities (given that migrants and their children are part of larger society, and not something separate from it), which create comparable challenges. Work that starts with robust intelligence on the local needs is therefore (as in the Slough, UK, case study) especially well equipped for this challenge.

Among the features that emerge clearly across the case studies are the difficulty and importance of working with media. Here, LRA experience was uneven, and only some LRAs felt that they had succeeded in developing good relationships with media in the field of integration. When they had, it was more often with local than with national media, and seemed to succeed where there was a genuine partnership.

A second feature was the vital role of civil society and other stakeholders. Involving civil society registered as a factor in success for LRAs across the case studies. However, especially in a climate of austerity, there are significant barriers to civil society becoming fully engaged.

A third feature was the importance of individual commitment, from politicians and officials – but also the fragility of dependence on individual commitment and the need for smart forms of mainstreaming to overcome this fragility. This fragility seems to be especially an issue where societies tend to have rather negative attitudes to migrants or specific ethnic minorities; here concern with the issues is more often limited to a smaller pool of active agents. However, the research suggests that where strong commitment develops in a local setting, cities can take a lead even where the society as a whole appears to be heading in a different direction.

Similarly, where governments have a stronger focus on demanding rather than promoting integration, local authorities may pay less attention to the attitudes towards migrants than to the attitudes of migrants themselves. However, again the research suggests that strong city leadership can work against the prevailing mood.

Many of the factors that make a difference – such as the media climate – are outside the control of LRAs. But the research shows that there are things that LRAs can do to get some leverage on these factors. For example, by understanding how local and national media work and findings ways to give them alternative narratives and voices (as in Glasgow, for instance), the terms of the debate can be subtly changed; by finding ways of developing face-to-face communications, LRAs can reach deeper into communities.

Other factors that make a difference are within the power of LRAs. Organisational complexity within and between LRAs and other institutions can sometimes hinder communication, and sometimes LRAs give out mixed messages (for instance, politicians and officials or different departments communicating very different narratives). Internal communication can be as important as external communication.

The move from ad hoc to strategic communication approaches is a learning journey on which LRAs across Europe are embarking, including a shift to evidence-based interventions, and to mobilising the full spectrum of communication channels including face-to-face and grassroots channels. The neighbourhood, as integration's 'ground zero', remains a relatively under-developed area of work, with the focus tending to be on whole municipalities (although examples from the Italian research such as Reggio or San Salvario are promising exceptions). However, at the city level, and emerging at the neighbourhood level, city leaders are developing strong local identities that are inclusive of migrant and non-migrant residents, from Oslo Extra Large to Münster the city of the Peace of Westphalia, Marburg a place of diversity, or Magdeburg an open-minded city.

The work that cities are doing is under threat, due to fiscal austerity, political turmoil, and lack of commitment from some national governments. It is under-resourced, and suffers from a lack of robust evidence of success and evaluation of what works. Not all communications work to promote integration is successful. Sometimes it can be counterproductive – but under the right conditions this may give more opportunities for learning.

Safe spaces for sharing less positive experiences with colleagues in learning networks could help LRAs to improve practice further. There is a thirst – demonstrated by the engagement of LRAs in the transnational and action learning elements of AMICALL – from local and regional governments for opportunities to share both positive and negative learning, within and across member states. European institutions can add value to local and regional work by helping to support such safe spaces. A culture of reflection and transnational learning among LRAs can ensure that local leaders continue to communicate positively with their citizens as a foundation for integration as a two-way process in Europe.

It is clear from our research that there is no one size fits all approach to integration at a local level, nor to communication about integration, especially as circumstances are continually changing at every geographical scale. Understanding local circumstances is as important as learning from elsewhere. In particular, new migration countries face very different challenges to old migration countries. This diversity of contexts makes a tickbox approach to benchmarking counter-productive.

At the same time, our research found a lack of robust evidence about the impact of LRA work and a lack of systematic evaluation. As noted already, our research was based on a wide-reaching but not comprehensive review of LRA communication practices in six countries, drawing primarily on practitioners' experiences. We attempted to identify success factors, but could not conduct a scientific investigation of these factors given the lack of evaluation evidence available.

However, from the promising practices we identified, a series of benchmarking principles do clearly emerge. In the AMICALL Promising Practices Handbook published with this report, we provide a detailed practical checklist of considerations local and regional authorities could take in planning, designing, managing and delivering communication work in this area. Here, however, we bring out the more general major recommendations that emerge clearly from the AMICALL research.

Most of these recommendations relate to the LRA policy and practice, and therefore are aimed at LRAs themselves. However, we also include recommendations aimed at other levels of governance and other stakeholders, who have a responsibility to support this policy and practice. This includes the EU level, which is well placed to give political support to the local level and support transnational learning between LRAs, and a responsibility to ensure that the positive messages coming from the EU level can be communicated at local level, avoiding the frequently more negative national debates.

Strong leadership

The AMICALL research shows that **political leadership at a local and regional level** can make a difference, both in pushing forward positive interventions and in preventing them. Local and regional authorities, working with other stakeholders, can take a lead whether or not national government is committed. From this finding, we recommend that **LRAs take seriously their key role in contributing to positive attitudes.** And we recommend that other levels of governance (including the EU) respect and practically support them in this role, both directly and through national and transnational LRA networks.

The AMICALL research suggests that strong leadership requires **joined-up working within administrations** – co-ordinating the actions and messages of different sections of the municipal bureaucracy, which was under-developed in some of the case study countries, leading to mixed messages undermining each other rather than consistent messages. And it requires officers or politicians within an administration with the **dedicated role of championing the work** internally as well as externally. The research found successful examples of this sort of championing at both a political level (for instance in the form of a deputy mayor) or within the bureaucracy (for instance in the form of an integration commissioner).

The AMICALL research also suggests joined-up working across administrations too: **horizontal cooperation with other municipalities,** especially those in the same urban area, to share experiences and develop common responses, and **vertical cooperation** between cities and regional, national and supranational institutions, in order to benefit from the informational and financial resources they offer.

Mobilising all the stakeholders

LRAs have a unique role and responsibility because they alone can provide leadership of the public debate, because of the democratic authority and legitimacy they have and because of their statutory roles in relation to some functions and services. However, the research suggests that LRAs work more effectively when they do not work alone. **Mobilising non-governmental stakeholders** – whether in the business sector, trade unions, NGOs or among migrants themselves – is key to embedding interventions locally. Mobilising the stakeholders is central to building the trust which the research suggests is a precondition for successful intervention. But in addition, in a context of fiscal austerity, mobilising non-governmental actors can be a necessary and cost-effective alternative to state-heavy action.

The research found that a number of municipalities have developed **community networks** between different stakeholder groups from migrant organisations to privately owned businesses, and supported the development of organisations directly. These networks and groups then develop their own communications activities. The building of such networks can create a platform for migrant voices to be involved in the process, to mobilise all stakeholders and not just traditional ones, and to use the full spectrum of communication channels to reach citizens.

However, the research found evidence of barriers and challenges to involving civil society, which suggests that future projects (including those funded by national or European agencies) might usefully **earmark more time and more resources specifically for the purposes of supporting the active engagement of civil society organisations** in communications work.

Strategic approaches

The fragility and potential lack of sustainability (especially in the context of austerity and political change) of ad hoc initiatives dependent on committed individuals, as identified by the research, points to the need for **strategic, embedded, whole authority approaches.** While developing long-term strategies might appear fiscally more costly than short-term projects, a strategic approach does not necessarily mean a major funding programme: consistent messages, clear aims and objectives and smart use of mainstreaming may be a more cost-effective use of resources than ephemeral projects.

Different types of interventions need to **target different parts of the population,** which will require different approaches including appropriate tools, messages and channels, as well as **bespoke voices and styles of communication** (e.g. emotional approaches and the use of culture, music, film, sport and leisure etc, as well as the use of humour – versus fact-based approaches). The checklist in the AMICALL Promising Practices Handbook gives concrete suggestions about thinking this through. Key considerations include: the context or need being responded to (why?); the communicator transmitting a message (who?); the framing and objectives of communication, the message/content of a communication, the medium used for transmitting the message as well as the type, frequency and style of communication (how?); the target groups receiving the message (to whom?), the effect/outcome of a communication (what?); the socio-spatial location of communication (where?); and the time of communication (when?). For example, if the issue is tackling misinformation and misapprehensions, then objective information provided by trusted voices is required; if avoiding and defusing tensions and conflicts is the issue, then mediation is a powerful tool; and if the need is creating understanding between different communities who share common places, then activities which enable safe and productive intercultural contact are appropriate.

However, the research found a number of approaches that seem to work in the right circumstances. Our research found instances where direct information provision about migrants (as opposed to toward migrants) has run the risk of reinforcing rather than reducing stereotypical or misguided beliefs, particularly if these are trying to bust 'myths' about immigrants. LRAs highlighted that **providing balanced information about immigration,** rather than attempt to directly influence opinion, tended to be more successful. The research also suggested that **consistent messaging** across the work of a local authority may be more useful than a one-off campaign.

Direct face-to-face communication, for instance by using 'agents' embedded in communities, is one way of using channels often neglected by traditional top-down communication strategies, and can be particularly effective in contexts where traditional voices are not trusted. The research suggests that strategies built on multiple and **quotidian interactions** between migrants and non-migrants can be more effective than the organization of occasional activities and political slogans and that some stakeholders can act as **'multipliers'** in the public sphere, using their own networks to multiply the audiences reached.

Working with the media is clearly also essential. The research suggested that **local media** is more likely to work with local authorities and convey positive messages than national media, and that those projects aiming to **link journalists with potential stories and contacts** seemed to have some success. In particular, there were promising examples where LRAs were able to provide media with ready-made alternative narratives, and so change the terms of the debate locally. Given this finding, EU agencies might usefully consider support for substantive engagement of local, as well as national, media on issues related to integration.

Strong inclusive local identities

The research found that LRAs' self-perception provides the background against which any communication in the LRA takes place, and identified a number of places where local and regional authorities had developed a strong 'place-shaping' function, building a **city or regional sense of belonging which both migrants and non-migrants can buy into.** Although these may start as top-down branding exercises, they have a better chance of success when they take root amongst citizens. Our research suggests that they take root when they focus on the **shared concerns and shared futures** of migrants and non-migrants. For example, common experiences between women, young people or inhabitants of specific neighbourhoods can provide the basis for inclusive belonging in case studies, while experiences from the past, such as emigration to other European countries and internal migrations between regions, were sometimes used to promote feelings of common belonging with international migrants.

Two-way communication

The research suggested that it is important that local and regional authorities take seriously **the concerns of all their citizens.** Communications are two-way; our research suggests that LRAs succeed where they listen to their citizens' attitudes and experiences, as well as attempting to influence them. This includes **listening to migrant voices.** And it means **taking seriously the politics of backlash and resentment** (what is described as 'white anger' in the Dutch debate) on which negative attitudes thrive, rather than simply promoting an anodyne moralistic pro-multiculturalism. Key to this is ensuring that ethical debates about migrants' and citizens' rights and entitlements are held transparently – the principle described in UK policy as 'visible social justice'.

Evidence-based interventions

One element of a strategic approach that works is being based on **robust intelligence about the majority and minority communities involved** – for instance, early identification of tensions by having an ear close to the ground, or a grip on changing demographic dynamics to enable forward planning. A top-down branding strategy, for instance, will not work where it is not based on the issues that resonate with citizens. The AMICALL Promising Practices Handbook gives some concrete suggestions about developing such an evidence-based approach.

Cross-party approaches

The research revealed the fragility of communication initiatives when local leadership changes, especially in the context of fiscal austerity. However, in a number of locations, from Barcelona to Scotland, **cross-partisan consensus** (often represented in a pact or declaration signed by politicians of different parties, as in Barcelona) meant that initiatives could be sustained through changes of leadership.

Knowing what works

The lack of robust evidence about what works in this field was a striking finding of the research. Serious **evaluation and impact assessment** is lacking. Honest and critical internal reflection and external scrutiny are required to ensure that policies which are developed have a chance of success. EU agencies, national governments, local and regional authorities and practitioners themselves have a role in building this evidence base. Although commissioning independent, scholarly evaluation research should remain the aspiration, LRAs can also be proactive in collating evidence and documenting impacts internally as a matter of course. Future projects might usefully include resources (and time) specifically allocated for the evaluation of a sample of case studies of 'promising practice'. Research teams and LRAs might then be enabled to undertake specific evaluation studies to reach conclusions that are as robustly based as possible.

The research also showed that too often LRAs are developing policy and practice without an awareness of what has been done elsewhere. There is a clear need for **trans-local sharing of knowledge and practice,** both within and across member-states. However, LRAs have limited internal resources to support such work, so national governments, as well as foundations and European Union institutions, have a role in providing and investing in platforms for such sharing. European Union funding, as well as the institutions of the Council of Europe and networks such as Eurocities, can add significant value to local and regional integration work by making action learning and knowledge exchange possible.

- **UK:** Centre for Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford.

- **Hungary:** Central European University (CEU), Budapest.

- **Germany:** european forum for migration studies (efms), Bamberg.

- **Netherlands:** Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

- **Spain:** University Complutense, Madrid.

- **Italy:** International and European Forum on Migration Research - Forum Internazionale ed Europeo di Ricerche sull'Immigrazione (FIERI), Torino.

- **Associate Partners:** Council of Europe, Migration Policy Europe.

- **Evaluators:** Centre for Urban and Community Research, Goldsmiths, University of London.

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