

## Chapter 1. A territorial perspective on migrant and refugees integration

*This chapter presents the key findings of this study and describes the need for a territorial perspective on migrant integration. It then examines regional differences in how migrant integration is managed and looks at the roles of different levels of government in integration.*

## Introduction

This chapter confirms the need for a territorial focus to address migrant integration issues. The places in which migrants arrive in host countries have different characteristics and different capacities to welcome newcomers. At the same time, the geographic dispersal of migrants across their host countries depends on range of different factors, such as the presence of existing communities from their country of origin, their own motivations for migration, or available work and educational opportunities.

Integration measures thus need to take a place-based approach, adapted to the characteristics of the host communities as well as to those of migrants themselves. Integration needs to happen where people are, in their workplaces, in their neighbourhoods and the schools to which they send their children, in the local supermarkets where they shop, and in the public spaces where they will spend their free time.

Successfully managing increasingly diverse local areas in terms of origins, cultural and religious backgrounds requires effective co-ordination between central/federal and subnational administrations, active local communities and local authorities capable to design what successful integration should look like and communicate their vision to citizens.

This work contributes to characterise the need for a territorial focus and appropriate multi-level governance mechanisms, when implementing the leaving-no-one behind imperative introduced by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter first presents key findings, then turns to the regional differences in how migrant integration is managed and looks at the roles of different levels of government in integration. The analysis is complemented by boxes with good practice case studies.

## Key findings

- While immigration policy is set at the national level, migrant integration policies are generally implemented at the subnational level. Integration must be addressed at the right geographical scale, involving neighbouring municipalities in establishing the best options for the distribution of migrants when they arrive, the service and transportation provided, and measures for well-being and inclusion.
- Local governments must be part of a framework of multi-level governance for migrant integration, one that gives them the tools and adequate means needed for action. Localities should be considered partners in the national-level policy dialogue on integration objectives and indicators, informing national policy changes through their experience on the ground.
- Nearly two-thirds of migrants settle in mostly metropolitan, densely populated regions, with capital-city regions recording the highest population shares of migrants in the majority of OECD countries. While migrants tend to concentrate in urban areas, however, asylum seekers are more spread across urban-rural areas than are the rest of the resident population (including other migrants and native born).
- Between 2005 and 2015, OECD regions varied significantly in the change to their migrant population share, ranging from an increase of 12 percentage points to a decrease of 9 percentage points. Overall, in 80% of all regions, the share of foreign-born grew. Nevertheless, the large majority of regional migrant

populations consist mostly of settled migrants who have been in the host country for at least ten years.

- Cities are at the forefront of creating long- and short-term responses for the arrival and integration of migrants. The increasing concentration of migrants in urban areas is transforming cities into diverse spaces where different preferences and needs must be managed through policies that cut across different parts of the public sector and involve a range of local actors – non-governmental organisations, businesses, migrant and civil society associations, third-sector enterprises – in their efforts. The expertise and co-ordination of different actors with whom local authorities have well-established relations can be of great benefit.
- This report presents 12 key evidence-based points for reflection, in order to aid local, regional, national and international policy makers and practitioners in the development and implementation of migrant and refugee integration programmes, at local level: A checklist for public action to migrant integration at the local level.

### **A checklist for public action to migrant integration at the local level**

#### **Block 1. Multi-level governance: Institutional and financial settings**

Objective 1. Enhance effectiveness of migrant integration policy through improved vertical co-ordination and implementation at the relevant scale.

Objective 2. Seek policy coherence in addressing the multi-dimensional needs of, and opportunities for, migrants at the local level.

Objective 3. Ensure access to, and effective use of, financial resources that are adapted to local responsibilities for migrant integration.

#### **Block 2. Time and space: Keys for migrants and host communities to live together**

Objective 4. Design integration policies that take time into account throughout migrants' lifetimes and evolution of residency status.

Objective 5. Create spaces where the interaction brings migrant and native-born communities closer

#### **Block 3. Local capacity for policy formulation and implementation**

Objective 6. Build capacity and diversity in civil service, with a view to ensure access to mainstream services for migrants and newcomers

Objective 7. Strengthen co-operation with non-state stakeholders, including through transparent and effective contracts.

Objective 8. Intensify the assessment of integration results for migrants and host communities and their use for evidence-based policies.

#### **Block 4. Sectoral policies related to integration**

Objective 9. Match migrant skills with economic and job opportunities.

Objective 10. Secure access to adequate housing.

Objective 11. Provide social welfare measures that are aligned with migrant

inclusion.

Objective 12. Establish education responses to address segregation and provide equitable paths to professional growth.

### Box 1.1. Who is a ‘migrant’?

The term ‘migrant’ generally functions as an umbrella term used to describe people that move to another country with the intention of staying for a significant period of time. According to the United Nations (UN), a long-term migrant is “a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months)”. Yet, not all migrants move for the same reasons, have the same needs or come under the same laws.

This report considers migrants as a large group that includes:

- Those who have emigrated to an EU country from another EU country (‘EU migrants’),
- Those who have come to an EU country from a non-EU country (‘non-EU born or third-country national’),
- Native-born children of immigrants (often referred to as the ‘second generation’), and
- Persons who have fled their country of origin and are seeking international protection.

For the latter, some distinctions are needed. While asylum seekers and refugees are often counted as a subset of migrants and included in official estimates of migrant stocks and flows, the UN definition of ‘migrant’ is clear that the term does not refer to refugees, displaced, or others forced or compelled to leave their homes:

*The term ‘migrant’ in Article 1.1 (a) should be understood as covering all cases where the decision to migrate is taken freely by the individual concerned, for reasons of ‘personal convenience’ and without intervention of an external compelling factor. (IOM Constitution Article 1.1 (a)).*

Thus, in this report the following terms are used:

- ‘Status holder’ or ‘refugee’ for those who have successfully applied for asylum and have been granted some sort of protection in their host country, including those who are recognised as ‘refugees’ on the basis of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, but also those benefiting from national asylum laws or EU legislation (Directive 2011/95/EU), such as the subsidiary protection status.
- ‘Asylum seeker’ for those who have submitted a claim for international protection but are awaiting the final decision are referred.
- ‘Rejected asylum seeker’ for those who have been denied protection status.

- ‘Undocumented migrants’ for those who decide not to appeal the decision on their asylum seeker status or do not apply for another form of legal permission to stay.

This report systematically distinguishes which group is targeted by policies and services put in place by the city. Where statistics provided by the cities included refugees in the migrant stocks and flows, it will be indicated accordingly.

Source: OECD (2016), *International Migration Outlook 2016*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr\\_outlook-2016-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2016-en); UNSD (2017), “International migration statistics”, United Nations Statistics Division, <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/migration/migrmethods.htm#B>.

### Box 1.2. Description of the municipality sample and methodology

The examples and statistics provided in the main body of this report (except for Chapter 2 and all other data referenced from the *OECD Database on Migrants in OECD Regions*) are extracted from two datasets. First, an in-depth study of nine large cities in the European Union (Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Glasgow, Gothenburg, Paris, Rome, Vienna) with population sizes ranging between 3 500 000 and 550 000 and a small city (Altena, Germany) with a population of 16 000. The sample has a median of 1 222 000 inhabitants and an average migrant share<sup>2</sup> of 23% ranging between 52% and 12%. Second, a short ad hoc survey was conducted with an additional 61 cities, rural districts and associations of cities in Europe and Turkey circulated among EURO CITIES and Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) members.<sup>3</sup> Combined, the overall sample of 71 reaches a median of 186 000 inhabitants and an average migrant share of 13% and a median of 9%. The average share of non-European migrants amounts to 6% while the EU-migrant share constitutes 5%, while for the median the EU-migrant is as the average (5%) the median for non-European migrants constitutes only 3%. It should be noted that 63% of the responses come from Germany and are characterised by a smaller population median (153 921) and lower average migrant share (10%) than the rest of the non-German responses (630 000 and 17%, respectively). This overrepresentation leads to a bias in the data that should be borne in mind when considering the overall results.

The methodology adopted included an ad hoc survey collecting from municipalities and associations of municipalities: statistical and qualitative information identifying how cities situate themselves in multi-level governance mechanisms for integration policies. The survey considered: the specific competences that the cities have with regards to reception and integration policies; favourable and unfavourable factors to integration; and specific initiatives in terms of housing, education, labour market integration, communication, multi-stakeholders engagement, governance gaps, and resources available,

The methodology adopted for the case studies included the data collection from ten municipalities through an in-depth questionnaire around the above issues. Based on the information collected, the OECD team conducted field missions,

organised in collaboration with the municipality, to interview relevant actors: local business associations, employment agencies, NGOs, migrant and refugee associations, as well as national authorities (Ministers of Justice, Migration authorities, Minister of Employment, Minister of Interior, etc.). This information was then combined with a literature review on the local migration history and trends, as well as open source information on relevant integration initiatives, in order to complete the case studies for each city.

#### Migrant population in case-study cities

Municipality	% of migrant out of total city population	Definition of migrant
Altena	11.3 (ND)	FN
Amsterdam	51.60 (ND)	MB
Athens	23 (2011)	Unclear definition
Barcelona	16.6 (2016)	Unclear definition
Berlin	29.9 (2016)	MB
Glasgow	12.24 (2011)	FB
Gothenburg	24 (ND)	FB
	33.20	MB
Paris	14.9 (ND)	FN
Rome	12.74 (2015)	FB
	27.40	FN
Wien	38.30 (2016)	FB
	50.00	MB

*Notes:* MB: Share of the population who were born abroad/foreign nationals or at least one of their parents were born abroad or have foreign nationalities. FB: Share of the population with a foreign nationality, or naturalized citizens born abroad. FN: Share of population with foreign nationality. ND: No Date.

2. All data provided by the city administrations are subject to data availability as well as local definitions of migrant population.

3. Migrant Shares described here do not account for local specificities in data collection and categorisations. In some cities this share include population with a migration background (i.e. at least one of the parents was born abroad). Please see Box 1.1 above for more details in the definition of migrants in the ten cities.

4. Overall the additional sample comprises 62 cities, but only 51 included data on their population and migrant presence.

*Source:* OECD territorial grids, 2017; OECD (2016), *International Migration Outlook 2016*, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr\\_outlook-2016-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2016-en); National Statistic Agencies (i.e SCB; etc.); OECD data collection through the case studies.

## Regional differences in migrant integration

Although the integration of migrants is a primary objective of policy makers in many OECD countries, most existing data and work present evidence limited to the national level. Such statistics mask the great variation that characterises the geographic location of migrants, as well as the differences in their integration, as observed across places within the same country. The *OECD Database on Migrants in OECD Regions* offers policy makers a new tool to critically assess previous policies and articulate new ones, both based on a region's own experience as well as on evidence on the integration process across other OECD regions. Thus, it contributes to an effective policy response to the diverse and multidimensional challenges that recent migration poses.

This volume extracts some observations from this database, contributing to the existing literature on integration outcomes of international migrants by providing comprehensive and unprecedented evidence at the subnational level across the OECD.

Across OECD regions, migrants tend to be more concentrated in certain areas than native-born populations. Almost two-thirds of migrants settle in mostly metropolitan, densely populated regions, while only 58% of the native-born live in such regions (see Box 2.1). Capital-city regions play a vital role in the integration process of migrants, as those regions record the highest population shares of migrants in the majority of OECD countries. In Europe, non-EU migrants are more concentrated in certain areas than are EU migrants, who face fewer difficulties in obtaining work permits or getting their qualifications and education officially recognised. While migrants tend to concentrate in urban areas, however, asylum seekers are more spread across urban-rural areas than are the resident population, mainly due to dispersal mechanisms.

Between 2005 and 2015, OECD regions varied significantly in the change to their migrant population share, ranging from an increase of 12 percentage points to a decrease of 9 percentage points. Overall, in 80% of all regions, the population share of the foreign-born grew. Among those, regions in the north of Italy and Germany as well as the south of Sweden and Norway recorded particularly large increases in the population share of migrants, between around 5 and 12 percentage points. In general, regions with already relatively large migrant communities also experienced larger growth of those communities, as did more prosperous regions. The large majority of regional migrant populations consist mostly of settled migrants who have been in the host country for at least ten years. However, in (almost) all regions in Australia, Scandinavia, Spain and the United Kingdom, recent migrants account for 30% or more of the entire regional population of foreign-born individuals (OECD, 2017a).

In terms of their educational background, highly skilled migrants, those with tertiary education, predominantly seek opportunities in the same regions as highly skilled native-born. While migrants across OECD countries are on average as likely to be tertiary-educated as native-born, the education of migrants differs significantly, both across regions and according to the continent of origin of migrants. Among migrants, there is a large discrepancy – 10 percentage points on average – in tertiary educational attainment between EU and non-EU migrants (OECD, 2017a). While EU migrants are, on average, even more educated than native-born, non-EU migrants are significantly less educated than both native-born and EU migrants.

Migrants often face great challenges in integrating into their host regions' labour markets. They have higher unemployment rates, are more likely to be over-qualified for their jobs and earn lower incomes than native-born. Analogously to educational attainment, a clear divide can be observed between EU and non-EU migrants. In most European OECD regions, EU migrants record employment levels comparable to those of native-born. In comparison, employment rates are on average 10 percentage points lower for non-EU migrants in European OECD regions (OECD, 2017a). The income gap between migrants and native-born, documented for European regions, is particularly pronounced in urban (densely populated) areas. The larger discrepancy between native-born and migrant in household incomes in urban areas might also be reflected in the finding that relative housing conditions, which directly affect individuals' well-being, are worse for migrants in urban areas, too. The difference between migrant and native-born populations in the share of households living in overcrowded dwellings is greater in urban than in non-urban areas.

The perception of the role played by migrants in society can vary in different types of regions. Migrants are more likely to be seen as providing an important contribution to the local economy in regions with larger migrant communities. Furthermore, the economic conditions of native-born appear to be more relevant in shaping attitudes towards migrants and migration in general than the labour market outcomes or economic contribution of migrants. Across European OECD regions, unemployment among native-born is negatively correlated with views on migrants' economic contribution and tolerance for migration of different ethnicities or from poorer non-European countries (OECD, 2017a).

The characteristics of the place where people live can also help shed light on the process of migrant integration. The structure of regional economies is significantly correlated with gaps in labour market outcomes between native-born and migrants. Regions with a greater importance of high-tech services sectors such as information and communication, rather than industry or construction, record smaller differences, on average, in employment outcomes between native- and foreign-born populations. Additionally, the existence of established migrant communities seems to make it easier for migrants to search for jobs that are equivalent to their educational background. In regions with a larger share of migrants that have stayed in the host country for at least ten years, the differences in over-qualification rates between migrants and native-born are lower than in regions without such established migrant communities.

### Multi-level governance matters

Migration makes places more diverse, bringing new challenges and opportunities that need to be managed locally (Benton, 2017). While immigration policy is often determined at national level, local government has the overarching mandate of ensuring local, social and economic well-being. Furthermore, on average in OECD countries, subnational governments are in charge of 40% of public spending and 60% of public investment (OECD, 2017b).

Developing and implementing integration measures involves a wide variety of policy dimensions: education, labour, welfare, health, housing, urban planning, economic development and so forth. Thus, local authorities must manage complementarities across sectors in order to successfully achieve integration objectives.

Five dimensions are key to defining a consistent, co-ordinated approach to migrant integration:

1. Local governments must be part of a framework of multi-level governance that gives them competences and adequate means for action. Localities should be considered partners in the national-level policy dialogue on integration objectives and indicators, informing national policy changes through their experience on the ground.
2. Local governments must identify complementarities across the wide variety of policy sectors involved in supporting integration: labour market, social, health, housing, education, economic development, culture, etc.
3. Local governments must involve different actors from the local community – non-governmental organisations (NGOs), businesses, migrant and civil society associations, third-sector enterprises – in the efforts to make diversity an investment. The expertise and co-ordination of different actors with whom local authorities have well-established relations can be of great benefit. .



4. Agile and continuous learning and evaluation are needed, using: evaluation of integration outcomes, capacity building of municipal staff, and knowledge sharing across departments dealing with vulnerable categories as well as learning from the experience of other cities.
5. Integration must be addressed at the right geographical scale, involving the neighbouring municipalities in establishing the best options for the distribution of migrants when they arrive, the service and transportation provided, and measures for well-being and inclusion.

National governments have an important role to play, not only in clarifying competences and contributing to financial needs, but also in incentivising mutual learning across cities and regions, disseminating successful approaches and appropriate innovations across cities. Further national governments influence the room for manoeuvre and effectiveness of local actions by designing flexible policies that can be easily adjusted to local needs – this is especially important concerning labour market policies – and providing transparent information upfront about migrants’ potential and constraints regarding integration (OECD, 2006).

To understand how local authorities take initiatives that relate to integration and implement them, within the framework of this study, an *institutional mapping* for each of the ten partner cities (Altena, Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Glasgow, Gothenburg, Paris, Rome, Vienna) analysed is presented, as a reference point to clarify who is in charge of what and the interactions among the different stakeholders. In addition, based on the variety of challenges and experience reported through the study, the OECD has created a single checklist of the 12 key objectives that should guide policy makers when formulating and managing integration policies, presented in Chapter 3.

## Key observations from the cities analysed

### *Types of integration policies vary, but all aim to ensuring equal access to services and opportunities*

Across most of the European countries analysed in this study, until the late 1980s, migrant policies were mainly group-specific, aimed at preparing ‘guest workers’ to return to their countries of origin (see “Objective 4. Design integration policies that take time into account throughout migrants’ lifetimes and evolution of residency status”). Since the 1990s, however, ‘mainstreaming’ mechanisms, meaning inserting migration as a parameter in universal public service policies (labour market, social, health, housing, education, etc.), have ensured that more ‘migrant-sensitive’ public services have been established (IOM-JMDI, 2015).

Local measures for overcoming linguistic or cultural barriers, such as providing information or services in a variety of languages, have had the advantage of avoiding parallel systems or different treatment based on ethnicity or nationality, and have ensured sustainable access to public services and infrastructures for migrants. These measures are usually seen as providing initial support (i.e. language, accompaniment, etc.) to newcomers to navigate the system until the point it is fully accessible for all. This is the ratio of many of the group-specific policies set up in many cities since 2015 targeting asylum seekers and refugees (see “Refugees and asylum seekers: Responses to new challenges can help address past unsolved co-ordination problems and revamp a group-based approach”).

Local policies for integration tend to be “generic where possible, and specific where necessary” (Wittebrood and Andriessen, 2014) meaning that they add local components to national generic policies to help ensure equal treatment for all groups and also design group-based measures when necessary, in order to tailor the national package to local migrants’ needs. For example, local policies for highly skilled migrants and local initiatives for EU migrants, such as the Welcome Desk for EU Migrants in Amsterdam.

Cities are not only concerned with equal access to service and opportunities for persons with a migrant background. Integration is part of broader cities’ effort to break divides whether they are created by race, religion, gender, gender orientation, disabilities, economic-social conditions, etc. In this sense often a city opts for developing integration policies rather inclusion ones, that target all groups based on their vulnerability, interests and capacities rather than individual characteristics (see “Designing city spaces to promote community, interconnected lives and a common sense of belonging”).

***Multi-level governance allows cities to ensure equal access to services for all groups, in conjunction with the efforts of local civil society***

To achieve inclusion, cities often use flexible, multi-level mechanisms to co-ordinate integration measures and share objectives across levels of government. Higher levels of government influence the room for manoeuvre of municipalities to design and implement a local approach to integration. Decentralisation influences the official competences that the local level will have depending, for instance, on whether regional authorities are in charge of important integration-related sectors (such as health) or they are in charge of administering funding, in particular EU social and structural funds that can be used for projects addressing integration-related issues (see “Objective 3. Ensure access to, and effective use of, financial resources that are adapted to local responsibilities for migrant integration”). More or less formal multi-level governance tools (such as platforms for dialogue and information sharing, incentives for co-ordination, priority selection and performance achievement, contracts across levels as well as ex post evaluation) can influence local policy makers’ attitudes towards inclusion, orient their priorities and build capacities for better integration policies outcomes, including in terms of local development (see “Objective 1. Enhance effectiveness of migrant integration policy through improved co-ordination across government levels and implementation at the relevant scale”).

In responding to migrants’ specific needs, cities often outsource some measures to NGOs in different integration policy areas, such as language acquisition, housing, support to administrative processes, access to jobs, health, food, cultural activities, etc. (see “Objective 7. Strengthen co-operation with non-state stakeholders, including through transparent and effective contracts”). This is not only for legal reasons. NGOs can also assist those migrants that municipalities might not be able to reach, because they have more specific expertise with this public. These are often grass-roots organisations located within migrant communities (see “Objective 5. Create spaces where the interaction brings migrant and native-born communities closer”). As such, they can bring an element of co-production to the design and development of interventions.

***Policy coherence at local level: Tools and learning practices***

Often, integration strategies aim to guide migrants across service delivery in all public sectors, avoiding fragmentation (i.e. single mothers might not be able to access language courses or other training if their children cannot access pre-school) and loopholes in

accessing services (i.e. holes in the system – for instance when a change in status incurs - preventing people from accessing the services to which they are entitled). This brokering and navigation function emerges as an important dimension of effective support to new arrivals in particular. Such a “road map approach” can be facilitated by co-ordination and dialogue mechanisms, shared information systems, mutualisation of practices and building a sense of shared responsibility for all departments that deal directly with migrants. Ideally a ‘road map’ following the crucial steps that migrant and refugee take at different stages in their lives could be drowned collectively by the relevant services for each department to plan its activities coherently to the road map (see “Objective 2. Seek policy coherence in addressing the multi-dimensional needs of, and opportunities for, migrants at the local level”).

Many cities go beyond a strategy delivering services of comparable quality to all publics and supporting their access to jobs. They set their visions of what sustainable, inclusive and diverse cities should look like. In the words of London’s vice-mayor, “Diversity does not equate to successful economic integration.”<sup>2</sup> Cities formulate inclusive urban development strategies that aim at enabling all individuals to achieving the best outcomes regardless of personal characteristics (i.e. sexual orientation, age, gender, disabilities, race and ethnicity, religion, etc.). Cities are becoming more diverse due to a variety of individual characteristics of their inhabitants, and take increasing into account the impact of this diversity in their labour market and in the society more in general and try to reflect it in more inclusive strategies (OECD, 2018). The importance of spaces and interaction emerges regularly among the objectives of these policies for inclusion throughout many case studies (see “Designing city spaces to promote community, interconnected lives and a common sense of belonging”).

Beyond a strict division of competences across sectors and levels, and mixing generic and specific measures, municipalities try to implement a coherent approach to migrant integration. Evidence from the extended OECD research sample shows that the majority of cities set up an entity dedicated to migrant and refugee integration (81%) (see “Which tools could work and what could be done better” under Objective 2). Yet, only 54% have a specific strategy covering all sectors involved in migrant integration. Only 47% of the respondents of the ad hoc questionnaire sample consult with other actors such as the cities’ migrant organisations, civil society organisations or the private sector.

Foster learning is essential for improving integration polity coherence. not only from past experience, but also from all sectors of the city administration that have experience dealing with different types of vulnerable population segments, including with departments managing cross-sectoral projects addressing social inclusion and combating poverty. Also the expertise of non-state actors can benefit tremendously to strengthening public service capacities (OECD, 2015). A permanent consultative committee on migrant integration, including non-government local stakeholders, has been put in place by 47% of the respondent cities of the ad hoc questionnaire. Nearly the same amount (46%) identify capacity gaps (described as insufficient know-how, training, technical, infrastructural capacity of local actors to design and implement integration policies) as very high or significant shortcoming to integration policies. Beyond municipal departments and NGOs, experience-sharing mechanisms with neighbouring municipalities could improve the quality of integration-related services offered at a more relevant geographical scale. For instance better experience sharing could allow for sharing service delivery across municipalities and achieving economies of scale. Such co-ordination across neighbouring communes was only rarely observed in the responses to the questionnaire. One interesting example is the association of 13 municipalities,

including the city of Gothenburg, Sweden, where the mayors have met once a month since the 2015 peak in refugee arrivals in order to discuss synergies for housing and provision of specific services.

***Refugees and asylum seekers: Responses to new challenges can help address past unsolved co-ordination problems and revamp a group-based approach***

This report investigates to what extent the measures to receive and integrate asylum seekers and refugees undertaken by municipalities are a reaction to the shock in the number of arrivals since 2015 (showing their resiliency) or whether they are routine policies that the municipality already had in place to address migrant needs and have been scaled up.

The peak inflow of refugees and asylum seekers in 2015 prompted an unprecedented reaction on the part of citizens and local authorities, an engagement to host new arrivals, provide for their sustenance and to integrate them (see “Block 1 Addendum. Shifts in the governance and funding of the policies for refugees and asylum seekers”). Nevertheless, although the overall refugee numbers in 2015 were very significant, those new arrivals represent a small percentage of migrant population in the cities in the case study sample (from 0.80% in Amsterdam to 3% in Berlin) and a very small percentage compared to total population (0.40% in Amsterdam, 0.36% in Paris, etc.<sup>3</sup>).

Many of the measures implemented by local authorities in the sample, such as the use of interpreters or cultural mediators, or information websites for migrants, were started in 2016, indicating an increased awareness and response to particular needs, rather than a scaling up of existing services. Targeted measures were put in place to accommodate, educate, treat and introduce into the labour market the arriving refugees and asylum seekers. These group-specific measures prompted, in some cases, cross-sectoral co-ordination within municipalities as well as multi-level co-ordination, overcoming past obstacles towards more coherent integration policies. In other cases, cities were confronted with difficulties in implementing the decisions that were taken by higher levels of government, often feeling that they had received insufficient information or were not consulted adequately.

The results of these targeted interventions could reshape the future of integration policies if they prove to create better conditions for successful integration. In this sense, assessment of these mechanisms should not only take into account their performance in managing the emergency but also their sustainability in terms of governance and risk of creating parallel service delivery, which would be detrimental for equality (see “Policy coherence at local level: Tools and learning practices”).

National governments generally designed dispersal mechanisms to avoid concentration of asylum seekers in some areas of the country that had happened in the past (for example, in Italy and the United Kingdom) and that still happens today in some EU countries. Following initial responses, some national governments adapted funding to the new needs and devolved some competences (such as housing for refugees in the Netherlands) to municipalities, recognising from past experiences that they could better take into account local housing priorities. Some national authorities involved the local level in designing and managing reception and integration mechanisms for refugees and asylum seekers, in collaboration with local NGOs, recognising their long-standing tradition in working with these groups. Examples Italy’s Protection System for Asylum and Refugees – SPRAR – set up in 2002 and the early integration programme in Amsterdam. Based on previous labour market integration challenges – only 25% of refugees had a job 3.5 years after

recognition – the city of Amsterdam designed a new, all-encompassing, early integration response. The “Amsterdam approach” capitalised on the migrant integration experiences of all relevant city departments, designing a ‘chain’ management model in which all sectors are represented.

Many cities aim to integrate as rapidly as possible, adopting holistic approaches from day one, which start with integration measures for people who applied for asylum, and recognised refugees. Such approaches acknowledge that people who are displaced for several years or more need more than just food and shelter in order to build new lives. It also recognises the high motivation to integrate – particularly through employment – on the part of many refugees. The OECD case studies show the high degree of autonomy that many of the ten cities exemplified during the last two years, in reacting promptly in the wake of the increased refugee and asylum seeker arrivals. They did so by starting new measures or scaling existing ones, and by having learnt from past experiences that delays are detrimental to the integration process.

### ***Experience with diversity makes places more resilient to increase in the number of newcomers***

The involvement of a local administration in integration policies not only depends on the sectors for which they have competence, but also on the local political will and past experience. These are shaped by a variety of factors, many of which are self-reinforcing. Places that have experience with diversity are more likely to accept migrants. According to recent OECD analysis migrants’ perceived contribution to the local economy is positively correlated with the share of foreign-born people in a region (Kleine-Rueschkamp and Veneri, forthcoming). There is a sort of “diversity culture” that builds over time and makes it possible for cities to welcome large waves of refugees and asylum seekers and to maintain, despite difficulties, a positive perception in the public opinion. For example, between 2015 and 2017, public opinion in Amsterdam remained in favour of welcoming refugees and asylum seekers (Amsterdam, 2016<sup>[11]</sup>).

Cities with long-standing experience in hosting and integrating refugees and migrants were able to build on existing mechanisms to scale up their response in 2015 and were better prepared should integration needs again increase. In particular, some cities have well established mechanisms of co-ordination with NGOs, for example, Barcelona has a platform co-ordinating all actors involved in provision of language classes for foreigners. Mechanisms of dialogue with the private sector are particularly effective in swiftly introducing newcomers to local job market opportunities, for example, “Barcelona Activa”, a municipal employment service that aligns its capacity-building offer for migrants to local market needs. Other cities were able to strengthen existing agreements with housing associations, in order to identify appropriate housing solutions to shelter asylum seekers and host refugees, for example in Amsterdam, Gothenburg, and Glasgow. Also, the presence of multi-linguistic staff within the public service has a key impact on the immediate capacity of the city to respond to newcomers’ needs. This also provides important role models for new arrivals.

### ***Making migrant inclusion a shared value***

A number of factors can impact on how people perceive migrants: how mixed are neighbourhoods, schools, places of worship, public spaces; the diversity of the public service; the diversity of the political, media and cultural landscape; and the general economic and employment conditions in the host region (Kleine-Rueschkamp and

Veneri, forthcoming). The active participation of migrants and refugees in local economies, politics, arts, sports, public institutions, and volunteering can create collective experiences that defeat stereotypes. Involving migrants in shaping their local community can help to demonstrate their positive contributions and to overcome trust barriers.

Local leaders influence host communities' perceptions of migrants through their vision and communication campaigns. Some cities have built their tourism attractiveness campaigns on their diversity, such as Berlin, while others, such as Barcelona, have made all citizens responsible for increasing tolerance and inclusion by training volunteers as "anti-rumour agents". Some 61% of the cities in the ad hoc survey had developed public awareness campaigns around positive results of migration, for instance showing how migrants revitalised some neighbourhoods (Athens) or countered depopulation in (Altena). Cities tend to present integration as a two-way process: all individuals mutually engage in local integration and need to show respect for others in their communities, as shown by initiatives such as the Vienna Charter or the Berlin Integration and Diversity Strategy.

Cities also work with the local business community to foster openness to employing migrants and refugees. Over time, businesses may become more open to migrant workers and sometimes they even revise requirements in terms of language skills. For example, in Swedish Chamber of Commerce has noted that some employers have started accepting applications of candidates who speak English rather than Swedish, in sectors such as engineering. These means to prevent discrimination don't only apply to discrimination against ethnic minorities and usually rely on national anti-discrimination legislation.

### *Local authorities are involved in integration for the long term*

Cities are at the forefront not only of managing the recent influx of asylum seekers, but also of providing essential services for all migrants during their lives. This includes guaranteeing a safe welcoming environment, promoting long-term integration, and creating labour and education paths to self-sufficiency (see "Objective 4. Design integration policies that take time into account throughout migrants' lifetimes and evolution of residency status"). This long-term support is seen in terms of rendering individuals and their families more autonomous users of universal public services, while preserving contact in order to be able to accompany them with critical orientation at "turning points" in their lives (changing status, completing their studies, obtaining or losing job, when family reunites or grows, etc.).

### *Designing city spaces to promote community, interconnected lives and a common sense of belonging*

People from different backgrounds often live parallel lives within the same city. Discrimination combined with high levels of segregation, such the ones analysed in many of the case studies, may contribute to heightened social tensions, encourage prejudice and restrict social mobility and employment opportunities. This is not only true for migrants, other groups (LGBT, disable, gender, religion/belief, younger or older people, etc.) feel they are experiencing different types of discrimination (EUROBAROMETER, 2015) and might not feel fully included in some of the activities and opportunities that the city offers. Inclusion doesn't happen by taking the same public transport or sharing work places, interconnected lives start when people from different groups live, work, go to school, dine, go out to have fun, and so forth. Shortening distances through inclusive

urban development policies of which integration of migrants is often a key dimension, remains a cross-cutting priority for the local authorities who contributed to the survey.

As well as addressing structural inclusiveness issues and ‘neighbourhood effects’ (see “Objective 5. Create spaces where the interaction brings migrant and native-born communities closer”) through policies aiming at ‘de-segregating’ housing (see “Objective 10. Secure access to adequate housing”) and schools (see “Objective 12. Establish education responses to address segregation and provide equitable paths to professional growth”), inclusive urban development policies include making public places attractive and accessible to different groups.

New city spaces can bridge not only ethnic, but also generational, gender, religious and social divides for instance by building accessible and attracting libraries, schools, recreation centres and theatres. Local civil society organisations are the best ally of municipalities in this sense. Their bottom-up initiatives contribute to fostering social mix and involve long-standing migrant networks (see “Objective 4. Design integration policies that take time into account throughout migrants’ lifetimes and evolution of residency status”). Common spaces managed by NGOs and migrant associations with municipal support – often through seed funding or open bids for grants – offer important opportunities for sustained interaction over time. Interaction with the local business community is also fostered by approaching spaces where migrants are hosted and where local entrepreneurs set up their activities; there are examples of this in Amsterdam and Paris.

### *Sharing good practices across cities*

There is much good practice across cities that clearly needs to be shared and could save time and effort if applied where appropriate. Increasingly, cities participate in international networks to share their experiences and offer reciprocal support. The voices of cities, describing their role in welcoming and integrating migrants and refugees are more and more heard at global level. Mayors from “global” and small cities have been taking part in international summits in order to present their migrant integration programmes and to influence international decision making, in particular in the formulation of the UN compacts on migration and refugees that will be discussed in 2018.

Numerous examples of platforms that bring together cities around integration issues include:

- The Global Mayoral Forum (see Box 5.2) UN initiative from which The Global Mayors Summit invites municipal leaders, civil society, and international stakeholders to discuss how cities overcome obstacles to implementing policies that promote migrant and refugee integration, rights protection, and empowerment. United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and its European branch, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). These groups co-ordinate with municipal associations in collecting, practicing and advocating for strengthening the role of cities in migrant integration.
- EUROCITIES, a network of major European cities that showcases the practical implications of the work that cities do in receiving and integrating refugees and that reinforces the important role that local governments should play in the multi-level governance of migration
- As part of the Urban Agenda for the European Union, the City of Amsterdam is leading a Partnership for the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees. This partnership includes the European Commission (DG HOME as co-ordinator, DG REGIO, DG

EMPLOYMENT), four EU member states, five cities and civil society organisations.<sup>4</sup>

- The URBACT Network of Arrival Cities, which fosters migrants' social inclusion, sharing good practices between project partners.<sup>5</sup>
- The Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Project, which seeks to contribute to improving the governance of migration at local level in cities in Europe and the southern Mediterranean.<sup>6</sup> (see Box 5.1)
- The OECD global coalition of Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth, which was created in March 2016(see Box 5.4).

Other key actors include the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), the Migration Policy Group (the MPG) and the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI).

### *Improving the measurement of integration*

The diverse sources of evidence described above can all contribute to fine-tuning integration policies at local level. A major challenge lies in incentivising local and national policy makers to quickly adjust or change their strategies by learning from their past experience as well as from experiences elsewhere. In this regard, data collection and sound evaluation mechanisms can play a vital role. They can improve the impact of integration-related measures by providing an overview of the status quo of integration outcomes and by offering insights into formulating best practices.

Among the dimensions that need to be considered, migrants' local living conditions as well as their outcomes in the labour market or education are crucial. For instance, precise information on migrants' employment rates, their income and the degree to which their qualifications are recognised and adequately used in their host communities can be helpful in eliciting systematic integration challenges, especially if they are juxtaposed with the outcomes of local non-migrant residents.

Beyond such standard indicators, more inclusive evaluations should be designed, involving the recipients of the policies. Migrant direct experience should be systematically added to cities' learning processes through participatory evaluation and consultative mechanisms. Other aspects of integration should also be considered such as levels of contact between different population segments, increased diversity and attractiveness of the city thanks to migration.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the need for a territorial approach to migrant integration issues. The places in which migrants arrive in host countries have different characteristics and different capacities to welcome newcomers. At the same time, the geographic dispersal of migrants across their host countries depends on many factors, from the presence of existing communities from the migrant's country of origin to a migrant's own reasons for migrating to available employment and educational opportunities.

Integration measures thus need to take a place-based approach, adapted to the characteristics of the host communities as well as to those of migrants themselves. Successfully managing this requires effective co-ordination between national and subnational administrations, local authorities, civil society groups and businesses.



Together, all partners must be able to envision what successful integration should look like, communicate this vision and implement it.

To achieve this, all stakeholders need reliable evaluation tools and stronger data on how integration measures are working on the ground, at the regional and local levels. Although there have been initiatives to compare migrants' integration outcomes nationally (OECD and European Union, 2015), no systematic subnational analysis has so far been conducted. This gap is addressed in Chapter 2., providing empirical evidence on migrant characteristics and outcomes in OECD regions.

## Notes

1. Migrants are mentioned explicitly in SDG 10.7 as well as with regards to promoting labour rights and reducing the costs of remittances (SDG 8.8/10.c) making the need for their inclusion and integration explicit in different sectors.
2. Keynote speech delivered at the Global Mayor Summit, 18 September 2017, New York City.
3. Indicators here provided correspond to categories put in place by cities and so their comparability remains limited. It is possible that these data are underestimated in some cities, given the scale of the 2015 arrivals and the notorious difficulty in gathering accurate data for these groups.
4. Amsterdam (Co-ordinator), Athens, Barcelona City Council, Berlin and Helsinki.
5. Amadora, Dresden, Messina, Oldenburg, Patras, Riga, Roquetas de Mar, Thessaloniki, Vantaa and Val-de-Marne.
6. Amman, Beirut, Lisbon, Lyon, Madrid, Tangier, Tunis, Turin and Vienna.

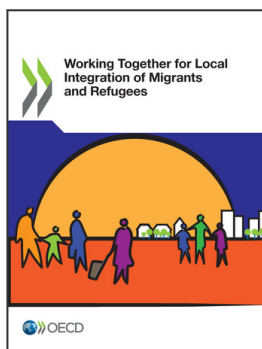
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