

Preface

Over 5 million people migrated permanently to OECD countries in 2016. Following the 2015/16 peak of refugee arrivals in Europe, attention has now shifted towards effectively integrating migrants into their new societies. While migration policy remains a national responsibility, central and local authorities recognise that integration needs to happen where people are, in their workplaces, in their neighbourhoods, and in the schools where they send their children. Behind every migration statistic, there are individuals or families starting a new life in a new place. Local authorities, while coordinating with all levels of government and other local partners, play a key role in integrating newcomers and empowering them to contribute to their new communities.

While the media and public debate have focused on the initial reception of migrants, recent increases in new arrivals have exposed the underlying governance weaknesses for both the short and long-term responses for integration. Such weaknesses often stem from the lack of coordination among policies across different sectors (such as labour, health, housing and education), as well as across levels of government. There is a need to break these policy silos in designing coherent responses at the local level and by involving non-state actors. Recent events have also been a catalyst for public sector innovation, by bringing together decision-makers across policy areas and from national and local levels. Inspiring examples are found in this report. Such new governance approaches are also valuable for building more resilient communities for all groups, including past migrants and other vulnerable groups.

The effective integration of migrants is a critical issue for regional development. Migrants often settle in metropolitan areas in order to access public services, social networks and jobs, and to contribute with their skills and diversity to local development. In many countries, rural areas are seeking new residents to revive their economic and demographic base and may seek to welcome more migrants. In this respect, regional economic development strategies could consider the important role migrants can play in boosting a local economy. This report supports peer-to-peer learning for the successful inclusion of migrants to support regional development, by providing a range of practices from 72 cities with a particular focus on Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Glasgow, Gothenburg, Paris, Rome, and Vienna and one small city in Germany, Altena.

This report also highlights that getting data at the right scale is essential to improve our policies for migrant integration. A new publicly available database at the regional level was created for this report. It shows where settled and recently arrived migrants are living, as well as how effectively they are integrating, for example, into local labour markets and housing.

There is no denying the fact that migration is a sensitive political issue. Evidence from this report shows that attitudes towards migrants tend to be more positive in regions with a greater share of migrants or where unemployment is lower. When places are

economically successful, all residents benefit and it is easier to combat different forms of discrimination.

Many cities are struggling with managing migrant integration, communicating their actions for migrants and engaging with the wider public. To tackle these challenges, some cities have strategically created shared spaces such as cultural and sports facilities for migrants and other residents to connect. Such approaches aim at preventing communities from living parallel lives. Other cities are working actively with employers to change mind-sets and address barriers for migrants in the labour market, particularly for female migrants.

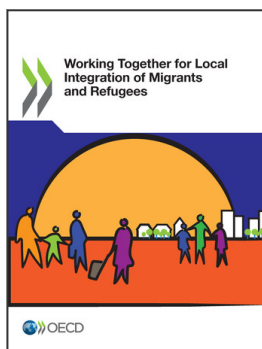
In summary, *Working together for local integration of migrants and refugees* provides concrete examples of how different-sized cities have shaped migrant and refugee integration policies at the local level. While many of the examples in this report are from European cities, these lessons are also relevant to other OECD countries and beyond. The report's *Checklist for public action to migrant integration at the local level* is a tool that any city or region can use to work across levels of government and with other local actors in their efforts to promote more effective integration of migrants. Success in this area is important for all.



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From:
Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264085350-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2018), "Preface", in *Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264085350-1-en>

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