

RE-CITY

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FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

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“FOR AN INTER-CULTURAL FUTURE” CYCLE

“PUBLIC MANAGEMENT FROM THE INTER- CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE”

SESSION WITH **IRENA GUIDIKOVA**



Public management from the inter-cultural perspective

Guest Speaker: Irena Guidikova, Founder and Director of the Inter-Cultural Cities Programme, The Council of Europe

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This document summarises a debate held with Prof. Guidikova in the Re-City project's "For an Intercultural Future" cycle of lectures, which forms part of the Re-City project. Each one consists of a public lecture and a seminar with Catalan scholars. This is followed by a gala dinner attended by sundry figures from Catalonia's economic, social, political, and business circles.

These activities were held in Barcelona's Palau Macaya (a palace built in the Modernist style) in November 2019. The contents in this summary follow a thematic order rather than that taken by Prof. Guidikova. Re-City is a project carried out by Fundació Catalunya Europa [Catalonia-Europe Foundation] in collaboration with the Catalan Government, Barcelona's Metropolitan Area, Barcelona City Council, "la Caixa" [bank] and The Club of Rome. "For an Inter-cultural Future" is the third challenge in the Re-City project. The two previous challenges were: "Fighting Inequality" and "Facing up to Climate Change".

Biography

Irena Guidikova is the founder and Director of the Inter-cultural Cities Programme of The Council of Europe, and is also Head of Division for Cultural Policy, Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue, The European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG).

She graduated in Politics from Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski' (Bulgaria) in 1992, and in 1993 was awarded a Master in Political Philosophy from York University (The United Kingdom). Guidikova began working in the Council of Europe in 1994. Since then and for the last twenty-four years, she has held diverse posts within the policy innovation field, for example: youth and cultural policies; democratic participation, inter-cultural diversity and integration. Guidikova began as Director-General of Youth and Sport, drawing up a cross-cutting three-year project on the future of democracy in Europe. The outcome was an agenda and standards on electronic governance, electronic voting, the funding of political parties, and Internet Culture. Later on, she was Policy Advisor to the Secretary-General's Private Office, a post she held until 2018 when she was appointed to her present job. In 2013, she was the co-ordinator of the World Forum for Democracy: "Rewiring democracy - connecting citizens and institutions in the digital age". The Forum deals with the main challenges facing classical institutions and decision-makers, and how these issues are changing democratic systems in general.

As Head of Division for Cultural Policy, Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue, Guidikova manages teams that support governments, cities, and other key events in drawing up and carrying out urban inclusion and anti-discrimination programmes. With regard to inclusion, Guidikova stresses that the Inter-cultural Cities Programme serves as a roadmap to develop comprehensive strategies for the inclusion of minorities, focusing on diversity as a social and economic asset for society. With regard to anti-discrimination, the programmes seek to enhance equality in public institutions and Civil Society organisations, fighting discrimination in every sphere. In this respect, the stress is on gender equality, on cross-cutting strategies, and on how to offer positive narratives to society and to counteract discourses sowing hatred.

Public management from the inter-cultural perspective

Guest Speaker: Irena Guidikova, Founder and Director of the Inter-Cultural Cities Programme, The Council of Europe

Summary

The main purpose of this third session in the “For an Inter-cultural Future” cycle of lectures is to delve into public inter-cultural management. That said, seeking tools and narratives to foster social harmony and cohesion, and answers to the challenges facing today’s complex, diverse societies is no easy task. To introduce the subject, Guidikova began by mentioning the example of Barcelona as a pioneer in the incorporation of an inter-cultural perspective in the management of the city’s public policies. In 2009, Dani de Torres (then Commissioner to Barcelona’s Mayor’s Office for Immigration and Inter-cultural Dialogue) took an active part in the implementation of the Barcelona Inter-cultural Plan. The strategy was based on a cross-cutting approach that involved all social actors and spheres of public administration. This ensured the roll-out did away with the red tape often seen in public management. The results were very encouraging, leading to the Plan being exported to other European cities through The Council of Europe.

The belief that the inter-cultural model is better for managing the super-diversity found in our societies has been vindicated over the last few years. Over thirty cities around the world have adopted the model, convinced that State policies must be changed by cities which, in the process, further values based upon democracy and diversity. Guidikova stressed that earlier models (such as those based on segregation/assimilation/multi-culturalism) failed to create either social cohesion or a sense of belonging. The inter-cultural model seeks to overcome these weaknesses by striking a better balance between the differences and the commonalities found among individuals. The new model’s goal is to foster social co-existence and cohesion. Thus it acknowledges the pluralism of identity — that is to say, that individuals are the sum of many traits. That is why the model stresses human relationships. By fostering interaction at all levels within the framework of ‘equality for all’, inter-culturalism seeks to forge links, relationships, and to strengthen a sense of “us”.

Here, equality is the key to many of the policies for managing inter-cultural diversity. Interaction among equals is needed if we are to prevail against discrimination and exclusion.

At the same time, this approach must be accompanied by education, both formal and informal so as to shape the plurality of identities upon which society is based. This involves respect based upon empathy for

and co-operation with others. Applying the model requires a holistic vision of society that stems from close co-operation among public administrations, the business sector, the media, and citizens in general. An example of such a cross-cutting approach can be seen in Barcelona City Council's 'Anti-rumours Strategy'. It is underpinned by critical thinking on how to stop the city's socio-cultural diversity spawning prejudice.

For the inter-cultural model to succeed, governance must embrace all institutional levels in a joint strategy to achieve common ends. The way powers are currently shared out does not properly reflect the resources available at each tier of government for managing diversity and new waves of migrants. This means dialogue and a make-over of those powers to reach those goals. The Council of Europe has a key role to play in this process, and little by little has introduced the inter-cultural perspective in the political agendas of many countries. Here, the Council has acted as a forum for pooling knowledge and experience among these agents and cities. Europe will need many more immigrants to meet labour market demands and to ensure economic growth. Given The European Union's wretched management of the 'refugee crisis', initiatives such as the European Regional Network are important for ensuring progress towards an inter-culturalism approach.

At the end of the session, Guidikova gave examples of best practices that had actually been put into action. At the institutional level, she highlighted: Red Española de Ciudades Interculturales [Spanish Network of Inter-cultural Cities] (RECI); the inter-cultural perspective taken in police management in Fuenlabrada; the Anti-rumour Strategy 'Zurrumurruak' in Bilbao. At a more social level, she mentioned 'Festival Todos' in Lisbon, a strategy for working with local communities to create art spaces involving all cultures. At the economic and labour level, she mentioned the so-called Diversity Management Accords — a new inter-cultural focus adopted by a handful of companies in Catalonia, hiring and integrating people from more diverse backgrounds and conducting 'awareness campaigns' among the workforce.

Public management from the inter-cultural perspective

Trends in public models for managing diversity: from assimilation to inter-culturalism

After The Second World War, nations realised that they needed to co-operate if they were to avoid another war. The result was that the world began to forge more international links, facilitated by better communications and greater mobility. That is why the size of regional and international migrations began to rise. This was when some countries began to grasp that the influx of newcomers needed to be managed along with the diversity issues that came with it.

The first diversity management models that were used were: (1) guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*); (2) assimilation; (3) multi-culturalism, each one strongly influenced by the specific contexts of the nations adopting one or other of these options. All three models shared the provision of economic rights for migrants among their integration policies (Figure 1). At the same time, they differed because each successive model incorporated new rights to those contained in the foregoing model.

The first model — that of the ‘guest worker’ (*Gastarbeiter*) — was implemented in Germany and up until recently, was still in operation. Under this model, migrants were given the status of ‘guest worker’ and could therefore enjoy all the rights that entailed. Although this status was effectively permanent, the idea was that once the host country no longer needed the migrants’ labour, they would return to their countries of origin. Since it was not foreseen that the migrants would stay on and integrate, no provisions were made for them to enjoy social, civil, and cultural rights.

The second model — the assimilation one — was mainly implemented in France. Migrants were given economic, social, and economic rights but they were denied cultural rights. Cultural diversity was not valued in France because everyone was expected to identify with French values, culture, language, and so on. The end result was not integration but segregation.

The third model — multi-culturalism — was implemented in The United Kingdom. Unlike in the preceding two models, it recognised that cultural communities have special rights and that migrants can keep their ‘foreign’ identity in the host country. This model thus gave economic, social, and cultural rights. Yet it was based on the premise that groups should seek advancement in accordance with their culture, race, and

religion. It was precisely by strengthening emotional ties with a given migrant community that inflamed feelings between groups. Such a policy neither fostered integration or a cohesive society.

Figure 1: The inter-culturalism model compared with three earlier diversity management model

Integration policies based on individual rights		Economic rights	Civil & Social rights	Cultural rights	Pluralist identity
Cultural differences ignored	Guest worker	X			
Cultural differences rejected	Assimilation	X	X		
Cultural differences stressed	Multi-culturalism	X	X	X	
Cultural difference as the basis for a common identity	Inter-culturalism	X	X	X	X

Source: Irena Guidikova, Fundació Catalunya Europa.

As time went on, the limitations of all three models in managing diversity became ever more apparent. These integration management strategies have failed to foster social cohesion or prevent segregation. That is why countries and the international community in general are seeking new governance models to cope with the 21st Century's mass migrations. Such a model is urgently needed to ensure more efficient, sustainable management of societies.

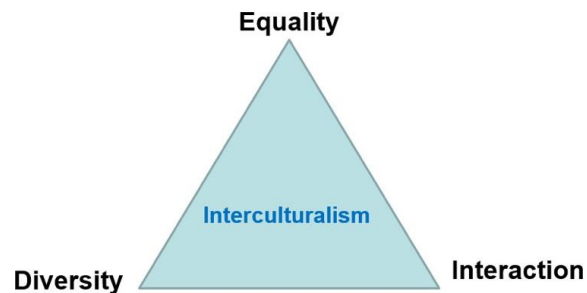
The fourth model — inter-culturalism — aims to overcome the weaknesses of the three earlier models and to foster co-existence and social cohesion more effectively. Its goal is to strike a better balance between differences and commonalities among the citizenry and to forge sufficient trust to enable interaction. That is why it acknowledges pluralism of identity, which is to say, the freedom to live out any number of identities.

The inter-cultural model: equality, acknowledgment of diversity, and interaction

Inter-culturalism is a diversity management model offering a wholly new vision of governance. As can be seen in Figure 1, this latest model does not focus on the nature of culture but rather takes an all-inclusive approach. Identities are fluid and diverse, changing over time. They are also pluralist both at the individual and collective levels. Cultural differences are the threads from which a common identity is woven. It is the fruit of all the things we share, and of a society that both unites and strengthens us.

Fleshing out this vision of public policies and putting them into effect involves taking an **inter-sectional view**, representing diversity without labelling anyone but also without leaving anyone out. At the same time, inter-cultural management must incorporate **equality of opportunities, acknowledgment of diversity, and interaction** (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The Inter-cultural model



Source: Irena Guidikova, Fundació Catalunya Europa
(based on Giménez, 2005).

Carlos Giménez's triangle of policies (Giménez, 2005) was used by Guidikova to explain how interculturalism attains these three principles in a cross-cutting fashion in every sphere of governance (for instance, town planning, social services, the labour market, culture). Here, public policies must foster the creation of spaces and situations that allow societal interactions and avoid social segmentation and segregation¹. This means taking effective measures to combat hatred-inciting discourses and various kinds of discrimination (for example, in access to services, jobs, public participation, public resources, and so on). At the same time, this interaction must fully embrace diversity and redistribute resources².

¹ The argument stems from Contact Theory, in which many sociologists believe in the need to ensure real person-to-person contact.

² The argument stems from the idea of **diversity advantage**, in which greater diversity yields greater development, welfare, and cohesion in all spheres of society. The importance of policies for properly distributing resources lies in the fact that segregation arises from issues of social class and economic resources, rather than from cultural aspects.

Figure 3: Multi-culturalism versus inter-culturalism

MULTI-CULTURAL FOCUS	INTER-CULTURAL FOCUS
Normative, discursive affirmation of cultural plurality , as an intrinsic feature of the one's society.	Normative, discursive affirmation of diversity (of an inter-sectional nature) , as an intrinsic feature of society. Acceptance of cultural hybridisation.
Multi-culturalism in education (ethnic and religious schools, education in the mother tongue, celebration of different cultures).	Inter-culturalism in education (mixing, inter-cultural competence, multilingualism, many perspectives).
Representation of minorities in the media (making diversity visible).	Inclusion of diversity in the media (in all stages of the process and embracing all manifestations of diversity).
Reasonable adaptations (with the focus on one's own cultural rights).	Reasonable adaptations and public debate, experience of cultural cross-fertilisation (with the focus on cultural exchange and interaction).
Citizenship is the goal and end-point of the integration process.	Citizenship is a necessary condition for integration: urban citizenship, power-sharing, participative democracy.
Support for racial minority associations (bonding capital ³).	More support for inter-cultural associations and projects (bonding and bridging capital ⁴).

³ This concept was used in speaking about a kind of Social Capital — in this case *bonding capital* within a given community or social group. It describes the dense web of links within this group or community, characterised by similar features in terms of demography, attitudes, information, and resources.

⁴ This concept was used in speaking about a kind of Social Capital — in this case *bridging capital* within a given community or social group. It describes open, inclusive social relations as an exchange (or bridge) among people and groups having different social identities but with share interests and goals.

Battle against discrimination (attacking the symptoms).	Combating the myths (tackling the attitudes and mentalities, highlighting the main causes of discrimination).
Access to power as representative of a group.	Power-sharing, co-creation, dialogue, participative democracy, inter-cultural skills .

Source: Irena Guidikova, Fundació Catalunya Europa.

A multi-level model of governance: the debate on powers and the emergence of the city as a strategic actor

When considering the new governance model and its implementation, the main problem is properly managing the challenges arising from dealing with several tiers of public administration. **There is asymmetry between State, regional, and local tiers of government when it comes to their powers and resources. That is why a shift towards multi-level governance is needed to foster co-operation and to overcome the hurdles to the new management approach.** Basically, this means transferring knowledge from the local world to the national one, and transferring resources and powers from the national sphere to the regional and local ones. Meanwhile, cities have become the protagonists of this inter-cultural integration both from citizens' standpoint, and as the places where most immigrants settle.

Europe's role, political rights and access to public function

In this slow transformation, The European Union's role has been ambivalent and inconsistent. That is because the EU is highly politicised, with a great deal of in-fighting among Member States. Dani de Torres highlighted the inter-cultural practices and narratives that have spread through various spheres and cities, both in Europe and in the wider world. Oriol Amorós, the Catalan Government's Secretary for Equality, Migrations, and Citizenship, noted that there is still a long way to go in this respect. According to Amorós, the European debate is still mired in a contradiction between the discourse and the facts on the ground. This is because the EU agenda has focused too much on managing migrant flows (of anywhere between a million and one-and-a-half million) instead of trying to more effectively manage Europe's existing diversity. It is estimated that there are some eighty million migrants of diverse origins in an EU with a total population of some five hundred million [approx. 445 m in the post-Brexit EU-27]. Public opinion is also blind to the fact that we live in a diverse society and that a great deal more immigration will be needed in the future.

In a nutshell, we must learn how to effectively manage this situation if we are not to stunt our society's ability to grow economically, socially, and culturally.

In this respect, guaranteeing the political rights of immigrants and ensuring their access to public function are still issues requiring answers. At present, this power lies with national governments, which are responsible for conferring rights on citizens and upholding them. Yet this ignores reality. The European Convention on Human Rights — the main international instrument for guaranteeing equality, forbids discrimination on any grounds. Here, Guidikova stressed that the Convention makes no reference to 'nationality'. She argued that the EU has a key role to play in tackling this issue in a more effective manner. As a supra-national actor, the EU plays a co-ordinating, regulating role, cajoling and pressuring Member States. **The problem for migrants from outside The European Union is that they find themselves with fewer political rights in most EU Member States — something that puts them at a big disadvantage *vis-à-vis* the host society.** It is not only that they are unable to take part in political life; they cannot work in most public sector jobs either. For example, in the Spanish case, one can only be a Civil Servant if one is a Spanish citizen, even if one hails from another EU Member State. This is a severe handicap for migrants given that Spain has huge and bewildering number of jobs that fall within the public sector. By classifying these as 'Civil Service' jobs and exploiting restrictive practices, Spain effectively puts these 'off-limits' to foreigners. The situation for non-EU immigrants is even worse given that they can only work in Spain if they have obtained both work and residence permits. Obtaining Spanish citizenship involves undergoing a refined form of bureaucratic torture, and in most cases requires ten years of continuous, legal residence in the country to boot. That said there are a few exceptions. One of these covers people given refugee status. Another exception covers migrants deemed to have some cultural affinity with Spain. This special category covers applicants from: Spanish-speaking Latin American countries; Andorra; The Philippines; Equatorial Guinea; Portugal. Possibly as a quixotic afterthought, it also includes The Sephardim (Diaspora descendents of the Spanish Jews expelled by The Catholic Monarchs' in 1492 or fleeing the country in the bloody pogroms that followed). By contrast, in France one can begin an application for citizenship after five years of continuous, legal residence. In the case of Switzerland, naturalisation rests with each Canton but is Federally regulated. The process requires ten years of legal residence, regardless of which country the applicant comes from [Switzerland is **not** a member of the EU].

In the ultimate analysis, this unequal relationship with the host society results in a greater or lesser dissatisfaction with the system, threatening its sustainability, peace, stability, and cohesion. Thus Guidikova criticised the endless obstacles strewn in the path of would-be citizens by slothful, arbitrary bureaucracy, noting that Human Rights should be enjoyed by everyone. **From an inter-culturalist standpoint, nationality should not be the end-point but rather the starting point for achieving all the rights needed to become a fully-integrated member of society** (Figure 3).



The Council of Europe and the Inter-cultural Cities Programme

In the European context, The Council of Europe has played the leading role in promoting inter-culturalism in public debate and in political practice. Even though the Council is made up by European Nation-States, its mission has begun to embrace cities and an inter-cultural perspective with a view to making an impact at the State level. Thus in 2007 it began the **Inter-cultural Cities Programme (ICC)**⁵, a holistic strategy based on clearly-defined goals shared by all a city's departments and services. The strategy allows the whole range of urban actors to: grasp the complexity of plans; alter plans and their implementation where needed; assess the progress made.

Going beyond the policy areas covered by the Programme⁶, Guidikova stressed that the ICC had **conceptualised and systematised all those measures that might help cities create inter-cultural policies**. It did so by providing a package of six common components (Figure 3). The first component **creates spaces for interaction and co-creation**. This involves designing urban spaces that are fully-inclusive and pleasant for everyone, allowing public participation and consultation, joint artistic and cultural creation, inclusive management of spaces and sports activities, joint design and implementation of specific campaigns, reflection of diversity in the media, and so on. The second component includes **forms of power-sharing** that turn governance into a more deliberative kind of democracy that is closer to citizens (bottom-linked governance). This also corrects some of the intrinsic drawbacks of representative democracy, which does not mirror society's full diversity. Corrective measures include participative budgets, working parties for drawing up projects and regulations, and so forth. The third component is **conflict management and putting an end to stereotypes** through political commitment to courageous, inclusive narratives. These narratives end up being reflected in the media where they help make public opinion take a shine to inter-culturalism. The fourth component (which is linked to the third one) fosters an **inclusive narrative and symbolically acknowledges diversity**. The fifth component **fosters inter-cultural skills and a more creative bureaucracy**, not just in public administration but also in both formal and informal education settings. It does so by, for example, organising public debates, exhibitions, films, social tasks, and in general, all aspects that might make people more appreciative of working in a more diverse setting. The sixth component is to **empower those people who are most innovative and creative to bridge barriers**. For example, such people may be found among entrepreneurs and members of NGOs, and become examples to follow for the rest of the community.

⁵ Council of Europe. (2020). Inter-cultural Cities - Home. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities>

⁶ Fields that the programme's main policies cover include: inter-cultural governance; official discourses and media discourses; inter-cultural focus in education; town planning; housing; districts; public services and administration; the economy and business; arts and sport; public safety in cities; conflict mediation and resolution; language; international relations and diplomacy; inter-cultural awareness training; welcoming newcomers.



An **Inter-cultural Cities Index (ICC Index)**⁷ was created to show the goals achieved to date and allow comparison with other cities. Guidikova explained that those cities that had invested more in inter-culturalism had achieved more effective, efficient public administrations, boosting diversity and jobs, a higher perception of public safety, and the provision of higher-quality services. These features were ones that generally helped create a more cohesive society and boosted economic growth.

Guidikova mentioned that the inter-cultural model had been adopted by over one-hundred-and-thirty cities around the world⁸ (most of them in Europe but some in Japan, The United States, Mexico, and Canada). Furthermore, over the last two years, The Council of Europe has worked with States in a series of informal meetings and has made big strides. For example, Guidikova mentioned the cases of Finland, Northern Macedonia, The Republic of Ireland, and Portugal as nations that have incorporated inter-cultural policies. One should also mention the recent approval (22nd January 2020) by The Council of Europe's Council of Ministers of the Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion 2020-2025⁹, whose goal is to combat discrimination against gypsies and to support equality.

Barcelona's leadership: From Inter-Cultural Plan to the Anti-rumour Strategy

The City of Barcelona is an example of advanced theory in the inter-culturalist field and its public implementation. The arrival of large numbers of migrants in the late 20th Century and the early 21st Century as a result of globalisation and the city's development boosted Barcelona's population. As a result, Barcelona's society has become a great deal more diverse both in terms of immigrants' countries of origin and their social backgrounds. This new, highly complex, plural reality has posed new challenges to peaceful co-existence and social cohesion yet at the same time, it has offered new opportunities. In 2009, Barcelona City Council decided to come up with its own long-term strategy, based on cross-cutting gatherings and consensus among various actors in the metropolis. The result was the passing of the **Barcelona Inter-cultural Plan**¹⁰, which has ten specific axes that converge on the need to create real interaction among city-dwellers. Dani de Torres, who was Commissioner for Immigration and Inter-cultural Dialogue at the

⁷ About the Intercultural Cities Index. (2020). Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/about-the-index>

⁸ Council of Europe. (2020). Intercultural cities: participating cities. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/participating-cities>

⁹ Council of Europe. (2020). Committee of Ministers adopts new action plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/committee-of-ministers-adopts-new-action-plan-for-roma-and-traveller-inclusion>

¹⁰ Pla Barcelona Interculturalitat [Barcelona Inter-culturalism Plan]. (n.d.). [PDF] Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona, p. 3-5-6. Accessible at: https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/dretsdiversitat/sites/default/files/Pla%20BCN%20Interculturalitat_cat.pdf [Accessed 29th January 2020].



time, stressed that ten years on, the plan has yielded important fruits and facilitated progress in many areas, even though major challenges remained. According to Torres, when making a start on interculturalism, one needs both the support of people who are passionate about the idea and those who can ‘think outside the box’. One also needs to get box-loads of bureaucrats on board. At the same time, to ensure sustainability, it is essential that the whole thing does not become a vanity project for certain politicians but rather is implemented across the board so that it becomes part and parcel of the way public administration and the city work. One needs to stick to the strategy and find new allies to legitimise it and to strengthen it by re-inventing when necessary.

Likewise, Guidikova highlighted Barcelona as the city that has so far implemented the best approach. To explain this, she drew on the **Anti-rumours Strategy**¹¹, launched in 2010 within the framework of the Barcelona Inter-cultural Plan, and later copied by The Council of Europe¹². The Strategy was subsequently adapted for many other cities (Figure 3). It involves fostering critical thinking among citizens to nip prejudice and discrimination in the bud. In a complementary fashion, the strategy also seeks to create and boost spaces for constructive interaction among city-dwellers no matter what their cultural origins happen to be.

Torres saw the strategy as a perfect example of the need to foster consensus through alternative narratives and to work together to ensure these were effective in achieving their goals. Unfortunately, our minds react readily to discourses based on fear and rejection of ‘the other’ — hence the importance of political parties all pulling in the right direction. Here, instead of trying to directly rebut the arguments of those opposing immigration, the aim is to come up with an alternative narrative based on different values, concepts and ideas. Such an approach encourages critical thinking among the citizenry rather than knee-jerk reflexes. The Anti-rumours Strategy is thus a responsible one that draws on intelligent communication with citizens and the media in a quest to vanquish prejudice and discrimination.

Main shortcomings, challenges, and best practices in inter-cultural management

Throughout the session, it was patently clear that there were hurdles to defining governance structures, policies, and indicators for delivering integration and citizens’ inclusion. There was discussion of the lessons

¹¹ Ajuntament de Barcelona. (2020). Què fem - Estratègia antirumors | BCN Acció Intercultural. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/bcnacciointercultural/ca/estrategia-bcn-antirumors/que-fem-estrategia-antirumors>

¹² Council of Europe. (2020). Antirumours. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/anti-rumours>



learnt from the step-by-step implementation of the inter-cultural model in cities to date. This gave an inkling of the main shortcomings, the challenges posed, and the best practices to meet them. Those attending the session with Irena Guidikova gave their views in these respects. There was broad agreement that strategies need to be reviewed, considering the generated knowledge about what works and what does not.

While progress has been made on society 'meeting places', public management is still failing to ensure that this interaction takes place on an equal basis. There are still many mental and physical barriers between the host community and minorities, thereby perpetuating the stigma and discrimination suffered by the latter. With regard to mental barriers, the rise of the Far-Right and the ever more violent, xenophobic nature of its discourse on the subject of immigration — a convenient whipping-boy for society's ills — reveals a general lack of empathy towards and knowledge of 'the other'. At the same time, this pressure on various groups forces them to buckle to assimilation pressures in order to survive yet those pressures perpetuate inequalities in access to rights and opportunities. With regard to physical barriers, the fact that public representation does not reflect social diversity leads to: (1) ingrained ignorance at the institutional level; (2) poor relationships with officialdom; (3) negative perceptions of immigrants and their daily problems. This ignorance in turn leads to the design and implementation of policies perpetuating the inequalities and discrimination suffered by immigrants. For instance, the long, tortuous process of obtaining civil and political rights in the host society (that is, citizenship and the right to vote) spawns a strong rejection of the system and general disaffection, both at the political and economic levels. This means that immigrants often neither play a part in democratic politics or in normal economic and trade union activities.

To overcome such discrimination and segregation mechanisms, there is a need to **reformulate public policies without resorting to tried-and-tested methods that have been proven to fail. This means establishing inter-cultural principles (equality, diversity, and interaction) and by adopting an inter-sectional perspective** (Figure 3). One can attain true inclusion by listening to and learning from the diverse groups making up our societies. Speaking about this, Guidikova noted that studies in The United States revealed that areas with more ethnic diversity showed greater co-operation among people and less discrimination than in mono-cultural areas.

With regard to this re-orientation of public policies, Guidikova noted the importance of both **formal and informal education** as a highly effective tool for fostering political awareness and changing the public's mind-set. Such an approach lets the general public see the benefits of inclusion as opposed to segregation. For example, if schools were given incentives to include all groups in their teaching teams, immigrants would be co-opted, thus improving their community image. At the same time, teachers would be better

able to teach inter-culturalism in classrooms and combat the mechanisms reinforcing inequality (unconscious bias, the social circumstances of pupils and their families, and so on). This educational mission also needs to be taken up by **the media** on issues bearing on immigration and diversity. That is because the media tend to dwell on the negative aspects of immigration, especially if they are 'news-worthy' in the gutter-press sense. As a result, more up-beat news items that might make people think more positively about immigration tend to get ignored.

The second aspect mentioned was that **integration of immigrants in the economic and labour spheres must be made a priority**. While the relationship between economic growth and migration is generally a positive one, it is vital that this contribution is managed to ensure it will yield long-term benefits. On the one hand, this means **boosting public investment** so that those workers with shaky jobs are given the chance to train and qualify. On the other hand, there is a need to offer **incentives to the business sector** so that it supports and hires people from diverse backgrounds. The business world can play a key role in ensuring immigrants' integration. At the same time, firms will also benefit given that greater diversity in the workforce boosts creativity, productivity, and so on. Public administration could adopt the inter-cultural model by hiring regular staff from immigrant communities instead of merely using foreigners as 'interpreter' auxiliaries to native staff.

The session also stressed the importance of cities co-operating in the field of diversity management by **pooling best practices**. Here, Dani de Torres mentioned the work done by **Red Española de Ciudades Interculturales [Spanish Network of Inter-cultural Cities]** (RECI)¹³, which hones tools and launches initiatives for exploring diversity's potential, for underpinning co-existence, and for stimulating creativity. Taking advantage of this methodological support, Oriol Amorós, Catalan Government Secretary for Equality, Migrations, and Citizenship, presented the principles of the **European Regional Network for Inter-Culturalism**¹⁴. The presentation was made on the 5th of November 2019 and took place at the Catalan Office before The European Union. The initiative already enjoys the support of a dozen European regions and was defended at the presentation by Irena Guidikova, who stated that all cities can do a great deal in this field, and that it was vital to forge links between regions and States in jointly striving towards the same goals.

Guidikova also noted the example of **Fuenlabrada**, an area with a population of 200,000 to the South of Madrid, in which the local police began taking a set of innovative measures over a decade ago to manage

¹³ RECI. (2020). Qué hacemos – RECI – Ciudades interculturales. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: <http://www.ciudadesinterculturales.com/que-hacemos/>

¹⁴ Gencat. (2019). Regions europees impulsen la xarxa europea de regions per a la interculturalitat. Accessed 29th January 2020 at: http://exteriors.gencat.cat/ca/ambits-dactuacio/afers_exteriors/delegacions_govern/ue/actualitat/20191105_InterculturaRegionsNet



diversity. Those measures have now borne fruit, proving to be highly effective. As a result, the public feel safe in the area and trust has been forged with the local community. The first step was to make policemen more aware of discrimination through training courses and workshops. Diversity in the force itself was boosted by facilitating entry by people from minority groups. Second, special bodies and teams were set up to combat discrimination, targeting both professionals and Civil Society in general, and gathering their views for later analysis and assessment. Third, tools were developed to take preventative action against discrimination and to act in cases where it had occurred. Manuals were drafted on complaint procedures and instances of discrimination.

Guidikova also detailed the case of Bilbao, with its **“Zurrumurrak”** Anti-Rumours Strategy, put into practice in 2011 after adapting it from the 2010 first version, in Barcelona. Collaboration between social agents and institutions led to training courses, thematic workshops, audiovisuals, teaching materials, public awareness materials, literature, and so on. The aim is to reach all walks of society to come up with a fully-integrated response.

Lisbon was also given as an example, with its **Festival Todos**. In 2009, the city decided to promote interculturalism through Contemporary Art, inviting the public to explore world cultures, cuisine, music, workshops, and so on. By working directly with local communities, Lisbon has helped eliminate the ghettos associated with immigration.

Last but not least, the business sector was also mentioned in connection with best practices on diversity. Some companies in Catalonia have drawn up so-called **Diversity Management Accords**. These involve collective negotiation between firms and trade unions in which diversity is acknowledged in the work place, employees are made aware of diversity issues, and stress is laid on the rights and duties of all workers. These accords help foster greater integration throughout the workforce.

Conclusions

The current economic and political debate reveals the inter-cultural model as the best option for managing diversity in our societies. Public inter-cultural policies must be drawn up in a cross-cutting fashion, acknowledging diversity, fostering positive interaction, and ensuring equality of opportunity for all.

Earlier diversity management models are still being applied in many countries. These models — the *Gastarbeiter* [Guest Worker], Assimilation, and Multi-cultural models all have serious flaws. The first does

not recognise cultural diversity; the second spurns it by insisting on total absorption by the host society, while the third spawns autistic micro-societies lacking any common sense of belonging. By contrast, the inter-cultural model is based on forging a common, shared identity by accepting the individual identities that exist within each and every community.

Finally, one should highlight some of the examples of best practices in the inter-cultural management field, such as Barcelona's Anti-Rumours Strategy, the inter-cultural perspective adopted by the police in Fuenlabrada, Lisbon's Festival Todos, and Diversity Management Accords in the business world.

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