

Project description:

Up to now cultural policies have been left aside in the debate on the management of immigration-related diversity. This project proposes a framework of reflection on how cities can orientate their cultural policies in contexts of diversity, paying special attention to the social dimension of the policies and the Mediterranean area.

The three policies areas that will be considered are: permanent yearly festivities, libraries in specific areas of the city and The City History Museum

Academic scholars from Barcelona, Tel Aviv, Lisbon and Oran, explore through case studies how cities can use cultural policies to turn their commitment to diversity into actions. The project evolves around the elaboration of recommendations for a notion of a *culture of diversity* for the Mediterranean region, and suggestions on basic policy recommendations that can contribute to this notion.

In July 2011 the report will be presented and evaluated in a final Workshop open to the public.

Project duration: February 2011-July 2011

Partners

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Cities Cultural Policies in the context of immigrant-related diversity: towards a Mediterranean approach

Project financed by the Anna Lindh Foundation within the field of "Migration, cities and diversity" Ref: ALF/CFP/2010/ST2/105



Project Background

Our project positions itself in an ongoing interest for the complexities arising from increasing diversity and the determining factors in how diversity is lived and perceived in different spheres of urban life.

In line with an explicit and positive approach on intercultural interaction, the Council of Europe and the European Commission stated in 2009 that successful cities and societies of the future will be indeed intercultural - a visible approach in the joint action called “Intercultural cities programme” .

Likewise, the Eurofund conducted during 2009 a wide-ranging study examining intercultural policies and practices in 31 European cities in the “European network of cities for local integration policies for migrants (CLIP)”. Its overview report “Intercultural policies in European cities” (August 2010) offers, besides insights into how these cities are tackling their increasingly diverse dispositions, a set of guidelines for good practice for policymakers.

Strategies for intercultural dialogue are further discussed in the “Anna Lindh Report” from 2010. Here conclusions are drawn upon the importance of attitudes, values and a shared sense of belonging in the Mediterranean region.

Likewise, the report from Zaragoza Summit 4th Ministerial Conference on Integration of Immigrants ‘Integration as an engine for development and social cohesion’ (April 2010) insists on the positive value of diversity in urban settings. Additionally, culture related themes undertaken by the Spanish EU-presidency are as well portraying the importance of not only recognition, but also political intervention in the realm of cultural diversity. In the sphere of culture, attention can be drawn upon Agenda 21 for Cultures, cities committed to cultural development and the UNESCO Convention on Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expression of November 2005.

For the city of Barcelona, one of the case studies in the project which also include Oran, Tel Aviv and Lisbon, diversity and intercultural strategies assumed by the City Council contribute to a commitment of the dynamics of diversity.

Two diversity dimensions

Instead of having a broad notion of diversity each city will take into account at least two diversity dimensions. The first one is shared by the four cities: *linguistic diversity*. The second one is city context related.

Broad question

How can we define a Mediterranean culture of diversity in practical terms?

Specific key questions

1. How do permanent festivities incorporate the two main diversity dimensions selected by the each city, taking into account the target population?
2. How do city libraries include specific activities related to diversity?
3. How does the City History Museum incorporate diversity in its collection, exhibition programme and diverse activities?