Foreword

An OECD-EU initiative: “Territorial approach to migrant integration: The role of local authorities”

This publication Migrant Integration in Vienna was produced by the OECD as part of a larger study, Territorial Approach to Migrant Integration: The Role of Local Authorities, with the support of the European Commission.

The study takes stock of the existing multi-level governance frameworks and policies for migrant and refugee integration at the local level in nine large European cities: Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Glasgow, Gothenburg, Paris, Rome and Vienna and the small city case of Altena. It also builds on information collected from other 61 European cities through an ad hoc survey thanks to the partnership with the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and Eurocities and on a statistical database on migrant outcomes at regional (TL2) level. This study resulted in the report, Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees, approved by the OECD Committee for Regional Development Policy (RDPC) in December 2017 (OECD, 2018).

The focus of this study is on “migrants’ integration”, meaning a wide range of different groups of people with different reasons for leaving their countries of origin: humanitarian, economic, family or study, among others. The target group includes newcomers as well as migrants who settled in the cities many years ago and native-born people with at least one migrant parent, depending on the statistical definition used by the city/country. Given the recent increase in the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe, particular attention is paid to these groups throughout the case studies.

Cities in the sample have different track records in integrating migrants. The study looks at updates to the governance mechanisms in the wake of the recent influx of asylum seekers and refugees, in order to improve the local reception of migrants and the capacity to integrate them into society. Conversely, it also investigates opportunities to extend some of the services recently established for newcomers to long-standing migrant groups.

The point of departure for the overall study is the observation that in practice integration takes place at the local level and should benefit both migrant and host communities through appropriate local development strategies. Cities are focal spots of refugee and migrant reception and integration processes: in 2015, close to two-thirds of the foreign-born population in the OECD lived in urban areas (OECD, 2018). However it seems that asylum seekers, at least in Europe, are more equally spread across regions. This new situation required responses from previously uninvolved cities and regions, in particular, in smaller-sized cities and non-urban regions. Following, the question of linking migrant

1. Please refer to the definition of migration provided below.
integration policies with regional development policies emerged for sub-national governments.

The ambition of this series of case studies is to identify how cities have responded to these objectives. It aims to address an information vacuum: beyond the dominant literature on international and national evidence about migrant movements and integration, several studies exist about the local dimension and impact of migration without converging towards general results.\(^2\) In addition, they just partially explore the governance factor attached to it. In the view of partner cities and international organisations (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], etc.), multi-level governance can be an important explanatory factor of the performance of migrant integration policies. Even though migration policies are the responsibility of the national government, the concentration of migrants in cities, and particularly in metropolitan areas (Boulant, J., M. Brezzi and P. Veneri, 2016; Diaz Ramirez, Liebig, Thoreau and Veneri, 2018), has an impact on the local demand for work, housing, goods and services that local authorities have to manage. Local authorities act within a multi-level budgetary and administrative framework, which limits or adds responsibilities in dealing with migrant-specific impacts in their territory. As such, this work first aims at understanding the way cities and their partners address migrant integration issues. While it doesn’t strive at this stage to evaluate the impact of the whole set of local public actions, it compiles qualitative evidence of city policies across selected multi-level governance dimensions. These dimensions were selected according to the multi-level governance gaps analysis developed by the OECD (Charbit, 2011; Charbit and Michalun, 2009). Statistical data have been collected from all of the cities on the presence and outcomes of migrant and refugee populations.

As a result of this comparative work, and in collaboration with the partner cities and organisations, the OECD has compiled a list of key objectives to guide policy makers integrating migrants with a multi-governance perspective. The **Checklist for Public Action to Migrant Integration at the Local Level** is articulated according to 4 blocks and 12 objectives. The four blocks cover: 1) institutional and financial settings; 2) time and proximity as keys for migrants and host communities to live together; 3) enabling conditions for policy formulation and implementation; and 4) sectoral policies related to integration: access to the labour market, housing, social welfare and health, and education (see the checklist in Part II).

This study first provides insight on the city’s migration background and current situation. It then provides a description of the actions implemented following the framework of the **Checklist for Public Action to Migrant Integration at the Local Level**.

The objective is to allow cities to learn from each other and to provide national and supranational decision makers and key partners of local integration policies with better evidence to address the major challenges ahead in this field and to adopt appropriate incentive schemes.

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2. Refer to the bibliography of the Synthesis Report.
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This case study has been initially written by Ursula Reeger (Institute for Urban and Regional research/Austrian Academy of Sciences), under the supervision of Claire Charbit, Head of the Territorial Dialogues and Migration Unit, within the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities of the OECD. This report is based on substantive additional inputs and contributions from Anna Piccinni (OECD) and Lisanne Raderschall (OECD).

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