

WELDI

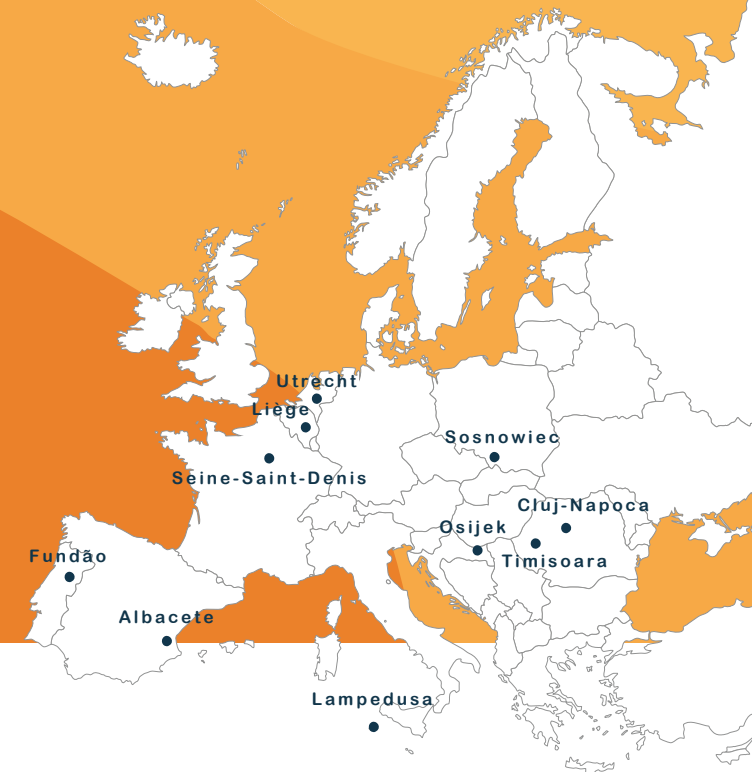
BUILDING WELCOMING COMMUNITIES
FOR MIGRANTS

Baseline report

URBACT



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Building welcoming communities for migrants

The URBACT network WELDI (2023-25) promotes local action to safeguard human rights, and to guarantee a right to the city for all residents, regardless of their nationality or residence status. Under this universal objective, WELDI focuses on migrants -and newcomers in particular- whose rights are jeopardised in specific ways: through a precarious residence status, unfamiliarity with the new environment, discrimination and exploitation, or a lack of language skills. WELDI explores potential synergies where newcomers are supported in a way that also benefits the host society - e.g. through mixed infrastructures and support offers, wherever possible. WELDI partners believe this is a good way to bring newcomers and established residents together, tackle anti-migrant bias and underscore their desire to uphold and guarantee access to human rights.

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Section 1.

Setting the context: human rights, migration and cities



The URBACT network WELDI tackles the question of how local authorities can promote human rights when receiving and offering integration support to newcomers. This ambition runs counter to what we see happening today in Europe and beyond, with thousands of people drowning in the Mediterranean every year, anti-immigrant parties gaining ground with the promise of closing-off borders, EU members being unable to share responsibility in reception and partnerships being sealed with non-democratic regimes to help curb migration flows.

At the same time, the number of people coming to Europe is constant, if not growing, and global demographic, social and climate trends make it unlikely that this will change. So unlike the dominant political discourse today, WELDI starts from the acceptance of the reality of migration and focuses on how to ensure an orderly and dignified reception and integration, rather than pretending that migration can or should be stopped.

WELDI's second axiom is to see the potential of cities as places of dignified reception and integration of newcomers. Cities are not naturally inclusive places when it comes to migration and there are indeed

many examples of the opposite. But most local practitioners understand that simply policing newcomers or ignoring their needs typically brings negative consequences for the city as a whole; while providing access to rights and opportunities for migrants can help them thrive.

Today's successive waves of migrant arrivals, which are often labelled as "emergencies", but which we see as a normality, represents not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for cities to come to the fore. So the third WELDI axiom is to demonstrate local leadership in reception and integration and to trigger bottom-up change towards models that are in line with the fundamental rights that lay the basis for the European Union.

Human rights and migrants and the local level

WELDI uses human rights as a benchmark for newcomer reception and integration. Human rights have been codified by international organisations and signed by states, but they are also legally binding for local authorities. In addition to their normative and moral function, human rights can be seen as guidelines to

ensure social justice and cohesion: for many local actors it is obvious how denying access to decent work, housing, healthcare and education or tolerating discrimination will deteriorate social cohesion across the community, beyond the people directly affected.

The local role in guaranteeing human rights has received increasing attention, both by international bodies and by researchers. This is due to the insight that local governments are not just passively bound to human rights obligations, but can instead lead by example in making them a reality.

Cities are indeed a good place to start when making human rights a reality for all: firstly, they might find it easier to build a universal, civil and inclusive identity as they are less bound to national narratives of "who belongs". Secondly, human rights are for everybody living on a territory and point to the principle of residency, which is the basis of city membership. As cities cannot control who comes to live on their territory, they organise services (think: childcare) for residents rather than for those who hold a certain passport. Thirdly, civil society, including migrant organisations, is a driving force in making human rights a reality and at the same time a key actor of the city

polity. By denouncing human rights violations and exerting pressure on public authorities to comply with human rights standards, civil society organisations drive change and help committed city councils to become more inclusive places.

The growing interest in the role of local authorities in safeguarding human rights is also a reaction to initiatives by city networks that have over the last decades defined and advanced their own human rights agenda. In this process, the human rights and the migration agenda have increasingly become intertwined.

Local authorities as norm-setters

A starting point for cities defining human rights principles is the **European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City (Saint Denis 2000)**, which was developed under the auspices of the international city network United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). The Charter defines the city as a collective good for all of its inhabitants, and citizenship of the city as independent of nationality or status. Having been signed by more than 350 cities, the Charter strives to guarantee access to work, education, health-

care and housing for all, support for vulnerable groups and protection against discrimination.

Based on the Saint-Denis Charter, UCLG has formulated a “Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City” to work on the implementation of the Charter. The document is currently updated, also with the intention to pay greater attention to migration. Accompanying this process, UCLG runs a campaign to create “10, 100, 1000 Human Rights Cities and Territories” by 2030.

A second key city initiative on cities and human rights is UCLG’s 2022 **Lampedusa Charter for Dignified Mobility and Territorial Solidarity**. The charter promotes a municipalist vision of migration that shifts the focus of the migration narrative from border management and administrative status to a “people-centred vision that addresses all communities as neighbours”. Developed through a global consultation with cities, the Lampedusa Charter takes the stance that human rights violations are by no means inherent to migration and

establishes principles to protect human rights, such as:

- ▶ Providing humanitarian assistance and specific support for the most vulnerable groups.
- ▶ Reinforcing mechanisms for saving lives.
- ▶ Restoring the dignity and memory of those who were hurt, died or disappeared.
- ▶ Avoiding detention and criminalisation of migrants.
- ▶ Providing access to water and sanitation, social and healthcare services, decent housing, youth and children welfare and schooling.
- ▶ Actively involving established residents and newcomers alike in service design and decision-making, regardless of status.
- ▶ Moving from an emergency logic to a long-term response.

An action plan to accompany the charter is in preparation.

Localising Human Rights

According to the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA):

- ▶ “in a human rights city, the local government, local actors and people in the city work together and commit (...) to uphold international human rights standards and legal obligations. To do so, they take measures to deliver on these standards and develop rights-based policies on a wide variety of issues that cities are responsible for, thus contributing to protecting, respecting, fulfilling, and promoting human rights locally.”¹

The bottom-up practice of making human rights a reality is referred to as “localising human rights”², a process that involves, on the one hand, using human rights norms as guidelines and benchmarks for local policies, and on the other, feeding local challenges and solutions into the European and international discussion.

- ▶ Localising human rights means spelling out the meaning of human rights for the practice of local administrations and other actors, putting them into action and thereby providing bottom-up input into the definition and interpretation of international human rights norms.

So, the relation between local authorities and human rights is not one of a top-down implementation of international norms. Rather cities are actively constructing human rights and their meaning from their specific contexts, and thereby participating in a bidirectional, “glocal” process of making human rights a reality.

¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2022. Human Rights Cities in the European Union, p. 5

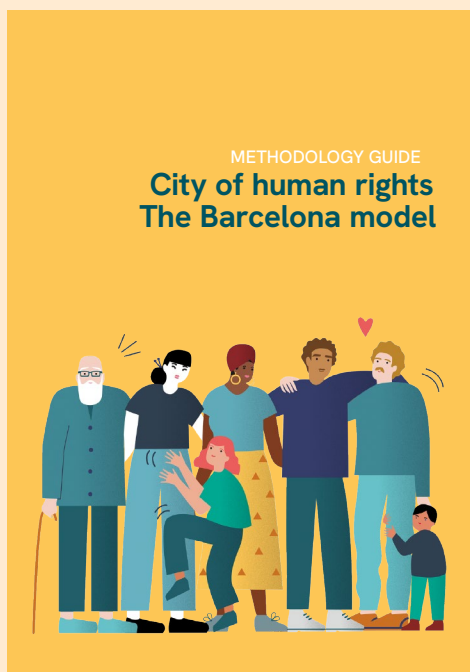
² See De Feyter, K. 2006. [Localising human rights](#). Institute of Development Policy and Management

Example Barcelona

“We understand citizenship in a way that is entirely disconnected from the concepts of nationality or residency. Speaking about citizens’ rights means speaking about the rights of everybody living in Barcelona.” (Barcelona, City of Rights Programme)

In 2015, Barcelona city council adopted the [“Barcelona city of rights” programme](#) with the objective “To promote a diverse, intercultural and multifaceted city where everyone has real, effective and equal access to human rights.” The programme includes actions for strengthening protection against discrimination and racism, a review of municipal services, regulations and protocols on whether they violate human rights, and human rights staff training and campaigns. Under the programme, Barcelona has e.g. reinforced its office for Non-Discrimination and developed action plans for participation and gender equality. The city has also removed barriers for residents with an irregular status to access all municipal

services and identified measures to help residents in regularising their status. Finally, the city has set up a resource centre on human rights and developed a [comprehensive guide-book](#) on how to implement a human rights based approach in cities.



Networking and teaming up for making human rights effective

In coalition with like-minded partners, international organisations and civil society actors, cities have formed networks defining and branding their commitment to developing rights-based policies in welcoming migrants: as cities of human rights,

as sanctuary cities, as cities of refuge, as welcoming or solidarity cities. Beyond city marketing, such labels typically imply tangible change in the form of a formal political commitment, a local coalition of actors with a common goal, a review of local policies and mutual learning with other cities at national or international level. Here are some of the most relevant initiatives:

Human Rights Cities

Transnational, active WELDI members: Utrecht, Seine-Saint Denis

Starting with Rosario in 1997, cities across the globe, including Barcelona, Graz, Lund, Nuremberg, Utrecht and Vienna, have declared themselves “Human Rights Cities” in city council motions. Together with organisations such as United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), Human Rights Cities strive to use Human Rights as a guiding principle for local policies through dedicated human rights offices and strategies. One key framework for this work is the 2001 European Charter for Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City (see above).

European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR)

Transnational, active WELDI members: Lampedusa and Liège

ECCAR is a city-network initiated by UNESCO in 2004 with the aim to fight racism. Exchanges between the cities are based on a common 10-point action plan that includes the commitment to monitor and combat racism, to support equal opportunities and actively promote cultural diversity.

Participating cities have to demonstrate that they are active in at least one of the 10 common actions.

Eurocities Integrating Cities Initiative

Transnational,
active WELDI
members: Utrecht

Under the framework of “Integrating Cities”, the city network Eurocities has organised transnational exchanges on supporting newcomers since the mid-2000s. Based on the Integrating Cities Charter (signed by almost 50 cities), cities commit to facilitating equal access and non-discrimination in their roles as policy makers, service providers, employers and buyers of goods and services, and are regularly monitored. Eurocities has also set up a solidarity cities campaign in response to the 2015 refugee arrival, and hosts a specific group of cities exchanging on how to support undocumented migrants with the COMPAS research centre.

Intercultural Cities

Transnational,
active WELDI
members: Seine-Saint
Denis

Intercultural cities is a city network with more than 120 members initiated by the Council of Europe in 2009. Members work together based on a common set of indicators for assessing to which degree their policies take into account intercultural principles of providing equal opportunities, recognising diversity and fostering interaction.

From the Sea to the City/International Alliance of Safe Harbours

Transnational,
active WELDI
members: Lampedusa

Bringing together city councils, search and rescue operators and other civil society organisations, and the support of political foundations, the International Alliance advocates for a radical shift of EU migration and asylum policies - in particular in linking Search-and-Rescue operations with legal corridors for asylum seekers and city welcoming pledges.

Cities of Sanctuary (United Kingdom) National

Starting in Sheffield in 2005, British Cities of Sanctuary aim to create a more welcoming local environment for forced migrants. Cities of Sanctuary initiatives are usually driven by a coalition of local actors (schools, universities, arts centres, NGOs and individual citizens) and city councils that pass sanctuary city motions. Today, local sanctuary groups exist in more than 100 cities, towns and boroughs that are supported by an umbrella charity.

Association Nationale des Villes et Territoires Accueillantes (ANVITA)

National,
active WELDI
members: Seine-Saint
Denis

Anvita was created in 2018 with the objective to promote unconditional welcome in France. Its membership includes cities, départements and regions and its activities include mutual learning, advocacy and awareness raising.

Sanctuary cities (USA)

National

Since the 1980s, local authorities in the US have declared themselves “sanctuary cities” for not cooperating with federal immigration authorities in the detection and deportation of migrants without residence papers. The movement started with San Francisco in 1985 and now counts 300 cities and other jurisdictions, including literally all major US cities. Sanctuary cities have developed policies that prohibit public services requesting, recording or sharing information on a person’s residence status. Many have also introduced local IDs to allow residents to identify themselves e.g. to open a bank account or to report a crime. In particular under the Trump administration, US Federal government has tried to force Sanctuary cities to end their practice - so far unsuccessfully.

Welcoming communities National / transnational

Based on the initiative of civil society and charities, “Welcoming communities” platforms have formed in the US, Australia, in Germany and internationally. They offer self-assessment and learning tools as well as a certification for participating authorities who receive support in meeting standards on migrant participation and engagement, fostering interaction and providing equitable access to services.

Through different means and from different thematic angles, these networks and initiatives offer platforms to build cities’ capacity to improve their reception and integration policies, often in collaboration with civil society and international organisations. They offer moral support in working towards a common goal and technical exchange. They also have -to varying degrees- an advocacy function for cities towards states, the EU and the international level.

WELDI is connected to several of these networks, and will use synergies with them to strengthen its message.

Within the URBACT programme, WELDI builds on the legacy of the network “[Arrival Cities](#)” (2015-18). The commonality between both networks is their aim to foster local leadership in migrant reception and

integration in times of an increasing political contestation of migration, with the nuance that this contestation has only grown in the meantime. Both networks also share the ambition to build strongly on the involvement of migrants as protagonists, a need whose urgency has only grown. WELDI’s specific contributions to this legacy include its human rights perspective and its advocacy agenda on behalf of cities.

The current state of EU asylum and migration policies

The 1997 Amsterdam Treaty marks the starting point for the EU to develop a common immigration policy and a Common European Asylum system (CEAS). This manda-

te was consolidated by the Lisbon Treaty that made common migration policies a subject of qualified majority voting.³ Since then, the EU has made efforts to harmonise asylum decision and reception conditions, and created common policies in the area of economic migration (e.g. through the Single Permit Directive and the Blue Card for highly skilled workers), family reunification and non-discrimination. Over these 25 years, migration has become increasingly politicised within and between member states, which led to a sluggish application of the agreed EU standards and stalled progress in many areas. A major cause of conflict today is asylum, and in particular solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility - a core principle of EU migration policies according to the Lisbon Treaty. This conflict opposes those regions of the EU that are the main places of arrival of asylum seekers with those that are not and that are unwilling to see asylum as a common responsibility.

The smallest common denominator between member states today has been a focus on border security and partnerships with states outside the EU to curb arrivals and asylum claims. While the budget for such policies is constantly increasing⁴, their track record in achieving their objectives is meagre at best. In the current context of a succession of wars, political and humanitarian crises, demographic developments and climate change, it looks unlikely that a significant reduction in immigration can be achieved through stricter migration controls.⁵

Rather a change of perspective is needed acknowledging that migration is part and parcel of the EU’s future, and allowing a focus on how to organise migration better and in compliance with human rights instead. Cities can be protagonists in leading this change, a task of which member states seem incapable at present.

³ This means that in order to approve a legislative proposal, the Council of the European Union does not need a unanimous vote, but a majority representing 55% of all member states and 65% of the population and the approval of the European Parliament.

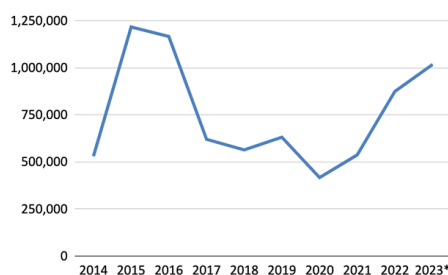
⁴ The border management and visa instrument has increased by 131% to €6.2 billion in the current funding period compared to 2014-2020. The budget of the Agency Frontex has increased from an annual 6m in 2006 to 800m today. Also, increasing parts of the European Development Fund and the Neighbourhood Development Instrument are earmarked for migration control by non-EU transit countries. Statewatch and the Transnational Institute 2022. [At what cost? Funding the EU’s security, defence, and border policies, 2021-2027](#) A guide for civil society on how EU budgets work.

⁵ See, e.g. Crépeau, F. 2017. [Why nothing will stop people from migrating](#). The Sunday Magazine

Failed relocation and potential for city-based initiatives

The succession of political crises over the last decade have also exposed how the lack of reliable procedures for sharing responsibilities between member states systematically creates situations of overcrowding in local arrival destinations, making it impossible to safeguard human rights or to meet the specific needs of children or other vulnerable groups. Arrival destinations bordering the Mediterranean such as Lesbos, Lampedusa or the Canary Islands, regularly experience overcrowding and humanitarian crises and have become places of migrant deaths - almost 3,000 migrants die on their way to the Northern shores of the Mediterranean every year.⁶ This devastating situation is the result of a complex of inadequate policies including the reliance on transit states in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean to curb migration flows and the active inhibition of search and rescue operations. Finding a

common approach is urgent, as the number of asylum applications are currently again moving towards the record numbers that were recorded in 2015/16.



1st time asylum applications in the EU.

Source: Eurostat (t_migr_asy)

*2023 data extrapolated for November and December.

The response of the new Pact on Asylum and Migration, on which an agreement was reached in December 2023, is focused on lowering asylum standards: it introduces fast-track border procedures for asylum claimants from countries with typically low recognition rates; lowers criteria for “safe third countries” to which migrants can be returned and allows exceptional measures for emergencies where many migrants arrive at once, or where they are

instrumentalised by other countries. There is still no agreement on the relocation of migrants within the EU, but a mechanism allowing member states to express solidarity through financial means instead.

In the light of the failed relocation of asylum seekers within the EU after 2015, voluntary city-led relocation of asylum seekers inside the EU and resettlement of refugees from outside the EU⁷ based on local pledges have come to the fore as potential alternatives. One political initiative on this topic is the “International Alliance of Safe Harbours” (IASH), which brings together city councils and civil society organisations. In its 2021 declaration, signed by politicians from 33 cities, IASH summarises the idea of city-led relocation as follows:

► “Instead of concentrating the burden through hotspots and camps with many of them in a few cities along the Mediterranean, we rely on a wide distribution among many cities, which distributes the burden for the individual city through the power of a broadly supported alliance. We want to supplement the current allocation key as the sole basis in Europe

with a broad network of many voluntary municipal reception quotas.”

City-based relocation needs the agreement of member states. But this is not a utopian scenario, as WELDI partner Fundação has illustrated in organising relocation of refugees in cooperation with its national government.

Human rights deficits in the asylum system

The EU’s objective to build a common, human rights-based policy on asylum is still unmet. National asylum systems have highly varying procedural standards in deciding on asylum claims and in the support granted to asylum seekers. Some of the most blatant human rights deficits include⁸:

- ▷ the violation of the principle of non-refoulement by member states and EU agencies (so called “pushbacks”);
- ▷ delays of several months before asylum seekers can apply and get access to support (e.g. in Greece and Spain);
- ▷ the long duration for reaching asylum decisions (up to three years), which negatively affects

⁶ Fundamental Rights Agency 2023. Asylum and migration: progress achieved and remaining challenges.

⁷ See Sabchev, T.Y. and Baumgärtel, M.G.N., 2020. The path of least resistance? EU cities and locally organised resettlement. *Forced Migration Review*, 63, pp.38-40.

⁸ See also Fundamental Rights Agency 2023. Asylum and migration: progress achieved and remaining challenges.

mental health and employment prospects;

- ▷ a lack of accommodation for asylum applicants exposing some of them to homelessness (e.g. in France and Belgium);
- ▷ a restricted labour market access for asylum claimants through requirements such as a work permit on demand of an employer or a labour market test, even when the waiting time stipulated in the EU Reception Conditions Directive (max. 9 months) has passed⁹;
- ▷ the unavailability of integration support, such as language training and civic education, during the asylum procedure, which contributes to a feeling of being in a limbo and has negative mental health effects.

Some of the rights deficits of asylum seekers are the result of a centralised planning and implementation of accommodation, in which national agencies plan and implement local accommodation without much consideration of local conditions. This centralised model has many disadvantages. It typically consists of large, institutionalised facilities that are spatially and socially isolated from the rest of society and effectively poses an obstacle to integration.

⁹ [Integration of applicants for international protection in the labour market](#). European Migration Network Inform, October 2023.

¹⁰ EUAA. Surveys of Arriving Migrants from Ukraine: [Thematic Factsheet - Issue 2](#), October 2023

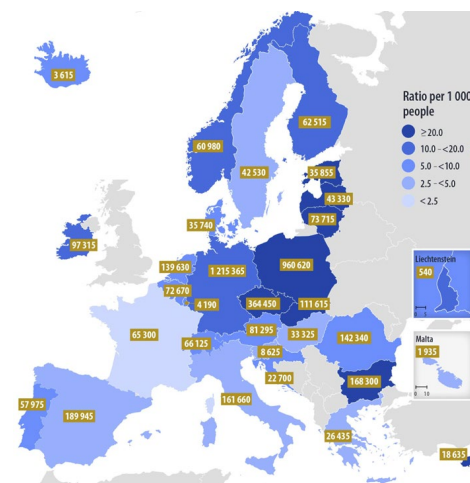
Examples such as the SPRAR system in Italy (cancelled by the government in 2018), the Plan Einstein Pilot in Utrecht and the Migration Centre in Fundão have demonstrated the advantages of a decentralised reception system that is funded by the state, but implemented by local authorities. They show how locally-led accommodation on a smaller scale can foster interaction through co-living with other groups (e.g. young people in Utrecht), and ideally combine support for the established neighbourhood population and the new residents.

A counter-model? Insights from the reception of Ukrainian refugees in Europe

The Russian attack on Ukraine in February 2022 led to the biggest refugee movement to Europe since World War II. The European Union reacted to this movement by activating -for the first time since its adoption in 2001- the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) to provide a common reception framework for those fleeing from Ukraine to

the EU. Under the directive that is valid throughout the EU, people can immediately access employment accommodation or housing support, social welfare, medical care and education (Art. 14). The directive is activated at least until March 2025, pending further prolongation.

The TPD granted people fleeing, free mobility within the EU before a residence permit is granted and a certain degree of mobility within the EU thereafter. By September 2023, 4.2m people from Ukraine had registered for temporary protection.



Refugees from Ukraine in Oct 2023. Map Source: [Eurostat](#) (simplified)

There is evidence of a comparably successful and fast integration of refugees from Ukraine under the TPD, in particular on the labour market.

In countries such as Poland or the Czech Republic, employment rates had already reached 30 and 40%, respectively, within the first half year after the directive was triggered, and increased further thereafter. The EU-wide SAM-UKR survey by the European Union Agency for Asylum found an employment rate of 58% in 2023 across the EU.¹⁰

Characteristics of the Ukrainian refugees such as their economic ties, demographics and qualifications can in part explain this success. But the policy framework has certainly also contributed to it: providing direct access to the labour market, free mobility and relying on a mix of refugees' initiative and support provide directions on how to improve refugee reception more widely.

With a lack of alternatives, citizen-provided housing was the dominant accommodation model with percentages of more than 90% in countries such as Italy, Belgium and Poland. While there have been cases of abuse, the system has generally worked and provided shelter to an unprecedented number of arrivals in a decentralised and less segregated model. This contrast to institutional housing of asylum claimants represents another innovative element in the reception of Ukrainians.

WELDI cities have generally had positive experiences in organising the reception of Ukrainian refugees with civil society partners despite the complicated circumstances of mass arrival and individual trauma. They see this as a case of how reception of other migrant groups could be improved through a stronger reliance on self-organisation and decentralised structures.

One lesson that is perhaps still to be learned is that of a “future free” integration. Given the uncertain future, both refugees and host societies are hesitant to take a definite decision on settlement and may delay investments in language learning, education or the recognition of qualifications. In this situation, it has been pointed out that public authorities should provide support that makes sense regardless of what the future will bring¹¹ - e.g. qualifications that are useful in many different contexts. This uncertainty is in reality not an exception of the Ukrainian case, but chimes with

many transnational migrant experiences. It suggests that the common idea of integration into static national societies might need to be rethought, and with it the support that newcomers receive should be reoriented towards more open support models, which focus on fostering the autonomy of newcomers and on safeguarding their dignity, while not presupposing that they will stay forever.

Irregularisation and precarisation

A precarious or irregular legal status represents one of the biggest obstacles for migrants to access human rights. The outdated but still most recent estimates from 2009 put the number of migrants living without a regular legal status in the EU at 1.9 to 3.8m¹². There is not one typical situation but rather many different events that contribute to precarity of legal status, such as the expiration

of a visa, a negative asylum decision or losing a job.

A lack of legal migration pathways and restrictive national policies, rather than preventing people from migrating, reinforce precarisation, and often challenge local governments that want to safeguard human rights and avoid negative consequences of exclusion for the whole city.¹³ In reaction to such challenges, some local authorities have created practices of partial inclusion of migrants with a precarious status. They facilitate for instance access to fundamental rights such as healthcare and education and provide skills and language training. Following the example of US-cities, local IDs have been issued in an increasing number of European cities with the idea to give a broader and more secure basis to access to basic rights. The local inclusion of migrants with a precarious status is far from being universal. It is often restricted to some sectors, not shared across the whole municipality or externalised to NGOs. But it breaks through the logic of conditioning rights according to a complex of legal categories, which often create confusion among service providers, migrants and citizens in inhumane debates about “deserving” and “undeserving” migrants.

The plight of economic migrants

Economic migration illustrates that precariousness is not just a matter of holding residency papers or not. Across the EU, there are labourforce shortages that cannot be fully addressed by the available domestic workforce.¹⁴ Taking up work remains one of the main reasons for migrants who come to the EU - In 2020, 20% or 4.2 million residence permits were issued to seasonal workers, highly skilled or posted workers to the Union, often in essential sectors such as agriculture, care or production.

However, current labour migration policies often fail to guarantee fair working conditions for migrant workers, although, according to the EU Fundamental Rights Charter and the EU’s Pillar of Social Rights, they should be equivalent to those of citizens of the Union. Some of the most common breaches of migrant workers’ rights are inappropriately low pay, illegal working and living conditions or illegal recruitment fees.¹⁵ In many cases, systems of worker recruitment have been found to keep migrant workers in isolation

¹¹ See OECD 2023. [Working towards dual intent integration of Ukrainian refugees](#)

¹² Kovacheva and Vogel 2009, cited in Triandafyllidou and Bartolini 2020. Understanding Irregularity. In: Spencer and Triandafyllidou. [Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe](#).

¹³ For an overview on the subject, see Homberger, A., Kirchhoff, M., Mallet-Garcia, M., Ataç, I., Güntner, S.A. and Spencer, S., 2022. [Local Responses to Migrants with Precarious Status. Frames, Strategies and Evolving Practices in Europe](#).

¹⁴ European Commission Communication 2022. [Attracting skills and talent to the EU](#).

¹⁵ For an overview, see European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2019. [Protecting migrant workers from exploitation in the EU: workers’ perspectives](#).

and in dependency on employers and recruitment agencies, thereby making it difficult for workers to access information and effectively defend their rights. For local authorities, economic migration often plays out as a process that is managed in grey areas outside formal reception and support systems.

The recently revised EU's single permit directive is a case in point, which in its previous version from 2011 was found to foster exploitative practices. Through a very loose approach of regulating member state practice, the directive allowed member states to tie a permit to a specific employer, creating dependency, and to be very lax about inspections of working conditions and fines for exploitative employers.¹⁶ These shortcomings have now been addressed in a recast directive which is expected to be adopted in early 2024. But migrant workers, whatever their status, remain in a precarious situation and should be a main preoccupation for local authorities and the EU alike.

Reinvigorating the fight against discrimination and racism from below

The 2000 EU Racial Equality directives were an early milestone in defining a European human rights-based approach to protect minorities, including migrants. However, more than 20 years on, challenges regarding the implementation of the directive seem only to grow. The EU-MIDIS survey¹⁷ with members of ethnic or immigrant background in Europe has shown a serious under-reporting of discrimination (only 12% report) and an unawareness of support (71%). It is openly acknowledged today that there are serious deficiencies in particular with the independent equality bodies that are tasked with monitoring discrimination in each member state.¹⁸ These problems are directly related to a weakening political commitment to fighting discrimination against migrants and other minorities across

the EU, in particular in those countries that are governed by parties that openly reject migrants and minorities.

While local governments are still not considered central actors in the EU non-discrimination framework, the present crisis could provide committed local authorities with the opportunity to become protagonists in increasing rights awareness and protection against discrimination. Local experiences such as campaigns against discrimination, rights-awareness training for local service providers and the setup of local bodies for monitoring discrimination and support to victims are some of the practices through which local authorities can help to reinvigorate an EU approach against discrimination at a time when it seems to have lost momentum. This potential is also acknowledged in the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan.¹⁹

Cornerstones of a local approach to defending the human rights of migrants

The previous section illustrated some of the ways in which migrants' rights are violated in Europe today, and how many vulnerabilities manifest themselves locally, in the form of the irregularisation and precarisation of migrants, unsupportive asylum reception and inadequate protection against labour market exploitation and discrimination. The current political debate, unfortunately, is more concerned with curbing arrivals than with improving the situation for those who continue to arrive. So we end this context section highlighting some key elements

¹⁶ See the joint NGO statement "[Break the chain of dependency and promote equal treatment of migrant workers](#)" (2023)

¹⁷ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2017. [Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey – Main results](#).

¹⁸ European Commission 2021. [Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of Council Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin \('the Racial Equality Directive'\) and of Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation \('the Employment Equality Directive'\)](#)

¹⁹ European Commission 2020. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. [A Union of equality: EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025](#)

of a local approach to safeguarding the human rights of migrants:

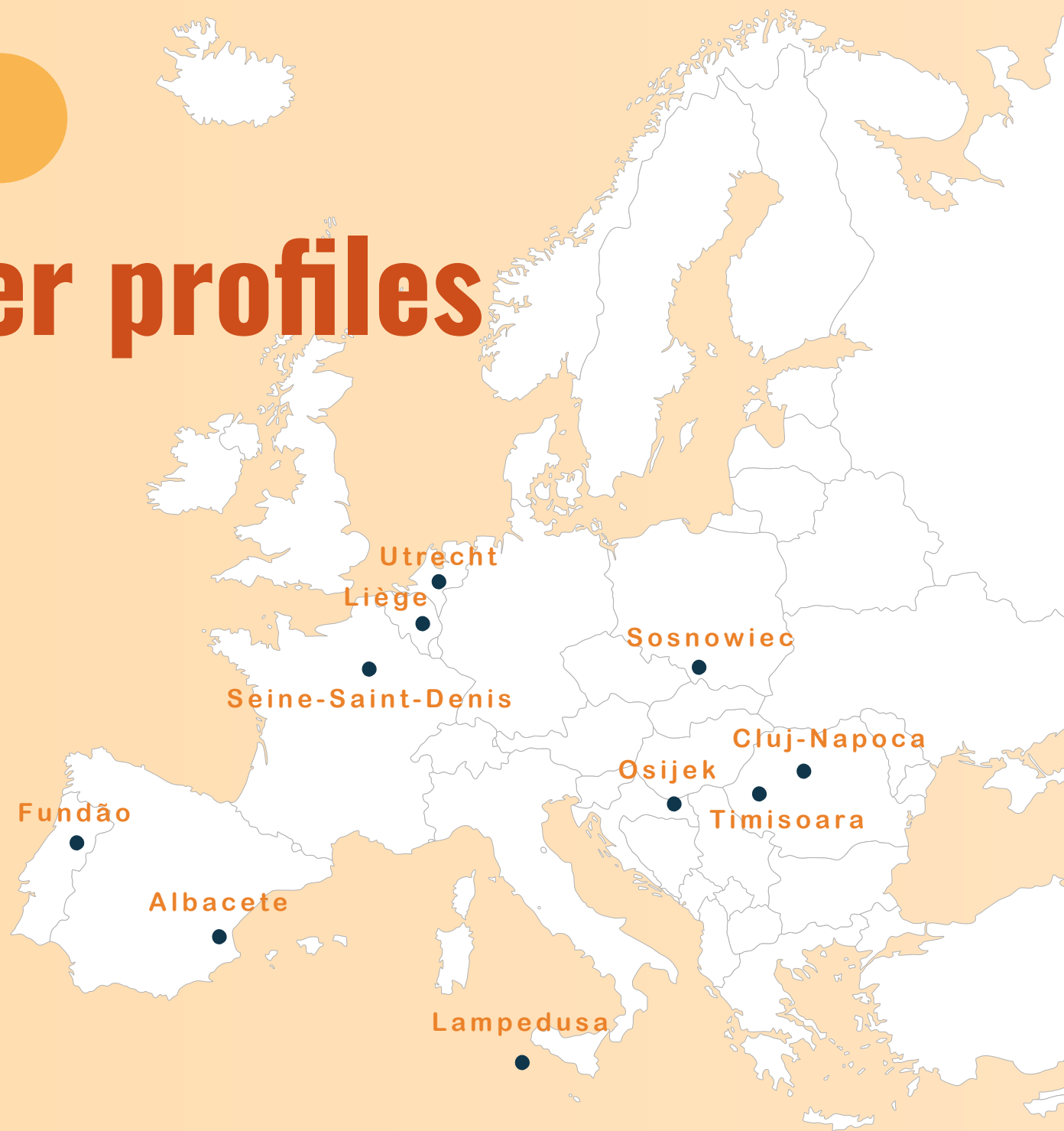
- ▷ Local authorities pursue human rights-based approaches because they are bound by human rights treaties, but also because situations of exclusion undermine the quality of life for the whole community.
- ▷ In defending human rights, local authorities are not passive implementers. Rather, they localise human rights proactively and creatively by identifying rights gaps, enacting human rights through local practice and contributing practically to putting the international human rights framework into practice.
- ▷ A lack of access to rights is not about one specific migrant group, but typically concerns a variety of groups that are vulnerable in a given local and national context.
- ▷ It is crucial to identify situations of vulnerability together with the groups concerned.
- ▷ A residence-based understanding of citizenship can express a city's commitment to safeguarding human rights and act against these human rights violations.
- ▷ Safeguarding human rights should not be a zero-sum-game

in which migrants are privileged over other residents, but create win-win-situations in which access to rights is improved both for newcomers and established residents, e.g. in housing, decent work or access to healthcare.

- ▷ Support for newcomers should not be an instrument of discipline and control, but help newcomers to develop their potential, regardless of whether they will stay or move on.
- ▷ It is crucial for local authorities to not only act locally but to also be proactive at national and transnational level in denouncing human rights problems across the multi-level governance system and to claim resources for local action.

Section 2.

Partner profiles



Albacete (ES)

173,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Social worker at social inclusion team

Breaking exploitation and marginality of migrant workers

Albacete is strategically located in one of Europe's most dynamic agricultural production zones, and hosts many seasonal migrant workers who follow the harvest seasons across the Iberian Peninsula. The city tries to meet the specific needs of migrant workers and families, some of which live in informal settlements - through social work and a strong cooperation with civil society organisations.

Still, many migrant workers arrive in Albacete to informal meeting points

where mafias address them in terms of accommodation, work and other services against money.

This exploitative parallel system seriously undermines the efforts of the city hall and keeps migrant workers at the margins of local society. In order to break this system, the city of Albacete wants to increase its capacity in providing housing solutions and better reach the migrants through outreach and support.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Planning of a housing resource for seasonal workers, and other newcomers that might need it, where the inclusion team will have their offices and provide services. This resource would become a One-stop-shop and a reference for migrants, to tackle exploitative parallel services provided by informal actors.
- ▷ Facilitate information for newcomers on their rights and services that are available to them and work on One-stop-shops to make the process easier.
- ▷ Take measures to increase leverage of existing housing stock for social purposes (e.g. through rent intermediation schemes / social rental agencies).
- ▷ Work with the employment department and NGOs to improve the situation of seasonal workers and break the exploitative middlemen structures (e.g. through certification of bona fide employers).
- ▷ Training on migrant rights to municipal workers that provide mainstream citizens services.



Migrant population

- 15,000 registered foreign residents (8.67% of the population). The main migrant groups are:
 - Seasonal agricultural workers from West-African countries, often with an irregular status and at risk of social exclusion.
 - Refugees from Ukraine (about 500).
 - Romanian Roma families living in informal settlements in the outskirts.
 - Latin American women working mainly in home care for local residents.

Socio-economic context

- Albacete's location at the crossroads of agricultural workers' seasonal migration paths between Comunidad Valenciana, Andalusia and Portugal makes the city an important place of transit and work in garlic and onion production, among others.
- Especially in the summer months there is a strong presence of seasonal workers.
- Unemployment of 13.6% at the level of the province.

Challenges and needs

- The most precarious migrant groups face severe housing exclusion (informal shanty town with 240 permanent residents, homeless shelter with up to 600 residents during the summer, when seasonal workers come to Albacete).
 - Learn about ways to increase available housing for (temporary and permanent) migrants in precarious situations, with limited resources.
- Migrant workers are being exploited by a deep-rooted middlemen system which acts as intermediary between the workers and employers, and charges money of migrants for its intermediation with employers, registration and other services.
 - Good practice on how to undermine and break exploitative middlemen structures in agriculture, e.g. through better cooperation with employers.
 - Learn about effective welcoming, guidance and referral of migrants to the different resources available in the city (e.g. one-stop-shops).
- Invisibility, informality and precariousness cause a negative image of some migrant groups.
 - Learn about efficient ways to combat false stereotypes.
- The municipality's services lack direct contact with some of the workers.
 - Raise awareness of staff working in generalist municipal services on migrant rights.

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths**
- The city's Social integration Centre and Inclusion Team provide personalised legal and social support to vulnerable groups, including migrants, on employment, education, housing, etc.
 - The city council also conducts outreach work in the informal settlements with a focus on the protection of minors and women and the facilitation of access to healthcare and education.
 - The Local Migration Council is a key instrument for information sharing and the co-production of policies for improving access to migrant rights.
 - Partnerships with civil society organisations, e.g. with a trade union doing outreach work with agricultural workers, help the city council to understand problems and find solutions.
 - The experience of organising reception for refugees from Ukraine has further strengthened relationships within the municipality and with civil society and regional and national level public institutions.
- Weaknesses**
- There are some issues in the coordination with regional and national level that affect access to rights.
 - The city has little capacity to influence the housing situation: 6 flats for emergency housing and a homeless shelter for 70 people.
 - The very small social housing sector is out of reach for most vulnerable migrants.
 - Administrative divides restrain the city's scope for actions: many migrants who live in Albacete work for employers outside the municipality.
 - The lack of centralised information and of a first contact point for newcomers facilitate the business of exploitative "parallel systems" of registration and intermediation.
- Opportunities**
- Migrants work in essential sectors (care, agriculture) whose importance for the local society is obvious.
 - Small-scale experiences in housing provision like the ACAIM residence (see below) demonstrate that the direct contact with neighbours and employers facilitates the integration of migrant workers with local society and can be a remedy against exploitation and prejudice.
- Threats**
- Exploitative "middlemen structure" in agricultural sector perpetuates marginality and represents a major obstacle to local integration and access to rights.

Local policy context

Local strategies

The local Equality Plan (2021-2024) stresses the importance of a human-rights-based approach. From its focus on gender equality it specifically targets the situation of migrant women.

The Local Migration Council and grants with NGOs provide a formalised framework of cooperation between the city hall and the stakeholders in the area of migration.

Distribution of competencies and funding

The municipality of Albacete has the key role in terms of reception and welcoming, since the access to the basic services start from residents' local registration and the very first intervention and welcoming is provided by the social services department.

In 2004, the Spanish state established a regularisation pathway which is based on three years of local registration and a job offer or training offer.

The regional level (autonomous community of Castilla-La Mancha) has key competences in education, healthcare and employment.

The city has no access to national AMIF funding.

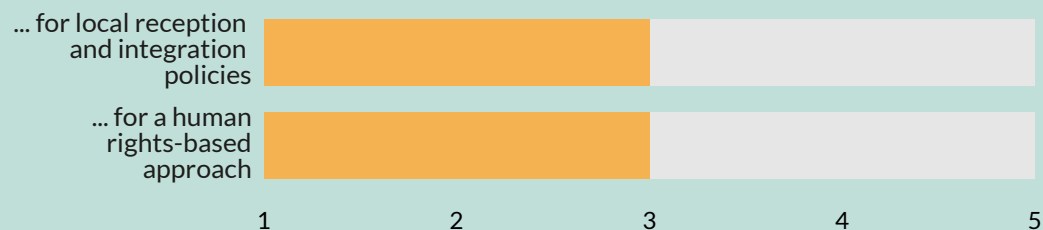
Good practice and elements to share

ACAIM / Medicos Mundi - residence for seasonal workers

Funded through a city council grant, the NGO ACAIM runs a residence for 25-30 seasonal workers outside Albacete. A major part of the day-to-day management of the house is based on self-organisation by the residents (cooking, cleaning and maintenance works), which ACAIM supports through training.

There are frequent contacts between the seasonal workers and neighbours, which increase the social and work opportunities and provide resources that can be useful when workers need a formal work contract to regularise their residence status.

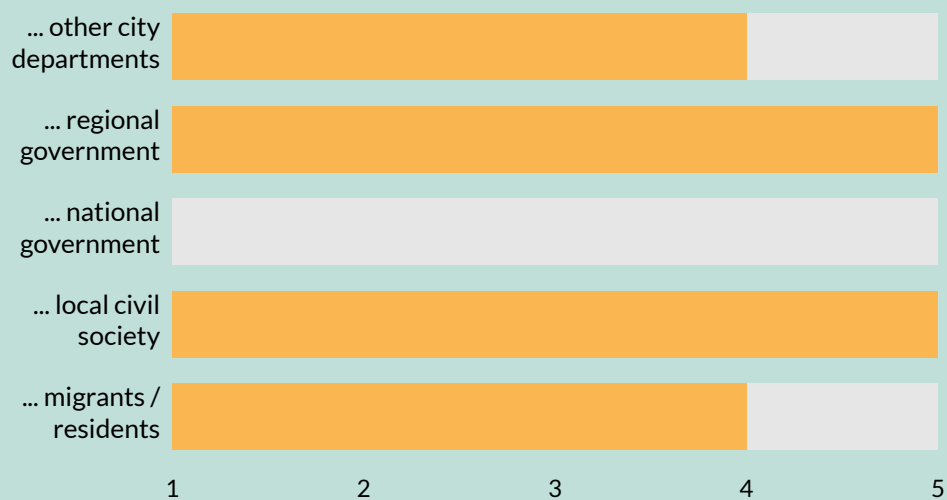
Level of political commitment...



Social climate on migration

The most precarious migrant groups have little visibility and are not integrated in local society. They have a bad reputation among locals, although they work in essential sectors such as agriculture and care.

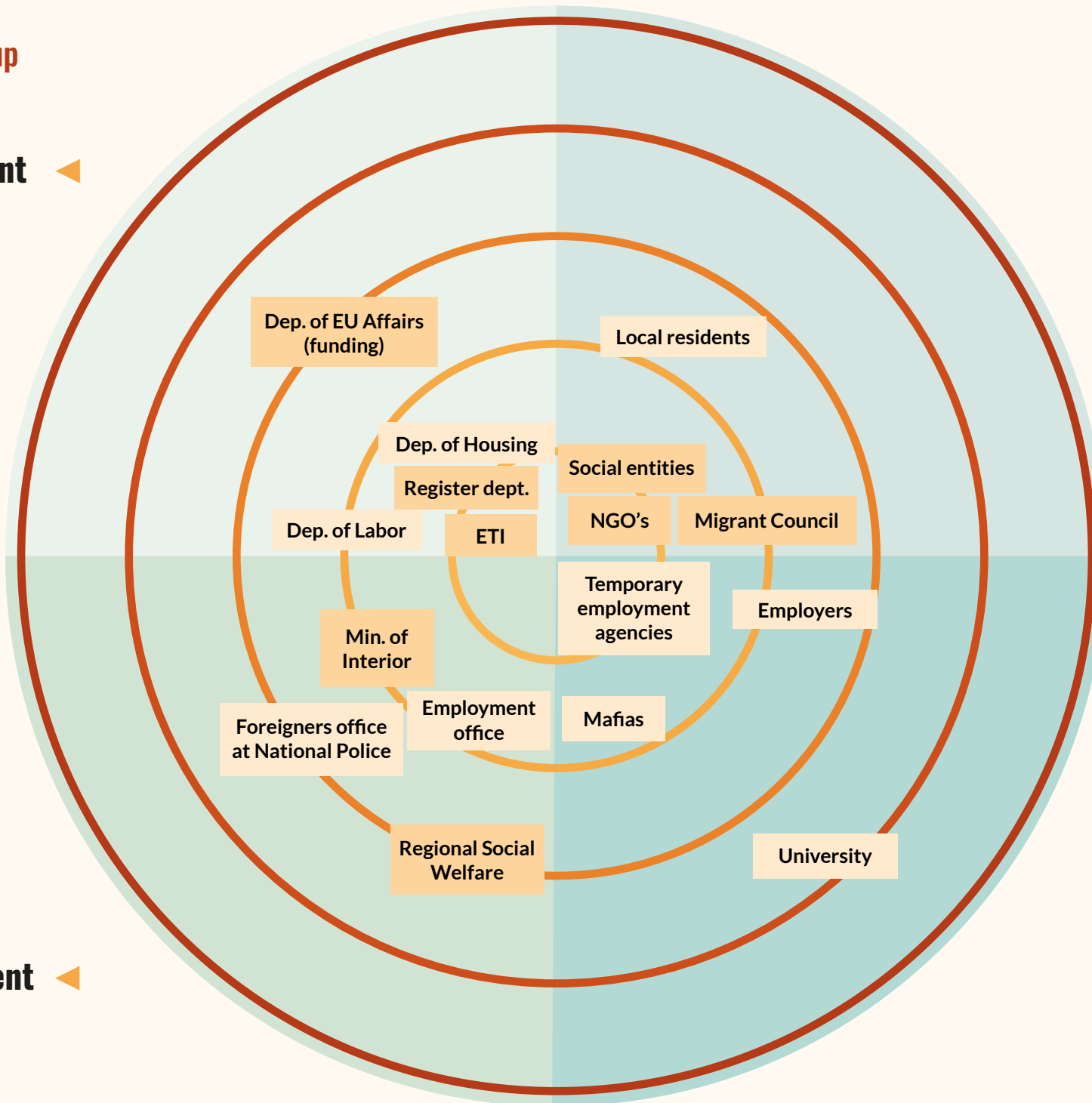
Level of coordination / co-creation with...



Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ Civil society



Other government ◀

▶ Other

Cluj-Napoca (RO)

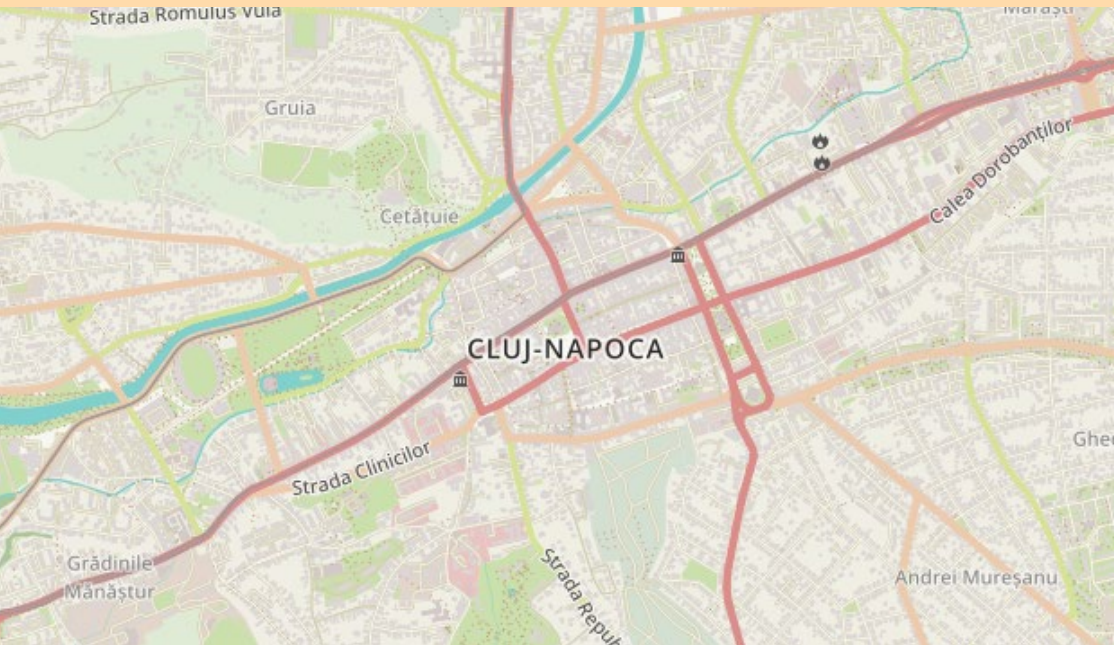
287,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Advisor to the Mayor

Leading internationalisation from the local level

Cluj-Napoca is rapidly diversifying: through international students, economic migrants and refugees from Ukraine, the city's non-Romanian population grew from 8,000 to 22,000 in the past five years. The city wants to react to this new reality by creating new services for migrants and engaging local society. In doing this, it can build on close cooperation with civil society and a beginning institutionalisation of migrant voices.

At the same time, national policies and institutions are still in the process of assuming this new reality. They continue to see migration as transitory and do not provide sufficient capacity to foster welcoming and support for newcomers.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Developing a One-Stop-Shop “Welcome to Cluj” as a space for migrant orientation, advice and activities for capacity-building and empowerment of migrant-led organisations.
- ▷ Develop the ClujID application, a local digital identity that can improve access to services and rights for all citizens, including migrants.
- ▷ As an offshoot of the digital ID, develop an app providing information and orientation for migrants.
- ▷ Engage migrants and refugees in participatory budgeting, based on a first experience with young people in the Com’ON Cluj-Napoca project.
- ▷ Provide training on rights awareness and cultural sensitivity for staff in all public institutions, including through migrant advocates and experts in migration.

Migrant population

- A total of 22,000 foreign nationals are registered, including:
 - ▷ Refugees from Ukraine (estimated 4,000).
 - ▷ Other refugees (e.g. from the Middle East).
 - ▷ Economic migrants (e.g. from Nepal and India).
 - ▷ International students.

Socio-economic context

- Dynamic economy and higher education sector.
- Multicultural tradition (Hungarian, German and Jewish minorities).
- Unemployment rate: 3.1% (Romanian North-West Region).

Challenges and needs

- Need to provide better information and legal support to Ukrainians and other newcomers.
 - ▷ Learn from experience and best practice in providing multi-lingual guidance to migrants.
- National legislation and institutions are not prepared for the current number of international arrivals, causing long waiting times in accessing residency and related rights.
- Local service providers lack information about refugee and migrant rights and as a consequence deny access.
 - ▷ Develop a better understanding of the national and European framework on migrant reception and integration.
- There is a need to take a more proactive approach to prepare society for the growing diversity - in particular non-European migrants.
 - ▷ Learn how to promote societal acceptance of migrants and communicate the benefits of their integration with the host society.
 - ▷ Learn from existing experiences on how to get better data on migration by combining the multitude of existing sources.
- Economic migrants live mostly segregated from the rest of society and might face exploitation and violations of their rights.

- Strengths**
- The city council today understands migrants as an asset and not as a threat.
 - Cluj has a well developed civil society with expertise in crucial fields (human rights, democracy, gender equality, etc).
 - An education cluster formed between the city council, universities, the school inspectorate, the county council and companies is an expression of the functioning collaboration between local government and civil society. The cluster has already provided teacher training on trauma awareness.
 - The arrival of Ukrainians has triggered the creation of new services and better cooperation between NGOs, International Organisations and public institutions.
 - The municipality has some first experience with knowledge sharing in migrant integration since it developed a first local action plan in the AMIF project “EPI” (European Pact for Integration), where it began its work on a one-stop-shop for newcomers.
- Weaknesses**
- There is a lack of targeted services for migrants and of mainstream services adapted to their specific needs.
 - Migrants face discrimination and intolerant attitudes, e.g. in housing.
 - A restrictive labour market regulation for migrants (e.g. linking a residence permit to a specific employer and job) limits job opportunities and increases the risk of exploitation.
 - Employers lack awareness about legal immigration procedures and migrant rights.
 - Most Romanian institutions still think of the country as a place of transit, and therefore are not planning how to adapt to the new migrant presence.
- Opportunities**
- The increasing number of migrants in Cluj has the potential to contribute to cultural enrichment, cross-cultural exchange and economic growth in the city.
 - The association of 20 municipalities of Cluj Napoca’s metropolitan region is a functioning strong “soft governance” mechanism that has decided to work together on migrant reception.
 - Through the mayor and the Romanian Association of Municipalities that he presides there are direct channels to the national government.
 - The city hall secured a 400 m2 downtown space to set up a one-stop-shop “Welcome to Cluj” in which IOM Romania already provides advice and language training.
 - A Cluj International Citizens Council was set up in 2023 that can be an asset in developing the city’s welcoming and integration policies based on the expertise of migrants.
 - The head of the General Inspectorate for Immigration’s county’s office has signalled his willingness to address bottlenecks in migrant registration together with the local stakeholders.
- Threats**
- Unfair employment conditions of migrants may lead to dissatisfaction, skill-waste and disillusionment.
 - Institutional capacities may not grow proportionally to the migrant population and cause bottlenecks.
 - The current preferential treatment of Ukrainians may cause polarisation among the migrant population.
 - As a result of a lack of support, migrant groups such as economic migrants and international students may face isolation and alienation.

Local policy context

Local strategies

The city has created an action plan on migrant integration through an EU project, which includes the provision of a generous downtown space to develop a One-Stop-Shop for newcomers and migrants.

The city celebrates the Cluj-Napoca Multicultural Festival within its annual “Cluj Days”. This festival aims to celebrate diversity, to promote intercultural dialogue, to improve mutual understanding and to combat stereotypes and prejudice.

Distribution of competencies and funding

Under the 44/2004 Ordinance on social integration the national government’s General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) is responsible for integration in cooperation with local authorities and associations. In reality, however, cities are not actively involved or supported in this role.

The state’s financial support for Ukrainian refugee reception changed in April 2023. The so-called 50/20 programme covering accommodation and food now covers only accommodation and is conditioned on beneficiaries being employed or registered unemployed and having children enrolled in Romanian schools. This change was decided without the involvement of cities. A working group on this theme includes NGOs, but not cities.

The Ukrainian reception policy is coordinated by the national government department responsible for emergencies, which creates a bias and hampers consolidating integration policies.

The Romanian Partnership Agreement with the EU for 2021-2027 states that necessary funding for complementary actions regarding migrant integrations will be provided through AMIF, ESF+ and ERDF. However, according to the National Funding Guidelines, currently in public consultation, it is proposed that local authorities will not be eligible for funding through AMIF.

Capacities at the IGI in issuing residence permits do not correspond to the current demand and create bottlenecks for migrants in accessing rights.

Good practice and elements to share

House of Ukraine

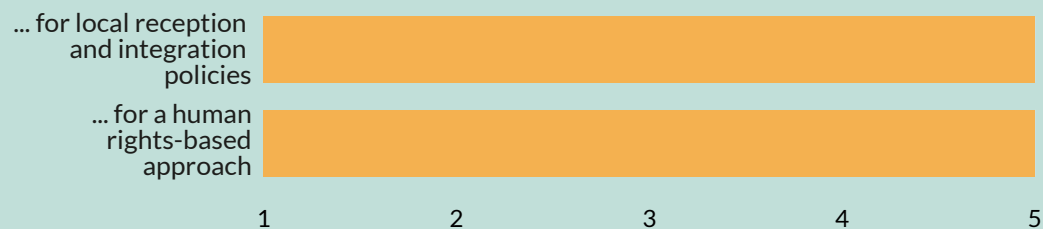
A support centre for Ukrainian citizens was set up in Cluj-Napoca in partnership with the Prefecture and the County Inspectorate for Emergency Situations in order to meet the needs of Ukrainian citizens coming to the city. The centre now functions as a community centre with funding from UNHCR.

It offers a multitude of services, including English and Romanian classes, help with accommodation, meals, legal services, employment, medical and psychological assistance, child protection or translation services, etc.

Cluj International Citizens Council

The Council was created in Oct 2023 with the support of the Romanian Institute for Peace – PATRIR, through an AMIF Project. It brings together migrants from Moldova, the Middle East, Latin America, and African communities and aims to become a tool for making Cluj a more welcoming place through the expertise and advocacy of migrants.

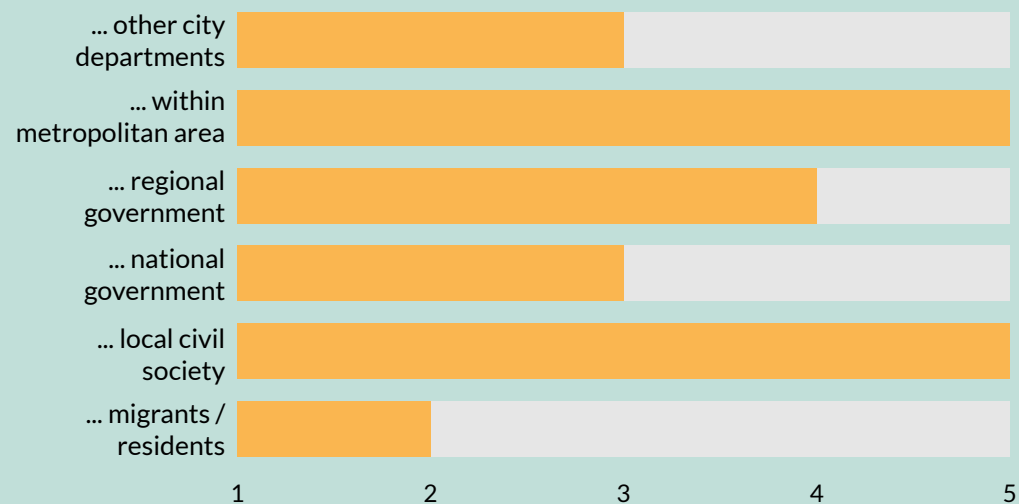
Level of political commitment...



Social climate on migration

Migrants, in particular from outside Europe, face discrimination on an everyday basis, e.g. on the housing market. At the same time, refugees from Ukraine have been welcomed generously.

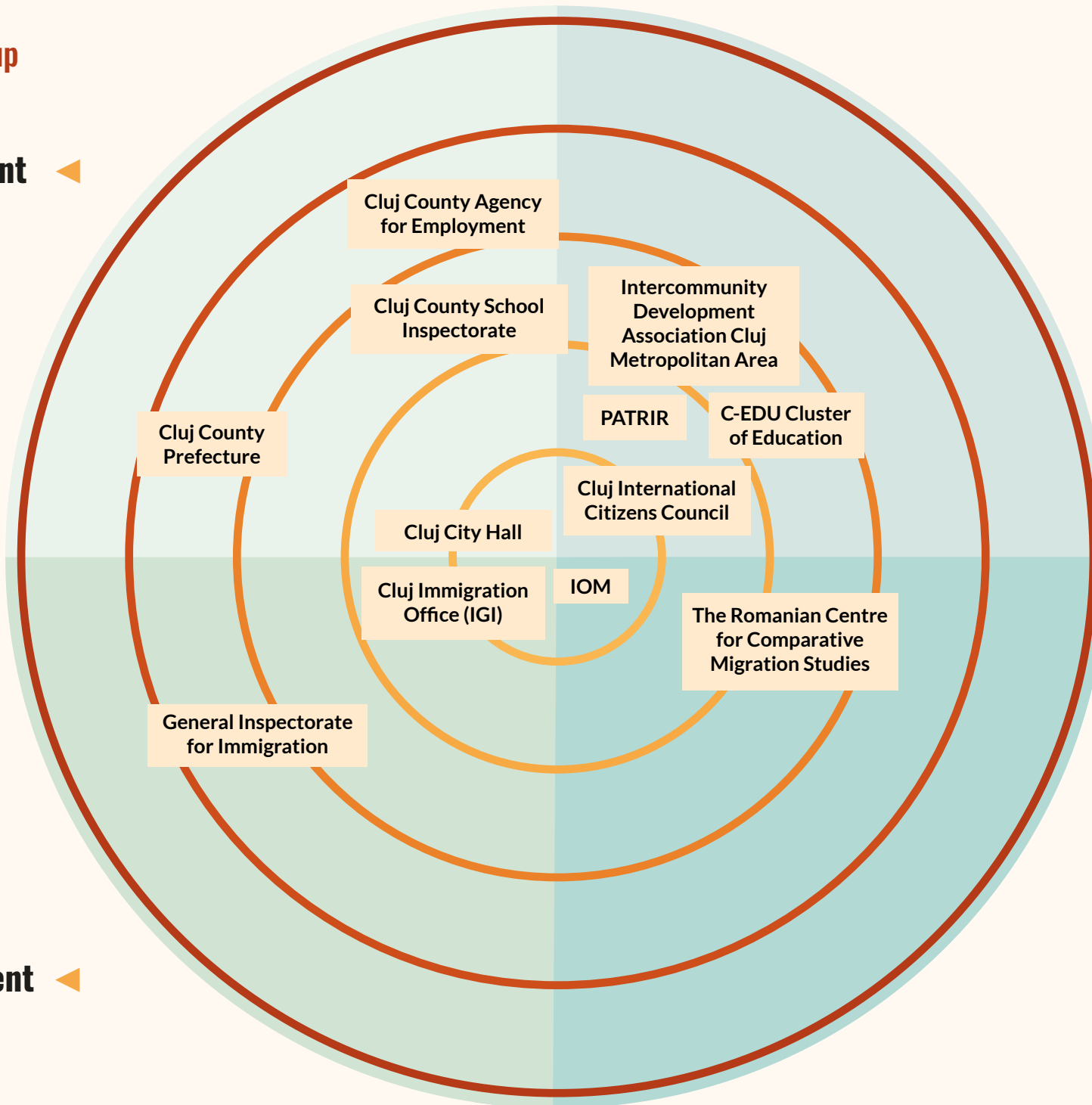
Level of coordination / co-creation with...



Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ **Civil society**



Other government ◀

▶ **Other**

Fundão (PT)

26,503 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Senior officer at Innovation and investment department

Becoming the “welcoming land”

Fundão calls itself a “welcoming land” and has been awarded as EU Capital of Inclusion and Diversity in 2023 for its commitment. Coming from a situation of demographic decline, the town with an economic base in agriculture and industry has managed a turnaround by attracting new businesses and people. Newcomers include not just tech workers from Asia and Latin America, but also migrants rescued at sea, victims of trafficking or refugees from Ukraine, underlining Fundão’s humanitarian engagement.

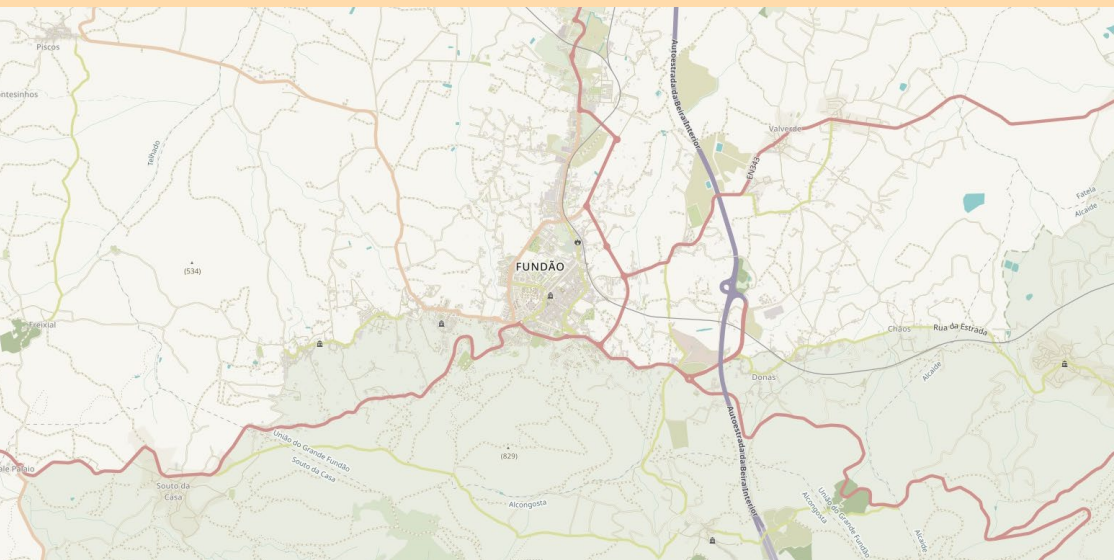
The holistic support that newcomers receive is embedded in a local ecosystem of economic and social innovation, and a well-connected network of actors who can find quick solutions to arising challenges.

In pursuing this policy further - the goal is to attract 8,000 new residents in 10 years - the city needs to ensure the social acceptance of this fast-paced social and cultural transformation by making local residents an integral part of this process and fostering their interaction with newcomers.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ A mentorship program matching migrants with local residents who could help them with finding a job, learning the language, and getting settled in.
- ▷ A cultural exchange program to bring together migrants and locals in activities such as cooking classes, language exchanges and cultural festivals.
- ▷ A sports club bringing together migrants and locals.
- ▷ A community garden for migrants and locals producing fresh products for the Migration Centre.
- ▷ Job fairs for migrants.
- ▷ A digital platform providing multilingual information and support for migrants and helping them to find jobs and language learning opportunities.
- ▷ A micro-grants program helping migrants to start their own businesses and in getting settled in.



Migrant population

- 3.737 foreign nationals (14,1%) from 73 nationalities.
- 260 refugees have been hosted since 2018 on the city's own initiative, in partnership with the Portuguese High Commission for Migrations (ACM), including people originating from search and rescue missions, the EU relocation mechanism and victims of trafficking.
- 73 Ukrainians (of originally 132) brought to Fundão at the outbreak of the war.
- 70 seasonal workers from East Asia hired by local agricultural companies.
- About 60 international vocational students from Portuguese-speaking African countries per year - some of them stay in Fundão after finishing their training.
- 1,200 highly skilled international workers recruited by local companies.
- About 500 EU citizens, often with alternative lifestyles.

Socio-economic context

- The presence of migrants has almost doubled in the last decade.
- Fundão is the Portuguese centre for cherry production - creating better working and living conditions and "fixing" seasonal workers to the town was one of the starting points for Fundão's plan to become a "welcoming land".
- Fundão faces systematic shortages of skilled labour in key sectors such as agriculture/forestry, agro-industry, metalworking and CNC, polishing and ICT.
- Fundão's unemployment rate is 6.5% (11.3% for non-Portuguese citizens).

Challenges and needs

- Further develop capacity, culture and mindset to become a welcoming town and promote social and cultural integration.
 - How to effectively raise awareness of the public about the benefits of migrant integration and the challenges that migrants face.
 - Learning about successful measures to celebrate the different cultures that make up the city's population.
- Scope for better processes for matching migrants with local work opportunities.
 - Inspiration on how to improve employment and entrepreneurship support, e.g. through job placements, mentorship programs, and entrepreneurship support.
 - Share advocacy strategies about improving procedures of recognition of foreign qualifications.
- Shortage of adequate housing for newcomers.
- Lack of awareness of human rights in some sectors of the municipality.
 - Learn about successful capacity building measures.

- Strengths**
- Fundão municipality is demonstrating leadership in attracting and welcoming migrants of a variety of origins and situations. This has been recognised by various national and European awards.
 - Fundão has demonstrated that migration can fill skill gaps in the local economy and turn around negative demographic and economic trends.
 - Fundão successfully embeds its welcoming approach to migrants in a local ecosystem around social and economic innovation without losing sight of the humanitarian side of its policies.
 - As a result of this, Fundão has placed itself on the international map.
 - The size of Fundão allows all actors to be well connected among each other, which allows finding solutions to problems quickly and in an integrated manner.
 - The town has been able to mobilise EU funds and with their help has created innovative policies and structures such as the Migration Centre.
- Weaknesses**
- There are some remaining challenges in Fundão's welcoming policies such as an insufficient housing offer as well as language and cultural barriers.
- Opportunities**
- Fundão demonstrates how migrants and refugees can contribute to offsetting declining birth rates and an ageing population, to trigger economic growth and innovation and to become a cultural enrichment and element of innovation for the local community.
 - The city council's policy of placing the city on the international map has the potential to attract positive attention and trigger new cooperation.
- Threats**
- The fast influx of migrants and refugees in Fundão strains local resources, such as healthcare, education, and housing.
 - Welcoming migrants and refugees might cause tensions among some local residents who fear competition for resources or cultural changes.

Local strategies

Welcoming land

In 2019, the Municipality of Fundão passed a resolution declaring itself a “welcoming land” for migrants. The resolution states that the municipality is committed to providing access to basic services and integration programs for all migrants, regardless of their legal status. The resolution also calls for the promotion of a human rights-based approach to migration.

MIXin2 - Fundão's Municipal Plan for Migrant Integration (2022)

Financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the plan aims to:

- ▷ better understand the reality of migrants residing in the municipality;
- ▷ welcome migrants dignity and foster their full integration into the host society;
- ▷ provide migrants with conditions to develop in a sustainable, balanced and integral way;
- ▷ improve integration and cooperation between different actors;
- ▷ promote tolerance and equality, intercultural relations and inter-religious dialogue.

Move to Fundão and Strategic Plan for Innovation

The city is running a campaign “Move to Fundão” to attract investors, start-ups and migrants. The city council has set up a business centre, a number of co-working spaces, a business incubator space and a FabLab. It provides support to businesses in setting up in Fundão or in recruiting staff from abroad. The city also supports the reception and integration of foreign workers.

Housing support for newcomers

Access to housing is an important area for the municipality's reception and integration policies. Since 2012, the city council has mobilised a housing stock of about 250 centrally located private flats, which are rented to newcomers working for local companies for affordable prices. The council subsidises renovation and grants discounts on the housing tax to owners who are willing to cede their flats to the city council for a given time. Owners also get a yearly maintenance allowance.

Distribution of competencies and funding

The Office for Inclusion and Diversity (GID - Gabinete de Inclusão e Diversidade) is responsible for promoting inclusion and diversity at the local level. Its scope of work includes initiatives to support and integrate migrants, refugees and other vulnerable populations in the local community.

The municipality provides access to basic services healthcare, education, housing, language classes, integration services. The municipality has also taken a number of other steps to support migrants, including:

- ▷ providing financial assistance to migrants who are in need;
- ▷ working with local businesses to create jobs for migrants;
- ▷ providing language classes and other integration services;
- ▷ working to combat discrimination and xenophobia.

According to the MIPLEX (2020), Portugal is among the most inclusive countries in Europe when it comes to migrant integration. Fundão has established direct channels to the government's High Commissariat for Migrations, Foreigners and Borders Service (now Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum), and is proactive in securing funding from the national AMIF programme.

Good practice and elements to share

Centre for Migration

The Centre for Migration was opened in 2016 in a former catholic seminar on the outskirts of Fundão, with funding from the Asylum, Migration and Integration fund. Its first purpose was to provide better living conditions for agricultural workers (about 50 per year). Later, other groups, such as vocational students from abroad, Geneva convention refugees and refugees from Ukraine also found a first dwelling in the centre. At the end of 2023, 62 refugees, 75 vocational students and about 30 seasonal workers were hosted there.

In addition to that, 107 refugees received holistic support in the centre by psychologists, social workers, interpreters from the inclusion and diversity team. The team follows a 3-step pathway, to first cover basic needs, then support inclusion through language training, leisure activities and finding school, training or work; and finally in supporting autonomy.

Since 2016, 260 people have been hosted in the centre. Through the intermediation of the municipality, 38 private accommodations have been found for 123 former residents of the centre. More recently, the centre also offers activities targeting the whole population.

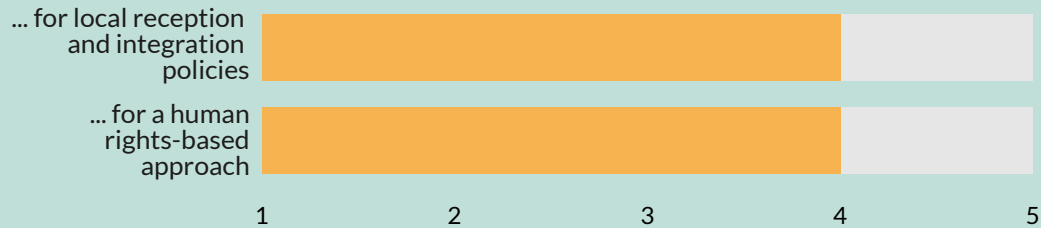
Pilot training with victims of trafficking from East Timor

In 2022, Fundão agreed with the Portuguese government to host 180 of a larger group of East Timorian migrants who had been trafficked to Portugal. As the National Agency for Vocational training was unwilling to help, the city consulted with employers in the agro-sector about needed qualifications, and set of specific training in tree cutting, cheese making, etc. with them. As a result of this initiative, 77 of the workers have now found work in Fundão.

Migration section in Journal de Fundão

The local newspaper, which was created in 1946 and had an important role in the Portuguese revolution, now hosts a regular section to give a voice to and report about newcomers in the community.

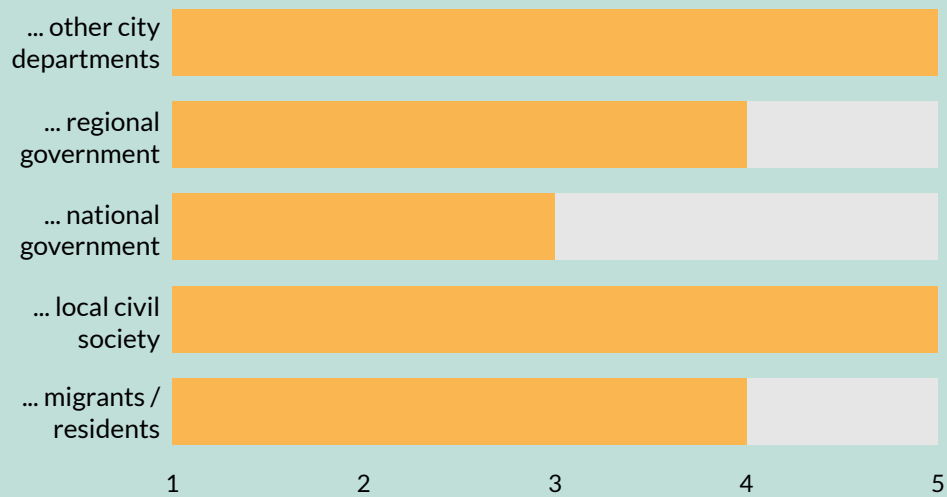
Level of political commitment...



Social climate on migration

Migrants are in general well-received in Fundão. However, there is a risk that the city's welcoming policies might be perceived as privileging them over the established residents.

Level of coordination / co-creation with...



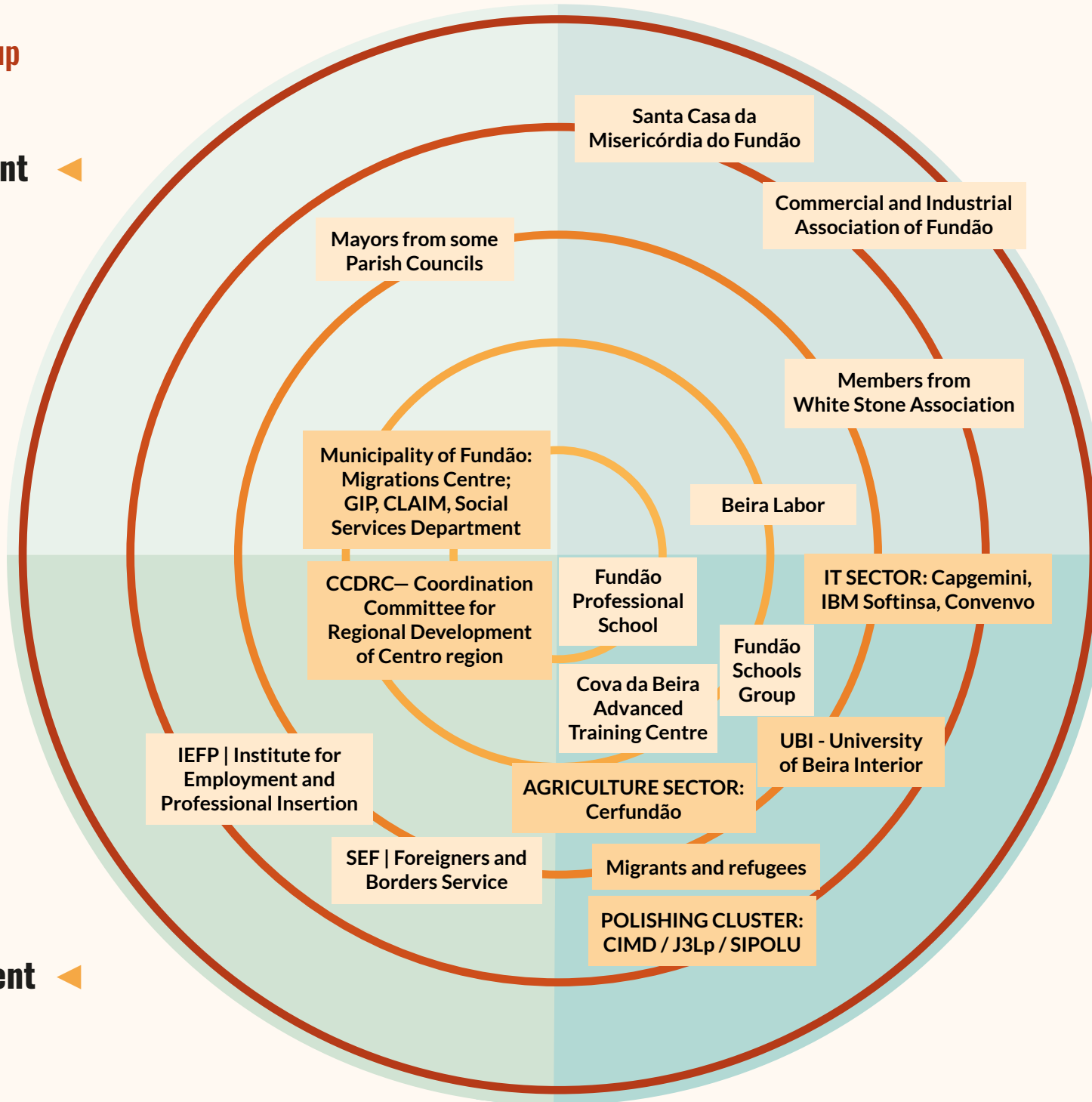
Urbact Local Group

Local government

Civil society

Other government

Other



Migrant population

- Mostly temporary population landing on Lampedusa in small boats from Tunisia and Libya. They are hosted in a “hotspot” on the island and within three days are shipped to Sicily by national authorities. More than 150,000 arrived in 2023.
- 209 settled non-Italian nationals, of which 82 males, 127 females. The biggest nationality groups are Romanians (104), Pakistani (13) and Senegalese (13) working in elderly care, tourism and fishing.

Socio-economic context

- Low average age and significant school population (around 850).
- Tourist economy - 250,000 overnight stays per year.
- Residual, but significant fishing industry. Fishermen symbolise the readiness to rescue anyone in danger, as provided for by the unwritten law of the sea. However, the boats in which migrants arrive are economically damaging because of the debris causing damage to fishing boats and nets.
- Strong dependency on the import of goods and services from Sicily.
- Crucial role of commuter workers from mainland Sicily (doctors, nurses, teachers, lawyers and other professionals, police forces) - up to 1,000 people work on the island as a result of the arrival of migrants.

Challenges and needs

- Poor level or lack of services, both for locals and temporary migrant population, in particular regarding lack of adequate healthcare.
 - Exchange experiences about trauma-informed healthcare and psychological care.
 - Learn about the social inclusion of new arrivals.
- Infrastructure strained by migrant arrivals - e.g. port infrastructure blocked by migrant boats and debris, accumulation of waste on the island, need to provide coffins for migrants having died at sea.
- Facing the contradictions of EU migration policies while having no say over reception policies.
- Representational and moral problem of being associated with migrant landings and deaths.
 - Reclaim an active role for the local authority on what is happening on Lampedusa and contribute to shaping a new narrative about the island.

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths**
- Clear awareness of what they need after 30 years of migrant arrivals.
 - Involvement of citizens in providing support to migrants.
 - Engagement in international city exchanges and diplomacy.
 - Special attention is paid to Lampedusa by national and international institutions.
- Weaknesses**
- Small municipality with limited capacity (60 staff).
 - Lack of power to co-develop reception policies or services such as healthcare.
- Opportunities**
- “Lampedusa as a brand” for welcoming and commitment to reception and to saving people’s lives.
 - Attention and potential support of private and non-profit actors from all over the world.
- Threats**
- Constant increase of migrant landings as a result of climate crisis, African demographic trends, political instability and conflicts make current reception utterly inadequate - peak of migrant landings in September 2023 has only been managed thanks to special efforts by all actors involved.
 - Possible evolutions in national and EU migration policies and related decisions. For instance the menacing plan to build a huge reception centre for long stay on the island.
 - Geographical and demographical marginality means that costs to improve services for an island of only 6.5k inhabitants are objectively excessive.
 - Potential conflict between migrant reception infrastructure and tourism.
 - Environmental impact of mass landings (e.g. generation of special waste).

Local policy context

Local strategies

Local policies are not easy to identify and implement due to the external management of migration flows by agents of the central state and the Red Cross, which are in charge of first reception.

The municipality supports events like the yearly commemoration of the 3rd October 2013 shipwreck, whose main message is the universal right to have access to safe channels of mobility and the duty of all countries, institutions and individuals to prevent the loss of human lives.

The municipality has implemented projects aimed at raising awareness among local, national and European publics on the necessity of guaranteeing the dignity and fundamental rights of migrants.

Distribution of competencies and funding

Due to Italian legislation on the management of migrant landings and first reception, Lampedusa’s institutions have no active role in this area, finding themselves in the uncomfortable position of having to deal with its effects without having the powers to act effectively and sustainably.

At the same time, the municipality has contacts with regional and national government, and both have acknowledged the island’s specific situation when it comes to providing health services. Several times the island has been supported by Italian governments through tax relief or direct funding as a form of mitigation of the effects of its exposure to migratory flows.

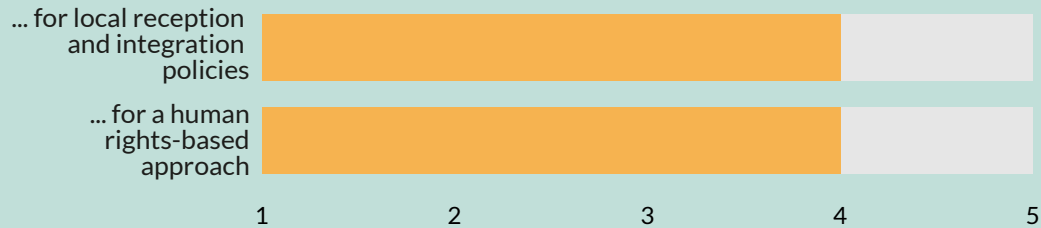
Good practice and elements to share

International Advocacy Work

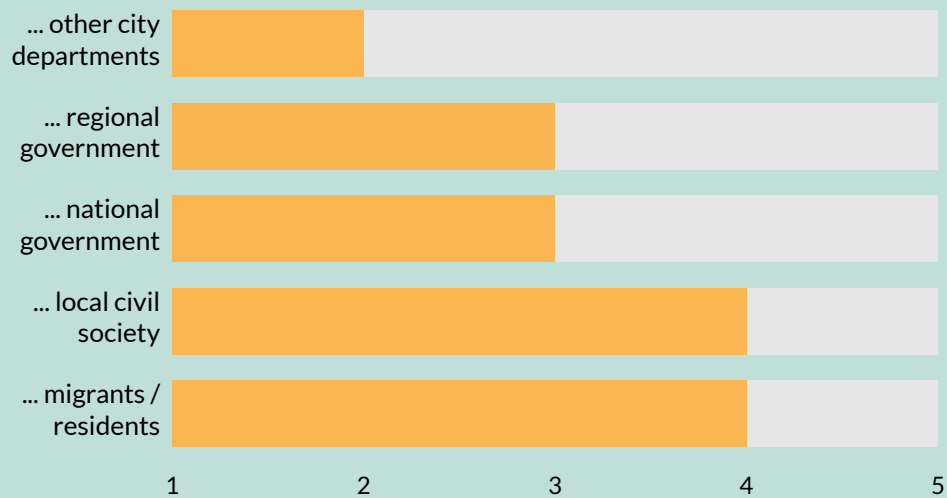
Lampedusa’s lasting commitment to migrant rights is reflected in a very active advocacy work at national, EU and international level. Lampedusa has set up and chairs the Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN), which aims to address problems related to geographical and institutional marginality of places on Europe’s borders, such as migration, and to carry out advocacy for humane migration policies that respect fundamental rights and are in line with the UN’s Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees.

As a member of UCLG, Lampedusa has led a political process of the drafting and approval of the Lampedusa Charter for Dignified Mobility and Territorial Solidarity.

Level of political commitment...



Level of coordination / co-creation with...



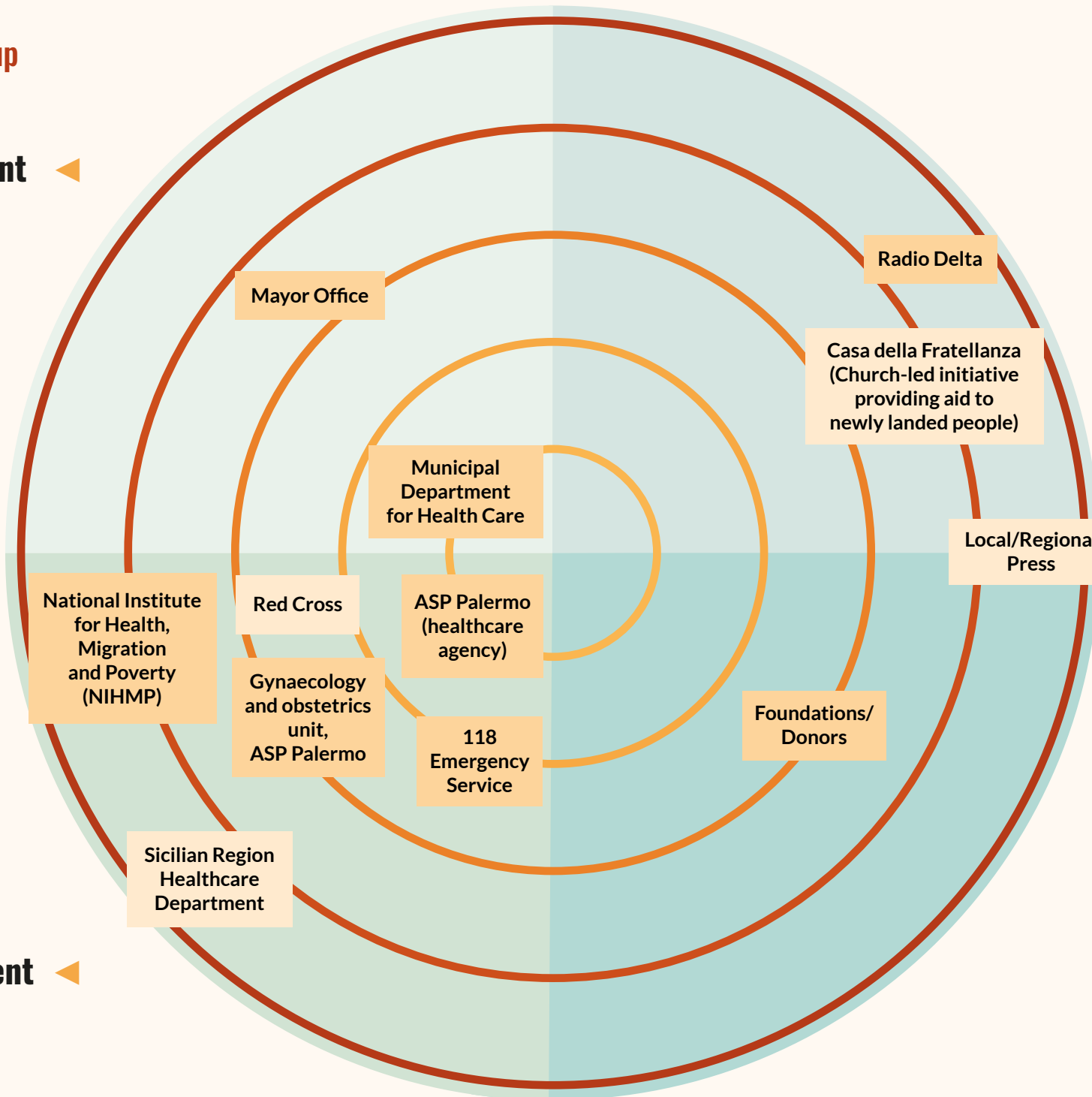
Social climate on migration

The local population is always ready to rescue people at risk of dying at sea and to support the newly arrived. However, there is a feeling of tiredness of having to stem an unproportionate weight of the consequences of the EU's migration policies and being a place of migrant deaths.

Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ **Civil society**



Other government ◀

▶ **Other**

Liège (BE)

195,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Project manager for social cohesion and participation

Strengthening cooperation to become a welcoming city

Liège is a city of migration, whose political leadership recognised the long tradition of welcoming people from other countries. The city can count on a densely knit and experienced network of civil society organisations that lead on this work with public support.

But the multitude of actors that work on newcomer reception and integration is also a challenge: in terms of coordinating the support offer from the side of the city council and in terms of understanding it from the side of newcomers. Adding to

this complexity, regional and national level actors have key competences and do not always align with the city's objectives.

The adoption of a “welcoming city” council motion provides a new framework for public-civil society cooperation and also raises the expectations for making Liège a more inclusive city. There are several projects, such as a city ID card, a one-stop-shop and a development of social economy initiatives for migrant inclusion that have a high potential for achieving this.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Develop a One-Stop-Shop for migrants between the city council and several other key institutions.
- ▷ Develop a local ID card as a tool for safeguarding human rights and for strengthening local identity.
- ▷ Generate a printed and online guide for migrants, municipal services and CSOs with essential information and a complete listing of services and associations that newcomers can benefit from.
- ▷ Make better use of the social economy to support labour market integration of migrants.



Migrant population

- 39,134 (20%) hold a foreign nationality, 60,000 are born abroad (31%).
- Asylum seekers and refugees - there are 3 reception centres for asylum seekers around Liège.
- A significant number of undocumented migrants - 559 undocumented migrants used night shelters in 2022.
- Economic migrants from EU and non-EU countries.

Socio-economic context

- Liège is a growing cultural and education hub.
- The city has gone through a major urban and economic process of restructuring in the past two decades.
- Lowest per capita income of all Walloon municipalities and a high number of minimum income beneficiaries.
- 8.4% unemployment (Liège Province, 2022).

Challenges and needs

- The multitude of actors and services related to reception and integration -between different city departments, administrations and civil society- is difficult to navigate for newcomers.
- Some actors and services do not exploit the full potential for cooperation, e.g. between integration and mainstream employment services.
 - Learn from other experiences on setting up one-stop-shops for migrants and in providing guidance.
- Migrants face difficulties in entering the labour market, including through their administrative situation, employers' mindsets, the lack of childcare and racism.
 - Exchange about innovative ways to use the social economy for labour market integration.
- In spite of the city council's inclusive policy, e.g. in providing healthcare, migrants without a residence permit face many obstacles in accessing rights, e.g. in housing.
 - Share experiences with other cities interested in developing local ID cards as a tool to guarantee fundamental rights for all residents.

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths**
- Liège is recognised as a city of migration - it has a long history of migration and a highly diverse population, that is acknowledged by its leadership, not the least in the city council motion to become a “Welcoming city”.
 - The city can count on a very engaged civil society with long-standing experience in the area.
 - Strong symbolic local identity and local pride to be “liégeois”.
- Weaknesses**
- There are coordination problems that hamper the effectiveness of policies:
 - ▷ within the city administration between different departments,
 - ▷ with the NGO sector,
 - ▷ with regional government,
 - ▷ with the national government (responsible for refugee reception).
- Opportunities**
- The city council motion “Liège, a hospitable city” (adopted in 2017) sets a goal to aspire to and provides a framework for cooperation between city council and civil society through the Welcoming Liège Coalition.
 - Fedasil, the federal agency responsible for the reception of asylum seekers, wants to work more closely with cities and civil society, and is interested in seconding staff to local one-stop-shops.
- Threats**
- The policies and discourses of national government are exclusionary and undermine local efforts - the federal elections in 2024 could further undermine a future national government’s human rights commitment, in particular regarding policies towards migrants without a residence permit.
 - Rising rent prices coupled with Fedasil’s policy of non-reception negatively impact access to housing and increase homelessness.

Local policy context

Local strategies

Hospitable city motion

In November 2017, the Liège City Council unanimously voted a motion committing the City and its services to the reception and inclusion of migrant people on its territory. As a follow-up, a civil society collective was formed in a process of citizen participation, bringing together associations, trade unions and citizens. Since then, meetings with the Mayor and the departments and services of Liège have been organised in order to share observations and proposals for more inclusive policies, and to improve the reception of Liège residents of foreign origin in a spirit of dialogue.

2020-2025 Social Cohesion Plan

The plan has a budget of 2.6m € and is organised along the three priority areas socio-professional integration, housing and health. Migrants are one of the 6 target groups of the strategy.

2020-2025 Transversal Strategic Programme

Two out of five strategic objectives - to fight poverty and social inequality, to promote good relations in all neighbourhoods - are directly relevant for this project. The ambition to “make Liège a model of an inclusive, supportive and emancipating city” is embodied in 49 priority actions in areas such as housing, solidarity with people in precarious situations, fostering integration and emancipation, strengthening social ties as well as developing participation, information and communication.

Other strategic commitments include the creation of a **Reception Service for Asylum Seekers (SADA)** in 1993 and the adoption of the motion “**Liège against Racism**” in 1995. Liège also holds the vice-presidency of the “European Coalition of Cities against Racism” - ECCAR.

Distribution of competencies and funding

The reception of migrants is a federal competence (FEDASIL) whereas the region leads on integration through the agency CRIPEL (Regional Center for the Integration of Foreigners and People of Foreign Origin). In 2022, 1,735 newcomers have started their integration pathway with CRIPEL, 995 of which are registered in Liège. Regional integration support consists in particular of a standardised integration programme for newcomers from outside the EU.

Municipalities have formal competencies in areas including registration, education, housing, but above all have a fundamental role to play in the operationalisation of some of these policies by the Public Social Welfare Center and City Administration.

Good practice and elements to share

Intercultural training and support at Interra asbl

The NGO Interra designs activities involving newcomers and established residents that follow an asset-based approach that starts from the skills and ambitions of the person, turns newcomers from “beneficiaries” to protagonists and offers flexible support towards employment. Interra’s activities include workshops organised by newcomers to transfer their knowledge to a mixed group of newcomers and locals; intercultural communication training provided by a mixed team of newcomers and established residents; a mentoring scheme and an inclusive business incubator.

Hospi’Jobs project (NGO Le Monde des Possibles, Research and training institute IRFAM)

This 15 weeks training prepares participants for working in cleaning, catering, and logistics jobs in the Health Sector. It provides 90h of French training with a vocational profile, a job placement of 120h and 178h of individualised accompaniment to develop and communicate skills and conduct job search.

Funded by the regional employment service, the training aims to develop integrated alternatives to the official “linear” regional integration pathway, which puts general integration and language training first and labour market integration second. It has demonstrated that migrants are able to find decent work without having strong language skills from the outset.

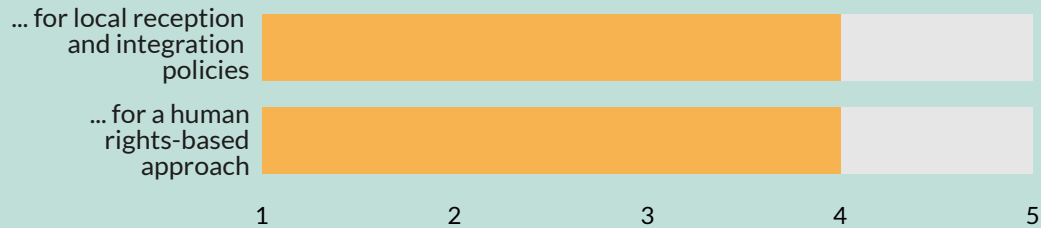
“La Bobine” language support for women

The NGO “La Bobine” aims to strengthen the autonomy of migrant women through training and support. Every day, about 200 people pass through the NGOs office in the arrival neighbourhood Droixhe.

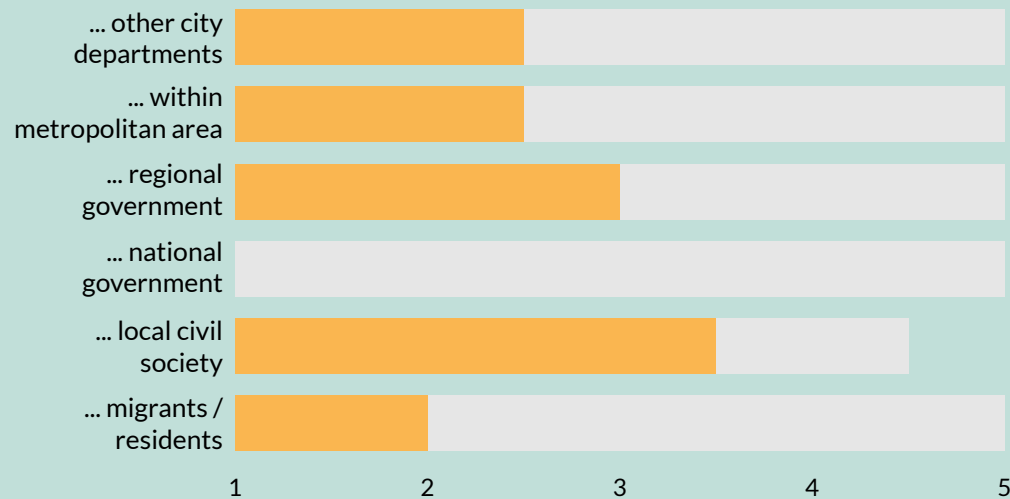
The language support in La Bobine is remarkable in that it:

- ▷ trains young mothers while their children (0-3 years) go to creche in the same building;
- ▷ offers stratified support, from alphabetisation classes to courses with a professional profile;
- ▷ has advanced students participate in the development of learning materials.

Level of political commitment...



Level of coordination / co-creation with...



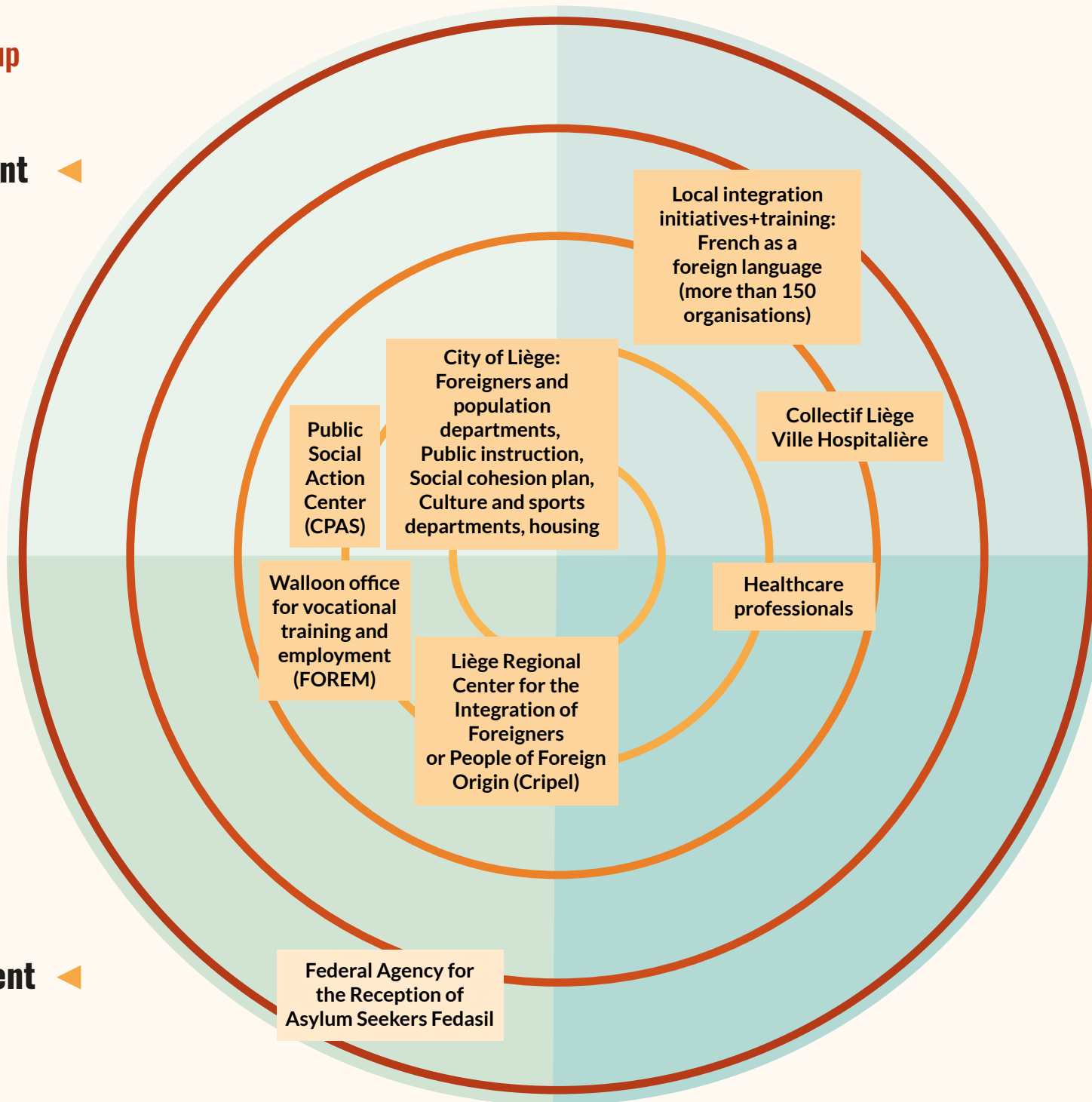
Social climate on migration

There is a high level of acceptance towards migration and diversity in the city, but the more negative discourse of national government actors has also effects at the local level. Pressure from the federal level is being felt by the municipalities, and Liège is trying to resist it to the best of its ability, with the help of a strong network of civil society organisations.

Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ **Civil society**



Other government ◀

▶ **Other**

Osijek (HR)

96,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Officer at Department for Social Protection, Pensioners and Health - responsible for refugees, migrants and other vulnerable groups

Local initiative in continuing the success story of Ukrainian refugee reception

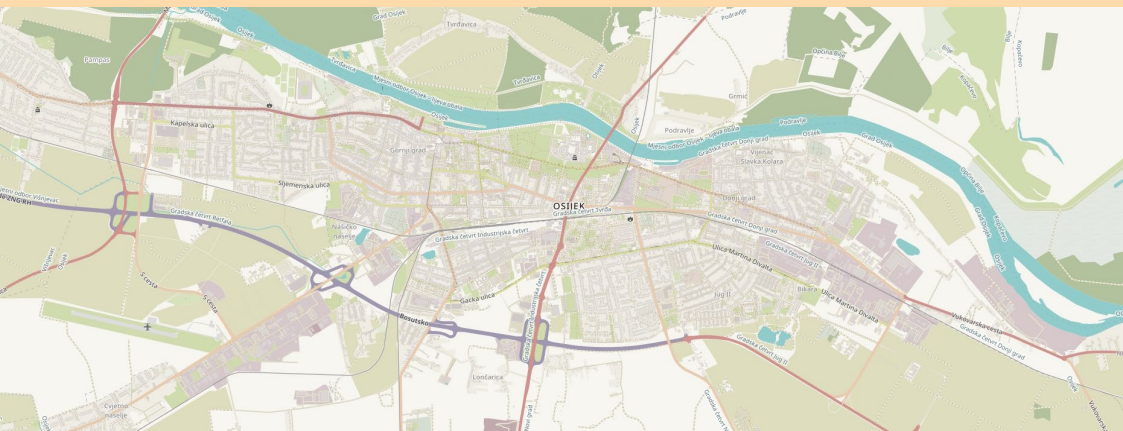
Osijek's civil society is proud of having managed the arrival of newcomers from Ukraine - about 800 people came in a very short amount of time and found shelter in the city. After initial support, cultural activities, employment and language learning was organised quickly, mobilising 120 volunteers. This experience reminded many locals of their own story of forced displacement in the 1990s, which meant that they could easily relate to and sympathise with the newcomers. In addition to that, the city and civil society could build on the experience of managing the arrival of refugees in 2015. Although back then, most people moved on, it created a pilot for

cooperation between the city council and NGOs. Almost two years after their arrival, about 500 Ukrainians continue to stay in Osijek, but the initial dynamism of reception seems to ebb away. National government has no plan about what should be the next steps and there are less resources available for local actors providing support. But the capacity that has been built up locally suggests continuing the successful path that has been started. First steps in doing this would be to further improve stakeholder coordination and to launch new initiatives, e.g. to foster the economic integration of Ukrainians with external funding.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Develop a stakeholder exchange platform for better coordination.
 - ▷ Start an initiative to assess and record qualifications of job-seeking refugees.
 - ▷ Set up a social agency for temporary job placements
- for locals and newcomers, with the support of the Public Employment Service. This could be coupled with support in the recognition of qualifications and language training where needed.





Migrant population

- Refugees from Ukraine (about 500).
- Economic migrants from Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines working in industry, e.g. in hospitality industries and in construction.

Socio-economic context

- Shrinking population.
- Slow and steady real increase of GDP per capita.
- 12% unemployment in Osijek-Baranja county (11/2023).
- 2022 was the first year in more than a decade in which Croatia registered a positive migration balance, mostly through inflows from Ukraine and Asian countries.

Challenges and needs

- Need to move from emergency to mid-long term integration support for Ukrainian refugees.
 - Develop a mechanism for stakeholder coordination.
- Obstacles to labour market integration (e.g. slow and costly national procedures and language requirements for the recognition of foreign qualifications, lack of childcare).
- Some refugees have not acquired sufficient language skills as they did not envisage staying for a longer period. Now there is a shortage of language courses, in particular those that offer an official certification.
- Lack a long-term vision and support for the future development of the economic integration of refugees and asylum seekers.
- Integration needs of foreign workers are not taken into account by state.
- Institutions such as schools and healthcare providers are not prepared for dealing with newcomers.
 - Learn about how to build long-term reception and integration support structures, e.g. for economic integration.
- Prejudice and sentiments of refugees receiving privileged treatment.
 - Learn about initiatives that can reduce stereotypes among the population.
- Data on migrants (age, educational and professional background of working foreigners) is scarce, distributed over many sources and not systematised.
- Funding of international donors is decreasing and relevant EU funding (e.g. national AMIF programmes) is not available at present for continuing support.

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths**
- Osijek has an experienced group of civil society organisations, many of which go back to building trust after the Yugoslav wars.
 - Managing refugee arrivals from the Middle East in 2015 (most of whom moved on) and of Ukrainians after 2022 generated valuable experience and capacity in working together in partnership with local stakeholders.
- Weaknesses**
- The Croatian policy framework for the recognition of foreign qualifications is slow and costly.
 - Policies for employment support and self-employment are inefficient.
 - Many newcomers from Ukraine are not ready to make a longer-term commitment to staying in Osijek and starting to build a life or have unrealistic expectations.
 - Many refugees from Ukraine have not taken language classes and are facing language barriers.
- Opportunities**
- Migrants have the potential and qualifications to fill vacancies in the Croatian economy, e.g. in the health sector.
 - The social economy has a huge potential for facilitating labour market integration of newcomers (but which is not yet fully recognised in society).
 - Osijek's stakeholder network is very experienced in developing projects with EU funding.
- Threats**
- The overall economic and demographic situation in Eastern Slavonia is not positive.
 - National policies for recruiting foreign workers are prone to creating exploitative situations.
 - There is a lack of political interest and commitment in the topic of migration.
 - National government is careful in its messaging about refugees from Ukraine and not promising unlimited right to stay, both for political reasons and in order to avoid giving the impression of privileging the refugees over the locals.

Local policy context

Local strategies

Plan for the sustainable development of social services for the period 2021-2022, includes "Encouraging networking of social welfare institutions and other social service providers" as priority measure.

Osijek was the first city in Croatia to have a plan on refugee integration.

Distribution of competencies and funding

There has been a package of measures from the national government in support for refugees from Ukraine, covering housing, subsistence and access to healthcare. There are subsidised employment measures for third country residents covering 50 to 100% for up to four months.

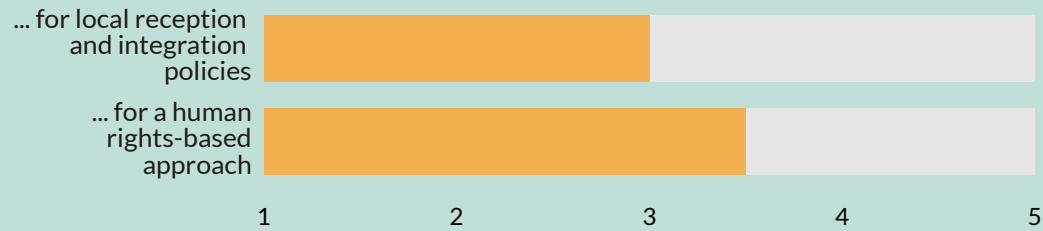
Local authorities have relevant responsibilities in housing, economy, urban planning, social services, social welfare, health and international cooperation. However, there is no defined and resourced framework for migrant integration.

Good practice and elements to share

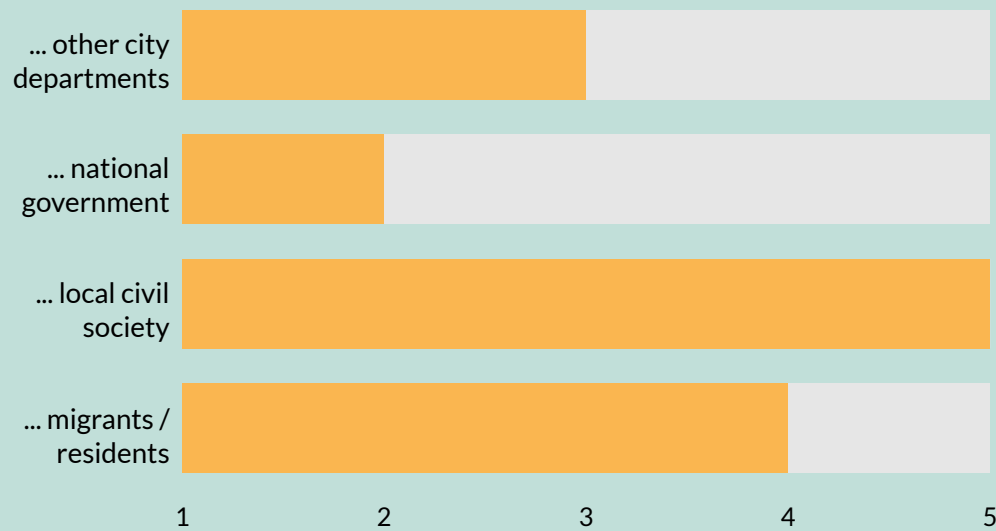
Ukrainian community space

With the support of the civil sector, a space for socialisation and exchange information was provided to the Ukrainian community. The Ukrainian community has self-organised activities and, according to needs, carries out childcare activities so that family members can work full-time or part-time.

Level of political commitment...



Level of coordination / co-creation with...



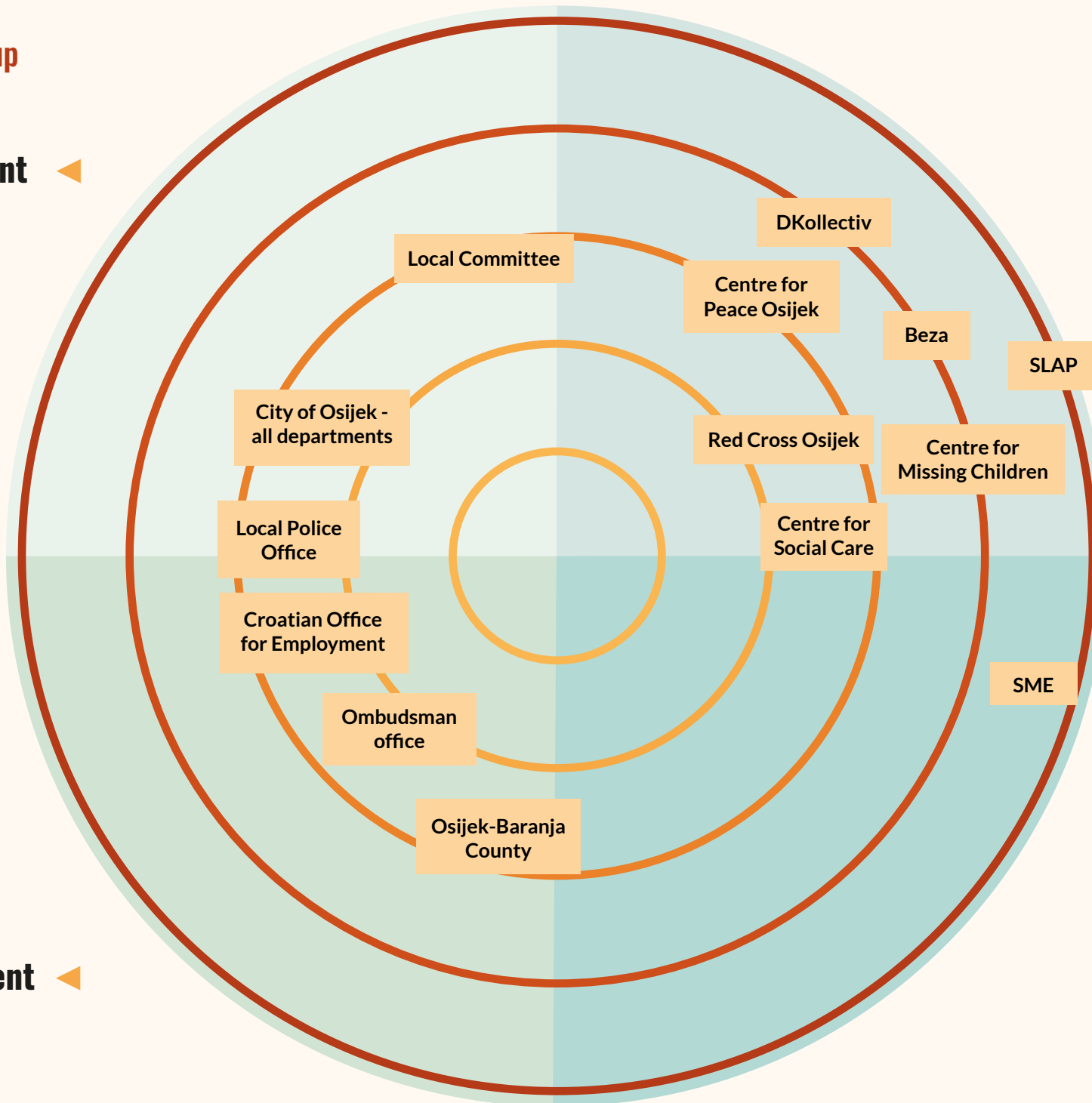
Social climate on migration

Ukrainian refugees might be seen as receiving an unfair advantage due to their privileged treatment by the municipality (e.g. free transport and free entry to municipal services).

Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ **Civil society**



Other government ◀

▶ **Other**

Département Seine-Saint-Denis (FR)

1,645,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Project Manager for international solidarity and stakeholder coordination with ANVITA

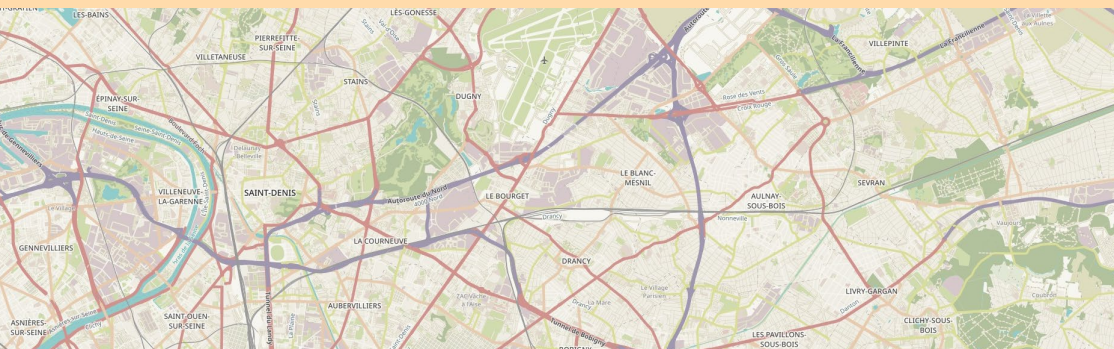
Coordinating a reception and integration strategy informed by human rights

Historically and demographically, Seine-Saint-Denis is a land of immigration. Diversity is in the département's DNA, as illustrated by the 130 different nationalities and 177 languages spoken. It is also a land of contrasts, with, on one hand, the highest number of new jobs created in the whole Paris region, and, on the other hand, social polarisation, where many residents face problems in accessing housing, healthcare and social support.

The dense superposition of various administrations (cities, département, region and state) with their respective services, and the rich landscape of associations represent an asset. But it

can also be difficult to understand and navigate for newcomers and therefore represent an obstacle in accessing their rights.

Building on its long-standing commitment to providing unconditional welcome, the département wants to improve the coordination between all actors to develop a joined-up approach to reception and integration. In doing this, it also plans to work directly with migrants as experts by experience to better adapt the services to the diversity of needs and life situations that characterise this territory.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Set-up a stakeholder coordination mechanism on migrant reception and inclusion.
- ▷ Building an innovative strategy for migrant reception and inclusion that brings together all stakeholders.
- ▷ Develop a guide to refugees' rights and practical procedures (residence permits, housing, work, health, etc.), produced in several languages by refugees.
- ▷ Create a "Maison de l'hospitalité": a third-place "one-stop shop" bringing together all those involved in migration (migrants, public bodies, associations, vocational training, students, researchers) and offering legal and social advice, vocational training, spaces for associations, cultural and creative space.
- ▷ Carry out an in-depth quantitative and qualitative analysis of the situation with the help of researchers from the local group.
- ▷ Improve professional training on migrants' rights and needs.

Migrant population

- 400,000 foreigners (24% of the population; 20% from countries outside the EU, biggest nationality groups from Northern and Western Africa, China and Sri Lanka).
- 505,660 foreign-born residents (31%).
- At least 45,000 people without a residence permit (based on 2022 number of beneficiaries of Aide Médicale d'Etat, a healthcare policy for migrants without papers, in 2022. Actual numbers are likely higher).
- 4,200 first applications for asylum in the département in 2022.
- 1,500 unaccompanied minors are currently supported by the département.
- Around 500 people from Ukraine are still being housed in emergency accommodation centres in Seine-Saint-Denis (managed by the state).

Socio-economic context

- Seine-Saint-Denis is the territory with the highest number of jobs created in Ile-de-France Region, however, growth does not benefit the whole population.
- In 2019, 14% of immigrants were unemployed, compared to 9% of French nationals by birth.
- Some young migrants work in the informal economy, including networks trafficking cigarettes, medicines, drugs, etc.
- 30% of Seine-Saint-Denis' population are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, compared to 15% for the rest of France.
- Severe situation of housing exclusion, which unproportionally affects migrants: in spite of having the highest social housing rate in mainland France (32% of the housing stock), only 11,000 out of 210,000 household applying could be provided with social housing in 2021.
- Informal migrant "camps" and squats and informal sub-letting arrangements are common.
- One third of all housing evictions of the region take place in Seine-Saint-Denis, although the département only has a share of 13% of the regional population.

Challenges and needs

- Many residents with a precarious legal status are excluded from basic rights such as decent housing or healthcare.
- Problems of take up of rights, as social support services do not reach their target groups, in spite of being entitled to them.
 - Learn how to improve advocacy to identify obstacles to fundamental rights.
- In some areas of the public administration staff face challenges to understand migrant rights and needs.
 - Learn from training experiences in other local authorities.
- Lack of coordination between the multitude of actors from different public administrations (local, département, region, state) and civil society.
- Lack of transparency of the service offer for newcomers.
 - Need for tools to build and improve local governance.
 - Need to learn how to apply methods of co-creation with migrants.
- Negative societal climate on migration.
 - Tools to improve the quality of the public debate of migration.

- Strengths**
- Long experience in receiving vulnerable migrants and working with a multicultural population, making Seine-Saint-Denis an arrival territory and a springboard for their future integration.
 - Political leadership and support for unconditional welcome.
 - Applying human rights standard in areas of its competence.
 - Seine-Saint-Denis is the first Department to hold two state labels certifying its commitment to promote diversity and equality.
 - Civil servants in the county represent the diversity of the population.
 - Committed civil society.
 - Seine-Saint-Denis political leaders are active in national debates about migration and human rights. Since 2013, the département holds the co-chairmanship of the committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (CSIPDHR).
- Weaknesses**
- Institutional framework for asylum and migration policies is designed and implemented at the national level, and leaves little influence to local governments.
 - As a county, Seine-Saint-Denis does not have the same proximity to citizens and leverage that city councils have in welcoming migrants.
 - Welcoming and ensuring the integration of migrants is a challenge in a territory that faces many socio-economic issues.
 - The staff of the Social Action Department have little time to dedicate to tasks outside their core work.
- Opportunities**
- Seine-Saint-Denis is a member of the French ANVITA network of Welcoming Cities and Territories and is in the process of joining the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities programme.
 - Seine-Saint-Denis has direct access to ESF+ and manages a budget of 35m.
 - The 2024 Olympic Games are an opportunity to raise the profile of SSD, particularly in terms of sports facilities and the legacy of infrastructure, as well as the possibility of raising the profile of the languages spoken in the region.
 - Seine-Saint-Denis was selected in the national programme "Territoires zéro non-recours" ("Territories where no one is deprived of their rights") to help people access benefits and assistance to which they are entitled.
- Threats**
- Restrictive national framework for refugee reception.
 - Anxiogenic discourses and rise of extremism.
 - Current social tensions and high level of terrorist threat.
 - Associations and social workers are denouncing how the Olympic Games are used as a pretext to close down homeless shelters and ban outreach work in certain areas.

Local strategies

Seine-Saint-Denis is spearheading the fight for the end of violence against women with a two decades old Observatory pushing for innovative policies.

The County has an Equality and Diversity Service and a Discrimination Observatory, that is monitoring discrimination and conducting awareness raising activities and collective actions in court.

Distribution of competencies and funding

The département of Seine-Saint-Denis is in charge of social support, social and professional integration, health prevention and child welfare including unaccompanied migrants. The county also developed policies in the areas of sports, culture, citizenship, education and international solidarity.

There are 40 cities in Seine-Saint-Denis whose competences include primary school and complementary social support (analysing social needs to identify vulnerable groups, registration duties).

Four “Intercommunalités” group cities that share common services in areas including economic development, urban planning, the reception of travellers / Roma, and urban cohesion including housing.

Above the département, the region (Ile-de-France) is responsible for urban planning, transport and mobility, economic development, sustainable development, high school management and professional training policy.

First reception and integration in the narrower sense is under the control of the state. This also includes emergency housing.

Seine Saint Denis manages 35m of ESF funds and can apply for the national AMIF programme.

Good practice and elements to share

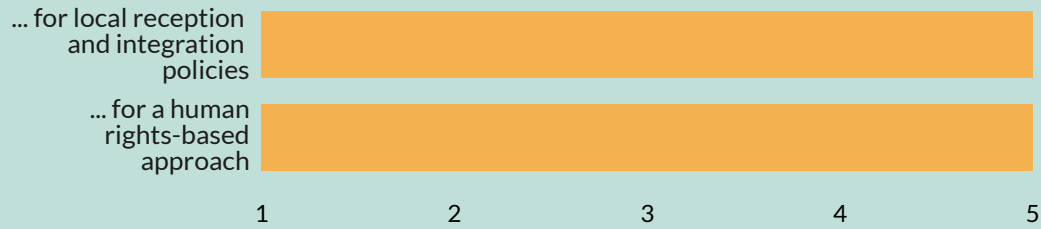
Healthcare outreach work

The Department helps to mobilise and support the various actors in the territory in order to promote a comprehensive outreach approach to people who do not have access to healthcare, e.g. homeless people or people living in shanty towns. This includes a mobile Maternal and Child Protection (PMI) team that was set up in partnership with Médecins du Monde and which includes midwives, social workers, nursery nurses and Romanian-speaking health mediators. It offers pre/postnatal consultations and visits, opens up healthcare entitlements and liaises with other services.

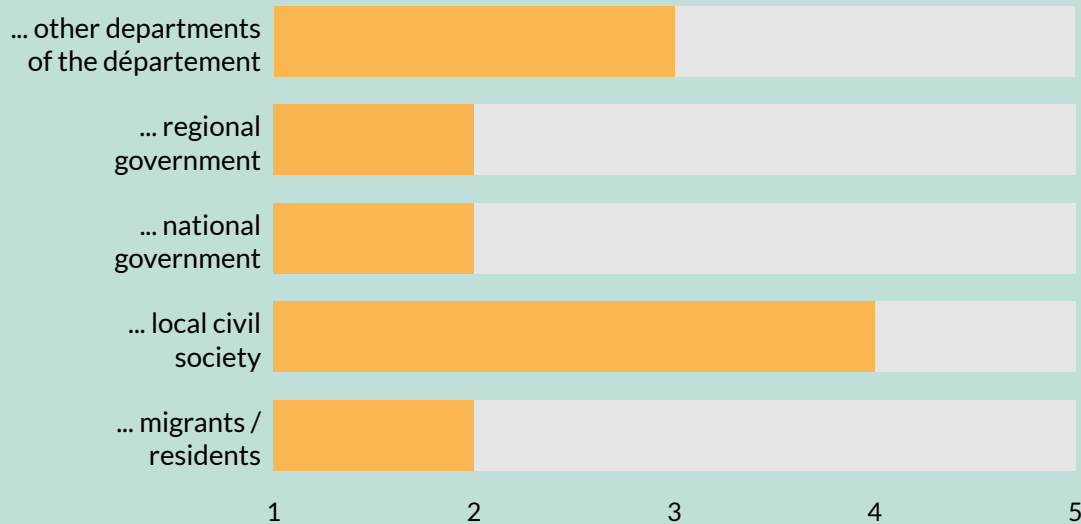
CAMNA unit supporting unaccompanied minors

CAMNA provides accompaniment for young people who arrived as unaccompanied minors in France. Many see their status challenged by state authorities, which puts them at risk of losing residency rights. The service ensures access to housing and accompanies the youngsters in the juridical steps linked to their status. It offers social support, leisure activities, psychological accompaniment and mentoring. One of its main activities is support in finding professional training and work in cooperation with four vocational schools, which often is a key to regularisation should their status as minor not be granted by the state authorities.

Level of political commitment...



Level of coordination / co-creation with...



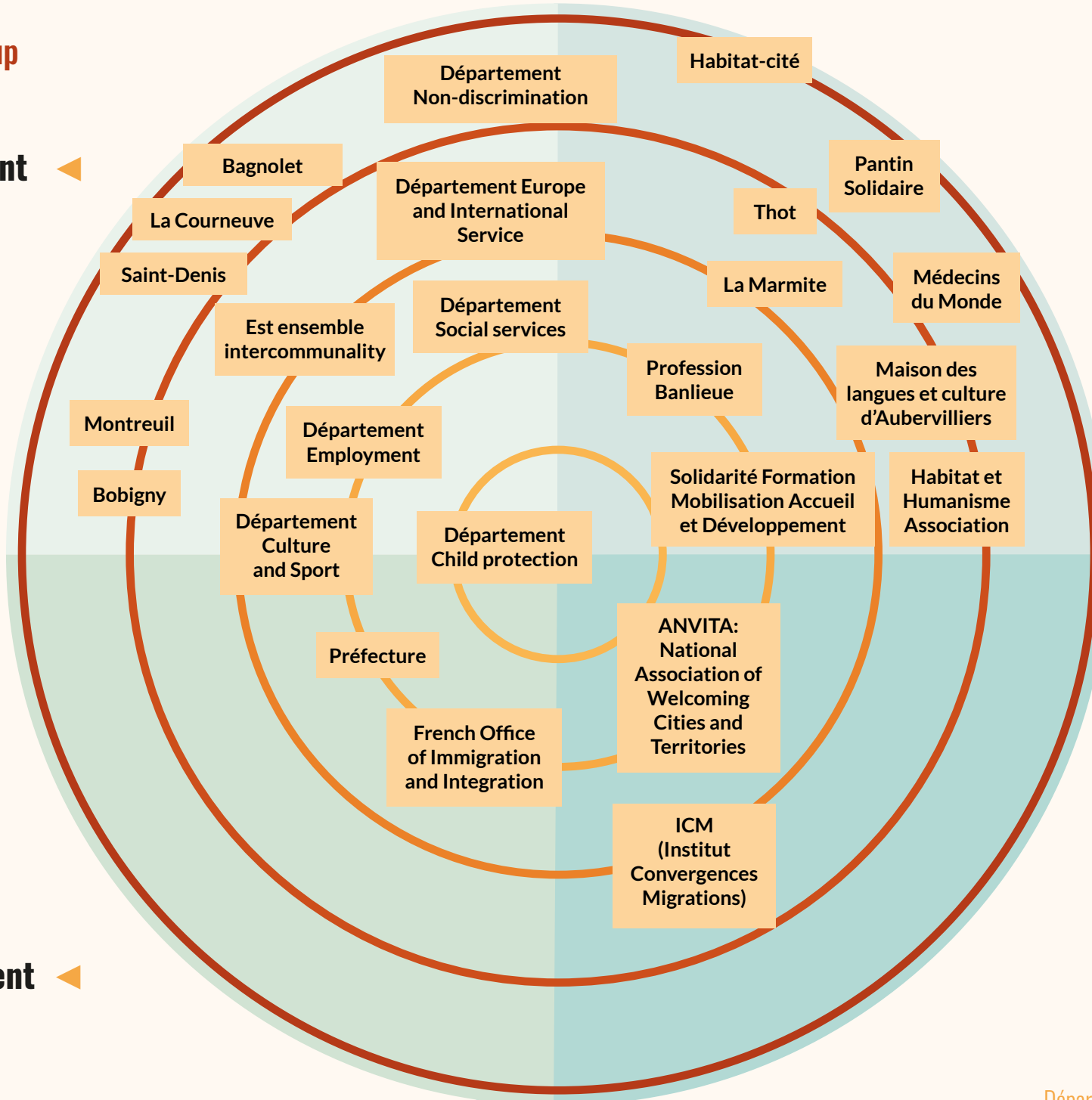
Social climate on migration

The new law on controlling migration and improving integration, the 22nd reform on immigration and asylum since 1986, was adopted in January 2024 and showed how the debates around the law reflected how the anti-immigration rhetoric of the far right is seeping into the political mainstream. More and more people are speaking out against immigration, blame migrants for all types of social problems and are ready to sacrifice human rights.

Urbact Local Group

Local government

Civil society



Other government

Other

Sosnowiec (PL)

179,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Senior Specialist at the Department of Culture and City Promotion

From mastering the emergency to a strategic approach in reception and integration

With the Russian aggression on Ukraine, Sosnowiec has become an arrival destination literally overnight. The city saw an enormous mobilisation of support for the newcomers and found new solutions together with partners from civil society.

Now that the crisis has been managed, a new mobilisation is needed to provide support for refugees to take the next steps, and to ensure that all have access to education, decent housing, work and childcare. Developing relations between new-

comers and established residents is another priority.

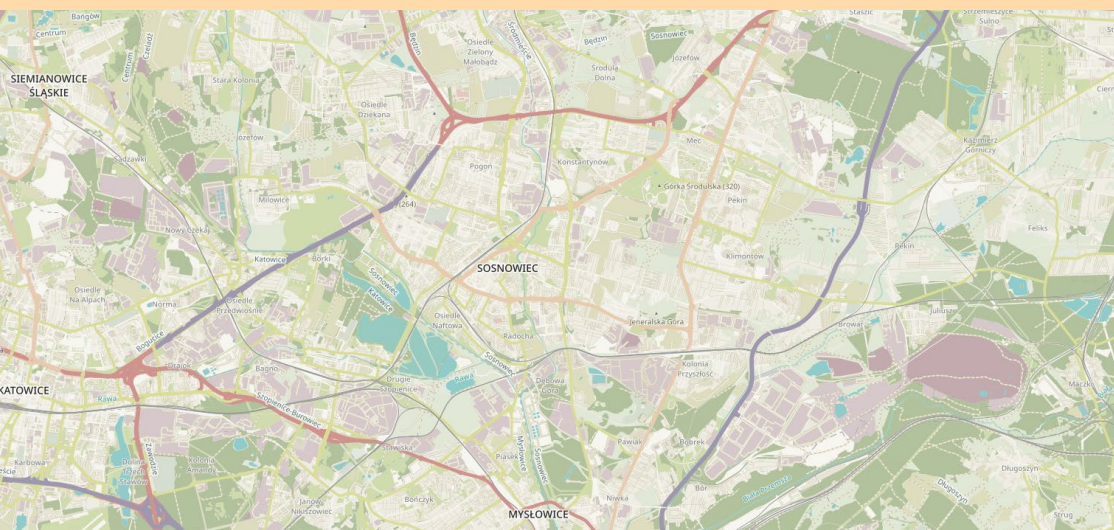
In order to achieve these goals, Sosnowiec needs to define a long-term vision and strategy for working together between the city departments and other stakeholders with a view of increasing the capacity to support current and future arrivals.

This will be particularly challenging as resources (such as funding) that were provided for the emergency seem to be slowly waning.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Develop digital guidance for migrants arriving in Sosnowiec.
- ▷ Consolidate governance and capacity of reception and integration support, e.g. through training of local administration on human rights.
- ▷ Develop a sustainable cooperation structure between stakeholders.
- ▷ Create more opportunities for encounters between Ukrainian refugees and locals, e.g. through cultural and sport events.
- ▷ Promote the “resident’s card” (already used by some residents) as a tool to strengthen the sense of belonging to the city both among “old” and “new” residents.



Migrant population

- Refugees from Ukraine (about 5,000 according to estimates).
- International university students.
- Economic migrants from Eastern Europe and from South Asia.

Socio-economic context

- Ageing and shrinking population - from close to 250,000 in the 1970s to 180,000 at present and a projection to have declined to 130,000 by 2050.
- Low unemployment (5,2% in June 2023), vacancies in particular in jobs demanding lower qualifications (logistics, trade, production).

Challenges and needs

- Lack of experience and knowledge on how to work with migrants.
 - Learn from best practice in capacity building on migrant reception and integration.
 - Gain better understanding of the relevant terminology and national/ EU legislation.
- Lack of cooperation among local institutions and stakeholders - working in silos.
 - Learn how to build an efficient network of cooperation among local NGOs and municipal agencies.
- Social isolation of newcomers.
- Prejudice against migrants.
 - Understand what works to raise awareness of the benefits of migrant integration to both migrants and the local community.
- Need for orientation and information for migrants now that the first reception points for refugees from Ukraine no longer exist.
- Lack of information about migrants' workplaces and working conditions.
 - Understand how to improve employment conditions and fight exploitation.
- Lack of information about migrants' needs regarding housing and social services.
- Lack of reliable data on migrants.
 - Learn how to gather reliable evidence on migrants and their needs.
- Funding mobilised for the emergency is precarious.

- Strengths**
- Reception of refugees from Ukraine has been mastered well and skills of actors in the city administration and civil society to deal with sudden inflows of migrants have improved.
 - A high labour-market participation of refugees from Ukraine demonstrates the integrative capacity of the local economy.
 - The growing number of foreign university students strengthens normalisation of diversity in the city and can potentially improve the city's demographic and economic future.
 - Local authorities like Sosnowiec have stood their ground against the national government's anti-immigration rhetoric.
- Weaknesses**
- Little experience in working with migrants.
 - Low level of cooperation among local stakeholders.
 - Local institutions/organisations do not recognize the need to work with migrants now that initial reception of Ukrainians has been mastered.
 - There is a lack of data about migrants.
 - There is a lack of financial resources for integration support.
- Opportunities**
- City of services, production and logistics, where migrants can find employment easily with low demands of Polish language and professional skills.
 - Population shrinkage and ageing may lead to a better understanding of the necessity to attract new residents.
 - The recent change of national government can improve multi-level governance.
- Threats**
- The solutions that have been found to address the newcomers' most urgent needs (e.g. in housing, education, work) might not be sufficient in the long term.
 - Funding for many integration programmes (language, professional training, socio-cultural activities, psychological support) is precarious or running out.

- The previous cultural homogeneity in Sosnowiec can create fears about migrants, which were reinforced by the dehumanising narrative of the previous national government and some media.
- Attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees might change from sympathy to antagonism.
- Exploitation of migrants and exclusion from key resources might cause disintegration.

Local policy context

Local strategies

With its 2023 City Council Resolution Sosnowiec brands itself as the City of Equality and Respect for Diversity. The resolution condemns all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, religion, ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation and undertakes to respect and promote human rights and to build a tolerant and inclusive society.

Distribution of competencies and funding

Central government is in charge of the reception of asylum seekers and temporarily displaced persons. There is no formal mandate for cities in migrant integration, but cities have provided support to Ukrainian refugees with partial funding from the central government (e.g. a subsidy for Polish households hosting refugees of about 8€ per person and day).

The national programme of the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) does not reach local authorities. There is no strategic link between ESF+ projects and the city's reception and integration strategy.

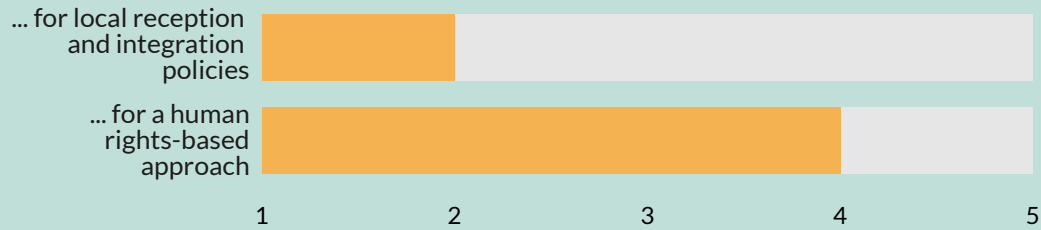
Good practice and elements to share

Psychological support for traumatised children from Ukraine

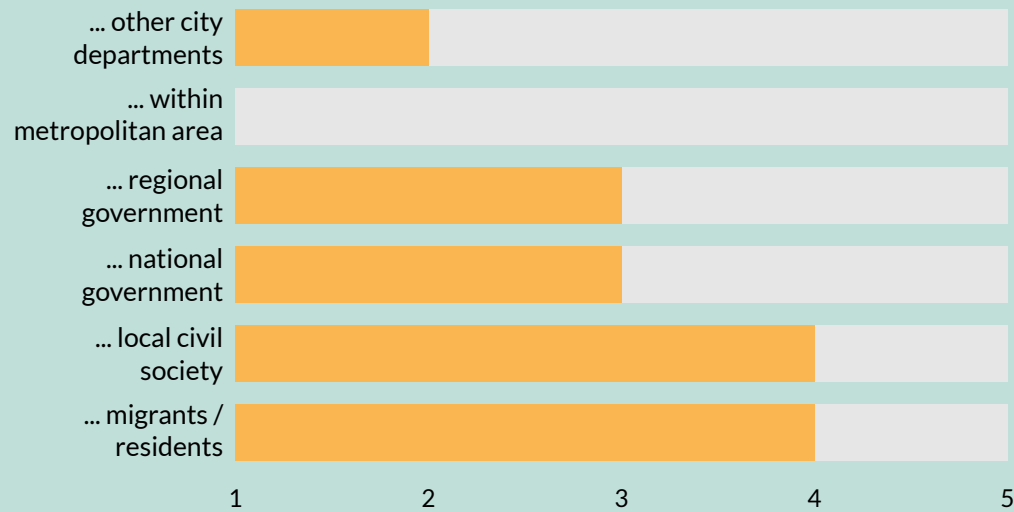
The NGO "The power of support" provides psychological support for refugee children from Ukraine in Sosnowiec and other local authorities in Poland, with support from UNHCR.

Their philosophy is to provide psychological "first aid" to help children in overcoming trauma and restore their agency and a lifeline that was broken through the war, in individual and group sessions and with activities.

Level of political commitment...



Level of coordination / co-creation with...



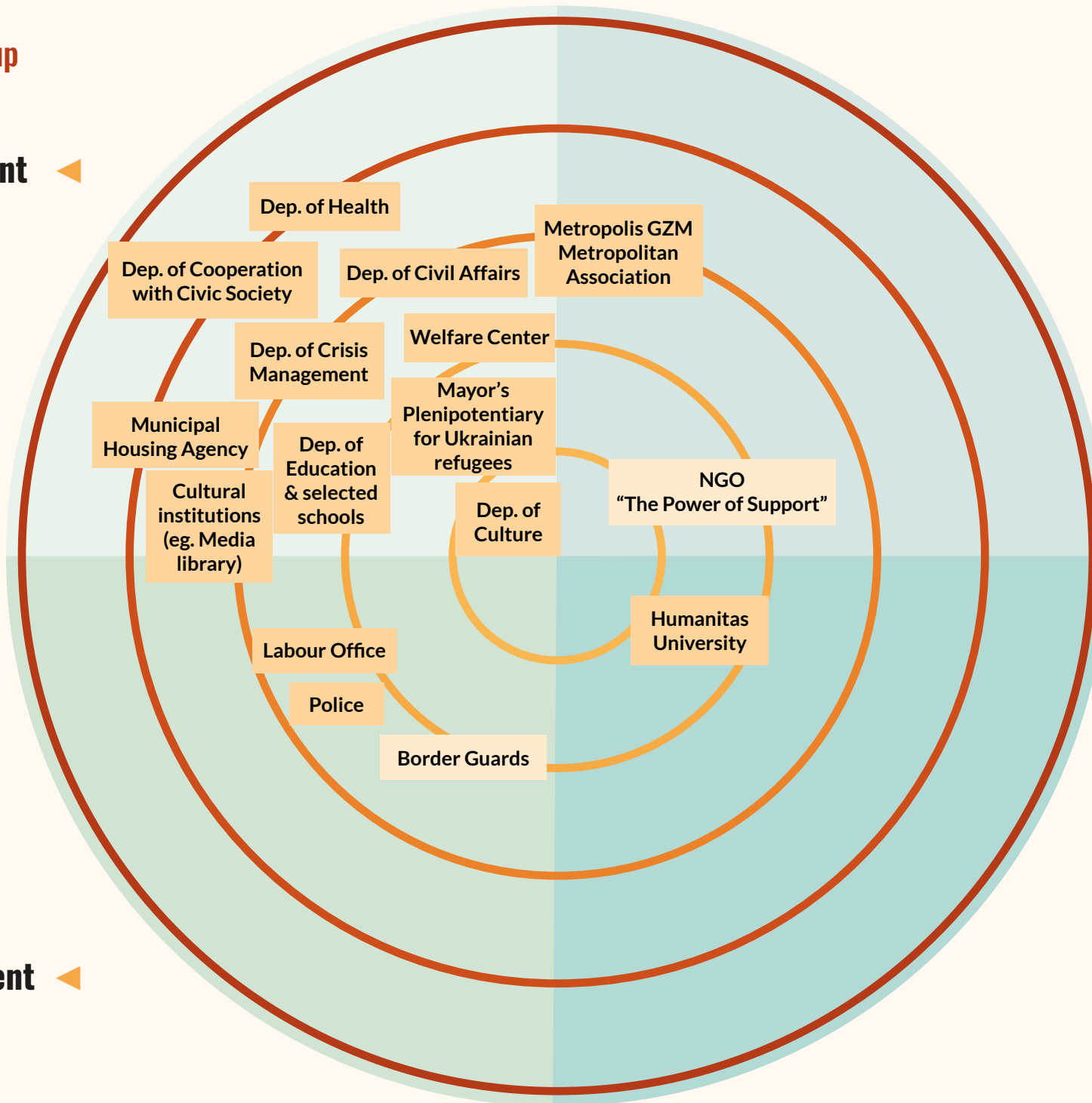
Social climate on migration

Society reacted mostly positively to the reception of refugees from Ukraine. The perception of other migrant groups, in particular of refugees and economic migrants from outside Europe, is more negative.

Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ **Civil society**



Other government ◀

▶ **Other**

Timișoara (RO)

319,000 inhabitants

Local coordinator: Head of Resilience and Community Mobilisation Service from Timișoara Municipality's Social Assistance Department

From ad-hoc cooperation to a whole-of-society approach

In the past four years, Timișoara had to overcome two challenges: the need to quarantine and support migrants arriving without papers during the pandemic, and the arrival of refugees from Ukraine. Managing these emergencies successfully together with civil society and migrants themselves has strengthened the relationships between all actors and helped to build trust. In this process, the city council could build on the Ukrainian community's ideas, initiative and potential for self-help.

As migrants continue to arrive, both sides are now ready to bring this

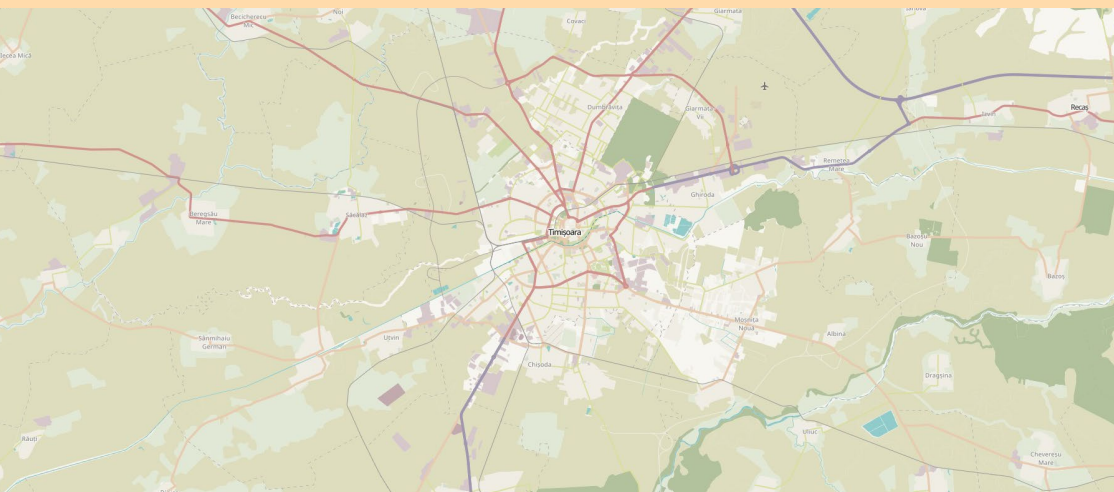
cooperation to a new level and to develop a sustainable whole-of-society approach. This will involve mapping migrant needs together with migrants and improving coordination of existing and new services between the different actors.

This should lead to more efficient support in areas such as the orientation and advice, language learning opportunities, professional training and activities that bring together newcomers with established residents.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Conduct a joint needs analysis between city authorities and civil society, including migrants, as a basis for a common strategy.
- ▷ Map existing service offer between all stakeholders, as a starting point for a coordination and referral mechanism.
- ▷ Develop a city services map for migrants translated in different languages.
- ▷ Set up a better internal coordination mechanism between service providers.
- ▷ Provide training for people wanting to set up a business (this could be both for locals and newcomers/migrants).



Migrant population

- Refugees from Ukraine under temporary protection (1,300, of which 428 children and 557 women).
- Economic migrants (mostly from Nepal and Sri Lanka (1,500)).
- Timiș county receives more than half of Romania's asylum application (6,500), but they are mainly under the responsibility of a central government agency (with a local branch in Timișoara).
- Migrants without papers (unknown number).

Socio-economic context

- With an unemployment rate of below 1% (August 2023) local businesses find it hard to fill vacancies.

Challenges and needs

- Lack of a coordinated, integrated approach to newcomer reception between local, regional and national stakeholders.
 - Learn from best practice about how to build local capacity on migrant reception and integration.
- Lack of knowledge on economic migrants' needs and aspirations, e.g. regarding labour rights of migrants, prospects of family reunification.
 - Understand how to train professionals from local services on how to work with migrants.
- Migrants face obstacles in accessing rights due to their lack of information and a lack of awareness among service providers.
- Economic migrants with temporary permits are off the radar of public authorities and some might face exploitation.
- Migrants with complex social issues (mental health, domestic/partner violence, substance abuse, child abuse/neglect) are often not supported adequately.
 - Learn about methodology and tools for working with migrants with complex social issues.
- Low understanding and lack of knowledge of the local community towards migrants and the need to bring migrants closer to the local community.
- Lack of childcare facilities makes it difficult for women with pre-school-age children to become autonomous. This also affects Ukrainians in meeting the conditions to be working or registered jobseekers to receive government support.

SWOT Analysis

- Strengths**
- The two emergencies of the pandemic (when migrants without residence permits arrived from Serbia and needed to be quarantined and supported) and of the arrival of refugees from Ukraine triggered new collaboration between NGOs and the city authorities and allowed to build trust between both sides.
 - Active Ukrainian community that has initiated projects and provided communication structures to involve community members and foster intercultural interaction.
 - Prior experience in stakeholder coordination through EU projects in URBACT network ROOF on ending homelessness.
- Weaknesses**
- Lack of expertise in designing reception/integration policies.
 - Lack of coordination between stakeholders - no joint approach and no coordination in the development of services.
- Opportunities**
- Organising the reception of Ukrainian refugees has led to the creation of new services and laid a basis for an intensified cooperation in the future.
- Threats**
- National government is not listening to or involving cities.
 - There is competition between NGOs.
 - There is a hostile climate for non-European migrants.

Local policy context

Local strategies

Since 2022 the city has a service for supporting Ukrainian refugees living in Timișoara to find accommodation, to access health and education services, facilitate work integration and referrals to other programmes/activities (Romanian lessons, integration activities for children and adults, financial support) developed by local NGOs.

The county's Local Support Team for foreign citizens' integration promotes access to rights and services for migrants holding a residence permit, including beneficiaries of international protection.

One of the city's Social Services Strategy's objectives is to adapt services to the increased number of migrants in Timișoara.

Distribution of competencies and funding

Under the 44/2004 Ordinance on social integration the national government's General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) is responsible for integration in cooperation with local authorities and associations. In reality, however, cities are not actively involved or supported in this role.

The state's financial support for Ukrainian refugee reception changed in April 2023. The so-called 50/20 programme covering accommodation and food now covers only accommodation and is conditioned on beneficiaries being employed or registered unemployed and having children enrolled in Romanian schools. This change was decided without the involvement of cities. A working group on this theme includes NGOs, but not cities.

The Ukrainian reception policy is coordinated by the national government department responsible for emergencies, which creates a bias and hampers consolidating integration policies.

The Romanian Partnership Agreement with the EU for 2021-2027 states that necessary funding for complementary actions regarding migrant integrations will be provided through AMIF, ESF+ and ERDF. Nonetheless, according to the National Funding Guidelines, currently in public consultation, it is proposed that local authorities in Romania will not be eligible for funding through AMIF.

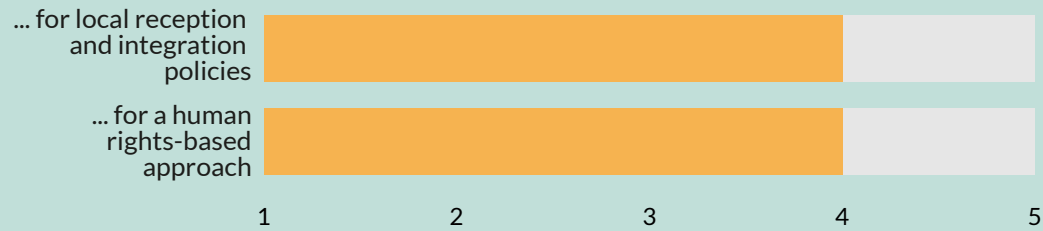
Capacities at the IGI in issuing residence permits do not correspond to the current demand and create bottlenecks for migrants in accessing their rights.

Good practice and elements to share

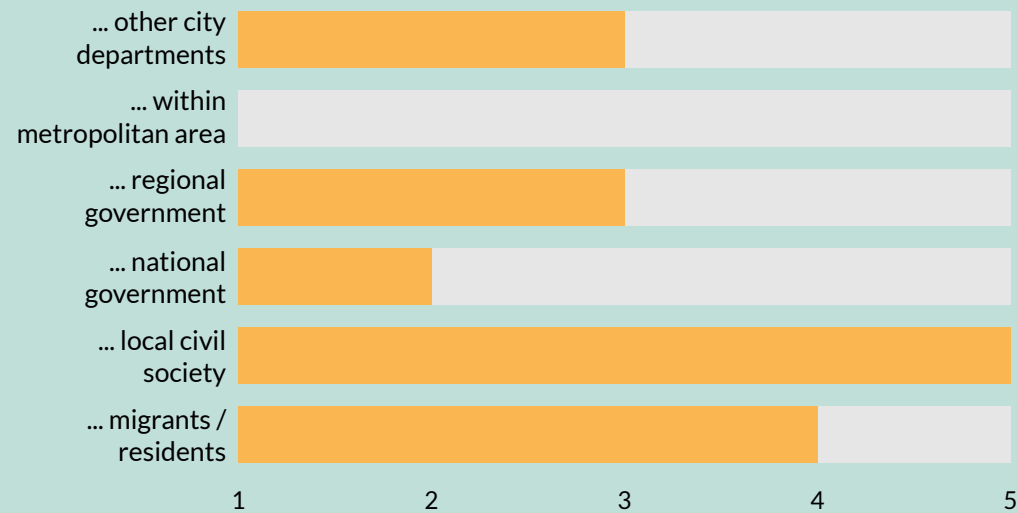
UkrKidsHub at Timișoara House of Youth

The UkrKids Hub is a grass-roots initiative of the Ukrainian refugees community. It provides face-to-face teaching for Ukrainian pre-school and primary school children as well as spaces where Ukrainian secondary school students can connect side-by-side to distance learning classes with the Ukrainian authorities, with the accompaniment of local supervisors. Between these and teachers for face-to-face education, 12 staff are employed in the Hub, with funding from UNICEF. The House of Youth also runs additional cultural activities and workshops (e.g. art classes) for young people both from Romania and Ukraine, so the funding for Ukrainian refugees also benefits the local youth.

Level of political commitment...



Level of coordination / co-creation with...



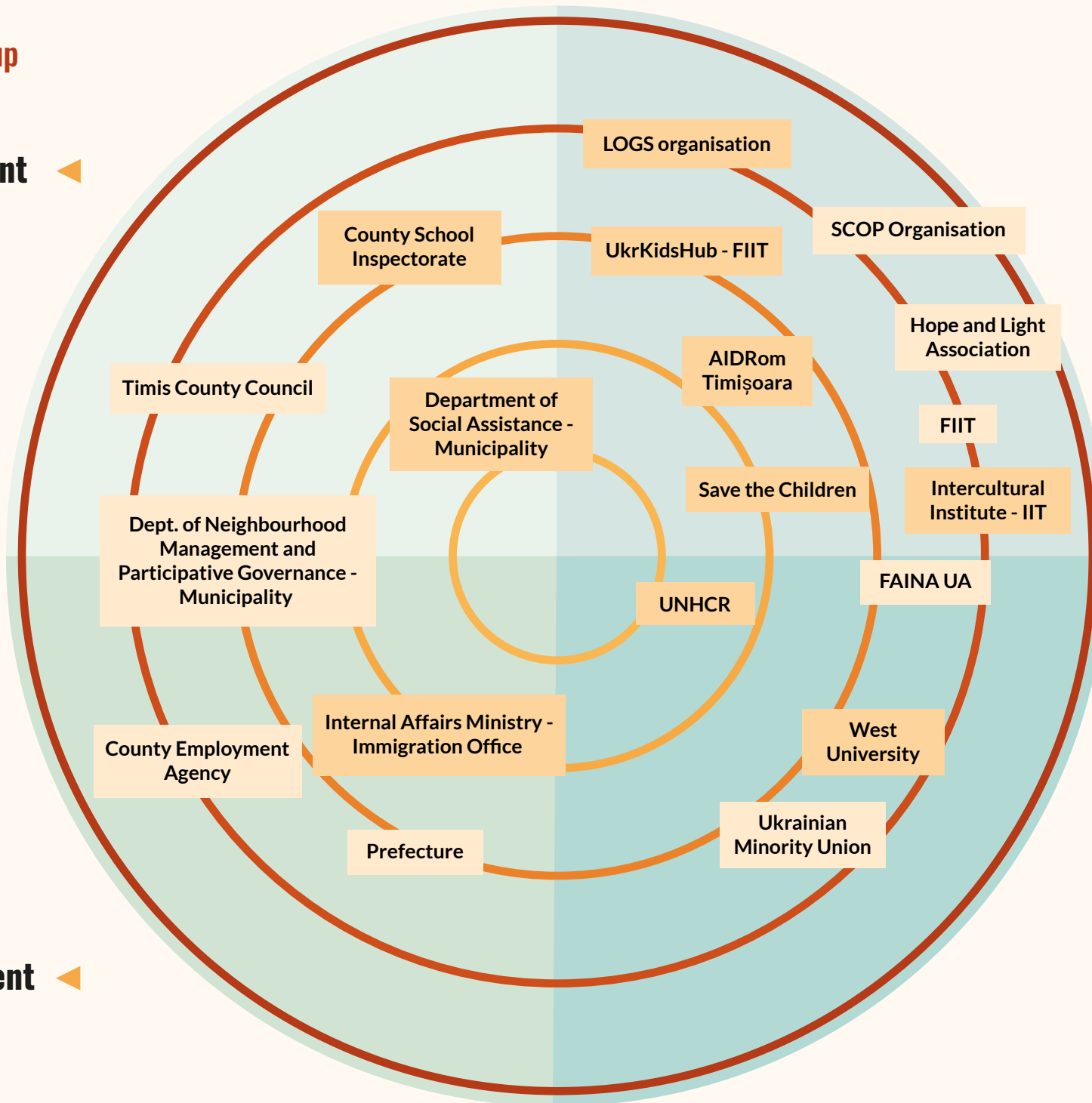
Social climate on migration

Low trust of local community towards migrants, in particular migrants from outside Europe.

Urbact Local Group

Local government

Civil society



Other government

Other

Utrecht (NL)

367,984 inhabitants

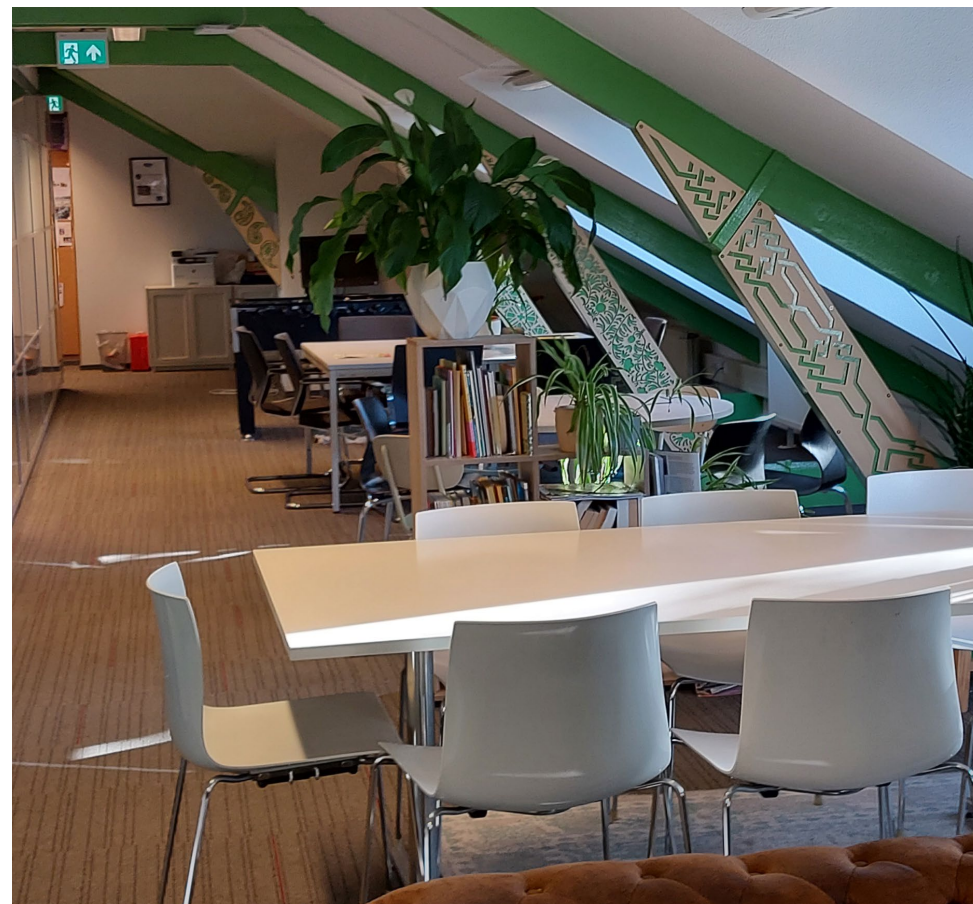
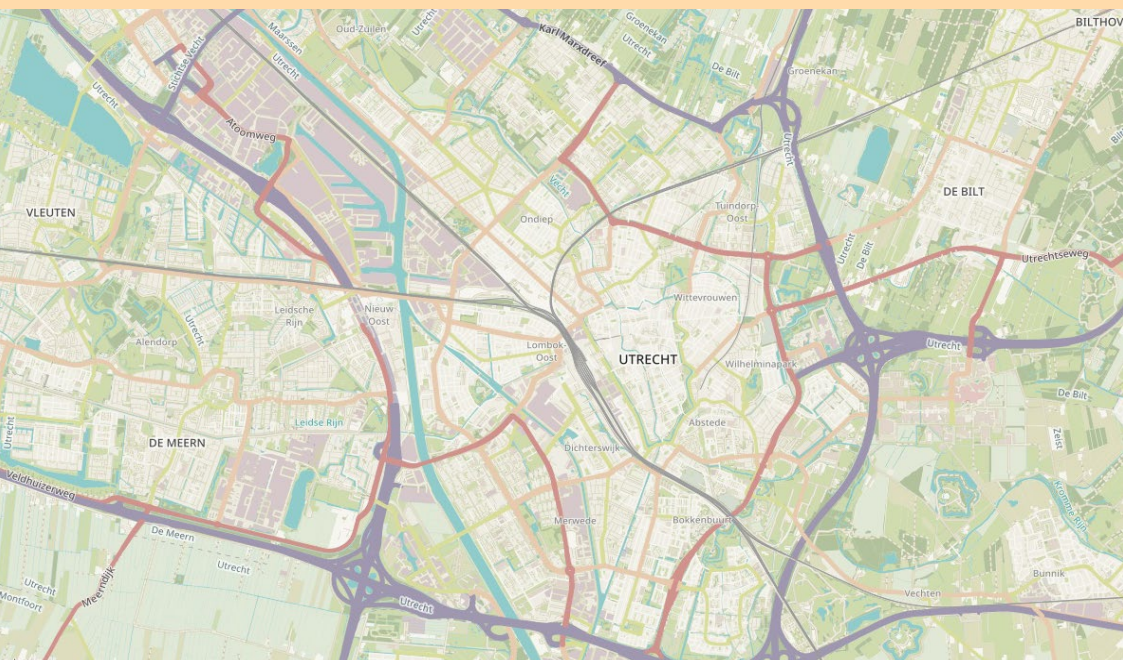
Local coordinator: Senior policy officer migration

Continuing the path towards becoming a city of human rights

In a national context that is highly diverse, but also one of the most reluctant towards migration over the last two decades, Utrecht has been a forerunner in making the case for applying human rights standards in reception and integration. Based on political leadership and a strong alliance with civil society, the city has worked on applying the Council of Europe's Human Rights legislation in its policies towards residents without papers, and has made the case

for a paradigm shift towards a more welcoming asylum seeker accommodation.

Consolidating these achievements to guarantee human rights for people without papers, and finding more efficient ways to support the integration of newcomers into the labour market can be two key elements to continue on this path of localising human rights.



Preliminary focus of the integrated action plan

- ▷ Develop a more elaborate translation of international human rights standard in the local ecosystem for refugees and migrants.
- ▷ Develop a City-ID card to take the next step in safeguarding access to fundamental rights for people without papers living in Utrecht.
- ▷ Getting more newcomers into work, in strengthening the collaboration with employers and creating structures that can circumvent bureaucratic obstacles, e.g. for asylum seekers.

Migrant population

- Utrecht is home to 168 different nationalities - the most important countries of origin are Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, the Antilles and Indonesia.
- 22% of foreign-born population, 35% population have a migrant background (foreign born or children of foreign-born parents), among the youth 50%.
- Approx. 2,660 recognised refugees (with temporary and permanent residence permits): 35% from Syria (over 900), Eritrea 10%, Afghanistan 9%.
- 3,000 undocumented residents (mostly male).
- 2,000 Ukrainian refugees registered in Utrecht.

Challenges and needs

- Access to work, in particular for asylum seekers: although they can work after six months, employers need to ask the Public Employment Service for a permit, which is a strong disincentive.
- Recognition of foreign qualifications.
- Employment services not sufficiently specialised to bring newcomers into work.
 - Learn about how to work with committed employers.
 - Exchange with other locally-driven asylum-seeker accommodation initiatives.
 - Exchange about strategies to become a welcoming city / city of human rights and how to increase political support for it.

Socio-economic context

- Utrecht is a growing city with a young and highly educated population and more than 35,000 university students.
- Unemployment rate is at 3.8% (2022), but significantly higher for migrants.

- Strengths**
- There is political commitment to becoming a welcoming, human rights city and know-how on how to do it.
 - The city is proactive in working with international organisations and national government to make national and local institutions comply with human rights standards.
- Weaknesses**
- Scarcity of funding.
- Opportunities**
- Innovativeness in implementing human rights standards and widespread support among the population and politicians.
- Threats**
- Unwelcoming national narrative about refugees, especially in the current moment of national elections and the formation of a new government.

Local policy context

Local strategies

The city's Refugee Action Plan is a key framework that was developed with stakeholders and that is constantly updated to incorporate new initiatives.

The main areas of intervention are adequate reception and accommodation for asylum seekers, facilitating integration of third-country nationals, promoting social inclusion and community building, and fostering collaboration and partnership.

Key components of the Utrecht approach are: Active from day 1; the 'continuous line', meaning that if people receive shelter in Utrecht, they should stay in Utrecht and not be transferred to facilities in other municipalities; and that activities for newcomers are also open to citizens.

The refugee action plan also includes a policy agreed with the national government that asylum seeker accommodation in the city should be based on the Plan Einstein model (see below), and appropriate funding.

Utrecht is a member of the Human Rights Cities Network. In 2010, the City of Utrecht adopted the universal standard of human rights to guarantee a high quality of life for all inhabitants. In following up on this aim, Utrecht has been working on promoting a human rights culture in the city, fitting the identity of an open, inclusive and social city. In 2013, a Local Human Rights Coalition was born, consisting of NGOs, local civil society organisations, businesses, politicians, policy officers and researchers. The Coalition's aim is to create awareness and ownership of local human rights in order to enhance the quality of life of citizens by translating global value(s) into the local practices. Although the initiative does focus on this local bottom-up governance approach, best practices are shared with other cities at the national and international level.

The city has an action plan to combat discrimination on the housing market.

STIL Utrecht supports migrants with questions about their legal situation and rights.

Several local partners provide shelter, legal advice, support for migrants without residency papers. They have a right to legal support when they re-apply for residency, a right to healthcare, a right to education until 18, and safe reporting of crime.

Distribution of competencies and funding

The reception of asylum seekers is a competence of the national reception agency (COA). Through the Plan Einstein Pilot, Utrecht has been able to demonstrate the benefits of locally led new reception model that is of a smaller scale, provides mixed housing also for local residents and that also offers mixed services for locals and asylum seekers). The city has reached an agreement with COA that any new accommodation in Utrecht should be based on this model.

In contrast to asylum seekers, municipalities are directly responsible for the reception of the approximately 90,000 Ukrainian refugees who came to the Netherlands.

After many policy changes in different directions, since 2021 Dutch municipalities are again in charge of the national "inburgering" integration programme that is mandatory for most newcomers from outside the EU.

Utrecht has acted within a coalition with other Dutch cities to force the national government to fund the local provision of basic services ("bed bath bread") for migrants without a valid residence permit.

Utrecht is eligible for national AMIF funding and has direct access to ESF+ funds.

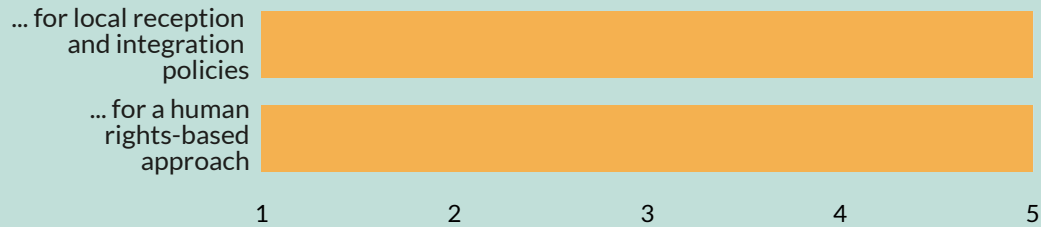
Good practice and elements to share

Plan Einstein asylum reception model

Asylum seeker accommodations are typically designed as efficient and low-cost housing options (e.g. in former military barracks) at the outskirts of cities. Their architecture and location reduce interaction with locals to a minimum. In addition to that, asylum seekers typically do not receive integration support (e.g. language training) during their procedure.

In its Plan Einstein pilot project, funded by the EU Programme Urban Innovative Actions, the city of Utrecht successfully attempted a radical break with this model. In a space in a less affluent neighbourhood, the city provided mixed accommodation for young neighbourhood residents and asylum seekers. It provided services from day 1, such as English courses and entrepreneurship training, or spontaneous initiatives from neighbourhood residents or newcomers, that addressed both the locals and newcomers. The governance of the centre also represents a shift - from a top-down approach led by the state agency and implemented by subsidiaries, to a horizontal coalition of organisations including local government, NGOs, business and adult education providers. The model's higher costs are outweighed by its manifold positive effects. They include the wellbeing of newcomers, social acceptance and benefits for the local population, the creation of social networks of newcomers and the more productive use of time for newcomers awaiting their asylum decision. COA, the state's asylum agency that agreed with Utrecht to conduct the pilot, has conceded the city to pursue this model in every new asylum seeker accommodation.

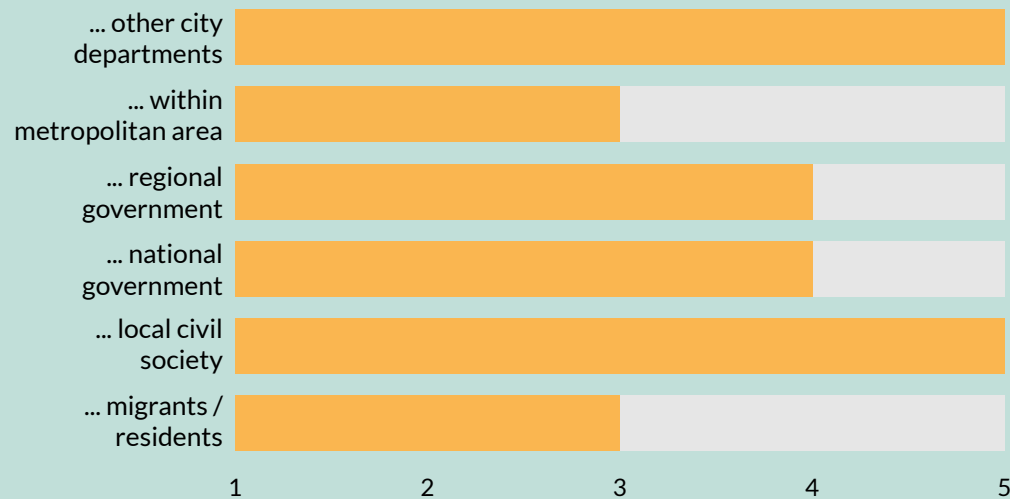
Level of political commitment...



Social climate on migration

In the context of the Netherlands, which over the last two decades has seen a strong political mobilisation against immigration, Utrecht is a city with higher approval of migration and diversity.

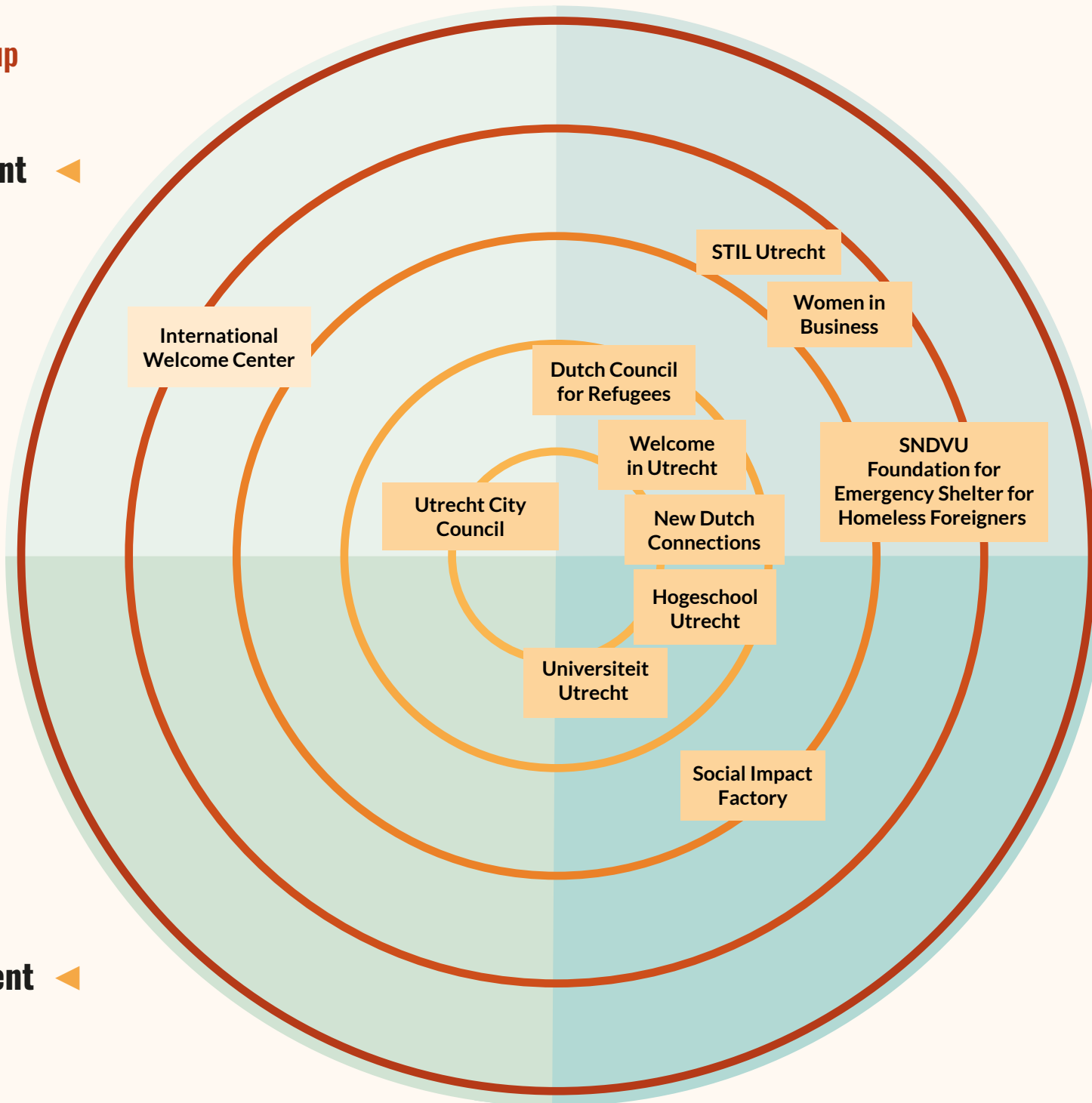
Level of coordination / co-creation with...



Urbact Local Group

Local government ◀

▶ **Civil society**



Other government ◀

▶ **Other**

Section 3.

Synthesis, Methodology and Network Roadmap



Network themes

WELDI partners work to identify key challenges and needs with regard to guaranteeing migrant rights began with the online kick-off meeting in July 2023. They continued to work together through a collaborative document, and ended with the city visits and the “ready for action” meeting in Osijek.

Many of the challenges of guaranteeing access to migrant rights are related to governance. These challenges include policy coordination, in particular coordination with national government; establishing an efficient whole-of-society approach at local level and co-designing reception and integration with migrants as protagonists.

There is **no predominant “target group”** common to all of the network cities when it comes to human rights challenges. Instead, a wide range of groups are considered vulnerable in different local contexts.

| | Asylum claimants & refugees | Economic migrants | Ukrainian refugees | Undocumented migrants | Women | Unaccompanied minors | Children | Internat. students |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------|----------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Albacete | | | | | | | | |
| Cluj-Napoca | | | | | | | | |
| Fundão | | | | | | | | |
| Lampedusa | | | | | | | | |
| Liège | | | | | | | | |
| Osijek | | | | | | | | |
| Seine-St-Denis | | | | | | | | |
| Sosnowiec | | | | | | | | |
| Timișoara | | | | | | | | |
| Utrecht | | | | | | | | |

Challenges to migrant rights pertain to a **wide diversity of themes, sectors and potential instruments** of intervention. Falling under the broad categories: governance, tools,

and sectoral and group-specific approaches, the following themes were identified as priorities for WELDI over the next two years:

Governance

Models, concepts & philosophies

How do local authorities label, brand and advertise their commitment to migrant reception, and what are the implications of such labels in forging coalitions and expressing commitment for migrant rights?

Joined-up, participatory and strategic governance

How can a strategic approach to reception and integration be developed, in cooperation with stakeholders and residents? How can capacity to understand migrant rights be built in all services?

Tools

One-Stop-Shops, information and guidance

How can guidance and information be provided to newcomers to ensure they can access their rights? How can first points of contact be created and service provision organised under one roof to facilitate support and enable cooperation between service providers?

City ID-cards

Local IDs to facilitate access to rights and local services, and as an expression of local citizenship as a common identity, independent of residence status.

Intercultural interaction, campaigns, festivals

How can prejudicial myths and rumours be effectively debunked in communication? How can situations of meaningful interaction between new and established residents be created? What is the role of cultural festivals and other ludic activities in reducing stereotypes?

Sectoral and group-specific approaches

Support for minors and women

Reflecting the demographics of recent arrivals - what are the specific needs of women and children and how are they taken into account in our reception policies?

Access to decent work

How to support access to decent work, training and the recognition of foreign qualifications? How to fight over-qualification, exploitation and trafficking?

Access to shelter and decent housing

How can we create temporary shelter and decent housing opportunities for vulnerable migrants? How to de-institutionalise accommodation systems and create opportunities for interaction?

Access to healthcare, psychological and social support

How can universal access to healthcare be guaranteed?
How can outreach work overcome obstacles to access?

Synthesis of learning needs and challenges and relevant good practice cases

● Needs & challenges ● Envisaged actions ● Good practice

| | Governance | | Tools | | | Sectoral and group-specific approaches | | | |
|-------------|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| | Concepts and philosophies | Joined-up, participatory and strategic governance | One-Stop-Shops, information and guidance | City IDs | Intercultural interaction, campaigns, festivals | Support for minors and women | Access to decent work | Access to shelter and decent housing | Access to health care, psychological and social support |
| Albacete | | Staff training on migrant rights | inform and guide newcomers to resources available in the city? services of the inclusion team at new temporary housing facility | | Tackle Invisibility, informality and precariousness that cause a negative image of some migrant groups | | improve situation of seasonal workers and break exploitative middlemen system (coop with employers). | Plan new housing facility for seasonal workers How to mobilise existing housing stocks for social purposes? | Complex social outreach work with vulnerable families in informal settlements |
| Cluj-Napoca | "Cluj-Napoca - Your Home Abroad" to embrace city's welcoming attitude to migrants and foreigners | Engage migrants in participatory budgeting better understanding migrants rights, EU and nat. Framework Training on rights awareness and cultural sensitivity for staff Improving data | Develop One-Stop-Shop "Welcome to Cluj" providing multi-lingual guidance and kegal support to migrants | Develop the Cluj-ID application, a local digital identity that will improve access to services and rights for all citizens. | How to promote societal acceptance of migrants and communicate benefits of integration Multicultural festival during annual Cluj days | | Economic migrants live mostly segregated from the rest of society and might face exploitation | | House of Ukraine community space co-organised between PATRIR, city, Prefecture, County & UNHCR offering language training and other support. New Cluj International Citizens Council |
| Fundao | "Welcoming Land" | Staff training on migrant rights | Digital guidance platform (jobs, language,...) | | How to recognise and celebrate the city's different cultures? culture and sports exchange activities community garden for Migration Centre Migration section in local newspaper | | Improved support (e.g. job fair, mentoring, business startup micro-grants,...) Tailored training for migrants in agriculture and industry Cooperation with agricultural employers to improve working conditions | Migration Centre as support place and temporary housing solution for newcomers | |

● Needs & challenges ● Envisaged actions ● Good practice

| | Governance | | Tools | | | Sectoral and group-specific approaches | | | |
|-----------|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|
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| Lampedusa | International advocacy for migrant rights through UCLG (Lampedusa Charter for Dignified Mobility and Territorial Solidarity) and Border Towns and Islands Network (BTIN) | New multi-level cooperation on health | | | | Improving maternal health care to react to increasing number of pregnant women among arrivals Skyrocketing number of unaccompanied minors | | | Improving health care infrastructure for established residents and landing migrants |
| Liège | Hospitable city motion (2017) and civil society coalition | Multitude of actors and services difficult to navigate for newcomers Some actors and services do not exploit full potential for cooperation | Develop a One-Stop-Shop for migrants between city council and other key institutions Learn from other experiences on setting up one-stop-shops Develop printed and online guide for migrants, municipal services and CSOs with complete list of services. | Develop a local ID card as a tool for safeguarding human rights and for strengthening local identity share experiences with other cities interested in developing local ID cards | Asset-based intercultural activities by Interra asbl: workshops by newcomers transferring knowledge intercultural communication training by a mixed team of newcomers and established residents; mentoring; inclusive business incubator. | “La Bobine” language support for women (from alphabetisation to vocational) combined with childcare. | Make better use of the social economy’s potential to support labour market integration of migrants Exchange about innovative models Hospi’Jobs training combining vocational training for auxiliary professions in health care with language learning. | day and night reception for the homeless and undocumented migrants | emergency medical aid (health relay) for people without papers |

● Needs & challenges ● Envisaged actions ● Good practice

| | Governance | | Tools | | | Sectoral and group-specific approaches | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|--|----------|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| | Concepts and philosophies | Joined-up, participatory and strategic governance | One-Stop-Shops, information and guidance | City IDs | Intercultural interaction, campaigns, festivals | Support for minors and women | Access to decent work | Access to shelter and decent housing | Access to health care, psychological and social support |
| Osijek | | <p>How to build long-term reception and integration support structures</p> <p>stakeholder coordination platform</p> <p>Staff training on migrant rights</p> <p>Lack of data that is consolidated and centrally cleared</p> | | | <p>initiatives that can reduce stereotypes</p> | | <p>assess and record qualifications of job-seeking refugees, offer Social job placement agency with integrated support</p> | | |
| Seine-Saint-Denis | <p>Member of ANVITA association of Welcoming cities and territories</p> <p>Member of UCLG campaign "10, 100, 1000 Human rights Cities and Territories"</p> | <p>in-depth needs analysis of the with ULG researchers</p> <p>Stakeholder coordination mechanism and strategy</p> <p>Staff training on migrant rights</p> <p>Co-creation w migrants</p> | <p>Co-created guide to refugees' rights and services</p> <p>"Maison de l'hospitalité" hosting all relevant actors and services</p> | | <p>tools to improve the quality of the public debate of migration</p> <p>Intercultural biennial "Multitudes"</p> | <p>Support service unaccompanied minors</p> <p>Observatory on Violence against women - migrant woman as one target group.</p> | | | <p>Complex social outreach work (focus on child and maternal health)</p> |

● Needs & challenges ● Envisaged actions ● Good practice

| | Governance | | Tools | | Sectoral and group-specific approaches | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|--|--|--|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Concepts and philosophies | Joined-up, participatory and strategic governance | One-Stop-Shops, information and guidance | City IDs | Intercultural interaction, campaigns, festivals | Support for minors and women | Access to decent work | Access to shelter and decent housing | Access to health care, psychological and social support |
| Sosnowiec | <p>Sosnowiec – the City of Equality and Respect for Diversity</p> | <p>Consolidate governance and capacity</p> <p>Develop a sustainable cooperation structure between stakeholders</p> <p>Staff training on migrant rights</p> <p>How to build capacity on migrant reception and integration + understanding of terminology and + legislation</p> <p>Data: how to gather reliable evidence on migrants and their needs.</p> | <p>Digital guidance for newcomers</p> | <p>Promote the “resident’s card” as a tool to strengthen the sense of belonging both of old” and new residents</p> | <p>What works to raise awareness of the benefits of migrant integration to both migrants and the local community?</p> <p>Create opportunities for encounters between Ukrainian refugees and locals, e.g. cultural and sport events</p> | | <p>How to monitor employment conditions and fight exploitation</p> | <p>Lack of information about migrants’ needs regarding housing and social services</p> | <p>Psychological “first aid” for traumatised children from Ukraine</p> |

| | Governance | Tools | | Sectoral and group-specific approaches | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| | Concepts and philosophies | Joined-up, participatory and strategic governance | One-Stop-Shops, information and guidance | City IDs | Intercultural interaction, campaigns, festivals | Support for minors + women | Access to decent work | Access to shelter and decent housing | Access to health care, psychological and social support |
| Timișoara | | <p>Needs analysis between city, CSO and migrants, as a basis for a common strategy</p> <p>Map existing service offer between all stakeholders to improve coordin. and referral</p> <p>Improved coordination mechanism between service providers</p> <p>Staff training on migrant rights</p> | Develop a city services map for migrants translated in different languages | | House of Youth - cultural workshops for newcomers and local youth | UkrKidsHub at Timișoara House of Youth offering distance learning support and joint cultural activities and workshops for young people from Romania and Ukraine | Provide training for people wanting to set up a business (this could be both for locals and newcomers/migrants) | Monitoring citizen-provided housing for Ukrainian refugees | |
| Utrecht | <p>City of human rights</p> <p>Develop a more elaborate translation of international human rights standards in the local ecosystem and increase political support</p> | | | Develop a City-ID card to take the next step in safeguarding access to fundamental rights for people without papers | | support centre for unaccompanied minors and young people around 18 (with and without residence permit); provides support with integration, education, work, legal support. | Improve access to work for asylum seekers through social economy and work with committed employers | Plan Einstein asylum reception model providing housing and mixed services for neighbourhood residents and asylum seekers. | <p>Increase momentum for locally-driven asylum-seeker accommodation through exchange with other initiatives</p> |

Methods and formats of transnational exchange

Six of WELDI's principal network meetings are conducted face-to-face, four take place online. Each meeting is hosted by a different city and focuses on one of the challenges identified in the activation phase.

Setting the context: local, national and EU competencies and their interaction

Each city visit will be introduced with a short **introductory note** on the local context, prepared by the lead expert, with support from the host city and accompanied by **briefing on relevant European policy and legal frameworks**, for example on the recognition of qualifications or the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

Understanding what works - good practice and knowledge transfer

Structured **presentations of good practice** from WELDI partners and external cities will form an integral part of our face-to-face and online meetings. The lead expert and ad-hoc experts will produce **short "digests" from research and policy in key areas** (e.g. one-stop-shops, recognition of qualifications, communication, ...) to provide an overview of the components of successful policies and the conditions required for their success.

Understanding relations between actors

WELDI host cities will be encouraged to organise meaningful site visits, which give peers the opportunity to understand how the city and its stakeholders work together. We are keen to speak to migrants while avoiding exposing them to uncomfortable situations and tokenism.

Opening up action planning processes to peers

Cities hosting transnational meetings will be invited to share current challenges they face with regard to planning and implementing the IAP with their peers, either in the form of open stakeholder discussions or in action learning sets. We

thereby mobilise peer support and knowledge sharing on the technical challenges of action planning and build trust within WELDI's community of practice. Building on this, we will hold formal peer reviews of the draft IAPs in the second half of the project's life cycle.

Articulating transnational network and ULGs

ULG meetings are suggested to be scheduled ahead of each TEX meeting to provide input specific to an upcoming transnational meeting, where relevant (see network timeline). ULG members who hold expertise on a particular TEX topic and were involved in preparing an input, would typically attend a transnational meeting on behalf of the city, wherever possible.

For some of the core network topics, WELDI will also explore forming transnational subgroups of a particular profile of ULG members where there is interest and a critical mass of members. A transnational researcher subgroup is the most popular option so far, with interest from Cluj-Napoca, Fundão, Liège, Seine-Saint-Denis, Sosnowiec and Utrecht). Another subgroup could be constituted by the police and legal experts to accompany the work on labour market exploitation (e.g. Sosnowiec, Liège, Albacete, Fundao,...).

Capturing and monitoring learning

At the end of each transnational meeting, participants will record their key learning and follow up actions at local level (key learning grid). Partners and Lead Expert will monitor the learning journey at the level of individual cities and the network with a view to adapting learning methods if necessary.

Synergies with other URBACT networks

We identified the URBACT networks FEMACT-cities and DIGI-Inclusion as those with which WELDI has the biggest potential synergies. With FEMACT there is even a shared member (Cluj-Napoca / Cluj metro area). These synergies can be explored in two meetings: on digital tools for access to rights (Cluj online-meeting, potential input from DIGI-Inclusion) and on children and women-centred approaches to reception and integration (Sosnowiec online-meeting, potential input from FEMACT-cities). WELDI will be attentive to other synergies once our work unfolds, also through activities organised by the secretariat.

Intervision sessions for keeping WELDI members committed and connected

At three stages of the project (spring 2024, autumn 2024 and spring 2025), Lead Partner and Lead Expert will hold an intervision dialogue (online) with the local coordinator to conduct a “health check” with each partner and understand possible challenges for the local and transnational work strands.

Training on common challenges

In addition to the transnational exchanges, training on core themes will be offered throughout the project’s life cycle for all members of the project. The training will be mostly developed with the help of ad-hoc experts and external partners. It includes:

- ▷ Human-rights-based approach (face-to-face, spring 2024)
- ▷ One-Stop-Shops (online - ad-hoc expertise, autumn 2024)
- ▷ Communication on migration and diversity (online - ad-hoc expertise, winter 2024)
- ▷ Funding and project design (for implementing the action plan) (online - ad-hoc expertise, spring 2025)

Other training sessions will be offered on a voluntary basis depending on time and interest. Through a collaboration with Eurocities, it will be possible to offer online training on:

- ▷ Co-designing integration strategies (MOOC)
- ▷ Data gathering and sharing
- ▷ Women-centred integration policies
- ▷ Transition from emergency response to strategic planning

The date for these training sessions will be confirmed at a later stage of the project.

Peer exchanges: in depth and covering specific needs

WELDI partners have many overlapping and complementary challenges and priorities, but not all of these will be addressed in detail in the transnational work. For this reason, bilateral and trilateral staff-exchanges will be organised by the partners to provide an opportunity for a more in-depth technical

exchange. Topics that promise significant learning potential are, for instance, One-Stop-Shops (Liège, Cluj, Fundão, ...), breaking exploitation in the agricultural sector (Albacete, Fundão), digital IDs (Liège, Utrecht), the use of the social economy for labour market integration (Liège, Osijek, Utrecht) or outreach work with migrants with complex social issues (Albacete, Timișoara, Seine-Saint Denis, Sosnowiec). Concrete staff exchanges will be proposed by the Lead expert but are eventually decided on the initiative and with the budget of individual partners.

They will typically be one-way, with a learning partner visiting a more experienced partner, and last two full days plus travel time. If this is considered useful, they can also involve a return visit. Their programme consists of peer meetings with the main network of actors responsible for a policy / practice / service and –where possible– shadowing professionals, i.e. accompanying them in their work.

The Lead expert will help to plan the exchanges and their objectives, and collect the necessary background information from both cities. A planning meeting (online) should take place ahead of the meeting to fine-tune the exchange.

Involving migrants in WELDI

In all WELDI partner cities we found professionals from NGOs and municipal services in a very prominent role, although there was also an interest in working more directly with migrants who are not professional stakeholders. Lead Partner and Lead Expert propose that WELDI partners engage actively with migrants to include them in the development of the city action plan.

As one way of facilitating this engagement from the network’s side, WELDI will offer support (via the Lead Expert, ad-hoc expertise and/or the researcher group) to a transnational group of migrant experts by experience from WELDI members who are interested in accompanying WELDI beyond the local stakeholder groups. Should there be interest in setting up such a group, WELDI will provide initial training and accompaniment through the lead expert, ad-hoc expertise or the researcher group.

The work plan for the experts by experience group should be self-determined. During the activation stage, the lead partner suggested collecting migrant voices giving account of the process of arrival, leading to a WELDI Multivoiced Archive of recordings/transcripts.

A second suggestion for giving more visibility to migrants in WELDI is to commission a play based on some of the data and voices gathered in WELDI to be performed during the final conference. With Brian Richards, we have already identified a theatre director who is a member of the Utrecht Local Group and who could be involved in this work.

Thirdly, we suggest that based on the community research and other forms of migrant involvement, videos by migrants will be produced by each city as an output of the project (see outputs section).

Advocacy agenda

In the initial mapping, WELDI partners found that some of the human rights challenges are the result of policies and laws preventing the take up of rights. This informed a first list of advocacy themes that are intertwined with the partner's learning objectives. An advocacy group (Fundão, Lampedusa, Seine-Saint-Denis and Utrecht) will meet to develop these themes into a more detailed advocacy plan in the first half of 2025, that takes into account the agenda of the EU institutions and of city networks to which WELDI partners have direct links.

City-led relocation of asylum seekers

(links to: Lampedusa, Utrecht, Fundão).

The relocation of asylum seekers from those Mediterranean countries receiving the bulk of asylum claims to other EU member states has so far been unsuccessful. At present, it looks like the new EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum will not include an agreement on relocation, but rather allow member states to demonstrate solidarity through financial contributions.

City-led relocation based on pledges by individual cities could be a model to break this blockage, in line with the advocacy work of the International Alliance of Safe Harbours, and previous pledges by individual Eurocities members. Within WELDI, Fundão is already engaged in relocation in cooperation with the Portuguese government.

The finalisation of the Asylum and Migration Pact and the European Elections in 2024 are potential opportunities to give visibility for this topic in WELDI, also in relation to advocacy for more legal pathways for mainly economic migration, to take the pressure off the asylum system and enable a faster integration.

City-led / decentralised reception and accommodation of asylum seekers

(links to: Utrecht, Fundão, arrival destinations of Ukrainian refugees).

Accommodation is mostly centrally steered with little or no consultation with local authorities. As a consequence, facilities are often large-scale and segregated, in stark contradiction to most local philosophies of integration, and contributing to perpetuating anti-migrant narratives.

Examples exist of locally-coordinated but centrally-funded models, and they have largely demonstrated their benefits. They include the SPRAR system in Italy (abandoned in 2018 by then Home Affairs Minister Salvini), the Plan Einstein Pilot in Utrecht and the Migration Centre in Fundão. They all illustrate the potential of locally-led accommodation for more locally adapted solutions that foster interaction through co-living with other groups (e.g. young people in Utrecht), and joint support for the established neighbourhood population and the new residents. Based on experiences from WELDI partners and others, and as contribution to a new local reception model, WELDI will collect examples of locally coordinated asylum accommodation and provide evidence of its benefits.

The reception of Ukrainian refugees is also a major case where reception has been organised in a much more decentralised way, and been implemented

by local authorities, while funding was provided by national authorities and international donors.

Better support and procedures for the recognition of qualifications

(links to: Cluj-Napoca, Fundão, Osijek, Sosnowiec, Timișoara, Utrecht)

Most WELDI cities report that access to homologation and recognition of foreign qualifications is a major obstacle for migrants in accessing decent work opportunities. Procedures are often intransparent, take a long time and are costly. What is needed to improve the situation is mostly in the hands of member states: better coordination between different (typically national and regional) institutions that are responsible for the recognition of qualifications, simpler procedures and better information. Countries such as Denmark, the Netherlands or Germany have worked into this direction and can serve as an example. But local administrations, as examples such as Munich or Barcelona illustrate, can also do their share by providing additional support and guidance. This is not only an investment in the future of their citizens, but also a source of economic returns for the city in the form of reduced welfare spending and higher tax income.

The recent EC Recommendation from November 2023 on the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals provides a topical EU framework for this issue, demanding member states to consult with stakeholders about existing barriers. It also defines quality criteria for responsible authorities which include an appropriate capacity and training, offering tailored support for clients, providing clear information on procedures and not charging unreasonable costs for the procedures.

By gathering evidence about obstacles that migrants face in having their skills and qualifications recognised, WELDI can provide a local authority perspective on this topic. The project can also provide a platform to share advocacy strategies with national authorities.

Access to EU-funding

(Links to Albacete, Osijek, Sosnowiec, Cluj-Napoca, Sosnowiec, Timișoara)

The exchanges with WELDI partners in the beginning of this project have shown that several local authorities have little access to funding for migrant

reception and integration. Several national government authorities have not yet published any call under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund in the current financial framework, while others are excluding cities as potential beneficiaries in the national programmes, in violation of the AMIF regulation.

WELDI will gather more evidence and seek to join existing monitoring coalitions (e.g. civil society, Eurocities) to continue this first analysis and potentially denounce preventing local authorities from accessing crucial resources.

Network meetings

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| <p>22 Feb 2024</p> | <p>Fundão (online TEX): Access to decent work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to decent work - introduction to Fundão context ● Local cases of labour market exploitation and strategies on tackling it ● The special case of middleman systems in agriculture and how to break them ● Experience with tailored training to migrants to work in the local economy (Fundão, Liège) ● The role of the social economy as intermediary for placements (e.g. for refugees). ● How to address the bottleneck of the recognition of qualifications? | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input: local situation on labour market exploitation and ways to tackle it ▷ Host presentation on work with employers to guarantee fair working conditions and tailor-made training for newcomers to work in agriculture and forestry ▷ Input on initiatives on clean labour regional certification of agricultural products (tbc) ▷ Input on work with socially committed employers ▷ Background on EU framework for the recognition of foreign qualifications, national best practice ▷ WELDI-Survey on specific local bottlenecks regarding recognition encountered in WELDI localities ▷ Background on state of play on revised EU single permit directive for economic migrants |
| <p>Feb 2024</p> | <p>Advocacy group kick-off meeting</p> <p>Refining WELDI's advocacy agenda and its interaction with learning and communication activities.</p> | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Align advocacy topics with WELDI communication plan as well as with agendas of EU institutions and city networks |
| <p>Feb/Mar 2024</p> | <p>Kick-off meetings (online):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WELDI transnational researcher group ● WELDI transnational experts by experience group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define research agenda and how it can feed into the project - Define potential links between the two groups | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Connecting interested ULG members with groups ▷ Launch brainstorming process on objectives via shared document prior to the meeting |

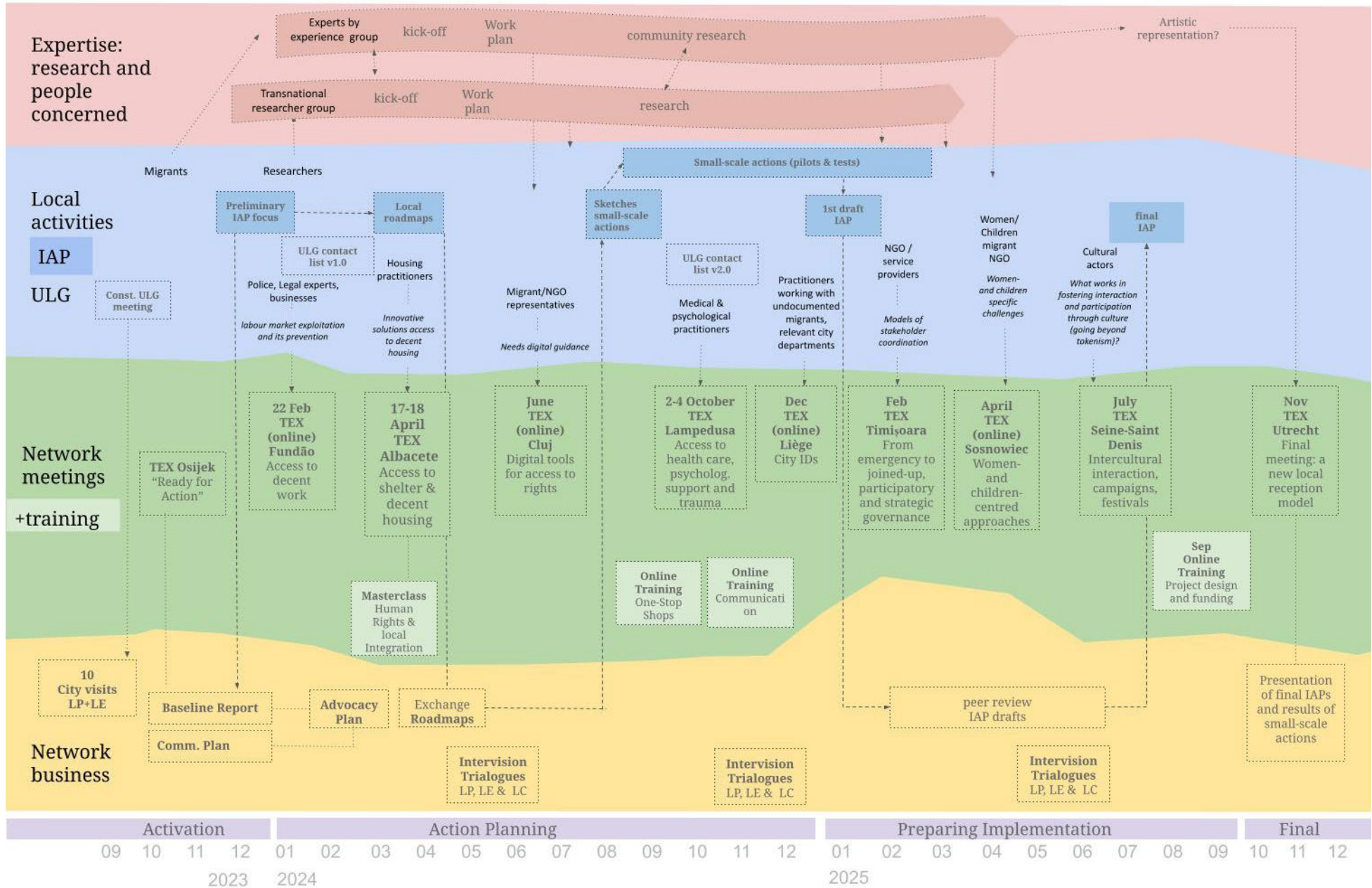
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| <p>17-18 April 2024</p> | <p>Albacete (TEX): Access to shelter and decent housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Albacete ● How to increase leverage of existing housing stock for social purposes (e.g. through rent intermediation schemes / social rental agencies) ● Building a case for city-led housing for asylum seekers and refugees (Advocacy) ● A review of citizen-provided housing in managing Ukraine reception ● Interventions in informal settlements (Albacete, Seine-Saint-Denis) <p>Other elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Masterclass Human-rights based approach in local reception and integration policies (tbc - could also be organised online) ● Exchange on local IAP-roadmaps and first ideas for small-scale actions (could also happen online) | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on problems with access to housing ▷ Site visit of residence for seasonal workers ▷ The ROOF-legacy - homelessness and migration (Liège, Timișoara) ▷ Input on rent intermediation schemes (Spain, Belgium) - pros and cons ▷ WELDI survey on citizen-provided housing for Ukrainians, further background research ▷ Ad-hoc expertise (profile: practitioner with long-standing experience in HR-based approach at local level) Masterclass Human-rights based approach in local reception and integration policies |
| <p>June 2024</p> | <p>Cluj (online TEX): digital tools for access to rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Cluj ● Digital tools for guidance and inclusion of newcomers - exchange of ideas between cities planning digital guidance actions (Cluj, Liège, Sosnowiec, SSD) ● Digital local IDs - Cluj ● Digital language support tools ● The future of automated translation | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on information sources used by newcomers ▷ Potential presentation from H2020 project MICADO - Migrant Integration Cockpits and Dashboards on guidance apps for migrants ▷ Potential experts input on future scenarios of AI based automated translation ▷ Connection with other URBACT networks: DIGI-Inclusion |
| <p>Sep 2024</p> | <p>Online-Training / Workshop One-Stop Shops (OSS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What OSS can and cannot achieve ● Design principles of OSS ● Presenting real city examples of OSS ● Providing space for cities to discuss their OSS ideas and models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Ad-hoc expertise (profile: practitioner working in OSS / consultant having supported the development of a OSS) |

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| <p>2-4 Oct 2024</p> | <p>Lampedusa (TEX): access to healthcare, psychological support and trauma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Lampedusa: win-win investments in mixed infrastructure for newcomers and established residents - healthcare ● Multilingualism, cultural awareness and rights awareness in care ● Work with unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups ● Debate: trauma-informed reception and integration (Sosnowiec, SSD, Timișoara) <p>Other elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specifying small-scale actions (could also happen online) | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on legal and practical obstacles in accessing healthcare and examples of training of healthcare staff ▷ Background in legal obstacles to universal access to healthcare ▷ UCLG Saint-Denis Charter Process on Human Rights in the city |
| <p>Nov 2024</p> | <p>Online-Training Communication about migration and diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What works and what does not work in communicating about migration at local level ● Anti-rumours networks and/or other approaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Ad-hoc expertise (profile: professional with experience in communication on behalf of local authorities in the area of social affairs / migration; coordinator of anti-rumour strategies, etc.) |
| <p>Dec 2024</p> | <p>Liège (online TEX) : City ID cards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Liège: Advantages and obstacles of local IDs ● Presentation of ID projects in other WELDI members (Utrecht, Sosnowiec, Cluj) | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on the potential benefits of ID cards ▷ Input from city currently implementing local ID (e.g. Zurich - tbc) ▷ Background research city IDs |

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| <p>Feb 2025</p> | <p>Timișoara (TEX): From emergency to joined-up, participatory and strategic governance</p> <p>Knowledge and best practice sharing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Liège: towards a strategic approach ● Discussing elements of a strategic approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting needs analysis - Strategy development / action planning - Stakeholder coordination mechanisms - Joined up governance - Monitoring and evaluation - Building capacity through staff training on migrant rights | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on models of stakeholder coordination and experiences with co-design ▷ Connection with work of experts by experience ▷ Input on local best practice on staff training |
| <p>Apr 2025</p> | <p>Sosnowiec (online TEX): Women- and children-centred approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Sosnowiec ● Access to labour market for women ● Access to childcare ● Supporting parenthood from a human rights and intercultural perspective ● Access to education (Ukrainian refugees, asylum seekers) | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on women’s and children’s needs that are unmet by mainstream integration services ▷ Input on work with families in informal settlements ▷ Ad-hoc expertise: facilitation / inspiration (profile: expert in women / children-centred approaches to reception and integration) ▷ Connection with other URBACT networks: FEMACT |
| <p>July 2025</p> | <p>Seine-Saint-Denis (TEX): Intercultural interaction, campaigns, festivals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro and open stakeholder discussion Seine-Saint-Denis ● The role of sports and other ludic activities ● The role of communication and campaigns <p>Other elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outreach work in social inclusion policies | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Beyond tokenism and preaching to the converted: what works in fostering interaction and participation through culture? |

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| <p>Sep 2025</p> | <p>Online-workshop on funding and project design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project design principles ● Funding sources ● Platform for WELDI-partners to present project ideas and develop them | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Ad-hoc expertise (profile: project design and funding in social affairs / migration area) |
| <p>Nov 2025</p> | <p>Utrecht (TEX): Final meeting: a new local reception model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenting final IAPs and next steps ● Discussing progress on advocacy agenda ● Presenting other network outputs ● Debate on a new local reception model ● Cultural event | <p>Potential input/preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ ULG input on information sources used by newcomers |

The network roadmap



Network outputs - in progress

During the activation stage, WELDI partners discussed a variety of potential network outputs. At present, they represent a collection of ideas that still need to be refined in the first phase of the action planning stage.

Toolkit on a new human rights-informed local reception model

A toolkit conveying the challenges, good practice and lessons learned in the project with a view to presenting a next generation model of mobility and human-rights-based local reception that is prepared for a constant flow of newcomer arrivals, their dignified reception and a constructive interaction between new and established residents. This new model has to acknowledge the reality that integration into the national society – although the goal of many national integration policies – is not in fact the goal for many newcomers, who plan to move on elsewhere. As such, cities should take a “future free” perspective, adopting the role of enablers, “launchpads” or “springboards” for newcomers to fulfill their potential.

Board game on applying human rights in local reception policies

In a more playful variant, the toolkit would become a board game, in which players have to react to different human rights challenges that the city faces and set up a resilient reception structure.

Report on lessons learned from local reception with Ukrainian refugees

A report would collect the experiences of WELDI cities with the reception of Ukrainian refugees from city council and NGO partners and community members, and draw lessons from it on how to inform a new local reception model. The report would be a space for reflection of this experience which is seen as foundational in many cities in that it has led to an unseen mobilisation of civil society and city council actors, but also in that the framework of temporary protection provided more opportunities to the refugees (e.g. direct access to the labour market, different accommodation models).

Community research on migrant voices

The work of community researchers can feed into the project and its outputs in different ways, which are yet to be determined. One idea that was discussed in the first phase of the project was to record experiences of arrival, local belonging, future perspectives and interaction with different support services from the perspective of the migrant protagonists; and to dramatise the experiences in a play. The community research and its outputs will be driven by the researchers themselves and the project’s role is to provide guidance and support.

Videos on WELDI’s local results

Videos of partners and stakeholders reflecting on concrete outcomes of the project and changed perspectives, narratives, vocabularies, imaginaries; as well as migrants bringing in their perspectives on reception in the WELDI localities could be an outputs that can be suitably used for the project’s social network activities.

WELDI

Building welcoming communities for migrants

Baseline report by: Lead Expert Dirk Gebhardt,
with the support of the partners of the WELDI
action planning network.

Final version: February 2024
Layout: Julia Giordano

URBACT



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