



Practice to Policy

Lessons from Local Leadership on
Immigrant Integration



MAYTREE

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Cities of Migration

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About Cities of Migration

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Cities of Migration tells stories about cities that are working on innovative and practical ways to foster inclusion, diversity, and shared urban prosperity.

This report is the last in the series, *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*. In this series, we share good practices that highlight how local governments can contribute to the future prosperity and well-being of their cities through wise investments in immigrant integration. In *Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration*, we look at what these practices can tell us about the role of local governments in immigrant integration, and how cities can start or deepen their work in this area.

Throughout the series, we have benefited enormously from the insights and experiences of leaders in this field. Four international experts contributed thoughtful analysis and insight on immigrant integration policy in the essays that make up the body of this report: Audrey Singer, The Brookings Institution; Jan Niessen, Migration Policy Group; Roland Roth, Magdeburg-Stendal University; and Myer Siemiatycki, Ryerson University. Their expertise and international perspectives are invaluable.

Our contributors drew both on an established body of literature and the evidence of good practice offered by the local councils, municipal departments, agencies and community partners who generously shared their stories with us, so that we could promote the excellence and innovation they represent with cities around the world.

In all of our work, we are honoured to work with partners, like-minded institutions and networks of city and community leaders, experts, practitioners and activists whose daily work inspires us to redouble our own efforts.

Thank you also to the team at Maytree who worked to put this series together: Bonnie Mah for editing and shaping this report, and drafting the recommendations; Markus Stadelmann-Elder and Sarah Gledhill for communications

and design; Piali Roy, with an international web of contributors, for researching and writing the “good ideas” that are at the core of this report and other volumes in the series, and Evelyn Siu for coordinating the myriad ways that we share these stories with others.

The full set of publications in this series is available at www.citiesofmigration.org.

Kim Turner
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“Cities attract people and talents from all different places. It is the spirited process of immigration and integration that makes great cities thrive.”

Mayor Olaf Scholz
Hamburg, Germany



Introduction: From Practice to Policy

Ratna Omidvar
Maytree



Immigrants overwhelmingly choose to migrate to cities and their suburbs. Consequently, the local experience plays a defining role in their settlement. Yet, too often, the immigration discourse focuses solely on the levers of national policy as key instruments in selection and integration. Certainly, national governments have a big role to play, in setting the terms of immigration and citizenship, selecting potential immigrants and developing strategies about how immigration will build the nation, both socially and economically. But too often, national policy informs an abstract public discourse that fails to account for the realities of lived experience.

Local policy-makers have a critical role to play. As Jane Jacobs wisely observed, the level of government closest to the people is best positioned to serve the people. Indeed, around the world, cities are on the front lines of immigrant integration. These municipal governments are leading the way with innovative policies and programs that ensure that immigrants are welcomed and integrated into their new hometowns, where they can contribute to the local economy and culture.

This volume is the last in our series, *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration*. The series highlights more than 70 promising practices from cities in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Some of the featured cities are old hands at integration – such as Toronto, London, and New York. Many are newer immigrant gateways – such as Helsinki, Bremen, and Barcelona. These emerging leaders are leap-frogging over traditional steps in integration policy and making immigrant inclusion a top priority. They are welcoming their newest residents and facilitating their social, economic and political participation.

In this collection of essays, international experts examine what these practices tell us about municipal integration policy and discuss the roles that local governments can, and should, play. Audrey Singer (Washington) paints a picture of shifting metropolitan immigration patterns in North America and internationally. Roland Roth (Magdeburg and Stendal) discusses the slow but steady shift in the way that cities think about immigrants – one that recognizes that immigrants bring significant economic benefit and opportunity, and are key to urban prosperity.

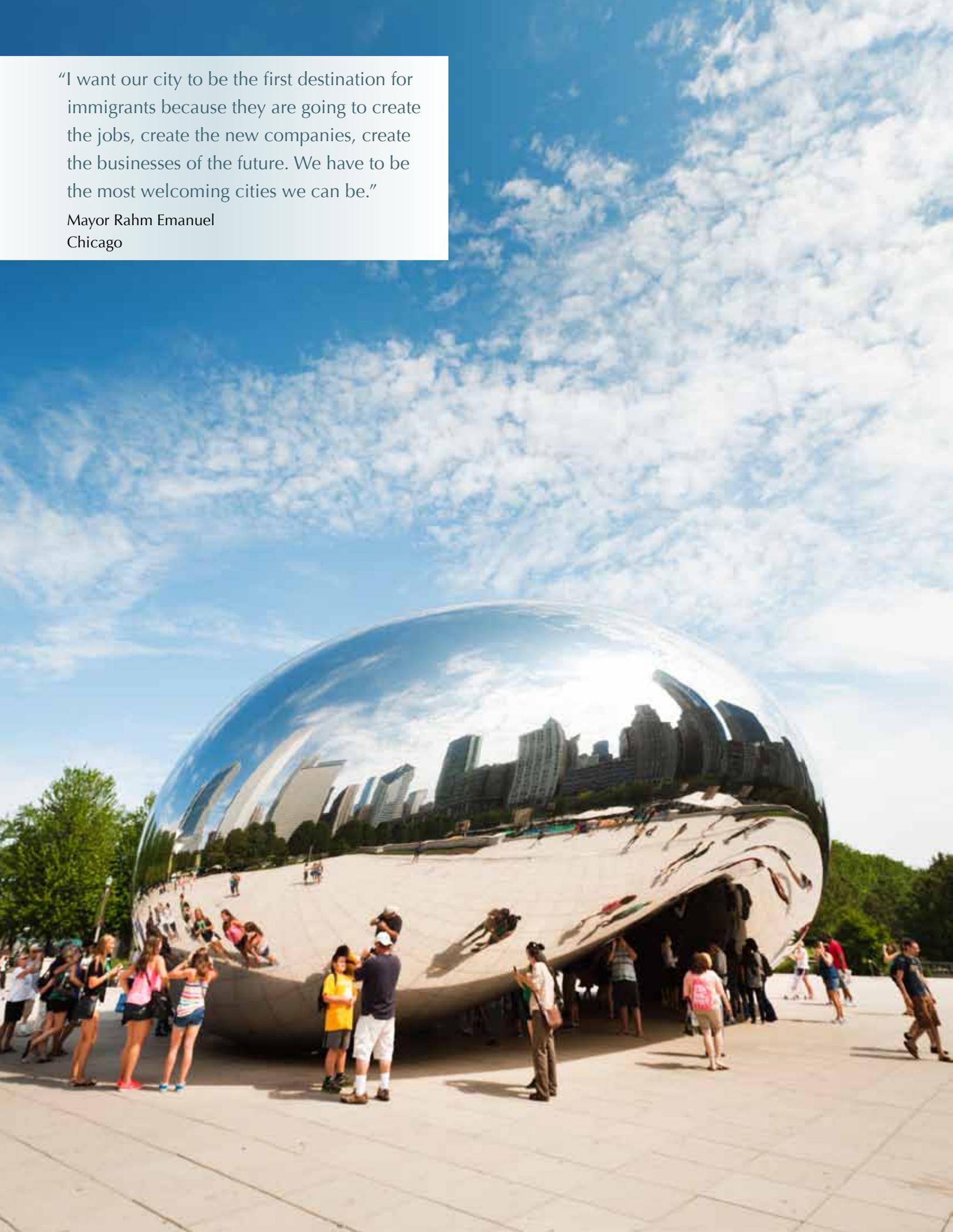
Myer Siemiatycki (Toronto) explores the ways that integration influences and is influenced by our public spaces. His essay illustrates how integration expresses itself across multiple policy areas. Jan Niessen (Brussels) looks at the ways that national policy interacts with local policy by examining global policy trends and commenting on gaps and convergences.

Finally, we conclude with some lessons and recommendations that we've gathered from our work on this series. While cities are powerful agents of change at the local level, they must also engage with policy makers at the sub-national, national, and international levels. They must tell their stories so that effective policies and successful practices can be adapted and replicated by others. From these local practices, we can move to policy solutions that make sense in both local contexts and within the frameworks of national immigration strategies. ■

Ratna Omidvar is President of Maytree, a private foundation in Toronto. She is the chair of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and the co-chair of *DiverseCity: The Greater Toronto Leadership Project*. In 2011, she was made a Member of the Order of Canada for her advocacy on behalf of immigrants and for her devotion to reducing inequality.

"I want our city to be the first destination for immigrants because they are going to create the jobs, create the new companies, create the businesses of the future. We have to be the most welcoming cities we can be."

Mayor Rahm Emanuel
Chicago



Migration and the Metropolis

Audrey Singer

The Brookings Institution



In the 21st century, immigration continues to change cities and nations worldwide. One-fifth of the world's immigrants live in the United States where the foreign-born population now exceeds 40 million, making up 13% of the national population. Over the last two decades, nearly 20 million immigrants arrived in the U.S. These unprecedented levels of immigration have changed the character of many places, urban, suburban and rural. And the U.S. is not alone – no less than 15 European Union nations have foreign-born populations exceeding 10%, while in Australia and Canada, immigrants make up 22% and 20% of the general populations, respectively.

While we often think of immigrants as moving from one country to another, really they arrive from a particular place and settle in a particular community, usually a metropolitan area. In the U.S., for example, the vast majority of immigrants (95%) live within one of 366 metropolitan areas, which vary considerably in size, industrial structure, and demographic composition. And within metropolitan areas, where they live varies: they reside in primary cities, dense and mature suburbs, and emerging suburbs and exurbs extending to the urban fringe. Where an immigrant arrives and settles is very important to the immigrant integration process, which largely takes place on the local level. Immigrants live in neighborhoods, go to work, set up businesses, and send their children to school – all of which happens at the local level.

These metropolitan contexts are important for understanding how immigrants fit into local labour and housing markets, and how they interact with institutions such as schools, transportation systems and healthcare

systems. In many countries, especially those built on immigration, several metropolitan areas have had a continuous history of receiving immigrants. In the United States, the cities of New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Boston are the largest continuous immigrant gateways. In Europe, major capitals like London, Amsterdam, Berlin

Immigrants live in neighborhoods, go to work, set up businesses, and send their children to school – all of which happens at the local level.

and Paris have played similar roles. These places have been incorporating immigrants for over 100 years and have a thick social service infrastructure and strong identification as immigrant destinations. In the United States, Los Angeles, Houston and Miami are among the largest immigrant destinations, yet their experience began only after World War II. Other cities, such as Dublin and Calgary, have just recently begun to receive immigrants in large numbers, in the past two decades or less, and may be less prepared for the changes that affect major institutions.

In the United States, due in part to economic restructuring and “new economy” industrial growth in technology and service sectors, metropolitan settlement trends have taken at least two new turns over the past two decades. After decades of just a few established places drawing the majority of immigrants, new opportunities in metro areas with little history of receiving immigrants saw significant spikes to their foreign-born populations. Coming out of

the 2000s, metropolitan areas that experienced the greatest numeric growth of their foreign-born population held some surprises. These “second-tier” metro areas emerged as immigrant destinations beginning in the 1990s such as Atlanta, Austin (Texas), Phoenix, and Las Vegas. In Europe, cities like Barcelona, Copenhagen and Malmo have experienced a similar process. Some old immigrant gateways have now re-emerged as major destinations; for example, Philadelphia, Seattle and Sacramento (California) in the United States. Counterparts elsewhere include Bremen (Germany) and Winnipeg (Canada).

In a second shift, immigrants in the U.S. and Canada are bypassing cities in great numbers and settling directly in suburban areas. In the early 20th century wave of immigration, during the great period of industrialization, immigrants moved to cities to be close to jobs. Now as jobs have decentralized and as suburban opportunities have opened up, there are more immigrants residing in suburbs than in cities. Housing availability and affordability, the presence of ethnic communities, and the ubiquity of the automobile influence immigrants’ decisions to settle in suburban areas. Even three decades ago, similar shares of immigrants lived in the cities and the suburbs of the largest metropolitan areas in the United States, for example, but by 2010, only 33% of U.S. immigrants lived in central cities of the 100 largest metro areas, while 51% lived in their suburbs. Similarly, in 2006, of recent immigrants to the traditional gateway of Vancouver, Canada, 46% actually lived in the suburbs Richmond, Burnaby and Surrey.

Immigrants have made inroads to new destination areas, large and small, urban and suburban. The shift to suburban areas means that central cities are no longer the dominant entry point for immigrants and the consequence is that suburban areas are becoming more diverse places with regard to race and ethnicity, language, and religion.

These new patterns are not without conflict and stress. Major institutions in new metropolitan destinations now confront serving this diverse population. Many areas in the

United States have yet to recover from the affects of the recession and immigrants are often viewed as competitors for jobs and scarce public resources. In some of those places that experienced recent fast immigrant growth, state and local measures to control immigration, especially unauthorized immigration, have been proposed or legislated.

Many urban areas have welcomed immigrants, including places with well-established foreign-born populations, and those that started receiving and integrating immigrants more

Metropolitan areas are on the front lines of the economic integration of immigrants

recently. Metropolitan areas are on the front lines of the economic integration of immigrants. Increasingly, some cities such as former U.S. gateways Detroit, Pittsburgh and Cleveland are endeavouring to attract and retain immigrants to stem population loss and to stimulate economic activity. Some areas are also investing in immigrants that are already here, as a strategy to help local businesses and economies, as well as immigrants, their families and the communities in which they live. Cities that are the most forward-looking, that have the most pragmatic view on immigrants, are the ones that are reaching out and creating environments that immigrants can not only survive in but thrive in. They are putting out the welcome mat for immigrant newcomers. ■

Audrey Singer is a senior fellow in the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution in Washington, United States. Her areas of expertise include demography, international migration, United States immigration policy, and urban and metropolitan change. Her work currently focuses on the new geography of immigration, the economic, social, political, and civic integration of immigrants, and state and local responses to immigration. The Brookings Institution is a nonprofit public policy organization that conducts research and provides innovative and practical policy recommendations.

'Rich and Happy': Good Local Initiatives for the Integration of Migrants

Roland Roth

Magdeburg-Stendal University



"We are rich and happy because we have so many immigrants," explained Wolfgang Schuster, Mayor of Stuttgart. This came as a surprise to the jury of Germany's first national competition on local integration policy.¹ The competition "Successful integration is no coincidence – Strategies for community policy" showed that cities and towns were starting to think differently about immigration. Previously, integration and migration had long been viewed as a nuisance, a peripheral issue, and, above all, as a problem. The untapped potential of immigrants and their economic and strategic significance had long been overlooked. This new positive, asset-based approach took the jury by surprise.

Following a phase of restrictive migration policy in many Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, the last few decades have seen more open immigration policies that focus on skilled labour. We are experiencing global competition for information technology professionals, creative artists and high skilled individuals upon whom to place our hopes for future prosperity. "Brain gain" rather than "brain drain" is the driving force in today's migration policies. Since the financial crises that started in 2008, the pendulum has begun to swing in the opposite direction. Long-term demographic trends will continue to strengthen the case for immigration even after the economy cools down.

This discussion of the economic framework for migration policy requires both regional and national lenses.² While we must not succumb to economic reductionism, economic considerations crucially influence both migration policy and key policy decisions at the national level, generally. Local communities, especially large cities, similarly cannot escape the impact of global competition for goods, services and labour, and are developing economic strategies and principles (e.g. the entrepreneurial city) and taking action directly, as the examples in this series demonstrate.³

Economic considerations crucially influence both migration policy and key policy decisions

The economic significance of metropolitan regions is gaining wider recognition. The worlds of experience offered by colourful, multicultural urban areas have drawn the attention of growing tourist industries. The informal and ethnic economies of immigrants are in full swing. The new, knowledge-based economy has long discovered cities and identified their diverse neighbourhoods and districts as hubs

1. Bertelsmann Stiftung, Bundesministerium des Innern (Hrsg.). (2005). *Erfolgreiche Integration ist kein Zufall: Strategien Kommunaler Integrationspolitik*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, Stuttgart was the winner in the category of large cities.

2. For country-specific economic requirements, see Menz, Georg. (2011). *Employer Preferences for Labour Migration: Exploring 'Varieties of*

Capitalism'-Based Contextual Conditionality in Germany and the United Kingdom. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 13, 534-550.

3. Other works in this series highlight municipal programs and policies from North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. See Maytree Foundation. (2012). *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration*. Toronto: Maytree Foundation.

of skill and innovation.⁴ “Creative cities” are just one of the many ways in which the economic and social benefits of diversity have been expressed.⁵ This asset-based, human capital approach to immigration is starting to replace older, problem-oriented attitudes and approaches to immigrant integration. Cities increasingly recognize immigrant skill and potential as sources of hope.

As cities adjust to changing economic conditions, they also remain central to the social integration of immigrants across all areas of everyday life. Unlike business enterprises, cities and towns must also seek approaches that are sustainable, inclusive, ecologically sensitive and globally responsible.

Targeted economic integration strategies and immigrant recruitment initiatives therefore require broad social integration policies and must be supported by all residents in the receiving community. All local integration policy fields – ranging from education to widening of intercultural horizons to antidiscrimination and the promotion of equality – can contribute. These complementary measures are necessary for economic integration initiatives to be successful at the local level and must address local conditions and economic prospects. Even among major cities, there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Good local migration and integration policy will definitely contribute to better economic integration of immigrants. You can find international examples of good local practices throughout this Municipal Leadership series⁶.

Looking in, looking out

Basically, two approaches are at work here. On the one hand, local governments must look inward, and invest in a diverse urban society in all its potential. On the other hand, cities and towns are also looking outward, making

themselves attractive to potential immigrants and creating the conditions for investment. A welcoming culture is one that contributes by helping immigrants and their families overcome obstacles in all areas of life while also providing targeted employment and business start-up assistance. The collection of good ideas demonstrates just how innovative local governments can be in their approaches and responses across a spectrum of different city contexts and experiences.

Cities are developing founding principles that stress the economic and social rights of immigrants and opt for diversity. In doing so, they are overcoming traditional approaches that restrict urban citizenship to nationals and certain status groups of immigrants.

A welcoming culture is one that contributes by helping immigrants and their families overcome obstacles in all areas of life while also providing targeted employment and business start-up assistance

For example, Montreal (Canada) established a “Charter of Rights for Urban Citizens.” The Greater London Authority has joined a London Living Wage Campaign launched by the citizens’ action initiative “London Citizens.” The slogan “Making London a Living Wage City” addresses a central problem of major cities, where the cost of living is often significantly higher than the agreed minimum wage, assuming that the latter even exists. It also addresses a class of workers in which women and minorities, including immigrants, are over-represented.

<http://citiesofmigration.ca/good-ideas-in-integration/municipal>

4. The works of Richard Florida were pioneering; see especially: Florida, Richard. (2005). *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge. For a critical, empirically sound interim balance see Krätke, Stefan. (2011). *The Creative Capital of Cities: Interactive Knowledge Creation and the Urbanization Economies of Innovation*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

5. For programmatic aspects, cf. Page, Scott E. (2007). *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

6. Maytree Foundation. (2012). *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration*. Toronto: Maytree Foundation. <http://citiesofmigration.ca/good-ideas-in-integration/municipal/>

Cities are recognizing immigrants as active and productive members of society, that enhance the economic prosperity of the city. Community programs and institutions are promoting immigrant employment, training immigrants for high skill sectors of the local job market and supporting fair and equitable business practices. This includes recognizing their credentials, training, experience and language skills. Many cities have initiatives that address the specific needs of immigrants.

Building on the success of Toronto's TRIEC (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council), highly qualified immigrants seeking employment in the Auckland Region (New Zealand) can access mentoring and training through OMEGA (Opportunities for Migrant Employment in Greater Auckland) in partnership with municipal executive staff. The local economic development agency in Turin (Italy) succeeded in defusing conflict among vendors at a local market at the Porta Palazzo by creating a regulated zone and a legal status for unlicensed merchants as "non-commercial vendors." In Wuppertal (Germany), the Wuppertal Participation Network works with asylum seekers in Germany during the period of time they are not permitted to work; the time is used for training that prepares them for the local labour market.

Diversity as a productive force: promoting immigrant entrepreneurship is becoming a priority for integration policies around the world. Cities and towns are increasingly helping immigrants to start businesses, fostering small business incubation and supporting their development – from the back streets to Main Street success.

In Munich (Germany), the community-based MEM (Migrant Entrepreneurs Munich program) supports entrepreneurs with an immigrant background by providing advice, training, networking events and promoting their recognition and appreciation with an annual award for successful immigrant enterprises. Vienna (Austria) has established an elaborate welcome program for immigrant entrepreneurs. The city's agency for entrepreneurs, MINGO ("move in and grow"), provides multilingual services for immigrant entrepreneurs in a "one-stop shop."

Local communities are leading the way by using municipal offices, agencies and services to model good practices for diversity. Increasing cultural competencies and inclusion while improving the quality of public service has already been on municipal agendas for some time. While it is difficult to implement these policies at a time when public services are shrinking under pressure for fiscal retrenchment, these initiatives ensure the city will be accountable to its residents and competitive in the long run.

Bremen (Germany) has set up an education and training centre for public services that specifically addresses the recruitment and training of minority youth for the public sector. Copenhagen's Diversity Charter not only governs the development and management of local community services but also includes mandatory social clauses around procurement and supplier diversity.

Cities have taken up the issue of securing the economic rights of immigrants. They have also adopted such courses in clear pursuit of their own interests, knowing the burden of the social and economic cost of economic discrimination and financial exclusion. For the average citizen, this area includes everyday things like opening a bank account, credit and other forms of microfinance for workers who are precariously employed or without legal status, or for entrepreneurial start-ups. In times of harsh and sometimes deadly border regimes, local communities have set themselves the task of contributing to the more humane treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and non-status immigrants that conforms with human rights. Many of the frequently well-qualified civil war refugees from Europe's periphery also deserve better prospects on the EU labour markets.⁷

Bank On in San Francisco (U.S.) provides free-of-charge or low-cost accounts to low income individuals and families. In Durham (U.S.), the Latino Community Credit Union, a co-operative bank, goes one step further. On a community basis, it offers credit to immigrants with low income and runs a large number of branches to facilitate day-to-day

money transactions. A similar approach in London (U.K.), Fair Finance, awards microcredits to immigrants to protect them against the extortionate rates of interest charged by private moneylenders. In New Haven (U.S.), the city issues local identification cards for all city residents, including undocumented migrants, to facilitate access to essential city services, including banking.

Today, cities fluctuate between adaptation and obstinacy when it comes to economic integration. Given the success of local efforts to adapt to economic trends and the number of policy guidelines in many cases and in many places, there remains a surprising reluctance among some cities to embrace their traditional role as places of integration. Going forward, we must continue to develop resources to support new immigrants and their integration into the urban economy so that they really can help make all of us “rich and happy.” ■

Roland Roth is professor of political science at Magdeburg-Stendal University, Germany. He has also served as a research fellow at the University of California at Santa Cruz and the Social Science Research Centre Berlin, and as a visiting professor at the University of Vienna. His scholarly and political work focuses on democracy, social movements, integration, and civil and human rights. He is one of the founders of the Committee for Basic Rights and Democracy in Cologne, and serves on several advisory boards on democratic development, child and youth participation, integration and right-wing extremism.

7. Richey, Mason. (2012). The North African Revolutions: A Chance to Rethink European Externalization of the Handling of Non-EU Migrant Inflows. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 1, 1-19.

Taking It to the Streets: A Municipal Role in Immigrant Integration

Myer Siemiatycki
Ryerson University



Streets are the defining characteristic of cities and urban life. What distinguishes cities from rural and small-town sites is the street – at once both a reflection and embodiment of all that is unique about cities. Urban population, architecture, infrastructure, economics, society, culture, order and disorder all are manifest on the street. This essay examines how the street can become a path to immigrant integration.

Cities divided, cities united

We are living in “the age of migration.”¹ More humans than ever now live outside their country of birth. More countries than ever are now major senders or receivers of migration flows. And whatever part of the world immigrants move to, they overwhelmingly settle in cities.

Cities have always been composed of diverse populations. Deyan Sudjic reminds us: “The tension between different ethnic groups has been the essence of big city life for 3,000 years. By definition, cities are places that attract outsiders, and which form a meeting place between different cultures.”² On what terms do these different cultures converge in the modern city? Sharon Zukin speaks for many urban scholars in replying that the well-being of cities now depends on whether they “can create an inclusive public culture.” Such successful integration may well begin on the street, as “accepting diversity implies sharing public space.”³

City streets and public spaces can reflect either social inclusion or social exclusion. Landscapes of exclusion are

typically characterized by such features as:

- immigrant ghettos;
- unequal access to institutions and spaces of employment, learning, government, etc.; and
- municipal planning policies that are unresponsive to the distinct residential, recreational, religious and cultural needs of diverse communities.

Such patterns inevitably create polarized and divided cities.

Whatever part of the world immigrants move to, they overwhelmingly settle in cities

There are many risks in such a situation. They include social strife and the lost opportunity to fully benefit from the human capital of a diverse urban population. Streets can either divide or unite urban residents.

Municipal leadership: Landscapes of inclusion

Municipal governments generally have limited powers, as assigned by a senior level of government. Typically, municipalities have very little direct role in immigration policy. National governments set policies related to immigration admission, status and citizenship; they frame the terms of integration around approaches ranging

1. Castles, S. and M. Miller. (1993). *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. New York: Guilford Press.
2. Sudjic, D. (1993). *The 100 Mile City*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company. p.292.

3. Zukin, S. (1995). *The Culture of Cities*. Cambridge: Blackwell. pp. 44, viii.

from marginalization to assimilation to multiculturalism, depending on the country.

But it is cities that are the destination point of migration journeys. In Canada, for instance, 95% of all immigrants in the country live in a census metropolitan area – the most populated urban places. And more than 60% of all immigrants in Canada live in just three cities – Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

Immigrants make cities their home. The record shows there are many steps – big and small – that cities can take to promote the integration of immigrants in their new urban home. Some of the most creative and effective initiatives assure that urban space – streets, but also parks, schools, libraries – serve the entire population. As Valerie Preston and Lucia Lo state, good things happen “when immigrants

It is cities that are the destination point of migration journeys

successfully transform the city’s built environment, creating places that signify their presence and testify to their rights to occupy public space.”⁴

Because municipal governments typically regulate the use of urban space, they play a critical gatekeeping role in what can be built and happen on the street and other public spaces. Let’s look at some examples of how cities are promoting integration, sometimes street by street.

Taking it to the street

Local initiatives can be taken by anyone with a good idea. As the examples below show, this can involve leadership from municipal officials, newcomer communities and members of the broader urban community. What all these examples

have in common is an attempt to use urban space as a pathway to equitable integration.

Planning - Municipalities are increasingly becoming committed to “multicultural planning,” which Mohammad Qadeer defines as “sensitivity of the planning process to cultural diversity.”⁵ This leads to better responsiveness by cities to the distinct spatial needs of immigrant and minority communities.

Zoning - The “Boston Back Streets Program” is a City of Boston government commitment to preserve zoning areas for small and mid-sized light industry and commercial supply firms typically owned by immigrant and minority residents. Often located off the beaten track, these firms were being displaced by urban re-development. Recognizing their importance to immigrant employment and enterprise, Boston has taken steps to assure space is available for the operation of such businesses.

Enterprise - Cities are now also showing greater commitment towards ethnic retailing. “Ethnic retailing,” Zhizi Zhuang observes, “is fluid, dynamic, and complex in nature.”⁶ It can operate from stores located on some of the city’s oldest streets, or in shiny new suburban malls built on different scale and design than traditional western malls. Recognizing the importance of local ethnic economies, city governments are now more flexible in their approach to retail location, size, signage, parking, etc.

Culture and faith - Thanks to migration, non-Christian religions are the fastest growing faith communities in cities of the global north. This has given rise to applications to build new mosques, gurdwaras and temples. In many cities, such plans have generated tensions and conflict with neighbours and municipal officials. Successful cities, Annick Germain declares, are creative in “reconciling new places

4. Preston, V. and L. Lo. (2009). Ethnic Enclaves in Multicultural Cities: New Retailing Patterns and New Planning Dilemmas. *Plan Canada*, January-February 2009. p.70.

5. Qadeer, M. (2009). What is This Thing Called Multicultural Planning? *Plan Canada*, January-February 2009. p.11.

6. Zhuang, Z. (2009). Ethnic retailing and Implications for Planning Multicultural Communities. *Plan Canada*, January-February 2009. p.79.

of worship with their environment.”⁷ In this fashion, Engin Isin and I concluded in a study of building mosques in **Toronto**, “[c]ities often open themselves to the world one building at a time.”⁸

Living together - Many cities promote walking the streets as a way for immigrants to get to know their new city, and longer-term residents to become familiar with newcomer communities. In The Hague, the city organizes tours of immigrant places of worship, neighbourhoods and markets. In Toronto the local school board takes teachers on “Community and Faith Walks,” visiting newcomer neighbourhoods and places of worship. In Wellington the local council promotes cross-cultural exchanges and business networking between newcomer immigrants and the indigenous Maori population.

Healthy neighbourhoods - The City of Auckland has developed a most ingenious walkway to integration – “the Walking School Bus.” With more than 300 different routes and networks across the city, children and parents walk a set route and schedule to school every day, picking up more participants as they proceed just like a real, motorized bus. In the process diverse families connect, know each other’s homes, and become neighbours.

Multiculturalism - Many cities provide public space for immigrant or multicultural festivals. When the growing Sikh community in the northern Spanish city of Badalona requested municipal permission to hold a Sikh parade through city streets, the city government first organized community dialogue between the Sikh community and its adjacent neighbourhoods. This built goodwill leading to a successful parade with non-Sikh neighbours and city officials participating in the parade.

Speaking out - Talk or graffiti on the street can sometimes express anti-immigrant sentiments. **Barcelona** has adopted a creative “Anti-Rumour Campaign” to counter such views. Working with grassroots organizations, the city trained more than 350 “anti-rumour agents” to deliver public speaking and perform street theatre countering anti-immigrant prejudice.

Libraries - Many cities use their municipal libraries as sites to promote newcomer integration. Typically this includes language and reading circles, offering materials in many languages, and even the provision of settlement services such as employment counseling. Particularly creative is the “Living Library” program in **Valongo**, Portugal. It travels to high schools presenting each class its own “book” – which is a real immigrant telling his or her migration story and experience to the class. Students then get to comment and ask questions, based on the slogan “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”⁹

Parks, sport, recreation - Many cities also pro-actively use their parks as sites of immigrant integration, through special programs or making space available for non-traditional activities (e.g. cricket, capoeira, tai chi). New York, for instance, has a policy to promote newcomer use of parks through such initiatives as special outreach to local newcomer communities, diversity training for park staff, providing more diverse food menus in park restaurants and offering more immigrant-friendly programs. In Barcelona, an abandoned hospital site in a newcomer neighbourhood was recently converted to a park that has enlivened the area and earned the city an international award for advancing an important “integrative task in a rapidly expanding and multi-ethnic quarter of Barcelona.”¹⁰

7. Germain, A. (2009). Religion in Public Space in a Multi-Ethnic Environment: Reasonable Accommodation in Zoning. *Plan Canada*, January-February 2009. p.91.

8. E. Isin and M. Siemiatycki. (2002). Making Space for Mosques: Struggles for Urban Citizenship in Diasporic Toronto. In Sherene Razack (Ed.), *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*. Ottawa: Between the Lines Press. p.206.

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Successful integration: A two-way street

Successful integration requires flexibility, goodwill and generosity by both immigrants and their receiving society. Cities are the stage on which this encounter of diverse identities plays out. The essence of city life, Iris Marion Young states, is “the being together of strangers.”¹¹ In this age of migration, cities play a major role in determining whether urban strangers will live together equitably or unequally, harmoniously or in conflict. You can find clues to how your city is performing on the street. ■

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National Policies and Local Realities in Immigrant Integration

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This short essay explores the dynamic interplay between the global and local dimensions of integration policies. It opens with a reminder that mobility is among the main characteristics of city life, and that this calls for comprehensive policy responses. Next, it looks at the distinction between public, civic and private sector policies that cuts across all levels of governance, and argues that these sectors should reflect the diversity of the population in the way they operate. It looks at how national policies can create favourable integration conditions at the local level. Finally, it examines international trends in migration policy.

Modern migration is local, fluid

Integration is about changes in societies and city landscapes, in the lives of individuals and communities. It takes place where people live, interact and must constantly adapt to changing situations. Local communities are safe havens and cities are economic motors in a seemingly borderless world, in which people, capital, goods, services, knowledge, information and ideas move around with varying degrees of freedom and speed. As a result, it is becoming increasingly difficult for individuals to locate opportunities and confront challenges in one place alone. They must be prepared to be mobile and to move both long and short distances and for varying periods of time. Faster and cheaper means of transportation enable them to work and live in more than one place and travel frequently within and between countries and cities. Millions of people across the world work and communicate with each other without ever meeting in person. Cultural and scientific exchange, as well as tourism, continue to grow.

Cities of migration are learning to recognize and capitalize on the fact that migration is not necessarily linear but often

becomes a circular process. Migration is more than the geographical movement of people because it leads to the circulation of social and financial capital and to cultural exchange. It leads, in many cases, to the upward social mobility of immigrants and their families. Consequently, as a multi-faceted, long-term and rather open-ended process, integration requires a confluence of global and local, general and specific policy interventions.

Local communities are safe havens and cities are economic motors in a seemingly borderless world

Public, private and civic sectors all have a role to play

Public policies, as well as policies of civil society and private sector organizations, can create favourable, less favourable or unfavourable integration conditions. As regulator and policy-maker, national governments adopt anti-discrimination laws, review existing general policies and laws through the lens of equality, allocate resources and implement policies facilitating equal access to employment, education, health and other public services, decision-making and citizenship. Civil society and private sector organizations operate at local and global levels as, for example, commercial firms, social enterprises, welfare and community organizations, sports clubs, civic and political organizations, or cultural and scientific institutes. These organizations knit society together. Their social commitment can find an expression in the implicit and explicit acknowledgement of society's diversity, which inspires compliance with anti-

discrimination laws; the screening of internal regulations on provisions preventing or facilitating the participation of specific groups of individuals; the adoption of programs, projects and products from which a diverse population benefit; and the setting of clear targets for specific categories of people within the population. The public, private and civil society sectors can work together and learn more from each other more than they often seem to realize. Cities often function as successful laboratories.

For the public sector this is a democratic duty, for civil society and the private sector it is a matter of good citizenship

Despite the differences between public, civil society and private sector organizations, they have much in common, not only in what they can do to promote integration, but also in how they go about doing it. As societal entities they can promote integration in the way they operate and reflect the diversity of the population. For the public sector this is a democratic duty, for civil society and the private sector it is a matter of good citizenship. By including diversity considerations in their employment, procurement and service delivery practices, governments at all levels not only demonstrate their social commitment, but also set a powerful example that may attract followers in other sectors.

Political parties' role to promote the inclusion of immigrants cannot be limited to designing, adopting and reviewing the implementation of public policies. They can also promote the implementation of these policies by political institutions (such as, parliaments, city councils, national and local implementing agencies, etc.) and by parties themselves. Parties can be asked whether as organizations they reflect the diverse population they want or claim to represent. They can also be asked to demonstrate a systemic and pro-active approach to

opening up their organizations to people with a migrant background. This entails the application of diversity principles in electoral strategies, in recruitment and trainings for members, leaders, elected officials and employees and in the engagement of suppliers. Cities have demonstrated themselves to be ideal testing grounds for such an approach.

National policy influences local integration

Integration at the local level is made much more difficult when the residence status of immigrants is not secured, their labour market mobility is restricted, they cannot live with their families, they do not have equal access to education, they cannot participate in decision-making or acquire citizenship, and when they are not protected against discrimination. Therefore, city governments have a big interest in the creation of favourable conditions in all of these areas. Many of these areas fall within the authority of national governments, which can be inspired by international standards and practices. That is why in many countries cities are working together to have their voices heard not only at national level, but also at international level.

Global trends in national migration policy

The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) provides local integration actors very useful contextual information. This web-based tool compares in great detail national integration policies of more than 30 countries across the globe. It shows that integration policies change little by little despite regular calls and plans for more dramatic changes. It finds strong positive correlations between the various policy areas. Most countries that do well (or poorly) in one area of integration do well (or poorly) in the others. With the help of MIPEX, local integration actors can establish how national policies play out on the local level and whether or not they create equal or favourable integration conditions. The comparative index and rating scale helps local actors set targets and influence national policies. The following provides examples of where this can be applied for a number of crucially important policy areas.

Securing immigrants' residence and protecting family life helps to create stable local communities. What does it take to grant long-term resident status, and therefore the ability to work, study, retire and live in the country just like nationals? In many countries, immigrants must pass many different eligibility requirements and conditions, some of which are more restrictive than others. Many cannot apply, even when they live in the country for five years or more. Countries with restrictive definitions of family tend to also impose burdensome conditions on the sponsor. Those with inclusive definitions often limit conditions out of respect for family life. Normally, applicants must prove a “stable and sufficient” income, but why – as is the case in many countries - does that need to be vague and higher than what nationals need to live on social assistance? Few countries impose language or integration conditions. But as more countries do, they are extending these to spouses before arrival. Once admitted, families must, and indeed tend to, acquire both a secure residence permit and equal rights, but, to get an autonomous residence permit, they face significant waiting periods and conditions.

Getting people to work and contribute to the local economy is a crucial concern. Not all immigrants have equal access to the full labour market, education system or employment services. For instance, national laws often restrict opportunities in the public sector to citizens, who may also have better procedures to recognise their foreign degrees. Most immigrants can use public employment offices. But are these general services able to address specific needs, especially for migrant women and youths? Does allocation of national funds allow city governments to provide the much needed targeted measures?

Education enhances immigrants' capabilities. Do all children have the right to attend kindergarten and basic education? How many school systems are actually making professional assessments of what newcomer children learned abroad? Are immigrant children able to access general measures to help disadvantaged students? Local authorities and schools

often retain broad discretion on whether or not to address the specific needs of immigrant pupils, their teachers and parents. However, without clear, nationally defined requirements or entitlements, pupils do not get the support they need throughout their schooling or across the country, especially in communities with many more immigrants and/or many fewer resources. Few countries have systems to diversify schools or the teaching staff; most schools are therefore missing out on new opportunities brought by a diverse student body. National and local authorities can join forces to change that situation.

Political and civic participation enhances the sense of belonging among immigrant communities. Immigrants have limited opportunities to inform and improve the policies that affect them daily as many countries still have laws denying immigrants basic political liberties and voting rights. However, in many countries consultative bodies exist at local level. These bodies provide some meaningful opportunities for immigrants to improve policies. National and local authorities fund, to a greater or lesser extent, immigrants' civic activities and inform them of political rights.

Citizenship promotes integration. However, procedures to acquire citizenship often discourage or outright exclude many immigrants from trying. In Europe, for example, an immigrant must wait an average of seven years simply to apply for citizenship. National laws make citizenship conditional upon income and high fees. Applicants are normally required to know the language, often at high or unclear levels. Language and citizenship tests rarely come with the support to pass them. Only after these rather discretionary procedures can applicants enjoy some protection from statelessness and withdrawal.

In conclusion, the question of whether public policy can address the needs of local integration can be answered along the following lines. Integration processes are too complicated to locate policies in one place alone. It is necessary to distinguish between levels of governance and formulate policy responses where they are needed; to

address problems and seize opportunities where they arise or originate. Ideally, these responses are complementary: addressing the economic, social, cultural and civic sides of integration; considering the local, regional, national and international dimensions of it; and dealing with its social and legal aspects. ■

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Recommendations for Local Governments

As the essays in this report demonstrate, local governments in leading cities are taking action to encourage conditions that welcome and integrate immigrants into economic, social and political life. Drawing on these analyses, Cities of Migration recommends the following principles guide the immigrant integration efforts of local governments:

1. Recognize the important role that you play in immigrant integration.

Too often, conversations around immigration and integration focus on national policymakers. Local governments, however, have an enormous stake in the settlement outcomes of immigrants. As the level of government closest to the people, you have the best view of how immigrants are integrating, the challenges they face, how to facilitate their success and how to ensure that the city benefits from that success. While it is important that local governments engage with national and sub-national levels of government to inform broad immigration strategies, you must also focus on taking action on immigrant integration across all policy areas that are within local authority.

2. Develop immigration and integration strategies that recognize your city is competing for immigrants.

Even established immigrant gateways cannot assume that they will remain a destination of choice for today's highly skilled and highly mobile immigrants. The number of new and emerging destination cities means that today's immigrants have choice. They use a variety of criteria to choose a new city to call their home. A broad range of factors inform these decisions, and cities can aim to attract immigrants by investing in these areas. When immigrants are welcomed and supported to integrate socially and

economically, they will spread word of their success to other potential immigrants.

3. Embed the principles of diversity and equality in all city policies and activities. Put measures in place to hold yourself accountable.

Many cities adopt charters that explicitly value diverse and immigrant residents, and confirm that immigration is an asset to the community, not a problem to be solved. These charters demonstrate a commitment to the integration and participation of all city residents. These principles should also form the basis of action taken by local governments across policies, services and programs. Accountability measures can help ensure that principles do in fact influence city activities.

4. Encourage the mayor to become a public champion for immigrant integration.

Mayors are public symbols of the values and aspirations of a city; their leadership sets the tone for the city's policies and activities. Mayors can show leadership by publicly stating their support for immigration, building broad political consensus and multi-partisan cooperation among elected representatives, and supporting non-political city staff in their immigrant integration efforts.

5. Ensure that immigrants, including non-citizens, can participate in democratic processes. Establish multiple ways for all residents to participate in city governance, and advocate for the right to vote for all city residents.

In many cities, immigrants and especially non-citizens have limited opportunities to participate in the local decision-making that affects them daily. Local governments can include immigrants and non-citizens on councils, boards

and consultative bodies to ensure that you hear the voices of immigrant communities. Extending the right to vote to non-citizens ensures that these residents can make their voices heard, and demonstrates your commitment to immigrant residents.

6. Replicate or adapt approaches that have proven successful other cities, including new, smaller and emerging immigrant gateways.

Long-standing immigrant gateway cities have developed and tested strategies over their histories of receiving immigrants, and emerging gateway cities have the benefit of starting fresh with new and innovative practices. Take good ideas from each and adapt them to suit your city's needs and conditions.

7. Target initiatives to multiple demographic groups with similar needs and experiences.

Policy and program initiatives can achieve multiple objectives simultaneously. For example, employment programs that support new businesses might be suitable for both young entrepreneurs and immigrant entrepreneurs who are unfamiliar with local laws and regulations. Similarly, poverty reduction initiatives aimed at low-income workers might also benefit marginalized immigrant and refugee communities, through targeted outreach or a tailored stream of programming.

8. Adopt good client service practices from the private and community sectors.

The desire to access new domestic and international markets has driven many private sector companies to improve their ways of doing business. Leading businesses create specialized products or services for specific client groups and target their marketing accordingly. They also adapt customer service processes to meet the needs of specific groups – for example, by providing multilingual services. Community organizations have intimate knowledge of their client groups and can be a good source of responsive practices.

9. Provide city services in many languages.

City residents who do not speak or read the majority language well will face barriers accessing city programs and services. Local governments can provide services in many languages – by translating written materials, providing telephone or in-person interpretation, and by hiring employees who speak immigrant languages – and ensure that city staff have the cultural competencies needed to serve all residents.

10. Lead by example and set the new standard for inclusive hiring practices.

As major employers, local governments should implement and innovate inclusive hiring and promotion practices. As the competition for skills and labour increases, inclusive hiring practices will ensure that you continue to access talented employees. Further, a diverse workforce enhances your ability to serve the public and create sound policy that reflects your constituents.

11. Use your procurement power to facilitate opportunities for immigrant business owners and immigrant-friendly businesses.

Local governments are also major purchasers of services and supplies, and thus wield considerable procurement power. Establish a procurement policy that values suppliers with immigrant ownership and/or good immigrant employment practices and outcomes. Similarly, the procurement policy can be used to encourage demographically diverse (in gender, age, ability and so on) suppliers more generally.

12. Promote immigrant entrepreneurship as a route to economic integration and to prosperity for all city residents.

Self-employment and business ownership are viable paths to economic integration for many immigrants, including those who were entrepreneurs in their country of origin. Local level policies affect the ability of immigrants to build

successful businesses. For example, review planning and zoning regulations to ensure that immigrant entrepreneurs do not face unfair barriers to starting businesses that will contribute to the economy and employ other residents.

13. Look to public spaces as facilitators and indicators of integration.

People come together in public spaces such as parks, streets, libraries, community centres, and public transportation – areas that are typically governed by local governments. These public spaces are the stage where integration can happen, and can also indicate how city residents interact with each other. Ideally, programs and services that centre on public spaces benefit a wide variety of residents who are welcomed and included in those spaces.

14. Set targets and measure the impact of your programs and services, using international benchmarks where appropriate. Couple this with reliable, longitudinal data that you or other levels of government collect. Analyze and share this information.

Measuring the impact of programs and services will help to allocate resources effectively. Tools such as the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) and the Global Cities Indicators Facility (GCIF) provide international benchmarks and comparators that you can use to measure your progress against other cities of your size and character. Together with longitudinal population data, this information will inform policy and program development and indicate how well large scale or long-term measures are working. Further, sharing the information and analysis allow the community and private sectors to target their activities as well.

Recommendations for Community Partners

While this series focuses on the role of local governments in immigrant integration, community sector organizations can play an important role in influencing local policy by working with local governments. To this end, Cities of Migration recommends that the following principles should guide organizations' efforts to work with local governments on immigrant integration:

1. Understand how local government works, and their role in immigrant integration.

Local governments can be large, complex organizations. Identify the departments that are most relevant to your work, and the individuals who influence decision-making in this area. This will help you target the different channels or pathways to access them. Further, understanding which policy areas come under local jurisdiction, how funding is allocated, and the processes and timelines that they use to make decisions will help you to effectively tailor your work and relations with your local government.

2. Identify champions within local government.

Individuals who understand and support your work can give you insight into decision-making processes, as well as access to decision-makers. Champions who are in senior positions and/or are well-regarded can also give your organization credibility.

3. Tell your story using evidence and anecdotes.

Many groups and issues are competing for attention from local government. To bring your issue to the forefront, tell a compelling story using evidence and anecdotes. Evidence can include research or statistics that demonstrate the importance of immigration in your city or country, the need for and outcomes of your own work, and successful initiatives from other sectors or jurisdictions. Anecdotes

demonstrate how your work affects individual city residents. Your story should clearly demonstrate what you bring to immigrant integration.

4. Aim to influence local governments on their agenda and priorities.

Local governments have different methods of taking input from community sector organizations when planning and setting priorities for their work. If you can provide input during these processes, you can help to put immigrant integration on the agenda that affects all city activities. Even if you are not yet able to influence the development of the city's agenda, positioning your work within their existing agenda could open opportunities for them to support or partner with you on your work.

5. Propose solutions and plans to implement them.

Local governments must take action to serve city residents. Too often, community organizations focus only on describing problems. This leaves local governments with the task of trying to solve the problems. Instead, draw on your knowledge and expertise in immigrant integration to propose programs, services or policy changes that could help to solve these problems. In addition, propose realistic plans for what local governments could do themselves, or how they could partner with or fund other organizations to do the work.

6. Articulate what the local government can do to support you in your work.

Consider the different ways that the local government could support your work. For example, it might fund programs, provide information or data, convene stakeholders or other levels of government that you want to talk to, participate as an employer in employment programs, and

so on. Determine what the most valuable and realistic contributions would be, and ask for them.

7. Articulate what you can do to support your local government's work.

Often, community groups approach government only to make requests. However, you have much to offer your local government – for example, intimate knowledge of the community you serve, innovative ideas, the ability to carry out programs outside of the city's infrastructure, and so on. Knowing what assets you bring to the table can help you to position yourself as a partner in achieving mutual objectives. This can also encourage a collaborative, reciprocal relationship and lead to formal partnerships with the local government.

8. Put forward your greatest asset: the community and clients you work with.

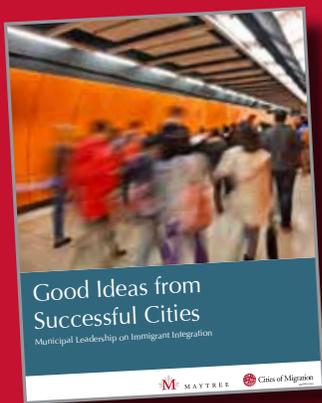
Although they are the level of government closest to the people, local governments tend to lack the direct, trusted and open access that community organizations often have with the people they serve. By facilitating access between the two groups, you can help local governments hear the voices of their constituents, and provide opportunities for community members to use their power as civic actors. For example, you might be able to help connect local governments with community members to serve on public agencies, boards or commissions.

9. Encourage the local government to promote and value the civic engagement of immigrant residents.

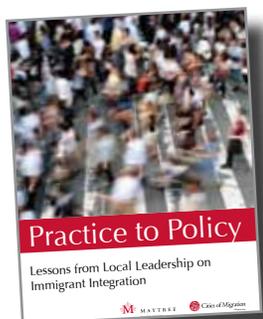
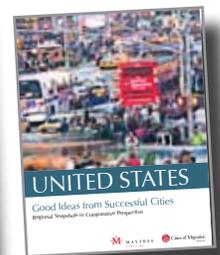
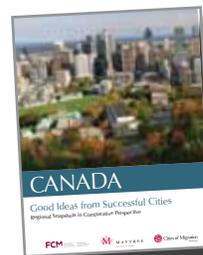
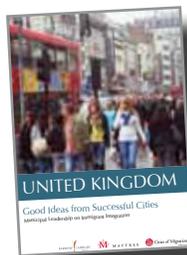
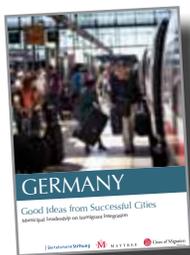
Civic and political engagement is a cornerstone of immigrant integration. Local governments and institutions benefit from hearing the voices of all residents. By supporting immigrant residents to engage with local civic processes – for example, school boards decisions, local elections and so on – you help local government develop sound and responsive policies and help immigrant residents shape their community.

10. Develop a strategy for government relations; set goals and measure your progress.

As with all of your programs and activities, think strategically about your relationship with your local government and develop a plan to achieve your goals. Measure your progress and adjust your approach as needed.



In *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership in Immigrant Integration*, we share international good practices from cities across Canada, the United States, Europe and Australasia.



Country Snapshots: A series of companion reports offers additional examples of innovation and good practice from cities in selected countries.

Additionally, in *Practice to Policy: Lessons from Local Leadership on Immigrant Integration*, four international experts provide policy insights and recommendations for city leaders and their community partners.

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