

# Integrating Cities online conference – workshop 1

## **Integrating cities IX: Invest in local solidarity - Cities and volunteers building inclusive society**

The Integrating Cities Conference is part of a series of events underpinning the [Integrating Cities process](#). Having started in 2006, this partnership between EUROCITIES and the European Commission seeks to maintain a policy dialogue between the local and the European EU level and brings together cities, civil society and EU institutions in a multi-stakeholder approach. It is an important opportunity to highlight the crucial role cities play in developing innovative strategies for the integration of migrants.

This year's conference is organised in the framework of the VALUES project - Volunteering Activities to Leverage Urban and European Social integration of migrants, and co-hosted by the city of Nuremberg, partner of the VALUES project. It will focus on building cohesion and inclusive society at the local level, by involving and engaging communities and citizens.

Kicking off on 2 December, our very first online Integrating Cities Conference takes place at a time when integration is moving up on the policy agenda of the EU. As such, the European Commission's Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion, which will be released by the end of 2020, will set the policy context in which a closer involvement of cities in designing integration policies is indispensable.

## **Final list of workshops**

- **Protecting the rights of migrant children and youth: good practices and challenges (25 November, 10:00-11:30 CET)**
- How to work on human rights and anti-racism at local level. The contribution of human rights education to anti-racism and equality (26 November, 10:00-11:30 CET)
- The role of civil society and volunteering organisations in contributing to integration policies at the local level: a tool for social innovation? (27 November, 10:00-11:30 CET)
- Labour market integration: how can the EU support the labour market integration of migrants at the local level? (30 November, 10:00-11:30 CET)

## **Workshop title: Protecting the rights of migrant children and youth: good practices and challenges**

### **Workshop's objective:**

Children in migration represent one of the most vulnerable groups of migrants. They can indeed suffer from violence, abuse, discrimination, exploitation and trafficking.<sup>1</sup>

When it comes to their integration in the host country, children and young people often find themselves to be socially marginalised and encounter difficulties to access mainstream services. Cities work with different actors, such as social workers, NGOs and civil society associations to develop innovative solutions and ensure children and young migrants' rights.

The workshop will discuss the following topics:

- Ensuring the rights of unaccompanied minors' migrants
- Youth participation and empowerment
- Good practices at the local level

---

<sup>1</sup> Communication on 'The protection of children in migration', COM(2017) 211 final, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0211&from=DE>

- Challenges faced by cities and possible solutions
- Cooperation between cities and NGOs

## Programme:

Moderator: Jean-Paul Judson

### Wednesday 25 November

09.30 - 10.00 Connection to meeting

10.00 – 10.10 **Welcome and introduction by moderator**

10.10 – 11.20 **Speakers**

**Olsi Dudumi**, Regional Innovation & Youth Empowerment Officer, Terre des Hommes

**Liz Small**, Corporate Parenting Manager, City of Bristol

Malmö *tbc*

**Zoltán Somogyvári**, Senior legal officer Refugee programme, Hungarian Helsinki Committee

Q&A with participants

11.20 – 11.30 **Conclusions by EUROCITIES**

## Background note:

Even if not comparable with the refugee crisis in 2015-2016, there are still a large number of children arriving in Europe, and mostly in European cities. In 2019, more than 33 000 children arrived on European shores<sup>2</sup>, and Eurostat registered 14 100 applications in the EU from unaccompanied minors.

The 2017 European Commission's *Communication on the protection of children in migration*<sup>3</sup>, demonstrates that the challenges of ensuring the rights of children migrants and youth are still plentiful. After having ensuring the basic and urgent human rights needs of the children migrants arriving in Europe, one of the next challenges would be the regularisation of the children's status, and more specifically, the lack of a channel of asylum procedures for migrant children, tailored to their specific needs. Once in the local society, young migrants often find themselves to be socially marginalised and encounter difficulties at home and at school. The main issue among young migrants is isolation, which can lead to serious problems with mental and physical health, as well as negative educational and employment outcomes. Adding to this the transition period of an underage migrant turning 18 represents an additional challenge, namely because sometimes this automatically exclude them from access to social services. This is where long term systemic integration actions are needed, to empower young migrants, give them access to equal rights to education, - contributing to the stability of their life -, and give them a voice and a place in the public life. Cities, as first receptor of migrant population and closest level of government to citizens, are in first line to face these challenges and come up with solutions.

<sup>2</sup> 'Refugee and migrant children in Europe', UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM (2019), available at <https://eea.iom.int/sites/default/files/publication/document/Refugee-Migrant-Children-Europe-Overview-Jan-Dec-2019-IOM-UNHCR-UNICEF.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Communication on 'The protection of children in migration', COM(2017), available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0211&from=DE>