



Intercultural cities

Joint action of the Council of Europe and of the European Commission



Donostia-San Sebastian: Results of the Intercultural Cities Index

Date: 22 June 2011

A comparison between 21 cities

Introduction

The Intercultural Cities programme is a joint initiative between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. It seeks to explore the potential of an intercultural approach to integration in communities with culturally diverse populations. The cities participating in the programme are reviewing their governance, policies, discourse and practices from an intercultural point of view. In the past, this review has taken the form of narrative reports and city profiles – a form which is rich in content and detail. However, it is relatively weak as a tool to monitor and communicate progress. The new intercultural city index has been designed as a new benchmarking tool for the cities taking part in the pilot phase of the programme as well as future participants.

As of today 21 cities have undergone their intercultural policies analysis using the Intercultural City Index: Amadora (*Portugal*), Barcelona (*Spain*), Donostia-San Sebastian¹ (*Spain*) Duisburg (*Germany*), Geneva (*Switzerland*), Izhevsk (*Udmart Republic, Russia*), the London borough of Lewisham (*United Kingdom*), Lublin (*Poland*), Melitopol (*Ukraine*), Mexico City (*Mexico*), Neuchâtel (*Switzerland*), Neuköln (*Berlin, Germany*), Oslo (*Norway*), Patras (*Greece*), Pryluky (*Ukraine*), Reggio Emilia (*Italy*), Rijeka (*Croatia*), Sechenkivsky (*District of Kyiv, Ukraine*), Tilburg (*The Netherlands*), Turnhout (*Belgium*), and Zurich (*Switzerland*).

This document presents the results of the Intercultural City Index analysis for the city of San Sebastian and provides related intercultural policy conclusions and recommendations.

Intercultural city definition

The intercultural city has people with different nationality, origin, language or religion/ belief. Political leaders and most citizens regard diversity positively, as a resource. The city actively combats discrimination and adapts its governance, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population. The city has a strategy and tools to deal with diversity and cultural conflict. It encourages greater mixing and interaction between diverse groups in the public spaces.

Methodology

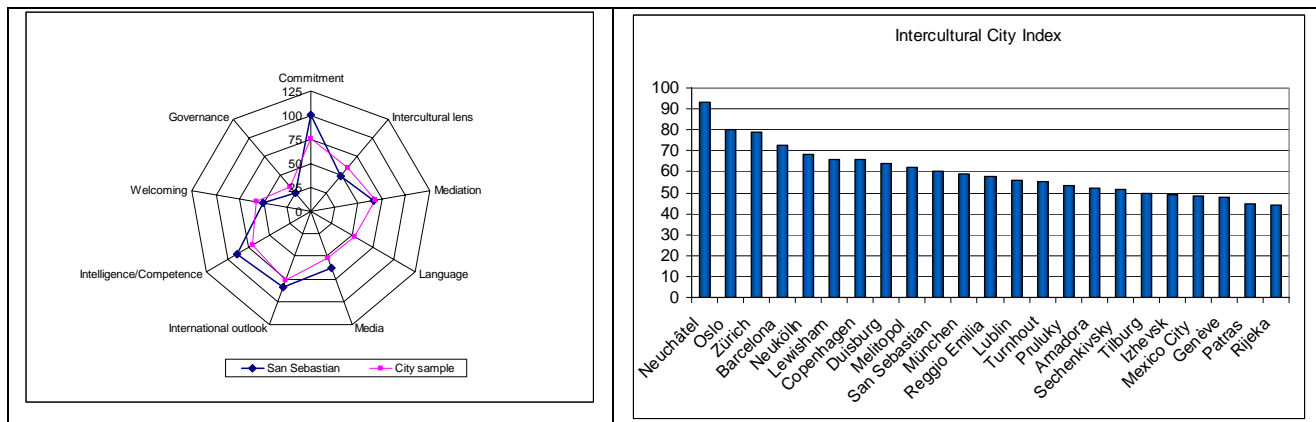
The Intercultural City Index analysis is based on a questionnaire involving 66 questions grouped in 14 indicators with three distinct types of data. Indicators have been weighed for relative importance. For each indicator, the participating cities can reach up to 100 points (which are consolidated for the general ICC Index).

These indicators comprise: commitment; education system; neighbourhoods; public services; business and labour market; cultural and civil life policies; public spaces; mediation and conflict resolution; language; media; international outlook; intelligence/competence; welcoming and governance. Some of these indicators - education system; neighbourhoods; public services;

¹ The Spanish city of Donostia-San Sebastian hereinafter referred to as San Sebastian

business and labour market; cultural and civil life policies; public spaces are grouped in a composite indicator called “urban policies through the intercultural lens” or simply “intercultural lens”.

The comparison between cities is strictly indicative, given the large difference between cities in terms of historical development; type and scale of diversity, governance models and level of economic development. The comparison is based on a set of formal criteria related to the intercultural approach in urban policies and intended only as a tool for benchmarking, to motivate cities to learn from good practice.

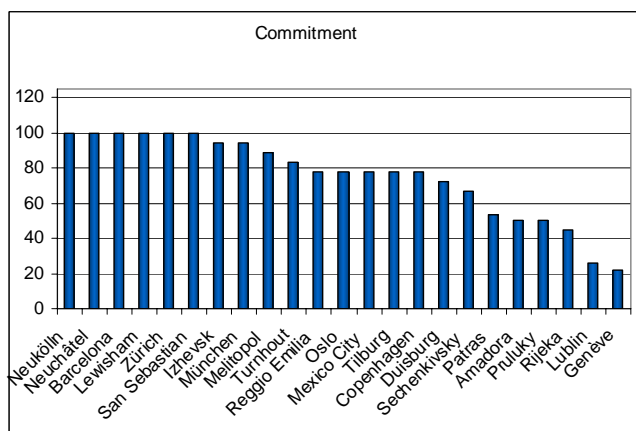


According to the overall Index results, San Sebastian is positioned 10th among the 21 cities in the sample in relation to the index as it stands at present.

San Sebastian -An overview

San Sebastian is a Spanish city. In 2009 it had a population of 181,510 inhabitants. The largest minority group- people from Central and South America- makes up 3 % of the city’s population. Non-nationals make up 6.63% of San Sebastian’s total inhabitants. The latest GDP/ per capita figures are of €34.123.

1. Commitment



The optimal intercultural city strategy would involve a formal statement by local authorities sending an unambiguous message of the city's commitment to intercultural principles as well as actively engaging and persuading other key local stakeholders to do likewise.

The rate of achievement of San Sebastian's commitment policy goals is considerably higher than the city sample's²: 100% of these goals were achieved, while the city sample's rate for commitment policy is 75%.

San Sebastian has adopted a number of initiatives which demonstrate its commitment to the intercultural approach. The city council has formally adopted a public statement in favour of diversity, peace and co-existence. The local government has designed an intercultural strategy and has developed an action plan to put it in practice. It has allocated a budget for the implementation of its intercultural strategy and action plan. The city council also has an evaluation process for its intercultural strategy. The city council has launched an official webpage for diversity and interculturality. San Sebastian has a dedicated cross-departmental co-ordination structure which is responsible for its intercultural strategy and action plan. Local citizens who have done an exceptional thing to encourage interculturalism in the local community are acknowledged.

The city council might consider ameliorating its commitment initiatives for instance by making clear reference to San Sebastian's intercultural commitment more frequently in the city's speeches and communication.

2. Education³ policies through an intercultural lens

According to the answers provided in the survey, education initiatives are implemented by the Basque government. This is why San Sebastian did not provide any answers to this part of the survey.

3. Neighbourhood policies through an intercultural lens⁴

An intercultural city does not require a "perfect statistical mix" of people and recognises the value of geographical proximity and bonding between people of the same ethnic background. However, it also recognises that spatial ethnic segregation creates risks of exclusion and can act as a barrier to an inward and outward free flow of people, ideas and opportunities.

San Sebastian's neighbourhood policy indicators are lower (45%) than the city sample's rate (62%).

In none of San Sebastian's neighbourhoods a vast majority⁵ of residents comes from the same ethnic background. In none of the city's neighbourhoods a vast majority of inhabitants come from minority ethnic groups⁶. According to the answers provided in the survey, San Sebastian takes occasional measures to promote interaction within neighbourhoods.

We invite San Sebastian to encourage residents from one neighbourhood to meet and interact with residents from another from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds. The city could consider the following neighbourhood initiatives of other cities. For instance, Tilburg (the Netherlands) supports ideas for creating more meeting places and therefore lets neighbourhoods apply for making benches, or "social sofas". The inhabitants state were they want to place them and how

² The term "city sample" refers to the weighted average of the 21 cities included in the Index at this moment in each of the fourteen areas of intercultural governance.

³ The term "Education" refers to a formal process of learning in which some people consciously teach while others adopt the social role of learner - (ref. http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html)

⁴ By "neighbourhood" we understand a unit within a city which has a certain level of administrative autonomy (or sometimes also certain political governance structures) and is considered as a unit with regard to city planning. In larger cities districts (boroughs) have several neighbourhoods. The statistical definition of "neighbourhood" varies from one country to another. Generally, it includes groups of population between 5,000 and 20,000 people on the average.

⁵ For the purpose of this report, a "vast majority" refers to a situation where more than 80% of residents come from the same ethnic background.

⁶ By "minority group" we understand a subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over their own lives than the members of a dominant or majority group have over theirs. (ref. http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html)

they should be designed. In addition through the "enrich your neighbourhood programme," Tilburg's residents can ask for some money to organize special activities in their own neighborhoods.

San Sebastian may wish to consider a policy which avoids ethnic concentration (which is still far off, given the low numbers of migrants, but preventive action is best in this respect). For example, the city of Zurich may be a source of inspiration and learning for the future. For instance, a large proportion of the city's inhabitants live in rented accommodation. 25% of the rented flats are provided by the city or through housing associations which have implemented an allocation policy. The city's allocation scheme includes achieving a "good mix" between different social groups as one of the initiatives criteria.

4. Public service policies through an intercultural lens

An optimal intercultural approach remains open to new ideas, dialogue and innovation brought by or required by minority groups, rather than imposing a "one size fits all" approach to public services and actions.

The analysis shows that San Sebastian's public services policy achievement rate is lower (15%) than the city sample's rate (43%).

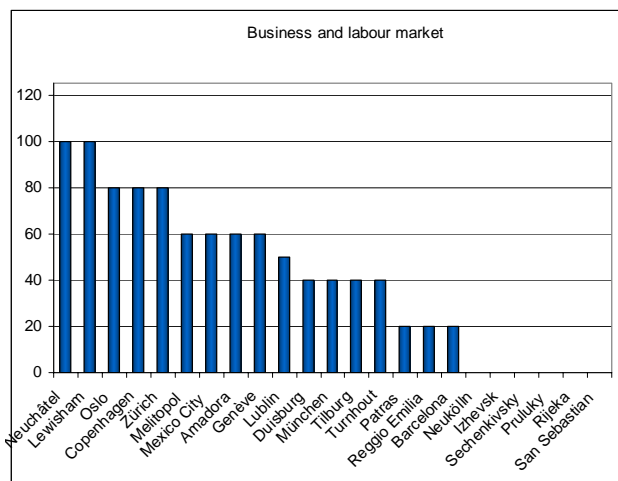
San Sebastian provides one out of the five services listed in the Intercultural cities index which are tailored to the needs of the ethnic/cultural background of its citizens: . it offers specific school meals in response to culturally-based requests..

According to the answers provided in the survey, non-nationals can seek employment "on certain positions" in the local public administration. The city may wish to consider opening up the administration further to non-nationals. For instance, the canton of Neuchatel in Switzerland worked with police to convince them to open the police to non-nationals. After an initial phase of reluctance motivated by the belief that only nationals can really defend national interests, the police finally opened up to foreigners and their integration has been successful.

The city may wish to consider implementing a specific recruitment strategy to ensure that the ethnic background of public employees reflects the composition of the city's population. An interesting example of such an initiative can be drawn from the city of Copenhagen. For example, Copenhagen has taken a number of actions to improve the representation of migrants in the city administration. The local government offers paid internships specifically targeted at people with minority backgrounds, for instance by requiring they should be able to speak a certain language. It also offers training possibilities for its interns so they can acquire permanent positions. The city council advertises its vacancies through community media groups, as well as Universities with a high proportion of students from minority backgrounds.

The local government may wish to ameliorate its diversity and equality policies in the future, for instance by encouraging intercultural mixing in the private sector labour market. We invite the city of San Sebastian to consider the following initiative launched by the London Borough of Lewisham in this area. The Council's procurement policies and contracts include an Equalities statement that bidding companies need to show they meet as part of their application.

5. Business and labour market policies through an intercultural lens



San Sebastian's business and labour market policy indicators are lower than the city sample's: 0% of these goals were achieved, while the city sample's rate for business and labour market policy is 41%.

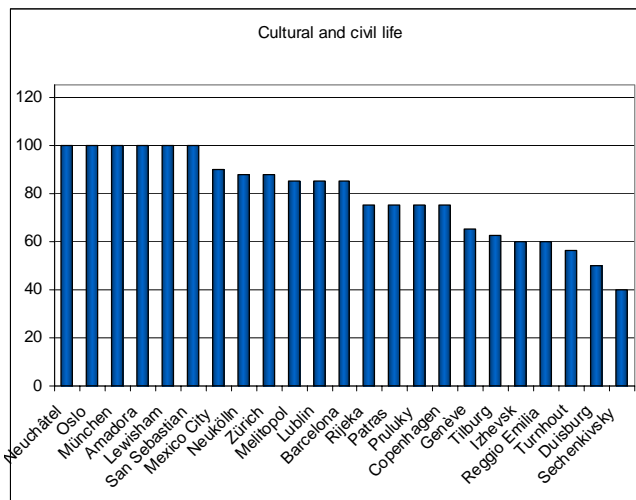
The City Council's business and labour market policies may benefit from encouraging the creation of a business umbrella organization which promotes diversity and non discrimination in the workplace. An example of setting up such an umbrella organization comes from the London Borough of Lewisham. Here the Chamber of Commerce has recently agreed with Lewisham to work on increasing their membership and particularly Black and Minority Ethnic Group (BME) representation. In Lewisham the Regeneration and Community Strategies promote cohesion through the benefits of a diverse and representative SME base. Current figures show that 70% of people attending pre-start business training are from BME communities.

San Sebastian may benefit from signing a charter which outlaws discrimination in employment. For instance, the London Borough of Lewisham has signed a charter which outlaws discrimination in employment.

We invite San Sebastian to consider encouraging "business districts/incubators" to facilitate inhabitants from different cultures to mix more easily or look into the example of Zurich where a local trust offers micro credits and consulting services for small start ups.

The city may wish to build upon its business and labour market initiatives for instance by, prioritising companies which implement a diversity strategy when procuring their goods and services. The London borough of Lewisham may provide a source of learning and inspiration in this area. For instance, if a company does not implement a diversity strategy Lewisham supports it through the Business Advisory Service to implement one. Another interesting example of this initiative has been implemented by the city of Zurich. The city has adopted key standards, for instance with regard to non discrimination as set out by the International Labour Organization.

6. Cultural and civil life policies through an intercultural lens



The time which people allocate to their leisure may often be the best opportunity for them to encounter and engage with inhabitants from a different culture. The city can influence this through its own activities and through the way it distributes resources to other organisations

San Sebastian's cultural and civil life policy goal achievement rate one of the highest (and indeed at the maximum rate, 100%) than the city sample's rate (79%).

San Sebastian has implemented the following policies in cultural and civil life. It does use interculturalism as a criterion when allocating grants to associations. The city does organise events and in the field of arts, culture and sport to encourage cultural mixing between inhabitants. Cultural organizations which deal with diversity and intercultural relations in their productions are also promoted. Finally, San Sebastian organises public debates and campaigns around the topics of diversity and living together.

7. Public space policies through an intercultural lens

Well managed and animated public spaces can become beacons of the city's intercultural intentions. However, badly managed spaces can become places of suspicion and fear of the stranger.

The rate of achievement of San Sebastian's public space policy goals is considerably higher than the sample city's: 76% of these goals were achieved, while the sample city rate for public space policy is 69%.

According to the answer given in the survey, there are no areas in the city which have a reputation of being "dangerous". None of the areas in the canton are dominated by one ethnic group and make other inhabitants feel unwelcome.

The city has implemented a public spaces policy instrument. The local government promotes intercultural mixing in public libraries, museums, squares and playgrounds. When reconstructing an area, San Sebastian's City Council proposes different forms and places of consultation to reach out to its ethnically and culturally diverse inhabitants.

We invite San Sebastian to build upon its existing public space initiatives for instance by, taking into consideration the ethnic/cultural backgrounds of its citizens when designing and managing new public buildings or spaces. An interesting example of this initiative has been implemented by

the London Borough of Lewisham. In Pepys Park young people were invited into the process of designing and making a new playground area. At Ladywell Fields, an area of abandoned meadowland was restored to public use with the involvement of a park user group and the reinstatement of a park warden and a 'Rivers and People Officer'.

8. Mediation and conflict resolution policies

The optimal intercultural city sees the opportunity for innovation and greater cohesion emerging from the very process of conflict mediation and resolution.

The analysis shows that San Sebastian's mediation and conflict resolution policy achievement rate is almost equal (66%) to the city sample's rate (67%).

The city has introduced some initiatives to achieve its mediation and conflict resolution policy objectives. The city has set up a municipal mediation service committed to intercultural issues specifically. San Sebastian also provides mediation services in places such as hospitals, in the city's administration, as well as in neighbourhoods and on the streets.

9. Language⁷

San Sebastian's language policy achievement rate is lower than the city sample's rate (53%).

San Sebastian encourages projects which give a positive image to minority/migrant languages. San Sebastian may wish to provide specific language training in the official languages for hard-to-reach groups⁸. Zurich may provide a source of inspiration and learning for San Sebastian's future language initiatives. For instance, Zurich city council encourages projects which give a positive image to minority/migrant languages. For example, the city's representatives recommend to parents to raise their children, prior to them attending schooling either in their mother tongue or as bilingual (their mother tongue and German).

Zurich also supports private/ civil sector institutions which offer language training in migrant/minority languages. Additional curriculum courses, called HSK Courses are offered by embassies, consulates as well as private organisations. These courses cover a range of topics including languages, history, geography, as well as minority cultures.

We invite San Sebastian to consider the following language initiative as implemented by the Swiss canton of Neuchatel. In 2009 32 language courses allowed 360 foreign residents to learn French. Since 2007 foreign citizens who take beginner and intermediary French language training can sit a recognized exam. These courses are designed to facilitate foreign citizens' integration into the local community and promote social cohesion.

The Swiss canton of Geneva has also introduced a similar initiative. Here, French language courses are open to all, without discrimination and are tailored to meet the needs of specific members of the local community, for instance migrant women. They are offered by various public and private organizations which operate in the canton. For instance, in 2009 the canton's Office for the Integration of Foreigners provided financial support to 32 French language projects. They were operated by 19 local associations. The global objective is to ensure that newly arrived foreign citizens are able to reach the level of language fluency that is required in daily situations. This includes for instance to be able to ask for directions, engage in conversations, as well as seek employment and work in French. Language training constitutes one of the most important tools in order to integrate newly arrived migrant communities in Geneva's daily life

⁷ By language we understand an abstract system of word meanings and symbols for all aspects of culture. The term also includes gestures and other nonverbal communication. (ref- http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072435569/student_view0/glossary.html)

⁸ The term makes specific reference to non-working mothers, the unemployed, as well as retired people

10. Media policies

The media has a powerful influence on the attitudes to cultural relations and upon the reputations of particular minority and majority groups. Local municipalities can influence and partner with local media agencies to achieve a climate of public opinion more conducive to intercultural relations.

63% of San Sebastian's media policy goals were achieved while the city sample's attainment rate for these goals is 52%.

The municipality has implemented various media policy instruments. For instance, the city's information services are instructed to promote harmonious intercultural relations. An external body also monitors the way in which minorities are portrayed in the local media.

Making reference to the answers provided, one specific policy is adhered to only 'occasionally'. This consists of promoting a positive image of migrants and minorities in the media through targeted press meetings and dedicated newspaper columns. An interesting example of this type of initiatives is found in Reggio Emilia which has run several pro-diversity workshops involving special editions of local newspapers and TV Sports. They have created a directory of reference persons for media to enlarge the view points expressed in the media.

The city may wish to further explore possible media policies for instance by providing advocacy/media training/mentorships for journalists from minority backgrounds. An interesting example of such an initiative has been implemented by Oslo city council. Among journalists and editors, and media researches, there is a growing awareness about the role of the media in promoting cohesion and presenting news in a responsible and intercultural way. This has resulted in a stronger focus on the recruitment of journalists with ethnic minority background.

11. International outlook policies

An optimal intercultural city would be a place which actively sought to make new connections with other places for trade, exchange of knowledge, as well as tourism.

San Sebastian's international outlook policy indicators are considerably higher (83%) than the city sample's (76%).

The city has put into practice a policy to encourage international co-operation. A specific financial provision has been introduced to achieve this. An agency has been set up to monitor and develop San Sebastian's openness to international connections. The city has initiated projects and policies to encourage co-development with San Sebastian's migrant groups countries of origin. The city provides support to local universities in order to attract foreign students. In addition, San Sebastian's ensures that foreign student populations take an active part in the city life.

The city may wish to further explore possible international outlook policies for instance by ensuring that the city develops projects and policies for economic relations with its migrant population's countries of origin. Even though the London borough of Lewisham has not introduced such policies or projects it does provide specific business advice and links to the UK Chamber of Commerce are established to encourage co-development with Lewisham's migrant groups countries of origin.

12. Intelligence competence policies

A competent public official in an optimal intercultural city should be able to detect and respond to the presence of cultural difference, and modulate his/her approach accordingly, rather than seeking to impose one mode of behaviour on all situations.

The attainment rate of San Sebastian's intelligence competence policy goals is considerably higher than the city sample's: 89% of these goals were achieved, while the city sample rate for intelligence competence policy is 70%.

The city has adopted the following best practice recommendations in San Sebastian intelligence competence initiatives. Information regarding diversity and intercultural relations is mainstreamed to inform the city when formulating new initiatives. According to the answers provided in the survey, the city conducts intercultural workshops. The city also conducts surveys to find out how inhabitants perceive migrants/ minority groups. San Sebastian also promotes the intercultural competences of its officials and staff through interdisciplinary seminars, information networks and training courses.

13. Welcoming policies

People arriving in a city for an extended stay (whatever their circumstances) are likely to find themselves disorientated and in need of multiple forms of support. The degree to which these measures can be co-coordinated and delivered effectively will have a significant impact on how the person settles and integrates.

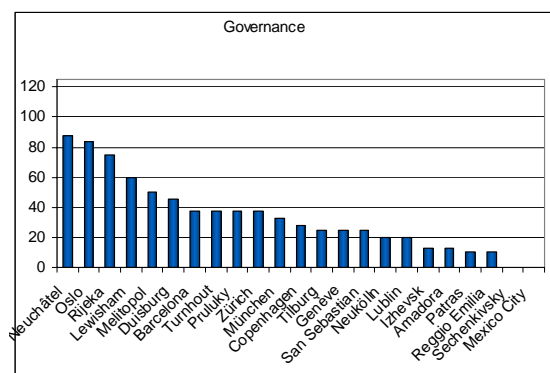
The attainment rate of San Sebastian's welcoming policy goals is lower than the city sample's: only 50% of these goals were achieved, while the city sample rate is 57%.

San Sebastian has implemented various welcoming policy instruments. For instance, the city has set up a designated agency to welcome newcomers. San Sebastian has published a comprehensive package of information to aid newly arrived foreign residents.

The city may wish to further explore possible welcoming market initiatives for example by launching services and agencies which provide support tailored specifically for students, family members, refugees and migrant workers; as well as greeting newcomers in the presence of the city's officials. An interesting example of such an initiative has been introduced in the Dutch city of Tilburg. In Tilburg each month there is a special ceremony for the people who passed the exams for the integration programme. Once a year a party is organized by the municipality for all new residents. In some neighbourhoods and in some blocks of flats special "welcome" guides welcome the newcomer in the neighbourhood. They teach the new residents how people used to live in Tilburg, and give them information about the important issues (doctors, hospitals, police, town hall, public transport etc).

We invite San Sebastian to consider the following welcoming initiative as implemented by Copenhagen city council. Here, foreign students are invited to participate in a welcome reception at the City Hall with other expat. Here they can meet city officials, local associations and hear about cultural offers of the city. The Lord Mayor of Culture and Leisure officially welcomes participants to Copenhagen at the reception.

14. Governance policies



Perhaps the most powerful and far-reaching actions which a city can take in making it more intercultural are the processes of democratic representation and decision making.

25% of San Sebastian's governance policy goals were achieved while the city sample's attainment rate for these goals is 34%.

Newcomers are eligible to vote in local election "immediately after registering as residents".

The local government may wish to further explore possible governance policies by ensuring the ethnic background of the city's elected politicians reflects to a greater extent the composition of the city's population. setting up an independent political body to represent all ethnic minorities living in San Sebastian; as well as well as establishing standards in the representation of migrant minorities in mandatory bodies which supervise schools and public bodies.

15. Conclusions

In the majority of intercultural strategy areas, San Sebastian does better than most other cities in the sample. Its leading practices can provide useful insights and examples to other cities in the field of: commitment, public spaces, international outlook and Intelligence competence. Local citizens who have done an exceptional thing to encourage interculturalism in the local community are acknowledged. The local government promotes intercultural mixing in public libraries, museums, squares and playgrounds. The city provides support to local universities in order to attract foreign students. In addition, San Sebastian's ensures that foreign student populations take an active part in the city life. The city has adopted the following best practice recommendations in San Sebastian intelligence competence initiatives. For instance, information regarding diversity and intercultural relations is mainstreamed to inform the city when formulating new initiatives. According to the answers provided in the survey, the city conducts intercultural workshops.

16. Recommendations

San Sebastian needs to make progress in relation to its neighbourhoods , public service, business and labour market, language media, international outlook, welcoming and governance initiatives . The city may wish to look into some of the examples implemented by other Intercultural Cities as a source of learning and inspiration to guide future initiatives. Such examples are examples provided in the Intercultural cities database⁹.

⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance_en.asp