

Intercultural activities on municipal level

LUBLIN, August 2014

Lublin intercultural policy and activities have been intensified for the past two years and focus mainly on creating a system approach to Lublin's policy towards minorities and foreigners. Based on Lublin's multicultural heritage, but primarily from the experience coming from increasing number of foreigners choosing our city as a place of temporary or permanent residence as well as many activities undertaken jointly with European partners, the following activities seem to best describe timely „Lublin intercultural action”:

Lublin 4 All: the project, supported by a grant from Switzerland through the Swiss contribution to the new European Union member states, is an opportunity for Lublin to learn from the master – Swiss canton Neuchâtel, Lublin's partner in this project. The idea is to build Lublin's system of cultural diversity management from the scratch, based on the experience and example of the leaders in the intercultural approach in Europe. Through the partnership, with close cooperation with COSM (Centre de la Cohesion Multiculturelle, unit dedicated to working with minorities and migrants), Lublin City Hall is developing its own cultural diversity management, tailored to Lublin's specific situation. During almost two years of the project, the outcomes have exceeded expectations:



Support group

a group of specialists from institutions and organizations working with or for minorities and migrants has been united as a „support group” - advisory body helping design and build Lublin's participatory system of diversity management. Regular monthly meetings have become a great opportunity to meet and network, which has resulted in stronger cooperation of all the institutions, coordination of activities undertaken by each partner and building a network of specialists ready to share their knowledge and expertise with others.



Vice-Mayor of Lublin,
Monika Lipińska,
opening the first meeting of Lublin
minorities in February, 2014.

Meetings of minorities

Two meetings of minorities and migrants representatives were held at Lublin City Hall, which was the initial step for engaging migrants and minorities in local government's initiatives, hopefully increasing their participation and visibility within the city.

The first meeting, held in February 2014, gathered the representatives of almost all Lublin minority groups, including ethnic and religious minorities. During the meeting municipal activities and initiatives were presented and the guests were asked to share their expectations for future cooperation.

The meetings will be held quarterly. The next one is scheduled to take place in September.

Social awareness campaign

Social awareness campaign has been launched and will continue until the end of August. The aim was to remind Lublin citizens of its diversity and advantages it brings. This is especially important considering the fact that such initiatives have not been undertaken in Lublin for a long time and the intercultural message to community members needs to be reinforced (and constantly evoked!).



Screen shot form www.dlawszystkich.lublin.eu

From June until the end of August, Ukrainian journalist and photographer from Luck, Oksana Tsymbaliuk, has been creating a unique picture of Lublin residents through photographs. The portraits of people who chose Lublin to be their city of residence are followed by a short interview and in some cases audio recording. All is published on the website www.dlawszystkich.lublin.eu which is the continuation of Oksana's previous Facebook project, Faces of Lublin. Oksana's pictures have become the basis of advertisements in local newspaper, in public transportation system and on citylights around the city, enriched with some fact about Lublin's multiculturality or short message to the newcomers. In September, a book with all the 'faces of Lublin' will be published along with the summary of Lublin 4 All project outcomes.

Cooperation with major Polish cities

Over the past months, Lublin 4 All team worked closely with representatives of municipalities of major Polish cities to organize meetings in Poznań, Łódź, Kraków, Szczecin, Białystok, Gdańsk, Rzeszów and Wrocław to discuss and compare different intercultural approaches of each city. Lublin shared the experience of Lublin 4 All and ICC and described the challenges and successes on the way. Representatives of municipalities as well as civic society organizations presented their way of facing integration challenges in Poznań, Łódź, Kraków, Szczecin and Białystok. We are still about to visit Gdańsk, Rzeszów and Wrocław.

Another goal here is to present a tool – Intercultural Cities Index, which proved to be very useful in Lublin. A guide for Polish cities is being created to use the index as a tool to self assess their intercultural approach.

Foreigners Help Desk

Lublin Residents Affairs Office, in cooperation with Project Department within the cross-border cooperation project with Ukrainian cities Luck and Iwano-Frankiwsk and Homo Faber Association created first in Poland municipal help desk for foreigners arriving to Lublin. The idea was to create a place within Lublin City Hall where all the important information is gathered and disseminated and where trained staff can not only answer all questions but also help with legal issues. Such place was a missing link in Lublin and its creation is an enormous step on the path to improve quality of services for foreigners in Lublin. Official opening of Foreigners Help Desk is scheduled to 12 September 2014.

Communication 4 Integration (C4I): Lublin is a part of network of 11 cities invited by the Council of Europe to join the „Communication for Integration: Social Networks for Diversity (C4I)” project. The idea is to use social networks and viral information channels to provide correct and up to date information on migration and diversity issues and fight widespread misconceptions within local community. Based on successful Barcelona anti-rumour campaign, the innovative social communication and networking methodology will be developed in each partner city, followed by assessment of its impact and effectiveness.



Identification of rumours, the first step in the process of creating communication strategy within the project, ended in August both with official reports on rumours and public art event created in cooperation with Municipal Public Library: Rumour Exchange Shop.



Nieznane - Zasłyszane
Co się mówi w Lublinie o obcokrajowcach?

OD 4 SIERPNIA
PLAC PRZED CENTRUM KULTURY



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European Union COUNCIL OF EUROPE



For 5 days outside of Centre of Culture, municipal cultural institution and home of Municipal Public Library, a construction made of old banners was displayed and passers-by were invited to write the rumours they had heard or consider widespread among Lubliners. The goal was to engage local community into public discussion of how foreigners and migrants are perceived.

The event attracted many people: young and old, male and female, working or studying, Polish and of foreign nationalities. Some of them wanted to share their stories, but not in writing, but most of them, to our surprise, were very keen to share the rumours – or in many cases their own opinions or messages to newcomers.

Even though the official, scientific identification of rumours has come to an end, the Rumour Exchange Shop can be considered a valuable barometer of social attitudes towards migrants. Many people feared the adverse effect of the initiative: strengthening and fixing misconceptions about foreigners, but this experience actually proved to be the opposite: a chance to see and confront the 'power of rumours'.

Rumours Exchange Shop brought immediate attention of the media. The event got coverage in all 3 local radio stations, 2 local and 1 nationwide television, 3 local newspapers and the most popular nationwide online news provider. This became a great opportunity to spread the message about the project as well as all municipal intercultural initiatives.



Rumours Exchange Shop, fot. A.Amanoil

Study in Lublin



Lublin is a city of the young with five state universities and several private colleges providing education not only to the Poles. The presence of over 80 000 students makes Lublin considered a city of dynamic people whose creativity may and should be used by research centres and companies looking for innovative technologies.

"Study in Lublin" is a project implemented by the Lublin City Hall. The aim is to integrate the local academic community, encourage foreign students to study in the city and stimulate the multicultural exchange in the scientific environment. The project also involves close cooperation of the local government, business and higher education institutions. Within its scope an online portal was made available at www.study.lublin.eu, providing information for foreigners on the offer of higher education institutions from Lublin and application procedures. It is available in four language versions: Polish, English, Ukrainian and Russian. The greatest number of foreigners study at the Medical University which has conducted English-speaking medicine courses for 18 years now. Students arriving in Lublin come chiefly from the USA, Canada, Scandinavia, Taiwan and Saudi Arabia. Other universities and colleges also have an interesting offer for foreigners. 13 different English-taught programmes are available in Lublin at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Catholic University of Lublin and the University of Vincent Pol in Lublin. A real hit for foreigners – Veterinary Studies in English – is being prepared by the University of Life Sciences.

Multicultural Lublin Festival



was held in May 2014 for the 7th time in municipal Centre of Culture. It is a festival of ethnic and religious minorities living in Lublin, presenting traditions, culture and heritage of various minority groups in Lublin. Organization of the Festival is a unique opportunity for migrants and minority groups to engage local community into art events, workshops or lectures. This is the event that cannot be replaced by any other in Lublin. There are challenges though: how to combine the energy and willingness of minority groups with needs and expectations of the minority group when Lublin cultural offer is already so diverse? How to engage the minority into creating of the events? How to create a intercultural event instead of multicultural one?

Local Migration Policies



Participants of the II Local Migration Policies Forum
in Lublin, March 2014, photo by Lude Reno,
www.politykimigracyjne.pl

This September, another, third Local Migration Policies Forum will be held in Warsaw, this time focusing on migrants and minorities participation. The first day of the Forum, 18 of

September 2014, will be devoted to Lublin activities in the field of integration, closing and summarizing the Lublin 4 All project with participation of representatives our partner in Neuchâtel – COSM (Centre de la Cohésion Multiculturelle).

Support and cooperation with local NGOs

Many services for migrants and minority groups are provided by local non-governmental organizations. They are a very important part of the more and more integrated system of diversity management in Lublin. As a rule, Lublin City Hall covers own financial contribution required from NGOs in order to receive funding for their activities and services. The City Hall also networks these organizations within the Support Group, trying to facilitate contacts among them and help provide sustainability of project activities they conduct. In the newly developed first Foreigners Help Desk (see page 2), the information on services provided by local NGOs is and will be available and regularly updated.

Lublin Municipality, namely the division of cooperation with NGOs and social participation, puts great effort into engaging representatives of minorities into activities and events run in and by the city. During the first edition of local participatory budgeting, we worked closely with local NGO, Homo Faber Association on helping refugees, inhabitants of Centre for Foreigners in Lublin to create and submit their own project, providing assistance and translation services. We also contact migrants with NGOs, helping them find the best organisation or institution to bust their activities.



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