

ADEQUATE HOUSING POLICIES

TOOLKIT FOR EQUALITY CITY POLICIES AGAINST RACISM

European
Coalition
of Cities



against Racism



International Coalition
of Inclusive and
Sustainable Cities – ICCAR



Co-funded by
the European Union

Why is it necessary?
Foundation
Putting into practice
Follow-up

TOOLKIT FOR EQUALITY CITY POLICIES AGAINST RACISM

ADEQUATE HOUSING POLICIES

THE CITY GETS ACTIVE IN ITS FUNCTION AS A

- democratic institution
- **rule-maker**
- **employer**
- **service provider**
- **contractor**

ECCAR 10 POINTS ACTION PLAN

- 1 Greater Vigilance Against Racism**
- 2 Assessing Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies
- 3 Better Support for the Victims of Racism and Discrimination
- 4 More Participation and Better Informed City Dwellers
- 5 The City as an Active Supporter of Equal Opportunity Practices
- 6 The City As An Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider**
- 7 Fair Access to Housing**
- 8 Challenging Racism and Discrimination Through Education
- 9 Promoting Cultural Diversity
- 10 Hate Crimes and Conflicts Management

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INTRODUCTION

The Toolkit for Equality is a manual to support cities in implementing local policies that successfully counteract racism and racial discrimination or in adjusting existing ones. The Toolkit provides experience-based step-by-step instructions for implementing concrete policies, starting from the conceptualization and ending with measuring their impact. All content is based on expertise shared by experienced city officials working in European cities.

Our aim has been to give suggestions that are as concrete as possible. We invite you to read the toolkit as the joint expertise of colleagues in other cities and take whatever seems useful for your city.

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ADEQUATE HOUSING POLICIES

The chapter on housing combines several approaches and aspects related to the right to adequate housing, which includes the availability, accessibility, and acceptability of housing.

This chapter starts by discussing how to provide emergency shelter for newly arrived immigrants. It then addresses the aspect of accessibility of housing by suggestions on raising awareness and forming alliances in counteracting discrimination in the housing market. The aspect of acceptable housing is addressed by summarizing cities' experiences in improving basic infrastructure and social inclusion of marginalized city neighbourhoods.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) defines that ***“racial discrimination shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin [...]”***.

“Distinction” means to define a person as different on the basis of “race”, colour, ethnicity, descent, birth, religion or language (addressing biological and cultural ascriptions), justifying differentiated entitlements on a structural level. The opposite of distinction is equality. Equality is meant as a status as well as a process.

“Exclusion” means denying access to and enjoyment of human rights. The European Union adopted the term social exclusion defined by the ILO, but widened the definition stressing that social exclusion occurs when people cannot fully participate or contribute to society because of *“the denial of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights.”* It is indicated in the definitions that exclusion results from *“a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, bad health and family breakdown.”* Participation is a precondition for as well as a purpose of human rights. The opposite of exclusion is *inclusion*.

“Restriction” means a limitation of enjoyment of human rights in practice. The positive counterpart is to have “equal opportunities”.

“Preference” privileges a person on grounds of “race”, colour, ethnicity, descent, birth, religion or language over another person. Symmetrically, it disadvantages one person compared to another. The positive answer to this formal understanding is “equal treatment”. Policies successfully counteracting racial discrimination therefore need to contribute to the positive counterparts of the four dimensions of discrimination.

Counteracting discrimination therefore means to increase *equality, inclusion, equal opportunities and/or equal treatment*.

→ **HOUSING POLICIES** as described in this chapter counteract discrimination by promoting **equality, participation, equal opportunities and equal treatment** in order to **prevent or eliminate** restriction in the enjoyment of human rights.

CONTEXT INFORMATION

The following chapter was developed based on interviews with initiators, civil servants, politicians, beneficiaries, NGO members, school teachers etc. in the cities of Ghent (Belgium), Torino (Italy) and Pécs (Hungary). The chapter was completed with information provided by the city of Villeurbanne (France).

WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

A comprehensive policy as described in this chapter is recommended because:

- Lack of integration resulting from lack of appropriate housing is a potential risk for the security of the city as a whole.
- Integration policies that aim at providing migrants with basic shelter are important, but not sufficient for a sustainable integration of society, creating links between new residents and the native population and allowing for societal participation.
- Inclusion policies aim at creating a sense of belonging of city dwellers to their district of residence. They provide elements of identification for ALL residents (not only the privileged ones, who have the power to define the “character” of a district).

How does the city benefit?

- Guaranteeing a vital need of every human being: finding shelter, having equal opportunities in finding a place to live, and living in a place that allows for good health and participation in society.
- Avoiding high consequential costs that arise from social exclusion of a district’s population.
- Prevention and reduction of social conflict;
- Improved living conditions for district residents;
- Counteracting the segregation of city districts; re-integration of marginalized city areas;
- Reduction of health risks caused by poor sanitary conditions;
- Increased self-sustainability of residents (finding access to education and employment and being able to pay rents);
- A mobilized and active community;
- The policies foster future investment in the area;
- The communication and cooperation between city administration, NGOs on-site and district residents is improved.
- The sense of belonging to a given place reduces acts of vandalism;

LIMITATIONS

Housing and neighbourhood policies alone are unable to solve larger-scale problems of poverty (e.g. residents without income will not be able to pay rent and energy bills for the apartment of their choice). Experienced municipalities report that residents of severely marginalized districts, who grew up in poverty and segregation, might have difficulties in making use of education or employment possibilities offered in the framework of city district development policies. A city that integrated vocational trainings (e.g. as stonemason or painter) in a project renovating desolate housing buildings, made the experience that participants were not familiar with the expected way to work (showing up in time, how to learn/practice work steps etc.) This city therefore recommends consideration beforehand about what can be accomplished with the beneficiaries and to always combine infrastructural development with social work.

FOUNDATION

→ EMERGENCY SHELTER

The first section of this chapter deals with emergency shelters as temporary housing facilities for homeless persons or persons, who are at risk of being homeless. Emergency shelters as suggested in this chapter particularly aim at bridging the critical time period after arrival for new immigrants who do not have accommodations or family networks that take them in until they have their own means to find housing. Their situation is particularly critical due to language barriers, lack of knowledge about the city facilities and the resources available. Cities usually provide emergency shelter services in cooperation with social organisations, through a tender of subsidies.

1

STEP Gathering the relevant stakeholders

Key stakeholders are the city council, social workers, civil society organisations/NGOs already experienced and active in providing emergency shelters and social intercultural mediators. It is recommended that all city departments related to the topic are included, like the departments responsible for housing, social housing, employment, education and culture.

DEVELOPING THE CONCEPT

2

STEP Define the objectives and target groups

The general target groups are homeless persons or persons at risk of being homeless. Discuss with experienced civil society stakeholders the pros and cons of providing/establishing separate shelters for specific groups (e.g. women, minors). Make sure to provide possibilities for families to stay together.

3

STEP Define conditions of use

Clarify issues like: Is there a maximum period of stay (e.g. max. 7+7 days)? Is it a day centre? Is it an overnight centre?

For a sustainable impact in the sense of improving the situation for the target group: provide comprehensive attention, not only housing! Thus conceptualise complementary measures, these are for example:

- specific subsidies for families with financial difficulties,
- measures to cover the basic needs of food (having a canteen or catering services)
- support in accessing healthcare services, e.g. accompanying the beneficiaries in the procedures to obtain health insurance, explaining the health care system, education in health literacy
- training workshops: Language courses, cooking, domestic skills
- Leisure and free time activities: having a common room, reading materials, internet access and PCs, other regularly organised games.

4

STEP Consolidate and reinforce existing shelter services;

Provide coordination of existing services which support homeless people. Discuss with service providers which gaps need to be filled and how this can be managed.

Tip: remain flexible toward the adaptation of services according to the needs that arise and require immediate response. Set aside shelter places reserved for emergency situations.

RISKS, CHALLENGES**MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS**

Demand for emergency shelter places exceeds the supply.

Involve additional departments, stakeholders, in order to increase the number of places; Flexibility in planning.

Finding out if the policy is suitable and meets the needs

Assessing the services regularly, asking service providers and the service users, making adjustments if necessary.

→ ACCESSIBILITY OF HOUSING

This section deals with discrimination in access to housing at the public and the private sector. The city is seen in its function as a service provider and the chapter introduces different methods to prevent and eliminate discrimination in order to establish equal treatment.

Context factors to be taken into account when initiating these policies are the city competencies to influence the housing market and – connected to this – the question of if the housing market is open or regulated and if there are strong or weak price regulations.

5

STEP Prepare a study to gain evidence for discrimination

Interviewees reported about the issue of discrimination in housing in many cities. It is relevant to provide clear evidence of discrimination to housing sector stakeholders and city officials, if they deny the existence of discrimination. Situation testing serves as a means to provide evidence of discrimination and it is an initial step toward raising awareness of discrimination.

Situation testing in housing is a method whereby two (fictive) persons apply for the same apartment. They differ only on the basis of the single characteristic to be tested (ethnicity, gender, age, disability, social status, religion or sexual orientation). If the two receive different treatment, this is evidence of discrimination. Results can also be used to put some pressure on the city stakeholders to cooperate in initiating measures against discrimination.

Tip! Find a neutral partner for the study. Contract with a university or another external research institution concerning situation testing on the housing market. It is not recommended to have the situation testing carried out by the city, even if you have competent staff and even if this would be cheaper. The issue at stake is politically sensitive and the findings might be called into question if not realised by an external and neutral actor.

It is important that the study is supported by the mayor and the deputy mayor in charge of housing – at least to get it commissioned.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

Mayor and Deputy mayor in charge do not support the situation testing

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Make clear that the objective of situation testing is not blaming the landlords or the housing markets, but rather gaining evidence of discrimination.
Offer publishing the findings anonymously (just the total number and proportion of incidents, not mentioning the concrete discriminatory landlord/housing company/estate agency)!



6

STEP Decide on the method for the study

There are different methods of situation testing. You can complete or combine the different methods.

Situation testing by phone: Have one person with a foreign accent call on a number of housing ads, saying “Hi my name is Mohammed, can I rent this apartment?”, and one person with a local accent calling “Hi my name is [typical local name], can I rent this apartment?”. If you want to test disability as discrimination ground, let the other person ask “Is the apartment accessible or barrier free?” or “Are service-dogs allowed?” If you want to test social status as a discrimination ground, let the other person ask: “Is the flat available to those with public subsidies?” Document the answers and compare.

Situation testing by mail: Send out e-mails saying that you are interested in the apartment, signing with names from different origins or asking the questions as named above. Document (non-)responses and compare.

RISKS, CHALLENGES**MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS**

Findings are biased because of unintended discrimination (landlords do not know that the refusal of service dogs in flats is discrimination)

Be aware on the limitations of the study



7

STEP Publication of results

Make situation testing results public in cooperation with local media. Be aware of and be prepared for strong reactions.

RISKS, CHALLENGES**MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS**

Housing market actors, estate agents, landlords and politicians from various parties will disapprove of the testing as a form of “state control”.

A strong political commitment is needed to allow a city to commission such a testing. Confront opponents with the results, to argue that a testing was apparently necessary.



RISKS, CHALLENGES

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Once the testing is published, real estate agents are aware that they could be tested which biases further research.

Use these circumstances for your research: After the publication of the first secret testing, announce a second testing round and inform all stakeholders about it (e.g. through a letter). Compare the results of the two testings.

The validity of findings is called into question by landlords. They deny discrimination, they say that they just selected one and did not refuse the others

Vary the applications and explain how this behaviour is influenced by prejudices

Bad experiences influence the opinion of the landlords and they feel insecure about their property

You have to work on the intrinsic motivation (it takes longer and it is much harder than severe punishment but it is the only thing that works in the long run)

The demand on the housing market is greater than the supply, which makes it easy to discriminate

Offer more social and public housing if possible.

Tip! For sustainability it is important to have an agreement with the housing sector on continued situation testing in the housing market. Provide the housing sector with the findings first and let them comment and reflect before informing the public.

Basically, the situation testing is transferable to other cities. Thereby, you have to examine the situation in your city, e.g. reflect on context factors like the relationship between demand and supply and the needs of the population when setting up the method.

8

STEP Get the stakeholders involved

For effectively work on anti-discrimination policies in access to housing, you really need to take the stakeholders on board. Raise awareness of discrimination and offer them alternatives to act. Support them in changing behaviour.

Stakeholders in the housing sector:

- city housing services,
- intermediates (semi-private/private housing services),
- private landlords,
- the real estate sector and its agents,
- individuals who are potential targets (tenants, buyers),
- inhabitants (neighbours).

Get in contact with social housing agencies as well as private real estate agencies. Start by using already established contacts and persons who are positively interested in the topic. Explain that the objective is not in blaming and shaming but to improve service provision for all clients.

Tip! If the testing showed that a particular housing agency did not discriminate, start with that one, and motivate them to act as a role model.

RISKS, CHALLENGES**MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS**

Stakeholders deny that discrimination takes place.

Aim for objective results: statistics and comparisons showing the gap, situation testing, case law, give victims a voice to tell their stories, work with local media to publish cases (anonymously!), support Antidiscrimination offices in their work.

The topic involves a whole range of target groups, which is a lot to handle.

Choose to focus each year on one target group.

Politicians worry about heavy resistance by the housing sector and parts of the population.

The political will can be legitimized by legal obligations and/or regional/national guidelines on non-discrimination. Diversify the approach, addressing all grounds of discrimination.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

Housing agencies are not interested.
 Housing agencies feel that the city intervenes in private business and are upset over the testing.

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Use scientific research with situation testing to show that discrimination is a problem in the sector and that something needs to be done.
 Refer to legal provisions or, if there is no adequate legislation, to public image and loss of potential clients.
 Political support and pressure is needed to be able to enter into negotiations with the real estate sector.

9

STEP Inform the stakeholders about discrimination

Take a participatory approach and invite interested stakeholders to a working meeting.

Give an information input to real estate agents on discrimination, explaining that there is direct, indirect and systemic discrimination, and that is not always intentional (e.g. real estate agents comply with discriminatory demands of neighbours or owners). Discuss with the participants concerning relevant criteria when choosing between applicants.

The Antidiscrimination office can carry out awareness raising activities and inform housing agencies about non-discrimination law. Try to explain how (unconscious) prejudices influence the selection of tenants and may result in discrimination.

You can find more information on Antidiscrimination offices and their activities in the chapter “Antidiscrimination Offices”.

Tip! Be aware of the different types of logic that apply in private housing as compared to social housing. The private housing market follows an economic imperative; if covered by anti-discrimination law private housing agents are nonetheless bound to non-discrimination. Social housing is based on a stronger imperative of solidarity, and regulations for social housing agencies are usually stricter than for private ones.

10

STEP Organise an initial exchange conference

Organize a conference bringing together associations that work with (potential) victims. Invite lecturers from other target groups (e.g. real estate association, legal experts) to host a workshop; not only to transmit information but also to for an exchange among the groups.

Intermediates, NGOs etc. may use similar approaches without knowing about each others’ activities. Bringing them together creates synergies and facilitates an exchange of practices.

How to reach representatives from the housing sector to invite them to the conference?

Use all contacts and networks of your department, other departments, partners, the city housing service etc. Search for people you have been in contact with or you think of and ask them to give a workshop; they will pass it on to interested people they know. Contact persons who are already engaged in non-discrimination and/or are open to exchanges with stakeholders from other perspectives. Use social media to spread the invitation to the workshop.

11

STEP Implement regular round tables with stakeholders

A sustainable form of stakeholder exchange is the establishment of a regular round table, where representatives of all stakeholders come together, get to know each other and each others perspectives, and exchange ideas on possible actions against discrimination in housing.

12

STEP Discuss potential actions for non-discrimination in housing

Discuss with the stakeholders you have won for cooperation what kind of actions could be taken and what they would need from the city to not discriminate anymore. Negotiate to agree on a **charter which describes the way of cooperation and the engagement** in non-discrimination. Housing agencies might be free to choose implemented measures from a list of possible activities.

Actions proposed by the participating cities are:

- Making criteria for selection more transparent
- Training real estate agents on non-discrimination
- Equipping employees : analyses of practices and coaching, establishing objective selection criteria, standardization of selection processes
- Contributing to awareness raising on discrimination in housing
- Improved information for people, looking for housing, on the criteria for selection (concerns mainly social housing)
- Committing to external, unannounced testing

A major goal is to reach **agreements on external, unannounced situation testing**. Make the offer that the participating housing agencies will be the first ones to receive the results so that they can consider how they want to work on the results. Recommend cooperation with a local antidiscrimination office that supports the victims of discrimination in housing. Formulate an agreement in a way that gives the responsibility to the sector, but also leaves some possibilities of pressure through publishing testing results and/or having cases dealt with by the antidiscrimination office.

13

STEP Create a quality label for “equality housing agencies”

Implement a visible validation of good practices. Create and design a quality label which is awarded to housing agencies that commit to the actions above and agree to situation testing. Provide for opportunities to make this label visible and known in public, e.g. on the city website, specific journals and local media, in order to create an incentive for housing agencies to take part.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Achieving commitment by real estate agencies.

Research results are important. Agencies care about their image.
 Build on suggestions by the sector: Chances of change are better when measures are not imposed but developed by the sector itself.
 Support actors in the sector who are committed to acting against discrimination, e.g. by inviting them as experts to other stakeholder events, by offering to do a workshop for their employees etc.

Individual agents have racist attitudes and do not care about awareness raising efforts.

Repeat situation testing in order to identify these actors and to produce evidence for court proceedings.

The regional/national legislation limits the power of the city to act.

One feasible measure is to obligate landlords to put the price of an apartment in the advertisement and to connect non-compliance to an administrative fine.

Economic interests and client orientation (e.g. complying with an owner’s wish to only search for “national” tenants) are stronger than the commitment to non-discrimination.

Promote the quality label to the extent that it has an impact on corporate image and name recognition on the market.

→ NON-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION COVERING HOUSING

The legislation defines the extent of pressure one can put on housing agents not to discriminate. If there is no basis for denouncing housing agents of discrimination in the law, one can try to create pressure via the public image of a housing agency.

If anti-discrimination law is at the regional or national level, a city has no power to increase the legal punishment of racist behavior in the housing sector. Thus, lobby the relevant government level for increased powers. Use the evidence gained from the situation testing and the awareness raising measures. Present your city as a role model.

The Antidiscrimination office can also confront real estate agencies with accusations of discrimination. An Antidiscrimination office can also become active if the law does not provide a basis for a lawsuit and/or if the victim prefers an out-of court solution.

→ SUPPORT VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Apart from the “normal” initiatives to support victims of discrimination offered by the Antidiscrimination offices, interviewees reported good experiences from a so-called “buddy project”. This is about supporting people who have difficulties in presenting themselves in an effective manner to a real estate agents or landlords. Members of groups who are particularly vulnerable to discrimination in access to housing – e.g. young people under age 18 living alone, ex-prisoners, people depending on social welfare, members of a discriminated ethnicity - can utilize individual coaching and training interviews in order to gain self-confidence when applying for housing.

Interviewees reported good experiences with innovative online platforms and projects that match individuals who have an apartment for rent with those searching for one.

All city residents are the neighbor/friend/colleague of someone and are therefore potential witnesses to discrimination in housing. Supporting campaigns by local Antidiscrimination office(s) providing information about non-discrimination legislation and their offers of support. Support the establishment of an Antidiscrimination office that can intervene and mediate in neighborhood conflicts driven (see chapter 6 for more information).

RISKS, CHALLENGES

Projects terminate at the end of the funding period.

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Try to have a follow-up, at least by organizing an exchange among colleagues in the field on what went well and what did not.

→ SECURING BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND COUNTERACTING SEGREGATION

This section is about the structural development of deprived or disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It addresses adequate housing in the narrow sense, but is also about availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure, affordability, habitability, and location including opportunities for education, work and leisure, as required by the right to adequate housing (Art 11 CESCR).

The suggested approach combines infrastructural development with social work. The policy aims at avoiding/counteracting the formation of segregated areas of marginalised groups. It is carried out at the district level and has the purpose of improving living conditions as well as to strengthening social inclusion and active citizenship. Therefore it is a crucial element in the approach to include all district inhabitants (marginalised and non-marginalised) from the beginning. Experienced municipalities emphasise the importance of social work and mediation as accompanying measures. Social workers are important stakeholders in regard to the establishment of a relationship of trust in the district population, which has turned out to be an important factor of success. Anti-discrimination policies in the area of inclusive neighbourhood policies can be included in larger measures of district development, e.g. as part of more general redevelopment and resurgence “mother policies” towards urban living.

Limitations

A neighbourhood programme needs to be delimited to a certain district/neighbourhood to be able to address its specific needs. A municipality which plans to implement such a policy needs to be aware of the exclusion of the outside areas of the neighbourhood addressed. Experience shows that residents of these outside areas might not understand the selection and feel even more excluded.

PLANNING AND ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

14

STEP Gathering relevant stakeholders

- Relevant city departments and the administrative district, depending on the city size and the scope of the policy.
- Relevant public facilities: It is recommended that local stakeholders are included as they have direct daily contact with district residents and therefore know about the situation and needs. Schools are relevant stakeholders, because they are respected in the community and can work as an interface between the municipality and the inhabitants. Successful social inclusion policies involved schools from the beginning as they can contribute important ideas and the children are a relevant starting point to get access to the parents.
- Regarding infrastructural developments, it is recommended on-site service providers are included, e.g. a cooperative in charge of managing public facilities like public toilets / showers. Social workers and the providers of social services in the district must be integrated from the beginning.
- Representatives of ethnic minorities. If the neighbourhood policy also aims at reducing ethnic segregation, the inclusion of representatives of ethnic minorities into planning the policy is crucial. The local residents need to be active participants in the measures, not only its subjects.
- Relevant external stakeholders with experiences of and knowledge of social inclusion and urban planning. It is furthermore recommended artists working in the district are involved as they may have “intuitions” that help city planners understand the “spirit” of the district.

15

STEP Carry out a needs assessment

The needs assessment helps by gathering and collecting the ideas and concerns of the population in order to design a policy that is actually needed and can have an impact. The needs assessment helps in designing the policy as a whole, and also the concrete target group oriented measures. A target group oriented design fosters the acceptance and the participation of the population.

Suggested methods for a needs assessment:

- round tables with key stakeholders (named above) in the district, to identify and discuss local concerns with regard to housing (e.g. abandoned buildings, lack of public infrastructure, problems with the energy supply, insecure places etc.)
- an expert mapping of the district/area in respect to the topics of concern (e.g. to identify places, which are perceived to be unsafe and insecure).
- a survey among the population in the respective district
- gathering data from organisations, NGOs that are in contact with people living in the respective area.

Tip! If the needs assessment indicates too many problems, first inspect the most pressing issues, and put them in focus. Successful planning needs to be based on a rigorous assessment of needs in the relevant district and it may take up to 2 years. Continuous re-assessment and adjustments according to the needs is vital to successful implementation.

16

STEP Appoint a management committee

Achieve a city council decision

The establishment of the Management Committee is recommended in the form of a City Council's decision. This gives more power to the committee and avoids internal administrative conflicts.

Define the duties and nominate the members

The tasks of the director of the management committee are communication, meeting with citizens, organizing working groups, coordinating public works and mediation of conflicts.

Nominate an administrative coordinator. Supervision and implementation monitoring are core tasks. The management committee should include administration clerks who are experienced in project management and district development. Experienced municipalities clearly point out the importance of experience on district development in the management committee.

Nominate the operative staff

Ideally, each single activity – as derived from the findings of the needs assessment – should have a person in charge. This person should be responsible for the procedures, deadlines, and achievement. Staff is supervised and supported by the Management Committee.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Challenges due to administrative and bureaucratic procedures:

The positive cost-benefit balance of these policies is difficult to demonstrate as results are sometimes not easily visible;

Enhance internal communication and transparency. Use public economy cost-benefit models which include calculations for prevention benefits. Ensure that there are operationalized objectives and make the achievements visible.

Problematic relations and conflicts between different public authorities affect the process of developing a concept;

Enhance internal communication and transparency. Use public economy cost-benefit models which include calculations for prevention benefits. Ensure that there are operationalized objectives and make the achievements visible.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Many different partners and stakeholders, who follow different communication methods and technical solutions

The coordinator sets up rules for communication and for conflict settlement within the project.

Challenges due to characteristics of beneficiaries:

High mobility rates in the district of question

Challenges due to political and strategic interests:

Immigration policies are paralyzed by a fear of losing political consensus; From a political point of view, there is a need to find a balance between the wish to preserve the national culture and the respect for different cultures in order to foster coexistence and unity in the territories.

Create awareness among politicians that migration is not a new phenomenon. So-called “migrants” often have long-standing roots in the country and city administrations have to develop paths for them.

Challenges due to the limited scope of the policy:

The inclusion of a certain area into neighbourhood policies is always an exclusion of its surroundings. This can cause tension and envy.

Include the surrounding area when possible, by allowing residents of neighbouring districts to also make use of services/ infrastructure (e.g. community buildings, coaching for children); consider follow-up projects in these other areas

DEVELOP THE CONCEPT

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STEP Define the objectives and concrete measures

Such policies are only useful if the beneficiaries and social workers already present in the area are involved from the beginning. Neighbourhood policies differ in terms of their scope: they can encompass whole districts, suburban areas or certain residential areas.

The objectives should be defined with respect to the findings of the needs assessment (see above). Concrete measures to achieve goals need to be formulated within the frame of city powers.

Use the contacts with the target group established during the needs assessment to discuss every element of the draft concept. A participatory approach and a needs-based development of objectives and means to achieve them are very important for the acceptance of these measures in the neighbourhood. Take into account surrounding issues, such as unemployment, businesses and schools. It is not sustainable to improve housing infrastructure if the inhabitants cannot pay the rent.

CONCEPT

Basic infrastructural issues:

Objective: Guaranteeing basic sanitary/energy infrastructure for all city dwellers, using e.g. the following measures:

- providing each community flat in the district with adequate sanitary facilities (without compromising their affordability)
- providing adequate energy supply and heating systems
- information workshops for residents on how to prevent and combat mould, on efficient heating etc.

Physical-environmental issues:

Objective: stimulate inhabitants to meet and promote social integration, support sustainable urban mobility, using the following means:

- Provide the district with additional green areas and recreational spaces (streets are narrow, no places for aggregation);
- Create elements of identification in the physical spaces: for natives and for migrants;
- Redevelop and modernize the district from a physical point of view;
- Rethink effective public transportation
- Improve security through construction measures (pedestrian protection, better lighting etc.)

Socio-cultural issues:

Objective: improve the image of the district and promote the territory through local cultural actions through the following means:

- Stimulate active citizenship;
- Activate efficient public services as a contrast to urban decay;
- Improve the integration of socially vulnerable groups:
- Change the negative perception (bad reputation) of the district; (Indicators: the narrative used by other parts of the city when talking about this part)
- Create community paths, even though this is very difficult as at times people have no cultural instruments (indicator: data on level of education);
- Establish a wide range of cultural initiatives in the district (traditional and innovative theatre, dance, cinema)

Economic and employment issues:

Objective: Promoting job opportunities, sustaining investments and boosting the territory's competitiveness through the following means:

- Supporting Small and medium enterprises investments;
- improving the economic infrastructure of the area;
- strengthening the cooperation between local entrepreneurs for marketing actions;

- sustaining the employment level;
- reducing school drop-out rate;
- enhancing and evaluating immigrants' competences;
- providing a coaching service for the development of entrepreneurial projects, and economic incentives for existing or newly established micro enterprises in the district.

Ethnic de-segregation:

Objective: Social inclusion of ethnic minorities who are affected by segregation, pauperization and ghettoization through the following means:

- education: complete compulsory school; offer vocational training in cooperation with the labour office.
- Employment incentives for labour market inclusion: Funding for 6 months, employers are obliged to keep the employees for a further 6 months.
- mobility programme: support the moving of people to integrated housing areas. An important precondition for these mobility programmes is including the residents of the integrated housing areas in these measures in order to foster acceptance. Mobility programmes must be accompanied by social work and mediation.

When designing construction measures, always consider aspects like: who will use it? When? How and for what? Is it barrier free?

With regard to the socio-economic deprivation often related with marginalization in housing, it is crucial to combine infrastructure measures with social work and social services. These services aim to bridge the gap that residents of marginalized districts face such as difficulties in accessing "regular" city services and guaranteeing satisfaction of basic needs and rights.

Depending on the conditions in the target district, this might include:

- mobile doctors and healthcare staff, who offer free health checks and information about disease-prevention and a healthy lifestyle
- child care and care for the elderly
- vocational training for adults with low qualifications
- youth work, streetwork
- community work, like providing for a community house, youth centre etc.

Discuss with all stakeholders and residents, how local residents can be included in the implementation of infrastructure measures in a way that values and increases their competencies, e.g. combine renovation of a building with vocational training opportunities for disadvantaged local youths, combine development/fixing of electricity networks with information on how to use an electricity meter to monitor one's own energy costs.

When designing the concrete measures, bear in mind that the overall objective is to foster social inclusion and social cohesion through rehabilitating/renewal of the selected area.

Tip! The importance of schools in district development work: When facilitating access to the population, it is recommended to involve all schools located in the district. Schools are key entrance points to the population (via teachers you get access to the pupils and via the pupils you get access to their parents). Define children as a target group of your first activities. The involvement of children creates a direct and easier way to also involve their parents.

Invite schools to participate in the development of the concept and in brainstorming on activities to improve life-quality in the district. Modes of participation are e.g. through school projects on this or through the integration of policy activities into the teaching programs at the beginning of every school year. The implementation of the policy in the school can furthermore be guaranteed through existing inter-class groups and through already established methods of coordination.

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

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STEP Open an appropriate, accessible office

Open an office in the heart of the targeted district/neighbourhood. The Management Committee needs to be present there too. This creates proximity and allows all actors in the project and the local population to interact.

Experienced municipalities suggest trust-building measures for the operation of the office. The project office is expected to have longer office-hours than the counter services in the city hall. There is no need to arrange appointments or have formal meetings with authorities. This creates trust in the population.

Tip! Organise an inclusive opening event. Experience shows that it is good to link the opening event with another ceremonial opening, e.g. of a renovated cinema or another public facility, which is then used as starting point for putting the policy into practice. A speech from the mayor is important too.

Include as many groups from the local population as possible. Reach out to those who have not yet been reached via municipal welfare services (family services, elder care, community building and social work) and other channels.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

Too much press reaction and recognition can be a risk for the functioning of the policy: the press could contribute to negative opinions and resentments about it.

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Invest in good public relations and media work; think about these issues and reflect on and discuss the image of the policy with the management board.



DAILY WORK

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STEP Ensure proper communication and coordination

E-mail coordination on a daily basis and personal group meetings on a weekly basis are very effective. The group meetings should include discussions and feedback; the participants should go through controversial issues coming up in the course of daily work. Day-to-day cooperation is guaranteed by the management committee or in smaller scale policies by a single person – however, there should be a clear responsibility in this regard.

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STEP Ensure constant communication with the beneficiaries and partners

Only constant cooperation and inclusion of beneficiaries from the beginning onwards builds up trust between the project implementers and the beneficiaries and thus to successful implementation. Resort to social workers to communicate with the beneficiaries and organise regular meetings for the beneficiaries.

RISKS, CHALLENGES

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Challenges due to the limited scope of the policy:

Inhabitants have prejudices with respect to public administration (bureaucracy, lengthy processes)

Try to be as flexible as possible and available for interaction with inhabitants (even outside office hours)

Challenges due to characteristics of beneficiaries/actors involved:

Vandalism or negligence of public property

Awareness raising and sanction measures (the vandal needs to repair the damage)

Resistance and opposition by inhabitants

Create mediation meetings to explain to citizens the complexity of a given situation in order to help them to understand the opposing interests.
In principle: negative reactions from inhabitants are mitigated by a transparent communication from the city, establish a complaint hotline.

Why is it necessary?
Foundation
Putting into practice
Follow-up

→ Daily work

RISKS, CHALLENGES

MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

Beneficiaries need to become used to the measures: e.g. if houses in poor regions are renovated: children need to become used to a toilet or to a shower or to having enough space to sleep in a separate room from their parents.

→

Social work and psychosocial process support is essential to this. All renovation and changes should be communicated beforehand with the residents. Found a team that is responsible solely for the organization and implementation of the relocation (so that there is not a need to resort to social work for this).

→

(Infra-) Structural challenges:

Limited resources, working overtime and unpaid (unpaid what?)

→

Motivate inhabitants to participate voluntarily. BUT: this participation cannot be a substitute for the political responsibility to realize public duties (e.g. the construction of bicycle lanes); To not rely too much on residents' participation

FOLLOW-UP

If the policy is funded by the EU or another donor, the possibility to bring about major adjustments at a later stage is limited. It is not possible to change objectives or activities, but the modus operandi can be adjusted. This is very important because neighbourhood programmes have many facets, featuring many participants and project elements; it might be necessary to find solutions concerning unexpected problems which come up suddenly. The following lessons learned have been reported:

- Talk with citizens;
- Transparency with all stakeholders;
- Do not set a time-frame for conceptualisation that is too narrow (5 years is realistic);

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS

The inclusive neighbourhood policies enhance the transparency within the different levels of administration. This policy allows the cooperation of sectors of the administration that traditionally do not work together.

- Professionalism and experience in conceptualisation and management (project management and funding management);
- Deep knowledge of the territory at stake and its dynamics among the stakeholders (social workers; welfare service);
- Social work in the selected area and participation in the policy activities
- Having enough time for development and implementation: 5 to 7 years is realistic (2 years for preparation, 2-3 years for implementation, 1-2 years for follow-up)
- Follow-up is important as neighbourhood policies are different from investing in roads and sidewalks which then can effectively be left on their own;
- Have the capacity to listen to the real needs of the area and ignore negative prejudices or narratives about suburban areas;
- Honest and transparent relations with citizens;

→ Key factors of success
Impact and outcome

- Involvement of inhabitants (including children and adolescents) from the beginning;
- Involvement of migrant, ethnic, marginalized communities;
- Constant communication and cooperation;
- Involvement of external institutions and actors such as businesses (shop owners, associations)
- A supportive mayor (high-level politician), who stands behind the policy.
- The positive results achieved by the policy can be maintained in the long term thanks to “management pacts” signed between the municipality and residents.

IMPACT AND OUTCOME

In order to measure the performance of the policy, a number of indicators were mentioned:

- Number of people that have accessed services (indicates acceptance);
- Number (proportion) of participating residents;
- Level of involvement of children, especially because they understood the complexities and difficulties behind the planning, realization and maintenance of public goods (in this case a public garden);
- Number of newly established facilities in the district (e.g. an art gallery);
- Usage of facilities, created in the frame of the policy;
- Level of voluntary work to maintain facilities (gathering trash, watering plants);
- International attention on the district and visibility (media reports);
- Image of the city (media reports)
- Long-term outcome indicator: development of tourism through numbers of overnight stays.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Graz (AT): Community Mediation Service

The City of Graz Peace Office runs a Community Mediation Service that professionally supports and assists residents of housing estates in finding solutions in disputes between neighbours. The aim of such a mediated discussion is a mutually satisfactory settlement of the dispute. The actual results and steps are put down in a written agreement. The agreement is a voluntary declaration of the conflicting parties to actively facilitate the improvement of the situation.

<http://www.friedensbuero-graz.at/cms/angebote/gute-nachbarschaft/#c460>

Pécs (HU): Desegregation in “I”: The city includes a visible Romani population, many of whom live in different segregated neighbourhoods. The cooperation between Pécs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) commenced in 2011. One of the most significant objectives was to explore concrete, long-term and sustainable accommodation solutions for segregated families, completing the Municipal Government’s efforts in this field. A major obstacle to consider was that families living in extreme poverty and exclusion must find economical solutions since they would otherwise fall into a debt trap.

Turin (IT): Urban Barriera – city development programme (*Uni Padova*)

Urban Barriera is a city development program aimed at starting a general improvement of the “Barriera di Milano” area, a historical district located in the northern part of Torino. This program forecasts events and initiatives to favour social inclusion and active citizenship in the context of a more general redevelopment and its resurgence to an urban common living. Urban Barriera acts through four intervention axes: physical-environmental, economic-employment, socio-cultural and through a strong communication activity and social support.

<http://www.comune.torino.it/urbanbarriera/>

<http://www.comune.torino.it/urbanbarriera/en/>

Madrid (ES): The Madrid Plan for Social and Intercultural Coexistence

The Madrid Plan for Social and Intercultural Coexistence was born with the aim of working for social and intercultural coexistence in the city of Madrid. A cohesive society is everyone’s responsibility and requires the participation of all its neighbours. It has been designed as a transversal program where different areas of the City Council work together, based on the reflection and experience of professionals who have collaborated in its drafting and with the active and committed participation of the social sector of Madrid.

The Madrid Plan works for the different departments of the City of Madrid (housing, employment, education, culture, etc.), developing general and specific programs that can provide the necessary keys to adequate the work to the new reality and provide services that can reach all neighbours.

www.madrid.es/UnidadesDescentralizadas/Inmigracion/EspInformativos/MadridConvive/Present/Ficheros/ResumINGLES%20PLAN%20Madrid-WEB-1.pdf

www.madrid.es/UnidadesDescentralizadas/Inmigracion/EspInformativos/MadridConvive/Present/Ficheros/ResumenESPA.PLAN%20Madrid-WEB-1.pdf

