



Cultural Diversity as an advantage for economic development and social cohesion

Join declaration by the Municipalities of Limassol and Ioannina



- ❖ In the light of:
 - The memorandum of twinning agreement between the Municipalities of Limassol and Ioannina
 - Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on intercultural integration and recommendations of “The Intercultural City Step by Step” guide, of the Council of Europe.
 - Limassol Intercultural Strategy 2018-2020.
 - European Charter of Diversity

- ❖ Recognizing and acknowledging that:
 - People of various origins contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of our cities offering their talents, skills and qualifications.
 - Societies successfully managing their cultural diversity have an advantage in matters of prosperity.
 - Apart from other intercultural crucial domains like, inter alia, family, social and cultural life, education, health and housing, business, entrepreneurship and labour are fundamental parts of human life and a catalyst for successful intercultural integration,
 - Micro, small and medium enterprises have a special role in generating jobs, creating new opportunities for the cities, interaction, attraction of talent and self-realization of diverse citizens of today and tomorrow;

- ❖ Noting that:
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on our intercultural societies, especially on a wide range of vulnerable groups and communities and particularly to younger people, women, migrants, people with special needs and all kind of minorities;
 - The lack of the awareness on the economic potential of diversity and consecutive lack of action, could result in increased exclusion, uneven economic development, higher crimes rate, ghettoization, fragmentation and polarization of local communities, and civilizational regression in all terms;

As a conclusion of the joint project “Intercultural Twinning: Cultural Diversity for Inclusive Growth”, funded by the Council of Europe “Intercultural Cities” programme,

the Municipality of Limassol and the Municipality of Ioannina:

❖ Declare that:

- En addition to their twinning agreement of 02/07/1984, the two parts jointly proceed in an Intercultural twinning, an act of great symbolic value, aiming at:
 - Deepening collaboration in the field of intercultural/inclusive integration, according to the framework provided by the Intercultural Cities programme of the Council of Europe
 - Supporting the development of local partnership platforms that will help removing obstacles in the qualification recognition and support development of skills, knowledge and experiences of diverse groups and communities;
 - Facilitating multi-stakeholders debates with a view of preparing action plans and measures to increase diversity in working spaces and improve access of migrant-owned businesses to the mainstream economic activities.
 - Encouraging the entrepreneurial activities of all segments of the society and social groups including inter alia those of migrants, women, youth, ethnic, sexual and other minorities and/or people with special needs
 - Aiming at further developing quality management standards consistent with the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment and fair remuneration.

❖ Invite:

- Businesses, Labour organisations and their representatives, such as Employers and Industrialists Associations, Chambers of Commerce and Labour & Trade Unions and Business Support organizations (Incubators, Accelerators etc), to:
 - Value, praise and emphasise diversity of the workforce and citizenry.
 - Approach strategically the issue of cultural diversity.
 - Support talent and provide an environment for its advancement.
 - Create a climate of positive interaction, mutual appreciation, equality and respect in the working space.
 - Further recognise and promote the diversity advantage as one of the main assets of job market and modern cities and societies in general.

- Take into account the role of migrants and minorities and diversity in the workforce in general for the future social deals and agreements.

➤ Civil sector organisations:

- To work towards the better visibility and awareness of the diversity advantage.
- To support the efforts of Local Authorities, National Governments, Businesses & Labor organizations and their representatives, in order to increase the dialogue and provide deepest social outreach to its results.

➤ Universities, Educational and Research institutions:

- To provide the state-of-the-art research and technological support for diversity management in the working space.
- To be an example and a role-model of the mobility of people and ideas and the transfer of knowledge across any boundaries.

➤ National authorities in charge:

- To standardise the diversity standards and quality measures and promote them nation-wide.
- To Coordinate the implementation of the Recommendation on Intercultural Integration and, towards that goal, the “Intercultural City Step by Step” guide, with an emphasis on its “Social and Cultural Life” and “Business and Labour” chapters, across various sectors and policies and throughout their national territories.
- To afford local authorities with adequate powers to deal with diversity effectively and efficiently.
- To support the recognition of qualification based on, for example, the CoE’s European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, and provide flexible language standards for non-native speakers.

❖ Thank:

- All partner organizations taking part in the project, as well as the members of Limassol Intercultural Council for their contributions;
- The Secretariat of the Intercultural Cities programme, the Division of Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Programmes of the Council of Europe for their financial and administrative support.