ppi 201502ZU4645
Publicación científica en formato digital
ISSN-Versión Impresa 0798-1406 / ISSN-Versión on line 2542-3185
Depósito legal pp 197402ZU34

CUESTIONES POLÍTICAS

Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Derecho Público "Dr. Humberto J. La Roche"
de la Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Políticas de la Universidad del Zulia
Maracaibo, Venezuela

Vol.40 Nº 74
2022

Cuestiones Políticas Vol. 40, Nº 74 (2022), 246-267
IEPDP-Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Políticas - LUZ

Intercultural Communication and Community Participation in Local Governance: the EU Experience

DOI: https://doi.org/10.46398/cuestpol.4074.13

Aisulu Parmanasova *
Iryna Tytarchuk **
Iryna Titarenko ***
Olena Ivanova ****
Yana Kurgan-Bakoveieva *****
Marina Järvis ******

Abstract

Interaction based on equality is a determining factor in an intercultural approach to mutual cross-border integration. States direct their policy vectors towards creating provisions for positive and constructive cooperation between people of different backgrounds and lifestyles with government institutions. The recognition and testing of policies and practices that promote intercultural interaction and inclusion by local governments are of particular importance in this context. The aim of the article was to identify and reveal current problems and the current state of regulation of intercultural communication and community participation in local governance in the European Union and Ukraine. Observation, analysis and survey methods were the main methodological tools. The study showed that the effective development of intercultural communication and community participation in local governance requires progress in the implementation of the overall strategies declared by the European Union. The adequacy and prospects of the intercultural cities network (ICC) are presented. Analysis of the survey of

* Department of Economics, Kyrgyz National University named after Jusup Balasagyn, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5885-0812

** Department of Public Relations, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5838-974X

*** Department of Public Relations, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3180-6926

**** Department of Advertising and Media Communications, Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Odesa, Ukraine. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3834-1946

***** Department of Management, Information and Analytical Activity and European Integration, Drahomanov National Pedagogical University, Kyiv, Ukraine. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7028-6022

****** Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences, Tallinn, Estonia; Department of Business Administration, Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4541-4632

Recibido el 14/06/2022 Aceptado el 03/08/2022

cities surveyed in the Intercultural Cities Index showed a high level of local government transformation and public participation in regional decision-making.

Keywords: interculturality; multivariate nations; intercultural communication; social inclusion; cross-border mobility.

Comunicación intercultural y participación comunitaria en la gobernanza local: la experiencia de la UE

Resumen

La interacción basada en la igualdad es un factor determinante de un enfoque intercultural para la integración mutua transfronteriza. Los estados dirigen sus vectores políticos hacia la creación de disposiciones para la cooperación positiva y constructiva entre personas de diferentes orígenes con las instituciones gubernamentales. El reconocimiento de políticas y prácticas que promuevan la interacción intercultural y la inclusión por parte de los gobiernos locales son de particular importancia en este contexto. El objetivo del artículo fue identificar y revelar los problemas actuales y el estado actual de la regulación de la comunicación intercultural y la participación comunitaria en la gobernanza local en la Unión Europea y Ucrania. Los métodos de observación, análisis y encuesta fueron las principales herramientas metodológicas. El estudio mostró que el desarrollo efectivo de la comunicación intercultural y la participación comunitaria en la gobernanza local requiere avanzar en la implementación de las estrategias globales declaradas por la Unión Europea. Se exponen la adecuación y las perspectivas de la red de ciudades interculturales (ICC). El análisis de la encuesta de ciudades encuestadas en el Índice de Ciudades Interculturales mostró un alto nivel de transformación de los gobiernos locales en la toma de decisiones a nivel regional.

Palabras clave: interculturalidad; naciones multivariadas; comunicación intercultural; inclusión social; movilidad transfronteriza.

Introduction

Modern society, values and identity are facing an increasing number of internal and external challenges. The complexity and uncertainty of geopolitical relations, economic and social crises, difficult coexistence with

new cultures, the gradual erosion of traditional know-how and increased competition are the main risk factors (Gustafsson and Lazzaro, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has also forced the world community to revise sustainable concepts of intercultural communication.

Moreover, ethnic groups differ in terms of cultural norms or perceptions of what appropriate behaviour in a particular context is. This produces barriers that reduce cultural recognition, including stereotypes and prejudices, and unreasonable assumptions about similarities, differences, and culture shock (Trenholm, 2020). In aggregate, these factors hinder the citizens' ability to respond effectively to transformed legal relationships.

Countries are exerting efforts to establish the most consistent legal background and conditions for law enforcement for all population segments and cultural groups. A peculiar feature of the processes that are currently taking place in the European Union is slow evolution of migration concepts. The issues related to cultural identity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability status, religion, etc. are on the agenda in the European Union. Cultural diversity is considered as a value, and efforts are being exerted to make everyone interested in the life of the local community, identify with it and does not feel excluded (Ferran Vila *et al.*, 2021).

Besides, an assimilationist is being replaced by an intercultural approach, which provides for greater inclusiveness of cities and regions and their taking advantage of diversity. Accordingly, multiculturalism multiplies the value of diversity for society, as well as the importance of culture and identity in the course of integration, especially of minority groups. The updated approach is the basis for cultural practice and the encouragement of equality and non-discrimination (Tian-Fang Ye and Buchtel, 2021). The new term "interculturalism" is being widely introduced into the legal field. This concept is interpreted as a complex set of common values, regardless of whether they are jointly developed through the interaction of communities or rely on generally accepted universal values (Lähdesmäki *et al.*, 2020).

Theorists maintain that intercultural communication is a form of global communication (Jumaev, 2020). Researchers further argued that such communication refers to intercultural interactions between different cultures that emerge in a social group with different religious, ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds (Vejseli and Kamberi, 2021). Intercultural integration as a political approach contends against all forms of discrimination and intolerance in the EU. The leading vectors of the struggle are still raising awareness and education of the population and promoting the benefits of multiculturalism remain (Akaliyski *et al.*, 2021).

The cities are becoming increasingly important participants in migration and integration policy, both in terms of policy development and implementation, and due to the participation of cities in major

international networks (White, 2021). European cities are important centres of intercultural exchange, providing housing for people from different communities. They offer unique intercultural opportunities and can be an example of encouraging multiculturalism and better integration. At the same time, we can talk about the relationship between the effective development of local governance through the prism of the influence of intercultural social groups in the region.

Many countries are currently putting efforts to implement EU practice at the national level. Ukraine is trying to develop intercultural competence, which is the ability to recognize, respect and effectively use the differences in the perception, thinking and behaviour of their own and other people's culture in intercultural contacts (Rezunova, 2021). This is why local governments should take prudent action to prevent tensions between culturally diverse communities. At the same time, interaction of people and cultures in this state have already been extended as a result of the civilizational development, scientific achievements, innovative technologies, requirements of public life, the priority of foreign policy (Biletska *et al*., 2021).

Despite significant achievements on the research topic, Ukraine has a frozen archaic inherited doctrine, which is just beginning to transform towards European intercultural integration.

In view of the foregoing, the aim of the article was to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the relationship and interdependence of intercultural communication and innovative integration of local governance in the EU. This aim involved the following objectives:

1. establish the legal background for the development of intercultural communication and participation of social groups in local governance in the European Union;
2. reveal the current innovations of the European Union in the field of intercultural communication and community participation in local governance for further possible implementation of relevant achievements in the associated states.

1. Literature Review

The selected research topic correlates with modern vectors of scientific research of theorists in different countries. The work of White (2021) was the main tool and basis for the article. The author quite accurately revealed the network of inclusion based on cities in a multicultural world. The work of Malović and Vujica (2021) entitled Multicultural Society as a Challenge for Coexistence in Europe also had a decisive influence on the formation of the author's position on the research topic.

The achievements of scholars allowed outlining the vector of research on the transformation of EU strategies and policies in the field of intercultural communication and local governance. In turn, the author found about a multi-vector approach to interculturalism: from globalized politics to localized politics and practice through the article by Zapata-Barrero and Mansouri (2021).

The study took account of the achievements of Akaliyski *et al.* (2021) in the field of analysis of multicultural integration in the EU in the context of common values. The study by US Jumaev (2020), used in the article, emphasizes the importance of self-identification and national identity, national culture in the context of interaction with government institutions. This work helped to follow the way of the transformation of cooperation theories both between different social groups, and society with the state.

The findings of the team of authors — Afanasieva *et al.* (2020) — were also reflected in this article. Among other things, the author takes into account the viewpoints of researchers in the comparative analysis of multicultural EU cities in the context of the rule of a polyethnic community. The findings of Cappiali (2021) supplemented the abovementioned achievements by taking into account the transformations of regional urban management in the context of increasing migration flows.

The findings of a comparative legal study by Vejseli and Kamberi (2021) for Northern Macedonia and Kosovo were analysed when studying the results of intercultural communication and their impact on local governments. Scientific positions of Trenholm (2020) were taken into account in the analysis of intercultural communication issues.

The article also covers the results of intercultural dialogue in the EU member states from the perspective of the implementation of intercultural principles and creative initiatives. Those results were summarized in a collective article by Hlebova *et al.* (2021). The authors also focused on the changes in social groups and their interests entailed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The end of the last century was marked by active research on the intercultural communication issues. This is why modern theory and practice of jurisprudence repletes with fundamental works, research and publications on issues related to heterogeneity of society, as well as transformations of cultural rights and consciousness of the population. The current challenges of globalization have, however, had a qualitative impact and continue to have a corresponding reformational effect on legal relations between social groups and local governments, thus making it urgent to carry out a study with regard to new criteria of scientific research.

2. Methods

The research topic determined the choice of variable empirical material in order to form a comprehensive author's view of the subject of research. Figure 1 details the research procedure. A total of forty-five references were reviewed and analyzed in the article.

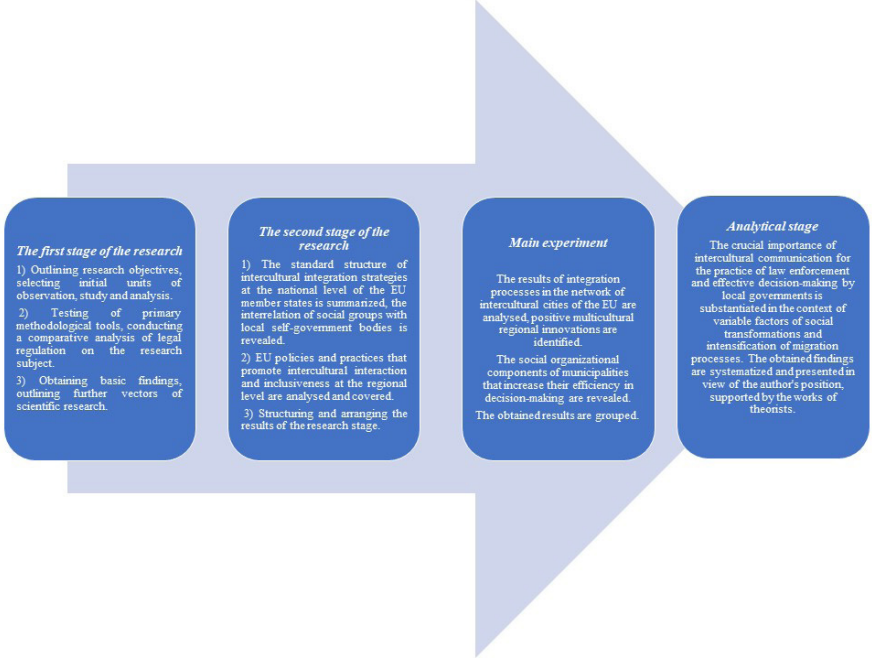

Figure 1. Stage research architecture.

The nature of the object of study, the specifics of the sample and the available resources determined a set of methods of scientific research. It is worth noting that the authors who partially addressed the subject of author's research, also used the methods of analysis and observation in their studies.

The method of analysis of the selected sample was used to select the article-specific methods for further research. In turn, socio-cultural analysis based on historical-analytical, sociological, socio-legal approaches, revealed the interdisciplinary aspect of complex processes of society life at the local level. This aspect was also detailed by using the results of the cities survey — Intercultural Cities Index 2021 (Council of Europe, n.d.). This methodology also identified the positive multicultural regional innovations in the area under research.

The author's position on the strategy of intercultural integration at the national level of EU member states was formed through the practical method of observation. This method was also used to consider the conditions that necessitated the creation of comprehensive maps of reforms in the field of intercultural communication of social groups and local governments of the EU. The observation method also helped to draw well-grounded conclusions on reforming the legal regulation of intercultural communication in a cross-border context.

The comparative analysis revealed the reasons that promote constant changes in legal relations between social groups and government institutions. This issue was also revealed from the standpoint of historicism. The process of building legal relations between the variable cultures of one region with local governments is described by systematization of disparate materials, generalization and analysis of data from different sources.

3. Results

Cultural integration policies must comply with the European human rights standards, including those relating to social cohesion, equality and non-discrimination. It covers a number of policy areas and levels of government. Besides, their development is a complex process that requires consistent consultation and coordination between all relevant stakeholders. The ability to achieve effective inclusion by promoting the accountability and active participation of government institutions, regional, local authorities and civil society determines the success of innovation.

At the international level, the requirements of international law determine effective testing of planned reforms. It is safe to say that the following documents are the key to effective intercultural discourse and reform of the legal relations: 1) the European Social Charter; 2) Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at the Local Level; 3) White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue; 4) Intercultural Integration Model; 5) Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; 6) European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and others. At the same time, modern realities transform the sustainable legal order and require a qualitative update of the doctrinal and legislative fundamental principles of the existence of a multicultural society.

In today's world, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic and political crises continue to spread around the world, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable population groups. In 2021, the number of displaced persons worldwide reached a record 82.4 million (Rescue Committee, 2021). The EU territory is no exception. In 2019, 2.7 million immigrants came to the EU from non-member countries. As of January 1,

2021, 23 million people (5.1%) out of 447.3 million permanently residing in the EU were not EU citizens.

In 2019, EU Member States granted citizenship to 706,400 people permanently residing in the EU, which is 5% more than in 2018 (Eurostat, 2021). These migrations of the population were the reason to revise both the general policy of the member states and the internal (regional) postulates of the organization of interaction of the population. The EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion (European Commission, 2020a) is currently a roadmap for enhancing the integration of asylum seekers, refugees and others with a migrant background in Europe over the next six years.

Much attention is paid to local governments in the EU, as well as public participation in decision-making. Local democracy in the EU countries develops in an ever-evolving environment. In general, European systems of local governance have the following attributes:

1. the status of local authorities is enshrined in national constitutions, which guarantee their powers;
2. a very wide range of functions of local government;
3. integration of local authorities into national government institutions, interdependence and mutual understanding between different levels of social governance;
4. the possibility of political influence of local authorities on government agencies through their associations and other integration institutions of local governance.

The European Charter of Local Self-Government indicates that local authorities acting under the law must be able to regulate and manage public affairs under their responsibility for the benefit of the local population. Recommendation 262 (2009) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on equality and diversity in local authority employment and service provision and Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on citizen participation in public life promoted equality and diversity in employment, including employment in the context of employment and the provision of services by local authorities. These documents help to effectively involve the public in plans for intercultural integration in the Member States.

The 11th Principle of the Strategy of Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level (Council of Europe, 2008) indicates to the respect, protection and realization of human rights in the field of local government, and combating discrimination on any grounds. A comparative analysis of the 12 principles of innovation and good democratic governance identified municipalities that are closest to all (or most) principles compared to the Council of Europe standard (Council of Europe, 2021), and therefore have the right to obtain ELoGE — European Label of Governance Excellence.

In June 2021, the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) adopted Intercultural Integration Strategies at the National Level (Council of Europe, 2021b). This document is developed through multilevel dialogue as a basis for national strategies for intercultural integration that are integrated, based on human rights standards, supported by a realistic understanding of cross-border mobility and its impact, the one that takes into account human, social and economic costs of non-integration.

It also relies on the positive results of local authorities and Member States, which have applied an intercultural integration approach as a tool to achieve real integration at the local level. The principles of the Strategy include ensuring equality, valuing diversity, promoting meaningful interaction and active citizenship. In turn, the structure of the intercultural integration strategy contains 10 main points (Council of Europe, 2021b).

Practical measures are being taken to implement the declared strategies. The Council of Europe takes a number of steps to protect minorities, including Europe's largest minority — the Roma. According to the estimates, 10-12 million Roma living in Europe, approximately 6 million are EU citizens or residents (European Commission, 2020). Many EU Roma are still victims of prejudice and social exclusion, despite the prohibition of discrimination in EU member states.

The EU Roma Strategic Framework (European Commission, 2020) sets out a comprehensive three-component approach. This approach complements the socio-economic integration of marginalized Roma by promoting equality and encouraging participation in political, social, economic and cultural life. On March 12, 2021, the Council of the European Union adopted the Recommendation on Roma equality, integration and participation in all Member States.

The EU Roma Strategic Framework focuses more on Roma diversity to ensure that national strategies meet the specific needs of different groups, such as women, youth, children, mobile EU citizens, stateless persons, LGBTI and elderly Roma, as well as people with disabilities. Starting in 2023, Member States will report every two years on the implementation of the national Roma Strategic Frameworks, including measures to promote equality, inclusiveness and participation, as well as the full use of the indicator portfolio.

Figure 2. Summarized standard structure of the intercultural integration strategy at the national level of EU member states.

Policies and practices that promote intercultural interaction and inclusiveness play an important role in enabling cities and regions to positively manage diversity. Various tools and methodologies, as well as a mutual learning environment for cities have been developed within the framework of the Intercultural Cities Network (ICC), bringing together more than 150 cities in Europe and beyond. Since 2015, it has become a pan-European standard, which is being adapted to national and multilevel governments.

The EU countries currently consider the Intercultural City (ICC) as a place where they are actively trying to achieve real equality, preventing discrimination and adapting urban governance, institutions and services to the needs of diverse populations. Equality, diversity and interaction are three interrelated values that are essential for the development and maintenance of an intercultural city.

Data are collected through a questionnaire consisting of 90 questions on the following items (ICC-Index 2019, Council of Europe Program 2019): local conditions and demographic context (1-2); intercultural policy, structures and actions (3-12); areas of governance/policies that promote intercultural integration (13-86); additional information that may

be provided by the respondent city (87-90). Each policy vector is briefly explained from an intercultural perspective. According to the general information provided about cities within the framework of the Intercultural Cities Index (Council of Europe, 2020a), the population of ICC cities was as follows: <500 thousand — 24%, 200–500 thousand — 23%, <100 thousand — 23%, 100–200 thousand — 30%.

The ICC Index is analyzed on the basis of answers to 83 questions (questions 3–86), grouped into 12 indices. These are commitment, intercultural prism, education, good-unneighborly relations, civil service, business and work, cultural life, public place, mediation and conflict resolution, language, media and communication, international cooperation, intelligence/competence, newcomer welcome policy, governance.

The completion of the questionnaire is followed by data verification and processing by BAK Economics, a Swiss research institute specializing in measuring the effectiveness of regional and local policies. The respondent cities can score a maximum of 100 points for each index. The data are also analysed from a political perspective and summarized in a report by Council of Europe experts.

Their report includes: the city's performance in various areas of governance/policy; charts that clearly illustrate the scores that the city obtained for each indicator, and their comparison with the average for a city or group of cities with similar characteristics; information on the city's best practices that can inspire other cities; recommendations based on examples of best practices provided by other cities that the respondent city may consider in order to improve its score in one or more areas of governance/policy.

Most responses should be fact-based and can be confirmed by real examples, details, explanations, relevant documents or references. It is recommended for the cities to evaluate the Index every 3-4 years in order to track their progress. A working group chaired by the mayor or another official from high-ranking officials of various municipal administrations is established to monitor the data collection for completing the questionnaire.

According to the Intercultural Cities (ICC) Annual Report (Council of Europe, 2021a), in 2021 only, 11 new members joined the initiative; a new regional network was established in Quebec; 9 evaluation reports were prepared on the basis of the ICC Index; 14 subject webinars or knowledge sharing webinars were held; 108 news, 5 issues of the bulletin was published; 86 best practices were collected and disseminated; 5 intercity projects were implemented; 4 new online courses were created; 3 joint actions dedicated to the Programme-related international days were organized. The results of the latest survey of respondent cities are presented in Figure 3.

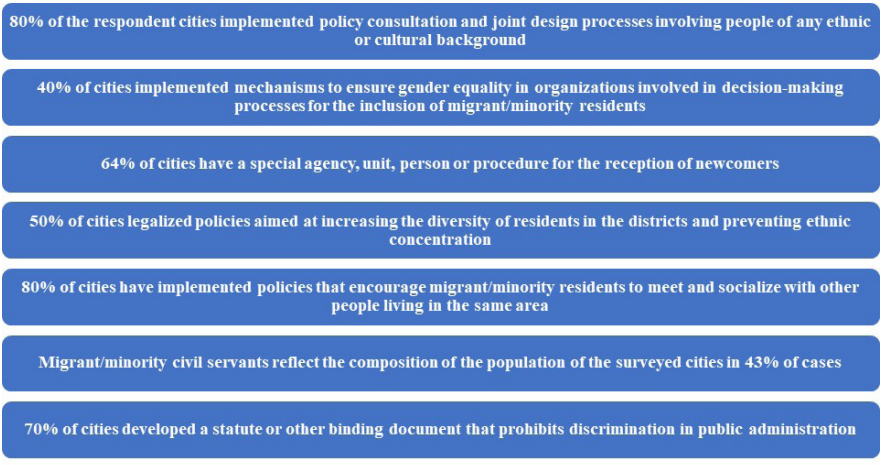

Figure 3. Positive multicultural regional innovations identified through the Intercultural Cities Index in 2021 (grouped by the author).

The study of implementing strategies and concepts of multiculturalism on the basis of the ICC Index allowed identifying positive features of this tool (Table 1).

Table 1. Positive features of testing the results of Intercultural Cities Index (based on the results of the author's own observation).

Intercultural Cities Index allows the cities to:
➢ initiate a discussion with local authorities on what intercultural integration means in practice;
➢ raise awareness of the need for horizontal work between different departments and services that promote intercultural issues;
➢ conduct a thorough review of different areas of governance/policy that promote intercultural integration;
➢ assess the city's status in various areas of governance/policy that promote intercultural integration;
➢ identify strengths and weaknesses and identify areas of governance/policy to focus future efforts at;
➢ compare the achievements of the city with the achievements of other cities; identify and study the best practices of intercultural integration in other cities;
➢ cooperate in national intercultural city networks or in international city educational clusters;

➢ assess progress over time and report on achievements and difficulties encountered;
➢ verify different hypotheses about the relationship between intercultural policy and particular policy outcomes, such as economic performance, trust in public institutions, quality of life and a sense of security

We can state that the EU countries are doing everything possible to fulfil the aforesaid objectives. For example, about a million Roma live in Spain today (Madrid no frills, 2021). Seventy percent of Roma over the age of 16 cannot read, and high elimination rates at various levels of education is still a serious problem to be addressed. The percentage of Roma children quitting school is 65%. Only 5% graduate from secondary school. The average age at which Roma children quit studies is about 12 years.

The percentage of unsuccessful students among Roma children is five times higher than among children from other families. Almost 70% of adult Spanish Roma are illiterate. The life expectancy of Roma is 10 years lower than in the majority of the population, and infant mortality is three times higher (Madrid no frills, 2021). In this regard, an example of best practice of the cities is the School Promotion Programmed with the Roma community in Barcelona.

The Programmed intends to encourage the full schooling of Roma students through prevention, diagnosis and early intervention into the cases of quitting studies, as well as to promote achieving academic success. It also aims at promoting the socio-economic integration of Roma students and promoting the values of Roma culture in the school curriculum. The main figure of this project is the "school promoter" — a professional who belongs to the Roma community and who coordinates his actions with schools, families and students to implement the program. This arrangement was organized by the private foundation Pere Closa in collaboration with the City Council of Barcelona.

The Social Organization of the Municipality of Patras (KODIP) established special units to provide support services to all vulnerable groups in Patras, being funded by the Western Greece Operational Programmed through the European Social Fund (ESF) (Council of Europe, 2021). KODIP has opened the Essentials Department, as well as Shelter, Open Day and Community Centre with the aim of respecting fundamental human rights. The main beneficiaries are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, both Roma and the local population. A Roma Branch has recently been established as part of the Community Centre, which will focus on the provision of field services in camps in the surrounding areas of the city of Patras through a mobile unit.

The ICC network has inspired the creation of the Intercultural Regions Network chaired by the Council of Europe and the Assembly of European Regions. This Network is established to provide knowledge, resource and experience sharing platform in the regions to promote intercultural integration at the regional level on the basis of equal opportunities, recognition of diversity and positive interaction between people of different backgrounds. The Intercultural Dialogue Index (ICDI), which measures the level of intercultural dialogue at the national level, is currently being developed to determine the impact that social and structural conditions may have on the diversity management and intercultural relations.

The proposed ICDI is designed as a tool for understanding how different countries monitor diversity management and intercultural harmony, as well as the interaction of social groups with local governments. This country-level analysis can also prognostically identify possible intercultural conflicts and tensions through empirical analysis of combined data in key sectors of society development.

Speaking about Ukraine, the representatives of more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups lived in the country according to the All-Ukrainian Population Census (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2001). In addition to Ukrainians, who make up 77.8%, the country is home to Russians, Belarusians, Moldovans, Crimean Tatars and Karaites, Bulgarians, Romanians, Hungarians, Poles, Jews, Greeks and others (Population and composition of Ukraine (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2001). But the situation has changed dramatically. The census has not been updated because of the escalation of the military conflict in eastern Ukraine, so this is a significant gap in showing real statistics in the country.

The adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On National Minorities" has given new impetus to the legislative framework of Ukraine on interethnic relations in connection with the integration of the state into European and Euro-Atlantic entities. Ukraine's accession to the Council of Europe in 1995 became especially important. Among other instruments in this field, Ukraine has ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The rules and standards for the protection of the rights of national minorities, enshrined in the CSCE Final Act, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and other international instruments were also applied in Ukrainian law.

At the same time, the state has shown a certain self-exclusion from the settlement of ethno-national processes in Ukraine at the state level for decades. This resulted in Ukraine's failure to adopt a concept or strategy of state ethno-national policy. This entailed the lag of political and legal enshrinement of state ethnopolitics from existing ethnopolitical processes.

In 2021, the Verkhovna Rada passed the Law "On the Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine" (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2021). The concept of "indigenous peoples of Ukraine" is defined as an autochthonous ethnic community that has formed on the territory of Ukraine. They are carriers of original language and culture, have traditional, social, cultural or representative bodies, identify themselves itself as the indigenous people of Ukraine, are an ethnic minority in its population, and have no state establishments outside Ukraine.

According to this definition, the Crimean Tatars, Karaites, Crimean Tatars are enshrined in the Law as the indigenous peoples of Ukraine. On March 24, 2021, the Decree of the President of Ukraine approved the updated National Human Rights Strategy (Office of The President of Ukraine, 2021). The Strategy is being implemented in strategic areas, including the prevention of and combating discrimination.

Between 200,000 and 400,000 Roma currently live in Ukraine. According to Council of Europe experts, 60 percent of Roma do not have a job, 40 percent have no documents, and only 1 percent have a university degree (US Department of State, 2021). About 90% of them inform against being persecuted on the grounds of their nationality (Ukrinform, 2021). The imposition of anti-pandemic measures has increased discrimination against Roma. On May 22, 2020, Mayor of Ivano-Frankivsk called at a weekly meeting of the City Council for the eviction of all Roma from the city, stating that the Roma violate COVID-19 quarantine restrictions. Later, police forcibly relocated 10 Roma from the city.

The Minister of Internal Affairs instructed that the police initiated a criminal case against Mayor on charges of discrimination (US State Department, 2021). In 2021, the 2030 Strategy for Promoting the Realization of the Rights and Opportunities of Persons belonging to the Roma National Minority was adopted. The implementation of this Strategy will provide documents, legal protection, education, health services, employment to Roma and will improve their social protection.

The fact that that on June 15, 2021 O. Bohdan — Chairman of the State Service of Ukraine for Ethno-Politics and Freedom of Conscience was elected Vice-Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Council of Europe on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) is worth noting (State Service of Ukraine for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience, 2021). The areas of work of the Steering Committee included: development of a new comprehensive legal instrument to combat animosity on language grounds; research on the political participation of youth that belongs to national minorities; promoting the implementation of the strategic policy of the Council of Europe on inclusion of Roma and nomads.

Ukraine has also joined the Intercultural Cities Programme. The national ICC-UA network was established in 2015 at the All-Ukrainian Forum held in Melitopol, and includes Melitopol, Lutsk, Odesa, Pavlohrad, Sumy, Vinnytsia. Among all Ukrainian cities, only Melitopol is a full member of the international ICC network with privileged access to all international events and special expert support. Melitopol led the ranking of the Intercultural Cities Index in 2020 among the ICC member states. In 2020, the overall score was 88 points (Intercultural Cities Index Charts).

This assessment consisted of the following scores: Commitment 95, Intercultural Prism 95, Education 95, Good-Neighbourly Relations 100, Civil Service 88, Business and Labour 100, Cultural Life 100, Public Place 87, Mediation and Conflict Resolution 93, Language 49, Media and Communications 100, International Cooperation 100, Intelligence/ Competence 100, Newcomers Welcome Policy 100, Governance 33.

The city is currently working on the implementation of the Comprehensive Intercultural Cooperation Programme of the City of Melitopol for 2021-2023 (Municipal Site of Melitopol City, 2021). The city administrations of the ICC-UA member cities have been working to identify the problems caused by the COVID-19 crisis. One of the examples is the two-week meeting held by the Civic Engagement Club, a local NGO in Sumy, with migrant communities on the availability and reliability of information (Council of Europe, 2020).

4. Discussion

The research found the versatile approaches of the states to testing the declared postulates of ensuring the opportunities of multicultural social groups and their participation in state-building processes. It was established that special attention is currently paid to ensuring the balance of rights and interests of citizens of EU member states and migrants. Researchers also support the author's view that in the current context ethnic groups in the EU with different cultural beliefs and value systems require equal opportunities to exercise their rights as permanent members of society (Cappiali, 2021).

The author's substantiation for the intensification of the development of the multiculturalism concepts has found support in the scientific community. Bunce (2021) observed that cultural diversity is a defining feature of humanity and a framework for the development of the external designation of group identity for reducing the likelihood of miscoordination.

Interculturalism is increasingly being used as a probable background for policy strategies designed to manage migratory diversity in ethno-cultural-pluralistic societies, especially at the local level (Zapata-Barrero and Mansouri, 2021). But interculturalism still needs to clearly formulate

its position in the context of a sustained multicultural narrative that has dominated different variations of public administration (Mansouri and Modood, 2021). The foregoing seems well-grounded even though multiculturalism has recently lost some of its benefits as a key paradigm of diversity policy (Zapata-Barrero, 2019).

The strategies and concepts the author analyzed have been tested at the level of local governance and showed a high level of involvement of different population groups in decision-making by the government agencies. In this context, the objective of policy is to create basic values that are acceptable to all parties, but they must have sufficient potential for quality coexistence (Malović and Vujica, 2021). The low participation of local communities in public policy is a poor reflection of general democracy and a signal that local authorities need to pay more attention to local communities so that they can restore trust in them, and develop an active citizen with democratic values (Vejseli and Kamberi, 2021).

The urged intercultural interaction has qualitatively increased the significance of intercultural communication. It is currently a key factor in the development and liberation of local communities, and policy is another vector of cooperation between local authorities and local communities. Cultural literacy also remains a leading competence in the balance between cultural global characteristics and the development of one's own identity (Maine *et al*., 2019).

The growing diversity of European societies normalizes intercultural dialogue as a practice, but also creates problems for political discourse. Politicians need to be more careful about the difficulties and variability of the current diversity. The conceptual language used in their policy documentation should reflect this position (Lähdesmäki *et al*., 2020). Therefore, we can argue that it is necessary to approach both individual and collective identity as multiple, multi-layered, procedural and transformed.

It can also be stated that the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) has evolved over its long history not only in terms of membership and geographical coverage, but also in terms of its attempts to respond to changes in global political consciousness (White, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the communities of ICC intercultural cities obtained valuable experience in implementing intercultural principles and creative initiatives required for establishing effective intercultural dialogue and consolidating society (Hlebova *et al*., 2021).

So, Melitopol can offer the world unique methods of developing a new type of community (Afanasieva *et al*., 2020). Researchers indicate the need to expand the range of sociological research on the phenomenon of the modern city, because its existence creates the conditions being formed under the influence of urban environment, while affecting the citizens themselves.

Conclusion

Globalization challenges and continuous migration require qualitatively new management decisions. The EU countries, like other countries, has faced serious challenges in intensifying the individualization of public interaction, which have been also produced by the latest scenarios of the COVID-19 pandemic. Modern intercultural integration is a policy approach that encourages citizens to consider their diversity as a resource for quality cooperation with local governments, rather than as a problem.

Intercultural dialogue is one of the main conceptual innovations closely related to interculturalism. It is considered as a political strategy or tool to promote cultural diversity in order to strengthen social cohesion at the local level. The dialogue requires certain social actions and conditions to transform ideas and problems in the field of local self-government into innovative processes and new forms of managerial response.

The EU strategies Union provide the ground for the interconnection and effective interaction of different social groups and public authorities in order to ensure a multilateral balance of interests. Intercultural cities, where local governments publicly advocate for respect for diversity and a pluralistic urban identity, are the main sources of good practice in intercultural integration in the European Union.

Cities are actively coping with deep-rooted discrimination in order to provide equal opportunities for all by adapting their government agencies, institutions and services to the needs of the population without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. A high level of trust and social cohesion is conductive to the prevention of conflict and violence, making policy more effective, and makes the city attractive to both people and investors.

According to the research results, the success of local multicultural policy is also determined by the balance of national concepts, funding of mechanisms that ensure equal opportunities, and ensuring the implementation of regional solutions. All these elements make up the intercultural integration model promoted by the Council of Europe. This model was successfully tested in regions and cities across Europe and beyond, and proved to have a direct impact on public policy.

The analysis of the implementation of strategies declared by the leading EU cities, as well as the survey of the population on the results of the transformations will be the areas of further research. This vector of analysis will enable reflecting the real state of the involvement of a multicultural society in the regional development of cities.

Bibliographic References

AFANASIEVA, Lyudmila; BUKRIEIEVA, Iryna; GLYNS'KA, Lyudmila; ORLOV, Andrii; HLEBOVA, Natalia. 2020. "Intercultural City in the Context of a Polyethnic Community Governing" In: Journal of History Culture and Art Research. Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 195-206.

AKALIYSKI, Plamen; WELZEL, Christian; HIEN, Josef. 2021. "A community of shared values? Dimensions and dynamics of cultural integration in the European Union" In: Journal of European Integration. Available online. In: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07036337.2021.1956915. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

BILETSKA, Oksana; LASTOVSKYI, Valerii; SEMCHYNSKYY, Kostyantyn. 2021. "Intercultural communication competence: International relations and diplomacy area" In: Linguistics and Culture Review. Vol. 5, No. S4, pp. 1664-1675.

BUNCE, John. 2021. "Cultural diversity in unequal societies sustained through cross-cultural competence and identity valuation" In: Humanities and Social Sciences Communications. Vol. 8, Art no. 238.

CAPPIALI, Teresa. 2021. Reframing Immigrant Resistance: Alliances, Conflicts, and Racialization in Italy. Routledge. London, UK.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2008. 12 Principles of Good Governance. Available online. In: https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/12-principles#{%2225565951%22:[10]}. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2020. COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities for Intercultural Local Authorities. Available online. In: https://rm.coe.int/covid-19-challenges-and-opportunities-for-intercultural-local-authorit/16809e4d4d. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2020a. Facts and figures – The intercultural cities at a glance. Available online. In: https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/facts-and-figures. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2021. European Label of Governance Excellence Benchmarking. Available online. In: https://rm.coe.int/eloge-benchmark-en-17-09/16808d71d4. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2021a. Intercultural Cities: building bridges, breaking walls. Annual report. Available online. In: https://rm.coe.int/icc-annual-report-2021/1680a55b42. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2021b. Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI). Available online. In: https://rm.coe.int/model-framework-for-an-intercultural-integration-strategy-at-the-natio/1680a2ecf9. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. n.d. Intercultural Cities Index Charts. Available online. In: https://icc.bak-economics.com/. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION. 2020. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Union of Equality: EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation. Available online. In: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0620&qid=1615293880380. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION. 2020a. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions. Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027. Available online. In: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files_en?file=2020-11/action_plan_on_integration_and_inclusion_2021-2027.pdf. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

EUROSTAT. 2021. Migration and migrant population statistics. Available online. In: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Main_Page. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

FERRAN VILA, Susanna; MIOTTO, Giorgia; RODRÍGUEZ, Josep Rom. 2021. "Cultural Sustainability and the SDGs: Strategies and Priorities in the European Union Countries" In: European Journal of Sustainable Development. Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 73-85.

GUSTAFSSON, Christer; LAZZARO, Elisabetta. 2021. "The Innovative Response of Cultural and Creative Industries to Major European Societal Challenges: Toward a Knowledge and Competence Base" In: Sustainability. Vol. 13, No. 23, 13267.

HLEBOVA, Natalia; AFANASIEVA, Lyudmila; BUKRIEIEVA, Iryna; SEMIKIN, Mykhailo; ORLOV, Andrii. 2021. "Social solidarity and cohesion in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in intercultural cities" In: Amazonia Investiga. Vol. 10, No. 45, pp. 272-280.

JUMAEV, Ulugbek. 2020. "Intercultural communication: concept, essence and theories of intercultural communication" In: International Journal on Integrated Education. Vol. 3, No. 11, pp. 1-4.

LÄHDESMÄKI, Tuuli; KOISTINEN, Aino-Kaisa; YLÖNEN, Susanne. 2020. Intercultural Dialogue in the European Education Policies. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Available online. In: https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-41517-4. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

MADRID NO FRILLS. 2021. Spain's Gitano Genocide. Available online. In: https://madridnofrills.com/spains-gitano-genocide/. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

MAINE, Fiona; COOK, Victoria; LÄHDESMÄKI, Tuuli. 2019. "Reconceptualizing Cultural Literacy as a Dialogic Practice" In: London Review of Education. Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 382-391.

MALOVIĆ, Nenad; VUJICA, Kristina. 2021. "Multicultural Society as a Challenge for Coexistence in Europe" In: Religions. Vol. 12, No. 8, pp. 615.

MANSOURI, Fethi; MODOOD, Tariq. 2021. "The complementarity of multiculturalism and interculturalism: Theory backed by Australian evidence" In: Ethnic and Racial Studies. Vol. 44, No. 16.

MUNICIPAL SITE OF MELITOPOL CITY. 2021. Comprehensive program of intercultural cooperation of the city of Melitopol for 2021-2023. Available online. In: https://www.mlt.gov.ua/?r=posts.client.view&id=1216. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE. 2021. Decree of the President of Ukraine №119: On the National Strategy for Human Rights. Available online. In: https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/1192021-37537. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

REZUNOVA, Olena. 2021. "Intercultural competence as a necessary component of professional competence of a modern specialist" In: Scientific review. Vol. 1, No. 73. Available online. In: https://naukajournal.org/index.php/naukajournal/article/view/2218/2224. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

STATE SERVICE OF UKRAINE FOR ETHNOPOLITICS AND FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE. 2021. DESS Chairwoman Olena Bohdan Elected Vice-Chair of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion. Available online. In: https://dess.gov.ua/olena-bogdan-elected-vice-chair-of-the-steering-committee-on-anti-discrimination-diversity-and-inclusion-cdadi/. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

STATE STATISTICS COMMITTEE OF UKRAINE. 2001. The number and composition of the population of Ukraine according to the results of the All-Ukrainian population census of 2001. Available online.

In: http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/rus/results/general/nationality/. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

TIAN-FANG YE, Frank; BUCHTEL, Emma. 2021. "Multiculturalism, Culture Mixing, and Prejudice: Effects of Priming Chinese Diversity Models Among Hong Kong University Students" In: Frontiers in Psychology. Available online. In: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.691858/full. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

TRENHOLM,Sarah.2020."InterculturalCommunication"In:ThinkingThrough Communication. New York: Routledge. Available online. In: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9781003016366-15/intercultural-communication-sarah-trenholm. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

UKRINFORM. 2021. The Cabinet of Ministers approved a strategy for the rights and opportunities of the Roma community. Available online. In: https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3288494-kabmin-shvaliv-strategiu-prav-ta-mozlivostej-romskoi-gromadi.html. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

VEJSELI, Mirlinda; KAMBERI, Ferdi. 2021. "The Intercultural Communication and Community Participation in Local Governance: The Case of North Macedonia and Kosovo" In: Journal of Liberty and International affairs. Vol. 7, No. 3.

VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE. 2021. On the indigenous peoples of Ukraine. Available online. In: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1616-20#Text. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

WHITE, Bob. 2021. "City-based inclusion networks in a post-multicultural world: The Intercultural Cities programme of the council of Europe" In: Local Government Studies. Available online. In: https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2021.2005030. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

ZAPATA-BARRERO, Ricard. 2019. Intercultural citizenship in the post-multicultural era. SAGE Publications Ltd. Available online. In: https://sk.sagepub.com/books/intercultural-citizenship-in-the-post-multicultural-era. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

ZAPATA-BARRERO, Ricard; MANSOURI, Fethi. 2021. "A Multi-scale Approach to Interculturalism: From Globalised Politics to Localised Policy and Practice" Journal of International Migration and Integration. Available online. In: http://www.unesco-cdsj.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/A-multi-scale-approach-to-interculturalism-Journal-of-International-Migration-and-Integration-10.07.21.pdf. Consultation date: 10/03/2022.

UNIVERSIDAD DEL ZULIA

CUESTIONES POLÍTICAS

Vol.40 Nº 74

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital y publicada en octubre de 2022, por el ***Fondo Editorial Serbiluz, Universidad del Zulia. Maracaibo-Venezuela***

www.luz.edu.ve
www.serbi.luz.edu.ve
www.produccioncientificaluz.org