



ECAR – European cities against racism

Responsibilities of cities in counteracting racism sustainably

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

ANALYSIS OF THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM AND XENOFOBIA IN THE CITY OF MADRID

SEPTEMBER 2011

1. INTRODUCTION INTO THE LOCAL SITUATION

1.1. POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

Firstly, it must be stated that the Spanish municipalities don't have legislative power. As a result, fields that are important for the fight against racism such as housing, education or employment are regulated by the regional administration. This prevents the city council from applying its own integrated policies and its function is often limited to implementing state or regional regulations or to develop complementary action programs. In the city of Madrid, competences in immigration and in the fight against racism are assigned to the Municipal Areas of Family and Social Services and in specific by the General Directorate for Equal Opportunities.

On the other hand, there is a significant absence of reliable data and sources on racist actions. The Ministry for internal affairs (National Administration) is the authority responsible for statistics related to hatred crimes. So far, these statistics are not specific enough, so it is not possible to determine with certainty which offences have been committed under racist or xenophobic motives.

1.2 COMPOSITION OF THE LOCAL POPULATION

In Spain, the information concerning the composition and characteristics of the Spanish population is reflected in the Municipal Register. Each person who resides in Spain, regardless the administrative situation has to register him- or herself which gives automatically the right to access to public health care and to education.

The Municipal Register is the only source of statistical data but it is very limited like it registers only nationality and place of birth because of the Spanish Organic Law of Personal Data Protection. This law establishes that no one can be forced to declare his ideology, religion or beliefs.

Madrid as the capital of Spain is the largest and most populous city of Spain. On the 1st of January 2011, 3.269.861 persons were registered. During the 20th century, Madrid experienced a big expansion of his population due to the internal immigration. It's starting from the late nineties that Madrid receives an important amount of citizens who have been born outside of Spain. At this moment 557.117 foreigners live in Madrid. It is 16,92% of the population. During the last 5 years, a lot of citizens born outside Spain, started a naturalization process which increases the total percentage of citizens born outside Spain but living in Madrid to 22,18%.

In Madrid, people of more than 180 different nationalities live together. The ten nationalities with most important presence in the city are: Ecuador (77,853 inhabitants), Romania (65 585), Peru (37 037), Bolivia



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(35,583), Colombia (33,707), China (29,695), and Morocco (26 036), Dominican Republic (24 317), Paraguay (22 603) and Italy (18 898).

1.3. ATTITUDES TOWARDS ETHNICS MINORITIES

In 2009, the General Directorate of Immigration and Cooperation carried out for the second time a survey aimed to analyze the coexistence in the city of Madrid. The survey examined the attitudes of the host population of Madrid towards immigrants, the degree of sympathy towards certain national groups and the feelings of discrimination and integration in the city. In general the results are quite positive.

Regarding the feelings of discrimination, neighbours of African origin are those who most often express that they suffer discrimination (35, 8 %) followed by the Latin-Americans (32, 3 %). Discrimination is mainly caused by xenophobic actions (80%) mostly produced in working environments.

2. SITUATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES AND PEOPLE WITH MIGRATION BACKGROUND IN THE FOLLOWING FIELDS:

2.1-POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Right to vote

Immigrants can vote in Spanish's municipal elections if they have legal residence in Spain and if they are citizens of the European Union or of a country with which Spain has a reciprocity agreement (Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Chile, Ecuador, Cape Verde, Paraguay, Iceland, New Zealand, Bolivia and Uruguay). Only people with Spanish nationality have the right to vote in general and regional elections.

Social participation

Madrid Municipality established local advisory boards in order to enable citizens to participate in the development of local policies and related matters. On municipal level, exists the Foro Madrid de Diálogo y Convivencia (Madrid Forum for Dialogue and Coexistence). Its functions are both consultative as propositional. The Madrid Forum was founded as a result of two Social Forums celebrated in 2003 and 2004, promoted and organized by the Municipality which congregated associations of immigrants and social organizations working on immigration. During its four years of existence, the Forum worked in commissions about the following topics; intercultural dialogue, gender, associativism, fight against racism, xenophobia and intolerance.

2.2-HOUSING

In general, immigrants housing conditions are precarious. There exists the problem of social housing shortage, increasing of prices, less offer in renting houses but also that landlords are reluctant in renting housing at immigrants because of ignorance and fear of no receiving the rent, overcrowding or sub renting the flats etcetera. Another problem to mention is the fact that people with precarious working conditions, and that's the case of a lot of immigrants, cope with a lot of problems to justify regular incomes what is required to obtain a mortgage for buying a house. Even for renting rooms or houses, the landlords demands deposits and proves of regular incomes.

Although, competences in housing matters are assigned to the Regional Administration, Madrid City Council, through the *Empresa Municipal de la vivienda*, has launched housing services and measures addressed to the most vulnerable people (Immigrants with legal residence included).



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2.3-EDUCATION

In Spain, education is compulsory for children from 6 to 16 years old. Every child has the right to education, regardless their administrative situation and so has to be registered in a school.

You can see integration difficulties of immigrant children in schools because of the language or cultural keys. Educational institutions should respond to the educational needs of these students. It is important to highlight that there are specific learning programs in the schools aimed to facilitate their integration.

Competences in educational matters are assigned to the Regional Administration. Madrid City Council carries out complementary educational programs and activities.

2.4-PUBLIC SPACES

Due to the climatologically circumstances of the city, the characteristics of the housing where families live in little spaces and the cultural keys of the importance to meet each other and to relate converts the public spaces of the city of Madrid in crucial places where the citizens of different origin meet and have to live together with each other. Starting from the moment that people from other countries came to live in Madrid, the use of these public places changed and generated sometimes conflicts because of inappropriate behaviour or because of the feeling of the neighbours that “their places” were invaded. Especially in moments of socioeconomic recess, you can hear each time more racist reactions and moments of tension for which these public spaces turn into perfect places to work the living together between the neighbours. For this reason, the city of Madrid started with the Public Outreach Service in order to implement projects, programs and activities with the objective to foment the intercultural coexistence and the social intercultural relations, involving the neighbours, sensibilising about the appropriate use of the public spaces and to generate respect towards the diversity in the society, all this with the aim to prevent intercultural conflicts in these places.

2.5-LABOUR MARKET

In Madrid, foreign workers are particularly concentrated in specific unqualified occupations characterized by deficient working conditions, low remuneration level and temporarily. They work mainly in the service sector, construction and domestic service.

They have difficulties to get a job in other sectors because on the one hand their work permits are limited to specific activities and on the other hand they have difficulties to obtain the equivalence of their academic credentials.

The Commission against Racism and Intolerance states that immigrant workers are discriminated because of the colour of their skin, religion, national origin, or a combination of the following reasons: Illegal employment conditions, lower wages, lack of training and employment promotion, more temporary work, threats and injuries at the work place

2.6-LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Madrid city council has developed a specific model of coexistence aimed to promote the equality and coexistence between immigrants and host population. This model is based on the following principles: universal assistance, active integration and intercultural coexistence.

2.7-POLICE AND JUSTICE

In Madrid, there are two police forces: the National and Local Police. During the last years, a lot of social organizations expressed their big preoccupation about the identity checks carried out by the national police



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forces based in race and fenotypical characteristics that they are immigrants. Stating that's a worrying situation like police forces are responsible to ensure the compliance of the laws, the security and the coexistence in the city.

2.8-PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

According with the Spanish legislation, all citizens, regardless of their administrative situation, have right to access to the public health services if they are registered in the Municipal Register. All citizens have right to access to emergency health services even if they are not registered.

3- LOCAL PROGRAMS, ACTION PLANS AND MEASURES TO PREVENT AND FIGHT AGAINST RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

3.1-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

On the different levels of the administration, exists specific plans to foment the living together issues and to prevent racism and xenophobia

-**General Administración**-Plan Estratégico de Ciudadanía e Integración 2007-2010

-**Regional Administración**-Plan de Integración de la Comunidad de Madrid 2009-2012

-**Local Administración**-II Plan Madrid de Dialogo y Convivencia Social e Intercultural 2009-2012. The Plan contains the following specific actions against racism and xenophobia: Prevention and raise awareness activities, legal services and participation activities.

3.2-ONGS-COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS-SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS

Social organizations (secular as well as religious organisations and trade unions) develop important actions and programs aimed to fight against racism and xenophobia and therefore are a crucial partner. Their programs are focussed on the following actions:

-Report and register racist and xenophobic actions

-Prevention and raise awareness activities

-Training activities

-Information and research

3.4-PRIVATE SECTOR

In the private sector, we want to refer at the Spanish savings banks that have the obligation to invest part of their profits in social projects. Some of them have launched projects aimed to promote multiculturalism and fight against racism and xenophobia such as La Caixa (Proyecto de intervention Comunitaria intercultural).

3.8-OTHERS

SPORTS

New sports such as ecuavoley and softball appeared as a consequence of the arrival of immigrants, especially from the Latin American countries. The inexistence of places fitted to practise this kind of sports



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and the inappropriate use of the places, generated intercultural conflicts and racist or xenophobic reactions.

As they are informal groups, the outreach service in public spaces has carried out actions aimed to promote the creation of associations in order to improve their communication with the public administration to obtain facilities to practice their sports and to foment the coexistence with the host populationⁱ

ⁱ This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein