Policy Brief

Overview

This policy brief considers how businesses and governments in global cities contribute to the integration of migrant and refugee populations, either through outreach, specialized programmes, the provision of services, or targeted funding of non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and to what extent these contributions can be deepened or expanded. The research involved the study of eight cities around the world representing a diversity of immigration experiences: Auckland (New Zealand), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Chicago (USA), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Lisbon (Portugal), Nairobi (Kenya), Rotterdam (The Netherlands), and São Paulo (Brazil).

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Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The Role of Cities and Businesses

Migration is a local reality. According to Singer (2012) "while we often think of immigrants as moving from one country to another, really they arrive from a particular place and settle in a particular community, usually a metropolitan area", forming multi-ethnic communities (p9). It is primarily in cities that migrants and non-migrants interact, be it through working, studying, living, playing or raising their families.

This brief provides a synopsis of a research project designed as result of a partnership between The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration (THP) and UNU-MERIT and its School of Governance. The main aim of the project was to ascertain how businesses and governments in global cities are contributing to the integration of migrant and refugee populations, either through outreach, specialized programmes, the provision of services, or targeted funding of non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and to what extent these contributions can be deepened or expanded.

The research involved the study of eight cities worldwide representing a diversity of immigration experiences: Auckland (New Zealand), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Chicago (USA), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Lisbon (Portugal), Nairobi (Kenya), Rotterdam (The Netherlands), and São Paulo (Brazil). A total of 56 interviews with a broad range of stakeholders were conducted.

By looking at integration from the perspective of public-private partnerships between city level governments and businesses, this research blazes a trail and presents a number of important findings that can be of value to the policy community.

The Hague Process
on Refugees and Migration

Key Definitions

The report takes a practical approach to the definition of integration. It brings together key characteristics from the academic literature, namely that integration is multidimensional and a two-way process. The five dimensions of integration considered in the report are: social, cultural and religious, economic, legal, and political.
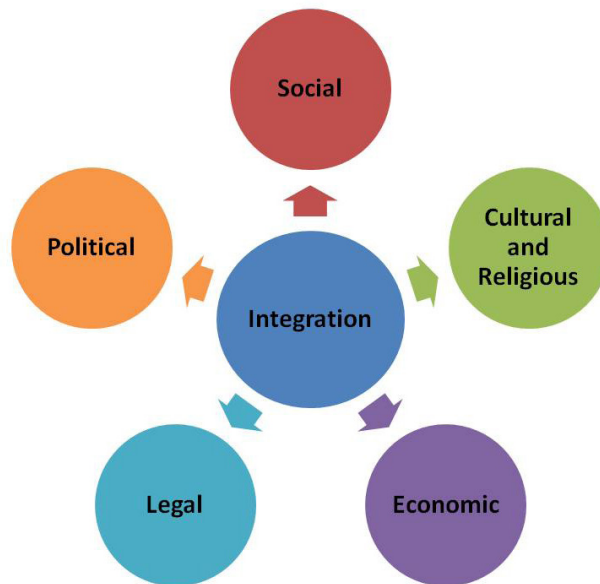
In each of these dimensions the study identifies good and promising examples of integration initiatives that contribute to making immigrants and refugees a functioning part of society and that guarantee rights to these populations. Good practices for migrant and refugee integration are identified using the following criteria: (1) practicality, (2) innovation, (3) successfulness, (4) transferability, (5) sustainability, and (6) strategic fit.

Why Cities and Businesses?

Local level governments and businesses are not the traditional stakeholders considered in migrant integration, given on the one hand that migration policies are still frequently attached to the national state level; and on the other hand that businesses are often viewed simply as employers rather than potential social actors. Nevertheless, local governments have an important role to play in addressing the social and economic challenges that arise from immigration and integration. Local governments have the capacity to tailor policies to their communities' needs, as opposed to national "standardized" policies. Local governments are also the providers of many services that directly affect the integration of migrants and therefore have a great capacity to ensure social cohesion. Moreover, they have the ability to coordinate other non-state actors such as businesses and NGOs to achieve a better integration of migrants and refugees.

Businesses are increasingly held to account for their treatment of migrant workers (International Business Leaders Forum, 2010). Businesses are more and more viewed as a functioning part of society with responsibilities towards the community. This is reflected in the rise of corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies. Nonetheless, Cavicchio (2008) observes that few companies have focused on the issue, mainly due to its highly politicized and controversial nature. Companies are often faced with concerns about brand protection and lack of competence

on the topic, as well as difficulty in allocating specific funds to this issue, among so many others of social relevance (Cavicchio, 2008). Beyond CSR however businesses have other reasons to be interested in the integration of migrants and refugees. Among the reasons that make migration a topic of direct interest to businesses is the fact that diversity can lead to a stronger workforce, where individuals can share and learn from each other (Koser, 2013). Additionally, migration is believed to enhance global competitiveness and allows companies to address labour shortages and specific skills needs. Migration also represents an expanded consumer base and often creates new market opportunities for businesses to thrive in (Cavicchio, 2008). According to Koser (2013), not only are better integrated migrants more successful due to higher motivation and productivity, but they also display higher loyalty towards their employer, which results in less turnover and absenteeism. Furthermore, a diverse workplace has been shown to boost competitiveness and innovation among employees (Koser, 2013).

Why Public-Private Partnerships?

Public-private partnerships represent an important tool through which cities can improve migrant and refugee integration policies. According to the IOM (2006), "partnerships between the private sector and governments are instrumental in identifying challenges and solutions in the economic and labour dimensions of migra-

tion" (p. 2). Private sector entities may also contribute to cities through knowledge of the local labour market, recruitment decisions and in devising educational and vocational training policies tailored to labour market needs (IOM, 2008). Furthermore, businesses are important sources of funding, and may also bring evaluation and monitoring techniques from the private to the public sector. The contribution of businesses can allow cities to better monitor and coordinate activities for migrant and refugee integration, which serve both the interests of businesses and migrants themselves.

Case Selection

Cities find themselves in different stages of development and commitment regarding the management of migration. This is also reflected in the number of stakeholders involved or interested in migration issues, as well as the resources a city has or is willing to allocate to address such issues. The cities selected for study represented cities with different immigration histories and policy frameworks. They are also cities less represented by current work examining good practices for the integration of migrants and refugees. Additionally, all of the cities in this study can be considered global cities, where the "expansion of corporate headquarters and international finance and related commercial activities" (OECD, 1998, p. 8) has led to the emergence of numerous job opportunities in all wage levels and a constantly changing population (Penninx, 2005).

About the Authors

Teressa Juzwiak is a Research Assistant at UNU-MERIT and its School of Governance. She has worked on several projects, including the Evaluation of the ILO's Programme on International Labour Migration, The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration (THP) Project on Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities: The role of Cities and Businesses, and is also involved in the Migration and Health research stream.

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Dr. Melissa Siegel works as an Associate Professor and Head of Migration Studies at UNU-MERIT and its School of Governance. She manages several migration research projects and coordinates the Migration Studies Specialization and Migration Management Diploma Programme, while also lecturing and supervising students. She has worked on or led projects for governments, international organizations and NGOs including the Dutch Ministries of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Social Affairs, the ILO, IOM and UNHCR.

Key Findings

The research uncovered a number of interesting findings linked to migrant and refugee integration:

• A total of 121 partnerships were found operating in the various cities with the aim of facilitating the integration of migrants and refugees.

Overview of Partnerships
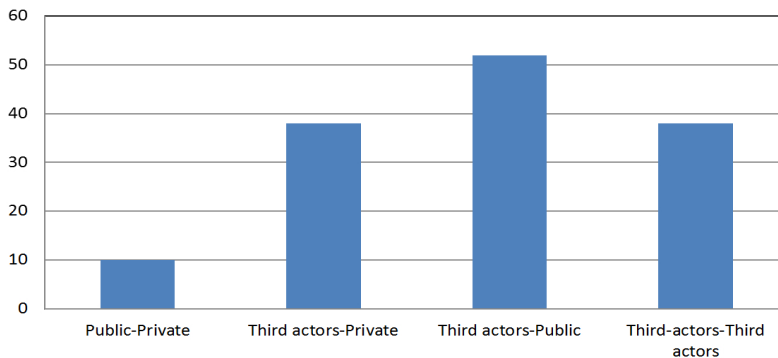
• However, despite the potential benefits of public-private partnerships, relatively few examples were identified: only 10 of those partnerships have been established between a private and a public stakeholder.

• Related to this, businesses are generally not conceived as natural partners in the context of migration – except in teh case of expatriates – and as a result are often not involved.

• The majority of partnerships were identified between a third actor and a public institution.

• The study found that third actors (such as international organizations and NGOs) are much more active in engaging with both business and government sectors. Thus existing networks of third actors may be a useful resource to be tapped to identify opportunities for public-private partnerships.

• Language, housing and discrimination were three common challenges faced by actors seeking to support immigrants and refugees to settle in their cities.

• The incentives for different actors to get involved in integration issues are clearly different both with respect to the city context and to the group of migrants being discussed. This leads to different policy approaches and a different landscape of integration initiatives by a range of stakeholders. Nevertheless, there is a clear opportunity to learn from innovative approaches to migrant and refugee integration both within and between cities. For this to be successful there is a need for knowledge exchange between stakeholders. City governments could take on a key coordinating role in this respect.

• The study identified 20 good practices and three promising practices. These good practices have been shown to be successful and provide innovative ideas to address common challenges regarding the integration of migrants and refugees. While there is no room to go into detail in this brief, the interested reader can consult the full report for a clear overview of the identified good practices.

◆ The good and promising practices identified in this study contribute to a growing database to address integration challenges of migrants and refugee groups. As the framework of this study suggests, local governments, businesses and other local stakeholders should engage in knowledge-sharing not only at city level but also between cities. Presenting similar experiences and accomplished solutions can help other cities tackle their identified challenges in more effective ways.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings some clear recommendations emerge:

1. Establish networks and fora to share experiences and identify potential partners both within and between cities. Rather than applying predefined notions of what a partnership looks like we should acknowledge that collaborations between different stakeholders often occur in an ad hoc and unofficial manner;

ignoring them could undermine the potential identification of successful and transferable practices. Within cities there is often a lack of understanding of what other key actors are doing. By sharing this knowledge and experience, opportunities for partnerships can be identified, promoting the transfer of good practices within and between cities.

2. Learn each other's language: integration and migration are "loaded" terms which vary according to the frame of reference of each city and stakeholder. The practical reality uncovered here is that the portfolio of services that businesses and cities provide to their residents and employees often functions as integration support without specifically being labelled as such. A reframing of the conversation would help to engage the relevant stakeholders. By broadening our vocabulary we can better communicate with each other and identify new and improved ways of managing issues linked to urban development.

3. Acknowledge diversity while recognizing commonality: There was clear variation in the services for different migrant groups (e.g. expats, refugees) in the practices identified by the study. For example, a highly skilled migrant has more to gain from improved policies for the recognition of qualifications which can support their labour market integration. Low skilled migrants, however, are more likely to be interested in legal support for cases in which passports or wages are withheld by their employer, particularly where their status in the country is tied exclusively to

more cities around the world be included in the implementation of local level integration policies, cities should also be actively encouraged to seek out partnership opportunities with local businesses and to tap the existing network of interventions that offer good and promising ideas for supporting migrants to succeed. Further research currently being carried out on this topic is already taking into consideration the importance of city level initiatives for the well-being of all citizens, including migrants and refugees. Such is the case for the IOM's forthcoming 2015

"Ultimately, cities should be more involved in the field of migrant and refugee integration..."

their employment contract. Yet most people share common needs when moving to a new city: regularize their legal status, find housing, access health care, find schools for their children and so forth. Thus, lessons can also be learnt by better understanding the range of services already being provided within a city to identify areas where good practices could be replicated for other groups within the city.

Concluding Remarks

Ultimately, cities should be more involved in the field of migrant and refugee integration. It is in cities that migrants carry out their daily lives and have interactions that enable the creation of social connections with the community. Not only should

World Migration Report and for the Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI), both of which aim to strengthen the contribution of migration and development by reinforcing the local dimension.

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UNU-MERIT is the United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and social Research institute on Innovation and Technology. The institute explores the social, political and economic factors that drive technological innovation, with a particular focus on creation, diffusion and access to knowledge. Following the integration of the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance in December 2010, UNU-MERIT now covers all aspects of governance in domestic and global organizations, from risk assessment to policy analysis, design and evaluation. In its enlarged form UNU-MERIT functions as a unique research and training institute for around 100 PhD fellows, and as a UN think tank addressing a broad range of policy questions on science, innovation and democratic governance. UNU-MERIT is located at, and works in close collaboration with, Maastricht University in the Netherlands.

INSIDE:

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"Migrant and Refugee Integration in Global Cities"

Exploring how businesses and governments in global cities contribute to the integration of migrant and refugee populations.

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