European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Diversity policy in employment and service provision

Case study: Mataró, Spain

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CLIP Network
Cities for Local Integration Policy

Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland. - Tel: (+353 1) 204 31 00 - Fax: 282 42 09 / 282 64 56
email: postmaster@eurofound.europa.eu - website: www.eurofound.europa.eu

Contents

Background 1

Profile of Mataró 7

Approaches to diversity 11

Employment policy, practice and outcomes 16

Diversity in service provision 21

Key challenges and lessons for CLIP 24

Bibliography 26

List of persons interviewed 27

Background

Brief history of migration to Spain

Spain is situated at the crossroads of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, Europe and Africa. Between 700 and 1200 the south of Spain was part of several Muslim empires and a lot of movement took place towards Morocco in the south and Italy in the east. In 1236 the Christian *Reconquista* progressed to the last Islamic stronghold, Granada and a period started in which the empire became a successful seafaring and colonising nation. The Spanish empire was one of the largest in world history and included parts of Africa, Asia and Oceania, and a large part of the current United States and of South America and the Caribbean.[1] Except in North America, Spanish is still the national language in many of these territories and there is some movement of people to and fro, for instance from Spain to Latin America and back. To put it shortly, Spain's history is characterised by a strong international orientation.

In the first 80 years of the 20th century Spain's economy was not very strong. Emigration became more common than immigration. Between 1850 and 1950, 3.5 million Spaniards left for the Americas (Ortega Perez, 2003). From 1950 onwards Spain's workforce moved to the richer industrial areas of northern Europe. Because of the 36-year dictatorship of General Franco Spain became internationally isolated. Only some former emigrants to, and political refugees from, South America immigrated to Spain.

After Franco's death in 1975, Spain made the transition to a democratic state and the economic situation improved rapidly, with King Juan Carlos as head of state. In the constitution of 1978 respect for linguistic and cultural diversity within a united Spain is expressed, contrasting with the suppression during Franco's rule.

Currently the country is divided into 17 autonomous regions with their own elected authorities. The level of autonomy of each region differs. Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia have a special status with their own language and other rights. Catalonia has had extra powers in taxation and judicial matters since the referendum of 2006 when a Catalan constitution was approved. One of Spain's most serious domestic issues is a leftover from the dictatorship and related to the autonomous regions: the problem with ETA and the tension in the northern Basque country.

Emigration of guest workers to the north came to a halt because of the worldwide economic crisis of 1973. Since 1975 650,000 Spaniards returned to the country, while approximately two million improved their position in and continued to live abroad (Borkert et al, 2007). But a considerable proportion of the foreign residents in Spain in 1981 were retired people from the European Union who moved to the Spanish coast.

Economic growth increased further when Spain became a member of the EU in 1986. The Spanish economy boomed from 1986 to 1990, averaging 5% annual growth. After a European-wide recession in the early 1990s, the Spanish economy resumed moderate growth starting in 1994. Immigration accelerated fast after this, and Spain changed from an emigration to an immigration country.

Between 2000 and 2004 the number of migrants to Spain tripled, amounting to 7% (3,050,847). In 2004 Spain received the largest number of immigrants of any country in the European Union.

[1] It included the following areas: Spanish Sahara, Equatorial Guinea, Spanish Morocco (Africa), Philippines (Asia), Guam, Micronesia, Palau, and Northern Marianas (Oceania), a large part of the current United States (North America), Mexico, Panama, Guatemala, Equator, El Salvador, Peru, Costa Rica, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina (South America) and Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo, Trinidad, Tobago (Caribbean). The Canary Islands, Ceuta, Melilla and the other *plazas de soberanía* on the northern African coast have remained part of Spain.

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Table 1: *Largest immigrant groups to Spain (nationality), 31 December 2006*

	Number	% of total pop
EU countries (in 2006)		
United Kingdom	175,870	0%
Italy	98,481	0%
Germany	77,390	0%
Rest of Europe		
Romania	211,325	0%
Bulgaria	60,174	0%
Ukraine	52,760	0%
Non-Western countries		
Morocco	543,721	1%
Ecuador	376,233	1%
Colombia	225,504	1%
China	99,526	0%
Peru	90,906	0%
Argentina	86,921	0%
Dominican Rep.	58,126	0%
Total South Americans	1,064,916	2%
Total immigrants	3,021,808	7%
Total	43,964,000	

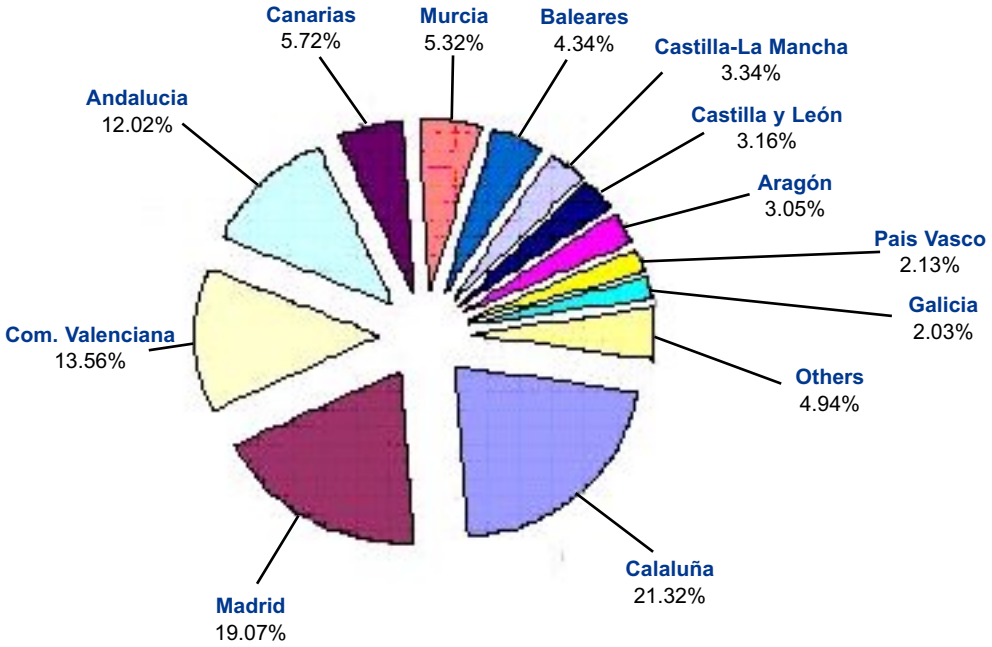
Source: *Boletín Estadístico, Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración, January 2007*

Borkert and others (2007, p. 28) note that the country has a significant number of irregular entries and/or stays. Irregular immigrants can get access to the national health system by registering at the municipalities. Research on a national level has shown that about half the immigrants registered do not possess a valid residence permit. Because of five large regularisation programmes, many former illegals have been legalised. On the other hand, the Spanish authorities failed to renew all residence permits within the compulsory period due to understaffing.

Catalonia has been economically more successful than many other parts of Spain. It had a leading role in the industrialisation in the beginning of the 19th century and is still ahead in GDP and economic growth. First the fast growing industry attracted labourers from other parts of Spain, especially poorer areas where the agriculture was collapsing. In industrial areas like Barcelona city and Mataró, housing districts were sometimes extensively inhabited by these national immigrants. Since 2000, labourers have also come from countries outside the European Union. Figure 1 shows that Catalonia receives 21% of all immigrants to Spain, compared with 19% for Madrid and 14% for Valencia and 12% for Andalusia.

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Figure 1: *Share of immigrant population in the different Spanish regions*



Source: *Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración* (**http://extranjeros.mtas.es**/)

As Table 2 shows, the percentage of immigrants in Catalonia is higher than the percentage of immigrants in Spain as a whole. Catalonia is subdivided into four provinces. The table also gives the figures for Barcelona province of which Mataró is a part. The figure for Barcelona province is not very different from the Catalonia figure: slightly more South Americans and Asians and slightly fewer other Europeans and Africans.

Table 2: *Immigrant categories to Catalonia and Barcelona province (based on nationality), 31 December 2006*

	Catalonia		Barcelona province	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total Spanish	* 6,256,110	88	not known	-
Total immigrants	* 878,890	12	441,599	-
EU countries	84,265	1	55,882	-
Rest of Europe	54,495	1	23,117	-
Africa	216,852	3	126,642	-
South America	212,615	3	172,858	-
North America	3,054	0	2,592	-
Asia	71,027	1	60,064	-
Other	521	0	444	-

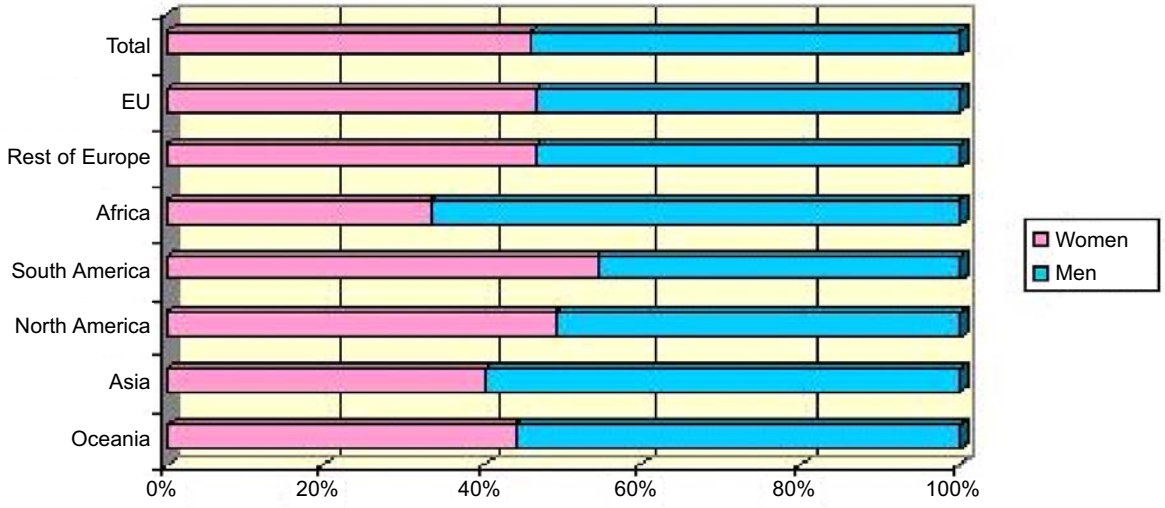
Source: *Boletín Estadístico, Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración, January 2007 (* another source used here)*

The average percentage of immigrants in Catalonia is 11%, although some cities reach higher figures, such as Barcelona's 15%. It is clear that the economic boom since 2000 led to an explosion of activities, especially in the field of construction, on which the Spanish economy depends heavily.

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The immigrant groups in Spain are relatively new, so most of them still have the nationality of their country of origin, except for about 10% of the Moroccans and 10% of the Chinese. Another consequence is that the percentage of males still exceeds the percentage of females in most ethnic groups, while among the Spanish population the percentage of females is slightly higher. Figure 2 shows that this imbalance is particularly visible among African (66% males) and Asian immigrants (61% males). The groups with the lowest percentage of females are Senegalese (81% males) and Pakistanis (85% males). Only among South Americans, does the percentage of females (54%) exceed males.

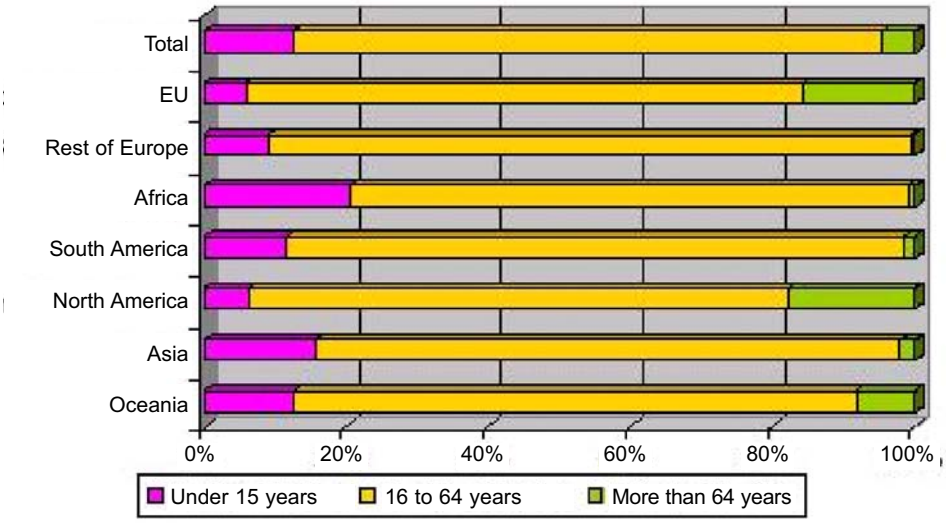
Figure 2: *Male-female ratio of the immigrant groups in Spain (left females, right males) as at 31 December 2006 (TOTAL refers to the total immigrant population)*



Source: *Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración*, **http://extranjeros.mtas.es**.

Another consequence of the recent arrival is that there are not yet large numbers of elderly people, as seen in Figure 3. The large majority of immigrants are of working age (15–64). Only among immigrants from the European Union and North America do the elderly make up a considerable number. While the percentage of people over 64 is 18% among the Spanish, we see hardly any from Africa, South America and Asia.

Figure 3: *Age division of immigrants in Spain, by continent, 31 December 2006*



Note: *Total refers to the total immigrant population*
Source: Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración, **http://extranjeros.mtas.es/**

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One of the most significant socio-demographic phenomena in recent years has been the increase in the number of elderly people in Spain. That the age division of immigrants is very different is in many cases the reason why there is no decline in city populations. The estimated fertility rate in Spain in 2006 is only 1.28 children per woman, which is one of the lowest in Europe. Immigrants have an important share in the number of births. Not all minority ethnic groups have a lot of children, since there is a surplus of single men. The percentage of children between 0 and 15 years old is highest for the African immigrants.

The total unemployment figure in Spain was 8.3% of the active population in the fourth quarter of 2006, and in Catalonia 6.7% (monthly newsletter of labour statistics, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs). Though immigrants are attracted by the economic situation, not all find work. Table 3 shows that some immigrant groups suffer more from unemployment than others. South Americans seem to have more problems finding work than the other groups, and North Americans, Asians and Oceaneans are below the mean unemployment figure.

Table 3: *Number of foreign workers out of work and on social security, Spain in 2007 and Catalonia in 2005 by continent of immigration (illegals also receive welfare)*

	Spain 2007		Catalonia 2005	
Origin	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
Native Spanish	16,995,200	90	not known	-
EU countries *	595,453	3	60,823	-
Rest of Europe *	69,354	0	38,430	-
Africa	371,414	2	102,062	-
South America	6,844	0	150,554	-
North America	708,442	4	1,426	-
Asia	119,876	1	42,855	-
other	5,017	0	214	-
Total immigrants	1,876,400	10	396,860	-
Total	18,871,600	100	-	-

**Bulgaria and Romania were part of the EU in 2007, not in 2005*
Source: *Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs*

National policy context

Spain didn't have an immigration policy until the 1980s. When it joined the European Union, the country was under pressure to restrict non-EU citizen immigration. The immigration policy of 1985 *Ley de Extranjería* approached most immigration as a temporary phenomenon; immigrants were regarded as workers, who required regulation by the Ministry of Labour (Ortega Pérez 2003). When Amnesty International criticised the toughness of the 'foreigners law' in 1989, the first attempt to draft an integration law took place in 1990 (Borkert et al, 2007). This led to the establishment of the *Dirección General de Migraciones* (General Directorate for Migration). Initiated by left wing politicians, a large regularisation of illegal immigrants took place in 1991. This ultimately had little impact, since three years later 50% of the immigrants who had legalised their status with a one-year work permit, had in 1991 fallen back to illegal status. To compensate for ineffective and restrictive admission policies, regularisation programmes have taken place in 1994 (on grounds of family reunification), in 1996 and 2000.

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Besides measures to control immigration, at this point a start was made on programmes for immigrants' social integration. In 1994 an 'Inter-ministerial Plan for the Integration of Immigrants' was presented, with the intention of granting immigrants the same civil and social rights and responsibilities as Spanish citizens. The concept of integration was in this way directly linked with citizenship and the philosophy was based on the principle of equal rights and freedoms for every person. In line with the institutional rights of the autonomic regions, Spain tends to promote and recognise the culture of migrants (Borkert et al, 2007 p. 29). The policy was not directed at specific groups, but at granting equal rights, for instance, for immigrant children at schools.

Only in 1998 was the Law on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and their Integration passed; it focussed clearly on integration and the political and social rights of non-EU foreigners. It came into force in January 2000.

When Partido Popular came to power in 1996, this centre right wing government led by Prime Minister Aznar was interested in liberalisation and in privatisation. A new organ, Delegación de Gobierno para la Extranjería y la Inmigración was established within the Ministry of Interior Affairs, which meant a shift of power away from the Ministry of Social and Labour Affairs where it had been during the Socialist times. In 2000 the so-called 'Plan Greco' was presented, which went more in the direction of migrant adaptation. The Plan Greco addresses four key areas (quoted from Ortega Pérez, 2003):

1. Global, coordinated design of immigration as a desirable phenomenon in Spain, as a member of the European union
2. Integration of foreign residents and their families as active contributors to the growth of Spain
3. Admission regulation to ensure peaceful coexistence with Spanish society
4. Management of a shelter scheme for refugees and displaced persons.

In the Plan Greco the autonomous communities played an important role in implementing immigrant integration. Besides Spain's work-permit system, the country has experimented with a labour quota system to respond to the long- and short-term shortages on the labour market. While it was intended to regulate immigration flow, it was seen by many illegal immigrants as a way to gain legal status and most applications came from undocumented immigrants already in Spain. It was transformed in 2002 so that applications could only come from abroad based on bilateral agreements with Ecuador, Colombia, Morocco, the Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Poland and Romania.

The current left wing (PSOE) government led by Zapatero that took over in 2004 tends to focus more on improving the social provisions and work situation for immigrants. Officials who work for immigrants experience this as more positive, and the money allocated for initiatives in the social sector has gone up. The complicated bureaucratic system limits the possibilities. National laws, regional Catalan laws, the layer of the county and after this the municipality make things complicated, and municipal budgets are limited. Immigrants' access to social services depends on their registration with the municipal administration. The only agreement by the Spanish state in which all the political forces agree how to develop immigration policies was signed in 2006: the Civic Responsibility Pact.

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Profile of Mataró

Brief history of the city

Mataró is the capital of Maresme county, situated 30 km north of Barcelona on the Mediterranean coast. The origins of Mataró go back to Roman Times: a Roman villa from the 1st century BC was found in the old part of town. In the Baroque period the town was extended, but the real enlargement took place after the Second World War. While it had 41,000 inhabitants in 1960, the number had increased by January 2007 to 120,384.

The most important elements of the local economy are: commerce and repair (12%), textile and confection industry (11%), and building (11%). In the country around Mataró a lot of horticulture is found, for instance flowers, tomato and strawberry farming. These characteristics of the labour market invite a lot of unskilled and semi-skilled labour for both men (construction, industry) and women ('horeca', care, housework). Since the population of Mataró is ageing, as in the rest of Spain, labourers had to come from outside.

The city attracts a considerable number of tourist to its beaches, yacht harbour and sporting facilities every year (3,000 hotel nights + day tourism), with the Serralada Litoral mountain range on the west side of the city as an extra attraction to walkers and climbers. In the last 10 years Mataró has tried very hard to make the city more attractive by laying out parks, renovating old buildings and organising a cultural festival for some weeks in summer with bands and a theatre.

The city intends to broaden and develop a modern service sector with the new Mataró Tehnocampus Park, a technology space that will house the university, specialised entrepreneurs, technology centres and knowledge-intensive companies, which will become the economic force of 21st century Mataró.

The city's migrant population

As shown, Mataró's inhabitants have more than tripled since 1960. This increase in population was mainly due to internal Spanish migration from Andalusia, Extremadura, Castilla and Galicia.

In 1970 foreign immigrants started to arrive; the first stream came from sub-Saharan Africa, in particular Senegal and Gambia. The Council of Mataró developed social, health and education services early. Gradually, the origins of migrants became more diverse. After the sub-Saharans, Maghrebeans started arriving in Mataró. Other communities, for example from Central and South America, Asia (China) and Eastern Europe have settled in Mataró recently. Table 4 shows the largest immigrant groups in Mataró by nationality.

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Table 4: *Largest immigrant groups in Mataró by nationality on 30 June 2007*

Nationality	number	% of total population
Moroccan	7,147	5.95
Chinese	1,664	1.39
Gambian	1,334	1.11
Senegalese	1,110	0.92
Argentinian	700	0.58
Malian	643	0.54
Bolivian	603	0.50
Italian	577	0.48
Ecuadorian	562	0.47
Colombian	526	0.44
Uruguayan	380	0.32
Others	3,285	2.74
Total of non-Spanish population	18,531	15.43
Total population	120,109	100.00

Source: *elaboracio per Servei d'Estudis i Planificacio, 2007*

The foreign population increases not only through immigration, but also through births. In 2007, 22% of the babies were born in non-Spanish families, and 78% were born in Spanish families. The large majority of these immigrant children are of Moroccan origin (64%). On the other hand Spanish citizens account for 99% of mortalities. In 2007 foreign nationals not only arrived in Mataró (in total 978 foreign nationals); there was also an exodus of 830. This is related to, among other things, not only the seasonal character of the job opportunities, but also to easy movement to and from other parts of Catalonia.

As in the rest of Spain, a large percentage of immigrants are without resident permits. In the first trimester of 2002, 45% of foreigners had residence permits, but this dropped to 38% in the second trimester of 2007.

It is possible to calculate a segregation index for the different immigrant groups. According to information from the Servei d'Estudis i Planificacio, it becomes clear that Moroccans, Senegalese and Gambians live very often in the same neighbourhoods, while for Chinese this figure is also increasing.

The neighbourhoods of Mataró where immigrants live in high concentrations are: El Palau-Escorxador (36%), Rocafonda (33%) and Cerdanyola (21%), as Table 5 shows.

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Table 5: *Concentration of foreign nationals in the neighbourhoods of Mataró*

Neighbourhood	Foreign population	Total Population	Percentage of foreigners
Centre	362	3,937	9.19
Eixample	2,687	28,384	9.47
Palau-Escorxador	2,476	6,877	36.00
Racafonda	3,616	11,078	32.64
Vista Alegre	233	7,008	3.32
Mollins-Roner	402	5,761	6.98
Cirera	832	9,803	8.49
La Llantia	212	3,899	5.44
Cerdanyola	6,130	29,702	20.64
Peramas	876	8,211	10.67
Pla d'en Boet	705	5,449	12.94
Total Mataró	18,531	120,109	15.43

There are neighbourhoods that were built between 1950 and 1980: El Palau and Rocafonda, north east of the centre, and Cerdanyola, north west of the centre. These neighbourhoods are not very big and the quality of the buildings seems not too bad at first sight. Buildings are usually five to six floors high and not all have lifts. After the first Moroccans moved there, the image of the neighbourhood went down, while house prices actually went on increasing. Just outside Rocafonda on the industrial area that borders the town, a Moroccan mosque was established in the building where the Red Cross is also situated.

Figure 4: *Map of Mataró with concentrations of foreign nationals (dark colour)*



The unemployment rate in Mataró is 11% (for comparison: 9% in the province of Barcelona, 11% in Catalonia and 7.6% in Spain). Without data on the size of the workforce, it is only possible to calculate the number of unemployed in the total population: 5.1% for Spaniards and 3.5 % for immigrants (this is not the usual unemployment figure, as it disregards the different age divisions). The official unemployment registration of immigrants is lower than among the Spanish because immigrants arrive in Mataró to work. Since unregistered immigrants form about 38% of the immigrants and it is not clear how many of them are unemployed or have irregular jobs – a large section of the foreign population is not described within these figures.

The city authorities

Mataró has a PSC (socialist), ERC (left nationalist) and ICV (ex-communist) coalition, the same as the Catalan regional government and therefore cooperating well with the Catalan government. The Council has signed the 'New Citizenship Agreement' (2004-2007), which was in more general terms initiated by the Catalan state. Immigrant integration and social cohesion are seen as a shared responsibility of Maresme county, Barcelona province and the Catalan regional government; in this area Catalan regional policy is very similar to the local one. The municipal policy stresses equal rights and duties for all inhabitants, including immigrants or people with other religions. It speaks of 'normalisation' of its institutions when it tries to make services available for all.

The municipality has six main departments (and related political commissions in the Council): department of thoroughfares, department of personal services, department of central services, department of territory services, department for innovation, and department of presidency. Within direct municipal power are also: the labour office and training, social services, neighbourhood relations, town planning and cemeteries. The Catalan government is responsible for education and medical care, though some of its practice is carried out by the municipalities.

The (sub)department responsible for the well-being of immigrants in Mataró is *Nova Ciutadania* (New Citizenship) within the department of the Presidency. Within *Nova Ciutadania*, there is the *Comissionat del Pla de la Nova Ciutadania* (commissioner for the Plan of New Citizenship). The New Citizenship department has a staff of 20 (mainly women). When this department has to cooperate with the other departments of the city administration, for instance on employment, the heads of departments make agreements. This works well, according to our informant, since the Council as a whole had signed the 'New Citizenship Agreement' and is fully behind it.

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Approaches to diversity

Historical background

Since immigration has only developed in the last ten years, there were no policies prior to that. Mataró started relatively quickly with its policy for immigrants, which is known in Catalonia and in Spain as an example of a well developed policy. The policy is even presented at congresses, for instance in Valencia spring 2007, and attracts the attention of other cities. Immigration took place rapidly and caused huge changes in the city's poorer neighbourhoods.

The general principles of the 'New Citizenship Agreement' are, according to the information in our questionnaire: 'globality' (taking foreigners into account) and 'normality' (which means that foreign citizens have to be able to operate as 'normally' as Catalans). Policies have to be both 'local' and 'integral'; inter-administrative cooperation has to take place and awareness of participation and citizenship are considered important. Strategic lines of the plan are: migrants' integration in democratic principles and values, 'normalisation' of service provision, equal opportunities and quality of life for all citizens, promotion of cultural and social change through social and political consensus.

Mataró states in its welcome guide to new citizens that it is now undergoing a process of social and economic change, the variety of nationalities is increasing and Mataró is turning into a cosmopolitan city. This shows a positive attitude towards immigrants that the authorities are trying to spread among its population. Another guiding principle of the policy is to adapt public services so that all citizens can use them equally well. The political will is available and the administration has to adjust to give these citizens the same possibilities and services. Political leaders and the city administration undertook action, partly because it became difficult to keep services, education and health care on the same level as they were before the population increased.

Objectives of the policy

The Town Hall of Mataró belongs to the 'Town and City Association for Human Rights' (approved unanimously at the plenary session on 3 February 2005), which has the objective of promoting the values of the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City. The rights and obligations, based on the values of respect for the dignity of the human being, of local democracy and the right to an existence that allows the improvement of well-being and quality of life for everybody, include:

Rights

- The right to the city: the city is a collective space belonging to all who live in it. They have the right to conditions that allow their own political, social and ecological development, but at the same time accepting a commitment to solidarity.
- The principle of equal rights and non-discrimination: recognised rights are guaranteed by the municipal authorities, without any discrimination with regard to colour, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political opinion, ethnic, national, or social origin, or level of income.
- The right to cultural, linguistic and religious freedom: citizens have a recognised right to exercise their cultural, linguistic and religious freedom.
- Protection of the most vulnerable groups and citizens: the authorities recognise that the most vulnerable groups and citizens have the right to special protection.
- The right to political participation: citizens and their organisations can access public debates, direct enquiries to the municipal authorities over issues concerning the regional and local authority, and express their opinion.

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- The right of association, assembly and demonstration: the local authorities encourage associations as an expression of citizenship and respect their autonomy.
- The right to a family and private life: the city protects people's rights to a private and family life and recognises that respect for the family unit, in all its current manifestations, is a fundamental element of local democracy.
- The right to information: citizens have the right to information on matters concerning social, economic, cultural and local administrative life.
- The right to public services of social protection: the signatory cities consider social policies a crucial part of their policies for the protection of human rights and they undertake to guarantee these rights within the limits of their authority.
- The right to education: citizens have the right to an education. The municipal authorities provide access to basic education for all children of school age.
- The right to health: the municipal authorities encourage equal access for all citizens to medical and preventive healthcare.
- The right to a home: the municipal authorities endeavour to ensure an appropriate supply of homes and infrastructure for all their inhabitants, without exception, within the limits of their financial resources.
- The right to work: citizens have a right to enjoy sufficient financial recompense for a worthwhile occupation, which guarantees a satisfactory quality of life.
- The right to the environment, citizens have a right to a healthy environment.

Obligations

- The obligation to register: people who reside in the city are obliged to register with the aim of acquiring the status of a citizen of Mataró.
- The obligation of solidarity: citizens must show their solidarity to all the people who most need it.
- The obligation of mutual respect: nobody shall, through his or her behaviour, undermine other people's rights or commit an offence against their dignity.
- The obligation of education: families must see to it that their children receive a good education.
- The obligation to respect the environment.
- The obligation to pay taxes: everyone is obliged to pay the relevant taxes that apply to them as citizens.
- The obligation to respect the national, cultural and artistic heritage of the city.

These are the general principles behind the policy. The following paragraphs look at how this is implemented in the activities of the New Citizenship Department.

The three main starting points of the work on New Citizenship are, as the New Citizenship Agreement Pact prescribes: a) reception policy, b) integration policy and c) 'sensitisation' of the native population. An important principle is the 'transversal' approach to the municipality's own service provision, which means from both immigrant and native side. There are no written targets on employing a certain number or percentage of immigrants, but several departments and institutions that work with immigrants have employed immigrants for language reasons.

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a) Reception policy includes: a letter from the mayor immediately after someone comes to register, an information session of about two hours and an information guide of 29 pages. This part is organised by the registry. The information guide includes the full list of rights and obligations summarised above. All the information in the guides is translated into the following languages: Catalan, Spanish, English, French, Arabic and Chinese. The information meetings are held in: Catalan, Spanish, English, French, Arabic, Tamazight, Wolof, Mandinka and Chinese.

   Staff professionals (from Gambia, Morocco and China) arrange the sessions in Arab/Tamazight, Wolof/Mandinka and Chinese.

   After this the second phase starts, organised by staff of New Citizenship: all immigrants are offered a language and information course, which is free and voluntary: 10 hours on how the city works ('knowing the environment') and 20 hours of Catalan language. This session leads to a certificate. With a group size between 10 and 15 people, and the possibility to have women-only and courses in the evening for working people, the municipality tries to keep the threshold low and attract all new citizens. Not many people seem to avoid these courses. Separate sessions are organised for Chinese, Moroccans, Senegalese/Gambians and Spanish-speaking South Americans.

   After finishing this phase, it is possible to go on to a third phase of further language lessons organised by external services, 'Omnium Cultural', *Consorci per a la Normalizacio Linguistica* (all under the coordination of New Citizenship). One can take courses of 20 hours and go on to several levels.

b) The work on integration includes a service of intercultural mediation, aimed at professionals from different municipal services and the rest of public services, to facilitate the communication between public services and newcomers, favour intercultural knowledge and encourage the coexistence of people with different origins and cultures. The service has existed since 1996 and it includes seven people, five of them born abroad. The mediators can intervene in Moroccan Arabic/Tamazight, Chinese and Wolof/Mandinka. It is possible, for instance, to phone from a doctor or from a hospital to one of the mediators and get a direct translation service. All services that are available for the general public need to become as easily available for immigrants, for instance support for associations, and the use of civic centres and cultural facilities. Other institutions are stimulated also to adjust their services.

c) The third aspect of the work of New Citizenship is the 'sensitisation' of the native population. It is the explicit intention of the administration to fight racism and xenophobia in neighbourhoods where workers live. In these neighbourhoods earlier immigrants from other regions in Spain are over-represented; they have the perception that they have to compete for public and labour resources.

   The same principles of living together and rights and obligations that are described in the newcomer guide are promoted here. Since racism and prejudices are not uncommon in the neighbourhoods where immigrants settle, and especially evolve around scarce services like health and education services, activities are organised to get to know each other's culture and to get into contact. All kinds of cultural and informational exchange is organised with the intention of increasing mutual respect.

Responsibility: elected representatives and officials

As explained above, 'New Citizenship' is part of the Department of the Presidency – Nova Ciutadania – a committee of nine Councillors from six different parties following the New Citizenship Agreement. None of them is specifically working on the New Citizenship issues. As already noted, all politicians of the Council have signed the local version of the New Citizenship Agreement.

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Collaboration with social partners and non-governmental organisations

The administration nearly always cooperates with the other institutions when it carries out its work. Often it is the Catalan government or the provincial government (the *Diputació Barcelona*) and sometimes it is the EU (for instance the Equal programme) and within the city, it cooperates extensively with several general NGOs, two trade unions and many migrant associations. Most of the information leaflets received from project organisers carry the logos of at least three organisations. It is clear that the cooperation between the municipality of Mataró and social partners is well developed and one of their strong points. It is not only sensible to stimulate civic society in general, it is also important to communicate with special interest organisations on the issues that concern them.

An important organ where this cooperation takes place is the *Consell Municipal per a la Convivencia* (Council on Living Together), which has consultative and advisory functions. It is made up of 30 individuals, among which are representatives of political groupings and migrant associations. Migrant associations that were included in 2001 were the Jama Kafo Association, Muso Kafo Association, Islamic Cultural Ansar Association, Al Ouahda Muslim Cultural Association, Moroccan Migrants Association of Catalonia and the Muslim Cultural Association Nhour. They talk about migrant issues, aspects of the welcome policy are discussed and task divisions are made.

As already explained, Catalan and Spanish language training is also given in cooperation with other institutions and associations; among them are Caritas 'Omnium Cultural', *Consorci per a la Normalizacio Linguistica* (an institute that promotes knowledge of Catalan), but also migrant associations like the Al Ouahda.

The municipality also cooperates for all kinds of other reasons with the *Associacio Ajuda Mutua Immigrants a Catalunya* (the communal aid organisation for immigrants in Catalonia), the Gambia Kambeng Kafo (Gambian), Mali's Migrant Organisation, the Workers Trade Union UGT, trade union COO, ALISHLAH, cultural associations of migrants, Centre Sant Pau/Caritas Diocesana (church-related) and the Red Cross.

Four examples, the Red Cross, Caritas, the trade union and the Moroccan mosque, follow:

1. The Red Cross is housed in the same building as the mosque, and gets funding through the Central Red Cross, donations and by cooperating with the authorities. One of the subsidies from the municipality is for work with the homeless; the Red Cross uses it to feed (often irregular) homeless people for a maximum of two days. The law forces cities to support the homeless for a maximum of three days (hotel, food and a bus ticket), but since this easily eats up the budget for immigrants, it has been arranged through the Red Cross. The Red Cross has given 1,500 meals this year for about 500 people, of which 80% are immigrants. The mosque supplies free meals on Fridays. It is estimated that some 90 homeless people travel from city to city to find food every day. The influx from the Canary Islands has caused part of this travelling: when people have been 60 days in the Canaries without papers, they are sent to certain parts of Spain and the local authorities have to take care of them. Officially there are now 300 people who have arrived this way, but unofficially there are probably more. The municipality of Mataró takes the view that it is their humanitarian duty to cope with this reality of irregular stay and that they have to help.
2. Caritas is related to the church; it depends heavily on charity and volunteers, but gets subsidies from the municipal for work on women, youth and supporting the unemployed. Five professionals and volunteers give courses. They use an old school building in town so the centre is nearby and easily found by immigrants and their children. Their clients are mainly Moroccans and Sub-saharans, and they have taken on foreign staff: two Moroccan teachers, one Moroccan man at the reception and one Senegalese. Besides Catalan language courses for women, they also organise cooking activities, which informally leads to talking about any integration problems. From 5pm to 7pm children can go to the centre and receive support with their home work by an educator. Another project is organised with schools

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for eight-year-old children. Information to help imagine life in Mali is given to the children. Their employment training targets norms, cultural habits, punctuality and how to find a job.

3. The workers' trade Union CCOO set up an information centre for immigrants in 1995, *Centre d'Informatio per a Treballadors i Treballadores Estrangers* (CITE). CITE provides free of charge advice and orientation about immigration law, procedures to acquire work and residence permits, family reunification, citizenship and visa, Catalan language courses and mediation and communication with educational centres around Catalonia. The most common problems that the Senegalese CITE representative in Mataró encounters, have to do with papers, tough working conditions (hard work), underpayment and lodging. The people from the poorest home country areas have most problems and often limited work experience. They work in agriculture, the hotel business and in people's homes, so the weakest groups are found in these sectors. For construction a higher level of language proficiency is needed. CITE has 43 offices around Catalonia; in Mataró there is only one person and one volunteer, but in larger offices there are also advisers and lawyers. CITE also organises and participates in awareness campaigns against racism, and is involved in social integration and in publishing several information guides for immigrants (CITE website[1]).
4. The Mosque organises language courses for Moroccans and provides information and support to all Muslims.

Policy and practice on monitoring progress

Statistical developments within the migrant population are followed by the city's statistical bureau, while developments on employment are followed by the *Institut Municipal per a la Promocio Economica* (IMPEM), the (autonomous) institute for economic development. Attitudes of Mataró's citizens are sometimes studied with surveys.

Key challenges faced in implementation and broad lessons learnt

One of the problems in Mataró is that many services were already not widely available and the public complains that this became worse after the arrival of large numbers of immigrants. The competition for services is noticeable for instance in public nurseries for low-income groups, health care and education services. An example shows the public perception: while, 10 years ago, five patients were in the waiting room of a doctor, currently five Catalans and five immigrants – derogatorily named 'Morros' – are waiting to see the same doctor. Another example is the number of nursery places for low-income groups. While objective criteria are used to assign places like income and number of children, Catalans are annoyed because they think immigrant kids have advantages. Among the former immigrants from other regions of Spain, the view exists that it is not fair that immigrants are helped so much, because they were also not helped in the sixties, when they arrived in Catalonia. The administration finds fighting prejudice one of the main challenges.

Potential future policy development

Immigration will go on and the number of immigrants will increase in Spain. The second generation will develop further, and will need more attention. Standardisation of services for the migrant population and working in a 'transversal' manner will go ahead, as will the work on the native population. It can be expected that municipal services will become better adjusted to immigrants. Since the immigrants have not started from an equal basis with Spanish citizens, it cannot be expected that 'normalisation' (getting a comparable position and access) will take place very quickly.

[1] http://www.ccoo.cat/cite/index.htm

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Employment policy, practice and outcomes

Profile of city employees

In the absence of data on the number of employees or the ethnic background of employees, this section looks at employment policy towards all citizens of Mataró, and not at policy that applies only to the city administration.

Employment diversity policy

The so-called 'Local Agreement for Employment' (2004–2007) derives from the European strategy for employment. The European policy guidelines are implemented in the national Spanish Employment action plan, and further in the Catalan government's Employment Agreement (2003–2006), in the Barcelona provincial plan and more specifically in the local plan. The Local Agreement on Employment in Mataró has three overall aims: full employment, improvement of the quality and productivity of work and social inclusion and cohesion. More specifically, it is worked out in six guidelines: 1) to promote active measures for the unemployed, 2) to enhance job creation and entrepreneurship, 3) to promote adaptability and mobility on the labour market, 4) to develop know-how and lifelong learning, 5) to increase the supply of workers and promote the extension of working life, and 6) to guarantee equal opportunities.

The members that have signed the agreement in Mataró are the Council, through the Local Institute for Economic Promotion (IMPEM) and the local institute on urban promotion (PUMSA), the trade unions (UGT en CCOO) and the federation of employers' associations in Mataró and the surroundings. Although these guidelines are general, and not specifically targeted at immigrants, some of the more specific local plans address immigrants, such as 'lifelong learning training'. The principle of lifelong learning was the main subject of training held in September–October 2006 called 'Human Resource Management and Diversity', in which it was stressed that the number of women and third country nationals is increasing in companies, so management of difference is nowadays fundamental in running companies.

Other training – paid by EU funds such as the Equal programme – has been organised to improve the front desk service provision in a multi-ethnic context. Front desk employees are informed about the home countries of immigrants, can improve their language skills in foreign languages and are equipped with information on frequent legal, health, education and labour problems. This course was remarkable because it has made clear how important the information function is in the work on newcomers.

Non-discrimination and equal opportunities are basic principles of the Spanish constitution, and discrimination of communities on the basis of race, sex, language or religion is forbidden. That doesn't mean that positive discrimination is forbidden when communities need it. As far as is known there has not been any affirmative action within Mataró. The Council engages immigrants in its service provision, not because they are foreigners but because they are experts in a specific area. According to the answers in our questionnaire the policy of equal opportunities has led to more access to the public administration, but the stress is not on getting a certain percentage of immigrants into the administration.

As already shown above, both the welcome service and the intermediation service have deliberately employed people that were born in a third country. Third country nationals have also been employed in the adult schools, the labour office (IMPEM), the local education institute IME and the local police. The labour union has hired a Senegalese to deal with the immigrant office within the union, and probably more institutions have done so. One of the lucky circumstances in Mataró is that the immigrant groups are relatively highly educated, so it has been easy to get immigrants into advisory positions. The Senegalese representative in the labour union is highly educated. The Moroccan secretary of the Adult School in Rocafonda was already highly educated in Morocco (Arabic Philology degree) and has a second Catalan degree. This kind of person can function as an example to others in their respective communities and the municipality hopes that through building up contacts in immigrant communities others, especially youngsters, will be stimulated to build up their references.

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Challenges in development and implementation of policy

Up till now the hiring of immigrants has not caused tensions. The opposite is true, since the highly qualified professionals that were found are highly valued complements to the departments. They are well respected and have been a suitable solution for the problems that the department experienced.

Recruitment, training and promotion

Recruitment is generally done through the IMPEM, which functions both as labour office, as training provider and as support for new entrepreneurs. At IMPEM a special coordinator for issues concerning immigrants has been hired.

When job hunting immigrants arrive at IMPEM, they are led into the job search area, a large room with many computers and newspapers. An official explains to them how they can look for a suitable job on the computer system, and apply directly. A member of staff is available to help them, and now and then gives a small course for a small group. For immigrants who cannot read and write, some advertisements are put on a notice board at the entrance, marked with red, and illiterates can come with these advertisements to the staff member for help. The database had 1,000 advertisements in 2006, and 439 people got a job in this way, while about 650 found a job indirectly through IMPEM.

They can make an appointment to get further help with their CV and to talk about career development and schooling. The specialised staff member discusses with them how they can improve their qualifications and tries to convince them of a long-term strategy that includes further education. Lifelong learning is the principle. The aim of the labour service at IMPEM is to foster personal autonomy, assuming that a more autonomous person will be better able to adapt to the changing labour market. The methodology is based on the idea that people define their own 'professional project' within the framework of their life, but with professional advice and a broad range of training possibilities available. The first step is professional orientation: what are their interests, capacities and aptitudes and, consequently, how will they give shape to their 'professional project'? The second step is professional qualification: existing job qualifications can be improved or better competencies can be developed. There are about 30 courses available (for Spanish and non-Spanish) in fields where there is a shortage of labour, both full- and part-time, and usually for 3–6 months. One of the possibilities is to have four hours of teaching in the morning and four hours of internship in the afternoon, with work nearly guaranteed. Courses include: the hotel business, child care in kindergartens, business development, plumbing, computer skills, etc. In 2006 190 people were attending these training courses.

A next step is labour market access preparation: this includes a three-hour training session at IMPEM to improve strategies for searching for jobs, learning to use the Internet, writing a letter, adapting the CV to the job requirements and passing a job interview successfully. In 2006, 500 people participated in these courses.

The IMPEM representative who deals with migrants said that most immigrants prefer to take any work as fast as possible and are more interested in making money right away than in improving their status. She has to convince them to go further with language training and to take one of the free courses in their field, not to be stuck later on, when the labour market becomes tenser or they become too old for physical work. She reported that women are often more willing to take her advice then men. Women who work in the hotel sector or in the care sector sometimes have flexible working hours, but also see the need for taking courses more easily than men, who work as builders or in horticulture. It also depends on the starting qualifications whether or not people feel like studying: the ones with school experience are more positive towards further education.

To promote these services among immigrants, migrant associations are made aware of them. Beside specific service and staff members for migrants, IMPEM also has services for youngsters under 25 and for disabled people.

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Equal pay and working conditions

Non-discrimination is sanctioned by law, so equal jobs mean equal payment. Of course the irregular economy is difficult to control. In the irregular economy people work sometimes with lower wages, without contracts or even without getting paid for months, while employers keep promising that they will pay later. If an employee can prove that he has worked for a certain number of hours and that others are paid more, he can complain at IMPEM or the trade union even if he has no papers and the employer gets a penalty, while the irregular worker is not punished. In practice it is very difficult to prove that you have worked a certain number of hours.

Harassment

A few cases of racial harassment (insults) have been treated by the intercultural mediators and the neighbourhood mediators. The police are notified in cases of physical harassment.

Accommodation of cultural and religious needs

There are no general policies to safeguard cultural and religious needs, but employers tend to make arrangements themselves. Cases are known in which Muslims work on the night shift during Ramadan, so that they can eat during work and won't faint or feel weak. This report is not aware of provisions in companies for prayer or rules about head scarves or turbans.

Islamic burial has been an issue in Mataró. The problem was creatively solved by the Council, by sticking to the rule on the obligation to use a coffin, but letting Muslims add sand before it is closed, as a compromise.

Health and safety

Mataró's welcome guide gives information on the possibilities of acquiring a free health card. Several information meetings were organised to inform immigrants about safety at work and safety in the home (fire prevention). Both IMPEM and the mediation services support this kind of labour mentoring.

The immigration secretariat of the trade union CCOO provides leaflets in Catalan but also in Arabic about safety at work and prevention of accidents. This campaign was co-financed by the foundation for the prevention of labour risks (*Fundacion para la Prevencion de Riesgos Laborales*). It lists risky situations about which workers can complain like machinery that is not in order, unstable climbing equipment, lack of helmets, etc.

Induction and language tuition

As explained above, the first language programme for new citizens is organised by the department of New Citizenship (free), and after that people can choose any of the language training that is offered by other institutions, usually also free. They can go ahead many years on different levels.

The Catalan government pays a lot of attention to encouraging Catalan language proficiency, because the Catalan language was suppressed during Franco's time. The *Consorci per a la Normalitzacio Linguistica* (Language Standardisation Consortium) of the Catalan government was established in 1989 and provides classes and courses on different levels, both for Catalans who did not learn to write in Catalan because they grew up during the dictatorship, and specifically for immigrants.

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The consortium works together with: 'Omnium Cultural' (on the promotion of Catalan culture and language), the Catalan Summer University, the Friends Association of Catalonia in the South of France, and the association for the defence and diffusion of the Catalan language and culture in Italy. The branch in Mataró is called *Centre Normalitzacio Linguistica Maresme-Mataró*. Besides giving courses it has established a 'Linguistic Voluntariat': a language exchange project of Catalan speakers and newcomers with meetings each week in couples and aiming at improving the level of newcomers.

To make the threshold lower, language courses are also given at migrant associations and NGOs: *Associacio Familiar Mixta d'Africans de Catalunya, Associacio Ajuda Mutua Immigrants a Catalunya, Gambia Kambent Kafo, Associacio Musso Kafo, Organitzacio dels Immigrants de Mali, Unio General de Trabajadores UGT, Associacio per l'Educacio cultural i social dels immigrants (ALISLAH) and at Centre Sant Pau/Caritas Diosena/centre d'Acollida a nouvinguts*.

Children can take support classes at school to learn Catalan.

Recognition of qualifications

Foreign diplomas have to be sent to Madrid to a national office for recognition. This is a difficult process that can take up to a year and even then it does not always succeed. The representative of the CITE office says he has made people aware that they have the right to submit requests through the municipality. He says that many people don't know that they have the right to ask for recognition of diplomas, and that the diploma can increase their payment if it is relevant to the job.

Complaints

As explained above, complaints on unequal pay for the same work can be made at IMPEM or the foreigner advice office of the trade union and then examined by a judge. It is also possible to complain at the municipality itself or to the ombudsman. A researcher of the Institute for Public Law at the University of Barcelona, N. Caicedo, studied complaints by immigrants in 10 Catalan cities that went to court. She reports that most complaints have to do with residence – and work permits. The first phase after arriving in Spain is getting a residence permit or work permit and this keeps immigrants busy. Since they often have temporary contracts, work and residence permits have to be renewed frequently and some become irregular while they have actually worked for a continuous period. Four other types of complaints have occurred more than once in the last five years: complaints that have to do with living together in an apartment block (noise, disturbance), complaints about the many telephone shops that have been established in immigrant areas (they are not big enough, do not have enough light and ventilation etc.), complaints about the lack of possibility of using civic centres for celebrations of immigrants and complaints about not being able to bury in the Muslim way, while the law states that it should be possible.

The research also found that not all the money designated by the Catalan government for immigrant policy was actually used for it (only 40%); the rest went to general payment of staff. The reason was that municipalities have to write proposals and plans and this did not happen everywhere. It is clear that Mataró is a positive example, because it has made a big effort to write plans and employ staff.

Special initiatives

Besides training for front desk workers, another training course was held for heads of units and officials that lead projects dealing with migrants. This was meant to teach heads about the intentions and political willingness of the Council when it comes to adapting the local agreement on new citizenship. If heads understood the strategy well, they would be better able to transmit this to their staff and implement it with the right focus. Some explanation was given on the history,

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evolution, agreement and plans around New Citizenship, the integral territorial plan, the challenges of present and future in the domains of welcome, foreigners, housing, the labour market, perceptions and positive discrimination.

Monitoring

During the training of staff and managers that work with newcomers, discussion took place on the needs of foreigners and the suitability of the services in relation to the needs. Indicators of the number of people attending advisory services show that they are increasing. The number of employees finding a suitable job related to their profile has also increased. Every service keeps its own records. This report has no further information on the monitoring of the policy.

Impact of policy and lessons learnt

The municipality of Mataró has taken many initiatives, like training, raising awareness among employers, work with illegal youngsters, information on social and labour circumstances, mediation and labour services. This is important to avoid social conflict about scarce public resources, and to raise awareness among natives about the consequences of migration. The danger is that unemployment may affect a large part of the population in a period of de-industrialisation and closing down of the textile industry. The attempts in Mataró to work within companies on inter-ethnic relations seem successful. But at the same time, working with the migrants who are excluded from the labour market is also necessary, to ease training, give labour advice and mentor people towards the labour market.

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Diversity in service provision

Services provided and contracted out

The main services that the department of New Citizenship provides or coordinates are:

- Welcome meetings and a first information session with an information guide by the registry.
- Initial language training for adults of 20 hours by the department of New Citizenship.
- Mentoring and sending immigrants on to the other services in town by department of New Citizenship, like the labour office IMPEM, where they are helped to find a suitable job and training;
- For the follow-up language courses for adults external institutions get a subsidy. The language programmes have been described above; these are coordinated and subsidised by the municipality, but organised by NGOs and migrant associations.
- In the educational field, the Education Project of Mataró (PEM) was established in 2002 under the auspices of the mayor; it is composed of both administrations and other institutions like schools. Its duties are to develop new educational materials and methods for both kids and adults. It also tries to balance the number of children in classes, since in some neighbourhoods the number of kids was growing faster because of immigration. Thirdly it has set up a support system for migrant youngsters and hired new staff to take care of those with language problems. New migrant kids get extra language support.
- The intercultural mediation service is organised by the New Citizenship department. Health officers, police, lawyers, employers or anybody else can contact them by phone for translation or interpretation, but also for mediation in case of problems between neighbours.
- Within the 'Citizens Information Bureau', there is a specialised service called 'Foreigners Information Bureau' at the city level.
- In the area of health a 'Welcome centre in case of emergency and information to migrants' has been established, and in several health centres and in the hospital the service made available.
- In the three neighbourhoods where migrants live, two community centres already existed. These community centres have been supplied with extra information on all important issues concerning migrants.
- Support in finding a job, specifically for foreigners and for illiterates, is organised by the independent office of IMPEM.

Diversity policy in services

The main aim of the Council's policy is to reinforce social cohesion for all and to enhance the associational network. The Council opted for mainstream services – as did the Catalan government – instead of specialist services, so that services don't have to be duplicated. However specialist services are necessary on the arrival of newcomers in the city. Since specific needs are detected that the administrative structure cannot cope with, specialist services are developed concerning welcome policy, education, employment and health.

The targeted population are new citizens in Mataró, who do not yet speak enough Catalan and who do not have enough information to find their way independently. IMPEM provides also specific services for illiterates, youngsters under 25 and disabled people.

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Employment profile of service providers

The institutions and NGOs that cooperate or get subsidies from the municipality are either migrant associations or institutions that are adjusting themselves to the new clientele by hiring new staff members. This report is not aware of conditions that the Council has put on cooperating with other institutions.

Access to services

Ensuring better access to services is one of the main purposes of the plan and agreement on new citizenship. Raising the awareness of the whole staff and especially those responsible for areas where the immigrant population is a large part of the clientele is an important aspect. Another aspect is the mediation service, which was created to avoid conflicts and to ease mutual understanding between migrants and other citizens and service providers.

Monitoring of access and outcomes identified

Access to services is monitored by each of the Council's areas of work. This report has data on the number of people helped by IMPEM (a total of about 1,000 obtained a job), but not on how many were foreigners.

Cultural awareness of staff

As described above, training has been given for the front desk staff and for managerial staff to raise their cultural awareness. The local training plan was part of the New Citizenship Plan and is seen as one of the ways to improve services like legal advice, health, education and labour.

Discrimination against service users

Discrimination is forbidden in the Spanish constitution, but the victims have to prove it themselves, which is difficult if not impossible. Statistics are not accepted as evidence, and there are virtually no statistics that include numbers of immigrants.

According to the research of the Public Law Institute in Barcelona, immigrants are often unaware of the fact that they could complain about social services, because they think they are a kind of charity. They assume that they don't have rights, and are happy if their residence and work permits are in order. If discrimination takes place, it is hidden and usually directed at the Moroccans, who are less liked than for instance the Senegalese. In the educational field, there have been some cases of private and semi-private schools that have been refusing immigrant children. The semi-private schools have lost their subsidy after a new law was passed to prevent this kind of discrimination. Spanish parents tend to take their children from public schools and send them to private schools, and this results in some public schools having a majority of black students.

The ombudsman has no complaints from immigrants and nothing on religious or ethnic discrimination. The complaints that he has handled are about Spanish gypsies (gitanos), minors living on the street and lack of access to buildings for disabled people.

Special initiatives

The round table *Consell Municipal per a la Convivencia* where immigrants, social partners and local officials cooperate, is worth mentioning here.

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Impact of policy on access to, and quality of, services and lessons learnt

The labour service provisions and the migrant policy have kept the quality of life and social cohesion at an acceptable level. The provincial government is concerned about competition for scarce public resources and native perceptions about immigrants. The positive impact of the active role and the dedication of the officials and politicians in Mataró in this should not be underestimated. That the municipal is giving out very positive messages on solidarity and inter-ethnic relations is very important. Even if less positive messages are given out by, for instance, national and international TV, the sense of Mataró being different and welcoming is very important to stop racist and xenophobic tendencies.

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Key challenges and lessons for CLIP

In this overview of the policies of Mataró it has become clear that the situation of Mataró has some specific characteristics, compared with other CLIP cities. Mataró is dealing with a large influx that has developed over the last 10 years; it has to deal with a considerable number of irregular migrants and consequently many immigrants are stuck with legal problems that they have to solve before they worry about integration. The administration has made great effort to adjust its general service provision, to train its staff in multicultural issues and to establish specific services where necessary. It assumes that specific services are only needed for new immigrants, who do not yet speak Catalan, while it is a general goal to get immigrants into the mainstream institutions.

People working on immigrants in the Catalan municipalities often have too much work and not enough funds. A large part of their funds has to go to personnel costs, and that means there is not much left for the real support of immigrants. Mataró has been actively looking for political support and for extra funding and is setting an example for other municipalities in the region. While in other municipalities only 40% of the funds for immigrants have been used, Mataró is doing everything possible to extend its policies. It is clear that the inspiring leadership of the New Citizenship Department is an important condition to make all this work. The foresightedness and the strong ideological basis has made the policy move much faster than in other municipalities around Mataró.

From 1999 onwards the municipality had to go against general public opinion, which was becoming more negative towards Muslims, due to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. It became for instance more difficult to find a space for the Alouahda mosque because neighbours started to complain and in the end the mosque had to move to industrial terrain. It is important that the municipality is taking a clear stand on the importance of equal rights for all citizens, including non-nationals. There were also more complaints about specific service provision for immigrants. But the municipality has consistently spread a clear and ideological message.

The strong and well developed cooperation between the municipality and NGOs and migrant associations is another very positive aspect of the work in Mataró. In general stimulating civic society in a town is good for the development of social capital. Information spreads more easily and weak groups can have a voice. Cooperation between municipalities and civic society guarantees that certain groups within the population that are difficult to reach are also contacted. There are a few specific reasons in Catalonia why it is a good solution for a municipality to work together and forward money to NGOs.

Firstly it is cheaper since NGOs work with volunteers. Secondly the municipality is concerned about providing services to illegals, because they consider it their humanitarian duty to do so, but of course the national government cannot support that. If money is given to the Red Cross, this contradiction can be handled. A third slightly less positive reason might be that the municipality avoids complaints that could be directed towards them. A common complaint by the public in Catalonia is that immigrants get too many extra services. By forwarding money to NGOs the municipality cannot be accused of working only for immigrants. The downside is that some competition may arise about who gets which subsidy and who gives which course and for an outsider it looks difficult to choose to which language course at which NGO one should go.

Mataró has made a great effort to improve its services for immigrants. The adjustments within the labour provision IMPEM is one of the examples which other cities could learn from. The approach towards every job hunter is direct and personal and the official working with immigrants has to convince them of a long-term strategy instead of the fast money solution. That a large number of free courses is available makes it possible for people to develop themselves and not to remain for the rest of their lives in the lowest segment of the labour market. In the end they become more independent and will be better able to adjust to the changing labour market.

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Another interesting example for other cities is the training for heads of units and officials that lead projects with migrants. Only because heads of units are able to explain the reasoning of equal rights for all, which is behind the policy, is it possible to convince the more conservative layers of the staff and population that measures for immigrants are necessary and will hopefully avoid problems in the future. The immigrants interviewed were all much more positive than is the case in other European countries. Both the Pakistani shopkeeper and the illegal Senegalese worker and the Moroccan representative of the mosque praised the Spanish for their welcoming attitude and were not very worried about their integration. The biggest worry of immigrants in Spain seems their residence permit. The system of temporary permits that are not always renewed fast enough is a nuisance to all. Of course the recent date of immigration is related to these perceptions and it is probable that in 20 years many other worries will start to prevail, concerning, for instance, children and youngsters and the elderly that are disabled because of the hard work they have done. But a situation like that in the Netherlands, where a large number of elderly Moroccans do not speak the Dutch language, will probably not develop, since Catalonia is giving a lot of language training from the start.

In Mataró, foreign staff are hired for their expertise. A policy of trying to get the same percentage of foreigners in the staff of the administration and institution has not developed. Mataró does not feel any urgency to do this, and the monitoring to arrange it is not available. Only the Red Cross is consciously trying to raise the percentage of immigrants among volunteers and professionals to a representative level. As we know from other countries, it is difficult to prove discrimination. There is probably a lot of hidden discrimination towards immigrants, but they are maybe not always aware of it, or take it as natural because of their recent arrival date, but do not know how to combat it. It might be possible to try and extend monitoring and develop anti-discrimination measures further.

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List of persons interviewed

(21-25 June 2007)

Josep Palacios i Manuel, Head Department of New Citizenship (city representative)

Lidia Arias, Department of International Relations, Deputation de Barcelona

One of the officials responsible for welcome policy, Department of New Citizenship Mataró

One of the intercultural mediators, official responsible for contacts with the Gambian and Senegalese community of the Department of New Citizenship Mataró

Montse Molina, official responsible for campaigns on intercultural relations, Department of New Citizenship Mataró

Carme Marti and Christina Lopes, responsible for migrant issues and work, Institut Municipal de Promocio Economica, Servei d'Occupacio (IMPEM)

Lourdes o Maria, coordinator of courses at Centre Sant Pau de Caritas

Carlos Garcia, Creu Roja Mataró (Red Cross Mataró)

Driss i Mofadal, board member of the Moroccan Mosque El Ouada

Idrissa i Jalika, migrant information office CITE at the trade union COOP

Albert Terrones, researcher Autonomous University of Barcelona, who has studied the Rocafonda neighbourhood

Nathalia Caicedo, researcher Public Law Institute, who has studied legal complaints by/on immigrants, University of Barcelona

Ali Suman, Pakistani shop owner

Senegalese street trader

Anja van Heelsum, Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES), University of Amsterdam

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