

## **Municipal Strategic Concept for Interculture**

The Municipal Strategic Concept for Interculture was developed with representatives from Wuppertal Interculture – including many young people. A significant contribution was made by the international meeting centre of the Caritas organisation, the Wuppertal Media Project, the City Library and the Immigration and Integration department.

### **Cultural diversity is our strength**

The 2007 integration report of the City of Wuppertal estimates the number of people living in Wuppertal with a foreign passport at around 48,500; another 34,000 have a dual citizenship. They come from 151 nations. Around 100,000 people, a good third of the population of Wuppertal, have an immigration story: as migrants, as ethnic German immigrants to Germany, as nationalised citizens or as citizens born in Germany to parents with a migration background. Wuppertal is therefore a city of immigration, a multi-cultural city.

The people with an immigration story who live here are a part of the culture in the city, which they have a decisive influence over. Cultural diversity has meanwhile become a normality and is increasingly seen as an enrichment to the area.

Interculture, understood as an exchange between and the cooperation of cultures and the reciprocal dialogue and learning process<sup>1</sup>, supports the development, from coexistence to the willingness to live together of people of different cultural origin.

Intercultural work (intercultural culture work) is of particular significance here. It represents excellent opportunities to outline and clarify the creative potentials of immigrants. It strives towards a social climate of acceptance, respect and tolerance, in which intercultural conflicts and misunderstandings, which from time to time seem to define the public debate, can be tackled head-on.

With this it makes an important contribution to the inner cohesion of an international urban society.

### **A. Retrospect- Interculture in Wuppertal**

The City of Wuppertal recognised at a very early stage that with the influx of people with a migration history and their family members and their permanent presence in Germany, the wish of the immigrants for equal social participation also increases. In 1980 the first and only office in the foreign labour sector in the whole of NRW was established at the VHS (further educational college) of Wuppertal. The focus of this field of activity was German as a foreign language as well as so-called target-group specific socio-cultural foreign labour sector. By

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<sup>1</sup> Final report by the Enquete Commission "Kultur in Deutschland" (Culture in Germany) (Bundestags printed paper 16/7000 from 11.12.2007, p. 210 f.)

setting up this working area a specific municipal funding of intercultural associations and initiatives could be guaranteed.

In 1989 – suggested by the foreign residents' council at the time, which took its inspiration from the example of the International Festival of Kemnade – a permanent post for "Intercultural Projects" was installed by the city council at the culture office of the City of Wuppertal. At the time this was one of the few offices in NRW.

Back then, Intercultural Projects set itself the goal of presenting the varied culture mainly from the countries of the migrants living in Wuppertal in the sense of intercultural encounters, the preservation and development of the cultural identity and revival of intercultural dialogue. Projects lasting several weeks assisted by a wide network (comprised of urban institutions, private initiatives, migrant self-organisations, artists, socio-cultural facilities and organisations of private social welfare) were developed, in which

1. the cultural minorities, multicultural initiatives and artists with a migration history living in Wuppertal were offered a forum to present the culture of the Wuppertal population and thereby enter into a sustainable intercultural dialogue with the local artists and creators of culture,
2. the German artists, groups and initiatives, which have dealt with intercultural subjects and cultural discussions, were given access to an intercultural exchange, so as to inspire and learn from one another and to act together,
3. "Open a window to the world," which means cultures and artists from abroad were given a chance to create cultural openness among the local public and to initiate access to other cultures.

In 1996 the "Intercultural Projects" sector was passed over from the closed culture office to the further education college of Wuppertal. The former budget, which was provided for the funding of intercultural activities, was reduced from 50,000.00 DM (from the Culture Office plus 20.000 DM from the VHS within the socio-culture framework) to 15,000.00 EUR today.

In autumn 2001 the "Intercultural Projects" sector in the culture office of the city of Wuppertal in the business sector CULTURE, EDUCATION & SPORT was given the new title: Interculture and cultural exchange (encounter and dialogue of cultures).

Within this context the following conceptional conditions, goals and task fields have been specified:<sup>2</sup>

In a multicultural society like the German one where diversity is of high importance, municipal culture management of the intercultural approach should play a big role. This is also reflected in the cultural funding and development, which includes artist and project promotion in the intercultural sector, the culture exchange as part of the twin town partnerships and the involvement in cultural key projects of the City of Wuppertal. The task fields defined at the time were:

- **Intercultural Projects**

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<sup>2</sup> Design of Interculture concept in the Wuppertal Culture Office, written submission by Ch. Englert for the Culture Department of the City of Wuppertal

- Planning and realisation of “Intercultural Encounters” and “Interculture Festivals”
- Networking of intercultural activities:  
Coordination and overall control of intercultural projects in cooperation with urban departments and municipal authorities as well as with private providers of intercultural work.
- Development and promotion of individual theme orientated intercultural projects (example: “Crossing borders ....”)
- Promotion of intercultural projects of third parties:  
Consultation and promotion of intercultural projects by third parties e.g. by migrant self-organisations, culture groups, artists, intercultural initiatives and institutions.

- **Intercultural offers**

- Public relations and cooperation with foreign groups, associations, institutions (as a requirement for project planning)
- Contact point for foreign groups and individual people (information and advice, conferences)
- Support of neighbourhood projects, support of target group work (e.g. with youths, seniors, women), course offers in conjunction with providers of further education and youth work (Examples: “Intercultural Meeting”, courses, workshops, dialogue of religions)

- **Culture exchange**

Planning and promotion of the cultural exchange – especially with partner cities.

Planning, organisation and focusing on individual twin town projects.

Summary:

- Intercultural culture work has a comparably long tradition in Wuppertal.
- With the “Intercultural Encounters” and the “East-West-Contacts” a series of events has been developed, which are very successfully attracting interest also far beyond the city’s borders.
- A wide network, including creators of art and culture – with and without migration background - and representatives of the private and publicly-funded culture scene has thereby developed into an effective working instrument.
- And finally: Intercultural work in Wuppertal is based on the conceptional principles, which are constantly further developed and which have been adapted to modified conditions.

## **B. Intercultural work in the 21st century**

Intercultural work or intercultural culture work (the terms are mostly used alongside one another and related synonymously) is understood as a response to society, which has become multicultural as a result of immigration. Its aim is to show the cultural wealth, potentials and cultural needs of the migrants and their children in public. It brings people from different

cultures into contact and develops and supports culture activities, which promote the dialogue of different ethnic groups amongst one another and with the majority society.

Intercultural work opens up access to cultural offers and culture facilities for people with a migration background, while at the same enabling them access to the cultural scenes of the immigrants and therefore also offering a setting for cultural exchange.

The INTERCULTURE programme is thereby oriented towards their projects and conceptions on a long-term basis and is understood as an integral part of the culture and further developed as such.

In the medium-term this means

- the promotion of the potentials of migrants,
- the incorporation of their interests into existing offers - also of publicly-funded facilities – and the development of new events – types of events
- the safeguarding of their involvement as culture creators and as recipients of culture and
- better access to the immigrant scene.

### **Interculture based on exchange and participation**

Interculture must be practiced as a cross-sectional task of administration and politics – as a self-evident part of local politics.

Only then can the corresponding conditions be created in order to be able to follow and implement intercultural focuses.

This goal, in which the working and developing process is constantly opened up, can only be achieved in order to incorporate the competences of the immigrant culture creators and those interested in culture.

This is why the guarantee of an exchange between those involved is also necessary. So the involvement of artists with a migration background, the incorporation of a migration committee, the participation of culture providers of private and public cultural facilities and the involvement of interested parties is an important basis for the development of relevant and more attractive offers. In this way, art and culture projects, which take the interests of people with and without a migration background into consideration. can be planned and organised.

A factor within this context is the regular collection of data on intercultural issues in order to gain an up-to-date overview and to allow the planning of cultural offers which is aimed at the interests and habits of use of people with a migration background.

### **Young people and interculture**

Young people with a migration background, just like their German contemporaries, do not necessarily have access to interculture. But for well-educated youths in particular internationality is of high significance and stands for cultural openness. Interculture is associated with homeland culture and is therefore considered more to be retrogressive.

Unlike older generations, for whom it is important to maintain their own cultural heritage, young people with a migration background have a considerably more positive access to German, or international culture. It is easier for them to cross borders; they find a cultural self-image of an international nature much more quickly. As far as content is concerned such youths are interested both in traditional Central European culture products of adult and youth culture, which reflect their life from an artistic and content point of view. For many children and youths with migration background the parents fail as conveyors of the local culture.

Children and youths have a particular interest in active artistic and cultural forms of expression. Those who learn about art and culture are particularly interested in receptive application of culture, which also serves as a multiplier for this. For schools and the youth culture work this results in high demands and huge possibilities.

### **Interculture - Cultures in Wuppertal**

Attractive cultural offers characterise the self-perception of the Wuppertal residents and have a very positive effect on the public image of the city.

- A variety of offers is a significant location factor.
- Against the backdrop of population development this can play a role for the residential area of Wuppertal.
- Market value of culture – the number of foreign visitors has increased in the last few years

## **C. Guidelines**

Intercultural work offers the framework for the cooperation and the exchange of people and their different cultures and leaves space for the cultural difference and independence. The following points offer an initial orientation:

- The different cultures in Wuppertal are being increasingly perceived and involved in the offers. This leads to an increase in the share of intercultural offers both in the programmes of the private scene as well as in the offers of the publicly funded facilities and institutions.
- Intercultural networks are expanded, in order to enable the exchange and involvement in projects to those involved with and without a migration background.
- Political decision makers are incorporated into intercultural development processes.
- Migrants participate actively as creators and enthusiasts of culture and at the same time pass information onto their communities.
- The offers of cultural education are aimed at children and young people with and without migration background – especially those who were previously not able to participate in these offers due to their family situation.

- In the districts and neighbourhoods low-threshold intercultural offers are expanded and intensified.
- Regardless of their cultural origin young people should be acquainted more intensively with the active and passive use of culture. International and young artistic forms of expression in particular should be supported in doing this.

## **D. Measures**

If a strategic concept is not merely to remain a declaration of intent, it must suggest measures in which the suggested guidelines are substantiated and replete with life.

### **1. Intercultural Day**

At the Intercultural Day the guidelines and measures of the strategic concept are discussed and cultural contributions focusing on intercultural dialogue are presented.

### **2. Intercultural Conference**

An annually held intercultural conference will be established, in which representatives of publicly-funded culture facilities, the culture associations of foreign culture circles and the young generation participate. Its goal is to

- inform people about intercultural activities,
- exchange experiences and give advice
- support cooperations.

All facilities involved in the Intercultural Conference are called upon to develop their own catalogue of measures for the period of 2 years with the aim

- to develop or strengthen offers with intercultural orientation
- to positively influence visitor numbers
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Interculture expert circles, which meet up to two to three times a year and discuss specialist matters of the intercultural work, are being set up. The Culture Office is responsible for taking care of the Intercultural Conference and the specialist circles.

### **3. Interculture as a task of the Culture Office**

In the Culture Office the intercultural work remains an important task and within the framework of the available resources will include the following activities:

- Support function for the Intercultural Conference
- Contact partner and coordination function for partners of interculture
- Information platform and expert exchange
- Realisation of intercultural activities
- Support in the acquisition of funds
- Networking of adult and youth culture

### **4. Intercultural Projects**

On the basis of the guidelines of the Municipal Strategic Concept for Interculture, there will also be a series of intercultural events held in the future, into which both urban culture facilities and interculturally-oriented event organisers will be incorporated. As examples of this the East-West contacts and the Intercultural Encounters can be carried out.

## **5. Invitations to public events**

On the guest lists to public events from all social sectors (economy, education, sport, culture etc.) people with a migration background are given particular consideration with a role model function.

## **6. Cultural funding**

In the allocation of public funding to promote culture, decision criteria are applied which adequately take projects by experts with a migration background into consideration. These criteria are also used for decisions about exhibition and image possibilities.

## **7. Intercultural education**

The work at school is all about supporting and promoting intercultural development processes. Cultural projects are brought into being, which don't build on ethnic backgrounds, but firstly find a common denominator and then demonstrate the diversity of internationalism.

Consideration is given to the cooperation of schools with established culture facilities and youth culture facilities.

## **8. Database**

In the Culture Office a general database will be set up, on the support of culture funding, especially for artists with a migration background and/or intercultural interest. The aim is an overview of artistic potential in Wuppertal.

## **9. Public relations**

The representatives of intercultural facilities and projects will continue to be competently supported in their press and public relations work and within this context contacts to press representatives/ reporters will be set up.

The Culture Office is developing an intercultural newsletter, containing information on events and projects with an intercultural character and purpose will be sent to organisers and interested parties in an easily accessible manner.

## **10. Qualification**

Creators of culture will be motivated by relevant training and further education offers (information about migration and integration, public relations, intercultural project management,...).

## **Municipal Strategic Concept for Interculture Attachment**

The following documentation firstly provides an overview of the previous activities of intercultural work in Wuppertal. It is followed by a list of the events and projects which have been carried out since 1989 and an overview of the cooperation partners included.

### **a. Intercultural events and projects from 1989 to 2007 (examples)**

#### **Literature**

- Goethe's "Italian Journey" reading with music, Kulturpalast (1992)
- "The Harem is not the World" with Moroccan author Prof. Fatima Mernissi, Alte Feuerwache (1993)
- "Wuppertal reads" the novel "Iskender" by Hermann Schulz with an eclectic accompanying programme of events, at several locations (2007)

#### **Film**

- Film series and discussions in the encounter with Poland, film and discussion with Polish director

#### **Theatre**

- German-Turkish Wuppertheater
- Greek Theatre with Maria Karavia
- Turkish Arkadas' Theatre
- Bosnian Theatre "Roda", "Pralipe" - Romatheater

#### **Dance**

- Dance Theatre Incluse from Kaliningrad, Russian Winter ,2006
- Afrodance with Adésa, Africanissimo, 1997

#### **Visual Arts**

- "From All Directions" – International artists in Wuppertal
- 27 artists from 15 countries, Stadtparkasse, 1991
- "Accepting foreigners" – 5 Wuppertal locals and 7 foreign artists, Stadtparkasse, 1994
- Africanissimo- "GAME SU... It is time," paintings, sculptures and installations by African and European artists, Kunsthalle HDJ-Barmen, 1997

#### **Music**

- "From the Bosphorus to Gibraltar" Music festival on the Hardt, 1991
- "Suerte" concert with Abed Azrue with intercultural ensemble, Paris, in the Schauspielhaus, 1995

#### **Youth culture**

- International youth exchanges with cultural programmes (e.g. with France, England, Poland, Slovakia, Israel).
- Media project since 1992 featuring film productions incl. "Young and Muslim 1-4," "The Seal," "Revelations," "I am Me"

## Festivals

- Street festival "From Anatolia to Andalusia," Laurentiusplatz, 1991

## Workshops

- Future workshop: "The multicultural City Society – Reality and Vision", VHS, 1991

## Festivals/Intercultural Encounters

- 1990 Encounter with Turkey "El ele – Dest bidin hev – Hand in Hand" (Turkish – Kurdish – German)
- Encounter with Greece "Kalimera Wuppertal"
- Encounter with Yugoslavia "Yugoslavia – a multi-ethnic state"
- 1991 **1<sup>st</sup> Wuppertal Intercultural Festival** "From the Bosphorus to Gibraltar"
- 1992 Encounter with Italy
- 1993 Encounter with Morocco
- 1994 **2<sup>nd</sup> Wuppertal Intercultural Festival** "Encounters which hold out hope"
- 1995 Encounter with Poland "Spotkanie z Polska"
- 1996 Encounter with Spain "sol y sombre"
- 1997 Africanissimo in Wuppertal
- 1997 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Bosnia-Herzegovina
- 1998 **3<sup>rd</sup> Wuppertal Intercultural Festival** "Where Cultures Meet"
- 1998 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Encounter with Slovakia
- 1999 Alevites in Wuppertal (a religious orientation in Turkey)
- 1999 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Encounter with Russia
- 2000 **4<sup>th</sup> Wuppertal Intercultural Festival** "Children of the World"
- 2000 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Encounter with Hungary
- 2001 Greece – Turkey – Germany Interactive Culture Project
- 2001 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Encounter with Romania
- 2001 Jewish Culture Days (Roswitha Dasch)
- 2002 Encounter with Italy "7th Talklänge – Festival of Italian Culture"
- 2002 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Lithuania – Poland
- 2003 Morocco and its neighbours, insights into the Arabian world of Maghreb
- 2003 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Special: 10 years of Slovakia
- 2003 Jewish Culture Days (Roswitha Dasch)
- 2004 **Around the Mediterranean – Part I** Wuppertal Interculture Weeks
- 2004 EAST WEST CONTACTS: Encounter with Poland
- 2005 **Around the Mediterranean – Part II** 25 Years of Wuppertal Interculture Days
- 2005 EAST WEST CONTACTS: The Baltic States
- 2005 Jewish Culture Days (Roswitha Dasch)
- 2007 EAST WEST CONTACTS international
- Intercultural Encounters with Latin America** – Poetry and Mysticism of a Continent

## b. Intercultural encounters – Cooperation partners (1990 – 2008)

### A. Urban cooperation partners

- Department for Integration and Migration
- Foreigners' Commissioner
- Foreigners' Advisory Council
- RAA
- Press office and city marketing department
- Municipal authority for further education
- In particular the languages department, German as a foreign language, Culture, Pin politics
- Municipal authority for the City Library
- Municipal authority for Youth and Leisure
- Especially Häuser der Jugend (Houses of Youth), facilities for children and youth work, RAA
- Municipal authority for schools
- Municipal authority for the Bergische Music School
- Municipal authority for Sport and Swimming Pools
- Media Centre of the City

## **B. Further cooperation partners**

- International Youth and Meeting Centre Alte Feuerwache
- International Meeting Centre of the Caritas
- Talklang e.V.
- Ethnological Museum
- Meeting Place of the Old Synagogue
- Migration Service of the Deaconship
- Social counselling of the Workers' Welfare Association
- District offices (e.g. Ostersbaum, Oberbarmen, Nordstadt)
- Communication Centre "die börse e.V."
- "Die Färberei"
- "Bandfabrik"
- "Café ADA"
- Catholic Education Centre
- Catholic City Hall(Laurentiusplatz)
- City Hall
- Secretariat for joint culture work in NRW
- Schauspielhaus (Nachffoyer)
- Forum Maximum in the REX
- Greek Theatre Wuppertal
- Wuppertheater
- Immanuels Church
- "Unerhört" (Sophien Church)
- City Youth Council
- City Church of Elberfeld

### **• Religious facilities**

e.g. Orthodox communities, mosques, "missions"

### **• Groups, associations, federations**

- Mutual Aid Association (Turkey)
- Youth, Sport and Culture Association of Anatolia

- International Workers' Association and Youth Centre (Turkey)
- Alevi Culture Associations (2)
- Development Association Yilmaz-Güney Foundation
- KOMJIN, KOMJIVAN (Kurds)
- Mesopotamian Culture Association (Kurds)
- Greek Democratic Communities "Makrijannis"
- "Panagia Soumela" (GR)
- "Megas Alexandros" (GR)
- "Circolo Culturale Italiano"
- Spanish Mission
- Polish Church Community
- German Romanian Friendship Association "DER KUB"
- German-Indian Society
- Philippine-German Association
- "Petar Kocic" Association (Serbia)
- Croatian Mission
- Nicaragua Office
- IAF (Association of Bi-National Marriages and Partnerships)
- IKV International Culture Association
- AGEW (Working Group One World)
- ESG (Evangelical Student Community)
- KHG (Catholic University Community)
- ASTA Foreigners' Department
- Congolese Culture Association
- Culture Association of Eritraia
- Humanitarian Aid Organisation Togo e.V.
- Moroccan Friendship Association
- Iranian Culture Association "PEGAH"
- Children Protection Association
- UNICEF
- Children's Museum
- MIZWA e.V.
- Friendship associations of the partner cities
- Böhler Hof Society
- Kafka-Theatre e.V.
- "Unter Wasser fliegen"
- "Der Grüne Weg" e.V.