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The Need of Having an Intercultural Approach, in the Welcome Mechanisms of Migrants and Refugees in Bogotá. Policy Review, Learning from Others, Making Proposals

La necesidad de tener un acercamiento intercultural, en los mecanismos de acogida de migrantes y refugiados en Bogotá. Revisión de políticas, aprendiendo de otros y formulando propuestas

Fernanda NAVAS-CAMARGO

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4032-7070>

jfnavas@ucatolica.edu.co

Universidad Católica de Colombia, Colombia

Sandra MONTOYA RUIZ

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6011-418X>

politologa85mruiz@gmail.com

Universidad Católica de Colombia, Colombia

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ABSTRACT

The present paper explores the district's public policy of three Latin American capital cities, known for their intercultural population: Buenos Aires, Ciudad de México and Rio de Janeiro. Then it examines those policies in Bogotá, the capital city of Colombia, in order to compare and determine its preparedness or not for hosting the growing immigrating communities in the city. Main purpose is to contribute in defining a migrant integration path, through policy making that promotes intercultural cities in Latin America. It is expected to answer the following questions: Why is an intercultural approach important in the city's planning and which aspects are to be considered? How are the observed cities responding to that approach? How should Bogotá start preparing itself to welcome more immigrants?

Keywords: Community, Immigration, Interculturalism, Public Policy

RESUMEN

El presente artículo explora las políticas públicas distritales de tres ciudades capitales latinoamericanas reconocidas por su población intercultural; Buenos Aires, Ciudad de México y Rio de Janeiro. Luego examina esas políticas en la ciudad Bogotá, capital de Colombia, con el propósito de comparar y determinar el grado de preparación de ésta en ser un destino anfitrión para las crecientes comunidades migrantes asentadas allí. El objetivo principal es el de contribuir a la definición de una ruta que contribuya a la promoción de ciudades interculturales como mecanismo de acogida. Se espera responder las siguientes preguntas: ¿Por qué es importante el enfoque intercultural en la planificación de una ciudad y cuáles son los aspectos a ser tenidos en cuenta? ¿De qué forma están respondiendo las ciudades estudiadas a este enfoque?, ¿De qué manera puede comenzar a prepararse Bogotá, para continuar recibiendo migrantes?

Palabras Clave: Comunidad, Inmigración, Interculturalidad, Políticas Públicas.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Arriving into a new host country, represents a variety of situations and feelings which range from being able to communicate in a foreign language, to understanding the underlying meaning of certain acts, ways, traditions and proceedings of the new destiny. Understanding the actual migrating conditions, allows to have a better understanding of that community, and the integration processes in the host countries (Polo, Serrano, & Granados: 2018). The continuously growing Migration flows encompass a deep cultural heterogeneity in the multiple host countries around the world and therefore nowadays it is much more evident the need of rethinking the territories around a cultural diversity. States seem to be willing to change towards interculturality, but in a smaller scale, how are cities preparing themselves? Several aspects of the immigration approach are to be handled through local decisions, made by city administrators. i.e., route planning of public transportation in accordance to the specific needs of peripheral population, investment in inclusive education², promoting intercultural activities for all.

Migration waves derive from heterogeneous backgrounds, which translate into an emergence of a plurality of cultures within a single setting. Nevertheless, the needs of the population come out to be almost the same. Finding a place to live, being able to find a means for survival through a decent job opportunity, searching for equals and for familiarity in order to create community, pursuing to communicate adequately (many times in a foreign language), that is, settling down and being able to call the new destiny, home. Migration comes along with radical changes and challenges, therefore encouraging integration in the sites where different cultures and social groups meet, like schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, streets, shopping malls, and soccer fields (Ray: 2003) is a way of making the integration process better. Those issues do not represent national concerns, but are to be taken care of by the cities governments. Furthermore, as a result of the great economic growth in Latin America throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century, the development of migrations towards certain destinies inside the region experienced a significant upturn (Polo, et al: 2018), which means it is latent the necessity of establishing suited proceedings in the integration process of the arriving population.

2. UNDERSTANDING INTERCULTURALITY

According to United Nations, it is to be understood as the construction of equitable relations between different communities which are to be framed under their individual historical, cultural, economic, political and environmental background. Education is called to be tool to achieve that equitable relation (UNESCO: 2017). It is not an static situation, but it is to be conceived as a process, with different stages such as the willingness of people to avoid conflicts, the capacity of being compassionate about others feelings and the disposition to have a perspective from someone else's point of view in order to have a respectful and cordial interaction among cultures (Cavalié: 2013). It cannot be imposed by a third party, or a dominant culture. It should integrate dimensions such as exchange, interaction, mutual relationship, openness and effective solidarity among the diverse ways of understanding life, values, history, social conducts.

Interculturality is conceived as means for creating a better, more understandable and peaceful society where the voice and the diverse opinions are taken into account, all of which should be appointed into

¹ El presente texto expone resultados de investigación del proyecto titulado "Desafíos contemporáneos para la protección de Derechos Humanos en escenarios de posconflicto desde enfoques interdisciplinarios", que forma parte de la línea de investigación Fundamentación e implementación de los Derechos Humanos, del grupo de investigación Persona, Instituciones y Exigencias de Justicia, reconocido y categorizado como Tipo A1 por COLCIENCIAS y registrado con el código COL0120899, vinculado al Centro de Investigaciones Socio jurídicas (CISJUC), adscrito y financiado por la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Católica de Colombia.

² Inclusive education, within an intercultural paradigm, is based on an interdiscursive thinking, considers the experience of the self-consciousness of the subject, as a relationship between individuals interacting on the basis of the reciprocal recognition (See Díaz: 2013, p. 69).

consolidating a better community. A wholesome community is that in which everyday practices are shared, observed, analyzed and discussed by all. Where there is a chance for everyone to prove new ideas and identify mistakes. When the community itself is support and sustainability of the psychic identity of its members because they feel appreciated, valued and welcomed from the beginning (Vallescar: 2013).

The implications of having an intercultural approach are perceived in the simple situations of everydayness in both the personal and the social spheres. The way of relating and communicating with others is fundamental and it is shaped not only by the verbal outcomes, but as a whole including facial and body expressions (Grimson: 2001). Purpose of interculturality is then communication, comprehension of the others without imposing our values and without having the obligation of identifying ourselves with theirs.

Interculturality has many definitions and interpretations, depending on context and applicability to particular segments of society (Lincoln, Liang & Mackey: 2015). Newcomers - weather from other cities within and beyond national border of from rural areas- contribute to the increasing diversity and complexity of interactions in cities (UNESCO: 2016).

Context is important to understand and admit that there's not a unique assessment of single situations (Beltrán: 2015), therefore it is latent the need of creating tailored mechanisms that foster the integration of diverse cultures within a given territory, city or close environment. But, interculturality³ doesn't reduce itself like multiculturalism does, to the simple dialogue of cultures of dialogue of knowledges, it is much more than a good conversation and coexistence of good neighbors, interculturality is a horizon for decolonization of life itself, where all dialogues are possible (Guerrero Arias: 2011).

A transformative and participative interaction that leads to integration without trespassing believes and leaving aside relationships based on power and dominance. Is the ability to listen and be heard. It is the path that should be taken and that currently is challenged by the lack real actions of solidarity, respect, inclusion and diversity. Proposals for policy making are to include the aims of the public opinion and the social claims (Velandia Montes: 2014). Important is, to start taking concrete engagements towards a truly intercultural space, one which has not been achieved yet. The advantages of an intercultural model (Cacciatore: 2015, p 48) is directly related to the criticism of a uniforming theory and practice that, in the name of artificial and supposed universalistic exemplars put into discussion the territorial specificity and the sovereignty of cultures themselves, in order to avoid both discrimination and exclusion⁴.

It is a fundamental part of the process to have an aim to achieve peace in every social interaction and in order to be able to claim that, the ones presented as victims are to be considered main civil actors (Martínez Lazcano & Cubides Cárdenas: 2016).

3. THE INTERCULTURAL CITIES

The United States is a country whose identity is based on the arrival of migrating communities, therefore its expertise and tradition in this area is very well known. *The Migration Policy Institute* has a long haul practice in evaluating the different outcomes from the migrating process. In year 2003 a study named *The Role of Cities in Immigrant Integration* was published by the institute, and it presented a first analysis of what is lacking to procure a better integration for immigrants and refugees. Conclusions made then were: immigrants and refugees settle in suburbs, this characteristic involves a series of needs, i.e. a better transportation network,

³ According to Vergara, interculturality is committed to a dialogical crossing and as an essential element to achieve equality, understanding, liberation, and mutual recognition of those participants involved in the intercultural dialogue and in the balanced and symmetrical share of relational power (See Vergara: 2015, p. 40).

⁴ Grasping on discrimination deserves to reflect on related processes to the triad Society-State-Market, among them: value chain transnationalization, the rise of knowledge society, new transnational social division of labor, process of cultural reconfiguration, social exclusion and the subordination of the State (See Infante: 2009, p. 89).

with flexible schedules. It should also be considered the perspective of “eminent domain”, where relations between the judicial, legislative and executive powers are to be applied (Azuela: 2008).

Understanding the city as a territory for heterogeneity and diversity is the aim of providing an intercultural approach in the city planning. This is what is called an intercultural perspective, and its purpose is to contribute towards social transformation by promoting changes in the dynamics of exclusion, discrimination, invisibilization and inequality faced by certain collectives belonging to minority cultures (Ajuntament de Barcelona: 2018). The migrating population always represents a minority in any host destination. Mexico City has a population of 9 million inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEG): 2018), 5% of those, are migrants and 80% of them come from United States and Guatemala, the remaining 20% belong to, Spain, Colombia, Argentina and most recently from China and Korea (Rojas: 2011). Rio de Janeiro is home for over 6 million people (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE): 2018), around 3% of them being foreigners. The migrating community there is composed by naturals from the United States - 51.000 people, Japan -41.417 people-, Paraguay -24.000 people- and Portugal -21.376 people- (Sputnik News: 2012)⁵. Buenos Aires City, is home for 2.890.151 inhabitants, and Great Buenos Aires, the urban agglomerate hosts 12.801.364 people, 38% of which were not born in the city (Buenos Aires Ciudad: 2018), and 13% of whom were not born in the country. Along with Bogotá, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo and Santiago de Chile, are the only Latin American cities categorized as Alfa Cities, according to the GaWC classification⁶. That makes them the ones with the most external relations, therefore, interculturalism is a natural situation within their environment. Interculturalism within the cities is essentially viewed as a set of diversity policies driven by one basic idea: that the interaction among people from different backgrounds (including immigrants and citizens) matters and that this has been overlooked in diversity policies, which have mainly concentrated on ensuring the cultural rights of immigrant groups (Zapata-Barrero: 2015a, p. 9). As discussed above, an understanding of interculturalism without taking into account an active participation from the minorities⁷, cannot be understood in a wholesome way.

What are the cities doing to promote further interaction between its inhabitants, to have active participation from the minorities, to promote spaces for open discussion and contradiction and to teach that different means gaining and learning more and not the opposite way around? As for the integration process of the immigrating community, how are they being supported?

In order to determine whether or not the Districts are planning their development around an intercultural perspective, the scale proposed by Ricard Zapata-Barrero⁸ will be used. The scale is based on 10 dimensions, each of which is assessed by two components. Each indicator weights either 0,5 or 1. An overall score below 5, means that the city doesn't have an intercultural approach, maximum score is 10 (Zapata-Barrero: 2018).

⁵ Sputnik News. (2012). En los últimos diez años el número de inmigrantes que viven en Brasil aproximadamente se ha duplicado, según el censo de 2010 publicado por el Instituto Brasileño de Geografía y Estadística (IBGE). Sputnik News.

⁶ The GaWC classification derives from a Research Project, directed by the Geography Department at Loughborough University, funded by the Flemish Fund for Scientific Research and conducted by an international network and its results are based upon the studies made in 707 cities. The network focuses upon research into the external relations of world cities. Most of the research effort was put on studying the internal structures of individual cities and comparative analyses of the same.

⁷ In order to reflect on the participation of civil society and its relation with a collective protection of democracy in the Americas, see Guevara (2009).

⁸ Senior researcher and associate professor at the Department of Political Sciences, *Universitat Pompeu Fabra* (Barcelona, Spain). His main lines of research deal with contemporary issues of liberal democracy in contexts of diversity, especially the relationship between democracy, citizenship and immigration.

| DIMENSION | INDICATORS | SCORE |
|---|---|-----------|
| Political | By political consensus the city recognizes that it is diverse | 0,5 |
| | The city is committed with interculturality | 0,5 |
| Planning | There is evidence of an explicit adoption of a program for intercultural strategic actions | 0,5 |
| | Within that program, there's an specific budget assigned for the promotion of intercultural actions | 0,5 |
| Interdepartamental | There's an intercultural strategy for most of the areas within the town hall | 0,5 |
| | An explicit mention to follow an intercultural strategy is made in the departments programs | 0,5 |
| Leadership | There is an intersectoral institutional network to deal with issues related to diversity | 0,5 |
| | There is a coordinating figure of interculturality dependent on the mayor's office | 0,5 |
| Human Rights | An specific office/department is intended to deal with complaints about discrimination | 0,5 |
| | There are specific mechanisms to apply the European Directive Against Discrimination ⁹ | 0,5 |
| Social | A public declaration of principles for interculturality between the political and social spheres has been made recognizing to be a diverse city engaged with interculturality | 1 |
| Information, training and knowledge transfer | There's an structure to observe interculturality, identify good practices, collect information and promote research, among other actions | 1 |
| | Each area of the town hall has its own code of conduct which declares interculturality as a main principle | 0,5 |
| Ethics | The town hall has its own interculturality training program for their employees | 0,5 |
| Participation | An specific communication channel has been established by the council, in order to allow discussion on basic issues of the districts agenda and its political orientation | 1 |
| Welcome Plan | There is a network in charge of making a linguistic and knowledge welcome plan (culture, town hall services, history of the city, etc...) | 1 |
| Total Overall Score | | 10 |

Table 1: 10 Parameters to measure interculturality-Source: Made by the Authors

3.1. México City

The largest community of North American citizens living outside the United States is based in Mexico. There's an estimated population of 700,000 U.S. naturals currently living there (World Population Review: 2018). According to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, in the last decade the number of foreigners settled in Mexico has grown in a 95 per cent. Where 89 per cent of those foreigners come from the United States (INEG: 2018).

Mexico's city current District Policy, is called *Programa General de Desarrollo de Distrito Federal 2013-2018* (General Development Program of the Federal District 2013-2018). The strategies of the program are built around five thematic priority axes and cross-cutting issues, which in turn are related to the Mexican foreign policy approach and its cultural diplomacy focus⁹. The issues raised are listed and explained below.

⁹ A holistic approach on migration processes has characterized the international role of Mexico. In the 1930s and during World War II, under Cárdenas administration, Mexico placed the importance of cultural exchange and supported a committed asylum policy, in order to protect human rights and democracy. In this decade, more than a thousand Austrians were hosted as exiles in Mexico. In the 1970s, with the overthrow of the Chilean Popular Unity government, the Mexican Chancellor Rabasa moved to Santiago city to obtain safe-conducts for the Chilean citizens who were asking for refugee at the Embassy of Mexico in Chile. Mexico has a tradition of an independent and respectful approach, which has been used as a means of soft power within its foreign policy (See Montoya: 2017).

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Equity and Social Inclusion for Human Development | The city recognizes itself as a place for human development, but with a need to improve their approach in acting against poverty, inequality and marginalization. In 2008, a screening to determine the most discriminated groups was made. As a result, it was identified a need to design specific strategies for the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women • Girls and Boys • Young People • Indigenous people and communities • Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, transvestite and intersex people • Stray population • Senior Citizens • Disabled person • Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers • Victims of Human Trafficking and sexuality exploited persons <p>Furthermore, it is determined that a following action is to operate the Law for interculturality, migrant's attention and human mobility, as well as to create an interculturality index.</p> |
| 2 | Governance, Security and Citizen Protection | One of the biggest challenges identified is the large mobility of people, the high demographic concentration and the socioeconomic inequality of its people. Threats based on natural phenomenon, socio-organizational matters and health issues, are also put in the scope. The coexistence of millions of people in the same place, is recognized as challenging. |
| 3 | Sustainable Economic Development | It is stated that Mexico has made a transition from an industry based economy, into a sustainable based economy. Main objectives include improving air quality, health protection, identify environmental risks and promote within citizens a commitment into fostering actions to preserve the setting. |
| 4 | Habitability and Services, Public Space and Infrastructure | Planning of the urban and natural territory, as well as their maintenance, the articulation of public transport, the use of vehicles, the housing offer and an integral management of solid waste, are the challenges to be faced through this axis. It is also identified that in certain territories of the city, the available resources are underutilized. This place were to be used by the migrating community of Mexico who seeks others districts where to live, because of the unavailability of spaces. |
| 5 | Effectiveness, Accountability and Fight against Corruption | An effective government it that in which the definition of goals is clear and traceable. Where actions are taken in correspondense of society's needs and an assessment of success can be made. Currently the city recognizes they have an excessive bureaucracy and high corruption rates. An specific line of action is intended to improve the infrastructure to better serve minorities, such as the migrating population. |
| Cross-cutting issues | This issues represent what should be important for all. The selected topics to be focused on during the period are: Human Rights, Gender Equity, Citizen Participation, Transparency, Innovation, Science and Technology, Sustainability and Metropolitan Development. There's also an special focus on international actions, being those understood as the ability the city has to become a point of reference because of their sustainable practices. It is also thought as a touristic destination, with great human capital, good for making business and for commercial exchange. | |

Table 2: Overview of the General Development Program of the Federal District 2013-2018.
 Source: Made by Authors

3.2. Buenos Aires

It was difficult to find a consolidated Policy of the district's development plan. In the official website of the city of Buenos Aires, there's information available regarding the focal points in which the city has proposed a plan, as follows:

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Citizens | Teachers and Students | Children and Adolescents |
| | Youth | Third Age |
| Tourists | Women | Family |
| | With information about what to do, when visiting the city in short stays. | |
| Enterprises | Economical Districts | Agency for the promotion of foreign investment |
| | Enterprise Design | Small and Medium Size Enterprise |
| Entrepreneurs | Funding and competitions | Training and enterprise incubators |
| | Entrepreneurial City | Social Innovation |

Table 3: Focal Points of the city of Buenos Aires Planing- Source: Made by Authors

Along with them, four axis represent the city's concerns: Enjoyment, understood as a city that favors the coexistence and that invites the community to share and enjoy good moments together. Human Scale, where it is stated that the city is built to connect people, to promote the use of public spaces and to protect the environment. Social Integration for all the inhabitants to have the same opportunities, rights and

responsibilities. Creativity, because the city is thought as a place that fosters technology and innovation, along with creative solutions that generate high impact in the city.

The available information is very general and it is appointed for the service of citizens and short stay visitors. Nevertheless, there's news from year 2003 in which it is stated that the Ombudsman Office, created a department focused on giving support to the immigrating and emigrating community. It was called the *Center to help and assist immigrants and emigrants*, and among their functions, giving information regarding legal, economic, cultural, labour and academic aspects of the hosting destination, was one of the most important ones. It was also thought for to give support in bureaucracy matters, for the Argentinian citizens living abroad (Clarín: 2003).

There isn't any recent evidence regarding the existence of this center. What does exist is the most current law, Decree 70 of 2017, modifying the Law N° 25.871, where the Argentinian government declares that immigrants who come from the poorer neighbor countries, are the cause of the growth of delinquency, perpetrators of crimes derived from drug smuggling and represent high proportions of detainees in the national penitentiary. On other news, it is even said that the intention of Argentina's president, is to build a wall between Bolivia and Venezuela in order to prevent them from entering to Venezuela (Romero & Politi: 2017).

Argentina's society was build from the arrival of European migrants. Nowadays, this seems to have been forgotten.

3.3. Rio de Janeiro

Town Hall for Rio de Janeiro, proposed a strategic plan named *Plano Estratégico da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro. Rio 2020, mais solidário e mais humano*. Within the plan, one can find four dimensions of action represented in four strategic goals, as follows:

| DIMENSION | AREAS OF RESULT | STRATEGIC INITIATIVES |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Economic Dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global, productive, groundbreaking and full of opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economy of the future Global vocation Capable Rio Social entrepreneurship Rio to Rio Innovative Rio |
| Social Dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventive health and Social Emergency. Human capital and education for Cariocas. Safe and sound Rio de Janeiro. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health attention and prevention Female attention Inclusive Rio Human Rights Popular Restaurants Literacy Civic Culture |
| Urban-Environmental Dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green, clean and healthy Rio Decentralized, inclusive and connected territory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban legislation Carioca Parks Greener and sustainable Rio Integrated territories |
| Governance Dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance for the citizens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital City Town Hall and you Digital Process |

Table 4: Planning Dimensions of the City of Rio de Janeiro. Source: Made by Authors

Among the development of the proposed strategies there wasn't any explicit mention regarding the integration process of the migrating communities (Prefeitura do Rio de Janeiro. (2018). Brazil too, is a country that was build and shaped from the perspective of the immigrants who landed there. Nowadays 0,9 percent of the population is migrant. Brazil is the Latin American country hosting the highest number of Syrian refugees, with around 3.000 (Garcia: 2017). It has recently been attracting qualified and skilled foreigners from countries such as the United States, Philippines, India, Germany, Italy and France. In the past few years there has been a rise of 135% of immigrants, most of them holding masters' and doctorates degrees (Pineiro Machado: 2014).

4. THE SITUATION OF COLOMBIA

Colombia had traditionally been known not as a destiny country, but as a walk-through territory for the migrants who aim to have The United States or Canada as a final destination. Nevertheless, in the last decades and given the positive transformation process that Colombia has been performing in the areas of safety and economic development, many have decided to stay here.

Over 50 years of internal war brought with it an overwhelming flow of emigrating citizens out of Colombia. In its recent history, the people of this country have had three moments in which a decision was made to flee somewhere else. In the 1970's, The United States was seen as the ideal destination in order to achieve better standards of living. By the 1980's, Venezuela was the chosen end point because it offered not only the possibility of living better, but it also had the benefit of being a neighbor country and having the same language. The oil bonanza was the main attraction for the migrants not only from Colombia, but from Latin America in general. Highly educated migrants were attracted to work in Venezuela, making it the first hosting destination for Latin American's and Caribbean's (Villa & Martínez Pizarro: 2001).

Then, in the late 1990's, other countries came into scope, such as Spain and Ecuador (TeleSUR-Cancillería de Colombia- AESCO/ df-KP-AdP:2015). In total, around five million Colombian nationals live today in a foreign country (Departamento Nacional de Planeación: 2017), making it one of the most emigrating countries in the world.

Empirically, the thesis of a population movement according to the gradients of growth or differential population density finds some support. Although there are exceptions (for example, migration between Colombia and Venezuela), the majority of migration flows in the region are directed from countries with higher growth or higher population density, to countries with lower growth or density (Martínez, Hakkert & Guzmán: 2000).

4.1. Bogotá

Multi-level governance and cities networks influence the policy design and the consolidation of cities' diversity policies (Zapata-Barrero: 2018). In Bogotá, policies are focused on the following areas:

| | |
|--|--|
| A city for the families | Recognize and guarantee the rights, inside a Family. |
| Comprehensive development from pregnancy until adolescence | In order to secure a safe and sound growth of the child and wellness of their mothers. |
| Living the territory | Foster the central administration, in order to be able to answer properly any inquiry. |
| Inclusive and without barriers | Articulation of processes and people, in order to be inclusive with all. |
| Dignity and happiness in seniority | Make senior citizens happy |
| Nutritious Bogotá | Provide enough, healthy and wholesome food for the children to be fed. |
| Diverse District | Reduce vulnerability, discrimination, violence and social exclusion, given the sexual orientation of a person. |
| Young District | Strengthen capacity building and generation of opportunities for youth in Bogotá. |
| Attention to street inhabitant | Searching for opportunities which generate, prevention and satisfaction. |

Table 5: Bogotá's Policy Making- Source: Made by Authors

None of the above gives a real representation of perceiving Bogotá, as an intercultural city, which in turn is linked to the lack of a holistic migration policy within the Colombian foreign policy (Montoya: 2017).

5. EVALUATING AND MAKING THE COMPARISON

Using the evaluation tool proposed by Zapata-Barrera (2015b), a weighing is made in accordance from what has been found in each city’s policy plan.

Table 6: Evaluating the cities Source: Made by Authors

| DIMENSION | INDICATORS | Mexico | Río de Janeiro | Buenos Aires | Colombia |
|--|---|----------|----------------|--------------|------------|
| Political | By political consensus the city recognizes that it is diverse | 0,5 | 0,5 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | The city is committed with interculturality | 0,5 | 0,5 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Planning | There is evidence of an explicit adoption of a program for intercultural strategic actions | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | Within that program, there’s an specific budget assigned for the promotion of intercultural actions | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Interdepartmental | There’s an intercultural strategy for most of the areas within the town hall | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | An explicit mention to follow an intercultural strategy is made in the departments programs | 0,5 | 0,5 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Leadership | There is an intersectoral institutional network to deal with issues related to diversity | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | There is a coordinating figure of interculturality dependent on the mayor’s office | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Human Rights | An specific office/department is intended to deal with complaints about discrimination | 0,0 | 0,5 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | There are specific mechanisms to apply the European Directive Against Discrimination * | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Social | A public declaration of principles for interculturality between the political and social spheres has been made recognizing to be a diverse city engaged with interculturality | 1 | 1 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Information, training and knowledge transfer | There’s an structure to observe interculturality, identify good practices, collect information and promote research, among other actions | 0,5 | 0,5 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | Each area of the town hall has its own code of conduct which declares interculturality as a main principle | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Ethics | The town hall has its own interculturality training program for their employees | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| | An specific communication channel has been established by the council, in order to allow discussion on basic issues of the districts agenda and its political orientation | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Participation | An specific communication channel has been established by the council, in order to allow discussion on basic issues of the districts agenda and its political orientation | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Welcome Plan | There is a network in charge of making a linguistic and knowledge welcome plan (culture, town hall services, history of the city, etc. .) | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 |
| Total Overall Score | | 3 | 3.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

* Check note 10

The results are really low, and none of the cities examined comply with the requisites proposed by Zapato-Barrera. A long trail is still to be walked in order to create more inclusive societies, respectful of its own believes and eager to learn from the culture, knowing’s and proceedings of others, “it is necessary to introduce specific training in intercultural competences to enhance those spaces and create ways of living together, based on a minimum of justice and equality” (Vallescar: 2013, p. 57). All the voices need to be heard.

¹⁰ In 2008, the European Commission presented a proposal for a Council directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment outside the labour market, irrespective of age, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief, which aims at extending protection against discrimination through a horizontal approach. However, as unanimity is required in the Council, the draft has remained blocked at that stage since then (European Parliament: 2018).

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BIODATA

Fernanda NAVAS-CAMARGO: Abogada y Administradora de Negocios Internacionales. Doctora en Educación para la integración y el Desarrollo Humano y Sostenible. Investigadora de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Católica de Colombia, integrante del grupo de investigación Personas, Instituciones y Exigencias de Justicia, registrado con el código COL0120899 en Colciencias, vinculado al Centro de Investigaciones Sociojurídicas (CISJUC) de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Católica de Colombia.

Sandra MONTOYA RUÍZ: Politóloga de la Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Especialista en Organizaciones, Responsabilidad Social y Desarrollo de la Universidad de los Andes y Magister en Asuntos Internacionales de la Universidad Externado de Colombia. Integrante del grupo de investigación Personas, Instituciones y Exigencias de Justicia, registrado con el código COL0120899 en Colciencias, vinculado al Centro de Investigaciones Sociojurídicas (CISJUC) de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Católica de Colombia.