

Strategy for the Development of the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca

Multicultural Cluj

Summary

Culture and the relationships between various cultures and ethnic groups affect a variety of different spheres of public life and as a result, play a key role in the realisation of social and economic goals of development plans. The present document attempts to make a contribution to the creation of the framework for the *improvement of interethnic dialogue* by means of formulating *local policies* promoting interethnic collaboration and a *beneficial employment of religious and ethnic diversity* in Cluj-Napoca.

The recognition and amplification of this cultural diversity in the future makes the elaboration, adoption and promotion of policies tailored for the local context that would turn this diversity into value a necessity. Although diversity is a value in itself, its integration has both an economic, as well as social dimension, contributing to durable local development. Naturally, the definition of cultural diversity is still under debate. However, several features have been identified, such as multiculturalism, linguistic diversity, ethno-diversity, cultural rights, diversity of confessions, beliefs and traditions. As a result, cultural diversity implies an integrative approach in the fields of politics, economy, the social and the legal spheres.

As a result, the present document contains a series of recommendations regarding the beneficial employment of cultural diversity in the city of Cluj in an attempt to support local development. The central recommendations are the following:

1. *Assuming and defining a multicultural identity for the city and its promotion via all means of mass communication;*
2. *The creation of a Consultative Council in the sphere of multiculturalism that would bring together leading representatives of the various ethnic groups living in the city;*
3. *The encouragement and promotion of partnerships between public and private institutions, non-profit organisations in various fields of activity: education, culture, tourism, etc.*
4. *The organisation of multicultural events and the elaboration of short and medium term agendas in this regard;*
5. *The city should rely on its multicultural potential in encouraging cultural tourism;*
6. *Raising awareness of the Roma problem as a component of the multicultural potential of the city.*

Introduction

Cluj-Napoca is a city with a significant multicultural tradition. From a cultural perspective, the city is remarkable due to the wealth of the Christian (Orthodox, Roman and Greek Catholic, Calvinist, Unitarian, Pentecostal, Adventist), Muslim and Judaic communities. The presence of these religious communities is completed by ethnic diversity due to the presence of ethnic Romanians (79.39%), Hungarians (18.96%), Roma (0.95%), Germans (0.07%), Ukrainians (0.5%) as well as Jews, Arabs and Chinese. In the recent past, Cluj has been welcoming an increasing number of asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, as well as employees of international companies.

The recognition of this cultural diversity and its amplification in the future makes the elaboration, adoption and promotion of policies tailored for the local context that would turn this diversity into value a necessity. Although diversity is a value in itself, its integration has both an economic, as well as social dimension, contributing to durable local development. Naturally, the definition of cultural diversity is still under debate. However, several features have been identified, such as multiculturalism, linguistic diversity, ethno-diversity, cultural rights, diversity of confessions, beliefs and traditions. As a result, cultural diversity implies an integrative approach in the fields of politics, economy, the social and the legal spheres.

Romania has made significant progress in regard to the protection of ethnic minorities. Romanian legislation has been enriched by a series of provisions that are meant to protect minorities and support them in their yearnings to maintain their identity and traditions. In this general atmosphere of relaxed interethnic relations, of acceptance and promotion of diversity, the negative example of Cluj was becoming increasingly visible.

Local elections in 2004 have brought about major changes in the Mayoralty of Cluj-Napoca. The implications of this change for the ethnic diversity of the city are very important. For the first time in 12 years, the discourse of local authorities remained short of ultra-nationalist phraseology, allowing minorities to feel an integrative part of the local community. In spite of this, the participation of minorities in public life is still timid. After such a long period of exclusion, in which minorities have developed their own mechanisms and institutions of social participation, there is need for a joint initiative of local actors – public authorities, non-profit organisations, organisations of ethnic minorities – in order to overcome lack of trust, in order to ensure the involvement of minorities in the life of the local community, and for the promotion of respect for the values of diversity.

Our desire through this document is the identification of local public policies that will allow to beneficially rely on the cultural diversity of the municipality of Cluj-Napoca in supporting current developments.

The Analysis of Current Affairs

Contemporary scholarly literature proposes three normative models in the approach of majority-minority relations. These are: the assimilationist model, the differentialist model and the multicultural model.

The assimilationist model proposes the “incorporation of minorities into the majority” by giving up their language, traditions, cultural and social values, while concomitantly internalising those specific for the majority group/population. The individual is responsible for assuming this task, while the state is implicitly not expected to bear responsibility for accommodating preferences and values specific to given groups. This model implies that

through the internalisation of language/values/traditions specific for the majority groups, any chance for conflict is excluded.

The second model is the differentialist one, according to which contact between the majority group and the minority group(s) is reduced to a minimum, ensuring the “cohabitation” of groups that rarely meet and interact in this way. The state assumes no responsibility for accommodating specific languages/preferences/values, although it allows for the existence of parallel institutions.

The multiculturalist model implies, however, a more nuanced approach in between the above two through the acceptance of legitimacy and potential represented by assuming the diversity of ethnic groups. This model believes that there are chances for facilitating the participation of various groups in public life in such a way as to accommodate the language/preference/values specific for all groups. The participation of different groups in public life is, from the perspective of this model, the key element in the restructuring and improvement of community life and elimination of conflicts. The role of public institutions is diversified and improved by the encouragement of creativity in developing organisational combinations that are adequate for the specific needs of local communities.

Naturally, these theoretical-normative models are hard to find in pure form. They are, however, useful in structuring characteristic policies in a strategic manner, taking into account the outcomes of contributions made by every ethnic group to the life of the community it is active in over the medium and long run. From a legal point of view, current legislation creates the context for adopting multicultural policies at local level.

According to the *Romanian Constitution*, minorities are guaranteed the right to maintain, develop and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity, conferred by art. 6 para. 1

The Art. 6 defines the right to identity:

(1) The State recognizes and guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities, to the preservation, development and expression of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity.

(2) The protecting measures taken by the Romanian State for the preservation, development and expression of identity of the persons belonging to national minorities shall conform to the principles of equality and non-discrimination in relation to the other Romanian citizens.

By Art. 16, is guaranteed the equality of citizens:

(1) Citizens are equal before the law and public authorities, without any privilege or discrimination.

(2) No one is above the law.

(3) Access to a public office or dignity, civil or military, is granted to persons whose citizenship is only and exclusively Romanian, and whose domicile is in Romania.

In addition, art. 4 para. 2 states the equality of all citizens of Romania irrespective of nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, or language.

Also the ***Romanian Constitution*** establish: the right to education of minorities (Art. 32, para. 3: *The right of persons belonging to national minorities to learn their mother tongue, and their right to be educated in this language are guaranteed; the ways to exercise these rights shall be regulated by law*), parliamentary representation of minorities (Art. 59, para. 2: *Organizations of citizens belonging to national minorities, which fail to obtain the number of votes for representation in Parliament, have the right to one Deputy seat each, under the terms of the electoral law. Citizens of a national minority are entitled to be represented by one*

organization only), the right for interpreter during juridical procedure (Art. 127, para. 2: *Citizens belonging to national minorities, as well as persons who cannot understand or speak Romanian have the right to take cognizance of all acts and files of the case, to speak before the Court and formulate conclusions, through an interpreter; in criminal trials, this right shall be ensured free of charge*).

Cabinet Decision no. 137/2000 regarding the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination, later adopted as law no. 48/2002 defines discrimination and stipulates its punishment. In this regard, an organism was founded, called the National Council for Combating Discrimination, whose aim is to supervise the respect for the provisions of the anti-discrimination legislation.

Emergency Ordinance 22/1997 regarding local public administration brought significant positive changes as far as the use of minority languages in public administration are concerned. Legislation is applicable in localities in which at least 20% of the population belongs to a minority community. The normative act contains provisions regarding the use of bilingual signs and inscriptions, the use of minority languages in communicating with local authorities, both in writing, as well as in oral interactions, the publishing of announcements of public interest in minority languages, as well, the use of minority languages during Council meetings (local or county level) if at least one third of the councillors belong to a minority group (translation into Romanian must be offered), and the use of minority languages in court.

As a more recent development, a new law regulating public administration, passed in 2001, includes new provisions regarding the use of mother tongues in administration; in areas where minorities constitute over 20% of the population, all regulations adopted by local councils must be published in the mother tongue, as well, while individual decisions may be translated on demand. Similarly, if representatives of minorities constitute at least one third of all the representatives in the local council, meetings may be held in Romanian or in the minority language and must be assisted by an interpreter.

The **Law regarding local public administration (Law no. 215/2001)**, at article 90 stipulates:

"(1) In the relations between citizens and the authorities of local public administration the Romanian language is used.

(2) In the territorial administrative units, in which citizens belonging to a national minority represent more than 20% of the number of inhabitants, in their relations with the authorities of local public administration and their specialized bodies, can address them orally or in writing in their mother tongue as well and they will receive answers both in Romanian and in their mother tongue.

(3) In the conditions stipulated at paragraph (2), on the public relations posts there will also be employed persons that know the mother tongue of the citizens belonging to the respective minority.

(4) The authorities of the local public administrations will assure the inscriptioning in the mother tongue of the citizens belonging to the respective minority, of the names of localities and the public institutions under their authority, as well as the inscriptioning of announcements of public interest, in the conditions stipulated in paragraph (2).

(5) The official documents are obligatorily made up in Romanian."

Education in minority languages in Romanian public schools is another important component of the relevant legislation, recognised by the *Law of education*, passed in 1995. The problem regarding the use of Hungarian language in public education has been thoroughly debated over the past years. The law on education and its amendments ensure the right to education in the mother tongue at all levels of study and in all forms of instruction.

"Art. 118. Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to study and receive instruction in their mother tongue, at all levels and forms of education with appropriate request, according to the present law.

Art. 119. (1) Taking into account local needs, groups, classes, sections or school units with teaching in the languages of national minorities may be established, at request and in accordance with the provisions of this law.

(2) Paragraph (1) of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the learning of the official language and the teaching in this language.

The necessity to approach in different ways problems of national minorities depending on the nature of specific issues they are faced with appeared with the adoption of the *Strategy of the Romanian Cabinet for the Improvement of the Situation of Roma* in 2001. The strategy represents the first governmental initiative that comprehensively addresses the problems of the Roma minority, stipulating measures for ten different directions of action: community and public authority development, housing, social security, health care, economy, justice and public order, child protection, education, culture and cults, communication and civic participation. Recently, the Strategy has been completed and modified by Cabinet Decision 515/19.04.2006.

Thus, as far as community and public administration developments are concerned, the Strategy stipulates: "Local / county level organisation of mixed working groups formed by elected representatives of the given community, those of decentralised structures of the central administration and non-profit organisations of Roma and the Roma minority, in the evaluation of the more important needs of Roma communities and the application of support programmes for the latter." Another listing in the same chapter recommends "the development of collaboration between public administration and non-profit organisations of Roma, based on partnerships; the inclusion of leaders of Roma communities in local level administrative decision-making processes that affect the Roma communities."

The Constitution and the electoral law guarantee the representation of minorities in the Chamber of Deputies in the articles that grant one deputy seat to the organisations of all national minorities officially recognised if they obtain 5% of the total number of votes necessary for a lower house representative nation-wide.

In June 2002 the *Statute of the Police Officer* was passed and stipulates the inclusion of persons who speak the language of the given minority in the police forces of the settlements in which at least 20% of the population belongs to a minority community.

The currently existing legal framework in Romania provides the general pieces for the adoption of multicultural policies. This aspect is important not only concerning the facilitation of existent ethnic minorities' participation in public life, but also as regards pro-active measures connected to migration policy targeting communities in Romania that have been settling in this country over the past years.

The Objectives of Multicultural Policies

Through this document, we propose to identify means with the help of which local authorities can identify public policies that will permit the beneficial employment of the cultural diversity of the municipality of Cluj-Napoca in supporting current development. This study is based on the assumption that the multicultural tradition of Cluj is a value that must be cultivated in order to avoid the appearance of feelings of social isolation of certain cultural and / or ethnic groups, as well as to transform cultural diversity into a factor of lasting development.

Cluj is constituted by a conglomerate of parallel cultural communities (ethnic, linguistic, religious) among which there is little communication. A variety of reasons (historical, political, among others) lead over time to the current state of affairs, but which is incongruent with needs for local development of the city. In order to be able to respond to the context of cultural pluralism at local level, we would like to identify a set of measures that can effectively address problems of communication amongst cultural and ethnic groups in Cluj.

Measures specific for the multicultural model of diversity depend on the concept of applied multiculturalism. Scholarly literature distinguishes among three different notions of multiculturalism. The first conception is a demographic one, and according to which diversity is identified by the description of criteria that characterize the social context relevant for the process of local level public policies. The second conception is of a political nature and refers to measures and specific policies of local authorities that are meant to address specific needs of diverse contexts. The third conception, and the most controversial one, is an ideological one according to which cultural diversity is a social value in itself. As a result, there is a necessity to recognize individual and group rights as a prerequisite for the preservation of the cultures and traditions of various ethnic groups.

Irrespective of the adopted conception of diversity, multicultural measures taken attempt to attain one or several of the below enlisted goals:

- *The preservation of cultural identity* – refers to rights specified by law that ensure the freedom of speech and the manifestation of cultural and linguistic values for every citizen.
- *The insurance of social justice* – implies the guarantee for equality of chances and everyone's right to be treated equally irrespective of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender and origin.
- *The improvement of economic performance* – the development and employment of skills and talents of everyone irrespective of origin.

At the level of public policies, the promotion of multiculturalism and communication amongst various cultural communities means the elaboration, adoption and promotion of principles specific for the local context in an aim to support local development. We identify in this regard five main domains in which local public authorities have the possibility to adopt measures aimed to beneficially employ the multicultural character of Cluj. These principles are the following:

1. *The necessity to preserve traditions and specificities of the different cultures.*
 - a. officially recognising of local cultures and that of minorities,
 - b. guaranteeing the access of persons/communities to their own culture,
 - c. protecting and promoting cultural institutions.
2. *The conservation of the languages of all linguistic communities.*

a. insuring an institutional framework that aims to create and support education in the mother tongue,

b. facilitating the use of mother tongues in relations with local authorities,

c. insuring the access to information in minority languages through the development and support of audio-visual programmes.

3. *The facilitation of intercultural communication.*

a. promoting the consumption of a diverse range of cultural services,

b. ensuring the pluralism of information services,

c. stimulating intercultural events in the field of culture,

d. supporting participation in intercultural events.

4. *The adoption of multicultural education.*

a. elaborating and applying curricula for multicultural education in the formal education system,

b. supporting intercultural information services provided by NGOs,

c. supporting the diversity of instruction systems for adults.

5. *The development of cultural services.*

a. stimulating artistic creations in all cultural locations,

b. the creation of multicultural artistic workshops.

The adoption of these principles in the elaboration of local development policies contributes to the increase of social inclusion of various cultures and minorities, who in turn facilitate the beneficial employment of local resources for the promotion of durable development.

Main problems

Problems facing the Cluj community from the perspective of inter-ethnic relations can be divided into:

I. Institutional problems

As regards local public institutions

a) The lack of a multicultural vision as far as local authorities are concerned. Multiculturalism has not been considered till recently an important aspect for the development of the community by local authorities.

b) The lack of specialists in the domain within public authorities. This need refers to specialists in problems of multiculturalism in general, as well as specialists for problems of specific communities. As far as this latter aspect is concerned, there is a definite need for specialists regarding problems affecting members of the Roma community.

c) Unsuitable communication of local authorities with minorities, including in problems of common interest. It is important to mention here the lack of informative materials in the languages of minorities/or international languages for cooperation. The sources of information that need diversification are: the website, the newspaper of the Mayoralty, the printing of brochures with useful information, summaries of pieces of legislation specific for minorities, pin walls for public information.

d) The lack of cooperation mechanisms among numerically small minorities whose contributions to the enrichment of the life of the community would otherwise go unnoticed.

e) Low levels of institutional capacity in utilising existing resources actively used in the non-profit sector for facilitating dialogue. There are limits in understanding the mutual points of view and constraints regarding specific activities.

- A) *As regards relations among minorities and between minorities and the majority*
 - a) As formal relations among institutions
 - i. Relatively rare contacts between active organisations of the different minorities.
 - ii. Limited access to internal and external financial resources necessary for joint cultural initiatives.
 - b) Informal
 - i. The loss of interest in collaboration over time due to punctual, limited actions.
- II. *Problems of mutual perceptions that exist both between majority and the different minorities, as well as among minorities themselves:*
 - i. The fragmentation of the population on ethnic grounds;
 - ii. Lack of information regarding each others' values/traditions;
 - iii. The existence of stereotypes and prejudices regarding alternative groups.

Recommendations

1. *Assuming and defining a multicultural identity for the city and its promotion via all means of mass communication;*

1.1. The periodical evaluation of the situation by means of a **sociological study*** in order to assess the state of interethnic relations in Cluj-Napoca and those domains that require intervention.

1.2. The elaboration of a **strategy of communication*** and the adoption of a multicultural identity for the city.

1.3. The launching of a **campaign promoting a multicultural message** on all channels of communication (the newspaper, the website of the Mayoralty, etc.).

2. *The creation of a Consultative Council in the sphere of multiculturalism that would bring together leading representatives of the various ethnic groups living in the city;*

2.1. Identifying and co-opting respectable, recognised and appreciated representatives of the Cluj community. The creation of a **Consultative Multicultural Council*** of the Mayoralty, formed by these respectable representatives of ethnic groups living in the municipality. The role of this Council would be to update and put into practice the strategy of the Mayoralty promoting multiculturalism by formulating proposals and recommendations and by approving decisions of the Local Council in problems that fall within the competence of the Consultative Multicultural Council.

3. *The encouragement and promotion of partnerships between public and private institutions, non-profit organisations in various fields of activity: education, culture, tourism.*

3.1. The periodical **initiation** of multi-sectorial meetings (public institutions, non-profit organisations, the business community) for the **harmonisation** of efforts regarding the accommodation of ethnocultural diversity.

3.2. **The encouragement of partnerships** in the fields identified in the SWOT analysis as being domains preponderantly segmented on ethnic grounds: culture, the associative medium and education, by allocating a certain score in the evaluation forms of projects financed by the Local Council and which would promote the respective initiatives.

3.3. The allocation of a budget that would encourage the **co-financing** of European projects promoting multiculturalism and multicultural partnerships in the domains identified as priorities in the beneficial employment of the municipality's multicultural assets.

4. *The organisation of multicultural events*

4.1. The editing of a representative **publication** that would illustrate the multicultural potential of the city.

4.2. At the recommendation of the Consultative Council, the hosting of **events** with significant visibility attended by educational and cultural institutions of cultures to be found in the city (theatres, churches, cultural centres, publishing houses, schools, media agencies, etc.).

4.3. The celebration of multiculturalism, by identifying a **day** dedicated to the multiculturalism of the city.

5. *The city should rely on its multicultural potential in encouraging cultural tourism*

5.1. The preparation of **materials** promoting the city and tourist events by the office for tourism proposed by the strategy for the development of tourism that could strongly rely on the city's multicultural wealth.

5.2. The improvement of **monuments' visibility** and that of historical buildings by appropriately indicating their significance.

6. *Raising awareness of the Roma problem as a component of the multicultural potential of the city*

6.1. The hiring of a **Roma expert** according to the provisions of the *Strategy of the Romanian Cabinet for the Improvement of the Situation of Roma*.

6.2. The identification and **promotion** of **Roma** human and institutional resources in the municipality.

6.3. The creation of an institution or departments within existing institutions for the **promotion** of the above-mentioned assets (a museum for Roma, etc.).

Annex – Institutional local resources of multiculturalism

The National Theatre and the Romanian State Opera. The Hungarian State Theatre from Cluj, the Hungarian State Opera is the oldest theatrical company in Hungarian, inaugurated in 1792. A majority of performances are interpreted into Romanian.

The “Puck” Puppet theatre runs shows for children both in Romanian, as well as in Hungarian language.

Other *public institutions* of culture: the National Art Museum, the National History Museum, The Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania, „Lucian Blaga” Central University Library, the Cluj chapter of the Academy Library, „Octavian Goga” county library, the Transylvania State Philharmonic.

Babes-Bolyai University, the one that adopted as its main direction of development multiculturalism, enrolling students and employing faculty with Romanian, Hungarian, German, even Roma ethnic background.

Other institutions of *higher education* (the University of Fine Arts and Design, „Gheorghe Dima” Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca technical university, the University of Agricultural Science and Veterinary Medicine, „Iuliu Hațieganu” Medical and Pharmacy School, the Protestant Theological Institute Cluj, *Sapientia* University).

Institutions of *secondary education* with the language of tuition in Romanian, Hungarian (*Báthory István* theoretical high school, *Apáczai Csere János* theoretical high school, *Brassai Sámuel* high school), as well as institutions of *secondary* with multiple languages of tuition (for instance: „George Coșbuc” national college – Romanian, as well as German language classes; „Onisifor Ghibu” theoretical high school – Romanian and Hungarian language classes).

Publishing houses, as well as literary and cultural magazines – the existence of publishing houses, that of literary and cultural magazines, newspapers both in Romanian (daily newspapers, magazines, among which *Steaua*, *Tribuna Apostrof*, *Echinox*), as well as in minority languages (Hungarian) (among which *Szabadság*, *Krónika*, *Korunk*, *Helikon*, *Művelődés*).

The regional studio in Cluj of the national television station, TVR, with programmes in Romanian, Hungarian, as well as those of other minorities.

Religious institutions and foundations with activities of social and community interest – the presence and functioning of multiple religious cults in Cluj-Napoca: Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Roman catholic, protestant, Neo-protestant.

Institutes of *the Romanian Academy* in Cluj: „George Bariț” History Institute, „Sextil Pușcariu” Institute of Linguistics and History of Literature, as well as the Folklore Archive of the Romanian Academy.

Non-profit organisations, associations, cultural centres: Association for Interethnic Dialogue (Asociația pentru Dialog Interetnic), *Max Weber* Foundation, *SACRI*, the Centre for the Study of Interethnic Relations, (Centrul de Cercetare a Relațiilor Interetnice), The „*Ion Aluaș*” Centre for the Documentation of Multiculturalism (Centrul de documentare pentru multiculturalism „*Ion Aluaș*”), *Civitas* Foundation, *Tranzit* Foundation, *Transindex* Foundation, *PATRIR*, Resource Centre for Roma Communities (*Centrul de Resurse pentru Comunitățile de Romi*), Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Centre (*Centrul de Resurse pentru Diversitate Etnoculturală*), etc.

Non-profit organisations of different ethnic minorities: Kolozsvár Association (Kolozsvár Társaság), Transylvanian Museum Society (Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület), Transylvanian Hungarian Cultural Society (Erdélyi Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület), Transylvanian Hungarian technical Scientific Society (Erdélyi Magyar Műszaki Tudományos Társaság), Foundation for Transylvanian Hungarian Civil Society (Erdélyi Magyar Civil Szervezetekért Alapítvány), “*Heltai Gáspár*” Library Foundation (Heltai Gáspár Könyvtári Alapítvány), Hungarian Student Society from Cluj (Kolozsvári Magyar Diákszövetség), The Democratic Forum of Germans from Romania, Cluj chapter (Deutsche Forum), The Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania, Cluj chapter, *Wasdass* Foundation, *Amare Phrala* Association, *Romano Suno* Roma Students’ Association, etc.