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“The packaging keeps changing!”

**The European Intercultural Cities Programme and the
Politics of Policy Mobility into Ansan, South Korea**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy in Geography
at
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by
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Abstract

This thesis examines the global circulation of the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) and its local adoption in Ansan City in South Korea (hereafter Korea). Since the 2000s, Korea has become a popular destination for international migration in Asia. In the pursuit of a framework to manage ethnic and cultural diversity, growing attention has been paid to European interculturalism in the academic and policy spheres in Korea. Within this context, the ICC was introduced - an urban diversity policy launched by the Council of Europe (CoE), with 164 member cities worldwide as of 2025. In 2020, Ansan became the first city in Korea and second in Asia to join the ICC. Building on the growing national interest in the ICC following Ansan's accession, this thesis begins by asking how the European approach to diversity management gained legitimacy and credibility within the Korean context. This thesis investigates this process, with a focus on the development, promotion, and circulation of the ICC to cities, initially in Europe and eventually in Asia, including Ansan.

This thesis adopts a policy mobilities approach to explore how global and local politics have shaped the contours of the ICC's mobility. It draws on document analysis of the CoE's official documents on the ICC, and Ansan's city council transcripts, as well as interviews with 23 local actors in Ansan. Through Critical Discourse Analysis, this thesis presents three key findings. First, the global circulation of the ICC is part of a wider set of geopolitical reconfigurations that connect continental aspirations for international visibility and influence across Asia and Europe. Second, the adoption of the ICC in Ansan is marked by a non-linear process, shaped more by political contingencies within the particular local context than by its ideal fit as a policy. Third, the ICC operates as an empty signifier in Ansan, with its significations imbued with the imperatives of local politicians, while remaining detached from the everyday experiences of different local actors. Despite the disconnect between the perspectives of the CoE and Ansan regarding the ICC's vision, this thesis highlights that the ICC's mobility created mutual benefits for both parties, with each leveraging the discourse of the intercultural city to advance their respective goals.

Critical insights developed in this thesis suggest that policy mobility studies need to expand their scope to incorporate geopolitics, in order to gain a richer understanding of how policy mobility is co-constituted by shifting global and local dynamics. This has particular

implications for urban studies in Asia, demonstrating that Asia has become a key region where Europe seeks symbolic validation for its policy frameworks on a global scale, and that cities in Asia strategically modify and adapt these European, and more broadly, Western policy frameworks to better serve their own urban agendas.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEF	Asia-Europe Foundation
ASEM	Asia-Europe Summit Meeting
CCC	Council for Cultural Co-operation
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CoE	Council of Europe
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EU	European Union
ICC-Index	Intercultural City Index
ICC	Intercultural Cities Programme
LABRRI	Laboratory for Research on Intercultural Relations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
RDA	Regional Development Administration
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 A brief overview of the growth in migration in South Korea

South Korea (hereafter Korea) has become a popular destination for international migrants in Asia. Since the 2000s, the migrant population has increased consistently. In 2023, the number of migrants reached approximately 2.46 million, accounting for 4.8% of the country's total population (Ministry of the Interior and Safety, 2024). The influx of migrants is closely tied to Korea's economic transformation since the 1960s. Until the early 1960s, Korea was one of the world's most impoverished countries and was sustained largely through foreign aid (Collins, 1990). Beginning in the 1960s, the government invested heavily in the manufacturing industry, leading to the country's rapid economic growth over the next twenty years (Le et al., 2016). This progress was facilitated by government investment in education, which aimed to expand vocational training opportunities (Lee, 2007). Coupled with educational reforms introduced in the 1990s, the higher education population in Korea grew significantly (Choi & Lee, 2017). This led to a mismatch between labour supply and demand in the manufacturing sector. Despite consistent demand for workers, young Korean college graduates avoided manufacturing jobs, seeking opportunities in the tertiary sector instead (Park, 2002). As the manufacturing sector faced continuous labour shortages, the Korean government opened the labour market to migrant workers in 1993 by introducing a labour migration regime known as the Industrial Trainee System, which was later replaced by the Employment Permit System in 2007. Since the 2000s, other migrant groups - such as marriage migrants and foreign nationality compatriots - have also arrived in large numbers. The growing diversity of migrant groups was followed by a diversification of their nationalities, with the majority coming from East or Southeast Asia.

Since the mid-2000s, the issue of diversity management has become increasingly prominent in Korean society (Kang, 2006). Over the last two decades, the dominant framework for managing diversity has shifted from multiculturalism to interculturalism. From the mid-2000s to the early 2010s, multiculturalism prevailed as the dominant framework, drawing on the theories and policies of Anglophone countries. However, with the rise of anti-multicultural sentiment in Korean society, a shift toward interculturalism began in the mid-2010s, influenced primarily by European discourse. The growing attention to interculturalism was marked by the introduction of the Council of Europe's (CoE) Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) in Korea.

In 2020, Ansan - the city with the largest number of migrants in Korea - became the first local government in the country to join the programme. Ansan's accession garnered nationwide interest and was followed by the participation of two other local governments in Korea - Guro district in Seoul in 2020 and Asan City in 2024.

This thesis takes as its point of departure the recent adoption of European interculturalism in Korea. The growing popularity of the ICC raises questions about how a European approach to diversity management gained legitimacy and credibility within the Korean context. Rather than interpreting the circulation and adoption of the ICC as simply a case of a global policy being transplanted and copied, this thesis takes a more critical approach by exploring how the ICC was introduced, understood, and came to be seen as an ideal policy initiative within the Korean context. To further this discussion, the next section outlines the two key terms central to this thesis: interculturalism and the ICC.

1.2 Interculturalism

Before examining the ICC, it is essential to explore its theoretical foundation. The ICC is an urban policy initiative that promotes an intercultural approach to managing cultural diversity, grounded in the theory of interculturalism (CoE, 2008b). The European version of interculturalism is the most recent framework to address cultural diversity, which emerged as a response to the backlash against multiculturalism in Europe. In the late 2000s to early 2010s, political leaders in Western Europe officially stated that multiculturalism has failed, arguing that it led to fragmentation within society (Mikelatou & Arvanitis, 2019). The purported failure of multiculturalism was also put forward by the CoE, Europe's oldest existing political organisation founded in the post-war period in 1949.

In 2008, the CoE published the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity* to promote interculturalism as an alternative to multiculturalism, both in theory and in practice. While acknowledging that multiculturalism fostered the recognition of cultural differences among groups from various backgrounds, the White Paper also argued that it reinforced sharp distinctions between majority and minority populations by placing too much emphasis on cultural differences (Abdallah-Preteuille, 1999; CoE, 2008b). Building on the criticism that multiculturalism resulted in the creation of 'parallel societies', where people coexist without meaningful interaction (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010), the White Paper

proposed interculturalism as an alternative approach to foster social cohesion. A key premise of interculturalism is its focus on society as a whole, aiming to encourage collective adaptation in response to increasing diversity in ways that transcend the boundaries between majority and minority groups (Zapata-Barerro, 2017; White, 2022). Central to the intercultural approach is the emphasis on interaction, with scholars arguing that everyday interpersonal contact fosters a deeper understanding of people from different backgrounds (Cantle, 2012; Zapata-Barrero, 2015). This, in turn, is claimed to contribute to building a society grounded in trust, tolerance, openness, and respect for cultural diversity. Building on the advocacy of interculturalism, the CoE has sought to incorporate the principle of interculturalism into a concrete urban policy initiative, as evidenced by the launch of the ICC in 2008.

1.3 The Intercultural Cities Programme

In the mid-to-late 2000s, a new wave of international migration to Europe led to a rapid increase in foreign-born populations, bringing the issue of cultural diversity to the forefront of urban agendas across Europe (Wood, 2010). In response, the CoE proposed applying interculturalism to cities' diversity management policies and launched the ICC in 2008 - a policy programme designed to support cities in developing and implementing intercultural policies aligned with the vision of an intercultural city (CoE, 2019). Following the CoE's definition, an intercultural city is one that advocates a pluralistic city identity and ensures equal opportunities for a diverse population of different nationalities, languages, religions, and beliefs (CoE, 2019: 14).

To join the ICC, candidate cities first express their interest in participating. The city and the CoE then sign an agreement, officially announcing the city's membership. The next step involves the city completing the Intercultural Cities Index questionnaire, an assessment tool used by ICC experts to evaluate the degree of interculturality in the city's policies, structures, and actions. Based on the assessment results, the ICC experts publish a report on the city that includes visual charts of the city's interculturality, examples of good policy practices, and recommendations for improvement (CoE, 2019). The CoE promotes that member cities can receive support in fostering the exchange of policy knowledge and practices to enhance interculturality at the local level, primarily through international meetings, workshops, study visits, and expert advice (CoE, 2015b).

Over the past 17 years since its launch, the ICC has expanded substantially, reaching 164

member cities within and beyond Europe as of 2025. In its early years, the CoE leveraged political backing from its internal committees to promote the ICC's circulation across Europe. Subsequently, European politicians and ICC experts traveled to or hosted visitors from cities outside Europe to promote the ICC worldwide. Since the early 2010s, the CoE has established a number of institutional spaces for cultural exchanges with Asia to introduce the ICC. In 2017, Hamamatsu City in Japan became the first Asian city to join the ICC. This sparked attention from cities in Korea, leading to Ansan's accession in 2020 as the second participating city in Asia.

This thesis approaches the emergence and circulation of the ICC as an empirical case of the movement of a specific policy idea. To explore this policy movement, two key questions revolve around how the policy emerged and spread to different locations, and how it was received and adapted in those new contexts. Therefore, this thesis takes two main vantage points to the development and circulation of the ICC - first, its emergence in Europe and its spread to Asia and Korea, and second, its adoption and implementation in Ansan in Korea. The following sections present the epistemological approach and the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis to explore these two interrelated dimensions of the ICC's mobility.

1.4 A policy mobilities theoretical framework from post-positivist and post-structuralist perspectives

This thesis draws on post-positivism and post-structuralism to understand the concept of policy and the nature of the policy process. Departing from positivism, both perspectives highlight the complex ways in which reality is constructed within particular historical, social, and political contexts (Fischer, 1998). Post-structuralism, in particular, focuses on how various forms of power influence and shape the construction of reality (Devetak, 2009). Building on these insights, this thesis conceptualises policy as a set of multiple political responses aimed at advancing particular interests and consolidating power relations (Edelman, 1988; Stone, 1988; Bacchi, 2000).

Drawing on post-positivist and post-structuralist traditions, this thesis adopts the policy mobilities approach to explore the movement of the ICC, both within Europe and beyond, extending into Asia. Policy mobilities emerged in the early 2010s in pursuit of a critical understanding of policy movement, particularly driven by scholarship in geography and urban

studies (Haupt, 2023). The theoretical point of departure for policy mobilities is the recognition that policy movement evolves in a non-linear way, characterised by non-rationality, unpredictability, uncertainty, and contingency. Central to policy mobilities is the idea that policies undergo changes in response to the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of their new destinations (McCann, 2011). Rather than being passive backgrounds to policy movement, these contexts are placed at the centre of analysis to understand how they reshape the content, meaning, and outcomes of policies (Peck & Theodore, 2015).

What sets policy mobilities apart as a critical approach to policy movement is its focus on power relations. It claims that policy movement is driven by power dynamics, highlighting that only a few policy ideas are circulated and adopted worldwide, typically those known as ‘best’ or ‘hot’ models (Peck & Theodore, 2010; Temenos & Baker, 2019). To unpack the selective nature of policy movement, policy mobilities aim to identify the powerful stakeholders who mobilise their knowledge, ideas, skills, and practices to influence processes of policy movement. Therefore, it seeks to explore the underlying ideologies and discourses that drive policy movement, along with the powerful narratives and rhetorical strategies employed by dominant stakeholders (McCann, 2001; Peck & Theodore, 2010; Temenos & Baker, 2019).

This thesis draws on the policy mobilities framework to critically examine the global circulation of the ICC and its local adoption in Ansan, Korea. To take a more politically informed approach, it adopts a wider perspective to examine the role of geopolitics in shaping the ICC’s mobility. A focus on geopolitics provides an empirical lens for understanding how policy mobility is entangled with the evolving geopolitical positioning of key stakeholders (Bok & Coe, 2017). Building on its implications, the first half of the thesis investigates how the ICC was made to widely mobile, unpacking the CoE’s underlying interests, motivations, and strategic approaches in promoting its circulation. In the second half, the thesis examines how the ICC was incorporated into diversity management approaches in Ansan, focusing on the sociopolitical context which facilitated its adoption. In line with this broad structure, the overall aim and four objectives of this thesis are outlined as follows.

1.5 Research aim, objectives, and methodology

The overall aim of the thesis is to examine the global and local politics that have shaped the circulation and adoption of the ICC in Ansan.

The focus of the research is on the following four key objectives:

1. To examine the discourses that facilitated the global mobility of the ICC.
2. To investigate the networks that supported the ICC's mobility to Asia.
3. To explore how Ansan's diversity context shaped the adoption of the ICC.
4. To investigate how the ICC is incorporated into diversity management approaches in Ansan.

To gain an in-depth understanding of the global circulation of the ICC and its local adoption in Ansan, I employ a qualitative methodology by using document analysis and interview methods. For the document analysis, I examined two primary sources - the CoE's official documents on the ICC, and Ansan's city council transcripts that address the adoption and implementation of the ICC. In terms of interviews, I carried out interviews with 23 local stakeholders in Ansan, including policy decision-makers, experts, representatives of migrant support centres, and local residents - both Koreans and migrants. Then, I analysed the CoE's official documents, Ansan's city council transcripts, and interview transcripts using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Discourse analysis seeks to unpack the ways in which societies are produced through discourses, which encompass a wide range of spoken and written materials (Potter, 1997; Gill, 2000). CDA, in particular, focuses on the power relations embedded in constructing and circulating particular discourses (Bryman, 2012). In this thesis, I take history as the entry point for conducting CDA to examine how geopolitical tensions that emerged during European post-World War 2 history ultimately facilitated the development of the ICC. This historical approach is key for understanding how key actors in Europe created and mobilised discourses to shape the ICC's global circulation for their geopolitical interests. The results of this analysis are incorporated into key findings of this thesis, demonstrating how global and local politics shape the contours of the ICC's mobility to advance political agendas and imperatives.

This thesis contributes to the existing literature on the ICC, diversity policies in Korea, and policy mobilities scholarship. The research informing the thesis is the first in-depth analysis of the mobility of the ICC that situates it within the broader context of European cultural policies. This framing lays the foundation for exploring how the expansion of institutional spaces for cultural exchange between Europe and Asia has played a substantive role in facilitating the ICC's mobility to cities across Asia. In addition, this research provides the first account of the

incorporation of European policy frameworks into Korea's urban diversity policies. Departing from the focus on multiculturalism theories and policies from Anglophone countries, which have predominantly shaped Korea's diversity management framework until recently, this research highlights the growing influence of European interculturalism by identifying the key actors, channels, and moments that facilitated the mobility of interculturalism and the ICC to Korea. By taking these two main vantage points - the global mobility of the ICC and its adoption in Korea through the case of Ansan city - this research contributes to the policy mobilities scholarship by bringing much needed focus on Asia in the formulation and development of diversity policies in response to growing ethnic and cultural diversity driven by international migration. In this way, this research highlights the significance of incorporating shifting geopolitics to explore how they shape the contours of policy mobility, thereby enabling a deeper understanding of how policy mobility is constituted and reinforced by broader scale of geopolitical reconfigurations. In the following section, I present the chapter organisations of this thesis.

1.6 Thesis overview

Chapter 1 introduced the thesis, providing a brief overview of the growth in migration in Korea and the key terms that are central to this research. After demonstrating how the policy mobilities approach can offer insights into this research, the chapter presented the overall research aim, objectives, and a summary of the methodology.

Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework for this thesis. It offers a broad overview of policy mobilities scholarship, with a particular emphasis on its relevance to urban studies. To lay the theoretical foundation of policy mobilities, the chapter begins by outlining key ideas of post-positivism and post-structuralism. After addressing the shortcomings of orthodox approaches to policy movement, the chapter demonstrates how the policy mobilities approach can alternatively offer a critical and interpretative perspective on policy movement. Then, the chapter explores the implication of the policy mobilities approach, with particular attention to geopolitics, for urban studies in Asian contexts.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the literature on multiculturalism and interculturalism to understand the theoretical rationale behind the European ICC. It begins by outlining the theory of multiculturalism and multicultural policies. To demonstrate how interculturalism claims to

mark a clear departure from multiculturalism, the chapter then explores its claimed distinctiveness on its principles and key components. The chapter concludes by addressing the intense scholarly debate on interculturalism, specifically whether it replaces or merely relabels multiculturalism, which serves as a reference point for the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 4 sets out the methodological approach of this thesis. It provides an overview of document analysis and interviews, outlining the materials used and the steps taken to conduct each method. Moreover, the chapter demonstrates how critical discourse analysis is applied in this research, particularly highlighting the significance and relevance of taking a historical approach to the analysis.

Chapter 5 introduces the context of international migration and multiculturalism in Korea and Ansan City. The point of departure is exploring how Korea's long-standing belief in ethnic and cultural homogeneity has shaped multiculturalism in the Korean context. The chapter then examines how Korea's multiculturalism gave rise to anti-multicultural sentiment in society, leading into a discussion on the context in which European interculturalism was introduced as an alternative. The chapter then focuses on the context of Ansan, exploring how the declining popularity of the multicultural city branding led to the rise of intercultural city branding. This background chapter helps to outline the broader context that facilitated the adoption of interculturalism and the ICC in Korea and Ansan.

Chapter 6 examines the development and changes in European cultural policies. It begins by investigating how the focus of cultural policies in Europe shifted from the idea of unity to diversity, in response to the world's geopolitical dynamics. The chapter then unpacks three distinct discourses which emerged as the notion of diversity was incorporated into cultural policies, focusing on their underpinning ideologies. The chapter ends with exploring how these discourses facilitated Europe's soft power, opening institutional spaces for cultural exchanges between Europe and Asia. This provides a contextual understanding for the circulation of the ICC to Asia.

Having set the context in which this study is situated, chapters 7, 8 and 9 together present the empirical findings of this thesis. Chapter 7 unpacks how the ICC was made into a 'transferable' form to gain mobility. It begins by examining key discourses underpinning the ICC to demonstrate that the ICC was framed in a way to tap into the aspirations of cities worldwide.

The chapter then outlines catalyst events and key actors that facilitated the translation of the ICC discourses into a concrete policy programme. It focuses on how these mobility chains facilitated the ICC's reach to cities within and beyond Europe, including Asia. This chapter highlights how the ICC was crafted to give the impression of being fully formed and ready for duplication.

Chapter 8 begins by questioning whether the local adoption of global policies is merely a process of duplication. It emphasises contingent background factors that shape the complexities and challenges involved in the adoption of global policies. By demonstrating the ways in which the ICC was adopted in Ansan, this chapter investigates the sociopolitical conditions of Ansan in 2019 where its encounter with and uptake of the ICC was uncoordinated but serendipitous. The chapter identifies key timing, context, actors, channels, and rationales that facilitated the integration of the ICC into local politics as an 'alternative'. Focusing on the short periods of time taken from translating the ICC into actual implementation in Ansan, the chapter ends with exploring how the local political landscape characterised the ICC as a 'fast policy'.

Chapter 9 builds upon chapter 8 to examine how the ICC was reshaped within the context of Ansan. It illustrates how the city's aspirations for national and international reputation, coupled with an ambiguous definition of interculturalism, along with its vague distinction from multiculturalism, provided local politicians with the opportunity to interpret the idea of the intercultural city in their own terms. Based upon this analysis, the chapter highlights that the ICC in Ansan became political and economic rhetoric, overshadowing the socioeconomic inequalities faced by migrants. The chapter concludes by demonstrating the ICC exists as an empty signifier, relabeling and repackaging the city's previous multicultural policies without resonating with local residents.

Chapter 10 forms the conclusion of the thesis, drawing together the key findings and contributions to policy mobility scholarship, with particular emphasis on urban policy studies in Asian contexts. The chapter begins by contextualising the ICC within the broader landscape of European cultural policies, shaped by postcolonial orientations. It then outlines three key findings of this research that link the ICC's global mobility with its local adoption in Ansan. These include the operation of geopolitics in the global circulation of the ICC; the non-linear process of its implementation in Ansan; and its functioning as an empty signifier in Ansan.

Drawing on these findings, this chapter illustrates how the ICC's mobility has evolved into a policy feedback loop, where key actors from both the CoE and Ansan leverage the ICC to advance their agendas and interests. This chapter concludes by acknowledging the limitations of this research and proposing two directions for future research.

Chapter 2 A Policy Mobilities Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework for this thesis, demonstrating the approach through which I have framed the concept of policy and policy movement. This research explores the development of the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) - from its emergence, formation, and global circulation to reach Ansan City, Korea. Therefore, reviewing different approaches to policy and policy movement is essential to identify the framework that offers a critical and interpretative lens for this research.

The first section of this chapter introduces three different epistemological approaches to policy and policy process, namely positivism, post-positivism and post-structuralism. I will begin by outlining the varying perceptions of reality and truth within each approach and examine how these understandings have shaped orientations of policy analysis in each. The second section discusses four different approaches to policy movement, namely policy diffusion, policy transfer, policy translation, and policy mobilities. The first two approaches stem from the positivist tradition, while the latter two are grounded in post-positivist and post-structuralist frameworks. After outlining the key principles of each approach in the analysis of policy movement, I will highlight the distinct orientations of the policy mobilities approach. With a particular focus on geopolitics, I will discuss how this approach is useful in urban studies, especially in Asian contexts, and draw out its implications for this research.

2.2 Understanding policy from post-positivist and post-structuralist perspective

In this research, I draw upon post-positivism and post-structuralism to understand the concept of policy and the nature of the policy process. In the context of this thesis, policy is understood as “a set of shifting, diverse, and contradictory responses to a spectrum of political interests” (Edelman, 1988: 16). In positivist understandings of policy, policies were regarded as rational solutions to pre-existing policy problems, typically offered by governmental institutions or policy practitioners (Bacchi, 2000). To challenge this rationalist approach, critical scholars in political science have argued that policies are, in fact, constructed through political actions aimed at advancing specific interests and consolidating power (Edelman, 1988; Stone, 1988;

Ball, 1993; Goodwin, 1996; Bacchi, 2000). Drawing on Foucault's (1972) theory of discourse and power, this perspective conceptualises policies as discursive constructions. To further this discussion, it is useful to explore the post-positivist and post-structuralist approaches that inform this critical perspective on policy. Given that they emerged in response to the limitations of positivism, I begin by explaining the key ideas of positivism and how they have shaped the positivist approach to policy analysis. Then, I move on to post-positivism and post-structuralism to explore their implications for conducting a critical and interpretative policy analysis to this research.

2.2.1 Departing from positivism to post-positivism and post-structuralism

Grounded in foundationalist epistemology, positivism presumes the existence of a single reality or truth, which is believed to have a solid foundation of certainty (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018). It holds that reality or truth can be discovered through empirical observation. When applied to the field of policy analysis, the positivist approach aims to pursue a scientific ideal that is claimed to exist independently of the specific policy being investigated (Sharp et al., 2011). Therefore, a positivist approach assumes that the policy process follows a systematic procedure to achieve the scientific ideal - the most efficient and effective policy solution, so to speak. This perspective frames the policy process in technical and objective terms, often converting policy problems into narrowly defined technical issues (Fischer, 1998). This is reflected in the wide use of scientific theories and empirical methods in conservative policy analysis, such as modeling, statistical inference, and cost-benefit or risk-benefit analysis (Doron, 1992; Dunn, 1993; Albæk, 1995).

For such a technocratic orientation, the positivist approach has been subjected to three major criticisms. First, it overlooks the complex dynamics of the policy process by assuming that it unfolds in a linear and predictable manner (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987; Howlett et al., 1995). Second, it oversimplifies the policy problems by reducing them to a single measurement unit for assessment and evaluation (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). Third, it underestimates the subjective elements of policy, particularly the values and interests of various individuals, based on a binary distinction between truth and value (Howlett et al., 1995). To address the drawbacks of positivism, post-positivism and post-structuralism have appeared with different understandings of the idea of reality and truth. Before moving on, it is worth mentioning that

post-structuralism is often situated within the larger context of the post-positivist movement (Gottweis, 2003; Sørensen et al., 2022). Thus, while acknowledging the distinctive focus of post-positivism and post-structuralism, they overlap in their broad understanding of truth, reality, and, ultimately, policy.

Influenced by social constructivism, post-positivism rejects positivism's assumption of a pre-given social world (Fischer, 1998). Instead, post-positivism asserts that reality is constructed under particular historical, social, and political contexts. The same perspective is applied when understanding the notion of truth. Post-positivism makes no pretense of an objective realm of truth. Rather than perceiving truth as universal or value-neutral, it recognises what is claimed to be truth is contingent upon the social conditions under which it is produced (Fischer, 1998). In other words, post-positivism shifts the focus to the sociopolitical contexts which enable specific knowledge to be accepted as truth or regarded as constructing reality. Thus, post-positivism aims to interpret the situational context and discursive process that contribute to the production of knowledge (Fischer, 1998).

Post-structuralism aligns with post-positivism in its criticism of the validity of truth claims. However, it extends this critique by bringing the focus on the close connection between knowledge and power (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2005; Devetak, 2009). When it comes to power, post-structuralism offers a distinct conceptualisation, setting itself apart from the traditional definition of power as coercive control by powerful agents. Post-structuralists theorise power, drawing on Foucault's ideas, with an emphasis on its productive aspect (Vidovich, 2007). According to Barnett and Duvall (2005: 55), productive power refers to "the constitution of all social subjects with various powers through systems of knowledge and discursive practices of broad and general social scope". While the idea of productive power acknowledges that every individual is part of a power dynamic, it highlights how power, in practice, is inherently regulated, articulated, and produced through discourse (Markula & Silk, 2011; Avner et al., 2014).

2.2.2 Conducting policy research from post-positivist and post-structuralist perspective

As noted above, post-positivism and post-structuralism depart from positivism in their pursuit of contextual understandings of reality and truth by bringing in the notions of knowledge,

discourse and power into the discussion. How do these understandings apply in conducting a more in-depth policy analysis? Post-positivist and post-structuralist approaches to policy acknowledge the complex nature of policy processes by paying attention to the involvement of multiple actors. Rejecting the idea of a single and objective understanding of policy issues (Howlett et al., 1995), these approaches highlight that policy is a contested arena shaped by people with different values and interests, thereby requiring multiple interpretations. The post-positivist approach recognises that the values pursued within the policy domain are diverse, complex, and controvertible (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987), which are, in fact, always subject to change based on the positions of their holders within society. This opens room for an interpretative approach to policy analysis that seeks to uncover how different policy actors shape policy problems by infusing them with their own values and interpretations (Fischer & Forester, 1993). The post-structuralist approach adds to this by incorporating power dimensions into policy analysis. As previously noted, a core principle of post-structuralism is the recognition that power is distributed across all individuals in society. This prompts an investigation into how different individuals, groups, and institutions with varying political positions influence the policy process in their own way. A term that reveals this shifting power dynamics in politics is what Laclau (1996) calls an 'empty signifier'. This term broadly refers to any idea or symbol which lacks a definitive concept or content (Laclau, 2005). Its ambiguity gives political actors room to project their own interpretations, meanings, and priorities onto the term, enabling its use as a rhetorical tool to advance their interests.

Back to post-positivism and post-structuralism, they drive a more politically informed approach to policy analysis with their emphasis on power-laden aspect of policy process. In the post-positivist view, policy choices are not made solely based on technical considerations but rather driven by political interests. Policy goals and means are the results of ongoing disputes and negotiations among different political actors, driven by personal interests as well as broader political pressures and ideologies (Howlett et al., 1995). The post-positivist approach pays close attention to how those political actors group together to form discourse coalitions (Fischer, 1993; Hajer, 1993). Identifying the discourse that ultimately shapes policy thus become the focus of policy analysis (Dryzek, 2002). From the post-structuralist perspective, influenced by the work of Foucault (1972), discourse itself is neither good nor bad. However, it becomes problematic when it is unquestionably accepted as truth by society (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983).

When discourse is naturalised, society no longer questions its effects on achieving and maintaining power. Ultimately, post-structuralist research aims to critically examine the social world by exposing discourse to scrutiny (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2005; Avner et al., 2014). The goal is not to determine whether specific representations presented by dominant discourses are true or false, but to uncover how adopting these representations can reproduce power dynamics (Smith et al., 2016). In this sense, the post-structuralist approach offers valuable insights into how power functions in policy process. It facilitates understanding of how policy becomes a means of creating or maintaining power through the construction and dissemination of what is considered ‘truth’ or ‘knowledge’ (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016).

Relating post-positivism with post-structuralism in my research opens up for a critical reflection on the Council of Europe’s (CoE) ICC. It hints that the programme itself is not a scientific policy solution for every city, nor is its current ‘global’ reputation inherent or predetermined. Rather, these two approaches guide my research to perceive the programme as the outcome of discursive formation by powerful political actors - the CoE in this research. This suggests it is crucial to explore how the CoE made the ICC global, focusing on its underlying ideology and dominant discourse, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

2.3 Understanding non-linear and haphazard processes of policy implementation

The intrinsic complexity of policy, as demonstrated within post-positivist and post-structuralist approaches, suggests that establishing a clear cause-and-effect mechanism to explain the policy process is challenging (Greenberg et al., 1977). Unexpected outcomes are bound to occur when policy is put into practice, implying that gaps or inconsistencies between policy theory and its practical outcomes are inherent in policy implementation (Lejano, 2012; Czaika and Haas, 2013). Reviewing studies on policy gaps will further the understanding of the intricacies of the policy process, which is central in this research. In the following section, I will outline an overview of three different types of policy gaps that are identified in policy studies. Even though each gap is stated individually for readability, it is important to note that in practice, these gaps and their contributing factors are intricately intertwined, rather than sharply distinct from one another.

First, there exists a gap between academic theory and policy in practice. Put another way, this

refers to a gulf between academics and policy practitioners. Policy does not appear from a vacuum. It requires a toolbox of various theories and concepts (Ball, 1993). It has been assumed that theory will “trickle down” from ivory tower academic institutions and ultimately influence the perceptions and actions of policymakers (Walt, 2005). However, when implemented, policy often falls short of meeting the expectations of policy academics, due to different orientations of academic theorists and policy practitioners. Whereas academics emphasise the accuracy and sophistication of applied knowledge, which takes considerable time to achieve, practitioners prioritise the swift and immediate application of knowledge (Nye, 2008). Meanwhile, there has been an increasing methodological focus within academic disciplines, leaning heavily toward scientific approaches, leading to an overly optimistic belief that academic advice is universally applicable to all political issues (Nye, 2008; Hudson et al., 2019; Cairney & Oliver, 2020). A similar movement is observed in politics, showing a reliance on scientific expertise in policy-making, which Turner (2002) referred to as the “expertisation” of policy. This tendency overlooks the complex challenges involved in translating theory into practical application in the real world. In practice, the process by which ideas shape policy is far more idiosyncratic and haphazard (Albaek, 1995).

Second, there is a discrepancy between the stated objective of a policy and its actual implementation. During the implementation process, actions often deviate from the goals outlined in a particular policy on paper. Part of the challenge may arise from the abstract and unrealistic nature of policy objectives, which are often disconnected from specific contexts and real-world experiences (Czaika & Haas, 2013; Ménard et al., 2018). This occurs, for example, when politicians shape declared objectives driven by their pursuit of winning votes and engaging in effective lobbying (Czaika & Haas, 2013; Hudson et al., 2019). At the same time, inconsistent actions are also considered responsible for the implementation gap (Schiller, 2017). They occur due to the absence of institutional arrangements, incentives, and available resources (Ménard et al., 2018). Another hindrance to effective policy implementation stems from the lack of high-level political commitment (Savedoff & Spiller, 1999). An ambiguous notion of ‘commitment’ from politicians does not always translate into practical action (Downing, 2015). Without sustained and long-term political dedication and investment, policy hardly achieves its goal.

Third, there is a mismatch between public discourse and policy output. In political science,

discourse is considered a form of political action that shapes people's understanding of reality and constructs policy problems (Bacchi, 2000; Mills, 2003; Acosta Arcarazo & Freier, 2015). It encompasses a range of values, priorities, and interests, extending beyond policymakers to include those on the frontline, such as street-level bureaucrats and the general public (Lipsky, 1980). While it is acknowledged in theory that policy matters are discursively constructed, a discursive gap is frequently observed when public discourse is translated into policy. This gap refers to a discrepancy between public discourses and policies on paper (Czaika & Haas, 2013; 494). Some realistic barriers such as financial and human resources, time constraints, and competing policy priorities are responsible for the gap (Czaika & Haas, 2013). Thus, when addressing a policy issue, it is significant to consider both the particular social context in which the policy discourse has emerged (Patrick & Moodie, 2016), as well as the political process and hidden agendas that influenced the translation of policy discourse into actual policy (Geddes, 2008).

Policy gap studies highlight the importance of a contextual approach to policy analysis. Rather than interpreting policy gaps as signs of failure or mis-implementation, the studies emphasise that it is more important to focus on the specific circumstances or processes that lead to those gaps. They hint that when the policy is made in one place and carried out in another, policy gaps are more likely to occur. This has a particular implication for this research which investigates the mobility of the European ICC in Ansan, Korea. Given the differing sociopolitical landscapes in both Europe and Ansan, the mobility and implementation of the ICC will likely face unexpected challenges, with gaps expected to occur. Thus, examining the specific context in each region that contributed to the uptake of the ICC is essential for understanding potential discrepancies or discontinuities in its implementation in Ansan, which will be the focus of Chapters 8 and 9.

2.4 Conducting policy analysis from the policy mobilities approach

As discussed so far, policy undergoes changes from its design to implementation stage. The policy process is characterised by unpredictability, nonlinearity, and inconsistency. When policy is transferred from one place to another, a new layer of complexity - referred to as mobility - further complicates the process. This is particularly relevant for this research, as the ICC has been widely circulated to cities worldwide. In an attempt to frame its movement, I

introduce four different approaches to studying policy movement: policy diffusion, policy transfer, policy translation, and policy mobilities. Policy diffusion and policy transfer are traditional approaches based on positivism, while policy translation and policy mobilities are alternatives rooted in post-positivism, including post-positivist and post-structuralist approaches. Revisiting the initial discussion on positivism and post-positivism helps to unpack the orientations of each approach.

2.4.1 Policy diffusion

The earliest attempt to understand policy movement began in the 1960s, which was described as the policy diffusion approach (Peck, 2011). Diffusion occurs when one government observes what other governments have done and reorganises its own policy accordingly. In the sense that governments influence one another, policy adoption is an interdependent process (Graham et al., 2013). According to Simmons et al. (2006), a government adopts a new policy through four mechanisms - emulation, learning, competition, and coercion. Despite the differences among these four mechanisms, it is hard to sharply distinguish them, either theoretically or empirically, as more than one mechanism may operate simultaneously (Marsh & Sharman, 2009; Graham et al., 2013).

While acknowledging the significance of the policy diffusion approach in initiating discussions on how policy movement occurs (Graham et al., 2013), it is important to pinpoint some of its shortcomings. First, the policy diffusion approach fails to investigate what happens after a policy is introduced in a new location. Much of the existing literature primarily focuses on identifying patterns of policy diffusion and generalising the responsible factors (Marsh & Sharman, 2009). The policy diffusion approach reduces policy movement to a small number of factors that do not take into account the complex and multi-faced character of policy movement processes. Second, the policy diffusion framework prioritises broad structural influences to explain the main drivers of policy movement, such as globalisation and industrialisation (Tews, 2005). These large-scale societal processes are significant, but over-emphasis on them can often obscure the role of other agents positioned at different scales in processes of policy movement. Third, the policy diffusion perspective pays less attention to the actual content of the policies being transferred, placing the main emphasis on interpreting diffusion patterns through quantitative methods (Clark, 1985; Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996; Tews, 2009). Without a

thorough investigation of the policy content being transferred, however, it is challenging to further discussions on how it has changed in new settings. These constraints within policy diffusion have led to the emergence of another approach known as policy transfer. Meanwhile, there has been controversy regarding whether these two approaches are analytically distinct or whether they complement each other (Newmark, 2002; Stone, 2001; Marsh & Sharman, 2009). Putting aside the classificatory differences, the next paragraphs will illustrate the key ideas of the policy transfer approach.

2.4.2 Policy transfer

Policy transfer is defined as a process “in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting” (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000: 5). While policy diffusion gives attention to the phenomenon of policy movement per se, the policy transfer approach aims for a broader understanding, starting with the question - how does policy transfer take place? (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996). To answer this question, policy transfer adopts an actor-centred approach, identifying key agents involved in the transfer process. According to Dolowitz and Marsh (2000), there are nine agents, including elected officials, political parties, bureaucrats/civil servants, pressure groups, policy entrepreneurs and experts, transnational corporations, think tanks, supra-national governmental and non-governmental institutions and consultants (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). What sets policy transfer apart from the policy diffusion approach is its emphasis on voluntary as well as coercive forms of policy movement (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996). When Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) identified various transfer agents, as mentioned above, they pointed out how governments, international organisations, and supra-national institutions often function as policy-pushers, compelling other governments to adopt a particular policy. They exert their influence either directly, by imposing loan conditions, or indirectly, by organising conferences through which they disseminate their ideas and ideologies (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000).

Even though the policy transfer approach has opened up a wider discussion on policy movement compared to the earlier policy diffusion approach, it still has limitations. It starts with the conventional notion of ‘transfer’ itself (McCann, 2011). According to Peck and

Theodore (2001: 449), the term ‘policy transfer’ suggests “the importation of fully formed, off-the-shelf policies”. This presumes that the policy remains unchanged during its travel and even after it arrives in a new context, reflecting the positivist understanding of policy movement (Mukhtarov, 2014). Second, the policy transfer framework assumes that the agents engaged in policy transfer make choices based on rational criteria (Mukhtarov, 2014). This explains why earlier studies on policy transfer focused on the successful case of so-called ‘best practice models’, which were perceived to be driven by rational agents (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2012). However, such agents may have limited or inaccurate information regarding the issues under consideration (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). Moreover, when making choices, the agents are often driven by subjective factors such as perception, values, and beliefs, rather than circumstances alone (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996). Chances are they are swayed by their ideological preferences, rejecting the choices that do not align with them (Needham, 2011). The prevailing fashion at a given time also impacts the decision-making. When policies move like fads, agents often adopt them without a thorough examination of their effectiveness or the potential adjustments they may need (Mossberger & Wolman, 2003).

Last but not least, the policy transfer approach is often overwhelmingly focused on categorising transfer agents (McCann, 2011). While acknowledging the value of such categorisation, the problem is that policy transfer studies prioritise the typology of agency in their analysis (Marsh & Sharman, 2009). This emphasis may divert attention from other crucial aspects of policy transfer. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) pinpointed that policy transfer frameworks fall short in considering the impact of political structures on policy movement. In this sense, Marsh and Sharman (2009) emphasised that policy transfer analysis needs to focus on the dialectical relationship between structure and agency, in terms of how they interplay in facilitating policy transfer.

To summarise, policy diffusion and policy transfer approaches exhibit relatively narrow understandings of policy movement that stem from their positivist orientations. Assuming that policy movement follows a set of structured procedures (Mukhtarov, 2014), these approaches presuppose the rationality, linearity, and continuity of policy movement. In the next section, I focus on more recent and alternative approaches, namely policy translation and policy mobilities. Rooted in post-positivist and post-structuralist approaches, respectively, policy translation and policy mobilities shift towards understanding policy movement as more

complex and contextual.

2.4.3 Policy translation

Unlike policy diffusion and policy transfer, which utilise an empirical approach, policy translation draws on an interpretative approach to understand the contingency of policy movement (Needham, 2011). Drawing upon post-positivism, it begins from the understanding that policy movement is an ongoing process where “policies and their schemes, content, technologies and instruments are constantly changing according to sites, meanings and agencies” (Lendvai & Stubbs, 2007: 15). I will illustrate the key ideas of the policy translation framework.

To start with, policy translation sheds light on how newly adopted policy ideas undergo changes in response to new contexts. Challenging the conventional notion that policy free floats across different places, policy translation focuses on how context significantly shapes policy movement (McCann, 2011). Whereas context was once regarded as a passive backdrop to policy movement, policy translation acknowledges it as an important factor that changes the content, meaning, and even the outcome of the policy (Peck & Theodore, 2015). From this perspective, policy movement is the product of social, spatial, institutional, and political contexts where the policy is developed, transferred, and adopted (McCann, 2011: 122). In addition, policy translation highlights the involvement of various policy actors in shaping policy movements. This actor-based approach is not entirely new, as noted in earlier discussions of policy transfer. However, unlike traditional accounts of policy transfer, which typically focus on individuals or groups with official positions in the policy domain, policy translation broadens the scope of actors to include citizens, along with other types of informal networks (Mukhtarov, 2014). Moreover, whereas policy transfer examines the role of actors in replicating and transferring policies to different settings, policy translation places a stronger emphasis on their role in bringing changes to policies (Needham, 2011; Oakes & Wang, 2016). Policy actors are no longer ‘transmitters’ but ‘translators’ (Johnson & Hagström, 2005). They construct and reconstruct policy ideas, imbuing them with their own meanings, values, beliefs, and practices. Lastly, policy translation critically examines the inherent power relations embedded in the circulation of policy ideas. According to Johnson and Hagström (2005), the translation process is dependent on social power constellations. Policy translation seeks to understand how actors

engage in argumentative struggles to shape the meanings surrounding policy ideas (Needham, 2011; Mukhtarov, 2014; Clarke et al., 2015). It also highlights that not every actor can equally create and validate the ‘translation chain’ (Johnson & Hagström, 2005). Thus, the question arises as to who possesses the resources to translate a particular policy idea, who convinces others to accept it, and who compels those with contrasting ideologies. In this sense, the policy translation process evolves through asymmetrical encounters and negotiations between the dominant and the marginal (Clarke et al., 2015). To ensure that the voices of the marginalised are heard, Tymoczko (2006) emphasises the importance of exploring what is ‘not’ translated within the policy movement.

Significant research has been conducted through the lens of policy translation, all of which demonstrates the complexity associated with transferring policy ideas in a new context (Lendvai & Stubbs, 2007; Needham, 2011; Mukhtarov, 2014). For instance, Mukhtarov (2014) adopted the policy translation approach to investigate how the global policy idea of a ‘regional development administration’ (RDA) was transferred to Türkiye and recontextualised within the country’s political context. From the outset, the idea of the RDA became a site of political tension in Türkiye. Turkish state agencies were unwilling to cooperate with the Turkish RDA, leading to the loss of political and financial support from the state. In response, key organisational actors sought to cooperate with international organisations, which was again perceived as competition against Turkish state agencies. As a result, the Turkish RDA was given a reduced and limited role compared to the one it was initially modeled after in the United States. This case of the adoption and implementation of the Turkish RDA illustrates the inherent contingency and context-dependence of policy processes, where changes to the policy idea and practice become part of it.

At this point, it is clear that policy movement is contextual, and its contingency inevitably leads to changes in policy ideas and practices. Building upon the key principles of policy translation, the following approach of policy mobilities expands the discussion on the complexity of policy movement by broadening the scope of scales, space, and actors involved.

2.4.4 Policy mobilities

Policy mobilities is the most recent approach that emerged in the early 2010s as geography and urban studies scholars pursued a more critical framework to policy movement (Haupt, 2023).

This approach is guided by the ‘mobility turn’ (Urry, 2007) that had a substantial influence across the social sciences in the early 2000s. John Urry (2007: 43), one of the earliest proponents of a focus on mobilities, defined mobilities as a “broad project of establishing a ‘movement-driven’ social science in which movement, potential movement, and blocked movement are all conceptualized as constitutive of economic, social and political relations”. The attention to mobilities has offered a new understanding of how social realities are shaped in and through the movement of objects, ideas, and people across different scales (Büscher et al., 2011). This perspective particularly resonated within the field of geography, where geography scholars introduced the ‘policy mobilities’ approach to investigate the global circulation of policy ideas (Temenos & McCann, 2013). The use of policy mobilities in the plural form highlights the multiple and intertwined process of policy movement (McCann, 2008). Central to the policy mobilities approach is a context-based understanding of policy movement, which emphasises the mutability of policies according to the conditions of their destinations. While this key idea is also noted in earlier policy translation, I will demonstrate three distinct orientations in the policy mobilities approach.

First, policy mobilities focus on how policy production and circulation evolve across various spatial scales. It highlights the interconnectedness of global, national, regional, and local scales in conditioning policy movement. By exploring the ways in which different scales influence policy movement without privileging any one of them, the policy mobilities approach emphasises the inter-scalar process. Building upon the earlier works of influential geographers - especially David Harvey (1982) and Doreen Massey (1991) - policy mobilities scholars highlight the significance of understanding policy in terms of both relationality and territoriality (McCann, 2011). The notion of relationality suggests that the policy process is significantly shaped by global flow, such as globalisation and capitalism. The circulation of knowledge, ideas, skills, and practices around the world facilitate the global framing of local policies. However, this does not imply that policy is implemented the same in every destination. This is where the notion of territoriality comes in, highlighting that policy undergoes changes to fit the specific local context (Temenos & McCann, 2013). Ultimately, the policy mobilities approach seeks to explore how policy is constructed and reconstructed through the ongoing tension between relationality and territoriality, as well as mobility and fixity (McCann, 2011).

Second, policy mobilities expand the scope of spaces to offer a richer analysis of the mobility

chains through which policies become mobile. Through the lens of policy mobilities, spaces, which were once considered fixed backgrounds of social realities, are, in fact, recognised as important sites of knowledge production and circulation (McCann, 2011). This perspective resonates with long-standing traditions in human geography that conceptualise space as socially produced through relations, making it continuously changing and reconstructed (Massey, 2005). Policy mobilities scholarship pays attention to not only long-lasting spaces but ephemeral spaces (Temenos & McCann, 2013). For instance, Park's (2020) study on the mobility of the idea of relocating the administrative capital of Indonesia demonstrates that summit meetings and seminars functioned as sites where the relocation idea "touched down to gain fuel and traction" (Temenos & McCann, 2013: 346). Moreover, seemingly mundane spaces are under investigation to explore how they facilitate the mobility of policy ideas and practices. What Larner and Le Heron (2002: 765) termed "globalizing microspaces" - such as cafés, restaurants, and hallways - are viewed as chains where global policies are produced, spread, and mobilised to different locations.

Third, policy mobilities draw attention to a wide array of policy mobilisers at different levels and scales (Temenos & McCann, 2013). Going beyond powerful international organisations that write and implement policies, it considers the role of global policy consultocracies, local policy practitioners, and even technologies - all of which interpret, frame, and spread policy ideas through practices that, at times, may seem ordinary in everyday life (McCann, 2011). By identifying policy mobilisers and their contribution to the circulation of policies, the policy mobilities approach unpacks the trajectory of policy movement across various levels of governance. Materials such as policy documents, press releases, websites, speech transcripts, and manuals, are under scrutiny in policy mobility research (Baker & Temenos, 2015). It is important to note that they become 'mobile', as they "are passed around at conferences and meetings [...] and are repeatedly the topic of discussion among a broad range of urban policy actors" (McCann, 2008: 890). These materials shape policy movement by informing ways of thinking, instigating conversation, and influencing the decisions of policy actors (Temenos et al., 2019).

Meanwhile, what sets policy mobilities apart as a critical approach is its emphasis on power relations. An implication of post-structuralism on the interplay of power and policy suggests that policy mobility is politically and ideologically charged. Rethinking policy movement, the

policy mobilities approach suggests that not all policies are circulated but only those known as ‘best’ or ‘hot’ models. The policy mobilities approach highlights that these models ‘achieve’ mobility through uneven and selective processes (Peck & Theodore, 2010; Temenos & Baker, 2019). Politics is, in fact, a site of competition and negotiation among different stakeholders to make a particular policy mobile. The policy mobility approach, therefore, seeks to explore the dominant ideologies and interests behind policy circulation and to identify whom they ultimately serve or benefit (Peck & Theodore, 2010). Simultaneously, it unpacks the discursive strategies used by powerful stakeholders (Temenos & Baker, 2019). To circulate a popular policy, stakeholders mobilise an imagination that would lead to a successful outcome. This imagination is made through narratives and discourses that draw upon powerful tropes and representational techniques (McCann, 2011). Thus, it becomes central to policy mobilities studies to critically investigate the discursive formation of policy movement.

In the policy mobilities approach, a focus on geopolitical dynamics can emerge through an emphasis on power relations integrated with attention to larger scales, spaces, and actors involved in the movement of policy. As Bok and Coe (2017) point out, the mobility of policy is deeply intertwined with ongoing shifts in geopolitical configurations, wherein the export of policy models is instrumental to the strategic positioning of key stakeholders on the global stage. In this sense, the policy mobilities framework provides a theoretically-informed analytical lens for examining how the global political system operates. A wider geopolitical perspective on how policies are ‘made’ mobile reveals the ways in which evolving geopolitical interests shape the contours and trajectories of their mobility. Building on this, this research places geopolitics at the centre of its analysis to examine how the ICC’s mobility was shaped and driven by the networks of powerful actors in response to global power shifts. This focus is particularly useful in demonstrating how the ICC became a key form of policy acting ‘at a distance’, facilitating its reach beyond Europe to Asia, Korea, and, ultimately Ansan.

Policy mobilities have resonated with urban studies scholarship, giving rise to a sub-field of urban policy mobilities. In a globalised world, increasing connectivity and interdependency among cities worldwide are pushing policy exchanges forward. In particular, there is an impulse for ‘fast policy’ (Peck & Theodore, 2015), where local policy practitioners benchmark global policies in a short time frame. As Temenos and McCann (2013: 347) put it, “urban policy is never ‘just’ urban”. Within this context, policy mobilities seek to explore relational

production of urban politics through the mobility of people, knowledge, ideas, practices, and materials that transcend global, national, regional, and local boundaries (McCann, 2011; Peck, 2011; Temenos & Cook, 2019). This approach offers a deeper understanding of urban politics in the following three aspects. First, urban policy mobilities highlight that cities are crucial nodes in global circuits of knowledge and policy (McCann, 2011). With the call for a ‘local turn’ in urban studies, which emphasises the capacity of local governance in policy-making, cities are understood as active players rather than passive transmitters (Zapata-Barrero, 2017b; 2018). In this regard, policy mobilities studies suggest exploring how cities “arrive at” policies, moving beyond how policies arrive in cities (Robinson, 2015: 831). In addition, policy mobilities shed light on the co-constitutive aspect of urban policies and urban contexts (Temenos et al., 2019). The policy mobilities framework no longer focuses solely on identifying what is moving - the policies and ideas on the move, so to speak. Instead, it extends to exploring how these policies both reflect and, more importantly, reshape the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of the cities they are moving to. Lastly, policy mobilities bring focus to power dynamics in the urban policy process. Increasing inter-city policy changes have created channels - such as ‘fast policy’, ‘policy boosterism’, and ‘policy tourism’ - through which policies are effectively and rapidly circulated to other cities. Policy mobilities critically analyse how they have become power-laden by exploring the interests, ideologies, and discourses that regulate these channels (McCann, 2013; Temenos & McCann, 2013; Peck & Theodore, 2015).

To discuss the implications of policy mobilities in Asian urban studies, it is first crucial to point out the prevailing tendency in urban studies scholarship to understand and represent Asian cities. A significant number of urban studies so far have been conducted within the Global North, particularly focusing on the experiences of North America and Europe (Roy, 2009). Major Euro-American cities, such as London and Los Angeles, have been portrayed as the hubs of the ‘Creative City’, ‘Smart City’, and ‘Sustainable City’. It is within this hegemonic framework through which cities in the Global South or Asia have been analysed, where their experiences are often reduced to by-products of Euro-American policy models (Roy & Ong, 2011; Molho et al., 2020). Asian cities have often been represented as passive, static, and monotonous, expecting to follow an established pathway of Western prototypes (Roy & Ong, 2011). This, in turn, has led to the claim that Asian cities simply copy or imitate Western policy

models, lacking their own capacity and resources for innovation (Wang et al., 2016). In a way, these critiques reflect a linear understanding of policy movement within orthodox approaches, where Western policy models are seen as one-size-fits-all solutions that will lead to the same outcome for Asian cities.

The policy mobilities approach, with a focus on geopolitics, offers ways to overcome this bias in scholarship, which, in fact, stems from longstanding power imbalances in world politics. At this point, it is crucial to recognise the reconfiguration of the global political system, where Asian cities are emerging as important sites of economic development and political investment (Roy & Ong, 2011). This shift adds a new dimension to contemporary policy mobility, marked by the rise of Asian cities as active players in shaping and circulating policy worldwide (Bok & Coe, 2017). Thus, bringing geopolitics to the core of the analysis further highlights this aspect. It facilitates a broader examination of how the policy is made mobile to Asia, unpacking how its circulation is conditioned by and reinforces the geopolitical significance of connections with Asia within global politics. In this regard, the policy mobilities approach can contribute to Asian urban studies in two aspects. First, it demonstrates how Asia has become a pivotal region where key actors in the Global North seek to validate the global outreach of their policies. Second, it shows how regions and cities in Asia strategically leverage the uptake of these policies to advance their global aspirations. These are the two focal points that this thesis explores through the case of the mobility of the ICC to Ansan, Korea.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter introduced different approaches to policy and policy movement in order to draw implications for this thesis. Post-positivism and post-structuralism provide critical reflections on policy and policy process, highlighting how policy process evolves in a non-linear way, characterised by contingency, irrationality, and power-embeddedness. Building upon these ideas, the policy mobilities approach suggests a more politically informed perspective to policy movement. It explores how policy movement is driven by power dynamics among key actors, situated at various scales, who mobilise particular ideology and discourse. At the same time, it examines how policy ideas are fractured and altered throughout this process. The implication of policy mobilities for urban studies is that it explores the significant role cities play as key nodes in the circulation of global policies. When it comes to studying policy movement in

Asian cities, the policy mobilities approach is useful in highlighting how Asian cities are becoming active drivers, with their particular local politics shaping the circulation of global policies as much as global politics itself. This opens room for exploring the dynamic aspects of Asian cities, challenging the traditional perception of Asian cities as passive recipient of Western policy ideas.

Drawing upon these implications, this thesis adopts the policy mobilities approach to examine how global and local politics shape the contours of the ICC's mobility. The emphasis of the policy mobilities on the power-embedded nature of policy process - where key stakeholders mobilise policies to advance their interests and consolidate power - has particular implications for this thesis. It leads to a sharper investigation into how key actors at both the CoE and in Ansan co-constitute and reinforce the mobility of the ICC by shaping it in ways that align with their respective interests while also producing mutual benefits. In the next chapter, I provide a review of the literature on multiculturalism and interculturalism to understand the theoretical rationale behind the development and circulation of the ICC.

Chapter 3 The Politics of Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism, both in theory and practice. The Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC), which is the focus of this thesis, is grounded in the theory of interculturalism, which emerged as a response to the purported failure of multiculturalism in Europe. The Council of Europe (CoE) has played a significant role in shaping the concept and principles of interculturalism. In 2008, it released the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity*, with the goal of promoting interculturalism within and beyond Europe. An overview of the theoretical shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism will help understand the claimed theoretical orientation of the ICC. In particular, the theoretical differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism will be a useful reference point for Chapters 8 and 9, which explore whether the implementation of the ICC in Ansan City replaced or merely repeated the city's previous multicultural policy.

This chapter begins with a discussion on multiculturalism and moves on to interculturalism. I begin by outlining the sociopolitical background that led to the emergence of multiculturalism and discussing its key theoretical principles and policy initiatives. After pointing out the limitations of multiculturalism, I will introduce interculturalism, particularly the version that emerged in Europe in the early 21st Century. I will examine its key principles, which are built upon the criticisms raised by intercultural advocates of multiculturalism. Finally, I will discuss the limitations of interculturalism and draw their implications for this research.

3.2 Multicultural in theory and practice

3.2.1 Emergence of multiculturalism in different contexts

The idea of multiculturalism emerged prominently with the development of multicultural policies in Western settler-colonial and European countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Rattansi, 2011). Departing from the earlier melting pot theory that assumed assimilation of immigrants, multicultural policies aimed to accommodate increasing ethnic and cultural diversity within countries (Kymlicka, 2010; Berry & Sam, 2013). There is no one-size-fits-all model for multicultural policy, as it varies depending on a country's historical and sociocultural contexts (Nye, 2007). Before outlining the key principles of multicultural policy, I will briefly

discuss how multiculturalism emerged in Canada, Australia, the United States and Western Europe, which are most known for implementing both official and unofficial multicultural policies (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010).

Canada was the first country to officially adopt multiculturalism as federal policy. Multiculturalism emerged alongside the Francophone Quebec province's movement for secession from Canada. Quebec's claim of its distinctiveness from the predominantly English-speaking regions in the country led to the passage of the *Bicultural and Bilingual Act* in 1969. However, this raised concerns about the inclusion of other ethno-cultural minorities, prompting Parliament to expand the range of groups to be included (Rattansi, 2011). In 1988, the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* was enacted, officially acknowledging multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canada. The Act sought to preserve different cultures and languages, reduce discrimination, and foster culturally sensitive reforms within federal institutions (Dewing & Leman, 2013).

Australia has also gained recognition for its strong commitment to multicultural policies (Kymlicka & Banting, 2006). In the early 20th Century, as a settler-colonial society, Australia implemented the White Australia policy, known for its notorious racist and discriminatory nature as set out in the *Immigration Restriction Act* of 1901 (Stratton, 2020). The White Australia policy aimed to restrict the migrant population predominantly to Anglo-Celtic Europeans (Jupp, 2002). From the 1960s, Australia experienced a new wave of immigration over time, with newcomers from Asia, such as Chinese, outnumbering those from Europe (Ballantyne, 2022). This led to concerns about how the country will address the emerging ethnic and cultural diversity. In 1973, Australia decided to abolish the White Australia policy and adopted multiculturalism as a new approach to diversity governance (Rattansi, 2011; Ballantyne, 2022).

In Western Europe, multiculturalism emerged following the migration of foreign workers after the Second World War (Castles, 1992). These workers mostly came from European peripheries, including former colonies. As post-war economic recovery took hold, Western European countries encouraged large-scale labour migration, exemplified by Germany's guest worker programme. Even after the programme ended, many migrants chose to settle permanently or semi-permanently, bringing their families through family transfer policies and raising new

generations (Alexander, 2013). The integration of the growing population of non-European origins became a key issue on the public agenda, leading to the implementation of multicultural policies (Rattansi, 2011).

In the United States, multiculturalism was bound up with race, which has been a central organising principle of all aspects of social life in the US (Stratton & Ang, 1994). Emerging from the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, multiculturalism in the US grew out of social movements of non-white ethnic groups, notably African Americans. In a quest for group rights, they sought equality, beginning with the education field. In the early 1970s, African American scholars like James Banks promoted multicultural education to provide better educational opportunities for African American and other students of colour, while also working to reform the education system to better represent their identities (Banks, 2009; Nieto, 2017).

While multiculturalism initially emerged in North America and Europe, it has since expanded beyond Western countries. Since the 1990s, countries in Asia, Japan and Korea in particular, have become key destinations for migrants from neighbouring Asian countries. Once claimed as ethnically homogeneous, Japan and Korea began allowing the entry of migrant workers through labour migration regimes. Intertwined with the countries' socioeconomic shifts, other groups, such as marriage migrants, also arrived, shaping distinctive multicultural aspects that are distinguished from those of Western societies (Kim & Oh, 2011). I will discuss this in detail in Chapter 5. The following section outlines the underlying theory of multiculturalism and the key principles of multicultural policy, with reference to some of the initiatives implemented in the countries mentioned so far.

3.2.2 Underlying theory of multiculturalism

Prior to starting this section, I will briefly explain the foundational philosophy that has significantly influenced contemporary theories of multiculturalism and multicultural policy. In his influential essay *The Politics of Recognition* (1994), Charles Taylor traces the emergence of modern notions of recognition and identity to the rise of Western democracy. In modern Western societies, identity was reconstructed as an individual characteristic, shaped by factors such as ethnicity, race, and gender. People began to claim that everyone should be recognised for their distinct identities. This is where the concept of recognition comes in, going beyond a

mere courtesy to a ‘vital human need’ (Taylor, 1994: 26). The modern notion of identity has also led to a politics of difference. According to Taylor, the politics of difference emerged to address the problems of the difference-blind liberal paradigm, where people’s differences were overshadowed in favour of universal principles, such as equal dignity and equal rights. He claimed that everyone should be recognised for their unique identity, recognising what makes them different from others so to speak. This recognition of difference has become the point of entry to the political theory of multiculturalism (Murphy, 2012). However, it is worth mentioning that there are inherent problems with Taylor’s notion of recognition. I will set aside these problems for now and revisit them later in this section where I discuss limitations of multiculturalism. In the following part, I will outline three principles of multicultural policy implemented based on the overarching idea of recognising differences.

3.2.3 Key principles of multicultural policy

There are three key principles of multicultural policy. First, multicultural policy aims to promote the inclusion of minority¹ groups in the political sphere. As the minority population has grown in size and significance in particular countries, there has been an increasing demand for representing their diversity and ensuring their involvement in the political landscape (Bird et al., 2010). In this context, Anne Phillips (1998) suggested the notion of ‘the politics of presence’ to emphasise the significance of fair political representation of minority groups. Building upon this notion, multicultural policy seeks to ensure that the policy making process considers the different needs and priorities of minority groups. Depending on the country’s historical or social context, the initiative to increase the representation of minority groups takes different forms - ranging from ensuring the representation of Indigenous peoples on land and resource co-management boards, enhancing the participation of ethnic minorities in national and regional legislative bodies, and engaging in consultations with racial minority leaders to shape the content of anti-discrimination legislation (Murphy, 2012). Other measures to facilitate the access of minority groups to necessary resources for political participation include offering ballots in their languages and employing interpreters to assist their communication

¹ Depending on the context, the term ‘minority’ may refer to indigenous peoples, substate national minorities, dispersed and racialised populations, or immigrant groups.

with government agencies (Levy, 2000; Zapata-Barrero & Gropas, 2011).

Second, multicultural policy seeks to protect the cultural heritage of minority groups. Departing from assimilation policy which asks minorities to abandon their cultural identities (Berry & Sam, 2014), multicultural policy recognises cultural diversity at the institutional level. For instance, the *1985 Canadian Multiculturalism Act* states that the government of Canada's policy is to “*recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society ...*” (Department of Justice Canada, 1985). Similarly, the 1989 National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia defines cultural identity as one of the key dimensions of the country's multicultural policy, stating “*the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage including their language and religion*” (The Department of Home Affairs of the Australian Department, 2024: 2) These institutional recognitions are translated into various initiatives in the public sphere. To open up channels for minorities to express their identities and pass on their culture to future generations, public funding is often allocated to minority schools and ethnic organisations (Banting & Kymlicka, 2006; Murphy, 2012). Multicultural festivals are also a common practice, offering a stage for minority groups to feature a wide range of cultural activities, such as cooking, music, dance, and publications.

Lastly, multicultural policy strives to facilitate the socio-economic incorporation of minority groups. Recognising that unequal opportunities and discrimination hinder the integration of migrants into the host society, it works to reduce socio-economic stratification along ethnic lines (Kurthen, 1997; Igarashi, 2019). Often, this latter principle takes the form of affirmative action, which has been particularly notable in the United States and Canada (Banting & Kymlicka, 2006; Murphy, 2012; Warikoo & Allen, 2020). Affirmative action is designed to promote the equitable engagement of underrepresented members from specific racial, ethnic, or other backgrounds, by ensuring their representation above a certain threshold (Brest & Oshige, 1995). In 1986, the Canadian federal government passed the *Employment Equity Act* to implement affirmative action for marginalised groups, including Indigenous people and ‘visible minorities’ - defined as those who are non-white in colour and race. Another example is the longstanding affirmative action policies at universities in the United States. Up until its abrogation in 2023, following the US Supreme Court's decision that race-based admissions are unconstitutional, affirmative action continued for decades to increase access to higher

education for African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans (Brest & Oshige, 1995).

3.2.4 Backlash against multiculturalism

Despite various multicultural policies, there has been a backlash against multiculturalism since the mid-1990s. It coincided with the rise of anti-multicultural sentiment, that centred around public discourses of nation-building, unitary citizenship and even a return to assimilation policies (Kymlicka, 2010; Korteweg & Triadafilopoulos, 2015). Particularly notable in Western Europe, policy leaders came to claim the failure of multiculturalism. In 2010, German chancellor, Angela Merkel officially stated that the country's attempts to create a multicultural society have completely failed (Weaver, 2010). The following year, Britain's former Prime Minister David Cameron made the same claim, calling for the need to create a stronger national identity in response to what he referred to as Islamist extremism (Channel 4 News, 2011). Moreover, whether multicultural policies have met the stated goals has been subjected to heated discussions among scholars (Kymlicka, 1995; Vertovec, 1996; Bloemraad, 2007; Wright & Bloemraad, 2012). The following section discusses the major critiques of multiculturalism.

First, the political claim has been made that multiculturalism undermines a sense of social cohesion. This discourse focuses particularly on the outbreak of a series of disturbances in Western Europe that had a significant impact on European politics. In 2001, a number of ethnic riots broke out in parts of northern England, which stemmed from a long tension between men of White and of South Asian background. The dominant political response was that the riots were due to multiculturalism that ended up separating society. The government-ordered report stated as follows:

Separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives. These lives often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges

(Cantle, 2001: 9)

Central to this argument is that the focus of multiculturalism on group-based identities has created boundaries among people of different cultural backgrounds (Murphy, 2012). It is

argued that this has led to the creation of ‘parallel lives’ or ‘parallel societies’ where people lack meaningful encounters and interactions with others (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010). A similar critique has been presented by academics. Sen (2006) highlighted the ‘illusion of a unique identity’, questioning the assumption of conventional multiculturalism that strongly adheres to the belief that a person belongs to a singular unique identity, particularly defined in cultural terms. This, in turn, has prevented people from recognising what they have in common with other people from different cultural backgrounds. In this sense, there has been growing doubt about whether the separation of people on the basis of their cultural identity is compatible with maintaining a cohesive society, prompting a rethinking of multiculturalism (Murphy, 2012).

In addition, multiculturalism has been criticized for essentialising the concept of culture. Its tendency to categorise people into distinct cultural groups has led to claims that multiculturalism views culture as a fixed boundary with an unchangeable nature (Lentin, 2005; Kymlicka, 2010). Another criticism focuses on how culture is represented within multicultural policies. Multicultural festivals, for example, often adopt an ethnically framed approach, featuring different ethnic groups dressed in traditional costumes and showcasing folklore performances. These festivals have become highly commercialised, reducing culture to a commodity and often focusing solely on the exotic aspects of it (Bissoondath, 1994). Scholars have pointed out that the festivals promote a superficial understanding of culture, while essentialising what is being represented. They argue that multicultural festivals fail to capture the everyday lived experiences of people, raising doubts about whether festival presentations promote a deeper understanding of ethnic communities (Bramadat, 2005).

Last but not least, scholars have argued that multiculturalism has failed to address the deeply embedded issues of structural inequality (Colombo, 2015). Particularly, those on the centre-left have argued that multiculturalism has, ironically, reinforced the isolation of minorities (Kymlicka, 2012). According to Barry, this stems from the ‘one pervasive flaw’ in the multiculturalist perspective, which assumes that any challenges faced by a group are tied to its distinctive cultural attributes (2001: 305). However, for African Americans, for example, their longstanding socio-economic marginalisation, due to limited access to education and job opportunities, does not stem from their culture, but from the legacies of slavery and racism (Crowder, 2013). As such, an exclusive focus on culture in multiculturalism has diverted public

attention away from more fundamental and pervasive sources of injustice in society (Barry, 2001; Alibhai-Brown et al., 2006).

To further explore the issue of social equality and justice, it is worth revisiting the notion of recognition, upon which the theory of multiculturalism is built. Scholars have questioned the extent to which recognition has practically contributed to addressing the structural problems from which injustice against minority groups stem. Fraser (1995) was among the first to spark a debate on the limitations of recognition, arguing that merely recognising cultural differences cannot solve the injustices marginalised groups face. According to her, mainstream multiculturalism is limited to a superficial reallocation of respect towards minorities. She suggests that recognition should be combined with redistribution measures. These measures include redistributing political-economic resources to restructure the societal framework, ultimately empowering marginalised groups to equally participate in society.

Butler also calls for a rethinking of recognition, arguing that recognition is inherently intertwined with power dynamics (Willig, 2012). While Charles Taylor briefly acknowledges the power aspect by arguing that misrecognition is a form of oppression, Butler brings the role of power to the fore, highlighting the interplay between recognition and power. She points out a scheme of recognition that ultimately decides which subjects are worthy of recognition, while others are left non-recognised. This aligns with Phillips' (2009) critique of the dominance of Western perspectives in recognising different cultures. Predominantly, it is Western culture that holds the power to recognise non-Western cultures, with Western understandings serving as the moral and rational standards for interpreting non-Western cultures. As a result, non-Western cultures are often misrecognised or only partially recognised. These claims highlight that a key task of multiculturalism is to examine the unequal distribution of power embedded in what Butler referred to as 'differential distribution of recognizability' (Willig, 2012).

To summarise, this first section of the chapter has demonstrated how multiculturalism's emphasis on recognising difference and diversity later allowed spaces for its critiques. Its stated purpose was to acknowledge the distinctive identities of different groups within society and offer opportunities to preserve their cultures. However, multicultural policies were perceived to ultimately create boundaries between groups, leading to social conflicts and inequality. Along with the growing political discourse around the failure of multiculturalism, political

leaders began seeking alternatives. In response, interculturalism emerged as one new approach to promoting social cohesion, which I will explain further in the next section.

3.3 Interculturalism in theory and practice

In the second section, I begin by exploring how interculturalism emerged in different contexts. Focusing on the European version, I will discuss its key ideas and principles. Then, I will address the limitations of interculturalism in terms of its theory, practice, and ideology.

3.3.1 Emergence of interculturalism in different contexts

Interculturalism is not a recent concept. It has a history that extends back at least a century (Grillo, 2018). The term 'intercultural' was in use before the articulation of the European version of interculturalism (James, 2008). In his book *The Silent Language* (1973), an American anthropologist Edward Hall conceptualises the notion of 'intercultural communication' as communication across cultures.² Interculturalism received more attention as an idea once it was incorporated into the realm of policy. Just as multiculturalism has manifested in various forms, interculturalism also has different roots and applications that derive from specific contexts.

In Europe, interculturalism started to gain recognition through debates on integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities. The notion of integration has long been a major national issue throughout Europe (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2009). In response to the clash between cultures, particularly the claimed tension between Western and Islamic values, and the backlash against multiculturalism, interculturalism was conceptualised as a new type of inclusion policy (CoE, 2008b; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2009). The CoE and the European Commission were the primary advocates and promoters of the European version of interculturalism (Cantle, 2012). Notably, from 2008, the development of interculturalism was facilitated with the release of the

² Its conceptualisation is based on Hall's working experience at the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State in the 1950s. The Institute was established in 1947 to train Foreign Service personnel. Hall conducted training courses on intercultural communication to improve the skills of U.S. American diplomats and technical assistance staff (Rogers et al., 2002). Given that intercultural communication has been promoted as one of the key 'distinguishing' elements of the CoE's interculturalism since 2008, it seems worth investigating the difference in the usage of the term between Hall and the CoE.

White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity and the declaration of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

In Canada, interculturalism emerged in the 1980s in response to the multicultural policy implemented in the 1970s (Zapata-Barrero, 2017a). Just as Quebec's persistent claim to its distinctive identity shaped Canadian multiculturalism, it eventually led to the development of Canada's own variant of interculturalism. The preservation of French identity has been crucial for Québécois throughout Canada's settler colonial history. The former multiculturalism - perceived as an imposition by Anglophone Canadians on Francophone Canadians - placed Québécois identity within the Canadian mosaic alongside that of the Indigenous population and immigrants (Cantle, 2012; Elias & Mansouri, 2020). As an alternative, Québécois interculturalism emerged as a new approach to advocate for Québécois national identity (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008).

It is worth mentioning that not all manifestations of interculturalism have arisen from Anglo-American or European discourses around failed multiculturalism. In Latin America, a distinct form of interculturalism known as *interculturalidad* has long existed. Informed by the Indigenous movements in Latin America during the 1970s, *interculturalidad* was perceived as an act of agency and resistance of Indigenous communities (Hamel, 2008; López, 2009). Situated within postcolonial discussions on diversity, *interculturalidad* sought to promote a greater identification of Indigenous people (Solano-Campos, 2013). Therefore, its policies primarily focused on the preservation and development of indigenous culture and language, notably within the field of education (López, 2009).

Regardless of the difference in context in which interculturalism has emerged, there has been a growing body of literature addressing interculturalism as a novel approach to managing the reality of super-diversity. In the next section, I will introduce its fundamental concepts and ideas. For clarification, among three versions of interculturalism mentioned above, the following description applies to the European notion of Interculturalism, as it is from this that the Intercultural City programme emerged, which is the focus of this research.

3.3.2 Key ideas of European interculturalism

In relation to the European context, interculturalism emerged as a potential solution to the

purported failure of multiculturalism, which was criticised for causing societal separation and increasing tensions between the majority populations and migrants. Interculturalism was therefore proposed as a new approach committed to fostering ‘a stronger sense of the whole’ of society, with a focus on social cohesion and belonging (Cantle, 2012). Ted Cantle, a leading advocate of interculturalism, outlined its key principles in his influential book *Interculturalism: The New Era of Cohesion and Diversity* (2012), describing interculturalism as a proactive, future-oriented paradigm that envisions a shared society and integrated communities. To cultivate common values and a sense of belonging within society, intercultural scholars suggested a rethinking of culture and identity.

Interculturalism emphasises the fluid and dynamic nature of both identity and culture. This perspective critiques multiculturalism for perceiving these elements as fixed and unchanging (Abdallah-Preteille, 1999; Zapata-Barrero, 2017b). From an intercultural perspective, identity is seen as flexible and contingent, understood as an ongoing process that is constantly redefined through communication and interaction with others. A similar point is made regarding culture. Interculturalism perceives culture as continually changing, through which new meanings, interpretations, and practices emerge (Barrett, 2013). Scholars also argue that interculturalism acknowledges the various cultural positions an individual may hold, thereby blurring the boundaries between multiple cultures (Sandercock, 2004; Cantle, 2012; Barrett, 2013).

It is claimed that the flexibility and multiplicity of identity and culture offer a new possibility for society as a whole to adapt to increasing diversity. Again, this point is made with reference to the limitations of multiculturalism, which has often placed the burden of adaptation solely on migrant groups (Cantle, 2012). Scholars point out that this stems from the belief that the host society is unchanging, thus asking migrants to fit in. In contrast, interculturalism claims to challenge this idea by highlighting the potential for change to be made within the host society itself, arguing that the host society can and must transform to accommodate emerging diversity. In this regard, White (2022) asserts that the term ‘directionality’ is central to interculturalism, inviting both majority and minority groups to adapt to a society in transition. Interculturalism, therefore, presents itself as a new approach that includes all citizens within the scope of diversity policies, moving beyond the clear-cut divisions between majority and minority or national and non-national (Zapata-Barerro, 2017). It argues that diversity policy is no longer limited to a specific group of people but is geared towards all citizens.

3.3.3 Underpinning elements of interculturalism

Based on the premise that interculturalism is a new diversity approach, two key elements underpin its framework: interaction and intercultural dialogue. These elements are regarded as making interculturalism a contact-based policy approach, which aims to foster relationships among people with different backgrounds (Zapata-Barrero, 2017a). In the following section, I will demonstrate how these elements form the basis of the contact-based approach.

First of all, interculturalism highlights the significance of promoting interaction. To make this point, it revisits the stated drawback of multiculturalism, mentioned earlier, that it causes people to coexist, but independently in their own separate ways (Gillert et al., 2003). Even the liberal multicultural scholar Kymlicka (2003: 155) supported this claim by pointing out that “we have multicultural states populated by citizens who have only minimal levels of intercultural interaction or knowledge”. Building upon this criticism, intercultural scholars incorporate interaction as central to interculturalism (Zapata-Barrero, 2015). This is reflected in the definition of ‘intercultural societies’ in one of the publications of the CoE (Brander et al., 2016: 27), where “[d]ifferent cultures, national groups liv[e] together within a territory, maintain *open relations of interaction, exchange and mutual recognition* of their own and respective values and ways of life” (emphasis by author). From the perspective of interculturalism, interaction serves as a channel to promote mutual respect and understanding, which is ultimately expected to reduce stereotypes and prejudice towards those with different cultures (Cantle, 2016b; Nadhem, 2017).

However, intercultural scholars note that interaction does not occur automatically simply because a mix of different people live in one place. Nor does interaction always yield positive outcomes, as it can rather be negative. Therefore, they suggest a few conditions to channel meaningful and positive interaction (Elias & Mansouri, 2020). First, interaction should arise from interpersonal contact at the individual level. This is not to say that interculturalism overlooks the significance of intergroup relations. When referring to interpersonal contact, interculturalism claims that it directs more attention to the individual than multiculturalism does (Abdallah-Preteille, 1999). In contrast to multiculturalist’s group-based approach, intercultural scholars suggest that interculturalism adopts an individual-based approach by prioritising individuals over groups (Zapata-Barrero, 2015). An intercultural society expects

individuals to participate in dialogue and interaction beyond group categorisations (Gillert et al., 2003). It is envisioned that individuals will interact with others, motivated by their personal interests, beliefs and behaviours (Zapata-Barrero, 2015). Meanwhile, scholars point out the chance of superficial interactions, such as people passing each other on the street, using the same public transport (Cantle, 2012). These interactions obviously do not guarantee meaningful dialogue, which is essential for building trust and understanding among people. In this regard, interculturalism suggests its second principle, which is intercultural dialogue.

The definition of intercultural dialogue is significantly shaped by the CoE, for which a wider discussion is undertaken in Chapter 7. Following its *White Paper on Intercultural dialogue*, the CoE (2008b: 17) conceptualises intercultural dialogue as “a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect”. Intercultural dialogue claims to go beyond mere communication, opening up a space for debate or argument, where people from different backgrounds engage with each other’s cultures (Grillo, 2018). It is suggested as a dual process that is both reflective and interactive. That is, people reflect on their culture from the perspectives of others, while acknowledging the differences that exist between each other (CoE, 2008b; Elias & Mansouri, 2020). Going back to how the idea of intercultural dialogue aligns with the overarching aim of interculturalism, the CoE asserted that it could encourage a deeper understanding among people, ultimately leading to tolerance, openness and respect for others (CoE, 2008b).

Regarding the scale at which interaction and intercultural dialogue occur, interculturalism emphasises the importance of local scale. Scholars argue that interculturalism focuses on informal or casual interactions at the local level, contrasting with multiculturalism, which relies more on functional or celebratory events (Wood & Landry, 2008). Based on this principle of leveraging local level as a site for the practice of interculturalism, the CoE implemented an urban diversity policy programme called the ICC in 2008. Initially launched as a pilot initiative of 11 cities in Europe, the programme rapidly expanded to 150 cities by 2025. This programme claims to promote the inclusion of people from different backgrounds, particularly migrants, by encouraging their interaction with local residents. Since the objective of this chapter is to review multiculturalism and interculturalism, I will offer more details on the programme, along

with the examination of its development and circulation, in Chapter 7.

3.3.4 Critiques of interculturalism

Regardless of the seemingly widespread uptake of interculturalism and the global circulation of the ICC programme, as detailed in other parts of this thesis, there are critiques of the limitations of this policy approach. Critiques have been made regarding its concept, practice, and ideology, which I will discuss in the following section.

First of all, scholars have raised questions on the theoretical clarity of interculturalism. Despite the widespread usage of the term, interculturalism is considered as an elusive notion which is hard to pin down (Joppke, 2018). Regardless of the promotion of interculturalism as “a completely different” approach to diversity (Cantle, 2016a: 472), scholars have questioned what is so unique about it. For example, Joppke (2018) refers to interculturalism’s emphasis on promoting interaction in public spaces. He points out that public spaces have always been sites of communication and contact, a function that has long been central in urban planning. This leads to the question of what is distinctive about ‘intercultural’ in the concepts promoted by the CoE, such as intercultural space and intercultural city.

Going beyond the definition of intercultural itself, it is necessary to examine the claimed differences between interculturalism and multiculturalism. As noted earlier in the section on the key ideas of interculturalism, it has built on criticisms of multiculturalism, giving the impression that interculturalism replaces multiculturalism (Brahm Levey, 2012). For example, scholars like Cantle (2012) and Bouchard (2011) argue that interculturalism is fundamentally different from multiculturalism. This has sparked a heated debate among other scholars who see interculturalism as either repeating or supplementing multiculturalism (Meer & Modood, 2012; Levrau & Loobuyck, 2013; Kymlicka, 2016; Modood, 2016; Parekh, 2016; Zapata-Barrero, 2017b; Joppke, 2018). From the perspective of Kymlicka, a strong advocate of multiculturalism, the critique of multiculturalism by interculturalism is unconvincing. He asserts that interculturalism gained prominence only through “a misrepresentation, even caricature, of multiculturalist theories and approaches” (2016: 158). He claims that interculturalism is no more than echoing multiculturalism’s ‘progressive’ agenda. In fact, some of the key principles of interculturalism rely on those of multiculturalism. For example, interculturalism’s contact-based approach would be undermined without institutional measures

such as the recognition of rights and the prevention of discrimination, those central to multicultural policies (Zapata-Barrero, 2017a). Therefore, based on these arguments, interculturalism is not as new or different as it claims to be. Beyond the claimed distinction between the two, other scholars position interculturalism and multiculturalism as complementary, referring to them as ‘critical friends’ (Modood, 2016). They claim that the two theories pose critical questions to each other, eventually contributing to the improvement of both. For example, Modood (2016) admits that interculturalism has motivated multiculturalists to reflect on the weaknesses of multiculturalism, opening room for advancing their perspectives. In the same sense, Parekh (2016) employs the terms ‘a multiculturally sensitive interculturalism’ and ‘interculturally attuned multiculturalism’ to suggest that interculturalism and multiculturalism should reconfigure themselves based upon each other’s insights. Until now, however, there is no consensus on how to situate interculturalism, reflecting its theoretical uncertainty.

In addition, interculturalism has been criticised for its lack of practical engagement in addressing systematic problems of society. Sealy (2018) calls for a rethinking of interculturalism’s contact-based approach, pointing out its utopian premise that contact will reduce prejudice and discrimination. He asserts that merely meeting Black people or Muslims every day does not necessarily mean one will eliminate racist or discriminatory attitudes toward those communities. As Valentine put it, “encounters never take place in a space free from history, material conditions, and power” (2008: 333). This suggests that the concept of contact should not be treated as neutral but rather as an ongoing process where power is embedded. A similar point was made by Allport (1954), upon which interculturalism’s contact-based approach was built. In his contact theory, Allport emphasised that contact should be established on the basis of ‘equal’ status between the majority and minority groups within society. Thus, before facilitating contact, the examination of whether people engaged have equal socioeconomic positions should come first. However, interculturalism does not ask who organises the encounter, who comes and who does not come, and why (Sealy, 2018). In this regard, interculturalism is a depoliticised approach to social equality, which masks deeply entrenched structural problems faced by minorities, including legacies of colonialism and racism.

Finally, some scholars have questioned the ideological orientation behind the ongoing

fascination with interculturalism. This ideological aspect has not received as much attention as the conceptual and implementational aspects mentioned above. However, given that policy development and circulation are shaped by the particular interests of key actors (Peck & Theodore, 2010), it is necessary to pay attention to Europe's political push for interculturalism. Vertovec and Wessendoft (2009: 27), in their book *The Multiculturalism Backlash: European Discourses, Policies and Practice*, raise the question why European politicians have put "real and extensive public money, political commitment, and institutional activity surrounding the diversity agenda across Europe". Even though this comment was not explicitly directed at interculturalism, it can be linked to exploring the ideology behind Europe's commitment to interculturalism. This resonates with Kymlicka (2016), who highlights the significance of the CoE's White Paper, which was leveraged to promote interculturalism. As an official statement by a pan-European organisation, it demonstrates the consensus among member states on the purported failure of multiculturalism. By referring to this, he hints at the CoE's strong motivation behind this. In a similar vein, Vidmar-Horvat (2012) situates the declaration of the year 2008 as *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue* as self-congratulatory. According to him, the notion of intercultural dialogue served as a new label in European politics to reframe and strengthen European identity. I will leave this topic for now, as I will explore the embeddedness of European interests in Europe's cultural policies further in Chapter 6. Based on these claims, however, it is clear that the advocacy of interculturalism was at least partly driven by the political interests of Europe and, particularly the CoE. This calls for more empirical studies to investigate how these interests shaped the promotion of interculturalism, particularly considering the ICC has now expanded its geographical outreach within and beyond Europe, which is one of the core foci of this thesis.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter explored how interculturalism appeared as a new approach to managing cultural diversity in Europe. In response to the backlash against multiculturalism, interculturalism was proposed as a clear departure from multiculturalism, both in theory and practice. Its underlying ideas and principles are strongly built upon criticisms of multiculturalism. The central idea of interculturalism is that it fosters social cohesion by promoting interaction and dialogue among people from different backgrounds. Building upon this, interculturalism is claimed to be a future-oriented and pro-active approach. However, a key question that this chapter raises is

whether interculturalism effectively provides a solution to the challenges posed by multiculturalism. While this remains an ongoing debate among academic scholars, one way to assess this is through empirical research on the practical application of interculturalism. The analysis of the implementation of the ICC in Ansan, Korea, will draw on the discussions presented throughout this chapter to examine whether it has led to practical changes compared to the city's previous multicultural policy, or rather remains merely a repackaging of it.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This thesis focuses on the mobility of the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) from Europe to Korea, with a focus on its implementation in Ansan City. Through the lens of policy mobilities, it examines the global and local politics that shape the circulation and adoption of ICC. The thesis adopts critical discourse analysis to examine the Council of Europe's (CoE) official documents on the ICC, Ansan's city council transcripts, and transcripts of interviews with 23 local stakeholders of Ansan.

This chapter sets out the methodological approach of this thesis. I begin by providing a thick description of the origins of this thesis, reflecting on the question, "How am I connected to the research, theoretically, experientially, emotionally?" (Haynes, 2012: 78). Then, I outline the research approach and methods used in this thesis, which include document analysis and interviews. Then, I provide an overview of critical discourse analysis, with a focus on its key principles and implications for this thesis. This leads to a discussion of the significance of taking history as the entry point for analysing the discursive formation of the ICC's mobility in this research.

4.2 Origin of research

This research is connected to my own interest in the challenges faced by migrants, particularly in a context where migrants are becoming increasingly significant in Korea. My research interest grew from my personal experience as a child, having spent one year overseas. In 2006, when I was 10 years old, I spent a year with my family in Aotearoa, New Zealand. I made a lot of good memories, but I also faced some challenges as an 'outsider' in a new society. Learning English and adjusting to a non-Asian culture were not easy. The most difficult time was when I was bullied by some White students, who called me a "Bloody Asian" at school. I clearly remember feeling shocked, terrified, and sad. It was the first time I had reflected on my ethnic identity, which has had a profound impact on my life. In 2007, I moved back to Korea, where I stayed until returning to New Zealand in 2022 to pursue my Ph.D. Starting in the 2010s, I began noticing changes in Korean society. Media reports highlighted the increasing number of international migrants coming to Korea from nearby Asian countries. Because Korea had long

been seen as an ethnically homogeneous country, the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences of these migrants were noticeable. This reminded me of my own experience in New Zealand and sparked my interest in understanding where these migrants were coming from and why and how they decided to move to Korea. During my undergraduate years, I volunteered at various non-profit organisations that were established to help migrants settle in local communities. I had the chance to meet different people, such as migrant workers, marriage migrants, and North Korean defectors. They often shared their stories of experiencing racism and discrimination, which made me reflect on the intolerance that remains in Korean society towards those who do not belong to the dominant ethnic and social group. I began to realise that structural problems, such as socioeconomic inequality and discrimination faced by migrants, cannot be fully addressed at the level of everyday life. This led me to focus on the institutional level, particularly migrant policy in Korea.

In 2017, I began my Master's programme in Human Geography at Ewha Womans University in Korea. This was around the time when Europe's distinctive approach to cultural diversity, known as interculturalism, was initially introduced to Korea. This was a significant shift, as multiculturalism had been the dominant framework in Korea until then, largely due to the academic influence of the United States. I will explore this discursive shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism in Korea in Chapter 5. During my period as a Master's student, I had frequent academic interactions with my supervisor and other scholars who had conducted research on migrant issues in Korea. As co-leaders of Multicultural and Intercultural Studies Programmes at the university, they approached migrant issues from various fields such as geography, education, and language. Their research largely focused on identifying the limitations of Korea's multicultural policies and proposing interculturalism as a complementary approach. It was through these scholars that I was first introduced to the concept of European interculturalism and the ICC. Immersed in this academic environment, I perceived interculturalism as an innovative and progressive concept for responding to diversity, one that I believed could eventually replace multiculturalism.

My Master's thesis is titled '*A Study on the Characteristics of the Migrant Spaces and the Necessity of Intercultural City Policy: Focusing on Paldal-gu, Suwon City*'. It was a case study of Suwon, a city on the outskirts of Seoul, with an increasing number of migrants. This thesis critically examined the city's multicultural policies and proposed the implementation of the

ICC to address the socio-spatial separation between local migrants and Koreans. At that time, I held an optimistic, perhaps somewhat naive, view of interculturalism, seeing it as a potential remedy for the challenges of multiculturalism in Korea. Reflecting on those days, I now realise I also took for granted the claimed authority of the CoE as a progressive and democratic European organisation, accepting its remarks and policies without question.

In 2021, I began my Ph.D. in the Geography Programme at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. While searching for a research topic, I came across news reports announcing that Ansan in Korea had become the first member city of the ICC in 2020. This achievement was highlighted as a remarkable milestone for the city. This caught my attention and led me to revisit interculturalism and the ICC in my Ph.D. research. However, what sets this thesis apart from my previous master's research is a shift in my perspective on the ICC. This time, I approached the programme from a critical perspective, by adopting the policy mobilities approach. The policy mobilities approach, which I introduced in Chapter 2, suggests a critical and interpretative understanding of policy and policy movement. It highlights that policy movement is politically and ideologically sanctioned by powerful stakeholders. Through the lens of policy mobilities, I began to rethink the ICC. When and how did the programme become so widely circulated worldwide? Who are the key actors driving its circulation? What are the rationales behind its circulation? And ultimately, how was it mobilised in Korea, particularly in Ansan, given the geographical, political, and cultural differences from Europe? The early findings of my research also influenced the focus of the research on the power-embeddedness of the circulation and adoption of the ICC. While examining how the programme initially started, particularly through the CoE's official documents on the ICC, I realised that there is a much broader European geopolitical context behind its development. Additionally, analyses of Ansan's city council transcripts and interviews with local actors in Ansan marked another turning point, revealing local political interests that played a role in the city's decision to adopt the ICC. The attempt to identify any possible connection between these two seemingly disconnected regions - Europe and Ansan - became the starting point of this thesis.

Shifting my perception of the ICC that I had unquestioningly accepted for years was challenging. While reviewing literature and attending the conference on the ICC during my Ph.D., I made a conscious effort to consistently question and critically engage with the material. This process guided me to approach the ICC in a more critical and interpretative way, ultimately

leading to a richer and more interesting analysis than I had initially anticipated.

4.3 Ansan City

The research location of this thesis is Ansan, an industrial city on the outskirts of Seoul, which has the highest number of migrants of any local government in Korea. I will briefly outline how my previous research experiences in Ansan have shaped my perspective on the city, which underpins this thesis. From 2016 to 2020, I worked as a researcher at the Korean Institute of Criminology (2019-2020) and Ewha Womans University (2016-2020) in Korea. Most of the projects I conducted focused on the socio-spatial changes occurring in Korean cities with significant migrant populations. Ansan, which has the highest number of migrants in Korea, was always included in these projects. At the Korean Institute of Criminology, my colleagues and I carried out research titled *The Safety Conditions and Policy Initiatives in Korean Cities with a High Concentration of Migrants*. We made multiple visits to Ansan to assess criminal prevention facilities and interviewed local residents about their fear of crime and perceived threats, particularly following the increase in migrant population. At Ewha Womans University, I participated in research projects, such as *Korean Diaspora and Transnational Migration in Multicultural Society in Korea*, which explored the lived experiences of migrants in cities including Ansan. I visited facilities run by migrants, such as restaurants, grocery stores, and religious facilities, where I had the opportunity to hear about the everyday experiences of migrants. These included their experience with migrant support services provided by the local government, participation in local events designed to foster interactions with Koreans, and connections with neighbours from various ethnic backgrounds. Through these experiences, I developed a deeper understanding of the socio-spatial transformations occurring in Ansan due to the influx of migrants. Conducting these studies across various districts and locations within Ansan, each with a different focus, led me to observe the city from different angles. By integrating these experiences and understandings into this thesis, I was able to design the research in a broader sense to shed light on the policy process in Ansan by incorporating the viewpoints and experiences of a wide range of local stakeholders. In the following section, I will discuss research methods for this thesis.

4.4 Research method

In this thesis, I employ a qualitative methodology to understand the complex ways in which

the ICC was constructed and reconstructed within and across particular sociopolitical contexts. A qualitative methodology recognises the existence of various interpretations of the world, each shaped by its specific context (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Challenging the belief in a single scientific theory that explains the world, the approach taken in this thesis seeks to understand how people make sense of their world, focusing on different ways in which they understand and experience social events (Hignett & McDermott, 2015). Among different qualitative research methods, this research employs document analysis and interviews. Using multiple methods provides a richer description of the study under investigation, offering different reference materials and diverse perspectives (Chamberlain et al., 2011). First, I conducted document analysis of official documents issued by the CoE on the ICC, as well as Ansan's city council transcripts that address the adoption and implementation of the ICC in Ansan. Additionally, I carried out interviews with 23 local stakeholders in Ansan, from January to September 2022, including policy decision-makers, academic and policy experts, representatives of migrant support centres, and local residents. Then, I analysed the interviews transcripts, along with other two key documents, using critical discourse analysis. In the following section, I will provide details on each research method.

4.5 Documents analysis

Document analysis refers to the analysis of a wide variety of documents containing textual or visual information (Morgan, 2022). It is particularly effective for research that requires tracing past events. Documents spanning extended periods are important sources that offer insights into the historical contexts and developmental trajectories of the phenomena under investigation (Bowen, 2009). They help reveal how past events have shaped and conditioned the way the phenomena operate in the present.

Prior to conducting document analysis in this research to examine the dynamics underpinning the global circulation of the ICC and its local adoption in Ansan, I collected a diverse range of research materials. First, I collected the official documents issued by the CoE on the ICC. Since the launch of the ICC in 2008, the CoE has published and updated various documents promoting the ICC that outline its definition, theoretical background, key objectives, core principles, methodologies, and examples of member cities. Produced between 2008 and 2025, these documents take different forms, including policy briefs, thematic papers, background

documents, annual reports, brochures, and summaries of the meetings among the ICC coordinators. Among these, I selected documents published particularly during the ICC's earlier development and circulation stages, including *The Intercultural City - What it is and how to make it work* (2008a) and *Intercultural cities programme medium-term strategy 2016-2019* (2015b), to examine the ICC's development trajectories on the global stage. Second, I collected Ansan's city council transcripts, available on the council's website, covering the period from July 2019 to August 2024. Given that Ansan formed a task force in October 2019 to prepare for joining the ICC, I set July 2019 as the starting period to capture any earlier remarks or discussions regarding the ICC. Initially, I included all transcripts that mentioned the terms 'intercultural' or 'interculturalism' to identify moments during council meetings when the mayor, councillors, and city officials discussed the ICC. They amounted to 95 transcripts. Then, I narrowed the selection to 74 transcripts containing significant references to the ICC's adoption and implementation in Ansan, which are relevant to the focus of this research. Adding transcripts of interviews with 23 local stakeholders from Ansan, which I will discuss in the next section, these three types of documents were analysed using critical discourse analysis. The discussion of the application of critical discourse analysis to this research will follow at the end of this chapter.

4.6 Interviews

Coupled with document analysis, I carried out semi-structured in-depth individual interviews and focus group in this research. These methods are among the most common in qualitative research for exploring various perspectives, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, and experiences of participants (Gill & Baillie, 2018). In-depth individual interviews and focus groups are often used together to provide a more enhanced description and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). In this research, both the individual interviews and focus groups were semi-structured, following a degree of predetermined order while allowing flexibility in how the interviewers addressed certain issues (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). In the following section, I will provide information on the interview participants and outline the process of recruiting interview participants and conducting the interviews. This will be followed by a discussion of how my positionality influenced the relationship with the interviewees and the way the interviews were conducted.

4.6.1 List of interview participants

One of the key foci of this research is to explore how the ICC was adopted and implemented in Ansan. To gain a deeper understanding of Ansan's particular local context, it was crucial to conduct interviews with local stakeholders. Depending on their roles in the local political landscape, I expected each group of participants to provide different perspectives on the ICC's implementation in the city. I categorised the interview participants into four groups: policy decision-makers³, experts, migrant support centres, and local residents (See Table 1).

³ The act of deciding policy is not limited to policy officials alone. On the ground, a range of street-level bureaucrats also play this role. However, in this research, the term 'policy decision-makers' specifically refers to a group of officials who have the authority to make final decisions and define the implementation of policy at the legislative level.

Table 1 List of interview participants

Category	Organisation	Code
Policy decision-maker	Ansan City council	P1
	Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters	P2
	Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters	P3
	Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters	P4
Expert	Ansan Local Think Tank	E1
	Ansan Local Think Tank	E2
	A university in Korea	E3
Migrant support centre	Ansan Migrant Support Centre A	MC1
	Ansan Migrant Support Centre B	MC2
	Ansan Migrant Support Centre C	MC3
	Ansan Migrant Support Centre D	MC4
	Ansan Migrant Support Centre E	MC5
Local resident	Korean resident	K1
	Korean resident	K2
	Korean resident	K3
	Korean resident	K4
	Korean resident	K5
	Migrant resident	K6
	Migrant resident	M1
	Migrant resident	M2
	Migrant resident	M3
	Migrant resident	M4
	Migrant resident	M5

In the following section, I will outline the characteristics of each interview group and the focus of the interview. A sample of the interview questions is provided in Appendix 1. The policy decision-maker group included one city councillor and three city officials from the Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters. Given that city councillors hold regular council

meetings to discuss the city's agenda and approve the budget for policy implementation, the interview with the city councillor focused on the policy process behind adopting and implementing the ICC. Interviewees also included officials from the Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters, established in 2005 as a dedicated body to implementing the city's migrant support policy. City officials from this department were identified as the practical implementers of the ICC. The interviews with these officials focused on the background and rationale behind adopting the ICC.

The expert group included one academic expert and two policy experts who engaged in the adoption and implementation of the ICC in Ansan in their own ways. As one of the earliest advocates of interculturalism in Korea, the academic expert delivered a lecture on the ICC to Ansan city officials in 2019. The interview with the expert focused on early communications with city officials about the ICC, aiming to identify the ICC's initial mobility channel to Ansan. The two policy experts are affiliated with a think tank in Ansan established to conduct research on local policy issues. One of them was a member of the task force organised by Ansan for the ICC adoption in 2019, and both were later commissioned to undertake research related to Ansan's mid- to long-term strategies as an intercultural city in 2021. During the interview, the primary focus was on their opinions and perspectives on intercultural policies in Ansan.

There are five migrant support centres in Ansan. One is a governmental organisation and the other four are non-profit organisations. Each centre offers different assistance according to the characteristics of migrant groups, such as providing legal assistance, teaching Korean language and culture, and organising cultural festivals. In Ansan, migrant support centres have played a significant role in facilitating the adaptation of migrants at the local level even before Ansan established the headquarters in 2005 (Oh, 2010). Therefore, the centres that participated in the interviews have a very long history, with two of them having operated for 30 years since 1994. They continue to influence the city's migrant support policy through a consultative body, as intermediaries between migrant communities and local authorities. The interviews with representatives of migrant support centres primarily focused on their perceptions and evaluations of the efficacy of the ICC.

The local resident group included five Koreans and five migrants. In terms of the nationality of the migrants, two were Chinese, one was Vietnamese, one was Sri-Lankan, and one a

Chinese person who acquired Korean nationality. There are two districts in Ansan - Danwon and Sangrok. Danwon has a high density of migrants, with 69.6% of the city's total migrant population living in the district. Since migrant population density can influence the residents' perception of cultural diversity, I chose six residents from Danwon and four from Sangrok district. The focus of the interviews was on the experiences and perceptions of local residents regarding the ICC. Their opinions and thoughts were significant in exploring whether the stated goal of the ICC resonates with local residents or if it remains merely rhetorical.

4.6.2 Conducting interviews

Before conducting the interviews, I contacted prospective interview participants by email or phone using the available contact details. Participants were informed about the research through provision of a research information sheet, and they signed the participant consent form (see Appendix 2 and 3, respectively).

I carried out individual in-depth interviews and focus groups, aiming to gain insights from various perspectives and interpretations regarding the adoption and implementation of the ICC in Ansan. While both in-depth interviews and focus groups are commonly used in qualitative research, they generate different types of interaction through which detailed accounts of participants' thoughts, beliefs, and knowledge regarding the phenomenon under investigation are gained (Clifford et al., 2010). Individual interviews primarily involve interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, whereas focus groups are characterised by interactions among the participants themselves. Group interactions in focus groups can offer richer insights into the range of perspectives and experiences among participants (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). In this research, I conducted individual in-depth interviews with policy decision-makers, experts, representatives of migrant support centres, and migrant residents. For Korean residents, I organised a focus group with a group of five people. I initially planned to conduct focus groups with migrants as well. However, when I reached out to them individually, I noticed variations in their proficiency in Korean. Therefore, I concluded that conducting individual interviews would be more appropriate to accommodate their language skills. All interviews and focus groups were semi-structured, following a set of principles and guiding questions, while allowing for a certain degree of flexibility for the researcher to adjust the direction and structure of the interview as needed (Wilson, 2012). During individual in-depth interviews, I sought to

delve into the interviewees' answers by using follow-up questions to elicit more detailed responses. During focus groups, I paid particular attention to the interactions among the participants to identify points of agreement and disagreement. I also observed their reactions to capture the nuanced variation in their opinions or perceptions.

The interviews were conducted from January to September 2022. Once participants agreed to interviews, I arranged a time and location. Most took place in Ansan, at locations such as participants' offices or quiet places like cafes. The focus groups, however, were conducted online via Zoom, as COVID-19 public health restrictions limited gatherings to fewer than five people at that time. In each interview and focus group, I began with a brief introduction about myself and my research. Once the participants signed participant consent forms, I started the interview with a reminder that it would be recorded. I then asked the interviewees to introduce themselves, their institutional affiliations, and their roles within the institutions. This introduction was followed by a loose set of questions which was informed by the overarching objective of this research. Interviews lasted one hour to one and a half hours. During the interviews and focus groups, I made notes on both the participants' responses and their nonverbal communication. Later, I reviewed these notes, recalling the context of the conversation to reflect on their significance and relevance to my research. On the day of each interview, I always spent a couple of hours walking around Ansan. Especially in the neighbourhoods with a high number of migrants, I dined at restaurants run by migrants and visited their daily religious facilities. By doing so, I aimed to experience the sense of place that Ansan offers as the most migrant-populated city in Korea.

Once I finished the interviews, I transcribed them using Clova Note, a speech recognition technology software. Once I uploaded the audio recordings, it converted them to written text for easier review. However, it sometimes produced typos, especially if the interviewee mumbled, spoke too fast, or if background noise interrupted. To address these potential errors, I listened to the recordings again and compared them with the written text. I did not translate the entire interview transcripts into English, but only those I cited in this thesis. One important aspect in translation is that translation is not a replica of the original text. It is a practice tailored to the target-language culture, which does not always convey the intended objectives and meanings of the source text (Venuti, 1992; Ferreira Duarte, 2000). This problem was also noted in the translation process, where I could not find equivalent terms for certain nuanced

expressions in Korean. In such cases, I slightly paraphrased the statements to better reflect what the interviewees intended to convey.

4.7 Positionality

The interview process, discussed so far, was significantly influenced by my positionality. Positionality refers to a combination of indicators of one's relational position in society (Chacko, 2004). While it was initially used in terms of gender identity (Alcoff, 1988), it now commonly embraces different factors such as race, nationality, age, sexuality, and socio-economic status (Bukamal, 2022). A researcher's positionality shapes the research process, from the scope of the material and framework to the participant recruitment process and, even the research outcomes (Chacko, 2004; Bourke, 2014). In this section, I will demonstrate how my positionality as a *Korean, young and younger looking, female, PhD student* shaped the way the interviews were conducted, influencing different aspects of the interview process.

First, my position as a relatively younger PhD student shaped interactions with policy decision-makers. They are often referred to as 'elites' due to their privileged position to influence policy (Richards, 1996). A key challenge in elite interviews is gaining access, which is closely tied to the sociopolitical gap between interviewers and interviewees (Darbi & Hall, 2014; Mason-Bish, 2019; Glas, 2021). When trying to contact Ansan's policy decision-makers, I initially wrote them formal interview request emails or reached out to their secretarial staff via email and office phone to request if I could leave a memo. However, I could not get any response. Thus, I used other networks to facilitate access, which is, in fact, a common strategy in elite interviews that involves finding a third party with equivalent influence to the policy decision-makers (Darbi & Hall, 2014). In this research, one of interview participants among expert group, who had had initial contact with the policy decision-makers, served as the mediator. When he contacted them, the interview was arranged in a short period. That my access as a 'student' was mediated by another influential intermediary reflects the sociopolitical gap noted earlier.

In addition, I became particularly aware of my gender, given the gendered character of policy decision-makers. Whereas all policy decision-makers whom I interviewed were male, I encountered one female official during a visit to the office where the interviews were held. However, without any specific remarks during the interview, her role was limited to setting up the interview venue and providing coffee - tasks often considered as stereotypically gendered.

The absence of empowered females reflected the broader male-dominated character of political organisation (Shvedova, 2005; Schneider & Bos, 2019). The low representation of females in the political organisation in charge of developing and implementing the city's migrant policy led me to consider the potential absence of gender sensitivity in migrant support policy.

Moreover, my 'young age' and being 'younger looking' shaped the hierarchical relationship between me and the participants. Korean society has been heavily influenced by Confucianism, where respect for elders shapes everyday interactions. It is customary to defer to the opinions of elders and avoid challenging or contradicting them. This age-based hierarchy is reflected in strict communication patterns, which involve the use of honorifics and titles. These norms often place restraints on young people, particularly when talking to older people (Chen & Chung, 1994). Given that most of the participants in this research were older than me, possibly as old as my parents, the interviews often took on a highly formal tone. During the interviews, I used honorifics and addressed the participants by their respective titles such as 'Councillor' or 'Doctor'. Adopting these linguistic norms reinforced my perception of the hierarchy between myself and the interviewees, often making me feel nervous before and during the interviews. Furthermore, I found it challenging to express differing opinions or directly refute certain remarks made by participants. Instead, I conveyed my intentions indirectly or subtly to avoid offending them. It was a way of making space for myself in this social setting, by aligning with social norms and expectations. In addition, when I met my interview participants, a few of them said with an awkward smile, "*I thought you were an undergraduate*" or "*You do not look like your age*". It was clear that I did not match the image they had in mind of a 'PhD' student and a 'researcher'. This perception influenced how the participants engaged with me during the interviews, particularly in the way they spoke. In Korean society, the usage of honorifics is a sign of respect when meeting someone for the first time. However, there was one moment during an interview where a participant, who had initially used honorifics in email correspondence, shifted to informal language once we met in person. There were also some interviewees who engaged in interviews as if they were giving a lecture to a young and inexperienced student, speaking to me without using honorifics. Once I realised that my youthful appearance influenced how others perceived my professionalism, I presented myself more formally and occasionally mentioned my previous research career to establish my identity as a researcher.

Finally, I became distinctly aware of my positionality as ‘a Korean’ when engaging with the migrant community. During my visits to Ansan, I frequently went to Wongok neighborhood, where migrants constitute 79% of the total population. The streets were lined with various amenities catering to this diverse community. During my visits, I often encountered foreign languages such as Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese, and came across places like an Islamic mosque, making me feel as though I were traveling abroad. On one occasion, when I entered a store in the neighborhood, a Korean clerk greeted me in Chinese. When I explained that I am Korean, she replied, “*Oh, I didn’t realise you were Korean because most of our customers are Chinese*”. These experiences left me with a sense of being ‘out of place’ (Cresswell, 2008), as though I did not belong to the local community. Meanwhile, I did not get the impression that the migrant interviewees treated me as an outsider as much as I expected. Nevertheless, I kept trying to find common ground with the migrants, by sharing my own experiences of living in New Zealand in my childhood. My intention was to foster a sense of connection with them over the boundary between Koreans and non-Koreans. Regardless, there were moments where I realised my ‘Korean’ position, especially through Korean language usage. Even though the migrant interviewees were fairly fluent in Korean and able to communicate without particular difficulty, I noticed variations in their proficiency. This influenced the way that I initially designed the interviews with migrants. To address the language barrier, I simplified the interview questions to make them as clear and understandable as possible.

This section was an overview of the interview process, including the steps of identifying and contacting potential interviewees, conducting interviews, and addressing the challenges intertwined with my positionality. In the following section, I will move onto discussing the analytical framework for this thesis.

4.8 Critical Discourse Analysis

In this thesis, I used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to explore the discursive formation that facilitated the development and circulation of the ICC around the world, and its mobility to Ansan. Before discussing how it is applied in this research, I will discuss key ideas of the CDA approach. Beginning from broader discourse analysis, CDA builds upon a social constructionist epistemology to explore how reality is constructed (Hardy et al., 2004). According to Potter (1997: 146), discourse analysis aims to unveil the way “...versions of the world, of society,

events and inner psychological worlds are produced in discourse”. The term ‘discourse’ is used to refer to “all forms of talk and texts, whether it be naturally occurring conversations, interview material, or written texts of any kind” (Gill, 2000: 174). Discourse analysis pays particular attention to language use and meaning (Georgaca & Avdi, 2011). Going beyond the traditional concept of language as a medium of communication, it perceives language use as a form of social practice (Janks, 1997). The language people use and the meaning they attach to it become important sources to analyse how society is perceived, understood and constructed (Bryman, 2012). Thus, discourse analysis aims to explore how discourse shapes social, political and cultural realities in societies.

CDA is differentiated from other approaches to discourse analysis in terms of how it addresses the existence of organisations. Some discourse analysts who draw upon anti-realist assumptions argue that organisations do not exist as an external reality, but come into existence through interaction among members of the society (Mumby & Clair, 1997). However, critical discourse analysts, such as Fairclough, conceive organisations as a social structure, which conditions properties of discourse, and simultaneously, is conditioned by discourse (Fairclough, 1985). Thus, the way in which discourse is constructed under particular social, cultural, or historical structures is a primary concern for CDA. Central to CDA is to explore the power relations embedded in discourse (Janks, 1997). Given that discourse is a practice aimed at “establishing one version of the world in the face of competing versions” (Gill, 2000: 176), CDA notes how discourse is a form of powerful action which strongly influences and shapes the way people understand the constructed realities (Bryman, 2012). CDA draws heavily on Michel Foucault’s work on knowledge. In contrast to the positivist understanding that power and knowledge exist independently (Knights, 2002), Foucault emphasises that these two are rather interconnected. He uses the term ‘power/knowledge’ to highlight that systems of knowledge are inseparable from networks of power, in the sense that certain discourses are empowered while others are left out (Janks, 1997). This resonates with Gill (1996), who points out that what is said is always a way of not saying something else. Moreover, Foucault focuses on the subjects that produce and distribute discourse. Therefore, exploring “who uses language, how, why and when?” (van Dijk, 1997: 2) is at the centre of CDA.

I will now outline the relevance of the Foucauldian-based critical discourse analysis to this thesis. Both CDA and policy mobilities, the theoretical frameworks for this research, share

three key principles in understanding policy and policy process. First of all, both frameworks challenge the rationalist approach to reality. CDA emphasises that reality is socially constructed, fragmentary, and subject to change (Janks, 1997). This aligns with the policy mobilities approach, which views the policy process as evolving in a non-linear and contingent manner (McCann, 2008). In addition, both CDA and policy mobilities offer a context-based understanding of policy movement. CDA highlights that social practices are intricately tied to specific contexts, incorporating temporal and spatial dimensions in analysis (Janks, 1997). Similarly, policy mobilities argue that policy movement is shaped by particular historical, cultural, and political contexts, within which policies are reconstructed (McCann, 2011; Ward, 2006). Last but not least, both CDA and policy mobilities adopt a politically informed approach to policy analysis. CDA focuses on the power dynamics embedded in the construction and circulation of discourse. This focus resonates with the policy mobilities approach, which explores how policy movement is driven by powerful actors who mobilise particular discourses to serve their own interests (Peck & Theodore, 2010). By incorporating CDA into the research, the thesis aims to unpack the ways in which the ICC was enacted, focusing on its development and circulation, which was marked by irrationality, contingency and power-embeddedness.

This research takes history as the entry point for applying CDA, examining how geopolitical tensions that emerged throughout European post-World War 2 history eventually gave rise to the idea of the ICC in the late 2000s. Applying a historical lens to discourse analysis resonates with Foucault's genealogical framework. In his conceptualisations of 'genealogy' and 'history of the present', Foucault (1977) urges engaging with history to situate present-day practices and institutions within particular struggles, conflicts, and exercises of power in the past. By tracing history amid ruptures and discontinuities, the genealogical approach reveals the particular historical "surface of emergence" (Hook, 2005: 14) that has shaped the concepts, ideas, or events which appear normative today (Garland, 2014).

In conducting policy research, the historical approach opens up a broader picture by recognising the situatedness of the policy process. It helps trace how policies originated and evolved through past critical junctures (Ferragina, 2023). The aim is not simply to identify the origin of the policy, but to rethink and, most importantly, to problematise its orientation and underlying rationale, which are inseparable from wider historical contexts. In this sense, the historical approach has particular relevance for bringing geopolitics to the centre of policy

analysis. Situating the policy process within shifting political reconfigurations goes beyond merely setting the background (Sharp, 1996). Rather, it demonstrates how the policy has operated through the larger networks of powerful actors on a broader scale in response to shifting global dynamics (Kuus, 2011).

Given the significance of history, there has been increasing methodological reflection on its role in critical discourse analysis (Achugar, 2017). The point of the departure is a close investigation of historical discourses to examine how they were constructed, mobilised, and ultimately served to legitimise the dominance of popular discourses in later periods (Jóhannesson, 2010). Drawing on its implications, this thesis provides a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of European history to demonstrate how the ICC emerged as part of Europe’s longstanding cultural policies. Chapter 6 looks back to the end of the era of imperialism to explore how Europe’s geopolitical interests shaped the development of its cultural policies. This historical context lays the foundation for contextualising the ICC in this thesis. It paves the way for examining how the ICC discourse is embedded in Europe’s earlier narratives on cultural diversity and operates to reinforce Europe’s positioning in world politics, as explored in Chapters 7, 8, and 9.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology and analytical framework for this thesis. This thesis uses documents and interviews to explore how the perceptions and practices of local stakeholders shape the mobility of the ICC and its reconstruction in the context of Ansan. All data, including interview transcripts, the CoE’s official documents on the ICC, and the city council transcripts, are analysed using critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis, especially when combined with the concept of policy mobilities, provides a sharp framework for unpacking the discursive construction that drove the mobility of the ICC across cities worldwide, leading to its arrival in Ansan. CDA helps to unpack the powerful actors and dominant ideologies and discourses, both at the global and local scale, that underpinned the ICC’s mobility. I will present the results of the analysis in Chapters 7, 8, and 9. In the following chapter, I provide an account of international migration and multiculturalism in Korea to offer contextual understanding of the introduction and adoption of the ICC, both nationally and, ultimately, in Ansan.

Chapter 5 Migration and Multiculturalism in Korea and Ansan City

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the context of international migration flows and the adoption of policies of multiculturalism in both Korea and Ansan City. As noted in the policy mobilities scholarship in Chapter 2, policy undergoes changes according to the particular social, political, economic contexts in which it is implemented (McCann, 2008). Therefore, identifying the unique characteristics of Korea that have shaped the understanding and application of multiculturalism within the Korean context is crucial in this research. The particular characteristics of Europe in relation to diversity policy development are explored in Chapter 6.

In the first part of this chapter, I start with exploring Korea's homogeneous nationalism, focusing on key moments of crisis in its history when this political ideology was consolidated. Then, I examine how the belief in mono-ethnicity and mono-culture of Korean society was challenged by the increasing influx of international migrants since the mid-2000s. Despite this challenge, a deeply entrenched homogeneous nationalism continued to distinguish which migrant groups could be integrated into multicultural policies, which will be explored in the last section of the first part of this chapter. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss the context of Ansan, which has become the city with the largest migrant population in Korea. By offering an overview of Ansan's development into an industrial city, I explore how this led to the rapid influx of migrants to the city in recent decades. Next, I investigate the way in which Ansan gained nationwide recognition as a pioneering multicultural city as a result of its renowned policy initiatives. The final section addresses the gap between the rhetoric and reality of being a multicultural city, which eventually led to Ansan's adoption of the Council of Europe's (CoE) Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) in 2020. This chapter lays the foundation for the discussion in Chapter 8, which examines Ansan's political context that facilitated the adoption of the ICC.

5.2 Migration and multiculturalism in Korea

The adoption of multiculturalism in Korea took place in response to the increasing number of international migrants since the mid-2000s. At this time, the Korean government started to

introduce a version of Western multiculturalism, predominantly drawing on theories and policies from Anglophone countries such as the U.S., Canada and Australia (Ahn, 2012). It is important to note, however, that newly adopted policy ideas are reconstructed according to the specific conditions of where they are applied (McCann, 2011). In the Korean context, it is critical to account for how multiculturalism was perceived and practised in relation to Korea's homogeneous nationalism.

5.2.1 Korea's homogeneous nationalism

The construction of homogeneous nationalism has had much in common with the process of the creation of modern nation states, as outlined by Benedict Anderson in his influential work *Imagined Communities* (1991). Collective memory based upon historical events or figures often plays a significant role in calling the *imagined* nation into being (Anderson, 1991). In Korea, the *Dangun* myth has been foundational to national identity. This myth narrates the story of the country's first ancient kingdom and the origin of the Korean ethnicity. *Dangun* is the legendary son of the Heavenly God *Hwan-ung*, and a human who had transformed from a bear *Ung-nyeo*. In 2333 BC, Dangun is said to have established Korea's first kingdom, known as *Gojoseon*⁴, which lasted until 108 BC, when it was invaded by the Chinese *Han* dynasty.

Figure 1 The portrait of Dangun



Source: Jacques Beaulieu - Under Creative Commons license

⁴ Since 1948, October 3rd has been designated as the national holiday celebrating the establishment of *Gojoseon*. Its official name *Gae-cheon-jeol*, which translates to 'The Day When the Heaven Opened', is a metaphorical expression marking the very first day of the Korean people.

The myth has served to construct the national identity of Koreans. Its narrative that *Dangun* is the founding ancestor of Koreans became the basis for the idea of a single ancestral lineage. That is, through this myth Koreans are believed to share the same bloodline, thus belonging to a single ethnicity (Kim, 2014). Since the early 20th century, such homogeneous nationalism has been mobilised as a political ideology during periods of political instability, marked by Japanese colonisation (1910-1945), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the period of military dictatorship (1960s to the 1980s).

During Japanese colonial rule, the colonial government implemented radical measures to assimilate Koreans into Japanese culture, such as prohibiting the use of Korean language and forcing people to use Japanese names. Against this oppression, Korean nationalists attempted to unite Koreans by arousing homogeneous nationalism, with reference to *Dangun* myth (Jeon, 2022). During this time, the concept of *Han Minjok*, meaning “Korean ethnicity” was developed, bringing together notions of lineage, territorial boundary, language, and culture to define what it means to be Korean (Kim, 2014). In 1945, Japanese colonialism came to an end when the United States dropped atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. However, not long after liberation, Korea underwent another turbulent period. Following the impact of World War 2, the Korean peninsula was divided, with the United States occupying the South and the Soviet Union occupying the North. Once again, homogeneous nationalism was invoked by right-wing nationalists in resistance to international trusteeship (Jeon, 2022). At the core of their argument was the rhetoric that Korea is ‘one nation and one ethnicity’, and therefore cannot be divided (Huh, 2009).

Soon after, in 1950, the Korean War broke out following an attack from North Korea. During this period, homogeneous nationalism was incorporated into propaganda for unification. For example, Figure 2 below shows the leaflets distributed by the United Nations (UN) Command and the South Korean Army to the North Korean military. The one on the left side features *Dangun* with his hands wide open in front of the crowd of Koreans with the phrase “One Ancestor, One Blood, One Ethnicity”. On the copy on the right-side is written “Listen to the shout of the Progenitor *Dangun* for [...] the Free Unified Nation” (my translation). What is noteworthy is the following phrase that “This is the reason why the UN fights”. It shows how Korea’s nationalism was even leveraged by the UN to justify its intervention in the Korean war

(Kim & Haley, 2018).

Figure 2 Leaflets distributed by the UN Command and the South Korean Army



Source: Open Archives of the War Memorial of Korea (<https://archives.warmemo.or.kr>)

In 1948, according to the resolution of the UN Interim Committee for the General Election of South Korea, separate governments were established in South and North Korea. On August 15th, the first government of South Korea was formed, from which the present-day South Korea evolved. From the 1960s to the 1980s, military dictatorships came to power through a number of coups d'état, including the May 16 coup (1961) carried out by Park Chung-Hee, and the December 12 coup (1979) by Chun Doo-Hwan. To justify and maintain their authority, powerholders sought to achieve national unity through the discourse of a homogeneous nation (Chung et al., 2009). The mythical belief of the country's homogeneity was systematically structured and disseminated through history education, with narratives equating the concepts of people, ethnicity, and nation (K. S. Choi, 2014). For instance, all students in elementary, middle, and high schools had to recite the National Education Charter established in 1968, which stated: *"We are born in this land, charged with the historic mission of ethnic revitalisation. [...] Realising that the prosperity of the nation is essential for our individual growth [...], we shall elevate national consciousness to participate and serve in building the nation"* (National Institute of Korean history, n.d. my translation). Even though the charter was abolished in 1994 because of its association with the legacy of dictatorship, the narrative of a homogeneous nation and people persisted through national history textbooks until the late

2000s (Jeon, 2022).

Since the mid-2000s, there has been a reconsideration of the absolute belief in mono-ethnicity and mono-culture of Korean society, primarily due to the rapid increase of international migrants. Korean scholars began expressing concerns that homogeneous nationalism could lead to discrimination against migrants (Choi, 2006; Song, 2007). This issue was also raised by international organisations, such as the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (United Nations, 2007). In 2006, the Korean government made an official statement that “moving towards a multiracial and multicultural society had become inevitable” (Korea TV, 2006). Since then, references to the notion of homogeneity have decreased in the public sphere (Jeon, 2022). However, this does not imply that homogeneous nationalism, which had served as the foundational ideology since the early 20th century, has completely vanished. Rather, it has continued to influence how Koreans understand the concept of ‘multiculture’. Before exploring the legacy of Korea’s nationalism, I will first provide background information on the influx of migrants in Korea.

5.2.2 Influx of Migrants

The influx of migrants is closely tied to Korea’s industrialisation since the 1960s. Until the early 1960s, Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world and heavily depended on foreign aid (Collins, 1990). During this period, the Korean government was committed to rebuilding the devastated land and industrial facilities in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950-1953). Starting in 1962, the late President Park Chung Hee, who came to power through a military coup in 1961, vigorously pursued the country's economic development through the implementation of a series of development plans. These plans primarily focused on promoting light industry in the 1960s, and the heavy and chemical industries in the 1970s. Over the next twenty years, Korea made significant economic progress and became known as one of the four ‘Asian Tigers’, along with Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan, by the 1990s (Le et al., 2016). Given that Korea accomplished such noticeable results in roughly 30 years, which typically took over 100 years in other developed countries, Korea’s case was referred to as ‘compressed growth’ (Lee, 2013).

One of the factors that contributed to the rapid economic development was education (Lee, 2007). Early after Korea’s liberation in 1945, the Korean government implemented a series of

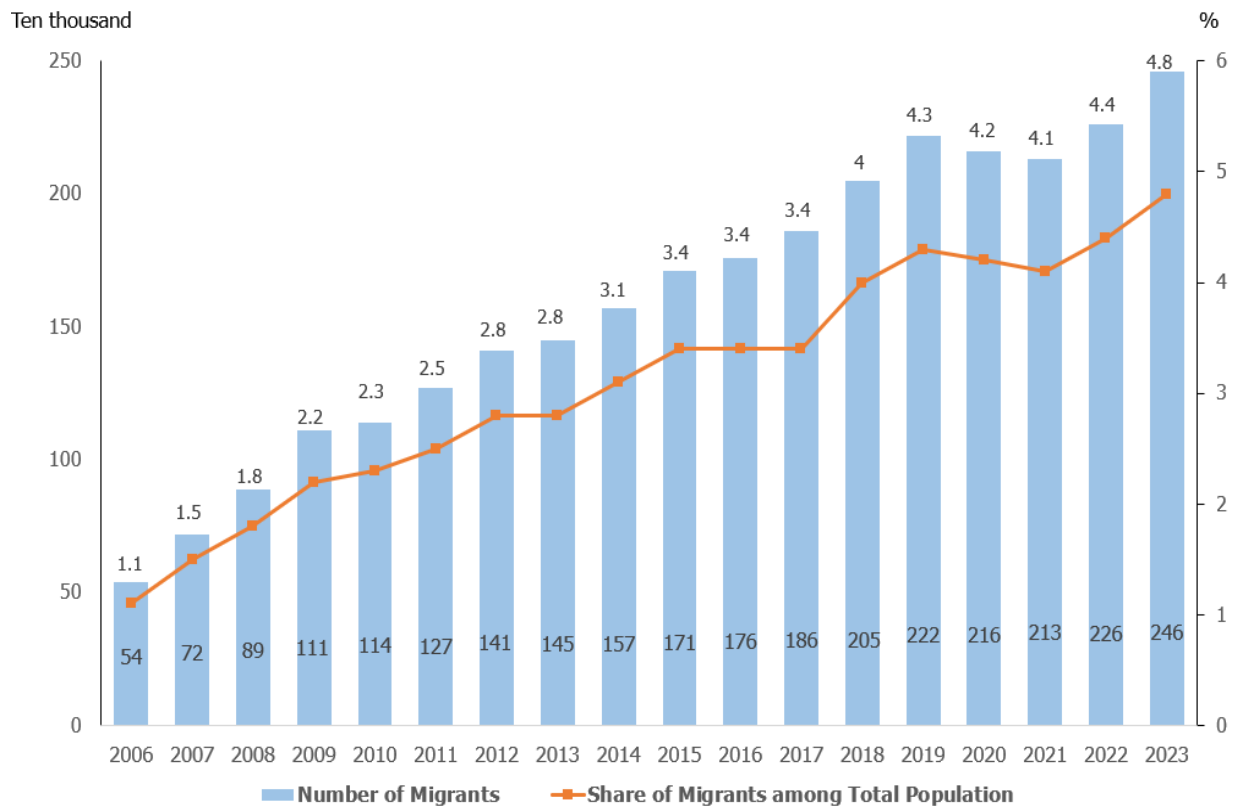
educational measures in response to Koreans' strong motivation for education, which had been severely suppressed under Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945) (Kim, 2000). For example, in 1949, the Basic Education Law was passed, legislating a compulsory, free primary education system that persists to this day, subject to some revisions. In the 1960s and 1970s, in alignment with the country's industrialisation, the government heavily invested in education to increase the human capital stock by expanding vocational and technical training opportunities (Lee, 2007). Since the 1980s, the focus shifted to the expansion of higher education as the government began investing in research and development (R&D) activities (Kim, 2000). This involved restructuring the education system. Two key changes were made in 1996 - the Simplified University Establishment Policy, which eased the requirements for establishing universities, and the Deregulation of University Student Quota Policy, which increased the student entrance quota. Both the number of universities and graduate students grew, contributing to the overall rise in the higher education population in Korea (Choi & Lee, 2017).

Meanwhile, one of the resulting problems was the imbalance in the labour market. A mismatch between supply and demand became apparent, particularly in the manufacturing sector. As suggested above, there was a high demand for a workforce in the manufacturing sector to sustain the country's economic development. However, the majority of college graduates, young Koreans, were not willing to work in the manufacturing sector (Park, 2002). It was perceived as 3D jobs - dirty, difficult and dangerous. They aspired to become white-collar employees in the tertiary sector, which rapidly grew in Korea during the 1980s (Kim, 2000). From the 1990s, the manufacturing sector faced severe labour shortages. Small and medium-sized companies with low wages and poor working environments were particularly affected (Park, 2002). According to Statistics Korea, the number of manufacturing workers was 601,000 in 1963, accounting for 7.9% of the country's total workforce. Its number increased to 5.15 million (27.6%) in 1991 but rapidly decreased to 3.9 million (19.6%) in 1998. It became a chronic problem, to the point that the manufacturing sector could no longer be sustained solely by the Korean labour force. In response, the Korean government opened the labour market to migrant workers by introducing a labour migration regime called the Industrial Trainee System in 1993. Soon after, the influx of other migrant groups, such as marriage migrants and foreign nationality compatriots, began in large numbers (Lim & Jin, 2010), which I will explain in detail later. For now, I will briefly outline the demographics of migrants in Korea, in terms of

their distribution across the country, nationality, and visa status.

Figure 3 illustrates the migrant population in Korea, both in terms of number and percentage, over the period from 2006 to 2023.⁵ As demonstrated, the migrant population has been continuously increasing. It surpassed one million for the first time in 2009 and two million in 2018. In 2023, the migrant population reached approximately 2.46 million, accounting for 4.8% of the total population.

Figure 3 Number and percentage of migrants in Korea (2006-2023)

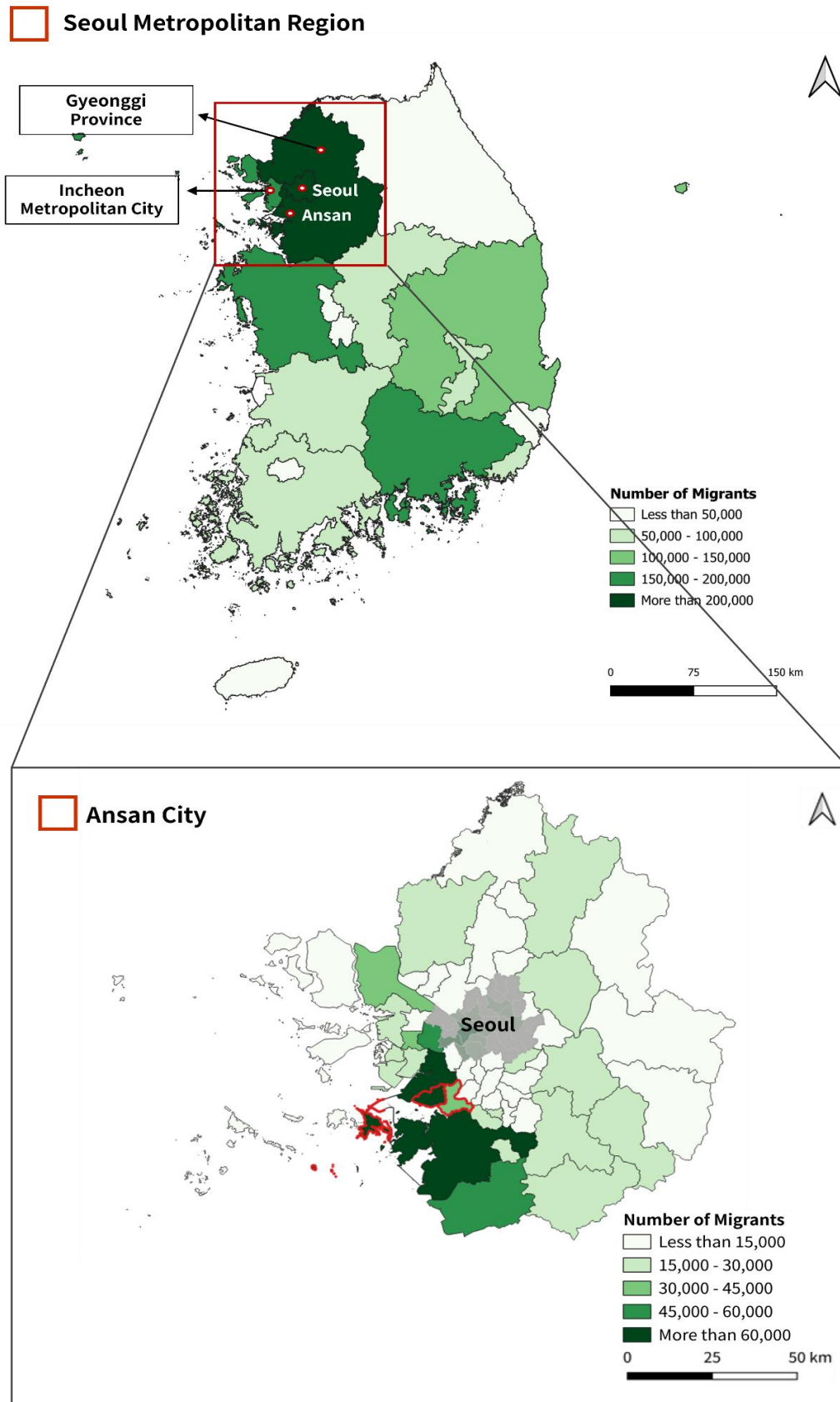


Data source: Ministry of the Interior and Safety

⁵ In this research, I use the ‘Statistics on Foreign Residents in Local Governments’, published by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety. Annually, it provides data on the number migrants who have stayed in Korea for over 90 days, including information on their nationality, visa status, and residence. The residence data is broken down into the smallest administrative units, including *eup* (town), *myeon* (township), *dong* (neighbourhoods). In this research, the detailed residence statistics provide preliminary understanding of the distribution of the migrant population across Ansan City. The statistical investigation was first conducted in 2006, with its latest data from 2023.

Figure 4 shows the geographical distribution of migrants in Korea. 57.8% of migrants live in the Seoul Metropolitan Region, including capital city Seoul, Gyeong-gi Province and Incheon Metropolitan City. Many migrants live and work in the outskirts of metropolitan regions concentrated in areas with agricultural and industrial zones (Collins, 2016). Within the Seoul Metropolitan Region, the southern part of Gyeong-gi Province, where Ansan is located, has the highest density of migrants. This area is home to the *Banwol* and *Sihwa* National Industrial Complexes, the two largest such complexes in the country.

Figure 4 Distribution of migrants in Korea



The following two tables demonstrate the composition of migrants in Korea based on their nationality and visa status.

Table 2 Nationality of migrants

Nationality	Number	Percentage
Korean-Chinese	532,100	27.5
Vietnam	247,286	12.8
China	221,405	11.4
Thailand	190,690	9.9
Uzbekistan	76,920	4.0
Nepal	58,731	3.0
Cambodia	54,084	2.8
The Philippines	52,840	2.7
Indonesia	50,869	2.6
United States of America	47,985	2.5
Others	402,240	20.8
Total	1,935,150	100

Table 3 Visa status of migrants

Visa Status	Number	Percentage
Migrant Worker	470,250	19.1
Foreign Nationality Compatriot	410,972	16.7
Children with migrant background	289,886	11.8
Acquirer of Korean Nationality	234,506	9.5
Foreign Student	206,329	8.4
Marriage Migrant	180,072	7.3
Others	667,527	27.1
Total	2,459,542	100

As illustrated, most of the migrants have East or Southeast Asian backgrounds, with China (including both Korean-Chinese and Chinese) accounting for the largest group of the total migrant population. The next largest groups are people from Vietnam, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Cambodia, The Philippines and Indonesia. In regard to visa status, migrant workers are the largest group, followed by foreign nationality compatriots, children with migrant backgrounds⁶, acquirers of Korean nationality, foreign students, marriage migrants, and others⁷. Among them, I will illustrate three groups that reflect the particular context of Korea - migrant

⁶ This refers to the children of migrants who have acquired Korean nationality, as well as those with foreign nationality who are married to Koreans. This does not include cases where both parents are of foreign nationality, refugees, or undocumented migrants.

⁷ According to the Ministry of Interior and Safety, the category of ‘Others’ are those with visa status other than migrant workers, marriage migrants, foreign students or foreign national Koreans, such as investors, reporters, etc.

workers, marriage migrants, and foreign nationality compatriots - focusing on their migration background and current status.

5.2.2.1 Migrant Workers

The migration of migrant workers is closely tied to Korea's rapid economic development since the 1970s. As outlined earlier, Korean society made a transition from a traditional agricultural to an industrial economy during this time (Kim & Topel, 1995). This shift was accompanied by rapid urban development in the latter half of the 1980s, as evidenced by the national plan of constructing two million housing units in the country within five years (1988-1992). Given the growing demand for labour, primary and secondary industries started to experience severe labour shortages by the 1990s (Han, 2014). Often classified as 3D jobs with low income, young Koreans tended to avoid those low-skilled industries. To address this problem, the Korean government introduced the Industrial Trainee System (ITS) in 1993. It was modeled after Japan's foreign worker regime at the time (Chun, 2014). However, the increase in unauthorised employment under the ITS brought about issues such as human rights violations and poor working conditions (Cho et al., 2006). In need of a more systematic regime, the government implemented the Employment Permit System (EPS) in 2007.⁸ Where the previous ITS was operated under the Korea Federation of Small and Medium Business, the EPS is directly managed by the government. Together with 17 countries⁹ that have signed up for the EPS system with Korea, the government established the overall framework of the system - from the quotas for migrant workers to their employment conditions. Under the EPS system, employment is limited to six specific industries: agriculture and farming, construction, manufacturing, fisheries, mining, and hospitality. The maximum length of employment is 4 years and 10 months. According to the Sincere Foreign Worker Re-Entry system, they can extend their stay to another 4 years and 10 months; however, they must return to their home while waiting for visa approval. They are not permitted to invite their family members or

⁸ However, the problems of human rights violation and labour exploitation persist. The fundamental causes lie in highly restrictive legal and institutional regulations that increase the vulnerability of migrant workers (Kim, 2011; Seo & Skelton, 2017), which will be briefly addressed in a later section.

⁹ As of 2023, the 17 countries include Indonesia, Nepal, Cambodia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Philippines, Pakistan, Myanmar, East Timor, Vietnam, Thailand, Mongolia, China, Laos, and Tajikistan (Korea Employment Information Service, 2024)

acquire Korean nationality. As of 2023, the majority of migrant workers are male, accounting for 82% (385,539) of all workers. In terms of nationality, the largest group is Korean-Chinese (Chinese who are ethnically Korean), followed by those from Vietnam, Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, and the Philippines.

5.2.2.2 Marriage Migrants

The migration of marriage migrants reflects both the changing sociocultural norms in Korea as well as its economic development. Korean society has traditionally been based upon Confucian principles, which placed a high social expectation on marriage and family formation (Im, 2014). Around the mid-1990s, however, the rate of unmarried Korean men, especially in rural areas, started to increase (Kamiya & Lee, 2009). During that time, amidst rapid urbanisation across the country, the sociocultural gap between rural and urban areas widened, in terms of living and working conditions. One consequence was that more women chose to move to urban areas in pursuit of higher education and career, while men were likely to remain in rural hometowns due to the Confucian custom of men supporting their parents and inheriting the family business (Kim & Park, 2008; Kamiya & Lee, 2009). The low marriage rate in rural areas resulted in an aging population and a low fertility rate. Since 1995, the Korean government has promoted international marriages as a solution to this demographic challenge. Referred to as ‘Movement to Promote Marriage for Rural Bachelors (*Nong-chon Chong-gak Jang-ga Bonaegi Undong* in Korean)’, mediating international marriages has been incorporated into a significant policy initiative. Initially, most marriages were arranged with Korean-Chinese women. This was facilitated by exchanges following the establishment of Korea-China diplomatic relations in 1992 (Lee & Lee, 2014). Over time, the nationalities of marriage migrant women have become more diversified, but have been predominantly amongst Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and Cambodia. Considering that these countries have substantially lower Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita than Korea, marriage migration is often considered as a channel to gain economic benefits for prospective marriage migrants (Kim et al., 2012). As a sign of the feminisation of international marriage in the Korean context, 77.7% of marriage migrants are female (139,980). In terms of nationality, the largest group is from Vietnam, followed by China, Korean-Chinese, Japan, the Philippines, the United States, Thailand, Cambodia and others.

5.2.2.3 Foreign Nationality Compatriots

Whereas the inflow of migrant workers and marriage migrants is a relatively recent phenomenon, the presence of foreign nationality compatriots has a longer history associated with the Korean diaspora, tracing back to the early 1900s. According to the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans, a foreign nationality compatriot is defined as a person ‘who once held Korean nationality (including those who had emigrated abroad before the establishment of the Government of the Republic of Korea in 1948) or their lineal descendants with the nationality of a foreign country’. In terms of their nationality, as of 2023, Korean-Chinese is the largest group accounting for 75.1% (308,657), followed by Korean-Russian 6.8%, and Uzbekistan 5.8% and others. The large-scale migration of Koreans to China (*Joseon-jok* in Korean, with *jok* (族) meaning ‘ethnicity’) began in 1910, as many sought to move overseas during the Japanese colonial period. This migration included political figures who aimed to advance the Korean independence movement abroad, as well as farmers whose land and property were confiscated by the Japanese (Choi & Kim, 2016). The other group of compatriots are from the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including Russia and Uzbekistan, are known as *Koryo-in* in Korean, with *in* (人) meaning ‘person’. Korean migration to Central Asia began in 1937, when Koreans who had moved to the Maritime Province (today’s Russian territory) during Japanese colonialism were subjected to forced migration by the former Soviet Union. At that time, the Soviet Union was wary of Japanese expansion and perceived Koreans as potential Japanese spies because of their similar appearance (Pohl, 2000). Both Korean-Chinese and Korean-Russians struggled to settle in China and Central Asia due to their status as ethnic minorities (Lee, 2001; Oh et al., 2015). A few decades later, some of their descendants migrated to Korea in search of job opportunities, with their proficiency in Korean and affinity for Korean culture playing important roles in their decision to migrate (Oh et al., 2015). Many of them work in small and medium-sized companies in primary and secondary industries. Unlike migrant workers in general, their employment is subjected to the Special Employment Permit System. Therefore, legal and institutional regulations on foreign nationality compatriots are relatively less restrictive than those for migrant workers, particularly in terms of their rights to bring family members and

acquire Korean nationality (J. H. Kim, 2020).¹⁰

5.2.3 Reconstruction of Multiculturalism in Korea

The increasing number of migrants of different national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds in Korea was more than a simple shift in population demographics. Rather, migration-led diversification was perceived as a challenge to Korean society which has long held onto a strong sense of homogeneous national identities (Kang, 2006). It is within this context that the cultivation of Korea's multicultural policies has taken shape to re-craft national identities. Homogenous nationalism has served as a filtering mechanism to determine which groups of migrants should be incorporated into the policies. Korea's multicultural policies became very narrow and limited, functioning based on the criterion of whether a migrant had the chance to inherit Korean lineage and culture. This was evident in how the policies were committed to assimilate marriage migrants while systematically excluding migrant workers.

The ideology behind the policy support for marriage migrants was that they are mediators who could restore and uphold Korea's traditional family institution (Yoon, 2008; Koo, 2015; Lee, 2016).¹¹ As outlined earlier, the influx of marriage migrants was accompanied by a discourse on Korea's looming population crisis - the low marriage rate of Korean men and the consequent low birthrate particularly in the rural regions. Coupled with Korea's patriarchal system, traditional gender roles of caregiving and reproduction have been heavily imposed on marriage migrants, with expectations that they give birth to 'Koreans' and become a member of Korean family (Cho, 2013). Thus, they have always been prioritised in multicultural policies, despite representing a small proportion (7.3%) of the country's total migrant population. It is evident that the way in which the policies were applied to marriage migrants reflected a clear boundary shaped by patriarchal national ideology. Multicultural policies were implemented under the

¹⁰ However, this does not mean that foreign nationality compatriots are treated 'equally' to Koreans. They are still perceived as foreigners and face daily discrimination because of their distinguishable linguistic usage, appearance and customs (Park et al., 2015; Kim, 2019). Due to the gap between the expected hospitality of the 'homeland' and the reality of discrimination, they often struggle with an identity crisis, not feeling they belong either in Korea or in China or Central Asia (Kim, 2019).

¹¹ As they are expected to be 'obedient' to these roles, a high number of marriage migrants are exposed to human rights abuses, including domestic and sexual violence (Kim & Kim, 2011).

assumption that marriage migrants maintained their marital status with Korean men. This meant that the policy support could be withdrawn if marriage migrants no longer fit into the dominant consensus of 'ideal' marriage migrants. Therefore, those who are divorced or widowed have often been marginalised and excluded from the policy (Kwon et al., 2020). Even within the policies, most focused on assimilating marriage migrants into Korean society, such as teaching them Korean language, cuisine, and culture (Kim, 2008). It reflected the attempt of rebuilding the notion of 'Korean-ness' by pushing them to conform to Korea's traditional customs and gender norms.

On the other hand, migrant workers, who account for the largest proportion (19.1%) of the total migrant population, have been excluded from multicultural policies. A different approach was applied when making policy considerations for migrant workers. Since they came to Korea under the labour migration regime, the policy measures affecting them were heavily shaped by neoliberal ideology. With the rise of neoliberalism, the provision of a highly skilled labour force with higher education and professional skills became desirable (Simon-Kumar, 2015). This means that the majority of migrant workers in Korea - low-skilled workers in primary and secondary industries - were deemed undesirable, despite still being needed. Thus, they were not targeted for integration into Korean society but were instead prevented from staying in Korea permanently. This is most evident from the fact that they are restricted from accessing naturalisation. Under the current immigration policy, migrant workers can reside in Korea for four years and ten months and extend for a further four years and ten months. However, the visa extension process is highly restrictive, as it is only open to those who have remained within the same industry throughout the initial period. In addition, they must return to their home countries for one month before re-entry.¹² It is significant to note how this regulation prevents the permanent settlement of migrant workers in Korea. According to Article 5 of Korea's Nationality Act, a person who has resided in Korea for at least five 'consecutive' years can apply for naturalisation. The stipulation that migrant workers must leave Korea before

¹² This is a recent change implemented after October 2021. For the last nine years, the requirements were more restrictive: Only migrant workers who had not changed their 'workplace' throughout the initial period were eligible to apply for a visa extension. In addition, they had to return to their home countries for three months before re-entry.

completing five years prevents them from meeting this condition, making it impossible for them to acquire Korean nationality unless they marry a Korean.

While the labour migration regime dominantly shaped migrant worker policy, there were signs of Korea's nationalism still playing out, favouring those with an affiliation to Korean ethnicity. In 2010, the Korean government implemented a policy to address the increasing number of undocumented migrants by legalising them under certain conditions. For undocumented migrants who had stayed in the country for over 10 years, the government granted the right to re-enter Korea and find a job, provided that they 'voluntarily' returned to their countries. However, this exception was applied to foreign nationality compatriots, only to Korean-Chinese. The majority of migrant workers of different ethnicities, such as Vietnam, Nepal, Cambodia, were excluded from this measure. Perceived as discriminatory treatment for non-compatriots, this caused tension among migrants between those with affiliation to Korean ethnicity and those without (Han, 2018). This demonstrates how the strong adherence to Korean ethnicity has been entrenched in national policies, establishing a hierarchy among migrants. In the next section, I will expand the discussion on Korea's narrow multicultural policy to show how it gave a rise to a discourse of multiculturalism specific to the Korean context.

5.2.4 Discourse of Damunwha

In Korea, the promotion of multicultural policies was accompanied by the creation of related terms to decide policy beneficiaries, such as 'multicultural family' and 'multicultural student'. When it comes to policy terms, it is significant to deliberate beyond their administrative or technical functions. Policy terms are not neutral, but they are part of political actions to shape specific meanings around the terms (Tanesini, 1994). The way that the terms are employed constructs a particular discourse by influencing how the dominant groups in society understand and perceive the people associated with them. What follows is an investigation into how the term 'multiculture' was constructed in Korea, particularly by nationalist ideology, and how it came to carry particular socioeconomic implications within the discourse of multiculturalism. In Korean, the equivalent term for multiculture is *damunwha*, with *da* (多) meaning all and *munhwa* (文化) meaning culture. By definition, *damunwha* includes people from various

ethnic, legal, gender, linguistic and religious backgrounds. In policy terms, however, it is limited to referring to ‘a family consisting of a marriage migrant mother, a Korean father, and their children’. This originated from the term ‘Multicultural Family’, which the Korean government coined in 2006 in order to delineate the boundaries of multicultural policies. That year, the Ministry of Education published an ‘Education Support Policy for Children of Multicultural Family’, where it defined a multicultural family (*damunwha gajeong*) as follows: A family composed of people with ethnic and cultural backgrounds that is different from us [Koreans] (Ministry of Education, 2006: 1). In its definition, it is worth paying attention to the remark “different from us [Koreans]”. By drawing a boundary between the concept of the ‘Korean family’, the term reflected a strong sense of nationalism in two aspects. First, the justification of the notion of multicultural family relied on the presumption that the ‘Korean family’ is monocultural (Jang, 2011). By emphasising the monocultural aspects of the Korean family, such as nationality, ethnicity, and language, this reinforced the belief in the homogeneity of Koreans. Second, it hinted that a multicultural family, whether one of the parents is Korean or their children are legally Korean, is not considered equivalent to a Korean family. This suggests that they are not fully accepted in Korea society, where the term ‘multicultural family’ was employed to ‘other’ them, with its strong implications of difference from Koreans.

Simultaneously, the discourse of multiculturalism in Korea evolved in a way that relates solely to marriage migrants, in alignment with the biased considerations for them in multicultural policies. The excessive focus on marriage migrants, while other migrant groups - such as migrant workers - are left out, has led to the creation of separate support systems within the policy. For example, in 2006, the Korean government established support centres for marriage migrants and their families, named as ‘Multicultural Family Support Centres’. As of 2023, there are 230 offices across the country operated by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. When it comes to migrant workers, the Ministry of Employment and Labor operates ‘Foreign Workers Support Centre’, with 44 offices across the country. Besides the evident disproportion in the number of Multicultural Family Support Centres, the term and separate support institutions constructed and reinforced the dominant discourse of multiculturalism by delineating which group of migrants falls within the boundaries of ‘multiculture’.

The one-sided policy consideration centred on multicultural families shaped how the discourse of multiculturalism played out in public perception. Underlying the policy support and attention given to them was the perception that multicultural families are subjects of sympathy and charity. The Korean media has further reinforced this prejudice by representing multicultural families as marginalised groups with low socioeconomic status, to the point of often highlighting the poverty of marriage migrants' families in their home countries (Kwon, 2013). Within this context, the term *damunwha* came to carry connotations of economic and social disadvantage, translating to 'poor families with Asian mothers from developing countries' (Koo, 2015; Kim & Cho, 2021). This was accompanied by standardised images of multicultural families: 'foreign' mothers struggling to adopt to Korean society, 'old and poor' Korean fathers, and children with 'distinct' features with imperfect Korean skills (Kwon, 2013). Such prejudice then has led to discriminatory remarks and attitudes towards multicultural families, with *damunwha* itself becoming a pejorative term. For example, some Korean media outlets have reported how children from multicultural families are often called "*Hey, damunwha*" by their schoolteachers instead of by their actual names, leading to the children being subjected to bullying (Kim, 2018; Meang, 2022). Due to the stigma associated with the label of *damunwha*, these children often conceal their family backgrounds, rather choosing to be called a 'foreigner' (Kim et al., 2022).

Amidst the negative reactions to the term *damunwha* from those it referred to, anti-multicultural sentiment started spreading in Korea from the mid-2010s. Especially as the economic recession and unemployment problems became more prominent, Koreans started to perceive multicultural policy as a reverse discrimination (Shim & Kim, 2016; Choi & Park, 2012). They pointed out that Koreans have been neglected in policy considerations, while most of the government's budget is allocated to supporting multicultural families. During this time, the discourse on the crisis of multiculturalism that had emerged in European countries, such as Germany, France and the United Kingdom, was introduced through domestic media, reinforcing the anti-multicultural opinion that Korea's multicultural policies would soon fail (Han, 2012). Following critical reflection on multiculturalism across academia and politics, a demand for a new immigration policy framework began to emerge (Shim & Kim, 2016). This led to a shift towards Europe's interculturalism, particularly made by Korean scholars who had studied in Europe. A more thorough investigation of the discursive shift to interculturalism,

along with the key actors and channels involved, will be explored in Chapter 8.

5.3 Migration and Multiculturalism in Ansan

In this section, I provide information on the context of Ansan, the research location of this thesis. I will first explore how Ansan evolved into the city with the largest number of migrants in Korea, offering an overview of the city's transformation in line with national development. Then, I will demonstrate how Ansan became Korea's representative multicultural city, with a reference to some of the city's renowned multicultural policies from early 2000s to late 2010s. It is worth mentioning that the way in which Ansan's policies were carried out aligns with the broader national context discussed above. Lastly, I will outline the background for the city's decision to make a policy shift to intercultural policy from the late 2010s, by joining the ICC in 2020.

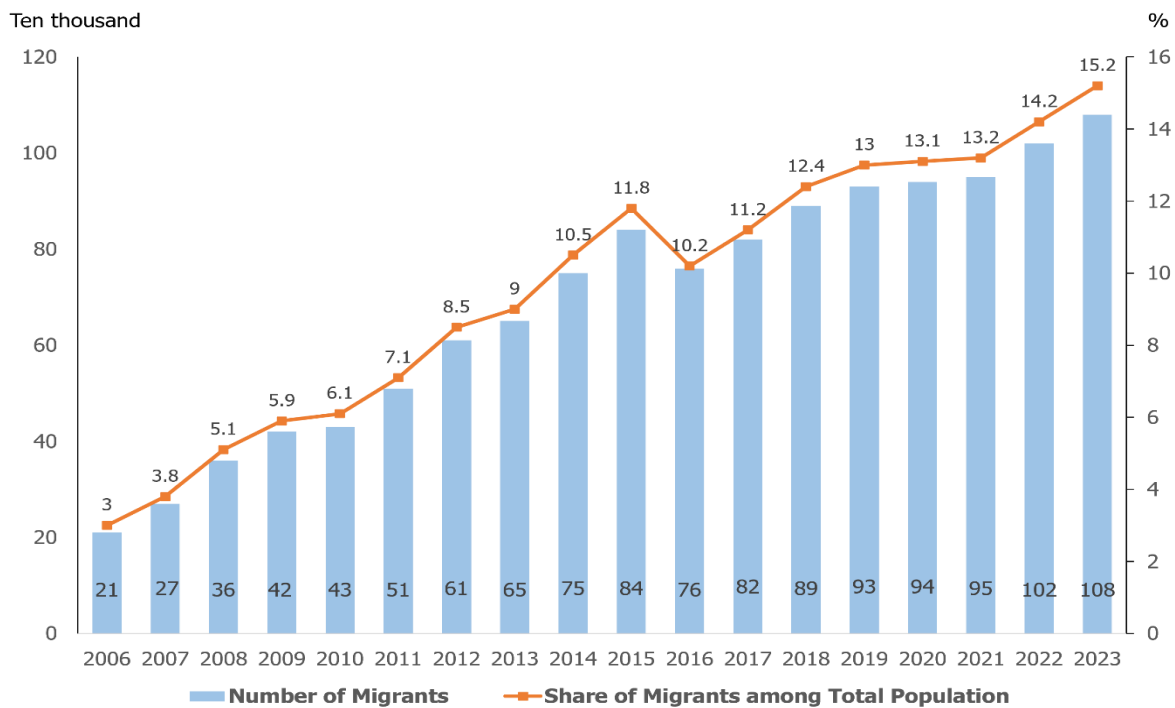
5.3.1 Influx of migrants in Ansan

Ansan is the first planned city in Korea, developed through the government's urban planning initiative starting in the 1960s. With rapid urbanisation occurring since the late 1980s, Korea's population and industrial facilities became heavily concentrated in the Seoul Metropolitan Region. To achieve balanced regional development, the government implemented a plan to relocate the population and resources across the country (Ansan City History Compilation Committee, 1994). This included the establishment of the Banwol National Industrial Complex in 1977 in the former Banwol area, located 40 kilometers southwest of the capital city, Seoul. After obtaining city status in 1986, this area became what is now known as Ansan. Following the city's development plan, the economic structure of Ansan changed significantly. Until 1976, the city was a typical agricultural and fishing region, with 72.7% of the local population engaged in primary industries. By 1986, it had transformed into an industrial city, with 82.6% of the population working in secondary industries (Song, 2022). Working-class residential areas were created near the industrial complex, most of which were in the form of cheap, closely attached, multi-family houses (C. H. Kim, 2015).

While leading the national economy, the Banwol National Industrial Complex began to face challenges following the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. Amid economic downturn, small and medium-sized companies in the industrial complex had to reduce production expenses,

primarily by cutting wages. This led to many Korean factory workers leaving the complex, resulting in severe labour shortages (C. H. Kim, 2015). Simultaneously, the development of entertainment facilities near the residential areas around the industrial complex was perceived to deteriorate the quality of life, driving more local Koreans away (Koo, 2013). These labour and housing vacancies were soon filled by international migrant workers, who began entering Korea through the Industrial Training System introduced in 1993. As their numbers increased significantly, a number of non-profit organisations were established in the mid-1990s to provide them with the necessary legal and social assistance, which further attracted more migrant workers to Ansan (Koo, 2013). In this early stage, even before the Ansan local government established a dedicated body for migrant support policy in 2005, these organisations made a significant contribution to helping migrants adapt at the local level (Oh, 2010). Followed by the settlement of other migrant groups, such as marriage migrants and foreign national compatriots, Ansan became the largest city in terms of migrant population among 226 local governments in Korea. As illustrated by Figure 5, the migrant population, both number and percentage, is on a steady rise. In 2023, it reached approximately 108,000, accounting for 15.2% of the total population.

Figure 5 Number and percentage of migrants in Ansan (2006-2023)



Data source: Ministry of the Interior and Safety

One notable aspect of the migrant composition in Ansan is the large proportion of foreign nationality compatriots. As shown in Table 5, they account for 33.7% of the city’s total migrants. This is evidenced by the high percentage of both Korean-Chinese (44.8%) and those from the CIS states, including Korean-Russian, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan (Table 4). In fact, one particular neighbourhood in Ansan, known as *Seonbu-dong*, was the first settlement for ethnic Koreans from the CIS (*Koryo-in*) in Korea. With job opportunities, coupled with cheap housing prices, and its proximity to Seoul City, this neighbourhood has evolved into a *Koryo-in* enclave (Kwak & Yim, 2017).

Table 4 Nationality of Migrants in Ansan

Nationality	Number	Percentage
Korean-Chinese	41,382	44.8
China	11,439	12.4
Uzbekistan	9,338	10.1
Korean-Russian	6,519	7.1
Kazakhstan	3,913	4.2
Thailand	2,925	3.2
Vietnam	2,769	3.0
Russia	2,698	2.9
Indonesia	1,229	1.3
The Philippines	1,044	1.1
Others	9,015	9.8
Total	92,271	100

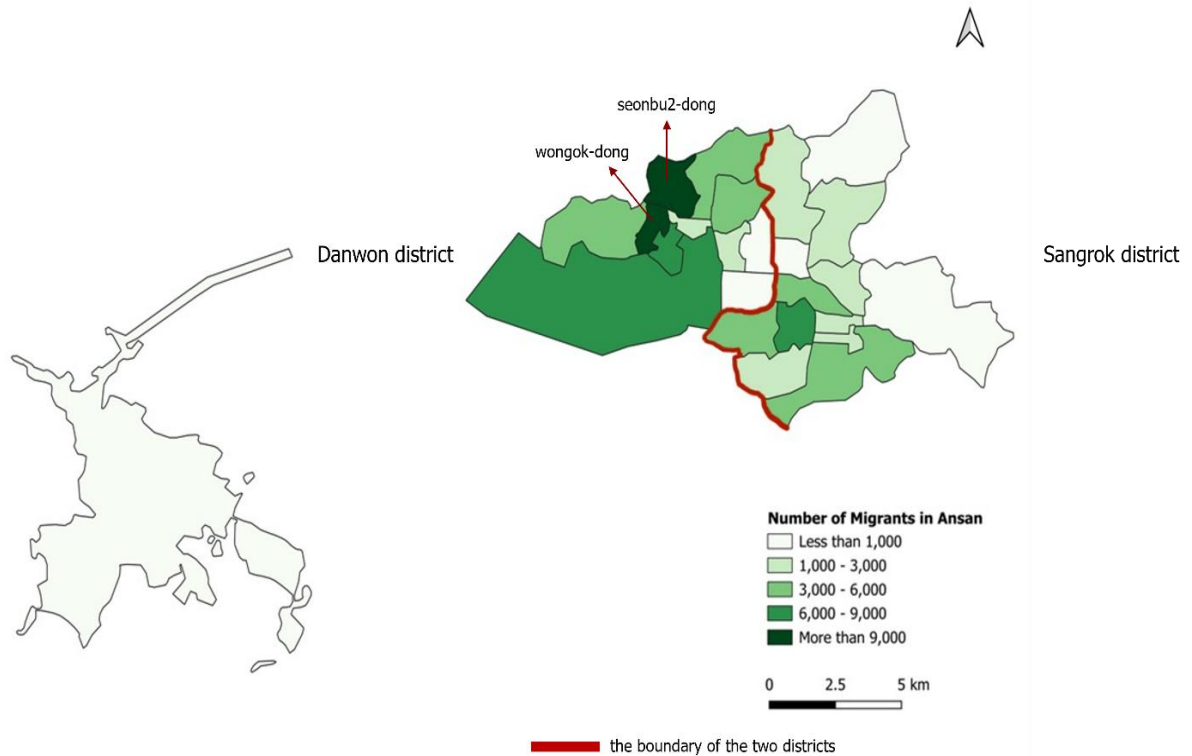
Table 5 Visa Status of Migrants in Ansan

Visa Status	Number	Percentage
Foreign Nationality Compatriot	36,385	33.7
Migrant Worker	15,875	14.7
Acquirer of Korean Nationality	9,671	9.0
Children with migrant background	6,091	5.6
Marriage Migrant	5,201	4.8
Foreign Student	3,383	3.1
Others	31,427	29.1
Total	108,033	100

Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of migrants in Ansan. Ansan is divided into two districts - *Danwon* and *Sangrok*. They are further divided into 25 neighbourhoods, with 12 in *Danwon* and 13 in *Sangrok*. It is clear that the majority of migrants reside in *Danwon* district, with 75,185 (69.6% of the city’s total migrant population) compared to *Sangrok* district with 32,848 (30.4%). Among the eight neighbourhoods (*dongs* in Korean), *Wongok-dong* shows the highest density of migrants, which results from its proximity to the Banwol National Industrial

Complex. This is also the case for Seounbu2-dong, which has a notable population of ethnic Koreans from the CIS, as mentioned above.

Figure 6 Distribution of migrants in Ansan



5.3.2 Implementation of multicultural policies in Ansan

In this section, I will explore some of Ansan’s multicultural policies from early 2000s to late 2010s. Most of these policy initiatives were implemented for the first time in Korea, which contributed to the city’s reputation as the leading multicultural city in the country. In 2005, Ansan established a dedicated body to provide services to local migrants, marking the first such initiative among local governments in Korea. Initially called the ‘Ansan Migrant Worker Support Centre’, it evolved into today’s ‘Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters’. It consists of two divisions and six departments with 36 public officials: the Division of Foreign Resident Administration (Departments of Administration, Foreign Resident Human Rights, and Multicultural Special Zone support), and the Division of Foreign Resident Assistance (Departments of Support, Global Village Culture, and Foreign Resident Education).

In 2009, Ansan enacted the ‘Ordinance on the Promotion of the Human Rights of Foreign Residents in Ansan’. Article 2 stated that no residents should be discriminated against based on

their ‘nationality, skin colour, race, ethnicity, language, or culture’. This part of the ordinance was perceived monumental for including undocumented migrants in the law, considering that they had been largely excluded in the central government’s immigration policy (C. H. Kim, 2015). In the same year, the local government designated a ‘Multicultural Village Special Zone’ within the city. Supported by the central government, a neighbourhood called *Wongok-dong*, with the highest concentration of migrants in the city, was rebranded as a tourist destination (Koo, 2013). With the aim of raising the city’s ‘Multicultural City’ brand, different initiatives - such as renovating the zone’s physical infrastructures, holding a series of traditional folk festivals, and promoting ethnic restaurants - were put forward. A symbolic sculpture, decorated with world flags, was also erected for the special zone. This implies that Ansan began to place cultural diversity at the core of the city’s image and identity. The special zone was perceived differently by different stakeholders, however. Local migrant NGOs perceived it as the local government’s attempt to control and manage local migrants, expressing concerns that it could commercialise and break up existing ethnic communities (Koo, 2013; Heo, 2021). For local Koreans, in contrast, it was seen as reverse discrimination, as they felt that Koreans were being left behind in favour of preferential treatment for migrants (C. H. Kim, 2015; Park & Park, 2015).

In 2012, Ansan led the establishment of the National Council of Multicultural Cities. Consisting of 21 cities in Korea with large migrant populations - either over 10,000 people or 3% of the city’s total population - the council was created to facilitate cooperation among local governments in the implementation of multicultural policies (Ansan City, 2012). Ansan served as the 1st and 2nd presidential city positions (2012-2016), hosting international symposiums on the topic of immigration policy. For instance, *Korea, Europe, and Japan International Symposium on Interculturalism* - co-organised by the CoE, and the Japan Foundation - was held in Ansan. This event eventually channeled the introduction of the ICC, which I will thoroughly explore in Chapter 8.

In 2018, Ansan implemented another multicultural policy for the first time in Korea. Considering the high number of children from migrant backgrounds, the local government decided to offer subsidies for day-care fees for children aged 3-5 attending local kindergartens. This decision was made based on Ansan’s 2013 Ordinance on the Support for Foreign Children

and Multicultural Families. This policy has been widely recognised as a good example and was later adopted by other cities such as Bucheon and Siheung (2020), Gunpo (2021), and Gimpo (2022) (Lee, 2023). In 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, Ansan was the first city to provide emergency disaster relief funds to migrants. This decision was highly notable, given that it was made at a time when providing relief funds to migrants sparked nationwide controversy, perceived as a reverse discrimination against Koreans (S. W. Kim, 2020).

5.3.3 Shift to intercultural policies in Ansan

Building on these multicultural policies, Ansan's reputation as Korea's representative multicultural city was solidified. The city's policies have been perceived as progressive and inclusive, which have been adopted by other cities across the country (Oh, 2020). However, from mid-to-late 2010, signs of dissonance between the ideal of multicultural policy and its reality began to emerge, surfacing through the residential separation between local migrants and Koreans (Park & Park, 2015). With the increasing influx of migrants, Wongok-dong, in particular, came to be represented in negative terms as being dirty and dangerous, gradually becoming undesirable by Korean residents (C. H. Kim, 2015). This is evidenced by Figure 7, which earlier showed the distribution of migrants in Ansan, demonstrating a clear dividing line between Danwon district, with a high migrant density, and Sangrok district, with high Korean density. Beyond the spatial separation, there was an evident sign of social distance between local Koreans and migrants. While the two groups coexisted in the city with little interaction or communication, negative sentiments against migrants started to build up over time (Park & Park, 2015).

This was exemplified by a local incident that occurred in 2021. Wongok Elementary School in Wongok-dong has often been referred to as a reflection of the city's cultural diversity, with 98.6% of its students with migrant backgrounds. However, the reality is that the school has become unwanted among Korean parents. In Korea, students are assigned to school zones by their residential areas. In 2021, Korean parents living in *Baegun-dong*, a neighbourhood next to Wongok-dong, formally petitioned the Ansan Office of Education to expand the school zones to include schools other than Wongok Elementary. Their main concern was the perceived degradation of education due to the concentration of *damunwha* students - those from multicultural families. The school principal held an official meeting to persuade them that this

was far from what was actually happening on the ground. However, the request made by the Korean parents was accepted by the Ansan Office of Education. Afterwards, not a single admission application was made to Wongok Elementary School from Baegun-dong (Shim et al., 2022). This implies that the ‘multicultural’ reality, despite the local government’s intense input for multicultural policy, faced resistance from Koreans, compounded by stigma or prejudice towards migrants.

To address the limitations of multicultural policies, Ansan’s policy officials sought a new discourse to reshape the city’s brand, with cultural diversity still placed at its core. The renovation of the city’s brand, particularly to align with a global city image, became central to local politics. This period coincided with the arrival of the Intercultural City discourse in Ansan, which led to the city’s rapid movement to join the ICC. In February 2020, Ansan became the first city to join the ICC in Korea. This was accompanied by the city’s active branding as an intercultural city. The uptake of the ICC in Ansan will be investigated in Chapter 8. The city’s intercultural city branding is exemplified in an official illustration published by Ansan, featured with the catchphrase *‘You, Me, and We Integrate and Coexist! Ansan, the Intercultural City’* (Figure 7). However, just as the previous multicultural policy revealed a mismatch between rhetoric and reality, a similar gap was also noted in the city’s intercultural policy, which will be thoroughly explored in Chapter 9.

Figure 7 The illustration of Intercultural City Ansan

너, 나, 우리가 함께 통합과 상생! 상호문화 중심도시 안산



Source: Ansan Foreign Residents Support Headquarters (n.d.-b)

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of migration and multiculturalism in both Korea and Ansan City. It began by examining how Korea's homogeneous nationalism has influenced the multiculturalism discourse, where migrants were selectively marginalised based on the belief in the mono-ethnicity and mono-culture of Korean society. When the multiculturalism discourse lost public support in the mid-2010s, it created room for discussions on European interculturalism to emerge in Korea. A similar pattern was observed in Ansan. Despite its renowned multicultural policies, there has been an increasing physical and social separation between local Koreans and migrants, making the city's multicultural brand unwanted by residents. In response, Ansan turned its attention to the ICC to restore its city brand in late 2019, with the stated purpose of promoting mutual communication and interaction between Koreans and migrants.

The outline of the broader paradigm shifts from multiculturalism to interculturalism in Korea and Ansan provides a reference point for the latter part of this thesis, where I explore the practical reasons and motivations behind Ansan's adoption of the ICC. The comparison between the official rationale presented in this chapter and the underlying motivations discussed in subsequent chapters will serve as the basis for a critical analysis of whether the rhetoric of Ansan's intercultural policies aligns with their implementations. As noted in Chapter 3, intercultural policies are promoted as a response to the limitations of multicultural policies, with their emphasis on the social integration of people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Key findings in Chapters 8 and 9 will provide an empirical case to validate this argument, by exploring whether Ansan's implementation of intercultural policies achieves its stated goals of promoting migrant integration, or whether these policies simply rename multicultural policies while migrants continue to face marginalisation in the city.

Chapter 6 Development and Changes in European Cultural Policies

6.1 Introduction

In the latter half of this thesis, I examine the development and circulation of the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) and its adoption in Ansan, Korea. Before delving into these three key dimensions in Chapters 7, 8, and 9, this chapter lays the foundation for contextualising the ICC, providing a basis for understanding how this thesis approaches the ICC. The name *Intercultural Cities Programme* suggests that it is a global city network to promote exchanges among cities worldwide. While this is one of the ICC's stated objectives, it is significant to move beyond a surface understanding of the ICC as merely a city-level initiative. As discussed in Chapter 3, the ICC initiated as the pan-European project by the Council of Europe (CoE) to promote interculturalism for managing the growing cultural diversity within Europe during the mid-to-late 2000s. This origin positions the ICC as a political response to cultural diversity, situated within the broader context of Europe's cultural policies. This chapter adopts this framing as a starting point for a more critical examination of the ICC throughout this thesis.

Europe's cultural policies have evolved over time in response to changing global political dynamics, with different foci emerging at different historical moments. In the post-war era, the emphasis was on promoting European unity by bringing European countries together to restore Europe's power. By the 1970s, particularly with the spread of democracy, the notion of cultural diversity gained prominence and was soon incorporated into Europe's cultural policies. Within this context, this chapter investigates the discursive shift from unity to diversity according to key junctures in Europe's history. Exploring this shift towards diversity will help unpack how the idea of cultural diversity was shaped in response to Europe's evolving geopolitical interests. Ultimately, this will contribute to a critical understanding of the ideological orientations that underpin the CoE's launch of the ICC in 2008.

This chapter begins by examining the era of European imperialism as a starting point for investigating Europe's geopolitical challenges. It moves to the post-World War II period and into the 1970s, exploring how the notions of unity and diversity emerged in Europe's cultural policies during each of these periods. The final section of the chapter focuses on the Asian

context in the 1990s, examining how Europe's cultural initiatives to expand its influence in Asia became channels through which European interculturalism began to spread. This chapter lays the foundation for critically investigating the mobility of the ICC, both worldwide and to Asia, which will be explored in the next chapter.

6.2 Constructing Europe in the era of imperialism

Before delving into how the idea of unity became the focus of Europe's cultural policies, it is important to note that this was not always a primary concern. As I will demonstrate throughout this chapter, Europe's cultural policies evolved as a way to strengthen its global influence during a time when its power was waning in the post-war period. Before exploring Europe's sociopolitical landscape in the post-war period, I will first look back at European imperialism. This is to investigate the process through which Europe lost its imperial authority, which eventually led to the demand for the establishment of European organisations and the institutional use of cultural policies to restore its power.

The global growth of European imperialism dates back to the 16th century when European empires competed for supremacy through the expansion of their colonies (Asad, 1973). European imperialism was manifested in the exploitation of territories and the subjugation of people of 'uncivilised nations', which referred to countries in Africa, the Americas, and Asia. During this time, colonial states actively used censuses, maps, and museums to visualise and quantify the people and territories of colonies. These tools helped colonial states to control those deemed as not belonging to their envisioned glorious empire (Anderson, 1991). Imperialism imposed substantial violence, as evidenced by the Atlantic slave trade, which reached its peak in the 17th and 18th centuries. Other key features of imperialism included the extraction of resources, global indentured labour systems, and settler colonialism. At the same time, European empires sought to rationalise their dominance by spreading European ideas, beliefs and ideologies, which claimed to represent new forms of universal 'modernity' (Wesseling, 2004). Imperialist expansion was justified as the civilising duty of Europeans, based on the rationale that non-European societies were primitive and heathen. This rationale gained wide acceptance through the development of science and social theories, such as Social Darwinism, which was associated with white racial superiority (Dennis, 1995; Wesseling, 2004). Darwin's evolutionary theory provided a powerful rationale for perceiving the physical

and the psychological traits of colonial subjects as inherently inferior (Shields & Bhatia, 2009). It served as a taxonomical framework that categorised European society as the most advanced, while non-European societies were epitomised as irrational, barbarian, and agrarian (Jara & Magana, 1982). Non-European cultures were often devalued or exoticised (Said, 1978). The British historian and politician Thomas Babington Macaulay remarked that “a single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia” (Sharp, 1920: 109). The discourse of inferiority of non-European cultures legitimised various forms of cultural imperialism, including the expansion of missionary enterprises (Porter, 1997).

Centuries of European imperialism entered a new phase after World War II. A wave of decolonisation marked the decline of long-standing imperial authority (Babou, 2010). Several shifts in international politics accelerated decolonisation. First, leading colonial powers became politically vulnerable after disastrous setbacks during the war, which led to the dismantling of the colonial system (von Albertini, 1969). Second, anti-colonial resistance in Asia and Africa inspired colonies to unite in their fight for freedom, based on their collective experience of oppression (von Albertini, 1969; Myrice, 2015). Third, the United States exerted significant pressure on European powers to liberate their colonies (Clymer, 1995; Thomas, 2008). The fall of European imperialism contrasted with the rise of the 'American century'. The American century referred to the 20th century, during which the United States emerged as the new global power reshaping world geopolitics (Kearns, 2003; Schou, 2016). During this period, American values, ideas, and images were widely disseminated, underpinned by the ideology that the United States was the guardian of democratic and egalitarian values (Schou, 2016). American values were represented as more progressive and modern than European values, which European politicians saw as a form of cultural diplomacy aimed at influencing the minds of Europeans (Schneider, 2005).

These two strands of decolonisation and Americanisation significantly challenged the longstanding sense of European authority. In response, Europe's ruling elites sought a space in which to 'trade' their grievances over the loss of empire - grievances that reflected Europe's reduced global power, uncertainty about its future trajectory, and, not the least, the deep discomfort of confronting the reversal of being surpassed by countries long perceived as inferior (Hansen, 2002: 494). In the hopes of filling the power vacuum, European elites outlined a project to create a Greater Europe. Emphasising that the future of Europe must be determined

by Europeans, Europe began to embark on an integration project. This was accompanied by the creation of a founding myth, where Europe was imagined as a cohesive community ‘from its outset’ (Riekmann, 1997). In the following section, I will discuss how this European integration project was enacted.

6.3 Uniting Europe in the post-World War II period

Europe’s integration project began by establishing European organisations. In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the CoE were created. In 1951, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established, which laid the foundation for what became the European Union (EU). These organisations aimed to conceptualise and realise European cooperation, with NATO mainly focusing on military alliances, the CoE on political reconciliation, and ECSC on economic cooperation. While distinct in their own right, all three organisations sought to construct and cultivate the idea of European unity (Robertson, 1954). Among these, I focus on how the CoE employed cultural policy to reinforce the idea of European unity. This will lay the foundation for understanding the broader context from which the ICC emerged, which is the focus of this thesis. I will first outline the background of the creation of the CoE.

6.3.1 Establishing the Council of Europe

The initiation of the CoE marked an effort to realise both historical and contemporary notions of unity. To quote a statement made by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs during the ceremony to mark the signing of the Statute of the CoE, Europe - whose definition and boundaries had long been controversial - was now ‘being built on reality’ (Schuman, 1949/2013: 2). Europe was re-imagined as a distinct political-territorial entity with a pan-continental identity (Murphy, 1999). To realise this vision, the idea of European unity was perceived as the ‘last chance of salvation for Europe’ (Schuman, 1951/n.d.) . The creation of the CoE was suggested by Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom at that time. In March 1943, at the peak of World War II, Churchill delivered a broadcast address where he urgently proposed the creation of the CoE as a means to enhance the security and safety of Europe.

We must try - I am speaking of course, only for ourselves - we must try to make

the Council of Europe, or whatever it may be called, into a really effective league with all the strongest forces concerned woven into its texture with a high court to adjust disputes and with forces, armed forces, national or international or both, held ready to enforce these decisions and prevent renewed aggression and the preparation of future wars.

(Churchill, 1943/2016: 3-4)

In 1946, Churchill delivered another speech at the University of Zurich. Echoing the post-war vision for Europe, the aspiration to create the CoE was imbued with a more spiritual tone, emphasising ideals of peace, unity, and human flourishing. In his speech, he envisaged the reconstruction of Europe based on principles of justice, mercy and freedom. The establishment of the CoE was seen as the first practical step towards realising this vision. Its creation began to take shape through international meetings among governmental officials from Western European states. The 1948 Hague Congress of Europe marked the culmination of a consensus among states to establish a European organisation. At the congress, the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity suggested convening a European assembly, which became the forebearer of the CoE. The proposal received significant support from the French Government, which had been advocating for the unification of Western European nations, particularly due to concerns about the potential resurgence of Germany (Loth, 2015). On 5 May 1949, the Foreign Ministers of ten countries of Western Europe - Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Ireland - signed the Treaty of London on the establishment of the CoE. As a symbol of reconciliation and cooperation between France and Germany, it was headquartered in Strasbourg, located near the border of the two countries.

Upon its foundation, the CoE aimed to quickly solidify its membership among Western European countries. Meanwhile, its expansion was perceived as a threat to Central and Eastern Europe, whose political and ideological systems clashed with the CoE's aims of liberal democracy and a free market economy (Bond, 2012). However, the détente in the 1970s and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 transformed the political landscape of Central and Eastern Europe, paving the way for the accession of newly emerging democratic governments to the CoE in the 1990s. The CoE member states declared their willingness to accept governments

liberated from communist oppression provided that they adopt the basic principles of democracy and human rights in their political institutions and legal systems (CoE, 1993). Ultimately, the CoE evolved into a pan-European organisation, covering the whole of geographic Europe, including Türkiye and states of the Caucasus. As noted from its 50th anniversary slogan *For a Great Europe without Dividing Lines*, the CoE has strived to become a democratic institution dedicated to enhancing the political, legal, social, and cultural cohesion of ‘Greater Europe’ (CoE, 1999b). In 2025, the CoE has 46 member countries¹³, with the exception of Belarus (excluded since 1977 for its lack of respect for human rights and democratic principles), Kosovo (whose international status is not yet clarified), and the Russian Federation (excluded since 2022 for its war of aggression against Ukraine). This modality of inclusion and exclusion of member states underscores the ongoing construction of Europe in response to changing realities, with its shifting geographical, political, and cultural boundaries.

As stated in its 1949 Statute, the CoE declared that its aim is “to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress”. It called for joint action in the cultural sphere to attain this overarching vision. This demonstrates that the CoE has consistently highlighted the significance of culture and cultural policies since its inception. In the following section, I will examine how the focus of these cultural initiatives has changed over time in response to Europe’s internal and external challenges.

6.3.2 Rediscovering European cultural heritage

During the 1950s, Europe’s primary focus was unification, driven by the rise of a bipolar world, which was exemplified by the rivalry between the former Soviet Union and the United States, and their respective allies, Eastern and Western Europe. Western European intellectuals turned

¹³ Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom (May 1949), Greece and Republic of Türkiye (August 1949), Iceland and Germany (1950), Austria (1956), Cyprus (1961), Switzerland (1963), Malta (1965), Portugal (1976), Spain (1977), Liechtenstein (1978), San Marino (1988), Finland (1989), Hungary (1990), Poland (1991), Bulgaria (1992), Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania (1993), Andorra (1994), Latvia, Albania, Moldova, Ukraine, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1995), Croatia (1996), Georgia (1999), Armenia and Azerbaijan (2001), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2002), Serbia (2003), Monaco (2004), Montenegro (2007).

their attention to the common cultural heritage of European states as a means to rebuild and unify Europe (Spyrou, 2023). Consequently, the initial phase of the CoE's cultural initiatives centred on discovering and promoting a shared European cultural heritage. In 1954, the CoE adopted the European Cultural Convention, marking the first official cultural declaration by a European organisation in the post-war era (Patel & Calligaro, 2017). This convention is perceived as a framework for directing European cultural policy and fostering 'common European thinking' over several decades (CoE, 2004a: 22). During the time when Europe was rebuilding itself, the convention was deemed as one of the essential building blocks of that process (CoE, 2004a). It advocated for collective action to safeguard Europe's common cultural heritage and encourage its ongoing development.

In the same year, the CoE launched an Art Exhibition, marking its first initiative implemented within the framework of the European Cultural Convention. The exhibition reflected the CoE's attempt to materialise the vision of promoting a common cultural heritage. To effectively engage the public and raise awareness of European unity, the exhibition aimed to visualise European culture. This ambition was articulated in the 1953 Memorandum of the Committee of Cultural Experts, which noted that the CoE's previous cultural events had failed to "strick[e] the imagination of the educated public" (CoE, 1953: 15). To fill this gap, the Art Exhibition was introduced as a "valuable source of spiritual propaganda" organised to "arouse the European conscience without being subjected to criticism from political or nationalist quarters" (ibid.). These remarks highlight how culture became an effective tool for achieving political objectives. Starting in 1955, a series of exhibitions were held in various capital cities in Western Europe. The exhibitions displayed major artistic movements that had a Europe-wide impact, such as Humanism, Mannerism, and Modernism. They showcased the works of significant artistic figures and historical events in European history. The primary goal of these exhibitions was to raise awareness of European art "as one of the highest expressions of Europe's culture and common values" (CoE, n.d.-b). While the themes of the exhibitions evolved over time, their primary message remained centred around European unity and European identity. For example, the first Art Exhibition, held in Brussels in 1955, was devoted to Humanism, which was introduced as "a notion traditionally associated with Europe more than with any other civilization" (CoE, n.d.-g). According to the CoE, Humanism was selected to highlight "the interdependence of European cultures" during a period of societal change and "a still precious

vision of the arts and sciences in a harmonious civilisation” (CoE, 2004b: 9).

Before moving onto the next section, I will summarise the key aspects of the CoE’s cultural policies during the 1950s. First, the policies primarily targeted elites who had access to high culture. Second, they mainly focused on cultural heritage that highlighted key moments in European history. Third, they aimed to foster a feeling of collective identity and unity among Europeans. In the following section, I will demonstrate how cultural policies have shifted in the 1960s.

6.3.3 Pan-European unity during the Cold War

In the 1960s, there was a noticeable change in the CoE’s cultural agenda. Its cultural policies began to shift according to the world’s geopolitics. Cultural initiatives were increasingly regarded as a means for Western European states to reinforce Europe's position on the global stage. This ambition was manifested through the establishment of the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CCC) in 1962. As its name suggests, the CCC sought to promote stronger cultural cooperation among European countries. Its task was to make proposals for the CoE’s cultural policy and implement cultural programmes particularly in the education field. It asserted for a reformation in the European education system to make sure that Europe’s educational standards do not fall behind those of the United States or the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the CCC promoted teacher trainings, student exchange programmes, or study tours mostly among institutions across Europe (CoE, 1964). Ultimately, through European cultural cooperation, the CoE envisioned the CCC to become “EURESCO”, anticipating that it would fulfill a role similar to that of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) within the United Nations (Patel & Calligaro, 2017). The grand vision of “EURESCO” encapsulates how culture evolved into a tool to enhance Europe’s standing in the world.

The CoE’s attempts to extend its global influence continued in the 1970s. During this period, it expanded the geographical coverage of its cultural policy to include Eastern Europe. The Cold War had intensified the political, economic, and cultural separations between Western and Eastern Europe (Wright, 2009). Despite the upcoming Age of Détente in the 1970s, Eastern Europe remained resistant to engaging with Western Europe. In this context, culture was seen as a seemingly apolitical tool to reduce the tensions between the East and West (Patel &

Calligaro, 2017). In fact, the CoE put greater emphasis on the role of culture in facilitating reunification across the Iron Curtain. This was manifested by the CoE's declaration of the year 1975 as *European Architectural Heritage Year* (EAHY), when it organised a pan-European campaign to develop a European policy for heritage protection. The Committee of Ministers suggested ensuring the pan-European nature from its outset (CoE, 1972). European architectural heritage was identified as the common property of "our continent", framing conservation efforts as a matter concerning "the whole of Europe" (CoE, 1975: 5). Under this agenda, the CoE sought to encourage Eastern European participation through the rhetoric of pan-European cooperation (CoE, 1991). While claiming cooperation in theory, however, the CoE presumed it should be Western Europe taking the lead. The CoE sought to justify its leadership in the EAHY campaign, particularly by comparing the regimes of Western and Eastern Europe. For instance, in the 1991 campaign report, the CoE problematised Central and Eastern Europe's cultural heritage conservation policy, addressing the problems faced under communist regimes. According to the report, the heritage in that region was "directly threatened by decay, demolition or disinterest" as a result of "lack of appropriate legislation and its implementation" (CoE, 1991: 1). It continued to state that urban planning under the totalitarian state had served the ideological and nationalistic objectives to strengthen the communist regime (CoE, 1991). Then, the CoE urgently called for establishing a new policy to protect the cultural heritage of Eastern Europe. It framed the new policy within a democratic framework, in terms of fulfilling fundamental human needs and achieving a harmonious social balance, with consideration for the life of future generations (CoE, 1975).

To summarise, the CoE's cultural policies during the 1960s and 1970s demonstrate how culture became more politicised to enhance Europe's position in the shifting global geopolitics. This was especially evident during the Cold War, when the CoE promoted a pan-European cultural project, framed as a foundation for solidarity and cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe. While it is important to note that the intention was to expand the CoE's influence beyond Western Europe, it is also worth paying attention to the notion of 'pan-European'. This shows how the constructed belief in Europe as a single, united entity was still deeply embedded during that time. However, the claim of unity started to fade in light of social changes in Europe from the 1970s onward, which eventually gave rise to the notion of diversity. In the next section, I will outline the background behind the rise of diversity in Europe.

6.4 Shifting towards a diversity claim from the 1970s

In the early 1970s, democracy spread widely across Europe, marked by the rise of social democratic-oriented governments in Western Europe (Hellema, 2018). This shift was largely influenced by political activism in 1968, known as the youth-led counter-cultural movements in Western Europe, which claimed direct forms of democracy in opposition to Europe's authoritarian, hierarchical, and elitist traditions (Stevenson, 2011). These movements led to the emergence of urban social movements, such as second-wave feminism, the gay rights movement, the green movement, and ethnic minority activism (Konrad, 2008; Stevenson, 2001). These societal transformations brought a significant shift in the understanding of culture. With an increasing demand for the democratisation of high culture, the notion of culture - once predominantly centred around high art and elite groups - began to embrace a focus on everyday culture and marginalised groups (Peters et al., 2019). In response, there was a rising call within the CoE to refine its cultural policy. In 1976, European Ministers with Responsibility for Cultural Affairs gathered in Oslo and discussed that culture should be reconceptualised as an equal right for all (CoE, 1976). The CoE's cultural policy was revised to ensure equality and freedom for minority or disadvantaged people in European societies that were increasingly becoming pluralistic (ibid.). For example, the *Report of Ad Hoc Conference of European Ministers with responsibility for Cultural Affairs (1976)* employs the notion of cultural plurality and diversity. This report is a collection of speeches by cultural affairs ministers of the CoE regarding the new direction of the CoE's cultural policy. The report referenced the plurality of cultures within Europe, including local, minority, and immigrant cultures. It emphasised the need for measures to support people with limited access to culture due to socio-economic or geographic factors (CoE, 1976). This broad category of cultural minorities included the disabled, residents of sparsely populated regions, and migrant workers. In fact, during the post-war era, Europe experienced large scale immigration, particularly from its former colonies. Colonial migrants moving to Europe from 1945 to early 1990s amounted to approximately five to seven million (Andrea, 2002). Thus, migrant workers in this report are likely to refer to postcolonial immigrants and guest workers. Referring to migrant workers as 'new cultural communities inside Europe', the report highlighted their rights to participate in cultural life (CoE, 1976: 148).

A broader sense of cultural diversity, in terms of migrants, emerged following a more recent

wave of migration in the mid to late 2000s. An earlier wave of migration began in the 1950s, when several countries, such as France and the UK, experienced an influx of migrants from post-colonial countries. In the mid to the late 2000s, the number of migrants increased rapidly, leading to a high proportion of foreign-born populations across Europe (Wood, 2010). They were referred to as ‘new minorities, distinct from the ‘traditional minorities’ in Europe. Traditional minorities included the minority Hungarians in Romania, who became national minorities following border revisions after the two world wars (Szarka, 2013). The rise in foreign-born populations marked a substantial sociocultural change for Europe. This was not only due to their sizable numbers, which countered the declining birthrate in Europe during that period but also because their cultures and languages reshaped Europe’s ethno-cultural landscape (Wood, 2010). Therefore, the notion of cultural diversity became highly relevant to the ethno-demographic shifts occurring in Europe.

With the spread of democracy both in Europe and worldwide, coupled with the international migration flow to Europe, the notion of cultural diversity became more prominent in Europe’s cultural policies. In 2000, the CoE issued a declaration with the term cultural diversity at the forefront, namely *Declaration on Cultural Diversity*. Since then, cultural diversity has become central to the CoE’s cultural policies. As discussed so far, European cultural policies have always been shaped by specific European ideologies. In this context, I will unpack three distinct discourses that emerged through these policies that began to focus on diversity - the inherent diversity of the continent; humanitarianism; and the guardianship of democracy.

6.4.1 An inherently diverse continent

One of the dominant discourses that was embedded in the CoE’s cultural policies was the idea that Europe has always been diverse. The CoE drafted a number of official documents which constantly underlined the richness of Europe in terms of culture, religions, and languages. In its description, it was notable that diversity was placed at the very centre of Europe’s identity. In fact, diversity was framed as European society’s founding element that had been “permanent” in its culture and heritage (CoE, 2004a: 36). This framing rendered Europe as a continent that has “always” been a continent of diversity (CoE, 2000b: 11). Below is an excerpt from the *Diversity and cohesion - New challenges for the integration of immigrants and minorities* published in 2000.

No unified European culture has emerged in the course of history. On the contrary, Europe thrives on its diversity. The Christian tradition produced diverse denominations - Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. In certain parts of Europe, Islam remained the dominant faith. The Jewish Diaspora has [led] to the establishment of Jewish communities in many European countries.

(CoE, 2000b: 16)

This statement comes under scrutiny in two respects. First of all, the rhetoric of a diverse Europe is built upon the refuting of the idea of a unified Europe. The CoE's cultural policies during the 1950s and 1970s, as may be recalled, were directed towards constructing a single European culture to promote the ideology of European unity. Contradictorily, its longstanding claim for European unity was abandoned in favour of a new claim for European diversity starting in 2000. More importantly, the rhetoric of an 'inherently' diverse Europe is built upon the erasure of Europe's violent history. It obscures the manifestations of racial hierarchy and supremacy that have shaped Europe for centuries, both internally and externally. Turning back to the excerpt above, the CoE juxtaposed religions and communities that were oppressed to solidify European identity, with the White race and Christianity at the core. Behind the rhetoric of a diverse Europe, which incorporated Islam and the Jewish diaspora into the narrative, centuries of religious antagonism throughout European history - where religious differences were eradicated through persecution - are overlooked. In a similar vein, Europe's assimilation history of forcing European Jews to abandon their religion is erased (Sheffer, 2011). Regardless, the rhetoric of a diverse Europe gave rise to another discourse where Europe was portrayed as a forerunner of humanitarian principles, which I will explore in the next section.

6.4.2 A forerunner of humanitarian principles

Through the rhetoric of a diverse Europe, Europe was represented as a tolerant and open society. Notably, just as diversity was framed as an inherent to Europe, the openness of European society was claimed to be an innate characteristic. Again, in the report *Diversity and cohesion - New challenges for the integration of immigrants and minorities*, the CoE portrayed these issues as follows:

Because Europe is a Continent full of mature and maturing Nations and States,

it is also a Continent open to welcome all people seeking a new place to live. Europe knows, and has always known, how to open herself to newcomers. [...] Europe was receptive to many who turned towards her with hope [...] During the last half century, Europe, at least in one of its corners, has been able to accommodate those who differed because their homeland was of another Continent. Europe was and should always remain an open Continent.

(CoE, 2000b: 7)

The rhetoric of Europe as an open continent that ‘has always known’ how to accommodate the differences of newcomers aligns with the critiques made in the previous section about how such rhetoric is built upon reshaping and invisibilising Europe’s violent history. Not surprisingly, the rhetoric of open Europe led to the claim that Europe epitomises a democratic society, where democracy was framed as a fundamental European value (CoE, 2004b). For example, at a conference held in 2004 to mark the 50th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention, many European experts and politicians reiterated democracy, the rule of law, human rights, freedom, and social cohesion as the shared denominator of ‘European culture’.

The common European heritage consists of such elements of European culture which are consistent with the fundamental values of human rights and individual freedom. (...) these values are of a universal nature. They give European culture a distinctly humanistic and democratic character and provide the rationale for human solidarity.

(CoE, 2004b: 72)

The statement demonstrates how firmly the notion of European culture anchored normative principles. Europe was self-represented as a source of enlightenment, a recurring discourse from European imperialism to justify colonial expansion (Shohat & Stam, 2009; Shore, 2013). The claim of Europe’s intellectual and cultural superiority was built on an explicit construction of inferiority of others. This resonates with Edward Said’s argument in his book *Orientalism* (1978), where he notes that binomial opposition of ‘us’ and ‘them’ has been central to constructing European democracy. In a similar vein, West (2002) argues that Europe’s democracy has always been entangled with determining who is worthy of consideration. He demonstrates that it is only very recently that black people were recognised in European

perceptions as human beings. The argument that Europe is inherently democratic gained validity through a discursive construction that non-European societies lack an appreciation of ‘our [European] values’ (Said, 1978; Dervin, 2016).

Meanwhile, several studies challenge Europe’s claim as the birthplace of democracy. Scholars demonstrate how traditions within Buddhism, Confucianism, and Islam embody democratic philosophies (Thompson, 2015). Democracy, in fact, emerged not in Athens but in Syria-Mesopotamia (Keane, 2022). Moreover, scholars argue that Athenian democracy, often represented as the cradle of modern European democracy, was far from democratic, as it excluded political participation of slaves, foreigners, women (Fisher, 2006; Isakhan, 2015). While these arguments challenge Eurocentric history, they reaffirm that the rhetoric of Europe as the forerunner of democracy has always been politically charged and contested. Interestingly, this rhetoric co-constituted the discourse that the CoE is a guardian of democracy, which I will unpack in the following section.

6.4.3 The Council of Europe as the guardian of democracy

The epitomisation of the CoE as the ‘pioneer and guarantor for human rights and democracy’ (Kicker, 2010) was built on reshaping its history. To revisit the earlier discussion on the background of the CoE’s establishment, it was created to realise European unity in response to the continent’s internal and external challenges, reflecting the strong motivation of politicians to build ‘Greater Europe’. However, the remark made on the official celebration of the 50th anniversary of the CoE in 1999 adopted a more or less apolitical tone in presenting the CoE’s origins as below.

When Winston Churchill spoke in Zürich in September 1946 of “the tragedy of Europe”, the continent - and the entire world - remained in shock. [...] The desire for a better world, for peace among nations, and for recognition that every individual has a personal entitlement to have his life and dignity respected had probably never been greater. [...] His vision was “to re-create the European Family, or as much of it as we can, and provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom”. Nobody or organisation better

lives up to that vision than the Council of Europe.

(CoE, 1999a: 8)

The remark demonstrates how the CoE took on a spiritual tone to advocate for human dignity and rights, arousing the impression that the CoE was, from its outset, a democratic organisation. The political interests for its creation were sidelined and reframed as the pursuit of realising democracy, where 50 years of CoE's initiatives were summarised as commitment to defending human rights and democracy, as stated below.

Since its inception, 50 years ago, the Council of Europe has made democracy, human rights and the rule of law permanent priorities for Europe and has been committed to the defence of human dignity and the development of social progress.

(CoE, 2000b: 9)

The CoE was framed as a blueprint for establishing the framework for democracy and the rule of law. This created the impression that the CoE was destined to carry out its 'civilising' duty, justifying its position to exert normative power. Coupled with the two discourses mentioned above, the discourse of CoE as a democratic organisation reappeared in the key discourses of the ICC to establish its rationales as a global policy. I will explore this in more detail in the next chapter.

6.5 Engaging Asia from Europe

Europe has significantly benefited from leveraging the three discourses that have underpinned its cultural policies from the 2000s. They served to justify Europe's engagement in the politics of other countries, primarily through cultural exchanges (Dosch, 2017). This way of exerting power is what Nye (2004) termed 'soft power'. In contrast to traditional hard power, which relies on military force, soft power refers to the mobilisation of intangible tools such as culture, ideology and institutions (Nye, 2004). The use of soft power became increasingly popular in global politics in the post-Cold War era. Meanwhile, European soft power was not entirely new. As demonstrated earlier, with reference to the CoE's cultural policies during the 1970s, Western Europe sought to promote the idea of democracy to Central Eastern Europe through cultural policies. However, the 1990s marked a significant turning point, when Asia became a major

audience. I will begin by outlining the economic background behind the establishment of relationships between Europe and Asia.

During the 1990s, Europe's global economic influence grew stronger, marked by the EU's establishment of the single market in 1993 and the adoption of a single currency in 1999. At the same time, Asia emerged as a significant economic force, with many countries transitioning from centrally planned to market-oriented economies. Asia's rapid growth, often referred to as an 'economic miracle', was seen as a powerful force to reshape the global order (European Commission, 1994). This prompted Europe to redress its policy interests and actions, aiming to build stronger connections with Asia. European organisations began to articulate their commitments through their official documents. The EU, in particular, took the lead, publishing *Towards A New Asia Strategy* (1994) and *Europe and Asia: A Strategic Framework for Enhanced Partnerships* (2001). Establishing relations with Asia was framed in economic terms, aimed to ensure that "Europe's interests are fully considered in this key region" (European Commission, 1994: 3).

Notably, Europe claimed that its partnership could benefit Asia in consolidating democracy (European Commission, 2001). This claim was made in consideration of the major political transformations in Asia during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Countries such as Korea, Taiwan and Indonesia were undergoing democratic transitions, each at different stages (Croissant, 2004). In this context, Europe exerted influence in reconfiguring human rights. While the concept of human rights is not 'culture-free' (Freeman, 1999: 109), European perspectives were adopted as the 'international standard' (Dosch, 2017). One example is the CoE's call for the abolition of the death penalty. Viewed as a violation of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, the CoE placed the abolition of the death penalty high on its political agenda, which was directed at its observer states. However, Japan, the only observer state in Asia since 1996, did not comply with the anti-death penalty due to its distinct institutional and cultural context (Obara, 2013). Setting aside the debate over the abolition itself, it is noteworthy that the CoE warned in Resolution 1253 that Japan's non-compliance could result in the withdrawal of its observer status for not aligning with 'the CoE's standards' (CoE, 2001).

The growing significance of soft power in Europe's diplomacy was manifested through the increasing number of institutional spaces for cultural exchanges between Europe and Asia. This

is demonstrated by the establishment of Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), an intergovernmental organisation for Asia-Europe partnerships. The creation of ASEF was facilitated by the governments of Singapore and France. Following the Europe-East Asia Economic Summit in 1994, the Prime Minister of Singapore Goh Chok Tong visited France and proposed the idea of a meeting of Asia-Europe leaders to the French prime minister. Singapore's desire to diversify its foreign markets and Europe's strategic focus on enhancing its relations with Asia aligned, leading to the first Asia-Europe Summit Meeting (ASEM) in 1996 in Bangkok, Thailand (Yeo, 2003). At this meeting, the Heads of State and Government from 10 Asian countries and 15 EU members¹⁴ convened and decided to establish ASEF the following year in Singapore. The objective of ASEF is to promote mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual and cultural exchanges. Since its inception, it has launched initiatives to connect policymakers, researchers, civil societies, youths, and students from both regions. Flagship projects have been organised, such as Asia-Europe Meeting, Asia-Europe Public Diplomacy Training, Asia-Europe Youth Training, Asia-Europe Journal, and Asia-Europe Classroom Network.

What is noteworthy is that the European side significantly shaped the early development of ASEF. In addition to the EU being the largest financial contributor since its inception (ASEF, 2016), several other indicators demonstrate that European perspectives shaped the initial framework of ASEF. Most importantly, the narrative employed by ASEF showed significant similarities to that of the EU and the CoE. For instance, one of the catchphrases of the ASEF programme was 'Unity in diversity' (ASEM, n.d.: 1.) echoes the EU's motto of 'United in diversity'. In 2003, ASEF launched the Cultures and Civilisations Dialogue Programme in 2003. The aim of the programme was to "discover common values across the cultural, ethnic, geographical, religious and socio-economic diversity of Asia and Europe" (ASEM, n.d.: 1). During discussions on 'common values,' references were made to ancient civilisations, as demonstrated in the speech delivered by the Executive Director of ASEF at the 1997 Helsinki meeting.

¹⁴ Participant countries included 15 EU Member States and the European Commission, and 10 countries from Asia: the seven members of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) - Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam - along with China, Japan, and South Korea.

Asia and Europe are the homes of several ancient and rich civilisations. There is tremendous scope for bringing together the leading intellectual, artistic, spiritual and young leaders of our two regions to dialogue, to write, to exhibit and to perform together. We could produce new blossoms for the cross fertilisation between our rich civilisations. Not only would a clash of civilisations be averted, but an enriched and peaceful new world would await us.

(Yeo & Latif, 2000: 12)

The search for common ideals that can build bridges across Asia and Europe was delivered with an optimistic tone, anticipating a bright future for all. This resonates with the narrative in the CoE's cultural policies from the 1950s, mentioned in the previous section, which addressed discovering common cultural heritage for a greater and more united Europe. Another sign of the influence of European discourse was ASEF's advocacy for intercultural dialogue. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the CoE has been at the forefront of promoting intercultural dialogue as a key element of European interculturalism. ASEF promoted intercultural dialogue as a means for enhancing mutual understanding among people from both Europe and Asia, organising training programmes to inform people about the knowledge and skill for intercultural dialogue. Training programmes were held in different countries alternating Europe and Asia, co-organised by international organisations including the CoE. For instance, Asia-Europe Training for Trainers: Developing skills and competencies for intercultural dialogue was held in Korea, 2006.

The examination of ASEF's cultural initiatives reveals that European interculturalism began to spread to Asia in the mid-2000s. This suggests that the circulation of the ICC to Asia did not emerge in a vacuum. Rather than viewing it as a standalone event, it should be contextualized within the broader framework of earlier cultural exchanges between Europe and Asia, which were, in fact, driven by Europe's soft power.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored how Europe's cultural policies have changed over time in response to Europe's internal and external challenges throughout its history. In the first half of the chapter, I outlined the contexts of post-war period, the Cold War, and the rise of democracy to

demonstrate the shift from a focus on European unity to cultural diversity. In particular, the establishment of the CoE in the post-war period facilitated the institutionalisation of cultural policy, through which cultural policies became politicised to serve the interests of both Europe and the CoE. While the focus of these policies has shifted, the underlying intention has always been to increase Europe's political power in alignment with the world's shifting geopolitics. In the latter half of the chapter, I focused on Europe's cultural policies in the 2000s to examine how they associated with the notion of diversity. Three distinct discourses emerged through the incorporation of diversity into cultural policies. Europe was represented as a diverse and democratic society, and the CoE was portrayed as the guardian of democracy with a civilizing mission. These discourses were co-constituted to consolidate Europe's soft power, which ultimately justified Europe's engagement with Asia. As a result, institutional spaces for cultural exchanges between Europe and Asia increased, through which European interculturalism was introduced to Asia in the mid-2000s.

The discussions above have several implications for how the ICC should be contextualised in this thesis. First, the ICC should not only be viewed as a tool for fostering exchange among cities worldwide but also as a strategic instrument for achieving Europe's broader political goals. Particularly in terms of the ICC's global circulation, it is important to examine the dominant discourses that facilitate its spread and adoption. These two aspects will be explored in the next chapter, which addresses the development and global circulation of the ICC.

Chapter 7 Development and Dissemination of the Intercultural Cities Programme

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the wide circulation of the Council of Europe's (CoE) Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) to cities around the world. Drawing on the post-positivist and post-structuralist approaches to policy discussed in Chapter 2, this chapter examines the situational and discursive formation of the ICC's global mobility. The point of departure for this analysis is the reminder that a policy idea itself cannot travel alone. Revising Chapter 2, policy mobilities highlight that a policy takes on a 'transferable' form to gain mobility, supported by underpinning concepts, frameworks, discourses, and instruments. Once refined into a concrete policy, it requires channels through which it can be transferred from one place to another (McCann, 2013; Peck & Theodore, 2015). However, this does not guarantee that all policies will become mobile. To gain traction for mobility, advocacy from dominant groups is essential, making policy movement inherently politicised (Temenos & McCann, 2013).

Launched in 2008 as a pan-European project, the ICC was designed with its mobility in mind, initially spreading across cities in Europe. Since then, it has spread rapidly, expanding outside Europe to eventually reach Asia and other parts of the world. For a richer understanding of the ICC's mobility process, I conducted a critical discourse analysis of the CoE's official documents on the ICC, aiming to unpack how the ICC was devised and circulated. Particular attention is given to the rationale and discourses underpinning its mobility. This chapter begins by investigating the concept of 'intercultural dialogue' that initially shaped the idea of the ICC. It then explores two key discourses that underpinned the ICC, along with their limitations. Following this, the chapter examines three key stages through which the idea and discourses of the ICC evolved into a concrete policy programme. Lastly, the chapter unpacks the channels through which the ICC became mobile beyond Europe to reach Asia. This chapter lays the foundation for examining the mobility chain that facilitated the introduction of the ICC to Korea.

7.2 Origins of the ICC

Policy design scholars pay attention to the policy itself as much as the processes that produce policy (Schneider & Ingram, 2020). Based upon the perspectives of post-positivism and post-structuralism, as discussed in Chapter 2, policy is the product of ideas and discourses where particular ideologies of dominant groups are embedded (Howlett & Ramesh, 1998; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). This perspective suggests that examining the initial idea and discourses that shaped the policy can unpack the policy's orientations. In the case of the ICC, a key discourse emerged around the notion of intercultural dialogue that was proposed in the CoE's *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue - Living Together As Equals in Dignity* (2008b). In this section, I will provide the context for how the notion of intercultural dialogue developed and led to the launch of the ICC.

7.2.1 *The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*

The CoE designated 2008 as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue to promote the idea that Europe's cultural diversity is a unique asset for European society (CoE, 2008b). In the same year, the CoE published the White Paper, which introduced a new approach to cultural diversity, namely intercultural dialogue. Adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the 47 member states, the White Paper has significantly influenced the development of Europe's cultural policies from that point onwards. The White Paper outlines the definition of intercultural dialogue as follows:

Intercultural dialogue may serve several purposes, within the overriding objective to promote full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law (...). It fosters equality, human dignity and a sense of common purpose. It aims to develop a deeper understanding of diverse world views and practices, to increase co-operation and participation (or the freedom to make choices), to allow personal growth and transformation, and to promote tolerance and respect for the other.

(CoE, 2008b: 17)

Put simply, intercultural dialogue was presented as a process of exchanging different views in a respectful and open manner among people with varying ethnic, cultural, religious, and

linguistic backgrounds. Notably, intercultural dialogue was proposed as a democratic approach to cultural diversity, grounded in universal principles of human rights, human dignity, and equality. This framework for intercultural dialogue is not coincidental. As discussed in the previous chapter, the 2000s marked the period when the CoE began to frame its cultural policies as democratic governance. This was reflected in how the CoE strongly highlighted the association of intercultural dialogue with democratic principles. It stressed that democracy and intercultural dialogue should be addressed together, asserting that modern democracy cannot function without the will and capacity to engage in intercultural dialogue, nor can intercultural dialogue take place without a democratic culture (Bergan, n.d.). The CoE's claim about the interconnectedness of these concepts is noted in the frequent juxtaposition of the terms such as 'democratic culture and intercultural dialogue', 'democratic interaction and intercultural dialogue', and 'democratically and interculturally competent citizen'.

When promoting a policy idea as a new approach, a discursive formation follows to stabilise its framework (Foucault, 1972). Central to the discourse of intercultural dialogue is the idea that it promotes universal inclusion. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that appealing to universalist principles is a common strategy to facilitate the internationalisation of policy (Falkner, 2007). With an optimistic tone, the CoE claimed that intercultural dialogue leads to the inclusion of 'all' residents in 'full' respect of their human rights (CoE, 2008b: 4). This vision promised an intercultural society seemingly free from any form of inequality and discrimination. To strengthen their claim, the CoE stressed the 'risks' of not engaging in dialogue. The White paper adopted a firm and assertive tone, arguing that non-engagement in dialogue could lead to intolerance and discrimination in society. It stated that a lack of dialogue could lead to a fragmented society that is hostile to "individual autonomy and the unimpeded exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (CoE, 2008b: 16). This implied that any opposition to intercultural dialogue would be interpreted as opposition to the universal principles of democracy, making the CoE's claim for intercultural dialogue irrefutable (Aman, 2012). Building upon these assertions, intercultural dialogue was framed as a values-based approach. In contrast to approaches seen as commercially motivated, intercultural dialogue was distinguished by its normative and ethical orientations (Rey-von Allmen, 2010). It is noteworthy that the same rationale was made when the CoE promoted the ICC, which I will examine in the following section. Before delving into it, I will provide an overview of the ICC.

7.2.2 Overview of the ICC

In this section, I explore the particular context in which the idea of launching the ICC was shaped and translated into policy in Europe. This is followed by an overview of its current status, including the department running the programme and the member cities as of 2025.

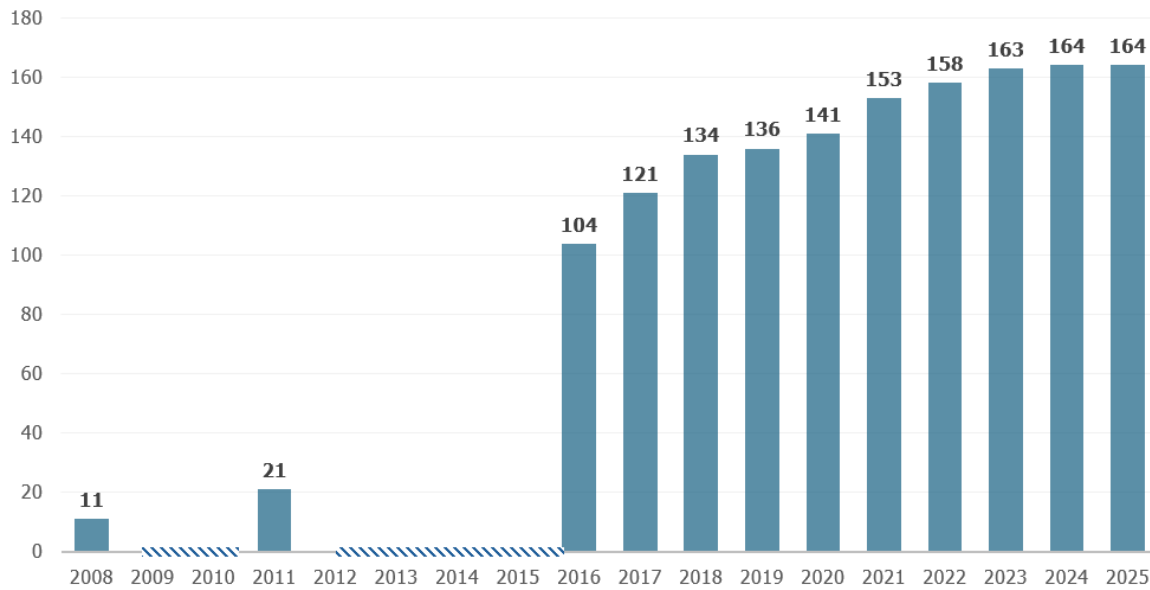
In 2008, the CoE and the EU implemented a series of pan-European projects grounded in the idea and discourse of intercultural dialogue. To promote the significance of intercultural dialogue, the CoE and the EU carried out the projects under eight major topics: culture and the media, minorities, migration, religion, education/science, the workplace, multilingualism, and youth. Within the topic of migration, they discussed how the growing diversity in Europe is reshaping European society, with a particular emphasis on how the cultural expressions and practices of migrants are transforming European cities. Regarding the future prospects of cities in transition, the CoE and the EU emphasised that the ‘success’ of cities would lie in their capacity to embrace interculturality (CoE, 2008b; EU, 2009). This laid the groundwork for the development of a policy programme to apply an intercultural approach to urban diversity policy. The programme took concrete form when the CoE submitted a proposal for the programme in response to a call for funding from the EU (White, 2022). In 2008, the ICC was launched. In the early stages of the programme, the CoE faced significant budget cuts, making economic cooperation with the EU essential (CoE, 2009). The ICC had a cumulative budget of €1.5 million for the five years from its inception, with 56% of the funding coming from the European Commission and 44% from the CoE (CoE, 2015a). The joint programme ended in 2013, and since then the CoE has solely run the ICC with its structural funds (White, 2022), while member cities contribute €5,000 a year for administrative costs.

As of 2025, the ICC is managed by the Division of Inclusion and Anti-discrimination Programmes of the CoE. The Division has a stated aim of promoting equality and ensuring full access to rights and opportunities for all members of society (CoE, n.d.-c). Within the Division, there are four specialised units - Intercultural Inclusion Unit, Anti-discrimination Cooperation Unit, Hate Speech, Hate Crime and Artificial Intelligence Unit, and Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics Unit. The Unit of Intercultural Inclusion is responsible for running the ICC.

The ICC has grown substantially over the last 16 years, both in size and geographical coverage.

It started with 11 pilot cities in Europe in 2008. Since then, the number of member cities has increased, with the most significant rise occurring between the early and mid-2010s. As outlined in Figure 8, the rate of increase slightly slowed down after the number of cities reached 120 in 2017.¹⁵ As of 2025, there are 164 member cities.

Figure 8 Number of member cities in the ICC (2008-2025)



Data source: The Intercultural Cities Annual Report

¹⁵ Note that the chart only include data from 2008, 2011, and the years 2016 through 2024. Since 2016, the CoE has been publishing the Intercultural Cities Annual Report, which provides information on the number of member cities. Although no annual reports were published for the years 2008 through 2015, data for 2008 and 2011 was found in other CoE documents.

Table 6 Number of member cities of the ICC and cities outside Europe

Year	Number of member cities	Cities outside Europe
2010	n.a.	Mexico city (Mexico)
2011	21	Montréal (Canada)
2016	104	Bursa-Osman Gazi (Türkiye), Haifa (Israel)
2017	121	Ballarat (Australia), Hamamatsu (Japan), Agadir, Casablanca, Chefchaouen, Kenitra, Larache, Marrakech, Martil, Meknes, Rabat, Tangier, and Tetouan (Morocco)
2018	134	Maribyrnong and Melton (Australia), Rochester Minnesota (United States), Kepez (Türkiye)
2019	136	-
2020	141	Ansan and Guro (Korea)
2021	153	Ephesus Selçuk (Türkiye), Salisbury (Australia), Drummondville, Gatineau, Repentigny, Rimouski, and Sherbrooke (Canada)
2022	158	-
2023	163	Guadalupe (Mexico)
2024	164	Asan (Korea)
2025	164	-

In terms of its geographical coverage, the ICC has expanded beyond Europe. Until 2010, all member cities were located in Europe. As illustrated in Table 6, Mexico city (Mexico) became the first city outside Europe to join in 2010, followed by Montréal (Canada) in 2011. The year 2017 was noteworthy for two reasons. First, eleven cities in Morocco joined the ICC, an unprecedented event for a large number of cities from one country to join at the same time. Their membership was followed by the creation of the *Moroccan Network of Intercultural Cities* in late 2016 (CoE, n.d.-f). Second, two cities in the Asia-Pacific region joined, Ballarat (Australia) and Hamamatsu (Japan). The membership of Ballarat stimulated three more Australian cities to join in the following years, ultimately leading to the creation of the *Intercultural Cities Australian National Network* in Australia in 2022 (CoE, n.d.-d). The

accession of Hamamatsu was another turning point for the spread of the ICC in Asia. As the first Asian city to join the ICC, Hamamatsu's participation became a catalyst for cities in Korea to join, beginning with Ansan City in 2020. I will investigate details on how the ICC was introduced to Asia in the final section of this chapter.

Regarding the ICC's rapid and wide expansion, it is significant to note that its mobility was neither coincidental nor incidental. Since the inception of the ICC, the CoE highlighted its role model effect. It pointed out that the ICC's strength lies in "the concept [that] can be easily transferred from one city to another by adapting the tools provided by the Council of Europe, making it possible for a successful model to inspire duplication" (CoE, 2009: 12). This suggests that the ICC was developed with a view to wide circulation, with its concept and key principles crafted in such a way that they are easily transferable and can be broadly applied as a global policy programme. Within this context, I will explore the ways in which the ICC was designed, with a particular focus on its framework and key features.

7.3 Development of the ICC

7.3.1 The Intercultural Cities framework

The first aspect to consider is the framework of the ICC, which includes the structure it claimed to operate within, and the tools used to advance it. Since the 2000s, there has been a global shift towards decentralisation in policy-making, especially in migration management, where increasing attention has been paid to the significance of the local scale (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2008; Grindle, 2009; Lacroix, 2022). There were many policy initiatives at the time that took a 'local turn', such as UNESCO's 'European Coalition of Cities Against Racism', EUROCITIES Network's 'Solidarity Cities', URBACT's 'Arrival Cities', ICMPD's 'Mediterranean City to City migration project'. Aligning with this global trend towards a local turn, the ICC positioned local governments as key actors in the programme. By claiming to collaborate with cities, the ICC highlighted that it uses a bottom-up approach to migrant inclusion. The bottom-up approach was perceived to enhance the programme's openness and flexibility, which were, in fact, identified as two of its 'success factors' (CoE, 2015a: 3). However, given that the ICC was initiated as a top-down influence from international organisations on cities (Lacroix, 2022), there is room for critical consideration in its claim of a bottom-up approach. As commented by Simpson and Dervin (2019), one must recognise the

symbolic power that organisations like the CoE wield in shaping policies at local, national, and supranational levels (Simpson & Dervin, 2019: 113). As demonstrated by the implementation of the CoE's cultural policies discussed in the previous chapter, the CoE has often mobilised political support from its member states across Europe to advance its specific agendas, interests, and values. The ICC was one such initiative, formulated by the CoE as a pan-European policy programme to promote its conceptualisation of interculturalism, as noted at the start of this chapter. The ICC thus reflects the CoE's perspective on cultural diversity and its desire to disseminate this vision across cities worldwide. To facilitate the ICC's circulation, the CoE drew on substantial political support from its deliberative body, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, particularly during the programme's early stage. While this aspect will be examined in detail later in this chapter, it emphasises the need to rethink the CoE's claim of the ICC as a bottom-up approach to building a global city network.

Back to the framework of the programme, the ICC utilised the strategy of city branding. In the 2000s, raising the visibility of cities to appeal to both local and global audiences became seen as crucial for urban development (Vanolo, 2017). While the ICC did not explicitly use the term 'city branding' in its guidelines, it implied that participation in the programme could enhance a city's recognition on the global stage. The ICC was promoted as a global platform where cities could build wide-ranging connections with other cities, as highlighted in the ICC brochure outlining why cities should join the programme.

Intercultural Cities is a platform to connect cities and leaders globally into a community where initiatives and practice from one city are analysed and shared to inspire the others.

(CoE, n.d.-e: 1)

Another document from the ICC, which outlined the 'advantages' of membership, directly touched upon city governments' desire for global visibility by stating that member cities could benefit from the "international exposure and credibility of the Council of Europe" (CoE, 2015b: 8). For effective exposure, the ICC developed promotional tools to help member cities build a recognisable city brand. First, the ICC created a 'Brand Pack', including the Intercultural City branding logo, banner, customisable profile photos, and templates for presentations. At the same time, the ICC encouraged member cities to use online platforms, using the hashtag

‘#ICCITIES’ on social media. It also suggested creating a dedicated section on their city websites to inform the public, both internal and external, about their involvement in the programme.

7.3.2 Content and focus of the programme

Moving to the content and substantive focus of the ICC, I will explore the two discourses that were employed to widely promote the programme. These discourses encompass the vision of the type of city envisioned, supporting the policy goals, orientations, and target population (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Firstly, the ICC was driven by the discourse of an economically competitive city that emphasises how cultural diversity can contribute to urban economies. This aspect of the discourse reflected the global repercussions from the 1990s, when the discourse of globalisation, informed by neo-liberal ideas, highly influenced the economic framings of diversity (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2020). The movement of people, viewed as ‘human capital’, across borders was framed through a lens of competitiveness, leading to the perception that people from diverse backgrounds are a source of economic value and potential growth. Building on this idea, the ICC developed a concept of ‘diversity advantage’.

The discourse of diversity advantage arose from the socioeconomic changes within Europe during that time. In the 2000s, there were growing concerns over decreasing birth rates and an aging population in Europe. In this context, international migration to Europe was perceived as a solution to offset the negative aspects of demographic decline (Wood, 2010). Therefore, it was expected that, migrants, mostly of a young working age, could contribute to the workforce and alleviate the economic burden of elderly dependency in European societies (Coleman, 2006). Over time, the focus shifted to the intellectual skills of migrants, perceiving diversity as a driver for the knowledge-based economy. This aligned with the worldwide enthusiasm for the theories of the ‘creative city’ (Landry, 2000) and the ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002). It is helpful to think of the ICC in terms of a continuum, where the ICC referenced cultural diversity as incubator for new inspirations and innovations. This is illustrated in one of the first documents on the ICC, titled *How can we unlock the potential of cultural diversity in cities?*

[...] policy development and practice innovation needs to be devoted to exploring the potential benefits of diversity advantage. A change in the mindset is required so that more businesses start to see a mixed management team and

workforce as a source of new skills and innovations; so that local authorities and others begin to see mixed communities as a desirable and achievable outcome; and so that individuals come to regard their lives enriched through contacts with others not of their ilk.

(Wood et al., 2006: 64)

The quote reveals that the positive recognition of diversity was driven by the economic benefits that diversity could offer, leading to discussions about the anticipated contributions of migrants to local economies. Not only were migrants perceived as new markets for local businesses, but they were expected to attract foreign investment with their new skills and knowledge. By leveraging the networks of migrants, the chance of facilitating trade between their home and host countries was also highlighted (Wood, 2010). These economic rationales formed the basis for the ICC's emphasis on cities' openness, as outlined below.

Because there is now a global flow of finance, cities must compete at a number of levels in order to attract a share, be this from government or foreign direct investment, trade, business and leisure tourism, or for the location of major events such as tournaments and expos. Those looking to invest their time or money in one city as against another will now be swayed by a number of factors. Of growing importance amongst these is the sense of openness of a place. Places which are uniformly monocultural or seem unwelcoming of difference will lose out to those places with a cosmopolitan 'buzz'.

(Wood, 2010: 27)

A city's openness and tolerance toward diversity were perceived as competitive advantages in the global competition for a cosmopolitan city brand. In this context, the ICC's discourse suggested that a city could enhance its economic prominence and develop into an international hub by welcoming newcomers and accommodating diversity. Cities that adopt intercultural policies and practices were envisioned to "gain enormously from the entrepreneurship, variety of skills and creativity associated with diversity" (CoE, n.d.-a). Before moving on to the second discourse of the ICC, I will point out the limitation of the ICC's economically driven approach to diversity. It is significant to point out that these expectations primarily apply to high-skilled migrants in the knowledge and finance economy. They are the ones who are often identified as

‘powerful and positively viewed’ policy target populations (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). On the other hand, the ICC’s discourse overlooks the experiences of low-skilled migrants in labour-intensive sectors, such as temporary or seasonal workers or undocumented migrants. Such a neo-liberalist approach to diversity reproduces inequalities, by neglecting the systematic problems that perpetuate class-based discrimination among migrants (Abdou & Geddes, 2020). This critique applies to the CoE’s very notion of diversity advantage itself, which diverts attention from social and economic disparities that reproduce everyday vulnerability and discrimination among migrants. Within the concept of diversity advantage, issues of inequality are smoothed over and normalised in a way that obscures and reinforces unequal power dynamics between migrants and the majority population (Côté, 2018). These claims suggest that the idea of diversity advantage remains rhetorical unless it is discussed within a broader context of systematic roots, such as the legacy of colonialism and the politics neoliberalism, which perpetuate the precarious conditions of migrants (Collins & Friesen, 2011; Côté, 2018).

The second discourse of the ICC was framed around an emphasis on the ‘democratic city’. Since the 2000s, there has been a significant increase in the development of urban policies framed around democratic principles. This shift was stimulated by burgeoning literature advocating for the integration of normative democratic values into urban politics. The earlier notion of Henri Lefevre’s ‘right to the city’ (1968) was particularly influential. His argument that the city is a social construct shaped by power relations and rights expanded the scope of who can participate in urban life (Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008). The concept of ‘right to the city’ was subsequently translated from its critical Marxist origins into a key framework for urban development policies at both the UN and UNESCO levels in the 2000s (UNESCO, 2006; United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2010). Additionally, concepts like ‘the emancipatory city’ (Lees, 2004), ‘the good city’ (Amin, 2006), and ‘the just city’ (Fainstein, 2014) highlight the emergence of political vocabularies such as democracy, justice, community, inclusion, and participation in urban theory, which have formed the basis for rights-based agendas in urban policies.

The intercultural city was also conceptualised around democratic ideals. It was envisioned as a city that guarantees fundamental rights, such as political participation, religious freedom, and legal protection from discrimination (Wood, 2010). Accordingly, it was claimed that the intercultural city’s governance, structures, and institutions guarantee ‘equal opportunities for

all’, catering to the needs of a diverse population (CoE, n.d.-h). Within this framework of democratic governance, the notion of diversity advantage reappeared. Whereas it had primarily been framed from an economic perspective, greater attention was now given to the social and cultural value of diversity as an essential element for building a pluralistic and inclusive city (CoE, 2015b). Building upon the discourse of the intercultural city, the CoE promoted the ICC as a proactive programme that adopts a rights-based approach (Wood, 2010; CoE, 2017b). Simultaneously, it made significant efforts to validate and strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the ICC. This included publishing a series of documents on the broad theme of democracy, such as a policy brief titled *Participatory and Deliberative Democracy Strategies for the Intercultural City*, which addressed measures to promote the engagement of migrants, refugees, and newcomers at the local level (CoE, 2017c). Particularly since the mid-2010s, when right-wing populist discourse gained prominence in Europe following the large-scale arrival of refugees (Kreis, 2017), the ICC was reframed to embrace stronger democratic orientation. This shift was noted at the 2017 Intercultural Cities Milestone event, where a declaration was made affirming that the ICC’s strategy for the following five years focusses on implementing inclusive integration policies, one of which seeks to challenge discriminatory political rhetoric and practices against newly arrived refugees and migrants (CoE, 2017a).

Before concluding this section, it is worth exploring the ideologies that emerged from the ICC’s discourse. The point of departure is examining the narrative that positioned the ICC as a rights-based programme. Although the rights dimension was noted in many city networks that emerged in the 2000s, as noted above, the CoE claimed that this was the exclusive feature of the ICC. It referred to the ICC as ‘the only’ initiative based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law (D’Alessandro, 2021: 5). This claimed normative foundation was seen as setting the ICC apart from other city networks, which were perceived to have a more technical orientation (White, 2022). More importantly, the CoE argued that the ICC’s commitment to these normative values was in line with the CoE’s long-standing tradition (White, 2022). For example, the brochure published by the CoE titled *Intercultural Cities: Join the Future* states as follows:

By joining Intercultural Cities, your city will be able to benefit from the ideas, experiences and initiatives that have been successfully implemented over more than a decade, based on the human rights standards of the Council of Europe.

(CoE, n.d.-e: 2)

While the CoE referred to itself as having laid the foundation for human rights standards, this orientation was further claimed to be rooted in Europe's traditions. In the *Intercultural Cities Programme Medium-term Strategy 2016-2019* (CoE, 2015b: 1), it was stated that "Intercultural Cities is the only initiative which is based on a range of European values and principles, in particular those of the Council of Europe". Attributing universal values to the characteristics of both the CoE and Europe resonates with discussion in the previous chapter, which identified three distinctive discourses embedded in the CoE's cultural policies in the 2000s. All the accounts above clearly demonstrate how the discourses of 'Europe as the forerunner of democracy' and 'the CoE as the guardian of democracy' resurfaced, being reinforced in the ICC's discourse. It is crucial to recognise that discourse is constructed and spread by influential actors with resources and networks, inherently reflecting dominant perspectives and interests, which makes it highly politicised (Fairclough & Mauranen, 1997). In this regard, the narrative of associating universal values with those of the CoE is subject to critical examination to explore whether an ideology positioning the CoE as the precursor of universal rights is embedded within the ICC's discourse.

It is apparent that the discourses of the ICC were constructed by a dual vocabulary, incorporating both economic terms such as market, creativity, and innovation, and political terms such as democracy, rights, and engagement. Together these discourses established a persuasive account of how the ICC could benefit the economic and political dimensions of urban policy in a variety of cities. Following this stage of articulation, the next step was to ensure that the ICC could reach many cities worldwide. Thus, the CoE sought to develop the ICC into a 'transferable' package, a process which I will investigate in the following section.

7.4 Global circulation of the ICC

The ICC received substantial political support across Europe from its outset. Since the launch of the programme, there has been close cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, a deliberative body within the CoE dedicated to nurturing grassroots democracy across its member states. The Congress has been a strong advocate for the ICC, as explicitly stated in its Recommendation 245 (2008: 1), where it urged the Committee of Ministers to "support the establishment of the network of Intercultural cities". The following year,

Resolution 280 was adopted, which called on local authorities to “express explicitly their common commitment in favour of an intercultural policy approach” (2009: 1). The mobilisation of a pan-European political assembly demonstrates strong political backing for the ICC. The Congress has continued to play an active role in promoting the ICC practices and examples to many cities (CoE, 2015a). In the following sections, I will identify three stages that paved the way for the systematic distribution of the ICC.

7.4.1 The pilot phase of the ICC

The period from 2008 to 2010 was the pilot phase of the ICC. The very concept and main tools used during this stage were drawn from research conducted by the British think-tank Comedia in 2004, titled *The Intercultural City: Making the Most of Diversity* (Caponio, 2021). Although the CoE later developed its own definition of the intercultural city, the original concept was derived from Phil Wood, a senior researcher at Comedia and principal advisor to the ICC.

The focus of the pilot phase was on formulating the overall framework of the programme. The CoE released a 24-page introductory document to outline the concept, key elements and methodology of the ICC. The document highlighted the importance of the intercultural approach to diversity management in comparison to other approaches, including multiculturalism. It also introduced a set of questions and a policy assessment grid as practical tools of the ICC. Once the initial outline of the ICC was established, the CoE selected 11 cities from 11 Member States to test and validate the programme. These cities included Berlin Neukölln (Germany), Izhevsk (Russian Federation), Lyon (France), Lublin (Poland), Melitopol (Ukraine), Neuchâtel (Switzerland), Oslo (Norway), Patras (Greece), Reggio Emilia (Italy), Subotica (Serbia) and Tilburg (the Netherlands). According to the CoE, the criteria for city selection were the strong commitment of local actors for the ICC and the availability of networks and policies for its implementation (Wood, 2010).

While the pilot cities completed an overview of their policies using the developed assessment grid, the ICC experts visited the cities to evaluate if the city is capable of implementing the programme. Discussions with a range of stakeholders - such as city officials, professionals from the relevant areas, and civil society representatives - took place to set a clear goal for making them intercultural cities. At the same time, thematic events were held in cities to solidify the foundational concepts of the programme, such as ‘diversity advantage’. For

example, an event titled *Diversity as a Motor of Development in the Past and at Present: Mobilising Civil Society* was held in Lublin and Melitopol, two of the ICC pilot cities. The practices and policies of pilot cities were assembled into a collection of good examples of ICC initiatives, which the CoE deemed worthy of introducing to other cities (Wood, 2010: 42). The early experience of the ICC was compiled in an influential book *Intercultural Cities - Towards a Model for Intercultural Integration*, published in 2010.

7.4.2 The second phase of the ICC

In the second phase, the CoE sought to expand the ICC's networks. In July 2010, Robert Palmer, who was then the Director of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage of the CoE, gave a presentation about the ICC at a Geneva workshop organised by the International Organization for Migration. Palmer emphasised that the ICC had received substantial global interest and reaffirmed the CoE's commitment to expanding the programme even beyond Europe's borders (Palmer, 2010: 5).

To inform more cities about the ICC and encourage their participation, the ICC required an analytical and assessment tool (Caponio, 2021). In 2011, the ICC team developed the Intercultural Cities Index with BAK Basel Economics, an independent Swiss research and consulting institute. Comprised of 66 questions grouped in 14 indicators, the ICC index was promoted as the method for member cities to assess their interculturality across policy, structure, and actions. According to the CoE, the index was the standardised tool available for broad application (CoE, 2012). The graphical display of index results was particularly highlighted as an appealing feature, enabling each member city to visualise its level of interculturality and compare its performance with that of other cities. The CoE referred to the index as a 'very successful' tool. Garnering attention from many cities, the index served as the entry point for more cities to join the ICC. Later, in 2019, the index was updated and made available in English, Italian and Spanish for wider application, along with a video tutorial to facilitate easy access and understanding. However, concerns later emerged regarding the use of the index to rank cities, rather than meeting the CoE's stated purpose of self-assessment and peer-learning (White, 2022)

In this second phase there was also an ongoing discussion on effective channels for circulating the ICC. Following a growing call for "catalytic events" to disseminate the "inspiring outcomes"

of the ICC (Wood, 2010: 41), a series of visits and exchanges from city to city were organised. They took different forms such as thematic workshops, study visits, expert visits, and trainings. In 2011, the CoE organised a group of 15 experts - including professors, policy advisors, researchers, and consultants - to work with a larger number of cities (CoE, 2012). For expert training, two special events were organised that year - *the Intercultural Cities Training Session* (Brussels, Belgium in March) and *Summer School - Language and Multilingualism, Second Generation and Intercultural Mediation* (Reggio Emilia, Italy in October). Subsequently, the experts visited 17 cities in Europe, including seven pilot cities and ten new cities, to conduct in-depth assessments of each city, based on documentation reviews, interviews, and meetings with local stakeholders (CoE, 2012). They also provided policy recommendations and conducted follow-up visits to examine the cities' progress.

In February 2013, an international conference titled *An Intercultural Cities Milestone Event - Making Diversity Work for Cities* took place in Dublin, Ireland. Remarks were made on the progress and results of the ICC over the past five years. The ICC was referred to as an inspiring achievement that has built "an impressive record of good practices to share" among cities in Europe and beyond (Sfirloaga, 2013: 2). This statement implied the focus of the third phase of the ICC, the circulation of the ICC's good practices to cities worldwide.

7.4.3 The third phase of the ICC

The third phase of the ICC primarily focused on extending its reach, particularly outside Europe. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the mobility of a policy requires various channels to effectively circulate it (Temenos & McCann, 2013). Therefore, various forms of policy tourism - symposiums, seminars, summits, study visits, and expert visits - were organised as a series of introductory events for the ICC. These events functioned as 'global circuits of policy knowledge' (McCann, 2008), where the expertise and experience of the ICC were spread to cities, countries, and continents outside Europe. Politicians and experts from Europe - the 'exporting locality', to borrow Wood's (2014) term - traveled to or hosted visitors from non-European cities to raise awareness about the intercultural city and foster their participation in the ICC programme. Among various regions, North America, Australia, and Asia have been popular sites. In the following sections, I will briefly highlight the key channels and mediators engaged in the ICC's arrival in each location.

In the case of cities in North America, a notable event that facilitated the wider circulation of the ICC was the 2014 Montréal Forum. During the 2013 conference in Dublin, *An Intercultural Cities Milestone Event - Making Diversity Work for Cities*, mentioned above, an informal conversation took place among representatives from the CoE, members of the Laboratory for Research on Intercultural Relations (LABRRI) at the University of Montréal, and officials from Montréal, regarding the possibility of launching the Forum in Montréal. According to Bob White, an ICC expert and director of LABRRI, several factors contributed to Montréal being selected as the venue. Not only was it the first Canadian city to join the ICC in 2011, but its own variant of interculturalism - distinct from the European model - was expected to foster constructive dialogue among cities across the Atlantic. In 2014, the Montréal forum was held, symbolising a trans-Atlantic exchange of perspectives and experiences on the intercultural city from both North America and Europe (White, 2018). This forum marked one of the initial events where the ICC was circulated outside Europe (White, 2018).

In the Oceania region, cities in Australia have hosted a series of international events since 2019, inviting high-profile ICC experts from Europe. The first event, titled *Intercultural Cities @ Swinburne* was held in Melbourne in 2019. At this event, the intercultural city was referred to as “a new game-changing development around the globe” (Monash University Intercultural Lab, n.d.). Following the public lectures, a workshop took place where Australian policymakers and scholars discussed the possibility of applying intercultural policy within the Australian context. In a similar format, *Intercultural Cities Australasia Summit 2019* and *Making Connections: Multiculturalism and Interculturalism in Australia 2023* were held, which reflected a strong interest and demand for the ICC in Australia. While Australian policymakers and scholars were interested in learning about the ICC, they adopted and modified it to align with the particular sociopolitical context of Australia. Considering that multiculturalism has been a dominant diversity framework in Australia, interculturalism - the underlying theory of the ICC - was positioned as building on or adding another layer to multiculturalism, rather than replacing it, as seen in the European context (Ballantyne, 2022). In 2017, the Australian Intercultural Standards and Index was created to reflect such a context of Australia, while incorporating the key principles of the original index version developed by the CoE (Ballantyne et al., 2017).

Asia was another important site where the idea of the ICC circulated and evolved into a concrete policy initiative. Since 2009, local governments in Japan had already been engaging in dialogues with the CoE on the ICC (Keizo & Takahiko, 2021). In that year, an international symposium titled *Intercultural City and Multicultural Symbiosis* was organised in Tokyo. A series of international symposiums held afterwards facilitated the introduction of the ICC to Korea. Tracing this mobility channel offers a deeper understanding of how the ICC was ultimately introduced to Ansan, Korea, which is the focus of the next chapter. In the following sections, I will explore the process through which the ICC was mobilised to Japan and Korea.

7.5 Mobility of the ICC to Asia

Revisiting the last section of Chapter 6, Japan and Korea have gained increasing attention from Europe since the 1990s, primarily due to their rapid economic growth. In 1996, Japan became an observer state of the CoE, the only observer state in Asia. This existing connection between Japan and the CoE became the starting point for the mobility of ICC to Japan. The process through which the ICC was first introduced to Japan is outlined in detail in Keizo and Takahiko's (2021) publication titled *An Introduction to the Intercultural City for Local Governments In Japan*. Since 2009, just a year after the pilot phase of the ICC, policy dialogues on the ICC have taken place between Japanese government officials and the CoE. The Japan Foundation (Japan's official cultural institution) has played a crucial role as a mediator between the two parties. Established in 1972 by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the foundation became an independent administrative institution in 2003. Its initial objective was to promote understanding of Japanese culture and values, with the aim of complementing Japan's economic power by expanding its cultural influence (National Diet of Japan, 1972a; 1972b). The foundation has since been dedicated to developing various cultural exchange programmes, not only with countries in Asia like Korea, but also with those in Europe¹⁶ (Fisher, 2014). Its initiatives have become channels for introducing Japanese and European cultural programmes to each other, one of which was the ICC. Table 7 shows a list of key international events on the ICC organised by the Japan Foundation.

¹⁶ The foundation has 26 overseas offices in 25 countries: 11 offices in Asia (Korea, China, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos, India) and 7 offices in Europe (Italy, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Spain, Hungary, Russia).

Table 7 A list of key international events on the ICC held in Asia (2009-2013)

Year	Country	City	Event title	Organiser
2009	Japan	Tokyo	Intercultural City and Multicultural Symbiosis	The Japan Foundation, The CoE
2011	Japan	Tokyo	Intercultural City Seminar 2011 "Tokyo's Tabunka-kyosei : What Can We Learn from Europe's 'Intercultural City?'"	The Japan Foundation
2011	Japan	Tokyo	International Symposium on Intercultural Cities in Asia and Europe Communicate, Collaborate, and Create: Our Communities for Tomorrow	The Japan Foundation
2011	Korea	Seoul	Asia-Europe Intercultural City Symposium	The Korean Association for Multicultural Studies, The Japan Foundation, The Embassy of Japan (Korea)
2012	Japan	Tokyo	Asia-Europe International Symposium on Intercultural Cities	The Japan Foundation, The CoE
2012	Japan	Hamamatsu	Asia-Europe Intercultural City Summit 2012 Hamamatsu	Hamamatsu City, The Japan Foundation, The CoE, The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) (Japan)
2013	Korea	Ansan	Korea, Europe, and Japan International Symposium on Interculturalism	Ansan City, The Japan Foundation, The National Council of Multicultural Cities (Korea), The CoE

There are three notable aspects to these international events. First, they were important sites for the transfer of knowledge and ideas about the ICC in Asia. The *Asia-Europe Intercultural City Symposium*, for example, brought together local government officials from both Japan and Korea. Second, the frequent use of the term “Asia-Europe” in summit titles recalls the Asia-

Europe Foundation (ASEF), discussed in Chapter 6. Revisiting the origins of ASEF, it was established in 1997 within the broader context of Europe's aim to build relationships with Asia, taking the form of cultural exchanges between two regions. ASEF organised various cultural programmes under the 'Asia-Europe' banner, such as Asia-Europe Youth Training. Although the ICC summits mentioned above were not directly affiliated with ASEF, their titles, such as Asia-Europe International Symposium on Intercultural Cities, suggest that the summits were a continuation of Europe's attempt to establish connections with Asia, this time by circulating the ICC in Asia. Given that it was the CoE that first requested Hamamatsu to join the ICC, (Keizo & Takahiko, 2021), leading to Hamamatsu becoming the first member city in Asia, it is evident that Europe had a big interest in this process. However, rather than understanding the intake of the ICC in Japan as a one-sided push from Europe, it is worth noting that it aligned with the rising aspirations of Japanese cities to become global cities. Since early 2000s, Hamamatsu spelt a vision for becoming a global city as demonstrated in its *2001 Global City Vision*. Building on this, *Hamamatsu Intercultural City Vision* was formulated in 2013. Its purpose was stated as follows:

It is in times like this that in regions such as Europe, new ideas are attracting attention. The existence of foreigners and other residents with diverse cultural backgrounds are being regarded as sources of city vitality. Residents with diverse cultures are indeed the source of creativity that is important in realizing the Creative City that Hamamatsu aims to be. The "Hamamatsu City Comprehensive Plan" outlines the future of Hamamatsu City as a Creative City built on civil collaboration, shining into the future. To achieve this goal, we propose a new "Hamamatsu Intercultural City Vision", built on the three pillars Collaboration, Creation, and Comfort.

(Hamamatsu City, 2013: 1)

This shows that Hamamatsu's vision of becoming an intercultural city stemmed from its consistent efforts to grasp opportunities for international recognition. As noted in the excerpt above, Hamamatsu's engagement with the ICC was primarily driven by the ambition to become a creative hub. It is likely that ICC's discourse on 'diversity advantage', which framed diversity in economic terms, as noted earlier, sparked the city's aspiration to achieve this broader goal. Lastly, in relation to the ICC summits in Asia, it is noteworthy that two summits were hosted

in Korea in the early 2010s: Asia-Europe Intercultural City Symposium held in Seoul in 2011 and Korea, Europe, and Japan International Symposium on Interculturalism in Ansan in 2013. These two events served as key mobility chains for introducing the ICC to Korea and Ansan, and will be explored further in the following chapter.

7.6 Conclusion

Based on a critical discourse analysis of the CoE's official documents, this chapter examined the discursive formation of the development and circulation of the ICC to cities around the world. The findings demonstrate how the ICC was designed from the outset to be a global policy programme, with structured frameworks and broad political backing to ensure its mobility. The ICC was framed in a way that could resonate with cities, by tapping into their aspirations for greater international visibility. Reflecting on the global repercussions from the 2000s, the ICC was envisioned to pave ways for cities to become more global, economically competitive, and inclusive. Moreover, the ICC established systematic channels to circulate these discourses through various forms of mobility circuits, such as publications, websites, symposiums, and expert visits. These have become key channels through which European politicians and experts raised awareness of the ICC to cities both within and beyond Europe. At the same time, it is important to note that the process of making and circulating the ICC was strongly supported by the CoE. The CoE's claim of the ICC as a successful and inspiring initiative, with great potential as a role model for other cities, catalysed the conditions for its mobility. Last but not least, the political networks that the CoE had with Japan facilitated the ICC's introduction to Japan and, subsequently, to Korea.

This chapter calls for a rethinking of global policy models. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, policy mobilities scholarship emphasises that only selective policy models attain the label of 'global'. In other words, global policies are not inherently global, rather they are made to give the impression of being fully formed, underpinned by clear-cut rationales, and ready to be spread worldwide by key actors. The development and dissemination of the ICC, as shown in this chapter, provides an empirical case of how a policy is strategically constructed and positioned for global recognition. However, as the policy mobilities approach also highlights, global policies are not simply duplicated, nor do they undergo smooth transitions when transferred to new locations. Instead, their implementation unfolds through non-linear

trajectories, characterised by fluidity, unpredictability, and contingency (McCann, 2008). This non-linearity was noted in the introduction and adoption of the ICC in Korea and Ansan, where their specific sociopolitical contexts conditioned the complexities and challenges involved in the ICC's mobility. To explore this further, the next chapter examines how the evolving sociopolitical landscapes of Korea and Ansan shaped the adoption of the ICC in 2020.

Chapter 8 Mobility of the Intercultural Cities Programme to Korea and Ansan

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the mobility of the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) to Korea, and eventually, to Ansan City. The entry point for this analysis is that policy development is far from coherent, planned, or rational, which accounts for the non-linear and messy realities of policy process, as noted in Chapter 2. Despite the ICC being presented as a package of ideal policy initiatives, as discussed in Chapter 7, this chapter demonstrates that Ansan did not adopt the ICC because it was necessarily the best solution for the city, but rather due to a series of contingent contextual factors that made it appear to be a viable option. To unpack the contingency of adopting the ICC in Ansan, it is necessary to investigate the particular sociopolitical context that facilitated its introduction in 2020. However, it is noteworthy that Ansan's first encounter with the ICC occurred earlier, in 2011, when the international symposium on the ICC was held in Korea for the first time. While this significant time gap highlights the non-continuous nature of the policy process, it provides a starting point for this chapter to explore the sociopolitical changes in both Korea and Ansan over the last ten years that ultimately led to Ansan's incorporation of the ICC into local policy by 2020.

The first half of this chapter examines the discursive shift in Korea's approach to diversity management over time, moving from multiculturalism to interculturalism. The two time periods under consideration are from the mid-2000s to the early 2010s, and from the mid-2010s to the late 2010s. The focus is on how the ICC was perceived and framed during each period. The latter half of this chapter investigates the political context in Ansan, where local politicians quickly incorporated the ICC into the local agenda in 2020. Drawing on interviews with local stakeholders, and city council transcripts, I conducted a critical discourse analysis to identify the primary agents, channels, and rationales that created the conditions for adopting the ICC in Ansan. This chapter lays the foundation for Chapter 9 to understand how local politicians ultimately reshaped the ICC to meet their needs and interests.

8.2 A non-linear policy development process

Revisiting Chapter 2 on the post-positivist and post-structuralist perspective, policy

development is far from a planned, coherent, and rational process. Classical theories and models on the policy decision-making process, such as the theory of bounded rationality (Simon, 1957), the garbage can model (Cohen et al., 1972), and the multiple streams model (Kingdon, 1984) point to non-rational and contingent nature of policy making. According to the theory of bounded reality, policy decisions are often far from rational due to the limitations in the knowledge of key decision-makers. The garbage can model further emphasises the non-rational nature of the policy development process, by suggesting that policy decisions are made by chance or randomly, not necessarily through a well-defined process. Building on this model, the multiple streams model emphasises the possibility of a ‘window of opportunity’ opening due to political events, such as budget cuts or elections, which allows a particular policy to be chosen. All of these theories and models highlight the messy realities of the policy decision-making process, characterised by dynamism, fluidity, ambiguity, unpredictability, and serendipity. They offer frameworks for understanding how the process deviates from the conventional approach in the face of the ‘unstructured and improvisational rush’ for decisions (Schick, 2010).

This non-linear policy process was particularly evident in the adoption of the ICC in Ansan when local politicians were urgently seeking a means to fulfill the mayor’s previous electoral promise of making Ansan a global city. Prior to delving into this, however, it is important to explore how the idea of the ICC initially arrived in Ansan. Meanwhile, even though local factors play a major role in shaping policy decisions at the local level, national political changes also influence those local decisions and priorities (Peck, 2002). Therefore, for deeper understanding of the mobility of the ICC in Ansan, it is necessary to consider the broader national discussions surrounding the ICC in Korea that began in the early 2010s. Interestingly, this provides further evidence of the non-linear adoption of the ICC in the Korean context. In the sense that the discussion on the ICC at the national level was accompanied by a discursive shift in diversity management from multiculturalism to interculturalism, I will examine how this shift occurred over two time periods: from the mid-2000s to the early 2010s, and from the mid-2010s to the late 2010s.

8.3 Discursive shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism in Korea

8.3.1 From the mid-2000s to the early 2010s

During the mid-2000s to the early 2010s, the diversity management discourse in Korea was characterised by a dominant focus on multiculturalism. Revisiting Chapter 5, this period was marked by a continuous increase in the influx of international migrants to Korea, which started in the early 2000s. Coupled with the diversifying categories of migrants - such as migrant workers, marriage migrants, and children with migrant backgrounds - the Korean government began searching for a framework to address the increasing sociocultural diversity in society. In 2006, the government officially declared that Korea's transition to multi-ethnic and multicultural society had become inevitable, marking the adoption of multiculturalism as a central agenda of the country (Kim et al., 2007). Since then, multiculturalism - predominantly influenced by theories and policies from Anglophone countries - has been widely circulated across academia, media, and civic groups in Korea (Kim, 2007; Kim et al., 2007; Ahn, 2012; Kim, 2012). Multiculturalism also emerged as a key policy focus at the local level. Since the early 2010s, the Korean government has sought to establish dedicated departments for multicultural affairs within local governments across the country (Oh, 2009). At the same time, local governments began taking active roles in addressing the increasing diversity in cities. For example, in 2012, cities with large migrant populations - either over 10,000 people or 3% of the city's total population - established the National Council of Multicultural Cities. The aim of the council was to facilitate cooperation in the implementation of multicultural policies among local governments. As evident by its name, the notion of a 'multicultural city' also became widespread in the early 2010s.

Amid the flourishing multicultural discourse, it is noteworthy that two international symposiums on the ICC were held in Korea in the early 2010s (Table 8). As discussed in Chapter 7, these symposiums were part of a series of international symposiums that had been taking place in Asia since 2009, co-organised by the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Japan Foundation. In 2011, Seoul hosted the *Asia-Europe Intercultural City Symposium*. Two years later in 2013, Ansan hosted the *Korea, Europe, and Japan International Symposium on Interculturalism*. These two symposiums brought together local policy officials from Korea, Japan, and Europe to discuss their policies aimed at addressing urban diversity. During the

events, the ICC was introduced through presentations by officials from the CoE. In 2011, Irena Guidikova, the manager of the ICC at that time, was invited, followed by Claudia Luciani, the Director of Democratic Governance, Culture and Diversity, in 2013. The symposiums, including the CoE officials' presentations, were simultaneously interpreted into Korean and Japanese.

Table 8 Two international symposiums held in Korea

Year	City	Event title	Organiser	Participant cities in Korea
2011	Seoul	Asia-Europe Intercultural City Symposium	The Korean Association for Multicultural Studies, The Japan Foundation, The Embassy of Japan (Korea)	Seoul, Ansan, Gwangju
2013	Ansan	Korea, Europe, and Japan International Symposium on Interculturalism	Ansan City, The Japan Foundation, The National Council of Multicultural Cities (Korea), The CoE	Ansan, Namdong district (Incheon City), Gwangsan district (Gwangju City)

These two international symposiums offer insights into how the ICC was understood in Korea at the peak of the multiculturalism discourse, particularly in terms of the translation of key concepts such as ‘interculturalism’, ‘intercultural policy’ and ‘intercultural city’ into Korean. In political studies, translation has garnered considerable attention, particularly in the globalised world marked by the international circulation of political discourse (Schäffner, 2012; Bánhegyi, 2014). Contrary to the traditional view of translation as a replica of the original text, increasing attention has been paid to factors that can lead to shifts and omissions during the translation process (Lefevere, 2016). Omissions emerge not only because of the lack of availability of equivalent terms in the target language but also because the cultural, social, and political contexts of the receiving site shape the transferability of the intended objectives and meanings of the source text (Venuti, 1995; Ferreira Duarte, 2000). In this regard, Venuti (1992: 8) claimed that translation is “a weave of connotations, allusions, and discourses specific to the target-language culture”. In other words, translations may often be inaccurate when translators try to align them with the sociopolitical context of the target-language (Chan, 2007; Valdeón, 2007; Malkawi, 2012). Building on these implications, I will focus on the 2011 and 2013

symposiums held in Korea to unpack the Korean terminologies for interculturalism and intercultural city, focusing on what was or was not translated in their original sense. This will help with understanding how the ICC was contextualised within the broader sociopolitical context of Korea during the early 2010s, when multiculturalism was still dominant.

Figure 9 shows the Korean versions of the official flyers for the 2011 and 2013 symposiums. Interestingly, they revealed both mistranslation and non-translation. First, the aspect of mistranslation was evident in the titles of both symposiums on the translated flyers for a Korean audience. The 2011 *Asia-Europe Intercultural City Symposium* was translated as Multicultural City Symposium (다문화도시 국제심포지움 in Korean). The 2013 *Korea, Europe, and Japan International Symposium on Interculturalism* was translated as International Symposium on Multiculturalism (다문화 국제심포지움). This shows how, in both events, the term ‘intercultural’ was translated as ‘multicultural’, or at least the Korean analogue for multicultural *damunhwa*. This translation led to the terms ‘interculturalism’ and ‘intercultural city’ being translated as ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘multicultural city’ in Korean.

Figure 9 The Korean versions of the official flyers for the 2011 and 2013 symposiums



Source: EcoLaw Newspaper (<http://www.ecolaw.co.kr>) (left)

Japan Foundation Seoul (<https://www.jpjf.or.kr>) (right)

The 2011 symposium handbook introduced the ICC in Korean, as follows (translated by me)¹⁷:

It is becoming prominent that local governments are embracing coexistence with foreign residents as an opportunity and a source of local vitality, innovation, creation, and growth. Currently, in Europe, there is a growing attention to the concept of the ‘intercultural city’ as a new urban policy. Through the Intercultural City Programme, implemented by the Council of Europe since 2008, 18 European cities that align with its purpose have been exchanging knowledge and experiences.

While this introduction briefly conveys the key idea of the ICC, it is worth noting that it features a case of non-translation. In the Korean version, the term ‘Intercultural city’ was merely written in Korean using its phonetic equivalents as 인터컬츄럴 시티. Likewise, a Korean online news article that summarised the discussions from the symposium translated the terms ‘intercultural’ phonetically into Korean, in reference to the CoE’s intercultural approach to the integration of migrants (Kwak, 2013). Where the Korean terminology for ‘intercultural’ was lacking, there was no particular explanation of what the intercultural approach specifically means. Recalling Chapter 7, the early 2010s was when the CoE was actively promoting the ICC worldwide. Since its launch in 2008, the CoE has been developing various channels through which it could introduce the ICC to different cities, with the two international symposiums held in Korea being part of these initiatives. Therefore, it is highly likely that mistranslation and non-translation were indicative of the specific Korean context. They affirm the dominance of the multiculturalism discourse in Korea, where interculturalism had little room to be integrated into discussions on diversity management at that time. This is particularly noted in the absence of an equivalent Korean term for ‘intercultural city’. Given that fewer than five studies were conducted in Korea on the intercultural city during the early 2010s¹⁸, its notion and concept

¹⁷ While trying to preserve the original meaning, I added some paraphrasing to better translate some nuanced expressions in Korean and more accurately reflect what the original source was trying to convey.

¹⁸ These include *Study on Intercultural Policy in Europe* (Oh, 2012), *Cultural Diversity and Intercultural City Project in Europe* (Hong, 2014), *Transforming towards Interculturalism and Intercultural City Policy* (B. D. Choi, 2014).

were still rudimentary, even in academia.

The more evident prevalence of multiculturalism in the early 2010s in Korea is highlighted by the fact that multiculturalism served as the overarching framework for both 2011 and 2013 symposiums. As noted in a news article which summarised the symposiums likewise, the ICC was framed as a sub-theme of multicultural policy: “[...] *at the symposium, the speaker from the Council of Europe discussed Europe’s multicultural policy. Addressing the relationship between multiculturalism and immigration, the speaker led the discussion by posing the question of what kind of urban policies are needed in this regard*” (Kwak, 2013. my translation). The influence of multiculturalism was also suggested by the names of the Korean institutions that held each symposium - The Korean Association for *Multicultural Studies*, and The National Council of *Multicultural Cities* (emphases added). Considering the institutions’ advocacy for multiculturalism, it is not coincidental that the concepts of interculturalism and the intercultural city were mistranslated as being equivalent to multiculturalism and the multicultural city.

Ultimately, this shows how Korean political actors and institutions positioned interculturalism as part of multiculturalism in the early 2010s. This sharply contrasts with Europe, where interculturalism gained legitimacy as a clear departure from multiculturalism, fueled by rising claims of its failure in Europe. However, this was not the case in Korea, where multiculturalism was still gaining wide acceptance and support both in politics and academia. Such a disconnect between the interests of different European and Korean actors raises the question of whether European actors assumed that interculturalism would easily resonate with countries outside Europe. Particularly, the slippage between multiculturalism and interculturalism demonstrates that European actors assumed a linear translation of the term ‘intercultural’ in non-European countries, overlooking the possibility that it might not carry the same meaning, connotations, and significance in the receiving contexts. This initial introduction of the ICC in Korea in the early 2010s clearly demonstrates that policy mobility evolves in a non-linear process, rather than through a smooth transition between different contexts.

8.3.2 From the mid-2010s to the late 2010s

One of the aspects that shows the contingency of the policy decision-making process is when the same policy matter re-emerges after many years, but within a different context (Jacobs et

al., 2003). This was noted when discussions on interculturalism resurfaced from the mid-2010s onwards, accompanied by critical reflections on multiculturalism in academia, politics and the public sphere in Korea. Scholars criticised the fact that Korea had unquestionably accepted Western multicultural theories, without reflection on how Korean society differs from dominant Western multicultural societies (Hwang, 2015; Shim & Kim, 2016; Hong, 2018; Yun & Kang, 2019). In one aspect, the embrace of multiculturalism in Korea was perceived as a rhetorical strategy to gain international recognition by demonstrating a commitment to Western principles of human rights and tolerance (Ng & Bloemraad, 2015). Multicultural policy also faced criticism regarding its effectiveness, both in terms of its implementation and outcomes. Until now, there has been no dedicated department within the central government responsible for implementing multicultural policies. Consequently, policies have been implemented across various departments, resulting in overlapping initiatives and inefficient use of the budget (Shim & Kim, 2016). This sparked a heated controversy in Korea, with some arguing that multicultural policies amounted to reverse discrimination against Koreans, expressing their perceived unfairness at receiving less attention compared to migrants (Kim & Jeon, 2017). Simultaneously, signs of rising anti-multicultural sentiment emerged, as evidenced by studies showing increasing social distance and residential separation between Koreans and migrants (Kim et al., 2014; Jang & Lee, 2019).

With the growing recognition of the shortcomings of multiculturalism, both in theory and practice, the claim that multiculturalism has either reached its limits or already failed in Korea became widespread (C. G. Kim, 2015). This prompted a demand for a new theoretical framework, initially emerging from academia, in which scholars turned their attention to European interculturalism. In fact, European interculturalism had been gradually introduced to Korean scholarship since the early 2010s, driven by the claim for broadening the discursive field beyond the dominant Anglo-American multiculturalism (Jang, 2010). Early studies, particularly in philosophy and education, focused on the theory of interculturalism itself, providing definitions and exploring its relationship to multiculturalism (Byeon, 2013; C. G. Kim, 2015; Jang, 2016; Kim, 2017). By the mid-2010s, discussions moved beyond to address the practical implications of interculturalism for Korean society in terms of its growing ethnic diversity. Korean scholars emphasised that Europe could serve as a reference point for Korea for Europe's earlier engagement with interculturalism to address the challenges of

multiculturalism (Kim & Park, 2018). The scholars introduced specific policy initiatives of interculturalism, one of which was the ICC, by referencing influential publications that have become blueprints for today's ICC, as mentioned in Chapter 7: *The Intercultural City: Making the Most of Diversity* (2005) and *The Intercultural City: Planning for Diversity Advantage* (2008). In Korean academia, the ICC was introduced as a new urban policy initiative, systematically equipped with a specific framework and methodological tools (Kim & Park, 2017, 2018). It was expected that the ICC could offer insights for Korea's urban realities, especially in cities with high number of migrants, where concerns were raised on emerging spatial segregation between Koreans and migrants (Jang & Lee, 2019).

In the mid-2010s, interculturalism was also introduced to the policy arena in Korea. In 2016, the Ministry of Justice announced the 3rd Master Plan for Immigration Policy that outlined the direction of Korea's immigration policy over the next five years (2018-2022). For this Master Plan, the IOM Migration Research & Training Centre of Korea affiliated with the Ministry of Justice, published a research proposal. The proposal suggested engaging in dialogues with international organisations such as the CoE to ensure that Korea's immigration policy aligns with international standards and receives global recognition (Jeong et al., 2016: 240). Although the paper did not explicitly use the term 'interculturalism', it reflected its growing influence by referring to the significance of promoting intercultural understanding between Koreans and migrants. The proposal also cited the ICC, albeit very briefly, as an example of the CoE's urban migrant policy (Jeong et al., 2016).

Since 2020, the discourse on interculturalism entered a new phase of growing popularity, particularly in the urban policy arena. Ansan's participation in the ICC in 2020 promoted political discussions on interculturalism at the local level, involving different local actors such as politicians, think tanks, and NGOs. Ansan gained significant attention from both domestic and international media for being the first ICC participant city in Korea. Accordingly, other Korean cities began expressing their interest in the ICC (Oh, 2020). Two more cities officially joined the ICC afterwards - Guro district in Seoul in August 2020 and Asan City in October 2024. Even cities that have yet to join the ICC, such as Incheon City and Yeongdeungpo district in Seoul, employed the term 'intercultural' in their policy initiatives. In response to this growing attention, a series of international forums on the ICC have been held in Korea since 2021. By inviting high-profile ICC experts, these forums placed greater focus on the intercultural city

than those held in the early 2010s, clearly indicating that the interculturalism discourse began to gain more attention in the early 2020s. Interculturalism reappeared in national political discussion, accompanied by emerging calls for a shift in immigration policy from multiculturalism to interculturalism. For instance, the 4th Master Plan for Immigration Policy (2023-2027) employed the term and concept of interculturalism in its new policy guidelines. Pointing out that the existing policies were limited to integrating migrants, with little focus on improving Koreans' awareness towards migrants, it highlighted the significance of intercultural education for promoting mutual understanding and interaction between Koreans and migrants (Ministry of Justice, 2024).

The discussions so far highlight a different dimension of how the ICC was positioned in Korea compared to the early 2010s. From the mid-2010s onwards, it was framed as an alternative that could address the shortcomings of multiculturalism. This demonstrates how the same policy issue can re-emerge in a different form, shaped by the particular context of the time. Meanwhile, given that Ansan facilitated the discourse of the ICC from 2020s by becoming the first Korean city to join the programme, it is worth examining whether Ansan's adoption of the ICC aligned with the national discursive shift towards interculturalism, or if there was a locally contextualised 'window of opportunity' (Kingdon, 1984) that motivated Ansan's policy decision-makers to turn to the ICC.

8.4 Introduction of the ICC in Ansan

8.4.1 Shifts in Ansan's sociopolitical landscape from the 2010s to the 2020s

In the latter half of this chapter, I will explore how the ICC was first introduced to Ansan and ultimately adopted in 2020. I will begin by discussing Ansan's sociopolitical landscape, which facilitated its adoption. In a broader context, this reflects the national discursive shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism over the 2010s into the 2020s.

Back in the early 2010s, amidst the increasing popularity of multiculturalism in Korea, the notion of the multicultural city also gained widespread support. As noted with the establishment of the National Council of Multicultural Cities in 2012, cities with large migrant populations were referring to themselves as multicultural cities at that time. In fact, Ansan played a leading role in the establishment of the National Council, serving as the president of the council over

two terms, from 2012 to 2016. This demonstrates one of Ansan's efforts to establish the city's brand as a multicultural city in the early 2010s. In 2016, Ansan was awarded first place at the 'Multicultural Policy Award Ceremony', which was held with support from the Korean government to recognise local governments with prominent multicultural policies (Kim, 2016). As discussed in Chapter 5, Ansan's multicultural policies, being the first of their kind among local governments in Korea, contributed to shaping Ansan's city brand and reputation as the leading multicultural city in the country.

However, the city's multicultural brand began to lose its support among the local residents from mid to late 2010s, pointing out gaps between the city's vision and reality. As noted from the news title *Ansan Multicultural Street - Is It Safe To Walk Around During The Night?* (Ko, 2012), Ansan was also being represented as a chaotic and dangerous city, with high rates of crimes committed by migrants (Koo, 2013). This negative image was associated with the composition of the city's migrant population and the socio-spatial characteristics of Ansan as an industrial city. Specifically, the concentration of low-skilled migrants employed in the industrial sector, coupled with the deteriorating living conditions in the industrial zones where migrants reside, made the notion of ethnic and cultural diversity less desirable. This, in turn, led to resistance among local residents to the multicultural rhetoric of Ansan (C. H. Kim, 2015; Park & Park, 2015).

As the city's multicultural branding lost support, Ansan's policy officials sought a new discourse to redefine the city's brand. It is at this point that the ICC reached Ansan, following a discursive shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism at the national level, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. However, it is noteworthy that this was not Ansan's first encounter with the ICC. During the two ICC international symposiums held in Korea, as discussed earlier, Ansan participated in both events and even hosted the symposium in 2013. Nonetheless, as Ansan was at the peak of its multicultural city branding in the early 2010s, the intercultural city was understood as part of the multicultural city framework and thus did not receive much attention. Its subsequent encounter with the ICC in the late 2010s, however, led to a different outcome. There was an 'improvisational rush' (Schick, 2010) to embrace the ICC in order to fulfill the mayor's past electoral pledge, therefore incorporating it as a new city branding strategy. Prior to exploring this, I will examine the initial channels through which the intercultural city discourse was introduced to Ansan in the late 2010s.

8.4.2 The travel of the ICC idea from academia

In the mobility and translation of policy ideas, academics often play a key role in opening up pathways for knowledge circulation. Academics serve as conduits for bringing in new knowledge - encompassing theories, approaches, and methodologies - particularly by moving between the countries or place of an idea's origin and destination (Park, 2004; Liu & Willis, 2021). Academic mobility of this kind has gained attention from both researchers and policymakers for its significance on the production and dissemination of knowledge in society (Teichler, 2015; Chen, 2016). Particularly academic returnees - those who return to their home countries after earning degrees abroad - often change the domestic academic landscape through their research and teaching practices (Lee et al., 1988).

The dimension of academic mobility was also noted in the introduction of ICC to Ansan, particularly through a Korean academic who returned to Korea after obtaining postgraduate degrees in Europe. As a high-profile expert in intercultural education in Korea, they were often invited to give lectures to a wide audience, such as teachers, the public, NGOs, and policy officials. During the lectures, they touched upon broader themes such as interculturalism, intercultural society, and intercultural city. In 2019, they were invited to the regular meeting of the National Council of Multicultural Cities, which eventually facilitated the spread of the concept of intercultural city to local practitioners in Korea. Before providing further context of this meeting, I will outline how the academic became aware of the ICC. During my interview with them for this research, it was revealed that their first engagement with the notion of the ICC was neither planned nor structured. Rather, it was mediated by the academic's years of study in intercultural education which stimulated their interest in the ICC in later years.

Well, the intercultural city does not fall within the area of education. However, as I began studying intercultural education, I started paying attention to some other activities of the Council of Europe and the European Union. That is when I came across the Intercultural Cities Programme. Even though I'm not a scholar in geography or policy, I became interested in the ICC.

(Academic expert, E3. 01/03/22)

This shows how the initial pathway for the circulation of the ICC in Ansan did not start from the most relevant field of urban policy or urban planning. Instead, it emerged through a distinct

field of education, suggesting that a serendipitous or chance encounter with a new concept can invigorate policy development (Cohen et al., 1972). At the same time, it implies that the academic's background in education may have informed the way they perceived the ICC. Of the various areas that constitute the ICC - such as economy, governance, media, and public space - the academic's primary interest lay in education, a focus that would have differed considerably from that of city planners or policy decision-makers, as will be discussed in later sections.

In April 2019, the academic was invited to the regular meeting of the National Council of Multicultural Cities in Korea. Held in Suwon City, the meeting was attended by up to 60 city officials and practitioners from Korean cities with a high number of migrants. In the first half of the meeting, the academic led a training programme for policy officials under the title 'Transition from Multicultural society to Intercultural society' (Ko, 2019). During this training, they discussed the concept and significance of the ICC. This meeting was also attended by an official from Ansan. As the academic explained below, this meeting channeled the introduction of the ICC to more of Ansan's city officials five months later.

About five months after the training programme, around September, one of the city officials from Ansan's Foreign Residents Support Headquarters, who had participated in the regular meeting, reached out to me. They requested a lecture on the ICC for Ansan's mayor, deputy mayor, and public officials at their staff meeting.

(Academic expert, E3. 01/03/22)

As the five-month time difference implies, the translation of a policy idea into concrete action does not necessarily occur in continuous time. During the staff meeting in Ansan in September 2019, the academic introduced the ICC, suggesting that the city should adopt an intercultural approach to urban planning. Emphasising the need for a policy change, the academic pointed out one of the city's major problems is the lack of interaction between Korean residents and migrants. During my interview with the academic, they emphasised their expectation that the ICC could supplement the city's educational measures aimed at changing the attitudes and perceptions of Korean residents towards migrants. As noted earlier, it reflects how the academic's positionality as an expert in education led them to prioritise the aspects of attitudes

and perceptions over the city's concrete physical or social structures or other policy measures.

When proposing a particular policy, there must be a rationale that makes it better than other alternatives (MacRae & Whittington, 1997). The academic's grounds for suggesting the ICC lay in the applicability and adaptability of its index to the Korean context. During my interview with the academic, they compared the ICC index to a 'medical checkup' for a city in the sense that it is useful to diagnose the interculturality of the city. Because the ICC index analysis for each city is published every three years, they expected that the index would be used to review Ansan's interculturality over time. Meanwhile, they expressed their concern over the 'misuse' of the index by practitioners, adding that it should not be used for city branding. This expectation is noteworthy, as it often accounts for the frequent gap between the academic and policy spheres (van den Hove, 2007). In policy implementation, policymakers tend to prioritise 'selling' the policy to the public within a short timeframe (Brownson et al., 2006). They often employ policy tools like indexes to enhance the symbolic achievement of the policy, which I will address in the next chapter.

After the staff meeting in Ansan in September, communication between the Ansan city officials and the academic continued into early October, primarily via emails. The city official asked for their help to find out details on the process of joining the ICC, saying that 'it is difficult to figure out on our end because we are not good at English'. Inquiries included whom to contact, where the ceremony of declaring the city's participation takes place, how the ICC membership payment proceeds, and where they could find details on the ICC index. This highlights one of the challenges of adopting a foreign policy initiative, namely, the linguistic barrier. This is particularly relevant to local practitioners outside English-speaking countries, where English, as the lingua franca, limits their access to primary knowledge that is often produced and distributed in English (Amano et al., 2016). For now, it demonstrates that language hampered direct communication between city officials and the CoE during the preparation phase of the ICC's adoption, requiring the involvement of an intermediary fluent in English. This related to the academic's communication with city officials. After having had no contact since October, the academic was 'surprised' to learn from the media four months later that Ansan had joined the ICC. While this implies that the academic was less involved in the actual adoption stage of the ICC, it remains clear that they were the key informant who introduced the ICC to Ansan at the outset. In the next section, I will investigate how this academic input resonated so quickly

with Ansan's policy decision-makers within the city's political landscape at that time.

8.5 Uptake of the ICC in Ansan politics

Policy uptake does not occur in a vacuum but rather takes place when there is a particular political interest driving it (Brownson et al., 2006). Especially when there was a fast policy uptake as witnessed from short periods of time taken from the translation of the ICC to actual implementation in Ansan, it may imply a strong political motivation and commitment behind this (Peck & Theodore, 2015). In the following section, I will focus on the specific situation in Ansan around the time that the ICC was introduced in order to identify the political rationale behind its adoption.

In late 2019, at the time the ICC was introduced in Ansan, the Mayor of Ansan - Hwa-Seop Yoon - was in the second year of his mayoral tenure. In Korea, local elections take place every four years and he was in the mayor's position from 2018 to 2022. The year 2019 was a particularly important period for the mayor, as he sought to fulfill his previous electoral commitments and prepare for re-election in two years. In fact, election cycles often set a timeframe within which policymakers take action to raise awareness of their achievements (Brownson et al., 2006). In the 2018 local election, he made ten electoral commitments encapsulated in different city concepts: 1. Human-centred Economic City, 2. Environment- and Energy-Friendly City, 3. Hub City for Cultural and Artistic Exchanges, 4. Global Youth Exchange City, 5. Happy City, 6. Pedestrian- and Bicycle-Friendly City, 7. Green City, 8. Marine Ecological Tourism City, 9. People's City, 10. Citizen-Governance City. Among these, the fourth commitment - 'Global Youth Exchange City' was specified as empowering youth as global leaders through international exchanges to renovate the city's brand. One of his electoral promises for making Ansan a 'Global Youth Exchange City' was by gaining recognition from the United Nations as an 'International Youth Multicultural City'. This idea of 'International Youth Multicultural City' is worth investigating, as it 'unintentionally' paved the way for ICC to be adopted in Ansan.

The electoral commitment to create Ansan as 'International Youth Multicultural City' was informed by and directed through Gyeonggi Research Institute. This institute is a think tank for Gyeonggi Province which has conducted research on major policy issues of cities within the province since its establishment in 1995. In fact, such interaction between policymakers

and think tanks is a common form of policymaking. When policymakers seek to bring academic knowledge to bear in their decision-making, think tanks often inform them with alternative policy proposals (Thunert, 2006; McGann, 2015). They often present their proposals as attractive packages, framing them as ‘stories’ with language and messages designed to resonate with policymakers (Hart & Vromen, 2008).

In December 2017, Gyeonggi Research Institute published a 600-page research paper titled *A Study on Regional Issues and Strategies in Ansan City*. In collaboration with external experts such as university professors, a consultant for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and researchers from different institutions, the paper proposed ten policy strategies for Ansan. One of the authors, Ju-Yong Kim, a Korean consultant of UN-Habitat Youth Programme during that time, wrote a policy proposal titled *A Plan to Promote International Youth Exchange City through the Designation of the UN International Youth Multicultural City*. Here, it is important to note that there is no official UN programme under the title ‘International Youth Multicultural City’. Rather, it was a programme proposed by Mr. Kim. Given his position as a consultant of the UN-Habitat, it is assumed that his proposal was inspired by the UN-Habitat Youth Programme. This is a global programme with a particular focus on youth-led urban development, based on the idea that youth are a valuable resource for urban growth. Under this programme, various youth initiatives have been undertaken to understand the challenges youth encounter in cities and empower them to engage in urban policy making (Opsal, 2016).

The objective of Mr. Kim’s proposal was to suggest a model through which Ansan could develop into an international multicultural City (Seong et al., 2017). He suggested that Ansan collaborate with the UN-Habitat Youth Programme to earn the designation of an ‘International Youth Multicultural City’. In his proposal, immigrant youth in Ansan were perceived as a driving force for urban development, as key agents in improving local perceptions of multiculturalism and contributing to Ansan’s socio-economic growth. The proposal included details on establishing institutional and physical infrastructure for immigrant youth, along with implementing social campaigns and programmes for them. It was expected that this would ultimately enhance Ansan’s city brand as an ‘International Multicultural City’, enabling the city to achieve global recognition and share its local experiences worldwide (Seong et al., 2017). This proposal was incorporated into the mayor’s pledges for the 2018 local election, where he

eventually became Ansan's 14th Mayor. Consequently, he now had to put into practice the idea of transforming Ansan into a 'UN International Youth Multicultural City'. The combination of catchy terms in the slogan reflected Ansan's growing aspirations to become an international or global city, demonstrating how global city making became central to local politics afterward.

8.5.1 The ICC as an alternative choice

At this point, I turn to the unsystematic and uncoordinated nature of policymaking, mentioned at the start of this chapter. The real world of politics is characterised by messy realities, which usually make policy processes unforeseen and unpredictable (Walker et al., 2001). Policy ideas often come into being through serendipity or chance encounters. For instance, fleeting conversations in ephemeral spaces (Robinson, 2015), informal exchanges during official meetings (White, 2018), or interactions outside meetings that would not have occurred but for a delayed flight (Wathne & Haarstad, 2020). Consequently, policy programmes are often "assembled from [...] ongoing plans that were 'lying around' when its proposal was made" (Wathne & Haarstad, 2020: 136). While these examples suggest that policymaking is often unstructured, they also demonstrate how such unexpected occurrences can stimulate the development of new policies. I will extend this discussion to explore the implications for Ansan's adoption of the ICC.

When the mayor took action to gain recognition from the UN as an 'International Youth Multicultural City', the mayor and Ansan city officials realised that no such programme existed within the UN. It seems that Mr. Kim's proposal, in which he 'tentatively' suggested such a programme, was misunderstood as an existing policy. The lack of clarity in his initial proposal may have caused this confusion. This demonstrates one of the limitations of politics, where decisions are often made based on incomplete or even incorrect information (Forester, 1984). The mayor and city officials had to find a similar policy programme that could fill the vacancy left by 'International Youth Multicultural City'. Coincidentally, during this period in search of an alternative, they happened to attend the academic expert's lecture on the intercultural city during their staff meeting, as noted earlier. Eventually, the idea of the ICC was perceived by city officials to be able to replace what they originally envisioned. This demonstrates how Ansan's decision to adopt the ICC was serendipitous - as an alternative or detour to fulfill the mayor's electoral pledge. Such a chance encounter was mentioned in my interview with Ansan

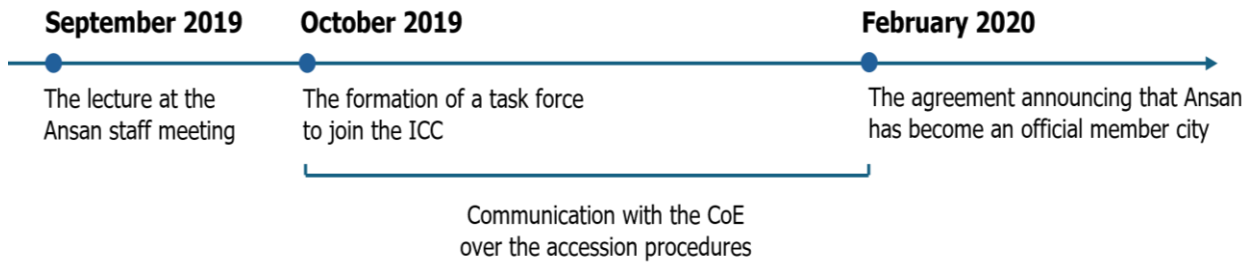
city officials, who explained the background of the adoption of the ICC as follows:

[...] One of the mayor's electoral commitments was implementing Youth Multicultural City (UN International Youth Multicultural City). But eventually there was no organisation within the UN that designates such programme. So, alternatively, [we] detoured to the Council of Europe's programme.

(Policy decision-maker, P2. 15/02/22)

The same rationale was noted at the city council meeting, where city officials referred to the decision to adopt the ICC as an “unavoidable alternative”, given that no such programme as the ‘UN International Youth Multicultural City’ existed (Ansan Council transcript, 06/16/21). In two key aspects the ICC was perceived as interchangeable with the ‘UN International Youth Multicultural City’. It is important to recall that the ‘International Youth Multicultural City’ proposal was part of a broader attempt to raise Ansan’s international recognition. Ansan aimed to achieve this goal by associating with an international organisation’s cultural programme, which could reinforce its long-standing reputation as a leading multicultural city in Korea. In that context, Ansan expected to gain the same outcome by adopting the CoE’s ICC, benefiting from the perceived stature of the international organisation while renovating its culturally diverse city image with the newest term ‘intercultural’. Due to its perceived interchangeability, the idea of the ICC was rapidly translated into a policy initiative in Ansan. Figure 10 reiterates the timeframe for the adoption of the ICC in Ansan. In September 2019, the idea was introduced into the policy sphere through the academic expert’s lecture at the Ansan staff meeting. One month after, Ansan formed a Task Force to initiate the process of joining the ICC. Over the next four months, city officials worked together with a local think tank - the Ansan Evergreen foundation - to communicate with the Intercultural Cities Unit of the CoE over the accession procedures (Song, 2020). In February 2020, the mayor of Ansan concluded an agreement with the Deputy Secretary General of the CoE, which officially announced that Ansan had become an ICC member (MBN News, 2020).

Figure 10 The five-month timeline for the adoption of the ICC in Ansan



8.5.2 The ICC as ‘fast policy’

During my interview with Ansan’s policy decision-makers, including city councilors and city officials, they characterised the implementation of the ICC in terms that aligned with fast policy process. Fast policy process is often marked by its compressed timelines of policy design and development stages (Peck & Theodore, 2015). The city councilor stated that the duration for policy decision-making process typically depends on “the mayor’s willingness” (Policy decision-maker, P1. 21/01/22), suggesting the mayor's strong motivation behind the fast implementation of the ICC. City officials also mentioned the speedy process, adding “*as far as I know, the preparation time was really short [...] We did not have much time*” (Policy decision-maker, P3. 15/02/22), implying that the ICC implementation proceeded under time constraints. This process raises questions about what prompted the urgency for policy decision-makers to speed up the ICC implementation. In fact, by the time Ansan was considering joining the ICC, a local competition emerged over the title of ‘First Intercultural City in Korea’ with Guro - one of the districts in Seoul City. City titles often play a crucial role in raising a city’s profile (dos Santos, 2021). When city titles are associated with rankings or numbers, they become more compelling branding tools on the international stage (Giffinger et al., 2010). Therefore, earning ‘the highest’ rankings and ‘the first’ labels often sparks rivalry among cities, turning city branding into a battlefield for symbolic markers (Anttiroiko, 2016). This was noted in Ansan’s ICC implementation process, when city officials sped up the process upon realising that Guro was preparing to join the ICC at the same time as Ansan. While monitoring Guro’s progress, the city officials aimed to complete Ansan’s accession before Guro could. During the council meeting in December 2019, city councilors asked city officials about Ansan’s progress in joining the ICC as follows:

City official: It is on track. But we are trying to *rush* a little bit next year because the mayor of Guro district is preparing to announce the district's participation [in the ICC] right next year. And in Asia, we [Ansan] are not the first participant city. City of Hamamatsu in Japan has already joined, but City of Kyoto [in Japan] is also considering joining, so we will *speed up* to get it done in January next year. (emphasis added)

[...]

City councilor: In any case, in terms of policy for migrants, our city [Ansan] is the leading city. [...] So, we ask for proactive administration measures to gain recognition as the intercultural city.

(Ansan Council transcript, 03/12/19)

These remarks clearly demonstrate how the actions of city officials to implement the ICC were shaped by the pressure to join the ICC faster than any other local government in Korea to gain the 'shiny' city title as *the first* city in Korea and *the second* in Asia. This city title was perceived to strengthen Ansan's long-established position as the pioneering city of multicultural policy in Korea. Therefore, it was no surprise that Ansan received significant attention from both local and national press immediately after concluding its agreement for the ICC participation. With the headline *Ansan City Designated by the Council of Europe as Korea's First and Asia's Second Intercultural City*, the following news article demonstrates how the city title of 'the first intercultural city' served to showcase Ansan's leadership in multicultural policies in the country.

According to Mayor Yoon Wha-Sub, "It is very meaningful that Ansan's excellence in migrant support policies and cultural diversity initiatives has been highly evaluated by the Council of Europe, which is a global human rights organisation. He added "As *the first* intercultural city in Korea and *the second* in Asia, we will make Ansan the best global intercultural city by harnessing cultural diversity as a new asset for urban growth" (emphases added).

(J. C. Park, 2020. my translation)

The repetitive use of the term - *the first* city in Korea and *the second* in Asia - shows how this city title was incorporated to enhance Ansan's brand, positioning it as a gateway to raise its

international profile. At the same time, the mayor's entrepreneurial understanding of cultural diversity as an asset for urban growth suggests economic motives behind adopting the ICC. This economic approach to the ICC heavily influenced how it was recontextualised in Ansan, which will be explored in the next chapter.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored the introduction and adoption of the ICC within the particular context of Korea and Ansan, based on a critical discourse analysis of interview with local stakeholders and the city council transcripts. The findings demonstrate how the adoption process of the ICC evolved in a non-linear manner, forming a chain of decision-making processes that ultimately led the city's policy decision-makers to choose the ICC as the most feasible option for Ansan. Rather than following a clear-cut sequence of rational decision-making, the ICC adoption was characterised by the decision-makers' unpredicted but rather serendipitous encounters with the idea of the ICC. Particularly, there were windows of opportunity, such as local election and regional rivalry for intercultural city branding, which opened channels for the decision-makers to place the ICC at the centre of Ansan's politics in late 2019. Especially, these windows of opportunity came with a time constraint, where the urgency added an extra layer to the dynamic process of implementing the ICC .

This demonstrates the local conditioning of global policy. The status of a 'global' policy does not necessarily guarantee its smooth transition to different cities worldwide. The uptake of the global policy occurs only when the city's policy decision-makers identify that certain elements of the policy align with the city's goal, aspiration, and interests. This explains why Ansan's first encounter with the ICC in the early 2010s, which, in fact, was directly channeled by the CoE, did not translate into policy action. Only when there was a political impetus to embrace the idea for the city's benefit did policy decision-makers turn to it in the late 2010s. In this context, this suggests that policy mobility is far from being a complete package. Rather, it is fragmented and selective, with local actors adapting the policy to fit the specific context and timing of the city. This aspect of policy adaptation is the point of departure for the following chapter, which explores how the ICC was ultimately recontextualised in Ansan's context.

Chapter 9 Implementation of the Intercultural Cities Programme in Ansan

9.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how the ICC was recontextualised within Ansan City's specific political context. Building on the non-linearity of the policy development process, as demonstrated through the Intercultural Cities Programme's (ICC) adoption in Ansan in Chapter 8, this chapter examines how Ansan's social, economic, and political landscape shaped the implementation of the ICC. Revisiting Chapter 2, the policy mobilities approach highlights that the ways that policies are implemented to fit the local context reflect the interests of dominant stakeholders, ultimately making policy implementation a politically charged process (Peck & Theodore, 2010). This is particularly relevant to Ansan's case because the political context during which the ICC was implemented overlapped with key changes in local politics, including the mayor's electoral campaign for the 2023 local election, coupled with the amendment of the Local Autonomy Act by the Korean central government.¹⁹ The mayor made an electoral promise to make Ansan the first 'Intercultural Special Case City' in Korea, using the concept of the intercultural city as political and economic rhetoric to elevate the city's status. Through this process, the idea of the intercultural city came to function as a floating signifier (Laclau, 1996), largely detached from local actors apart from the politicians.

I will begin this chapter by identifying the theoretical elements that made it possible for key terms such as 'intercultural city' and 'intercultural policy' to become empty signifiers. Drawing on a critical discourse analysis of the Council of Europe's (CoE) *Ansan's Intercultural City index report*, I will unpack how a set of indicators and terminologies made these key terms elusive. Next, I will explore Ansan's political context to investigate how the ambiguity of intercultural terms has been mobilised by local politicians, with the notion of 'intercultural' taking on political and economic connotations. Lastly, I will investigate how these intercultural terms were perceived and understood by different local actors, in order to assess whether they

¹⁹ The amendment introduced a new administrative unit called 'Special Case City' to grant more administrative and financial authority to local cities with growing populations. Its details will be outlined further in the chapter.

resonated with their everyday lives. Based on a critical discourse analysis on 23 interview transcripts, I will address the significant gaps between Ansan's official claim of being an intercultural city and the lived experiences of the local residents. The analyses in this chapter, along with those of Chapters 7 and 8, will be brought together to present the key findings of this thesis in the following chapter.

9.2 Intercultural city as an empty signifier?

Before unpacking how the term 'intercultural city' became an empty signifier in Ansan, it is significant to understand what is meant by the term 'empty signifier'. This goes back to the early semiotic theory of Saussure. According to Saussure, language is a linguistic sign composed of a *signifier* (a sound-image) and a *signified* (a concept). Rather than assuming that the signifier and the signified are inherently joint, with a pre-determined signification, he argued that their relationship is arbitrary. Thus, the linguistic sign itself is arbitrary, rather than carrying a particular meaning from the outset (Saussure, 1998). Building upon this theory, Laclau coined the term 'empty signifier' to suggest the possibility of a signifier functioning without a signified (Laclau, 1996). In other words, empty signifier refers to any term which lacks any concept or content that is translatable into a definable sense (Laclau, 2005). Building on this, Laclau emphasised how politics becomes a battlefield for hegemony, where different groups of people aim to impose their own meanings, interpretations, and representations onto the empty signifier (Laclau, 1996). One example of the empty signifier is the concept of race. In his famous lecture 'Race: The Floating Signifier', Hall argued for unpacking the ways in which race is discursively constructed, floating free of any scientific, biological, or genetic foundations, while its meanings and implications continue to shift depending on context. The notion of the empty signifier has been adopted in many critical policy studies, which explore how political terms, such as 'governance' and 'sustainability', have emerged and developed as empty signifiers, with dominant stakeholders arbitrarily using them to advance their own agendas (Gunder, 2006; Offe, 2009; Brown, 2016). It is also relevant to the case of Ansan, where the concepts of intercultural policy or the intercultural city have been emptied of any signification, yet are nonetheless presented as something innovative and transformative. Throughout this chapter, I will explore the processes and factors that contributed to the making of the intercultural city as a floating signifier that could be applied in Ansan.

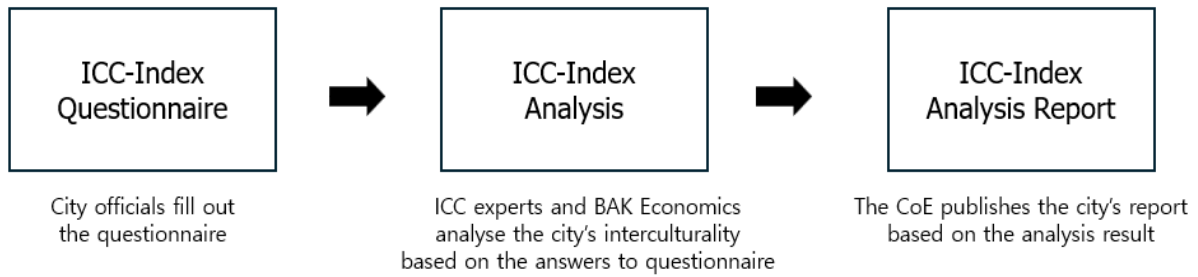
9.3 Critical reflections on Ansan's intercultural city index analysis

As noted in Chapter 8, the adoption of the ICC in Ansan aimed to reinforce its image as the pioneering city of multicultural policy in Korea, while also renovating the city's image by alleviating negative connotations with the term multiculturalism or migrants. Since becoming the first official intercultural city in Korea, there has been an active branding of Ansan as an intercultural city. One of the factors that fueled this process of city branding was the publication of the *Ansan City Intercultural City Index Analysis Report* by the CoE in 2020.

In August 2020, six months after Ansan joined the ICC, the Intercultural Cities Secretariat of the CoE published the *Ansan City Intercultural City Index Analysis Report*. Figure 11 outlines the three steps involved in how the CoE publishes the city's ICC-Index analysis report. As briefly discussed in Chapter 7, the Intercultural City Index (hereafter ICC-Index) is an analytical tool of the ICC used to assess the city's policies and practices from an intercultural perspective. When a new city joins the ICC, city officials fill out the ICC-Index questionnaire consisting of 90 questions grouped into 18 indicators.²⁰ The questions ask about the city's policies, structure, and actions aimed at enhancing interculturality across its governance. City officials must give answers to each question, along with relevant examples, documents, or references for validation (CoE, 2019). Once the ICC-Index questionnaire is completed, it is analysed by experts from the CoE along with BAK Economics - an independent Swiss research institute that initially developed the ICC-Index in 2011. Based on the analysis result, the ICC experts published a report, including visual charts of the ICC-Index results, the city's good practices, and future recommendations with reference to initiatives of other member cities (CoE, 2019).

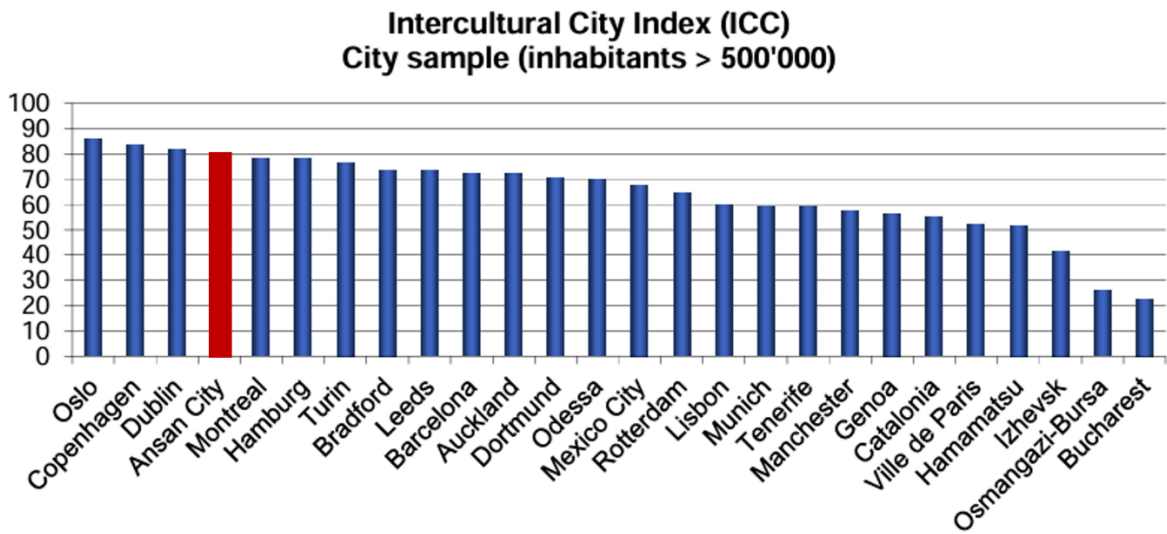
²⁰ These 18 indicators include - Commitment, Intercultural lens (classified into six sub-indices: education, neighbourhoods, public services, business and the labour market, cultural and social life, and public space), Mediation and conflict resolution, Language, Media and communication, International outlook, Intercultural intelligence and competence, Welcoming newcomer, Leadership and citizenship, Anti-discrimination, Participation, Interaction.

Figure 11 The process of publishing the city’s ICC-Index analysis report



In Ansan’s ICC-Index analysis, Ansan had an aggregate ICC-Index score of 80 out of 100. This index result was compared to 26 ICC member cities with more than 500,000 city population.²¹ As Figure 12 demonstrates below, Ansan rated ‘the fourth highest city’ among 26 member cities, following Oslo (Norway), Copenhagen (Sweden), and Dublin (Ireland).

Figure 12 The result of Ansan’s Intercultural City Index



Source: CoE, 2020

²¹ The CoE compares each member city’s index result with those of other member cities, based either on the total city population or the percentage of foreign-born population. Both the total city population and the percentage of foreign-born population are divided into four brackets. The city population is classified into the following ranges: less than 100,000, between 100,000 and 200,000, between 200,000 and 500,000, and over 500,000. Likewise, the percentage of foreign-born population is divided into less than 10%, between 10 and 15%, between 15 and 20%, and over 20%. According to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, the total population of Ansan in 2020 was estimated to be 654,915, with 13.1% (93,792) of foreign-born population.

Such a remarkable record caught the attention of local politicians, and it was quickly incorporated into political discourse to showcase the city's progress. For example, the mayor of Ansan referred to this, saying "*Ansan achieved the world's fourth place [...] marking its advancement as a global city*" (Ansan Council transcript, 26/11/20). Since then, Ansan has leveraged its ICC-Index score for the city's global city branding, which will be examined later in this chapter. For now, I pay attention to the short timeframe of Ansan's accession to the ICC in February 2020 and the release of the ICC-Index result in August 2020. How could Ansan's policy have received such a high score in its interculturality when the concept of intercultural policy was adopted *only six months* earlier? How could the paradigm shift from a multicultural policy to an intercultural policy have occurred so quickly, especially given that Ansan had been at the forefront of multicultural policy for more than 10 years? These questions lead to a critical reflection on the ICC-Index assessment to examine what was considered intercultural policy in the assessment, which will be explored in the following sections.

9.3.1 Intercultural policy as repackaging and relabeling of multicultural policy

In the move towards an evidence-based approach in policymaking, indexes and indicators have become popular policy tools (Solesbury, 2002). In the sphere of urban policy, city indexes are expected to provide objective and factual knowledge of a city's performance (Kitchin et al., 2015). Nonetheless, these indexes often have inherent methodological and technical limitations, as their indicators may fall short in reflecting what they initially intend to measure (Affortunato et al., 2010; Kitchin, 2014; Kitchin et al., 2015). As a result, some index results fail to reflect what actually happens in practice (Affortunato et al., 2010). The problem is that this gap is often difficult to detect on the surface. In this regard, rather than taking Ansan's index result for granted, I will unpack Ansan's ICC-Index report²² to explore whether there were any factors contributing to the highly positive assessment of Ansan's intercultural policy.

As the CoE (2019) notes in its publication on the methodological overview of the ICC-Index, the subject of assessment for the index is the city's *intercultural* policies. Therefore, Ansan's

²² While the raw data from Ansan's ICC-Index analysis and the ICC-Index questionnaire are inaccessible, Ansan's ICC-Index report serves as a reference point, as it is an official summary of these two sources from the CoE.

ICC-Index should have been evaluated based on policy initiatives ‘newly’ implemented after the city joined the ICC in 2020. However, Ansan’s index report shows a mismatch in the indicator, as the report refers to the city’s *multicultural* policies over the past ten years. In the report, ICC experts referred to Ansan’s good practices in promoting intercultural integration, which were factored into their analysis of the city’s interculturality. For example, in the area of the city’s commitment to intercultural principles, the experts scored highly the establishment of a sculpture symbolic of Ansan’s Multicultural Village Special Zone. In the area of public space, Ansan’s multicultural libraries were recognised for facilitating understanding and interaction among people with different backgrounds. In cultural and civic life, the city’s annual multicultural festivals, such as ‘Together Day’, were acknowledged for encouraging migrants to engage in cultural activities. It is worth mentioning that all three of these initiatives were launched in 2008 as the city’s *multicultural* policies.

While the use of *multicultural* policies as indicators of *interculturality* raises doubts about the reliability of the ICC-Index, at least in terms of demonstrating the uniqueness of intercultural approaches, I go beyond concluding this simply as a methodological limitation. In fact, there is room to further the discussion in light of the relationship between multicultural policy and intercultural policy. Recalling Chapter 3, the CoE’s claim of intercultural policy is based on a clear distinction from multicultural policy. Intercultural policy has been promoted as an alternative to, and potentially a replacement for, multicultural policy. However, the slippage between interculturalism and multiculturalism, noted in Ansan’s ICC-Index analysis report, raises the question whether this slippage occurred because the ICC experts considered multicultural and intercultural policies *interchangeable*? If so, this implies that, even from the perspective of experts in intercultural policy, these two types of policies essentially have the same content but are labeled differently. Does this then suggest that intercultural policy is a *relabeling* of multicultural policy? For further examination, I now turn to Ansan’s ICC-Index questionnaire to explore whether the same issues reappear, prompting reconsideration of the relationship between interculturalism and multiculturalism.

In the ICC-Index questionnaire, there were two ways of enquiring about the city’s contribution to intercultural integration. First, it directly asked whether the city is implementing intercultural policy. Otherwise, it indirectly asked through questions on local actions to promote ‘inclusion’, ‘mixing’, or ‘interaction’. These questions included “Has the city adopted a process of policy

consultation and/or co-design *including* people of all ethnic or cultural backgrounds?”, “Does the city take action to encourage meaningful intercultural *mixing* and *interaction* in public space?” and “Does the city have a policy to increase ethnic/cultural *mixing* in schools?” (emphases added). Because inclusion, mixing, and interaction are alleged to be the central axis of intercultural policy, the ICC experts likely believed that incorporating these key factors into questions would make it possible to identify intercultural policies. However, given that Ansan’s ICC-Index report included many of the city’s multicultural policies, as noted in previous paragraphs, it is assumed that the city officials responded to the ICC-Index questionnaires by citing the city’s multicultural policies.

Such a gap between the intentions of the ICC experts who created the questionnaire and the actual responses of Ansan city officials requires particular attention. Rather than attributing this gap to the nebulous design of the questionnaire, it is worth addressing this in respect of the foundational principles of interculturalism. The responses from the city officials imply that, contrary to the theory of interculturalism, the criteria of inclusion, mixing, or interaction alone are insufficient to distinguish intercultural policy from multicultural policy. This indicates that, from the perspective of policy practitioners, these factors are not perceived as entirely new or innovative elements of intercultural policy. In other words, actions for inclusion, mixing, and interaction had already been implemented, albeit under the name of multicultural policy. Does this, then, suggest that intercultural policy is nothing more than a *repackaging* of multicultural policy? This leads to a tentative conclusion that intercultural policy only exists as an empty signifier in Ansan, used to label existing policies with a different name.

Whether intercultural policy is a ‘relabeling’ and ‘repackaging’ of multicultural policy recalls the intense scholarly debate on interculturalism, which was addressed in Chapter 3. Despite the CoE’s proposal of interculturalism as a new diversity paradigm, Ansan’s case contradicts this by demonstrating that interculturalism, in practice, is not necessarily as innovative or transformational as it was envisioned or claimed to be. Not only does this reveal a disconnect between the perspectives of the CoE and Ansan, but it also reflects the different political circumstances and agendas of the two. The CoE’s promotion of interculturalism emerged as a response to the purported failure of multiculturalism in Europe. Thus, its advocacy for interculturalism clearly marked a theoretical departure from multiculturalism. However, this was not the case with Ansan. As discussed in Chapter 8, the motivation for Ansan’s

participation in the ICC was to build the image of the global city, while reinforcing its reputation as a leader in Korea's migrant support policy. Here, it is important to recall that such a reputation was built upon its multicultural policies over the past ten years. This means that the advocacy for intercultural policy in Ansan did not emerge as a clear departure from the multicultural policy, but rather as a continuation of it. Therefore, unlike the CoE, criticism of multicultural policy was not apparent in Ansan's political sphere. In fact, this could have been seen as undermining or denying the city's long-established reputation. To summarise, intercultural policy in Ansan appeared more as a re-presentation of multicultural policy, while leveraging the positive connotations of interculturalism as an 'innovative' and 'global' approach to cultural diversity.

9.3.2 Labeling Ansan as an Intercultural City

The description of Ansan as an intercultural city continued to appear across the city's ICC-Index report, as if suggesting that the city has made a significant departure from multiculturalism to interculturalism. This was noted from the frequent use of terms combined with the adjective 'intercultural' to describe the sociocultural conditions of Ansan, for instance, 'intercultural school', 'intercultural community', 'intercultural resident', 'intercultural worker', 'intercultural family' and 'intercultural entrepreneur' (CoE, 2020). The repetitive use of these terms created the impression that Ansan is dedicated to cultivating intercultural dimensions across diverse urban spheres, ultimately projecting an image of a city that has become more tolerant and inclusive than in the past. Despite the powerful influence of the usage of such terms (Foucault, 1972), the ICC experts did not provide clear definitions of these terms in Ansan's report. In theory, the prefix 'inter-' in the adjective 'intercultural' adds specificity by suggesting the dynamics of interaction between different individuals or groups (Rey-von Allmen, 2010). According to this definition, the terms mentioned above should refer to a type of place, community, or group of people in Ansan that are distinguished from others that are not labeled as intercultural. The following statements, made by the ICC experts in Ansan's ICC-Index report, serve as reference points to unpack the actual meanings.

Many community events in Ansan offer programmes for locals and *intercultural residents* to get together and share their culture. (p13)

As the largest enterprise city in the Republic of Korea, Ansan has many

intercultural workers living in the city. Ansan offers human rights education to staff of companies hiring *intercultural workers* and provides interpretation services for them. (p15)

With the view of helping *intercultural children and juveniles* retain their mother tongue, Ansan also offers mother tongue classes primarily centring on Russian. (p23)

(CoE, 2020. emphases added)

On the surface, the terms ‘intercultural residents’, ‘intercultural workers’, and ‘intercultural children’ seem innovative and progressive, with their optimistic connotations of dynamism and inclusivity. When unpacking whom they denote, however, these terminologies are nothing more than general terms for migrants. ‘Intercultural residents’ refer to migrant residents, ‘intercultural workers’ to migrant workers, and ‘intercultural children and juveniles’ to young migrants. This demonstrates how the adjective ‘intercultural’ has been employed to rename migrants in a more polished sense. This, again, brings us back to the discussion on the gap between the ideal and practice of interculturalism. Building on its critique of multiculturalism for categorising people into groups which undermines individual identities, interculturalism is claimed to promote social integration beyond the binary of majority and minority (Gillert et al., 2003; Murphy, 2012). However, Ansan’s ICC-Index report shows how the use of the intercultural terminologies ends up categorising migrant groups in contrast to the majority of Koreans, while also erasing their specific ethnic, cultural or other identities. Rather than indicating all citizens in Ansan, these terms still serve to maintain a distinct classification for migrants, risking interculturalism falling into the same trap as multiculturalism.

While the intercultural terminologies have been emptied of any signification, it is important to note that they have nevertheless functioned in ways that benefited both the CoE and Ansan. It is worth mentioning that the terms such as ‘intercultural residents’, ‘intercultural workers’, ‘intercultural children’, and ‘intercultural family’ are specific to Ansan’s ICC-Index report.²³

²³ In the reports of other ICC member cities, terms such as ‘intercultural communication’, ‘intercultural dialogue’ and ‘intercultural competence’ frequently appear. The CoE has officially used these terms since publishing the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (2008). However, the use of the adjective ‘intercultural’ to refer to specific groups of migrants is not commonly noticed and is unique to Ansan’s

Presumably, such terms were used by Ansan city officials when they completed the ICC-Index questionnaire at the outset. If so, it suggests that they were deliberately employed to gloss over the pejorative connotations associated with the term ‘migrant’. The term ‘migrant’ has been perceived as evoking a negative image of the city, largely stemming from the low socioeconomic status of Ansan's majority migrant population, including low-skilled migrant workers (C. H. Kim, 2015). Thus, explicit references to migrants were avoided and replaced with new intercultural terminologies to present Ansan as a more appealing city. At the same time, the uptake of these terminologies by the ICC experts raises the question of whether they were unaware of, or overlooked, the problem of misusing the terms. There is room for interpreting the overuse of the intercultural terminologies as a way to promote the views and agenda of the CoE. At this point, it is significant to reiterate that the ICC did not emerge in a vacuum. As discussed in Chapter 7, the CoE systematically developed the programme to advance and disseminate the theory of interculturalism. It was not only a response to critiques of the failure of multiculturalism but also a means to enhance the CoE's presence and influence on the international stage. Given this political context, it is reasonable to question whether the intercultural terminologies were employed as normative terms to showcase the widespread adoption of intercultural practices, which could convince a global audience of the utility of interculturalism. Whatever the ‘real’ reason may be, through use of intercultural terminologies by the ICC experts, Ansan was presented as a city that served as a model for its effective implementation of intercultural policies, as outlined below:

Ansan city is committed to disseminat[ing] the city’s policy best practices to many other cities both locally and internationally. (...) 21,591 people [have come] to learn about Ansan’s *intercultural policy*[’s] best practices and experience. Ansan strives to be a leading Intercultural City recognised both in South Korea and throughout Asia.

(CoE, 2020: 7. Emphasis added)

As discussed so far, the CoE’s analysis of Ansan’s ICC-Index involved renaming and repackaging the city’s high-profile multicultural policies as intercultural policies. Even though

report.

little change has been made in Ansan's approach to cultural diversity, the high score from the index analysis portrayed Ansan as having successfully made a political transition to interculturalism. The discrepancy between the stated purpose of the ICC-Index analysis and how it eventually played out in Ansan prompted a reevaluation of the theory of interculturalism, particularly its principles and key factors, which were alleged to be distinguishable from multiculturalism. Regardless, these problems have not been discussed on the surface, and the CoE's labeling of Ansan as an 'intercultural city' became a floating signifier. This was rapidly taken in by local politics, where the term 'interculturalism' became little more than political and economic rhetoric, which will be explored in the next section.

9.4 Recontextualising the intercultural policy

In this section, I will explore how the intercultural policy was recontextualised in Ansan's political landscape. In 2021, the mayor of Ansan began his active campaign for reappointment in the 2023 local election. One of his electoral commitments was to make Ansan 'Korea's first Intercultural Special Case City', a new city concept developed in response to the amendment of the Local Autonomy Act in Korea. To appeal to potential voters, he adopted an imaginative tone to communicate an optimistic future for Ansan, which is, in fact, a common strategy in city branding (Johansson, 2012). As demonstrated earlier in this chapter, the term 'intercultural' was functioning as a floating signifier at that time, suggesting that it was open to redefinition by local politicians. The mayor capitalised on this ambiguity and reshaped the term with a neoliberal implication, projecting an imaginary vision - both politically and economically - for the 'Intercultural Special Case City'. I will begin the discussion by exploring Ansan's political movement around the Special Case City.

9.4.1 The idea of interculturalism as political rhetoric

In January 2022, with the amendment of the Local Autonomy Act, a new form of administrative unit called 'Special Case City' was created within Korea's local government structure.²⁴ A

²⁴ The structure of local government in Korea is a two-tier system: The upper-tier governments are composed of special city, metropolitan city, self-governing city, province, and self-governing province. The lower-tier governments are the basic municipalities, including city, county, and district. As of 2025, there are 17 upper-tier governments and 226 lower-tier governments in Korea.

Special Case City is a municipal entity positioned between a metropolitan city (belonging to the upper-tier government) and a local city (the lower-tier government). This was created to address the challenges faced by local cities with increasing populations. Despite having large administrative demands, these local cities have had limited autonomy due to their status as lower-tier governments (Ha & Ryu, 2022). Thus, the Korean central government revised the law to grant these local cities administrative and financial authority comparable to that of metropolitan cities, while their legal status remains that of lower-tier governments. While a population of over 1 million is the requirement for becoming a Special Case City, the central government established additional criteria for local governments with smaller populations, where they could apply for Special Case City status based on their local characteristics and administrative needs (Local Autonomy Act, 2022). This motivated many local governments across the country to apply for the Special Case City in hopes of enhancing autonomy and promoting development (Yoo & Bak, 2023).

Ansan was one of the cities to take swift action to apply for the Special Case City even before the revision of the Act was made, announcing its application plan in April 2021. In its plan, Ansan highlighted its local characteristic of having the largest migrant population in the country, thus calling for expanded administrative and financial authority to meet the growing needs of migrants. While this claim itself does not seem problematic, it is notable that the term ‘intercultural city’ was incorporated into the plan, with Ansan asserting its status of an ‘Intercultural Special Case City’. This soon became one of the electoral promises of the mayor of Ansan for the upcoming 2023 local election. The mayor is the same figure who promoted Ansan’s accession to the ICC in 2019 for his electoral commitment during his first-term tenure, as noted in Chapter 8. While the idea of the intercultural city was tied to local political actions from the outset, the fact that it has now come to raise the city’s status implies that it has become more politically charged. Within this context, I will explore how the discourse of the intercultural city evolved into political and economic rhetoric in Ansan.

The point of departure is investigating the practical reasons behind incorporating the term ‘intercultural’ in Ansan’s Special Case City plan. To gain support from a wide audience - from citizens to the central government - for the city’s selection as the Special Case City, the mayor had to sell Ansan in a way that distinguishes itself from other cities. One of the strategies was to tap into the global city aspiration. To convince the audience that Ansan has the potential to

become a global city benefiting not only the city itself but also the country, the mayor drew upon the intercultural city discourse. The following are his remarks at the press conference in January 2022.

This year, I will promote Ansan's status as a Special Case City to enhance its standing as a global city. [...] Two years ago, Ansan was designated as an Intercultural city for the first in Korea and the second in Asia by the Council of Europe [...] This means that Ansan, once widely recognised as the best multicultural city in Korea, has leaped forward as an internationally recognised intercultural city. Now, Ansan aims to take the next step toward becoming a global city by establishing the infrastructure corresponding to an Intercultural Special Case City.

(Kang, 2022. my translation)

As demonstrated above, the Intercultural Special Case City was perceived as a gateway to transform Ansan into a global city. The push for Intercultural Special Case City built upon retracing the positive outcomes produced after Ansan joined the ICC in 2020. It started with repeating the appealing title of 'the First Intercultural City in Korea and the Second in Asia' and highlighting the international attention Ansan received afterwards. Soon after this press conference, the mayor initiated his electoral campaign, where he employed the same repertoire. This time, under the slogan of 'Ansan, Korea's Intercultural City to Connect the World', he asserted: "*In February 2020, Ansan was designated as an Intercultural City by the Council of Europe. Moving on to attaining the status of an Intercultural Special Case City, Ansan will undoubtedly emerge as the centre of the world [..]*" (Yoon, 2022. my translation). This reaffirmed how the mayor's claim for the Intercultural Special Case City capitalised on the glossy connotations associated with the previous intercultural city discourse, demonstrating the intention to benefit from the halo effect of the intercultural city.

On the other hand, there was no reference to the substance of the intercultural city. The mayor's statements, during both the press conference and the election campaign, lacked a definition of the intercultural city and its stated goal of promoting interaction between Koreans and migrants. The issue of cultural diversity, which is, central to the ICC, was sidelined in favour of a 'flashy' packaging of the intercultural city, demonstrating that Ansan political leaders valued the

intercultural city primarily for its marketing potential. With the introduction of the Intercultural Special Case City plan, the ICC was framed as an urban economic development policy in which economic considerations played a prominent role.

9.4.2 The idea of interculturalism as economic rhetoric

In this section, I will explore how the notion of intercultural evolved into economic rhetoric by unpacking how the Intercultural Special Case City plan reflected an entrepreneurial understanding of cultural diversity. From its outset, the plan was driven by the city's economic development agenda. As noted in the mayor's remark below, the Special Case City plan has been perceived as a foundation for driving local economic growth since its initial announcement.

The Intercultural Special Case City would become a groundbreaking foundation for urban development, bringing about unprecedented outcomes. [...] Ansan City, which began with the Banwol Industrial Complex, now needs to move forward to as a Special City Case based on the futuristic 'intercultural' value.

(Kim, 2021. my translation)

The mayor tapped into political imagination by referring to "unprecedented outcomes" to persuade citizens of the Special Case City's potential for creating new economic opportunities. It is notable that he envisioned Ansan's new economic structure moving beyond its traditional industrial base. The positioning of the Banwol industrial complex, which has been the foundation of the city's industrial base, has had a two-sided effect on Ansan. While the industrial complex undoubtedly drove the city's early development since the 1980s, as discussed in Chapter 5, it has also brought a negative sense of place due to the creation of working-class neighbourhoods with a high concentration of low-skilled migrant workers (Ahn et al., 2009; C. H. Kim, 2015). Aligning with the city's ongoing efforts to construct a more advanced and polished city image, the elevation to the Special City Case was suggested as a means to engineer Ansan's new economy. Here, it is noteworthy that interculturalism was presented as having a 'future-oriented' value to facilitate such transformation. Its value was placed foremost on the economic aspects, implying that interculturalism became associated

with neoliberal rhetoric. This was embedded in the details of Ansan's Intercultural Special Case City plan, which will be explored in the following section.

The mayor proposed four initiatives in the Intercultural Special Case City plans. These initiatives primarily focused on producing tangible results, which included the creation of new facilities and organisations in Ansan: a Korean Culture International School, a 'Global Citizen' Housing Complex, an Intercultural Research Institute, and the Department of Intercultural City within the local government. Among these, the establishment of the Korean Culture International school and the Global Citizen housing complex were grouped together under the goal of developing Ansan into, to borrow the mayor's words, an "International Cultural Hub" (Oh, 2021). Starting with the proposal for an international school, the mayor stated that the idea is to cultivate "global talents" to expand Ansan's "soft power" (Ansan Council Transcript, 17/01/22). Considering that Korean popular culture has gained international visibility and popularity since the 1990s - a phenomenon known as 'the Korean Wave' (Lee, 2011) - it was proposed that the school specialise in Korean popular culture, such as 'K-Pop' and 'K-Drama'. Next, the proposal for a Global Citizen housing complex addressed regenerating the city's existing 'Multicultural Village Special Zone', the district with the highest concentration of migrants in Ansan. With refurbished infrastructure, the zone was expected to become a more appealing local touristic destination.

These two initiatives of the Intercultural Special Case City plan were clearly underpinned by a neoliberal approach. They reflected typical patterns of neoliberal urban planning, which include the restructuring of educational institutions and the commodification of the everyday urban spaces to stimulate the city's development (Chatterton, 2010; Cochrane & Williams, 2013; Pais & Costa, 2017). The Korean Culture International School plan, for example, aimed to produce global talents to expand Ansan's soft power. Although the plan did not explicitly define who these global talents were, the use of the term 'soft power' offers a clue. Soft power refers to the ability to increase cultural influence by drawing on cultural resources, which are typically associated with innovation and creativity (Nye, 2004; Tsutomu, 2015). This suggests that the international school plan was designed to appeal to the wealthy producers and consumer class with cultural capital, while likely marginalising the majority of migrants in the city due to their low socioeconomic status. While migrants were largely absent from the international school plan, their presence was heavily emphasised in the plan for the Global

Citizen Housing Complex. This plan to transform the migrant-concentrated area in Ansan into a touristic attraction reflected an initiative to commodify the everyday spaces of migrants to project an image of the city as global, as suggested by the use of the term ‘global’ in the name of the plan. Accordingly, migrants were positioned as exotic sellers, showcasing their ‘polished’ cultures to appeal to outsiders. This reflects the city’s neoliberal approach to migrant culture and community, recognising them as easily consumable (Brandellero, 2009), while reinforcing the difference and otherness of migrants for marketing purposes. Again, it is worth recalling that the plans for the Korean Culture International School and the Global Citizen Housing Complex were part of the broader Intercultural Special Case City initiative, suggesting that the term ‘intercultural’ has since taken on a neoliberal connotation within the city’s urban planning strategy.

Regardless, the Intercultural Special Case City Plan was put forward, still anchored in the narrative of the city’s cultural diversity. It was claimed that the plan would facilitate *‘two-way intercultural [exchanges] where Korean culture, created in Ansan, is spread to the world, and cultures from around the world arrive in Ansan’* (Oh, 2021. my translation). This statement reaffirms the rhetorical use of the term ‘intercultural exchange’ as an empty signifier, mobilised to arouse a sense of dynamic interaction among Koreans and migrants to establish the image of a global city, without clarifying what ‘intercultural’ means in this context. To further the discussion of interculturalism as an empty signifier, I will now turn to the lived experiences of various local actors to examine whether interculturalism resonated with their everyday lives or remained merely rhetorical.

9.5 Disconnect between Ansan's intercultural city vision and local experiences

Drawing on 23 interviews conducted over nine months from January to September 2022, I will demonstrate the differing evaluations of Ansan’s implementation of the ICC by various local actors (See Chapter 4 for details on each group of local actors).

To start with, there were a few signs that implied a significant gap between Ansan’s official claim of the intercultural city. Most importantly, the majority of the local actors were unaware of the idea of ‘Intercultural City’. Except for think tank researchers, who were directly involved in the adoption stage of the ICC as part of the task force team, its concept and ideas were not

communicated to migrant support centre representatives and residents. Representatives of the migrant support centres noted that they came across the term ‘Intercultural City’ either by seeing a city banner explicating Ansan as an intercultural city or by attending the city’s declaration ceremony. Here, it is important to revisit that migrant support centres have played a significant role in facilitating the adaptation of migrants at the local level even before Ansan established a dedicated body for migrant services in 2005 (Oh, 2010). They continue to take part in shaping the city’s migrant support policy through a consultative body and function as a bridge between migrant communities and local authorities. Nonetheless, the fact that they came to know the term ‘intercultural city’ through external communication reveals that the development of intercultural policies took place mainly at the bureaucratic level. The exclusion of migrant support centres at this early development stage, despite their direct engagement with migrants at the local level, implies that substantive discussions about how intercultural policies are relevant to Ansan’s context does not appear to have been undertaken.

[Ansan] held a celebration event for the city’s designation as an Intercultural City and invited representatives of [migrant support] organisations. [...] I attended the event and got to know [about the city’s accession to the ICC]. But I’m not sure about its implication or how it will be incorporated into the existing policy [...] The city actively promotes its achievement as the first intercultural city in Korea, and feels proud of it. But I’m not sure exactly how the city will change.

(Migrant support centre, MC5. 07/07/22)

Migrant support centre representatives expressed doubts about whether local residents were aware of the concept of the intercultural city. One interviewee criticised that its concept as merely political rhetoric, communicated only between the mayor and public officials saying: *“Intercultural City? What does the ‘inter-’ mean here? The only inter [interaction] happening is between policy officials and public officials”* (Migrant support centre, MC3. 21/04/22). In fact, all residents who participated in the interviews, both Koreans and migrants, answered they had not heard the term ‘intercultural city’. Most recently, in 2023, Lee et al. (2023) conducted a survey, part of which investigated the perception of 300 Ansan citizens towards the city’s intercultural policies. When asked - *Are you aware that Ansan City was the first in Korea to be acknowledged as an Intercultural City by the CoE?* - the vast majority (71%) responded ‘not

aware at all', while 24.7% 'had heard of it', and only 4.3% were 'aware of it'. To the next question - *To what extent do you think Ansan City is promoting intercultural policies to encourage mutual recognition and interaction between migrants and Koreans?* - more citizens answered, 'not promoting' (27%) than 'promoting well' (16.3%), besides 56.7% answering 'moderately well'. These survey results indicate that Ansan has yet to effectively communicate the concepts of an intercultural city and intercultural policies to local residents, much less connect them to their daily lives. This raises the question of what the city's active intercultural city branding has achieved over the past few years, especially if local residents - who, in theory, should identify with the city brand the most - are unaware of it (Braun et al., 2013).

Moreover, contrary to how the intercultural city is imagined - a city of cultural diversity and interaction - all the interviewees pointed out its discrepancy with the reality in Ansan. As noted in Chapter 5, there is a clear geographical boundary between two districts in Ansan: Danwon district, where migrants are densely concentrated, and Sangrok district, with a much higher Korean population. Even within Danwon district, migrants are heavily populated in Wongok neighbourhood. In this regard, one interviewee pointed out the gap in the spatial scope of cultural diversity between the city's rhetoric and locally perceived reality:

When we talk about experiences with encountering migrants, you know Ansan is very large. Those experiences are very much confined to one particular area of the city [Wongok-dong] [...] It is just that there is one place in Ansan where many migrants live. We can't interpret it to say that the entire city of Ansan is culturally diverse. It is different.

(Korean resident, K1. 07/08/22)

This remark raises doubts about whether the concept of an intercultural 'city' is fundamentally applicable in the context of Ansan, when citizens do not resonate with the reality of cultural diversity, perceiving it as a characteristic of a specific neighbourhood rather than an overall characteristic of the city. One interviewee added, for the concept of an intercultural city to gain public support, it is most important that Ansan citizens take pride in and feel proud of the city's intercultural identity. However, according to the interviewee, Korean citizens tend to distance themselves from the city's intercultural character, saying "*That is something specific to Wongok neighbourhood*" (Migrant support centre, MC3. 21/04/22). This reveals that cultural diversity

is perceived as applying only to migrants, rather than to the citizens of Ansan as a whole.

Interviewees also commonly questioned the efficacy of cultural festivals held in Ansan, which is the most frequent approach to promoting interaction between Koreans and migrants within intercultural policies: *“Among those large events that actually require significant budget input, I’m not sure how many of them eventually bring Koreans and migrants together”* (Migrant support centre, MC1. 06/04/22). In fact, all Korean residents who participated in the interviewees answered that they had not participated in any cultural events, mostly because they are not interested. Even migrants perceived that the existing cultural events are one-off, highlighting the need for more continuous policy initiatives to facilitate interaction with Koreans (Migrant resident, M1. 14/06/22). This requires reconsideration of the fundamental way in which the city officials understand and facilitate intercultural exchanges in Ansan. For example, in 2021, Ansan established an ‘Intercultural Community Centre’ by renaming the former ‘Multicultural Community Centre’ and relocating it to the Ansan Foreign Resident Support Headquarters - the local governmental body that implements intercultural policies. The intercultural community centre is expected to provide more opportunities for migrants and Koreans to interact (Ansan Foreign Resident Support Headquarters, n.d.-a). During the interview with the city official, they explained the reason for the centre’s renaming and relocation as follows:

An intercultural city is one where frequent interaction takes place, right? Previously, the centre was far from here [the headquarters], with migrants having their own space for communication. We decided to relocate it into the headquarters so that migrants and people like us, who implement policies, can meet each other at least once more and communicate easily.

(Policy decision-maker, P2. 15/02/22)

There are three important aspects to note of this statement. First, it reveals the simplistic and superficial understanding that the offer of a place will promote interaction among different people and that this will eventually make a city intercultural. Second, the city official’s remark overlooks the sense of place (Cresswell, 2004), which was pointed out by one interviewee. They noted that places for interaction should be where people feel comfortable coming and going, and where they encounter other people as neighbours and friends (Migrant support

centre, MC2. 07/04/22). Given its location within the government office, they expressed doubt that the intercultural community centre would foster a welcoming atmosphere, especially for migrants. Rather, it would reinforce the formal encounter between Koreans and migrants, with Koreans as service providers and migrants as recipients. Lastly, the city official's remark above aligns with a bureaucratic approach to cultural diversity, a point made during the interview, reflecting the local authorities' attempt to manage and control migrants. The interviewee began by explaining how Ansan's previous multicultural policies have absorbed the previously self-reliant migrant communities into the formal policy domain, thereby standardising and diminishing cultural diversity. Adding that the city's current intercultural approach is little different from these past policies, they stated as follows:

This is not an intercultural city, it is more of a city where it is easy to manage and control migrants [...] If they are spread out, it is hard to control. But if they are gathered in one place, it appears quite flashy, especially [in Ansan] where migrants come from so many different countries. [...] Intercultural city sounds appealing, but in terms of its substance, it is not true.

(Migrant support centre, MC3. 21/04/22)

Amidst the discrepancy between the idealised concept of the intercultural city and the lived experiences of local actors, the notion of interculturalism was operating as an empty signifier. According to local think tank policy experts, who interviewed Ansan citizens during their own research on the city's intercultural city policy in 2021, citizens generally perceived the term 'intercultural' as *"something - although not knowing exactly what it is - with a very positive meaning"* (Policy expert, E2. 15/02/22). Different understandings were intertwined, making interculturalism an ambiguous yet a 'good' concept. First, there was a sense that interculturalism embraces a broader range of social groups. One migrant responded *"Interculturalism is different from multiculturalism. It brings both Koreans and migrants together. Literally, intercultural city means co-existence"* (Migrant resident, M1. 14/06/22). Second, there was a perception that interculturalism sounds 'fancier' due to its European origin, people thinking *"It gives a positive impression because it originated in Europe"* (Policy expert, E2. 15/02/22). Lastly, the prefix 'inter' in interculturalism was envisioned to incorporate normative values, as reflected in the remark: *"Isn't there significance in the prefix 'inter'? Intercultural rather than multicultural... It gives the impression of mutual equality"* (Korean

resident, K4. 07/08/22).

All these responses demonstrate that interculturalism was perceived as ‘something’ that is distinguished from multiculturalism yet lacked a clear understanding of what that ‘something’ entailed. These responses reaffirm that interculturalism was functioning as a floating signifier in Ansan, emptied of any definitive content and meaning. It, then, leads to the question of whether interculturalism or intercultural policy has brought any substantial changes to the everyday lives of local residents, compared to the past when Ansan was developing multicultural policies. If local actors do not notice any notable changes, are intercultural policies in Ansan merely repeating the city’s previous multicultural policies? This question brings us back to the issue of intercultural policies repackaging and relabeling multicultural policies, as discussed earlier in this chapter. On top of that, local actors pointed out that the term ‘intercultural’ glosses over the problems associated with Ansan’s multicultural policies, saying, *“I think the mayor is using the term ‘intercultural city’ to offset negative connotations of multiculturalism”* (Policy expert, E2. 15/02/22). The usage of the term ‘intercultural’ to largely neutralise the negative perceptions associated with that multiculturalism in Ansan suggests that the fundamental problems - the low socioeconomic status of migrants, the perceived danger and disorder of the migrant-concentrated area, and the separation between migrants and Koreans - remain unsolved and are instead reproduced. In this sense, one interviewee used the metaphor of changing the box packaging without changing what is inside to criticise the policy’s terminological shifts that lack practical impact on the everyday lives of local residents.

I still don’t know what intercultural is, the one that Ansan City is talking about [...] It is nice packaging, but the substance is still the same. [...] They keep changing the packaging to make it better. But if the packaging keeps changing over and over, eventually we start to feel deceived or tricked.

(Migrant support centre, MC3. 21/04/22)

This remark encapsulates the problems associated with the implementation of intercultural policies in Ansan. Beyond the disconnect between policy discourse and the public’s understanding of interculturalism, it reflects the frustration and distrust among local actors. These negative responses towards local politics stem from the realisation that intercultural

policies are merely symbolic rather than transformative. In other words, local actors are beginning to recognise that local politicians are diverting attention away from addressing the realities of parallel societies in Ansan - where migrants and Koreans live in isolation - by instead promoting a sugar-coated rhetoric of interculturalism. Ultimately, the discussion in this chapter raises critical questions: Where are Ansan's intercultural policies headed? Who are they targeting? What purpose do they serve? Another dimension to consider is whether these issues are specific to the context of Ansan or reflective of more fundamental limitations within interculturalism and intercultural policy frameworks. These questions will be further explored in the following conclusion chapter of this thesis.

9.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored how the ICC was recontextualised within Ansan's political, social, and economic landscape. The findings demonstrate that the notion of 'intercultural' eventually evolved into a floating signifier, serving more as a symbolic label than a concrete concept grounded in the everyday lives of local actors. Several factors led to this outcome: the theoretical ambiguity of interculturalism, coupled with the political agendas pursued in Ansan since 2021. First, the conceptual vagueness created a loophole that made it difficult to define and apply key terms such as intercultural policy and intercultural city in practice. The resulting lack of clear signification was appropriated by local politicians in Ansan, who reinterpreted and redefined these terms to serve their political interests, particularly in the context of garnering support for the 2023 local election. Politicians associated the idea of the intercultural city with neoliberal values, framing culture as a marketable commodity and cultural diversity as a source of economic benefits. However, local actors outside the political sphere hardly resonated with the city's vision of an intercultural city. Many of them expressed that the idea of the intercultural city serves as a smokescreen, concealing a managerial approach to migrant integration, an entrepreneurial understanding of cultural diversity, and the persistent separation of Koreans and migrants in Ansan.

The gap between the local politicians' official claim of Ansan as an intercultural city and the lived experiences of the local actors reveals that the discourse of interculturalism functions primarily as policy rhetoric. Revisiting the implications of previous chapters, it becomes evident that this policy gap requires a broader discussion to understand and interpret its

underlying causes. Paradoxically, the ways Ansan's vision of an intercultural city gained traction revealed the conceptual ambiguity of European interculturalism, as discussed in Chapter 3. The ambiguity that made interculturalism hardly distinguishable from multiculturalism, however, turned out to be advantageous in Ansan's case, where a progressive city image had already been built on its existing multicultural policies, as noted in Chapters 5 and 8. This chapter also drew upon the analysis from Chapter 7 to show how tools developed by the CoE, including the ICC-Index and the ICC-Index analysis report, were used to reinforce Ansan's claim to intercultural city status. In doing so, the city's repackaging of multicultural policies remained largely unnoticed. The discussions in the previous chapters, when linked to this chapter, suggest that the outcomes of Ansan's intercultural policies are not standalone but embedded within a wider context encompassing the global development and promotion of interculturalism and the ICC. The way these findings collectively contribute to understanding how both global and local politics have shaped the broader uptake of the ICC will be further explored in the conclusion chapter.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

Through the case of Ansan City in Korea, this thesis has demonstrated how global and local politics shape the contours of policy mobility to meet the interests and needs of key actors. The overall aim of this thesis is to examine the ways in which the Council of Europe's (CoE) Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) was disseminated, adopted, and implemented in Ansan in Korea. The thesis had four key objectives: 1) To examine the discourses that facilitated the global mobility of the ICC. 2) To investigate the networks that supported the ICC's mobility to Asia. 3) To explore how Ansan's diversity context shaped the adoption of the ICC. 4) To investigate how the ICC is incorporated into diversity management approaches in Ansan.

To answer these questions, this thesis has adopted a post-positivist and post-structuralist approach to policy and the policy development process. The combination of these two approaches has promoted an interpretative and critical understanding of the situational and discursive contexts that contribute to the production of policy (Fischer, 1998; Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2005). They have provided the foundation for this thesis to conceptualise policy as a contested area, shaped by multiple, overlapping, and often contrasting interests and motivations of various stakeholders. In this thesis, a post-positivist and post-structuralist approach has contributed to challenging the perceived legitimacy of the ICC, by critically exploring how it came to hold legitimacy and credibility, initially in Europe and eventually in cities around the world including Ansan. Drawing on post-positivist and post-structuralist traditions, this thesis has drawn upon policy mobilities as its theoretical framework. The policy mobilities approach has opened rooms for exploring the political dynamics through which a selective policy gains mobility through key actors, systematic frameworks, and transfer channels. In this, this approach has contributed to examining the politically and ideologically sanctioned processes through which the ICC has been mobilised globally and incorporated into diversity management approaches in the context of Ansan. For the analytical framework, this thesis has adopted a critical discourse analysis, which focuses on the power relations embedded in the construction of dominant discourses that shape the ways people experience, understand, and perceive societies. Through a critical discourse analysis of the CoE's official documents on intercultural policy, Ansan's city council transcripts, and transcripts of interviews with 23 local stakeholders of Ansan, this thesis has investigated how both global and local actors played a role in constructing discourses to develop, promote, and circulate the ICC worldwide, as well

as its mobility to Ansan.

This chapter draws together the findings of this thesis and reflects on their contribution to the policy mobility scholarship. To open the discussion, I begin by explaining how I contextualised the ICC in this thesis. Then, I identify three key findings of this thesis and demonstrate how they respond to the overall aim of the thesis. This is followed by implications and contributions to policy mobility studies. Lastly, I will discuss the limitations and opportunities for further research.

10.1 Understanding the ICC

This thesis has situated the ICC as part of broader European cultural policies that have been instrumental in rebuilding Europe's power in response to shifting global geopolitics. Through an examination of the historical trajectory of European cultural policies from the post-World War 2 era to the early 2000s, this thesis has demonstrated how postcolonial cultural orientations have continued to play out in European cultural policies. Particularly in the 2000s, when Europe experienced a rapid influx of international migrants, the CoE re-crafted Europe as an *inherently* diverse and democratic society that had *always* embraced people from different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. While erasing the violent histories of racial hierarchy and supremacy that have shaped Europe for centuries since the colonial era, the CoE self-projected an image of Europe as a humanitarian and inclusive continent, where normative values supposedly have resided from the outset. This discursive construction has been a key plank of Europe's soft power, enabling its engagement in the social, cultural, economic, and political realms of other countries initially within Europe and eventually beyond. Within this context, Europe has initiated a number of pan-European projects since 2008, particularly aimed at promoting the theory and practice of European interculturalism, which emerged in response to the crisis of multiculturalism in Europe. The ICC was developed and launched as one of these pan-European projects to promote a shift from a multicultural to an intercultural approach to cultural diversity in urban contexts. Since its launch, the ICC has rapidly expanded to cities beyond Europe, being claimed as a global policy programme set to be standardised and applied across different cities around the world.

By contextualising the ICC as Europe's broader soft power strategy to assert its presence and influence on the global stage, the thesis has investigated the power-laden process of the global

circulation of the ICC and its local adoption in Ansan, Korea. Particularly, in the implementation of the ICC in Ansan, this thesis has shown how its mobility has become a site of negotiation, where both global and local actors aim to achieve their own interests and needs. In the case of Ansan, this thesis has demonstrated that the implementation of the ICC was non-linear, initially marked by slow exposure, followed by a fast policy rollout during a moment of political necessity, when the local politicians were seeking a new approach to diversity management. Within the specific local political context, interculturalism and the ICC were subsequently incorporated into political and economic rhetoric aimed at elevating the city's status, ultimately operating as empty signifiers with little resonance in the everyday lives of local actors. In the following sections, I will present the key findings of this thesis and bring them together to highlight how these findings, as a whole, contribute to the policy mobilities scholarship.

10.2 Key findings

This thesis presents three key findings: the operation of geopolitics in the global circulation of the ICC; the non-linear process of its implementation in Ansan; and its functioning as an empty signifier in Ansan. On the surface, the ICC appears to be a policy programme designed to respond to the practical needs of cities that have growing levels of ethnic diversity. However, the ICC should be understood as part of a wider set of geopolitical reconfigurations that link continental aspirations across Asia and Europe. When Europe and Asia were both seeking to expand their global influence in the late 1990s, a number of platforms for cultural exchanges between the two regions were established, exemplified by the Asia-Europe Foundation in 1997. This foundation became the initial channel through which European interculturalism was introduced to Asia's cultural landscape. Japan and Korea, in particular, have actively engaged with European organisations since the 2000s. This period marked a time in which both countries sought responses to growing ethnic diversity driven by international migration, while also exploring ways to become more globally recognisable. For Japan and Korea, the launch of the ICC in 2008 was seen as a chance to address these two increasing demands. In the early 2010s, the Japan Foundation played a key role in circulating the ICC to cities across both countries, including Ansan (Keizo & Takahiko, 2021). While the local adoption of the ICC in Ansan in 2020 was driven by a 'window of opportunity' (Kingdon, 1984) recognised by local

politicians, its initial formulation and circulation were shaped by larger global forces in response to evolving geopolitics.

From the outset, the ICC was made as an off-the-shelf policy with a seemingly fully formed structure, accompanied by a discursive framework to enhance its legitimacy and credibility. International networks and channels further facilitated the circulation of the ICC as a one-size-fits-all solution for cities worldwide. Nonetheless, the ICC's adoption in Ansan was shaped more by political contingencies within the local context rather than by its ideal fit as a policy. Local politicians perceived the ICC as the best solution because its idea was 'lying around' (Wathne & Haarstad, 2020) at the very moment when they were urgently searching for a global programme to reinforce the city's image as Korea's most pioneering city in migrant support policy. Moreover, the adoption process of the ICC was driven by the uncertainty and contingency inherent in local politics, resulting in an unstructured and improvisational rush to replace the mayor's previous electoral pledge related to multicultural city branding. The ICC was chosen as an alternative to the so-called 'International Youth Multicultural City', which had ultimately proven unfeasible, highlighting the messy realities of the policy decision-making process, marked by fluidity, unpredictability, and serendipity.

Once adopted, the ICC was incorporated into Ansan's diversity management strategies, yet it operated as a floating signifier, adapting to the interests of local politicians. Given that Ansan had been at the forefront of implementing multicultural policies in Korea for over a decade, local politicians positioned the ICC within the existing framework of multiculturalism. While they sought to offset the negative connotations associated with the term 'multicultural' by adopting the ICC, this did not necessarily entail a shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism. Instead, the implementation of the ICC built on existing multicultural policies, with the key change being the replacement of multicultural terminologies with intercultural terminologies. Ironically, it was the theoretical vagueness of interculturalism - particularly its lack of clear boundaries from multiculturalism - that enabled this strategic repackaging of the ICC within Ansan's policy landscape. Moreover, local politicians leveraged the idea of an intercultural city within the city's development plan to transform Ansan into an international cultural hub, where interculturalism was imbued with neoliberal values that emphasised the economic benefits of cultural diversity. While this policy process created the impression that Ansan had made significant progress after adopting the ICC, the majority of local actors,

including residents, representatives of migrant centres, and local think tanks, were either unaware or critical of the ICC for obscuring the problems associated with migrants in the city. This gap between policy rhetoric and the lived experiences of local actors reveal that the ICC came to operate as an empty signifier in Ansan.

Through these three key findings, this thesis has demonstrated a disconnect between the CoE's initial vision of the ICC and its implementation in Ansan. Before discussing how to interpret this slippage, I will reiterate two key changes made to the ICC during its adaptation in Ansan, particularly regarding its theoretical paradigm and primary focus. First, the CoE has claimed that the implementation of the ICC is grounded in a paradigm shift in the city's diversity management, moving from multiculturalism to interculturalism. However, in Ansan, the adoption of the ICC did not necessarily entail a departure from multiculturalism. Rather, the ICC has been positioned within the existing multicultural framework. Additionally, the form and function of the ICC in Ansan differed significantly from the CoE's original vision. The CoE primarily framed the ICC as an urban diversity programme aimed at fostering social inclusion for migrants. In the context Ansan, however, the ICC has functioned more as an urban development programme, geared towards leveraging cultural diversity to drive the city's economic growth. These two aspects demonstrate that the initial principles and form of the ICC did not fully align with Ansan's political landscape, both of which were reshaped by local agendas and imperatives.

Despite the discontinuity in policy, this thesis has revealed that both the CoE and Ansan's politicians met their interests and needs through the mobility of the ICC. Although their interpretations of what it means to be an intercultural city did not align, their mutually reinforcing claims of Ansan as an intercultural city created a policy feedback loop, through which both the CoE and Ansan's politicians benefited from the intercultural city discourse. The CoE's endorsement of Ansan as an intercultural city served as a form of external validation that fed into Ansan's local politics, further strengthening its intercultural city branding. In turn, Ansan's intercultural city branding, although it was a repackaging of multicultural policies, reinforced the CoE's claim that the ICC had become a global policy. How should this cyclical policy process be understood? Was it merely coincidental, where the political interests happened to align by chance? This thesis has demonstrated that the cyclical process was co-constituted and mutually reinforced to ensure that both the CoE and Ansan politicians benefited

from the mobility of the ICC. From the CoE's perspective, Ansan served as a symbolic representation of the ICC's success in its global circulation, particularly its expansion into cities in Asia. At the same time, Ansan gained international recognition as the first intercultural city in Korea and the second in Asia, with this symbolic recognition being incorporated into its vision as a global city. While this contributed to creating a 'win-win' situation for both key actors, the ICC eventually became an empty signifier that is imbued with their respective interests and motivations.

Beyond the case of Ansan, this finding prompts a reconsideration of the ICC's very nature. As noted earlier, the ICC has rapidly expanded to 164 cities worldwide since its launch in 2008. The CoE attributed this wide circulation of the ICC to its easily transferable concept and standardised tools (CoE, 2009). However, building on the discussions thus far, it is worth considering whether the ICC's circulation instead reveals that its key policy framework operates as an empty signifier, thus rendering it a high degree of flexibility and adaptability across different contexts. In other words, the framework and underlying theory of the ICC float without being anchored in concrete policy substance, which, in turn, makes the ICC easily adopted by many cities within a short period of time. This suggests that the ICC is more of a symbolic policy initiative that does not necessarily require substantive changes in practice. In fact, it falls short of addressing the systemic issues of social integration that lie beyond the city's superficial achievements, which are measured by numerical data and policy declarations. For example, an increase in the migrant population does not necessarily translate into the city's growing inclusivity. The incorporation of the term 'cultural diversity' into a city's brand does not always lead to greater tolerance among citizens toward people with diverse backgrounds. Likewise, frequent interactions with migrants do not always result in positive changes in citizens' perceptions or attitudes towards them. However, because the ICC lacks the substance needed to solve these issues, it does not challenge cities to rethink or restructure their policies or governance in order to accommodate increasing diversity. This superficial nature of the ICC, in turn, allows cities to use it as a branding or promotion tool, enabling them to claim symbolic achievements through surface-level changes. Therefore, the global circulation of the ICC should be examined more critically - not as a mere indication that cities resonate with and advocate for its ideals, but rather as evidence that the ICC offers a seemingly easy fix to complex urban problems.

These findings have particular relevance for urban policy studies in Asian contexts. As discussed in Chapter 2, Asian cities have often been reduced to recipients or transmitters of Western policies, expected to follow an established urban transformation path laid out by Western frameworks (Roy & Ong, 2011; Wang et al., 2016). This thesis challenges this conventional idea in two aspects. First, it demonstrates that Asian cities do not simply replicate Western policies. Instead, they adapt and modify them to align with their own social, cultural, and political contexts. As a result, Asian cities create localised variants of Western policies, tailoring them to better serve their specific agendas and interests. Moreover, Asian cities often leverage the symbolic value of Western policy frameworks to lend credibility or legitimacy to their existing policies. In doing so, they create a form of city branding that serves to market them both nationally and internationally as exemplars of globally diverse cities. Second, this thesis demonstrates that Asia is emerging as a new global actor, one with which Europe is strategically seeking to establish connections. The trajectory of the mobility of interculturalism and the ICC from Europe to Asia reflects Europe's initiatives, through the CoE, to reinforce the legitimacy or credibility of its policy frameworks by demonstrating their capacity to travel across cultural and geopolitical boundaries beyond Europe. Particularly given the rise of Asia from the late 20th to the early 21st Century, Asia has become one of the key regions where Europe seeks symbolic validation for its policy frameworks on a global scale.

10.3 Contributions to the policy mobilities scholarship

Through the case of the ICC's mobility, this thesis has revealed that its global circulation was not merely an exchange of policies between cities, as the name the Intercultural 'Cities' Programme might suggest. By taking European geopolitics as the starting point for this study, the thesis has shown that the ICC evolved from Europe's long-standing political agenda to rebuild its power in the post-World War 2 era in relation to both decolonization and American global supremacy. This perspective has opened up opportunities to uncover the various actors, organisations, and channels at different scales involved in mobilising the ICC worldwide.

In this regard, this thesis underscores the importance of considering geopolitics when examining policy mobility. In existing policy mobilities scholarship, the primary interest has been on how policies become localised once they are transferred to new locations. While exploring the aspect of localisation is important in its own right, incorporating geopolitical

dimensions into the analysis can provide a richer description. Policy mobilities studies can demonstrate that policy mobility is not merely a local interest but is instead shaped by the networks of powerful actors operating on a broader scale in response to the world's shifting power dynamics. This perspective allows for exploring how global actors engage with policy mobility, particularly in terms of how their agendas and priorities drive the process. At the same time, research can offer deeper insights into how regions or cities that may appear geographically, politically, or culturally disconnected engage with each other when their geopolitical interests align, as demonstrated in this thesis through the case of the CoE and Asia. Moreover, by expanding the scope of analysis to include geopolitics, policy mobility studies can enhance understanding of how the mobility and adoption of policy are shaped by both global and local dynamics. This highlights that these two dynamics do not operate independently at separate stages, but rather co-constitute policy throughout its development and movement. As demonstrated by the way key actors from both the CoE and Ansan mutually reinforced the ongoing momentum of the intercultural city discourse, policy mobility studies can unpack a more complex and cyclical policy process by incorporating both global and local factors in exploring how policies travel and evolve.

10.4 Limitations and future research

In this final section of this chapter, I will address the limitations of this study and how these limitations may inform future research directions. The primary limitation of this study is the relatively underrepresented voices of local residents, which were less highlighted compared to those of policy decision-makers and experts. This limitation largely stems from the objective of this study, which was to explore the development, circulation, and implementation of the ICC in Ansan. As a result, this study primarily incorporated the remarks of the policy decision-makers or experts who were directly involved in the ICC's adoption and implementation. Furthermore, as briefly mentioned in Chapter 9, among ten local residents whom I interviewed - including five Koreans and five migrants - only one interviewee answered being aware of the ICC. This suggests that most residents were unaware of the ICC in Ansan. Therefore, during the interviews with local residents, I could not directly ask questions about their experiences with the ICC and instead reframed them as indirect questions about encounters and interactions with migrants or Koreans. However, due to the primary focus of this study on tracing the trajectory of the ICC's implementation in Ansan, the lived experiences of local residents were

not fully explored, except in Chapter 9, which examined the gap between the rhetoric of the ICC and the everyday experiences of local actors. Another limitation pertains to the underrepresentation of migrant experiences within this study. The interviews conducted with migrant residents were constrained by language barriers. While the majority of participants did not show significant difficulties in communicating in Korean, the interviews still could not reach the depth necessary to elicit their feelings and thoughts regarding their interactions with Korean residents and their experiences with intercultural policies in Ansan.

These limitations offer entry points for future research on the implementation of the ICC in Ansan. As discussed in Chapter 9, both the ICC and related intercultural terminologies operate as empty signifiers. Local politicians have mobilised the emptiness of signification to infuse it with political and economic rhetoric aligned with the city's development agenda. However, it is important to note that these dominant interpretations of the ICC or intercultural terminologies are neither fixed nor permanent. The fact that these terms are emptied of signification suggests that the concept of 'intercultural' is open to redefinition and reinterpretation by local residents. Local residents have their own understanding of what it means to live in an intercultural city. They have their own aspirations for how their ethnic, cultural, and social identities should be recognised and respected, as well as expectations for how interactions with people of diverse backgrounds should be facilitated in everyday life. These understandings and interpretations, stemming from lived experiences, can offer more nuanced and diverse perspectives on interculturality that are often overlooked in top-down policy decision-making. Therefore, I suggest that future research focuses on the lived experiences of local residents to explore how interculturality is perceived and practiced in daily life, grounded in the specific context of Ansan. By engaging with local voices and practices, future research could offer an alternative narrative to dominant institutional definitions of interculturalism - challenging both the city's bureaucratic framing of cultural diversity and, more broadly, the Eurocentric lens through which interculturalism is constructed. This would contribute to developing a more inclusive and locally rooted version of interculturalism.

Another direction for future research involves examining the continued mobility of the ICC across cities worldwide. To facilitate the ongoing development and circulation of the ICC, the CoE is establishing additional mobility channels through which the ICC is widely introduced. As noted in Chapter 7, those channels have taken various forms, including international

summits, seminars, and expert visits. As a continuation of these initiatives, officials from the CoE are participating in an international symposium on Intercultural Cities, hosted by Ansan in September 2025, to commemorate five years since the city's adoption of the ICC. The CoE's officials, along with politicians from Hamamatsu in Japan - the first ICC participant city in Asia - are expected attend the symposium to discuss future visions and joint development strategies for intercultural policies (Ahn, 2025). It is notable that this symposium resembles past international events co-organised by the CoE, the Japan Foundation, and cities in Korea and Japan, which were instrumental in circulating the ICC across Asia during its early stages, as discussed in Chapter 7. Recalling the influence of these early introductory events, the upcoming international symposium in Ansan is likely to serve as a catalyst for introducing the ICC to additional cities in Asia. Focusing on the growing mobility channels of the ICC, future research should adopt a broader global perspective that frames these channels as part of larger geopolitical reconfigurations connecting Asia and Europe through their increasing aspirations for visibility, presence, and influence on the international stage. The analysis of how Asia and Europe position themselves within the mobility channels, and how they construct and mobilise narratives and discourses to advance the agendas and interests, will offer a sharper understanding of how global politics shape the contours of the ICC's mobility worldwide. This thesis has provided a preliminary understanding of the global politics that have given traction to the initial implementation and circulation of the ICC, laying the groundwork for this future research direction. Building on the implications of this thesis, future research could provide a deeper analysis of how evolving geopolitical dynamics reinforce the ongoing momentum of the intercultural city discourse.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Sample Questions

Questions for policy decision-makers

The adoption of the ICC

1. How did Ansan decide to join the ICC? Did Ansan consider other policy approaches to diversity? What are the advantages of joining the ICC for Ansan?
2. Who were the main actors involved in the city's decision to participate in the ICC?
3. Were there any difficulties in preparing to join the ICC?

The implementation of the ICC

1. After joining the ICC, what changes have been made to existing policies, or what new policies have been implemented in the name of intercultural policies? Do you think these represent significant differences from previous policies?
2. What difficulties have been encountered in implementing the ICC? Was there any resistance to these ideas or policies?
3. From your perspective, what policy measures should be taken to ensure the ICC has more practical and sustainable effects in Ansan?

Questions for experts

The introduction of the ICC

1. Can you describe your initial involvement in the process of adopting the ICC in Ansan? Who contacted you, and how did your involvement begin?
2. How has the ICC developed as both an idea and a set of policy proposals for cities in Korea, particularly in Ansan? Why do you think the ICC is attractive to cities?

The implementation of the ICC

1. Are there elements of the Korean context that may be incompatible with the principles or goals of the ICC?
2. Were any concerns or tensions raised during the introduction and implementation of the ICC in Ansan?

3. What were your expectations when you suggested the idea of joining the ICC? Have those expectations or goals been met?

Questions for representatives of migrant support centres

The perception of the ICC

1. When did you become aware that Ansan was joining the ICC? How did you become aware?
2. What is your understanding of interculturalism? Do you see any conceptual and practical difference between multiculturalism and interculturalism?

The evaluation of the efficacy of the ICC

1. Have you noticed any changes since Ansan joined the ICC? Are you aware of any newly implemented policies or modifications to existing ones? Do you think these changes are significantly different from previous policies?
2. I have heard that some new measures have been proposed as part of Ansan becoming an Intercultural Special City - an intercultural institute and a K-culture international school - have you heard of these proposals? What do you think these different proposals are seeking to achieve? Do you think they can achieve the aim of enhancing interculturalism in Ansan?

Questions for local residents

The everyday experience with cultural diversity

1. Do you often encounter people from different cultural backgrounds in your daily life? Where do these encounters usually take place, and do you also engage in communication or interaction with them?
2. How do you perceive the growing number of migrants in the city? Do you see this as a positive or negative change?

The perception of the ICC

1. Are you aware that Ansan was the first city in Korea to join the ICC? How did you learn about this?

2. How do Ansan's policies on urban diversity balance the aspirations and expectations of local residents? I've heard there have been growing complaints that previous/existing multicultural policies are seen as a form of reverse discrimination against Korean residents. Where do you think this perception comes from?
3. What are your expectations for the city's diversity policy? How do you hope the ICC will impact the local community, and what specific outcomes would you like to see as a result of its implementation?

Appendix 2 Interview Participant Sheet (Individual In-depth interviews)



Project title: The gap between policy rhetoric and lived reality of Korea's policies on urban diversity

Project researcher: Youjeong Jang

The goal of the research project is to gain a better understanding the mobility of Korea's policies on urban diversity. This project aims to explore how the policies, with a focus on multicultural city policy and intercultural city policy, have changed according to the context of Korea in general and of Ansan city in particular. In addition, it aims to uncover how different people in the city, including policy officials, representatives of migrant support centres and ethnic communities and various local residents, are involved this process.

Youjeong Jang is a PhD student in Geography at The University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand conducting research on the gap between policy rhetoric and lived reality of Korea's policies on urban diversity.

Interview process

Individual in-depth interviews will be up to an hour. It will take place in your office or in another location that is deemed convenient.

What are your rights as a participant?

If you choose to participate you have the right to:

- Choose the depth of your participation with the interview by giving short answers to some questions or giving more in-depth explanations to other questions, or having spontaneous discussion with other participants, or choosing not to answer any particular questions.
- Receive a written transcript of the interview within four weeks after the completion of the interview. Add or remove material from the transcript.

- Withdraw from the research up to three weeks after receiving the transcript. Receiving a token of appreciation for your participation does not change your right to withdraw from the research.
- Ask any questions about the research at any time during your participation.
- Receive a summary of key findings once the research is completed.

Confidentiality

Your name will be collected but will not be reported in the research without your permission. During the interview you may choose a pseudonym that will be used to represent any information from your interview in the research. In case you refer to your organization and community, they will also be anonymised.

All interview transcripts will remain secure and accessible only through a regularly changed password on a closed network. Non-identifying data will be stored for a minimum of five years after the completion of the research. When the data period expires after ten years, all data will be safely destroyed. As to hardcopy information, it will be shredded. Digitalized data will also be destroyed using a digital file shredder program to dispose of the data in such a manner that it leaves no possibility for any reuse of backup.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee via email or post:

Email : alpss-ethics@waikato.ac.nz

Postal address : Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240

Appendix 2 Interview Participant Sheet (Focus groups)



Project title: The gap between policy rhetoric and lived reality of Korea's policies on urban diversity

Project researcher: Youjeong Jang

The goal of the research project is to gain a better understanding the mobility of Korea's policies on urban diversity. This project aims to explore how the policies, with a focus on multicultural city policy and intercultural city policy, have changed according to the context of Korea in general and of Ansan city in particular. In addition, it aims to uncover how different people in the city, including policy officials, representatives of migrant support centres and ethnic communities and various local residents, are involved in this process.

Youjeong Jang is a PhD student in Geography at The University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand conducting research on the gap between policy rhetoric and lived reality of Korea's policies on urban diversity.

Interview process

People are invited to participate in a focus group with four other participants.

Focus groups will be up to 1-2 hours. They will take place in small meeting rooms in local facilities like city hall, local library.

What are your rights as a participant?

If you choose to participate you have the right to:

- Choose the depth of your participation with the interview by giving short answers to some questions or giving more in-depth explanations to other questions, or having spontaneous discussion with other participants, or choosing not to answer any particular questions.
- Receive a written transcript of the interview within four weeks after the completion of the interview. Add or remove material from the transcript.

- Withdraw from the research up to three weeks after receiving the transcript. Receiving a token of appreciation for your participation does not change your right to withdraw from the research.
- Ask any questions about the research at any time during your participation.
- Receive a summary of key findings once the research is completed.

Confidentiality

Your name will be collected but will not be reported in the research without your permission. During the interview you may choose a pseudonym that will be used to represent any information from your interview in the research. In case you refer to your organization and community, they will also be anonymised.

All the information offered by other participants will not be shared outside.

All interview transcripts will remain secure and accessible only through a regularly changed password on a closed network. Non-identifying data will be stored for a minimum of five years after the completion of the research. When the data period expires after ten years, all data will be safely destroyed. As to hardcopy information, it will be shredded. Digitalized data will also be destroyed using a digital file shredder program to dispose of the data in such a manner that it leaves no possibility for any reuse of backup.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee via email or post:

Email : alpss-ethics@waikato.ac.nz

Postal address : Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240

Appendix 3 Participant Consent Form



Name of person interviewed: _____

I have received a copy of the Information Sheet describing the research project. Any questions that I have, relating to the research, have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask further questions about the research at any time during my participation, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time up to three weeks after the interview.

During the interview, I understand that I do not have to answer questions unless I am happy to talk about the topic. I can stop the interview at any time, and I can ask to have the recording device turned off at any time.

When I sign this consent form, I will retain ownership of my interview, but I give consent for the researcher to use the interview for the purposes of the research outlined in the Information Sheet.

I understand that my identity will remain confidential in the presentation of the research findings. Even if I receive compensation for participation, this does not change my right to withdraw my participation from the research.

Please complete the following checklist. Tick [✓] the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
<i>[I wish to view the transcript of the interview.]</i>		
<i>[I wish to receive a copy of the findings.]</i>		

Participant :	Researcher :
Signature : _____	Signature : _____
Date : _____	Date : _____
Contact Details : _____ _____	Contact Details : _____ _____