

ICC-UA 2016 Annual Report



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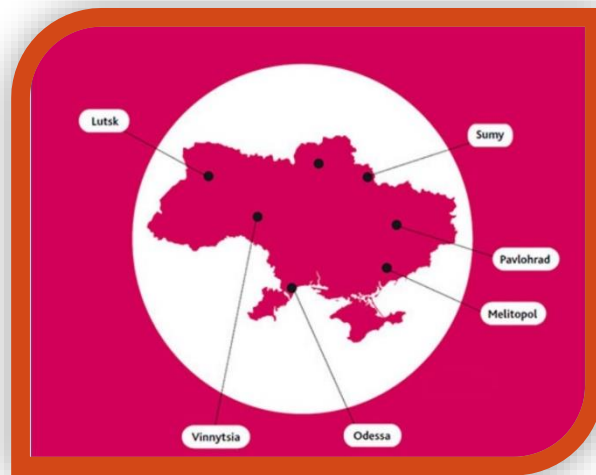
Intercultural cities
Building the future on diversity
www.coe.int/interculturalcities



Introduction

The Ukrainian network of Intercultural Cities (ICC-UA) includes a group of cities that recognize the importance of the diversity advantage for the development of their communities. These cities take strategic approach to the implementation of the ICC's urban model of intercultural integration within their jurisdictions and beyond to foster intercultural dialogue, promote good practice exchange, and give more visibility to the network.

The network has launched its new phase in 2015 following the Recommendation CM/Rec (2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and is aiming to review relevant policies and develop intercultural strategies for all cities-members.



The primary goals of the ICC-UA

To work on the implementation of the urban model of intercultural integration in the ICC-UA member-cities assuring that concrete policies and actions are reflected in the individual city plans

Employ and adapt the existing ICC Programme tools and approaches to Ukrainian cities' context with the Programme experts support assuring clear and straightforward implementation of the Programme concepts and principles

Assure connectivity and uninterrupted information and best practice exchange between the members of ICC-UA and the cities-members of the ICC Programme

Promote common new activities, collaborate closely with the member-cities assuring full understanding of the complexity and multidimensionality of the 'interculturality' concept and reaching out to a variety of local actors beyond art and culture field.

ICC-UA Progress in 2016

The Ukrainian ICC Network had a very productive and dynamic year 2016. Following the ICC-UA Memorandum signature, Melitopol, Sumy and Vinnitsa organized themselves and participated in a number of ICC partner-city initiatives, campaigns and trainings further promoting urban model of the intercultural integration. Several conferences, forums, study-visits, inter-religious breakfasts, information sessions and library gatherings were held for cities' residents, internally displaced persons (IDPs), students, educators and city administrators.

In addition, the city of Melitopol produced a few thematic TV programs and videos and shared them with the ICC national and international networks via social networks. The city of Sumy opened Roma Youth Center, a regional Center for National Minorities was launched in Vinnitsa. The city of Melitopol has actively participated in the ICC campaign devoted to the World Refugee Day in June 2016. All ICC-UA members held thematic events devoted to International Migrant Day (December 18). The Mayors of Sumy and Melitopol joined a study visit to the city of Bergen, Norway. The representatives of municipal services and religious organizations from Vinnitsa and Melitopol took part in the thematic ICC trainings and seminars in Romania and Spain.

The ICC-Index analysis of the cities members of the ICC-UA Network is one of the conditions of the ICC-UA Memorandum. Every city consents to conduct intercultural cities Index analysis within 12 months from the Memorandum signature date. All three cities – Vinnitsa, Sumy and Melitopol – fulfilled this condition and tested their policies through the intercultural lens in 2016 using translated [ICC Index questionnaire](#) made available to the cities by the national coordinator. Vinnitsa and Sumy have already received a comprehensive feedback including from the Programme experts including ICC Index rating and detailed recommendations on all 14 policy areas constituting intercultural approach. Melitopol, as a city with a longer record of the ICC membership, undergone its 2nd planned ICC Index analysis in October 2016.



ICC-UA Expansion in 2016

The good news is that the ICC-UA Network is growing and we have a number of cities from Ukraine and even former Soviet Bloc countries, who express their interest to join our network. We are proud to acknowledge that, in 2016, three more cities – Lutsk, Odessa, and Pavlograd – joined the ICC-UA, having passed an established application procedure. Since October 2016, these cities have already proven themselves as valuable members of our team.

Lutsk

Lutsk is a city in northwestern Ukraine with the population of 217,103 people¹ that includes people of different origins – Polish, Belorussian, Russian, Georgian, Czech, Jewish, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Roma, Crimea Tatar and others. The city has a well-established European network of sister-cities, which counted 18 total in 2016, and collaborates very dynamically internationally. Already in 2016, the year when the city officially joined the ICC-UA network, a number of events were carried out in Lutsk focusing on intercultural priorities of the city.



Odessa

Odessa is the third most populous municipality of Ukraine - 1 008 217 people.² It is a major seaport and transportation hub on the Black Sea shore (south of Ukraine). Odessa is a remarkable example of the colorful diversity of nations and cultures. More than 130 nationalities have historically cohabited in the city leaving a special mark to its culture, historic sights, architecture, cuisine and even language that is believed to emerge as a result of the interweaving of different cultures.



Pavlograd

Pavlograd is an industrial city in eastern Ukraine and one of the oldest settlements in Dnipropetrovsk region. Today Pavlograd counts slightly more than 109,000 inhabitants diverse in their cultural background. Regardless its industrial focus, Pavlograd has always had a high quality cultural life and institutions. It is a home to many known artists and typical for the region and internationally recognized - e.g. by UNESCO - painting and embroidery traditions.



¹ State Statistics of Ukraine, 2015.

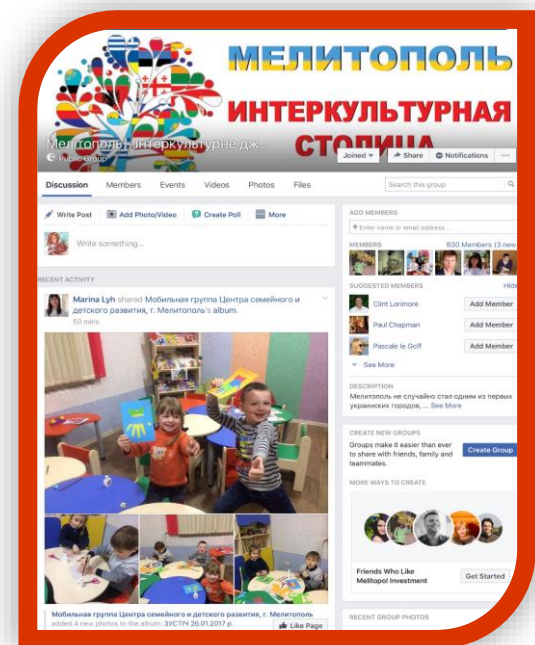
² As of July 1, 2016 according to the data of the Main Department of Statistics in Odessa region.

ICC-UA Social Media Presence

The ICC-UA Facebook and Twitter were launched back in 2015 and operated fully in 2016. The Network Facebook page connects cities' mayors, public officials, activists, culture and education professionals, young people, civil society organizations and NGOs far beyond the residents of only six cities members of the network. National and local coordinators are, of course, among the most active reporters of the page, yet a number of civil society organizations are active contributors.

The cities members of ICC-UA have developed official webpages, where they formally acknowledged their intercultural commitment, strategy or action plan and the ICC-UA membership. The city of Melitopol has its own "Melitopol is an intercultural capital of Ukraine" Facebook page that counts almost 1000 members.

The Mayors of Melitopol and Sumy have reordered thematic videos explaining the importance of intercultural engagement of their cities. These videos are available on the ICC Programme and ICC-UA Facebook pages. Regular updates from the ICC-UA network are also published in the ICC Programme Newsletter and shared with the Council of Europe's Office in Kyiv, Ukraine.



Activities

The first ICC-UA Coordinators' Meeting was held in Vinnitsa in April 2016. The participants approved the Network 2016-2017 Action Plan that listed a number of initiatives including inter-city collaborative actions, informatory sessions, seminars and workshops for public officials and local community stakeholders, residents and youth. Please see the detailed schedule at the end of this document. It was also agreed to develop the ICC-UA Network Guidebook that would contain the information about the principles and concepts of the ICC Programme in general, their actuality for Ukraine, adjusted to Ukrainian environment ICC Programme tools, the benefits and responsibilities of the ICC-UA network members, their experiences, and the step-by-step guide on how to become an ICC-UA member and maintain this status. The work on the Guidebook was planned for the year 2017.

1. ICC Index

As stated above, the ICC-Index analysis of the cities-members is one of the conditions of the ICC-UA Memorandum. Every city consents to conduct intercultural cities Index analysis within 12 months from the Memorandum signature date. All three cities – Vinnitsa, Sumy and Melitopol – fulfilled this condition and tested their policies through the intercultural lens in 2016 using translated [ICC Index questionnaire](#). Vinnitsa and Sumy have already received a comprehensive feedback including from the Programme experts including ICC Index rating and detailed recommendations on all 14 policy areas constituting intercultural approach. Melitopol, as a city with a longer record of the ICC membership, undergone its 2nd planned ICC Index analysis in October 2016. The results of ICC Index Melitopol are expected at the beginning of 2017.



2. Intercultural City Strategy/Plan

Our meetings with the member-cities demonstrated their high interest in the intercultural strategy development. The municipalities also regard the ICC Action Plans as a useful tool for strategic city management. They emphasize that during the period of

ongoing decentralization in Ukraine, the time is right for such strategies to be developed in the cities. Melitopol was the first in Ukraine to design and officially approve its Intercultural City Plan 2015-2020 under the close consultation of the ICC-UA national coordinator Kseniya Rubicondo. Adjustment of the ICC methodology to the Ukrainian reality was needed in this case, which made this work particularly meaningful and exemplary for the other members of the ICC-UA.

The Melitopol Intercultural City Plan was published in 2016 with the support of the Melitopol City Hall. Its key points include the vision and the values of intercultural integration in the current political and economic context of the city and the region, the scope and structure of such integration, and the list of thematic areas on which the city is planning to concentrate its efforts within the years to come. The five thematic



areas include intercultural awareness, education and communication (focus, directions, events); city social, economic and political development through the ‘intercultural lens’; community participation and engagement; culture, art, and sport; urban space planning; welcoming newcomers (refugees, immigrants), cultural and religious expression; international and interregional consciousness (incl. tourism and heritage).

A special review meeting was held in Melitopol City Hall in June 2016 to report on the most recent developments. A Coordination Group – including the city Mayor, local activists and stakeholders – was established to monitor the progress along the five priority areas of the Plan.³ By the end of 2016, the major advances of the Plan included:

The implementation of intercultural city strategy allows us not only to recognize the uniqueness of our city as a historically multi-ethnic place but also to become an integral and natural part of the development process of the common European urban space.
Sergii Minko, Melitopol Mayor

³ For details please see http://mlt.gov.ua/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=10104&Itemid=382

a) Intercultural awareness, education and communication

In spring 2016, the Melitopol City Council announced a competition for social and cultural projects titled "Implementation of the Intercultural Integration Plan" targeting local NGOs and civil society organizations. The "Melitopol Jewish community's" project "Mosaic" won the contest. Hence, a summer youth **camp "Mosaic"** was opened in Melitopol in 2016 with the support of the City Hall. It featured specific educational program for teenagers focused on the development of their intercultural communication skills, elucidation of the principles of tolerance and respect to other cultures, and on stimulation of intercultural interaction between young people through active participation in relevant courses, community events, visits to minority group organizations and cultural institutions. There are some prospects to expand this project beyond the summer time by adding different groups of participants, changing its summer location, etc. and to continue to explain the principles of tolerance and respect to other cultures to the young people and to stimulate their intercultural communication and interaction.

Moreover, in 2016, the students of Melitopol boarding school "Creation" became winners of an EU competition "Young Geographic Europeans Award," to which Ukraine was invited for the first time. More precisely, it was **"The Colorful Face of Europe"** project designed by 11-grade students that brought the award. While working on this project, the students tracked individual cases of migration of their family members via specifically designed questionnaires, interviews and focus group meetings, and studied the identified migration issues on the background of the country's history. The project resulted in a selection of posters, videos, presentations and written documents that were presented at the European Parliament this summer during the 5-day winners' trip to Brussels.



a) Urban space planning

Opening of the public Square of Sliven: after the reconstruction, an old public garden in Melitopol was transformed into the Ukrainian-Bulgarian square of friendship becoming one of the intercultural symbols of the city. Today, the square bears the name of a Bulgarian twin-city Sliven, and the flags of Sliven and Melitopol have been raised on the square honoring these relations. A similar initiative has been implemented in Sliven: Melitopol square has been established in the Bulgarian city.

The Intercultural Street: One of the central streets (and according to melitopolers, one of the longest ones) of the city has been officially named *Intercultural* on May 19, 2016 as a result of the so-called process of ‘de-communization’ in Ukraine (when the names of the streets and public places inherited from the soviet times were changed). Following a number of community debates and discussions, the new street name *Intercultural* has been approved. This initiative is considered by melitopolers as a symbol of reconciliation and mutual understanding.

b) City social, economic and political development through the ‘intercultural lens’

Inclusive Access to Employment: Melitopol entrepreneurs have also joined the city in its intercultural policy implementation by taking responsibility for creating jobs for immigrants and providing them with training. One of the priorities of this trend is to prepare projects in support of SMEs created by the young people, representatives of ethnic minorities and/or internally displaced people (IDPs). Along these lines, the "Committee for the Future - Solidarity and Responsibility", an NGO opened the first Business Incubator "Lift" in Melitopol a few years ago.

The first establishments of the IDPs independent businesses – as a result of the Incubator’s support – were reported this year. Of course, this is not an easy path neither for the incubator founders nor IDPs. Among the main challenges are: the variability of the participants, the difference of their professional profiles/disciplines and the levels of educational training. Yet, once the common business initiative is found for a small group, then it becomes easier for the incubator organizers to meet the needs of the participants (groups) and help them with particular skills they need to launch their independent business activity.

c) Community participation and engagement (incl IDPs)

The association of “The New Locals” was established in Melitopol by the refugees and internally displaced from the eastern area of Ukraine to officially cooperate with the city in the variety of social issues. One of the “New Locals” activists – Ms. Marina Lyh – launched a Facebook page «New Locals of Melitopol»⁴. Later on, together with a group of local activists and support of local and German civil society organizations, Marina started an important – not only in educational but also psychological terms – initiative “A Smile of a Child”⁵ showing a great example of proactive integration of IDPs in the social life of the city.

A lawyer by profession, Marina did not see herself inactive at her ‘new hometown’. Being very conscious of the fact that a huge number of IDP-children in the region needed much more than just education – as they lived through dramatic events and necessitated specific care, psychological support or sometimes just a ‘new friend’ – she launched this initiative. As a ‘Mobile group for children’s development’, Marina and her colleagues (some of them are professional psychologists) regularly organize educational and psychological mentoring events for groups of children of different age (incl. their parents) in a variety of places in the city and the region - parks, playgrounds, courtyards, libraries and other appropriate for this activity public spaces. In a friendly atmosphere, the activists explain the importance of the values of tolerance, respect of individual identity and cultural differences, and peaceful living together accompanying their ‘lessons’ by individual psychological coaching.

d) Evaluation Scheme in Place

Positive developments in achieving the Intercultural Integration Plan goals are regularly tracked in Melitopol by its educational institutions. This allows to take into account not only the experts’ opinions but also those of the city residents. **The Centre for Sociological Studies,**



⁴ Follow the link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/234253943616194/>

⁵ Relevant contacts, photos and documents can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/MelitopolFriendlySpace/>

which is a part of the Melitopol University, regularly conducts public opinion surveys engaging university students in data collection and survey analysis. The most recent survey was carried out in February-March 2016 with more than 12,000 respondents. The media published results of the survey indicated that Melitopolers consider interculturality as one of the main advantages of Melitopol, if compared to other Ukrainian cities. 62% of the respondents approve that the city's intercultural profile promotes a culture of tolerance.

These days, the Centre for Sociological Studies, under the guidance of the Director Ms. Lyudmila Afanasieva, is working on testing methods of measurement of "cultural competence". This involves analysing the interaction of four components, namely: competence motivation (interest, confidence and desire to adapt to different cultures), cognitive (understanding of cross-cultural issues and differences), metacognitive (strategy understanding of cultural diversity and experience) and behavioural (changing verbal and nonverbal actions according to the situation of interaction in different cultures) in different intercultural situations. Working on this experiment, the young pedagogues are learning not only about the analytical approaches but also about the advantages of culturally diverse society and the teaching methods of relevant skills.

Following their ICC Index analysis and Programme feedback, the network members agree to launch the intercultural city strategy development learning from Melitopol experience and with international urban expert support. In order to show their commitment, the cities of Sumy and Vinnitsa has already started working along some of the ICC Policy dimensions. These dimensions were estimated as developed by the ICC Index tests.

Sumy

a) Integration and Welcoming Policies

A new Roma Community Center opened in Sumy (Baranivka neighborhood) on August 26, 2016. The center aims to address the pressing issues of Roma people and to become a center of training for the establishment of local Roma youth organizations. The opening of the center was a logical continuation of the "Strengthening the institutional capacity



of Roma NGOs in Sumy" project implemented by Sumy regional public organization "Regional Studies Fund" and supported by the city and the International Fund "Renaissance". The center will provide free services and consultations for Roma community on the legislative requirements (e.g. obtaining Ukrainian nationality), education, social assistance and norms, medical services, and assist them in establishing public organizations for youth.

b) Mediation and Conflict Prevention

Nowadays one of the tasks of the Department of Education and Science of the Sumy city is to help the IDPs' schoolchildren adapt to the new environment. Each school in Sumy has psychologists and social educators who assist children and their parents of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the adaptation process and help them cooperate and interact with the people around them.

First of all, the school workers (psychologists and social educators) provide children and parents with the so called "road map" that contains the information about organizations where adults can receive legal and social assistance. Second, two times a year psychologists conduct separate surveys with kids and their parents in order to find out/monitor potential issues of intolerance, bad rumors, and/or radicalization and to assess the level of children's adaptation in the classroom. The specialists also consult parents in private, arrange seminars with the elements of training on how to help their children adapt to the new environments - school, city, society. Tailored seminars for teachers are also organized to enable them to observe and assess the status of a child, diagnose the situations that may negatively affect him/her, and to find the ways to help schoolchildren during the period of adaptation or in case of any identified issues.



c) Encouragement and recognition of cultural identity/diversity

The "Ranking our Culture Actors" initiative in Sumy is aimed to rate the input of the culture actors of different ethnic background to the social life of the city. The project is a joint initiative of the city administration together with some NGOs, a local newspaper 'Panorama', and the culture-and-art centre 'Sobor'. Every year, the culture's actors from

Sumy are proposed for rating - which takes place publicly via newspaper, - and the top ten are rewarded every year. Artists and writers with Armenian, Jewish, Russian cultural background and from Roma community have been recently rewarded.

Vinnitsa

a) Community Participation and Engagement

It is noteworthy that sustainable inclusion of the IDPs in the everyday life of the ICC-UA cities is an ongoing practice. Often enough, the initiatives come out from the IDPs directly or in the discussions/exchanges with local volunteers, activists and then are supported by the local authorities and/or associations. Obviously, such initiatives do not only address the issue of IDPs employment, their needs for social integration and inclusion, they also regard the IDPs as resourceful individuals capable of contributing fully and effectively to the life of their new city.

Nikolaj, an IDP from Lugansk, is an embroidery master. Since his arrival to Vinnitsa in 2015, Nikolaj was constantly seeking an opportunity to continue to 'live his passion'. His enquiries and interaction with the people in local community, in a library, resulted in an opportunity for him to start an embroidery atelier for locals. As a result, the atelier meets weekly in the library and gathers more and more interested participants. Beyond a small financial remuneration, which of course makes Nikolaj's life more independent, the 'stereotypes' breaking' is also happening during the atelier hours (exchanges, discussions) which contributes to the 'social sustainability' of the city.



3. Expert visits

Three ICC-UA cities were already visited by the local and international experts – Melitopol (southeastern Ukraine), Sumy (northeast) and Vinnitsa (center Ukraine). These visits were dedicated to clear and straightforward interpretation of the ICC

Programme strategy, concepts and working principles in the meetings with the city administrators, mayors, civil society organization, and local stakeholders. These visits highlighted once again the timeliness for the development of Intercultural City Plan or Strategy as a prerequisite for urban intercultural model implementation.

Moreover, Ukrainian cities are keen to discover and learn from the best practices of the European fellow-members of the Programme. Of particular interest are the interreligious and interfaith relations, university partnerships, city partnerships, and of course, refugee (or IDPs) integration, as the latter remains one of the most visible integration issue in Ukrainian cities. Their propositions were heard and the representatives of city administrations and religious organizations from Vinnitsa and Melitopol took part in the thematic ICC trainings and seminars in Romania and Spain. The Mayors of Sumy and Melitopol joined a study visit to the city of Bergen, Norway.



4. Raising awareness, cooperation

The ICC-UA members work to implement the Intercultural Model for diversity management in their respective urban territories as well as at the intra- and inter-regional levels. It was evident from the expert visits to the cities – especially those where representatives from different Ukrainian cities took part – that there is an interest and a potential for inter-city collaboration across many areas of intercultural policy including private and public sector and such fields as public service, urban planning, tourism, entrepreneurship, education, and culture.

Moreover, individual city-members are eager to spread the intercultural idea in their regions. Many of them suggest cities-candidates for ICC-UA network membership from their regions. Some cities take a more practical approach in terms of such regional cooperation. For example, the Center for Sociological Studies of Melitopol University

came with an initiative and worked together with the ICC-UA manager on a project proposal “The design of strategic intercultural integration roadmaps for polytechnic cities in Azov region.” The project is aiming to popularize the urban model of intercultural integration in such strategic for Ukraine cities as Mariupol, Mangush, Priazovye, Primorsk, Genichesk, Novooleksiyivka and to establish collaborative ties between the cities in Azov region.

Summary

This report demonstrates that continuous exchange – via technological means as well as bilateral and multilateral meetings – between member cities and the national coordinator has become a common practice within the ICC-UA, which is a prerogative to the development of a strategic approach and solutions to common challenges based on joint policy solutions and actions.

The activities carried out in 2016 are well in line with the ICC-UA Action Plan and the goals of International Network of Intercultural Cities. The ICC-UA members’ interests and priorities are addressed and methodological support in carrying out specific activities, in line with the ICC paradigm - e.g. completion of the ICC index, development and implementation of intercultural strategies, etc. - are provided by the national coordinator in cooperation with the other ICC experts and member cities.

Effective information sharing within the ICC-UA and International ICC Network is taking place via social media, cities’ web sites, newsletters, various reports and other means in the official language of the country (Ukrainian) and English, which facilitates relationships building between the members of both Networks.

Common initiatives are held within and between the ICC-UA members, and some of the International ICC members, including collaboration with city authorities, NGOs, media, universities, schools, libraries, youth and cultural centres. This assures further promotion of the ICC urban model of integration, ICC concepts, goals and achievements beyond the borders of the member-cities. This also contributes to awareness raising about the ICC-UA network activities and facilitates its expansion.

Reports about the Network main milestone events, actions, activities, and their results are provided to the Council of Europe regularly and are reflected in the ICC Newsletters.

ICC-UA Action Plan 2016-2017

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>
ICC 1st Coordinators' Meeting	April 2016	Vinnitsa
ICC Index analysis Vinnitsa	April 2016	Vinnitsa
Experience from Melitopol: How to involve the community in intercultural plan development	July, 2016	Vinnitsa
Two-language "Intercultural Plan of Melitopol" publication	May-July 2016	Melitopol
ICC Index analysis Sumy	July, 2016	Sumy
City Intercultural Policy/ Strategy Development Workshop	July, 2016	Sumy
Informatory City Intercultural Policy Workshop	August, 2016	Lutsk
National Conference "Shaping the intercultural communication skills in youth"	22-23 Sept 2016	Melitopol
ICC Index analysis Melitopol	October, 2016	Melitopol
ICC-UA Coordinators' Meeting	Spring 2017	T/D
Vinnitsa Intercultural Festival within Europe's Day celebration	19-21 May 2017	Vinnitsa
Workshop: Best Practice Exchange bw European and Ukrainian Cities	21 May 2017	Vinnitsa