

Checklist for the evaluation of intercultural project proposals

HOW INTERCULTURAL IS YOUR POLICY OR PROJECT?

REAL EQUALITY

The concept of fundamental values includes equality before the law or equal rights as laid down in the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) and the [European Social Charter](#). However, the concept of equal rights also requires positive action to ensure that rights are accessible to all. They also need to be promoted so that communities have a shared understanding and belief in equality for everyone within a community.

Indicators:

1. **Human rights and equality measures are reflected in policies and undertaken in practice**
2. **Active non-discrimination measures**
3. **Working together: Nurturing an understanding of shared fundamental values in communities**
4. **Communicating and promoting human rights and equality**
5. **Positive measures to address inequalities**

New to the topic? Take a look at the description of the indicators and an introduction to the intercultural principle of [real equality](#).

The intercultural checklist aims to be **simple and transparent**. Questions are phrased so that you can **tick the boxes which apply** to your project. The more boxes ticked – the more intercultural the project is. After completing the intercultural checklist, you should be able to easily identify to what extent the principle is reflected in the policy or project.

INDICATOR 1/5: HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY MEASURES ARE REFLECTED IN POLICIES AND UNDERTAKEN IN PRACTICE

An intercultural city should ensure that the necessary regulations and policies are in place to promote a culture of human rights compliance and equality in all areas of its work. However, regulations and policies are not enough. There needs to be a way of ensuring that they are put into practice when undertaking individual projects, or actions. Translating broad concepts such as rights and equality into the everyday work and practices of a city is one of the biggest challenges.

1. Have you considered how the broader concepts of human rights and equality are reflected in this specific policy or action? This is the case if:

- The city has reviewed the project according to the cities' goals or based on shared values or other criteria such as the ICC Index.
- The city has scoped the project to see how it contributes to broader goals on diversity, equality, or similar values.
- It is clear to the city which national legislation and obligations are engaged as part of this project.
- There are no unresolved issues or potential issues of a legal nature such as freedom of speech or protection against discrimination to consider.
- The city has sought advice from specialists about issues of equality or human rights that may be engaged.
- The project resources (financial, material, human and time) are being used in an equitable manner.
- It is clear in the project monitoring and evaluation how the city will measure the project inputs into key concepts of human rights and equality so this can be reported on and analysed.

2. Has there been a project specific impact assessment of how it will affect different groups or localities in the city? This is the case if:

- The city has evidence to inform the decision-making including equality data.
- The city has input from those who will be most affected by the project.
- The city has clearly defined the problem and the measures planned to improve it.
- The city knows who will benefit most from the project.
- The city knows the risks.
- The city is aware of any other preconditions needed to succeed such as resources or alliances.

Before you move on....

If you wish to read more on this subject, consider reading our policy study on [Identifying and Preventing Systemic Discrimination](#) that includes a section on impact assessments and decision-making. You may also wish to consider involving your equalities department for more advice or other members of your team. Remind yourself of your city's charter or values document and the larger framework the project feeds into. If your city reports back on anti-discrimination measures or other specific human rights issues, consider examples of good practice from the city previously.

Want to learn from your peers? Take a look at these [good practice](#) examples from member cities in the Intercultural Cities network (link opens in a new window). You will for example learn about the equality review set up in Dublin (Ireland).

INDICATOR 2/5: ACTIVE NON-DISCRIMINATION MEASURES

Discrimination takes many forms and can impact the daily lives of its victims in a multitude of ways. Discrimination can take place in education, employment, housing, political participation, healthcare, and many other areas, which makes it complex and difficult to tackle. There is also systemic discrimination that hides in structures, policies, and procedures in organisations, including local authorities.

3. Have you looked at the policy/project to ensure that non-discrimination is a central component of all its features, including assessing any systemic discrimination? This is the case if:

- The city has the data needed on equalities and discrimination in the city to plan the project.
- The city is reviewing the project in all of its aspects to consider structural discrimination and how this could be mitigated.
- The city has considered what other relevant power structures may cause discrimination and are within the city's powers to mitigate.
- There have been opportunities for other departments offer advice and support such as human resources or the equality department.
- Individuals who may have experienced discrimination have the opportunity to input into the planning, implementation, or evaluation of the project.

4. If relevant, will you work in partnership with civil society organisations and other institutions that combat discrimination and offer support and reparation to victims as part of this initiative? This is the case if:

- The city has considered the involvement of a range of organizations and institutions who work to combat different types of discrimination in your city.
- Organisations advise on the planning of the project or feed into its implementation, monitoring or evaluation.
- The city plays a leadership role in mainstreaming specific issues of human rights and equality into the project for itself and partners.
- The project participates in or is involved in local platforms for exchange on good practice.
- Legal bodies or institutions such as ombudsmen or anti-discrimination bodies advise on methodology or are interested in the results of the project.

Before you move on....

If you wish to read more on this subject, you can take a look at the materials produced by the [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\)](#), a human rights monitoring body specialising in questions relating to the fight against racism, discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance in Europe. You may also find the policy brief [Preventing the potential discriminatory effects of the use of artificial intelligence in local services](#) useful.

Want to learn from your peers? Take a look at these [good practice](#) examples from member cities in the Intercultural Cities network. You will for example learn about the anti-discrimination roadmap of the Canton of Neuchâtel (Switzerland).

INDICATOR 3/5: WORKING TOGETHER: NURTURING AN UNDERSTANDING OF SHARED FUNDAMENTAL VALUES IN COMMUNITIES

An intercultural city should try to nurture a shared understanding amongst all sectors of its population of the importance of fundamental rights and values for each and every resident. This does not mean just communicating, although this is very important (see indicator 4). A long-term political commitment and social engagement is needed with residents, with staff, as well as with a wide range of allies on the ground in civil society, schools, NGOs, sports, hospitals, neighbourhood groups, businesses, universities and institutions that combat discrimination and offer support and reparation to victims.

5. Does the city ground all of its work and activities in a sense of a shared understanding of fundamental values? This is the case if:

- The city is aware how shared fundamental values relate to this particular project.
- The city knows how the project fits into the city's overall framework of shared values.
- The city has created space for the definition, engagement, and discussion of values, such as dignity, inclusion, and social justice, in the planning of the project, to ensure equality, diversity and non-discrimination issues are taken into account.
- The city is clear and committed to promoting fundamental values and equality throughout the project's planning, implementation, evaluation and reporting.
- Publicity about the project will include information about the values that it promotes or is founded upon.

6. Has the city actively sought out allies to promote shared fundamental values in this project? This is the case if:

- Partners are aware of the city's values and how this project fits into that framework.
- There are opportunities or a need in the project to train or promote the city's values amongst its partners.
- Commitment to equality is a criterium for programme design or for choosing partners.
- The city's values are a part of what partners are asked to report back on.
- The project supports or takes part in campaigns and actions run by others to promote fundamental values and to amplify their impact.
- The project includes a diverse range of allies.
- There are other allies who could help you to plan, implement, promote the message, values, or results of the project.

Before you move on....

You may wish to consider if you have enough information on the other potential allies in your city who could be involved. Seek advice from colleagues or the partnerships or equalities departments or teams. Look at the [good practice section](#) of our website to see how other cities work with allies and partners in this field.

Want to learn from your peers? Take a look at these [good practice](#) examples from member cities in the Intercultural Cities network. You will for example learn about the stronger communities partnership in Bradford (United Kingdom).

INDICATOR 4/5: COMMUNICATING AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY

Linked to the third indicator, a city's use of media and communications can have a very powerful influence on attitudes towards cultural diversity and fundamental rights and can promote a climate of public opinion more conducive to positive intercultural relations. In its communication, an intercultural city should constantly highlight the positive contribution of people with migrant/minority backgrounds to the social, cultural, and economic development of the city, as well as the importance of shared fundamental values and how these benefit the whole community. Cities can also support migrant or minority voices to be heard in the media both through their own coverage and their work with others. The city could train and partner with local media agencies so that they have a similar message and cover events occurring in the city in an objective and unbiased way.

7. Is there a communication plan for the project to ensure that information reaches all members of the community, and that communication is done in an as inclusive way as possible? This is the case if:

- The project's communication strategy emphasizes positive elements of the project and interculturalism to a broader audience.
- The project's communication strategy ensures that communication about the project is accessible to as broad a range of people as possible.
- The project uses inclusive language – for example, gender-neutral language, symbols, non-verbal communication, like pictures, colours.
- Information is accessible and made available in ways that can be accessed by people who are illiterate or have lower literacy skills.
- The project and its activities are promoted in events or forums that are regularly attended.

8. Does the city strive to ensure that diverse groups can help develop and share the communication strategy including through amplifying minority and migrant and other diverse voices? This is the case if:

- The communication strategy has input from a wide range of diverse voices who will be able to help amplify the project's messages.
- The press team or the project team regularly sends information to a wide range of media including community media and minority or migrant journalists.
- Community media, minority or migrant journalists and a range of community groups are invited to events and briefings.
- Materials are provided in different languages and formats, for social media and in hard copies, so that different communities, groups, and individuals can read and share them.
- Publicity and other materials about the project contain minority, migrant and other diverse voices.

Before you move on....

You may wish to consider talking to your media or communications team or equality department about good practice in the field of accessible communications and if this can be brought into the project, for example, in the design of any leaflet or poster that may be produced or in how you approach publicizing events on social media. You can also read more from the Council of Europe on the importance of [community media](#).

Want to learn from your peers? Take a look at these [good practice](#) examples from member cities in the Intercultural Cities network. You will for example learn about the intercultural webpage of Cascais (Portugal).

INDICATOR 5/5: POSITIVE MEASURES TO ADDRESS INEQUALITIES

Cities should be aware that positive measures are sometimes needed to address inequalities experienced by members of minority communities in diverse societies. Practical measures should take into account the fact that the diversity of situations requires a variety of approaches and norms. An intercultural city acknowledges that a 'one size fits all' approach to public services and actions does not guarantee equal access to public benefits. The city also recognises that residents with migrant/minority backgrounds should never be treated as passive consumers of public benefits but can contribute actively by suggesting new ideas and innovative solutions to public problems.

9. Have you assessed your project for structural or other inequalities that will restrict participation in its development, delivery, use, or evaluation and how these may be mitigated? This is the case if:

- The project has an equality plan or other framework to assess, plan and measure any interventions that may be needed to address structural inequalities that would restrict access and participation in your project.
- Structural barriers in terms of transport and location for citizens from certain areas or neighbourhoods are identified.
- Planned positive measures to address inequality are informed by those groups exposed to inequalities and their representative organisations.
- Additional financial, human, or other resources needed to support access for particular groups are identified.

10. Have you assessed if it would be useful to work with a range of community and other civil society groups on this project? This is the case if:

- The project considers involving organisations working with hard-to-reach communities such as self-help groups, neighbourhood groups or refugee or other community groups to help extend the project reach.
- There is a clear strategy on when and how to involve people from diverse groups and communities.
- There is space to review to ensure that no groups (e.g., smaller groups within groups) have been left behind.
- Representatives involved represent a wide range of different voices within communities.

Before you move on....

You may wish to consider examples of other cities on [our website](#). For specific topics the [Gender Equality](#) work of the Council of Europe provides recommendations on for example gender mainstreaming and equal participation, while the [Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity unit](#) look at LGBTI-related topics and multiple discrimination. To build competence within the organisation it may also be interesting to look at the page on [intercultural competence](#).

Want to learn from your peers? Take a look at these [good practice](#) examples from member cities in the Intercultural Cities network. You will for example learn about the training of intercultural mediators in Patras (Greece).