



2024 Periodic Activity Report

Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine

January – March 2024

Summary

During the first three months of 2024, the Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine continued to display its resilience, determination, and the collaborative spirit of its members, highlighting the network's significant role in promoting intercultural dialogue, social cohesion, engagement, and shaping more inclusive environments in Ukrainian cities. The network's first annual meeting, held in this period, established the groundwork for the year ahead, focusing on a unified strategy to address the needs of the cities through an intercultural approach.

The Network was involved in a range of projects and international initiatives aimed at fostering meaningful interaction, deepening intercultural understanding, bringing communities together, and boosting the network's operational capabilities. Noteworthy in this regard was the ICCUA's participation in a round table organized by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, focusing on advancing education in the state language and the languages of indigenous peoples and national minorities. The engagement of young people from ICCUA cities in the international NET-IDEA project, led by ICC Global members, also showcased the dynamic involvement of Ukrainian youth in promoting intercultural dialogue and combating stereotypes.

The partnership between the ICC city of Stavanger and the ICC Cities Network of Ukraine remains strong, demonstrating Stavanger's continued support for the network amidst the challenges of the ongoing conflict. ICCUA's exploration of the opportunities for future international collaborations with the ICC Global network members and other international stakeholders further highlights its commitment to enhancing its intercultural capacities and global impact.

The opinions expressed in this document are the responsibility of the author Dr. Kseniya Rubicondo, Coordinator of the Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe. This document is published as it was submitted to the secretariat.

Network coordination and activities

The Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine held its first annual meeting on March 6 to design a common action plan for the coming year, focusing on a unified strategy to address the current needs of the cities and their diverse and continuously changing population. The meeting aimed to reinforce the Network's foundation by setting clear objectives, assessing the situation in Ukrainian communities, and reviewing the accomplishments of the past year. Some key aspects covered by the meeting included:



- Addressing the immediate needs of urban diverse communities while planning for long-term development.
- Updates from local ICC coordinators: a critical discussion that offered insights into the conditions within ICC cities in Ukraine, reflecting on the challenges faced by their communities, resilience and potential solutions.
- Review of 2023 achievements: this segment covered the work implemented by ICCUA cities in the past year, as featured in the 2023 ICCUA Annual Report.
- ICC Global updates: a presentation on global initiatives, the ICC Index practicalities, and the outcomes of the ICC Global Annual Meeting in November 2023.
- Planning for 2024: outlining objectives, identifying priorities, challenges, and exploring future cooperation with ICC Global members and other international partners to enhance support and exchange opportunities. The discussion also included a review of past practices and the planning of future activities, emphasizing the significance of sharing good practices.

It was noted that, amidst the backdrop of the ongoing conflict, applying for ICC intercity grants has become challenging for ICCUA cities, with stringent conditions and security concerns complicating the process. Nonetheless, the network is exploring collaborative applications for other international calls, underlining the proactive approach of its members to overcome financial and operational difficulties.

The question about certifying the intercultural competence of local ICC coordinators in Ukraine was raised during the meeting, which highlights the network's commitment to enhancing the quality and impact of its interventions. This effort aligns with the broader strategy to reinforce the Network's capacities.

ICC-Ukraine Projects for 2024

The partnership between the ICC city of Stavanger and the ICC Cities Network of Ukraine remains strong, demonstrating Stavanger's ongoing commitment to support the Network amidst the challenges of the ongoing conflict. This support has enabled vital initiatives that have profoundly and positively influenced the communities across our Network and has a slow become a source of hope, fostering resilience and solidarity within intercultural communities of Ukrainian ICC cities.

Building on the solid foundation of established partnership with Stavanger, the ICC-Ukraine is working to reinforce its positive impact on the recovery of its members through a series of well-defined, targeted intercultural projects. By the end of the first quarter, in close collaboration with the national coordinator, ICCUA members had designed a series of projects to address the specific needs of diverse communities enduring the hardships of war. These initiatives aim not only to provide immediate relief but also to lay the groundwork for long-term recovery, intercultural dialogue, meaningful interaction and inclusion. Through these projects, the ICC Ukraine also seeks to strengthen its role as a catalyst for peace, resilience, and intercultural solidarity. In particular, the network's members plan to focus on the following initiatives:



Picture: by the author

Empowerment Through Creative Expression: building on the success of the "Intercultural Art Oasis," this project aims to provide a safe space for children of internally-displaced persons (IDPs) and military families, using art as a means to express emotions, enhance resilience, and promote psychological well-being.

Building Bridges Startup Hub: expanding the "Set-up Start-up" initiative, that benefited from Stavanger's support previously, this project is designed to empower individuals who have lost their jobs due to the war, providing them with the resources and training necessary to launch their own businesses, fostering economic independence and community rebuilding.

Healing Harmonies: this initiative is offering music therapy sessions and workshops to enhance emotional healing, reduce trauma, and improve the mental health of children and adults affected by the war.

Artistic Resilience Workshops: derived from the "Colored Cities" initiative, this project will conduct art and craft workshops that not only serve therapeutic purposes but also aim to knit the community closer, celebrating diverse cultural heritages and fostering a shared sense of identity and resilience.

Cultural Threads of Unity: the project will focus on preserving and showcasing the rich tapestry of local and national cultures, promoting intercultural dialogue, and enhancing social cohesion among IDPs and local residents.

Community Integration and Empowerment Series : building on the "My Native Podilske" initiative, this series of workshops will focus on art therapy and cultural education, aimed at integrating internally displaced and local communities, preserving cultural heritage and traditions, and providing psychological support.

Engagement in International Initiatives

On March 1, representatives of the Ukrainian ICC Network and its national coordinator participated in an round table titled “Addressing education in the state language and languages of indigenous people and national minorities in Ukraine”. This on-line event was organized by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, in cooperation with the European Union and the Council of Europe’s project "Supporting the Implementation of European Standards on Combating Discrimination and the Rights of National Minorities in Ukraine."

Over 130 representatives from schools, educational institutions, national minorities, and embassies discussed the “Roadmap for Creating Conditions for Improving the Quality of Education in the State Language and Languages of Indigenous Peoples and National Minorities in General Secondary Education Institutions of Ukraine for 2023-2027.”



№	Назва	Описовий опис заходів	Відповідальні	Розпочаток	Завершення
Місія в Україні: Підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти (ОСВІТА ІНТЕРКУЛЬТУРНО)					
ЗАДАЧА 1: Підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти (ОСВІТА ІНТЕРКУЛЬТУРНО)					
1.1	Забезпечення кваліфікаційних вимог до педагогів у галузі мовної освіти, зокрема, у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин.	Організація спеціальних курсів підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин.	Міністерство освіти і науки України, Національний центр розвитку освіти (НЦРО), Інститут педагогіки НАПН України, Інститут мовної освіти НАПН України, Інститут мовної освіти національних меншин НАПН України.	Червень 2023 р.	Червень 2027 р.
1.2	Розроблення спеціальних курсів підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин, зокрема, у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин.	Розроблення спеціальних курсів підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин, зокрема, у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин.	Міністерство освіти і науки України, Національний центр розвитку освіти (НЦРО), Інститут педагогіки НАПН України, Інститут мовної освіти НАПН України, Інститут мовної освіти національних меншин НАПН України.	Червень 2023 р.	Червень 2027 р.
1.3	Розроблення спеціальних курсів підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин, зокрема, у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин.	Розроблення спеціальних курсів підвищення кваліфікації педагогів у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин, зокрема, у галузі мовної освіти національних меншин.	Міністерство освіти і науки України, Національний центр розвитку освіти (НЦРО), Інститут педагогіки НАПН України, Інститут мовної освіти НАПН України, Інститут мовної освіти національних меншин НАПН України.	Червень 2023 р.	Червень 2027 р.

This roadmap outlines measures to enhance language education for indigenous peoples and national minorities within the school system. The Deputy Minister of Education emphasized the importance of ensuring equal access to quality education for all Ukrainian children and committed to involving representatives of national minorities in consultations. Erlend Falch, Deputy Head of the Council of Europe Office in Kyiv, highlighted the Council's ongoing commitment to the protection of minorities, emphasizing human rights and cooperation. Discussions among teachers and minority representatives centered on the need for high-quality bilingual education, teacher training, and the creation of educational materials.



Participants stressed the importance of involving civil society in legislative changes and in monitoring their implementation. The Council of Europe reiterated its support for Ukraine's efforts, pledging ongoing assistance, expertise, and fostering dialogue among diverse sectors of society.

Young representatives from all Ukrainian ICC cities, who attended the Lublin Youth Summit in October 2023, continued their engagement in the NET-IDEA project. They participated by completing a post-event questionnaire, contributing to the creation of the first European Youth Manifesto on Anti-rumors, and attending a significant online meeting on February 10, 2024. This meeting was a collaborative effort to discuss and implement actions aligned with the Manifesto and to exchange local experiences related to youth activism. Participants included young individuals from sixteen cities across six countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Germany, and Poland), along with the Ukrainian group that had taken part in the Lublin summit, highlighting a broad and diverse engagement in this initiative.

In addition, Ukrainian ICC City of Vinnytsia maintains its active involvement with the Placemaking Europe initiative. Its representatives participate regularly in online meetings and seminars organized by Placemaking, and share newly acquired knowledge and insights with the members of the ICCUA Network.

Despite the challenging times, Ukrainian ICC cities continue to participate in the ICC annual surveys, including in 2024, ensuring their ongoing connection and contribution to the ICC Global Network.

Prospects for International Cooperation

The collaboration between Ukrainian Intercultural Cities and their European counterparts represents a significant step forward in advancing their intercultural cooperation skills, competencies, and capacity building, as well as contributing to Ukraine's restoration efforts. Presently, discussions between the national coordinator and the Italian Network of Intercultural Cities (ICEI) are in progress to provide Ukrainian cities with the opportunity to engage, within a specific framework, in forthcoming international initiatives promoted by the Italian Network. These initiatives are geared toward fostering intercultural dialogue and enhancing related competencies.

Despite some current constraints on direct participation, Ukrainian cities are actively exploring opportunities to engage in thematic exchanges with partner cities across Europe. Specifically, they are looking to potentially:

- Undertake initial thematic analyses to pinpoint key challenges and needs within their areas of concern and to participate in online surveys that collate data on competencies, priorities, needs, and challenges.
- Gain access to training resources and materials tailored for municipal and civil society organizations to strengthen their intercultural competence and diversity management skills.



- Join both online and in-person events for knowledge exchange, such as webinars and meetings, which are designed to discuss pertinent methodologies and tools essential for crafting effective intercultural policies and strategies.

These engagement activities may lay the foundation for more extensive future involvement by Ukrainian cities, aiming to reinforce their ability to actively contribute to and benefit from international initiatives.

Communication & Media Engagement

Throughout this period, ICCUA Network maintained its visibility and media engagement. Official ICCUA cities' websites and social media platforms were used effectively to share updates, ensuring consistency with the ICC Programme's guidelines. These efforts enhance our network's presence on the national and global stage.

Next steps

Within the first few months of the year, members of Ukrainian ICC Cities Network continued working together to address intercultural, social and economic challenges in their diverse communities, demonstrating strong commitment to human values and intercultural policy principles. The first annual meeting of the Network was crucial for designing a common strategy focused on addressing the needs of Ukraine's diverse communities and setting clear objectives.

The robust partnership with the city of Stavanger, Norway, forms the cornerstone of ICC-Ukraine's initiatives, supporting efforts that have had a significant positive impact on Ukrainian cities affected by the ongoing conflict. In 2024, ICCUA members, bolstered by Stavanger's support, will advance the intercultural projects they have designed.

The solid partnership with the city of Stavanger, Norway, serves as a backbone for ICC-Ukraine's initiatives, supporting community projects that have made significant positive impacts in affected by the ongoing conflict Ukrainian cities. In 2024, ICCUA members, with Stavanger support, will advance the intercultural projects they have designed to provide not only immediate relief but also to establish the basis for long-term recovery and intercultural solidarity. In particular, the Network will focus on implementing key initiatives, including Empowerment Through Creative Expression, Building Bridges Startup Hub, Healing Harmonies, Artistic Resilience Workshops, Cultural Threads of Unity, and the Community Integration and Empowerment.

Looking ahead, ICCUA will continue to navigate the complexities of the ongoing crisis while maintaining its commitment to intercultural values.