



Stage 3 – LEADERSHIP FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

Module 23 – CITY TO CITY COOPERATION (C2C): INITIATING THE PROCESS

The Leadership Academy is a learning and action programme for mayors, senior officials and elected representatives of local government.

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1 MODULE OVERVIEW

1.1 BACKGROUND

- City-to-City Cooperation (C2C) refers to decentralized cooperation (or diplomacy)¹ between two, or more, Local Authorities from different countries (i.e. International level, geographically distant, thus not bordering countries). Local Authorities engage in the process autonomously and tackle shared local issues (promoting the role of cities in international relations).
- C2C integrates the limits of traditional democracy and introduces new opportunities.
- The interaction between local and central governments in this perspective could be seen as a “competitive cooperation” since “there may be instance when city and state actors work for mutually exclusive policy outcomes and instances when city and state actors work for identical policy outcomes”².
- This module draws upon the knowledge, experience and materials of the Council of Europe on City-to-City Cooperation (see section 6. References). The module aims to introduce the topic of C2C to Local Authorities that have little or no experience with this type of cooperation, so to illustrate the potentialities of C2C for good local governance, as well as for local development. A thorough LAP on C2C will, however, be based on the “C2C Toolkit” and will follow, ideally, the steps indicated in section 7. Annex.

1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand the relevance of City-to-City Cooperation to promote local development opportunities, in turn ensuring the improvement of the overall delivery of good local governance.
- To gain an in-depth understanding of the key-elements, mechanisms, success factors of C2C.

1.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Participants understand the relevance of C2C for increasing local development opportunities as well as for delivering good governance.
- Participants are able to plan initial phases of C2C processes.

1.4 DURATION

- 180 minutes

¹ Decentralised diplomacy is not to be confused with parallel diplomacy (or underclass diplomacy). Rogier van der Pluijm argues that “the notion of parallel diplomacy is an unfortunate and rather inappropriate term, given that state and city actors do not necessarily “ride” along different diplomatic routes, but rather along the same route although in a different car”.

² A.Sizoo, 2008, p. 15

2 MODULE STRUCTURE

2.1 INTERACTIVE INTRODUCTION

- Participants are introduced to the key elements of C2C, according to the CoE Toolkit;
- Participants engage a facilitated debate on C2C, based on the inputs received and on their own experience/perceptions on the topic.

2.2 INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE 1 – IDENTIFYING SHARED PROBLEMS

- Participants are invited to think about problems they face in their municipalities, that might be overcome by means C2C;
- Participants share their views in a brief plenary session (not more than 1 min per person);
- Based on the identified problems, participants form “areas of cooperation” - operationally clustering the ideas and providing clusters with a title.

2.3 GROUP EXERCISE 1 – IDENTIFYING ADVANTAGES AND RISKS OF COOPERATION

- Participants are invited to work in thematic groups (i.e. corresponding to the identified clusters) and to brainstorm on possible advantages and risks of the cooperation.

2.4 GROUP EXERCISE 2 – IDENTIFYING THE GOALS AND RESOURCES OF COOPERATION

- Participants work in groups so to set achievable goals to their cooperation (e.g. considering previously identified risks to the cooperation, debating on existing and/or potential resources, etc.).

2.5 GROUP EXERCISE 3 – IDENTIFYING FUTURE PARTNERS OF THE COOPERATION

- Participants are invited to debate in their groups on what actors would need to be involved in the cooperation project, so that set goals may be achieved.

2.6 GROUP EXERCISE 4 – IDENTIFYING FUTURE COOPERATION STRUCTURES

- Participants are informed, in a plenary session, on existing/possible C2C structures;
- Participants are then invited to debate, in their groups, on the most appropriate structure for their C2C project.

2.7 PLENARY FEEDBACK

- Participants are invited to present their cooperation case, illustrating all aspects that were raised during the sessions of the day (i.e. obstacles and possible solutions, resources, partners, structure, etc) to the other groups.

3 WORKING DEFINITIONS

3.1 CITY TO CITY COOPERATION (C2C)³

City-to-City Cooperation is the full range of processes initiated by city institutions and civil society organisations engaging in international relations with the aim of representing themselves and their interest to one another, in order to initiate and develop cooperative actions to their mutual benefit. This definition allows for the identification of an operative framework within which C2C action can originate, develop and be assessed from a goal-oriented perspective.

C2C differs from Cross-Border Cooperation (ref. Module 22 – which involves Local Authorities from different bordering countries) and from Inter-Municipal Cooperation (ref. Module 21 – which interests Local Authorities from the same national context) as interests Local Authorities from different states at the international level.

3.2 LOCAL AUTHORITY⁴

For the purpose of LAP 'Local Authority' is interpreted as a public governing body, (directly or indirectly elected), possessing, within a given territory, as defined by law, a degree of autonomy from the central government and a set of competences to deliver public goods and services to citizens. Moreover, for the purpose of this module, Local Authority defines the first tier of local self-government.

³ ISIG. (2014). City-to-City Cooperation Toolkit. Council of Europe. Strasbourg

⁴ Toolkit Manual for Inter-Municipal Cooperation, Council of Europe/UNDP, 2010

4 KEY CONCEPTS

4.1 REASONS TO START A C2C PROCESS

There might be a range of different reasons to initiate a C2C process, motivated by different approaches:

- **UTILITARIAN APPROACH** – cities might undertake diplomacy initiatives in order to support and protect their interests. Serving the interests of the city and of its community implies the deployment of C2C actions in several contexts. In conflict situations, for instance, cities could engage in international relations in order to bring local issues and needs to the (international) public attention. Furthermore, cities can serve their own interests also entering into economic, cultural, or policy partnership agreements with other cities.
- **PARTICIPATION APPROACH** – cities can engage in C2C to respond to citizen activism, since community may force their municipal representatives to undertake activities and action in an international perspective.
- **SOLIDARITY APPROACH** – C2C engagement can be also the result of sheer solidarity bounds to which municipalities feel the need to respond (e.g. response of twin municipalities to a natural disaster – such as an earthquake – sending humanitarian aid).

Before actually engaging in C2C, cities have to consider a number of factors:

- Availability of Resources – both *tangible*, such as money, and *intangible*, such as the political culture or empowerment of staff.
- Legal and administrative frameworks – powers and competencies attributed to local authorities by national legislations determine the capacity and extent to which cities can engage in international affairs.

- Participation and representation – The relations between the central government and the local authorities are a key issue. The more the interests of cities are represented at the central government level, the lower the engagement of local authorities in C2C is expected to be. Nevertheless, favourable centre-periphery relation may also facilitate the central governments support to cities engagement in C2C.
- Centre-periphery divide – The geographical positioning of a city within a given state matters. The more so when the centre-periphery divide disproportionately affects border cities. Several case studies show that cities located in the core (socio-economic and political) regions of a State are more active and therefore more involved in international activities (Central regions). However, cities located in border areas tend to be more active in engaging in international relations across borders (Cross-border cooperation).
- International networks – Mobility and Connectivity matter a lot in hindering or favouring C2C. Case studies⁵ point out that where *transnational* and *trans-governmental* links cross the cities, such as in harbour city, municipal representatives are more engaged in international activities.

4.2 TYPES OF C2C

In addition to the degree of involvement, also the type of activities in which cities are involved can vary. With this regard, different experiences of C2C have so far pointed out five main areas of cooperation:

- Security
- Development

⁵ ISIG. (2014). City-to-City Cooperation Toolkit. Council of Europe. Strasbourg

- Economy
- Culture
- Representation

The following paragraphs briefly illustrate, for each of the five areas, advantages and obstacles related to their development within a C2C framework.

4.2.1 Security

Since the end of World War II, new actors have joined states in assisting local communities during the different phases of a conflict. This process has involved mainly NGOs, local associations and religious groups and cities.

The role of cities is manifold but is mainly structured in:

- Diplomatic activities contributing to conflict prevention (e.g. awareness campaigns);
- Activities to support the peace-making and peace-building processes during the conflict (e.g. international assistance programs);
- Post-conflict reconstruction initiatives (e.g. town-twinning initiatives or thematic conferences).

SECURITY – C2C ADVANTAGES

Engaging in C2C to solve security issues presents several advantages:

- Cities are closer to the problem and have a greater understanding of the contexts of intervention;
- Cities do not have armies, given that the army is within the state prerogatives, therefore they are less prone to see conflicts as military problems;
- Cities are often perceived as more neutral than states;
- Cities undertake actions that are more specific and concrete, different from purely idealistic initiatives (e.g. Town twinning experiences have limited impact in overall peace building process but represent a remarkable “best-practice” of concrete cooperation).

SECURITY – C2C OBSTACLES

However, there might be obstacles in a purely C2C approach:

- The need to align their initiatives to central government’s foreign policies could limit cities efforts;
- Cities in their post-conflict diplomatic activities often do not sufficiently take into account the extent to which the legacy of conflicts hinders democratic reform in post-conflict environments;
- A too high level of violence can undermine any effort;
- A certain level of rule of law is a precondition for any initiatives (i.e. local government does not exist independently from other governance institutions, thus if these are monopolized by factions involved in the conflict, a city is unlikely to be unaffected).

4.2.2 Development

Over the past 50 years, cities have increasingly become key actors in the field of development assistance. Two main strands of action can be identified:

- Humanitarian development assistance which occurs on the long-term crisis and includes activities such as international loans, grant-based cash transfers, building infrastructures, or information and technology-sharing, etc;
- Emergency development assistance in which cities intervene at the on-set emergencies through activities such as donations, availability of S&R support, etc.

The way in which these actions are carried out can vary. Cities can intervene either directly – through their own representatives and delegation – or indirectly by supporting other organizations working on site and administering international contacts on behalf of city governments.

DEVELOPMENT – C2C ADVANTAGES

Engaging in C2C to solve development issues presents several advantages:

- The proximity to the beneficiaries allows a better understanding of their needs and, in turn, allows to plan and manage aid measures more effectively;
- The structure of cities, more streamlined than that of international aid institutions, avoids bureaucratic delays and dispersion of resources;
- The permanent presence on the territory provides assistance with continuity and sustainability.

DEVELOPMENT – C2C OBSTACLES

However, there might be obstacles in a purely C2C approach:

- The need to coordinate cities initiatives with the actions taken by states could be a limit;
- The presence of other actors involved in assistance (e.g. NGOs, local associations, etc.) may cause coordination difficulties limiting the impact of initiatives;
- Foreign cities providing assistance to local municipalities sometimes underestimate the implications of the emergency.

4.2.3 Economy

Economy is one of the sectors in which C2C initiatives are constantly growing. It includes all activities aimed at promoting the economic life of cities. Two set of actions can be identified:

- Economic-pull activities aiming to attract resources (tourists, businesses, organizations, events). Interest for this kind of initiative is increasing and many cities, both metropolises, such as New York and London, and smaller cities have established a special economic office dedicated to attracting capital in various forms to the city in order to enhance their strategic position. An increasingly widespread initiative in this context is the city branding⁶ that applies the principles of marketing to the city which is considered as a brand to be sold on the market⁷.

⁶ S. Tayebi, 2006

⁷ F. Minelli

- Economy-push activities. These consist in exporting excellence services (and knowledge) or entering into partnership agreements with other cities with whom they share business sectors (e.g. agreements between port cities, tourist destinations, etc.). Although cities undertake this kind of activity mostly for economic profits, through the exchange of best practices, cities have also a gain in terms of human capital with a multiplier effect on other sectors of city governance (i.e. City branding and city marketing).

ECONOMY – C2C ADVANTAGES

Engaging in C2C to solve economy issues presents several advantages:

- Exporting services and knowledge to other cities or entering into partnership with them in order to share best practices, represent a long-term tool for human resource policy;
- New business and employment opportunities (many cities have an office dedicated to attract external capital), improve city attractiveness resulting in higher returns on investment;
- Strengthening the city identity (i.e. cities develop a long-term vision for themselves by thinking about what the city is, what the city wants to be and how it wants to get there);
- Enhancing citizens sense of belonging to their own city (i.e. inhabitants experience a new sense of pride and purpose).

ECONOMY – C2C OBSTACLES

However, there might be obstacles in a purely C2C approach:

- Losing the city traditional identity in favour of economic interests (i.e. the brand message must remain rooted in the true story of the city);
- Spreading of stereotypes (i.e. sometimes the rhetoric prevails over reality);
- City branding is limited to a short-, mid-term perspective.

4.2.4 Culture

Although the role of culture in the development of cities and as a tool to promote international democracy has been increasingly recognized, the potential of C2C in these fields is not yet fully achieved.

So far, the majority of cultural initiatives implemented are linked to:

- Cultural exchanges between cities;
- Cross-border cultural events;
- Cross-border competitions;
- Drafting of guidelines on how to promote cultural development.

CULTURE – C2C ADVANTAGES

Engaging in C2C to solve culture issues presents several advantages:

- Creating international networks through culture initiatives contributes to increase awareness that culture is a development strategy for cities which aim to enhance economic gains and to improve their position in the world;
- Enhancing the cultural sector contributes to the creation of employment, urban redevelopment and social inclusion;
- Cultural initiatives contribute to raising the awareness of communities towards some key local issues concerning local (tangible and intangible) resources. In addition, the pervasive character of culture in everyday life ensures that these campaigns are extensive and reach out for different target groups.

CULTURE – C2C OBSTACLES

However, there might be obstacles in a purely C2C approach:

- The capacity of a city to propose and implement cultural initiatives is closely influenced by the political culture of its representatives;
- Cultural initiatives often suffer from the lack of funds. Contrary to the idea that culture is a vector for development, in a

crisis local governments react by operating cuts in the cultural sector.

4.2.5 Representation

This activity is very similar to the tasks of traditional diplomacy and includes all initiatives and processes through which cities can get into the international arena and have voice in decision-making processes.

Such representation activities may be more or less structured. For instance, within EU and CoE (CoE) cities participation is encouraged through *ad hoc* bodies such as the Committee of the Regions of the European Union or the Chamber of Local Authorities.

The activities are those traditionally carried out by diplomatic bodies:

- Taking part in tables of consultation to voice instances of municipalities and local communities;
- Lobbying on some sensitive issues;
- Discussing the political agenda.

REPRESENTATION – C2C ADVANTAGES

Engaging in C2C to solve representation issues presents several advantages:

- The proximity of municipalities to communities provides a better understanding of local issues which, in turn, allows for more effective proposals to be included in the political agenda;
- The lobbying activities of groups of cities contribute to share communal approach by adopting one voice and, in turn, encourage social cohesion between cities.

REPRESENTATION – C2C OBSTACLES

However, there might be obstacles in a purely C2C approach:

- Municipalities may not be equally represented within tables of consultation;
- International organizations such as the EU and the UN are still primarily the

domain of states that are reluctant to share their power.

4.3 INITIATING A C2C PROCESS IN 5 STEPS

In order to initiate a C2C process, the following steps are suggested:

4.3.1 STEP 1 - Setting the basis for C2C

The first step of C2C is setting the basis of the future cooperation, which mainly refers to the identification (and understanding) of both advantages and risks of the future cooperation.

Advantages to be considered:

- improving visibility and capacity to act internationally;
- strengthening of a cooperative attitude in policy-makers;
- increase access to external funds (e.g. European Programmes).

Risks to be considered:

- slowing down of the decisional process;
- lack of democratic control.

The analysis advantages vs risks must be undertaken before initiating the process of cooperation. Moreover, the analysis should be developed by all the involved Local Authorities. It is important that all Local Authorities are aware of the risks, thus preventing them to develop further in to concrete obstacles of the future cooperation.

4.3.2 STEP 2 - Setting the pace of cooperation

When starting to design an action of C2C, it is important to understand the possible long-term evolution of the project. Relevant questions to answer are:

- Will this project be sustainable?
- Can this project be expanded upon?
- Is there the interest to make the C2C effort an ongoing feature of the administration?
- Are the partners willing and able to be involved in a long-term effort?

The questions help to define the long-term strategy linked to the C2C initiative, and can help

in defining key aspects of the project, such as the partners involved and the economic self-sufficiency of the action.

4.3.3 STEP 3 - Setting the goals for cooperation

The following step in designing a C2C action is setting the goals for the cooperation. It is important that the partners share the same vision about:

- Problems;
- Goals;
- Opportunities.

Once problems and goals are identified, that is the “why” of the project, opportunities can be identified, that is the “how”.

Shared opportunities can be:

- Availability of resources (economical or otherwise);
- Available legal or institutional frameworks.

The partners must be willing to share resources, and the framework they operate in must allow them to initiate a C2C project.

4.3.4 STEP 4 - Identifying actors, competencies and legal provisions

The next step in designing a C2C action is understanding the involved actors and their competencies.

In this regard, it is important to have a clear picture of every stakeholder involved, together with the role that they will play within the project.

A map of the involved stakeholders should contain the following information:

- Name of the stakeholder;
- Category they belong to (municipality, civil society, central government, Local Government Association, NGO, other);
- Role within the project;
- Legal basis for their action (i.e., if their legal status explicitly state that they can perform a certain function).

This information will allow for a clearer picture of the stakeholders and the possible partners.

4.3.5 STEP 5 - Identifying C2C structures

Another step in designing a C2C action is understanding the level of institutionalization that the C2C activity will have:

- Informal: agreements between partners do not have a formal legal basis;
- Formal: agreements between partners have a formal legal basis.

Informal C2C is not necessarily less effective than the formal one: strategies can be decided upon to tackle shared problems, and decisions can be

reached regarding solutions to existing issues. Informal C2C can also be faster than formal C2C, allowing to take action without the bureaucratic times of creating contracts.

Formal C2C can take several forms, from contracts binding the parties to the creation of subjects with legal status whose mission is the implementation of the C2C initiative. Examples of formal C2C are those projects created using European funds, which require official partnership.

5 EXERCISES

5.1 EXERCISE 1 – INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE 1 – IDENTIFYING SHARED PROBLEMS

- Think in silence about problems affecting your municipality, considering the following questions:
 - What are the problems affecting my area?
 - Are these problems due to causes internal to my municipality, or do they have external roots?
 - If they have internal causes, what other municipalities have or have faced similar problems?
 - If they have external roots, what other municipalities are affected by them?
 - Write your ideas and refer them to the group in the plenary session facilitated by the trainer.
 - Contribute to the debate so to identify clusters and clusters titles.
- The defined scenario must include:
 - Geographical indications (e.g. is the CB area situated by the sea, in the mountains, how many countries are included in the border area, etc)
 - Cultural indications (e.g. how many communities inhabit the area? Are there minorities, etc)
 - Socio-economic indications (e.g. what is the demography of the CB area? What are the main economic activities in the area? etc.)
 - Cross-border Cooperation Process indications (e.g. is there a CBC process undergoing in the area? Is the CBC formal or informal? etc)

OUTPUT – cardboard with clusters of “shared problems” and titles

5.2 EXERCISE 2 - GROUP EXERCISE 1 – IDENTIFYING RISKS AND ADVANTAGES OF THE COOPERATION

- Choose a cluster which most represents the problems of your municipality.
- Debate in the group on the advantages of tackling the shared problem in cooperation.
- Debate in the group on possible risks to the future cooperation, as well as on possible solutions.

OUTPUT – the scenario of the C2C project/case is completed by a short description of the advantages/risks and possible solutions to prevent risks.

5.3 EXERCISE 3 - GROUP EXERCISE 2 – IDENTIFYING GOALS AND RESOURCES FOR THE COOPERATION

- Debate within the group around future goals of the cooperation.
- Consider risks, opportunities of goals when debating. Is the set goal achievable? Is it a SMART goal?

OUTPUT – the scenario of the C2C project/case is completed with information about goals and resources.

5.4 EXERCISE 4- GROUP EXERCISE 3 – IDENTIFYING FUTURE PARTNERS OF THE COOPERATION

- Debate within the group around possible partners to include in the C2C partnership.
- Draw a map of your C2C partnership, by indicating for each partner:
 - Name of the stakeholder;
 - Category they belong to (municipality, civil society, central government, Local Government Association, NGO, other);
 - Role within the project;
 - Legal basis for their action (i.e. if their legal status explicitly state that they can perform a certain function).

OUTPUT – the scenario of the C2C project/case is completed with information about partners.

5.5 EXERCISE 5- GROUP EXERCISE 4 – IDENTIFYING FUTURE STRUCTURE OF THE COOPERATION

- Debate within the group around the possible structure that the C2C relation may take.

OUTPUT – the scenario of the C2C project/case is completed with information about the structure.

5.6 PLENARY FEEDBACK

- Select a representative of the group and prepare together a 5 min presentation of your C2C case/project.
- Share the information with the other groups so to get more feedbacks.

6 REFERENCES

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6.1 OTHER READINGS

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7 ANNEX

Structure of a 2-3 days LAP Stage on City-to-City Cooperation, based on the “C2C Toolkit”:

<i>Selection procedures and criteria</i>	<p>Ideally, participants to the CBC training courses should be involved in a selection/assessment procedure, aimed at supporting the trainer in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing the level of interest of participants to the course; • Assessing the level of knowledge of the participants on CBC processes; • Assessing the level of engagement of participants in C2C processes; • Assessing the level of familiarity with participatory methods and tools (e.g. brainstorming, focus group, etc). <p>Such information may be gathered by the trainer by means of a Form/questionnaire, as a condition for subscription to the training course.</p> <p>The purpose of the assessment is to adapt/design the training course based on the potentialities/expectations of the trainees.</p>
<i>Participants distribution</i>	<p>Ideally, the working group should have an even distribution of participants with reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Nationality • Position • Stakeholder category (i.e. representatives of Local Authorities, Civil Society Organizations, Cross-border bodies/structures, etc)
<i>Number of participants</i>	<p>Ideally, the working group for one training course should not exceed 20 participants.</p>
<i>Number of trainers</i>	<p>Ideally each course should be implemented by 2 trainers, or 1 trainer 1 facilitator.</p>
<i>Working materials</i>	<p>For each working day participants should be provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-it (i.e. different colours and/or shapes) • Markers (i.e. black) • Coloured paper (i.e. minimum 6 colours)
<i>Setting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room for plenary sessions • At least 3 different rooms/environments that allow for the development of group activities • Movable chairs so to allow for different settings • Video-projector • Flip chart
<i>Total duration</i>	<p>Preparation - 5 working days (8 hours each) Implementation – 5 working days (8 hours each)</p>

<i>Module</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Duration</i>
<i>Preparatory activity for trainers</i>	0.1. Research on the C2C context in which the course is developed 0.2. Research on trainees – needs and expectations (i.e. by means of form/questionnaire) 0.3. Preparation of materials 0.4. Preliminary contacts with participants	5 w/days
<i>Module 1 – UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS (UnderstandingC2C)</i>	2.1. Presentation/lecture on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHAT IS C2C (i.e. Theoretical and Legal framework); • HOW TO INITIATE C2C – 5 STEPS (i.e. Setting the basis, Setting the pace, Setting the goals, Identifying actors, competences and legal provisions, Identifying the legal framework, Identifying C2C structures). • ANALYTICAL STEPS FOR C2C 	1-2 hours
<i>Module 2 – UNDERSTANDING THE OPPORTUNITIES (Mapping obstacles to find solutions)</i>	3.1. Presentation/lecture on C2C opportunities (i.e. funding opportunities within EU programmes or International Organizations programmes – for each course the opportunities will be selected based on the eligibility criteria of the participants – such as typology of stakeholder, geographic area, etc)	1 hours
	3.2. Workshop (i.e. working groups activity): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of C2C opportunity for each group within the course 	1 hours
<i>Module 3 – PREPARING A C2C PROJECT PROPOSAL (within 2 or more working groups)</i>	4.1. Workshop (i.e. working groups activity) Identifying the shared problems/obstacles	2 days (minimum)
	4.2. Identifying possible solutions	
	4.3. Identifying possible actions	
	4.4. Identifying planned results	
	4.5. Developing the C2C project proposal (i.e. based on the other sessions, a Log Frame will be elaborated, which will stand at the basis of future proposals for the working-group)	