



ICC International Coordinators' Meeting

16-17 November 2022

Reggio Emilia, Italy

MEETING REPORT

Introduction

Cities that are members of the international Intercultural Cities (ICC) network hold coordination meetings once a year to take stock of achievements, put forward new challenges, and prepare the next programme of work with a view to further develop both the intercultural cities' network and the intercultural integration policy model.

This year, the meeting was hosted by the city of Reggio Emilia in the *Palazzo del Comune*. The programme included a workshop to test the pilot tool on equality data collection and analysis to prevent and address systemic discrimination, and a hybrid session on good practice and inspiring ideas.

The list of participants to this year's meeting can be found in **Appendix II**.

16 November – Part I

Opening of the session



Lucca Vecchi, Mayor of Reggio Emilia, welcomed the ICC international coordinators and underlined the importance of intercultural policies for the city and membership of the Intercultural Cities Network. Over the past 20 years, 25 000 people from 120 countries settled in Reggio Emilia, to meet this challenge the city has invested in active intercultural policies and inter-religious dialogue. The city is now launching a new plan against racial discrimination, the first city in Italy to directly tackle this challenge.

Overview of the past year

Through a general presentation the ICC team provided feedback on the implementation of the ICC programme in 2022. It was emphasised that the ICC programme largely builds on member cities' needs and contributions to ensure the model keeps evolving and building capacity.

In 2022¹ [membership](#) increased to 157, with six new cities: Wroclaw (Poland), Barcelos, Famalicão, Vila Verde, (Portugal), and Valladolid, Manlleu (Spain). The membership process was also initiated in five other cities. New members mean more richness and more good practices to share, but also entails a need to adapt services and tools to new contexts and to an ever-increasing size of the ICC network.

Nine [index reports](#) and one expert visit were completed over the year, and [four policy papers](#) published as well as a study visit, webinars and in person and online trainings. The [online training course and tools](#) were revamped and rehomed on the ICC website.

In 2022, particular attention was paid to supporting the Ukrainian members through the [Declaration of mayors](#), network meeting for peer support and tools for Polish cities. Kseniya Khovanova Rubicondo, Ukrainian ICC Network Coordinator expressed the appreciation of the Ukrainian cities for the support of the network and in particular Polish cities and citizens, Mexico City and Stavanger. The Ukrainian cities still wish to work on projects with other ICC cities.



During the presentation on diagnostic and profiling, Daniel De Torres Barderi, Spanish ICC Network (RECI) Director, provided an update on the European Pact for Integration project which has been finalised. It was a very good project providing participating cities with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the core principles of interculturalism.

RECI has also been working on simplifying the assessment of impact indicators: the ICC Index is useful to show the level of commitment, but to measure progress towards making diversity an advantage? RECI benefitted from expert support to produce a list of realistic and tangible ideas of impact

¹ Information included in this report relates to figures as of 16 November 2022.

indicators for each of the ICC core principle. Work is finishing now; the result is more humble than initially foreseen, but realistic and will be shared with the whole network in 2023. One example of an indicator: public libraries are usually a photography of the diversity as they have books in different languages, but it is the number of books and resources borrowed in different languages over a certain period of time that may tell you whether diversity is active.

During the presentation on intercity grants, Rosaria De Paoli, Italian ICC Network Coordinator spoke about the collaboration between Pontedera and Olbia (Italy) on second generation youth, helping them identify what they want from local public policies. Round tables and training have already been carried out. The cities also organised the “New generations festival” (17-19 November). The festival aims to create a space for discussion on the identities of young people of foreign origin, born or raised in Italy. The Ministry of Equal Opportunities facilitated the participation of representatives of the CONGI New Generations National Coordination, which meant that young people from different parts of Italy could also participate. The general evaluation of the grant is very positive. It was proposed that **a short meeting between coordinators of national networks having benefitted from ICC grants for work with youth could be organised to further discuss and share the results of their work next year.**

The ICC joint projects with DG Reform in Cyprus and Finland were presented including their aim to help establish multilevel governance for integration policies in these countries. The past achievements and future work of the Committee of experts on intercultural integration of migrants (ADI-INT) was also presented, underlining its potentially positive implication for the cities.

16 November – Part 2

Advancing equality through addressing discrimination, including systemic discrimination

Eleonora Costantini, International ICC coordinator for the city of Modena (Italy) gave a presentation on the city’s **experience in the ITA.CA project.**

The ITACA project is led by the Italian Intercultural Cities Network (ICEI) with partners such as the Municipality of Modena, Municipality of Reggio Emilia, Mondinsieme Foundation, ISMU - Foundation for Initiatives and Study on Multiethnicity Modena and Reggio Emilia; 7 medium and small sized Italian cities participate in the project. The goals are to strengthen the role of cities in fighting against discrimination and to promote public and private cooperation.

Thanks to the ITACA project, Modena:

- Set-up an interdepartmental intercultural team whose members have been trained on interculturalism and assessed anti-discrimination.
- Basic training on anti-discrimination was carried out for all employees, for directors, and for civil society organisations.
- The Charter for Modena intercultural city was written together with associations. At the end of the project, it will be presented to the intercultural team and the city council.

Learnings from the ITACA project:

- Addressing the issue of discrimination from the perspective of interculturalism is efficient.
- Training and regular meetings foster engagement and participation.

- Time and coordination is needed to implement a bottom-up approach with municipal organisations.
- Civil society involvement is complicated: not all of them find the intercultural approach relevant and some focus on individual issues.

Luca Colombo, then presented **“Reggio Emilia’s action plan against discrimination”** In Italy – so as in many countries, racism is underestimated and sometimes normalised. It is not often discussed and there is no national strategy to deal with it. Reggio Emilia decided to work on a local action plan against discrimination that would help protect victims and fight racism, but also complement and integrate existing municipal anti-discrimination policies, with a cross-cutting and intersectional approach. The aim is to connect it to existing plans and inter-institutional protocols for combating discrimination related to gender, sexual orientation, disability that do not cover racism.

The development of the plan is based on input from two sources:

- EU funded projects (ITACA and SUPER). For instance, the cities of Reggio Emilia, Turin and Bologna will propose a national strategy to combat racism, xenophobia and hate crimes (SUPER project). Collaboration with law enforcement and with the Observatory for Security Against Discriminatory Acts is set up with regards to action on hate crimes.
- An interdepartmental working group for a cross-cutting approach, involving also external actors such as the intercultural centre and the local police.

The process of development is participatory and multilevel, as it involves municipal staff, local stakeholders and decision-makers. For the municipality staff, including law enforcement, training was held with mixed groups. Local stakeholders were involved through community events to share the ongoing work and to gather proposals for the action plan. Decision-makers are involved with discussing the first draft of the action plan in city council.

The main findings so far are:

- Discrimination and racism are very evident in society but are under-reported so there is no data available.
- There is a tendency to normalise micro-aggressions, exclusions, and discriminatory acts.
- Main areas of discrimination include housing, access to information and services, opportunities open to young citizens, education, employment.
- Civil society is strong and wishes to collaborate with the municipality on this.

The plan will include: a general framework (principles, regulatory references, etc.), a local framework (goals and integration in municipal policies), actions, a glossary and recommendations.

According to the plan, actions will be marked by transversality, participation, and political-administrative responsibility: anti-discrimination will be enshrined in the municipal charter, an anti-racist network will be set up, a periodic audit of municipal anti-discrimination policies will be carried out, cooperation with other local institutions will be sought.

Training of municipal staff on anti-discrimination and interculturality will be organised. Awareness raising will also be important: anti-racist pride on 21 May, communication around valuing diversity, etc. Services to citizens will also be reinforced: the anti-discrimination desk will be enhanced (working hours, network with local CSOs to provide assistance, open antennas, etc.), information on rights and services will be shared in many languages and be accessible, intercultural mediation will be promoted (professionals and second generations), CSOs and municipal services will facilitate access to information and services for foreign-born residents, dialogue will be established with relevant actors

regarding housing, education (intercultural educational pact, training, workshops) and employment (Diversity Lab on the benefit of diversity for economic development).

To improve data collection of acts of discrimination, it will be encouraged to report them (including through CSOs) and an observatory will be established. Lastly, the interdepartmental intercultural working groups shall be tasked with monitoring the implementation of the action plan and its integration within all municipal anti-discrimination policies.

The Intercultural Cities expert, Niall Crowley, ran a **“Training session on data collection to identify and prevent systemic discrimination”** for the ICC coordinators to test the pilot tool and provide feedback on the concepts and approaches developed for the training manual on data collection and analysis to identify and prevent systemic discrimination.

After a presentation of the core concepts involved, participants were divided into groups and reflected upon the challenges of equality data collection (political will, participation, representativeness, use made of the data, etc.).

The participants shared their feedback on the training:

- The Canton of Neuchâtel mentioned that it would be useful to talk more about the possible resistance in the processes which can make agents feel helpless. What discourse should they adopt in such cases? The trainer highlighted that legislation mentioning statutory duties helps with resistance.
- Montréal highlighted that action against systemic discrimination should always be linked with interculturalism.
- Mexico noted that it is important to have strategies, but they have to be founded in the laws (which sometimes includes statutory duties) and that data is open to interpretation.
- RECI underlined that sometimes the laws are discriminatory. In those cases, what can the city level do? Sometimes you need data, but you can also do things to try to change things despite the laws. The trainer answered that data is not a prerequisite but an assistance.
- Reykjavik noted that when analysing data, it often does not coincide with one’s perception. The city’s gender budgeting assessment of the money spent on COVID actions showed how important it is to have numbers to fight against discrimination.
- The Ukraine network coordinator highlighted that it can be a challenge to get people to participate when collecting data, and the importance of representativeness for data collection, easy to keep going back to the same people and it is important to reach those who are not usually included.

17 November – Part 3

Learning from peers – Good practice and inspiring ideas (hybrid session)

This session was organised in a hybrid in-person / online format to share good and inspirational practices/policies from members cities on two main topics: 1) Multilingualism and language policies; 2) digital innovation and participation. The working languages were English, French and Japanese.

Part I - Multilingualism and language policies in Europe and Japan: two-way inspiration

The aim of this session was to allow Experts and city representatives from Japan and Europe to share knowledge and experience on the topic of multilingualism and language policies and on how these constitute an integral part of ICC member cities' efforts to apply the intercultural integration model.



Takahiko Ueno, Junior Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Study of Cultures, Faculty of Letters, Tsuru University, Tsuru (Japan) made a presentation on **“Introduction on interculturalism in Japan”**.

Hiroki Furuhashi, Chief Clerk, International Affairs Division, City Planning & Coordinating Department, Hamamatsu (Japan) presented **“Hamamatsu: A Vision for an Intercultural City and Multilingual Support”**.

Keizo Yamawaki, Professor, School of Global Japanese Studies, Meiji University, Tokyo (Japan) gave a presentation on **“Plain Japanese”**.

Renate Litleskare, Counsellor/teacher, Learning centre for Norwegian and social science, Bergen (Norway) gave a presentation on the **“Bergen experience in using “mother tongue” for assisted language learning”**.

Daniele Marchi, Deputy Mayor on Intercultural Dialogue, Reggio Emilia (Italy) gave a presentation on **“Initiatives**

undertaken to promote learning of migrant languages by the receiving communities in Reggio Emilia”.

There was a discussion on the definition of “mother tongue”, many families speak several languages at home. In Iceland they refer to the “family language”. In Bergen they use the term “mother tongue” but in fact it is the language they spoke as small children and they may now know another better. In some countries it is often considered to be the language of school and peers.

It was concluded that there are different ways of approaching the multilingualism and it can depend on the variety of languages at the local level, as well as national policies. The challenges are common between cities. If you include multilingualism in your intercultural strategy, it becomes an integrative part of it. It is not only a question of considering the diversity of languages but also about involving the speakers in initiatives. It is also about dignifying the languages of migrants. Prejudice around some languages should be eradicated. Migrant languages should be valorised and seen as an asset. They should feel safe and proud in expressing themselves in their languages.

Part II – Digital innovation to increase participation

Barry Cusack, Project Officer and Intercultural Cities Coordinator, Jabu Phiri, Volunteer Services Coordinator, from the Stronger Communities team in Bradford Council (United Kingdom) and Peter Kemp, Founder of Citizen Coin Bradford presented and answered questions on the [Citizen Coin App](#).

The Citizen Coin scheme aims to recognise, value and reward people for doing social good in their local community. People earn digital discount coins via a mobile app. The app records all activity, produces data reports for the individuals, organisations, businesses, and the local authority. Local retailers use it to promote their businesses and citizens can get discounts. It is particularly useful for low-income families, especially in this economic crisis times as they can get discounted food, clothes,

beauty services and leisure activities. The app brings together different people who would not normally mix, it improves community relationships. Intercultural benefits are at the heart of Bradford's use of Citizen Coin.

The app is linked with a PhD study about social value at Bradford University. In 18 months, 1 751 people have exchanged 10 522 coins generating a social value of over 750 000 GBP. The app can help with social insertion, help people generate a social CV, they can print a CV of their volunteer work from their data in the app. Only the individuals can access their own data, it is protected. The data is never sold, the local authorities only have access to macro data, it cannot be traced to an individual. Data is used by local authorities, for example they can direct participation in areas where there are gaps. The data can also support local authorities in asking for funding from national organisations.

The ambitions for the app centre around equality, diversity and interaction: understand and celebrate diversity, help young people's employment, make it even more accessible. There is always room for improvement and there is huge potential. For the food crisis they focused on areas with deprivation: schools, areas, etc. Bradford will use citizen coin to raise awareness about where to get food, warmth in the current crisis of energy and economy.

400 000 GBP was spent on development of the app before Bradford Council got on board. Over the past two years it costs approximately 35 000 GBP a year for Bradford City Council. Each local authority pays for the next round of technological development (for example adding language versions).

The app enables Bradford Council to target its support to the voluntary sector, and identify weaknesses.

17 November – Part 4

Towards the strategic development of the Intercultural Cities programme

The findings and recommendations of the draft ICC evaluation report, to which ICC coordinators and experts greatly contributed, were presented and discussed during this session. The findings include:

- The programme helped some cities with addressing a concrete problem.
- This has led to systemic approach of interculturalism which was mainstreamed throughout the organisation.
- Many cities say ICC is important for city image – it opens door for funding
- It was difficult to identify the most valued services and tools. Overall, the Index was highly prioritised, as well as experts visits and recommendations for strategy development. Lastly networking and peer to peer experience were considered useful. Several interviewees said it would be helpful to also be paired with cities and to meet regularly.
- The findings are not yet consistent, the survey produced very different feedback to the interviews. 40 interviews were held but 70 stakeholders had been approached.
- Concerning good practice examples, approx. 420 good practices were submitted or drafted by the ICC Unit in the period 2016-2022. Again, there are many disparities: 27 cities have submitted only 1 good practice and 1 city has submitted 27 good practices.
- The goals of the ICC programme are not sufficiently clear to everyone and it is hard for a few cities to justify membership fee.
- There are a lot of tools to choose from, but coordinators don't always find them easily.
- Some members are struggling with institutionalisation of intercultural principles due to resource constraints, lack of time, staff rotation, etc.

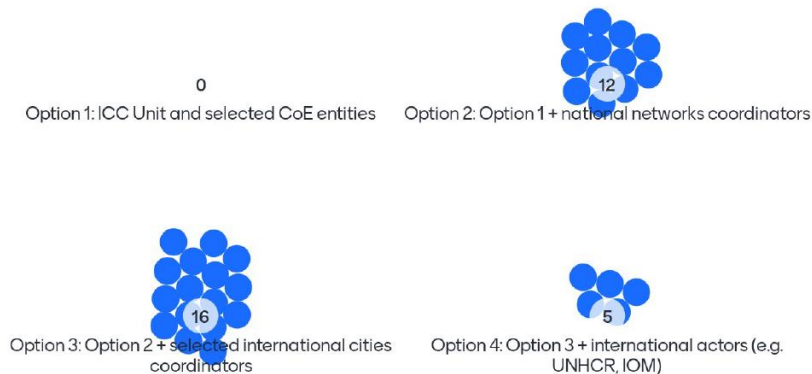
- National network coordination is – in some cases - under resourced, and would need more support and training in engaging with members.

The recommendations are strategic and operational, and include:

- Establishing a Steering Committee.
- Mainstreaming the ICC within the Council of Europe and externally through exchanges with national authorities, other city networks, work with EU and UN agencies in some regions where there is no ICC presence, etc.
- Prioritising tools and services which support index and emergency situations.
- Creating a simplified assessment tool for cities to use before doing the full index, or periodically between Index assessments.
- National networks have varying levels of activity. It might be useful to re-evaluate their commitment. The programme is not a crutch to a network but should act as a catalyst.
- National network coordinators would benefit from more support and training in engaging in members.
- Engagement works best when a group of people in a city are involved with the ICC programme. It is more sustainable and promotes cross sector working.
- The programme, its objectives and benefits, as well as functioning should be better presented.
- Tools and services could be packaged better – archive some of the resources – make more use of others such as good practice examples.
- Offering follow-up to the index assessment would further reinforce the benefit of the ICC programme.

After the presentation, participants’ feedback and feelings were collected through Mentimeter polls.

If a ICC Programme Steering Committee would be established, what should be its composition?



Why would my city volunteer to be a member of the ICC Programme Steering Committee?

Mentimeter



to show the city engagement for interculturality




to guide the thematic orientation of the programme



to contribute to decision-making on the tools and services to be developed

What might prevent my city from participating?



Lack of political support



Lack of interest



Lack of time



I don't see the added value of member cities to be part of the ICC Programme Steering Committee

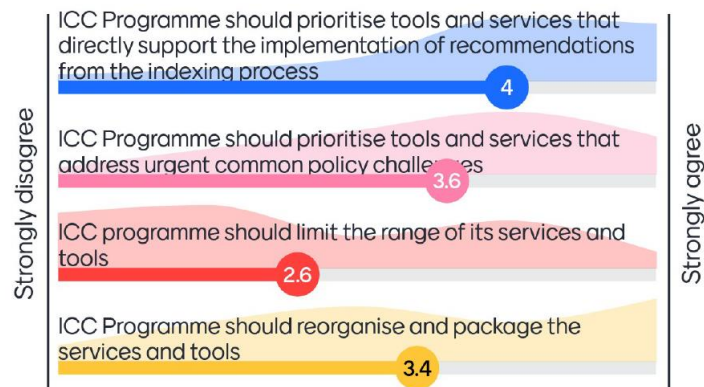
Comments of participants:

- Option 2 has a high number of votes, why? National coordinators represent more cities, including some members cities that are international. At the same time, they don't participate in the Annual meeting of international coordinators, which is where decisions on way forward are taken.
- Option 4 would be more efficient to mainstream the intercultural approach. At the same time, it would be strange to systematically invite external bodies to a Steering Committee where decisions are taken.
- Questions were raised about the purpose and objective of the steering committee, as well as the additional workload it may represent.
- It is always the same people that are active, including those who participate in the annual meeting. Is a new format necessary?

On prioritising ICC work, comments from participants differed:

- Some highlighted the need to focus on emergencies while other stressed that interculturalism requires a long-term approach which risks being put at stake by emergencies. For many, the support given to Ukraine should be sustained but remain exceptional, the programme should continue focussing on the long-run.
- Some cities declared they do not wish less services, they want what is on offer more clearly explained and classified. In general the variety of tools is considered a value of the ICC programme, but a lot of cities confessed are not ready to use the tools or to find them. The question of whether it is appropriate for the ICC team to devote time and resources in producing material that is not fully exploited needs to be posed.

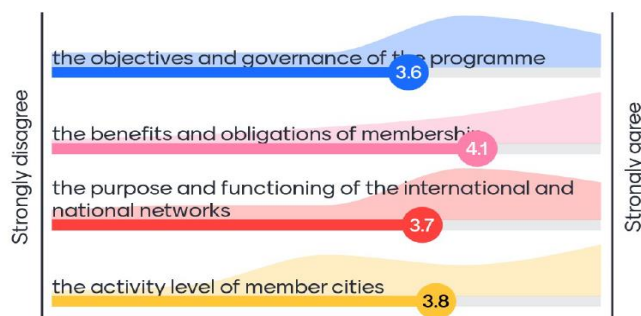
How do you rate the following statements on the ICC tools and services?



Comments:

- Results show there are very little difference in the scores, which makes it difficult to take decisions.
- One step would be to take the index as the guiding tool for future reorientation of work.

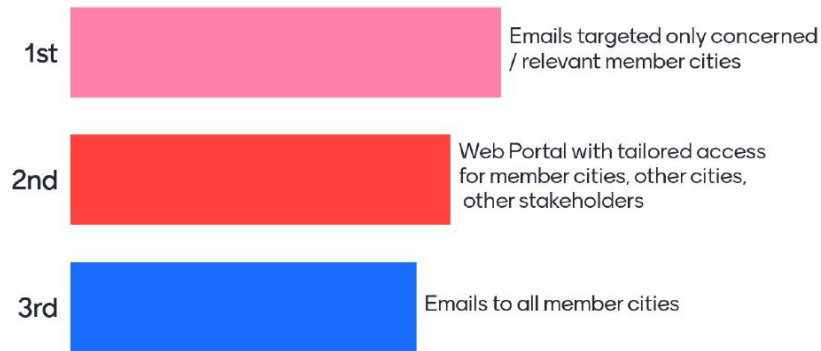
The engagement of member cities would be improved if the following were clearly presented:



Comments:

- It was highlighted that most of the elements above are clearly spelt in the ICC Statement of Intent, so as the members' obligations. The problem is that member cities do not go back to this important founding document after having signed it.

Regular communications from the ICC to member cities should use:



Comments:

- Given the little feedback received by the ICC Team from member cities, it is difficult for the Unit to tailor its communication. Besides, option 1 presents the risk for cities to miss important information, including invitations to events that may be of interest for them. Option 2 is interesting but – taken alone – it presents the risk for members to forget to consult the restricted website and again miss important information. Option 3 is the current one, and presents the disadvantage for ICC coordinators to receive also correspondence which is not necessarily of interest for them.
- One option would be for cities to indicate themselves what they want to be contacted about.

What is your main takeaway of the ICC evaluation?

Mentimeter

Learning and networking

I think the process is encouraging and it shows that ICC is serious about wanting to do better and to consult its members. I am surprised that the national networks need more support and that there might be information overload on the website.

It is very useful to have this evaluation for future strategy formulation of the ICC Programme. It raised some questions, e.g. about whether the Steering Committee is the best option for the future of the programme management, or if there are alterna

Very enriching session and I found that I should be more interactive with the ICC team and learnt Aldo how to make the most of the program at home administration.

The discussions were lively, and participants shared interesting observations and ideas that will be considered by the ICC programme in its management response to the evaluation recommendations. Namely:

- 1) The interactive charts are appreciated. However, the data related to original index is now outdated and it might make sense to get rid of it. Data could also be broken down into policy sections so that the competitiveness feeling is lessened (as opposed to the aggregated results). They could also display good practices.
- 2) Some cities realised how little engagement the ICC programme gets from them. For instance, when it comes to sharing good practices.
- 3) The possibility to discuss further about the evaluation and recommendations at a later stage was raised.
- 4) Some cities mentioned they will consider re-doing the Index as it was beneficial for them in the past. However, they mentioned the

Need for greater clarity in presentation of objectives and website alignment of index and tools and best practice
Address the impression of ranking

There might be a gap between all the tools that ICC provide and the available time and resources the city possess

ICC has so much to offer cities and so do other cities! as a city i need to do more to share good practice of our city.

The discussion regarding multiculturality is a never ending story, therefore the cities will be in a permanent process of on going evaluation.

Steering committee idea is good, I agree more thematic focus would be good, I think the network should become smaller and not bigger, and work only with really engaged cities

eventual new light assessment tool as being a good starting point before proceeding with the full Index. This lighter tool might even be a thematic one.

- Instituting a thematic cycle of 5 years for the Index was considered.

- More meetings with national coordinators might be useful.

- One way to promote the benefits of the programme could be to film short interviews with mayors and practitioners about their experiences. Short videos could also be envisaged for good practices.

- Exchange of best practices could be done more efficiently, as the good practice database is limited in its use and inspiration. More spaces for sharing could be set up, for instance bi-monthly online sessions showcasing 4/5 best practices in areas of priorities. They could be organised in rotation by national networks.

- The discourse around intercultural principles and objectives of the ICC programme should not be underestimated as it inspires cities.



Appendix I – List of Participants

CITIES

>Bergen, Norway

Brita Bolstad, Adviser, Agency for Social Inclusion

>Botkyrka, Sweden

Karl Joel Ahlgren, Development Manager, Botkyrka Municipality

>Kirklees, UK

Shebana Sadiq, Inclusive Communities Service Manager, Kirklees Council

>Krakow, Poland

Magdalena Anna Furdzik, Manager of The Unit of Multiculturalism, Social Projects and Equality Policy in the Social Policy and Health Department, Krakow Municipality

Ewelina Adamska, Official of The Unit of Multiculturalism, Social Projects and Equality Policy in the Social Policy and Health Department, Krakow Municipality

>Leeds, UK

Pria Bhabra, Migration Programme Manager, Leeds Council

>Limassol, Cyprus

Anastasios Zografos, International Relations Consultant, Limassol Municipality

>Lisbon, Portugal

João Paiva, Head of Youth and Cohesion Division, Lisbon Municipality

>Lublin, Poland

Anna Szadkowska Ciezka, Deputy Head of Participation Office, Lublin Municipality

>Mexico City, Mexico

Jorge Jimenez Ortega, Consultant, Mexican House of Deputies

>Modena, Italy

Eleonora Costantini, International ICC coordinator for the city of Modena

>Montréal, Canada

Jessica Lagacé-Banville, Head of Division, Newcomer Integration Office, Montreal

>Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Zahra Banisadr, Project officer in charge of migration issues

>Neumarkt, Germany

Marianne Hortolani, Member of the ICC coordination Team Neumarkt
Anna Katharina Lehrer, ICC coordinator, Neumarkt Municipal

>Novellara, Italy

Elena Carletti, Mayor

Erica Tacchini, Mayor's Staff, Communication, Cultural and Intercultural Services and Youth

Ilaria Codeluppi, Member of intercultural policies department

>Reykjavik, Iceland

Joanna Marcinkowska, Project manager, Human Rights and Democracy Office, City of Reykjavik

>San Sebastian, Spain

Carolina Adarraga, Officer, Office of Cultural Diversity of San Sebastian

>Stavanger, Norway

Ingrid Hauge Rasmussen, Special adviser, Diversity and Inclusion

Hanne Navdal Vatnaland, Head of Political Secretariat

Maiken Saxeide Offerdal, Head of department of Citizen dialogue

>Wroclaw, Poland

Dorota Kozak-Rybska, Main specialist

NATIONAL NETWORKS

>Glenda Joan Ballantyne, Australian National Network

>Bob White, Canadian National Network

>Simone Pettorruso, Italian ICC Network Coordinator

>Rosaria De Paoli, Italian ICC Network Coordinator

>Sara Morandini, Italian ICC Network Coordinator

>Cristian Brisacani, Italian ICC Network Coordinator (excused)

>Carla Calado, Portuguese ICC Network Coordinator (excused)

>Gemma Pinyol, Spanish ICC Network Coordinator

>Daniel De Torres Barderi, Spanish ICC Network Director

>Kseniya Khovanova Rubicondo, Ukrainian ICC Network Coordinator

EXPERTS

>Roderick Ackermann, Evaluator, Evalutility

>Magali Bernard Eklund, Evaluator, Partner & senior consultant, KEK - CDC

>Nial Crowley, Independent Expert

>Silverio Sandate Morales, Lawyer, Mexico City

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

>Ivana D'Alessandro, Head of the Intercultural Cities Unit, Anti-Discrimination Department

>Nichola Howson, Senior Project Officer, Intercultural Cities Unit, Anti-Discrimination Department

>Catherine Wolf, Project Officer, Intercultural Cities Unit, Anti-Discrimination Department

>Srdjan Radojevic, Administrative Assistant, Intercultural Cities Unit, Anti-Discrimination Department
