



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

UK INTERCULTURAL INTEGRATION ACADEMY

8TH – 9TH OCTOBER 2019

Report

By Isobel Platts-Dunn, ICC UK Co-ordinator

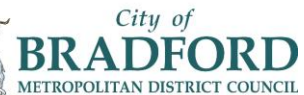


Background Note:

On 8-9th October 2019, the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) with its partner ICC UK, held the first Intercultural Integration Academy in the UK. The event was a two-day immersive course, designed to help cities make the most out of the ICC network and deepen their knowledge on subjects chosen by them. The event was hosted by City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (hereafter "Bradford Council") at Bradford University.

It's been an exciting year for the ICC Programme in the UK, after five new member cities joined the Councils of Lewisham and Swansea as international members, including Leeds City Council, Bradford Council, Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Kirklees Council and Manchester City Council. The agenda was agreed through consultation with the seven member Councils. All councils sent at least one political or officer representative to the

The Intercultural Cities UK Network is a Grantee of the Council of Europe. This document and event have been produced with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.



event, and they were accompanied by seven ICC experts who delivered a range of interactive workshops. Irena Guidikova and Francesca Lionetti from the Council of Europe ICC programme attended, along with Ted Cantle and Isobel Platts-Dunn from the iCoCo Foundation who, through a grant from the Council of Europe, are raising the profile of ICC in the UK. In total, an average of 29 participants attended the Academy on the two days.

A journalist from BCB radio (Community Radio station for Bradford) also covered the Academy – please listen [here](#) for more.

Tuesday 8th October:

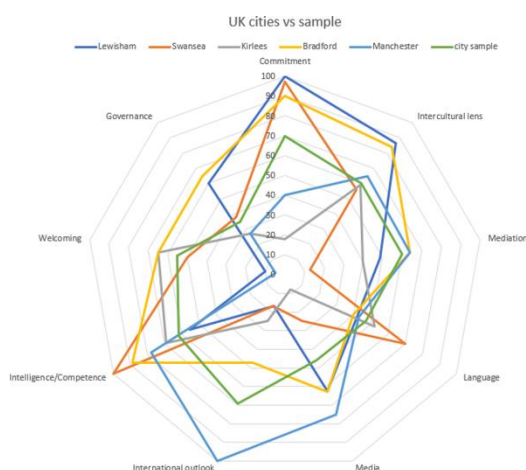
ICC Academy Welcome:

Steve Hartley, Director of Place at Bradford Council, welcomed delegates to Bradford and the Academy, reinforcing Bradford Council’s commitment to ICC and its pleasure to be hosting the first ever ICC UK Academy. He provided attendees with an overview of Bradford’s rich history and encouraged them to learn from one another throughout the Academy and discuss challenges as well as successes.



Interculturalism as a concept – Intercultural Policies:

Irena Guidikova, Head of Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Division at the Council of Europe began by highlighting that the UK was where the concept of ICC was originally born in 2008. However, councils’ uptake to the programme in the UK has been slow, and she is delighted to see UK membership grow since 2018. She then delivered an in-depth explanation of the



theory behind intercultural integration, the previous approaches (Guest Worker, Assimilation and Multiculturalism) and how Interculturalism differs from them. Irena explored what Interculturalism means on a policy level, and the values and tools which go alongside it. She shared examples highlighting how, when policies are shaped around the

The Intercultural Cities UK Network is a Grantee of the Council of Europe. This document and event have been produced with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

assets that a diverse population brings to society - instead of building only on the deficits, and when people are not defined by one aspect of their identity, but allowed to tap into their multifaced experience, the entire community benefits in terms of wellbeing.

Using data from UK cities' ICC Index – a tool to review policies, governance and practice that councils are setting in place to support intercultural integration - she also visually illustrated how cities can use the Index to learn from one another and highlighted the strengths and weakness of UK councils' approaches according to the ICC Index.

Intercultural Dilemmas:

Next, attendees took part in a two-hour interactive workshop facilitated by the Expert Helena Rojas from Botkyrka, Sweden. Helena asked councils to think through the factors which enable or prevent intercultural dilemmas within their own councils. They were then split into groups. Each group was tasked with identifying an intercultural dilemma and giving this dilemma to a different group to solve and come up with a solution. Examples of intercultural dilemmas identified were:



- How can councils maintain control of narratives on local conflicts or difficulties which have escalated and co-opted to further divide communities? How can councils ensure that decision-makers are reflective of the local community. Decision-makers are often not representative of their local community, and this can cause distrust?
- There is a key structural dilemma across councils: how can councils ensure that intercultural integration is streamlined across all sectors and teams are not working in silos? How can they get departments they haven't previously worked with on board?
- There are a lot of external factors such as national policy, austerity and the media which impact cities' intercultural work. How do we ensure longer-term investment on these issues?

Some solutions and recommendations identified by councils included:

- Ensure that local practitioners – police, teachers, council officers have the sufficient training to deal with difficult conversations and conflict. This will help prevent the issue being escalated and co-opted by others nationally. The council – going out to speak to people, doing local outreach is also important once a situation has escalated.
- There are excellent examples of fast-tracking, where lower-role staff go into more senior positions. A need to be more proactive and encourage those who don't

The Intercultural Cities UK Network is a Grantee of the Council of Europe. This document and event have been produced with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.



engage/don't want to engage understand the value they can bring as individuals and empower them to do that. Use participatory budgeting and involve local people in decision-making at all levels.

- Develop strategic co-ordination to help departments understand where the gaps are. Use evidence-based approach to get their buy-in and help them streamline local services.
- For external factors which impact councils: a need to collectively lobby national government to prioritise this issue. There is an opportunity here through ICC and a potential ICC UK network.

After lunch, participants split into two groups for workshops on Community-Based Results Accountability and Public Spaces and Diverse Heritage Assets.

Community-Based Results Accountability:

Phyllis Brunson, an ICC Expert from the Center for the Study of Social Policy, delivered a presentation and then held a discussion on how to co-create an ICC strategy with citizens. She outlined six steps which she recommended cities to follow: responsible partners; conduct community assessment; select results and indicators; decide on strategies; finance plan; monitor accountability. She highlighted that a key element for success is creating a cycle of accountability, and, when thinking about creating a strategy we must remember: equality is providing everyone with the same thing, equity is providing what is needed to achieve the required results.



In the general discussion, several questions were raised including:

- How can councils engage with new and different people, and ensure they are not engaging with the same people who are already invested in the process.
- How can you know that you are really engaging people? What measurements can you use?

Some recommendations from the general discussion led by Phyllis included:

- Self-evaluate and make adjustments - don't be afraid to make mistakes.
- Ask yourselves: what are we doing to deliberately include different people? This is a proactive approach that requires time and effort. Don't just rely on scheduled meetings, but rather, go out to the grassroot level: children's centres; hospitals; church; mosques. Need to step outside of your comfort zones. Acknowledge this is a difficult approach that can require more effort and time.
- Some councils are already doing this and offered further examples.



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

- When the groups come together they need to see small wins – find the funding to make the fences etc; participatory budgeting. We all have responsibility if something goes wrong.
- To be challenged is a learning process - not afraid of hearing about challenges – helps me to improve what we do.

An intercultural approach to public spaces and diverse heritage assets:

ICC Expert Noha Nasser, and Council of Europe Intercultural Cities project manager Francesca Lionetti led a workshop on how to create inclusive and intercultural public spaces. Firstly, each council was asked to give a good practice example of what works well in their cities. Good practice examples from cities included: festivals councils have organised which bring people together in public spaces and parks; councils owning local theatres – they become an arts and shared community spaces; open meetings which are widely advertised and people are encouraged to attend; consultation for the planning and design of local parks and areas.

Based on this discussion, a series of questions were presented to the participants, clustered around the three themes that underpin the intercultural paradigm: diversity advantage, equality and positive interaction. The questions were used to structure the approach councils can take towards public spaces and to deepen their reflections on this.

Participants were then asked to split into groups and work through a case study - redesigning the Dewsbury Market through an intercultural lens. Feedback and reflections from the group at the end of the session included: ensuring people are involved and not just consulted; avoid stereotyping; manage expectations and feedback on decisions; do consider the space and wider context and be creative and flexible; build interaction between different groups at the beginning so people can hear about what others are saying, what is important and where you can meet in the middle.

Intercultural messaging and relationships with the media:

For the final session of the day, experts and journalists, Marina Lalovic and Nigel Smith presented on specific ways councils can use to engage with the media in order to promote interculturalism. Practical tips included the use of affirmative vocabulary and understanding that certain words and emotions can cut through to journalists more than others. After the presentations, the participants were split into two groups, and each participant took part in a recorded practice interview – on either television or radio. Feedback on participants' television and radio interviews was given on Wednesday morning.

The Intercultural Cities UK Network is a Grantee of the Council of Europe. This document and event have been produced with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Wednesday 9th October:

Anti-Rumours Strategy:

Dani de Torres led an interactive workshop on the Anti-Rumours campaign. He explained how stereotypes, prejudices and rumours have a multifaceted roots, comprising of cognitive, emotional and social components. The anti-rumours strategy is about seducing the ambivalent majority, building on networks which already exist. For example, in Limerick the team in charge of the strategy went to the pubs to encourage people to take part in the campaign.

Dani then split the room into groups, and participants were asked to come up with an Anti-Rumours Strategy if they had a £20 million budget. Feedback from the sessions included: focussing on training and development for all society actors; creating localised and mobilised networks which can respond quickly to community tensions, in-depth work with the media on the issue, promoting education and mainstream information outside the administration.

Finally, Dani encouraged discussion by asking all participants as individuals to think about their own bias and prejudice, and the strategies they would use if personally confronted with a rumour and how they would engage in discussion and challenge the person spreading it respectfully and without alienating them, meaning in such a way that it would be possible to discuss again with the same person about the topic.



Cities' Action Plans:

ICC expert Phil Wood then led a session to help cities develop their Intercultural action plans going forward and discuss common experiences when developing ICC strategies. The cities were first asked to talk through their ICC strategy, and then paired up with other councils to discuss their different strategies and what they could learn from one another. There was discussion on how to develop an ICC strategy in a complex political landscape, and each city had different approaches according to their different contexts. For example, some cities wished to develop an individual intercultural strategy, whilst others chose to incorporate intercultural strategies as a pillar into future cohesion strategies.



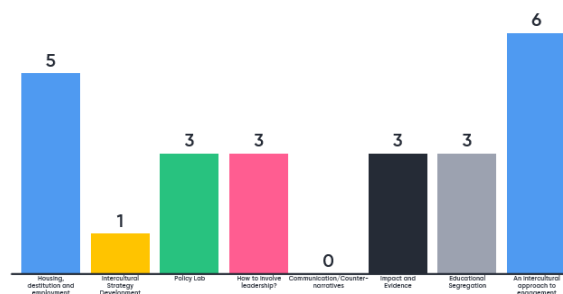
UK National Network and Community Resilience:

Finally, Irena Guidikova, Ted Cattle and Isobel Platts-Dunn held a final session to explore next steps for ICC UK members and discussed how to make current cohesion and integration work resilient to future challenges and the changing landscape in the UK.

The differences between the ICC international network and the national network and the benefits and challenges of setting up a UK network were discussed. The councils felt that there was value in setting up a national network, and, based on the consultation held by ICC UK in the summer of 2019, they then voted on key themes they wanted the ICC UK network to focus on next year:

Which topics would you want to focus on next year?

Mentimeter



13

The majority asked for the ICC UK Network to focus on the following two themes next year:

- Housing, destitution and employment
- An intercultural approach to engagement

The Intercultural Cities UK Network is a Grantee of the Council of Europe. This document and event have been produced with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

It was agreed that the Council of Europe and ICC UK would come up with a proposed administrative structure to create an ICC UK network next year.

Ted Cantle discussed community resilience and how other organisations – such as private sector organisations and organisations working in the health sector also have a responsibility to work on the cohesion and integration agenda too and should therefore be engaged by the councils. A discussion on how to secure more community resilience on this issue then followed.

Closing Remarks and Next Steps:

Ian Day, Assistant Director of Neighbours and Customer Services of Bradford Municipality and Irena Guidikova closed the Academy. Ian reiterated Bradford's delight at hosting the event and confirmed that it was a real learning experience, providing a great opportunity to learn with other UK local authorities working on this agenda. He encouraged officers to think about how they can streamline cohesion and integration into all departments across councils as is it a cross-sector issue. He also encouraged councils to see this as an opportunity to lobby government on issues of integration such as segregation in schools. He thanked the Council of Europe, the ICC Experts and the iCoCo Foundation for organising the Academy. Irena Guidikova also thanked Bradford, Bradford University and the iCoCo Foundation for their part in organising the UK Academy.

Feedback:

The Council of Europe carried out a post-event evaluation of the ICC UK Academy. From those who replied, all agreed that the activities enriched their knowledge of the intercultural approach to policy and practice, and all councils were going to co-operate with other cities which participated in the Academy going forward. All agreed that their expectations had been fulfilled through the Academy. To follow-up we will send this report out to current UK members, and have already sent through ICC expert presentations to councils to maximise learning.

The Intercultural Cities UK Network is a Grantee of the Council of Europe. This document and event have been produced with the financial assistance of the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the Council of Europe.