

# 2023 Periodic Activity Report

## Intercultural Cities Network of Ukraine

### July – September 2023

## Summary

The third quarter of 2023 witnessed dynamic progress and resilience within the Ukrainian Network of Intercultural Cities (ICCUA). Amidst the challenges posed by the ongoing war ICCUA demonstrated unwavering dedication to fostering intercultural integration and



cooperation within and beyond Ukrainian cities. The period was marked by significant achievements, including the first within the last three years Annual meeting of the Network in presence, hosted by ICC Stavanger, Norway. ICCUA members actively participated in international platforms, showcasing their commitment to intercultural values and solidarity. Noteworthy initiatives, such as joining Placemaking Europe, highlighted ICCUA cities' innovative approaches to urban development, emphasizing inclusivity and community engagement.

*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.*



Moreover, ICCUA cities actively contributed to sustainable urban mobility discussions, forging partnerships with European counterparts and sharing best practices. The period also witnessed substantial progress in Ukrainian legislation, with the passage of the national minority law, emphasizing Ukraine's commitment to protecting the rights of diverse communities. Ethical journalism advocacy remained a focal point, with ICCUA's active participation in international discussions highlighting the essential role of independent media during times of conflict.

Through this period, ICCUA maintained a robust communication strategy, disseminating updates via websites, various social media sources, ensuring the Network's visibility. In summary, the third semester of 2023 showcased ICCUA's resilience, determination, and collaborative spirit, underlining its pivotal role in promoting intercultural interaction, fostering community engagement, and shaping a more inclusive and harmonious future for Ukrainian urban communities.

## Network coordination and activities

### 1. Annual 2023 Meeting of ICC-Ukraine in Stavanger, Norway

One of the milestones of the third quarter of 2023 is the Annual Meeting of ICC-Ukraine Network held in Stavanger, Norway at the end of August. This meeting, the first in-person gathering since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the aggression of Ukraine, was a testament to our unwavering commitment to promoting intercultural values even in challenging times. The event was fully supported by the city of Stavanger, where Ukrainian delegation received a warm welcome by the Mayor of Stavanger, Ms. Kari Nordtun, Deputy Mayor Mr. Dag Mossige, Ms. Ingrid Hauge Rasmussen, the city council's advisor on intercultural issues, other representatives of the municipal administration and public.

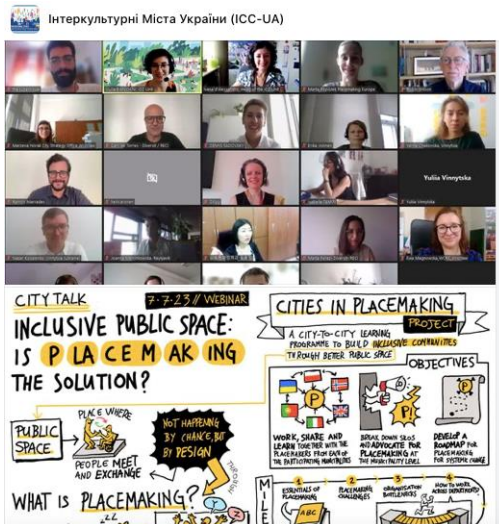
During this meeting, participants engaged in deep discussions analyzing the implementation of the ICC Programme in Ukrainian cities at the time of the ongoing crisis. The working sessions provided a platform to address pressing issues in promoting intercultural actions and initiatives during wartime and to strengthen effective international partnerships and solidarity actions for Ukrainian cities. The national coordinator of ICC-Ukraine gave several interviews to local media and delivered a speech at the Executive Board meeting of Stavanger emphasizing the invaluable cooperation model between Stavanger and the national ICC Network of Ukraine, underlining its positive impact on Ukrainian ICC municipalities and the nation's recovery.

During the meeting, participants also familiarized themselves with the work of various departments of the Stavanger City Council, including the Office for Migration and Refugee Reception, and met with representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora.

## 2. Placemaking Initiatives

One of the noteworthy achievements during this period was the participation of ICC Ukraine members in the Placemaking Europe activities. Enabled by ICC Programme support, the city of Vinnytsia joined the initiative and actively engaged in both online and in-person meetings in Amsterdam, Bergen and [Strasbourg](#) this year. The city's urbanists and architects are

currently working on the concept of a placemaking project aimed at reviving marginalized areas within Vinnytsia. This initiative aligns with the principles of inclusivity, social innovation, and community participation, creating a model for other cities to follow.



Moreover, ICCUA members actively participated in a webinar titled "City Talks," organized by the ICC Team Strasbourg, where over 100 representatives from intercultural cities and stakeholders took part. The webinar, facilitated by Placemaking Europe organizers Marta Popiolek and Ramon Marrades, explored the concept of placemaking, emphasizing community engagement and intercultural mixing.

## 3. Stavanger Supported Projects

This year, ICCUA cities continue their effective collaboration with ICC Stavanger. Within the last three months the social and cultural project "Бібліотека – місце добра та допомоги" (Library – a place of kindness and support) successfully unfolded in Pavlohrad, offering enriching experiences to young visitors. The project, made possible through the financial support of ICC Stavanger, transformed the library into a vibrant hub for learning and recreational activities for children and youth, including unaccompanied minors, representatives and internally displaced persons. Children participated in stress-relief and educational workshops, games, contests, and various creative pursuits, creating an atmosphere of joy and interaction.





#### 4. Intercultural Solidarity Initiatives in Ukrainian Cities

Throughout the reporting period, ICC-Ukraine cities continued their intercultural solidarity actions, exemplified by events such as the "Годуємо Країну. Смак Українського Криму" ([Feeding the Country. The Taste of Ukrainian Crimea](#)) initiative in intercultural Lutsk. Organized by the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Crimea and the International Charity Fund "Fund National Welfare of Crimea," the event showcased the rich culinary heritage of Crimea, offering 1300 servings of traditional Crimean cuisine to the local and displaced population of Lutsk and its guests. This initiative not only celebrated cultural diversity but also promoted unity among communities.



#### 5. Sustainable Urban Mobility and International Partnerships

Ukrainian ICC cities actively participated in the Sustainable Urban Mobility Seminar as part of the knowledge exchange program for Sustainable City Development in Ukraine led by the European Cities Association. Collaborating with the "Association of Ukrainian Cities" and the our Network representatives engaged with urban mobility professionals from across Europe.

This collaborative effort aims to establish sustainable urban mobility practices, fostering a greener future for Ukrainian cities.

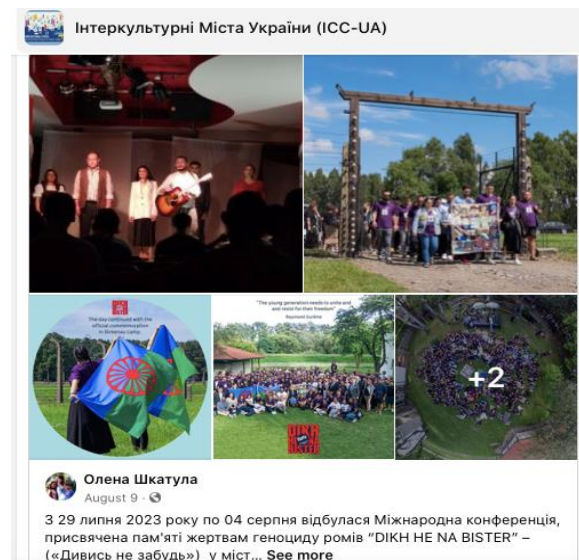
Additionally, ICCUA members continue to forge international partnerships, exemplified by the video conference between Mayor Luca Vecchi of Reggio Emilia, Italy, and Mayor Ivan Fedorov of Melitopol. This exchange highlighted the shared intercultural identity and mutual socio-economic goals of the two cities, sparking inspiring prospects for collaboration and post-war reconstruction efforts, particularly in the fields of education, economics and agriculture.



## 6. International Engagements and Intercultural Advocacy

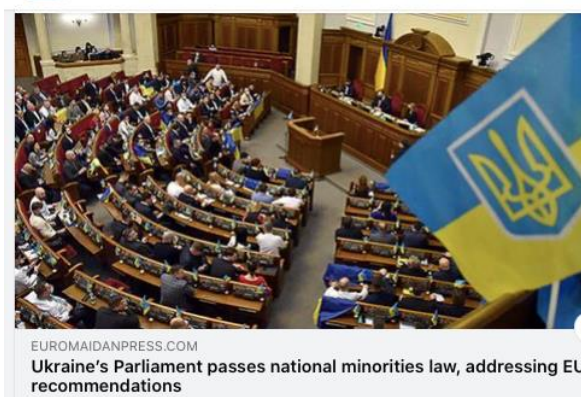
ICC-Ukraine members actively participated in international intercultural initiatives, such as the International Conference dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Roma genocide, "DIKH HE NA BISTER" (Look and Don't Forget), in Krakow, Poland. The Conference aimed to train facilitators and trainers in conducting sessions related to Roma issues.

Furthermore, ICC-Ukraine joined the Ethical Journalism Network's report launch event titled 'Ukraine Media: Defiance and Truth-Telling – The Frontline Struggle for Information and Democracy.' The event emphasized the vital role of independent journalism in Ukraine and underscored the need for international support to sustain journalistic integrity during conflict times.



## 7. Advancements in Legislation for National Minorities

A significant milestone was achieved with the passage of the [National Minorities Law](#) by Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada. The legislation, in alignment with the European Commission's recommendations, demonstrates Ukraine's commitment to protecting the rights and freedoms of national minorities. The law encompasses inclusive definitions of national minorities, ensures state support for minority students' education, allows the use of minority languages in various public domains, and clarifies the criteria for using minority languages in relevant settlements. This legislation, vital for democratic development, signifies Ukraine's dedication to promoting ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity.



## Communication & Media Engagement

Throughout this period, ICCUA Network maintained its visibility and media engagement. Newsletters, interviews, video, TV programs, websites, and social media platforms were utilized effectively to disseminate updates. The official ICCUA social media accounts and member-cities' webpages were actively used, ensuring consistency with the ICC Programme's guidelines. These efforts not only amplified our activities but also enhanced our network's presence on the global stage.

## Next steps

In conclusion, the third semester of 2023 was marked by active intercultural initiatives, international collaborations, legislative advancements, and ethical journalism advocacy. ICCUA remains dedicated to fostering unity, understanding, and collaboration among Ukrainian cities, even in the face of adversity. Our commitment to intercultural values continues to drive our efforts, shaping a more inclusive and peaceful future for all. In the coming months, the Ukrainian Network of Intercultural Cities (ICCUA) is planning to do a few important things. First, we want to work with more cities in Europe to learn from each other and make our cities better for everyone. We'll focus on helping minority communities have a stronger voice in their cities and making sure they have equal access to public services.

We will continue to build cross border partnerships, organize online and in person events and trainings to help our cities become even better at promoting interculturality, diversity and inclusion. Overall, our goal is to make our cities more welcoming and connected places for everyone who lives in them.