

RACISM

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**European
Coalition of Cities
against Racism**

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

International Coalition of Cities against Racism

The European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) was launched on 10 December 2004 at the occasion of the Fourth European Conference of Cities for Human Rights that took place in Nuremberg, Germany.

A few definitions

- Racial discrimination is defined by the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life”. As such, racial discrimination is banned by the international community as a serious human rights violation. Racism plays a major role in the social processes that give rise to and entrench such racial discrimination.
- As a doctrine, racism derives from theories and beliefs that establish a hierarchy of races or ethnic groups or base attributions of value on racial difference. Theories of racial difference are “scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and that there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice, anywhere” (Preamble of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965). Such theories are incompatible not just with the moral and ethical principles of humanity but also with international law, which recognises all human beings as members of one species, born equal in dignity and rights.
- In its practical manifestations, racism includes “racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviour, structural arrangements and institutionalized practices resulting in racial inequality ... it is reflected in discriminatory provisions in legislation or regulations and discriminatory practices as well as in anti-social beliefs and acts” (Article 2 of the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice of 1978).

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Declaration of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism

International Coalition of Cities against Racism

The International Coalition of Cities against Racism is an initiative launched by UNESCO in 2004 to establish a network of cities interested in sharing experiences in order to improve their policies to fight racism, discrimination and xenophobia.

The international conventions, recommendations and declarations elaborated at the upstream level need to be ratified and implemented by the States. At the same time, it is extremely important to involve actors on the ground, including the targets of discriminations, to make sure that those international and national instruments are applied and respond to concrete problems. UNESCO chose cities as the privileged space to link upstream and downstream actions. The role of city authorities as policy-makers at the local level is considered here as the key to create dynamic synergies.

The ultimate objective is to involve the interested cities in a common struggle against racism through an international Coalition. In order to take into account the specificities and priorities of each region of the world, regional Coalitions are being created with their own programme of action.

A plan of action

The Ten-Point Plan of Action for the European Coalition of Cities against Racism was finalized. In close collaboration with the City of Nuremberg (Germany), which played the role of the Lead City for the region, UNESCO organized an experts meeting in July 2004. The city representatives of Barcelona, Krakow, Paris, Saint-Denis, Stockholm and Nuremberg, representatives of NGOs and networks of cities such as the International Association of Educating Cities, as well as academics discussed together possible actions to be taken into account in the Plan of Action.

The finalized Ten-Point Plan of Action is composed of ten commitments covering the various areas of competence of city authorities such as education, housing, and employment as well as cultural and sport activities. It suggests in particular some examples of practical policies that city authorities might complete or develop. The signatory cities will undertake to integrate this Plan of Action in their municipal strategies and policies, and to involve the various actors within civil society in its implementation.

The European Coalition of Cities against Racism was launched on 10 December 2004 at the occasion of the Fourth European Conference of Cities for Human Rights that took place in Nuremberg and brought together representatives from more than 140 European cities. At this occasion, the Ten-Point Plan of Action for the European Coalition of Cities against Racism was adopted by the plenary meeting of the conference.

Since its initial launch, over 120 municipalities have already joined the initiative. UNESCO urges Cities in Europe to give their utmost attention to this Ten-Point Plan of Action and join the European Coalition of Cities against Racism.

Why do we need to unite against racism, discrimination and xenophobia?

Regardless of its origin and form, racism raises barriers against the development of its individual or group victims, corrupts those who practice it, and divides communities and nations. It is a serious threat to peaceful coexistence and exchange between communities that share the same space, and imperils democratic and participatory citizenship. Racism entrenches and aggravates inequalities within society.

In view of the deep mental roots of the racial prejudice inherited from the history and persistence of discriminatory practices, the struggle against racism and discrimination is a long-term effort. It demands regular updating of anti-racist strategies and policies along with coordination at international, national, regional and local level.

What can be done?

The struggle against racism and discrimination must be conducted on several fronts:

- **prevention and positive action:** raising awareness and consciousness and educating in mutual tolerance, respect of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, peaceful coexistence, human rights and democratic citizenship;
- **monitoring and vigilance:** collecting data and developing relevant indicators in order to assess discriminatory situations and policy impact;

- **empowerment:** support of victims in their efforts in affirming, organising and defending themselves;
- **mediation:** arbitration, explanation, awareness raising and reconciliation;
- **punishment:** reinforcing administrative and judicial mechanisms and uncompromisingly prosecuting racist acts.

The struggle against racism is everyone's business. It is, first and foremost, a legal and political obligation of States and regional and international intergovernmental organisations. It is one of the responsibilities of citizenship incumbent upon professional bodies, trade unions, voluntary organizations and the private sector. It is a moral and ethical duty for individuals, especially opinion leaders such as artists, journalists, teachers, academics, sports personalities and community, religious and political leaders.

The essential role of city authorities

Cities have become the main focus of ethnic and cultural mixing and are home to an ever greater number of foreigners, from all parts, seeking freedom, work, knowledge and opportunities to exchange. Cities are the places where the everyday meeting of differences sparks competition, clashing interests and fears that feed the development of the ideologies and practices of discrimination.

Cities are also laboratories where new forms of urban citizenship and new ways of living together can be invented. They are an ideal space within which to conduct a struggle against racism that facilitates effective implementation of the various instruments enacted by States.

Cities are run by local authorities who are often close to their citizens, and generally have a degree of autonomy, resources, and support and solidarity networks. They thus have the capacity to launch brave and innovative initiatives that can be effective against racism on the ground.

Local authorities, especially at city level, have a key role in mobilising forces, even in areas that do not fall within their administrative competence, and in implementing anti-discrimination policies that can make a real difference.

The long-term objective of the European Coalition of Cities against racism is to supply local authorities with an operational programme that will allow a more efficient implementation of policies against discrimination. Thus, a Ten-point Plan of Action has been developed, composed of 10 commitments covering the different areas of competence of local authorities such as education, housing and employment.

The signatories commit themselves to using their full range of political power to counteract racism and discrimination through the implementation of the 10 commitments. Each signatory is responsible for establishing, coordinating and/or implementing the local policies against racism and discrimination. This will be based, in particular, on a consultation process with those subjected to racism and discrimination as well as on a close collaboration with actors of civil society (NGOs, academics, associations, etc.).

Implementation and follow-up of the Ten-Point Plan of Action

How to join the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism?

The procedure is in two stages in order to take into account the requirements of the decision-making processes of the various municipalities:

- 1) Sending a letter of **Declaration of Intent** conveying the strong interest of the municipality in membership of the Coalition and its Ten-Point Plan of Action – the latter formality can be entered into at the second stage;
- 2) Signature of an **Act of Accession and Commitment** by which the municipality fully adheres to the Coalition and its Ten-Point Plan of Action; the municipality thus agrees to implement this minimal Plan of Action by incorporating the Plan into its municipal policies and strategies, notably by expressly indicating in the form attached to the Deed of Membership, the specific actions that accompany these commitments. The implementation of the Plan of Action implies on the part of the municipality, the allocation of the resources required to accomplish the actions foreseen.

Implementation

The Plan of Action, adopted on 10 December 2004 in Nuremberg, remains open for signature by European cities wishing to join the Coalition of Cities against Racism on the basis of these commitments.

The signatory cities undertake to integrate within their strategies and action programmes the Plan of Action and to commit to it the human, financial and material resources required for its effective implementation.

Each city authority is free to choose the policies it judges most relevant or most urgent. However, for reasons of consistency, each city is invited to implement at least one action as soon as possible in respect of each of the commitments.

City authorities that have already implemented or are currently implementing some of the proposed actions are invited to enhance them or to supplement them by further actions from the Plan of Action. The signatories undertake to establish a focal point with responsibility for follow-up and coordination of the Plan of Action.

Follow and Support mechanisms

a. Administrative Secretariat

The administrative secretariat for the European Coalition is located in the lead city.

b. International Technical and Scientific Secretariat

UNESCO will continue to provide at the international level, a technical and scientific support to the European Coalition, via its programme to Fight Against Racism and Discrimination. It will in particular assist the regional coalitions with :

- technical support (documentation, informations on the Action Plan, etc.) ;
- scientific support (proposals for thematic discussions and studies, organisation of panels, development of evaluation tools, etc.)

c. Steering Committee

For two years with possible extensions.

Evaluation of the follow-up

Every two years, the signatories will send to UNESCO and the Secretariat a report on their implementation of the Ten-Point Plan of Action. These individual reports will contribute to a collective summary report on the evaluation of the follow-up that will assess the development of the European Coalition and determine further action.

Ten-Point Plan of Action: Commitments for fighting racism in cities

1

“Greater vigilance against racism”. To set up a monitoring, vigilance and solidarity network against racism at city level.

Examples of action

- To establish a mechanism for consultation with the various social actors (young people, artists, NGOs, community leaders, the police, the judiciary, etc.) in order to take regular stock of the situation as regards racism and discrimination.
- To set up, in collaboration with civil society organisations, a monitoring and rapid response system to identify racist acts and hate crimes/speeches and bring them to the attention of the competent authorities.
- To put racism and discrimination on the agenda of the various consultation mechanisms that exist within the city (e.g. youth parliaments, elders’ councils).

2

“Assessing Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies”. To initiate, or develop further the collection of data on racism and discrimination, establish achievable objectives and set common indicators in order to assess the impact of municipal policies.

Examples of action

- To set up formal means of collecting data and information on racism and discrimination in all fields of municipal competence by introducing relevant variables in their data collection.
- To establish partnerships with research entities in order to analyse regularly the data and information collected, conduct studies at local level and develop concrete recommendations for the city authorities.
- To define achievable objectives and apply common indicators in order to assess trends in racism and discrimination and the impact of municipal policies.
- To set up a research council for an on-going dialogue between researchers and policy makers.

3

“Better Support for the Victims of Racism, discrimination”. To support victims and contribute to strengthening their capacity to defend themselves against racism and discrimination.

Examples of action

- To support victims to organize themselves in seeking remedies, initiatives (counselling, monitoring, etc.) and preventive measures in counteracting racism and discrimination.
- To establish a formal capacity within the city authority (ombudsperson, anti-discrimination unit, etc.) to deal with complaints about discrimination made by local residents.
- To provide support to local entities which provide legal and psychological support to local victims of racism and discrimination.
- To establish disciplinary measures within the routine functions of the city authority in regard to racist acts or behaviour by city employees.

4

“More Participation and Better Informed City Dwellers”. To ensure better information for city dwellers on their rights and obligations, on protection and legal options and on the penalties for racist acts or behaviour, by using a participatory approach, notably through consultations with service users and service providers.

Examples of action

- To publish and disseminate as widely as possible a brochure or municipal bulletin giving relevant information on local residents’ rights, the obligations of a multiethnic and multicultural society and the city authority’s anti-racist commitments, as well as penalties for racist acts and behaviour. To disseminate in the various public places, forms or contact information that victims or witnesses can use in the case of racist acts or behaviour in order to contact competent authorities or support groups.
- To organise, on a regular basis, Municipal forums against racism, in collaboration with existing organs and mechanisms, in order to offer an opportunity to discuss the problems of racism and discrimination in the city, local policies, and their impact.

- To commemorate each year, on the 21st of March, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, with a range of initiatives to promote awareness and mobilisation among city dwellers.
- To empower local NGOs to pursue their actions in providing information on and developing actions against racism and discrimination.

5

“The City as an Active Supporter of Equal Opportunity Practice”. To facilitate equal opportunities employment practices and support for diversity in the labour market through exercising the existing discretionary powers of the city authority.

Examples of action

- To employ the existing powers of the city as a purchaser through the inclusion of non-discrimination clauses in local contracts.
- To set up a certification procedure for local firms, shops and local professional entities who are committed to challenging racism and willing to accept the implementation of the local mechanisms for dealing with complaints about discrimination.
- To establish a micro-credit, sponsorship and mentoring programme, in partnership with business, to support economically viable activities developed within discriminated groups.
- To set up a partnership with businesses interested in supporting city authority anti-racist policies and in promoting diversity as an economic strategy and a commercial asset.
- To support, in association with professional bodies and trade unions the development of relevant learning and development programmes aimed at enabling employees to deliver culturally sensitive and appropriate services.
- To make licences (e.g. to serve alcohol) conditioned on non-discriminatory practices of equal access and perform tests (or audits) to check whether places of entertainment follow a non-discriminatory practice in order to ensure equal access to places of entertainment.

6

“The City As An Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider”. The city commits itself to be an equal opportunities employer and equitable service provider, and to engage in monitoring, training and development to achieve this objective.

Examples of action

- To engage in routine diversity audits in order to inform the development of appropriate policies and practice on the basis of an accurate data base;
- To implement impact and needs assessment (anti-discriminatory check list) when developing any new initiative. A standardised simple protocol could be developed in order to routinise this process;
- To identify and provide support for the learning and development needs of municipal employees by setting up introductory and advanced training for local authority staff in order to: enhance their ability to manage ethnic and cultural diversity; promote intercultural dialogue; develop competence in anti-discriminatory practice; and acquire the necessary competences in order to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate services.
- To implement positive action in order to improve the representation of discriminated groups or communities in city authority staff; and particularly in their executive bodies.
- To establish a special scholarship and training programme for young people from discriminated groups with a view to preparing them for employment by the city.

7

“Fair Access to Housing”. To take active steps to strengthen policies against housing discrimination within the city.

Examples of action

- To draw up legal normative instruments (Ethical Charter and a Code of Practice) for public and private bodies involved in renting and selling accommodation in order to combat discrimination in access to housing.
- To grant facilities and incentives to owners and estate agents that commit to the municipal anti-discrimination Code of Practice.
- To establish or support advisory services with a brief to assist and support residents from those affected by discrimination in seeking accommodation in both the public and private sectors.

8

“Challenging Racism and Discrimination Through Education”. To strengthen measures against discrimination in access to, and enjoyment of, all forms of education; and to promote the provision of education in mutual tolerance and understanding, and intercultural dialogue.

Examples of action

- To intervene to ensure equal opportunities, especially in terms of access to education, through affirmative action policies.
- To enact an anti-discrimination charter and an institutional mandate for teaching and training establishments run by the city authority in order to combat racism in access to education and racism at school.
- To create an “Equality School” certificate to reward local schools for their anti-racist work and a “Mayor’s Prize” awarded regularly to the best local school initiative against racism.
- To develop teaching material (textbooks, guides, audiovisual or multimedia documentation, kits) on mutual tolerance, respect of human dignity, peaceful coexistence and intercultural dialogue that can contribute to enhancement of the ability of pupils, teachers and trainers to operate in a multiethnic, multicultural and intercultural environment and to deal with the pressures and opportunities of such diversity.

9

“Promoting Cultural Diversity”. To ensure fair representation and promotion for the diverse range of cultural expression and heritage of city dwellers in the cultural programmes, collective memory and public space of the city authority and promote interculturality in city life:

Examples of action

- To facilitate the production, in partnership with professionals from the groups affected by discrimination, audiovisual material (feature films, documentaries, programmes, etc.) that enables them to express their experience of and aspirations for their city. To facilitate distribution of such material at local, national and international level.
- To fund on a regular basis cultural projects and meeting places (e.g. events, cultural centres, etc.) that represent the diversity of city dwellers (music, theatre, dance, painting, etc.) and to integrate them in official city programming.
- To name places (streets, squares, monuments, neighbourhoods) and / or to commemorate events specifically relevant to groups suffering from discrimination, in order to recognise their contributions and to integrate them into the memory and collective identity of the city.

10

“Hate Crimes and Conflicts Management”.
To support or establish mechanisms for dealing with hate crimes and conflict management.

Examples of action

- To establish a pool of experts (researchers and practitioners including those of discriminated groups) with relevant competence to provide the local community with advise, and carry out analysis of the situation to ensure that there is a proper analysis before responses are determined.
- To establish an inter-agency group of knowledgeable employees, representing agencies with potential ownership to such conflicts (police, education sector, youth workers, social workers, civil society organizations, etc.) with responsibility for coordinating actions at an early stage when racist crimes or group conflicts arise.
- To provide training on racist crimes and conflict management to selected employees from relevant agencies and institutions (schools, youth programmes, integration offices, etc.).

European Coalition of Cities against Racism

Declaration

Adopted by the Plenary meeting of the 4th European Conference of Cities for Human Rights, on 10 December 2004 in Nuremberg.

The Cities participating in the 4th European Conference of Cities for Human Rights held on 9 and 10 December in Nuremberg,

Concerned with the rise of all forms of racism and xenophobia, which cause discrimination and violence in our cities;

Convinced that racist and discriminatory ideologies, attitudes and acts that target certain categories of citizens or city residents constitute a serious threat to equality, mutual tolerance, peace, security and social cohesion in the city;

Aware of the responsibility incumbent upon them to provide to all city residents, without discrimination on the grounds of “race”, colour, descent or national, ethnic or religious identity, the conditions in which they can flourish, while acknowledging and respecting the freedom, equality, dignity and rights of all;

Convinced that the struggle against racism, xenophobia and discrimination in the city is among the duties of city authorities with a view to guaranteeing mutual respect and promoting equality among city dwellers and of citizenship that respects the diversity from which springs the wealth of modern societies;

Confident that only with the active participation of all city dwellers in policy definition, implementation and evaluation can action against racism and xenophobia attain the scope and effectiveness it demands;

Resolved to draw the lessons from past experience in action against racism and to exchange their expertise and good practices with a view to improving their policies;

Recognizing that in the increasingly diverse and multiethnic cities, promoting equality and counteracting discrimination is a cornerstone in the development of sustainable and cohesive democratic multicultural cities;

Recalling the commitment made by the Mayors of different regions of the world, on the occasion of the launching of the United Cities and Local Governments in Paris in May 2004, in favour of respect and promotion of cultural diversity in the city, as well as in regard to the creation of a legal framework favourable to the enlargement of the application of fundamental rights to all city dwellers;

Emphasizing that the growing ethnic diversity of cities is a source of cultural dynamism, economic prosperity and social cohesion;

Have agreed to adopt this Ten-Point Action Plan in order to give practical expression to their commitment to combat racism, xenophobia and discriminations.

This Action Plan will make it possible for the partner cities, inter alia, to set priorities in their struggle against racism, xenophobia and discrimination, to rationalise and optimise their policies and to reinforce their cooperation in this area.

The Action Plan is an instrument comprising ten commitments covering the various areas of competence of city authorities and suggests some examples of actions that city authorities might consider with a view to fulfilling each of the commitments.

The undersigned cities undertake to integrate this Plan of Action in their municipal strategies and policies and to involve in its implementation the various actors within civil society, especially the targets of discrimination.

The commitments and possible actions proposed in this Plan of Action make up a minimum programme which in no way precludes other action in this area by city authorities.

The Plan of Action will be amended and expanded as appropriate in light of assessment of its implementation through the mechanisms provided for in this respect.

In addition, the Cities adhering to the European Coalition of Cities against Racism will inform the Secretariat of their first actions to be undertaken in order to meet their commitments. The Cities will through ad hoc means and as soon as possible indicate the concrete actions to be carried out for each commitment made.



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For regularly updated information,
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