

RACISM

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# The International Coalition of Cities against Racism



United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization

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

# Cities: a laboratory for learning to live together

The city is a complex place. It is a place where the confrontation of cultural differences gives rise to irrational fears and encourages the development of ideologies and practices of discrimination. But it is also a laboratory for learning to live together, a place for an exchange of beliefs, attitudes and styles of life, which can contribute to new forms of democratic citizenship.

The city offers a privileged space for the fight against racism and other forms of discrimination and exclusion. It can facilitate the shift from rhetoric to practical action through the implementation of national and international instruments adopted by governments. At the same time, local authorities have the autonomy of decision-making, the means of intervention and the networks of support that can facilitate innovative and effective initiatives against racism in close interaction with the citizens.

# How can cities take action?

The city offers the possibility to intervene at appropriate levels and on different fronts, notably by:

**Formulating public policies in favour of victims of discrimination and enforcing legal and administrative measures against racist acts;**

**Increasing knowledge and developing efficient indicators on the phenomenon of racism and on the impact of public policies to combat it;**

**Raising awareness among citizens about the dangers of racism and other forms of discrimination;**

**Supporting citizens' initiatives that promote understanding, tolerance and dialogue among different communities residing in cities.**

By joining the **International Coalition of Cities against Racism** cities can join forces, renew their action to fight racism and discrimination and share best practices in fostering dialogue and tolerance.

# Objectives of the Coalition

**To unite in a common front** cities and municipalities interested in strengthening their policies against racism and other forms of discrimination.

**To share experiences and expertise** in the struggle against racism and discrimination at the municipal level and **to create synergies**.

**To launch initiatives** that revitalize action, strengthen networking and mobilize partners in the struggle against racism at the local, regional and international levels such as universities, NGOs, human rights associations, artists, sports organizations and private enterprises.

**To participate in the development of indicators** on racism which will be used to assess the impact of municipal anti-discriminatory policies.

# Guiding Principles

The cities participating in the coalition will commit themselves to the following principles :

**Adherence to an ethical and political Charter** that takes a firm position against racist ideologies and discriminatory practices;

**Adoption and implementation of a Ten-Point Plan of Action** to be elaborated jointly with the other participating cities in order to fight in a **concrete manner** against racism and discrimination at the municipal level.

In order to take into consideration the specificities of the different areas of the world, a **regional approach** will be adopted. This will be done through the creation of networks that will work towards the establishment of regional ethical and political Charters and Plans of Action that will ultimately inspire the overall international framework of the coalition.

# Implementation stages for the Coalition

## 1

### First step: Defining an ethical Charter and a Plan of Action for each region

In a first phase, a **Lead City** will be identified on the basis of its experience and commitment in the fight against racism and discrimination for each of the following regions: **Africa, Latin America and Caribbean region, North America, Asia-Pacific and Europe.**

The Lead City will launch consultations with other municipalities and civil society partners in order to define an **ethical and political Charter** rooted in Human Rights values and elaborate a **Ten-Point Plan of Action** for the region concerned. It will host an Expert Meeting to prepare a proposal for these two documents and to discuss the modalities of their implementation and follow-up mechanisms.

In order to avoid duplication, the Regional Coalition should define its Charter on the basis of existing regional instruments, and should build on existing structures and networks. For example, the city of **Nuremberg**, which has accepted to be the Lead City of the European region, will mobilize cities that are partners of the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City.

## 2

### **Second step: establishing a regional Coalition of Cities Against Racism**

Once the experts have prepared a proposal for an ethical Charter and Plan of Action, the Lead City will bring together as many cities as possible for the examination and adoption of the proposal. This can be done by organizing a meeting for that purpose or taking advantage of a planned event. Thus, the European Region will benefit from the **Fourth European Conference Cities for Human Rights** (Nuremberg, 9-10 December 2004) to present the Ten-Point Plan of Action elaborated by the Nuremberg Expert Meeting to the participating municipalities for adoption and integration in their programmes of action.

The adoption by the cities of the ethical Charter and Plan of Action will mark the creation of the Regional Coalition.

The Lead City will designate a personality, such as a sports-person or an artist, as the **Patron** of the Regional Coalition, and mobilize **Sponsors** for its activities from the private sector, preferably among companies that have signed the **UN Global Compact Project**<sup>1</sup>.



## 3

### **Third step: launching the International Coalition of Cities against Racism**

The third stage will include the organization of an **International Conference of Cities** in one of the partner cities to officially launch the **International Coalition of Cities against Racism**. This Conference will bring together representatives of the municipalities participating in each of the Regional Coalitions to adopt an international ethical Charter and to establish appropriate mechanisms of coordination and follow-up.

<sup>1</sup> The Global Compact, launched in 2000 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, is designed to bring together businesses and United Nations agencies, the world of work and civil society around nine universal principles relating to human rights, labour standards and the environment. Using the power of collective action, the Global Compact endeavours to promote the civic responsibility of businesses and the participation of the business world in the search for solutions to the problems arising from globalization. Principle N°6 of the Compact concerns the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



## Social and Human Sciences / UNESCO

The Coalition of Cities  
Against Racism is an  
initiative launched by SHS.  
As one of UNESCO's  
five specialized sectors,

SHS works to facilitate  
social transformations  
where the values of  
justice, freedom and  
human dignity can be  
fully realized.

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If your City is interested  
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