



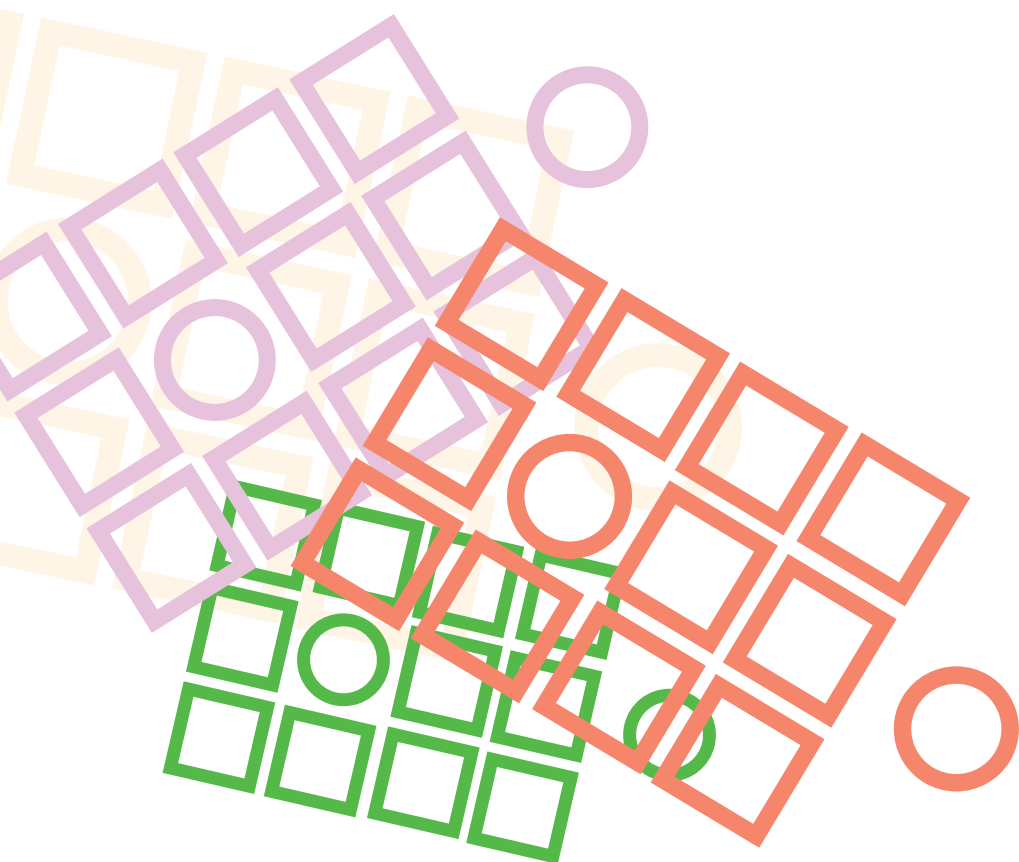
**DICl**

Discrimination In Cities:

Achieving Change  
Through Cooperation

# **Fighting discrimination in cities**

Policy recommendations  
for City Governance and Administrations



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## Introduction

Addressing discrimination on the basis of nationality, ethnicity or race (NER) within cities in Europe represents a key challenge for the present and the future. The following recommendations for policy and practice stem from the experiences of eight European cities (Cologne, Leipzig, Potsdam, and Wuppertal in Germany; Padua, Prato, Ragusa, and Turin in Italy) that took part in DICI: Discrimination in Cities - Achieving Change Through Cooperation, co-financed by the EU's Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme. The recommendations are intended to help guide municipalities in their efforts to reduce NER discrimination both through measures focusing on inclusion and integration and measures specifically designed to identify and fight discrimination.

The recommendations outlined below are preceded by five guiding principles that represent a general framework for thinking about policies, strategies and initiatives that seek to reduce NER discrimination. These represent the foundation upon which the 10 recommendations (spelled out below) are based.

## Guiding Principles

1) NER Discrimination affects and regards everyone, both as individuals and as institutions or organizations. As such, it is everyone's responsibility.

*Municipal administrations and governing bodies have a vested interest in addressing the forms and manifestations of NER discrimination present within the city to the extent possible. They are, however, not alone as actors within the local context and need to consider the role that they should play in the implementation of any given measure or initiative.*

2) Each city is unique in terms of its history, culture, population, and resources that influence the efficacy of policies and strategies adopted to prevent NER discrimination both in terms of implementation capacity and the reaction by specific target groups and/or city residents.

*Each city needs to assess its situation in order to identify and select the most effective strategy given its unique circumstances. Policies/strategies deemed effective in one city should not be blindly applied in another city without an assessment of the factors likely to influence success.*

3) Effectively addressing NER discrimination requires both pro-inclusion/integration measures that underscore commonalities AND anti-discrimination measures that actively **name** and address the phenomena.

*In seeking a state of equilibrium, city administrations and governments need to take into consideration Principle 2, recognizing that the ideal mix of pro-inclusion and anti-discrimination measures implemented at any given time depends on the social, cultural and economic situation within the city. This situation should be re-assessed periodically, with corresponding changes in the measures used, as the local situation changes.*

4) NER discrimination should not be considered in isolation, but in relation to other, interconnected, forms of discrimination (e.g., religious discrimination).

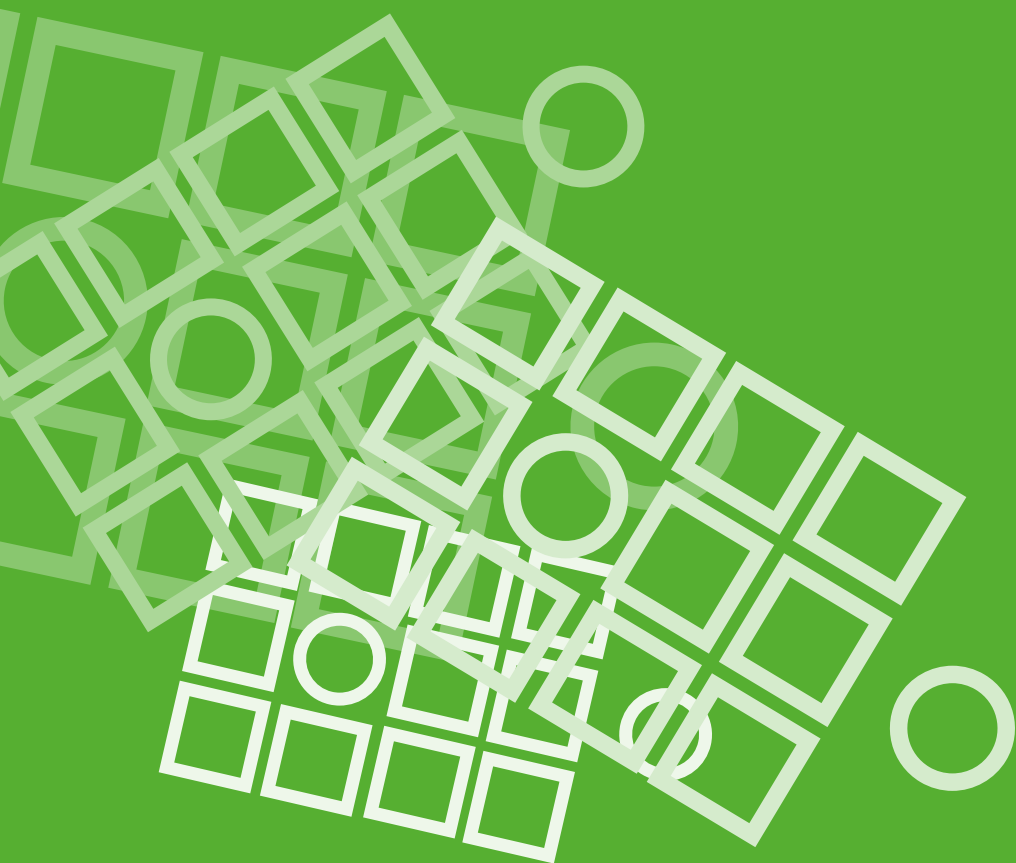
*City policies and strategies could benefit from the adaptation of a holistic approach to discrimination that recognizes the differences and commonalities of various forms of discrimination, potential interconnectedness and forms of multiple discrimination.*

5) Developing effective policies and strategies to address NER discrimination requires an understanding of its causes, forms and manifestations at the individual, institutional and structural level.

*City administrations should acquire an understanding of the underlying mechanisms of the various forms and levels of NER discrimination within the city in order to develop context-appropriate responses. Measures should, to varying degrees, take into consideration the psychological, sociological and cultural aspects of discrimination both in terms of the discriminatory behavior and the reactions to it by all involved whether as victim, perpetrator or bystander. Within this context an understanding of direct and indirect forms of discrimination is important. Furthermore, discrimination should be understood as a phenomena linked to unequal social power relations. Anti-discrimination is not only a matter of social equality, but also the enforcement of human rights.*



# Recommendations for Policy and Strategy Development







The following recommendations represent elements to be taken into consideration in the development and implementation of measures intended to address NER discrimination. Presented in order of relevance, as determined by the project cities, the points are to a significant extent interconnected and represent “ingredients” for the development and implementation of effective policies and strategies. In each case the municipal administration and governing bodies should carefully consider their role in supporting and/or implementing a given initiative on the basis of its capacity to act and the potential contribution of other institutions or organizations.

# 1

## **Name it - make the invisible visible**

NER discrimination, whether at the individual, structural or institutional level is often invisible as it may be difficult to identify and/or speak about. Rendering discrimination visible, through the creation of spaces and opportunities for speaking about and speaking out against NER discrimination, represents a first step towards addressing the issue.

Speaking about discrimination entails both the creation of safe spaces for individuals who have experienced discrimination to share or speak about their experiences in a confidential and protective setting and the creation of broader, public venues for speaking about discrimination in order to raise awareness. While the municipality may not be the most suited for providing these spaces, it should be aware of the need for such spaces and support efforts to create them. Within this, efforts should be made to make visible the underlying reasons and causes both of individual and structural forms of discrimination based on socio-economic disadvantage.

Speaking out against NER discrimination focuses on initiatives aimed at reporting or monitoring. Within this context the municipality should:

- promote events that help both victims and witnesses identify and report discrimination when it occurs, encouraging a climate in which people feel that they can and should report; and

- establish safe places, either independently or in partnership with other organizations, and means by which individuals who have experienced or witnessed discrimination can **report** the event. In the creation of these places it is essential that the reporters feel that they are heard, taken seriously and that appropriate follow-up measures are taken. This is distinct from the spaces indicated above that are designed to provide individuals a forum in which to speak, but that does not entail the formal reporting of incidents of discrimination or presumed discrimination.

## 2

**Develop a common internal strategy:** develop a clear strategy that guides how the city administration and government address the issue. This should have broad political support, beginning with the mayor. Strive to a-politicize anti-discrimination measures (whether direct or indirect). The administration should work internally before reaching out to other partners.

Strategy development should entail the internal coordination of services as well as the assignation of roles and responsibilities. Communication and the sharing of information between departments and offices within the city administration is essential for ensuring that initiatives designed to prevent and address NER discrimination become an integral part of city policy, both in terms of its internal functioning and in terms the external provision of services and interactions with the public. Mainstreaming should represent a primary goal according to which NER discrimination is seen as being everyone's responsibility rather than being viewed as being only of concern to a dedicated department or office. NER discrimination should be taken into consideration in the development and implementation of all municipal policies and initiatives.

## 3

**Make it everyone's responsibility.** The notion of responsibility is not limited to the city administration and municipal bodies, but extends to the broader community including civil society organizations, institutions, businesses and individuals. This notion represents the extension of Principle 1 according to which discrimination

affects everyone and hence everyone has a role to play in preventing it. It is a recognition that no single actor can effectively address discrimination alone and that the city administration is not necessarily the best actor to implement a given measure. Individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, and institutions all have a role play. The city administration should strive to identify how it can most effectively work with others in order to:

- help everyone have a voice and make room for them around the table; and
- empower individuals and groups to take on responsibility for reducing discrimination and promoting the development of an inclusive city.

## 4

**Collaborate and network:** This recommendation is the natural consequence of Recommendation 3 and a recognition of the efficacy of collaborative partnerships. Institutions at various levels of governance as well community organizations, businesses and associations, working together, are important contributors to the implementation of anti-discrimination initiatives.

It should be noted that the involvement of immigrant associations is especially important given the key role that they play as representatives of groups who are especially prone to be subjects of NER discrimination.

## 5

**Work on the ground:** work at the neighbourhood level to improve and develop the social, cultural and architectonic environment. On the ground work helps the city better involve other actors, understand problems, assess needs, and respond quickly and effectively to issues and problems as they arise. On the ground work also supports efforts to make NER discrimination everyone's responsibility through their active involvement and increase in sense of belonging and ownership as community members.

6

**Promote a sense of commonality for all city residents:** create spaces and points of contact that bring people together without underlining differences. Initiatives that bring people together around neutral themes (e.g., a festival to celebrate the city in which all groups are invited to participate) or commonalities (e.g., a bread festival) encourage knowledge and understanding of the other as members of the same community. While it is important to name and talk about discrimination, it is equally important to engage in inclusive activities that help bring people from different groups together.

7

**Promote institutional openness:** as part of (inter-)cultural opening the city administration should strive to:

- Promote equal access to city services for all city residents;
- Promote civic and political participation at local level of all city residents;
- Continually assess and monitor institutional and structural discrimination; and
- Promote and implement internal practices aimed at counteracting discrimination (e.g., the hiring process).

8

**Connect symbols with actions:** actions need to match words in that the symbolic power of public declarations and laws needs to be followed up by concrete actions that support this public stance. As such the city administration and the municipality as a whole should clearly communicate its anti-discrimination policy and/or stance with the broader public and implement supporting actions that are coherent with proclaimed policy. It should be underlined that purely symbolic actions may do more harm than good if they are perceived as lacking in substance.

# 9

**Make the most of what already exists:** given the limited availability of resources, the city administration should:

- Assess existing services and practices to determine how they can be modified to reduce discrimination and promote inclusion with little or no additional investment (e.g., through assessment of overlap in service provision, assessment/re-organisation of responsibilities);
- Maximize resources where possible both to reduce spending and to incorporate anti-discrimination/pro-inclusion work within existing services and initiatives;
- Prioritize initiatives according to available resources; and
- Consider how the city administration's actions fit into the broader picture given the services offered by other institutions or organizations as well resources that can be provided by other sources.

# 10

**Combine approaches:** it is important to recognize that no one action alone can be deemed sufficient. The municipality's strategy should bring together a mix of measures that include:

- A clearly defined internal organization;
- Effective collaboration and networking with others in order to promote the participation of other agencies and government institutions (e.g., at the national or regional level and civil society including NGOs and migrant associations.);
- Measures designed to promote mainstreaming and equal access for all;
- Targeted policies where necessary; and
- Ongoing monitoring and data collection to help guide policy and initiative development.



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