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**International Coalition
of Inclusive and
Sustainable Cities – ICCAR**

International
Observatory
of Mayors
Living Together

City Policies on

living Together

This working document was compiled by the International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together, in collaboration with UNESCO's **International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR** (http://en.unesco.org/iccar).

It is based on an original study – *Politiques et programmes sur le vivre-ensemble : État des lieux*, – conducted by the Intercultural Relations Research Laboratory (LABRRI) at the Université de Montreal for the Standing Committee on Living Together, a working group within the *Association internationale des Maires francophones* (AIMF).

The complete version of the report (in French only) is available at observatoirevivreensemble.org

The purpose of this report is to document existing Living Together policies and programmes at the municipal level; conduct an operational study on Living Together to strengthen municipal initiatives; and offer guidelines to cities that want to more effectively support Living Together in their respective communities.

Preparation of the report was enhanced by input from the following cities: Dakar, Douala, Geneva, Montreal, Namur, Ouagadougou, Quebec City, Rabat, Strasbourg and Tunis..

Living Together: a global challenge

In a context of diversity and globalization, increasing urbanization and migration around the world are posing ever-growing challenges to social cohesion. The responsibility for addressing this global challenge falls primarily on local authorities who face many problems associated with "living together," such as co-existence among different groups, inclusion of newcomers and indigenous communities, sharing public spaces, urban security, and efforts to combat discrimination.

Why a report on Living Together policies?

Numerous cities around the world have invested considerable effort in promoting Living Together in their respective communities. Despite many local initiatives, this concept remains vague. That is why cities, as a level of government close to the population, have been developing framework policies on Living Together at the local level. A current assessment of what each city is doing on this front is therefore necessary in order to identify common elements and to draw lessons. This assessment will improve our knowledge of the various approaches and levers that foster Living Together so that we can inspire other cities by promoting and sharing concrete experiences with them.

Living Together in an era of "super-diversity"

Every society wonders what it can do to better ensure harmony and social cohesion. The concept of Living Together has emerged in a context where many factors are forcing us to think about the pluralistic reality of contemporary societies (due to urbanization, urban growth, international mobility and so on). New forms of mobility coincide with new forms of diversity. The term "super-diversity" also embraces ethnic, religious, linguistic, sexual and gender identity.

→ What is the origin of the term "living together"?

Historically, the concept of Living Together emerged during the reconstruction of Europe (after the Second World War), which aimed to restore peace and reconciliation among nations. It is not by chance that the United Nations stated that "peace [is] an expression of living together" (United Nations 2017). In many publications, living together is linked to non-violence, accepting differences, rejecting exclusion, and seeking consensus through listening and dialogue. From this standpoint, promoting a "culture of peace" does not solely refer to the absence of war but also to the concept of good global governance.

→ International Day of Living Together in Peace (IDLTP)

In 2017, the United Nations, by the consensus of all Member States, adopted Resolution 72/130, which established the **International Day of Living Together in Peace (IDLTP)**, to be celebrated on annually on 16 May. This day is a means of regularly mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity. It is also an opportunity for all to express the desire to live and act together, united in differences and diversity. UNESCO is the UN agency responsible for the International Day of Living Together in Peace (IDLTP).

→ Living Together: a definition from the cities' perspective

In November 2018, the AIMF's Standing Committee on Living Together (composed of mayors from around 15 Francophone cities) adopted the following definition:

"[Translation] Living together in the city refers to a dynamic process involving various stakeholders in order to foster inclusion and a sense of safety and belonging. Promoting Living Together means recognizing all forms of diversity, fighting against discrimination and working to facilitate peaceful co-existence among society's members. To implement Living Together, local stakeholders must work together to identify values that contribute to positive interactions and social cohesion."

The "local turn" and local governance

The municipal level is essential to understanding the dynamics of co-existing in a context of diversity because cities are where individuals live and interact. For the past 20 years, "local turn" has become an increasingly common expression due to changes in municipalities' roles and responsibilities, with the result that the potential of "local governance" has been recognized in many countries. Due to the proximity of municipal governments to their populations, it is at the local level that the potential impact of policies and programmes is the strongest. These changes in governance imply a certain degree of institutional transformation in municipal structures and external relations. We have also witnessed the phenomenon of "intercultural cities," which emphasize interaction among groups. However, not all cities are on an equal footing, due to disparities at many levels, in terms of population diversity, financial or human resources and so on.

The importance of inter-city networks

Many cities around the world strive to better integrate and include their populations through inter-city networks of support and concerted action. Over the past 20 years, the number of inter-city networks in the world has increased both nationally and internationally (e.g. Metropolis, AIMF, International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together, ICCAR, Intercultural Cities and EuroCities). This phenomenon goes hand in hand with a range of practices and paradigms at the cities' disposal. Belonging to an inter-city network enables member cities to share their experiences, expertise, resources and best practices in carrying out joint projects.

Living Together as applied by municipal administrations

Living Together policies are implemented in different ways in each city. However, these different ways impact how these policies are rolled out within each city's range of municipal services. Here is an overview:

Douala	Living Together in Douala is primarily connected to the city's communications, decentralized cooperation and public relations division, which is part of its decentralized cooperation section. However, several initiatives are also carried out by other sections, such as the section for the urban development of geographic, address and land registry information, in which the city's architects and urban planners strive to make Douala's common spaces inclusive.
Geneva	Living Together in Geneva primarily falls under social services in the city's department of social cohesion and solidarity. This department, which is responsible for Geneva's diversity policy, is divided into six sections: early childhood; schools and institutions for children; funerals, cemeteries and crematoria; social services; youth services; and civil registry.
Montreal	Historically, programmes that promote Living Together fall under Montreal's sports and social diversity section. More recently, this section has begun to collaborate with the city's office for integrating newcomers to Montreal, which was created in 2016 to support the inclusion and integration of new arrivals. Within the city's international relations bureau, the Secretariat of the International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together plays a major role, among others, in urban diplomacy.
Namur	Living Together in Namur is partly considered from the standpoint of social cohesion. The city's social cohesion section within its department of civil and social affairs is composed of four cells: equality of opportunity; prevention and security; solidarity; and neighbourhood life.

Ouagadougou	Living Together in Ouagadougou is connected to the city's social action directorate, which is part of its social services division. The city's youth, associations and citizen initiatives directorate, which is part of its administrative services division, also addresses Living Together issues.
Quebec City	Quebec City has created a new model designed to operationalize Living Together within the municipal administration itself. Living Together is considered a component of urban security and falls under the responsibility of the city's assistant director-general. In tandem, the city has designated employees to work on various social development components in its recreation, sports and community life section.
Rabat	Rabat has placed Living Together in both its social services section (part of its social, cultural and sporting affairs division) and its international cooperation division (which includes the city's bilateral cooperation, multilateral cooperation and project coordination sections).
Strasbourg	Living Together in Strasbourg primarily falls under the social cohesion and educational/cultural development section of the city's municipal services division. This section is responsible for three missions: UNESCO heritage; preventing violent radicalization; and promoting women's and gender equality rights.

Categories of municipal Living Together programmes

Implementing Living Together policies and programmes in cities requires unequivocal political engagement and strong administrative support. The primary findings of this study are as follows:

- A pronounced tendency in the cities to **favour strengthening civic culture**, particularly through citizen committees, partnering with local organizations and associations, and developing volunteer programmes;

- Setting up **programmes for specific groups** (e.g. various ethnocultural, youth and newcomer groups);

- Implementing **action plans** and developing **evaluation tools**.

Living Together policies and programmes: examples of activities

Policy content and directions were analysed on the basis of three main programme areas (3D model), namely:

- **Diversity (promoting diversity)**
- **Discrimination or Equality** (combating discrimination)
- **Dialogue** (rapprochement-oriented initiatives)

The three programme areas are expressed differently in the cities participating in the study, depending on their local contexts and in relation to the actors and services involved. Below are a few examples of various initiatives:

DIVERSITY	
Dakar	Live performing arts show: theatre, song and dance.
Douala	Annual gastronomic celebration in each of the city's boroughs: tasting traditional dishes.
Ouagadougou	Days to highlight foreign communities living in Ouagadougou, featuring activities to strengthen integration into local society.
Rabat	Exchange of best practices with other cities by emphasizing the benefits of diversity.
Geneva	Genève, sa gueule [Faces of Geneva]: a project to portray and recognize the reality of diversity in Geneva through photos and life stories.

DISCRIMINATION	
Montreal	Panel discussion on diversity, inclusion and combating discrimination: a group of experts chosen to make the City of Montreal more representative of all forms of its residents' diversity.
Geneva	A week against Racism: various activities to highlight the city's diversity and pluralist identity.
Rabat	Rabat as a municipal entity promotes equity, equal opportunity and a gender approach in supporting the social integration of migrants and their participation in community life.
Quebec City	IMPAC Project: programme at the municipal court to support people with mental disabilities and provide sustainable solutions to recidivism.
Strasbourg	Mission on preventing violent radicalization in the city.

DIALOGUE	
Montreal	Liaison officer in public libraries: outreach programme for newcomers and isolated vulnerable persons.
Douala	"Peace in the village" awareness-raising caravan: to promote social dialogue (particularly with indigenous groups), encourage ongoing peace efforts in daily activities, and promote social cohesion.
Namur	"Living well together" workshops: prevention activities for target groups on specific topics.
Tunis	Series of film screenings combined with discussion: a film programme entitled "Living Together" hosted by a film club.
Dakar	Community mediation outlet: service encouraging residents to re-appropriate the custom of settling disputes amicably and to create new forms of solidarity.

The aim of a fourth programme area – **Citizen Participation** – is to foster public participation and social cohesion in a cross-cutting fashion.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION	
Strasbourg	Strasbourg foreign residents' council (CRE): a debate forum that brings together residents and associations to create a more egalitarian city.
Ouagadougou	Strengthening the community movement: support for setting up neighbourhood and sector development committees.
Namur	Residents' committee: initiative to enable residents to manage their own neighbourhoods and make social connections.
Tunis	Project to safeguard cultural and historical heritage: several initiatives that link Living Together with urbanism and neighbourhood revitalization projects.
Quebec City	Centre multifonctionnel des Roses: a multi-purpose building that includes a community centre, community housing, and local family services.

Policy content: a few observations

- Municipalities rarely offer an explicit definition of Living Together, even in cases where this concept is a major consideration in formulating policies and programmes.

- In most of the cities studied, it is recognized that Living Together concerns the entire population in all its forms of diversity (ethnicity, religion, language, gender, age, socioeconomic status, etc.).

- The Citizen Participation programme area seems to be strengthened by the involvement of civic officials in local governance.

- The Discrimination programme area is less well represented, probably because municipal actors prefer to work with a positive approach rather than a negative one.

- Cities that operate in a multicultural context seem to offer more diversity-oriented policies and programmes.

- Participants recognized that "diversity" is often implicit in policies and programmes, and that public institutions in some countries are not accustomed to differentiating between their citizens for fear of being discriminatory.

Implementing Living Together

Municipal Living Together initiatives have an inherently political dimension. Citizens directly engage with their elected officials; and cities implementing such initiatives engage with their populations directly.

Here are a few observations on this study:

- In most of the cities studied, there is a cross-cutting **conception of Living Together** in the different areas of municipal intervention with the general public. In this sense, coordination among the various municipal services appears as a strategy to strengthen Living Together. These strategies apply to central municipal services as well as to services in neighbourhoods and boroughs.

- A preliminary analysis of municipal structures shows a definite trend towards concerted action as a mode of governance in implementing Living Together in terms of **mobilizing municipal services** and local partners (associations, civil society organizations, businesses and university actors).

- Cities play an increasingly important role in planning and managing Living Together. That is why it is necessary to underscore both the importance of **political leadership** in this area, and the resulting importance of inter-city exchanges and training or capacity-building initiatives.

- Several cities emphasized the importance of **urban security** to ensure Living Together, not only by developing trust between residents and the police, but also through a general feeling of security. For this reason, some of the cities plan to initiate a "community policing" approach, based on education and prevention rather than on repression and coercion.

- In order to better address the specific needs of each municipality, the strategies listed in this study draw on **statistical and research data** based on the socio-demographic realities of the city concerned.

Governance and mobilizing Living Together

Several actors commented that the idea of Living Together as a cross-cutting approach is not new; it even constitutes "the founding mission of every city." It was also noted that Living Together is "not embodied in a particular competence or elected official" because it should be promoted by the entire municipal administration and not only by certain individuals, sectors or interest groups.

A consensus emerged around the idea that Living Together, as a philosophy or municipal vision, should go beyond simply hosting or integrating newcomers. When well framed, Living Together policies help identify cities' blind spots in their mission of ensuring social cohesion.

The section below offers several ideas for consideration that could address some of these questions.

→ **New Living Together policies raise many governance challenges:**

- Who provides the leadership for Living Together in cities?

- Is there a coordinating organization or unit?

- Who facilitates Living Together in the city on a day-to-day basis?

- Is Living Together a policy for the city as a whole or does it only concern a specific sector/section?

- Is there a common/shared framework for Living Together?

- Is there a narrative or communication strategy that could be easily adopted by elected officials and the various municipal services?

- Has such a strategy been developed by the city itself or does it rather stem from a framework provided by higher levels of government?

- Which sectors of municipal action are mobilized on behalf of Living Together policies?

- What are the means of collaboration and mobilization that cities can access in order to implement Living Together?

- What role do politicians play in implementing and supporting Living Together?

- What are the strategies to bring Living Together into the mainstream?

- What is the role of cities in educating the general public and raising public awareness?

Possible ideas for the future

⟶ Living Together at the municipal level is facilitated by clear political positioning. Without political leadership, it will not be possible for the concept of Living Together to be embraced by the municipal administration and translated into concrete terms that will be understood and supported by citizens.

⟶ For Living Together to be supported by all actors, cities can adopt a frame of reference that provides clear directions. Living Together policies and programmes are made possible by a cross-cutting approach in municipal programmes, achieved by designating an entity (e.g. directorate, section, council or advisory committee) to take charge of the file, and also evaluate it in the medium and long terms. Living Together needs to be monitored by an independent elected official who makes it a priority in the municipality's functioning.

⟶ Although the cities that participated in this study collectively draw on a variety of approaches to implement Living Together, those approaches that recognize diversity and combat discrimination can be strengthened. With a view to fortifying their toolkits, Cities whose Living Together programme areas are out of balance with each other could benefit from what other cities are doing.

⟶ Given the differing levels of experience, the participants in the study underlined the importance of developing references or guidelines on the various themes and the challenges of Living Together in order to facilitate communication with both the general public and the media.

⟶ To determine whether investing human and financial resources in Living Together policies is justified, the cities covered in the study say that they are in favour of evaluation tools to measure the impact of various initiatives and actions.

→ International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together

The Observatory is a platform for exchanging experiences and best practices in inclusion, social cohesion, diversity management and community safety. Its network includes around 50 cities in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas. The Observatory brings together mayors, and encourages collaboration among cities and universities in order to document experiences.

In association with the Observatory, the Standing Committee on Living Together is a space for action and reflection within the Association internationale des maires francophones (AIMF). The committee is made up of political representatives from around 20 of the Observatory's Francophone member cities as well as a technical group responsible for developing joint initiatives.

The Observatory's Central Secretariat (observatoirevivreensemble.org/en) is located within the City of Montreal's international relations office.

→ Living Together lies at the heart of UNESCO's mission:

In 2004, UNESCO created the **International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities - ICCAR,** a network consisting of seven regional or national coalitions that share experiences in order to develop more inclusive municipal policies.

As cities are key players in the promotion of Living Together, ICCAR calls upon its members to promote inclusion and diversity in their constituencies by committing to a Ten-Point Plan of Action on various areas of urban governance. By sharing good practices, knowledge and expertise, cities learn from each other's initiatives and develop their own policies and programmes adapted to their local contexts related to education, housing, employment and culture.

UNESCO is the lead agency for implementing the **International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022)**, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2012 in order to strengthen the role of member states in encouraging dialogue among religions and cultures, and promoting cooperation and mutual understanding in favour of peace. UNESCO also plays a key role in implementing the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024), whose primary goal is to strengthen actions and measures that guarantee people of African descent the full exercise of their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights as well as full and equal participation in society.

International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities - ICCAR
Regional and national coalitions of ICCAR

Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities launched in 2005

European Coalition of Cities Against Racism launched in 2005

U.S. Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination launched in 2013

Coalition of Arab Cities against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance launched in 2008

Coalition of Latin American and Caribbean Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia launched in 2006

Coalition of African Cities against Racism and Discrimination launched in 2006

Coalition of Cities against Discrimination in Asia and the Pacific launched in 2006

List of cities of the International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together

Abidjan	Drummondville	Madrid	Seoul
Algiers	Düsseldorf	Miami	Sousse
Bamako	Fez	Monterrey	St. Petersburg
Be'er Sheva	Gatineau	Montreal	Strasbourg
Beirut	Geneva	Mulhouse	Tel Aviv-Yafo
Brussels	Halifax	Namur	Thiès
Buenos Aires	Hiroshima	Ouagadougou	Toronto
Carthage	Ile-de-France	Paris	Tunis
Casablanca	Jerusalem	Port-au-Prince	Victoria
Chicago	Johannesburg	Porto-Novo	Washington, D.C
Cotonou	Lausanne	Québec	
Dakar	Libreville	Rabat	
Douala	Lyon	Sceaux	

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