

The city's engagement in the European Coalition Cities Against Racism

The city of Uppsala has been a member of ECCAR since 2006. In 2010 a General Assembly was held in the city of Uppsala. The city of Uppsala works actively with the 10 point plan of action and has recently chosen to follow an overall strategic plan for Promoting Human Rights and combating discrimination and racism. The overall plan was formed according to the 10 point plan of action. Below are some examples of the city's activities regarding the 10 point plan of action:

Commitment 1

Greater vigilance against racism

The city is cooperating on a broad level with the civil society and non-government organizations (NGOs). The civil society has a major role in the development of the society. The civil society contributes to broadening the cultural life in the city, increasing participation and inclusion and even bettering health amongst citizens. Many people learn the principals of democracy by participating in NGOs. The city of Uppsala has signed a local agreement with these NGOs. The agreement consists of principles and commitments for cooperation and collaboration. More than 100 NGOs have signed this local agreement. Some NGO's have also formed partnership with the city concerning common interests, for example integration and inclusion.

The city of Uppsala gives financial support to organizations that work against discrimination. One example is the local bureau, the Antidiscrimination Agency, run by an adult education association.

Furthermore, the city of Uppsala has additional funding for NGOs who work with inclusion. This is especially important due to the recent situation with larger numbers of refugees coming to the city.

Commitment 2

Assessing racism and discrimination and monitoring municipal policies

The City of Uppsala does not collect statistics on racism or discrimination. Through frequent contacts with the police and Antidiscrimination Agency the city assesses the current situation for different groups at risk for discrimination. When it comes to hate crimes, the city also gets the information through the police. The city now works at a strategic level with crime prevention.

Recently the city performed an investigation concerning the gap between different groups in society when it comes to health and economic conditions. The investigation was important to the city. It is a foundation for political strategies implemented to close the gap between different groups of people living in Uppsala.

Commitment 3

Better support for the victims of racism and discrimination

Inhabitants that experience discrimination and racism can get individual support and advice from the local Antidiscrimination Agency.

Furthermore, the city of Uppsala, gives financial support to NGOs that represent groups that are at risk for discrimination or racism, Such groups are for instance the roma group and people of African descent. Gay, bisexual and transgender people are at risk for hate crimes of the same character.

According to the PEN international recommendations and International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN), the city of Uppsala also takes a stand in defending freedom of expression by offering writers that are under attack in their home countries a safe haven in the city.

In its role as an employer, the city has adopted guidelines to combat discrimination within the organization.

Commitment 4

More participation and better informed citizens

Information about rights and obligations for all citizens is given within the ordinary educational services. When it comes to information about the national minorities, the city provides information on its website and in printed materials. Since 2011, the city has a political policy concerning the support of the national minorities. The city of Uppsala has also been selected by the Swedish government to become a “best practices” municipality concerning the support of the Romani people.

Every year the city is also honours different international memorial days, for example March 21, the international Day Against Racism and Discrimination is acknowledged, and also The Holocaust Memorial day on January 27.

Furthermore, the city honours:

February 6 – the Sami National Day

February 24 – the Swedish-Finnish Day

April 8 – the Romani International Day

October 24 – the UN Day

A new festival has started in the city – WelcomeOUT – and this festival is also honoured by the city of Uppsala.

Commitment 5

The city as an active supporter of Equal Opportunity Practices

Since 2010, the city has a senior adviser for supporting national minorities. The mission for the senior adviser is to spread information about civil rights and also ensure minority participation.. The city also, by being a “best practice-municipality” concerning the Romani people inclusion, works actively with inclusion concerning education, social services, housing and civil society.

The city is a member of many local, regional and national networks, all designed to combat discrimination and racism. Within the frame of these different networks, the city provides public seminars and also gives out an award. The award is given to a person, group, association or company with exemplary achievements within the field of integration and social inclusion.

Commitment 6

The City as an Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider

Diversity is a goal in recruitments and is addressed within a competence based recruitment system. Affirmative action is not allowed according to Swedish law however there is an exception for underrepresented gender.

The city of Uppsala has adopted ethical and social guidelines when it comes to the procurement of services and goods in order to minimize the risk of discrimination and corruption.

Commitment 7

Fair Access to Housing

Since June 2016, the city of Uppsala has a new public agency for rental flats. The agency shall provide flats to the applicants from a neutral criteria based on applicants time in the queue. The agency has an obligation to counteract discrimination.

In Uppsala there is a housing shortage. The waiting list for a flat is quite long, which causes problems especially for young people and for immigrants and newcomers. During 2016, when the city had an exceptional influx of refugees, during this time a percentage of these flats were commandeered to solve this acute housing situation for the refugees.

Commitment 8

Challenging Racism and Discrimination through Education

The city of Uppsala has, through different networks and in different situations, arranges seminars, conferences and convent, where issues concerning xenophobia, discrimination and racism are addressed.

The city offers educational training to employees in the following areas: human rights, combating discrimination, gender equality etc.

Commitment 9

Promoting Cultural Diversity

The city is promoting cultural diversity in a variety of ways. For instance the libraries have started an activity called “Borrow an Uppsala-inhabitant” – a simple way to provide newcomers connect with locals and get involved in inclusive processes. Many people who come to Sweden do not have existing networks and this is a way increase understanding between different nationalities in a simple way.

The libraries in Uppsala also have cafés where you can meet people and receive language training.

The city has also, in cooperation with the Swedish church, started a new concept, “Friend-family” – where established locals, local families can meet and interact with newcomers and their families, and do different activities together.

There are a variety of cultural activities going on in the city, where culture diversity is promoted. One night in September every year there is a “Cultural night” in the city, where more than 300 different activities take place, showing a diversity of expressions.

Commitment 10

Hate Crimes and Conflicts Management

The city of Uppsala is actively working to prevent crime and reduce the risks for young people to become criminal. A strategy has recently adopted concerning prevention of violent extremism. The strategy focuses on human rights and democracy.

There is a local guideline for those who work with young people within their profession. The guideline is called “Shall we phone the police?” and it gives support and advice to the professionals how to act when there’s concern about youth in problematic situations.

Support to young people who are exposed to crime is given following a specific method, mediation.



Swedish cities against racism

Uppsala is part in a national network of cities against racism. This network is often called the “Swedish ECCAR” since one purpose is to promote work in accordance with the “Ten-point plan of action” in Swedish cities even if they are not yet members of ECCAR. The network meets 3- 4 times per year for joint seminars and exchange of experience and best practice.