

**ECCAR General Conference  
19-20 November 2020  
CommunicAction: Together to protect human rights at the local level**

**20 November: Working group “Speaking up! Youth and media voices and narratives to communicate new cities”**

**Working language ENGLISH**

**Description and objectives of the working group**

Awareness raising actions targeting both hosting communities and migrants play an important role in fostering integration. Fighting discrimination, promoting a positive approach to diversity, combating xenophobia and hate speech are necessary elements for a fairer and peaceful society. On the other hand, negative framings about migration which portray foreigners as a threat to the local identities and customs can increase dichotomies within the local communities and feed in to the rise of populism and xenophobia.

This working session will focus on why migration narrative matters in shaping public attitudes and political narratives towards refugees and other migrants within their host communities and why young people have a role to play on this.

The focus of the ECCAR annual conference on education, youth and communication offers three important lenses through which identifying effective practices and policies at the local level.

Participants from migrant associations, youth groups, media outlets, civil society organisations together with the local authorities will explore the challenges in communication and highlight the inspirational examples on how media, youth and migrant voices can effectively engage and re-shape public opinions about migration in their cities.

**Outline of the working group**

The workshop focuses on the following dimensions:

- 1) communication
- 2) education
- 3) youth

We intend to operationalise these three dimensions and connect them with the key objective of this working group, that is to reach consensus among participants on some useful tools / approaches / initiatives that cities could undertake to re-shape public opinions about migration and to value the role of youth on this.

The workshop will be guided by a range of questions that may let good practices, and their tools and solutions emerge:

Communication □ This is the “means” of our action. Questions could be, i.a.

- Is youth a specific target group of the communication of your City? If so, how is this organised?
- Does your city have a protocol on intercultural / inclusive / fair institutional communication? Do you find it useful? If so, why? Is there any cooperation on this with local media?

- Are young people engaged / involved in the communication process? Is there an attention on the involvement of youth with migrant background?
- Do you know if journalists with migrant background work in your city? What solutions could be adopted in order to encourage young migrants to choose a career in the media? What role can play Local Authorities on this?<sup>1</sup>

Education / Training □ What role have education and training in fostering influential impact of youth on their communities?

- Does your city work on / support youth empowerment programs targeting also youth with migrant background? If so, how? Is there any experience on communication?

Youth □ This is the “main target group” of the initiatives developed. Questions could be:

- Can you bring successful examples on how to engage youth on actions / projects / campaigns to build inclusive societies and fight racism and discriminations?
- Do you know any exchange / volunteer / training programme involving young people coming from EU and non-EU countries? Is your city involved?
- Could the ECCAR play a role? How?

### **Format:**

The total duration of the working group is 4 hours.

At first moderator (Neva Cocchi from Weworld GVC) will provide guidance on the objectives and format of the working group discussion (15').

Three sessions of discussion of 35 minutes each: one on communication, one on education, one on youth. Each session will start with a 5' presentation of the good practices. This will last approximately 2h including some small breaks in between. In each session there will be a moderator/reporter that takes notes of the following:

- Tools/solutions
- Obstacles/problems that may be faced/dilemmas

The reporter from each session will make a summary at the end of the key tools emerged.

### **Contributions by:**

- City of Kadikoy (media and freedom of expression)
- City of Genk (Junior Team project: participatory projects addressed to teenagers and youth)

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<sup>1</sup> Under representation of journalists with migratory origin: migrants, as well as other vulnerable groups, are often the subject of public discussion, but hardly become the subjects. Until minorities are part of the media staff it will be difficult to give adequate coverage to news concerning migration. Accurate information on issues often overlooked by the mainstream media, access to alternative sources, knowledge of other languages and cultures, interpretation of events with a different frame than the hegemonic one are just some of the characteristics of intercultural journalism. Integrating these skills and knowledge in the editorial team of the mainstream media would have obvious advantages, not least in terms of building an effectively democratic public sphere.

- City of Traiskirchen on their experience / challenges / best practice in the field of communicating migration (to be confirmed)
- City of Gothenburg (City Youth Council and its role in contrasting discrimination and racism)
- City of Palermo (Festival delle letterature migranti)
- Municipality of Athens (Athens Coordination Centre for Refugee and Migrant issues - ACCMR) or another city from the Greek network on integration
- Action Aid Hellas
- Sudwind and another speaker contacted by them (to be confirmed) on root causes of under representation of journalists with migratory background
- Coach association (Empowerment academy - City of Cologne)
- Stamp Media or Zwiep associations (City of Genk)

Other possible contributions:

- European network of migrant women that could share their experience related to the Migrant Women Reality Watch: Migrant Women Reality Watch is a series of live interviews, hosted on ENoMW's Facebook page, in which women are interviewed about a wide array of subjects, according to each's area of expertise. It aims to be a forum of migrant women voices, and an amplifier to their knowledge and contributions (to be contacted)
- Monte Sole Peace School Foundation and youth who have attended the Ciak Migration training on Media Activism in Italy (to be confirmed)
- Next Generation Italy (Bologna) on the role of young generations on developing new narratives (to be confirmed)