

Finalists of the ECCAR Award 2024

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1. President's Greetings

As we look forward to a new year and reflect on what we have achieved in 2024, the slogan, "Don't let Europe Go Backwards!" from the ECCAR General Conference in Heidelberg (23-25 September 2024) resonates deeply with me. It prompts me to reflect on how ECCAR cities have navigated the challenges of the past year. The rise of right-wing extremist ideologies throughout Europe has driven us as a Coalition to reaffirm our commitment to fostering equality, non-discrimination, and anti-racism in our cities.

ECCAR member cities are leading the charge against these regressive trends. Together, we strive to cultivate cities where citizens can thrive in truly anti-racist societies. To honour and amplify this vital work, we relaunched the ECCAR Award during our General Conference, highlighting the exemplary efforts of our member cities.

The ECCAR Award 2024 was relaunched at a most fitting moment: ECCAR's 20th-anniversary celebrations. This milestone reminds us of the collective strength of the ECCAR community, which has grown over the past two decades to an internationally recognised coalition with

active thematic working groups and partner work not only with the European Union and UNESCO but also with civil society, academia, and other city networks.

Twelve cities submitted their exemplary initiatives for consideration, and we selected six deserving finalists across two categories: one for cities with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants and another for cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. By distinguishing between large and small cities, the ECCAR Award emphasises the importance of innovative local actions across different urban environments, ensuring that advancements in the fight against racism are acknowledged and promoted at all levels.

As the President of the Coalition, I was proud to read all the submissions and to hear the finalists' presentations featured in this publication finally. The finalists of the ECCAR Award represent a collective of cities dedicated to upholding the values of respect and equality for all residents, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, or religious background. The geographical diversity of the finalists, including Dudelange (Luxembourg), Ingelheim (Germany), Botkyrka (Sweden), City of

Bologna (Italy), Schaerbeek (Belgium) and Zurich (Switzerland) underscore the shared belief of our cities across Europe in the importance of inclusivity and solidarity, where local authorities and communities work together to create safe and welcoming environments for everyone. Through this Award, ECCAR celebrates achievements and inspires further collective action toward a future free of racism and discrimination.

I congratulate all the finalists - and the two winners, Dudelange (category of cities with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants) and Botkyrka (category of cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants) - again for their successful participation in this year's round. I look forward to the submissions in 2025!



*Benedetto Zacchioli
ECCAR President, City of Bologna © ECCAR*

2. What is the ECCAR Award?

ECCAR strives to transform cities into safe and inclusive spaces for all citizens by implementing the 10 Points Action Plan, which provides a framework for cities to integrate anti-racism strategies into their actions and programmes. The ECCAR Award offers ECCAR cities an opportunity to celebrate their municipalities' exemplary efforts and spotlight a specific action toward building inclusive, anti-racist cities. After the applications have been submitted, the ECCAR Scientific Advisory Board, the ECCAR Board, and the Office preselect six finalists: three for the category of smaller cities (<50,000 inhabitants) and three for the category of larger cities (> 50,000 inhabitants). The final voting for two winners takes place at each annual ECCAR General Assembly, where all six finalists present their good practices.

The ECCAR 10 Points Plan of Action (10 PPA)

1. Greater Vigilance Against Racism
2. Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies
3. Better Support for the Victims of Racism and Discrimination
4. More Participation and Better Informed City Dwellers
5. The City as an Active Supporter of Equal Opportunity Practices
6. The City as an Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider
7. Fair Access to Housing
8. Challenging Racism and Discrimination Through Education
9. Promoting Cultural Diversity
10. Hate Crimes and Conflict Management

The winning cities will increase the visibility of their ECCAR membership by co-organising an award ceremony at their municipality with the ECCAR President or an ECCAR representative. The winners also receive a physical award as a permanent symbol of their exemplary local action. They will receive 2500 Euros to fund an activity in their city, e.g., training, a team-building day, or an event.

3. The ECCAR Award 2024 finalists

3.1 Category: Cities with less than 50,000 inhabitants

3.1.1 Dudelange (Winner)

Mois du respect 2023, “Month of Respect 2023”

Background

Today's world is complex. Access to online information and social networks allows anyone to inform themselves on any topic. We now face widespread “fake news” and the proliferation of opinions. The rise of artificial intelligence generates credible images and texts, contributing to this issue. Additionally, racist and hate speech—against Jews, Muslims, LGBTQ+ individuals, and others—has increased. Meeting new people, exchanging ideas, and gaining experiences can help ease tensions. While not everyone must agree, listening, empathising, and appreciating our differences is crucial. Dudelange's 'Month of Respect' initiative arose from a range of factors, including societal issues such as discrimination and intolerance. Municipal leaders and associations aim to foster a more inclusive environment and enhance civil society's commitment to mutual respect. Moreover, local authorities stress education to prevent conflict and promote positive behaviours. Thus, collaborations with organisations, schools, and associations were essential to the project's ability to develop effective programs grounded in respect and understanding.

The Action

Organised for the first time in 2021, the Month of Respect has been given a theme for its second edition: communication, with the slogan "Dis comment tu me parles? (en. “Tell me how you talk to me?”) Luxembourg's southern region is known for speaking quite freely. Expressing one's opinion sincerely is good, provided one is careful with one's words. Words can hurt, and the way you say things counts. Respect in relationships and communication concerns everyone. That's why the 'Month of Respect' programme offers activities and events around this theme for everyone: music workshops for children, cultural projects for young people and adults, workshops, round tables and much more. By promoting respect, tolerance, and diversity, the event aimed to strengthen social bonds, foster an inclusive environment, and enhance residents' well-being.



Flyer of the “Mois du Respect” project 2023 © Standart - Marc Lazzarini

The impact

The action fostered social cohesion by uniting people from diverse backgrounds around shared values. Participants built and strengthened new relationships, creating a more inclusive community network. It raised awareness of key issues, such as tolerance and mutual respect. Lectures, workshops, and discussions allowed participants to gain knowledge and appreciate cultural differences. A

diverse range of residents from Dudelange participated actively, highlighting residents' interest and commitment and validating the event's relevance. Local associations and schools significantly contributed to the project, strengthening partnerships for diverse Respect Month activities. These interactions helped reduce tensions and prejudice, fostering respect and understanding, and participants noted a decrease in discriminatory attitudes. Respect Month 2023 became sustainable by integrating respect principles into educational programs and by

maintaining community involvement. Strategic use of social media kept people engaged. Thus, respect was established as a core value, enhanced by regular community activities. Finally, support for neighbourhood initiatives helped continuously promote respect and values throughout the community.



Group discussion © Standart - Marc Lazzarini

ECCAR 10 PPA:

- 1. Greater Vigilance Against Racism
- 8. Challenging Racism and Discrimination Through Education
- 10. Hate Crimes and Conflict Management

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3.1.2 Ingelheim

Actionbound 'Getting on the track of Hans Neumann'

Background

Right-wing extremist parties and organisations have been staging demonstrations and rallies in Ingelheim for years. Within the project “Partnerships for Democracy”, Ingelheim has committed to city politics and civil society jointly addressing the promotion of democracy, the preservation of culture, and the prevention of right-wing extremism, as well as providing the social and financial framework for developing projects and networks in this area. The culture of remembrance is particularly important here. Hans Neumann was born in Ingelheim in 1920 to a Jewish family and had a happy childhood there. When the National Socialists seized power and Adolf Hitler became the Reich Chancellor in 1933, things took a turn for the worse. Because only those who dare to investigate the past can shape the present and future in a sustainably positive way, the idea of an Actionbound interactive scavenger hunt about Jewish life in Ingelheim, based on Hans Neumann’s biography during the Nazi era, was born two years ago. The aim is to use gamification to make the topic of anti-Semitism in the past and present accessible to young people and to help make prevention work active and interactive. The Hans Neumann Actionbound promotes active citizen participation in remembrance culture, especially among young people.

The Action

The Hans Neumann Actionbound is intended to make an interactive contribution to sustainable prevention work in antisemitism. Young people, in particular, should be made aware of the consequences of antisemitism through the fate of Hans Neumann. The aim is to raise awareness of the issue and promote empathy for those affected by antisemitism. In addition, the culture of remembrance is intended to educate people and make it clear that we, as a society, bear a great

responsibility to ensure that the atrocities committed by the Nazis are never repeated. The interactive city tour is based on true events. The player can solve small puzzles at different stations, follow the footsteps of a Jewish teenager at the time, and be inspired to reflect. The game is open to all interested parties and can be played freely anytime, alone or in small groups. The game can only be completed by completing the final station at the Mediathek Ingelheim, one of the route's highlights. The last station also requires the players to upload their game results anonymously to the game database. Actionbound 'Getting on the track of Hans Neumann' can also be booked for school classes, youth and adult groups, etc., with an accompanying teacher. If desired, a follow-up workshop on "Antisemitism Today" can be included. Ideally, the players downloaded the game in advance (via Wi-Fi) in the Actionbound app so that no mobile data is required on the route.



Project member Martin Konrath (Continuous Education Centre Ingelheim) with the mobile app "Actionbound" of Hans Neumann © Martin Konrath



The final station of the game at the Mediathek Ingelheim © Martin Konrath

The impact

During the initial tests and the first enactments of the game, it became clear to the organisers that the participants, i.e. locals from Ingelheim, were highly aware of the theme and the main character's story. It quickly became evident to the project team how deeply the young people connected with Hans and engaged with the subject matter. This empathy is crucial for fully addressing the topic. The project fosters significant potential for audience identification with the main character and provides information that can enhance political education efforts. The follow-up workshop addressing the manifestations of antisemitism today underscores the topic's contemporary relevance, ensuring that the primary target group, young people, can recognise its connections to the present day. Thus, the Actionbound “Getting on the Track of Hans Neumann” is an excellent educational resource for schools.

ECCAR 10 PPA: 8. Challenging Racism and Discrimination Through Education

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3.2 Category: Cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants

3.2.1 Botkyrka (Winner)

Reimagining Place: Participatory Communications in the Context of Diversity

Background

The contemporary world is characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Societies face unprecedented diversity, encompassing a broad spectrum of cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences. Botkyrka, Sweden, is a municipality with 170 different nationalities speaking 100 different languages, where parts of the municipality are segregated areas facing challenges with crime and safety. This presents a significant challenge for the municipality, which must navigate complex, culturally diverse communities and socio-economic challenges while striving to adopt evolving best practices in communications. Communicating with youth poses a significant challenge, as they do not use the channels the municipality typically uses. In such a context, effective communication becomes paramount for fostering understanding, collaboration, and community cohesion. The municipal council has

established a cross-political agreement, 'Hållbart Botkyrka' (Sustainable Botkyrka), as its long-term governing document to address these issues. This plan outlines Botkyrka's sustainability challenges and incorporates a generational perspective spanning several decades, emphasising the need for effective and inclusive communication to foster trust and community cohesion.



Conferral of the ECCAR Award to the Municipality of Botkyrka and the young reporters of the Tiktok Botkyrka team for the project "Reimagining Place: Participatory Communications in the Context of Diversity" © ECCAR

The Action

Within the Sustainable Botkyrka plan, the Municipality launched a TikTok initiative to engage with Botkyrka's youth. The initiative has employed approximately ten young individuals part-time, providing them with training in communication and guidance from senior municipal communicators. The objective is to disseminate information from essential societal updates to leisure and recreational activities, with content created by the youth editorial team. Notably, young people decide what interests them in communication. The philosophy behind this

project is participatory action research and a bottom-up perspective, giving young people a platform and a voice in the community. Reaching young people in today's world and digital era presents challenges, and Botkyrka Municipality chose to invest in TikTok as a key communication channel. Efforts to foster a safer community include empowering young residents to shape the municipality's image through this platform. The initiative uses participatory storytelling and focuses on the aspirations and strengths of the youth community rather than its weaknesses or needs. This approach ensures that the youth's priorities and perspectives are at the forefront of any initiatives.

The impact



Young reporters of the project with the ECCAR Award ©ECCAR

The municipality faces specific challenges due to its demographics, including low democratic participation, segregation, and insecurity. Addressing these issues requires the municipality to explore new approaches and embrace innovation. Engaging youth is crucial, yet the municipality's communication efforts reach them only sparingly. Marginalised and segregated communities often suffer when the narrative is driven by outsiders who fail to consider their needs and perspectives. Botkyrka's approach emphasises the importance of interculturally responsive communication, actively listening to young community members to identify assets, opportunities, and needs. By cultivating and

implementing a shared vision for the community, the municipality can better support and benefit from its residents' thoughts and dreams. In just a few months, Botkyrka's youth editorial team produced over 60 videos, some of which garnered around 200,000 views. Since its launch in January 2023, the content produced by Botkyrka Municipality on TikTok has been viewed over four million times. The most popular video currently has approximately 250,000 views.

ECCAR 10 PPA: 4. More Participation and Better Informed City Dwellers
 9. Promoting Cultural Diversity

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3.2.2 City of Bologna

Local Action Plan for an Antiracist and Intercultural City (2022-2026)

Background

The Italian society is not yet a society of equals. The experiences of the communities that make it up are very different, and data confirm that ethnic, national and religious minorities are exposed to racist discrimination and forms of racism that are as much individual as structural and institutional and to prejudices rooted, though not necessarily conscious, in culture and history. Yet the lack of data at the local level testifies to the usefulness and urgency of the actions in the Local Action Plan. The Local Action Plan (LAP) vision is of an anti-racist and intercultural Bologna, a city capable of building, in the coming years, a shared understanding and everyday actions to combat structural and institutional racism and create equality, involving the entire city community. The aim is to produce significant and measurable changes in the daily lives of people belonging to racialised groups within a defined time frame that ensures equality of opportunity and equity of outcome. The LAP is also inspired by the model of intercultural integration policy endorsed by the Council of Europe in 2015, which promotes a process consisting of the effective, positive and sustainable management of diversity through the active involvement of communities, organisations and businesses based on mutual and reciprocal recognition.

The Action

The Local Action Plan for an Antiracist and Intercultural City (2022-2026) was elaborated in the framework of the European Project SUPER - Support Everyday Fight Against Racism, which involved three Italian Cities (Turin as Leader, Bologna and Reggio Emilia). Within the SUPER Project, a participatory process was developed involving the different areas of the Municipality (and other local institutions) and civil society organisations. Through several so-called “community events”, needs, proposals, and ideas were collected, forming the basis for the document's elaboration. The Local Action Plan is articulated in the main areas of intervention: i. Training and raising awareness; ii. Data collection; iii. Services for Citizens; iv. Internal Organisation; v. Participation and Political-administrative responsibility. In the Section “Services for Citizens,” specific objects and actions were defined for each thematic area. In parallel with the document, a set of indicators closely related to the goals and actions was developed as a monitoring tool. The Local Action Plan was approved by the Municipal Executive Board of Bologna in 2023 and is in the implementation phase.



Final Conference of the project SUPER with City of Bologna Vice Mayor Emily Marion Clancy (second from the right)

© City of Bologna

The impact

The action included consultations with various municipal departments and other institutions, conducted in a structured, participatory process with civil society. The Local Action Plan serves as the benchmark for the entire Municipality in combating racism. Areas/Departments/Sectors of the Municipality are responsible for achieving these goals in the coming years. In parallel with the Local Action Plan, an indicator system was developed to monitor its implementation. Apart from the structural impact the Local Action Plan has in fighting institutional racism sustainably, the action also showed how important it is to create safe spaces for dialogue and discussion. Likewise, the City learnt about building trust between institutions and civic society, and how essential it is to elaborate on content with stakeholders in participatory processes and to establish adequate monitoring tools.

- ECCAR 10 PPA:**
1. Greater Vigilance Against Racism
 2. Assessing Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies
 3. Better Support for Victims of Racism and Discrimination
 6. The City as an Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider

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3.2.3 Zurich

[Racism Report 2022: How does the city of Zurich deal with racism?](#)

Background

By joining ECCAR, the City of Zurich has committed to regular reporting. To this end, it has established an interdepartmental working group. The 2022 Racism Report follows the previous 2009, 2013, and 2017 reports. It is guided by the recommendations of the 2017 Racism Report and is based on an understanding of racism that emphasises its discriminatory effects and the institutional/structural dimensions of racism. Accordingly, one must constantly review one's actions for discriminatory effects. This is and remains an ongoing task, particularly for government agencies directly bound by the anti-discrimination mandate of the Federal Constitution. A critical reflection on one's structures, processes, and biases is key to making lasting change. Feedback from people who experience racism can help identify these effects.

The Action



The regular racism report, published by the Working Group on Racism in connection with the ECCAR 10-point action plan, focuses this time on the city administration to enhance its ability to implement recommendations. [The 2022 report](#) emphasises critical self-reflection on the city's roles as an employer and service provider. Political will for this initiative arose from previous reports, civil society actions, and increased discourse on the institutional aspects of racism. The report is based on discussions with contact and counselling centres, reported case examples from the city administration, feedback from city employees, and existing data collections. It provides insight into how racism manifests in the everyday operations of Zurich's city administration through concrete case examples. The positioning and assessment are based on current debates and expert discussions on racism and discrimination. At

the same time, this report presents examples of implementation and shows what has been achieved in line with the recommendations of the 2017 report. Based on their assessments, the working group again makes recommendations.

The impact

The publication of the 2022 report marks a significant step in Zurich's anti-racism efforts—not only in terms of policy but also in fostering a culture of institutional self-reflection and accountability. The report mandates that the city government develop an implementation proposal for its recommendations, ensuring that critical insights translate into concrete action. The city government took note of the report and approved it in its meeting on October 26, 2022. It acknowledged the work already done by the administration to prevent and combat racist discrimination and tasked the Presidential Department with submitting a proposal to implement the report's recommendations. An accompanying exhibition has also raised

awareness. As the report addresses institutional and structural issues related to racism, both city employees and residents are key beneficiaries. Furthermore, additional responsibilities have been defined within the city administration, effectively institutionalising anti-racism work within the individual departments. New structures must be established for experience exchange and monitoring, among other things.

In the fall of 2024, [the city government tasked the departments with implementing the measures they reported in response to the recommendations of the 2022 Racism Report](#). The years 2024–2027 will serve as the development phase for institutionalising efforts to prevent and combat racism within the city administration.

ECCAR 10 PPA: 2. Assessing Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies
 6. The City as an Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider

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3.2.4 Schaerbeek

["Let's Bring Down the Walls! Educational and Artistic Project Around the Bust of Roger Nols and the Nolsist Period"](#)

Background

On September 5, 2017, MRAX, a Belgian non-profit organisation that fights against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, published an open letter to the authorities of Schaerbeek requesting the removal of the bust of Schaerbeek's former racist and xenophobic mayor, Roger Nols, located in the hall of the town hall. The city administration had received repeated expressions of concern about the presence of controversial monuments, such as the bust of Roger Nols, which highlighted issues of racism and collective memory.



Roger Nols' bust in the town hall before the project. © Iadine Degryse

The Action

Following MRAX's intervention, the City commissioned the Brussels Studies Institute (BSI) to conduct a scholarly investigation of Roger Nols' actions as mayor in their historical context. Subsequently, the Schaerbeek authorities asked the BSI to present the findings of this research at a free public conference in September 2022. The September conference was followed by a public debate and the announcement of the creation of the "Roger Nols Bust" Working Group to formulate one or several coordinated proposals (s) to the Municipal Council on the intervention concerning the bust of Roger Nols located in the Schaerbeek town hall. Interested citizens of Schaerbeek were allowed to submit their applications to the Working Group, and two were selected by draw. Mayor Cécile Jodogne and the Alderman for Gender Equality and Opportunities, Sihame Haddioui, co-chaired the Working Group. Ultimately, the Working Group comprised representatives from all the political parties in the Municipal Council, citizens, and experts. In December 2022, the Municipal Council adopted the proposal to turn the bust around, facing the wall, and accompany this action with an educational project. Following the decision, an educational project with the Brussels Studies Institute (BSI) was launched to create a website and educational materials for schools and the public. The bust was turned around

during an official ceremony in December 2023, followed by educational work with schools that incorporated the developed resources.



Roger Nols' bust in the town hall after being moved to face the wall © Iadine Degryse

The impact

This initiative is part of the municipality's larger effort to promote the values outlined in the charters it has signed, with a focus on fostering inclusion and diversity. The goal is to transform a historical controversy into an opportunity for learning and reconciliation through democratic and educational debate. The strong participation in the project's events demonstrated



European Coalition
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Against Racism



significant support from the Schaerbeek community, bringing attention to issues of collective memory and increasing the project's visibility. Equally important is that the Working Group developed a proposal accepted by the Municipal Council, showcasing effective collaboration and a balanced consideration of various perspectives. The Municipal Council's near-unanimous approval—44 votes in favour out of 47 members—facilitated the project's implementation and strengthened its legitimacy. Two classes (one from a Dutch-speaking school and one from a French-speaking school) actively participate, integrating the project into the educational environment and encouraging discussions on memory and diversity in the 2024-2025 academic year. At the end of the year, the students will present the testimonies they collected and a counter-object they built based on these testimonies. The BSI-led educational project is in progress and includes schools that have received well-supported phases and ongoing assistance.

ECCAR 10 PPA: 8. Challenging Racism and Discrimination Through Education
 9. Promoting Cultural Diversity

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