

Global evaluation of city reports

Based on the reports of the
European Coalition of Cities against Racism's members,
submitted in 2025
on its Reporting Tool and Good Practice Database



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Compiled by the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
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Executive Summary

The Global Evaluation Report 2025 on 36 city reports submitted in 2025 synthesizes the efforts, challenges, and achievements of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism's (ECCAR) members in combating racism through local action within the framework of the ECCAR's 10-Point Plan of Action.

Additionally to the evaluation of the chapters of the structured reporting parts, the Global Evaluation Report 2025, for the first time, includes the narrative data of 66 good practices reported in 2025 which were evaluated in detail. The present report includes a detailed analysis of the procedural steps of developing, implementing and evaluating the cities' actions against racism. The Global Evaluation Report 2025 gives insight into the structure and process of subnational levels' policies to prevent, eliminate and sanction racism in Europe.

The report highlights the diversity of actions and achievements made by member cities. The findings show the need for persistent commitment, data-driven approaches, and inclusive stakeholder engagement to effectively confront racism and exclusion at the local level. More concretely, the 2025 city reports outline difficulties in raising awareness on the existence and impact of structural and institutional racism to both the broader public and city staff. There is a persistent lack of understanding about the nature of systemic discrimination, that is followed by societal denial or understatement of racism. Reporting cities thus emphasise on the relevance of having robust data and evidence as starting point for local action against racism.

The global evaluation of ECCAR city reports reveals persistent as well as emerging challenges regarding communication and public relations regarding action against racism. Municipal departments in charge of ECCAR report about city internal resistance to change and an assumed increase of work and legal uncertainties. The city internal resistance faced is accompanied by the need to coordinate different departments and actors within city administrations – as ECCAR's issues are cross-cutting matters. As a consequence, defining roles, ensuring accountability, and maintaining motivation during lengthy processes require ongoing communication efforts and – persistence and patience.

A well-developed communication and participation strategy is the core factor to prevent resistance and to align goals. Therefore, cities' key learning is related to ensuring a regular, transparent communication, which is supported by political leadership and anchored by cross-departmental mechanisms.

When it comes to facilitating the participation and access of a diversity of local communities and beneficiaries, cities report struggles to reach marginalized and racialized groups. Communication challenges, reported by cities, include language barriers, limited digital accessibility, and a lack of trust in institutions. While a multi-channel approach—encompassing traditional media, digital platforms, direct outreach, and public events—is seen as best practice to deal with these challenges, it is resource-intensive.

Furthermore, racism-critic campaigns, especially on social media, can trigger negative public reactions, hate and online hostility, some cities have reported that they were unprepared for the extent of backlash. Political polarization and rising extremist rhetoric, particularly in some regional contexts, complicate the narrative and effectiveness of public-facing campaigns. Cities' staff can only be prepared for these controversies the next time, by focussing on a fact-based communication and being aware on their achievements. Last but not least, cities have learned that they need to clearly communicate the limitations of their scope of influence / action and to manage expectations.

Finally, when it comes to assessing the impacts and outcomes of action against racism, there is a lack of systematic monitoring and data collection about the reach, effectiveness, and



community impact of policies. As a consequence, evaluations of policies are more a documentation of performance and efforts than an analysis of impacts and outcomes achieved.

The cities' needs and expectations regarding the ECCAR network clearly indicate the positive effects of learning from other cities and exchanging with them on challenges as summarised in this report. City reports clearly indicate how crucial the role of ECCAR is, when it comes to facilitating such exchange and peer-learning. Additional expectations of cities regarding ECCAR are related to the topics of impact assessment, development of Action Plans against racism and the collection and analysis of equality data.



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List of Abbreviations

10 PPA – 10 Point Plan of Action

AfD – Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland)

CERD – International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

CRT – (ECCAR's) Reporting Tool

CSOs – Civil Society Organizations

ECCAR – European Coalition of Cities against Racism

ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights

ETC Graz – European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy

EU – European Union

HR – Human Resources

L1-reporting – Level 1-reporting

L2-reporting – Level 2-reporting

LGBTQ+ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (im Text als "LGBT-phobia" erwähnt)

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations

PR – Public Relations

SAC – Scientific Advisory Council

TV – Television

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



A Background and Introduction

UNESCO operates the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism ([ECCAR](#)), which counts 185 members in October 2025. English, German and French are the official languages used by ECCAR: interpretation in these languages is provided in all meetings. ECCAR member cities commit themselves to adopt and implement programmes of action against racism and to regularly report on the implementation of these.

ECCAR moreover serves as an information platform for member cities, fostering peer-learning and exchange on best practice examples. This is achieved by means of Working Groups on specific topics of interest, such as specific forms of racism, equality data collection or small cities and urban areas. Each ECCAR member city may propose to set up a working group to the ECCAR office. As soon as it is supported by at least two more cities in at least two countries, the working group is automatically constituted.¹ The working groups meet regularly for exchange, the meetings are moderated by a member of the ECCAR office. Moreover, the working groups organize expert inputs, e.g. in the framework of workshops offered for the working group members. Further, the City Reporting Tool (CRT) provides for standardized reporting for all member cities, which allows the identification of trends and the monitoring of challenges over the years. The reporting procedures are available in all languages, allowing cities to report in their preferred language by means of an incorporated translation tool. The translation tool facilitates both: reporting to the ECCAR and access to information from other member cities' reports.

On an operative level, reporting takes place in two stages: first stage is a kind of template containing basic context information about the city and basic developments during the last reporting period (challenges, achievements, actions planned or implemented). All frequencies reported in the following figures are based on this "Level 1-reporting", is a structured reporting with mainly closed questions, which is obligatory for all reporting cities and allows for aggregation and comparison.

More detailed reporting on good practices is the second level reporting, which is voluntarily. Thereby, cities report on a specific practice, which they themselves deem as a promising practice, in more detail. Cities provide written information about the selected policy / measure for all stages of development and implementation. Reporting structure is based on the methodology developed for the Toolkit for Equality.² This is a methodology that breaks down actions into different development steps, fills each of these development steps with practical information from cities about challenges and solutions, and thus makes them accessible to other cities. This is the "Level 2-reporting". The ECCAR Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) then analyses the actions reported on whether they are actually examples of good practices. If they are, the actions will be published in the database of good practices.

The global evaluation of city reports allows

- Identifying trends over time
- Identification of achievements, common challenges, cities' needs, or expectations towards the ECCAR network
- compile statistics and various analyses in a quantitative and qualitative manner.

¹ <https://www.eccar.info/en/how-start-new-working-group>

² <https://www.eccar.info/en/eccar-toolkit-equality>



The following report is the global evaluation of city reports submitted in 2025. Whenever there is a change, it will be contrasted with the global evaluation of city reports in 2024. Whenever there are no significant changes or the findings are similar to the 2024 reports, only the global evaluation of 2025 reports will be presented.



B Global evaluation of city reports submitted in 2025

Altogether, 36 reports were submitted by ECCAR member cities in 2025 and 66 actions were reported (L2 reporting).

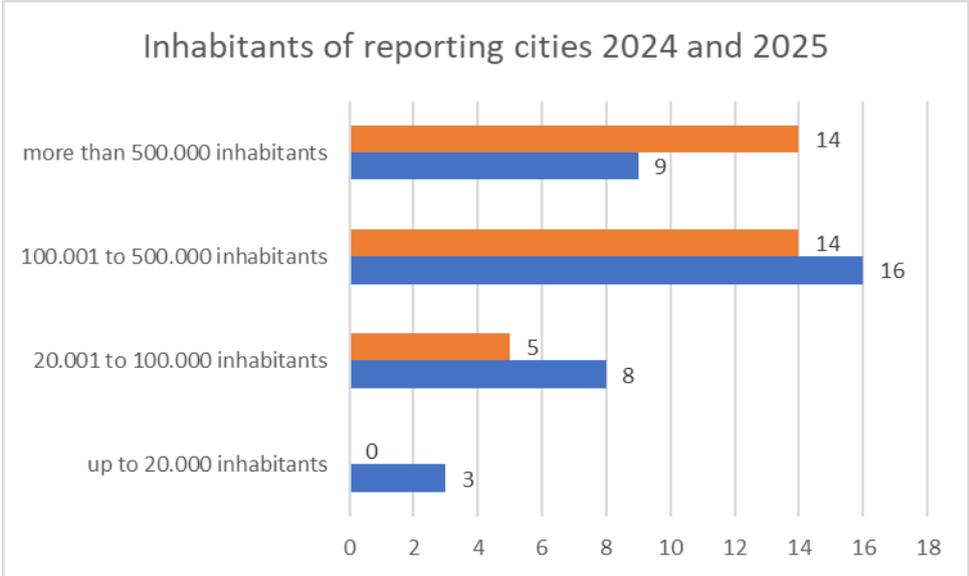


Table 1: inhabitants of reporting cities 2024 (n=33) and 2025 (n=36).

The number of smaller size reporting cities has increased in 2025 (blue) compared to 2024 (orange). In 2024 only 5 cities with less than 100.000 inhabitants reported, in 2025 they were already 11.

B.1 Legal environment of city



Table 2: Legal environment of reporting cities, n=66.

Similarly, to the reports of 2024, the most recent reports indicate the comparable low legal competence for cities to counteract racist discrimination and hate crimes compared to the



national level. Still, 20 out of 36 reporting cities have adopted norms and rules to prevent racial discrimination, e.g. in public procurement. The six cities wishing to explain their legal situation provide information on cities' other action against racial discrimination, such as: rules and procedures for dealing with racism in public administration; municipal anti-discrimination office; standards and rules to prevent racist discrimination are being developed; integration concept; local action plan against right-wing extremism; principles for combatting anti-Semitism; city does not have these competences, but region has.

B.2 Challenges

This section deals with historical, past and current challenges, faced by cities who reported in 2025. The challenges are predefined in the reporting system (see figure 3 and 4) and open for cities' additional comments.

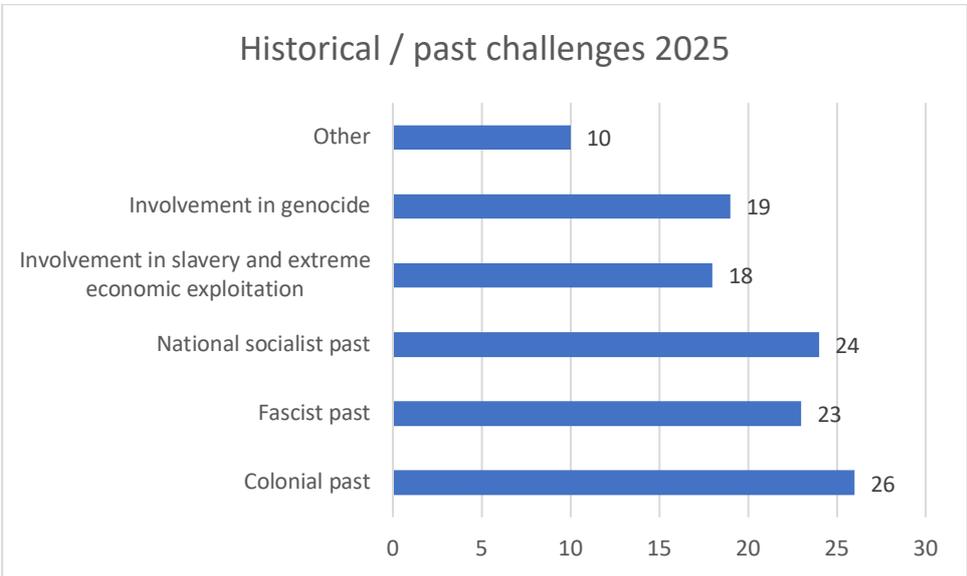


Table 3 Q: What past/historical challenges apply to your city/country, natural numbers, n=36.

Other historic / past challenges mentioned: none specific to the city, communist past (2), challenges, which are actually current challenges, such as anti-Muslim racism in the context of hosting refugees, industrial past created an influx of immigrant workers (2).

When it comes to current challenges, developments compared to the city reports 2024 have to be observed: while the number of reporting cities, which are challenged by coping with an ethnic diversity has decreased from 26 out of 33 in 2024 to 15 out of 36 in 2025, the number of reporting cities, challenged by significant racist movements in the population has significantly increased from 7 out of 33 in 2024 to almost all (31 out of 36) reporting cities in 2025.



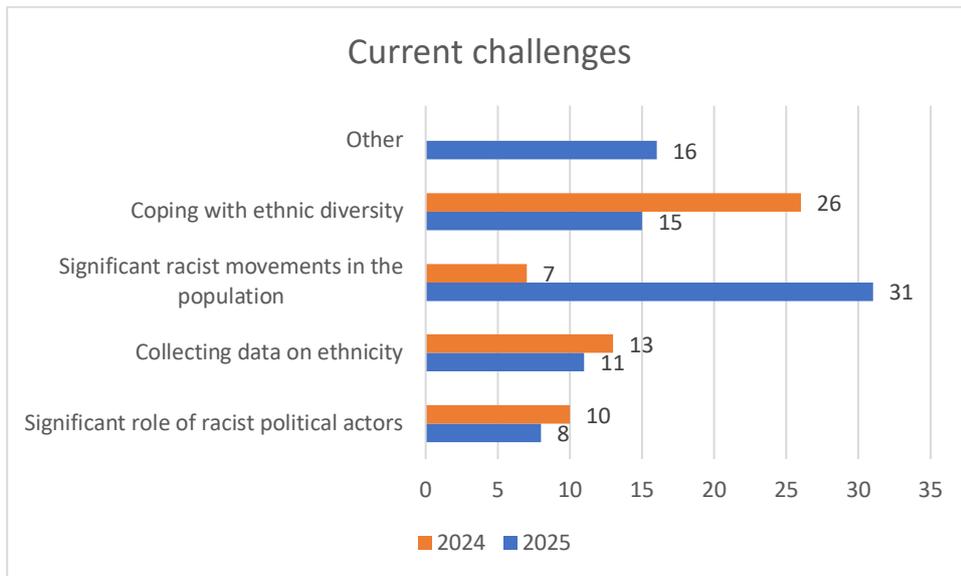


Table 4 Q: Which challenges does your city currently face, natural numbers, n=33.

The following other challenges were mentioned by 16 reporting cities:

- **Anti-Muslim racism related to failed inclusion of 2014/15 refugees / immigrants**

Demographic changes relating from influx of migrants from Arabic countries about 10 years ago result in an increased risk of xenophobia, anti-muslimism racism, and ethno-racial discrimination. Increased racial discrimination is mirrored by the findings of perception surveys, according to which, e.g. 43% of people in Nantes believe that discriminatory behaviour has increased in their municipality (an increase of 4 points in 3 years) and 39% of people in Nantes have witnessed discrimination.³ The city of Ratzeburg reports that well-integrated Muslim refugees repeatedly report about verbal hostility in public spaces with clearly anti-Islamic connotations, or about discriminatory behavior in public authorities that clearly express prejudices against Muslim people, for example, regarding the wearing of the headscarf or the supposedly oppressive role of Muslim men, which is “taken for granted”. Moreover, adult education centres notice an increased distribution of flyers and other materials with anti-Islam- or right-wing content.

- **Islamist groups**

Islamist groups, especially the Furkan Community, Milli Görüs, Ülkücü Movement, create a current challenge, e.g. for the city of Dortmund.

- **Social division from (refugees from) conflict and war regions**

The war of aggression against Ukraine as well as the conflict situations in Israel and Gaza-strip creates a social division, which is a current challenge in ECCAR cities, as coming up in the

³ City report Nantes submitted in 2025.



2025 city reports. In addition, cities, as Wrocław, reported that the integration of refugees from Ukraine is another current challenge.⁴

- **Lacking awareness and knowledge of (structural) racism**

A current challenge is that racism is often denied to exist within the majority society, with statements like "We don't have racism here!" commonly heard in communities or institutions when the topic is raised openly. An example is given in the city report of Ratzeburg, involving a racist incident at a secondary school where a student was bullied over a long period and faced racist insults related to their Asian heritage. The mother intervened with the school administration and found openness toward addressing bullying but encountered resistance when pointing out the clearly racist nature of the bullying. The school leadership, despite claiming to be a "School without Racism," refused to acknowledge the racial component of the harassment. Shortly afterward, the mother was labelled as a disruptor of school peace and ultimately decided to transfer her child to another school. She is now active in local anti-racism work (ECCAR) and continues to push for sensitization training for the school staff and administration involved in the case. More generally, several cities reported that there is a lacking awareness and knowledge on structural racism.

B.3 Achievements

Similarly, to 2024, also city reports of 2025 not necessarily refer to main achievements, but rather provided insights on the city's commitment and overall actions against racism. These achievements / measures taken are compiled in this section and structured along the 10 commitments of the ECCAR 10 PPA.

1. Greater Vigilance Against Racism

- **Commitment to Anti-Discrimination:** Cities like Wrocław and Cologne have established dedicated departments and programs to address discrimination, including Wrocław's signing of a declaration against antisemitism and Cologne's discrimination monitoring program.
- **Nuremberg's Campaign Against Racism:** Nuremberg joined the campaign to ban the N-word and the Z-word, committing to avoid any form of racist and discriminatory language.

2. Assessing Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Implementation of human rights-based monitoring during elections and the production of annual human rights reports have been established to track and reduce incidents of racism in Graz. A national discrimination observatory was launched in Nantes in May 2024.

⁴ City report Wrocław submitted in 2025.



- **Citizen Science Project "Nuremberg Researches"**: This project aims to provide insights into discrimination and its remedies, with immigrants taking on the role of researchers to examine integration and diversity topics.

3. Better Support for the Victims of Racism and Discrimination

- **Support Services**: The establishment of dedicated anti-discrimination offices and hotlines provides support and guidance for individuals who experience discrimination has been reported by several cities. Bordeaux's ELUCID network continues to provide tailored support for victims of discrimination.
- **Independent Discrimination Counselling**: An independent, psychosocial counselling centre has been established in Nuremberg to provide long-term support and legal advice to those affected by discrimination.

4. More Participation and Better-Informed City Dwellers

- **Community Empowerment**: Programs like Kraków's "Open Kraków" emphasize the importance of self-advocacy and self-help organizations, aiming to strengthen community involvement in managing diversity.
- **City Municipal Reporting Point**: Bruges has established a municipal reporting point for discrimination to inform citizens about their options to report incidents.

5. The City as an Active Supporter of Equal Opportunity Practices

- **Diversity and Equality Frameworks**: The establishment of equality departments and observatories, such as Wrocław's Social Diversity Department, reflects a commitment to monitoring and promoting diversity within local governance.
- **Support for Associations**: Saint-Étienne provides support to numerous associations working against discrimination, ensuring they have the resources needed to operate effectively.

6. The City As An Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider

- **Anti-Discrimination Office**: Düsseldorf has established an Anti-Discrimination Office to implement its municipal action plan against racism and right-wing extremism, enhancing its commitment to equality and anti-discrimination.
- **Diversification of Staff**: Wörgl has focused on diversifying staff, particularly in childcare, and has representation in politics with a deputy mayor of Turkish migration background.

7. Fair Access to Housing

- **Housing Reforms**: Revisions to public housing allocation guidelines aim to eliminate discriminatory practices and ensure equitable access to housing. Roeselare has implemented support systems for individuals seeking housing.

8. Challenging Racism and Discrimination through Education



- **Educational Programs and Workshops:** The district Düren district has implemented various educational programs, including the "School without Racism - School with Courage" network and the Bridge Builders Program, which trains individuals to address discrimination and promote awareness in schools. Hochheim has also initiated anti-racism workshops for young people and adults.
- **Sensitization and Training:** Clermont-Ferrand has initiated training for city agents on non-discrimination rights and has implemented sensitization programs for schoolchildren to address various forms of discrimination. Lausanne continues to organize training for municipal staff and has revamped its annual Week of Action Against Racism.

9. Promoting Cultural Diversity

- **Cultural and Educational Initiatives:** Ongoing cultural programs and educational initiatives focus on the history of slavery and colonialism, contributing to a deeper understanding of discrimination's roots. Clermont-Ferrand has initiated a "World Cultures Day" to celebrate and promote cultural exchange.
- **Civic Engagement and Events:** Cities like Hochheim and Saint-Étienne have organized intercultural festivals and thematic events to promote diversity and raise awareness about discrimination.

10. Hate Crimes and Conflicts Management

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Cities have launched broad anti-racism campaigns based on real cases of discrimination, often linked to international observances, to raise awareness and promote community engagement. E.g. Ratzeburg's campaign includes a plaque initiative titled "Turn on your heart - Turn off racism."
- **Remembrance Work:** Nuremberg has strengthened its remembrance work regarding victims of right-wing extremist violence and has initiated projects to explore discrimination and coping strategies.

B.4 Responsibilities for ECCAR in the city

42 responses in total were given to the question on the responsibility for ECCAR at the political level. 25 cities state, it lies with the mayor, in 8 cases with the vice mayor and in 9 cases with the city councillor.



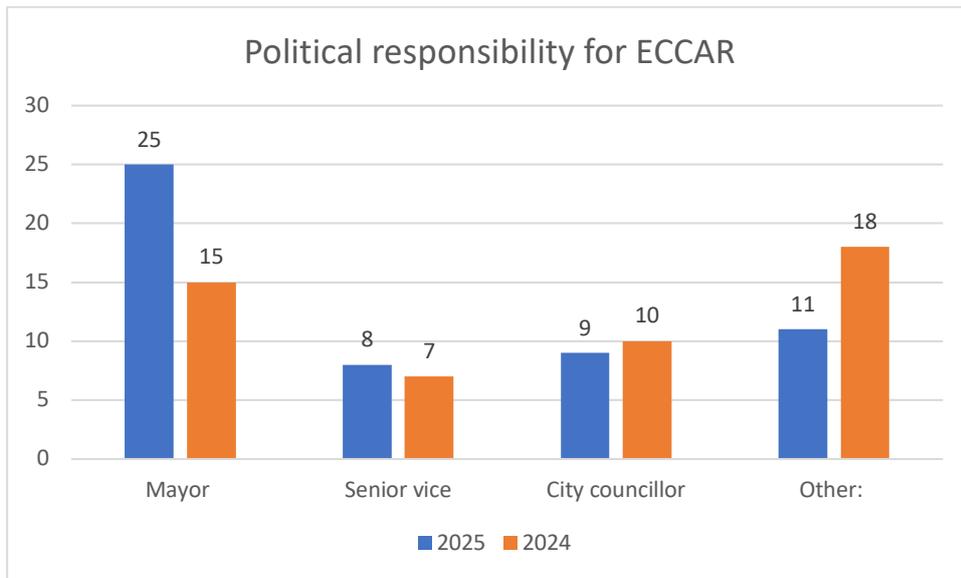


Table 5: political responsibility for ECCAR 2024 (n=33) and 2025 (n=36).

The figure shows that the political responsibility of mayors for ECCAR has increased in the city reports of 2025. The 11 selections of “other” responsibilities at the political level refer to the following: no response, additional explanation of selection, e.g. who this city councillor is, a council / commission and not a single person is politically responsible for ECCAR, no responsibility at the political level, but at the administrative level.

At the administrative level, the city reports of 2025 provide almost the same information as those of 2024: 9 times: department for integration, 1 time department for culture, 1 time department for human resources. Department for security was not selected. ECCAR issues are dealt with in a broad variety of other areas (28 selections). Other areas are

ECCAR issues in administration	City	Concrete Department / Office	Country
Equality and Anti-Discrimination Offices	Nantes	Directorate of Equality	France
	Nantes	Equality Directorate, within the General Delegation for Social Cohesion."	France
	Bordeaux	Department for Equality, Diversity, and Citizenship	France



ECCAR issues in administration	City	Concrete Department / Office	Country
	Clermont-Ferrand	Mission for Equality of Rights / General Directorate of Solidarity and Social Cohesion.	France
	Düsseldorf	Anti-Discrimination Office in the Office for Equality and Anti-Discrimination	Germany
	Ratzeburg	Mayor's Staff (focus on equality)	Germany
	Neuss	Office of the Commissioner for Diversity, Integration and Anti-Racism	Germany
Integration and Diversity Departments (an option that was provided for selection)	Mannheim	Team of the Officer for Integration & Migration / Diversity & Integration Department	Germany
	Cologne	Office for Integration and Diversity	Germany
	Aachen - Städteregion	Municipal Integration Center	Germany
	Monheim am Rhein	Department for Interculturality and Sister Cities	Germany
	Brühl	Integration Department	Germany
	Turin	Office of Rights - Department of Social Services, Health and Employment	Italy



ECCAR issues in administration	City	Concrete Department / Office	Country
Social Affairs and Policy Departments	Graz	Staff office of the municipal administration	Austria
	Hofheim am Taunus	Department of Social Affairs	Germany
	Krakow	Department of Social Policy, Equality, and Health of the Kraków City Hall	Poland
Diversity and Human Rights Offices	Hochheim	Office of Social Affairs	Germany
	Düren District	Primarily Office for Schools and Education	Germany
	Dortmund	Coordination Office for Diversity, Tolerance, and Democracy in the Office of the Lord Mayor	Germany
	Roeselare	Official: policy officer for integration (lead) in Seed Factory with core and steering group	Belgium
	Villeurbanne	General Directorate of Services, based on the Mission to Combat Discrimination	France
	Nuremberg	Human Rights Office	Germany



ECCAR issues in administration	City	Concrete Department / Office	Country
Intercultural and Community Services	Maó (Menorca)	Intercultural Mediator of the Basic Community Social Services Area	Spain
	Wörgl	City Administration Director together with the komm!unity association	Austria
	Celle	Department Head until 2024; Celle Immigration Agency from 2025	Germany
Specialized Offices	Bologna	The New Office for Citizenship, Cooperation and Human Rights	Italy

6 Administrative responsibilities for ECCAR.

The number of people working on ECCAR issues ranges from 1 person up to about 30 people:

1 person: 7 cities, **2 people:** 11 cities, **3 people:** 8 cities **4 people:** 6 cities, **5 people:** 2 cities, **11 and 15 people** 1 city each.

The number of people working on anti-discrimination is difficult to determine based on the city reports of 2025 – these are numerous people. According to reporting cities, it depends on the concrete tasks, the issue is a cross-cutting one, which is carried within several organisations and there are no dedicated people for ECCAR issues. Staff do not exclusively work on anti-discrimination, but has other tasks as well. Other cities report that anti-discrimination work is organised in rather loose alliances or councils. Concrete numbers mentioned reach from 4 up to 200. These differences can be explained by the fact that some reporting cities only mention those, whose mandate explicitly refers to the topic, such as “Equal Treatment Ombudsperson”, while other city reports also include those officers, whose work (indirectly) impacts on equality, such as social workers in the youth welfare offices, school psychologists, school administration or museum education.

As regards the diversities in the teams, five cities’ teams include diverse ethnicities and migration backgrounds, while 3 cities’ teams include limited or no diversity in terms of migratory background or ethnicity. Two cities do not collect data or assess the diversity of the team. As regards the gender balance: some cities’ teams are female dominated, others are male dominated and finally others are gender-balanced. A limited number of cities’ teams include non-binary people.



B.5 Actions implemented against racism

Only a minority of city reports outline a concrete number of actions against racism implemented since the last report / since becoming an ECCAR member city. The majority of reports outline the actions implemented or provide a judgmental information, such as “numerous actions” and finally others refer to the relevant sections in the report. This is a similarity to the reports submitted in 2024 – also here, cities provided more detailed information on the actions implemented and did not simply state their number. Other cities report number and description of actions implemented. These are either different actions or connected ones, such as 5 workshops on one meta-topic. Finally, others only report a selection of actions taken. Thus, the information can hardly be globally evaluated.

The city reporting system offers cities policy areas to select all those, under which they deal with ECCAR’s concerns. The ECCAR 10 Point Action Programme outlines a diversity of measures in diverse areas of local level action (=commitments). The 2025 city reports however clearly indicate a “dominance” in terms of significant frequency of two policy areas, these are – just like in the city reports of 2024: information provision and awareness raising (34 selections) and promoting cultural diversity (34 selections). These rather “soft” measures are more frequently applied than “harder” measures, such as public procurement and cooperation with the private sector (9 selections). The frequency of dealing with ECCAR issues in the area of housing increased from 10 in 2024 to 17 in 2025.

The option “other” was ticked by 7 city reports. These other areas mentioned would basically fit into the given categories, e.g. support for migrants (service provision), opening the administration for migration-friendly society (service provision), exchanging views on conflict areas (conflict management), public space and education and training. Policy areas, which are not covered by the given categories are: security (local police).

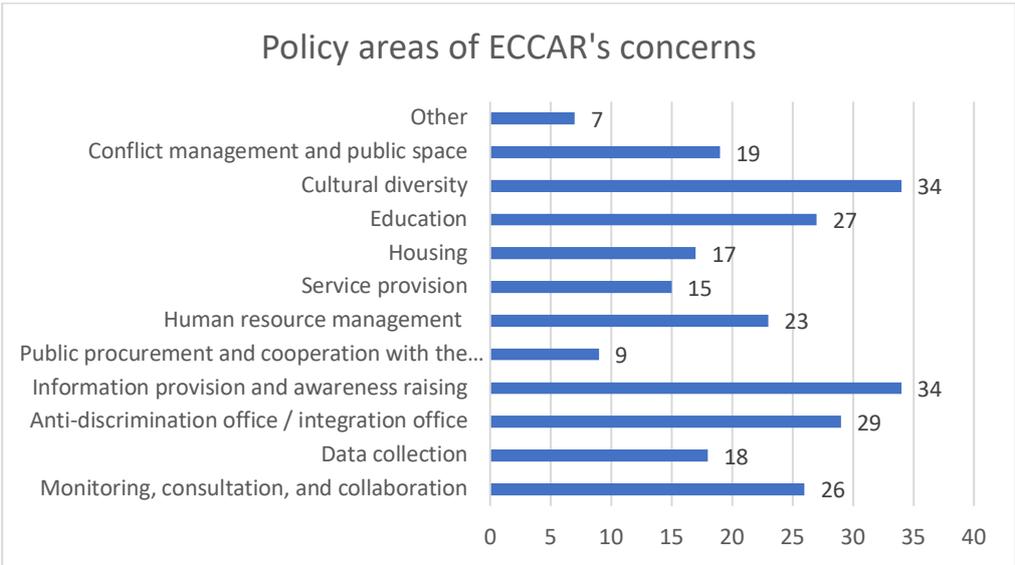


Table 7 Q: In which policy areas does your city specifically deal with ECCAR’s concerns? natural numbers, n=36



B.6 Equality data collection

The comparison of city reports in 2024 (33) and 2025 (36) indicate an increased engagement of anti-discrimination offices or counselling centres as well as research institutes and the academia when it comes to equality data collection.

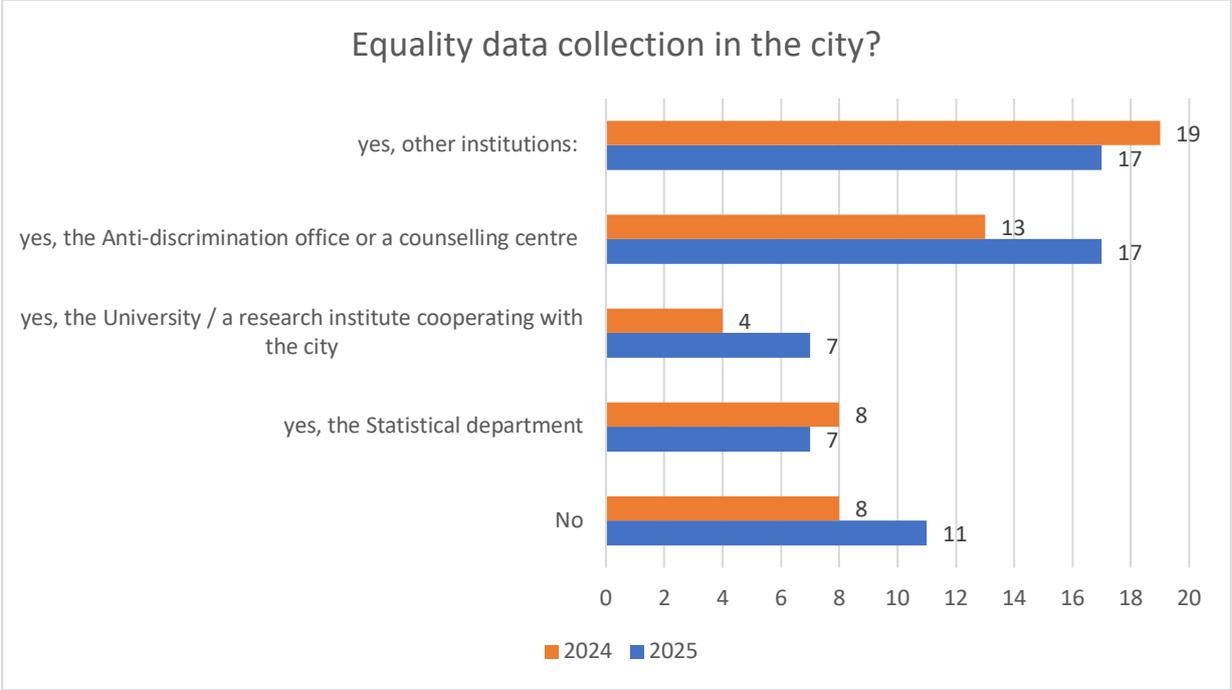


Table 8 Q: Does your city collect data in relation to equality and discrimination? Natural numbers, n=33/36.

A large number of 19 cities do not find their data collection facilities represented in the given categories. These other data collection facilities are: city departments other than statistics, e.g. equality department, department for culture, police, human rights institute (could be summarized in counselling centre or research institute – depending on the focus / mandate).

When it comes to data collection mechanisms, i.e. from which sources local authorities obtain their equality (relevant) data, criminal statistics were mentioned more often than in 2024 reports. At the same time, case reports’ significance as data collection mechanism has decreased in reported frequency. Reports of victim support services however remain the most frequently mentioned source of equality data in both years.



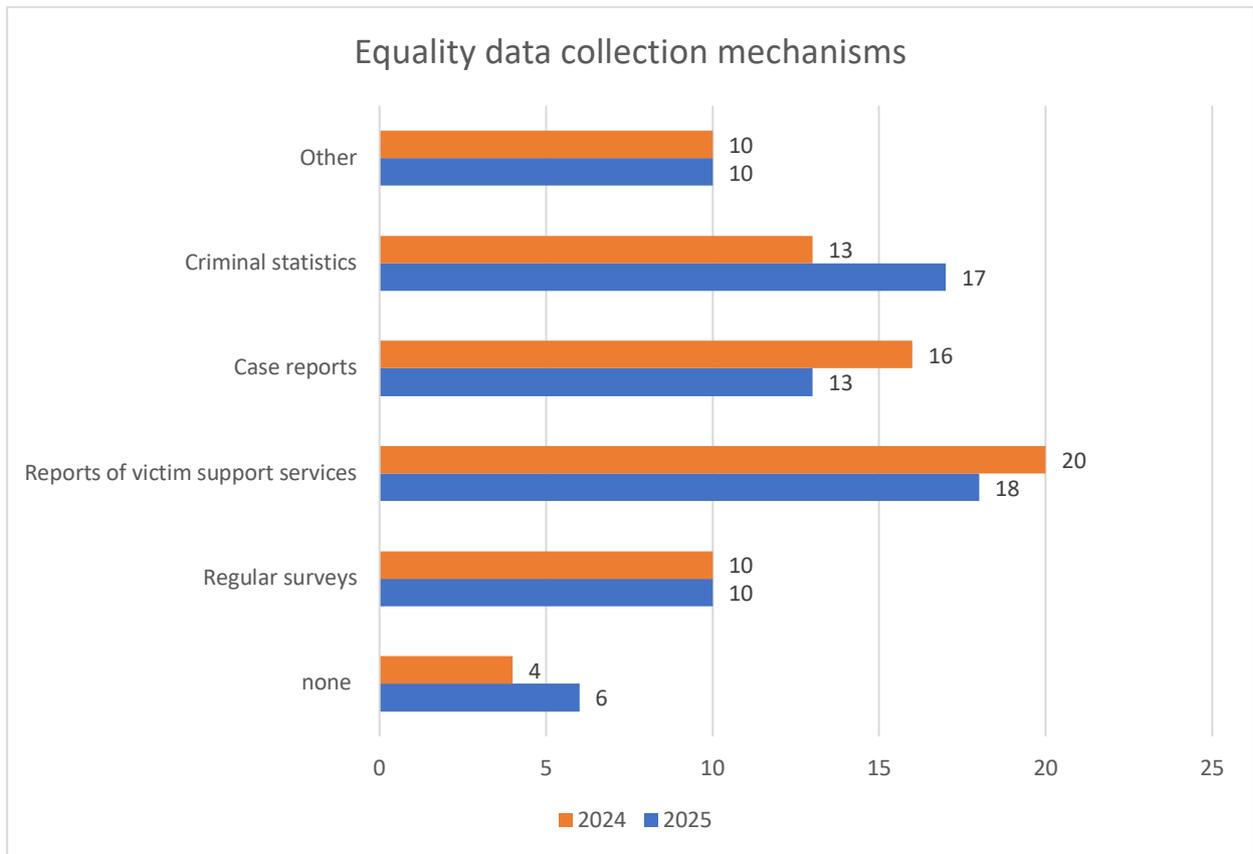
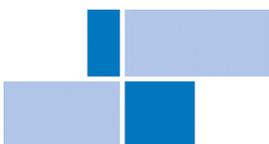


Table 9 Q: Which data collection mechanism does your city use to reveal racial discrimination? Natural numbers, n=33/36.

Cities, who ticked “other” refer to surveys among citizens, including questions on discrimination. Others report that there are unsystematic data collection mechanisms, such as studies, case numbers or surveys. Again, other cities resort to (inter-) national data collection mechanisms, such as Afrocensus or EU-Midis.



B.7 ECCAR membership: motives and expectations

The vast majority of cities joined ECCAR because of a value-based decision (almost all city reports selected this option in 2024 and 2025) and 20/21 cities joined ECCAR to cope with (ethnic) diversity. Bias-motivated political movements were a motive to join ECCAR in 3 out of 33 reports in 2024 and 6 out of 36 reports in 2025. Other motives to join ECCAR include:

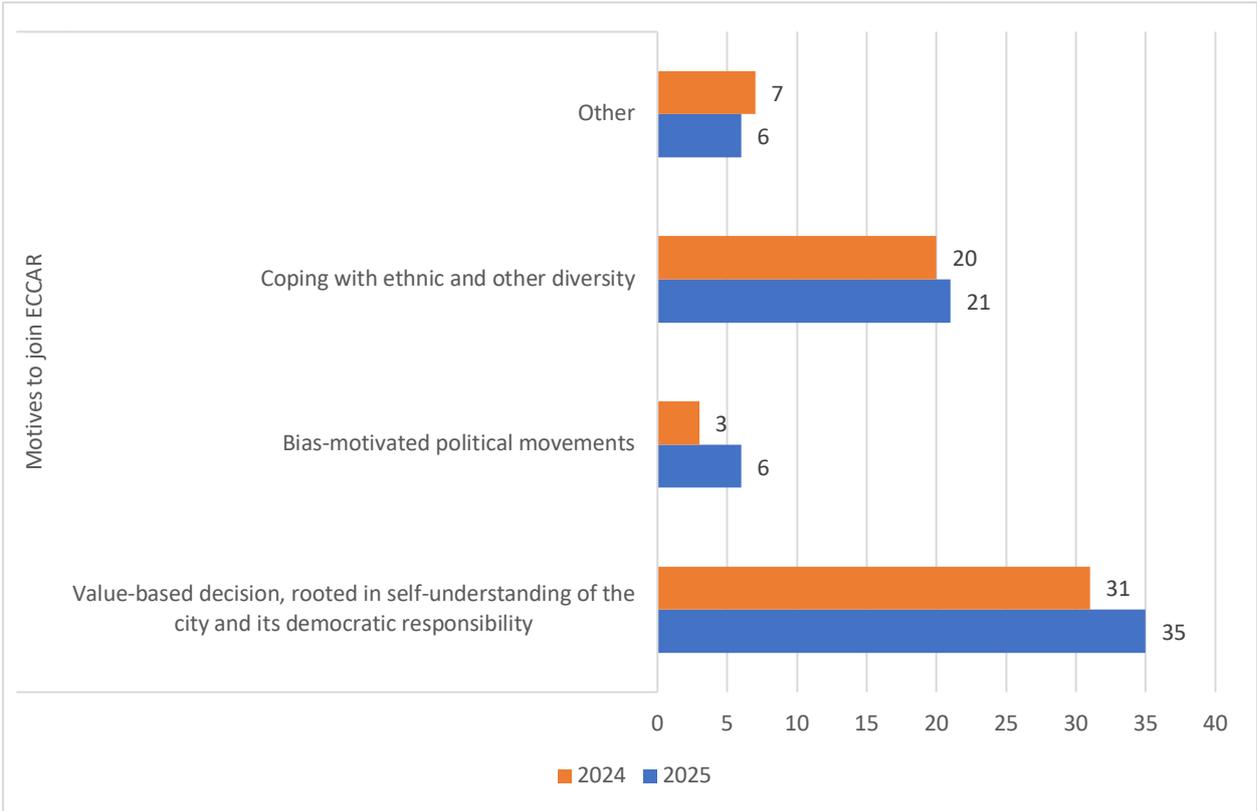


Table 10 motives to join ECCAR in 2024 (n=33) and 2025 (n=36)

Other motives to join ECCAR include networking with other cities (2), networking with other cities, voluntary commitment to combat racism, political will / council resolution, inspirations regarding good practices. These other motives are similar to those, reported in 2024 – where networking with other cities and political will were mentioned as well.

It is interesting, that current challenges and motives to join ECCAR are not related. Reports, which outline the significant role of racist political actors as a current challenge do not necessarily mention such political movements as a motive to join ECCAR. But such conclusions have to be drawn cautiously, as the reporting encompasses new and long-years ECCAR members. Still, motives to join ECCAR and current challenges do not necessarily coincide in time. Once the reporting system is filled with more data, connections between current challenges and motives to join ECCAR can be identified more securely.

When it comes to expectations from ECCAR membership, learning from others and exchange are most frequently mentioned as being very important – in both years. The relevance of the



expectation „being part of an UNESCO network“ has increased in the 2025 reports compared to those of 2024.

Expectation from ECCAR Membership	Importance of this expectation	2025	2024
Learning from other cities	Very important	28	27
	Important	8	6
	Secondary	0	0
	Not relevant	0	0
Exchange with other cities	Very important	26	24
	Important	10	9
	Secondary	0	0
	Not relevant	0	0
Reporting to other cities	Very important	7	4
	Important	17	15
	Secondary	12	12
	Not relevant	0	2
Raise voice at European level	Very important	13	12
	Important	14	12
	Secondary	8	5
	Not relevant	1	4
Being part of UNESCO network	Very important	16	7
	Important	17	18
	Secondary	3	7
	Not relevant	0	1

11 Importance of expectations from ECCAR Membership, 2024 and 2025.

Cities' other expectations from ECCAR membership are: none (8), cooperation with other cities and exchange of practices with them, access to European decisions and programs on the topic, bringing together various approaches at the local and regional levels:

By linking the ECCAR principles and work results from the various working groups (e.g., toolkits) and communicating them to civil society actors in Mannheim, by utilizing the offered support, training courses, and boot camps, as well as by integrating and exchanging ideas with the DL-funded project "Municipalities for All," the successful implementation of our strategic goals (especially Strategic Goals 1 and 3) and the Mannheim Declaration should be further promoted. How can the impact of our democracy and respect work be effectively presented/communicated internally (political bodies) and externally (urban society)? (City-Report Mannheim, translated)



Training and information on data collection and evaluation, access to the expertise of other ECCAR cities when it comes to developing a 10 PPA were expected as well.

In rural areas, there are no migrant communities here that are organized and politically active. Most people with a migrant background live isolated lives, connected at best in small self-help networks. There are little to no counseling structures for those affected by racism and discrimination. In some cases, there is not even an awareness in the majority society that racism and discrimination are commonplace here in rural areas. "We don't have racism!" is often said. This perception is not meant maliciously. It simply reflects the fact that people from the majority society rarely discuss racism and discrimination with those affected. [...] Accordingly, concepts for successful anti-racism work in rural areas are sought and urgently needed – concepts that are oriented towards the needs and, above all, the opportunities of rural areas. How can we achieve such concepts within the ECCAR family? In our view, only if the rural communities of the ECCAR city coalition connect, exchange ideas, and develop ideas together. Of course, this also includes the support of large ECCAR cities, which possess so much knowledge from which rural areas should also urgently benefit. We succeeded in this as a first step with the establishment of the "Small Towns and Rural Areas" working group, which was carried out in collaboration with the ECCAR office. Our expectations rest on this newly initiated networking of small ECCAR communities or ECCAR members with ties to rural areas (e.g., at the district level). We see a great opportunity in the fact that the [ETC Graz], as well as larger cities such as Nantes and Leuven, want to support us. (City-Report Ratzeburg, translated)

Further expectations are related to monitoring the impact of actions and effectiveness of measures (2), increased visibility of local anti-racism work at the state and federal levels in order to be able to incorporate strategic concerns into political decision-making processes. Furthermore, the opportunity for professional support and methodological development of local measures – for example, through consulting, training opportunities, or peer reviews. Access to European funding programs and networking structures that support the long-term and sustainable implementation of local strategies against racism is also important. Meeting these expectations would complement ECCAR's existing profile with practical support offerings that can have a concrete impact on the ground.

Support in promoting a broader vision of the fight against discrimination taking into account all criteria in order to strive towards harmonious coexistence for all. An intersectional approach is needed to make this holistic view a reality. On the other hand, anti-discrimination has to be seen as cross-cutting matter, taking into account the different situations of discrimination faced by people.

We very much welcome the increasing importance and effectiveness and can only pay the highest respect to the outstanding, many and important activities of the ECCAR bodies. (City report Karlsruhe)

ECCAR contributes to the strengthening of the municipalities preventive work as well as improving the anchoring of the anti-racist work at various levels, adapting local work to international standards, legitimising local anti-racism work through membership in an international network, finding partners for collaborative work, obtaining knowledge on data collection.



B.8 Needs for input, feedback and exchange

The Reporting System also asks cities for their concrete needs from ECCAR and other cities in terms of input, feedback and exchange. The responses are now outlined in relation to content and methods.

General Needs for Feedback:

1. Data Collection and Analysis:

Cities, including **Wroclaw**, **Krakow**, **Dortmund**, and **Neuss**, seek guidance on how to effectively collect and analyse data on racial and ethnic discrimination to inform their policies and actions.

2. Implementation of Measures:

Cities like **Graz** and **Mannheim** are looking for constructive criticism and suggestions on how to implement effective measures against discrimination and racism. **Bordeaux** and **Valencia** are looking for feedback on how to implement public policies that align with ECCAR's recommendations, particularly in the context of national regulations.

3. Awareness and Education:

Dormagen and **Ratzeburg** emphasize the need for raising awareness about anti-racist work and the importance of involving both affected communities and the majority society in awareness-raising efforts.

4. Intersectionality and Multi-Criteria Discrimination:

Nantes and district **Düren** express the need to address intersectional discrimination and understand how different forms of discrimination (e.g., racism, sexism, LGBTphobia) interact.

5. Structural Embedding of Anti-Racism Work:

District **Düren** and **Mannheim** are interested in how to embed anti-racism work within municipal structures and ensure long-term political support for these initiatives.

6. Community Involvement and Empowerment:

Cities like **Esch-sur-Alzette** and district **Düren** seek strategies for involving civil society actors, particularly those affected by racism, in the development and implementation of anti-discrimination strategies.

7. Evaluation and Monitoring:

Monheim am Rhein and **Bologna** are focused on developing evaluation instruments to monitor the effectiveness of their actions and public policies against discrimination. Thereby, they seek feedback from ECCAR.

8. Accessibility and Support Services:

Hochheim and **Ratzeburg** highlight the need for making cities more accessible as contact points for those affected by racism and discrimination, ensuring that support services are well-known and easily reachable.

9. Best Practices and Knowledge Sharing:

Cities like **Turin** and **Bologna** are interested in learning from the experiences and practices of other ECCAR cities to enhance their own strategies against discrimination.



Topical Areas of Focus:

- **Housing and Employment:** Addressing discrimination in these areas is a common concern, as noted by cities like **Nantes** and **Saint-Étienne**.
- **Public Safety and Security:** Cities like **Celle** are interested in understanding residents' feelings of safety in public spaces.
- **Innovative Policies:** **Esch-sur-Alzette** seeks to propose innovative policies and actions that go beyond event-based approaches.



Summary of responses to the question: *What aspects would you need feedback on to analyse and improve your city's work against racism and racial discrimination?*

Needs for Input 2023	Needs for Input 2024	Needs for input 2025
<p>Structural embedding of ECCAR-membership in the city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to strategically build an ECCAR team? • How to raise awareness in the city for ECCAR topics? • How to improve the city's work against racism and racial discrimination within their mandate (through public procurement and education)? 	<p>Strategies and Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to effectively address racial discrimination • How to assess the impact of existing policies • How to facilitate access and participation of target groups/beneficiaries 	<p>Institutionalisation and Structural Embedding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding ECCAR commitments and anti-racism as strategic, long-term municipal tasks with clear responsibilities (Wroclaw, district Düren) • Strategies to gain and maintain sustainable political support and administrative ownership (district Düren, Nantes) • Cross-departmental cooperation and internal integration of ECCAR actions (district Düren, Maó) • Coordination mechanisms combining international perspectives and local governance (Maó, Villeurbanne)
<p>Research and Monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to collect data on: equality (disaggregating data), prevalence of racism, under-reporting • Indicator development and population, benchmarking 	<p>Tools and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools to monitor racial discrimination • Efficient methods to collect significant data on racial discrimination 	<p>Data Collection and Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to collect reliable data on racial, ethnic, intersectional discrimination (e.g., Nantes, Dormagen, Krakow, Wroclaw, Dortmund, Neuss) • Development and implementation of indicators to measure the effectiveness of anti-racism measures (Jena, Monheim, Cologne, Bologna) • Monitoring systems adapted to resource constraints and rural/urban differences (Mannheim, Ratzeburg, Aachen-Städtereion)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact assessment of measures • Structural / institutional discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods to assess the risk of people being racialized • How to address reports of discrimination that are beyond local authority competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing under-reporting and non-use of complaint mechanisms (Bordeaux, Bologna) • Sharing examples and methods to implement ECCAR's 10-point action plan in different national contexts (Bordeaux, Villeurbanne) • Understanding and operationalizing intersectional discrimination approaches (Nantes) • Legal and practical frameworks to tackle systemic discrimination in employment, housing, and other sectors (Nantes, Valencia)
<p>Substantial inputs (theoretical level):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts, frameworks, wording / messaging 		<p>Substantive inputs on policy implementation and Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing examples and methods to implement ECCAR's 10-point action plan in different national contexts (Bordeaux, Villeurbanne) • Understanding and operationalizing intersectional discrimination approaches (Nantes) • Legal and practical frameworks to tackle systemic discrimination in employment, housing, and other sectors (Nantes, Valencia)
		<p>Community Engagement and Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving affected groups meaningfully in anti-racism work, including NGOs and community actors (Wroclaw, Esch-sur-Alzette) • Formats to enable equal participation, co-creation, and empowerment (district Düren, Ratzeburg) • Awareness-raising campaigns and involvement of the wider public and decision-makers, including in rural areas (Ratzeburg, Aachen) • Specific strategies to reach marginalized subgroups (e.g., women, LGBTQ+, rural populations) (Nantes, Ratzeburg, Roeselare)
		<p>Communication, Visibility and Networking</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the visibility of ECCAR commitment and local anti-racism actions within administrations and among stakeholders (district Düren, Monheim) • Building and connecting networks across local, regional, and European levels for knowledge exchange and capacity building (Roese-lare, Maó) • Practical guidance to communicate and raise awareness effectively (Dormagen, Hochheim)
		<p>Contextual Challenges and Adaptation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapting measures for rural contexts, accessibility issues, and emerging political challenges (Ratzeburg, Aachen, Esch-sur-Alzette) • Addressing national legal and cultural particularities affecting policy design and implementation (Bordeaux, Nantes, Saint-Étienne)

12 ECCAR cities needs for input 2023, 2024 and 2025 (summarised and evaluated written submissions).

The comparison of needs for inputs reported in 2023 and in 2024 indicates cities' progress from structural embedding to strategic action and from research and monitoring to tools and methods. Substantial inputs are not requested in the 2024 reports. However, also these conclusions have to be drawn cautiously. In 2025, ECCAR member cities seek substantive support and exchange on strengthening data and monitoring systems, structuring anti-racism policy sustainably within municipal governance, implementing intersectional and systemic discrimination frameworks, meaningful community participation, communication and networking strategies, rigorous evaluation methods, and context-sensitive adaptations for urban and rural settings. These inputs highlight a collective quest to better operationalize anti-racism plans on the ground in ways that are strategic, inclusive, measurable, and sustainable.

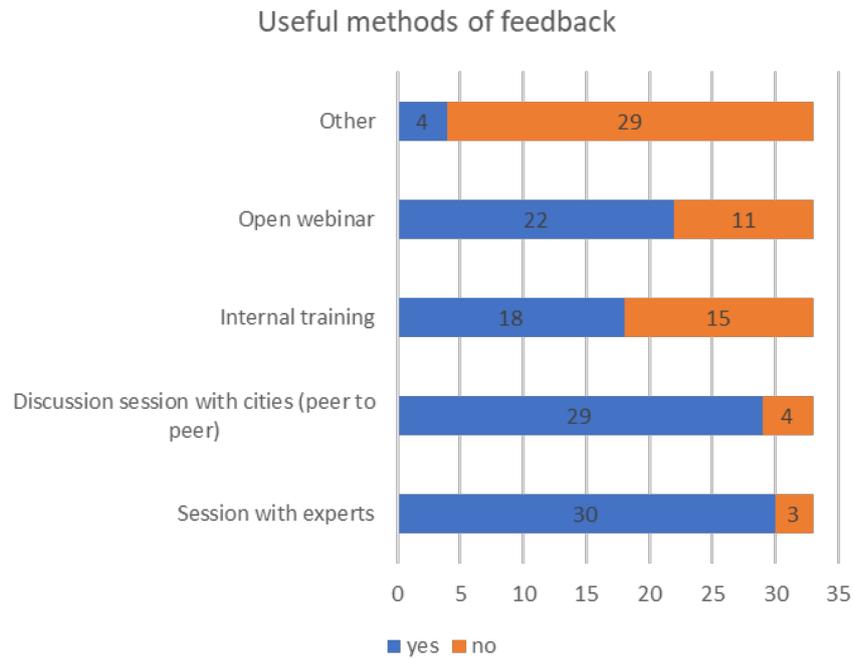


Table 13 Q: which methods of feedback do you perceive useful, natural numbers, n=33/36.

Other methods, named by the cities themselves:

- Legal information and support
- Written feedback
- City buddy or mentoring system

C Actions, measures or policies considered as good practice

The section C provides in-depth information, compiled from all city reports, on the procedural steps of designing, implementing, evaluating and sustaining these policies as well as on the core factors of success and learnings. 66 practices were reported in more detail by 27 ECCAR cities (out of 36; 9 cities limited their reports to L1-reporting in 2025).

The following evaluation is structured according to the questions in the reporting system and compiled along the procedural steps in policy cycles. The various Toolkits for Equality follow this structure as well. All city responses are compiled in each question. Based on a qualitative synthesis of cities' responses categorisations according to recurring thematic clusters were identified through content analysis. Clusters were assigned inductively by grouping similarities across cities and verifying internal consistency. This approach provides an accessible comparative overview for the whole procedure of developing and implementing actions against racism, while acknowledging some overlap between categories due to the multifaceted nature of urban policy-making.

C.1 Policy areas of actions

The policy areas of these practices focus on equality and anti-discrimination, diversity and democratic participation, intercultural training and awareness-raising, consultation and cooperation with civil society, youth and sports as social inclusion tools, and participatory governance. More concretely, the policies focus on

- **Policy Initiatives Promoting Equality**

This includes the adoption of targeted policies, structured plans, and projects that explicitly combat various forms of discrimination (e.g., racial, gender, ethnic, religious) and foster fair access for all groups in civic life, employment, education, and public services.

- **Training & Awareness-Raising**

Actions building intercultural competencies, educating city staff/the general public, or raising awareness about inclusion and diversity. These competencies are built by means of intercultural trainings, workshops or awareness-raising via education, consultation, cooperation and dialogue. Cultural diversity initiatives and information campaigns are relevant to this cluster as well.

- **Civil Society & Community Engagement**

Efforts to consult, cooperate, foster dialogue, and enable active participation and exchange across communities. Diverse participatory processes and measures to facilitate co-review of programs and policies are included here as well. Dialogue, encounters, cooperative projects, and community exchange initiatives are reported as being crucial for community engagement.

- **Comprehensive Policy Scope**

Another cluster is related to seeing equality and inclusion as cross-sectional matter in the framework of a comprehensive policy scope. Such a comprehensive approach includes



multifaceted approaches and several areas of action, e.g. management, HR, education, awareness, and cultural diversity.

- **Sports / Youth Inclusion**

Initiatives leveraging sports and youth programs to further social cohesion, inclusion were reported in more detail as well. These actions focus on leveraging sports and the broader civil society as “tools” for integration, inclusion, and community-building among youth and various demographic groups. Sports and youth programs are explicitly incorporated into a comprehensive policy strategy. In the framework of this strategy, sports is positioned as a platform for social integration, intercultural exchange, and for combating exclusion among young populations. Awareness-raising workshops for staff working at local youth centers, aiming to cultivate an inclusive and supportive environment for young people and to address discrimination or exclusion fit to this cluster as well.

C.1.1 Objectives of actions

City actions against racism, as described in the 2025 city reports, generally aim to both prevent and sanction racism. However, there is marked emphasis on prevention, empowerment, and systemic change observable. These policies aim at preventing racism through awareness and education, empowerment and inclusion, providing space for dialogue or collaboration. Sanctioning (legal support, reporting, and policy corrections) is rather framed as a component of broader strategies aiming for sustainable impact and as a means of general prevention. The various objectives of actions reported in 2025 are outlined in more detailed in the following table, separated whether they focus on preventing or sanctioning racism.

Sanctioning Racism	Preventing Racism
Enforce disciplinary actions (e.g., warning, suspension, dismissal of staff committing racism)	Raise public awareness and educate on mutual respect, diversity, and non-discrimination
Facilitate and support legal remedies for victims, including access to justice and reporting	Foster dialogue and cooperation among community groups, authorities, and stakeholders
Apply administrative sanctions (e.g., revocation of licenses, enforcement of anti-discrimination clauses)	Integrate anti-discrimination and tolerance training in public services and schools



Sanctioning Racism	Preventing Racism
Monitor, report, and publicize racist acts to deter further occurrences	Empower victims and marginalized groups through access to services and participation
Initiate corrective actions and policy changes in response to documented racist practices	Promote equal opportunity in employment, education, and service provision
Publicize penalties for racist behaviour, creating reputational consequences	Build inclusive city structures, procedures, and cultures to systematically reduce risks

14: Policy objectives: sanctioning and preventing racist discrimination

This table presents the main policy objectives under the two approaches, with sanctions typically directed at addressing, deterring, and penalizing racist acts, while prevention focuses on long-term cultural, structural, and educational change.

C.1.2 Expected impact of actions

The expected impacts mentioned in city reports are outcomes, in the sense of a change in behaviour, structures or attitudes taking place as a result of the actions. The following list summarises the mentioned outcomes based on a self-assessment of reporting cities.

Expected impacts / outcomes of actions

- **Increased awareness and knowledge:** Cities highlight campaigns, masterclasses, and events with the expected impact of having the public and young people sensitised about racism, its impacts, and prevention strategies. These actions aim to change attitudes, dismantle stereotypes, and foster empathy to create long-term cultural shifts towards inclusivity.
- **Empowerment and inclusion:** is another objective / expected impact of policies reported in more detail: expected impacts are empowerment of victims or at-risk groups, facilitating their access to services, rights, and opportunities. The goal is to strengthen social cohesion, build trust in authorities, and enable equal participation for all residents.
- **Dialogue and collaboration networks:** Cities foster platforms for dialogue, cooperation among institutions, and joint problem-solving (e.g., consultative councils in Saint-Étienne, intercultural exchanges in Neuss, and partnerships in Mannheim). Networks of vigilance and action, resulting in collective prevention against racism is the expected impact of these actions.
- **Access to justice:** Legal counselling, support in police procedures, and mechanisms for easier reporting (e.g., Wroclaw, Nantes, Valencia) have the expected impact of



facilitating access to justice. These direct interventions are expected to help victims navigate justice systems, advocate for their rights, and trigger legal sanctions against perpetrators.

- **Sanctions:** Actions are also expected to bring about changes in administrative protocols, particularly through sanctions in case discriminatory practices are detected (e.g., public housing tests in Clermont-Ferrand, revision of communication procedures in Graz).

Most city initiatives place a stronger emphasis on prevention—raising awareness, transforming structures, systemically reducing risks, and empowering marginalized groups. Sanctioning (e.g. legal support, reporting, and policy corrections) is typically framed as a component within broader strategies aiming for sustainable, preventive impact.

City anti-racism plans thus go beyond simple awareness campaigns to include concrete sanctions like disciplinary actions within city employment, legal and administrative penalties for discriminatory practices, and systemic mechanisms to enforce social and reputational accountability, particularly for repeated or serious racist acts.

C.2 Why is it necessary?

Section C.2 encompasses a global evaluation of all arguments and negotiation strategies brought by the cities, when reporting on their practices in more detail. The section includes needs for the policies, inspirations for the ideas and triggers of political will within the cities.

C.2 1 Needs for these actions

Cities report the need for **making discrimination visible** by means of data collection, as invisibility inhibits effective action. There is a need for tools such as observatories, monitoring systems, and inclusive participation in data collection to ensure accountability and targeted interventions. Cities of different countries (France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland) highlight that discrimination is often invisible unless systematically monitored. This need is the root for the development of *observatories, monitoring reports, round tables, and offices* to both collect data and intervene on a case basis. Fostering visibility of discrimination results in a reframing and redesign of ECCAR commitments to ensure they are cross-departmental and co-defined with migrants and civil society. More generally, ECCAR cities are converging on institutional mechanisms of visibility — observatories, monitoring, ombuds-type offices — as the backbone of structural anti-discrimination policy.

Eliminating administrative, linguistic, digital, and physical barriers to access public services is essential. Cities need **to make services** in the field of housing, childcare, healthcare, social benefits, and bureaucratic processes **more accessible to marginalized groups**, ensuring equal and meaningful access to rights and resources. These needs are met through actions like charters, neighbourhood centres and inclusive service models. Moreover, volunteer training, mentorship programs and facing language barriers are responses to the need of making services more accessible. Thus, city services are being actively redesigned to eliminate barriers



(administrative, linguistic, digital). Access to rights and services = the foundation of equal citizenship.

Furthermore, cities report a need to **embed education and youth empowerment** in anti-discrimination efforts. Racism-critic actions should focus on schools, youth programs, and training to equip the next generation with awareness and tools to combat discrimination. Cities therefore observe a pressing need for inclusive curricula, intercultural training, and institutionalized democratic education at all levels. Therefore, schools and youth programs are increasingly central to anti-discrimination: not only raising awareness but producing the next generation of democratic citizens.

Another need is related to building social cohesion and preventing polarisation. Therefore, sustained inclusive civic infrastructures—dialogue forums, advisory councils, cultural events—platforms where diverse communities participate actively in governance and community life are implemented to meet this need. Cities thus use *councils, festivals, interfaith forums, charters* as resilient civic architectures, **building bridges across communities**.

Cities require cross-cutting frameworks that address the interconnected nature of racism, sexism, class, migration, and other forms of exclusion. There is a need to move beyond narrow national or category-based perspectives toward solidarity based on **intersectionality** and global justice concerns. This need derives from observations regarding an Eurocentric feminism, showing unequal refugee reception (Ukraine vs. Global South); socio-economic exclusion alongside racism, xenophobia, LGBT-phobia, and ableism, broadening discrimination frames. Consequently, ECCAR cities increasingly move towards intersectional governance, where racism, sexism, class, and global inequalities are treated as interconnected.

Actions are needed to address the denial and silence around histories of slavery, colonialism, and systemic exclusion. Cities need to develop memory work and inclusive storytelling that rebuild trust and validate diverse identities within urban populations. Cities are reshaping themselves as **memory actors**, embedding historical legacies into anti-discrimination work to foster inclusive urban identities.

There is an urgent need for cities to serve as democratic anchors by creating values-based programs, civic education, and broad coalitions that resist the spread of hate, polarization, and extremist mobilization in urban contexts. Cities are acting as **bulwarks of democracy**, creating civic infrastructures that resist polarization and extremist narratives.

Across large metropolises (Valencia, Bologna, Düsseldorf) and smaller municipalities (Brühl, Hochheim, Wörgl, Maó), a shared urban agenda emerges:

Need	Brief description of action and examples
Systemic Racism Requires Systemic Tools	Observatories (Clermont-Ferrand), monitoring (Köln), roundtables (Karlsruhe), and anti-discrimination offices



Need	Brief description of action and examples
	(Valencia) are such systemic tools to institutionalize the fight against racism and discrimination.
Access to Services = Access to Rights	Simplification of administration, digital literacy, and language support are recognized as mechanisms facilitating access to services.
Awareness raising, training and education & youth centrality is needed	From democracy training (Dortmund) to intercultural workshops (district Düren, Bordeaux, Bologna, Wörgl), schools and early childhood are identified as key addressees of awareness raising and training measures.
Intersectional lenses	Cities like Esch-sur-Alzette and Valencia frame exclusions at the intersection of race, gender, economic inequalities, and global justice.
Memory as a Policy Tool	Nantes, Villeurbanne, Lausanne confront denial and historical amnesia and see that as essential for inclusion and credibility.
Civic Infrastructure for Democracy	Advisory councils, interfaith forums, charters, and festivals serve as micro-democratic institutions holding communities together.
Resilient Anchors Against Extremism	Cities position themselves as democratic guardians in contexts in which national politics feeds polarization.

15 Needs for these actions, clustered.

European cities face multifaceted challenges in promoting equality and combating discrimination that require comprehensive, systemic responses. Persistent racial and intersectional discrimination, entrenched through both overt acts and structural barriers, undermines social cohesion and democratic trust. Cities across Europe—the large metropolises and smaller municipalities alike—struggle with invisibility of discrimination, language and bureaucratic accessibility hurdles, precarious housing, unequal access to education and services, and the legacies of historical injustices such as colonialism and slavery. These factors



collectively hamper inclusive participation and deepen societal divides and are reported as needs for action against racism.

C.2.2 Inspiration for the policy

The following table compiles how cities shape anti-racism initiatives by drawing inspiration from civil society, political leadership, external models, internal practice, and international benchmarks.

This table is based on a qualitative synthesis of cities’ sources of inspiration for their anti-racism actions. Each city’s documented rationale was categorized according to recurring thematic clusters identified through content analysis: civil society/network-driven, political/institutional-driven, adaptation of external models, local/internal experience, and international inspiration. Clusters were assigned inductively by grouping similar inspiration sources across cities and verifying internal consistency. This approach provides an accessible comparative overview, while acknowledging some overlap between categories due to the multifaceted nature of urban policy-making.

Inspiration Cluster	Key Sources of Inspiration	Example cities
Civil society/network-driven	NGOs, local associations, community partnerships	Graz, Cologne, Dortmund, Roeselare, Neuss, Karlsruhe, Brühl, Wörgl, Duren, Esch-sur-Alzette
Political/institutional-driven	Mayor, council, own policy drive	Nantes, Aachen-Städtereion, Monheim, Circle Duren, Valencia, Düsseldorf, St. Stephen
Model adaptation	Other cities/municipalities, events, benchmarks	Hofheim, Monheim, Roeselare, Hochheim, Bologna, Maó, Wörgl, Jena, Graz
Local/ and city internal experience	Previous city actions, local consultation	Saint-Etienne, Lausanne, Bordeaux, Valencia, Hofheim, Graz, Dortmund
External/international	International campaigns, European networks	Jena, Villeurbanne, Bologna

16 Inspiration Cluster, key sources, example cities.



Cluster 1 compiles all practices, inspired by local communities or civil society. Main characteristics: horizontal learning, and civil society as driver of innovation and local responsiveness.

Cluster 2 compiles all policies, driven by high-level commitment. There is a strong top-down drive from city government, councils or elected leaders. Decisions are often rooted in the vision or policy direction of the local administration.

Cluster 3 summarises policies inspired by other cities, EU projects, ECCAR. Main characteristic is an emphasis on adaption and “good practice” transfer. Cities thereby use benchmarking and learning from successful action elsewhere.

Cluster 4 policies result from city internal reflection, community feedback loops, consultation with stakeholders or the city’s organisational learning.

Cluster 5 compiles inspirations from international organisations, campaigns or networks, such as ECCAR.

C.2.2 Triggers of political will for the actions

What are the most important triggers of political will for the actions against racism being reported in 2025? The following are clustered and compiled based on the information provided in the city reports of 2025.

- **Evidence from local data and studies**

Local data and studies revealing high incidence of discrimination create need for political action. Knowledge of the lived experiences of minorities triggers action.

- **Leadership Commitment to Equality and Inclusion**

Strong political leadership (mayors, city councils) having visions of inclusive, diverse communities is a core trigger of action against racism. Furthermore, formal political commitments such as local charters and national or international equality obligations foster sustained action plans.

- **Rising extremist ideologies trigger policy responses**

Rising extremist ideologies and right-wing parties, spike in right-wing violence provoke urgent political responses emphasizing democratic resilience and preventive measures, such as a local action plan against right-wing extremism.

- **Pressure from civil society and communities demands action**

Persistent pressure from associations, NGOs, and affected communities demand action, often shaping political agendas and funding priorities of ECCAR cities. Cities pioneered anti-discrimination political agendas through dialogue platforms involving residents and civil society.

- **Legal and policy frameworks of commitments**

National laws and international commitments (e.g., Germany’s General Equal Treatment Act, UN Decade for People of African Descent) provide frameworks within which cities align local policies. Urban renewal programs and social contracts link political will to infrastructure and social investment targeting inclusion.



- **Demographic and cultural realities**

Acknowledgment of growing multicultural populations and migration demands intercultural competence building in municipal institutions. Intercultural dialogue and decolonial and intersectional feminism frame commitments notably in several cities in Germany and France.

- **Symbolic and reflective triggers**

Memorialization processes and revisiting historical difficult legacies signal political reflection that provokes wider action. Political will is often renewed or redirected following critical consultations with the public revealing gaps or inadequacies in existing measures.

This listing of triggers of political will to actions against racism based on the city reports of 2025 is mainly for a quick overview. In reality, these different triggers are linked and work together. Therefore, political will to combat racism in ECCAR cities arises from an interplay of evidence, high-level political commitment, demographic transformations, legal-institutional frameworks, and responses to political extremism and societal challenges. Strong civil society engagement, and acknowledgment of intersectional and historical dimensions are furthermore central to mobilizing municipal action.

C.2.3 Beneficiaries and target groups of actions

In essence, anti-racism actions address a multi-layered beneficiary spectrum: general publics, marginalized migrants and refugees, those experiencing discrimination, youth and educational communities, civil society actors, public employees, and other vulnerable groups. This multifaceted focus ensures that interventions tackle both structural inequalities and social dynamics within diverse urban contexts. The following is a summary of target groups and beneficiaries of anti-racism actions, based on the ECCAR city reports, submitted in 2025.

Here is a more detailed matrix linking each target group to the types of interventions or services they receive:

Target groups	Main Needs/Challenges	Types of Interventions and Services
General Population and Urban Residents	Need for cohesive, inclusive, and safe communities	City-wide awareness campaigns, community-building initiatives, cultural events, inclusive policy frameworks
Migrants and Refugees (Ukrainian refugees, Roma, migrant women with children)	Housing insecurity, legal barriers, limited social support, integration challenges	Legal and housing assistance, language and integration courses, access to public services, targeted family support programs
Persons Experiencing Discrimination	Facing racism, exclusion, and unequal opportunities	Anti-discrimination advice centres, complaint mechanisms,



Target groups	Main Needs/Challenges	Types of Interventions and Services
		educational access support, campaigns to raise awareness, advocacy for racialized groups
Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults (esp. minority/migrant backgrounds)	Barriers in education, social exclusion, discrimination in schools	School workshops on diversity and inclusion, youth centres offering safe spaces, mentoring programs, specialized intercultural curricula
Civil Society, NGOs, Community Organizations, and Frontline Workers	Need for resources, coordination, and stronger capacity	Co-creation of inclusion programs, funding and support, training sessions, networking opportunities, knowledge exchange platforms
Municipal Employees and City Administration	Need to institutionalize anti-discrimination and inclusive practices	Capacity-building workshops, inclusive policy development, training for youth workers and administrators, mainstreaming equality principles
Specific Target Groups (people with disabilities, persons of African descent, women, religious communities, school staff)	Intersectional barriers, inequalities, and underrepresentation	Inclusive service access, tailored empowerment programs, community dialogue forums, workplace equality policies, training for educators

17 Target groups, needs and challenges, types of interventions.

- General Population and Urban Residents: reported initiatives target the city population as a whole, fostering inclusive, safe, and cohesive communities.
- Migrants and refugees (especially newly arrived or with insecure status) who face housing, legal, and social challenges. Notable groups include Ukrainian war refugees, Roma communities / travellers, and migrant women with young children. Actions support their integration and access to rights and services.



- Persons experiencing discrimination: Victims and witnesses of racism and discrimination are direct beneficiaries of services including advice centres, education access, and public awareness programs targeting racialized groups.
- Children, adolescents, and young adults, especially those from minority or migrant backgrounds, are prioritised as a target group. Actions include school workshops, youth centres, and specialized curricula.
- Civil Society, NGOs, Community Organizations, and Frontline Workers: These actors are both participants and beneficiaries, involved in co-creation and implementation of programs and receiving capacity building.
- Municipal Employees and City Administration: Internal city staff, including administrative personnel, youth workers, and political representatives, are engaged to mainstream anti-discrimination principles institutionally and benefit from training and inclusive policies.
- Targeted actions are reported as well, which reach specific segments of the population, such as people with disabilities, persons of African descent, women (often with intersectional focus), religious communities, and school staff.

C.2.4 Resistance faced during concept phase

The section deals with resistance, faced by initiators of action against racism and discrimination. The section thereby focuses on resistance during the conception phase and the development of policies. The reporting system asks openly for this resistance, meaning that city actors are free to report on all resistance they have faced.

Resistance is mainly city-internal concerns, related to legal uncertainty or concerns regarding workload increase. In addition, resistance is part of political negotiations when it comes to setting priorities within limited resources and capacities. City reports indicate that dealing with this resistance works through inclusive communication, legal reassurances, securing leadership and strong civil society partnerships. More concretely, the following actors of resistance and their concerns were reported by ECCAR cities.

1. City internal concerns and resistance

Resistance emerged related to staff concerns over paradigm shifts in Human Resource policies at the city level. The resistance is expressed around actions, which target staffing, recruitment, and pay, resulting in uncertainty and worries about pay deterioration. Resistance to lowering bureaucratic language complexity was noted, as some staff members had concerns regarding a loss of legal certainty. Resistance to lowering bureaucratic complexity was also linked to long-standing routines ("I've been writing this way for 20 years").

Municipal authorities expressed reservations about taking on additional tasks within limited financial and legal protection. Team fatigue, overload and organizational challenges are types of resistance against action. Especially ensuring staff participation in time-intensive training amidst other demands, alongside instable financing was mentioned by cities.

2. Cooperation with civil society

Civil society organisations represent a variety of group interests, some of which have complex and conflicting sensitivities, as cities have reported. Particularly interconfessional dialogue exposed ethnocentric societal biases and anxieties, particularly related to Islamophobia. Resistance is not outright rejection but hesitation that highlighted the need for careful educational approaches and trainings. Moreover, challenges in mobilising the public were



encountered, requiring adaptive communication and specific event formats, along with ensuring inclusive participation.

Generally, coordination and consolidation among numerous voluntary civil society initiatives was challenging and resource intensiveness due to representation balance and conflicts of interests. Therefore, participation-based initiatives required considerable effort, sometimes undercompensated.

3. Political and priority-based resistance

Reporting cities revealed difficulties balancing anti-racism work within other political priorities: anti-discrimination was recognized as important indeed, but frequently not prioritized within structural planning and workload due to competing agendas. Some cities have even faced direct political attempts (via right-wing parties) to defund anti-discrimination bodies, viewing them as “unnecessary”. Thereby underscoring the polarized political environment in some regions. Social media debates signifying segments of the population do not see anti-racism as a priority, reflect wider societal tensions. Growing social aversion toward Ukrainian refugees fuelled by misinformation and stereotypes created external resistance challenges.

4. Minimal resistance & strong political support

Some cities, on the other hand, faced no or very limited resistance during concept development. These successes are connected to early involvement of political leaders, civil society, and administrative stakeholders ensuring shared ownership of the planned initiatives. Moreover, embedding actions against racism into existing administrative frameworks ensures broad participation, high identification and support. This is mentioned as another explanation for facing minimal resistance during the concept phase.

These cities emphasized the importance of adapting projects based on ongoing feedback and recognizing criticism positively. Ensuring participation from diverse stakeholders and creating safer spaces for dialogue helped reduce defensiveness and fostered productive, respectful discourse.

C.2.5 Challenges and solutions during concept phase

Cities encounter various challenges during anti-racism policy conceptualization. These are located within the areas of legal boundaries, resource constraints, stakeholder coordination, social climate, and lacking visibility of discrimination. Effective solutions combine clear legal framing, broad participation, adaptive planning, sufficient resourcing, strategic communication, and trust-building for long-term institutio66 practices were reported in more detail by 27 ECCAR cities (out of 36; 9 cities limited their reports to L1-reporting in 2025). 24nalization. These lessons offer a proven framework for designing resilient and impactful anti-racism initiatives in diverse urban contexts. The following table provides an overview of challenges and solutions during the conceptualisation of anti-racism policies, based on the city reports 2025:



Area	Description of challenges	Solutions Found
Legal & Political Boundaries	Balancing human rights protection with freedom of expression; avoiding involvement in judicial processes	Clear communication on limits of monitoring (Graz); refer to legal frameworks of policies
Administrative Coordination	Defining and sharing responsibilities across heterogeneous departments; linking new concepts to existing policies	Standardized job descriptions; broad participation; integrating the concept in existing structures (Graz, Monheim am Rhein)
Resources & Budgeting	Limited funding; increased workloads without staff augmentation	Securing dedicated budgets; phased and flexible implementation; redesigning plans to fit resources (Jena, Hofheim, district Düren)
Stakeholder & Interest Management	Managing diverse actors with conflicting priorities; consensus building	Clear communication; defined participation criteria; use of smaller working groups; trusted peer communication (Nantes, Aachen)
Visibility & Public Awareness	Overcoming denial/invisibility of racial discrimination	Awareness campaigns; research and testing to quantify issues; embedding anti-racism in public services (Villeurbanne, Nantes)
Internal Resistance	Staff concerns about pay, workload, legal uncertainties; entrenched routines	Transparent engagement; embedding changes into routines; external expert support (Graz, Wrocław, Wörgl)
Social & Political Polarization	Rising extremist discourse; overlapping crises; misinformation and distrust	Promote democratic values; community dialogues; counter misinformation; strong political back-up (Mannheim, Wrocław)



Area	Description of challenges	Solutions Found
Operational Complexity	Coordinating multiple actors; data collection and monitoring complexities	Dedicated coordination offices; modular programming; early and ongoing communication (Cologne, Karlsruhe, Dortmund)
Engaging Reluctant Actors	Difficulties engaging trade unions, employers, religious or civil groups	Tailored outreach; clear criteria; building trust and shared goals (Lausanne, Esch-sur-Alzette, Saint-Étienne)
Urban & Rural Participation Gap	Differing engagement levels and accessibility between urban and rural areas	Accessible formats; targeted rural outreach; sustained publicity (Aachen, Monheim am Rhein)

18 Challenges, areas and solutions.

This categorized approach provides a clear framework for anticipating and addressing the multi-faceted challenges cities face when developing anti-racism policies, along with proven solutions for success.



C.3 Planning and Engaging Stakeholders

C.3.1 Key stakeholders of action against racism

Based on an analytical compilation of the 2025 city reports, the responsible stakeholders of actions against racism and their primary responsibilities can be summarized as follows:

Stakeholder	Primary Responsibilities in Anti-Racism Actions
Municipal Government & City Councils	Provide leadership, set strategies/visions, legislate, allocate budgets, and mandate anti-racism policies (e.g., Graz HR Advisory Council; Dortmund Coordination Office).
Dedicated Anti-Discrimination and Equality Offices	Lead implementation, monitoring, data collection, reporting, coordination of city-wide efforts (e.g., Jena municipal anti-discrimination office).
Specialized Municipal Departments	Deliver services related to housing, social affairs, education, culture, etc., and embed equality in operations (e.g., Hofheim's Social Affairs, Housing Association).
Civil Society Organizations (NGOs, Community Groups)	Co-design initiatives, conduct outreach, advocacy, and community mobilization; amplify marginalized voices (e.g., Wrocław NGOs, Roeselare partners).
Educational Institutions & Youth Services	Deliver awareness training, curriculum inclusion, youth engagement, and social work (e.g., Ratzeburg youth centers, Clermont-Ferrand schools).
Public Service Staff & Frontline Workers	Receive anti-bias training and incorporate anti-racism practices in direct service delivery (e.g., Cologne city employees, police).
Volunteers & Local Activists	Community engagement, organizing cultural events, supporting integration efforts (e.g., Hochheim festival volunteers, Brühl community activists).
External Contractors & Consultants	Provide support for evaluation, monitoring, research, and capacity-building (e.g., Cologne's external monitoring coordination).

19 Stakeholders and their responsibilities.



C.3.2 Main arguments for stakeholder engagement

The city reports indicate various arguments for stakeholder engagement, i.e. how actions against racism benefit from stakeholder engagement. These are:

- **Stakeholders provide expertise, authenticity and access to target groups**

Civil society organisations and representatives of affected communities bring specialized knowledge and practical experience. These stakeholders add authentic and credible perspectives to policy development. External experts and consultants additionally ensure methodological quality and innovation.

Stakeholders, as schools, NGOs, migrant associations or housing actors function as gateways to otherwise harder-to-reach populations. or priority populations. Civil society and grassroots groups are closer to people than local authorities. They give key insights, and function as facilitators of trust-building processes. Stakeholders from civil society and affected communities give voice to those directly affected by racism/discrimination and strengthen their participation in policy development. This increases empowerment and ownership within the local population. Generally, the involvement of CSOs and affected communities reinforces the legitimacy, credibility, and democratic nature of city actions.

- **Stakeholder engagement ensures sustainability and broader impact**

Mobilizing a broad coalition of partners increases scope, visibility, and sustainability of actions against racism. Pooling resources across administration and civil society boosts capacity and efficiency in planning and implementation of policies. Moreover, cities report that labels, evaluations and audits also encourage continuous improvement of racism-critic policies through stakeholder participation.

- **Political support and institutional anchoring is strengthened**

Political leaders (mayors, councils) provide the legitimacy, visibility, and governance support, that is particularly relevant during the conceptualisation and negotiation phase. Legal and institutional frameworks (such as Charters and Programs) are used as drivers of engagement. Political frameworks also ensure the security of budget and other resources.

- **Shared Values, Visibility & Social Cohesion**

Cities argue for stakeholder engagement referring to the perspective of equal rights, diversity, and intercultural cohesion. Engaging stakeholders makes diversity visible in public spaces. Actions demonstrate unity, collective responsibility, and symbolic significance in the fight against discrimination.

To sum up, stakeholder engagement brings in capacity and expertise, democratic legitimacy and empowerment of target groups. Stakeholder engagement increases synergies (partnerships allow pooling of resources) and impact (wider outreach, better embedding in society). These arguments are embedded in a political and legal framework (mayoral patronage, charters, anti-racism commitments) and tied to broader goals of social cohesion, equality, and visibility.



C.3.3 Challenges and solutions during stakeholder engagement

This summary reflects diverse stakeholder-specific challenges in urban anti-racism efforts and various pragmatic solutions such as collaborative coordination, political leadership, use of intermediaries, accessible communication, and process flexibility—all key for effective inclusive stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder	Challenges	Solutions
1. Civil Society Organizations and NGOs	Coordination difficulties among many voluntary civil society initiatives (Cologne)	Centralized coordination efforts to unify civil society stakeholders (Cologne)
	Reluctance or skepticism toward certain campaigns or city roles (Jena civil society actors reluctant to embrace campaign)	Persistent official support and public relations firmness (Jena mayor supporting campaign despite opposition)
	Varied and sometimes conflicting demands from diverse community groups (Karlsruhe: balancing “safe spaces” with open exchange)	Formulation of guiding principles balancing different community needs (Karlsruhe)
	Slow communication and inconsistent participation by associative partners (Lausanne)	Adapting flexible deadlines and communication approaches to accommodate partners (Lausanne)
	Difficulty recruiting vulnerable or hard-to-reach groups (Roeselare)	Use of bridge figures and targeted network events to engage vulnerable groups (Roeselare)
		Providing training and immersive experiences to align staff perspectives with user experiences (Roeselare)
2. Municipal and Political Stakeholders	Difficulty securing financial resources and budgeting accurately (Graz, Nantes, Hochheim, Brühl, Maó Menorca)	Securing third-party funding and grants (Brühl)

	Resistance or limited capacity within municipal departments and anti-discrimination offices (Cologne skepticism from offices over workload)	Delegating workload to specialized institutions (Cologne: university undertaking report preparation)
	Aligning diverse municipal departments and coordinating cross-sectoral collaboration (Clermont-Ferrand coordination challenges, Villeurbanne slow internal resource mobilization)	Early and continuous communication between departments and stakeholders (Monheim, Dortmund early planning)
	Scheduling conflicts with schools and political figures causing logistic challenges (Bordeaux, Saint-Étienne)	Political leadership actively defending projects and assuming responsibility (Saint-Étienne deputy mayor championing budget; Esch-sur-Alzette political alignment reduces resistance)
	Complexity in defining roles and ensuring accountability across municipal and autonomous agencies (Valencia)	Clear role definitions, shared responsibility, and participatory governance structures (Valencia)
3. Target Groups and Vulnerable Communities	Difficulty recruiting and engaging vulnerable, marginalized, or less accessible groups (Roeselare, Bologna: migrant families)	Developing simple, multilingual, and accessible materials (Bologna)
	Language and accessibility barriers in communication and participation (Bologna questionnaire accessibility)	Using trusted community bridges or peer figures for outreach (Roeselare bridge figures)
	Capacity constraints and lack of trust or experience with systems (Clermont-Ferrand dealing with diverse vulnerable publics)	Creating safe spaces and ensuring confidentiality (Karlsruhe explicit focus on “nothing about us without us”)
	Risk of exposing affected individuals and managing their protection (Villeurbanne concern over exposing participants)	Flexible and supportive participation frameworks respecting comfort and availability (Lausanne, Clermont-Ferrand)

		Continuous feedback and iterative process adaptation (Roeselare human-centered process steps)
4. Institutional and Administrative Staff	Overburdening staff with additional workload without capacity (Graz capacity issues, Cologne anti-discrimination offices lacking capacity)	Offloading tasks to external partners or academia (Cologne)
	Diverging perspectives within institutions and questions around legitimate spokespersons (Karlsruhe)	Developing guidelines to align goals and interests (Karlsruhe)
	Maintaining engagement and continuity over lengthy processes (Karlsruhe: volunteer vs professional participation imbalances, participant attrition)	Differentiating volunteer and professional involvement with transparency (Karlsruhe)
	Balancing institutional requirements with community expectations and diverse demands (Karlsruhe managing varied civil society views)	Ongoing communication, training, and participatory reflection sessions to maintain commitment (Roeselare, Clermont-Ferrand)
5. Communication and Coordination Challenges (Cross-cutting)	Ensuring timely feedback and response from diverse stakeholders (Monheim: managing scheduled deadlines, feedback incorporation)	Early and regular communication and reminders (Monheim, Nantes)
	Synchronizing activities to avoid competition among associative projects (Nantes)	Recruitment of service providers to facilitate associative cooperation (Nantes)
	Managing last-minute logistical changes and speaker availability (Saint-Étienne)	Flexibility in approach and readiness with contingency plans (Saint-Étienne)
	Generating trust among parties with different priorities (Wroclaw: overcoming institutional reluctance)	Evidence-based communication and transparency to build trust (Wroclaw) Continuous monitoring and adaptation (Roeselare human-centered iterative approach)

20 Stakeholder, challenges and solutions.

C.4 Putting into Practice

C.4.1 Drivers and leverages behind actions against racism

The drivers and leverages for the actions implemented by cities combine strong political endorsement, solid institutional structures, inclusive community participation and – last but not least – sufficient resources. These interconnected factors enable cities to develop and sustain impactful anti-racism actions tailored to their local contexts. The following section provides a summary of the drivers and leverages for anti-racism actions from the provided city reports, clustered by thematic groups of common drivers:

Strong, clear stances of mayors and city councils against hate speech and racism were reported as driver of action against racism. Moreover, political mandates, declarations, and charters reaffirming anti-racism principles. Political commitment is also shown by the recognition of international obligations and commitments (e.g. in the framework of the UN Decade for People of African Descent). This type of political backing enables funding and institutional support and thus works as solid base for action against racism.

Existence of dedicated municipal offices, integration centres, and coordination bodies relevant to the topic. Established civil society networks and partnerships facilitating outreach and implementation. Moreover, the use of data, continuous monitoring, and reporting is an essential means to identify discrimination hotspots and target actions effectively.

C.4.2 Most important procedural steps

Based on the procedural steps documented across the city reports, a "hybrid procedure", summarizing the most important phases for actions against racism was compiled. This framework reflects common phases across the diverse city experiences. Cornerstones are: solid political mandate, co-created strategy, well-functioning implementation logistics, continuous learning, and institutional embedding for sustained anti-racism action.

1. Initiation and mandate

Political commitment and a clear mandate from city council, mayor, or equivalent governing body is the first procedural step of action. The establishment of dedicated units, working groups, or alliances inclusive of civil society and administrative stakeholders were mentioned as initiatory step.

2. Concept development and planning

Co-development of the strategic concept or framework through consultations, workshops, including a diversity of stakeholders. Definition of clear and achievable goals, target groups, and resources including budget and partnerships. Identification and recruitment of partners, facilitators, trainers, and volunteers are essential for implementation and thus need to be considered already during planning.

3. Data collection, research, and needs assessment

Establishment of monitoring and reporting systems for discrimination incidents using data and community input. Conducting baseline surveys, audits, or diagnostics to identify priorities and inform the strategy.

4. Human resources planning and team formation

Recruit and train a dedicated implementation team comprising municipal staff, trainers, facilitators, civil society representatives, and volunteers (depending on the concrete action). Define roles and responsibilities clearly for efficient coordination and ownership. Ensure ongoing capacity building through trainings, manuals, and support for multipliers and facilitators.

5. Communication and awareness

Collaborative development and dissemination of produced information materials, campaigns, and manuals to raise public awareness. Leveraging media outlets, social platforms, and partner networks for broad outreach.

6. Implementation and capacity building

Delivering tailored trainings, workshops, and action events with expert facilitators and community participation. Providing ongoing support, guidance, and supervision to multipliers and participants. Coordinating logistics including venues, scheduling, participant registration and on-site facilitation – depending on the concrete type of action.

7. Monitoring, evaluation, and feedback

Continuous monitoring of activities, resource utilization and participant engagement. Collection of feedback through surveys, debriefings, and stakeholder meetings to identify what works and what does not yet. Adaptive adjustments based on evaluations and newly identified needs.

8. Institutionalization and sustainability

Formal adoption of strategies, position papers, or charters by municipal bodies for long-term sustainability. Embedding anti-racism actions within broader municipal policies and securing sustainable funding. Establishment of permanent structures or offices dedicated to anti-racism work.

C.4.3 Public Relations and accessing the target groups

The reported strategies and means to access target groups for anti-racism actions across cities are diverse and are related to the concrete actions and target groups at stake. However, generally, multi-channel PR aiming to reach broad and specific audiences work effectively. The following list of bullet points briefly outlines the PR media and strategies applied by ECCAR cities, who reported in more detail:

Category	Description	Main audience groups reached
Traditional media and public spaces	Press releases, newspapers, banners, posters in public centres, public transport stops, and city centres to gain wide visibility.	General population, urban residents, older adults and others, who rely more on traditional media, commuters, city visitors.



Category	Description	Main audience groups reached
Digital platforms and social media	Campaign websites, municipal and organizational social media channels, newsletters, online registration forms, videos on discrimination topics.	Younger audiences, migrants and refugees (via language-specific content), online communities, NGOs, civil society activists.
Direct outreach and community networks	Multipliers including schools, parents, social workers, immigrant organizations, advice centres, unions, civil society associations. Word-of-mouth and personalized invitations.	Migrants and refugees, children and youth, parents, frontline workers, community organizations.
Events and public campaigns	Kick-off events with politicians, workshops, giveaways, community meetings, awareness-raising events.	General population, youth, NGOs/community groups, political representatives, people experiencing discrimination.
Physical public spaces and campaign materials	Banners, billboards, posters, flyers distributed in transport stops, schools, city halls, event spaces.	General public, school staff and students, urban residents, migrants (visual multilingual materials).
Multi-modal and multilingual approaches	Flyers, posters, electronic newsletters, videos adapted to cultural and linguistic needs.	Migrants and refugees, racialized communities, persons with low literacy, multilingual city residents.
Institutional coordination	Collaboration with municipal departments, schools, communication teams, and monitoring networks.	Municipal employees, policy-makers, school administrations, NGOs, civil society associations.



Media / communication strategy	Description
Traditional media and public spaces	Use of press releases, newspapers, banners, posters in public centres, public transport stops, and city centres to gain wide visibility.
Digital platforms and social media	Campaign websites, municipal and organizational social media channels, email newsletters, online forms for registration, and highlight videos describing discrimination topics to engage both the general public and specific communities.
Direct outreach and community networks	Engaging multipliers such as schools, parents, social workers, immigrant organizations, advice centres, union groups, and civil society associations to disseminate information and recruit participants. Personalized invitations and word-of-mouth communication play a strong role here.
Events and public campaigns	Kick-off events with politicians, workshops, distribution of giveaways, community meetings, and public awareness events foster engagement and visibility.
Physical public spaces and campaign materials	Use of banners, billboards, posters, flyers distributed in public places such as transport stops, schools, city halls, and event spaces.
Multi-modal and multilingual approaches	Campaign materials including flyers, posters, electronic communication, newsletters, and videos tailored to cultural and linguistic needs help reach diverse populations.
Institutional coordination	Coordination with municipal departments, schools, communication departments, and monitors ensures clear messaging and leverages institutional networks.

21 Reaching target groups with media.



The most effective access strategies combine **mass reach channels** (media, public spaces) with **trusted community intermediaries**, including multipliers and civil society groups, enabling tailored, culturally sensitive communication and sustained engagement.

Digital tools amplify reach and enable two-way communication but must be complemented with personal contact and local presence to build trust, especially with vulnerable or marginalized groups. Coordinated, multi-stakeholder communication plans integrating institutional, community, and media efforts prove key for comprehensive target group access and participation. This multi-layered approach maximizes visibility, legitimacy, and relevance, enhancing both awareness and active involvement in anti-racism initiatives across varied urban contexts.

Social and community media play a key role for two-way engagement, especially to reach marginalized groups. Physical visibility in public spaces (urban transport, schools, prominent buildings) reinforces awareness and symbolizes municipal commitment.

Integration of communications with action events and close collaboration with civil society networks ensure messaging resonates broadly and triggers active participation. This comprehensive mix of PR channels enhances both the **visibility** and **legitimacy** of urban anti-racism actions, adapting to local contexts and target audiences.

In addition to this use of (combined) media to access the target groups and to make the action visible in the city, the reports also provide information on the narratives and contents of PR. Reports point out the need for a positive narrative focus: While specific campaign content is less detailed, many cities emphasize inclusive, culturally sensitive messaging tailored to target groups, often backed with educational or awareness-raising themes.

Social media are poised to significantly shape future anti-racism visibility campaigns in several ways. The following information is added here as it is relevant for local authorities' engagement in public relations.

Amplification and rapid spread of messages

Social media platforms enable quick and widespread dissemination of anti-racism content, raising awareness far beyond local or regional boundaries. Viral posts, influencers, and celebrities can mobilize large audiences rapidly, as seen in movements like #BlackLivesMatter. Social media amplifies visibility and engages populations globally.

Formation of digital communities and solidarity networks

Social media fosters creation of supportive communities united around anti-racism causes, allowing individuals across geographies to connect, share experiences, and coordinate actions such as protests and campaigns. This enhances collective empowerment and sustained activism.

Personal storytelling and educational content

Platforms support powerful personal narratives that humanize racism's impact, alongside educational campaigns that promote understanding of systemic discrimination and diversity. Interactive features like videos, live streams, and polls increase engagement and learning.

Targeted and inclusive outreach

Social media's data and advertising tools enable tailored messaging to specific demographics, including marginalized communities often missed by traditional media.



This inclusivity helps reach affected groups more effectively and builds broader coalitions.

Challenges of misinformation and algorithm bias

Despite strengths, social media also poses risks of spreading misinformation, hate speech, and algorithmic biases that can undermine anti-racism efforts. Future campaigns will need robust moderation, media literacy, and fact-checking components.

Youth engagement and trend adaptation

As younger people dominate social media use, campaigns that leverage popular trends, memes, and interactive formats (e.g., TikTok videos) may increase resonance and participation among youth, nurturing next-generation advocates.

Data-driven campaign optimization

Social media analytics provide insights into audience reach, sentiment, and engagement, allowing continuous refinement of anti-racism strategies for maximum impact.

Overall, social media's multifaceted capabilities for reach, community building, education, and targeting, combined with its challenges, will shape increasingly anti-racism visibility campaigns.

C.4.4 Challenges during implementation

Reporting cities faced the following challenges during the phase of putting into practice:

- Securing sustainable funding and managing budget constraints, which can limit the scope and continuity of actions
- Coordinating diverse stakeholders such as municipal departments, civil society, and external partners, often facing communication complexity and overlapping responsibilities
- Engaging and maintaining participation from all relevant groups, especially marginalized communities, due to reluctance, capacity limits, or communication barriers
- Establishing effective data collection and monitoring systems across institutions to track discrimination and evaluate impacts of actions
- Recruiting, training, and retaining qualified personnel and volunteers for implementation and monitoring despite resource limitations
- Managing unforeseen changes such as political shifts, scheduling conflicts, or logistical interruptions requiring adaptive planning
- Balancing differing community needs and perspectives, for instance between demands for safe spaces versus open dialogue, and reconciling institutional priorities.

Apart from these challenges during the implementation phase, the city reports provide more detailed information about organisational barriers, which limit cities from preventing systemic discrimination.

Processes involved in systemic discrimination are often invisible, unintentional, and difficult to trace back to organizational systems. This makes it hard to diagnose and address. Correspondingly, there is a lack of comprehensive, disaggregated data and monitoring in cities. This hampers the ability to identify systemic patterns and evaluate progress and consequently brings about an insufficient understanding of systemic discrimination's nature and its



widespread implications. This insufficient understanding of systemic discrimination limits effective recognition and intervention within organizations. This again brings about reluctance to admit organizational responsibility, and defensiveness.

ECCAR cities furthermore report an absence of dedicated leadership roles (such as a commissioner for anti-racism), cross-departmental coordination, and institutional mechanisms to sustain systemic change in the field of racism-critic policies. As a consequence, existing policies may unintentionally maintain structural inequalities by failing to consider intersectional and systemic forms discrimination or by perpetuating “paternalistic” approaches. Insufficient financial, human, and technical resources additionally limit the implementation of effective remedies. Anti-discrimination efforts often remain isolated within departments or sectors. Thus, a holistic and organization-wide coordinated response to systemic discrimination is difficult to implement.

Addressing these barriers requires raising awareness, establishing leadership and accountability, strengthening institutional structures, enhancing data-driven approaches and fostering an open culture ready to confront inequities. Within these structures, integrated, well-resourced strategies to dismantle systemic discrimination can be adopted in urban governance.

C.5 Impact and Outcomes

The city reports 2025 contain various types of outcomes and impacts achieved through the reported actions. The effects base on a self-assessment of the reporting actors. Some cities have reported tasks implemented (e.g. capacity building and training, monitoring and documentation) rather than outcomes or impacts achieved. Still, the findings from the city reports were evaluated in summary and clustered beyond single actions as follows.

- 1. Shift in attitudes and speech:** Increased awareness and public discourse about racism and its negative effects on social cohesion. More moderate election campaigns incorporating human rights language and reduced hate speech in political campaigns; Shift in attitudes toward diversity, respect, and social cohesion.
- 2. Increased visibility of racism-critics and political engagement:** Achieved by means of creating public forums, participation networks, and round tables facilitating ongoing dialogue and joint action as well as campaigning to sustain attention to the topic.
- 4. Institutional and structural improvements:** Increased commitment to inclusive policies, equal pay, and rights in municipal services. Expansion of diversity competencies and partnership networks across institutions within the city; Integration of anti-racism into school curricula and public education. Institutional and structural improvements also include more inclusive and accessible public service delivery. Impacts of racism-critic policies in this area include: tailoring of legal, social, educational, and health supports according to the needs of racialized and migrant populations; Increased use of interpretation services and social support mechanisms.

The outcomes of racism-critic policies cluster around awareness raising, behavioural shifts, empowerment, institutional change, and improved service delivery, reflecting a multi-dimensional impact of anti-racism actions. Cultural change and dialogue platforms promote sustained social cohesion. Monitoring and documentation enable data-driven approaches targeting specific issues. However, some limitations and challenges persist, including the need for longer-term evaluation, deeper community engagement, and combating backlash regarding



online hate speech. Some actions reported by ECCAR cities fell short of expectations or lacked sufficient duration to show long-term effects. Other policies, such as campaigning using social media, brought about even stronger negative reactions on social media highlighting persistent racism despite campaigns. Another learning is related to the ongoing need to improve public outreach and engagement of all targeted communities to achieve a real impact.

C.5.1 Evaluation of policies: actors and methods

Based on the city reports of 2025, the evaluators of policies and actions against racism can be clustered into the following groups:

Actor	Roles
<p>City internal: municipal departments and staff</p>	<p>Internal evaluation of policy compliance, resource use, participant feedback, running surveys and interviews.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Human Resources Office (Dortmund), Department of Interculturality and Sister Cities (Monheim am Rhein), European and International Relations Department, organizing teams, pilot departments (Clermont-Ferrand), Special external municipal cabinets (Villeurbanne), Municipal service (Valencia).</p>
<p>External: independent experts and academic bodies</p>	<p>Provide independent review, legal assessments, method validation, and academic rigor.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Legal experts reviewing hate speech proceedings (Graz), University of Education cooperating with city Alliance (Mannheim), Audit delegations selected by the city and metropolis (Nantes).</p>
<p>Civil society and partner organizations</p>	<p>Provide participatory and community perspectives, ground-level feedback, participatory evaluation.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Main partners in action scheme evaluation (Esch-sur-Alzette),</p>



Actor	Roles
	Associations and participants providing feedback (Clermont-Ferrand), Panels and external partners (Roeselare), Citizens and participants (Aachen), Round table participants (Karlsruhe).
Political or advisory committees	Official oversight, validation, policy advising, and review of reports and indicators. Examples: Labelling commissions set up by the state (Nantes), Inclusion Council (Saint-Étienne), Integration commission and festival committee (Hochheim), Charged agents overseeing weeks of equality (Semaines de l'Égalité, Saint-Étienne).
Participant feedback and group reflections	Direct input from beneficiaries and participants to measure engagement, satisfaction and perceived impact. Examples: Discussions with participants during and after events, Reflection discussions (Aachen), Surveys (Dortmund).

22. Actors and roles of evaluation.

This summary of evaluation actors and their roles illustrates evaluation approaches involving internal administration, independent experts, civil society, political/advisory bodies, and direct participant feedback. It reflects a comprehensive approach to monitoring and improving anti-racism policies through the inclusion of diverse perspectives and expertise. Of course, the concrete actors involved into evaluation depend on the type of action, time-frame, availability of actors and resources.

The use of the following evaluation methods was reported:



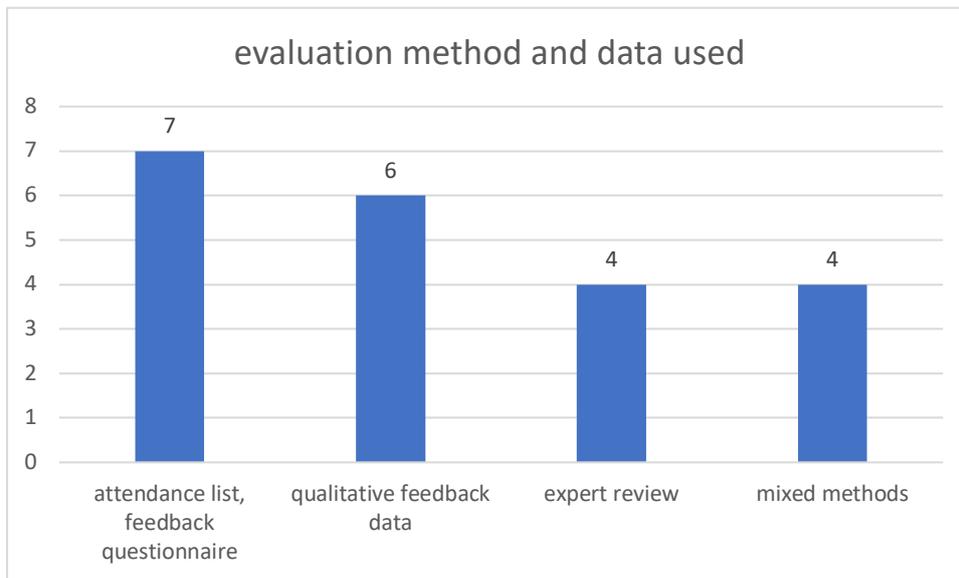


Table 23: evaluation methods and data used.

Mixed methods refer a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods including data from internal statistics, observational reports, briefing meetings, and documentary analysis. The evaluation approaches integrate quantitative data from attendance lists, surveys, and statistical monitoring with qualitative insights from experts, partner organizations, and participant feedback. Many cities do a participatory evaluation, involving stakeholders and participants directly in reflecting on actions and impacts. Standardisation of approaches and structured surveys provide rigor and comparability. Ongoing evaluations are embedded through reflections by departments and advisory committees ensuring continuous learning and adaptation.

Target groups generally participated actively through surveys and feedback sessions, enabling structured input on effectiveness, satisfaction, and suggestions for improvement. Direct contact and personal interviews enhanced deeper reflection, while consultative councils facilitated broader community voice and influence.

This mixed approach balances quantitative representativeness and qualitative richness, helping authorities better understand impacts from beneficiaries' perspectives and refine the actions accordingly. Ensuring diverse and inclusive modes of participation remains key for comprehensive evaluation. This multifaceted methodology is crucial to assess diverse outcomes from awareness to behavioural change, policy impact, and community empowerment, enabling cities to adjust strategies and demonstrate effectiveness comprehensively.

C.5.2 Features of evaluations with high quantitative response rates

Some cities achieved high response rates in their evaluation methods. This section compiles the features of their evaluation methods as inspirations for other cities. Response rates tend to be higher when survey topics are of direct interest or relevance to the respondents' lives or work. Participants need to see the value or impact of their input on issues affecting them personally or their communities. Moreover, shorter, user-friendly surveys with clear, simple questions are more effective in eliciting responses than long, complex ones which may cause



respondent fatigue. Web-based surveys generally achieve higher response rates in populations with good internet coverage and digital literacy.

Procedures such as multiple contact attempts, advance notification letters or messages, incentives for participation and personal invitations boost response rates. Effective communication about the survey's purpose and confidentiality also encourages participation. Existing trust between respondents and survey organizers, such as municipal authorities, NGOs, or familiar local stakeholders not at least supports willingness to respond.

C.6 Key factors of Success

Cities have self-assessed and reported their actions' key factors of success. This section provides a summary of these success factors. Basically, the reported success factors are similar than the leverages of action against racism at the local level. These are:

1. Strong political will and institutional commitment

- Explicit political support and decisions of municipal councils
- Clear mandates and allocation of human and financial resources

2. Comprehensive and clear planning

- Clarity and transparency in objectives, procedural steps, and evaluation criteria
- Detailed planning, including clear requirements and tendering processes

3. Community and stakeholder engagement

- Broad participation of civil society, local organizations, religious communities, migrant associations, and educational institutions building trustworthy partnerships
- Ensuring involvement of those affected by racism in design, planning, and evaluation ("Nothing about us without us")

4. Effective communication and public visibility

- Regular and multi-channel communication ensuring broad reach and awareness raising
- Using local, national, and international contexts to frame locally relevant issues
- Active and inclusive communication methods adapted to target groups

5. Capacity building and training

- Empowerment through training courses, workshops, and multiplier approaches to disseminate knowledge and skills
- Involving experts and experienced trainers

6. Sustainability and long-term perspective

- Embedding anti-racism work into city structures and policy frameworks
- Setting up ongoing forums for dialogue and cooperation

7. Adaptiveness and responsiveness

- Timely response to socio-political developments and participant feedback, allowing continuous improvement



- Flexibility to address new challenges and emerging discrimination forms

8. Inclusive and diverse approaches

- Tailoring actions to the needs of specific groups but at the same time promoting diversity and plurality of voices
- Addressing intersectionality and multiple discrimination dimensions

9. Building trust and relationships

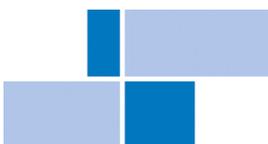
- Establishing trust is fundamental for participation and success; this involves close cooperation with stakeholders, transparency, and recognition of diverse experiences

Successful anti-racism actions across cities hinge on a multifaceted approach combining strong political backing, inclusive stakeholder engagement, clear and transparent planning, effective communication, capacity building, and sustainability. Trust-building, adaptability, and attention to local context and diverse experiences further enhance outcomes. These factors align with the ECCAR Ten-Point Plan of Action and support comprehensive, durable urban anti-racism strategies.

C.6.1 Most effective communication strategies for awareness raising

Effective communication strategies proven to raise awareness and participation in anti-racism actions based on the reports include:

Communication strategy	Description
Multi-channel approaches	Using a mix of media including posters, social media, websites, newsletters, local newspapers, radio, and TV to reach diverse audiences broadly and repeatedly.
Local relevance and personalization	Linking anti-racism messages to real, local cases and experiences rather than abstract concepts to engage the public effectively, making the issue tangible and relatable.
Inclusive and participatory processes	Engaging citizens, community groups, and multipliers in the creation and dissemination of campaign content ensures ownership and broader reach; promoting dialogue and critical thinking.



Positive and supportive messaging	Promoting solidarity, diversity, inclusion, and critical thinking rather than focusing solely on debunking myths or confrontational tones helps foster constructive public engagement.
Adaptation to target groups	Tailoring communication methods and campaign content to specific community needs, languages, and cultural contexts improves accessibility and participation.

24 effective communication strategies.

The city reports indicate that diversifying channels, grounding messages in local realities, fostering community participation, and combining education with empowerment and positive narratives are key for effective anti-racism communication and achieving broad participation.

C.6.2 Which content increased awareness most?

Messaging frames and content shared, using authentic personal stories, shared values, and human rights narratives have proven most effective in increasing awareness in anti-racism communication:

- **Personal stories:** Campaigns featuring lived experiences of discrimination, such as testimonies from people with disabilities or racialized communities, create authenticity and relatability that resonate strongly with audiences. These stories humanize abstract issues and evoke empathy, motivating attitude and behaviour change.
- **Shared values:** Starting communication with universal, aspirational values like fairness, equal opportunity, dignity, and community builds a foundation for engagement. Framing topics through values that audiences already care about makes messages more accessible and persuasive, avoiding alienation through jargon or overly technical rhetoric.
- **Rights-based narratives:** Positioning anti-racism in the context of human and civil rights helps underline the urgency and legitimacy of these actions. It empowers marginalized groups by emphasizing legal protections and participation as rights holders while framing social change as a collective responsibility.
- **Inclusive and participatory storytelling:** Collaborating with affected communities and young leaders to tell diverse stories strengthens trust, facilitates involvement, and ensures messages are relevant and respectful. Multi-channel storytelling combining social media, TV, radio, and educational events extends reach and impact.

Overall, the combination of authentic stories grounded in shared human values and framed within human rights discourse effectively increases public awareness, shifts attitudes, and motivates societal engagement in anti-racism efforts.



C.7 Key lessons learned

The key lessons learned are related to communication and involvement of employees. The early involvement and engaging of city employees as well as beneficiaries and target groups is seen as key lesson learned by the reporting authorities. Engaging employees at early stages of planning helps creating ownership and preventing or at least addressing resistance.

Furthermore, it helps trust-building and fosters participation. Accepting diverse viewpoints and responding respectfully to community feedback strengthens relationships.

As already pointed out at several times in this global evaluation report, a strong political leadership and support (visible commitment of mayors, city councils and high-level positions in administration) helps to secure resources and to mobilise partners. This is also a key lesson learned by practitioners.

Another lesson learned is related to flexibility requirements: Programs need to be responsive to changing social dynamics and participant feedback, allowing adaptation of methods and messaging to meet evolving needs. At the same time, embedding activities in city structures, establishing ongoing forums of exchange or working groups, and securing stable resources lead to long lasting positive effects. Last but not least, cities have reported that they learned dealing with criticism and hostility, which public anti-racism efforts may face; the local authorities say that they were not prepared for this. Thus, careful professional PR and preparedness are necessary to maintain momentum. Overall, these lessons learned emphasize the importance of professional, inclusive, adaptive, and well-supported approaches grounded in transparent governance and meaningful community engagement for successful anti-racism actions at the city level.

C.8 Sustainability

The sustainability of anti-racism policies in cities is connected to the following factors, which have been clustered based on the city reports:

- **Anchoring the action in the city structure**

Formalised and institutionalised political commitment for anti-racism creates sustainability. This anchoring may take place by embedding them into municipal law and policy and guaranteeing continuity (e.g., council resolutions, permanent alliances, sanction mechanisms, recurring events). Regular renewal of commitments by means of events or action weeks additionally ensures that the topic remain part of the city's ongoing agenda. Holistic embedding of anti-racism initiatives across multiple policy areas: employment, education, municipal services, urban planning is another factor creating sustainability. Successful cases show sustainability is maximized when anti-racism is part of broad diversity, inclusion, and human rights strategies, not in the framework of isolated efforts.

- **Approaches to secure resources**

It is almost self-evidently that secure funding of action ensures sustainability. Cities provide several approaches to secure funding against the background of constant resource bottlenecks. External funding or national funding, annual municipal budgets and saving efforts by recurrent actions. Timeless campaign materials, websites, and annual events keep issues visible and salient and at the same time saves resources.

- **Structured partnerships and maintaining networks**



Structured Partnerships and Networks Building and maintaining strong local partnerships with civil society, community groups, and public institutions enables durable collaboration, wider reach, and mutual capacity building. Strategic collaboration, such as "Bridge Builders" or broad participatory models further anchors sustainability.

- **Empowerment and capacity building**

Empowerment and capacity building developing local leadership through empowerment, professional development, and the creation of independent, self-sustaining groups ensures sustainability of policy effects and impacts. Ongoing training and integration of anti-racism in personnel and educational development ensure knowledge continues to spread organically.

- **Flexibility and adaptability of policies**

One might not assume that flexibility and adaptability of policies is another factor creating sustainability. However, adaptability provides for flexible adjustment based on changing needs, socio-political climates, and periodic evaluation. Policies that allow for adjustment as conditions and feedback evolve—reflected in periodic evaluation and responsive redesign—remain relevant and impactful through political, social, and demographic change.

Enduring anti-racism policies thrive where there is high-level political and institutional commitment, stable funding, strong partnerships, integration across municipal policy areas, continuous empowerment, transparent monitoring, and built-in adaptability. Embedding these characteristics ensures anti-racism work is not a one-off intervention but a durable and evolving feature of city life.

Sustainability of action against racism is therefore connected to formal institutionalization, ongoing resources, deep partnerships, integration across municipal sectors, continual capacity-building, transparent monitoring, and adaptability. Cities following these principles ensure that anti-racism is an embedded and enduring element of urban policy and practice.



D Trends and recommendations

Section D outlines tendencies of city reports based on recurring topics or areas of specific interest. For the 2025 evaluation, these are issues and trends related to democracy and extremism.

D1 Democracy

Democracy is addressed in the city reports as core system that has to be strengthened by participatory initiatives and actions fostering inclusion. Cities commit themselves to promote equality and social well-being and to defend the democratic values of the republics in which they are located.

More concretely, democracy is addressed at the local level by setting up means for **participation through city councils and advisory bodies**. (Saint Etienne). Affected and committed citizens are taken seriously and actively involved in decision-making processes. Last but not least, the involvement of as many different actors as possible should ensure the binding nature and transparency of municipal anti-discrimination work, thus enabling the strengthening of local democracy and participation (Karlsruhe).

Secondly, democracy is addressed by means of **awareness raising for democratic values**, equality and participation. Such awareness raising addresses the city administration, promoting equal access to public services and governance. Awareness raising initiatives are implemented in actions like the “Democracy Day” in Dortmund, whereby the city organises an all-day event for up to 300 trainees. Close coordination with the Human Resources and Organization Office ensures that Democracy Day is firmly integrated into the introductory week and that all organizational interfaces are taken into account. The involvement of civil society partners enables practical, authentic communication of the content and at the same time relieves the administrative burden on personnel. The city of Dortmund has established the Democracy Day as an integral part of training within the City of Dortmund. Third, **commitment of various actors to democracy is strengthened** by initiatives, such as an „Alliance for Living Together in Diversity“, as applied by the city of Mannheim with 377 signatories by several city institutions and diversity officers. In the framework of the Alliance, newsletters and events on the topic diversity were implemented. The partners of the Mannheim Alliance for Living Together in Diversity have strengthened their commitment to democracy and diversity and have expanded their institutional diversity competencies.

Moreover, city reports refer more generally to democracy that has to be strengthened and protected against increasing tendencies of scepticism to anti-democracy, associated with conspiracy theories and fake news. Various overlapping crises (economic crises, war, etc.) foster uncertainty among people and exacerbate irritability and a hardening of attitudes, endangering democratic discourses and substantial debates.

Trust in the state and politics is weakened. The risk of exclusion and discrimination for vulnerable groups increases. In this context, ECCAR cities aim at strengthening the democratic values of respect, openness, and solidarity. In addition, city reports explicitly refer to raising right-wing extremist parties and groups, which are undermining democracies. Against this background, strengthening the networks that advocate for democracy and marginalized groups is seen as of particular importance.



D2 Extremism

The topic extremism appears in the city reports in relation to ideological, nationalist right-wing extremism, and in the framework of needs for actions, as reported in L2. More concretely, societal challenges, which call for action against racism, are related to extremism, such as: extremist political campaigns and hate speech, rise of right-wing extremism, extremism leading to polarisation and violence, extremist violence and radicalisation, radicalisation narratives and extremist mobilisation. However, this is mainly apparent in city reports from Germany and it is mainly connected to the Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland, AfD*) in Germany and the growing attractiveness of exclusionary and extremist worldviews, expressed increasingly in group-focused xenophobia and other forms of hatred and violence (especially on social media).

Cities also refer to meetings of right-wing extremist actors, discussing „remigration plans“, which triggers public protests and other local responses. References to extremism were mainly made in city reports from Germany (Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Aachen, Mannheim, Jena). These city reports and actions relate directly to **extremism**, as many of challenges and their reported actions are triggered by, linked to, or designed to *counter extremism and its effects on equality*.

To sum up, **extremism is clearly referenced in city reports from Germany**, specifically in terms of right-wing extremism, democratic erosion, and extremist worldviews fostering hate and violence. The city actions connect to **extremism** in four explicit ways:

Connection to extremism	Description	Examples
■ Direct triggers	Extremist election campaigns, extremist party rise, extremist conspiracy plans, or extremist terror.	Graz (election campaigns), Jena (AfD rise), Potsdam ("remigration" plans), Halle (attack leading to Düsseldorf's plan).
■ Radicalization processes	Extremism fosters alienation, mistrust, conspiracy thinking, antisemitism, and anti-Muslim hatred.	Mannheim, Wrocław
■ Violent consequences	Extremist campaigns and ideologies translate into racist attacks, threats, and real extremist violence.	Halle (attack), Mannheim (knife attack)
■ Preventive response	Campaigns, integration concepts, democracy education, and anti-racism actions as direct counters to extremist propaganda and linked violence.	General/various contexts

25 Extremism references in city reports.



Extremism is identified as the *root driver of discrimination, polarization, and racist violence* that equality actions aim to prevent or mitigate.

D.3 Recommendations

The following **recommendations** for member cities of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism, that directly address urban realities and typical resource limitations, can be summarised based on the reports.

1. Start small and scale strategically

Pilot initiatives in selected neighbourhoods or with well-engaged stakeholder groups are recommended before city-wide rollout. This enables manageable evaluation, learning, and adaptation. Resort to existing community events, municipal communications, or established local networks to introduce anti-racism messaging. This saves resources and creates a greater reach.

2. Leverage existing structures and partnerships

Embed anti-racism actions into existing municipal services, schools, libraries, and cultural programs rather than creating parallel structures. Form partnerships with local NGOs and migrant organizations to share resources and expertise.

3. Prioritize realistic, measurable goals

Focus on a small number of clearly defined, achievable objectives (e.g., improving complaint mechanisms, training staff, updating outreach materials). Use practical targets: increase reporting channels, organize annual educational workshops, or publish regular updates on city progress.

4. Ensure meaningful community participation

Hold regular open forums with affected groups—not just formal consultations—to ensure their lived experiences inform your priorities and let identify needed policy changes. Involve youth, women, and diverse racialized groups in advisory structures and program design.

5. Put policies on different financial footing

Seek co-financing from regional, national, or EU grants, and supplement with municipal budgets or local donations. Invest in training and empowerment for city staff and partners to reduce dependency on external consultants.

6. Use data wisely, do not overburden

Build on simple, accessible monitoring tools such as annual surveys, community reporting, and open feedback lines. Publish results in plain language and ensure transparency, but avoid complex, resource-heavy measurement schemes – particularly if capacity is limited and evidence is needed in short notice.

7. Communicate regularly and locally

Use local radio, podcasts, social media, schools, and faith groups for anti-racism campaigns, tailored to city demographics and language specifics. Share authentic stories, highlight successful interventions, and celebrate diversity visibly in public spaces and events.



8. Mainstreaming and establishing a perspective critical of racism

Integrate anti-racism into routine urban initiatives: procurement policies, staff training, urban planning guidance. Assign clear responsibility for anti-racism at a senior municipal level, and ensure regular cross-departmental meetings to coordinate efforts.

9. Be pragmatic about challenges

Recognize limits, such as rent price constraints, mixed capacity, and possible backlash; plan for gradual achievement and incremental improvement. “Best is sometimes the enemy of good”: begin with what is achievable rather than waiting for ideal conditions.

10. Evidence gaps to be prioritised filling

Based on the comprehensive information from the city reports, the following evidence gaps are most impactful to prioritize when doing data monitoring:

- **Impact evaluation and effectiveness:** More systematic and comparative data on the actual outcomes and effectiveness of various anti-racism interventions is needed, including long-term social impact, behavioural change, and shifts in discrimination patterns.
- **Inclusive stakeholder engagement processes:** Detailed evidence on how marginalized groups, particularly those hardest to reach, are meaningfully engaged and empowered in decision-making throughout the anti-racism actions.
- **Sustainability and institutionalization:** Case studies and metrics on how anti-racism initiatives are embedded within municipal systems, ensuring longevity beyond initial project funding and political cycles.
- **Resource allocation and cost-effectiveness:** Data on financial investment relative to outputs/results, helping cities to prioritize resource allocation for maximum impact.
- **Context-specific adaptations:** Evidence capturing how local context (cultural, political, demographic) shapes adaptations and innovations in anti-racism strategies, to support transferability and tailored replication.

Filling these gaps will provide stronger empirical foundations to optimize urban anti-racism actions, build transferable knowledge, and secure political and public support for sustained change.



E Conclusion

The global evaluation of city reports submitted in 2025 to the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR), compiled by the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (ETC Graz), provides a comprehensive look into the efforts, challenges, and successes of cities in combating racism and discrimination. This evaluation included 36 member cities and 66 Action reports, noting an increase in smaller reporting cities compared to 2024. The main findings from this evaluation are summarized in the following sections.

E.1 Growing Challenges: An increase in racist movements and undetected discrimination

A critical finding is the significant increase in racist movements within the population. While 7 out of 33 cities reported this in 2024, the number rose to 31 out of 36 reporting cities in 2025. Anti-Muslim racism, often linked to the reception of refugees since 2014/15, is highlighted as a current challenge, manifesting in verbal hostility in public spaces and discriminatory behaviour in public authorities.

A significant obstacle is the lack of awareness of racism and insufficient knowledge about structural and institutional racism within the majority society but also within local authorities, which can lead to the denial of racist discrimination.

Despite their limited legal competence, 20 out of 36 cities have adopted norms and rules to prevent racial discrimination, such as in public procurement.

E.2 Achievements: Diverse actions across key policy areas

Cities reported on their actions against racism, structured according to ECCAR's 10-Point Plan of Action (10 PPA).

Key achievements include the establishment of dedicated anti-discrimination offices and programs, the promotion of participation and community empowerment, and comprehensive educational and awareness-raising programs.

"Softer" measures such as information provision and awareness raising, along with promoting cultural diversity, remain the most frequently applied actions, each mentioned 34 times. There has been an increased focus on addressing ECCAR concerns in the housing policy area, rising from 10 mentions in 2024 to 17 in 2025.

E.3 ECCAR Membership: Driving values and concrete needs

For most cities, which have reported in 2025 (but also the years before), joining ECCAR is a value-based decision, deeply rooted in their self-understanding and democratic responsibility. The ECCAR membership however also serves cities in addressing (ethnic) diversity challenges. Cities' primary expectations from ECCAR membership are learning from and exchanging with other cities. The perceived relevance of being part of the UNESCO network has increased in 2025 compared to last years' reports.

Cities expressed specific needs for support in areas such as effective data collection and analysis, implementing anti-racism measures, structurally embedding anti-racism work within municipal governance, and promoting awareness and inclusion. Demands for capacity building



regarding intersectional discrimination approaches and the meaningful involvement of affected groups are particularly notable.

E.4 Implementation: Systemic barriers and pragmatism

Challenges during the **concept phase** of actions against racism often involve city-internal concerns (increased workload, legal uncertainty), complexity in civil society cooperation (conflicting interests), and resistance in political priority-setting. Solutions include transparent communication, legal reassurance, strong leadership, and robust civil society partnerships. During **implementation**, systemic discrimination processes, which are often invisible and difficult to trace, as well as inadequate leadership and institutional infrastructures, notably hinder progress.

Key success factors emphasize strong political will and institutional commitment, comprehensive and transparent planning, broad stakeholder engagement, effective communication, capacity building, and a long-term perspective. **Sustainability** is fostered by anchoring actions in city structures, securing resources, structured partnerships, empowerment, and adaptability.

E.5 Strengthening Democracy, Countering Extremism

An overarching trend is the aim of **strengthening of democracy** at the local level through participatory initiatives. Cities' aim at defending democratic values amidst rising scepticism, conspiracy theories, and fake news. **Extremism**, particularly right-wing extremism, is identified by particularly German cities as a core driver of discrimination and polarization. Urban measures aim to counter extremist campaigns, "remigration plans," and violence.

Recommendations for member cities include **starting small and scaling strategically**, leveraging existing structures and partnerships, prioritizing realistic and measurable goals, ensuring meaningful community participation, diversifying financial footing, using data wisely, communicating regularly and locally, mainstreaming anti-racism, and being pragmatic about challenges.

Existing **evidence gaps** to prioritize include systematic impact evaluation, deep engagement of marginalized groups, detailed monitoring of data on sustainability and institutionalization, resource allocation and cost-effectiveness, and context-specific adaptations of strategies.

The evaluation clearly indicates that cities are playing a vital role in the fight against racism, constantly evolving their strategies, learning from each other, and actively working towards more inclusive, equitable, and democratic urban societies. ECCAR serves as an indispensable platform for this collective endeavour.

