

Cities for Equality

—
Mainstreaming
Equality at the
Local Level



VLADA REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE
Ured za udruge



CITIES FOR EQUALITY

The manual *Cities for Equality – Mainstreaming Equality at the Local Level* has been developed and published in the context of the project Cities4Equality – Improved Protection from Discrimination at the Local Level through Diversity and Equality Management, financed by the European Union through the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014 – 2020), co-financed by the Office for Collaboration with NGOs of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and implemented by the Croatian Law Centre and Association of Cities in the Republic of Croatia.

The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of the authors, i.e. the Croatian Law Centre and the Association of Cities in the Republic of Croatia. The European Commission and the Office for Collaboration with NGOs of the Government of the Republic of Croatia are not in any way responsible for how the information contained in this publication is used.

This publication is not for sale and is distributed free of charge.



Copyright ©2019

Croatian Law Centre and
Association of Cities in the Republic of Croatia
(all rights reserved)

Publisher:

Croatian Law Centre (CLC),
Zagreb, Hebrangova 21.

For the Publisher:

Goranka Lalić Novak

Editor:

Heidi Eterović

Language editing and proofreading:

Davies d.o.o.

Design and layout:

Vjeko Sumić

ISBN 978-953-6635-12-2

Croatian Law Centre and
Association of Cities in the Republic of Croatia

Cities for Equality

Mainstreaming Equality at the Local Level

Manual prepared by Heidi Eterović,
with Marko Ercegović and Tijana
Vukojičić Tomić

Foreword

Following a lengthy period of relative disregard, the issue of equality seems to have come into focus once again, as international experiences demonstrate that inequality impairs social cohesion and society's ability to achieve its goals and aspirations. As citizens exercise most of their rights and opportunities in their local communities, precisely where they live and work, it is here that equality issues tend to be the most visible.

When we talk about equality, we are in fact saying that everybody should have the same opportunities, and that nobody should be treated less favourably than anybody else because of some characteristic they have. The legally defined prohibition of discrimination¹ is just the crucial first step. Advanced societies and healthy communities are characterized by their attempts to empower people to use their potentials fully and to improve their lives on an equal footing with all other members of the community. Cities may contribute to these attempts primarily by making sure that they do not exclude any group of people while carrying out their public functions, and that they help everyone access and exercise their human rights and civil liberties instead.

The research carried out within the framework of the Cities4Equality Project, financed by the EU through the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, co-financed by the Office for Collaboration with NGOs of the Government of Croatia, and implemented by the Croatian Law Centre and the Association of Cities in the Republic of Croatia, demonstrates that Croatian cities mostly recognize the need to be engaged in initiatives aimed at improving equality among the citizens. This is apparent from the fact that a large number of cities, despite limited resources

1 · Anti-discrimination Act (*Narodne novine* 85/2008 and 112/2012): "Article 1. (1) This Act provides for the protection and promotion of equality as the highest value of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia, creates prerequisites for the realisation of equal opportunities and regulates protection against discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic affiliation or colour, gender, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin, property, trade union membership, education, social status, marital or family status, age, health condition, disability, genetic heritage, native identity, expression or sexual orientation."

and competences, carry out programmes to improve the position of individuals and groups deemed to be in a disadvantaged position socially and economically.

In the context of the present manual, our intention was to recognize advanced practices among Croatian cities, and to view them in the context of international and domestic developments where cities assume increasingly larger roles and responsibilities for ensuring the respect, protection and promotion of human rights within their entire scope of influence. We particularly aimed to emphasize the importance of mainstreaming equality into city management and administration processes, and citizen engagement in decision making at the local level, in line with the tenets of good governance. We believe that such an approach enables cities to achieve real and sustainable positive effects in the area of equality and in the more efficient use of the limited resources at their disposal.

The manual consists of three main sections. In the first section, the role of the city as the agent of democratic governance is highlighted. Attention is given to the methods the city can adopt to take a leadership role and declare equality as a policy priority. The importance and benefits of doing so are also considered. The second section reviews the impact of the city's equality policies and mainstreaming of equality concerns in the framework of the city's function as service provider and employer. The third part refers to citizen engagement in the process of the development of equality measures and policies, in decision making, and in implementation, and considers some of the methods that can be used to that end.

We hope that the present manual will encourage Croatian cities to improve their current equality performance in collaboration with citizens and other stakeholders and become better places to live. If they do so, they will join a growing number of cities and their networks in Europe and elsewhere that are learning from each other and collaborating to define the role and possibilities of city agency in this area.

We also hope that the Cities4Equality Index will be of further assistance to Croatian cities to this end, as it will provide them with an opportunity to assess their own performance and compare it with that of their peers. It will help them to improve the visibility of their collective efforts and achievements, and of equality itself as the highest value of the constitutional order.

Heidi Eterović

Contents

I. Taking the lead, declaring intent, and building partnerships · 1

1. The role of a city · 3
2. What are the benefits? · 5
3. What do research and international practice indicate? · 8
4. Setting up the process · 12
5. Communicating on what you have achieved · 14
6. Defining and measuring success · 15

II. Incorporating equality issues into the management of the city · 19

1. Functions of the city and areas of potential action against inequality · 21
2. Knowledge of the local community as the foundation of public policy · 22
 - 2.1. The importance of objective data · 22
 - 2.2. Setting up the process · 25
 - 2.3. Defining and measuring success · 26
3. Responsive and accessible public services · 27
 - 3.1. Improved accessibility of public services · 27
 - 3.2. Defining priorities and planning service delivery · 33
 - 3.3. Conduct towards citizens · 37
 - 3.4. Setting up the process · 38
 - 3.5. Defining and measuring success · 39
4. Competent and motivated staff · 41
 - 4.1. The city's treatment of its employees · 41
 - 4.2. Setting up the process · 44
 - 4.3. Defining and measuring success · 45

III. Engaging the citizens to advance equality · 47

1. Citizen participation · 49
2. Advantages of citizen engagement · 56
3. Further modalities of citizen engagement · 57
4. Elements of successful engagement initiatives · 59
5. Setting up the process · 62
6. Defining and measuring success · 63

Appendix · 65

1. Cities4Equality Index: Self-assessment Questionnaire · 65
2. Council of Europe 12 Principles of Good Governance · 69

Acknowledgments

Many deserve credit for the content of the present publication, primarily the cities that have recognized the importance of equality and have developed corresponding practices to advance it to the benefit of citizens.

The sections of the manual were reviewed to better correspond to the conditions and practices of city governance, as follows:

- The first section was reviewed by: **Mirjana Galant**, Deputy Mayor of the City of Pazin; **Ante Galić**, Head of the Secretariat of the City of Šibenik; **Hrvoje Kovač**, Deputy Mayor of the City of Lepoglava.
- The second section was reviewed by: **Helena Masarić**, Head of the Office of the City of Opatija; **Marselo Mitrović Marić**, Secretary of the City of Vodice; **Miljenka Radović**, Head of the Department for Administration and Social Services of the City of Prelog.
- The third section was reviewed by: **Alisa Aliti Vlašić**, Senior Advisor at Dubrovnik Development Agency; **Morana Müller Gradečak**, Senior Expert for EU Project Development and Implementation, City of Bjelovar; **Marijana Žižić**, Head of the Department of Economy, Environment, and EU Funding of the City of Solin.

We would also like to acknowledge the generously shared knowledge and advice from numerous colleagues and experts, listed here in alphabetical order:

Shams Asadi (City of Vienna, AT); **Niall Crowley** (Values Lab, IE); **Mirela Despotović** (Centre for Civil Initiatives); **Dana Dobrić Jambrović** (Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka); **Geraldine Guille** (EU Fundamental Rights Agency); **Anka Kekez Koštro** (Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb); **Višnja Ljubičić** (Ombudsperson for Gender Equality); **Paula Raužan** (Local Democracy Agency Sisak); **Anka Slonjšak** (Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities); **Nevija Srdoč** (City of Pazin); **Tena Šimonović Einwalter** (Office of People's Ombudsman); **Daniela Širinić** (Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb); **Tamara Šterk** (Office for Gender Equality, Government of Croatia); **Herman van den Bosch** (Open University, NL).

Chapter I

Taking the lead, declaring intent,
and building partnerships

1. The role of a city

The obligations of cities to achieve equality stem from the Constitution, law, and other instruments of public policy, such as strategies and action plans. In the narrow sense, cities have the obligation to observe all the prescribed provisions and measures. In the Croatian context, the role of cities has seldom been viewed beyond that of the executor of centrally defined public policies.

However, cities represent complex social institutions with a wide array of functions: they regulate social relations in local communities, ensure access to public goods and services, and employ a significant number of people. Within this framework, they have an impact on the ability of citizens to enjoy equal opportunities in both positive and negative ways.



United Kingdom – public sector equality duty

The UK's Equality Act (2010) is based on the premise that the protected characteristic of individuals affects their ability to access and use public goods and services, and obligates public sector entities to demonstrate due regard to the public sector equality duty to:

- *eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the act;*
- *advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;*
- *foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

To help local government units in implementing this legal obligation, the Equality Framework for Local Government² was developed. It contains guidelines for implementation and a self-assessment tool that may be used by local government units to evaluate and improve their own performance in the area of equality in collaboration with local partners, including citizens themselves.

2 · Local Government Association, "Equality Framework for Local Government", <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/equality-frameworks/equality-framework-local-government>. This and all other net-based sources cited in the publication were accessed on 2 April 2019.

Over the last decade, the role of cities in promoting equality has been increasingly recognized for multiple reasons. First, the idea has increasingly been taking hold that human rights and equality are in fact made real in the places where people carry out their everyday life – in their local communities. Second, cities, especially large ones, are becoming more and more ambitious in managing processes that fall within their sphere of influence, and in defining their priorities in line with the needs of the cities' residents. Finally, there is growing understanding of the negative impact of inequality on society as a whole.



World Economic Forum and inequality

The World Economic Forum (WEF) publishes the yearly Global Risks Report, compiled on the basis of consultations with some seven hundred experts from various fields. The Report covers the foremost social, economic, and political challenges the world is facing.

The 2017³ Report recognized growing inequality and social polarization as two of the three most prominent sources of risk in the world. The increasing frustration of citizens and their diminishing trust in politicians and political institutions affected the outcomes of a large number of electoral processes, and increased the likelihood that citizens' disappointment with politics would diminish prospects for objective decision making at national levels, and for collaboration at the global level. Inequality, especially inequality and lack of social justice at the national level, was ranked as the third most prominent source of global risk in 2018.

The body of practice related to cities' efforts to promote equality is evolving, and there does not seem to be a widely accepted model or standard for their performance in this area. Some cities have taken a broader view of their role, and declared themselves cities for human rights, such as Graz and Vienna (Austria), Barcelona (Spain), Utrecht and Middelburg (The Netherlands), and York (United Kingdom). The common features of the approach taken by cities with the most advanced practices seem to be the following:

3 · World Economic Forum, "The Risks That Just Won't Die", <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/02/global-risks-report-2017/>.

- The elected officials made a deliberate decision to advance equality, and make it a political priority;
- Partnerships and dialogue with citizens, civil society, and other actors are developed for the purpose of identifying local priorities and solutions;
- Equality concerns are incorporated into decision making and management processes in the city.

Strategic leadership, both political and executive, is key for developing a comprehensive vision of a city dedicated to equality. To incorporate equality into city policies and plans, and to ensure systematic and coordinated action across all strands of city business, elected officials, the mayor and council members have to take the leading role.

They are also the ones who are in a position to ensure the allocation of city resources for this purpose, the knowledge and information needed for the implementation of such public policy, and effective communication with all relevant audiences.

For equality-centred public policy to succeed, strategic partnerships with all local stakeholders are indispensable: from public services, city-owned companies and services, to employers, trade unions, and civil society organizations. In order to improve the position of different groups in the community, all data, human and other resources, and joint planning need to be used.

Due to their inherent characteristics, cities are the natural leaders of this process. They are also well placed to establish vertical collaboration on these issues with regional and national authorities for the purpose of aligning multi-level public policies and mobilizing additional resources that may be used to deal with related local equality issues.

2. What are the benefits?

Cities where the political leadership is committed to advancing equality are often seen as a more attractive employer and as a better place for doing business. They are also characterized by increased trust among citizens, and between citizens and local authorities.

Some cities also leverage human rights and an equality-based approach to tackling proactively issues that may represent long-term challenges to their development and functioning.



Vienna - monitoring integration and diversity

In the decade between 2007 and 2017, the population of Vienna increased by 12%. A full 35% of the population of Vienna were born in countries other than Austria, and 29% are foreign citizens. These numbers prompted decision makers and executive authorities to pay particular attention to issues related to the integration of foreigners in order not only to secure the appropriate supply of services, but also to ensure the long-term social cohesion and wellbeing of all the citizens of Vienna.

Since 2007, the City of Vienna has been systematically monitoring all events and trends related to integration in the areas of political participation, education, employment, social protection, housing, and neighbourly relations. The political and administrative measures taken by the city to address the various needs of the city's population are monitored systematically. Every two to three years, the results are published in the Vienna Integration and Diversity Monitor.⁴ This approach to the integration of foreigners has contributed significantly to Vienna's consistent position among the best places to live on the global scale.

4 · City of Vienna, "Integration and Diversity Monitoring in Vienna – Facts and Figures", <https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/facts-figures/monitoring.html>



Rijeka – Civic Education

The City of Rijeka piloted the elementary school curriculum of Civic Education⁵ in 2016/17, which is now available in almost all elementary schools in Rijeka. This measure was taken in response to national studies showing that young people were not sufficiently involved in the community and were poorly informed about political matters. Data at the city level indicated the same trend. Consequently, a Civic Education initiative was designed by the city government to address this issue.

The city coordinated the introduction of the curriculum, and secured the resources needed for its implementation. The first phase of the project included curriculum development and the development of training materials, and involved representatives of schools, of the university, civil society, and local government, but also experts with outstanding records in area of Civic Education. It should be noted that participation and all the materials are made available for free, and that Italian language variants were also produced for use in that language in four schools.

In the first year of rollout, the curriculum was piloted in six schools as an elective activity. Nowadays, it is available to all students from the fifth to the eighth form. The evaluation of the pilot year demonstrated that the students who attended the course had an attitude twice as favourable towards electoral participation and were twice as likely to discuss politics with adults and peers, and that they also significantly improved their knowledge of consumer rights and management of personal finances. The participating students gave very high marks to the programme, and recommended its extension.

Following this example, eleven other local/regional government units also introduced a civic education curriculum: the cities of Sisak, Pula, Rovinj, Poreč, Pazin, Umag, Labin, Opatija, and Osijek, as well as the counties of Istra and Primorje-Gorski Kotar, with plans to introduce the programme in the cities of Čakovec and Lepoglava. The City of Rijeka emphasizes the value of the programme for community development, and offers free consultations to cities which intend to introduce the programme.

5 · Grad Rijeka, “Građanski odgoj i obrazovanje” [Civics Education], <https://www.rijeka.hr teme-za-gradane/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/osnovne-skole/programi-i-projekti-u-osnovnim-skolama/gradanski-odgoj-obrazovanje/>

Regardless of the city's size, resources, competences in regulating local life, and all other circumstances that may affect its ability to design and implement public policy in this area, there seem to be direct benefits for cities in which the city government makes efforts to ensure equal access to public goods and services, the transparent and equitable distribution of public resources, assistance in achieving equal rights for individuals and groups in vulnerable positions, and where citizens have the opportunity to influence decision making on local priorities in this area.

It should also be noted that, as demonstrated clearly in the private sector, employees are better motivated and more efficient when they perceive their work as meaningful, and when they view the organization they work for as a positive force in the community. People feel a strong connection with their local communities, and wish to take pride in their own contribution while working for the city.

In brief, more motivated employees, more satisfied citizens, and improved social cohesion in the city are the three most important advantages achieved through an affirmative approach to equality. Enhanced collaboration among stakeholders may be instrumental in finding novel solutions to key problems in the city, and lead to new opportunities for growth in the long run. In Croatia, these advantages seem even more important in the light of the worrying trends of migration and depopulation.

3. What do research and international practice indicate?

In the context of the Cities 4 Equality Project, a review of secondary sources of information on the obligations of cities in the area of equality was carried out in 2018.⁶ Twenty-two regulatory documents (laws, protocols, and mandatory instructions) and thirteen public policy documents (strategies, programmes, action plans) were reviewed, and gave reason to conclude that currently little attention is given there to the role of cities in the area of equality. It may generally be observed that the roles and mandates of local government units seem to be poorly defined and that the roles and mandates of different levels of governance, as well as their vertical integration, are not systematically differentiated. Local government units seem to be viewed primarily as executors of national-level regulation and strategies, and their real and potential

6 · Croatian Law Centre, *Cities 4 Equality: The prescribed role and obligations of Croatian cities and towns in the area of equality - Summary of desk research results*, <https://www.hpc.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Equality-mandates-of-cities-in-the-RoC-desk-research-summary.pdf>

role in promoting equality and human rights within their comprehensive spheres of influence remains largely unnoticed.

Next, a survey of Croatian cities was carried out to investigate their current practices in the area of equality and regarding the priorities they had set themselves in this respect.⁷ Out of a total of 128 cities in Croatia, 56 responded, bringing a response rate of 44%.⁸

The responses seem to indicate that, despite the fact that public policies do not envisage a large role for cities in the area of equality, the cities themselves have invariably developed their own projects and programmes aimed at improving the position of various groups in the community, and seem to have invested significant resources therein. This indicates that both within city leadership and among citizens it is recognized that cities should be involved in promoting equality within their sphere of influence, and it is also expected for cities to be active in this respect.

The results of the survey also show that there is significant room to improve how local priorities are determined, how equality issues are managed in the cities, and the extent to which equality concerns are integrated into the working of a city. These improvements would be instrumental in achieving the already mentioned benefits, including the citizens' perception of the city as a desirable place in which to live and do business, the advancement of the city's capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts among individuals and groups residing in it, and the strengthening of the social capital of the city.

It has already been said that international practice in this area is only just being developed, and that there are a number of collaborative platforms where cities are trying to better define their role and find optimal ways to deal with individual equality issues or their broadly viewed mandates in the area of human rights. Some of the examples are:

7 · Croatian Law Centre, *Cities 4 Equality: The principal results of the survey on the existing equality practices of Croatian cities and towns*, <http://www.hpc.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Equality-policies-and-practices-of-cities-in-the-RoC-survey-results.pdf>

8 · The participating cities were: Beli Manastir, Benkovac, Biograd na Moru, Buje, Crikvenica, Čakovec, Čazma, Daruvar, Delnice, Donja Stubica, Donji Miholjac, Drniš, Dubrovnik, Duga Resa, Dugo Selo, Đurđevac, Gospić, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Ilok, Imotski, Ivanec, Kastav, Kaštel, Komiža, Korčula, Krapina, Kutina, Ludbreg, Mursko Središće, Novi Marof, Novi Vinodolski, Opatija, Orahovica, Osijek, Otok, Pakrac, Pazin, Popovača, Požega, Prelog, Pula, Rab, Rijeka, Senj, Solin, Šibenik, Varaždin, Vinkovci, Virovitica, Vodice, Vrbovsko, Vrljika, Zabok, Zagreb, Zlatar, Županja.

- The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) promotes multi-level governance in the area of human rights, i.e. a clear division of responsibilities and vertically integrated action in this area,⁹ and has published guidelines and a collection of best practice examples under the title “Joining-up Fundamental Rights”. In collaboration with the European Committee of the Regions, FRA also published “Making Rights Real” in 2014, a guide for local and regional authorities on respecting, protecting and promoting fundamental rights.¹⁰ The FRA coordinates dialogue and collaboration among European Human Rights Cities. At the Fundamental Rights Forum held in September 2018, the FRA recognized the issue of local action to guarantee fundamental rights as one of the main tenets of future EU efforts in this overall area.
- The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) established the European Charter for the Equality of Women and Men in Local Life in 2006.¹¹ The Charter is a political document through which local and regional governments announce their intention to take on this goal, commit to continuous progress in this area in collaboration with local and regional stakeholders, and assume the obligation to publicly report on the results. In Croatia, fifteen counties and fourteen cities and municipalities are signatories of the Charter.
- The European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR),¹² acting under the auspices of UNESCO, connects cities that wish to improve their practices in eliminating all forms of racial discrimination. ECCAR developed a ten-point plan for cities that wish to commit to this goal, and published a manual to help implementation (ECCAR 10 Points Action Plan; Toolkit for Equality; City Policies against Racism).
- The Council of Europe has been implementing a programme entitled Intercultural Cities: Governance and Policies for Diverse Communities.¹³ In the context of this programme, an index of intercultural cities has been developed, along with a benchmarking tool that allows a city's performance to be compared against existing best practice. The aim

9 · European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, “Joining up Fundamental Rights: Toolkit for Local, Regional and National Public Officials”, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>.

10 · European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Making Rights Real: A Guide for Local and Regional Authorities*, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-cor-making_rights_real-booklet_en.pdf

11 · Observatory of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, <http://www.charter-equality.eu/>

12 · European Coalition of Cities against Racism, “The ECCAR Toolkit for Equality”, <https://www.eccar.info/en/eccar-toolkit-equality>

13 · Council of Europe, “Intercultural Cities Programme”, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/home>

of the programme is to help cities develop strategies and tools to deal with issues related to diverse populations and potential cultural clashes, with a view to successful interaction among social groups, and improved social cohesion.



SALAR – Principles of engagement

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) entered into an agreement with the Government of Sweden in 2014 with the purpose of enhancing the activities directed at the promotion of human rights in local and regional government units in the country. In order to come to full, practical, and specific understanding of the meaning of human rights in the Swedish local and regional context, SALAR commissioned a comprehensive programme of consultations with cities and regions, as well as with representatives of the academic community and the civil sector, which was carried out by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.¹ Based on the results of the consultation, a platform for the development of public policies and operative arrangements for local and regional authorities has been developed. This platform defines the characteristics that cities need to have in order to be considered Human Rights Cities, sets the guidelines for systematic work in this area, and gives an indication of what cities may consider doing in the context of their roles as a social and political actor, as a provider of social and public services, and as an employer. The platform is consistent with all the principal international human rights documents and initiatives, including the United Nations' human-rights-based approach, which is founded on six fundamental principles:

1. Non-discrimination and equality – *no one may be treated worse than anyone else, or be subjected to rules and criteria that make it more difficult for one group, if these requirements are not relevant to the performance of a task. It is also important to remember that different groups are not homogeneous, but are made up of distinguishable individuals.*



14 · Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, *Human Rights at the Local and Regional Level: A Platform for Policy and Operational Development* (Stockholm: SALAR, 2017), <https://skl.se/download/18.177cc30c15e0311b6411f947/1503403517094/HR-platform-english-webb-SKL.pdf>



2. Participation and inclusion – the methods utilized in work must guarantee that all individuals/groups with legitimate interests are included. Participation makes it possible for individuals and groups particularly affected by these activities to take part in and influence the outcomes.

3. Transparency and responsibility – in order to know whether, and how, public authorities work on guaranteeing human rights, there is a need for transparency in policy-making and decision-making processes. The competences and responsibilities of all decision makers and executives need to be well defined and made publicly known in order for the rights holders to be able to monitor whether they carry out their duties properly.

4. Setting up the process

The set of equality-related actions of a city are by necessity specific to their own circumstances, and depend on a number of different factors: the existing programmes and priorities, the understanding, ambitions, and priorities of the leaders and political groupings in the city on the existing level of partnership and collaboration, on the influence and capacities of stakeholders, on the size and complexity of city administration, on available resources, the expectations of citizens and the seriousness of the problems facing the city, and on many other things defining the local context. For this reason, only general suggestions for setting up the process are listed here. Each city should flesh them out according to their own circumstances, and translate them into management systems that can be used to address these complex issues and challenges.

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies:

- Ensure active support from city leaders, from both the political and executive branch;
- Analyse the existing projects and programmes in the city, and their effects on equality;
- Discuss with the city council, administration, public sector entities, and other existing partners the current state of equality in the city, and their views on local priorities in this area;
- Develop a statement declaring your intentions and aspirations for equality outcomes within the sphere of influence of your city, and publicize it to internal and community stakeholders;
- Nominate a high-level individual as an equality focal point to lead this process and to report on equality issues to the city council;

- Check whether you have the necessary knowledge and information on relevant aspects of equality and human rights, and find out where you could get them;
- Set the goals and deadlines for the first year of your work, and define the roles and responsibilities of all involved.

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies:

- Define the ways in which equality concerns will be incorporated into the decision-making, planning, and budgetary processes in the city;
- Systematically engage stakeholders through consultative processes designed to set priorities and plan appropriate interventions, and then use the feedback to further develop your policies and goals;
- Provide training on equality issues to city employees and employees of city-owned companies and institutions and also on their role in ensuring equality;
- Set equality goals and the related monitoring systems for the city, and keep the public informed of your progress in this area;
- Share information on best practices with other cities and levels of governance, and advocate for their more active involvement and joint action in the area of equality.



United Nations' General Assembly Human Rights Council – Report on the Role of Local Government

The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee published a report entitled “The Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights” in 2015.¹⁵ The report defined the roles and obligations of local authorities within the context of the overall obligation of all public bodies to respect, protect, and promote human rights. This report also lists the most frequent problems encountered by local government in the process of protecting and promoting human rights, as follows:

- *Lack of political support;*
- *Poor institutional capacities and/or lack of funding;*
- *Lack of appropriate coordination between local and central government;*
- *Insufficient knowledge on what human rights are and the obligations that stem from them;*
- *Insufficient acknowledgment of the role and the potential of civil society organizations as representatives of marginalized groups.*

15 · United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights – Final Report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/2015_report_en_role_of_local_government_in_the_promotion_and_protection_of_human_rights.pdf

5. Communicating on what you have achieved

Consistent and credible communication on the efforts and results of the city in the area of equality is crucial for achieving the added advantages of such engagement. It helps:

- Build trust through openness and transparency;
- Encourage and implement change within the city and in the conduct of its leaders and employees;
- Provide the necessary information to all stakeholders;
- Build up the reputation of the city and its administration;
- Enlist support from stakeholders;
- Promote positive change in society as a whole;
- The city to become a favoured place in which to live and work.

In this, consistency in sending the same message through various means of communication of the city represents the principal test of credibility for city leaders. The annual reports by the mayor and annual budget proposals represent perhaps the most visible channels of communication for cities, as these documents contain crucial information on the cities' intentions, on the vision of the cities, and the fundamental values and principles of their government. Linking by means of these documents the cities' efforts in the area of equality indicates that there is in fact a systematic approach to equality-related issues, and not just a set of *ad hoc* activities.

The message on the importance and substance of the city's activities in the area of equality also needs to be sent systematically and consistently through other channels and means of communication. Equal attention must be given to internal communication aimed at enlisting the support of the city administration and employees of public companies for the equality-related programmes and initiatives, and to external communication in order to ensure the collaboration and partnership of stakeholders in the community.

The credibility of communication is crucial, especially in the light of the low level of public trust. Consequently, the objectivity of communication must be preserved, and exaggerated claims of achievements avoided, as they could otherwise leave the impression that equality-related actions serve only propaganda purposes. The communication should be factual, refer to real actions and results, and be consistent in conveying the message that these issues represent a long-term priority, and not just a short-term project.

For communication to be effective, the city should:

- Identify key target audiences, and give them priority in communication;
- Define key messages;
- Establish the appropriate communication channels with key audiences;
- Adapt the message and the method of reporting to the communication needs and habits of the target audience;
- Publish contact information relevant to all aspects of the programmes;
- Report on the long- and short-term results of programmes;
- Ensure that this communication evolves into true dialogue with key stakeholders, with a real flow of information and ideas in both directions.

6. Defining and measuring success¹⁶

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city leadership has assumed a public commitment to reduce inequality and discrimination, and improve relations in the community.

Check:

- Has this message been recognized and understood by the city administration and the local community?
- How have the city leaders demonstrated their commitment?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

The city is able to demonstrate that the decisions made on important issues in the city have incorporated aspects relevant to equality.

Check:

- How have the city leaders demonstrated their knowledge of local equality-related issues, and their own commitment to resolving these issues?
- What data and information were used in decision making?

16 · Adapted from: Local Government Association, *Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG): 2018 Version*, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/guidance%20-%20equality%20frameworks%20-%20Equality%20Framework%20For%20Local%20Government%20%28EFLG%29.pdf>

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

Decision makers understand what equality is and why it is important for the city. Partnership relations with civil society organizations and other stakeholders have been established for the purpose of identifying and taking into account local equality-related priorities.

Check:

- What are the documents that communicate the commitment of the city and its partners to equality?
- Are these priorities reflected in local planning?

Indicator:

The city has defined and publicized its goals in the area of equality.

Check:

- What sort of analysis and consultation process are these goals founded on?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

There is a consistent joint vision for equality in the city, based on jointly defined and understood priorities. The city is able to demonstrate successful collaboration with partners from the public, private and civil sectors.

Check:

- How do the city and its partners monitor, review, and evaluate their performance in relation to equality-related priorities?
- Do the results of such reviews influence the goals that the city has adopted?
- Are there measurable indicators of performance, i.e. of reduced inequalities or of an improved position of individuals and/or groups?

Indicator:

Specific and measurable equality-related goals are defined and incorporated into city strategies and action plans. The results of their implementation are regularly measured and monitored by competent city officials.

Check:

- How are the equality-related goals incorporated into strategies and plans?
- How is that process monitored and reviewed?
- How often?
- What is done if gaps and shortfalls are identified?
- How are the stakeholders and staff involved in this process?
- Is there any evidence of improved impact?

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

Equality-related goals are accompanied by specific performance indicators.

Check:

- Who are the decision makers for delivering this agenda?
- Who is in charge of monitoring and reporting?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

Structures are in place to guarantee the implementation and monitoring of equality-related goals.

Check:

- Is there a competent working group/committee/forum responsible for monitoring progress in the area of equality?
- Are there sufficient resources for equality work?

Indicator:

The city's communication activities convey the message that the city has assumed the commitment to advance equality in the local community.

Check:

- How does the city communicate its commitment to promoting equality?
- Is there evidence that the communication activities of the city reflect its commitment to equality?

Indicator:

Through consistent and effective communication, the city has gained a reputation as an equality champion with partners and the local community.

Check:

- How does the city promote the positive narrative around equality and good relations in the community?
- Are there examples where difficult events or decisions have been overcome due to the city's proven record in the area of equality?
- How is the city dealing with stereotypes?

Chapter II

Incorporating equality
issues into the management
of the city

1. Functions of the city and areas of potential action against inequality

In the previous chapter, the role of the city as the initiator and implementer of public policies and democratic decision-making at the local level was taken into consideration. In addition, there are two other broadly defined roles of the city which determine the impact it has on equality among citizens: the role of public service provider, and the role of employer.

Although cities, in the context of the public administration system, share most of the responsibilities for organizing and financing these functions with higher levels of governance, and enjoy only limited autonomy in defining relevant public policies¹⁷, they do in fact have a significant level of influence over the implementation of these regulations and policies in local communities. It should also be noted that the sphere of influence of a city is not limited to local government, but also extends to public/communal companies, and the institutions it establishes or has service delivery contracts with.

In addition to its legal competences, a city also has considerable convening power over all important organizations and institutions in the community, and the ability to foster collaboration among them. Taking all this into account, cities do have considerable capacities for effective action in the area of equality, and for dealing with equality-related issues.

The survey of cities in Croatia on their equality practices further indicates that cities do invariably develop various interventions of their own to resolve problems stemming from the unequal position of various groups in the community. Significant financial resources are being allocated to this end, which seems to show that: (a) cities do recognize and acknowledge their duty to promote equality; and (b) the local community has expectations for the city administration to act to this end.

The survey also shows that equality issues are mostly viewed in the light of assistance to individuals and groups in vulnerable or less privileged positions, and that interventions in this area may mostly be characterized as social transfers. However, the view that local administration has the obligation to create preconditions for the equality of all citizens and to enact measures to ensure equal opportunities that are incorporated into decision-making and management systems in a city is much less widespread.

One of the goals of this manual is to convey ideas and examples that illustrate the advantages of the effective management of equality issues in cities, within the overall framework of good governance.

17 · This statement refers to Croatia



Council of Europe – Principles of good governance

The Council of Europe adopted the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at the Local Level in 2009. Within this context, twelve principles of good governance that guarantee the responsible conduct of public business and management of public resources have also been defined.

The Council also established the Centre of Expertise, which has developed tools to aid local authorities in applying these principles, as well as the European Label of Governance Excellence (EloGE) which helps local governments evaluate and benchmark their performance.

The goals of the City4Equality Project are wholly in line with the content and intention of these principles which are listed in their entirety in Appendix 2. More details on the principles and on the tools for their introduction and implementation can be found at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/12-principles-and-elope>

Thorough knowledge of the local community, based on reliable data, represents the key precondition for successful management. These data allow for the accurate identification and analysis of issues and the development of effective and efficient interventions to address these issues.

2. Knowledge of the local community as the foundation of public policy

2.1. The importance of objective data

The leadership and staff in cities, particularly smaller ones, generally do have a relatively good insight into the situation in their respective local communities. However, without a systematic collection and analysis of equality data, there is a chance that decisions may end up being made on the basis of assumptions and habits, and not on the basis of facts.

Local administration needs a wide array of information, from quantitative to qualitative information, in order to be able to set reasonable goals, develop policy measures to achieve tangible results for targeted groups, and monitor progress in reaching the said goals and results. The quality set of information collected at the city level is key for:

- Good understanding of the composition of residents in terms of the protected characteristics they may have, as well as their other important features;
- The city's ability to recognize the key equality issues among citizens in terms of their different needs, priorities, challenges, and experiences;
- The city's ability to formulate priorities in the area of equality, the results that need to be achieved, and measures that may lead to these results;
- Measuring and monitoring progress in achieving the projected results and goals;
- Optimal planning of resources.



Equality analysis in the public sector

In the UK, when new public policy measures are to be introduced, but also in relation to the actions taken by public and private organizations and institutions, an equality analysis¹⁸ is often carried out. This analysis is designed to provide insight into the positive and negative impacts of the proposed measure on different groups of people, particularly those sharing certain protected characteristics.

Different bodies and organizations use different forms and protocols for this analysis. However, they all seem to share some common elements, as follows:

- A brief description of the proposed measure;
- A list of information sources used in the analysis (disclosing which data the decisions made by public authorities are based on is considered to be the obligation of the said authorities under transparency regulations);
- A description of the consultation process used in the course of the analysis;
- A brief description and estimate of the intensity of the impact of the proposed measure on each of the groups sharing protected characteristics according to anti-discrimination regulations;
- A list of mitigating measures to counteract the negative impacts of the proposed measure, or to increase its positive impact on equality;
- A description of the mechanism for monitoring the impact of the measure on relevant groups;
- A list of individuals responsible for the analysis and implementation of the measure.



18 · Primjer grada Wolverhamptona: City of Wolverhampton Council, „Equality Analysis“, <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/your-council/equalities-and-diversity/equality-analysis>.



In cases where the analysis indicates the risk of a large and negative impact on individual groups, more detailed equality impact assessments are often carried out.¹⁹

Our investigation has demonstrated a considerable gap in qualitative and quantitative data that could be used in the development and implementation of the equality policy and programmes at national, regional, and local levels. Consequently, identifying available sources of information that could provide an objective insight into important elements of a problem or situation would be a useful first step in developing a city's measure or policy directed at such a problem or situation.



Good practices in collecting equality data

The publication “Good Practices of Collecting (In)equality Data” offers a review of regulation in this area, a discussion of different aspects of data collection in equality-related public policies, and best practice examples from Finland, the United Kingdom, and Austria (Vienna). The publication was produced in the context of the project “Measuring (In)equality in the Republic of Croatia”, carried out by the Centre for Peace Studies (HR) and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute (AT), with EU funding.²⁰

19 · E.g. Haringey London, “Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA)”, <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-democracy/about-council/equalities/equality-impact-assessments-eqia>.

20 · Monika Mayrhofer, Good Practice of Collecting (In)Equality Data (Zagreb: Centar za mirovne studije, 2017) https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/107/Good_Practices_Of_Collecting_In_Equality_Data.pdf

2.2. *Setting up the process*

Cities, along with associated organizations and institutions, collect a large amount of different data for the purposes of managing their mandated business. Furthermore, cities (and other local and regional government units) have the obligation to report on the implementation of a wide array of national regulation and other instruments of public policy. Some of these are relevant to equality directly (e.g. strategies and action plans for countering discrimination, the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, the promotion of human rights, Roma, the elderly, young people, etc.). National statistical data (especially if they can be broken down so as to correspond with territorial divisions) and the data from Eurostat may also be useful, especially in comparing one's own performance with that of other cities, regions, or countries.

In addition to official sources of data, relevant information may also be found in different studies and reports from academics and/or civil society organizations. Representatives of public institutions, city/communal companies, and other organizations active in the city certainly have important insights, official and informal, into various aspects of equality issues that may be used in the process of developing and monitoring the implementation of public policy. Cross-sector collaboration will be addressed in more detail in the next chapter of this publication.

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies:

- Make an inventory of all sources and types of equality-related data that the city and associated organizations and institutions possess.
- Identify the equality data gaps that prevent you from effectively planning and monitoring your equality impacts. Consider alternative ways of acquiring the missing information, possibly in collaboration with community stakeholders.
- Collect and publish information on the current state of equality among citizens.
- Analyse the information you have collected: does it indicate a group of citizens, a public policy area, or a location that is particularly vulnerable to inequality?
- Use the collected information to improve the targeting of your public policy measures.

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies:

- Define the key equality indicators for the city.
- Set measurable goals in reference to the key areas/issues identified in the area of equality in the city.
- Appoint an appropriate individual from the administration or the

council to serve as a rapporteur on equality issues, with the obligation to report regularly on progress towards the set goals, based on the indicators.

- Use the results of the monitoring to improve the equality policy measures.
- Directly inform stakeholders, including citizens, on the results.
- Make agreements with community partners from the public and civil sectors on collaboration in collecting and sharing the information and data important for tracking equality issues within the community.

2.3. Defining and measuring success²¹

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city has collected and published information on the profile of the local community and on the scope of inequality within it. The city is developing a system for the collection of data on the local community, its needs and aspirations.

Check:

- Do you have a clear idea what sources of information (both local and national) are relevant and useful?
- Are you aware of what information is already being collected, including information collected by the city itself, public companies, partners, and civil society?
- Are you developing procedures for the use of different sets of data that are being collected?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

Appropriate information necessary to identify city-level policy priorities in the area of equality is being collected and published systematically. The city has established a mechanism for monitoring its performance in terms of equality goals, and uses the resulting information in planning and decision making.

Check:

- Can the data be disaggregated by location and by groups of citizens sharing certain protected characteristics?
- How did you define the gaps in equality, and how do you measure it?
- How do you intend to acquire the information you are currently missing?
- Have you appointed an individual responsible for data collection, for the management of the list of collected datasets, and for their analysis?

21 · Adapted from: Local Government Association, *Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG): 2018 Version*, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/guidance%20-%20equality%20frameworks%20-%20Equality%20Framework%20For%20Local%20Government%20%28EFLG%29.pdf>

- Have you established collaboration with partner organizations to avoid duplication?
- Could city officials and staff take a more active part in collecting equality data within the context of their regular activities?

- How often are data collected and analysed?
- How are they used in planning and decision making?
- Do they reflect the true information needs in the area of equality?
- Are they used to evaluate the success of the measures you implemented?
- Which indicators do you use to measure your performance?
- Do you give partners and the general public an insight into the collected data, analyses, and performance assessments related to the implementation of equality measures?

3. Responsive and accessible public services

3.1. Improved accessibility of public services

Public services delivered fully or partly by the city aim to fulfil various needs of groups of citizens and individuals within the community. The social and economic characteristics and the composition of the population are ever-changing. For this reason, those in charge of service delivery need an accurate insight into the situation in the city in order to be able to direct resources in the most efficient and effective way, including for the purpose of reducing inequalities in access to and in the use of public services. Best practice indicates that an affirmative approach, based on the anticipation of future needs and long-term planning, tends to produce the best outcomes.

Our study, carried out under the Cities4Equality project, indicates that cities, almost without exception, carry out programmes aimed at improving access to a wide array of public goods or services for persons and groups whose position is perceived as disadvantaged. These programmes are mostly based on either direct transfers or on waivers of payment for public services. Subsidies of education-related costs, housing, public transport, food, various types of care, and other similar services are quite widespread. Poverty is clearly viewed as the main dimension of inequality, as most measures seem to be directed at groups at risk that are at the same time seen as vulnerable to poverty.



Urban agenda for the EU – Poverty in cities

A full 70% of EU citizens already live in cities, and, according to the UN, this proportion will rise to 80% by 2050. For this reason, focus is increasingly being placed on the role of cities in delivering EU public policies. On the other hand, ways are also being considered for EU-level policies to be adapted to help resolve the issues and problems cities are encountering in an effort to deliver public goods and services to this large proportion of EU citizens.

The Pact of Amsterdam (2016)²² defines the Urban Agenda for the EU and puts forward the framework and principles of public policy on cities, along with a list of the most prominent topics. The document also describes the operative framework for collaboration, and the role of all stakeholders: the EU, national governments, regional authorities, as well as local communities, civil society, the business sector, and academic institutions.

The twelve issues identified as the most relevant include poverty in cities, and the corresponding goal to “reduce poverty and improve the inclusion of persons in poverty or at risk of poverty in underprivileged neighbourhoods”. The Urban Poverty Action Plan²³ covers four priority topics: (i) child poverty; (ii) the regeneration of underprivileged areas in cities; (iii) homelessness; and (iv) the vulnerability of the Roma population. It also includes two additional horizontal priorities: (v) access to quality services and social care; and (vi) the development and collection of datasets designed to identify, measure, monitor and evaluate poverty in cities.

Most of the actions in this area, as identified in our survey of Croatian cities, have been part of the cities' Social Services Plans, and this represents the principal way in which these measures are in fact integrated into city management procedures and into the planning and execution of city business and the budget. Most cities act on proposals from relevant departments when enacting various measures directed at groups at risk. Some of them seem to use a more inclusive process, where city departments carry out consultations with Social Care Centres or with branches of the Croatian Employment Institute. Only a small number of

22 · *Urban Agenda for the EU: Pact of Amsterdam*, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf

23 · *Urban Agenda for the EU – Partnership Urban Poverty Action Plan*, https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/annex_1_eu_urban_agenda_upp_action_plan_171221_final.pdf

respondents have used wider consultations where civil society organizations would have also been involved, mostly through Social Councils. In large cities, the decision-making process is more complex, and often involves special advisory bodies.

The survey indicates that most of the measures adopted by cities seem to be designed on the basis of some status-related characteristic of the final beneficiaries. The examples where cities use data to analyse equality issues, develop responsive programmes, and integrate them into the management of the city itself, including its service delivery, are much less frequent.



City of Kutina – local transport for Roma students

There are five elementary schools in Kutina. Until 2011, Roma children were enrolled in only one of those schools, close to the city area where the Roma community predominantly lived. There was a risk that this arrangement would lead to the segregation of Roma children, and their poor integration, especially in the light of the fact that fewer and fewer non-Roma children ended up enrolling in this particular school.

For this reason, the City of Kutina enacted a decision whereby the enrolment of Roma children in elementary schools in the city would be more evenly distributed, and the enrolment of these children limited to 30% of first-graders in any particular school. The purpose of the decision was the improved integration of Roma children.

From the planning phase, the Association of Roma Kutina was involved in the programme. Consultative and information meetings with parents of first-graders were organized, and the programme was accepted, as it was by the Ministry of Education. Consequently, the full rollout of the programme started in the school year 2011/12. In the context of the same programme, several teacher-training projects have been carried out, preparing teachers to work with the Roma community.

The results of the programme include much better performance in schools and a larger proportion of Roma children completing elementary school. Although their group performance is still below average, improvements can be observed from one year to the next.

The cost of the programme is entirely covered by the City of Kutina. One of the important elements of the programme is the free transport of Roma children to their respective schools, particularly those who were not able to enrol in the nearest one due to the quota. As the next step, the re-launch of an after-school programme for Roma children is planned, along with measures encouraging them to continue their education in secondary schools and universities.



City of Zagreb – Gerontological Centres

Senior citizens represent a growing segment of the population in Zagreb. This prompted the city's Department for Social Protection and Persons with Disabilities to partner with the Centre for Gerontology of the Andrija Štampar Teaching Institute for Public Health and develop a programme of Gerontological Centres in 2004. The main aim was to improve the quality of life of senior citizens through the delivery of various services tailored to this population, such as household assistance, sports and cultural activities, etc.

The project was piloted in three retirement homes, and gradually expanded to all nine homes managed by the city. In addition to the already mentioned household assistance, sports and cultural activities, the programme offers additional activities such as foreign language classes, counselling or IT workshops. The programme is coordinated by the city, and financed from the budget.

The programme activities are offered throughout the city, at some fifty locations, and reach seven thousand beneficiaries per year. These participation numbers are a fair indicator of the success of the programme. Additionally, the evaluation carried out in 2007 demonstrated that the participants were much more satisfied with their quality of life than a comparable sample of seniors not involved in these activities. The last evaluation of the programme was carried out at the end of 2018.



City of Popovača – Legalization drive and infrastructure development in Roma neighbourhoods

Over the last three years, a programme of legalization of buildings and infrastructural improvements has been carried out in the City of Popovača. The high unemployment rates and poor economic outlook of the Roma population in the settlement of Donja Gračenica prompted the city to develop local measures designed to gradually resolve the issues encountered by this minority group. The principal goal of the initiative was to improve the quality of life of Roma in Popovača.

The legalization and infrastructural development drive was launched in collaboration with the National Minorities Council, Office of the Roma minority MP Veljko Kajtazi, and the local association of Roma in Donja Gračenica. The City Department for Physical Planning and Communal Services was in charge of the implementation, and the costs were covered by the city budget and through fundraising by the National Minorities Council. The programme was completed in 2017, with 33 buildings legalized by then.

The next phase of the programme, implemented in 2018, extended its reach to three objects outside the neighbourhood of Donja Gračenica, with the help of co-funding from the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning. Part of the grant was used to repair the road infrastructure and lighting in the settlement. In the upcoming period, the programme is to be complemented with cultural and educational activities: the establishment of a musical group and the refurbishment of the local school.



Integration of persons with intellectual disabilities

The Association for the Promotion of Inclusion, established in 1997, aims to improve the inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities in Croatia. To this end, the Association collaborates with a number of local administration units.

This type of collaboration was initiated in 1998 in Osijek, where the Association and the City of Osijek, in partnership with the regional authorities, established the Osijek Inclusion Centre and initiated a number of projects.

In Slavonski Brod, the Association established a subsidiary in 2002, while the city donated a plot for construction, and waived the payment of associated local taxes. In the adjacent business zone, the city launched a social company in which persons with intellectual disabilities are employed. A similar approach was also followed in the City of Bjelovar, where a local Centre for Inclusion and Social Services was established, and where the city provides space free of charge, along with limited project financing.

Collaboration of the Association with the City of Grubišno Polje started in 2007, when the city authorities donated three buildings for the integrated living of persons with intellectual disabilities. A similar model was employed in Pakrac, where two apartments were donated, along with office space for the Association. The City of Lipik was in no position to donate space or buildings, but is nevertheless actively involved in the promotion of the inclusion of this group of citizens, encouraging their participation in city-level activities.

The City of Sisak also donated two apartments for the integrated living of persons with intellectual disabilities. In Šibenik, the Supported Living Association was founded and continues to collaborate with the Association to promote the employment of this population. The City of Zagreb also provides facilities for supported and integrated living, and finances regularly projects dedicated to improving the quality of life of these individuals. The Association works closely with the relevant city departments to this end, for instance by instituting a programme of free local transport for persons with intellectual disabilities.

3.2. Defining priorities and planning service delivery

In the previous chapter, the importance of data collection was mentioned. These data may be used as the objective foundation for decision making, for monitoring the implementation of public policy, and for evaluating whether policies have achieved the results they were designed for.

One of the most important applications of the said data in the area of equality is the assessment of the existence and extent of potential gaps between groups of citizens sharing specific characteristics or place of residence in terms of their use of public services delivered by the city. Differences in use are often indicative of differences in accessibility, which in turn is a good indicator of discrimination, or inequality.

Public services delivered by the city are mentioned specifically here because we believe that the most fundamental obligation of a city is to ensure, in carrying out its public functions and through the operation of companies from within its sphere of influence, that no citizens are discriminated against, but that their equality is promoted, primarily through the creation of conditions in which they can all benefit equally from the opportunities created by the city. Special programmes created for individual groups in the community, which most cities tend to support, are also important, but equal access to all in the context of the entire business of the city comes first.

If the data show a difference in the use of services, its causes should be investigated. Immediate service providers may have information on possible reasons for this. However, their perception may be coloured by practical considerations of their business model. For this reason, efforts should be made to find out the real reasons for underuse from the end consumers themselves. This may be achieved through consultations carried out in collaboration with the civil society organizations representing them, but also directly in meetings and public forums of various formats.



Energy poverty

According to some estimates, energy poverty affects up to 30% of people in Croatia.²⁴ This term describes situations where modern forms of energy (e.g. electric energy) are not accessible, or where users cannot afford the cost of energy sufficient to support an acceptable standard of living. Households that need to reserve more than 10% of the household budget to cover basic energy consumption standards are deemed to be energy poor: they often live in poorly constructed and poorly maintained buildings and cannot afford energy-efficient appliances. Consequently, energy is less accessible to them and, at the same time, they also waste it more, making it relatively more expensive. All of this combines to adversely affect their health and quality of life.

In Croatia, efforts are in place to address this problem through the introduction of the solidarity fee, i.e. a surcharge for all electricity consumers from which subsidized electricity costs for households at risk are funded. Some local government units also subsidize the cost of firewood or heating fuel, for instance, or the energy bills for some categories of citizens. The Society for Sustainable Development Design (DOOR), the leading civil society expert group in this area, believes that cities that wish to invest in the reduction of energy poverty should first consider supporting the introduction of energy efficiency measures in the affected households, because this is the only way to reduce consumption and costs in a sustainable way, while the quality of life is improved, and adverse effects on health are reduced. Through relatively small-scale and one-off investment, accompanied by information and counselling on the efficient use of energy, the need for continuous and unsustainable subsidies that do not eliminate the underlying causes of the problem is reduced significantly. Financial transfers should be considered only as the next, supplementary step.

DOOR has carried out field investigations and pilot projects in Petrinja in Sisak-Moslavina County²⁵ and in Zagreb. They seem to indicate the impor-

24 · Slavica Robić and Alma Traživuk, *Preporuke za suzbijanje energetskog siromaštva na području Grada Zagreba: Rezultati terenskog istraživanja* [Recommendations for the Suppression of Energy Poverty in the Area of the City of Zagreb] (Zagreb: Društvo za oblikovanje održivog razvoja, 2017), <http://door.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Preporuke-za-suzbijanje-en.-siromastva-Zagreb-rezultati-1.pdf>

25 · Slavica Robić, *Energetsko siromaštvo u Hrvatskoj: rezultati terenskog istraživanja provedenog u Sisačko-moslavačkoj županiji* [Energy Poverty in Croatia: The Results of Field Investigation Carried out in Sisak-Moslavina County] (Zagreb: Društvo za oblikovanje održivog razvoja, 2016), <http://www.door.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Energetsko-siromastvo-u-Hrvatskoj-1.pdf>

tance of accurate consumer data that may be used to direct energy poverty suppression policies efficiently. They also demonstrate the effectiveness of the approach based on energy efficiency measures, such as limited kits of basic equipment distributed in pilot areas (LED lightbulbs, heat reflecting foils, thermometers, window insulation tapes and water faucet aerators) which have reduced energy consumption significantly and improved the quality of life in participating households.

The obstacles to access to public services for citizens are diverse: from the price, the technical and organizations aspects of their operation, to physical barriers. The ways to reduce or eliminate these obstacles are best found in collaboration with service providers and final consumers, or the organizations representing them.

In order for equality issues to be incorporated into city management, they need to be mainstreamed into all the procedures that a city uses to carry out its business. This means that issues related to equality have to be systematically taken into account in the processes of needs assessment, the identification of priorities and goals, planning and allocation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. One priority issue or location may be selected for the start, and then gradually, with the growing confidence and capacities of the city leadership and officials, the scope and comprehensiveness of the interventions may be extended.

For instance, if all physical barriers cannot be removed and all city spaces made fully accessible to persons with disabilities, then at least plans should be put in place to allow for city services to be made available in an appropriate room, by appointment if necessary. It should be noted that persons with disabilities are not the only segment of the population experiencing difficulties with mobility: the proportion of the elderly is on the increase, and parents of small children also have similar problems. Designing and equipping public spaces in a way that guarantees accessibility and the adoption of a public policy requiring universal design for all newly developed public spaces provide for a lasting and systematic resolution of this issue by ensuring equal physical access for all.



Universal design

In line with the Article 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,²⁶ the term “universal design” denotes “the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. ‘Universal design’ shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed”; e.g. when special retrofitting or adjustment of facilities or equipment is needed to support access, such as the introduction of special software adapted for the use of persons with visual disabilities.

This article of the Convention also introduced the concept of “reasonable accommodation” to explain what needs to be done to ensure that all persons with disabilities can enjoy human rights and basic freedoms on an equal footing with everybody else. It means that “necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case”, have to be made by actors identified in the Convention, including public entities and employers in particular.

One of the most advanced methods for mainstreaming equality in city business is the already mentioned equality impact assessment. Thereby, all decisions deemed potentially sensitive are preceded by a structured set of test questions investigating the potential for the discriminatory impact of the said decision on various groups in the community. The assessment usually consists of two phases: in the first, simple and preliminary phase, the likelihood and the size of potential effects on all protected groups in the city are estimated. If there is evidence of a potentially sizeable impact on one or more such groups, a more detailed analysis of the effects is carried out using a consultative process, and mitigating measures are identified and proposed.

26 · *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs), <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html#Fulltext>

3.3. Conduct towards citizens



Codes of ethics for city officials and staff

The survey of cities carried out through the Cities4Equality project demonstrates that five cities have adopted ethical norms for the conduct of city officials and staff. Of those, three cities (Osijek, Pazin and Zagreb) have enacted comprehensive codes regulating the conduct of city employees towards citizens, and towards each other in the process of carrying out their duties. In these three cities, ethics committees have been set up to resolve complaints based on the code and to recommend other measures to address ethical issues.

The ethics codes define the norms for the conduct of city employees: (i) towards citizens; (ii) between each other; and (iii) in discharging their duties. In this sense, they codify the behaviour that citizens can expect from city officials and staff, but also the mechanism they can use if this behaviour is not in line with the norms set up in the code. The introduction of objectively designed processes characteristic of the codes represents an example of good practice in mainstreaming ethics, and indirectly also equality.

In reference to the issues directly related to the equal treatment of citizens, the codes tend to emphasize several important features:

- They emphasize the prohibition of discrimination, particularly in reference to legally prescribed grounds, as well as the need for confidentiality and the obligation to respect the integrity and dignity of clients and beneficiaries;
- They lay down the obligation of officials and employees to actively assist citizens in achieving their rights, in line with the principles of good governance, impartially and professionally;
- They reinforce the right of citizens to be informed, the need for the efficient and effective performance of duties that saves costs and time for both the city and the clients, and the prohibition of conflicts of interest.

In the context of the role of cities as suppliers of public services, the policies of public sector companies directed towards citizens as consumers need to be considered in particular. The previously mentioned survey of cities shows that a significant proportion of cities subsidize the price of the services they deliver, as well as other basic services, for low-income individuals.

Cities could mainstream their efforts in this context, and achieve a sustainable impact by making sure that the public companies fully or partially owned by them, or operating under service delivery contracts with those cities, have a fair and equitable pricing policy, collection policy, and payment-related dispute resolution procedures in place. The first step towards such policies is, arguably, the comprehensive analysis of complaints and disputes, collection procedures and defaulting rates, decisions on forced collection or on writing off debt, and other elements indicative of the policies of public/communal companies towards citizens.

3.4. Setting up the process

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies:

- In decision making, consider the methods you could use to assess their potential adverse effects on various groups in the community, or their beneficial effects in terms of equality and cohesion;
- Analyse the business processes that the city uses to deliver the public services it is responsible for: are there groups that are privileged as an outcome, or groups that experience difficulties in accessing and in the ability to use these services?
- Set up a system or upgrade the existing system for citizens' complaints and on how to resolve them.

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies:

- Introduce a system for assessing the equality impact of city decisions, using all available data and consultative processes;
- In planning, define the equality priorities, set up measurable goals, monitor progress, and report on it to the stakeholders;
- Consider introducing a practice of collecting feedback from equality-related public programmes and service beneficiaries to learn about their level of satisfaction and the real impact of those programmes.

3.5. Defining and measuring success²⁷

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city has defined and adopted an approach that will be used for mainstreaming equality considerations into decisions on public policies and services.

Check:

- Are there guidelines or instructions in place for assessing the impact of the city's decisions on equality, i.e. on different groups of citizens, particularly those who share protected characteristics?
- Is there sufficient information or training for carrying out this assessment?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

The city implements a policy of analysing the potential equality impacts of decisions in a systematic fashion and before these decisions are enacted.

Check:

- Is there a firm commitment on the part of the city for using such analyses in planning and decision making?
- Are the results of these analyses informative and useful in decision making?
- Have there been any cases in which a decision or a public policy was altered as a result of such analyses?
- Is the city able to demonstrate that the analyses have resulted in improved services more in tune with the needs of citizens?

Indicator:

Procedures are in place for incorporating equality outcomes into the business processes in the city.

Check:

- Do you monitor the implementation of equality plans?
- Do the policies regarding citizens/clients/beneficiaries include procedures

Indicator:

The equality goals are mainstreamed in all management processes in the city, and progress towards them is monitored regularly by key decision makers.

Check:

- Is there sufficient information on the beneficiaries of public services in the city?

27 · Adapted from: Local Government Association, *Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG): 2018 Version*, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/guidance%20-%20equality%20frameworks%20-%20Equality%20Framework%20For%20Local%20Government%20%28EFLG%29.pdf>

for meeting the needs of groups with protected characteristics?

- Is there an efficient system in place for resolving complaints?
- Is there a mechanism whereby city staff can suggest or introduce improvements in the business processes?

- Have the differences among groups of citizens regarding the use of public services been identified?
- Has the city taken steps to reduce or eliminate those differences?
- In what way are the needs of groups with protected characteristics taken into account?
- Are goals defined in a specific fashion?
- Is the cost associated with equality goals estimated objectively?
- Has the city established a system whereby city staff can suggest or introduce improvements in the business processes, and which one?
- In which way do the key decision makers demonstrate that they monitor and evaluate regularly the attainment of equality goals?

Indicator:

The city has developed a mechanism for the collection and analysis of data on the use of public services by citizens and groups in the community.

Check:

- Do all groups in the community show the same rate and pattern of use? How does the city track groups or locations where public services are less used, and what are the reasons for that gap?
- How does the city learn if citizens are satisfied with public services?
- Do these data show differences in satisfaction between different groups of citizens regarding the quality and accessibility of public services provided by the city?

Indicator:

The city monitors the rate of use, accessibility and adequacy of the public services offered, as well as customer satisfaction.

Check:

- Does the city use data on the accessibility of services and customer satisfaction in the processes of planning and decision making?
- Are there examples of improved accessibility and quality of services as a result of such an analysis?
- Has the city developed procedures for dealing with a situation in which individual groups in the community show dissatisfaction with the level or quality of public services?

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city has put in place a mechanism guaranteeing respect, protection, and promotion of the human rights of clients and citizens as end users of public services.

Check:

- Are instructions given to city officials and staff on the standard of treatment of citizens and clients?
- Is there is mechanism in place for citizens' complaints if they believe their rights have been violated?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

The city systematically takes into account human rights in decision making and in business processes.

Check:

- Are there procedures in place for the protection of the human rights of citizens and for the protection of citizens against discrimination?
- Are city employees trained to identify issues related to human rights and protection from discrimination?
- How are decision makers informed or trained on these issues?

4. Competent and motivated staff

4.1. The city's treatment of its employees

Cities, along with associated organizations and institutions, employ large numbers of people. Their main task is to deliver public goods and services to citizens in line with the principles of good governance. At the same ti, the city leadership has to ensure the application of the same principles, equal treatment, and the absence of discrimination towards city employees.

The contemporary approach to workforce planning and employment, in both the private and public sectors, is based on the notion that the structure of employees should reflect the structure of the entity's client base, or constituency. This may help the organization, i.e. the city, gain better understanding and insight into the issues important to individual community groups, and thus find the appropriate responses to them more easily. Furthermore, this approach tends to lead to increased trust between city authorities and the community, which contributes significantly to the smooth functioning of the city.



Diversity management

The above-mentioned advantages of the inclusive approach to staffing were first recognized by the private sector. The measures that companies implemented as part of their anti-discrimination efforts led to increased employment of women and representatives of various minority groups. This, in turn, produced a series of positive effects: in addition to the reduction of legal, regulatory, and reputation risks for companies, the practice brought companies closer to their customers and enabled them more easily to adapt their goods and services to customer needs and expectations. The positive impact of such diversity among employees brought about the diversity management discipline that was established in the context of human resource management strategies.

Croatian companies with the most advanced management practices have also adopted this approach and they promote it publicly by signing the Diversity Charter.²⁸

*The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has been promoting the adoption of a similar approach in the public sector since 2009. In its publication *Fostering Diversity in the Public Service*,²⁹ several measures are suggested that may be used to this end in recruitment:*

- *Use all available channels for advertising vacancies, including media specialized in the population groups you are trying to reach;*
- *When publishing job advertisements, include statements encouraging applications from persons from all groups, stating, for instance, that the city enforces equality in employment, that applications from persons with disabilities are welcome, etc.*
- *When describing the jobs you are advertising, emphasize skills, abilities, and the experience needed for good performance, and base your selection procedures on those.*
- *The committees evaluating job applications and conducting job interviews should reflect the same diversity you are striving to achieve among employees.*
- *The selection procedures should be designed as neutral, and should not contain elements that may be discriminatory.*

28 · Croatian Diversity Charter, <https://www.raznolikost.hr/>

29 · Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Fostering Diversity in the Public Service (OECD, 2009)*, <https://www.oecd.org/gov/pem/paper-fostering-diversity-public-service.pdf>

- *Introduce mechanisms that may help candidates to adjust to their jobs (training, mentoring).*
- *Establish complaint mechanisms that can be used in cases of unfair and discriminatory conduct in recruitment and at work.*

It should be noted that the concept and practice of diversity management is supported and promoted by the EU: the present manual was developed under the Cities4Equality project, which is financed under the diversity management priority within the overall funding line dedicated to anti-discrimination.

Equality policies in the workplace for employees of the city, of associated companies, organizations and institutions are reflected in the way that their work is organized, their performance evaluated, their professional development facilitated, in the way they are promoted and paid, but also in the mechanisms designated to protect them from harassment in the workplace, and in the ways the city encourages employees to participate in improving public policies and business processes.



Human resource development manual

In the context of the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at the Local Level, the Council of Europe formulated twelve principles for good democratic governance,³⁰ and its Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform developed a series of tools that can help local and regional administration units in implementing those principles. Among other tools, the Toolkit for Modern and Effective Human Resource Management³¹ was published, a practical guide for the development and advancement of this practice in cities. The manual includes instructions for advertising vacancies, selection, hiring, assessment, performance management, and mainstreaming gender equality issues into human resource management.

30 · Council of Europe, “12 Principles of Good Governance and European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)”, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/12-principles-and-elope#%7B%2225565951%22%3A%5B%5D%7D>

31 · Council of Europe, *Toolkit on Modern and Effective Human Resources Management*, <https://rm.coe.int/1680746cb9>

4.2 *Setting up the process*

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies:

- Examine the composition of employees, and consider if it corresponds to the composition of city residents and if men and women are equally represented at all hierarchical levels.
- Check if the city meets its obligations regarding the employment of members of national minorities and persons with disabilities. If not, what are the obstacles?
- Review the procedures that the city uses when advertising vacancies, in selection processes, and in the induction of new employees. Consider upgrading these procedures to promote equality and prevent discrimination.
- Check if the city has implemented reasonable accommodation measures to allow recruitment and work for persons with disabilities.
- Make sure that responsible managers know what discrimination is, and how it is prevented.
- Check if men and women have the same salaries for jobs of comparable complexity.
- Try to find out from employees themselves what would help them achieve equality in the workplace.
- Check if there are complaints by employees citing discrimination or harassment.

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies:

- If you have discovered that there are underrepresented groups, set up priority remedial actions, best in collaboration with employees belonging to these groups.
- Task an individual or a body to monitor regularly indicators in this area and to report on them to the city leadership.
- Consider the adoption of measures, such as flexible working hours and work from home, which would be beneficial to workers with family responsibilities.
- Ensure that there are opportunities and conditions for the further training and professional development of employees.
- Establish an independent and objective system of resolving employee complaints.
- Consult regularly with employees about measures that would improve their job satisfaction, and their recommendations to improve business processes in the city.

4.3. Defining and measuring success³²

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city is informed of the conditions in the local labour market and the obstacles faced by groups at risk of discrimination, and takes them into account when hiring.

Check:

- Does the composition of employees in the city, city-owned companies and institutions reflect the makeup of the city population?
- Has the city taken any steps to make the composition of employees more representative of the population?

Indicator:

The city has ensured that the policies and procedures in hiring and at the workplace are fully compliant with the relevant equality regulation.

Check:

- Are there data indicating that the city employs the requisite number of persons with protected characteristics?
- If not, are there objective reasons for this?
- Does the city collect data on the composition of employees, their salaries,

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

The city can demonstrate that equality in hiring has been improved in comparison to the previous period, including the participation of poorly represented groups at all levels.

Check:

- If there are indicators suggesting disproportionate representation, what has been done to address it?
- Are there examples of affirmative actions designed to improve equality in the participation of all groups in the community in the city's workforce?

Indicator:

The city uses additional methods to improve workplace equality, such as reasonable adjustment, equal pay, flexible working hours, and workplaces adapted to workers with family responsibilities.

Check:

- Which policies and procedures does the city use in this context?
- Are they used systematically?
- Are there data on their effectiveness?

32 · Adapted from: Local Government Association, *Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG): 2018 Version*, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/guidance%20-%20equality%20frameworks%20-%20Equality%20Framework%20For%20Local%20Government%20%28EFLG%29.pdf>.

promotion, training, and other important information that can shed light on workplace equality?

- Does the city collect information on the working conditions of employees, and is it aware of what needs to be done in order to improve them?
- Does the city have an insight into the status of pay equality and equal access to training and promotion opportunities?

- Are there data on the use of these measures, particularly by persons with protected characteristics?
- Are there examples of flexible working hours, work from home, and/or reasonable adjustment?
- Are some of the provisions related to equality included into collective agreements the city is signatory to?
- Are the special needs of all individual groups taken into account equally?

Indicator:

The city has established policies and systems to prevent and eliminate workplace harassment.

Check:

- Is there an anti-harassment policy in place?
- Are employees informed of the procedures they can use in such a case, and who to report it to?
- What are the instructions and/or training given to supervisors?

Indicator:

There is an effective system of protection from workplace harassment in place.

Check:

- Is the incidence of harassment monitored?
- What are the outcomes of harassment incidents?
- Do employees find these outcomes satisfactory?

Chapter III

Engaging the citizens
to advance equality

1. Citizen participation

Citizen participation in public life and the right of citizens to influence the decisions affecting their lives and the communities in which they live represent the foundation of democracy and constitute one of the main tenets of good governance. An open and inclusive approach to development and to public policy implementation increases citizen engagement, as well as the quality and transparency of decision making and the responsibility of those in public positions.

The notion of equality in a city is intrinsically related to the approaches and procedures used by the city to inform citizens, consult with them, involve them in the development and implementation of public policies, and partner with them in reaching the key objectives of the city. In order to improve equality, the city has to find ways to learn as much as possible about issues of concern for citizens, making at the same time sure that those who are usually the least heard have the opportunity to express their views on issues, possible solutions, and the associated proposals put forward by the city. This approach brings twofold benefits: the city can learn quite a lot about the issues that need to be resolved, about citizens' expectations regarding the outcomes of its interventions, and about what would constitute a success. Besides, successful collaboration between city administration and citizens develops the competences of both sides for any future collaboration, and creates the social capital to facilitate the smooth governance of the city and improve the quality of life in it.

At the national level, significant progress has been made over the last fifteen years in both the regulation and practice of citizen engagement. A decade ago, the Government of the Republic of Croatia (RoC) adopted the Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, Other Regulations and Acts,³³ setting up a process to be used by central government, but also by regional and local authorities. The Act on the Right of Access to Information,² as well as other special regulations, introduced the obligation of public bodies to inform and consult the public, and report on their practices in this respect.³⁴

33 · “Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, Other Regulations and Acts”, Official Gazette 140/2009 (25 November 2009), <http://int.uzvvrh.hr/userfiles/file/code%20of%20practice%20on%20consultation-croatia.pdf>

34 · Republic of Croatia, Information Commissioner, Act on the Right of Access to Information, Official Gazette 25/2013 and 85/2015 (consolidated text), <https://www.pristupinfo.hr/pravni-okvir/?lang=en>



Government of the RoC – Guidelines for Consultation with the Interested Public

According to the Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, Other Regulations and Acts (2009), consultation is viewed within the wider framework of public participation in decision-making processes.

It encompasses four progressive levels:

- *Access to information is the first level, which involves a one-sided process whereby government bodies inform citizens on their own initiative, or where citizens seek information from the government. An example of this is the practice of publishing relevant information and public documents in the Official Gazette, or on the websites of public bodies.*
- *Consultation is a two-way process during which public bodies seek and receive information from citizens, i.e. from the interested public, in the process of regulation and decision making.*
- *Engagement is the more advanced application of the two-way process between government and citizens, whereby the representatives of the interested public are directly involved in the development of public policies, for instance by becoming part of the working groups for the development of a law or other pieces of regulation.*
- *Partnership is the highest level of collaboration and mutually assumed responsibility between the government and representatives of the interested public for the development and delivery of a programme, law, regulation, and other initiatives.*

The Code of Practice defines the interested public as a constituent of the following: citizens, civil society organizations (informal citizen groups or movements, associations, trusts, private institutes, trade unions, employee associations), representatives of the academic community, chambers, public institutes and other legal entities discharging public office, mandated by the regulation or act in question, or involved in its implementation. The GoC Office for Cooperation with NGOs published the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Code of Practice in 2010.³⁵

35 · Vesna Lendić Kasalo (Ed.), *Smjernice za primjenu Kodeksa savjetovanja sa zainteresiranom javnošću u postupcima donošenja zakona, drugih propisa i akata* [Guidelines for the Application of the Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, Other Regulations and Acts] (Zagreb: Ured za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske, 2010)



Information Commissioner – Manual for Consultations with the Public for Local and Regional Government Units³⁶

This Manual was published by the Information Commissioner in 2016 to aid the implementation of the legal framework established by the Act on the Right of Access to Information, and of the obligations regarding public consultations stemming from other special regulations. The authors observe the firmly established practice of consultations at the national level. At regional and local levels, however, only occasional instances of good practice had been observed. The intent of the Manual is to lay out the advantages of public consultation as the first step towards public participation in decision making at the local level. The publication offers specific instructions on the preparation and implementation of consultations with citizens, and on communication with them in this context.

While the process of consultation has been widely practised at the national level, its adoption by local government units is of a more recent date. In particular, an increasing number of cities use digital technologies to facilitate the access of citizens to information, but also to carry out consultation with them on a number of issues.

36 · Anamarija Musa et al., *Priručnik za provedbu savjetovanja s javnošću za jedinice lokalne i područne (regionalne) samouprave* [Manual for Consultations with the Public for Local and Regional Government Units] (Zagreb: Povjerenik za informiranje, 2016), <https://www.pristupinfo.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Prirucnik-za-savjetovanja-e-izdanje.pdf>



City of Rijeka – E-consultation portal

The City of Rijeka has set up a portal named E-consultation³⁷ to improve consultation with members of the public on drafts of city regulations that would be of direct interest to residents, both natural persons and legal entities. In addition to the draft of the proposed regulation or act, the reasons for it are listed, as are the aims of the consultation. For each completed round of consultations, a report is published detailing which comments and proposals have been adopted, and which not. Additionally, in line with the Act on the Right of Access to Information, the plan of regulatory activities for the upcoming year is published on the portal annually, listing all the pieces of regulation that are to be adopted or amended in the following year, and particularly noting those that would be subject to consultation with the interested public.

The suggestions, views, and recommendations to specific documents under consideration are submitted through an online form, or directly on the portal. The published comments are moderated to eliminate offensive ones, or to exclude those not related to the issue at hand. Contact information of the consultation coordinator of the City of Rijeka is also published.

Rijeka is in the process of developing an online platform named URBAN INNO, which aims to facilitate citizens' participation in the development of the city, particularly around the issues of physical planning, the use and maintenance of space and the urban infrastructure owned by the city. In addition to the already established consultation programmes on small communal interventions and on the city-wide local partnership programme, this platform will enable citizens to propose activities and ideas for upgrading public space and infrastructure on a permanent basis.

37 · <http://ekonzultacije.rijeka.hr>



City of Pazin – Active engagement of citizens in the city budget development process

The idea of adopting a participatory approach to the development of the city budget was initiated in Pazin as an EU-funded project in 2014, which was implemented by GONG CSO, the City of Pazin, and the Our Children Association in Pazin. The aim of the project was to develop a model for the more active participation of citizens and the public in the budgetary process.

The process of consultation developed under the project is reiterated yearly: citizens, previously informed about the process, may submit their proposals for small communal actions to the city. The city administration analyses the proposals in preparation for public discussions in local (neighbourhood) councils, where citizens can deliberate on all outstanding issues in their localities and vote on the most pressing interventions.

Following the drafting of the first version of the proposed budget for the city, the final round of public discussions is held, presenting the budget and giving feedback on the results of the citizen consultations and the project proposed as a result.

Since the project (2014–2017), citizens have proposed 495 communal actions. Seven hundred and thirty-seven citizens participated in the public discussions and selected 124 out of those small communal interventions whose cost amounted to HK 1,705,000.00. It should be noted that, at the request of citizens, the amount allotted for this purpose was increased in the third year of implementation.

In addition to enabling citizens to actively participate in decision making on the spending of a portion of budgetary funds, public discussion is also instrumental in giving an insight to citizens into the functioning of the city government and its employees, which helps them raise issues with the city, formulate further requests, and create realistic expectations. On the other hand, this process provides space for the city government to inform citizens and discuss with them their other plans, news and issues.

Within the context of the project, an open code application was developed for the purpose of presenting the elements of a participatory and transparent budget process, which also includes a moderated public forum for the discussion of related issues (www.ipazin.net/forum).



Information commissioner – public participation in budgetary decision making

In the context of the monitoring of consultation processes in local and regional government units, the Information Commissioner, in her 2017 report, highlighted the promulgation of the good practice of participative budgeting, or of the engagement of the public in the budget development process.

The Commissioner observed that the structure of the budgetary process makes the 30-day deadline for consultations on the final versions of local budgets unfeasible. For this reason, consultations on draft versions of budgets constitute best practice. Furthermore, given the fact that the largest part of local budgets is already predetermined, consultations on the portion of funds earmarked for projects and programmes should be carried out early in the fiscal year, irrespective of the budgetary schedule: some cities have already adopted such a practice. The Commissioner also recommended particularly that local units carry out substantive consultations on financing public programmes in the areas of culture, education, sport, technical culture, and civil society development, which are yet to be fully adopted as practice in all local units.³⁸

City governments with a history of citizen consultation have been able to observe the advantages of such an approach, and have consequently been embarking on increasingly comprehensive, direct, and complex forms of engagement. The already described examples of Rijeka and Pazin illustrate this, as do those of other cities that have progressed from informing and consulting citizens to more advanced forms of collaboration with them, including partnerships and programmatic collaboration.

38 · Povjerenik za informiranje, *Izvješće o provedbi Zakona o pravu na pristup informacijama za 2017. godinu* [Information Commissioner, Report on the Implementation of the Law on the Right to Access to Information for 2017] (Zagreb: Povjerenik za informiranje, 2018), <https://www.pristupinfo.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/1.-Izvje%C5%A1%C4%87e-o-provedbi-Zakona-o-pravu-na-pristup-informacijama-za-2017.pdf>



Dubrovnik – Committee for Persons with Disabilities

The City of Dubrovnik is one of the first cities to fully implement the provisions of the National Strategy for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. In consultation with persons with disabilities resident in Dubrovnik, it adopted the Unified Policy Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in the City of Dubrovnik for the period 2009–2013.

The local strategy was developed by city representatives and experts, with representatives of civil society organizations of persons with disabilities involved from the very beginning and throughout the process. Based on this Strategy, the city convened a Committee for Persons with Disabilities, comprising the representatives of all stakeholder groups involved in the development of the Strategy. The Committee's mandate is to discuss, present opinions and give advice on all issues related to the living and working conditions of persons with disabilities. In addition to an advisory role, the CSOs of persons with disabilities are also involved in the implementation of relevant programmes, projects and measures in partnership with the city. Dubrovnik also provides affordable office space and grants to these organizations.

The Strategy encompasses the following principal areas: education, employment, and social inclusion, including social services, partnership with civil society, and accessibility and transport. Due to the physical features of the City of Dubrovnik, measures regarding transport and accessibility were particularly prominent, and included: the purchase of special vehicles for the provision of free public transport for persons with disabilities, vehicles for persons with disabilities in the historic city centre, enabling both residents and tourists to access all religious and public objects there, the provision of lifts and accompanying infrastructure for persons with disabilities at three city beaches, the retrofitting of city buses, and free transport for persons with disabilities attending rehabilitation programmes in city facilities.



City of Pula – Steering Committee of the National Minorities Council

The Steering Committee of the National Minorities Council was convened in Pula in 2019 to further promote the values of equality and tolerance with regards to the national minorities in the City of Pula. More specifically, the Steering Committee was to add to the already well-functioning collaboration between national minorities and the city administration through the establishment of this advisory and coordinating body, which gives the representatives of national minorities an additional platform for advocating issues and bringing forward proposals to improve their position in Pula. The Steering Committee is chaired by the Deputy Mayor, and the logistics are provided by the Department for Finance and Administration.

2. Advantages of citizen engagement

Croatian and international experiences concerning the advantages and the relevance of citizen engagement are diverse. Several perceived advantages seem to be more frequently cited than others.

First, when citizens are involved in the process of the development of projects or solutions, there is greater likelihood that they will be widely accepted, among other things because the citizens who were originally involved will make additional effort to ensure the success of the initiative. Furthermore, when citizens are involved in finding solutions to an issue, they become more informed about it, and are able to consider multiple perspectives or viewpoints. Consequently, the agreed-on solution and support for it are more likely to be based on a realistic assessment of the situation, and not subject to frequent change.

The involvement of citizens brings about better solutions: when we rely on a wider group of people, with more diverse types of knowledge of local circumstances, generating practical and effective solutions should be easier. Open discussion of issues also helps the early identification of problems at the point when they are still relatively easy to solve.

By participating in the process of the development of public policies and finding solutions for issues at the city level, citizens also develop their own knowledge and problem-solving skills, which in turn advances their readiness to further collaborate with the city government and other stakeholders. Local networks of community members are thus developed. The more people who know what is going on and who are ready to collaborate in achieving a particular end, the greater the likelihood that the community will be successful.

Finally, in the context of equality, it is important that everyone in the community knows that they have the opportunity to participate in its life and development, and in the setting of joint priorities. Through the widely conceived processes of consultation, collaboration and engagement of people of varying experiences, the community is strengthened and made more cohesive. The groups that feel overlooked and neglected may achieve better control over their lives and their communities. When people from various parts of the community work together, they often find that they have much in common.

All of this strengthens trust in local administration and in the way the city is governed. Collaboration improves communication, mutual understanding and confidence. When citizens know what the city and its officials, staff, and leaders can and cannot do, there is less space for conflicts and disputes.

3. Further modalities of citizen engagement

Collaboration between the public sector and citizens, as previously mentioned, has a significant background in Croatia and is founded on a regulation and institutional infrastructure. In addition to the above-described consultation with stakeholders based on the Code on Consultations, the Act on the Right of Access to Information, and other special laws, we would like to highlight two further instruments that may be of use in engaging citizens and partnering with them in various areas of local life, including the area of equality.

The first is financing projects and programmes of civil sector organizations active in the city. This practice is already widely adopted by cities, and instruments developed at the national level to guarantee transparency and the efficient use of public resources are also being increasingly employed.



Government of the RoC – Calls for proposals for civil society organizations

Based on the Associations Act, the Government of the RoC issued the Regulation on the Criteria, Standards, and Procedures for the Financing and Contracting of Programmes and Projects of Interest to the Public Good Implemented by Associations.³⁹ To facilitate the implementation of the Regulation, the Office for Collaboration with NGOs published a corresponding manual⁴⁰ with comprehensive instructions for all public bodies and organizations issuing relevant calls for proposals. The calls are regularly published on the website of the Office for Collaboration with NGOs.

Volunteering is another mechanism for citizen engagement validated in real life and confirmed in regulations. According to the Volunteering Act,⁴¹ local government bodies may organize volunteering programmes and projects directly. More frequently, however, they tend to extend grants to civil society organizations that, in turn, run community volunteering programmes and projects.⁴²



Centre for Civil Initiatives – An example of a volunteering project

In 2018, the Centre for Civil Initiatives carried out, with the support of a grant from the City of Zagreb, a volunteering project to investigate the needs and issues

39 · “Uredba o kriterijima, mjerilima i postupcima financiranja i ugovaranja programa i projekata od interesa za opće dobro koje provode udruge”, Narodne novine 26/2015 (9. ožujka 2015.), https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2015_03_26_546.html

40 · Ured za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske, Priručnik za postupanje u primjeni Uredbe o kriterijima, mjerilima i postupcima financiranja i ugovaranja programa i projekata od interesa za opće dobro koje provode udruge [GoC Office for Collaboration with NGOs, Manual for the Implementation of the Regulation on the Criteria, Standards, and Procedures for the Financing and Contracting of Programmes and Projects of Interest to the Public Good Implemented by Associations] (Zagreb: Ured za udruge Vlade RH, 2017), https://issuu.com/uzuvrh/docs/priru__nik_za_primjenu_uredbe_v_2_?e=32027115/56295

41 · “Zakon o izmjenama i dopunama Zakona o volonterstvu” [Act on Amendments to the Volunteering Act], Narodne novine 22/2013 (22. veljače 2013.), https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2013_02_22_361.html

42 · E.g. Volunteering Centre Osijek (<https://vcos.hr/programi/volonterstvo/korisna-dokumentacija>), and Volunteering Centre Zagreb, Menadžment volontera – Priručnik za vođenje volontera i volonterskih programa [Volunteer Management – Manual for Managing Volunteers and Volunteering Programmes], <http://www.mmh.hr/files/ckfinder/files/menad%C5%BE-ment%20volontera.pdf>.

facing the elderly in the city district of Trešnjevka North. Ten volunteers used the methods of survey, interview and focus groups and compiled a research report giving an insight into the views of the senior residents of this district on the advantages and disadvantages of living in Trešnjevka, and their recommendations on what could be done to improve their quality of life. The project reached 2.5% of Trešnjevka residents of the relevant age group, but also the younger members of their families, other residents of the district, representatives of CSOs active there, and the representatives of local government institutions. The results of the research are of direct and practical use to all stakeholders related to this group of citizens, primarily as an aid in planning and developing effective interventions to improve the quality of life in this part of the city.⁴³

4. Elements of successful engagement initiatives

Both Croatian and international experiences with citizen engagement seem to demonstrate that several factors are key for success in such initiatives, the first one being clear understanding on the part of the city of the purpose for such engagement:

- Does the city need ideas on how to tackle a novel issue, information on a new policy area, or does it wish to ensure public support for a potentially controversial decision? A clearly defined purpose of citizen engagement will help identify target audiences, define the most advantageous approach, and determine the scope of activities.
- The deadlines are the key determinants of what can realistically be achieved, and of the scope of the engagement. Resources available for the programme, including funds, information, people, skills and knowledge, also represent a determining factor. Realistic assessment of both can help cities decide whether to carry out the engagement programme on their own, or to seek assistance and partnership from other individuals or organizations.
- In reference to the target group of the engagement programme, it is important to define clearly who needs to be engaged, and then establish where those individuals or groups can be found, and how can they be reached. Which organizations already work with them? It is usually useful to talk to these organizations, as they are in a position

43 · Mirela Despotović, *Istraživanje potreba i problema osoba treće životne dobi na području gradske četvrti Trešnjevka – sjever* [Investigation of the Needs and Issues of Elderly Residents in the Area of the City District of Trešnjevka North] (Zagreb: Centar za civilne inicijative, 2019), <http://online.fliphtml5.com/pmglt/pkwf/#p=10>

to offer advice, and there may be opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

- Clear and open communication is very important for successful citizen engagement. The reason and logic of their involvement have to be explained clearly, they should be told what to expect, what the expected results are, and what can realistically be achieved.
- The roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the engagement programme need to be defined clearly. What will the city do, and what is expected of citizens and their associations: to inform citizens, collect feedback from them, or something else? The most appropriate methods also need to be considered carefully, in light of the purpose, resources, time, and available people. Would the citizen engagement initiative be implemented more easily in the form of a project?
- At the end of the implementation, for the purpose of improving future efforts of this kind, evaluation should be carried out. In order for its results to be useful, considering what would constitute proof that the initiative was successful should be factored in early, in the planning phases of the programme. In other words, what are the facts that will demonstrate to you that you have achieved the purpose of the engagement?
- Finally, to foster the development of trust and future good relations, citizens and their organization should be given feedback on the results of their engagement, and agreement should be made on ways of keeping channels open for future collaboration.



Potential difficulties and pitfalls

The working group convened by the Government of the Republic of Ireland published in 2014 a report on citizen engagement with local government.⁴⁴ The working group's brief was to propose ways in which citizens may be involved more strongly in work and decision making at the local level, and how public bodies may encourage and facilitate such engagement. Despite a significant

44 · Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, *Working Group Report on Citizen Engagement with Local Government*, https://www.volunteerkerry.ie/images/docs/research/Working_Group_Report_on_Citizen_Engagement_with_Local_Government.pdf



history of good practice of citizen engagement at the national level, the working group identified a gap, or a democratic deficit of meaningful opportunities for citizens' participation in decision making on local issues, where they would be able to bring about real change in their cities. Two aspects of this problem were highlighted: the inability of the local community to effectively influence decisions made by public bodies, and the lack of appropriate mechanisms to motivate citizens to participate in resolving local problems. The working group noted that citizens are likely to become engaged only if they believe that they would be able to influence the decisions, and that their opinions and inputs would be taken into account.

The Government of Wales adopted the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales, and issued a corresponding Practitioners' Manual for Public Engagement (2012).⁴⁵ Among other things, the Manual points out that the way in which consultations and engagement initiatives are carried out affects the level of citizens' engagement in the long run. If they are carried out in a purposeful and thoughtful way, and if citizens feel that their participation is meaningful and useful, there is a greater chance that they will respond favourably to future requests for engagement and be ready for more substantive involvement. On the other hand, the wrong approach to citizen consultation and engagement may produce the entirely opposite effect. The latter mostly happens in the following circumstances:

- If citizens are told that they will be consulted or engaged, while all the city really wants is to collect information;*
- If consultations or engagement are carried out for a reason which is not so relevant for the local community;*
- If the information collected is never put to use;*
- If the participants never receive feedback on what their contribution was used for.*

45 · Participation Cymru, "National Principles for Public Engagement", <https://participation.cymru/en/principles/>; Participation Cymru, Practitioners' Manual for Public Engagement, <https://participation.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/practitioners-manual-for-public-engagement.pdf>.

5. Setting up the process

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies:

- Review your practices regarding the Act on the Right of Access to Information. What do the requests for information and possible complaints indicate about your practice? Do you analyse them and use the results to improve business processes in the city? How does your practice stand up to the best practices of other Croatian cities? Do you have information on how happy citizens are with the level of information provided by the city? In particular, are there groups in the community who find accessing the necessary information difficult or impossible?
- Conduct stakeholder analysis for the key equality policies in the city.
- Determine which type of interaction with citizens is the most appropriate within the context of each of those policies, taking into account which phase of development or implementation the policy is in, the level of freedom the city has in determining the policy, and the resources at the city's disposal.
- In line with the city's priorities, develop plans to improve at least one aspect of the city's practices towards citizen engagement.

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies:

- Appoint an individual at the appropriate level in the city government to be responsible for improving the practices of citizen engagement, and to report on the related issues to the Mayor and the Council.
- Consider the methods that can be used to incorporate mechanisms for citizen engagement in all city policies.
- In collaboration with community stakeholders, review your practices in this area regularly, particularly in the light of the principle that all citizens should have the same opportunity to participate and/or be represented.

6. Defining and measuring success⁴⁶

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city is developing mechanisms and structures for citizen engagement.

Check:

- What are the mechanisms that the city is already using?
- To what extent are protected groups included or engaged?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

The city is using and is developing a series of mechanisms and structures for formal and informal interactions with citizens.

Check:

- How does the city encourage the participation of representatives of protected groups?
- How does the city make sure that the representatives of certain groups are not overrepresented, and of others underrepresented?
- Is there evidence of constant progress in regard to citizen engagement?
- Is there evidence that the engagement of the groups that used to be underrepresented is now mainstreamed?

46 · Adapted from: Local Government Association, *Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG): 2018 Version*, <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/guidance%20-%20equality%20frameworks%20-%20Equality%20Framework%20For%20Local%20Government%20%28EFLG%29.pdf>

If you are beginning to develop your equality policies

Indicator:

The city has a clear understanding of the level of participation in public life of groups sharing protected characteristics.

Check:

- Which information or data is or are collected by the city to gain an insight into the level of citizen participation in public life?

If you wish to advance the outcomes of your equality policies

Indicator:

Građane se potiče na sudjelovanje u javnom životu ili u pojedinačnim aktivnostima u kojima su podzastupljeni.

Check:

- How does the city actively inform citizens about opportunities for participation?
- Is there evidence of progress in citizen participation, especially among underrepresented groups?

CITIES FOR EQUALITY INDEX Self-assessment Questionnaire

With reference to each of the indicators, cities are asked to evaluate their current performance by selecting one of the four categories offered, which may be described by the following statements:

1. Time to act
2. We have started implementation
3. We are achieving better results
4. We are being effective

Participating cities are requested to submit evidence substantiating their self-assessment with reference to each of the indicators. The second, revised version of the self-assessment questionnaire is presented below.

Indicator 1: City leadership's commitment to equality

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
1.1. City leaders have not yet publicly declared their commitment to equality and non-discrimination.	1.2. City leaders have expressed their commitment to equality and non-discrimination through public communication related to their other activities, or in messages addressing multiple topics	1.3. City leaders have expressed their commitment to equality and non-discrimination through public communication partially or entirely addressing equality and non-discrimination <i>per se</i> .	1.4. City leaders have expressed their commitment to equality and non-discrimination through public communication, and by organizing events predominantly or exclusively dedicated to equality and non-discrimination issues, and which are organized in collaboration with representatives of groups at risk.

Indicator 2: Equality policies

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
2.1. The city's strategic and executive documents do not contain goals and measures clearly directed at promoting equality and combatting discrimination.	2.2. The city has set clear goals and has planned measures, activities, and resources for the reduction of inequalities in at least one strategic or executive document directing the city's activities in key equality areas (education, health care, social welfare, employment, culture, housing, infrastructure, and participation in the political life of the community).	2.3. The city has clearly defined goals and implements adequately funded measures directed at reducing inequalities in key equality areas, but does not have specific positions (appointed individual(s)) or bodies mandated in the area of equality, or has them in relation to only one group-at-risk, or in just one of the key equality areas.	2.4. The city has clearly defined goals and implements adequately funded measures directed at reducing inequalities in key equality areas. The city has specific positions (appointed individual(s)) or bodies mandated in the area of equality, covering multiple groups at risk, or several key equality areas.

Indicator 3: Monitoring equality

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
3.1. The city does not use any specific indicators or monitoring procedures regarding equality measures in individual areas and/or with reference to groups at risk.	3.2. The city reports to national-level bodies using the latter's sets of indicators and monitoring procedures regarding equality measures in at least one of the key equality areas, and /or with reference to at least one group at risk.	3.3. The city reports to national-level bodies using the latter's sets of indicators and monitoring procedures regarding equality measures in multiple key equality areas, and /or with reference to several groups at risk.	3.4. The city reports to national-level bodies using the latter's sets of indicators, and uses its own set of indicators, monitoring procedures and bodies. The city informs local stakeholders of the implementation of equality measures in individual key equality areas and/or with reference to groups at risk.

4. Effective communication

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
4.1. The city is not engaged in systematic communication on equality issues to raise the visibility of groups at risk and to inform the community of the city's efforts to reduce inequality.	4.2. The city publishes information materials (on websites, in official publications, on social networks, etc.) to improve the visibility of groups at risk in the community, to inform them of how they can access their rights, and on the city's measures aimed at reducing inequality.	4.3. The city organizes activities and public events, and publishes information materials particularly aimed at increasing the visibility of groups at risk and improving their awareness of how they can access their rights, and on the city's measures aimed at reducing inequality.	4.4. In addition to the publication of information and the organization of public events, the city enables and promotes two-way communication with community members to improve the visibility and participation of groups at risk in public life, to gain feedback to assist future programming, and to involve community members in efforts to reduce inequality in the city.

5. Evidence-based policies and services

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
<p>5.1. The city has no particular mechanisms to systematically develop equality measures based on objective information or data on the local community or on the relevant equality issues.</p>	<p>5.2. The city occasionally collects data on the profile of the local community and on the scope of inequalities within it, in one or a few key equality areas (education, health care, social welfare, employment, culture, housing, infrastructure, and participation in the political life of the community).</p>	<p>5.3. The city has adopted procedures and instruments (e.g. questionnaires, databases, etc.) to aid the evidence-based design of policies, measures, and services in the area of equality, and to evaluate and improve the accessibility and responsiveness of public services to individuals and groups at risk in at least one of the key services within the city's remit (for public services in which the city coordinates delivery, or has founding rights).</p>	<p>5.4. The city uses the adopted procedures and instruments (e.g. questionnaires, data bases, etc.) to aid the evidence-based design of policies, measures, and services in the area of equality, and to evaluate and improve the accessibility and responsiveness of public services to individuals and groups at risk in at least half of the key services within the city's remit (for public services in which the city coordinates delivery, or has founding rights).</p>

6. Human rights in service design and delivery

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
<p>6.1. The city has no particular mechanisms for the protection of human rights in public service delivery within the city's remit (for public services in which the city coordinates delivery, or has founding rights).</p>	<p>6.2. The city has started developing mechanisms (procedures, standards, bodies) to ensure the respect, protection, and promotion of human rights and the equal treatment of clients in public service delivery (for public services in which the city coordinates delivery, or has founding rights).</p>	<p>6.3. The city has developed and started implementing mechanisms (procedures, standards, bodies) to ensure the respect, protection, and promotion of human rights and equal treatment of clients in public service delivery (for public services in which the city coordinates delivery, or has founding rights).</p>	<p>6.4. The city has established specialized bodies, procedures and standards, and deploys them effectively to protect, respect and promote human rights and the equal treatment of clients in public service delivery (for public services in which the city coordinates delivery, or has founding rights).</p>

7. Human resource management in the city

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
7.1. The city has no particular policies or procedures to promote equality and protect human rights in recruitment or at work	7.2. The city has made provisions to ensure that the policies and procedures in recruitment and at work are fully aligned with relevant regulations and national equality policies.	7.3. The city has developed its own mechanisms to prevent the violation of labour rights and standards, to suppress workplace harassment, and has introduced additional procedures to promote equality in recruitment and at work.	7.4. The implementation of national and city-level human resource management measures and policies is effective in preventing the violation of labour rights and standards, workplace harassment, and in promoting equality in recruitment and at work.

8. Structures and mechanisms for participation

Level 1: Time to act	Level 2: We have started implementation	Level 3: We are achieving better results	Level 4: We are being effective
8.1. The city has not yet developed mechanisms for community participation in the development and implementation of local policies.	8.2. The city has put in place mechanisms and structures for engagement, such as stakeholder consultations, the participation of stakeholders in working-level bodies, and support to and/or funding of civil society organisations representing groups at risk in one or a few key equality areas (education, health care, social welfare, employment, culture, housing, infrastructure, and participation in the political life of the community).	8.3. The city has put in place mechanisms and structures for engagement, such as stakeholder consultations, the participation of stakeholders in working-level bodies, and support to and/or funding of civil society organisations representing groups at risk in most of the key equality areas (education, health care, social welfare, employment, culture, housing, infrastructure and participation in the political life of the community).	8.3. The city's mechanisms and structures for engagement are effective in promoting participation in stakeholder consultations in the process of adopting and implementing city decisions and public policies, the participation of representatives of groups at risk in working-level bodies, and the active engagement of civil society organisations representing groups at risk in most key equality areas, while key stakeholders in crucial equality areas are engaged in the process of creating and implementing the city agenda and policies.

Council of Europe 12 Principles of Good Governance⁴⁷

Principle 1: Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation

- Local elections are conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation, and without any fraud.
- Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life at local level.
- All men and women can have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests. Such broad participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.
- All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making, including over the allocation of resources.
- There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and on how this can be achieved.
- Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.

Principle 2: Responsiveness

- Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens.
- Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe.

Principle 3: Efficiency and effectiveness

- Results meet the agreed objectives.
- Best possible use is made of the resources available.
- Performance management systems make it possible to evaluate and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services.
- Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance.

Principle 4: Openness and transparency

- Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations.
- There is public access to all information which is not classified for well-specified reasons as provided for by law (such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures).
- Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public in such a way as to enable it to effectively follow and contribute to the work of the local authority.

47 · Council of Europe, “12 Principles of Good Governance and European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)”, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/12-principles-and-elope#%2225565951%22:0>

Principle 5: Rule of law

- The local authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions.
- Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially.

Principle 6: Ethical conduct

- The public good is placed before individual interests.
- There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption.
- Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions.

Principle 7: Competence and capacity

- The professional skills of those who deliver governance are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact.
- Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance.
- Practical methods and procedures are created and used in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results.

Principle 8: Innovation and openness to change

- New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision.
- There is readiness to pilot and experiment new programmes and to learn from the experience of others.
- A climate favourable to change is created in the interest of achieving better results.

Principle 9: Sustainability and long-term orientation

- The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies.
- The sustainability of the community is constantly taken into account.
- Decisions strive to internalise all costs and not to transfer problems and tensions, be they environmental, structural, financial, economic or social, to future generations.
- There is a broad and long-term perspective on the future of the local community along with a sense of what is needed for such development.
- There is an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which this perspective is grounded.

Principle 10: Sound financial management

- Charges do not exceed the cost of services provided and do not reduce demand excessively, particularly in the case of important public services.
- Prudence is observed in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue.
- Multi-annual budget plans are prepared, with consultation of the public.

- Risks are properly estimated and managed, including by the publication of consolidated accounts and, in the case of public-private partnerships, by sharing the risks realistically.
- The local authority takes part in arrangements for inter-municipal solidarity, fair sharing of burdens and benefits and reduction of risks (equalisation systems, inter- municipal co-operation, mutualisation of risks...).

Principle 11: Human rights, cultural diversity, and social cohesion

- Within the local authority's sphere of influence, human rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated.
- Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded.
- Social cohesion and the integration of disadvantaged areas are promoted.
- Access to essential services is preserved, in particular for the most disadvantaged sections of the population.

Principle 12: Accountability

- All decision-makers, collective and individual, take responsibility for their decisions.
- Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned.
- There are effective remedies against maladministration and against actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights.

This publication is not for sale and is distributed free of charge.