



EUROPEAN COALITION OF CITIES
AGAINST RACISM – ECCAR

10 POINTS ACTION PLAN
CITY OF GHENT 2015-2019

1) Description

The City of Ghent is Member of the ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities Against Racism) since 2007. In the framework of this membership, cities draft a 10-points-of-action plan thereby demonstrating the City's efforts to combat racism. When the city of Ghent joined the ECCAR in 2007, the Ghent 10-point-of-action plan was approved by UNESCO.

Ghent is an open, solidary, manner and child-friendly city. This is reflected in several policy decisions that focus on equal opportunities for all Ghent citizens.

Nevertheless, the City is not blind for the continued relevance of problems of discrimination in various domains. Hence, the City Board has chosen to draw up a new action plan for this term¹.

The 2013 Annual Report 'Discriminatie en Diversiteit' (Discrimination and Diversity) provides an overview and analysis of the reported complaints about discrimination to the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities² by discrimination motives and by social domains. In 2013, 118 reports were registered in Ghent. The main discrimination grounds were racial criteria. However, the number of official reports must be considered as being merely the tip of the iceberg.

In 2014, the Diversity Barometer Huisvesting³ (Housing) clearly demonstrated that discrimination on the rental market still exists. Some groups are more at risk of being discriminated than others. Men of non-Belgian origin and foremost people living from an allowance are often victims of discrimination on the rental market. This discrimination is partly determined by 'a certain sense of taste', but it is also connected to statistical discrimination based on prejudices. In 2013, Van der Bracht & Van de Putte conducted a field experiment, examining discrimination of first and second generation migrants in 581 rented houses in Antwerp and Ghent⁴. They concluded that one out of 6 tenants of first generation migrants were excluded. One out of 8 second generation migrants (whereby only the name differed from ethnical Belgian citizens) were excluded.

Also discrimination in other life domains is regularly reported. The annual report of the Antidiscrimination hotline shows that the housing and catering sector represent 51% of the complaints.

The VOLT television report 'Racism in nightlife' of March 2013 showed how a boy with a different ethnical background was repeatedly refused access to catering services. This was the starting point of an adjustment of the 2011 police regulations on porters activities in the Ghent catering industry.

The diversity barometer 'Werk'⁵ (Work) shows that a candidate of foreign origin is

¹ Policy document 'Gedeeld Gents Burgerschap' (Shared Ghent Citizenship) p.43

² Discriminatie en Diversiteit. Tijd voor een interfederaal actieplan tegen racisme. Jaarverslag 2013, Interfederaal Centrum voor Gelijke Kansen en bestrijding van discriminatie en racisme. (Discrimination and Diversity. Time for an interfederal action plan against racism. Annual Report 2013, Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities and the Struggle Against Discrimination and Racism.)

³ Diversiteitsbarometer Huisvesting, Interfederaal Gelijke Kansen Centrum, 2014. (Diversity Barometer Housing, Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities, 2014.)

⁴ Het not-in-my-property-syndroom. Etnische discriminatie op de huisvestingsmarkt, Koen Van Der Bracht en Bart Van De Putte, Universiteit Gent, 2013. (The not-in-my-property-syndrome. Ethnic discrimination in the housing market, Koen Van Der Bracht & Bart Van De Putte, Ghent University, 2013.)

⁵ Diversiteitsbarometer Werk, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansen en Racismebestrijding, 2012. (Diversity Barometer Work, Centre for Equal Opportunities and the Struggle Against Racism, 2012.)

6,6% more likely to suffer discrimination in comparison with a candidate of Belgian origin. Nearly 10% of the interrogated HR staff members confirm that the origin of the candidate influences the ultimate selection decision. 8% of the HR staff members indicate that candidates belonging to an ethnic minority will have to present better assets during an application interview. Hence, discrimination occurs in every phase of the selection procedure. Other research demonstrates that candidates with a non-Flemish (sounding) name have up to half less chances of being invited for an application interview⁶. A Turkish candidate has to conduct 44 % more applications to obtain the same number of positive reactions than a Flemish candidate.

Also in Education a lot still needs to be done in order to achieve equal opportunities for all children and youngsters. Education is potentially one of the most powerful levers for social participation of vulnerable groups and it is at the same time a powerful learning environment to teach children and youngsters how to deal with diversity.

This new action plan adopts a broad approach of discrimination. Where appropriate, specific actions are set up to counteract racism. This is based on the finding that discrimination often occurs simultaneously on several grounds (origin, wealth, language, gender,...). Structural subordination mechanisms are often similar for different grounds of discrimination. Yet, racism also has its own specific mechanisms, thus specific actions remain necessary.

For several life domains, concrete action plans will be set up in the coming years. They will be further elaborated on the agreed principles of this plan.

This document is the result of collaboration between various departments, that hereby express their commitment to the implementation and monitoring of the actions.

The 10-points action plan will be monitored by means of an annual consultation between all the involved departments. All actions will be screened and assessed. Furthermore, every department will monitor its own actions in the daily operation of the department. The Department of Social Cohesion and Welfare will act as director.

2) The 10-points action plan

The ECCAR action plan comprises 10 chapters, which are detailed on the basis of 4 tracks. Some of the 10 points included in the action plan are limited to one track, while other chapters contain various tracks.

The plan focuses on actions regarding discrimination and racism.

The 4 tracks are:

- 1) **Track 1: Information and advice:** providing information and/or advice to citizens, organisations,... concerning existing and relevant legislation, initiatives...
- 2) **Track 2: Sensitize:** sensitizing people/organisations for the equal treatment on all life domains with respect for the diversity of origin, civil status, disability, age, sexual preference...

⁶ Etnische discriminatie op de Vlaamse arbeidsmarkt voor schoolverlaters. Liever Jonas dan Okan?, Stijn Baert et al, 2013 (Ethnic discrimination on the Flemish labour market for school-leavers. Do you prefer John over Okan? Stijn Baert et al, 2013.)

- 3) **Track 3: Enforcement:** enforce regulations, e.g. by means of sanctions in case of non-compliance
- 4) **Track 4: Inventory and registration:** intended to submit policy proposals with respect to various policy levels.

1. Greater Vigilance regarding Racism

To set up a network for monitoring, guarding and cooperating in the struggle against racism at city level.

This action plan addresses various domains. Since the catering domain is not separately mentioned in the ECCAR template, we decided to list all actions with respect to the catering sector in this chapter. The actions hereunder will be elaborated and implemented to a maximum extent in alliance with the catering sector.

The majority of the Ghent catering establishments do not discriminate. On the contrary, many catering managers turn the diversity that characterizes the city into a strength. The Ghent unit of the Catering Federation is also actively engaged in counteracting discrimination in the catering sector.

Discrimination lies primarily (but not exclusively) in the nightlife. The porters regulations apply to those catering establishments.

The actions hereunder are elaborated and implemented to a maximum extent in consultation with the sector.

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 1.1 Enhance the willingness to report discrimination by means of a communication campaign: in the autumn of 2015, the Antidiscrimination hotline will initiate a comprehensive communication campaign to promote the text message number for reporting discrimination. Victims or witnesses of discrimination in the Ghent catering sector can easily report any refusals by sending a text message to the number 8989.

This text message system is unique in Flanders and was launched several years ago in Ghent. This system will be extended towards all discrimination motives and will consequently be deployed for other domains than the catering industry.

A broader announcement campaign will be set up to promote the Antidiscrimination hotline to all citizens. To this effect, we will cooperate with various partners, especially in the fields of youth work, education and with the civil society organisations.

Action 1.2 Initiate a panel-door policy: in view of establishing structural consultation between the Antidiscrimination hotline, the Cell Private Safety of the Police, the catering sector coach, catering managers and the public prosecutor. This measure aims at monitoring reports and obtaining compliance with the porters regulations⁷.

Track 3 Enforcement

Action 1.3 Target-oriented police control on catering establishments that carry out porters activities and must report any incidents.

The managers are compelled to visibly and permanently label the text message number as well as the e-mail address at the entrance of their catering establishment. Both initiatives were inspired on the police regulations on exercising porters activities

⁷ Politie reglement op het uitoefenen van portiers activiteiten aan Gentse horeca-inrichtingen. (Police regulations concerning porters activities at Ghent catering establishments.)

at Ghent catering establishments (2011). In case of non-compliance, the police is entitled to issue a Municipal Administrative Sanction ('GAS-boete').

Action 1.4 Annual assessment by means of a thematic assembly as regards the porters regulations and adjust/modify if necessary for the involved catering establishments.

Track 4 Inventory and registration

Action 1.5 Monitoring of reports. Further monitoring of the reports will be conducted by The Antidiscrimination hotline , in cooperation with the police and the catering sector coach. The data about the reports will annually be communicated to the local authority and the police.

2. Evaluating Racism and Discrimination and vetting the City's Policies

Collecting data on racism and discrimination, determining achievable objectives and common indicators in order to assess the impact of the City's policies.

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 2.1 Integrated Equal Opportunities policy: an Equal Opportunities method will be developed, whereby various policy domains of the city (housing, labour, education,...) will be screened and enhanced regarding the implementation of an equal opportunities policy. Process coaches from the Direction and Policy Support Cell of the Department of Social Cohesion and Welfare will draft an action plan in cooperation with the involved services.

The method comprises 3 phases:

1. During the first phase, the equal opportunities scan, a study group will make an overview of current actions that promote equal opportunities and will map the expected future challenges and blind spots.
2. Based on the scan and the participation sessions of the aforementioned study group, an action plan will be drafted in cooperation with representatives of the policy domain.
3. In order to monitor the action plan and to ensure its continuity, a learning network will be initiated for each policy domain. This network will: exchange good practices, closely follow up the action plan, create space for peer review, chart new needs, etc.

The ultimate goal of the equal opportunities method is to create an city-broad equal opportunities dynamic. Furthermore, an overview comprehending all city-internal initiatives will be made in order to advance equal opportunities and sharing expertise.

Track 4 Inventory and registration

Action 2.2 Continuously monitoring of reports about racism and discrimination. The Antidiscrimination hotline⁸ plays a crucial role in visualising this social cohesion problem. An improved visibility can induce a broader recognition of the problem and better government intervention. Simultaneously, the Antidiscrimination hotline tries to mobilise the largest possible number of actors and stakeholders to look together for appropriate solutions. Annual reports with recent data are communicated to the local authorities and the interested audience.

⁸ Since 2014, the Antidiscrimination hotline Ghent is part of the Interfederal Equal Opportunities Centre. This is an independent interfederal public institution, specialised in equal opportunities and non-discrimination policy. Its mission statement, based on Universal Human Rights, is to further equal opportunities and civil rights for all residents as well as counteracting any forms of discrimination. It is conducting this mission in terms of community development and in a spirit of dialogue, cooperation and respect.

⁹ Owing to the interfederal structure, the Centre became competent for regional and community affairs, and was anchored locally. Since then, the Antidiscrimination hotlines in 13 Flemish cities have become a part of the Centre.

3. Better support to Victims of Racism and Discrimination

To support victims and contribute to strengthening their capacity to defend themselves against racism and discrimination.

Track 1 Information and advice

Action 3.1 Antidiscrimination hotline. The possibility to report discrimination at a local level, diminishes the threshold for many citizens. The Office informs, promotes equal opportunities for all citizens and records reports of racism and discrimination.

A report submitted to the Antidiscrimination hotline differs from an official complaint lodged with the police or the criminal court. A report has no formal or coercive character. The services of the Antidiscrimination hotline are free of charge. It advises, initiates negotiations or provides assistance when legal actions are taken.

Action 3.2 The Bureau of Police Care of the Ghent Police Force

The main objective is to assist victims of crimes. This implies emotional support and short-term counselling, assistance and support during police investigations, informing, advising and referring to aid services.

Action 3.3 The 'Dienst Ombudsvrouw' (Ombudswoman) is at the disposal of citizens for second-line complaints and reports about a municipal office, the Public Social Welfare Centre, the Urban Development Office Ghent or the IVAGO waste disposal service. The Ombudswoman discreetly reviews the case in complete independence.

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 3.4 In the context of the city's Fund for diversity projects, civil society organisations can submit project applications, whereby priority is given to projects which are situated in the field of antidiscrimination.

4. More Participation and Better informed City Dwellers

Providing better information to citizens about their rights and obligations, about protection and legal options and about sanctions related to racist acts or behaviour, through a participatory approach, to wit in consultation with service institutions and their users.

Track 1 Information and advice

Action 4.1 Migration Information Point (Civil Affairs Office): the Information Point is at the disposal of all citizens with questions about residence statutes, residence procedures, labour cards, documents, translations...

Action 4.2 Civic Integration for Newcomers by IN-Gent vzw (IN-Gent ngo): this is an individual and tailor-made pathway. It contains a training programme (Social Orientation and Dutch language lessons) as well as individual assistance to newcomers. Furthermore, IN-Gent also promotes social participation by means of an extensive range of activities.

Migrants for whom civic integration courses are not compulsory or not allowed, can turn to the SenO (Samenleven en Oriënteren –Social cohesion and Orientation) project. This project enables people without legal residence status to be informed and oriented concerning various themes: residence rights, functioning of the Antidiscrimination hotline, health care, voluntary return...

Action 4.3 Advisory Board ethnic-cultural diversity (AD REM): the Advisory Board provides advice and recommendations to the City of Ghent and the Public Social Welfare Centre Ghent regarding policies that concern ethnic-cultural diversity. Advice is provided at the request of the municipal administration or is given on its proper initiative. The Advisory Board comprises representatives of the associations of ethnic-cultural minorities, representatives from the broad field of social and welfare organisations as well as individual experts.

Action 4.4 Diversity in youth work: additional efforts are made to enhance the access to and variety of activities during holidays, ('Pretfabriek', 'Pretkamjonet', playground activities...) and to enhance diversity within the operation of the tutors from the Youth Service and youth work in general. This is done by means of actions (training, information) that stimulate the flow of disadvantaged youth into mainstream youth work.

The objective is to let children and youngsters 'experience' diversity and to support tutors in dealing with diversity. From there, organisations are encouraged to reduce barriers in youth work for various target groups, tailored to the capacity of each organisation.

Action 4.5 International exchange: promote and facilitate international cooperation and intercultural encounters, destined to and organised by youngsters and the youth work in cooperation with JINT. The idea behind this is that positive interaction and stimulating encounters with others are key to a more tolerant society.

5. The City as an Active Supporter of Equal Opportunity Practices in the labour market

Facilitating equal opportunities regarding employment and supporting diversity in the labour market.

The City of Ghent is developing an action plan on equal opportunities in the workplace and intends to compass herewith as many labour market actors to cooperate with regard to:

- Enhancing equal access for all citizens
- Stopping discrimination on the Ghent labour market

We have opted to shape the plan by means of co-creation, directed by the City. The partners are: VDAB (Flemish Employment and Vocational Training Agency), project developers EAD SERR Ghent, Public Social Welfare Centre Ghent, VOKA (Flanders' Chamber of Commerce and Industry), VFU (Training Centre Fund for Temporary Employees), Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities, Work-Up, Randstad Diversity...

In Belgium, individuals of foreign origin still face some problematic situations in the labour market. This is confirmed by research of the National Bank of Belgium (NBB) (article published in the 'Economisch Tijdschrift' December 12th entitled 'The insertion of people of foreign origin into the labour market').

In 2011, the employment rate of non-European immigrants amounted to 45,8%. With this result, Belgium is lagging behind in the EU. The dissimilarity with the employment rate of native Belgian citizens even amounts to nearly 20%. Even people with equal socio-economic status can -in terms of job opportunities and salary- experience differences attributable to difficult measurable characteristics such as access to networks or knowledge of the functioning of the labour market. Recent studies of the European Commission (Eurobarometer as regards discrimination, 2012) and the Centre of Equal Opportunities (diversity barometer Work 2012) clearly demonstrate that individuals of foreign origin are discriminated.

Some of the actions that are further developed in collaboration with partners are:

Track 1 Information and advice

Action 5.1 Actively **approaching employers** concerning various training and employment measures, tailored to vulnerable groups.

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 5.2 Noticing the entrepreneurs about the **eDiv tool⁹ training**

Action 5.3 Actively approaching employees and job-seekers regarding **the willingness to report discrimination**, in close cooperation with the Antidiscrimination hotline of the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities.

Action 5.4 Facilitating the training 'recruit with an open mind' for employment agency consultants. **This training is made available through an open offer.**

⁹ <http://www.diversity.be/ediv-eeen-innovatieve-tool-om-diversity-ondernemingen-te-beheren>

Action 5.5 Creating a platform for companies on the basis of an own case about **reasonable adjustments** on behalf of people with a labour handicap. This action aims to help employers over the threshold when recruiting a person with a labour handicap.

Action 5.6 Mobilising the Ghent Service Checks enterprises, via the Service checks Platform, to inform their employees about the reporting possibilities for discriminatory statements by customers. Here, the Antidiscrimination hotline of the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities is invited to the Platform to illustrate the process and to inform the companies.

Track 4 Inventory and registration

Action 5.7 Systematic screening of vacancies for too high language requirements (in case of vacancies that are not managed by the VDAB¹⁰, but are under the direct control of an employer), in close cooperation with the VDAB. The responsible city manager will examine how to implement this procedure.

Experiences acquired from Jobkanaal reveal that the initially required command of language in a vacancy often does not correspond with the actual necessary command of knowledge. This is also confirmed by the VDAB. As a result, potential applicants drop out, and companies have no visibility at all suitable candidates who qualify for their job.

Action 5.8 Explore the possibilities to assess the non-discrimination clause in tenders: we intend to examine the effect of this clause within the organisations and enterprises with which the City of Ghent cooperates in the context of public procurements. The elaboration of this action will occur in close collaboration with the various employers and employees organisations.

Action 5.9 Investigating possible discrimination in Employment agencies: more specifically, a study will be conducted on imposed administrative and legal conditions (residence documents, labour cards,...) when recruiting non-Belgian citizens. This is done in close cooperation with the Employment agencies. Based on the results, a sensitizing and coaching role will be developed and performed by the City.

¹⁰ Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding. (Flemish Employment and Vocational Training Agency.)

6. The city as an employer and service provider, with a focus on equality

The city commits itself to: be an equal opportunities employer and an equitable service provider, invest in monitoring, training and development to achieve this goal.

Track 1 Information and advice

Action 6.1 Antidiscrimination hotline of the 'Interne Dienst voor Preventie en Bescherming op het Werk' (Internal Service for Prevention and Protection at Work): legislation concerning psychosocial risks stipulates that staff members also can submit a complaint about discrimination and racism in the workplace to the 'Interne Dienst voor Preventie en Bescherming op het Werk' (Internal Service for Prevention and Protection at Work).

Action 6.2 Clear information to City Staff: complementing the website with information on diversity, announcing actions through articles in the staff magazine, intranet,....

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 6.3 Trainings on diversity: offering customized trainings and integrating the diversity discourse in management and appraisal trainings.

Action 6.4 Organising sensitizing actions: continuous sensitize about the usefulness and value of diversity in the workplace and exciting attention to diversity, e.g. through: the DUO-day¹¹, news items on intranet at specific occasions (e.g. day against homophobia, day against racism), paying attention to diversity in the staff magazine Gent & co...

Track 3 Enforcement

Action 6.5 Integration of diversity in HR processes

- Permanent screening of the recruitment and selection procedures on direct or indirect discriminatory barriers (adverse impact). In 2013, the City and the University of Ghent, examined whether the City's selection procedures establish significant differences - which have an effect on the success rate- between certain groups. Based on those results, actions will be elaborated so that any effects can be remedied.
- Stronger emphasis on competence-oriented recruitment and where possible use experience and competency certificates when recruiting.
- Have the antidiscrimination declaration signed when recruiting new City staff personnel.

Track 4 Inventory and registration

¹¹ Day during which people with a labour handicap can follow an apprenticeship for one day in a service of the City of Ghent or at the Public Social Welfare Centre Ghent. This event is held annually in March.

Action 6.6 The City of Ghent and the Public Social Welfare Centre commit themselves, through the multiannual plans, to **increase the proportion of employees with a migration background**. In this context, specific target figures, will be determined on the basis of focused monitoring (with respect for the Privacy Law).

- In the staffing of the City and the Public Social Welfare Centre Ghent
- In the pool of applicants from the City and the Public Social Welfare Centre Ghent
- in the file of trainees from the City of Ghent

We will examine to what extent it is possible to include partner organisations in the monitoring.

Action 6.7 The screening of vacancies and selection procedures on the use of simple language. This is done in collaboration with the 'Huis van het Nederlands' (House of the Dutch). This action is unrelated to the provision around required Dutch language skills for certain functions.

7. Fair Access to Housing

Actively undertake actions in order to strengthen measures against discrimination as regards housing in the city.

The Diversity barometer 'Huisvesting'¹² (Housing) of 2014 demonstrated that individuals with a migration background, with a low income or living from an allowance are still discriminated when they seek housing. In cooperation with various services and actors in the housing market, an overview was made of on-going and new initiatives that contribute to increased access to the housing market. The spearheads are listed below.

Track 1 Information and advice

Action 7.1 Providing tailored information and interpretation to landlords, intermediates and citizen about anti-discrimination legislation and giving them practical tips about how to avoid or report discrimination.

Action 7.2 Cooperating with the private rental sector:

- providing information about antidiscrimination legislation
- promoting and distributing the standard information form for landlords and brokers¹³

Action 7.3 Training: integrating the antidiscrimination topic and the functioning of the Antidiscrimination hotline in the existing training offer of the City's Housing Office, the Public Social Welfare Centre, the Tenants Association, CIB¹⁴,

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 7.4 Increasing the willingness to report discrimination to the Antidiscrimination hotline via, inter alia, an awareness campaign towards the citizens. Thereby, the functioning and the mediation offer of the Antidiscrimination hotline will be promoted.

Action 7.5 Equal Treatment Protocol of the Province of East Flanders: the City participates in the working group and network of the Province of East Flanders in relation to the Equal Treatment Protocol of East Flanders. The City motivates Ghent landlords and brokers to endorse this Protocol.

Track 3 Enforcement

Action 7.6 Posting rents: monitoring, controlling and sanctioning regarding the compulsory posting of rents¹⁵.

Action 7.7 Addressing abuse: tackle abuses on the private rental market via

¹² Diversity barometer Huisvesting (Housing), Interfederal Equal Opportunities Centre

¹³ A standard information form about candidate-tenants, to be used by landlords and brokers. This form has been drafted by the BIV – Beroepsinstituut Van Vastgoedmakelaars (Professional Institution of Estate Agents).

¹⁴ Confederatie Immobiliënberoepen (Confederation of the Real Estate Professions).

¹⁵ Police regulations with respect to the compulsory mention of the charged rent and of the common expenses at each official or public announcement as regards rent of a property destined for housing in the private sector

cooperation between the Construction and Housing Inspection Office, District Police, MEPROSCH (human trafficking, prostitution and marriages of convenience), the Housing Office and the House Inspection.

Track 4 Inventory and registration

Action 7.8 Research: In consultation with various actors of the housing market (Confederation of Real Estate Professions Flanders, Professional Institution of Real Estate brokers, Tenants Association, Interfederal Equal opportunities Centre,...), the Ghent University will carry out a field study on discrimination in housing. On the basis of the results, specific follow-up actions will be developed with respect to the private rental sector. This enquiry will be effectuated by the Ghent University in consultation with various actors from the housing market.

Action 7.9 On-going monitoring of reported discrimination in the housing market by the Antidiscrimination hotline.

8. Combatting Racism and Discrimination Through Education

To strengthen measures against discrimination when accessing and when registered to all forms of education; Educating for mutual tolerance and understanding, as well as promoting intercultural dialogue.

Track 1 Information and advice

Action 8.1 Information Spot Education of IN-Gent vzw (NGO IN-Gent): this service provides accessible and user-friendly support to individual parents regarding their rights and obligations with respect to education. In itself, NGO IN-Gent is not one of the education providers and thus can perform this task from a cross-compartmentalisation position.

Action 8.2 A classroom on the site for travellers: on this terrain¹⁶ a classroom was built. Students from the teachers training of Artevelde Academy and Academy Ghent acquaint the residing children with school and learning.

Action 8.3 Mediators in primary and secondary education: through this cross-compartmentalisation mediators project the City of Ghent invests in improving the relationship between the school and the families and in mutual understanding of school and home culture. The mediators focus on informing and sensitizing in a direct and accessible way, and on strengthening parents and pupils in their relationship to the school and the neighbourhood.

Track 2 Sensitize

Action 8.4 Social cohesion on the playground: various studies¹⁷ show that there is a big mental and social distance between different groups of pupils at school. This generates tensions between various (ethnic) groups on the playground. Some Ghent schools will be elaborating actions to make this topic negotiable.

Action 8.5 Domain of ideological subjects: set up cooperation with respect to ideological subjects and practices, racism, discrimination and language at home .

Action 8.6 Multilingualism: Dutch is the official language in our schools. However, we respectfully deal with the languages pupils speak at home. By means of a powerful language policy, we provide better well-being of the pupils and we commit to teaching Dutch.

Track 3: Enforcement

Action 8.8 Guideline for teachers in the Municipal Education Ghent: since 2014, the 'IVA Stedelijk Onderwijs Gent' (Internally Privatized Municipal Education Agency Ghent) has a renewed mission statement and vision, elaborated in a guideline for teachers. Based on this guideline, the municipal schools are pursuing openness and respect for diversity.

The new mission statement reads as follows: *'The Department of Education,*

¹⁶ An area where traveller groups and communities can stay, managed by the City of Ghent.

¹⁷ JOP monitor and research of the Flemish Pupil umbrella organisation and the Catholic University of Leuven (UCL) (2014)

Upbringing and Youth intends to create optimum learning and development opportunities and effectuate the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the child- and youth-friendly City of Ghent. It achieves a qualitative and innovative offer in a pluralistic, democratic and people-friendly environment, supported by a thoughtful organisation.' All teachers of Municipal Education Ghent endorse this mission statement which is also part of the job description and assessment.

Action 8.9 Enforcing educational Rights. The Local Consultation Platform on Education (LOP) has a mediating role in achieving Equal Educational Opportunities. When problems related to refusal, capacity or referral of pupils occur, the LOP can assume a mediating role. If the LOP can't find a solution and if the educational Rights are likely to be violated, then reference is made to the competent authorities responsible for enforcement.

9. Promoting Cultural Diversity

Ensuring equivalent representation; promoting the wide range of cultural expressions and heritage of citizens in the cultural programming, collective memory and public space of the city government; and promoting interculturality in city life.

Track 2 Sensitize

Diversity as a major focus of cultural policy:

Action 9.1 Through the structural financial support, cultural houses are asked to take the demographically diverse composition of the City of Ghent into account in their operation and to pay attention to the participation of as many Ghent citizens as possible.

Action 9.2 Through the assessment of the project-based financial support, the way cultural houses deal with urban diversity and with contemplation of inclusion is taken into account.

Action 9.3 A charter is being drafted **with particular attention to diversity**, both in the own operation of the organisation and in supporting the cultural sector as a whole.

Action 9.4 Intercultural Centre De Centrale: De Centrale is an intercultural organiser of (stage) arts, an open house that offers the floor to the (often hidden) artistic expressions that arise from the cultural diversity in Ghent, Flanders and Brussels. In this way, the Centrale builds bridges within and between the diverse communities.

Action 9.5 The ‘Audience worker’ project:

An important key to greater diversity in the cultural sector is to provide opportunities to people with different ethnic-cultural backgrounds, thus allowing them to move up towards employment in this sector. That is why we continue the ‘Audience worker’ project: people with diverse ethnic-cultural backgrounds can, as part of their training, gain work experience in the cultural sector. Specifically, they are engaged in the public operation of various cultural institutions of the City (De Centrale, Circa, museums, etc.). Their work includes reaching a diverse audience within the cultural houses.

Action 9.6 Heritage project ‘Bestemd voor Gent’ (Destined to Ghent):

This project aims to record the stories, rituals and traditions of citizens with a migration background and to open this knowledge to a large audience. All the stories focus on living in the City of Ghent and on the strength and the courage needed for a new beginning in a foreign environment.

10. Hate crime and Conflict Management

To support existing or establish new methods to cope with hate crimes and conflicts.

Track 1 Information and advice.

Action 10.1 Raise awareness to police and judicial actors concerning the Circular letter Col13/2013, in which instructions are listed for a coherent prosecution policy on discrimination and hate crimes. Except clarifying the legislation and the expectations towards the magistrates, the Circular also describes how the police can help to improve the investigation and prosecution of discrimination and hate crimes. In this context, the Antidiscrimination hotline will establish a working group, consisting of police officers and magistrates.

Action 10.2 Inform judicial services, professionals and citizens about victim-offender mediation and restorative justice. The Antidiscrimination hotline is striving to develop alternative measures in the fight against discrimination and hate crimes.

Action 10.3 Importance of working with minors: developing an educational project that focusses on hate crimes and discrimination. By adequately dealing with minors, serious offences on a later age can be prevented.

Track 4 Inventory and registration

Action 10.4 In collaboration with the police and the reference magistrate on racism, the Antidiscrimination hotline identifies the number of cases involving hate crimes and hate speech and indicates which files may have been eligible for extrajudicial and judicial mediation.