

International Intercultural Cities Comparative Study

EVENT REPORT

Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada (June 09, 2022)

I. Description of the event : Sherbrooke Activity

The discussion event was held in a conference room at the city of Sherbrooke's Sports, Culture and Community Life Department. In the morning, representatives from the city were brought together to talk about the diversity management model of the Intercultural City. In the afternoon, practitioners from community organizations in Sherbrooke were brought together to discuss the intercultural approach in municipal and community settings. The questions and exchanges were aimed at identifying how these actors understand the intercultural approach, how it is translated into policies and practices, and what are the issues and challenges that allow the implementation of intercultural practices.

In general, the discussions of the city representatives and the practitioners came back to the same problems and issues concerning the intercultural approach in Sherbrooke. First of all, it was clear to both municipal and community actors that theoretical interculturalism diverges from practical interculturalism. Discussions touched on the difficulty of accessing resources and the competitive climate that exists between municipal and community actors. Both groups of actors are concerned about the emergence of cultural ghettos and the barrier represented by the use of the French language in the city's official communications and in the provision of services. In this sense, the two focus groups highlighted the fact that the city of Sherbrooke does not have a consensus on the status of its inhabitants: for example, in the case of immigrants and people from culturally diverse backgrounds, it is not known whether these people are considered full-fledged Sherbrooke residents. The actors had difficulty identifying the identity of the city of Sherbrooke, and it emerged that the vision of the city of living together seems to be shared and poorly assumed. The divergence of approaches between the federal, provincial and municipal governments and the difficulty of concerted intercultural action and communication were also discussed, in addition to the tensions that this creates between the levels of actors. The issue of the lack of communication between the city and the community and the university environment was raised. Finally, the participants agreed that the participation of the majority group in intercultural rapprochement activities needs to be worked on.

II. Programme

Programmation
Atelier sur les Villes Interculturelles
Sherbrooke, 9-10 juin 2022

9 juin

Journée 1 (Discussions de groupe, en présentiel)

Équipe organisatrice : Roukayatou Abdoulaye, Sophie Thibodeau, Bob W. White

9 h30	Bienvenue et introduction <i>Étude comparative internationale des villes interculturelles (IICCS)</i>
9 h45	Discussion 1 avec les représentants de la Ville (fonctionnaires) Thème : Expériences et connaissances sur la manière dont l'interculturalisme est mis en œuvre dans la ville
11h00	Discussion 2 avec les représentants de la Ville (fonctionnaires) Thème : Explorer des manières selon lesquelles l'interculturalisme pourrait être renforcé
12h15	Dîner avec partenaires et fonctionnaires
13h30	Discussion 1 avec les partenaires (praticiens) Thème : Expériences et connaissances sur la manière dont l'interculturalisme est mis en œuvre dans la ville
15h00	Pause
15h15	Discussion 2 avec les partenaires (praticiens) Thème : Explorer des manières selon lesquelles l'interculturalisme pourrait être renforcé
16h45	Fin de la journée

10 juin

Journée 2 (Plénière avec tous les participants, par Zoom)

Équipe organisatrice : Roukayatou Abdoulaye, Sophie Thibodeau, Bob W. White

9 h00	Retour sur l'atelier avec constats préliminaires et discussion
10h30	Mot de clôture (Ville de Sherbrooke, LABRRI, autres)