Strong Cities Network

Event Report

Transatlantic Dialogue Initiative

Maintaining Community Cohesion in the Midst of Global Crises: The Role of Mayors and Cities

Bratislava, Slovakia
6 – 7 March 2024

Summary

On 6 – 7 March 2024, the Strong Cities Network convened more than 40 mayors and local government practitioners as well as national government, civil society and multilateral representatives from Central and Eastern Europe, Germany and North America, as well as officials from multilateral partners, to share experiences, lessons learned and good practices in maintaining social cohesion in the midst of global crises, such as migration, climate change and the Russia-Ukraine war, among others. Hosted at Bratislava City Hall, the workshop was supported by the U.S. Department of State and held in partnership with the City of Bratislava and Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia. It was part of a broader series of transatlantic dialogues under our Transatlantic Dialogue Initiative to facilitate greater cooperation among European and North American cities on city-led solutions to hate, polarisation and violent extremism.

During the two days, participants discussed the varied impacts of these global crises on their cities and how largely unchecked mis/disinformation and conspiracy theories are exacerbating tensions and divides. Topics addressed during the workshop included: 1) the role of local leaders in safeguarding local democracy and mitigating the impact of global

crises on communities; 2) maintaining social cohesion and stability in European and North American cities; 3) balancing the needs of Ukrainian refugees and other new arrivals and long-time residents of cities; 4) city-led crisis response strategies; and 5) the role of cities in addressing the rise of hate speech and mis/disinformation, particularly during elections.

During the event, Strong Cities signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Parliament of Mayors. This partnership will strengthen efforts by the two organisations to elevate the voices of mayors and other local leaders and harness the power of cities to address global and regional challenges, including hate, polarisation and violent extremism.

Three key themes emerged from these discussions:

1. **Managing the Influx of Refugees and Other New Arrivals through Collaborative, Comprehensive and Data-Driven Approaches.** Since most cities were unprepared for the unprecedented influx of refugees following the Russia-Ukraine war, they were forced to develop innovative approaches for integration, inclusion and service provision as they continue to seek to maintain social cohesion during this crisis. The approaches were based on data-driven collaborative efforts among relevant local government and community-based stakeholders, easy access of resources and information for the new arrivals, including through multi-pronged "one-stop-shop" service provision, and a commitment to the principle of "Do No Harm".

2. **Enhancing City-led Responses to Address Hate and Polarisation Fueled by Mis/Disinformation.** Local governments are often well-placed to convene diverse groups across their city to address these challenges. This includes not only creating a space for dialogue and mediating tensions between opposed communities, but also creating a united identity for the city, for example, through strategic public communications campaigns. Additionally, cities can leverage existing networks and capacities at the community level to engage hard to reach groups and individuals. This places a premium on prioritising investments in these relationships and partnerships so that they are in place should a crisis emerge.

3. **Responding to Hate and Violent Extremist Incidents while Building Community Resilience through Coordination and Long-Term Social Impact.** Mayors need to be prepared: they should have a plan in place that is rooted in fostering unity, resilience and recovery to address hate and violent extremist incidents and other crises, including those fueled or exacerbated by public panic, humanitarian fatigue and historical tensions that can (further) polarise communities. The plan should emphasise the importance of clear, consistent and coordinated communication with both government officials and local communities. It should also recognise the important role that local government can play in facilitating coordination among the different government and community-based organisations working to address the immediate and long-term needs of victims and their families following an incident and in de-escalating tensions within and between communities and between residents and the local authorities. Further, while prioritising the immediate needs of those impacted, the plan should also take into account the *medium- and long-term* needs of the victims, families and communities with a view to ensuring that all aspects of the plan bear in mind the need to strengthen unity and community resilience across the city more broadly.

Threats, Key Challenges & City Needs

Participants' key concerns stemmed from the ways in which global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the Israel-Gaza crisis, have impacted social cohesion and stability in their local contexts. **Mayor Matus Vallo (City of Bratislava, Slovakia)** noted in his opening remarks, "Since I have become mayor, one crisis followed another. A year into my tenure, the pandemic began. And my hardest day in office so far has been 24 February 2022, which led to the Ukrainian refugee crisis." These challenges have not only impacted cities in Central and Eastern Europe, such as Bratislava, but also municipalities across Europe more broadly and in North America, which face similar capacity strains on government, and community-based organisations to address social unrest and polarisation.

Workshop discussions focused particular attention on challenges related to the **influx of diverse refugee populations, how public demonstrations are exploited by malign actors to spread hate and fear, and growing trends of hate speech and mis/disinformation in connection to electoral processes.** Participants from both sides of the Atlantic emphasised how these complex issues **exacerbate real or perceived social or economic inequalities within communities.**

For example, **Tomasz Fijolek (Director of Legislative Affairs, Union of Polish Metropolises, Poland)** noted that Poland's current housing crisis was compounded by the surge in Ukrainian refugees in the country. **Anna Valencia (City Clerk, Chicago, Illinois, United States)** echoed that while providing housing and basic services for new South American, Ukrainian and Afghan migrants is a priority, it has also been a challenge given existing strains on resources impacting local populations with similar needs. In many cases migrants and refugees were targeted by bad actors to create an image that they have been prioritised over the local population, igniting or exacerbating inter-community tensions. **Tammy Mayberry (Chief of Staff, City of Rochester, New York, United States)** highlighted that the longstanding history of racism in Rochester has multiplied the impact of "othering" against vulnerable groups during times of social and economic crises.

To address these intersecting issues, participants highlighted the need for **dedicated city-led trust-building and strategic communications efforts** that meaningfully involve actors from across city government departments, community-based organisations, law enforcement and the private sector. This would not only improve information-sharing and public service provision, but also perceptions and understanding among local populations during periods of heightened social divisions.

Several cities in Central and Eastern Europe shared how they are facing **waning support from their central governments for or, in some contexts direct pushback against,** city-led initiatives focused on strengthening social integration and pluralism. Participants said that this underscores how cities are increasingly a bulwark against the erosion of local governance and democracy, which is being threatened by some national leaders.

In Hungary, participants said the national government is not only "creeping into cities' competencies" but also contributing to the vulnerability of migrant, LGBTQ+ and certain other communities. This has impacted the work of civil society and community-based organisations and activists, which has at times been framed by the central government as "anti-national agents". In other Central and Eastern European countries, cities are grappling

with significant cuts in funding, not only from national government authorities but also international actors that are supporting local initiatives.

With support from the national level often on the decline, **Eric Rosand (Executive Director, Strong Cities Network)** noted that **cities and mayors are increasingly looking horizontally** to other cities for support when they cannot rely on their capitals. Strong Cities facilitates these vital connections and opportunities for knowledge-sharing, as exemplified in the insights exchanged during the workshop.

"The impact of global crisis reverberates in our local societies, making the work of cities crucial."

Tamara Sternberg-Greller, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy Bratislava

Key Themes

1. Managing the Influx of Refugees and other New Arrivals through Collaborative, Comprehensive and Data-Driven Approaches

Cities across Europe and North America are having to manage the influx of refugees and other new arrivals, including those fleeing from violence and persecution in their home countries. **Monika Pochron-Frankowska (National Liaison Officer, International Organization for Migration, Poland)** noted that more than 950,000 Ukrainian refugees currently reside in Poland, while **Mayor Matus Vallo (Bratislava, Slovakia)** shared that 150,000 refugees had received humanitarian services in Bratislava since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022. Meanwhile, **Ricardo Gambetta (Director of International and Refugee Affairs, City of Aurora, Colorado, United States)** highlighted that more than 40,000 South American migrants arrived in **Aurora** in the past year alone, even though the city's mechanism and resources allow it to only support 800 – 1000 refugees in any given year.

Across these examples and more, participants stressed that **most cities were unprepared** to handle such large and unprecedented waves of new arrivals. City officials and community actors are being pushed to be **innovative in their integration, inclusion and service provision approaches** for new communities while managing the needs and perceptions of existing ones to maintain social cohesion across the city.

City leaders underscored the importance of **collaborative efforts** to reach out to migrant communities needing support and that **accessibility of resources and information** must be prioritised. Ricardo Gambetta noted, "You need to make an extra effort to reach out to every different person in the city", adding that the **City of Aurora** did this through city council meetings and working with foreign language media platforms to reach diverse demographic groups.

Although not specifically directed at new arrivals, the **City of Reno (Nevada, United States)** adopted similar efforts through the Reno Constituent Institute, as highlighted by **Ashley Turney (Assistant City Manager, Reno)**. The institute's ten-week programme helps

constituents learn about local government processes, and in turn, allows them to become messengers for local processes and opportunities within their communities. Other local government workshop participants said they would look to replicate this programme in their city.

Officials from **Chicago (Illinois, United States)** and **Aurora (Colorado, United States)** also underscored the importance of meeting people where they are and using diverse engagement methods and tools to do so. **Julian Becker (Principal Advisor for Civil Society Matters, City of Dortmund, Germany)** emphasised the importance of having local government representatives meet new arrivals or other residents who might not be comfortable attending a meeting in City Hall in their "second living room", i.e., places where they typically gather outside their home and feel secure.

Participants also mentioned the importance of being sensitive to the perceptions of local communities and ensuring the vulnerability of migrant groups is not augmented by government efforts. For example, **Tammy Mayberry** shared that identification lanyards given to migrants arriving from across the southern border unintentionally raised their likelihood to be targeted in **Rochester (New York, United States)**. A "**Do No Harm**" approach is best suited here, as recommended by Strong Cities' policy brief on Navigating Local Impacts of Global Crises: Ten Considerations for Mayors and Cities.

Aurora (Colorado, United States) will be launching an online app to help migrants access resources and services, while Chicago (Illinois, United States) developed community volunteer networks that work with between 500 – 600, mainly immigrant and women, "community navigators" to share information about legal aid, employment rights, accessing city resources and more, with migrant populations in their native languages. While these programmes and approaches were introduced in the context of assisting migrants and refugees, the abovementioned cities are deploying them for broader community engagement.

Participants shared the benefits of a **multi-pronged, wrap-around approach** to providing services, including built-in access to psychosocial care, shelter and economic opportunities. **Katarina Markova (Head Coordinator of Assistance Center for Foreigners, Department of the Support for People with Foreign Background, City of Bratislava, Slovakia)** spotlighted **Bratislava's community center** that served as a "one stop shop" and first point of contact for Ukrainian refugees. She advocated for such safe spaces to not only better collect data, but also offer comprehensive services related to housing, healthcare and key government support. The center currently receives 200 visitors each day and is now focusing on long-term integration and inclusion efforts. **Martin Barčik (Coordinator for Prevention and Social Inclusion, City of Žilina, Slovakia)** pointed to a similar integrative effort through the **Žilina Lighthouse Center**, supported by UNHCR, and **Monika** shared that the **IOM** has also incorporated mental health support and intercultural mediation. Finally, participants highlighted how cities require **strong and accurate data** to develop clear and proactive messaging strategies and initiatives for refugees and asylum seekers. **Tomasz Fijolek** shared that the **Union of Polish Metropolises** has supported Polish cities in this regard by being the first organisation in the country to formally document (and share) the number of Ukrainians residing in Poland and identify the cities which they are staying. Continuously gathering this data is crucial to allow cities to periodically review and update their integration plans.

"Today, we need to focus not on needs, but approaches. Thank you to everyone around table who has contributed to saving Ukrainian lives through their efforts."

Andriy Moskalenko, First Deputy Mayor of Lviv, Ukraine

City of Bratislava, Slovakia

- **Challenge:** Since the Russia-Ukraine war in February 2022, Bratislava experienced an influx of thousands of refugees on its territory. Even though the capital of Slovakia was home to much of the country's foreign population, the city administration was not prepared and did not have the adequate capacities and resources to accommodate the needs of the high number of people arriving at its main train station. The City of Bratislava had to respond to different needs of the new arrivals including material support, documentation, housing, health care, education and employment. In addition to the immediate needs of refugees, local authorities also had to address integration challenges of thousands of refugees that settled in the city.

- **Approach:** To respond to this crisis, the City of Bratislava developed a comprehensive approach to respond to both immediate and medium to long term needs of Ukrainian refugees while maintaining social cohesion in the city.

    1. **Capacities and Resources**: In the weeks following the first arrivals of Ukrainian refugees, the City of Bratislava allocated and mobilised resources from its various departments for crisis management and coordination. To ensure a comprehensive strategic city response the created and filled a position for coordinating integration of foreigners which by the end of 2022 turned into a full department.
    2. **Addressing Immediate Needs**: Since most refugees were arriving by public transport, the city set up a point of first contact and support stand at the Main Train Station in Bratislava to provide people with information about the possibilities of staying and navigating the city. In just over a month the local government launched a Support and Information Centre to provide information related to legal stay in the country, temporary accommodation and guidance on social services, education, employment and other services.
    3. **Partnerships and Community Engagement**: A core component of Bratislava's response to this crisis was partnering with and leveraging the capacities and networks of civil society, community-based and multilateral organisations to support Ukrainians. For instance, the Bratislava City Foundation launched a grant scheme for larger and smaller non-governmental organisations to support local projects dedicated to support

the integration of Ukrainians. Additionally, it partnered with UNHCR to help address the immediate needs of refugees such as housing, and with UNICEF to provide education to Ukrainian children.

- **Impact:** Despite limited capacities, resources and preparedness to respond to the influx of new arrivals, Bratislava was able to launch a coordinated response and support the immediate needs as well as settlement and integration of nearly 35,000 Ukrainian refugees (close to 7% of Bratislava's total population). At its height, the Support and Information Centre received visits from 2,000 people daily, while it currently supports the needs of around 200 people per day. It functions as a one-stop-shop that provides crisis accommodation (up to 48 hours), obtaining temporary refugee status, legal advice, psycho-social support, health care and additional support provided by civil society and multilateral organisations.

City of Bratislava: https://bratislava.sk/en
Mareena:
1. Summary and recommendations from qualitative research analysis: People from Ukraine in Slovak cities
2. Situational analysis of the first year of assistance to people from Ukraine in Slovak cities
3. Priorities for the integration of refugees in Slovak cities
4. Recommendations from civil society organisations on Integration of people from Ukraine

Other city examples:

- City of Lviv, Ukraine: Providing Shelter and Housing to Internally Displaced People
- IOM, Poland: Integration Snapshot (2023).
- Aurora (Colorado, United States): Immigrant and Refugee Commission
- Chicago (Illinois, United States): Office of Immigrant, Migrant and Refugee Rights
- National Democratic Institute, Poland: Polish and Ukrainian Attitudes on the Ukrainian Community in Poland (2023)

2. Enhancing City-led Responses to Address Hate and Polarisation Fueled by Mis/Disinformation

In 2024, half of the world's population is voting, notably against a backdrop of **intensified polarisation and mis/disinformation trends globally**. **Filipe Fernandes (Advisor to the Mayor, City of Braga, Portugal)** reported how public opinion in Portugal around this year's elections is increasingly shaped by polarised, online debates on "imported" global issues. **Tariq Tyab (Co-founder, Foundation for a Path Forward, Canada)** highlighted the role of foreign state actors, such as China and Russia, in influencing voter sentiments in Canada and contributing to societal polarisation. Cities are at the frontlines of preventing and de-escalating inter-communal tensions, as well as addressing narratives and groups that openly spread hate. For example, **Mayor Thomas Zenker (Zittau, Germany)** noted that his city faces frequent problematic protests, often fueled by mis/disinformation, that have emboldened far-right groups.

Participants agreed that cities are in a unique position to contribute to addressing these challenges, including by leveraging their ability to convene **diverse groups for "tough conversations"** to help dispel misconceptions, build trust or de-escalate tensions. **Deputy Mayor of Budapest Gabor Kerbel-Fronius** said that "the problem is that these differences are entrenched. Creating places and opportunities where people can meet, such as through voluntary or community work, will decrease social tension and allow people to cooperate regardless of their differences." In **Krakow, Poland**, the [Open Krakow Program](#), an advisory board to the city, serves as an example of this, as it brings different ethnic and religious minorities together to meet and provide feedback on how city plans will impact local communities. Unifying efforts across community lines can also take shape through **strategic public communications campaigns**, as seen in the [One Chicago campaign](#) led by the city in response to anti-immigrant sentiment. Anna Valencia stressed the need to revive this campaign with the new wave of migrant arrivals and leaning on public relations firms to amplify these efforts.

In **Canada**, **Bill C-63: The Online Harms Act** was passed to reduce harmful content on social media platforms. Tariq Tyab highlighted that civil society organisations' efforts are key to ensuring that these necessary legislative measures are **complimented with direct community engagement**. **Foundation for a Path Forward**, for example, offers online harms workshops to young students and senior citizens, who are more susceptible to mis/disinformation, and connects city officials to school boards on these matters to build cross-stakeholder buy-in. Tariq shared that city support for such efforts increases when there is **allied support** from different ethnic, religious and gender groups underpinning them.

Several cities, such as in Poland and Hungary, however, are facing the threat of **state-sponsored misinformation**, for which cities lack strategies to counter locally. **Zuzana Papazoski (Senior Resident Director for Poland and Central Europe, National Democratic Institute, Poland)** shared that cities across the region have led social media campaigns or used platforms such as city radio, TV and posters in tram stations to communicate with the public, but often find it difficult to moderate conversations online. More **proactive rather than reactive city-led practices** are needed, as outlined by **Ashley Turney**. She shared that "the City of Reno has a TikTok account and we produce memes and sponsored ads on Facebook. Even if it's unconventional and scary, we take an active approach in social media, because there is more engagement and allows us to better connect with younger generations who can help mitigate online disinformation".

In addition to facing serious challenges with addressing mis/disinformation, cities are also grappling with the proliferation of hate during public gatherings and protests. **Marta V. Naszalyi, Mayor of the Municipality of Budavar (District I, Budapest, Hungary),** pointed out that her district has attracted hate and extremist groups from throughout the country and the region more broadly at the "Day of Honor" celebration, which commemorates the deaths of more than 10,000 German and Hungarian soldiers and civilians trying to break through the Soviet Buda Castle siege in 1945 with the display of Nazi banners, slogans and uniforms. Last year, this contentious anniversary inspired violent clashes between far-right and far-left groups.

To counter this, **Mayor Naszalyi** explained that her municipality has been working with historians to create a commemorative street exhibition that creates a platform for dialogue, counters historical revisionism and provides closure to the victims of Buda. She added that

"dealing with trauma does not give one permission to use violence and cause fear. Obeying *t*he law is just as important as processing the past."

"In my opinion there is no single path to mitigate extremism. I am sure of two things, however – we must not consolidate power through ignorance and we must not try to benefit from hatred."

Marta V. Naszalyi, Mayor of the Municipality of Budavar, (Hungary)

Other city examples:

- Lubin, Krakow and Wroclaw, Poland: [Joint Counter-Narratives and Mapping out Local Context of Hate Speech](#) (Intercultural Cities)
- Bardejov, Slovakia: [Community Foundation](#)
- [Foundation for a Path Forward](#), Vancouver (British Columbia, Canada): Coding in Colour
- National Democratic Institute, Poland: [Large Cities in CEE - Communication with Citizens and Public Participation](#) (2021)

3. Responding to Hate and Violent Extremist Incidents while Building Community Resilience Through Coordination and Long-Term Social Impact

Participants discussed how city leaders' responses to hate-motivated and violent extremist incidents must be rooted in **fostering unity, resilience and rehabilitation**, bearing in mind the need to address challenges fueled by public panic and historical inter-communal tensions.

The need for **clear, coordinated and open communication** is key in city-led crisis response strategies. For example, **Mayor Nancy Rotering (Highland Park, Illinois, United States**) shared how her city's communication strategy shifted in the wake of [**2022 Highland Park parade mass shooting**](#). "In the days that followed, my role evolved from first being the face of horror to 'here is what we going to do to moving forward'." Her role centered on engaging directly with the community with compassion, while being a consistent and trusted source of information for them and other relevant actors.

Martin Královič (Security Advisor to the Mayor, City of Bratislava, Slovakia) also shared how he navigated the difficult task of coordinating communication between the mayor, other cities, state police, the national crime agency and citizens following the [**2022 attack**](#) on the LGBTQ+ community at Tepláreň Bar. Coordination between the city and law enforcement was especially important after the incident because the perpetrator was still at-large and the local government needed to ensure the safety of (and reassure) residents in the vicinity of the attack and other parts of Bratislava.

Petr Pešek (Advisor to the Mayor, City of Prague, Czech Republic) underscored the importance of learn from each violent incident to improve public safety and crisis response. For example, although the police and other rescue teams reacted swiftly during [**2023**](#)

[Charles University shooting](#), there is room for improvement in terms of how the city responds to such events in the future. For instance, the city had a crisis plan, but it was outdated and did not include the protection of soft targets ,such as educational institutions. He said the local government is currently working on improving its crisis management plans by developing a new methodology for safety.

Cities can also play a **key coordination role when engaging with different community-based organisations and public sectors** that are crucial to responding to crises. For example, **Julian Becker** shared how, "in Dortmund, we had a drug pandemic where we tried to bring every side together — including groups responsible for prevention, urban planning and social work. Having them all in one room and on the same page with their different efforts was important to reach our shared goal. We try to speak with one voice." **Mayor of Zittau Thomas Zenker** encouraged greater city engagement with NGOs, churches and politically engaged groups, highlighting, "[t]hey are a big part of our cities and especially in key moments when you need help." **Maja Zabokrzycka (President, Foundation House of Peace, Wroclaw, Poland)** offered the example of her NGO, which cooperates with the municipality of Wroclaw to build dialogues among polarised groups, particularly since the Ukrainian crisis. Participants concluded that providing a platform for dialogue and giving voice to the voiceless is crucial for building social cohesion and community resilience.

These efforts often require **maintaining a long-term view about positive social outcomes** that will outlive any particular political administration. Participants noted that changing mindsets among public leaders about the value of long-term, community-based engagement is necessary, which might require drawing on leaders' motivations for legacy building or doing passion-driven work.

The **City of Lviv** (Ukraine) is a powerful example of a local government committing to supporting the long-term rehabilitation of victims of war and recovery of communities. The city's [Unbroken](#) **initiative** developed an entire ecosystem to provide wounded Ukrainians with prosthetic surgeries, rehabilitation, and psychosocial support. **Dave Fortier (President & Founder, One World Strong Foundation, United States)** reflected on how he "saw the power of a city to help people move forward. Lviv is an inspiration for its commitment to not leave people on their own. There are 150,000-200,000 internally displaced people currently in Lviv, but the mayor sees every single person as *theirs."*

Strong Cities Network

City of Lviv, Ukraine

- **Challenge:** Since the start of the Ukraine crisis in February 2022, more than two million people passed through or stayed in Lviv. While many of them have left, more than 200,000 have temporarily settled in the city, which had a population of around 725,000 prior to the war. While the city has made significant efforts to find shelter, the city's resources are stretched to accommodate the newcomers' needs. At the same time, while Lviv has generally been unaffected by violence and conflict, it has experiences occasional attacks, including one in early 2024 which destroyed a school and residential building Additionally, the city has been targeted by disinformation about Ukrainians arriving from the east to diminish social cohesion. The longer the war lasts the more challenging it will be for Lviv and other cities in Ukraine to recover and rebuild.

- **Approach:** Despite the severe challenges and circumstances that the City of Lviv and its residents find themselves in, the mayor and the local government he leads are committed to providing a united front in addressing communities' pressing needs.

    1. **Data Gathering:** The city prioritised data gathering to better understand the needs of their (new) residents and develop appropriate responses and initiatives. For example, more than 5,000 pregnant women from eastern Ukraine arrived in Lviv; hence, the city had to act immediately and provide them with the necessary access and resources.
    2. **Social Cohesion:** The local administration has worked on a model to include internally displaced people in local and national traditions and celebrations as well as facilitate the learning and understanding customs from across the country.
    3. **Communication:** The war disrupted regular communication, including disruption in phone reception and internet connectivity. To address this, the city decentralised its communication strategy to quickly reach as many people as possible to provide them critical guidance about safety and wellbeing.
    4. **Unbroken Initiative:** Working through a charity, the purpose of this initiative is to raise funds for social projects and the provision of professional medica, rehabilitation and psychological help to Lviv residents. Hosted by the National Rehabilitation Centre, the Unbroken initiative supports adults and children affected by the war through reconstructive surgery, orthopedics and robotic prosthetics, as well as physical, psychological and psycho-social rehabilitation. To strengthen the effectiveness of this initiative, the city is seeking additional funds from the international donor community.

- **Impact:** Despite significant challenges, the city government has deployed initiatives to respond to the local impact of conflict and violence. Together with civil society

organisations and communities, the City of Lviv has transformed nearly 500 theatres, schools, gyms, yoga studios and homes to provide shelter to internally displaced people. For the ones directly impacted by the conflict, doctors in Lviv have performed more than 10,000 surgeries at the National Rehabilitation Centre. Additional support which addressed psychosocial support and rehabilitation is provided by a recently formed multidisciplinary team.

Resources:

- https://city-adm.lviv.ua

- https://unbroken.org.ua/

Next Steps

This workshop is part of a larger effort by Strong Cities to bring European and North American cities together to discuss shared threats and inspire one another with innovative city-led solutions. Findings from this conference will inform our ongoing Transatlantic Dialogue Initiative, which will continue this year in Strasburg (France) in May 2024, Stockholm (Sweden) in June 2024, and Columbus (Ohio, United States) in September 2024.

Findings from this workshop will also add case studies to Strong Cities' Guides: one for mayors on mayoral leadership in prevention and response, the other for local government practitioners on how to enhance and sustain city-led prevention efforts. They will also inform an updated list of Transatlantic Dialogue Initiative findings and recommendations for 2024.

In addition to Strong Cities' guidance for mayors and cities on how the navigating the local impacts of global crises, the Network will explore developing additional resources to address key needs and priorities identified during the workshop. This will include guidance on how cities can address hate, polarisation and mis/disinformation during elections as well as tools for enhancing digital hygiene internally within city governments and among communities.

Strong Cities will also build on the Memorandum of Understanding it signed with the Global Parliament of Mayors to jointly support mayors and other local leaders to strengthen their approaches and elevate their voices at the national, regional and global levels in the prevention of hate, polarisation and violent extremism.

Additional Resources

- Navigating Local Impacts of Global Crises: Ten Considerations for Mayors and Cities – Lessons from the Israel-Gaza Crisis, Strong Cities Network, December 2023
- A 10-Step Roadmap for Enhancing City-Led Support for Community-Based Programmes to Address Hate and Extremism, Strong Cities Network, June 2023

- [Transatlantic Initiative: Ten Key Findings and Recommendations](#), Strong Cities Network, January 2023
- [A Guide for Cities: Preventing Hate, Extremism and Polarisation](#), Strong Cities Network,
- September 2023
- [A Guide for Mayors: Preventing and Responding to Hate, Extremism and Polarisation](#), Strong Cities Network, September 2023
- [National - Local Cooperation (NLC) Toolkit](#), developed to support the operationalization of the Global Counterterrorism Forum's (GCTF) good practices on strengthening NLC, September 2023
- [Municipal Action Guide: Responding to Racial Tension in Your City](#), National League of Cities, June 2019

Donors & Partners

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Contact Information

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