



Systemic Racism

*Acting to Transform Institutional Culture,
Change Attitudes, and Empower Citizens*

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Synthesis

Racism: daily, institutional, structural, colour-blind. In this document, the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CIM) looks at insidious forms of “racism 2.0” on which systemic racism is rooted. Here and now in Montréal, racism invisibilize and normalize mechanisms that produce distinctions between groups and individuals; it legitimize a certain form of social distribution of exclusions and privileges. Reviewing the literature on this topic, and consulting citizens from different backgrounds and organizations who are concerned with these issues, has enabled the CIM to highlight some of the tangible forms assumed by this phenomenon that affects a significant part of Montréal’s population.

When dealing with systemic racism, an approach based on diversity and inclusion could be praiseworthy in its vision and intentions, but its limits and blind spots are nonetheless significant problems. These problems become apparent as soon as we listen to Montréal citizens who experience racism and discrimination. Consultations carried out in 2019 showed that we need to take the non-institutional knowledge of citizens seriously if we want to consolidate a long-lasting, flexible, and dynamic approach that will ensure ongoing improvement and enable us to fight consistently and effectively against the various forms of racism and discrimination that are still at work. We have also observed something that goes well beyond the scope of relations between public administrations and citizens. Deeply rooted amalgams and stereotypes, and frontal attacks against Montrealers born here or elsewhere, provide fertile ground for more or less implicit processes of exclusion and marginalization that are woven into critically important areas of life in the city. These processes include discrimination in hiring, in the workplace, and in access to housing and transportation; significant police stops and and incarceration; and under-representation in decision-making and management positions. Consequences include obvious inequalities in terms of health, work, housing, safety, transportation, and access to services, facilities, and decision-making processes. Without substantive and coordinated efforts that will call on the City’s ability to act beyond its municipal powers and develop specific tools to challenge this system of injustice, a number of citizens with full rights will still be relegated to the economic, social and cultural margins. For Montrealers affected by this phenomenon, inaction and an absence of strong leadership on the part of the municipal administration in terms of antiracist initiatives would suggest a certain indifference – a lack of will to remove the discrepancies that create two categories of citizens.

In our view, solutions and actions must be designed with three main objectives in mind:

1. Taking Responsibility and Being Committed;

2. Empowering Citizens and Groups and Developing their Capacities;

3. Raising Awareness and Changing Attitudes.

Taking responsibility and being committed means publicly acknowledging that systemic racism is a problem that exists in Montréal, and being committed to take any action to change the situation. We believe that an antiracist and intercultural policy is the only way of fighting every kind of racism and discrimination, and we are suggesting a series of actions to develop such a policy. Empowerment and capacity development are responses anticipated by a number of people who participated in our consultations: we need to put citizens who are targeted by forms of racism and discrimination at the heart of actions undertaken by the Ville de Montréal on these issues, and we need to give them more resources and greater leeway to suggest and establish initiatives and projects that might make a difference. Finally, we believe that in terms of raising awareness, the Ville de Montréal must be more proactive if it truly wants to bring about the change in attitudes that is needed to eliminate every kind of racism and discrimination.

This statement emphasizes the voices of Montréal citizens, presenting excerpts from thought-provoking statements made by over fifty racialized citizens and representatives of community-based organizations who are directly concerned with the issue. In order to fight the concrete manifestations of racism and discrimination identified throughout our process, we have developed a series of key recommendations enabling the City to define a strong antiracist framework that can be adopted by the various parties involved.

The table below summarizes our recommendations, which we hope will be productive.

In Order to Act: Table of Recommendations, Actions, and Means

Taking Responsibility and Being Committed

ACTIONS

MEANS

- > Publicly acknowledge the existence of systemic racism in Montréal as a problem and commit to tackling it
- > Show leadership in creating and maintaining antiracist coalitions with other cities

- > Have City council pass a motion affirming the existence of the problem
- > Ask the Commission sur le développement social et la diversité montréalaise to draw up a list of the City's commitments to fight systemic racism
- > Launch an awareness-raising campaign on antiracism

Recommendation 1

That the Ville de Montréal publicly acknowledge the problem of systemic racism

- > Design an antiracist intercultural policy that will guide all of the City's policies, action plans and measures involving issues of racism and discrimination and, more widely, diversity and inclusion
- > Inform the population about this policy
- > Foster and promote the development of materials to raise antiracist and intercultural awareness

- > Develop an antiracist vision
- > Work with organizations involved in fighting racism and discrimination to define an antiracist policy
- > Create initiatives and procedures in tune with an intercultural antiracist vision
- > Provide all City departments with an antiracist glossary; on the basis of this glossary, review the terminology used by the City in its communications with both employees and citizens
- > Provide antiracist training for all City employees in order to better take racism and discrimination issues into account when providing services
- > Create antiracist education programs for Montréal's youth

Recommendation 2

That the Ville de Montréal implement an antiracist intercultural policy

Taking Responsibility and Being Committed

ACTIONS

MEANS

Recommendation 3

That the Ville de Montréal carry out strategic monitoring of the various forms of racism and discrimination in Montréal and of City actions taken to fight racism and discrimination

- › Use existing data and research and share findings publicly
- › Collect evidence of incidents involving acts of hate, racism, discrimination, and racial profiling, and make data and analytical outputs accessible to the public
- › Collect and examine data regarding the various forms of racism and discrimination in specific areas under the City's jurisdiction, such as housing, culture, and leisure
- › Use common indicators for all departments in order to account for incidents and trends relating to racism, discrimination, and racial profiling
- › Audit the various aspects of operations within all departments (planning, policies and programs, practices and procedures)

- › Publish an annual report on diversity, inclusion, and the fight against racism and discrimination in Montréal
- › Design a template for department reviews, including a section on the impact of steps taken to fight racism and discrimination
- › Implement indicators to monitor the evolution of the socio-economic status of target groups (Indigenous and racialized persons)
- › Develop comprehensive demographic profiles of each neighbourhood in order to guide development of policies and initiatives and program planning
- › Present disaggregated data on police stops, especially with regard to Indigenous and racialized persons, in order to be able to measure the phenomenon
- › Carry out specific studies on significant problems
- › Make the data produced as part of the studies available on the City of Montréal's open data portal

Recommendation 4

That the Ville de Montréal develop indicators to assess the impact of its measures to fight racism and discrimination

- › Design achievable objectives in terms of fighting racism and discrimination
- › Assess the impact of measures, initiatives, and policies implemented by the City
- › Identify systemic barriers affecting target groups (Indigenous and racialized persons)

- › Set targets in line with the objectives designed to fight racism and discrimination
- › Develop shared indicators to assess the impact of the City's actions in terms of fighting racism and discrimination
- › Develop measurement tools to document, then counteract systemic barriers encountered by target groups (Indigenous and racialized persons)

Taking Responsibility and Being Committed

ACTIONS

- › Implement a complaint mechanism under the authority of an antiracism and inclusion commissioner
- › Keep Montrealers informed about actions undertaken by the City to promote inclusion and antiracism
- › Regularly consult groups targeted by the City's actions to fight racism and discrimination
- › Receive complaints from target groups (Indigenous and racialized people)

MEANS

- › Carry out periodical surveys on the City's actions fighting racism and discrimination
- › Evaluate the policies, initiatives, and measures implemented by the City to promote antiracism and inclusion
- › Inform the public about the new mechanisms to process complaints
- › Receive and process complaints from people who are victims of acts of hate, racism, discrimination, or racial profiling
- › Establish partnerships with organizations fighting racism and discrimination to facilitate prevention and interventions, and thus to reduce the number of incidents giving rise to complaints
- › Hold an annual public consultation on the current situation
- › Publish an annual report on the fight against racism and discrimination and on diversity and inclusion
- › Make recommendations in order to improve the City administration's practices and standards with regard to racism, discrimination, and inclusion

Recommendation 5

That the Ville de Montréal appoint an antiracism and inclusion commissioner

- › Implement, as a pilot project targeting one or two boroughs, a centre to provide help and to fight against crimes and assaults of a racial, hate or discriminatory nature, following the model of Québec's sexual assault help centres, CALACS (Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel)

- › To put an end to discriminatory culture, promote a culture of inclusion, and include a prevention component, especially regarding racial profiling
- › Establish partnerships with the SPVM, the antiracism commissioner and the CDPDJ to facilitate prevention and interventions and ultimately reduce the number of incidents of hate
- › Develop partnerships with organizations fighting racism and discrimination
- › Collect and process anonymous raw data about police stops

Recommendation 6

That the Ville de Montréal establish a centre to provide help and to fight against hate-based attacks

Empowering Citizens and Groups and Developing their Capacities

	ACTIONS	MEANS
<p>Recommendation 7 That the Ville de Montréal review the rules defining how assistance and grants are provided to organizations supporting racialized persons and/or victims of racism and discrimination in order to provide sustained support for actions to fight racism and discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Implement specific grant programs for the fight against racism and discrimination › Provide financial incentives to organizations that want to implement programs to fight racism and discrimination › Earmark funds for organizations fighting racism and discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Encourage and support the organization of citizens' forums to raise public awareness of issues of racism and discrimination in Montréal › Create spaces for intercultural meetings and exchanges › Promote the initiatives of organizations working with racialized persons and/or victims of racism and discrimination
<p>Recommendation 8 That the Ville de Montréal ensure that documents and services are available in languages other than French</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide services in languages other than French › Provide some information documents in the four or five languages most spoken in Montréal › Develop partnerships with community media to ensure that information about the City reaches wider public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Actualize the Réseau d'aide volontaire des employés interprètes (RAVEI) by updating the existing list and recruiting new employees › Identify, with the help of citizens' groups and organizations, the documents that should be made available in several languages › Provide information guides about City services in several languages › Provide information sessions for newcomers in several languages › Increase libraries' offerings in languages other than French or English › Support existing francization initiatives and programs
<p>Recommendation 9 That the Ville de Montréal assure equal access to public transit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Ensure that the public transit offer is sufficient in every Montréal neighbourhood › Make sure that services answer the needs of people living in the Territoires d'inclusion prioritaires (TIP) and highly diverse boroughs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increase service frequency of bus lines in certain outlying districts › Diversify the transportation offer in outlying neighbourhoods › Establish differentiated fares based on household income

Rising Awareness and Changing Attitudes

ACTIONS

- › Implement a development program for persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous
- › Foster the development of management skills by persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous
- › Establish a staffing process to encourage the access of persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous to management positions

MEANS

- › Create opportunities for professional development (special training courses) for persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous
- › Provide special training courses for human resources advisers to raise their awareness of antiracist issues
- › Review staffing processes to support the professional advancement of persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous

Recommendation 10
That the Ville de Montréal establish a staff development program for visible minority and Indigenous employees in order to promote their access to senior management positions

Contents

Synthesis	v
A Word from the President	2
The CIM's Mandate	3
Introduction	4
1. Context	5
1.1 Contextualizing Racism	5
1.2 Issues of Racism, Discrimination, and the Fight against Racism in Canada	8
1.3 A Glance at Montréal's Actions	9
2. Approach and Methods	11
2.1 Mapping the Problem	11
2.2 Literature Review and Analysis	12
2.3 Data Collection	12
2.4 Limits	14
3. Systemic Racism: Concrete Manifestations	15
3.1 Recognizing the Non-Institutional Knowledge of Citizens	15
3.2 From Micro-Aggressions to Institutional Bias	17
3.3 Two Shortcomings that Must be Addressed	22
4. Taking Action: Transforming Institutional Culture, Changing Attitudes, and Empowering Citizens	23
4.1 Taking Responsibility and Being Committed	24
4.2 Empowering Citizens and Groups and Developing their Capacities	30
4.3 Raising Awareness and Changing Attitudes	32
Conclusion	33
Acknowledgements	34
References	35

A Word from the President

On behalf of members of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CIM), I am happy to provide Montréal's public administration with this statement entitled *Systemic Racism: Acting to Transform Institutional Culture, Change Attitudes, and Empower Citizens*.

Since its establishment, the CIM has been concerned with the phenomenon analyzed in this statement. Aspects of it have been studied over the years: racial profiling (2006 and 2017); cohabitation in the city and the use of minority places of worship (2009); access to equality in employment (2011); economic integration of immigrant people in the metropolis (2014); participation of Montrealers of diverse backgrounds in city life (2018 and 2019b); and an overall strategy for the adoption of an intercultural policy (2019a). Since the spring of 2019, the CIM has made systemic racism a central focus of its work and activities.

Readers familiar with CIM publications will find in this statement a key element of our previous recommendations: recognition that the difficulties experienced by people from a variety of ethnocultural origins are systemic in nature, and that action is urgently required to end systemic racism and its impact on society. It is precisely because the CIM is determined to support productive actions to fight the various forms of racism and discrimination that it chose to meet both citizens and front-line workers. This was a mean to directly confront the sources and effects of these phenomena, which can undermine values such as ensuring justice and fairness for all and acknowledging and including all Montrealers. In this spirit, the CIM reiterates its support for every initiative that will make Montréal into a lastingly antiracist and intercultural city, and asserts its willingness to collaborate in carrying them out.

Wishing you an enlightening reading.



Souleymane Guissé

CIM President

The CIM's Mandate

The Règlement sur le Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CIM) (19-051) regulates the operations and activities of the Conseil. Under this regulation, the CIM:

- › Offers, on its own initiative or through the City Council or Executive Committee's request, statements on any issue of interest for ethnocultural communities or any question related to intercultural relations that lie within the municipal field of competences, and submits recommendations to the City Council or Executive Committee;
- › Requests opinions, receives and hears motions and suggestions from any person or group on questions relating to intercultural relations;
- › Carries out or have carried out research and studies that it judges useful or necessary to the exercise of its function.

In line with the definition of its mandate, the CIM suggests specific recommendations and actions in accordance with the City's prerogatives. To this end, the CIM presents this statement, which follows its brief to the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction* held by the Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM) in 2019.

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Introduction

Having worked for over fifteen years to help shape public policies affecting relations between Montrealers from every background and with multiple affiliations, the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CIM) saluted the consultation initiated by Montréal citizens on systemic racism and discrimination within Montréal's area of jurisdiction. As part of that consultation, the CIM submitted a brief (2019c) on November 19, 2019. This statement is largely based on that brief.

The CIM's observations over the years, and recent knowledge as summarized in the first and third sections of this statement, tell us that varieties of systemic racism¹ and discrimination are still at work today, contributing to make invisible and normalize the mechanisms that produce distinctions between groups and individuals, and giving legitimacy to a certain social distribution of exclusions and privileges. As a way of dealing with systemic racism, an approach based on diversity and inclusion is praiseworthy in its vision and intentions. But its limits and blind spots are nonetheless significant problems, and this becomes obvious as soon as we listen to Montréal citizens who experience racism and discrimination. Through its consultation process with organizations and citizens from different backgrounds who are concerned with these issues (a process described in section 2 hereafter), the CIM has been able to identify concrete forms of this phenomenon affecting some groups within the population. While we rejoice in the pluralist nature of Montréal's population, in order to guarantee social justice for all, we must also acknowledge the heterogeneity of its living conditions.

To do so, in the fourth section of this statement, we put forward the idea that the City now requires an intercultural policy that is *wide-ranging, integrated, and antiracist*. This seems particularly necessary in today's social and political context: internationally, regionally, and locally, we note the persistence of unequal treatment and forms of discrimination against targeted groups. We argue that a straightforward approach of the kind we are suggesting can provide effective, direct and long-term leverage to ensure the well-being of Montréal citizens and strengthen their sense of belonging to the place where they live. To avoid inadequate responses that would prove insufficient to deal with all of the issues related to systemic racism and discrimination, this approach requires the Ville de Montréal to clearly acknowledge the existence of the various forms of racism and discrimination. Once this first step has been taken, we encourage the City both to ensure it has the essential means and to develop productive solutions and actions – including a policy that will extend its ability to face this systemic problem. Finally, we suggest a series of actions that are needed to transform institutional culture, change attitudes, and empower citizens.

¹ *Translator's note.* Throughout this statement in French, the Conseil interculturel de Montréal often refers to “racisms” in the plural, providing the following explanation in a footnote: “One reason for this is to emphasize the diversity of forms in which racism is embodied and reconfigured over time; another is to indicate that it affects different groups in specific ways. The word racism encompasses phenomena including, but not limited to, racism against Indigenous people, racism against Black people (‘antiblack racism’), antisemitism, Islamophobia, and any other form of racism directed at segments of the population because of their ‘race’, their ethnic or national origin, their religion, the colour of their skin, or any other specific characteristic.” Because the plural did not seem appropriate in English, expressions such as “forms of racism” or “varieties of racism” are used to indicate that there are many kinds of racism and discrimination.

1. Context

Nowadays we seem to have a lot of racism but very few racists. How do you explain this paradox?

James M. Blaut, “The Theory of Cultural Racism”

1.1 Contextualizing Racism

One of the first challenges involved in studying and analyzing racism has to do with the fact that there is no consensus on any single definition of racism (Este, Lorenzetti and Sato 2018, Fleras 2014, Labelle 2011, Satzewich and Liodakis 2017). From the outset, this makes it more difficult to grasp.

To attempt circumscribing racism, we first need to understand how it operates and what it produces. It is important to note that there are several ways of conceptualizing racism. One is to understand it as an ideology – consisting of words, actions and beliefs – that sees racialized minorities as inferior (Fleras and Elliot 2007:362, Fleras 2014:27, James 2003:136). This racism is both enshrined in law and institutionalized in organizational practices and government programs; it is presented as the minorities’ problem, and conveyed through policies and programs that reinforce the privileges of the White majority group (Fleras 2014:27). This type of racism is expressed fairly openly; it is direct and often intentional (Fleras 2014:27). It is embodied in the idea, prevailing until the mid-twentieth century, that there is a hierarchy among human populations² creating a *de facto* differentiation between individuals even though they are equal in terms of rights (Gouvernement du Québec 2006:10). While many people recognize that race does not exist as a biological category, the fact remains that racialization³, as a process, is still at work and is based on a social construction of race that makes it possible to categorize individuals and groups on the basis of a racial construct (Este, Lorenzetti and Sato 2018:4).

Other, more subtle forms of racism coexist. These forms, less clearcut and less easily identified, shape social relations and are so widespread that they are virtually invisible; they are more likely to be accepted, or even acceptable. In other words, despite the best intentions, racism is still present in Canadian society (Fleras 2014, Henry and Tator 2010, Satzewich 2011) and in Québec society (Labelle 2011, Renaud, Germain and Leloup 2004, Zaazaa and Nadeau 2019).

Fifteen years ago, in a consultation document that was part of the process of developing a government policy to fight racism and discrimination, the Québec government noted that:

Social conceptions related to classic racism continue to appear in new forms, since the social and identitarian logics that created this ideology are still at work and permeate the most diverse worldviews and practices. Thus, individuals of Asian, Black or Arab origin born in Québec or who have long been integrated into Québec society continue to be considered by some as foreigners, with values presumed different from those of Quebecers and excluded on the basis of this difference. The belittling of these individuals and the denial of their rights occur because of a supposed lack of cultural adaptation rather than biological inferiority. This in no way removes the unjust character of the exclusion and does not diminish the prejudice experienced. If account is taken of these modern forms of discourse and attitudes that fit into the racist logic and of the resulting discrimination, racism ceases to appear marginal or anachronistic (Gouvernement du Québec 2006:12).⁴

² The Ontario Human Rights Commission notes that “In the past, race was defined as a natural or biological division of the human species based on physical distinctions including skin colour and other bodily features. This notion of race emerged in the context of European imperial domination of nations and peoples deemed ‘non-white’ and was used to establish a classification of peoples” (2005:11).

³ On the issue of racialization, the Ontario Human Rights Commission indicates in its *Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination* that “Racialization extends to people in general but also to specific traits and attributes, which are connected in some way to racialized people and are deemed to be ‘abnormal’ and of less worth. Individuals may have prejudices related to various racialized characteristics” (2005:11). Matthew Clair and Jeffrey Denis (2015:15) also share this point of view.

⁴ On the persistence of racism in Québec, see also Renaud, Germain and Leloup (2004).

As was made clear by David Este, Liza Lorenzetti and Christa Sato (2018) in their book *Racism and Anti-Racism in Canada*, these more subtle forms of racism are still at work today and continue to shape social relations on a daily basis. Based on our consultation, we have focused in particular on five types of racism. This reflects what people said to us at consultation activities organized by the CIM while it was developing the brief it later submitted to the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction organized by the Office de consultation publique de Montréal* (OCPM).

To fully grasp the extent of racism as experienced on a daily basis by those who are its victims, Philomena Essed (1991) developed the idea of everyday racism. Focusing on the incorporation of racism in the practices of daily life, her purpose was to shed light on the way racism is experienced by racialized persons⁵ when they interact with persons from the (White) majority group; the interactions include both actions and words and involve both conscious and unconscious intentions. According to this approach, everyday racism is rooted in both interpersonal interactions and institutionalized practices.

A second form of racism still present in our societies is institutional or systemic racism. As noted by Frances Henry and Carol Tator (2010:44), institutional racism refers to the policies, practices and procedures of institutions (in the widest sense of the word) that may encourage, maintain or strengthen inequalities (for racialized groups) or privileges (for the majority group); the action may be direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious. In every case, the effects are the same: some people are oppressed by these practices that inevitably produce forms of discrimination.

Sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2015:1360) has emphasized the structural aspect of racism. According to him, racism is essentially embodied in behaviour and practices produced by a racial structure involving a network of relations (social, political, economic, cultural, ideological, etc.) that shape the lives and experiences of racialized persons. In his view, this structure is responsible for producing and reproducing systemic advantages for some (the majority group) and disadvantages for others (racialized groups). This means that racism is a form of social organization that creates inequality and division, enabling a social hierarchy based on race as a social construction (Mensah and Williams 2017:34).

According to Frances Henry and Carol Tator (2010), cultural or ideological racism mirrors social values, making it even more difficult to perceive and identify because it is incorporated into the collective beliefs of the society (and the majority group). This type of social construction perpetuates a number of erroneous representations and stereotypes about racialized groups.

Henry and Tator (2010:45) argue that cultural racism is what enables us to make a distinction between “us” and “them”: one racial group (the majority group) is seen as better than the others (racialized groups). This kind of racism is based on a set of ethnocentric beliefs and values whose effect is to maintain a racist perception of Others in the collective imagination.

“Colour-blind racism” is a concept that has been extensively discussed by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2002, 2015). According to him, this fifth type of racism is part of dominant liberal discourses through which White people refuse to acknowledge the existence of racial inequalities; some even argue that racism does not exist (Bonilla-Silva 2002:63). This type of racism justifies the absence of any action to fight racism. At the moment, it is especially apparent in Québec society, as indicated by responses to the idea of cultural appropriation in the summer of 2018 and the cancellation of Québec’s public consultation on systemic racism in the fall of 2017. These two examples show to what extent an inability to see the problem is still present in Québec, among other places. This is currently the dominant form of racism.

Thus, in recent decades, we have seen the appearance of new forms of racism that are more process-based: “racism 2.0”, to use a term coined by anthropologist Augie Fleras (2014). Much less conscious and direct, they may be viewed as normal or trivial. They include, but are not limited to, micro-aggressions, the belief that certain practices (cultural, religious, etc.) are incompatible with host society values and are an obstacle to “integration,” and the denial that racism even exists (Fleras 2014). To identify racism in today’s context, we need to expose its most insidious forms.⁶

Among these increasingly widespread forms of racism, Islamophobia is undoubtedly a phenomenon that is becoming more and more significant in Western societies. For anthropologist Ghassan Hage (2017), Islamophobia is a colonial racism based on practices and ideas about the Other that are inherited from a colonial past, and also on a mode of governance exercised on racialized persons (2017:11). According to Hage (2017:39, 45), the events of September 11, 2001 simply accentuated the desire to dominate, or to domesticate, the Muslim Other viewed as “impossible to contain” or to govern (other groups have been viewed in this way in recent history). Stereotypes conveyed by the media, especially in the West, have portrayed Muslims as people who are “outside the norm,” who cannot easily be integrated into Euro-American societies (Gottschalk and Greenberg 2008; Shryock 2010; Sinno 2010; Zine 2012), and who embody an “ideal enemy,” to use Arun Kundnani’s expression (2014). These are the conditions required to enable rejection of the Other, as a result of which Islamophobia, a form of racism

⁵ We have chosen this expression because it seems to us, at this time, the least biased. We are following the terminology used by the Ontario Human Rights Commission; on this issue, the OHRC writes: “When it is necessary to describe people collectively, the term ‘racialized person’ or ‘racialized group’ is preferred over ‘racial minority,’ ‘visible minority,’ ‘person of colour’ or ‘non-White’ as it expresses race as a social construct rather than as a description based on perceived biological traits. Furthermore, these other terms treat ‘White’ as the norm to which racialized persons are to be compared and have a tendency to group all racialized persons in one category, as if they are all the same” (2005:12).

⁶ On new forms of racism, see also Martin Barker (1981), *The New Racism: Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe*.

based on a profound aversion to Muslims, is running rampant in the West where it systematically produces exclusion and discrimination against this targeted group.

Let us return for a moment to institutional racism, which provides the foundation for systemic racism. As Henry and Tator (2010) pointed out regarding racism in Canada, institutional racism implies that racist attitudes and behaviour are built into the policies and practices of institutions in the widest sense of the word: the government and civil service, the media, educational and health systems, the justice system, the job market. As a consequence, if we want to understand how and why these various forms of racism continue to operate and reproduce themselves, we need to study how the values, ideologies, beliefs and practices of the majority group support the development and preservation of unfair socio-economic systems and structures; how racism manifests itself in various ways both in the public and the private sector; how certain conditions make it possible to perpetuate racism; and how host societies (Canada, Québec, Montréal) respond to racism in various ways.

In this statement, we have therefore chosen to focus on systemic racism in all of its forms and manifestations, whether subtle or obvious. We have retained the definition put forward by the Barreau du Québec, because we believe it provides the greatest clarity while remaining accessible to the general public:

By systemic racism we mean the social production of an inequality based on race through decisions that affect people and the way they are treated. Racial inequality derives from the way a society organizes its economic, cultural, and political life [our translation].

Having chosen this definition, we must now determine how to use it. How can we measure the prevalence of systemic racism and its institutionalization? How can we grasp such a diffuse and intangible phenomenon, except through the effects it produces? Researchers agree that it is very difficult to measure racism and that methods developed to do so are often used to measure attitudes, or indirect racist practices (Satzewich 2011:12). Such methods include attitude and social distance surveys, self-reporting, and statistical over- and under-representation (Satzewich 2011:12-18). All of these methods have their limits, however, and none can provide a comprehensive picture of the situation; even less can they show how racism comes to be institutionalized.

In other words, there is a challenge involved in attempting to describe a problem as difficult to grasp as systemic racism. We have chosen to look at its manifestations, and to consider the point of view of those who experience it.⁷



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⁷ We will discuss this choice in section 2, which explains our approach and methods.

1.2 Issues of Racism, Discrimination, and the Fight against Racism in Canada

Let us now take a look at the context in which systemic racism operates today. As we have seen, far from having disappeared, racism under various forms is active in Canada, in Québec, as well as in Montréal.

In 2002, Statistics Canada carried out an Ethnic Diversity Survey that reached 42,500 people aged 15 and over in ten provinces.⁸ The findings, as summarized by the Ministère de l'Immigration du Québec, were very clear:

Individuals from all visible minorities across Canada feel they are victims of discrimination or unjust treatment, including 50% of Blacks, 35% of Southeast Asians, 29% of Latin Americans and 26% of Arabs. In the Montreal Census Metropolitan Area, 31% of visible minorities responded that they had been victims of discrimination. In the case of Black communities, this proportion rose to 41%.

Persons of the Hindu faith (36%), Muslims (30%), Buddhists (31%), Sikhs (27%) and Jews (23%) declared that they had been victims of discrimination. With the exception of Jews, almost all of these respondents also belong to visible minorities (Gouvernement du Québec 2006:15).

The Québec government's observation in 2006 is still strikingly relevant today:

Under different arguments and discourses, these logics lead to the same results. Any excessively rigid definition of the society and the national culture produces forms of intolerance, discrimination and exclusion. In certain countries, these forms may be coopted by political parties and crystallized into political projects that incorporate discrimination or segregation. To ensure that cultural communities have the same chances as other citizens to participate in social and political life, to have access to jobs matching their qualifications and to services adapted to their needs and characteristics, it is necessary to intervene simultaneously on racism, prejudice and discrimination in all its forms (Gouvernement du Québec 2006:13).

Figures recently published by Statistics Canada (2019) show a marked increase in hate crimes⁹ in 2017, especially in Québec and Ontario. A majority of these crimes were motivated by hatred of a "race," ethnic origin, or religion. According to Statistics Canada,

After steady but relatively small increases since 2014, police-reported hate crime in Canada rose sharply in 2017, up 47% over the previous year. [...] In 2017, hate crimes motivated by hatred of a race or ethnicity represented 43% of all hate crimes, followed by those targeting religion (41%) (Statistics Canada 2019:5-6).

Data on both perceptions and reported crimes confirm the persistence of racism in Canada and Québec, despite normative instruments created to fight racism and discrimination internationally, nationally, and in Québec.

It should be emphasized that since the mid-twentieth century a number of countries, including Canada, have established normative instruments such as declarations, conventions, and international pacts (Gouvernement du Québec 2006:13) to fight racism. In some cases, these instruments have produced commitments that have had an impact on laws and have led to the implementation of concrete measures.

The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban in 2001, was clearly a turning point in the antiracist struggle: a genuine strategy was developed at the conference. This six-point strategy was intended to:

Assist victims and groups vulnerable to racism and related forms of discrimination; develop forward-looking approaches to promote diversity and combat racism; strengthen the role of civil society; strengthen regional and international cooperation; educate children and youth on diversity and anti-racism; and counter hate and bias (Government of Canada 2005:3).

Initiatives taken by the Canadian government include:

- > the Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination (2005)
- > the Anti-Racism Strategy (2019)

⁸ Since then, there has been no other survey of this kind. The General Social Survey (GSS) conducted throughout Canada every year does not support this kind of detailed measurement.

⁹ The hate crimes in question are those that are reported to the police. A recent study by the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (2019a) indicates that the phenomenon is probably more significant than the Statistics Canada data would suggest.

In Québec, the fight against racism and discrimination has been a matter of concern since the mid-1970s.¹⁰ The *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, adopted in 1975, prohibited discrimination based on “race,” colour, ethnic or national origin or religion. This was a first concrete measure to fight racism.

Since then, the Québec government has established various normative instruments, including:

- › Declaration on Intercultural and Interracial Relations (1986)
- › *Let's Build Québec Together: Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration* (1990)¹¹
- › *Government Action Plan: Shared Values, Common Interests* (2004-2007)¹²
- › *La diversité : une valeur ajoutée. Politique gouvernementale pour favoriser la participation de tous à l'essor du Québec* (2008)¹³
- › *La diversité : une valeur ajoutée. Plan d'action gouvernemental pour favoriser la participation de tous à l'essor du Québec 2008-2013* (2008)

As we have just seen, however, these policies (and the measures associated with) are of limited effectiveness, since racialized persons continue to say they are experiencing forms of racism and discrimination despite these efforts and measures.

The fact that conventions and international treaties were adopted, and initiatives were established, indicates that problems and possible solutions are known, and that it is now up to the host society to enact measures to deal with problems directly and on a long-term basis.

1.3 A Glance at Montréal's Actions

In its consultation document developed for the OCPM in 2019, the Ville de Montréal said that it was actively fighting various forms of racism and discrimination in two major ways: 1) taking action against racism and discrimination, and 2) taking action to integrate people with an immigrant background and to include each and every resident (Ville de Montréal 2019a:15). Elsewhere, in the *Document d'information générale* developed for this same consultation (Ville de Montréal 2019b), the City lists the initiatives that it believes to be related, directly or indirectly, to the struggle against systemic racism and discrimination and to inclusion of diversity.¹⁴ In this document, the City presents the scope and variety of its initiatives, programs, and services.¹⁵ These two documents show how the Ville de Montréal understands its role, and provide a detailed account of its initiatives.¹⁶ Our review of these documents leads to the following observations.

In general, we may note that Montréal has moved from an approach based on integration to an approach based on inclusion. The concept of inclusion places greater emphasis on “full participation” and the multiplicity of specific needs, going beyond a form of integration that would primarily insist on adapting differences to some kind of norm. Since the inclusion approach is fairly recent, it does not yet seem to have been completely assimilated by all of the City's departments.

¹⁰ In 1978, Québec declared that it was bound by the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted in 1965.

¹¹ As Micheline Labelle points out, this policy statement “is based on three principles, one of which asserts the necessity of fighting discrimination. ... The fight against racism is taken into consideration without being the object of a specific policy” (2011:7, our translation).

¹² This Action Plan “made the fight against discrimination one of its priority objectives” (Gouvernement du Québec 2006:14).

¹³ A summary of this document is available in English under the title: *Diversity: An Added Value – Government Policy to Promote Participation of All in Québec's Development*.

¹⁴ We will not attempt to list all of the initiatives established by Montréal; readers are referred to the City's document.

¹⁵ One of the limits of this document is the fact that the City never mentions what criteria were used in including the various initiatives on the list. In other words, the City does not explain in what way some of the initiatives would be effective in fighting racism and discrimination and to what specific problem they are responding. The quantity of initiatives seems to be more important than their quality (effectiveness, outcomes, etc.)

¹⁶ The similarity between the two objectives is noticeable, as well as a slight shift. There seems to be a suggestion that the first document will have a greater focus on the fight against racism and discrimination, whereas the second will also emphasize initiatives related to inclusion. However, this distinction does not really seem to apply, since both documents discuss inclusion and diversity as well as the fight against racism and discrimination.

We may also note Montréal’s emphasis on “social development”, described as a “pivot” in its actions (Ville de Montréal:2019a). Most of the document’s themes, or targeted areas of intervention, are said to be related to social development:

The City’s actions are grouped according to theme: social development, economy, housing, employment, public security, culture, etc. *It should be emphasized that the great majority belong to social development, which has proved its worth over the decades and which, for this reason, is the first theme to be addressed (Ville de Montréal 2019b:24, our emphasis and translation).*

In other words, social development is not merely a domain of intervention, it is an overall perspective. This category, and especially the policy that bears the same name (*Politique de développement social, 2017*), is the predominant framework used by the Ville de Montréal to make itself more inclusive by developing residents’ many social capacities. Montréal wants [...] to establish and strengthen the conditions required so that:

- each individual can fully develop his or her potential, be an active participant in social life, and obtain a fair share of our collective enrichment;
- the community can move forward socially, culturally, and economically, in a context where economic development is moving towards a form of development that is sustainable and oriented to social justice (Ville de Montréal 2019b:25, our translation).

Social development, in other words, is one of the main ways of fighting racism and discrimination: the goal is to eliminate the conditions that cause anyone to be excluded. Supporting and stimulating social development is presented by Montréal as an approach that will counter exclusion and poverty (Ville de Montréal 2019a:41) and that will rely on social diversity.

We need to ask how this approach is currently being pursued throughout the City’s various departments, and whether it will be sufficient to address some of the shortcomings of previous normative frameworks. While it is clear that the Montréal supports many of the principles of the struggle against racism and discrimination and has established a number of initiatives, the limits of such actions and interventions must be pointed out.



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2. Approach and Methods

This statement is the continuation of previous work carried out by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal. Over the past years, the struggle against the various forms of racism and discrimination, the importance of citizens' participation, and the consistency of the City's initiatives in this area have been a major focus of the CIM's work.

Our approach involved three steps:

- › First, in order to define the problem, we described the concrete forms of racism and discrimination that produce and reproduce systemic racism, basing ourselves on a literature review and participants' testimonies.
- › Second, in order to draw on best practices in terms of fighting varieties of racism and discrimination, we carried out a literature review that included official publications, consultation documents and reports produced by the Ville de Montréal, other cities and levels of government, and non-governmental organizations.
- › Third, in order to base ourselves on an accurate interpretation of stakeholders' points of view and to ensure that the voices of citizens concerned with the problem of systemic racism were heard, we analyzed the content of documents produced by the City as part of the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction*, and we organized activities to consult citizens.

2.1 Mapping the Problem

The first purpose of this statement is to contribute to a better understanding of systemic racism and discrimination. To do so, our first task was to define the phenomenon and identify major issues. Very quickly, we were able to see that while the phenomenon is largely undocumented by the Ville de Montréal, both citizens in general and City employees are well aware of it. Literature on the topic is abundant, and many solutions have been identified to fight the various forms of racism and discrimination.

In view of this, we have chosen to provide a brief overview of concrete forms of racism and discrimination that tend to (re)produce systemic racism, basing ourselves on available literature on this topic, and more significantly on accounts provided by Montrealers themselves.

The first objective of this statement is to present systemic racism by describing the concrete forms of racism and discrimination that tend to (re)produce it at the level of both the administration (the City) and the Montréal community (the city). The second objective is to show empirically how a certain social distribution of exclusions and privileges is consolidated, and to illustrate the limits of the City's approach (how the system works and operates).

Because the phenomenon, issues, and solutions are well known, we have attempted, in this statement, to encourage the City to go even further in its actions. In particular, we urge the City to acknowledge the existence of systemic racism and to develop a strategy to extend its ability to act in this area. As we will see in the pages hereafter, an approach that is too limited, or insufficiently wide-ranging, will simply not be able to foster the creation of fully inclusive host community. Our goal has been to focus on solutions and actions that will have significant effects and that will give Montréal effective ways of fighting the various forms of racism and discrimination that are still at work today.

2.2 Literature Review and Analysis

This statement is also based on a literature review encompassing scholarly articles, media articles, and grey literature (government reports, reports from organizations, normative texts, etc.). Our review focused primarily on initiatives, policies, practices and actions implemented by cities and municipalities in Canada and elsewhere. Our purpose was to identify best practices to fight varieties of racism and discrimination and to draw on them in developing recommendations that will enable the Ville de Montréal to take action and put forward a genuine antiracism strategy. While far from exhaustive, our review of scientific literature did enable us to identify the central issues in this area, and also provided elements to help define the conceptualization

we privileged. We also analyzed the documents prepared by the City in view of the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction* (2019). Our analysis showed the scope and limits of the City's actions in terms of fighting racism and discrimination, enabling us to identify blind spots and define priority areas for the City's actions.

2.3 Data Collection

Lastly, this statement is based on cross-referenced data derived from information sessions held as part of the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction*, and from public and private activities organized by the CIM to hear from Montréal residents.

Analyzing the content of the information sessions. As part of the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction*, the OCPM organized four public information sessions: a general information session (May 15 and 16, 2019), a thematic evening on culture (May 21, 2019), a thematic evening on employment (May 28, 2019), and a thematic evening on racial and social profiling (May 29, 2019). We analyzed the content of documents presented by the City and by the initiators of the consultation at these information sessions, as well as interactions and exchanges with panelists¹⁷ and citizens on each occasion. For each session, our goal was to identify the most significant elements of presentations by the City and by the initiators of the consultation in order to see how they understand the problems related to systemic racism.

We also looked at problems and issues identified by citizens during question periods. This enabled us to identify what really matters Montrealers dealing with systemic racism and to develop recommendations that better address their needs and concerns.

Consulting citizens and community-based organizations. Increasingly, the CIM has been choosing to consult citizens in developing its statements and briefs. For the purposes of this statement on issues of racism and discrimination, we felt that consulting the population was a necessity. We therefore organized four activities to hold exchanges with Montréal citizens.

¹⁷ At each thematic session, after presentations by the City of Montréal and by the initiators of the consultation, the OCPM had asked panelists to present an overview of the issues.

Four Contribution Activities with Citizens and Community-Based Organizations¹⁸

April 14, 2019
At CIM premises

Knowledge exchange session on the documents developed by the Ville de Montréal and its Service de la diversité et de l'inclusion sociale (SDIS) to prepare for the *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction*

› 15 representatives from organizations interested in submitting a brief or organizing a citizens' contribution activity as part of the consultation

August 6, 2019
At CIM premises

Public discussion group on identifying obstacles leading to exclusion and best practices to overcome them

› 23 people

August 26, 2019
In Côte-des-Neiges

Private discussion group on experiences and ideas from the point of view of racialized persons

› 7 people

September 4, 2019
In Saint-Michel

Knowledge exchange session on definitions of the phenomenon, key issues, and best practices to fight systemic racism and discrimination

› 13 representatives of community-based organizations and associations

In the pages that follow, we will present what we learned from these consultations through anonymous excerpts from citizens who participated in the discussion groups or the information session. We wish to emphasize how much they contributed to our thinking.

¹⁸ This table provides a summary of the activities we organized. For more detail about the content of each activity, see the brief we submitted in November 2019 (2019c).

2.4 Limits

Intersectionality¹⁹ is unquestionably relevant as a way of clarifying the issues raised by racism and discrimination, since it shows how their effects on individuals vary according to the person's gender, social class, etc. Unfortunately, however, we were not able to use this approach in developing this statement. Neither the data presented in the Ville de Montréal's documents, nor those that we collected to develop the statement, enabled us to carry out an intersectional analysis and show how experiences differ according to a number of variables (gender, class, age, origin, religion, etc.). We are nonetheless aware of the fact that persons who are victims of racism and discrimination are affected by them in a variety of ways, and that a combination of several variables may have an even greater impact.

We also realize that the data we have collected are limited, particularly with regard to the profile of the people who participated in our consultation activities. An overwhelming majority of participants were holding a university degree. This means that we were unable to reach more vulnerable groups, despite our commitment to go and meet them by holding two of our activities in neighbourhoods – Côte-des-Neiges and Saint-Michel – characterized by high levels of socio-economic and ethnocultural diversity.

Finally, one of our work's most important limits is derived from the timeframe within which we had to produce it. The *Public Consultation on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Within City of Montréal Jurisdiction* began in May 2019, and consultation activities took place until September. This schedule imposed significant constraints on the CIM's usual processes. Usually, completing a statement of this kind is expected to take at least twelve months. The five-month consultation period was far too short to allow for comprehensive data collection, in-depth analysis of the documents submitted by the City, and an appropriate review of literature on the topic.

Despite these constraints, in this statement, the Conseil interculturel de Montréal takes stock of the current situation and suggests a framework within which solutions can be developed in order to fight more effectively against the various forms of racism and discrimination that are still prevailing in Montréal.

¹⁹ The concept of intersectionality has become widespread in the early twenty-first century, not only in academic circles, but also in political, professional, community and activist environments (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016:1). Generally speaking, and following Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge (2016), intersectionality can be understood as a way of understanding and analyzing the world, people, and human experiences. Social and political events and conditions of life, and the self, can rarely be seen as shaped by one single factor. Often, they are the outcome of a number of factors interacting in various ways. In speaking of social inequalities, for instance, we can better understand people's experience – and the distribution of power in a given society – when we view the inequalities as distributed not along one single line of social division such as gender, race, or class, but along several lines that intersect and influence each other. As an analytical tool, intersectionality provides people with a way of grasping the complexity of the world in which they live and of understanding themselves. The intersectional perspective helps us take into account the articulation of multiple factors – including race, gender, and class – in our understanding of complex phenomena such as systems of oppression.

3. Systemic Racism: Concrete Manifestations

3.1 Recognizing the Non-Institutional Knowledge of Citizens

In its interventions, as we have seen, the Conseil interculturel de Montréal chooses to rely on the knowledge of racialized citizens, which they express when creating safe spaces to do so. Their perspectives are (and must be) a key source in any attempt to understand the scope and the various forms of systemic racism and discrimination (Essed 1991:1-2).

“It’s really important to get users involved, and to understand their story and the colonial heritage they carry from their point of view, if we want to provide adequate responses.”²⁰

Participants were often in a position to clearly identify the most frequent manifestations of racism, to put their finger on grey zones or institutional biases, and to explain the various mechanisms expressing and reproducing racism (i.e., leading to its systematization). Especially, they were able to avoid minimizing it, as people are sometimes inclined to do when they themselves do not experience its effects on a daily basis.

“For us, the difference between the systemic aspect of racism and prejudice, misinformation, or ignorance is the fact that some social groups are exploiting others, reaping benefits that mean that for them, maintaining the situation is justified. Cheap labour can be one of the benefits – you’re getting qualified workers for lower wages – or you may be instrumentalizing the issue [of ethnocultural diversity] to get more people to vote for you at the election.”

“This has been going on for so long, I can’t believe we’re just beginning to discuss it openly.”

Lack of attentive listening, research, support and intervention is in fact a way of minimizing – and thus reproducing – the forms of systemic racism and discrimination faced by these Montréal citizens.

“So can we be part of the discussion – we, the immigrants? When you’re in an administrative context, there’s no emotion, but in spaces that are meant for exchange, it’s bound to affect us. It slams right into us, and we’re holding it all inside. We’re human beings and we can speak for ourselves! I’ve been here for 32 years, I went to school here. This is my home.”

As the participants pointed out, systemic racism is multiform and diffuse: it is more than just a simple, easily identified structure (such as explicit State racism) or an unequivocal ideology (such as White supremacism).

“We need to go beyond skin colour, ethnicity, and so on. Take the example of a White woman from an immigrant background. If she doesn’t look like she belongs to a visible minority – a woman from Eastern Europe, for instance – as soon as she starts to talk, you can hear her accent, you get the feeling she’s not necessarily from here. Systemic racism can affect [someone like that], and it’s a kind of racism that’s based on deeply rooted prejudices.”

Discrimination – implicit or explicit, conscious or unconscious – is now combined with multifocal exclusionary practices that tend to reinforce each other if they are not counteracted in a transversal manner. This was clearly expressed by our participants: micro-aggressions (in practices, attitudes, discourses) tend to constitute and create an overwhelming obstacle, precisely because they are flexible enough to change, evolve, root, and endure.

²⁰ This quote, and those that follow below in section 3, come from the consultations carried out by the CIM in 2019. They are presented in such a way as to ensure that participants remain anonymous. (All quotes have been translated from the French).

“People experience this in their daily life – as soon as they leave to go to work, and until they come back. They have this experience on public transit, in their workplace, during their break, or at the shopping mall. Really, it’s happening throughout their everyday life. So we’ll have to get all of these environments involved.”



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The CIM believed it was crucial to focus on the complex reality of multiple consolidated forms of racism and discrimination before undertaking to study the areas in which the Ville de Montréal is empowered to act. How these areas are defined, and what human and financial resources are available, are factors that undeniably limit what the City can do. In our view, however, it is essential to adapt the definition of the City’s jurisdiction to the problem; otherwise, the systematization of racism may well continue. In other words, in choosing too quickly to rely on its predefined areas of jurisdiction, the City may neglect the development of its specific municipal powers to fight against various forms of racism and discrimination. The City may then produce a limited and possibly inappropriate response, ignoring problematic relations that are not part of its domains of intervention and action, but that nonetheless structure what happens on its territory.

“We meet Muslim women who’ve had people spit on them in the street. The problem is that it’s not illegal to follow someone or insult them. Criminal harassment is the only thing that’s illegal, and that’s only if someone is specifically targeting you as a person. As we’ve seen, if a woman who’s with her children, who’s wearing the headscarf or who has dark skin, is systematically being followed home by someone who’s insulting her – ‘You’re an immigrant, go back home!’ – there’s nothing she can do. It would be good to work on this with the City because that could establish safe living spaces.”

As discussed hereafter, it is essential that the City adopt a genuine antiracist strategy going well beyond a mere non-racist posture.²¹ The difference between antiracism and non-racism is far from trivial. Antiracism means consolidating a position that is proactive rather than reactive, without excessive reliance on normative references (charters, declarations, policies, etc.). While these are essential, what they provide is a kind of symbolic basis instead of an sustainable, flexible and evolving approach, based on continuous improvement and designed to fight effectively and consistently against the various forms of racism and discrimination. In widening the scope in which it acts, the City can become a leader in this fight, just as it has in other areas such as immigration.

²¹ The antiracist perspective is the core of the intercultural policy that we recently suggested in Montréal, Intercultural City (2019a).

3.2 From Micro-Aggressions²² to Institutional Bias

Participants said this over and over (and the literature agrees with them): beyond cases of frontal racism and direct aggression – several examples, recently documented or publicized, unfortunately demonstrate the persistence of such appalling phenomena – a number of Montréal citizens are also faced with a more subtle array of micro-aggressions deployed in social space.²³

“Racism doesn’t only affect people from an immigrant background. Take me, for example: I was born here, I’m third generation. But racism is part of my daily life. Even though I have a job and friends. People say to me: ‘Wow, you speak French really well!’, or, ‘Where are you from?’ But people only say that because I’m Black. I don’t know what to say anymore because I was born here. So it makes me wonder about myself. I’m thinking: is this where I belong?”

“Often people talk about problems in terms of looking for a job, or what happens during the interviews. But racism and discrimination exist even when you’re an employee. They don’t just disappear once you’ve been hired.”

Stereotypes, repeated ad nauseam, are now merged with more implicit ways of excluding people. Targeted individuals are no longer merely accused of “stealing jobs” or being “welfare bums” or “radicals”. They are also accused of “playing the victim,” constantly complaining for no reason, and never making a real effort to belong. It is important to keep an eye on the way the so-called “host” society acts to define the limits of the welcome it is extending. As we can see, words may evolve, shift or become more subtle, but exclusion remains.

A participant in one of our consultation’s activities used a striking phrase: she said that systemic racism “goes through space”. A few weeks later, at another CIM activity, a participant made a similar comment: he said that it “goes through everyday life, from when you get up to when you go to bed”. These statements illustrate the spatial and temporal range of racism, which extends far beyond any administrative framework. They were followed by discussions during which participants gave multiple descriptions of when, where and how Montrealers are the target of invective, harassment, contempt, and indifference, in public spaces (such as public transit or parks), at school, at work, and elsewhere.

“In a job search program, the person suggested I should take the name of the man who was my husband at the time, saying that the Italian community is accepted today. But I have a ten-year career, I have a name and things I’ve created. I’ve done so many jobs just to put food on the table, until recently when I set up an organization and a super safe place where everyone is respected. But then, not long ago, I had an interview to go live in a coop and when I walked in, the person introduced me to the selection committee saying ‘She’s the Brazilian one!’ Then they ask me: ‘What neighbourhood do you live in?’ I said, Rosemont, and then they said: ‘I suppose you’re living with roommates?’ Uh... No, I’m in a really great living situation, by myself in a 3½. I just wanted to live in a coop because it’s a way of living that appeals to me. I’m an immigrant, and I’d like to participate in a new way and just know my neighbours, that’s all. I think I was in a state of shock. It made me feel discouraged. Now, it makes me want to ask before I apply: is there diversity in your coop?”

Participants also related constant difficulties in getting people to acknowledge that some of their fellow-citizens, who do not belong to the majority group, were born and raised in Québec. They described a widespread habit of treating newcomers or non-Francophones as if they are children, assuming they are not intelligent or cannot understand the “values” of the host society or “how things are done here”.



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²² In *Microaggressions and Modern Racism*, Charisse C. Levchak traces the genealogy of micro-aggression as a concept (2018:6). It seems that the concept was first developed by Chester Pierce in *Offensive Mechanisms* (1970:266-267). According to him, micro-aggressions are subtle or trivialized forms of racial aggression that are difficult to identify explicitly, but that nonetheless have concrete and harmful impacts on the people who experience them as part of their everyday interactions.

²³ On micro-aggressions, see also Fleras (2016).

“When you think about how racism is perceived, you always have a sense that it’s unjust. You think: how come I’m being treated this way and someone else is treated differently? You often hear: I’ve lived here for a long time, I love Québec, but I’m treated like I’m someone else, someone who doesn’t belong to this society.”

“When someone who’s put in a category because of their accent is dealing with businesses, organizations or other institutions, and people try to discourage them from asserting their rights, you have to ask some serious questions about equality and justice in our society.”

“We’re systematically the number one focus of attention. Someone is always ready to spot the slightest thing we might do wrong. We end up feeling uncomfortable, like there’s something wrong with us – you should be able to feel comfortable, no matter where you are. A lawyer should be able to go to court with her Afro hairdo and be just as credible as someone who has naturally straight hair.”

“Someone was telling me about a hiring interview where a woman was asked by a White man who was interviewing her: Give me the name of a piece of music by Mozart. She said it was a way of saying they would be justified in not hiring her because of her cultural ignorance. For him, the fact that she was Black meant she was uneducated in terms of classical music.”

“When they get here, immigrants go through all kinds of training: how to go about doing this or that, learning French, getting to know Québec and Québécois people ... But Québécois people should also learn about their fellow-citizens who are coming to join them, and about the reality of immigration – because that’s part of reality. More information needs to be provided about the history of the world.”

“There is training on intercultural relations that’s part of the training for police officers, but it needs to be pointed out that it’s not mandatory. So what happened? Nobody came. That makes me say that in some institutions, people can’t even be bothered to try and understand in order to make the power dynamic equal.”

Participants repeatedly emphasized a widespread tendency to discover that there is always something wrong with the so-called “Others”. These “Others” are constantly blamed for their alleged lack of education and ability to adapt, while the host society merely provides a few intercultural training sessions that are neither mandatory nor adequate.

As we can see, suspicion,²⁴ lack of trust, or in some cases actual insolence consolidate a racism that is less “direct”, but just as noxious, as frontal attacks. And the effects are equally harmful. While this is not a matter of establishing an ideology based on the superiority of the “White race” (White supremacism) – the contemporary proliferation of this ideology is, of course, problematic – the habit of trusting only people of “one’s own kind” nonetheless tends to erect a “*pure laine*” version of White privilege. This is a strong tendency whose effect is to minimize the contribution of the various migratory flows that have shaped the identity of Montréal, and therefore of Québec. Québec’s identity is not derived from a single genealogical line, and certainly cannot be defined without including Montréal.

“Better work needs to be done to get people to understand. We need to forget the statistics and talk about how many people from each culture, and since when. We need to do this when we’re educating young children. I’ve just started to understand where I come from, and yet I took history courses and nobody ever talked about this! I was told people of African origin started coming here in the 1990s. This doesn’t fit with the history that shows the first people of African origin came here in the 1600s. It’s the same for all the cultures that are part of Québec today. Migrations didn’t start yesterday but people don’t know that, so they’re surprised. Our history is the history of interculturality. We need to accept that and [be willing to] put it in our educational documents, talk about it, organize workshops. And also learn other languages!”



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²⁴ See Leila Benhadjoudja’s article (2014) on this topic.

Terminological choices made by institutions sometimes reproduce and strengthen such exclusions. The City includes in the category “people with an immigrant background” people born in Québec whose parents migrated to Canada (see, for instance, Ville de Montréal 2019a:10).²⁵ Citizens thus find themselves confined, through rhetorical choices, to a state of perpetual transition: they never really settled here, they’re never really from Québec.

“You keep on saying you’re Québécois, but they’re never going to see you that way. You’re necessarily seen as someone who comes from somewhere else. And that must be even more annoying if you were born here.”

The statistical and survey use of concepts such as “visible minority” is also becoming inappropriate today. “White” people, after all, are never marked by the colour of their skin, even when they constitute a minority as is the case in several Montreal boroughs. Examples like this show us how a White “majority” comes to distinguish itself from “minorities,” and how “diversity” is constantly reserved for a population at the periphery that a well-centred majority is in charge of “managing”. The goal is to manage diversity as a problem at the margins or at the periphery, which means that it will never be fully integrated, and that the majority will never be located within this diversity.

With this handful of examples, we are simply scratching the surface of the micro-aggressions experienced on a daily basis by a number of Montréal citizens. The scope of the problem becomes apparent when one listens to those who are the targets. In addition, in the current political and media context, there is an almost systematic refusal to acknowledge that the problem exists. This refusal claims legitimacy on the basis of an alleged tolerance that is supposedly already too great, even though in reality, it is extremely volatile – it may be withdrawn as soon as voices are raised to underline the less than glorious conditions in which a number of our fellow-citizens find themselves. As one participant noted, once again, this type of reasoning makes a distinction between the majority, which is predisposed to tolerate, and minorities who are unable or show little willingness to recognize the host society’s efforts to be open. Public consultations held by the CIM and the OCPM, as well as the literature on this topic, tend to show that this self-perception on the part of the majority is precisely one of the major factors leading to the constant exclusion of the voices and presence of racialized or marginalized persons. In other words, this form of reasoning seeks to establish the image of an inherently reasonable majority, one that is always tolerant enough, facing demands that are not reasonable.

“I studied in English and French in a Montreal college and university. In an interview for a marketing and sales job, they asked me a question that made me so angry, I practically froze. I have a long last name. The person said to me: ‘Have you thought about changing your last name... for something that’s a little easier to understand and pronounce, like Tremblay? You’d probably have more people return your calls.’ I was born here. Even if I change my name, come on, people are going to know I’m not Annie Tremblay! I didn’t say anything. I never thought of filing a complaint. I let it go. Ultimately, they were insulting my parents, in a way, and they never really looked at my experience and skills.”

This reality is not limited, of course, to stereotypes or inappropriate terminology. It manifests itself through a series of exclusionary practices that or may not be institutional. Well-known examples include problems in getting a job at the Ville de Montréal or elsewhere²⁶ (experienced by both immigrant and racialized persons); qualifications that are not recognized; lack of access to quality jobs; lack of response when a resume has been sent; the suggestion that one should (or the feeling that one has to) change one’s name, not give an address in a neighbourhood that has a bad reputation, or not say where one got one’s diploma.

“When you come to Québec, you can’t get a job because you don’t have experience in Québec, which is what companies are asking for. So it’s a vicious circle. People end up in low-level jobs after they emigrate, because they can’t find their place, even though they were chosen for their qualifications. There’s racism about skin colour, about origins, but also about immigration in general.”

“When people have a job, they can organize their lives better. How can they get things organized, talk, develop if they don’t have a job? You need to deal with racism at the roots.”

“If systemic racism is something the City can solve or thinks it can solve, it won’t work unless action is taken in the workplace. Because that’s where the damage inflicted by discrimination is mostly experienced. Business and employers need to be involved in the issue of fair access to employment.”

²⁵ This fact was repeatedly brought up by citizens participating in the OCPM’s information session and thematic sessions.

²⁶ On this topic, see research by Paul Eid (2012).

Added to these difficulties are marked differences in earnings and blocked promotions (the glass ceiling). In terms of housing, several participants noted similar problems: a person's name, or where they live, can be a factor in getting a new dwelling. This difficulty also comes up when renting venues for all kinds of events or activities.

“The housing that immigrants can access is often unhealthy. That’s part of systemic racism. And the City has almost no inspectors. If people can at least have a place to live that’s in good condition – publicly funded housing as much as possible – that’s something the City could do.”



The lack of resources and investment affecting some neighbourhoods in many areas (public transit, parks, services) was also emphasized, in a context where the City does not provide any instrument to track budget expenditures, or to understand their geographic distribution throughout Montréal boroughs.

“Community organizations that really know the environment they’re working in often have great ideas and meaningful projects. Unfortunately, funding criteria are often very strict, and there’s not enough independence on the ground to develop interesting programs.”

In terms of representation, the situation is equally dismal not only in employment, but also in decision-making seats, political parties, the media, the arts,²⁸ Montréal’s heritage, etc.

“Looking at people working for community organizations, it’s true, you’ll see people from a variety of social origins. But when you look up at the Board of Directors, that’s something else!”

“When I hear ‘we don’t want ghettos’, I tell them that means everyone has to be able to have the right to affordable, quality housing. But people face discrimination in getting access to a healthy place to live.”

A number of people also mentioned difficulties in accessing services, or longer waiting times (for health, for instance). The gap in life expectancy between Montreal boroughs²⁷ tends to confirm the existence of obstacles of this kind, which include greater difficulty in accessing sports facilities and fresh food (run-down housing is also mentioned as an explanation for the health problems related to the gap).

While steps have been taken to correct some situations – particularly with regard to employment – they do not seem sufficient to address shortcomings. There is under-representation in the areas we have indicated, and also over-representation in unemployment, precarious employment, low wages, inadequate housing, contact with the police, etc.

²⁷ Regarding endemic poverty in some neighbourhoods, the Direction régionale de santé publique of the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l’Île-de-Montréal recently noted: “In 2011 some areas of Montreal were disproportionately affected, such as Parc-Extension, for instance, which unfortunately stands out with 43.8% of its residents experiencing poverty” (2017:13, our translation).

²⁸ After a consultation on racism in the arts, Diversité artistique Montréal (DAM) recently concluded: “The reality of racism manifests itself in the arts, culture and the media as a significant number of systemic obstacles that jeopardize the process of cultural justice” (DAM 2018:26, our translation). The organization identifies a number of symptoms, including under-representation in work teams, decision-making seats and media spaces; homogeneity of juries; the majority’s dominant ethnocentric aesthetic criteria; instrumentalization of racialized persons; stereotyped representations; confining artistic production to “ethnic” art; insufficient funding that is confined to “diversity” art; prejudice; denial of abilities; and cultural appropriation and making the other invisible. The Canada Council of the Arts acknowledges that systemic discrimination plays a part in creating unequal conditions (DAM 2018:28). There is a strong tendency to assume that Québec or Montréal audiences are not ready for a strong representation of diversity, even though diversity is definitely present, particularly in Montréal itself; the result is a type of content that is always intended for a White majority client group.

“We need to change the process of filing a complaint about the police to make sure that it’s an independent process. You shouldn’t have one police force investigating another. It should be people from the outside, who have had training on systemic racism, to give an unbiased point of view.”

Racial profiling is probably the best illustration of the fragility, or even non-existence, of trust between people of diverse backgrounds and the institutions of the Ville de Montréal (and especially its police force). Racial and social profiling, now an emblematic issue, obviously take place within a wider context of exclusion and marginalization.²⁹

“There are people who are afraid to go to the police when there’s an issue of domestic violence or sexual assault. This person isn’t going to make a complaint because they don’t want to have a problem with immigration. The police structure maintains this situation. At the level of the City, there’s a need to reconsider the repressive system.”

“The City took the first step with their ‘access without fear’ policy for undocumented people. But the City should say that police officers should not cooperate with border agencies because this is a form of systemic discrimination, based on the interests that have led to these people becoming refugees. People must have access to City services, but also, they should not experience repression, whether direct or indirect, at the hands of the City.”

Participants also told us that the treatment of hate crimes is inadequate, that it is difficult to file a complaint and that there is no way of following up on how it is being handled, that violence against racialized women is made invisible, that people are harassed in the street, and that undocumented migrants have very few options, especially in terms of accessing services such as day care.

“There are situations where are people are made invisible, especially racialized and Indigenous women, who are over-represented in the sex industry and in terms of sexual abuse. Since the beginning of colonial history, unfortunately, these women have been assigned to these specific situations, that’s what society expects. Degrading situations are presented as normal, or even trivial, in a way. Nobody talks about it except in some cases such as crimes of honour, and the effect of that is to fuel Islamophobia and racism. We need to ensure visibility for forms of violence that have been made invisible. And that calls for a certain will to invest in these specific issues.”

Are these problems so widespread that Montréal’s entire social fabric can be said to be rotten³⁰? It would be difficult to justify such a statement without further research and without finding ways of recording such situations in a more systematic way. The accumulation of experiences related during the OCPM’s introductory sessions and the citizens’ contribution activities is nonetheless a matter of grave concern, and it confirms what a number of research documents had already indicated. For instance, when we hear French-speaking citizens of Montréal who belong to racialized groups say that they feel more comfortable in Anglophone than Francophone groups – this happened during one of the CIM’s activity – this should at the very least induce us to question the host environment provided by a majority that, to this day, finds it difficult even to publicly admit the existence of a problem that a number of other Canadian municipal, provincial or federal bodies seem more inclined to acknowledge and to actively counteract. Racism may not be endemic, but our process suggests it is high time to acknowledge that the problem exists and that it needs to be tackled in a more systematic way. Lack or absence of data becomes an easy excuse, making it possible to assume the problem simply doesn’t exist.

²⁹ The CIM has been reporting on racial profiling since 2006, and the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse since 2003. Efforts have been made, but it is difficult to assess their effectiveness. For instance, are we seeing an increase, or a decrease, in the number of cases of racial profiling, or even in the number of complaints? Neither the SPVM’s most recent action plan, nor the documents prepared by the Ville de Montréal for the public consultation on systemic racism and discrimination, shed any light on this basic question. The SPVM’s most recent strategic plan is called *Écouter, comprendre, agir 2018- 2021*. Plan stratégique pour soutenir le personnel du SPVM en matière de prévention du profilage racial et social. The strange formulation of the subtitle – “soutenir le personnel du SPVM” – seems to indicate greater concern for supporting police officers than for supporting the victims of racial and social profiling.

³⁰ Obviously, none of these forms of racism and discrimination are expressed in the same way when people are Black, Indigenous, Muslim, a man, a woman, a trans person, a child, a rich person, a poor person, etc. Hence the importance of an intersectional approach and properly disaggregated data.

3.3 Two Shortcomings that Must be Addressed

It goes without saying that many of the issues we are raising extend far beyond the Ville de Montréal's capacity to act, both because of the limits of its jurisdiction as a city and because of the resources that would be required. However, the preceding description does illustrate a collective mindset that tends to give priority to a certain group (the White majority) over another group that is relegated to the position of the Other or the stranger (even if many of its members were born in Québec). White supremacism and White privilege provide different ways of discriminating or showing racism (methods can be more or less subtle, more or less intense), but in both cases, they lead to processes of exclusion whose impact is very real: full-fledged citizens are pushed into the economic, social and cultural margins. When a system is based on injustice, the response must also be systemic and involve a concerted effort to unfold necessary mobilizations beyond the municipal administration – i.e., to address other levels of government – if the response proves insufficient. Thus, a first shortcoming is the discrepancy, which already exists and is tending to increase, between the normative dimension and reality as experienced by a number of Montreal citizens. At this point, the City cannot merely proclaim itself non-racist: it must assert itself and activate itself through a consistent antiracism.

A second shortcoming, which the CIM recently noted in a brief dealing with citizens' participation (CIM 2019b), is associated with trust in the institutions of the Ville de Montréal. Failure to act is one of the mechanisms that consolidate systemic racism and discrimination, since it enables a certain indifference and lack of attention to the issues raised above. A number of citizens feel they are invisible or unwelcome, never fully recognized or heard.

The documents submitted by the City to the consultation provide an example: very few criteria or indicators were established to assess the success or failure of any given initiative. This quasi-systematic lack of measurement tools undermines the credibility of initiatives whose impact, in the end, is limited.

Focusing on forms of systemic racism and discrimination that fall under the jurisdiction of the Ville de Montréal is, in a sense, contradictory. The City has not so far developed any particular capacity to recognize and act on the systemic aspect of racism. But even if the City's initiatives are limited, they cannot be designed without considering this wider context, on which the City will have to find a way of acting indirectly. The City must fully acknowledge the reality of systemic racism and find the necessary resources to act in areas where it is unable, right now, to deal with the issue. The first municipal power that the City must develop is the power to enact a wide-ranging approach which, paradoxically, must go beyond its jurisdiction as currently defined. Otherwise, it will have to explain to a growing number of its citizens why it finds it acceptable to see a two-tier citizenship continue to exist.



4. Taking Action: Transforming Institutional Culture, Changing Attitudes, and Empowering Citizens

In terms of the actions and interventions implemented by the Ville de Montréal so far, one of the first elements to be noted is that the City does not seem to have adopted an integrated strategy to fight racism and discrimination.³¹ When we consider the actions named in the two documents that the City prepared for the consultation on systemic racism and discrimination within the Ville de Montréal jurisdiction (Ville de Montréal 2019a and 2019b), we find that in several cases, there is no indicator that would provide an exact measurement of their effects on the various forms of existing racism and discrimination. Often, the list of actions does not enable us to identify the problem that the actions are supposed to solve.³²

Moreover, when implementation of the actions is discussed, particularly in the boroughs, it is difficult to get a general view of the geographical distribution of budget resources and initiatives.

Very few data are provided on complaints related to systemic racism and discrimination, whether they were lodged with the Ville de Montréal directly, with the ombudsman, or with the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM).³³

Nor does the City provide, in its documents, a detailed report on systemic racism and discrimination outside of the municipal administration, which would allow us to see them in context. The danger here is that whenever cases become known, the City may argue that it lacks jurisdiction, even though its jurisdiction ought to include ensuring the well-being of its population and protecting the rights of all residents. Some of the issues faced by the City are not taken into consideration under the pretext that they supposedly are not under its jurisdiction.

While it is true that the City has implemented several initiatives intended to fight racism and discrimination, the fact remains that Montréal citizens – especially those we met during our consultations, and more generally those who participated in OCPM consultation activities – believe the City is not doing enough or is not doing what it should.

It is therefore worth asking if it would not be important and necessary for the City to provide itself with better ways of documenting manifestations of the various forms of racism and discrimination when these go beyond the municipal administration and its direct relationship with Montréal's population. The City would then be in a better position to target its actions and interventions and to measure their effectiveness.

We believe that the City's shortcomings must be addressed, and in the pages below, we suggest a general framework to address it.

On the basis of our consultations, we have identified four priority domains for action and intervention:

- > access to services
- > citizens' participation
- > employability
- > urban safety

³¹ We made the same observation about intercultural relations (CIM 2019a).

³² We made a similar observation regarding the City's actions in the area of intercultural relations in sections 2.1 and 2.2 of our statement on *Montréal, Intercultural City* (2019a).

³³ When the SPVM's new Service des affaires internes was presented to the Commission de la sécurité publique on October 1, 2019, no data were presented on this topic, even though the Service des affaires internes is the one that receives these complaints. Instead, the focus was on how complaints are handled, and what steps are taken to respond to them.

We believe that giving priority to these domains, and looking at all of them together, when designing actions to fight racism and discrimination would allow us to hope for a genuine transformation of the organizational culture – a culture that today encourages and reproduces forms of racism and discrimination, not only within the municipal administration, but throughout the population in general. Ultimately, it would create the possibility of empowering citizens’ capacities.

Solutions or actions on the part of the Ville de Montréal should be based on three main objectives:

1. Taking Responsibility and Being Committed;
2. Empowering Citizens and Groups and Developing their Capacities;
3. Raising Awareness and Changing Attitudes.

4.1 Taking Responsibility and Being Committed

The first action to be carried out in order to take responsibility and being committed would be to publicly acknowledge the problem of systemic racism. Given the daily impact of this phenomenon on racialized persons living in Montréal, it is important to admit its existence and scope, even when the problem extends beyond the City’s jurisdiction.

The City’s acknowledgement would make it possible to build a relation of trust with a whole segment of Montréal’s population that is directly affected by systemic racism and discrimination and by acts of hate.

R1 – That the Ville de Montréal publicly acknowledge the problem of systemic racism

ACTIONS

- › Publicly acknowledge the existence of systemic racism in Montréal as a problem and commit to tackling it
- › Show leadership in creating and maintaining antiracist coalitions with other cities

MEANS

- › Have City council pass a motion affirming the existence of the problem
- › Ask the Commission sur le développement social et la diversité montréalaise to draw up a list of the City’s commitments to fight systemic racism
- › Launch an awareness-raising campaign on antiracism

In our view, effectively dealing with the problem of systemic racism also requires the development of a policy combining both antiracism and interculturalism. We believe that only by implementing an antiracist vision based on eliminating every form of racism and discrimination will we be able to tackle the problem in a significant and lasting way.

It is worth remembering that antiracism means “citizens’ actions and public policies intended to eliminate racism, in terms of both personal interactions and social structures and institutions” (Labelle 2011:45, our translation). An antiracist perspective takes into consideration how the dynamics associated with diversity (in terms of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, language, etc.) are actualized, mediated, and enacted by people on a daily basis (Este, Lorenzetti and Sato 2018:8).

Thus, the establishment of a strongly antiracist intercultural policy would support awareness-raising and education not only for actors in the municipal administration, but more widely among Montréal’s population. It is important to support popular education that will enable the population to understand why the City is putting forward interventions and actions on issues of racism and systemic discrimination since the goal, ultimately, is a significant cultural shift, not only within the City’s administration, but within Montréal society as a whole. The population must understand how racialization processes work and what their impacts are. We believe that an antiracist vision would provide a way of reshaping institutions at a deep level and fostering systemic and lasting changes to end the various forms of racism and discrimination that are still at work. An intercultural policy rooted in antiracism would have the merit of explicitly naming the issues involved in racism and taking into account the power relations that it implies (Dei 2000:27).

R2 – That the Ville de Montréal implement an antiracist intercultural policy³⁴

ACTIONS

- › Design an antiracist intercultural policy³⁵ that will guide all of the City's policies, action plans and measures involving issues of racism and discrimination and, more widely, diversity and inclusion
- › Inform the population about this policy
- › Foster and promote the development of materials to raise antiracist and intercultural awareness

MEANS

- › Develop an antiracist vision
- › Work with organizations involved in fighting racism and discrimination to define an antiracist policy
- › Create initiatives and procedures in tune with an intercultural antiracist vision
- › Provide all City departments with an antiracist glossary; on the basis of this glossary, review the terminology used by the City in its communications with both employees and citizens
- › Provide antiracist training for all City employees in order to better take racism and discrimination issues into account when providing services³⁶
- › Create antiracist education programs for Montréal's youth

Also, in order to better define the problem and implement appropriate solutions, it is important to collect data³⁷ that will provide a basis for designing policies, reviewing existing practices and procedures, and establishing specifically antiracist initiatives.

Published in December 2017, the Ontario government's antiracist strategy, Ontario's Anti-Black Racism Strategy, rightly stressed the importance of "evidence-based policies", i.e., the importance of basing the development and implementation of antiracist public policies on comprehensive data. We believe that Montréal, as Québec's metropolis, must be a leader on this issue.

An evidence-based approach is the only one that will enable us to draw a genuine picture of the situation and establish reliable indicators to measure the effects of recommended actions.

³⁴ In 2017, in its *Avis sur le profilage racial dix ans après 2006-2016*, the CIM recommended "that the Ville de Montréal adopt an integrated strategy [...] to fight discrimination and inequalities and foster a better way of living together" (our translation). In 2019, in its statement on *Montréal, Intercultural City* (2019a), the CIM suggested the development of an intercultural policy based on an antiracist perspective. Today, we believe that this intercultural policy must be primarily antiracist in order to make it possible to fight systemic racism effectively.

³⁵ This recommendation points in the same direction as the first recommendation in the brief submitted by the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) as part of the public consultation held by the OCPM. The CDPDJ's recommendation is as follows (2019b:112, our translation): "That the City of Montréal develop a policy to fight systemic racism and discrimination that takes into consideration the specific realities experienced by Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant persons". The CDPDJ suggests that "this policy be developed jointly with the affected groups," an aspect that we, too, believe is essential.

³⁶ The CDPDJ shares the idea that antiracist training is required; this is the sixth recommendation in its brief (CDPDJ 2019b:114).

³⁷ In its 2011 report on racial profiling, the CDPDJ (2011:35) put forward a similar recommendation to collect better evidence, voicing its concern over the lack of publicly available data.

R3 – That the Ville de Montréal carry out strategic monitoring of the various forms of racism and discrimination in the Montréal community and of municipal actions taken to fight racism and discrimination

ACTIONS

- › Use existing data and research and share findings publicly
- › Collect evidence of incidents involving acts of hate, racism, discrimination, and racial profiling, and make data and analytical outputs accessible to the public
- › Collect and examine data regarding the various forms of racism and discrimination in specific areas under the City's jurisdiction, such as housing, culture, and leisure
- › Use common indicators for all departments in order to account for incidents and trends relating to racism, discrimination, and racial profiling
- › Audit the various aspects of operations within all departments (planning, policies and programs, practices and procedures)

MEANS

- › Publish an annual report on diversity, inclusion, and the fight against racism and discrimination in Montréal³⁸
- › Design a template for department reviews, including a section on the impact of steps taken to fight racism and discrimination
- › Implement indicators to monitor the evolution of the socio-economic status of target groups (Indigenous and racialized persons)
- › Develop comprehensive demographic profiles of each neighbourhood in order to guide development of policies and initiatives and program planning
- › Present disaggregated data on police stops, especially with regard to Indigenous and racialized persons, in order to be able to measure the phenomenon³⁹
- › Carry out specific studies on significant problems
- › Make the data produced as part of the studies available on the City of Montréal's open data portal

Elaborating policies and strategies is merely the first step in tackling systemic factors that perpetuate racism within institutions. Appropriate implementation and assessment of the effectiveness of policies and strategies, are also required. The element of evaluation is precisely what is missing from initiatives currently implemented by the Ville de Montréal and what is crucial, in our view, to fighting effectively against persistent and systemic forms of racism and discrimination.

Evaluation is also a key mechanism for revising policies and initiatives, particularly in terms of effectiveness. For this reason, indicators should be developed and implemented to measure the impact of the City's actions in terms of fighting racism and discrimination.

³⁸ Following the 2017 report from the Commission conjointe sur la lutte contre les profilages social et racial, in 2018, the City asked the Service de la diversité et de l'inclusion sociale (SDIS) to monitor the implementation of its 42 commitments. The SDIS publishes an annual report. In our view, however, all City departments should produce a review of their actions regarding diversity, inclusion, and the fight against racism and discrimination, and these reviews should be brought together in an annual report. The person appointed as diversity and antiracism Commissioner (see recommendation 5) would be in charge of producing the report. This point is similar to an element of the CDPDJ's recommendation 8 on accountability (2019b:115).

³⁹ This element is related to the second recommendation in the report by Victor Armony, Mariam Hassaoui and Massimiliano Mulone (2019) on *Les interpellations policières à la lumière des identités racisées des personnes interpellées*. In the report, the researchers made this suggestion: « Every year, the SPVM should produce and make public a report on the evolution of indicators regarding racial profiling » [our translation]. The CIM believes it is also necessary to make the raw data about police stops available so that other organizations or groups from civil society can assess the scale of the phenomenon. We commend the SPVM for its commitment to implementing the researchers' recommendations, and we invite it to go even further and make these data public.

R4 – That the Ville de Montréal develop indicators to assess the impact of its measures to fight racism and discrimination

ACTIONS

- › Design achievable objectives in terms of fighting racism and discrimination
- › Assess the impact of measures, initiatives, and policies implemented by the City
- › Identify systemic barriers affecting target groups (Indigenous and racialized persons)

MEANS

- › Set targets in line with the objectives designed to fight racism and discrimination
- › Develop shared indicators to assess the impact of the City's actions in terms of fighting racism and discrimination
- › Develop measurement tools to document, then counteract systemic barriers encountered by target groups (Indigenous and racialized persons)

To monitor manifestations of the various forms of racism and discrimination in Montréal and within the municipal apparatus, we believe responsibility should be assigned to a body or a person that can act with full independence. Appointing a diversity and antiracism commissioner, as recommended in the final report from the *Table sur la diversité, l'inclusion et la lutte contre les discriminations* in December 2019, is essential to ensure such a responsibility.

As mentioned earlier, in order to assess policies, practices, and initiatives, it is important to create tools and indicators that can measure the effectiveness of what is done to fight the various forms of racism and discrimination. All departments should carry out an annual review of their actions regarding those issues to ensure that actions to counteract the various manifestations of racism and discrimination are monitored. The person appointed as antiracism and inclusion commissioner would be responsible, among other things, for producing – in consultation with groups from civil society – the City's annual review of what has been achieved and what remains to be done.

We also believe it is crucially important to involve citizens in Montréal's public life by giving them a voice in the development of antiracist policies and initiatives. Like cities such as Toronto and London (Foster 2010), Montréal could hold annual public consultations on the current situation regarding every kind of racism and discrimination and consider the findings of these consultations when developing and updating its policies and initiatives. The City could also carry out periodical surveys of affected populations and groups to ensure the effectiveness of its actions and interventions. Lastly, it could ask a citizens' committee to carry out a yearly assessment of its antiracist measures and policies.

R5 – That the Ville de Montréal appoint an antiracism and inclusion commissioner⁴⁰

ACTIONS

- › Implement a complaint mechanism under the authority of an antiracism and inclusion commissioner
- › Keep Montrealers informed about actions undertaken by the City to promote inclusion and antiracism
- › Regularly consult groups targeted by the City's actions to fight racism and discrimination
- › Receive complaints from target groups (Indigenous and racialized people)

MEANS

- › Carry out periodical surveys on the City's actions fighting racism and discrimination
- › Evaluate the policies, initiatives, and measures implemented by the City to promote antiracism and inclusion
- › Inform the public about the new mechanisms to process complaints
- › Receive and process complaints from people who are victims of acts of hate, racism, discrimination, or racial profiling
- › Establish partnerships with organizations fighting racism and discrimination to facilitate prevention and interventions, and thus to reduce the number of incidents giving rise to complaints
- › Hold an annual public consultation on the current situation
- › Publish an annual report on the fight against racism and discrimination and on diversity and inclusion
- › Make recommendations in order to improve the City administration's practices and standards with regard to racism, discrimination, and inclusion

Because a number of citizens belonging to racialized groups do not trust the City, we believe that the Ville de Montréal should review its system for receiving and processing complaints with regard to racism and discrimination, acts of hate, and racial profiling. In *Avis sur le profilage racial dix ans après 2006-2016*, published in 2017 (CIM 2017), the CIM's third recommendation was to process complaints in collaboration with the CDPDJ in order to "simplify the procedures for processing complaints about racial profiling and reduce delays" (our translation). Today, we emphasize the importance of going even further. As we have just suggested, complaints should be processed by an independent body: this would allow, among other things, to restore trust between citizens and the City.

In addition, following the publication of *Les interpellations policières à la lumière des identités racisées des personnes interpellées* – a report written by Victor Armony, Mariam Hassaoui and Massimiliano Mulone (2019)⁴¹ – and given

the observations contained in this report, we believe that the process for processing complaints about racial profiling on the part of the SPVM should also be reviewed. A number of our participants expressed concern about the way the SPVM reviews and processes complaints about racial profiling and discrimination. We suggest the implementation of a more transparent and more independent complaints process. In our view, the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes (BEI) should receive all complaints of a criminal nature filed by complainants who identify as belonging to a visible minority, as is already the case for Indigenous complainants. The BEI could also treat all complaints relating to racial profiling. This would allow victims to trust not only the institutions, but the process itself.

⁴⁰ The CIM is at the disposal of the City's elected officials and departments to undertake a joint reflection on the mandate and purview of the antiracism commissioner. The means presented here suggest some interesting approaches.

⁴¹ The CIM supports the report's recommendations, particularly the second one: "The SPVM should produce and make public an annual report describing the evolution of indicators regarding racial profiling" (our translation). We are delighted that the Ville de Montréal and its police force have undertaken to implement the recommendations in this report. However, we are suggesting that the City should go even further in its approach to process complaints about racial profiling.

R6 – That the Ville de Montréal establish a centre to provide help and to fight against hate-based attacks

ACTIONS

- › Implement, as a pilot project targeting one or two boroughs, a centre to provide help and to fight against crimes and assaults of a racial, hate or discriminatory nature, following the model of Québec’s sexual assault help centres, CALACS (Centres d’aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel)⁴²
- › Develop an information campaign about the implementation of this new help center

MEANS

- › To put an end to discriminatory culture, promote a culture of inclusion, and include a prevention component, especially regarding racial profiling
- › Establish partnerships with the SPVM, the antiracism commissioner and the CDPDJ to facilitate prevention and interventions and ultimately reduce the number of incidents of hate
- › Develop partnerships with organizations fighting racism and discrimination
- › Collect and process anonymous raw data about police stops

In order to recognize and fully take into account the impact of hate-fuelled violence and profiling on victims, it would be worthwhile to set up, as a pilot project, a centre to provide help and to fight against the various forms of racism and discrimination. This kind of alternative, safe, and independent space could provide for victims of profiling and racist attacks a way of (re)building trust between victims and the City. The centre’s mission would be to accompany persons who are victims of racially motivated acts of hate, racism, discrimination, or racial profiling, but also to record and prevent such phenomena by working cooperatively with the City’s various departments and bodies, with the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ), and with other partners. Working with all of the actors involved, the centre would support the search for long-lasting solutions.

Within this framework, the centre’s actions could take three forms:

1. Helping and supporting victims and their relatives in a safe environment and through an independent complaint system (particularly for the treatment of complaints about racial profiling).
2. Raising public awareness through prevention campaigns and education.
3. Encouraging concerted mobilization with organizations fighting racism and discrimination in order to put an end to any kind of racially-motivated violence.

⁴² The CALACS model, and the approach used in cases of sexual assault (rape culture vs. culture of consent, which could be transposed in cases of racially motivated attacks as culture of discrimination vs. culture of inclusion), appear promising.

4.2 Empowering Citizens and Groups and Developing their Capacities

A number of people who participated in our consultation activities told us they would like to be genuinely involved in actions undertaken by the Ville de Montréal to fight racism and discrimination. They would like to have more resources and more latitude to be able to implement initiatives and projects that might make a difference.

Funding is an issue that often came up during the exchanges. Better funding, long-term funding, increased funding, funding for more projects: this is what is being asked for by citizens and community-based organizations who are familiar with

reality on the ground and who are in the best position to create solutions in order to fight effectively against the various forms of racism and discrimination. In our view, therefore, it would be suitable to review the rules defining how assistance and grants are provided to organizations in order to ensure a better representation of diversity and to provide sustained support for actions to fight racism and discrimination.

R7 – That the Ville de Montréal review the rules defining how assistance and grants are provided to organizations supporting racialized persons and/or victims of racism and discrimination in order to provide sustained support for actions to fight racism and discrimination

ACTIONS

- › Implement specific grant programs for the fight against racism and discrimination
- › Provide financial incentives to organizations that want to implement programs to fight racism and discrimination
- › Earmark funds for organizations fighting racism and discrimination

MEANS

- › Encourage and support the organization of citizens' forums to raise public awareness of issues of racism and discrimination in Montréal
- › Create spaces for intercultural meetings and exchanges
- › Promote the initiatives of organizations working with racialized persons and/or victims of racism and discrimination

Empowering citizens and groups, and developing their capacities, also means enabling them to appropriate the city and the services of the City, and this implies giving them the means – including the linguistic means – to do so. Linguistic barriers came up several times in our exchanges with citizens. We believe it would be important to actualize the Réseau d'aide volontaire des employés interprètes (RAVEI) by updating the

existing list and recruiting new employees, but also to create a directory indicating the languages spoken by employees in each administrative unit⁴³, in order to be able to provide quality services to citizens for whom it is difficult to communicate in French or in English.

⁴³ This was a step taken by the City of Vancouver in 1995 (Foster 2010:24).

R8 – That the Ville de Montréal ensure that documents and services are available in languages other than French

ACTIONS

- › Provide services in languages other than French
- › Provide some information documents in the four or five languages most spoken in Montréal
- › Develop partnerships with community media to ensure that information about the City reaches more people

MEANS

- › Actualize the Réseau d'aide volontaire des employés interprètes (RAVEI) by updating the existing list and recruiting new employees
- › Identify, with the help of citizens' groups and organizations, the documents that should be made available in several languages
- › Provide information guides about City services in several languages
- › Provide information sessions for newcomers in several languages
- › Increase libraries' offerings in languages other than French or English
- › Support existing francization initiatives and programs

Another important element of access to services is mobility. Our discussion groups emphasized the fact that certain groups, geographically off-centered, are poorly served by public transit, which contributes to their isolation or even their exclusion. To enable citizens to appropriate the city,

we believe the municipal administration must undertake to increase access to mobility so that all neighbourhoods are well served by public transit.

R9 – That the Ville de Montréal ensure assure equal access to public transit

ACTIONS

- › Ensure that the public transit offer is sufficient in every Montréal neighbourhood
- › Make sure that services answer the needs of people living in the Territoires d'inclusion prioritaires (TIP) and highly diverse boroughs

MEANS

- › Increase service frequency of bus lines in certain outlying districts
- › Diversify the transportation offer in outlying neighbourhoods
- › Establish differentiated fares based on household income

4.3 Raising Awareness and Changing Attitudes

In terms of raising awareness, we believe that the City of Montréal must be more proactive if it truly wants to ignite the change in attitudes required to eliminate every forms of racism and discrimination.

As mentioned earlier, we also believe it is essential that the Ville de Montréal review its general communications plan to reflect the diversity of its population and make it genuinely representative. Similarly, as we have said, the terminology used by the City’s various departments and administrative units should be reviewed to reflect an antiracist vision.

We believe that a change in attitude must start from decision-making centres. For this to happen, it is fundamental to focus on ensuring that the Ville de Montréal’s public service managers reflect the composition of the population. Data on recent hiring show that the City is far behind in terms of recruiting people who identify as members of a visible minority as deputy city managers, executive directors and, as well as senior managers. Therefore, we believe that the City must use all necessary means to close this gap.

R10 – That the Ville de Montréal establish a staff development program for visible minority and Indigenous employees in order to promote their access to senior management positions

ACTIONS

- › Implement a development program for persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous
- › Foster the development of management skills by persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous
- › Establish a staffing process to encourage the access of persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous to management positions

MEANS

- › Create opportunities for professional development (special training courses) for persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous
- › Provide special training courses for human resources advisers to raise their awareness of antiracist issues
- › Review staffing processes to support the professional advancement of persons identifying as members of a visible minority or as Indigenous

To change attitudes, in our view, it is also necessary to implement antiracist education programs for the population as a whole, but especially for children and young people. The City should work closely with Montréal schools and educational institutions to develop such programs.

In addition, a number of people participating in our consultation activities told us that the City should provide citizens with spaces to encourage intercultural and interreligious exchanges, which would be organized by citizens themselves. This echoes an idea that we put forward in *Montréal, Intercultural City* (2019a): that an intercultural policy must be based, among other things, on productive interactions. We believe that shared projects and spaces for exchanges and meetings are essential for us to live well together. To raise awareness and change attitudes, we need to encourage moments of intercultural dialogue where listening and empathy allow us both to go beyond polarization

and to deconstruct prejudice. We believe that the City can play an important role in supporting the development of projects shared by citizens from all backgrounds.

Finally, we believe that emphasizing the value of diversity is a crucial aspect of antiracist education. This involves a full range of actions, some symbolic, others more tangible. Some cities, such as Toronto, have adopted a slogan expressing the City’s commitment to celebrating diversity.⁴⁴ A day celebrating everyone’s cultural heritage – and not only that of some racialized groups – would be a way of recognizing the contribution of the whole of Montréal’s diversity, including the group described as the majority group. Recognition of the contribution of Montrealers from diverse backgrounds would be more visible if, for example, streets and parks were more often named after them. The symbolic impact of such actions would be significant and would show the City’s gratitude for its diversity.

⁴⁴ Toronto’s slogan is “Diversity Our Strength”.

Conclusion

The Conseil interculturel de Montréal urges cities to build societies that are inclusive, respect diversity, and provide equal opportunities. Given the scale at which they operate and the actions that they are in a position to undertake, they can make a difference in the everyday life of people living on their territory. This is because cities are at one and the same time organizations, communities, and guardians of the public interest (Foster 2010:11).

As we noted in *Montréal, Intercultural City* (2019a), there is still work to be done to “bridge the gap between [the City’s] goals for inclusion, which the normative initiatives of the Ville de Montréal favor, and the real exclusion of several of its residents which, unfortunately face recurring or even systemic barriers” (CIM 2019a:vi-vii). To be a committed and inspiring city in terms of fighting the various forms of racism and discrimination, Montréal must put forward an antiracist vision and implement policies and practices that can fight effectively against this phenomenon in all its forms. And to give its actions greater consistency, it must develop an overall vision.

We believe that this antiracist strategy should be based on the following principles⁴⁵:

- › Recognition of diversity
- › Equality and the rights of all
- › Productive interactions

As we have pointed out (CIM 2019a:15-16), recognizing the contributions of Montréal’s diversity means recognizing the socio-historical aspect of exclusion and the persistence of some forms of racism and discrimination. Publicly acknowledging what has been ignored will enable us to look ahead to more equal relationships, providing the basis for a relation of trust between racialized citizens and the City, and between all Montrealers. This is a crucial step in the emergence of an inclusive city that is committed to antiracism.

As we also explained (CIM 2019a:16), recognition of the contributions of diversity is necessarily based on fundamental rights enshrined in charters and, in particular, on the right to non-discrimination set out in the *Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. Equality of rights must be a guiding principle to be put into practice and not a mere statement.

Finally, in order to act on the sense of belonging shared by Montrealers of all origins, it is important to consider the significance of interactions (CIM 2019a:17-18). Productive intercultural relations must be built around shared projects that can bring together and include all of the groups making up the fabric of Montréal.

We believe that in translating these three principles – recognition, equality, and productive interactions – into operational terms as the basis of an antiracist vision, Montréal will at last be able to develop the means to fight, proactively and effectively, against every kind of racism and discrimination.

⁴⁵ These three pillars are the basis of our proposed intercultural policy (CIM 2019a).

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