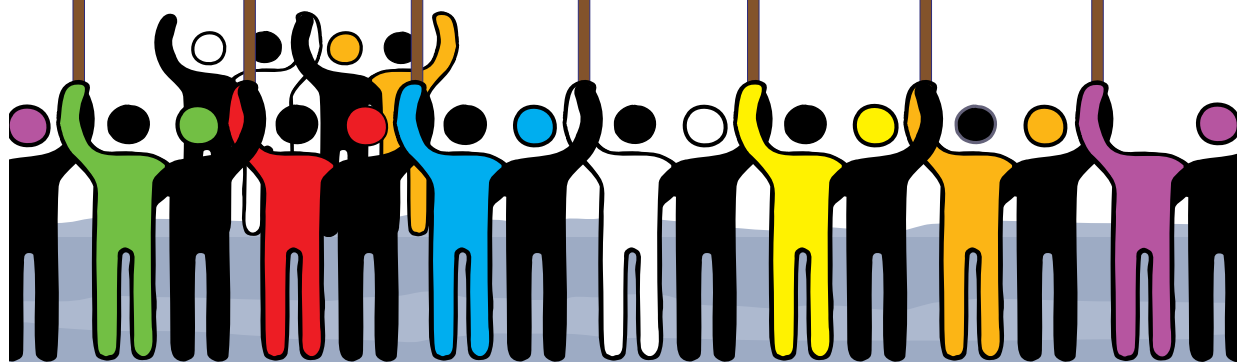


Hand in Hand for Diversity

**HAND IN HAND
FOR DIVERSITY**



14-22 March 2015

European Action Week Against Racism

Diversity! It enriches our cultures, our societies, our economies. It drives us to think broader and respect our differences. Diversity has the power to make society better.

Every year around 21 March, UNITED coordinates the European Action Week Against Racism and calls upon society to bring an end to racism, discrimination and intolerance. A wide variety of organisations join forces to confront racism with direct action. Whether by organising own activities, supporting others, or spreading the message: We stand hand in hand for diversity!

WEEKAGAINSTRACISM.EU

UNITED FOR INTERCULTURAL ACTION

European Network against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees



14-22 March 2015

Together we can make a difference

Diversity! It improves our culture, it strengthens our companies, it makes our economy more resilient, and it adjusts our perspective on reality. It drives us to think broader and to respect our differences. Diversity has the power to make society better.

That's why we say: **Lets stand hand in hand for diversity!**

Diversity in society refers to the presence of different groups, different people, and different individual roles. Once we understand what diversity truly contributes to our societies, we need to look deeper! We can then see the differences between those we always have considered to be the same and can see similarities and connections with others of whom we never realised this. We stop seeing each other as members of strictly separated groups, but as individuals with many different roles, many identifications, and continuously crossing different group boundaries. Our individual identities have many layers, and this makes each of us unique.

The key to successfully deal with diversity is to make use of all dynamics stemming from differences between people. Using all our different qualities, talents, and perspectives requests an inclusive approach. In an inclusive approach, people are seen and appreciated for their individual qualities and skills, and the differences in qualities and skills are combined to improve the coherence in society. A balance has been found between stimulating authentic talents and working on a common interest. Allow space for diversity and there will be a lot to explore, to understand, and to learn from each other. Using the strength of diversity makes us more able to cope with a rapidly changing world. Being open for diversity - within Europe, your country, your society, your neighbourhood, and yourself - strengthens the social cohesion we need to tackle the current atmosphere.

Embracing diversity in our society has many advantages. Diversity can bring new perspectives to change the current situation in Europe. During the European Action Week Against Racism we can show people in Europe the strengths of diversity and spread our own message of solidarity. This is the moment to stand hand in hand and make our voice heard!

CHANGE THE SITUATION IN EUROPE

Europe today is facing many different forms of racism, xenophobia, anti-migrant and anti-minority attitude resulting in exclusion, hate speech, and in extreme cases in hate crimes. Most worrying is the continuous rise all over Europe of racist and extreme right political movements and -parties as well as the more and more discriminatory discourse used by mainstream political parties. Furthermore, racism and discrimination are not only advocated by the openly racist, but also found in commonly used cultural expressions. Racism is not just an isolated act, but part of a collective, continuing system of social relations. It is not always easy to see; sometimes we need each other to point discrimination out to us. Cultural perspectives can be changed.

People in a rapidly changing society have the tendency to become protective of what is known and fearful for what is unknown. Dividing and categorising "others" into over-generalised groups as well as only selecting "the similar" in the core group is deeply embedded at various levels in our societies and in our everyday activities. Racism and exclusion

can take the form of a negative look in the subway, or crossing the street to avoid someone, or portraying people with certain words, images, etc. based on prejudices instead of individual capacities. We should rethink why we give voice to these prejudices and perceive others as lesser beings.

We can change the way society looks at differences. Effective antiracism is a joint effort; we start by opening up our own minds and then encourage those around us to see another future. Across Europe activists are preparing strong and innovative ways to engage with their communities during the Action Week Against Racism. A rapidly changing society forces us to rethink our methods of combatting racism, xenophobia and intolerance towards creating an inclusive society.

It takes courage to speak out against exclusion, discrimination, hate and racism wherever we see it: in our streets, at our schools, on the Internet, in the media, or within our institutions and governments. It takes an open mind to rethink discriminative tendencies in society and to change people's view.

HAND IN HAND FOR DIVERSITY

Fortunately, already many NGOs organise successful activities promoting cooperation, solidarity, and diversity as their answer to racism and xenophobia. Civil society organisations have a strong knowledge and experience in combatting the roots of racism, xenophobia and intolerance and have developed and effectively implemented unique methods in this area. Many European countries have developed good practices to promote diversity and combat racism and intolerance both in the fields of formal and non-formal education, and many local municipalities have joined in various ways to support diversity and solidarity in their community.

In the 2015 European Week Against Racism, NGOs, grassroots organisations, and local authorities throughout Europe will show society that we can all live side by side. Actions will be organised on all levels in Europe, from local neighbourhoods to European institutions. By helping each other and standing up for the "other" we can make a difference and turn the tides. Together we work for a future based on intercultural respect, solidarity and equal rights. With this goal, we stand **hand in hand for diversity**.

WHY 21 MARCH?

The General Assembly of the United Nations declared 21 March the International Day for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. This day was implemented as a reaction to the brutal murder of 69 anti-apartheid demonstrators in Sharpeville (South Africa) in 1960. Apartheid was a legal system of systematic racial segregation and inequality enforced by the government of South Africa from 1948 up to 1990.

EUROPEAN ACTION WEEK AGAINST RACISM

Since the early 1990s, UNITED coordinates every year around 21 March the European-wide Action Week Against Racism. Activists, NGOs, universities, schools, municipalities and a wide variety of different organisations carry out hundreds of activities all around Europe in order to bring an end to

European Action Week Against Racism

racism, discrimination and intolerance. The actions actively engage and involve 10.000s of people all over Europe to take a stand for diversity. The activities range from poster actions in schools, public transport and working places, to intercultural youth festivals, street actions, lectures, human libraries, film screenings, conferences, multicultural football games, making murals for diversity, or cleaning the walls from racist graffiti, presenting reports on racism, and many, many more.

Take this opportunity and become a part of the 2015 European Action Week Against Racism. Organise your own activity and help to make our message visible: All over Europe we will stand Hand in Hand for Diversity. Together we will have an enormous impact on creating cohesion and spreading our antiracist agenda.

- Tell us about your activity and it will be promoted on the event map on weekagainstracism.eu.
- Tweet about your activity with #ARW15.
- For more information visit www.weekagainstracism.eu.
- Stay updated on the latest activities through www.facebook.com/UnitedActionWeek.

WHY COOPERATE IN EUROPEAN CAMPAIGNS?

Racism is not just a local issue: we have to campaign on the local, regional and European level to set the agenda on all levels. Together we can show that there is an enormous amount of people that believe in the value of diversity.

By campaigning simultaneously all over Europe with a large variety of creative activities we make our movement visible and generate European-wide publicity. It is the variety and creativity of many different simultaneous activities all over Europe that make the UNITED campaigns unique.

Through joining a European campaign you can get inspired by ideas and enthusiasm of other activists, learn from each others experience and views, generate more publicity because of the scope of the European campaign, mobilise more people as you reach a combined audience, etc. You can benefit from the network's experiences as well as from its infrastructure and free campaign posters.

By speaking together we are louder, our message is stronger and travels further.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN BE CREATIVE, AND HAVE FUN!

Everybody can give a valuable contribution to the Action Week. Being active against racism does not necessarily require large organisational capacities, big budgets or years of experience – in fact, even the smallest event can make a big difference, and all that is needed from you is creativity and the will to act.

The European campaign aims to raise awareness in all relevant sectors of society. The four main target groups are media, youth, political leaders, and the general public:

- > **MEDIA** are essential in campaign actions with the purpose of raising awareness among the general public and may agree to work with you to produce special articles, TV programs,

and radio shows. Especially local media are often interested in cooperating with local organisations to produce special programs; so inform journalists and media about your activity!

- > **YOUTH** organisations and teachers' unions frequently take up the occasion of this week to organise special lessons, campus meetings, petitions and workshops. In fact it is very important to involve youngsters in actions for diversity: they make the future public debate!
- > **POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL LEADERS** can show their braveness and leadership when standing up for positions that may not be popular, and which show a vision of inclusion. Several mayors, ministers, and other politicians have shown their support to diversity in previous UNITED campaigns. In cooperation with ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities Against Racism), mayors and politicians are again asked to join this campaign. Approach your own politicians too! Send us a picture of this campaign poster with your mayor, minister, Member of Parliament and ask them for a clear quote: how will they promote diversity and fight racism, xenophobia, and exclusion. These political statements will be published on WeekAgainstRacism.eu and Facebook UNITEDActionWeek
- > **PUBLIC** actions, like conferences, debates and demonstrations provide space for reflection and brainstorming. Removing graffiti and other visible actions can alert the public to the message of the Action Week, but also hanging posters and distributing campaign material (e.g. posters, stickers, postcards, info-leaflets...) helps spread our message. You can take up the occasion of the Action Week to write petitions to politicians or publish media releases. Organise activities during the Action Week and give both the Week and your own activity more weight and publicity.

On the UNITED Action Week website (www.weekagainstracism.eu) we have published information on how to 'Get Active!'. You can also gain inspiration by checking previous campaign reports and become inspired by good practices. On www.facebook.com/UnitedActionWeek you can also find relevant news from the previous campaign.

As you start developing and preparing your activity there are some basic questions to reflect upon. Depending on how you choose to frame your activity the following questions provide a good starting point:

- What is the situation to address through your activity? Deconstruct the situation into a fact. Transform existing facts into a new opportunity.
- Who are you targeting and how?
- What are your goals and what can you organise in order to achieve them?
- Who are your potential partners in action?

Answering these questions will enable you to sketch out your event and create a plan of action.



21 MARCH



UNITED CAN HELP YOU

Whether you seek inspiration, wish to draw on other activists' experiences, are looking for potential partners or need various sorts of campaigning materials, UNITED can help you.

- You can order **FREE campaign material** (up to 2kg): posters, postcards and stickers. If you need more material for special purposes, do not hesitate to contact the UNITED campaign team.
- You can order or download a wide variety of **educational leaflets** that provide best-practices and background information about topics relevant for every day anti-racism work. See www.unitedagainstracism.org > publications
- Use the **online database** on www.unitedagainstracism.org/ addressbook to find partners. Call UNITED if you cannot find a partner for your activities: we can help!

- After the campaign your reports and pictures will be added to the online Event Map. Contribute to UNITED's **online campaign report!** Send us reports, newspaper clippings, articles, photographs, online coverage, and feedback after the event.
 - A **UNITED media release** will be sent out to all major European press agencies, newspapers, etc. We will also send it to you so you can inform your own media contacts. Or send us your specific media contacts, and we will include them in our list.
- Journalists wanting to know about specific activities will be informed about events in their country and referred to the organisations involved.

UNITED PROMOTES YOUR ACTIVITY

Announce your activities to us!

Mail us your ideas, flyers, invitations, posters, press releases, and links to your campaign activities before they take place.

- We will list your activities in an **interactive Event Map on WeekAgainstRacism.eu**, containing all event announcements and reports, showing the strength of the antiracist movement throughout Europe. Keep UNITED informed to make sure also your activity is included!
- We will highlight important news on **Facebook - UNITEDActionWeek** - like the page and follow UNITED!
- Show the world that Europe stands Hand in Hand for Diversity and **tweet** about your activity with **#ARW15**.

WE ARE UNITED

UNITED for Intercultural Action is the European network against nationalism, racism, fascism, and in support of migrants and refugees. Racism, nationalism, fascism, discrimination, restrictive migration and asylum policies all have a European dimension. It is important to fight intolerance on all levels.

Linked through UNITED, more than 550 organisations from a wide variety of backgrounds, from 48 European countries, work together on a voluntary basis. They base their cooperation on common actions, shared activities and on mutual respect.

UNITED is and will remain independent from all political parties, organisations and states, but seeks an active co-operation with other anti-racist initiatives in Europe.

Through the UNITED network, organisations meet each other, work on common actions and share information. European-wide action weeks and campaigns are planned and discussed at UNITED conferences. Like-minded organisations meet each other at such conferences and work together on specific projects and topics. The people at the secretariat are in constant contact with the network organisations, ensuring that information and proposals for action are processed rapidly.

Information is received from more than 2700 organisations and mailings go out to about 2300 groups in Europe. If you want to get involved, discuss the ideas and aims of the UNITED network within your organisation. Let us know when your organisation would like to support, join or receive information. And add UNITED to your mailing list!



UNITED IS SUPPORTED BY

more than 550 organisations from 48 European countries, many prominent individuals, private supporters and long-term volunteers from Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste, Austrian Holocaust Memorial Service and the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

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