UNITED for Intercultural Action
European network
against nationalism, racism, fascism and
in support of migrants and refugees

INFORMATION

Racism, nationalism, fascism, discrimination, asylum policies... all of them have a European dimension even though they often look like pure national issues. Reports from all over Europe demonstrate the increasing dangers facing migrants, refugees and ethnic minorities. Often these dangers are increased by undemocratic intergovernmental decisions like the Schengen Treaty. Strangely enough, racist and fascist organisations have strong European links from Portugal to Russia, from Sweden to Italy. Fortress Europe needs to be fought at local, regional and European levels - it cannot be fought on one level alone.

Linked through UNITED, hundreds of organisations from a wide variety of backgrounds, from all European countries, work together on a voluntary basis. They base their cooperation on common actions and shared activities on a 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. Europe-wide action weeks, campaigns and such are planned and discussed on UNITED conferences. Like-minded organisations find each other on such conferences and work together on specific projects on specific topics. The workers in the secretariat are in constant contact with the network organisations, ensuring that information and proposals for action are transmitted rapidly. Information is received from more than 2000 organisations and mailings are sent out to about 2500 groups in Europe.

If you want to get involved... Discuss the ideas and aims of the UNITED network within your organisation. Let us know that you would like to join or receive information. And add us to your mailing list!

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1. **All Different - All UNITED - General Background**

   It the Swiss countryside of Neuchâtel, the UNITED Conference "All Different, All UNITED" gathered 83 delegates from NGOs and Human Rights institutions from 38 European countries to debate various aspects of diversity, as a challenging aspect of multicultural societies in Europe. Entitled "All Different, All UNITED", the conference shows the connection with the European Campaign "All Different, All Equal" of the Council of Europe.

   For 5 days, participants were mapping, debating and improving their awareness over the current issues of diversity-equality in Europe. It turned out that nowadays not only post-Soviet countries are continuously facing racism and racial discrimination but even the old democratic society is infested with extremism, xenophobic trends and violations of human rights. Participants, mostly activists from grassroots organizations exchanged experience from projects and campaigns targeting negative aspects of diversity and worked on developing stronger partnerships for common future actions.

   Tomas Fachinetti, representing the Office for Foreigners and Immigration Neuchâtel came in the opening of the conference with a powerful quotation: "Each step taken, whatever small it is, in the struggle against xenophobia, intolerance and racism is precious for humanity here and all over the world."

   Service Civil International (SCI) - Swiss branch, our hosting partner organisation is one of the oldest voluntary service organisations in Europe, does International Voluntary Camps, projects of public utility as well as seminars and trainings about nationalism, racism and discrimination.

   On behalf of the local government, the Office for Foreigners and Immigration Neuchâtel presented the official position on diversity and activities with regards to the situation of migrants in Switzerland.

2. **Breaking the Blocks! - Informal Opening**

   It has become tradition that the UNITED conference begins with an interactive and informal way for participants to get to know each other. Finding out how many hours each participant travelled to attend the conference, the political views on left and right, how does it feel to be a minority, where Europe starts and ends are some of the aspects that participants learnt about, while discovering who are people in the room are. Despite the large diversity in geographical areas and provocative opinions the leitmotiv of the conference was: All Different - All UNITED!

3. **The Danger of Words: Same Words from Different Realities - Working Groups**

   The first activity in the conference was clarifying the meaning of some concepts that were to be used often in the program. In small groups, participants tried to explain terms such as equality, race, integration, nation, tolerance, etc. from different socio-cultural, geopolitical and economical perspectives. The aim of the activity, rather than reaching a common definition for the terms, was to raise the awareness upon the potential danger of words with several meanings and perspectives behind them. For instance, one could learn that a Jewish called in Russian `Zhid` it means an insult, while other Slavic nations use the same term in official way. In addition, some examples pointed out the internal evolution of the language itself becoming frequently the source of numerous major misunderstandings.

4. **Colours of Diversity - Lectures and Debates**

   Behind the positive title of the session, the speakers drew the attention over the situation of Human Rights in Europe with some astonishing facts: the hate trends emanate from the past models (anti-black racism) or the ignorance of humankind about the past history (alarming growth of intolerance today). The challenging presentations were calling for reconsidering our present attitude and behaviour.
4.1 Switzerland Welcomes You? Racism in Switzerland

By Gerome Tokpa - CRAN, Carrefour de Réflexion et d’Actions Contre le Racisme Anti-Noir (Switzerland)

Gerome Tokpa drew the attention on increasing racist acts against Blacks in Switzerland, among which the “stop-and-search” police operations represent a deterrent example of humiliations and unjustified arrests of black persons, the colour of skin being the main criteria for such actions. Though black racism has the most worrying development in the last years, many strategies to fight this phenomenon have failed so far. Slavery and colonisation figure as historical dimensions of racism are the cornerstones in constructing a European mindset that considers Black people as subhuman. The superiority complex of the Whites is still deep-rooted in the collective subconscious and constitutes an important component of the prejudices that Blacks are continuously confronted with.

“Should one be surprised of the contemptuous looks on Blacks in the streets?”
“Should one be surprised to hear the sound of monkeys coming from supporters during a football match whenever a black man touches the ball?” These acts of aggression are not only verbal but also physical with consequences that have lead up to death. CRAN has developed a strategy aiming at deconstructing the prejudice through inferiorisation and superiorisation. Since anti-Black racism is a construction, it must be deconstructed together with its corollaries (prejudices, stereotypes, etc.) and deconstruction must be followed by a reconstruction of the new individual, proud of his black identity, aware of his history, inhabiting positively his historical and present values. In Switzerland CRAN has already done a great job in putting pressure on authorities, with assistance of bigger organisations such as Amnesty International or ECRI, to denounce some cases. Activists have also put many efforts into training of police officials or into sensitisation and empowerment of black people in Switzerland. In this spirit, CRAN envisages to broaden the range of its activities by networking with other anti-racist organisations.

4.2 Challenge Intolerance, Fight Against Hate Crimes

By Valentin Gonzales - Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia (Spain)

“There is an alarming increase of intolerance throughout the continent, when intolerance means manifestation of something much deeper, powerful and threatening than a simple question of ignorance or fear”.

Considering the number of horrors of the 20th century, world wars, holocaust and genocides, it seems that Europeans have not taken their lesson from the past. The illusion of consecutive improvements in the field of human rights along the modern history dissolved fast with pictures of September 11 in New York. In 21st century, we are witnesses of how islamophobic, racist and xenophobic trends are getting around Europe. Hence, the fear concerns our future too since hate crimes as an extreme violent form of intolerance register high figures as well. Hate crimes imply aggression against individuals and communities with the purpose of marginalisation or dehumanisation, and an attack against the idea of human rights as a value. For example, in Spain Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia monitored harassments of 40 000 vulnerable individuals – migrants, homeless, gays and lesbians, prostitutes. Existing data show that there are 70 fanatic groups, 50,000 persons identifying themselves as neo-nazi (100.000 neo-nazi in Germany), and about 170 Spanish towns with high rate of Racism, were merchandising and football constitute the greatest sources of hate crime dissemination. Considering that since 1992, 75 persons were murdered by hate motivation, Valentin calls for data collection on hate crime victims in order to concretise the European reality. His closing observation was that we need a leadership of ordinary people gifted with activism, ethical, social and political commitment to move against racists.

“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world”.

5. » The Limits of Diversity - Panel Discussion «

By Irene Koutelou - Antinazi Initiative (Greece),
Robin Stoller - International Institute for Education & Research on Antisemitism (Germany) and
Kirill Babichenko - Memorial (Russia)

Irene opened the forum by denouncing her country, Greece, for remaining the only EU member state that accepts the legal status of open Nazis, whose political propaganda on foreign issues merges with mainstream Greek political speech. For example, the official refusal to recognize the existence of ethnic minorities, the Turkish one being recognized only as a religious minority and Macedonian minority not recognized at, makes them falling frequently as victims of Nazi attacks.
Witness of such absurdities, the Anti-Nazi Initiative Greece is running a longstanding campaign "Ban the Nazis" with the request to make punished Nazi violence. For greater efficiency, Irene calls for support NGOs and European institutions against the undemocratic practices of the Greek state.

Robin’s intervention was concentrated around antisemitism with a brief overview of its history, the transition from Christian anti-Judaism (a religiously motivated discrimination practice against Jews) to Modern antisemitism (a delusional ideology promising to explain the function of the world). Bringing into discussion Zionism, as a Jewish national movement that was suppose to erase antisemitism, and Israel-Palestine conflict of today, provoked the audience to react and debate further. Robin’s conclusion about the antisemitism was that it is more than just a point of view; it is an irrational ideology of extermination and should be fought wherever it appears. The audience got very emotional in relation to the hot issue of antisemitism and historical perspectives of the issue. The centre of the reactions and debate was on how in modern times anti-Zionism is related to antisemitism - Sebastian (Luxembourg). Florencio (Germany) and some others underlined that in the context of diversity, Islamophobia is strongly linked to antisemitism, especially in Western Europe. For Angelo (Italy) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should not be analysed without the post-colonialist context. Participants left again with the same questions in their mind: Who do we blame now? Where is the limit between criticism of Israel and the antisemitism? However, one important observation was that the issue should be further discussed and analysed in the present European context and focus on fighting both Islamophobia and antisemitism.

Kirill was the last to move the attention of participants over the present problem in Russia: the ethnical/racial discrimination/violence expressed both by skinheads and Russian Police. Hate-motivated violence in Russia is mainly associated with skinheads whose attacks are making victims belonging to different ethnic groups just because they have slightly darker skin or hair. But the mostly painful issue is “racial” harassment by the police itself. In this context, racial profiling appears in Russia where citizens of Russia are either Slavs - people with privileged appearance or second-class citizens - non-Slavs (mostly ‘visible minorities’ are Caucasians), the latter falling the first target for stopping, checks and detentions. Extortion of a bribe is not the only trouble for a detainee: one can be kept in a cell for many hours, can be humiliated, beaten; tortured, raped, money can be confiscated. All these hate motivated acts are happening with the silent approval of Russian administration, which seems to use some racist groups as a political tool. Unfortunately, the ruling “elites” in Russia continue to believe that radical nationalism is not a real political threat; thus, extreme xenophobia continues to grow and media has its contribution to it. Xenophobia, police violence, and right-wing extremism exist in many countries and more acute in Russia, that is why Russian NGOs need a permanent civic pressure and support from abroad to stop intolerance spreading around.


*by Uschi Waser - Naschet Jenische (Switzerland)*

While looking at Roma situation in Switzerland, we hardly found any visible Roma organisation and reported data concerning Roma condition. The Roma living in Switzerland are called Jenish community (travelling people of Swiss origins). The information known about this minority is mainly connected around the kidnapping of Jenish children from their biological parents under the pretext of a public need to destroy their “uncultivated culture” by the Swiss government. The Organisation “Children of the Country Road” (Pro Juventute), which was operating in the country between the 1920’s and 70’s had evidences of 600 kidnapping cases. Police took all those files in the 80’s. Their storage in governmental archives is subject to a high protection because state rejects to take its responsibility in the case. Besides the 600 known victims, many figures remain undisclosed because a big part of “Jenish files” held by other organizations were liquidated.

Uschi Waser, a living witness of this treatment was one of those deracinated children was present in the conference to transmit to the audience the astonishing content of her files. The 3000 pages-sized documentation had revealed many shocking secrets of her past such as being labelled immoral, a notorious liar and so on. Some inquisitive questions of participants Camelia (Romania), Dragan (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Isha (Netherlands), etc. disclosed that a lot of controversy has governed the Jenish issue. At the moment, about 3000 travelling people live in their caravans all over the country struggling with the lack of living territory caused by the unwillingness of Swiss communes and cantons to find a place for them. While a common prejudice towards Jenish people prevails in Switzerland, they keep on conducting their inadaptable lifestyle (e.g. restricted attendance of children at school or occasional work) and representatives of the community are taking care of victims’ rehabilitation.
7. **Current Issues in Europe - Thematic Working Groups**

7.1 **Get Visible! Migrants, Refugees and Human Trafficking**

The working group started with an exchange of information in each country represented about the situation of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and trafficked persons. Despite numerous common points, the comparison of practices, projects, laws or vulnerable groups revealed many differences between participating countries. For example, some countries have a long tradition of refugee laws, others have just created one (Italy, Czech Republic). The circumstances in detention and the rights of detainees differ from country to country. Some new member states of the European Union are transfer countries for migrants, while Western countries are often destination countries (Netherlands, Germany, etc.). This brings along divergent approaches for care, housing etc. The post-soviet and Balkan countries host Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). The intensive discussion revealed that the increasing Islamophobia leads often to inequalities in the asylum procedure and most countries face institutional racism. All countries have taken measurements for the repatriation and detention of undocumented people participants underlining that legislation becomes more restrictive. In this context, the best protection of beneficiaries is legal assistance and information about their rights. The group concluded as common strategies: direct contact with the target group, empowerment of vulnerable groups, involvement of young people, better cooperation between NGOs on national and international level and addressing stereotypes.

7.2 **Fear-factory: Islamophobia - Who do We Blame Now?**

They started with some questions on Islamophobia: Do you think a culture of Islam exist in the West? Who or what to blame for creating Islamophobia? How can it reconcile? Are there cultural and/or religious aspects of Islamophobia? With regard to prejudice one could think Muslim women are oppressed and deprived of any rights, Muslims are extremists and terrorists, Islam is seen as a monolithic block that has never been part of democracy. Such adversary attitude brings discrimination of Muslim at individual level (e.g. women wearing the scarf) as well as it is always a barrier for integration and for political participation of Muslims in Europe, what leads to loss of perspective for youngsters, thus, the street fight remains the only future. The group discussed also consequences of exclusion such as: Muslims as a race, conspiracy theories, the superiorisation and the inferiorisation aspects or the role of history and media. September 11 or xenophobia in are 2 major factors that increase Islamophobia. Considering the tolerance and multiculturalism might not be sufficient, activists claim for a respectful approach, a top and down process, which will break the institutionalization in the framework of which the supremacy of the Christianism affects the perception of the people. Participants stress out the necessity of education about Islam, Muslims, sensitization against discrimination, the dialogue with the local associations. As interaction is an important measure against prejudices, the possibility to learn from each other on the same level should be given. Finally, the group came to a common result: Islamophobia does not include only religious issues but also cultural ones.

7.3 **Antifascism - The Past is Present in the Future**

The working group explored the origin of the right-wing extremism, nationalism and antisemitism in our society. During the four sessions, participants analysed the role of history as a cause of conflicts given by different interpretations in European countries. The group discussed the term Holocaust, trying to define what it was, whether it could be explicable at all and whether it was possible to compare it with other genocides. Participants spoke also about the culture of commemoration and the importance of remembering the tragic historical events nowadays. The work resulted in draft of a declaration, which could be of interest to anyone dealing with the topic and/or not being indifferent to the current political situation.

In the course of the discussion, all have agreed that antisemitism was alarmingly rising in Europe, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Ignorance, denial, falsification of the data of the Holocaust is used in favour of antisemitic propaganda. Internationalisation of the fascist movement is made through websites, Holocaust denial movement and neo-nazism. They use the similar strategies being copied from each other, eg.: scapegoating the Jewry and stating they should cover their own or inciting fear and hatred among population. In many cases communist ideolo-gy can become extremely dangerous, even more than nazism, because it can lead teenagers into neo-nazi movements. In this respect, activists insist that now, more than ever before, it is time to remember the horrors of the past and let people be aware of the active threats that antisemitism presents to humanity. But what is the most important in the culture of remembrance? Is it possible to create a culture without crimes repeating and what can I personally do? When we all try to think about these questions, maybe we would be able “to learn from the past” and change the world for the better.
7.4 A Person is Not an Image: Stereotypes

This working group had the objectives: exploring what is a stereotype and its mechanisms, explaining how we use stereotypes in relation with different groups, defining the danger of operating stereotypes in relation with different groups of people, example of good practice addressing stereotypes and developing a set of recommendations and strategies for common action.

The answers to the question “Why do we stereotype” underlined that the fear of unknown we all have inside of us activates a defensive mechanism that put on the unknown the label “Bad”. Thus the fear of unknown makes people accepting stereotypes as an explanation for prejudices. Discrimination is the next step in the frame of “Pyramid of Hate” when one applies the prejudices into behaviour and action against the one s/he is afraid of. For a better explanation of how this hate mechanism works, the group went through a drawing exercise. Each participant had to draw his/her own image of the words: Muslim, Roma, Homosexual, Right wing extremist, Homeless. The drawings were different according to the personal stereotypes of participants and they expressed not only an image but also an attitude. Looking at how to operate with stereotypes, the group set a recommendation of practices in addressing stereotypes: showing the perspective of the other side, use of experiential learning as approach, apply Human Rights Education, sharing of positive examples, acknowledgement of stereotypes, respecting diversity as value, create frame for interaction.

The group finalised their discussion by listening the story of the Red Riding Hood from the wolf’s perspective, a perspective of the story that we never listen. Thus labelling the other is very easy when you hear only one perspective.

7.5 Educate in Diversity - Learn Equality

At first the group looked at some questions to answer: At what age we should start talking diversity? What is the goal of intercultural education? The most fruitful part of the working group came with short presentations of the participants, ideas of what will work in learning diversity. The group succeeded to summarise some theoretical suggestions, practical tips and advices for strategies to be taken in diversity education as follows: online materials easy to reach, work camps, focus on personal level, awareness of biography of the participants, in/visible diversity levels, theatre methods, intercultural teams, involvement of majority groups, training for teachers, bilingual kindergartens, guide for parents (how to watch TV with your children, what kind of example you will give to your child), role games, trainings, NGO supports and consultations, NGO works together with authorities, networking, strategically learning, involving instead of preaching, cooperation between NGOs and schools. One should remember the cultural differences when using exercises and examples. Last but not least, a list of useful websites was prepared for the audience:

- www.coe.int/youth
- www.becomingmorevisible.net
- www.coe.int/compass
- www.romanicriss.org
- www.adl.org
- www.interethnic.org

7.6 Offside - Racism in Football

Two sources of racism were identified, on the pitch and in the stadiums. The group agreed to focus on racism in fan culture and identified the increasing infiltration of ultra groups by the farright, using stadiums as a site for recruitment and also for propaganda (80% of displayed political symbols). While in some countries there is law to prevent the display of certain images and prohibition inside stadiums, fans are using a range of images and codes not always identifiable without specialist knowledge. Long-term preventive work is needed working with fans, but also improved law and training of police, to better recognise the symbols and practices of ultras. Participants then shared their expertise in order to develop some common recommendations.

The group recommended a better contact with FARE (Football Against Racism Europe) and UNITED to create better exchange of information and practice between national and international programmes. NGOs should work with all aspects of the games, clubs, players, fans and authorities, considering sports as a educational frame against racism. The role of players and stars is particularly important, they are high profile, act as role models and engage the loyalty of younger fans. Therefore, contact needs to develop with FIFPRO (International Federation of Professional Football Players) at European level and also with national players associations at domestic level. Show Racism the Red Card is a good example. Participants especially emphasised developing a framework for and understanding with ultra groups - each country should provide an annual report on the situation of racism in football.
8. **Get Active - Campaigning Working Groups**

8.1 **Short Presentation of the UNITED Campaigns**

As participants in the conference were on different levels of understanding and working with UNITED Campaigns, Sevil and Paola from the International Secretariat gave a short and effective update on the European Campaigns coordinated from the Secretariat and how it works on practical level. They also underlined the feedback that is necessary from the network to build the upcoming campaigns. Having the UNITED principle of the campaign in their mind “Think globally, act locally”, participants split up in smaller campaign working groups to put their views and expertise together for future slogans, posters, actions or events.

8.2 **Campaign in Support of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

European Campaign coordinated by UNITED, The "International Refugee Day - 20th of June" alongside the continuous "Fatal Realities of Fortress Europe" Campaign, which consists in elaboration of a "death list" reporting the number of dead refugees on their way to Europe. The campaign group has proposed regular updates of the information on leaflets and added few suggestions how to do it. Actions within the campaign should be adjusted to different target groups, as the focus should be on changing the point of view and the image of refugees showing their life before arriving in the hosting countries and reminding that they are not just refugees but first of all human beings. In this spirit, refugees and migrants must be involved in the process themselves.

8.3 **Campaign Against Racism**

The "European Action Week Against Racism" is centred around March 21, the "International Day of Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination". Ideas of new activities in cooperation with media, education institutions and local governments: setting up info kiosks at police stations, providing workshops at schools or distributing of materials in streets to affect the largest public possible. Related with the materials produced, they should be attractive, with a clear and catchy message, to use more pictures or historical personalities (Mandela, Gandhi, etc.).

8.4 **Campaign Against Fascism and Antisemitism**

Each year on 9th November, the UNITED network organises a European-wide campaign the "International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism" to commemorate the "Kristallnacht" pogrom and to protest against contemporary forms of fascism and antisemitism. Due to their different (often political) backgrounds, participants could not come up with one common idea for next campaigns (possible examples Modern Antisemitism, the persecution of Sinti and Roma) but they expressed the necessity to focus on youngsters and teenagers (10-16 years). Recommendations for future campaigns included sending additional information on the current situation in Europe (statistics, data), an appealing motto (Examples: Is it really so far away?, Now or never!, Past, present, future?, Focus on the person not on the background!, Stop it now!, Get up, stand up…against fascism!) After the discussion one thing was clear: “We must get UNITED, otherwise we will never stop fascism and antisemitism!”

8.5 **Using Media In / For Campaigning**

In the contemporary society, media plays a major role in dissemination of all kinds of information. Participants found out that NGOs mostly contact media via press releases, personal contacts with journalists, connection of event with the local media, attractive headlines and specific press conferences. The group defined a special need of training the journalists, to guarantee the right messages flow over the media, how to put various dimensions to the described stories, using qualitative and quantitative data, graphics.

8.6 **Youth Campaign Against Exclusion**

Exclusion implies a variety of meanings: Access, Rights, Equality and Opportunity but in all those cases the term alludes to a prior restraint of a right to be executed. Upon the exposal of national campaigns, the group detected various exclusion areas (e.g. schools, public transport, labour market, etc.) and listed the fundamental points for the practise. The group placed emphasis on the consistency of campaigning visibility, lasting throughout the year and not just at one big event. Moreover, a good campaign needs to provoke an action, to grip citizens as well as media, to reinforce positive examples and to bring up the invisible people. Thus, to be successful depends on engaging people to think and search out information beyond the message of campaigns.
9. **Challenges Within Diversity, Dealing with Diversity - Presentation of Good Practices**

### 9.1 Samora Magazine
*By Torbjorn Horn - Antiracist Centre (Norway)*

At the 25th anniversary of Samora Magazine, Torbjorn one of the founders of the Antiracist Centre in Oslo, presented the centre and the Magazine. Polarization of diverse social groups in the Norwegian society is a powerful phenomenon whose implications can no more be ignored. In this context, the Centre seeks to promote cultural diversity, human rights and equal opportunities in Norway through working for justice and equality. It also provides individual assistance to persons who have become victims of racism and racial discrimination, especially immigrants, minority groups and women. The personnel at the Centre possess hands-on expertise in several vital areas such as research, documentation, counselling, social work or lobbying. The activities of the Centre are: Tellus Radio - a local immigrant radio station broadcasting in 8 languages information related to migrants and minorities, Agenda X - a youth centre offering a variety of art workshops, training, seminars and open air activities, and Office for emergency help - project focused on legal and/or crisis assistance. In 2002 the first MELA festival (In Sanscrit it means market or meeting place) was held in Oslo. Later it became one of the biggest diversity festival throughout the world, counting in 2006 about 300 000 visitors. Finally, SAMORA publishes every year six issues connected with racism and antiracism in Norway and Europe.

[www.antirasistisk-senter.no/english/index.html](http://www.antirasistisk-senter.no/english/index.html)

### 9.2 Supporting Consultation against Racial Discrimination
*By Wiebke Doering - Humanrights.ch / MERS (Switzerland)*

The Swiss project introduced a way to improve the work of support services for victims of racial discrimination. Developed in 2005, the project enables any beneficiary support service to collect all reported cases with all necessary data in one common system that should serve consequently as nationwide statistics on racial discrimination. An online Handbook provides useful information about support services, practical information on how to deal with victims and a manual with examples of legal procedures. Wiebke suggests this tool as an example of good practice because it can be easily adapted for any other country and bring thus a new dimension to the work with victims of discrimination. Florencio (D) and Maria (D) reacted positively to the project stressing out that non-governmental nationwide statistics constitute a valuable counterbalance to the official governmental data.

[www.humanrights.ch](http://www.humanrights.ch)

### 9.3 A Classroom of Differences
*By Florencio Chicote Guimerans - Turkish Association Berlin (Germany)*

The project uses a large variety of methods to empower people to value diversity and fight against all forms of discrimination. Classroom of Differences has developed trainings for teachers, pupils and parents. Florencio underlined the importance of a parallel work on pupils and teachers at the same time because of their permanent interaction. The method works with homogenous groups of 10-25 youngsters each of to show them existing hidden differences among them. The challenge lays in creating understanding for different identities of oneself and of the others in order to value diverse backgrounds of the mates (game Molecules of identity), promoting intercultural communication, knowing about different expressions and effects of discrimination and exclusion and raising awareness for one’s own prejudice and stereotypes (Circle game). The reported impact of the project is a change of perception, communication and sensitisation of different backgrounds.

### 9.4 Perspectives of Diversity
*By Anna Misiaouli - Youth Board of Cyprus*

Beyond the core dimensions of diversity such as gender, ethnicity or religion, Cyprus needs a special emphasis on bridging communication between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. The 2 group are in a denial caused by the division of the island in two communities with a buffer zone in between. This situation led in 1994 to establishment of the Youth Board of Cyprus, a decision-making body, consisting of youth organisations from both parts of the island. The Board operates in four main committees (political, trade-union, student and general body), which tackle with youth policies as well as projects like infrastructure, trainings, seminars or cultural and prevention. Despite the failure of the referendum for basic resolutions of the Cyprus problem Youth Board of Cyprus, NGOs and the Turkish Cypriot individuals managed to set up some initiating measures for support of the Southern participants. Through those efforts, the actors achieved finally to restore the communication and to launch the campaign All different, All Equal with a bi-communal festival in June 2006, which introduced mixed music bands, cultural and social activities.

[Television recordings during the conference](#)
[Reading the conference info pack](#)
[Join the UNITED campaigns!](#)
10. **Diversity in Europe - An Update From International Organisations**

10.1 **All Different, All Equal: European Youth Campaign for Diversity, Human Rights and Participation**

by Michael Raphael - Council of Europe

All Different, All Equal is a European Youth Campaign implemented by Council of Europe in partnership with European Commission. Michael highlighted the role of the Campaign to strengthen and enhance the work of grassroots activists acting on diversity, human rights and participation issues. The campaign is coordinated through National Campaign Committees on the principle of co-management between governments and NGOs. Participants were encouraged to link their activities with the campaign and to participate in the Action Weeks targeting specific problems (e.g. Homophobia Week in Poland, Romaphobia in Slovakia) and pan-European events. National governments involved in the campaign and European Youth Foundation offer financial support for activities linked with the campaign. www.coe.int/youth

10.2 **Overview of the OSCE Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Programme**

by Anne-Sophie Le Beux - OSCE/ODIHR

OSCE is the largest regional security organisation in the world, with 56 participating States from Europe, Central Asia and North America, active in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. Based in Warsaw (PL), the ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) is the principal institution responsible for promotion of human rights and democracy in the OSCE area to watch the full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to promote democratic principles and tolerance. It organises human dimension meetings (with limited allocation of funding for NGOs) and provides monitoring assistance in specific issues such as: elections, democratization, human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination, minorities. A targeted series of advisory and consultative activities applies to racism, xenophobia and freedom of religion or belief areas. In 2003, the ODIHR’s mandate has expanded to violent manifestations of intolerance and hate crimes. The institution is in charge of following closely and reporting on violent incidents with a further dissemination of relevant information to OSCE States, what requires, among others, a consistent cooperation with civil society. Therefore, a presentation of the Programme and of the newly launched online „collection point” TANDIS (http://tnodihrr.pl) at the UNITED conference seemed to be of significant value for both present parties. www.osce.org/odihr

10.3 **Youth In Action Programme of the European Commission**

by Tatiana Monney and Ute Clausner - Swiss Coordination Office Youth Programme (Switzerland)

Financed by the European Commission, the Youth in Action Programme fosters cooperation in the area of youth activities dealing with cultural diversity, based on non-formal education and training, through exchanges of young people and youth workers across Europe, i.e. within 28 EU/EEA and 3 pre-accession countries, including Turkey. It offers funding for a variety of youth activities. As Switzerland currently participates indirectly in the programme one needs to consider the special terms of cooperation. This transitory situation is planned to come to an end from 2008 on with a possible official Swiss participation in the Youth in Action Programme. http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/index_en.htm or www.jfeuropa.ch

11. **Opening New Perspectives - Social and Optional Activities**

What makes a UNITED conference unique is its intercultural character. Meeting a large amount of interesting people of different backgrounds keeps most of participants wide-awake from early mornings to late evenings. Beyond the working sessions, there was time to know each other, to build fellowships, to network and socialize, to catch inspiration or to create basis for future cooperation. A great spectrum of social and optional activities had animated such burst of bridging of cultures and identities.

11.1 **The Info-Market and International Snacks**

In the first evening of the conference all delegates have their space to introduce the activities of his/her own organisation and to share with the rest of the group a taste, a sound or a colour of his/her own culture. National NGOs were also invited to attend the event. Everyone exchange opinions and practices, and in particular, explored the possibilities of future partnerships. Later on in the evening, the atmosphere of International snacks superseded all serious talks and all curious, the participants set out for tasting drinks and snacks they have never tried before or they have had some good memories of. Such energiser catalysed a passionate socialising and mutual cultural interchanges.
11.2 Study Visits and Cultural Visit of Neuchatel

Friday afternoon was dedicated to study visits. There were several options of local projects to be visited, each participant made his/her own choice.

One social project was “Vine and Wine Historical Museum in Boudry”, in a small town at the Lake of Neuchatel. Recently, the museum has become part of Neuchatel’s large-scale integration project “Neuchatoli” because alongside the history of wine it also shows the history of foreigners who came to work in vineyards and have become part of the local tradition. The visit included the wine-tasting cellar of the castle and a wine collection from the museum.

Other 17 active participants organised an interactive Antiracism Kiosk-Caravan on the streets of Neuchatel for the locals. The caravan was part of the activities organised in Switzerland in the frame of the European campaign “All different, all equal”. The team had prepared a series of street activities, but the rainy and windy weather allowed only the Wall of INTOLERANCE to be implemented. The aim of the activities was to encourage locals taking an active attitude against racism and intolerance and respect Human Rights.

The Asylum Seekers Reception Centre in Vallorbe (close to the French border), presented participants how the centre works and what are the procedures for asylum seekers entering Switzerland. The visit ended in a conference room, where the staff answered with patience the innumerable amount of our questions posed by the participants who were able to relate the situation in this centre with their experiences in their own country.

Bibliomonde - an intercultural meeting space run by volunteers. They offer an international library, with books in all possible languages, created with the purpose of presenting the different cultures coexisting in the region.

Two integration projects of Centre Protestant Neuchatel were also visited:
- ECHELLE - Programme of social and professional integration designated for refugees with a driving licence providing them opportunity to search for an internship or work.
- RECIF - Centre for meetings and intercultural exchanges between refugees, migrants and Swiss women that offer women of any background different sorts of activities and practical courses.

For the rest of the afternoon, participants could take a walk downtown in Neuchâtel. The day ended in the Castle of Neuchatel, with a visit to the ‘Hall of Grand Conseil’ where the government of Canton Neuchatel has its meetings and a reception with a buffet dinner hosted by the Canton of Neuchatel.

11.3 Political Cafés

Despite long working days, the most active ones managed to prepare in the evenings two political cafés, informal meetings to discuss some specific topics related to the mainstream exposed at the plenary.

The first political café was organised by Zakarias (Sweden). He projected the video “Crime of Honour”, telling the story of a Jordanian family, where a brother killed his sister because of her “improper” love to somebody the family has not chosen for her. The movie aroused a vivide debate, everybody trying to define his/her personal point of view: Is it about customs or Islamic tradition? Is it about legal system or rather about education and respect? Why do we consider the same acts in Europe as “family tragedy”? Participants took a very critical position to the issue, some called for the change of culture or for stricter punishment and other could not see any solution in those proposals.

The second political café touched another important issue, Homophobia. Boban and Adam from Serbia introduced the roots of this phenomenon in their country. It seems that the phenomenon is called “New National Identity” and appeared after the collapse of Yugoslavia in the beginning of 90’s. The entire mechanism of gaining independence started to produce different types of discrimination with the sole aim of creating a “pure” Serbian population, not offering any space for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender) people. The brutal violence during the Gay pride in 2001 (Beograd) and the homophobic climate in the Balkans motivated activists to start fighting against the phenomenon and to raise the awareness of general public over the consequences of Homophobia in a post conflict area.
11.4 Open Forum

Gathered in the conference room on the last day for the ‘Open Forum’, participants had the ultimate chance to share their thoughts with their fellows or to convey them their wishes and requests. Miska (Finland) asked more practical input from other activists, Boban (Serbia) recalled everybody to fight actively against racism and fascism, Adimka (Netherlands), Paola (Italy) and Yvonne (Germany) introduced their follow-up working group from Berlin in support of migrants and refugees asking everybody interested to assist or help the newly created international cooperation between NGOs.

11.5 Intercultural Evening

The closing moment of the conference was the Intercultural evening, prepared by participants and their performance talents, which enriched the spectators with new aspects of their cultures or traditions. The floor was given to Italian, Balkan, Romanian and Azeri traditional songs as well as dances from Russian speaking countries and other Orient related regions. It was then time for comedians Ionut (Romania) and Zakarias (Sweden) with some intercultural jokes. The floor was then open to fantastic vibes of the local band 'Los Yukas' that made everyone dance until the early morning...

12. >> Acknowledgements... <<

The UNITED conference in Switzerland is the result of a common effort of many people and organizations. The whole outcome is in fact the result of an intercultural and multi layered work, which has left a lot of inspiration for the next similar events.

Thanks goes to participants and to their sending organizations, who believe in UNITED and contributed to the conference with their ideas, their energy and their suggestions.

Special thanks goes to the International Preparatory Group for their common effort, the compact teamwork and the success of the event. "They were inspiring, they were challenging, they were transmitting knowledge and experience and they have had a strong commitment:

Antiracist-Intercultural Information Centre ARIC Berlin - Germany, Yvonne
Augustaschacht Memorial - Germany, Tatsiana
GetEducated - Learning Media Against Racism - Sweden, Zakarias
Golden Ball -- Youth National Minority Program - Latvia, Irina
Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia - Spain, Valentin
MTP Oradea - Romania and UNITED for Intercultural Action, Camelia
Queeria - Serbia, Adam
Service Civil International - Switzerland, Louise and Mirjam

Warm thanks to our host organisation the Service Civil International and to all representatives from the other Swiss organisations not only for making the whole conference-organization possible, but also for their continuous effort to solve all practical problems at any time!

Many thanks to our sponsors:

European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe
Federal Social Insurance Office - Department For Youth Affairs (CH)
Federal Service for Combating Racism - Fund for Projects Against Racism (CH)
Migros Kulturprozent (CH)
Youth for Europe - Swiss Coordination Office (CH)

Special thanks to all the UNITED secretariat staff for their technical organization and support before, during and after the conference! In particular, thanks to the UNITED young and talented volunteers who helped during the conference in the best way.
# UNITED Conference Program

**All Different - All UNITED**

14 – 19 November 2006 in Neuchâtel (CH)

### TIME

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<th>Thursday 16 November</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong> 9:30-13:00</td>
<td>Conference prepared by:</td>
<td>9:30-11:00 WELCOME</td>
<td>9:30-11:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Antirasistisch-Interkulturelles Informationszentrum ARC Berlin (D)</td>
<td>- What is UNITED?</td>
<td>THE LIMITS OF DIVERSITY</td>
<td>Continuation of the</td>
<td>ROMA – A HIDDEN ISSUE?</td>
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<td>- Augsburgstachl Memorial (D)</td>
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<td>Cultural differences &amp; Human Rights</td>
<td>THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS</td>
<td>History &amp; actual situation of Jeniche in Switzerland</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Get Educated - Learning Media Against Racism (D)</td>
<td>- Migration/Integration Office Neuchâtel, (CH)</td>
<td>Irene Kouletou, Antinazi Initiative (GR)</td>
<td>- Developing strategies -</td>
<td>Uschi Wasser, Naschel Jeniche</td>
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<td>- Golden Ball - Youth National Minority Program (LV)</td>
<td>- Foreigners &amp; Immigration Neuchâtel (CH)</td>
<td>Robin Stöfer, International Institute for Education &amp; Research on Anti-Semitism (D)</td>
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<td>- Presentation, testimony, discussion -</td>
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<td>- Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia (E)</td>
<td>- Programme/team/technicalities</td>
<td>Killi Balážičenko, Memorial (RUS)</td>
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<td>11:15 – 13:00 GET ACTIVE!</td>
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<td>- MTP Oraidea (RO)</td>
<td>- Personal introductions of participants</td>
<td>- Panel discussion -</td>
<td>Campaign Working Groups</td>
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<td>- QUEERIA (Serbia)</td>
<td>11:15-12:00 THE DANGER OF WORDS</td>
<td>11:15-12:30</td>
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<td>Campaigning against fascism and antisemitism</td>
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<td>- Service Civil International (CH)</td>
<td>Definitions and concepts most used in anti-racist and anti-discrimination work</td>
<td>Continuation of the</td>
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<td>Campaigning in support of refugees</td>
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<td>- UNITED for Intercultural Action</td>
<td>- Discussion groups -</td>
<td>The Thematic Working Groups</td>
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<td>Campaigning against racism</td>
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<td>Lunch</td>
<td>12:00 – 12:30 DIVERSITY IN EUROPE</td>
<td>- Sharing practices -</td>
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<td>Youth campaign against exclusion</td>
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<td>- COE – All Different, All Equal European Youth Campagne</td>
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<td>Using Media in/for campaigning</td>
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<td>Afternoon 14:30-18:30</td>
<td>With support of:</td>
<td>14:30-16.00</td>
<td>14:30-16.00</td>
<td>14:30 – 15:30</td>
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<td>- European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe</td>
<td>- COLOURS OF DIVERSITY</td>
<td>CHALLENGES WITHIN DIVERSITY</td>
<td>Free afternoon or study visits</td>
<td>DEALING WITH DIVERSITY</td>
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<td>- Federal Social Insurance Office, Depart. for Youth Affairs (CH)</td>
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<td>- Samora Magazine</td>
<td>14:00 – 16:30</td>
<td>• A Classroom of Diversity</td>
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<td>- Federal Service for Combating Racism - Fund for Projects Against Racism (CH)</td>
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<td>Torbjorn Horn, Antiracist Centre (N)</td>
<td>Visits to local projects in groups</td>
<td>Florescio Chicolte Guimaran - Turkish Association Berlin (D)</td>
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<td>- Migros Kulturprozent (CH)</td>
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<td>• Supporting Consultation Services for Victims of Racial Discrimination</td>
<td>• Asylum Seekers reception Centre</td>
<td>Perspectives of Diversity</td>
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<td>- Youth for Europe – Swiss Coordination Office (CH)</td>
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<td>Weiske Doering, Humanrights.ch</td>
<td>• Activities Stop-Racism Kosice Neuchâtel</td>
<td>Anna Miskay – Youth Board (CY)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arrival of participants</td>
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<td>15:30 – 16:15 GET ACTIVE!</td>
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<td>Registration</td>
<td>18:00-19:00 DIVERSITY IN EUROPE</td>
<td>Short presentation of UNITED Campaigns</td>
<td>Presentation of reports from Campaign Working Groups</td>
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<td>OSCE –Office for Democratic Institutions &amp; HR (ODIHR)</td>
<td>21 March Action Week Against Racism</td>
<td>- Plenary Session -</td>
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<td>- Youth for Europe Switzerland</td>
<td>9 November ‘Kristallnacht’ Commemoration</td>
<td>16:30 – 17:00</td>
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<td>Open Forum</td>
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<td>17:00 – 18:30</td>
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<td>Dinner 19:00</td>
<td>20:00 “Breaking the Blocks”</td>
<td>20:30 Political café &amp; Movie</td>
<td>20:00 Visit ‘Centre de Loisir’</td>
<td>Conference evaluation/Official Closing</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>The Crime of Honour</td>
<td>‘Homophobia in Balkans’</td>
<td>With the band ‘Los Yukas’</td>
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<td>21:30 International Snacks</td>
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<td>Movement for Peace Disarmament and Freedom</td>
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<td>NAFS</td>
<td>Krasni Prospect 220</td>
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<td>Never Again Association - Stowarzyszenie Nigdy Wiecz</td>
<td>NAAP</td>
<td>PO Box 6</td>
<td>PL-07300</td>
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<td>NEW Group - Service Civil International Belarus</td>
<td>SCI-BY</td>
<td>Post Box 91</td>
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<td>Norwegian People's Aid - Norsk Folkehjelp</td>
<td>NPA</td>
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<td>Rua Joao Estevao 135 A Piso 1</td>
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<td>SCIC</td>
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<td>Show Racism the Red Card - Ireland</td>
<td>SRC</td>
<td>PO Box 413</td>
<td>NL-1000 AK</td>
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<td>Sniffing Naschel Jenische</td>
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<td>Rruga Nam Fasheri 31</td>
<td>AL- 90000</td>
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<td>VFDIA</td>
<td>Hutterweg 6</td>
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<td>WNT</td>
<td>Aym 88</td>
<td>KY-72000</td>
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<td>WICC</td>
<td>Krasna 28</td>
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<td>St. Gustav Mayer Hy. 7</td>
<td>RS-10000</td>
<td>Pristina/Kosova</td>
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<td>Youth Board of Cyprus</td>
<td>YBC</td>
<td>PO Box 20282 - 82 Agianazia Avenue</td>
<td>CY-2150</td>
<td>Nicosia</td>
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<td>Abbas Fatullayev Str. 129/22</td>
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<td>Baku</td>
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<td>LV-1002</td>
<td>Riga</td>
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<td>A Different Jewish Voice - Ein Andrer Joods Geluid</td>
<td>EAJG</td>
<td>Postbus 59 506</td>
<td>NL-1040 LA</td>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
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<td>AESEE - Ass. des Etats Généraux des Etudian. de l'Europe</td>
<td>AESEE</td>
<td>BP 72 - Rue Nestor de Tiere 15</td>
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<td>All-African Community of Madonna</td>
<td>OSSAM</td>
<td>PO Box 341 - 13</td>
<td>MD-2038</td>
<td>Kairinh</td>
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<td>ASF</td>
<td>Auguststrasse 80</td>
<td>D-10117</td>
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<td>AfA &amp; Omega - Education Support Foundation</td>
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<td>Chilanzarska street 65/129</td>
<td>UZB-100115</td>
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<td>Kiev 15</td>
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<td>Anti-zoo Initiative</td>
<td>AN</td>
<td>55 Chalikondyl Street</td>
<td>GR-10432</td>
<td>Athens</td>
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<td>Anti-Racism Information Service</td>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>14 avenue Tremblay</td>
<td>CH-1209</td>
<td>Genève</td>
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<td>Anti-Racist National Network of Berlin</td>
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<td>Checkpoint Charlie U-Bahn station</td>
<td>U 10</td>
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<td>Assembly of Russian Peoples - Yaroslav's Branch</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Chekhova 31A</td>
<td>RUS-150054</td>
<td>Yaroslavl</td>
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<td>Associate of Refugee Immigrants - Orloa</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Via Teresio Vareno 140</td>
<td>I-20100</td>
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<td>Augustaschacht Memorial - Gedenszik. Augustaschacht</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Am Kashmirpark 7</td>
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<td>Black and not only - Nero e Non Solo - Caserta</td>
<td>BNS</td>
<td>Chiesa di Sant'Elena - Piazza Gramsci</td>
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<td>Blue and White: An International - Zwei und Weiß: Ein International</td>
<td>B&amp;W</td>
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<td>Blind and Different - Behindert und Differenziert</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

**UNIVERSAL Conference 'All Different - All UNITED'**

14-19 November 2006, Neuchâtel (CH)
UNITED for Intercultural Action 
European network 
against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees 

INFORMATION

Racism, nationalism, fascism, discrimination, asylum policies... all of them have a European dimension even though they often look like pure national issues. Reports from all over Europe demonstrate the increasing dangers facing migrants, refugees and ethnic minorities.

Often these dangers are increased by undemocratic intergovernmental decisions like the Schengen Treaty. Strangely enough, racist and fascist organisations have strong European links from Portugal to Russia, from Sweden to Italy. Fortress Europe needs to be fought at local, regional and European levels - it cannot be fought on one level alone.

Linked through UNITED, hundreds of organisations from a wide variety of backgrounds, from all European countries, work together on a voluntary basis. They base their cooperation on common actions and shared activities on a 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. Europe wide action weeks, campaigns and such are planned and discussed on UNITED conferences.

Like-minded organisations find each other on such conferences and work together on specific projects on specific topics. The works in the secretariat are in constant contact with the network organisations, ensuring that information and proposals for action are transmitted rapidly. Information is received from more than 2000 organisations and mailings are sent out to about 2500 groups in Europe.

If you want to get involved... Discuss the ideas and aims of the UNITED network within your organisation. Let us know that you would like to join or receive information. And add us to your mailing list!

UNITED IS SUPPORTED BY 

European Commission (DGIV), European Parliament (EP), Council of Europe (CoE), European Council (EC), European Youth Foundation, European Youth Centres, Fundación Mapfre, European Action Network on Racism, Intergroup of the European Parliament, European Anti-racism Network, CIPR, CIP, GPP, CUMR, DAFCON, etc.

This information contained herein does not necessarily reflect the position nor the opinions of our sponsors. Opinions are our own and they do not represent the positions of the organisations listed above.

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