

**European youth preparation for the UN World Conference Against Racism
in the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe**

Ready! Steady! Go!
May 28 - June 4, 2000 Strasbourg (F)

Monday 29 May 2000

Tuesday 30 May 2000

Wednesday 31 May 2000

Thursday 1 June 2000

Friday 2 June 2000

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

Monday 29 May 2000

The first impressions of the first day - Strasbourg

Definitely we didn't have time to feel tired after long travelling yesterday and short sleeping tonight. The conference started promptly. I must admit I didn't expect it. First we had to build up our knowledge about United and the Organizing Group, so we heard many useful information to use after the conference. We got a list of joined organisations (I believe around 500 is the correct number) so we won't have many work finding the best solution for (our) problems. More about United you can find on the internet. I CARE is the web page where you can participate in discussion about racism and other kinds of intolerance. These are also the main themes at the conference. So, my friends from Slovenia (and other countries), be on line and communicate with us! Do you know the difference between Council of Europe and European Union? Take a look at web: www.coe.fr and www.europa.eu.int and then write to youth@icare.to . The winner gets a free meal in the centre (instead of me). At first it seemed to be boring but it turned out an interesting introduction. We introduced ourselves (for the fifth time) and played some games to get to know each other better. Sorry, folks, I have to get lunch now. Write to you later!
Anita B. (National Council of Slovenia, Slovenian PostPesimissts)

Monday 29 may 2000, during the afternoon

During the afternoon of the Conference participants were asked to play Simulation Games. In some groups an actual role was played, others spent their time with discussion. In the so called "black" group (coloured by a candy

participants could pick out of a box), of which I was a member, a YES/I DON'T KNOW/ NO game was played.

Several questions were posed and the participants were asked to indicate if they agreed, disagreed or did not have an opinion. The questions we had to deal with were:

-I have prejudices;

-Tolerance means accepting everyone and everything at anytime;

-Are Human Rights equally important;

Sometimes the best of interest of society goes beyond the rights of the individual and Female circumcision has not to be accepted. Though the discussion did not become very heated, it was very interesting to listen to the variety of statements people put forward. Because the group kept falling back at the concept of what human rights are, we discussed after the lunch break the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, what they mean to us and how they should be interpreted in our individual view.

Here some discussion appeared about adoption of children by homosexual couples, whether the will of the majority means that the minority just has "bad luck" and the right to polygamy. At the end of this intensive afternoon we all agreed on the fact that some basic concept is of importance: As long as you do not hurt anyone, individuals have the right to choose how they want to live their own life, even if that means that you want to live with six other wives and four husbands

Jantien Brouwer, from IMADR

Report of the Bluegroup, led by Tony Geudens

First we started with a " get to know each other " exercise. We all had to stand on our chairs in alphabetical order, and to change places without touching the floor. This was fun, and we got to learn the names of all participants.

Now we were ready to move on to our main exercise, which dealt with the question of our own racial and social prejudices.

We were asked to imagine a hypothetical seven days long journey by train from Lisbon to Moscow. We would travel in a sleeping wagon and would have to share the compartment with three other persons.

At that time Tony, the leader of our group, gave us a list of 17 possible stereotypical characters. We were requested to choose from that list three persons with who we wouldn't mind to share the compartment, and those three with who we would. We were broken up into three groups of four and asked to reach a consensus on which persons we would have travelled with and not. We had discussions in the groups and we had to make arguments why our favourite person should be a part of the journey and why we would like to ban someone from the trip.

After the work in the groups we had a new list and we had to present it in the whole group. So we turned out with three different lists, and we had a discussion why we choose the people we choose.

The discussion did also include our thoughts about the subject of prejudice, stereotypes, if there were positive or negative. There were different answers, but we agreed on that we all have prejudice, and fixed images of how certain people behave and look.

Written by Lubna Jaffery and Srd Kisevic

Tuesday 30 May 2000

Racism and prejudice: tools to create a society?

Lecture of Anne Morelli, prof. Université de Bruxelles (Belgium)

Using the shared myths, heroes and folklore of Belgium Anne Morelli explained the way a society creates itself. Any group that wants to become a group has certain ideas of what makes them different from other groups. Groups tend to define themselves as being superior, and other groups as inferior. Groups create themselves by defining their identity. Societies use myths, heroes, monuments, songs, language etc. to create a shared identity. This is a construction. By realising that this is how the mechanism works, it will become possible to introduce another myth, another ideology. This time we could work on the idea of a shared history of migration and being human.

Is this natural? It is as natural as murder. It is something that happens, but not something we necessarily need to accept. Racism and prejudice are natural for societies but a learned behaviour for individuals. Racism and prejudice are an intrinsic part of the structure of society, not necessarily of the minds of people. We should take care not to confound 'natural' with unchangeable.

Is racism just prejudice or also something to do with economic and cultural power? Anne Morelli explained that she believed racism was based on different things, one part is prejudice, another part is power, another part is psychology. Unfortunately we will have to find these parts of the puzzle ourselves, as Ms Morelli's time was too short to include them in her presentation. In the US the idea "racism is prejudice plus power" has long been used to explain the difference between prejudice and having an active ideology promoting the suppression of another "race".

A point that was only barely touched during the discussion was the variety of identities and ideas inside our cultural groups. This is an important point, especially for minorities within minorities including migrant women, gay disabled, Jewish lesbians, etc. If we acknowledge the diversity in our own groups, this could lead to more understanding of other groups as well. If we can build bridges of women in different cultures, muslim and Jewish gays working together, etc. it might change the way we see 'us' and 'them'.

Coffee break discussion after the presentation

"Analysis of Racism and other forms of Discrimination"

During the coffee break a group consisting of people from Macedonia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia were discussing this morning's presentation by Anne Morelli were talking about the concept of nationalities. Everybody was talking in their own "national" language, and even so we could all understand each other perfectly, therefore language does not make you a particular nationality.

After reaching that conclusion somebody said that perhaps nationality is made by for instance national songs. The example given was: 'Macedonian Girl' as a typical Macedonian folksong. Unfortunately this is also considered a national song in Bulgaria and Greece. The conclusion we came to is that the concept of a 'governmental' nationality (identity) is a lot harder to describe than we thought.

Nationality is a mix of the people who live in a certain country at a certain time, so national identity changes all the time as the people who live in the country change.

Violeta Tchavdarova, National Youth Council of Bulgaria

Afternoon session

Today we were split up in Working Groups to exchange Good Practice. The topics to be discussed were: the National & Political situation of Migrants, Refugees, Anti-Racist Education, Women from Minorities, Ethnic Minorities and Second Generation and Cooperation to fight Different Forms of Discrimination. I joined the WG on Migrants.

We discussed all afternoon, even during the Coffeebreak! After some complaints from another group (because our Spanish delegate was too passionate) we moved to another room. It was very interesting to listen to the procedures that exist in other countries.

We discussed Sweden, Spain, Italy, Iceland, Estonia and Latvia. Estonia and Latvia had a different approach: Due to the splitting up of the Sovjet Union Estonia and Latvia became new countries and there, had to be decided, which people are citizens. Decided was that only those generations who were living there before World War II are considered citizens; all others have to pass exams, for which has to be paid. From this follows that a great part of the population does not have the citizenship. NGO's are now working to achieve equal rights and citizenship for all those living in theses countries.

We were all surprised to hear about the situation in Iceland. If a foreigner marries an Icelander, he/she is not allowed to work there. Since 1944 there has only been 1 asylumseeker who went there. Iceland has no immigration law at all: only " Alien Labor law". The asylumseeker was of course accepted as a citizen. I liked this afternoon very much, everyone participated enthusiastically.

I am looking forward to the interculinary evening: although I fear that not many people will like my dropjes!

Jantien Brouwer, from IMADR

Working group II

The discussion in the second working group started with reflections, impressions, opinions and ideas about the speech of Prof. Ana Morelli.

In general, participants found it interesting from the point of view of cultural relativism and discrimination. The professor didn't touch racism from the economic or ideological viewpoint.

One of the heat points of our reflection was that focused on the expression of Mrs. Morelli that racism is natural and normal. This was not acceptable for some of participants, but for others was just a misunderstanding, because racism was not considered genetically heritaged, but transmitted from one generation to another through culture, way of living, history, ect.

This discussion brought about another discussion concentrated on the origin of racism. There were two main trends in this aspect:

1. Racism hasn't existed before the ideology on racism was settled. (With that it is understood the ideology based on the racial differences and on the superiority and inferiority of any of the races.) What has existed before, it has been just a cultural, religion, ethnic discrimination, but not racism.
2. Racism as a phenomenon has existed before, but only in the XIX century it is embodied as concept and figured out in an ideology. But, we can not affirm its absence in the history. The examples mention were those of Spanish and Creoles, black slaves exploited by the whites, etc.

One of the interesting questioned being raised there was that that only rich who has the power discriminate poor people or it goes vice versa?

We agreed on that that this is a mutual phenomenon, both parts discriminates each other, but there was a point on which we were not of the same idea.

Someone said that poor can discriminate rich, but they do not have the power to change, so it is not so important. On the other side was mentioned that everybody has the right not to be discriminated despite of the political, economic, cultural, racial etc background.

Discrimination (racism) was not a phenomenon existing only because there are rich and poor. It exists also between rich people. The case mentioned was that of conflict between Catholics and Protestants. This discussion generated another example, which basically in partial analogy with the question above-mentioned was that it is not only white people discriminated and being racist to the black or others, but also on the other side.

The discussion continued with way and approaches we can use to be successful in tackling racism and discrimination.

The levels to be work with were

1. Grass root level, through interaction approach (natural meeting places)
2. Advocacy and lobbying in top level (policy and decision makers, public administration, media, etc.

Working Group VII

Our group reached these conclusions:

Cultural Relativism & Cultural Universalism

- Human Rights will may not be as strong as local cultures or laws inside a given group, even though these are rights every human being can use to their advantage
- We need to start working against racism locally and then gradually expand the range of chosen actions
- We all belong to groups, given or not, that can both stand alone and cooperate

Has racism been the same throughout the history?

- The human being has always been afraid of the unknown, this (plus other learned factors) has led to racism, and to prevent this the human being must recognise this fact so it can fight it within itself and within its group, community, country or other arenas

- Racism and discrimination can find place even within a group of people that mainly share the same cultural
- Experiences can help prevent racism, as racism is learned so can antiracism!

Daniele Aguilar, Tellus Radio & Antirasistisk Senter

[Wednesday 31 May 2000](#)

Media: Images of Migrants and Construction of Racism Led by Shade from Asylgruppen, Sweden

We started the debate with an illustration of a Norwegian newspaper dealing about the criminality in the country. The article was saying that most of the crimes were committed by immigrants and that criminals are mostly immigrants. The media is creating stereotypes and therefore influencing the public in a very unethical way! "People like to read about conflicts and that's what sells," is the answer the journalist would give.

The participants shared their experience in the related field and we have concluded that the media acts very similarly in various European countries. The questions that were raised were the following:

Should we work with the MEDIA?

If Yes, HOW?

Where is the objectivity in the information given and does objectivity exist in the media world?

Journalists lose a lot about their opinions and views because they have to merge with the magazine/newspaper point of view, which has a main goal to sell!

We all agreed that the media is an important factor in our lives and it helps us to feel freer. We are in an information society and that is a great opportunity we have.

How should we struggle against freedom of publishing fascist propaganda in the press? How should we work against RACISM in the media?

First of all, choose the right media. Then, promote anti-racism campaign in the media. Finally, do not associate status and culture to the action the person did.
AND BE OPTIMISTIC

Comments to Gabriel Goldberg, EUJ

Media: Lobbying

The study case presented by Albanian Committee against Violence, Racism and Intolerance (ACVRI)

Idea:

As the result of the researches and work with the cases of violence, the group of NGOs decided to create a Committee which has to try to work with a society in order to aware it of the increasing problems of family, political, racist (roma) violence in the country.

Using Steps in the development of the idea:

- * Advocacy and lobbying;
- * Preparation of a common STRATEGY - ambitious, beautiful but unrealistic;
- * Analyse of the human and financial recourses of the Committee.

The conclusion:

The work with mass media is a way to influence on the public opinion and political life as well. The media was a target group. Nearly 50 volunteers with different background, working in different fields - journalists, politicians, students, social workers joined their common desires, experience and energy in a common work on human rights with mass media in Albania.

Action Plan discussed from the participants in the working group

How to influence over mass media?

- * To find an interesting issue for publication and / or interesting way of presentation of the activity happened. The problem is important for both to be readable and interesting for the people and for the other side enough attractive for the journalists and the sponsors.
- * To find the right person in the right position in the needed moment. Lobbying work trough the "important of the day" is essential in the societies in the transition as a countries from Central and Eastern Europe. The networks of relatives and interests are more important than the needs of the society or the quality of the projects.
- * The media needs a NEWS, something really extraordinary to happens. The easiest way to ensure their interest to write about, is to involve them as a partner in the activity - enough big, well announced (media responsibility), and with involvement of strong political figures.
- * To initiate a Training on Human Rights (for example) in order to aware the journalists of the importance of the problem and as well to give them a bit of knowledge.

Ideas for campaigning :

- * to present and well announce the concrete case of violence. The role of the NGOs is to support the process of collecting of information from "First hand".
- * to publish more theoretical opinions which will present the meaning and the importance of the anti-racist work.
- * to use the social pages in the newspaper for presentation and discussion place for social problems not only for "Black Chronic". **By Violeta**

Report on the Trouble shooting group - people with limited abilities

Have you ever tried a wheel chair? Participants of our group first tried it and then discussed about our emotions. We agreed that trying a wheel chair for a few minutes is not the same as to use it every day, we had some problems with turning around, getting knife or a plate. This was a good point to start discussion. Tanel and Virpi told us their experience about it.

We spoke about situations in different countries but at the end shared the same opinion that the situation is improving.

WE raised a question whether disability is more like the problem of environment and society or health problem. We also found out that everybody is in some way disabled and can not use all tools available in everyday life.

WE very much enjoyed role playing and at the same time we were learning about problem of people with limited abilities. It was about real situation that Virpi explained to us: one in a hotel they wanted to go to the disco, but were not allowed to enter because of so called emergency risks, but what about drunk people, who are not able to move?

We had more examples to stress their point of view.

Anita B.

Thursday 1 June 2000

Alternative ways to struggle against racism

Workshop Wednesday 31 may, led by Sabrinha Lagoun.

In our group we thought it was important to have a dialogue and exchange experiences. We mainly discussed about the Swedish Anti-racism Film Festival at first. The festival is an alternative/different way to fight racism and xenophobia. The film festival shows quality movies in small cinemas with lecture before or after the movie. It is important to have a discussion about the theme in a movie and its essence. People have feelings and thoughts that have to be taken seriously and come up to the surface. Nothing is a taboo.

There are many ways to show that discrimination should never be acceptable. There is neither a right nor a wrong way to work. And everybody has his own style. By using art, theatre, music, poems, magazines and fanzines as tools, we find a natural way to communicate.

We believe that every event and thing that is honestly done and in which you believe, will turn out pretty successful. If you are good in music you can arrange concerts, collect the money and use it in a wise way, hopefully. Maybe it will be used for helping friends in need, like refugees for instance or used to distribute a magazine. It is all up to you and what you feel is important. If you are good in art or just like working with art, it will attract people and you will get your message through. Hopefully your message is of an anti racist nature.

**By Sandra Gustafsson (Hasans Vanner)
and Sabrinha Lagoun (Antirasistiska Filmdagar).**

Case Study on Asylum Seekers

Workshop Wednesday 31 may, led by Garret

The group led by Garret was working on the situation of asylum seekers and the rights they obtain. The first part of the workshop was dedicated to the discussion about the situations in different countries in general. The European situation is quite diversified, i.e. in Great Britain 54 per cent of the demand are accepted instead of 4-5 per cent in Belgium. Even on the living condition there are some differences, considering that in Iceland they get the same rights as the citizens. However, in Great Britain the rights of asylum seekers are quite limited, they have to live in detention centres, respect the curfew rules, they also have no right to handle money but only vouchers equal to 5 pounds per week accepted only in certain shops.

The second part was a real case study with a real situation currently being run by Garret's organisation, concerning the seven asylum seekers being imprisoned only because they protested against the private company, which is in charge of their accommodation. We were asked to produce ideas as to possible solutions to the problem and we decided that we have at least two aspects of the problem: how to set them free - so to say the short-term task, and the second one - what are the ways to improve the situation in general - in other words a long-term approach.

So the solutions suggested were as follows:

Short-term

1. Widespreading the information
2. Petitions to the courts to release the prisoners
3. Public support
4. Contacting other asylum seekers
5. Putting (moral) pressure on the officials
6. Increased media coverage of the case
7. Church asylum/looking for priests that can be of some help as far as accomodation is concerned
8. Fund raising
9. Free lawyer/medical assistance

Long-term

1. Try to find the ways to eliminate monopoly in accommodation of the asylum seekers.
2. Creating a network of free (for the asylum seekers) lawyers and medical assistance.v
3. Creating links with other people, starting with the people within organisations sympathetic to the cause of asylum seekers and Human Rights, at personal level in order to increase their interest towards the asylum seekers and refugees, for them to see these people as humans, as personalities and to raise the sympathetic feelings.
4. Free course of the language

The library: a case study

Amanda from "Proper-Job Theatre Project" manages the project, called "Above and Beyond". It is a training program for black people in the community, intended to teach them to be active on the community level. Part of the training is to do a research in the library. Amanda called a month in advance, saying there will be a group of 6 black people coming to do a research and asked for the documents to be prepared. So they came and were treated in a hostile and disrespectful way by the librarian. They were given a separate room "just in case" and accompanied to it by a security guard, the words like "tribe" were used in their address, and after all they were denied to come back the next day. The explanation was that they need to book it in advance.

How do you deal with this situation? What do you do? Is it a case of racism? Definitely. Are there different levels of racism? Yes, there are. In England, for instance, so called "subtle racism" is spread all over the country. And after all, how do you recognise racism?

The reactions could be different: from trying to appeal to humanity of the librarian to indirectly insulting her and being nasty. There is no right or wrong reaction; there's an emotional and rational one.

Here is what was done in reality. The group, which was in the training program, discussed the situation, and they decided to write a letter of complaint to the director of the library (a copy of the letter was sent to the librarian). "And make sure two follow up" they said to Amanda, which meant that the program is working! Two responses were written to them, in both the director apologised, admitted the fault, and promised to correct the situation so it wouldn't happen again.

The group found a way to deal with situation. They reacted instead of leaving all where it was. The society is pushing us towards disunity and individualism. But that was not the case, because the group realised, how important it is to establish community links and unity among the minorities.

Max Anmeghichean

Greek refugees in Romania

The consequences of the Civil War

The civil war that broke out in Greece more than fifty years ago had serious consequences on peoples' lives. One of them was the fact that a great number of refugees had to leave everything behind and go to unknown places.

Those who believed in the demagogic ideals of the communism were chased by those who shared the right wing ideology. It was inadmissible to kill your own brothers for the simple fact that they didn't have the same political convictions, but this was a cruel reality at that time. Unfortunately, the families of these communist fighters were the ones to suffer, being sent to camps and prisons, so that it didn't matter if these persons were 10 years old, 25 or 40.

However, all the Greek people who fought for the left wing ideals were granted political asylum from the communist countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, URSS, Czechoslovakia.

Greek refugees during the communist period

In regards to the Greek refugees in Romania during the communist regime, they were granted a series of civil rights, such as the right to work, the right to medical assistance, access to education for the Greek children, and of course, a place to live in. But, in what regards the citizenship, this was only granted in critical situations, for example if Greek citizens wanted to get married to Romanian persons. For instance, my father, who is actually a Greek, but was born on the Romanian territory, has got the Romanian citizenship only when he was 23 years old, after he had made several approaches to the Romanian authorities. During the 80's, many Greek refugees in Romania returned to Greece, but some of them chose to remain in Romania, eventually being granted the Romanian citizenship and all the other rights that a Romanian citizen had. Therefore, thousands of Greek people were the victims of some false political ideals, due to which their lives took unknown directions: some of them never got to see their native land again, others returned to their country, but deeply affected by the terrible experiences they had had.

Andreea Evelina Lazaridis

Association for Fighting Against Racism, Romania

Letter from **HUMANICE** in Reykjavík

To the Ready! Steady! Go! conference newspaper - Strasbourg

From the outside I have been very enthusiastically following the news from the conference and also we've been in good contact to our representative there. I have to say though that more news would be very appreciated for us on the outside.

Here is a small comment on the news report from the afternoon session on Tuesday the 30th by Jantien Brouwer from IMADR.

Towards the end of the news Iceland is mentioned and that is great. Mostly everything is correct but two things need correction: Firstly it's said that only one asylum seeker has went to Iceland and of course that's not so.

Probably half a dozen to two dozens seek asylum here in Iceland each year but **ONLY ONE** person has been granted the status of asylum seeker so far since the foundation of the republic in 1944. Others are simply turned back or in few instances asylum seekers have been granted "Temporary Residence Permit" which has nowhere as good a status as the granted status of an asylum seeker. Temporary residence permits have only been granted after a long struggle of the individual to get it granted, months or even years. It also says in the news that this one person was accepted as a citizen but it's not so. Citizenship in Iceland is not granted so easily for asylum seekers and I doubt that the person has any chance for citizenship here for at least the seven first years of residency - maybe more. In the law for citizenship it says f.e. that if a person has received any public financial support (such as pension, welfare financial help or unemployment benefits) he/she can not apply for citizenship.

It may also be of interest for you to know that Iceland has only accepted 350 refugees from 1944. Even though the population of Iceland is only 280.000 people that number 350 is shockingly low. Out of these 350 at least 150 have left

the country again for greener pasture - or at least to where they're treated a little bit less alien all the time. It shall be noted though that the refugees in Iceland have good support and treatment from the state and counties when settling here and are helped with housing, work and education.

Gudjon Atlason

Human Rights Organization of Immigrants in Iceland and Their Families,
Reykjavik, Iceland.

humanice@hotmail.com

Friday 2 June 2000

The Internet and how to use it in favour of NGO's to combat racism

We began with an historical trip about Internet development from USA to EUROPE. We spoke about the technical part and the different providers and services which can help us find information. We also spoke about security and how to protect our important information. Then we passed to the main part of the working group which was about combating racism by using the Internet. We had the examples of how NGOs (like I CARE and Magenta foundation) can use web pages to introduce themselves to the world. We realised how important for every one of our organisations to be represented on Internet. What our aims are, who we are, activities etc. It is not only important to use Internet for presenting yourself, it can also promote interactivity, so feedback from people to your organisation. You can use it to discuss topics with a group of people, like organising a conference not by meeting in one place, but by meeting in a chat session on the net.

Of course as organisations you have to fight also racism on the Internet, there are several ways of doing this.

Some organisations show on their WebPages links to racist web sites, but we think that that is not such a good idea, because not only anti-racists can use that, also racists use it to find other nazi groups to contact.

This workshop was useful for me because I think you should use every possible thing you can to further your cause and the Internet looks like a good way to do that.

Marcela Hoxhaj from Associazione Rieti Immigrant

"With united different initiatives to the same goal"

The Creative Youth Club SAY YES is the only organisation from Bosnia Herzegovina that has got representative in the UNITED Conference in Strasbourg.

SAY YES is a member of a rather new network for the Balkan region in co-operation with Danish Association for International Cooperation (MS).

The name of that network is South East European Youth Network in FRESTA Program and it consists of 11 youth organisations from Croatia (Green Action

and Volunteers Center Zagreb), Bosnia Herzegovina (SAY YES and Communication Youth Center), Macedonia (ADI and DEM), Yugoslavia (Belgrade center for Human Rights and Young Researchers from Serbia, Alter Modus Montenegro, Postpessimists Kosovo) and Albania (Albanian Youth Council). The main purpose of the Network is to make more links among youth from Balkan, through voluntary exchanges, different training and workcamps.

In some way all these activities are made against hatred among the youth from different nationalities and to destroy some prejudices that exist. That would be possible because of the work on joint projects from which they will learn more about themselves and probably recognise more similar things that connect them. In the near future the Network will be spread on new members and work with other partners, organisations and networks with the same wish to go together against any discrimination particularly in this "hot" region, but also generally in Europe and the world.

Jan Z. Kulenovic (SAY YES)

Saturday 3 June 2000

Direct action

Discussion was about different kinds of protest, showing to other people who we are and what we want. We may for example be an anti- racist group or make campaign for democracy. There was some examples of demonstrations from different countries.

One such campaign was in Belgrade where anti- Milosevich campaigners protested by noise with any material to hand to obscure the news from the government. That was because the news was censored to give Milosevich a good image.

We talked about very important role of media in spreading information about our actions. We have to be aware of consequences of our activity.

Sometimes action is our reaction i.e. where we try to stop skinheads or nazi march or meeting. Ales was saying about culture demonstration and festivals in Slovenia.

There was a point, that people, who take part in big events like concerts should know what is going on. We should remember about idea and reason of a event. It should not be boring or go to wrong direction i.e. they are totally drunk.

We should have fun during a demonstration but making gathering without any reflection is pointless. So there should be prepared short, clear message and information about meaning and aim of a event.

There is a problem with choosing a method of demonstration - with using violence or peaceful. We agreed about a rule that when anyone attacks us we defend ourselves using a force but we never do not use a violence.

Michal Kula

Legal Matters

The Netherlands:

- a strict law for equal treatment of men and women, which has special provisions for violating it.
- As a member state of EU the right to complain was admitted.
- Structurally, the Constitution is underlying, internal laws are inferior to international ones, but at the same time, international laws can't be used as they are, they should be adjusted to be used at the national level.
- Amsterdam Treaty states that in unanimity Council of Ministers can set up provisions/active actions connected with discrimination.
- Concentration on civil law instead of criminal one.

Poland:

- except the articles in the Constitution stipulating that any kind of discrimination is prohibited, there are no special laws on the subject.
- In the respect of law making it was also stated that if Poland ratifies an international law it automatically becomes an internal law of the country.

Russia:

The difference is that in Russia there also exist federal laws of both criminal and civil nature, though criminal laws are applied only when discrimination is displayed through violence and connected with criminal acts. Three levels of legislation: Constitution is the main law of the country, the international laws are superior to federal ones.

Moldova, Estonia:

- All ratified international laws must not contradict the Constitution (which is based on the Declaration of Human Rights) and besides, as soon as it is ratified, it becomes superior.
- In Estonia even you don't have any permit you are still protected by the Constitution as long as you are in the country.

Iceland:

No law, no discrimination regarding migrants, so it is totally denied.

There are only two laws regarding foreigners with the provisions for Residence permit (Ministry of Justice) and Working Permit (Labour Centre + Ministry of Social Affairs).

Three groups of foreigners are specified: refugees, European citizens and others (contract workers). Formally also stipulates equal treatment of men and women. Crime of solidarity

Norway:

Laws for emigrants don't follow them. Though it does include provisions for non-discrimination on the basis of sex orientation and disability, quite easy to operate (take to the court).

The questions raised:

- emphasis on internal discrimination law
- integration of anti-discrimination law - (anti-discrimination law in every sphere, stating what is prohibited and what follows if broken / mainstreaming - one big law plus special provisions in other laws)
- Access to justice / awareness of people, information on available legal services, free legal assistance, etc.
- Institutions outside the police to help people -"victims" of this kind of law.
- Law studied at secondary school, primarily paying attention to different minorities issues
- Employment procedures: new directives for approval of Council of Ministers/reversal the burden of proof
- Links to other laws
- Quotas/positive measures
- Legal procedure
- Citizenship
- Possibilities for NGOs to enter legal procedure with or for someone/group
- Anti-discrimination law against discrimination of all groups is relevant for racism

Finally, it was decided that anti-discrimination law should state that discrimination on the basis of (foreign) names, skin colour, ethnic and national origin, religions or political opinion or belief , sexual orientation, disability and apparel.

by Saskia

Local practises

1. Refugees and Migrants.

- The distinction between economic and political refugee should not be made. There is no difference between dying because of famine or because of a certain political situation. In this context the Geneva Convention should be re-examined.
- Asylum seekers should be entitled to the same forms of social support than the general population.
- Deportation of asylum-seekers is a violation of Human Rights and should therefore be stopped.
- Refugees and migrants should be entitled to the same rights and duties than nationals of the country where they are living.

2. Victims of trafficking. Should be accepted and recognized as victims and be granted with any form of protection. If that does not happen they are victimised twice, first by the people who 'imported' them and than by the state who treats them as criminals.

3. Staying permits for women. Women who come into a country through the family reunion rules or through marriage to a man who has the nationality of the country she goes to, should have a staying permit independently.

4. Education.

- Everybody has the right to benefit from their education no matter where that education took place.
- The procedure of recognition of diplomas and certificates as well as the recognition of prior working and learning experience should be facilitated so that refugees and migrants are not subject of either downwards mobility, or underpayment.

5. The right to diversity. Living in a multi-cultural society makes that people with a diverse cultural and/or religious backgrounds have the right to have different dresscodes and customs etc without it affecting their rights to work and education.

6. Support to victims of racism now.

- The gap between discussing racism as an abstract concept and improving the situation for the victims of racism now is something that worries us.
- Improving the situation for victims should take precedence over discussing racism on an abstract level.
- All forms of discrimination should be taken into consideration for the purpose of fighting against racism.

Local practises, second part

Acts of solidarity - An offence

Any law that encourages denunciation is not a law; any law that condemns the natural human inclination to help the needy is not a law. Governments should in fact land their citizens ' generosity when they sympathize with and help those in need.

A law is not a law when it goes against basic ethics. We want the government to help prosecuting voluntary organization who help persons without any valid documents on the grounds that such acts of solidarity constitute an offence.

As a token of respect for asylum seekers and persons not holding valid documents

1. Close all places where foreigners are detained for being asylum seekers or not holding valid documents.
2. Establish a fair debate and trial with due respect to human liberties and rights even when dealing with foreigners held in custody.
3. Allow concerned voluntary organizations to have access to foreigners being detained only because they do not hold valid travel or residence documents.

Police violation & discrimination against people of foreign origin

Each country should have a supervisory body either in the form of an observatory or in the form of a mediator, having power to independently investigate cases of harassment, repression and violence by the police against foreigners and people of foreign origin.

Once an asylum seeker has obtain the visa of one of the member country of the European Community, he/she should be able to apply in any other member

country. In conformity with the European Convention on Human Rights, we call for a stop to all humiliating treatment during identity checks as well as a ban on DNA-based checks.

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