

UNITED IN 2009



ANNUAL REPORT



UNITED FOR INTERCULTURAL ACTION

EUROPEAN NETWORK AGAINST NATIONALISM, RACISM, FASCISM

AND IN SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

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THE EUROPEAN NETWORK AGAINST NATIONALISM, RACISM, FASCISM AND IN SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

United

We believe that change can only be done by networking from the bottom up – through unity and solidarity. Since 1993, more than 550 organisations from 46 European countries have joined to make Europe a better place - for all.

For

We stand for mutual support, common action and the belief in the virtue of diversity. Together we want to create a Europe of respect and solidarity, a Europe of intercultural understanding.

Intercultural

We all live under the same sky, but see a different horizon. The UNITED network provides an exchange-platform for organisations to get connected and share expertise. Understanding common problems in different contexts enables activists to develop creative actions on all levels: regional, national and international.

Action

Common campaigns, cross-border projects and international gatherings translate the network's power into concrete action. UNITED produces and provides free campaign material & networking tools, coordinates international campaigns and projects, and brings together the expertise and creativity of hundreds of different organisations to strengthen the international anti-discrimination movement, from Portugal to Russia and from Iceland to Cyprus.

Diversity is a virtue, solidarity a duty

UNITED is a pan-European network with an open policy:

- Every group, organisation etc. that share values such as human rights, diversity and intercultural respect is welcome to join
- Everybody who is committed to our values is welcome to join our European-wide campaigns, has free access to information and contacts and can use our campaign material and networking tools for free.

Our ambition is to build up and strengthen civil society movements in the fight against hate, intolerance and fear; to give better visibility to the antidiscrimination movement; to stimulate cooperation among a variety of actors; to support the flow of information and expertise among Europe's NGOs; to create and distribute vital campaign-, networking- and educational material for free.

UNITED is, and always will remain, independent of any political party or governmental institute. That's why UNITED depends on financial support from a wide range of sources such as supporting NGOs.

By today, more than 550 organisations from 46 European countries have joined the network.



UNITED for Intercultural Action is the largest pan-European network of diverse non-governmental organisations – with (in 2009) 552 partner organisations in 46 European countries - bringing together the European anti-discrimination movement in all its shades and variety.

Despite the fact that working-topics, political attitudes and organisational structures may be different in cooperating organisations, they all are unified in the struggle against racism, nationalism, fascism and related forms of discrimination and in support of migrants and refugees.

The story of the UNITED Network began in 1992, when participants of two anti-racist European youth seminars in Strasbourg (F) recognised the need for a pan-European tool to strengthen and cross-link grassroots organisations and their actions against racism, fascism, and nationalism and in support of migrants and refugees. 1992 was the year of the most violent and massive xenophobic riots that took place in Germany after the Second World War - against this background the need for a structured info- and networking system urged and since 1993 the basic working principle “**UNITED WE ARE STRONGER**” spreads across entire Europe.

The Network provides a forum for active solidarity and cooperation between member organisations and their activists – special emphasis is put on supporting cooperation between organisations from Western and Central and Eastern Europe. Therefore, open access to information, constant stimulation and the free provision of (net)working tools are integral to serve the needs of the very diverse organisations and groups throughout Europe and strengthen the European anti-discrimination movement. The well-proven networking-tools enable a steady and smooth flow of information among all active groups in Europe and give UNITED the possibility to act as ‘spider in a net’, cross-linking grass-roots organisations, nation-wide anti-racist networks, international and national human rights and youth organisations, antifascist groups, refugee and migrant support organisations, sport groups, educational institutes, expert sources, officials and authorities, politicians, lobby organisations, media and journalists, museums and cultural centres and many, many more.

UNITED is a progressive Network with a future-oriented approach. In fast changing Europe we need to act courageously and not just reacting on recent incidences or deadlocked situations. The passion to develop and advance, to take risks in order to support innovative and courageous projects, is reflected in the work of UNITED since 1992.

The Heart of the Network

It needs a lot of work, patience and organisation to keep an international big-scale network alive. Although the constantly enlarged ‘net’ of UNITED is huge, the ‘spider’ that is weaving it is small. Only 4 staff members and 4-5 full-time volunteers worked 2009 in the Amsterdam based secretariat of UNITED. Together, staff and volunteers formed an international team composed of experts and activists from Austria, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain and Switzerland.

UNITED is able to work with international volunteers thanks to partnership with a vocational training program of the *Ca’Foscari University of Venice* (Leonardo da Vinci exchange), cooperation with *Action Reconciliation Service for Peace* (Germany) and EVS (European Voluntary Service) projects granted by the *European Commission*.

UNITED coordinates, supports and strengthens a network of over 550 organisations from 46 European countries. Voluntary cooperation and mutual respect are the main working principles of this broadest and largest pan-European network of NGOs. Everybody who wants to contribute can join the European struggle against inequality – no hierarchic structures interfere the neural fibres of UNITED that connect and advance the work within the network.

The Amsterdam based secretariat itself functions as network- and information-desk for the antiracist movement where logistic planning and administration takes place and all of the network data and information is processed. Many organisations, individual



activists, journalists, researchers etc. call the secretariat and ask for support, special information and advice. The main responsibilities of the intercultural team working in the UNITED secretariat are:

- Maintenance and development of the UNITED networking tools and information system
- Stimulation and coordination of annual pan-European campaigns
- Preparation and organisation of annual international conferences
- Planning and creation of publications and effective dissemination of this material
- Monitoring and documentation of the European anti-racist movement
- Handling of requests and information and archiving of publications of organisations and institutes from all over Europe
- Dissemination of UNITED campaign and educational material, as well as explanation of the important principles and concepts of international networking during delegations and conferences all over Europe

"I am writing to you because I am interested in knowing if you could let me know which institutes/organizations in your network organize anti-discrimination training seminars."

[Vanja - Researcher at the Centre for European Policy Studies (B)]

Funding

"Money makes the world go around" – it's a terrible truth and especially valid for non-profit organisations. UNITED is an ambitious project with no stable income – year for year anew UNITED needs to fight for funding and the last five years were an almost killing struggle for the network.

UNITED depends on the financial support that comes from network organisations and individual supporters, however we worry about essential additional funding for the upcoming period. While it is possible to partly fund projects, campaigns and conferences with granted sponsorships we still need to cover our administrative costs with minimal amounts in relation to the necessary individual effort and working force.

The participation in UNITED campaigns is cost-free, organisational and administrative support is given for free to NGOs, the use of UNITED material and tools is free of charge for everybody – all these things are directly connected with the work done in the UNITED secretariat and the very most of this work is done by volunteers (unsalaried of course).

"My name is Jalal, I am from Azerbaijan, and I am eager to become a supporter of this network against fascism, nationalism and racism. I would like to know, is it possible for me as an individual to become a member. If YES, please, could You help me to organize a payment?"

[Jalal – Azerbaijan]



COMMUNICATION HARDWARE

THE TOOLS OF THE UNITED NETWORK

UNITED has developed networking-tools that serve the needs of the very diverse organisations and groups throughout Europe. The proven and reliable networking-tools are well established in Europe and enable professional networking on European level and enable a steady and smooth flow of information among all active groups in Europe.

The below explained networking-tools are constantly improved and updated by the UNITED Secretariat.

Database – The Backbone of the Network

The internal UNITED database maintains details on over 8.300 diverse contacts from all over Europe active in the working fields of UNITED and builds the basic fundament of the UNITED network and its tools. Since the database is also one of the essential tools in the secretariat's daily work it is constantly reviewed, updated and expanded.

“The Researcher and Campaigner on Ukraine (Heather and Aisha) will be visiting Ukraine from 18 - 30 Jan in order to draw up recommendations to the new President which reflect Amnesty International's main concerns in the country. I was hoping you would be able to provide a list of recommended NGOs that we could contact regarding the issue. Would your network be able to recommend any other organizations working on racial discrimination in Ukraine?”

[Aisha- Amnesty International (UK)]

Mailing-System – Distributing Tools for Change

UNITED publications are distributed all over Europe via a direct postal mailing-system to more than 2.300 grass-roots organisations, youth groups, educational institutes, journalists, media, ministers and members of European parliament. Mailings are sent out four times a year. The other way around UNITED receives information and publications from over 2.500 organisations active in the field. All the received material gets processed, documented and archived by the UNITED secretariat. UNITED makes extensive use of the Internet and email communication and reaches out to more than 10.000 up-to-date contacts (e.g. for disseminating e-news including important information on actual situations, alerts for international/national actions or to enable to protest against unjust deportations of refugees, calls for participation in UNITED campaigns and conferences, forwarded calls from the Council of Europe etc.).

Mailings and E-mailings conducted in 2009:

Post mailings	4 times to over 2.300 contacts
E-news	35 times to over 10.000 contacts

“Thanks also for the material, we will use them in our forum dedicated to international day of tolerance.”
[Valence – ICUMBI (RUS)]



Campaign & Educational Material – Improving Campaigns and Building Capacity

UNITED has a vast collection of already over 300 publications. These publications are developed within the co-operating network organisations and designed, produced and disseminated by the UNITED secretariat. Up to today, several UNITED publications have been translated and reprinted in different languages, such as Azeri, Czech, English, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovakian, Spanish and Swedish.

All materials published by UNITED are distributed through the reliable mailing system, at delegations, at activities (e.g. street actions), at international conferences and provided (in larger amounts) to organisations and events on request. All UNITED material is free of copyrights, however when copied the source or the information needs to be mentioned. All UNITED publications are free of copyright (just the source needs to be mentioned) and can be found and downloaded from the UNITED webpage.

Information and Thematic Leaflets

On a regular basis, UNITED publishes Information and Thematic Leaflets that enable NGOs, activists, educators etc. to find hints, best-practice and specific know-how about topics relevant for the every day anti-discrimination work. The authors are expert activists from within different parts of the UNITED network and share their knowledge and experience. The leaflets are regularly updated and reprinted. Up to more than 30 information and thematic leaflets about various topics and concepts used in anti-discrimination work have been produced and are still distributed on request:

- Definition leaflets like *'The Danger of Words'*
- Conceptual leaflets like *'How to Recognise and Confront Hate Graffiti'*
- Statistical leaflets like *'Death by Policy: The Fatal Realities of "Fortress Europe"'*
- Documentation leaflets like *'History Interpretation as a Cause of Conflicts in Europe'*
- Basics in anti-discrimination work like *'Get Active – How to Organise an Activity?'*

Information and thematic leaflets 2009:

- **Football Without Racism** (in Russian language)
- **The Dangerous Threat of Populism** (in English, German, Spanish, Czech, Italian and Polish language)
- **UNITED Network Info Leaflet** (in Russian language)

Campaign Material

For each UNITED campaign the secretariat prepares and spreads special campaign material like newspaper-posters, stickers, postcards, logos and slogans adapted to the topic of each campaign. The visual materials are developed according to inputs given by participants of international UNITED conferences and produced by UNITED. Every year the secretariat gives its best to create new campaign material. The supply of grass-roots organisations with professional campaign material for free ensures a broad visibility throughout the continent and stronger local impact and media coverage.

Campaign material 2009:

- **Hatred Kills, International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, 9 November 2009**
 - Newspaper-poster (in English language)
 - Special order-leaflet (in English language)
 - Order form (in Russian language)
- **Look Deeper – Enjoy Diversity, European-wide Action Week Against Racism, 13-21 March 2009**
 - 2 Newspaper-posters (in English language)
 - 'All Different – All Equal' postcard (in English language)
 - 'Resist Intolerance' sticker (in English and Russian language)
 - 'Stop Racism' sticker (in Russian language)
 - Special order-leaflet (in English and Russian language)



Reports

The UNITED campaign reports give background knowledge on the development of racism and fascism in different European countries and an overview of activities implemented by NGOs all over Europe, as well information on the campaign's impact in each country. The campaign report also aims to inspire new organisations in joining UNITED campaigns by showing good practices throughout Europe and helps NGOs in reporting to their sponsors, lobby at local and national level and provide new ideas for future activities. Conference reports provide the structured results of lectures, presentations, discussions and analysed thematic contents during international UNITED network conferences. The conference reports reflect what has been going on within the network in recent time and what are the current trends in society according the anti-discrimination movement in Europe.

Campaign Reports 2009:

- **Hatred Kills! Protect your environment form right-wing extremism!**
International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, 9 November 2009 (in English language)
- **Look Deeper - Value Diversity**
European-wide Action Week Against Racism 2009 (in English language)

Conference Reports 2009:

- **Civil Society Against Right Wing Extremism**
Final (Grundtvig) Project Conference, 2 - 7 June 2009 in Sheffield, UK (in English language)
- **UNITED We Build the Future! – Empowering Civil Society to Face New Challenges**
International UNITED Conference, 23 – 28 October 2009 in Kiev, UA (in English language)

Project Report 2009:

- **Roads Out of a Dead End: creative actions against hatred**
Project report and good practice guide of the 3-year partnership project "Civil Society against Right-wing Extremism - Developing New Lifelong Learning Strategies for NGOs" (in English, Czech, German, Spanish, Italian, Norwegian and Polish language)

"We would like to thank you so much for the UNITED organization for the manuals and information regarding the tolerance and other issues. Moreover here in Kyrgyzstan we do not have international organizations that focus on tolerance, and prevention of the discrimination, therefore your help was a great asset to the development of our event."

[Sayid – Future Leaders Exchange (KY)]

"We've just received UNITED campaign materials. I went through all of it and consider it an useful tool and inspiration! We spread it between our activist, thank you very much for sending it."

[Alena – People Against Racism (SK)]

"Thank you very much for the precious information. I got also inspired by the conference material produced by the UNITED and it helped a lot!!!! During the seminar I also realised that UNITED is everywhere as I have met there so many friends who attended the UNITED conferences."

[Eva - Association for Integration and Migration (CZ)]

"The Holocaust Memorial Centre of Budapest, Hungary is preparing a publication presenting 20 different projects from all over the world promoting tolerance and anti-racism, focusing on general problems like hosting the minorities and the immigrants and rolling back prejudices and racist initiations. We would very much appreciate if you gave permission for us to use some of your great posters and postcards that you have on your site."

[Anna - Memorial Centre of Budapest (H)]



> ФОРМА ЗАКАЗА < **UNITED**

информационные листки • постеры • открытки • наклейки

от **ВМЕСТЕ** за Межкультурное Взаимодействие

> ЗАКАЖИ - бесплатно! > ПРИСЕДИНИСЯ > ИНОФОРМИРУЙ - или в твоем информационнике

> ПЕЧАТНЫЕ МАТЕРИАЛЫ <

UNITED может выслать до 2-х кг материалов бесплатно (только по Европе). За посылку весом более 2-х кг мы просим организацию оплатить стоимость пересылки. Однако, если тебе необходимо больше, чем 2 кг материалов бесплатно для специальных мероприятий – смело обращай в наш Секретариат!

ИНФОРМАЦИОННЫЕ ЛИСТКИ UNITED (вес 1 шт 12 грамм)

- (max. 30) «Футбол без расизма»
- (max. 30) «Действуй! Самоучитель» для тех, кто хочет организовать мероприятие
- (max. 30) «Отрицание Холокоста: Как понять и противостоять»
- (max. 30) «Очистим стены: Как распознавать и противодействовать граффити ненависти»
- (max. 30) «Европейская сеть: ВМЕСТЕ за Межкультурное Взаимодействие»

ПОСТЕРЫ UNITED (вес 1 шт 14 грамм)

- (max. 100) «Ненависть убивает – защити свое окружение от ультра-правых экстремизма»

Обратная сторона: информация о 9 Ноября – Международном Дне против Фашизма и Антисемитизма



*"Last week I was in Minsk (Belarus) and I saw the UNITED poster in one street cafe "Old Minsk",
the most famous one, as a detail of design. So it goes :)"*
[Ira – Youth Human Rights Movement (RUS)]

European Address Book Against Racism

The European Address Book Against Racism is one of the best-known and most widely used reference books in the anti-discrimination movement throughout Europe. It provides detailed contact data and information about active groups, institutions and NGOs in Europe and their operative fields. Thanks to the Address Book organisations have an elementary instrument to get in touch with each other to exchange information and to initiate collaboration.

The Address Book is an invaluable networking-tool with several tens of thousands copies in total circulating throughout Europe due to the fact that groups produce own duplicates for their affiliates. Also here UNITED follows its 'open access to information' policy – there is no copyright on any publication produced – only the source has to be mentioned if individuals or groups republish our material.

In addition to the printed Address Book there is also a searchable online version on the UNITED website. The website version of the Address Book includes extra searchable categories and also more detailed information on about 4500 active groups, NGOs, funding institutions, media, etc.

The updated printed edition, **European Address Book Against Racism 2009**, contained the addresses of about 2500 organisations and magazines active in the field and 161 funding institutions. Publication of this Address Book was made possible thanks to private donations from participants at UNITED conferences in Sweden (2008), Serbia (November 2008) and United Kingdom (June 2009).

*"Thank you very much for confirmation and the registration of the new contact details of WARD.
We highly appreciate the great job UNITED is doing."*
[Shahla - Women's Association for Rational Development (AZ)]

*"Dear Comrades of UNITED, We appreciate the wonderful work you are doing would be more than happy to
complement your work and solid arise with you in anyway possible. We would like to acquire an electronic
copy of the address book of organisations and institutions fighting against Racism."*
[Yufanyi - The VOICE (D)]

*"Dear Colleagues, Please provide me with your latest publication of European Address Book Against Racism,
which I find useful in my advocacy and work with migrant organizations."*
[Cesar - Bayan International - Europe / Sison Campaign (NL)]



Calendar of Internationalism

The *Calendar of Internationalism* is an ongoing project of UNITED and constantly overseen by volunteers in the UNITED secretariat. The Calendar acts as public source and information tool about events, seminars, training courses, conferences, demonstrations, exhibitions, festivals, campaigns and any other action linked with the working fields of UNITED. It is a promotional tool for active groups and organisations in Europe, but also an international action agenda and source of 'good practice' examples for active citizens and activists in Europe.

This project has been implemented in 1992 and proofed to be an excellent reference guide to good practices and co-operations within the European anti-racist movement. As the information comes from the movement to serve the movement, it documents the ongoing struggle for equality and reflects the themes and dimension of the anti-discrimination work in Europe.

Beside the weekly-updated online version of the Calendar, UNITED published 3 printed editions in 2009 (each containing about 140-160 announcements). With the printed editions of the *Calendar of Internationalism* UNITED also mapped out more detailed documented 'Good Practice' cases that took place within the anti-racist movement in Europe. These short documentations of special activities aim to show innovative and also unconventional ideas of resistance, protest and intervention. Beside the pure information about: What? Why? Where? How? A good practice always targets to motivate individuals or groups to start acting themselves.

Additionally special listings of events (List of Activities) that took place in the frame of UNITED's annual campaigns were published on the occasion of:

- European-wide Action Week Against Racism (around 21 March)
- International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism (around 09 November)

"This is what we have planned we hope it may interest others. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to tell about it. It may help to know that we all keep trying!"
[Birgitte - SOS mod Racisme, (DK)]

Thank you for offering the space in the calendar. I am very much looking forward to the calendar.
[Lucie - Muzeum romské kultury (CZ)]

Visibility on the Net

Through the UNITED website www.unitedagainstracism.org all UNITED networking tools, publications, background information on campaigns, projects and international conferences are easy accessible for public use and download. The website provides public access to the online searchable *Address Book Against Racism* and to all listings of the *Calendar of Internationalism* since 2004. The secretariat in Amsterdam is responsible for maintenance, advancing and up dating of the website.

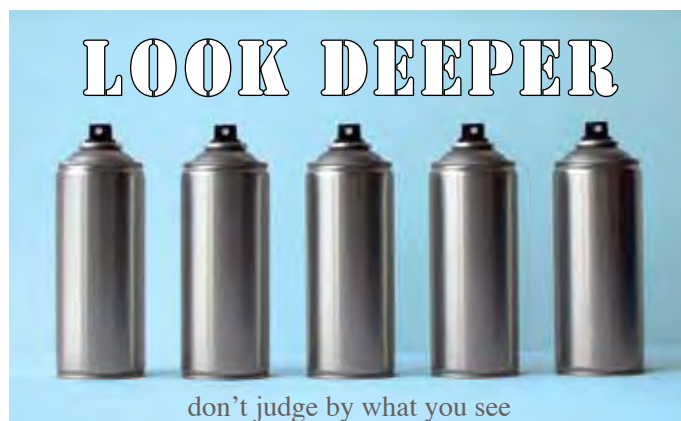
"I would also like to tell you that I really like the idea of connecting people from all around the world who are addressing such an important issue. Please, keep me informed about new actions and we will do our best to join!"
[Adela – Norwegian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (BH)]



Archive – Preserve the Past and Build the Future

The archive forms the backbone of the UNITED information service. With documentation on 2.780 organisations and their publications, UNITED holds the biggest and most up-to-date databank of material in its working field. Journalists and organisations both inside and outside the network use archived material provided by the UNITED secretariat.

Since 1998 UNITED cooperates with the *International Institute of Social History* (IISH) of the University of Amsterdam with the aim to preserve the archive in a responsible way. The archive is handed over to the IISU for further research and safekeeping - already more than 50 m archived material from UNITED is preserved by the IISH.



THE UNITED CAMPAIGNS THINK GLOBALLY – ACT LOCALLY

Look Deeper - Value Diversity

European-wide Action Week Against Racism 14-22 March 2009

On 21 March 1960 police opened machine-gun fire on a peaceful anti-apartheid demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa: 69 demonstrators were killed and hundreds were injured. This event storied as the 'Sharpeville Massacre'. In reaction to this massacre and to protest against the legitimisation of racism and white superiority in the South African regime (1948-1994), the United Nations declared 21 March the '*International Day for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination*'.

In 1992 UNITED initiated the first *European-wide Action Week Against Racism* and coordinates it since then every year with growing numbers of participating NGOs all over Europe. The *Action Week* has become the broadest annual anti-racism campaign in Europe, inviting people to get active to promote the values of equality, respect and diversity.

Population in Europe is becoming more and more diverse. Internal and external migration processes are making it a place where people of many different backgrounds share their existence. Nowadays diversity seems to be considered worrisome rather than a potential growth. "Diversity is beautiful" - that's true and much more than that it adds value to society, cohesion and development in any aspect. What we need to understand is how to manage diversity and not to be afraid of it. The magic formula is to **LOOK DEEPER** and **VALUE DIVERSITY** to recognise what is beyond the unknown and find out that there is a lot to explore, to understand and to learn from each other.

The Action Week Against Racism was an inclusive campaign and stimulated European-wide campaign activities, networking and experience exchange. In total 213 groups, NGO platforms, institutes, schools etc. implemented hundreds of activities in 46 European countries and mobilised together **more than 180.000 participants** to take an active stand against racism. Different contents and core topics were individually applied due to the local, national and international situations.

During the *European-wide Action Week Against Racism 2009*, which centred around 21 March, thousands of people actively engaged themselves for tolerance, equal rights and celebrated the diversity of Europe. This campaign highlighted the issues of racism from a non-governmental perspective on all levels - local, national and European-wide. The common slogan of this international campaign was "**Look Deeper - Value Diversity**".

Both, planning and preparation brought into play the UNITED network structure. During the international UNITED conference in Serbia (4-9 November 2008) a special working group prepared the framework for this European-wide campaign. This campaign also benefited directly of the evaluation-outcomes and follow-ups of previous annual UNITED campaigns.

UNITED collected diverse examples of good practice during the *International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism* and documented them in a special 'Campaign Report' and the 'Calendar of Internationalism'. Some examples of good practices related to the individual national situations are:

- In Germany the *Interkultureller Rat* in cooperation with *Gesicht Zeigen* coordinated again a huge nation-wide campaign in frame of the *Action Week against Racism 2009* with hundreds of activities in almost 250 cities throughout Germany
- *Sport Against Racism Ireland (SARI)* launched an online campaign for young people called 'Count Me In' to promote and support the 'European Wide Action-Week 2009'. They used the universal language of sport: 'Young people who believe in respect, fair play, working as a team and not leaving anyone out, were allowed to sign up to I say NO to Racism...Count



Me In'. This Internet action brought together thousands of young people from all over the world, which all wanted to sign up against racism.

- In Italy, the *National Office Against Racial Discrimination* organised several events during the 'Action Week Against Racism'. Events like photo exhibitions and conferences in Roma, Palermo and Pescara took place as well as a marathon to run through Roma's streets wearing t-shirts with anti-racist messages. Apart from this, there were information desks placed in the streets of several cities in order to distribute informational material against racism and discrimination.
- 'Faces of Modern Racism', this was the title for a school project with tolerance lessons, discussions and distribution of posters and anti-fascist newspapers in the region Karelia, Russia. It was organised by the *Youth Human Rights Group* from 14th to 22nd March 2009.
- 26-28 March 2009, a 'Mini Youth Symposium' took place in this year's European Youth capital Rotterdam in the Netherlands. The event was organised by the NGO *Eenheid is Kracht*, together with the *Unity is Strength Foundation* and ended with the annual 'International Diversity Award-show'.
- A 'Unite Against Racism' conference in Warsaw (PL) provided an ideal opportunity to learn how UEFA EURO 2012 co-host Poland is contributing solidly to the fight against racism and discrimination in football. The organisation *Never Again Poland* monitors and documents incidents of racism in stadiums and has trained stewards and match observers to help reduce such incidents. A speaker from *Never Again Poland* said: 'Racism is a reflection of society and was not created in the stadium'. Football has a positive force in society and we have to live up the challenges of the past and as well as of the future.

The produced campaign material for the *Action Week Against Racism 2009*, the complete listing of all actions and participating groups as well as the complete campaign report can be found and downloaded on the on the special campaign websites under www.unitedagainstracism.org/pages/act09arw.htm

We received the campain material for the Actionweek Against Racism. Thank you very much for the materials and your great cooperation.

[Mariana – Young Generation Romania (RO)]

"We would like to thank UNITED for our possibility to participate in the European-wide Action Week. It is a pleasure for us to be part of it."

[Anna – Never Again Association (PL)]

"Here is our orderform for the antiracism week. We would be very happy to get the materials because we are a non profit organisation without much money but with a big need for help."

[Emini - Projekt Roma Centar e.V. Göttingen (D)]

"Searching the net I came across your site and together with my students I would be very grateful for any help (such as posters, postcards, stickers, brochures, etc.) to organize Week Against Racism at our school."

[Agnieszka - Primary School nb 9 (PL)]



International Refugee Day – 20th June 2009

On the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Convention in 2001, the United Nations declared the 20th of June the International Refugee Day. Every year around this date, UNITED celebrates the International Refugee Day by coordinating a European-wide campaign where hundreds of organisations speak out against the intolerable human cost of building 'Fortress Europe' and to keep up the rights of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

Each year, hundreds of migrants and asylum seekers reach Europe fleeing from war, persecution or poverty. In the last years the number of migrants seeking refuge has grown considerably, due to several ongoing wars, the increasing intolerance toward minorities in many countries and the global economical crisis.

In June 2009, the UN High Commissioner, Antonio Guterres, has launched the UNHCR's annual '2008 Global Trends' report which shows the number of people forcibly uprooted by conflict and persecution worldwide stood at 42 million at the end the year 2008. Nevertheless, while the need for protection is increasing, the open attitude of those countries where migrants seek refuge is decreasing. In fact the European public debate tendency links crime rates with migration. The economical situation creates an atmosphere, which drives people to look for scapegoats.

UNITED is convinced that this attitude cannot be accepted. These tendencies are dangerously promoting xenophobic ideas within Europe and directly or indirectly acting against migration. Instead of discouraging refugees from entering Europe, they lead them to death. Without joined forces, the fates of undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees would be 'hidden' in our society without a chance of any formal care and support.

Under the common slogan 'Fortress Europe. Weakness Humanity', UNITED stimulated activities and events in 27 European countries and thus **mobilised more than 29.000 people** in the struggle for equal rights for refugees and a stop to the killing on European borders.

All over Europe protest and solidarity actions took place, such as festivals, concerts, conferences, forums of migrant- and refugee-, as well as asylum seeker groups and antidiscrimination organisations. What made the 2009 International Refugee Day so unique was not only the European scale, but also the variety of NGOs willing to create one European voice to claim more reasonable and human immigration policies.

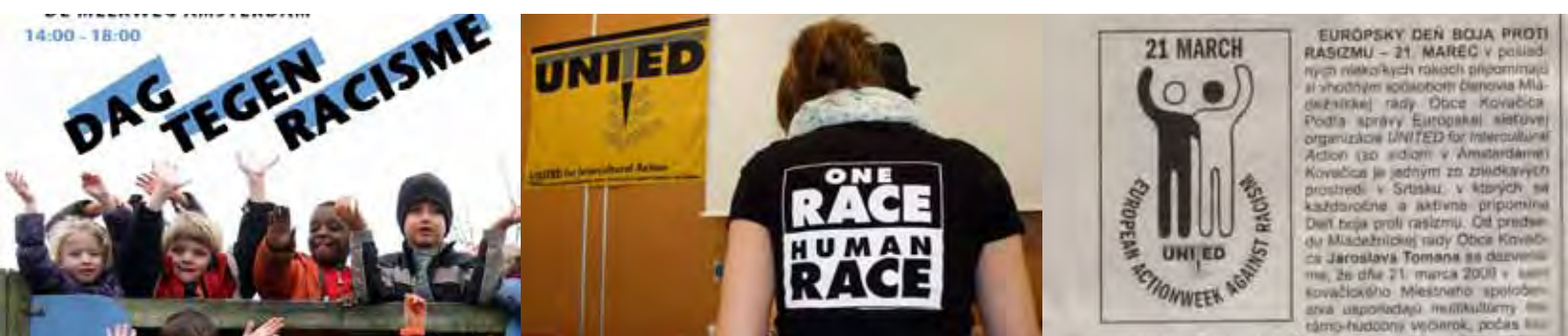
The complete listing of all actions and participating groups as well as related diverse campaign material can be found and downloaded on the on the special campaign websites under www.unitedagainstracism.org/pages/underframerRefugeeDay.htm

"We love your posters and your 2009 Refugee Day Campaign. We are organising our own Refugee Day celebrations, exhibition and party especially for the 800 Asylum Seekers who live in direct provision accommodation in Galway and for all residents of Galway and would like to order some posters, stickers and postcards."

[Helen - Community Development Worker Galway Refugee Support Group (GB)]

"We are a group of volunteers working with the organisations PRAXIS and CLUB SERRON FOR UNESCO Serres, Greece. We are going to participate in the International Refugee Day the 20th of June. Our campaign will include a radio broadcast, a radio spot, an exhibition etc. We would be very happy if you could send us some campaign material of any kind. Please see the attached order form for details."

[Teresa - Club Serron for Unesco (GR)]



Death by Policy

The Fatal Realities of “Fortress Europe” – 13.250 Migrant Deaths Documented by UNITED

The **shocking number of 13.250 migrants**, refugees and asylum seekers who died due to European migration policies were documented in the UNITED ‘List of Deaths’ till the year 2009. The UNITED secretariat has been monitoring the deadly results of ‘Fortress Europe’ since 1993. Although the experts say it is impossible to know the real number, which is likely to be three times higher, the UNITED ‘List of Deaths’ has been made with a rigorous method of comparing sources, from governmental reports, journalist and NGOs researches. With these facts UNITED spreads a powerful lobby and awareness-raising tool, to be used in campaign actions all over Europe.

The on-going tragedy of people dying in search of protection is an unbearable shame to Europe’s civil conscience and modern society in general. These deaths are not isolated incidents. They are the deadly result of the building of a ‘Fortress Europe’. Europe’s exclusion policy - a policy of border closing that makes it almost impossible to legally enter Europe, that lacks re-settlement programs and cannot guarantee refugees a safe transfer to other countries - has forced tens of thousands of people to resort to illegal ways of getting to a country where they are safe and where economical survival is possible.


On the way to ‘Fortress Europe’, in detention or identification camps, during deportation, or once repatriated, many refugees and migrants die. No matter how different the circumstances of these deaths are, they can all be ultimately put down to one and only reason: the building of a ‘Fortress Europe’.

The ‘List of Death’ compiled by UNITED is a testimony for all the victims and a mighty tool to raise awareness and lobby against unjust immigration policies. UNITED worked also in 2009 to spread the message: no more deaths at European borders! Making the European public aware about the inhumane and deadly situation of refugees and asylum seekers is the most powerful tool to create a strong campaign against inhumane European immigration policies.

During the year 2009 UNITED cooperated with several kinds of media to spread the message of the campaign, the UNITED campaign coordinator took contacts with researchers, journalists and artists all over Europe to inform about the work of UNITED and its invaluable document.

The fatal realities of "Fortress Europe"

...more than 10,000 documented refugee deaths





"I've recently seen your "actual list of death". I was now wondering if you could provide me with access to this information in a different format or listing. In particular, I'm interested in data indicating how many people have died at different locations trying to enter Europe, and in their cause of death. I'm looking for information that tells me the "top" spots of entering, as well as the numbers and the causes of death occurring at these places. Moreover, I'm trying to find out more about those places that are otherwise better known as holiday resorts."

[Rosa Gosch - Kulturaustausch magazine (DE)]

"I am an artist in Istanbul working on a project related to personal stories of refugees in the 20th century and particularly since the beginning of 1980s. I would appreciate it if you could suggest to me as to how I can find information about refugees' stories regarding their forced migration."

[Ipek - artist (TR)]

"I work for the weekly newspaper "O Kosmos tou Ependiti" in Athens. I would like to ask you about this great graphic for refugees you have made for Le Monde Diplomatique."

[Chrisa - O Kosmos tou Ependiti newspaper (GR)]

"Keep collaborating as we can! In fact, we sent today the link about the List of Deaths to our 3300 subscribers that receive every day our newsletter with news about migration and minorities, racism etc. we collect in 23 newspapers in Spain and 5 in Latin America. So keep in touch."

[Anaitze – MUGAK (E)]

HATRED KILLS: Protect Your Environment from Right-wing Extremism!

9th November - International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism

The 9th November 1938, the "Kristallnacht" pogrom, was the first step to the extermination of the Jewish Europeans by the nazis. Today it is seen as the symbolic beginning of the Holocaust, the policy of the systematic murdering of millions of people. It reminds us that such terrible things did not start with deportations and concentration camps, but developed step by step. Nazi propaganda and hate speech against Jews and laws depriving Jewish citizens of their rights – as happened with the "Nuremberg Laws" which, among other things, stripped German Jews of their citizenship – were the first steps which eventually culminated in violence and pogroms.

Why do we need to care about something that belongs to history books? Surely, it is better to be concentrated on the future rather than on the past, but how do we know that past is a closed chapter? Can we be sure the events of 9 November 1938 are totally irrelevant to the present and the future? The answer is: No. The seemingly distant past is not distant at all. All over Europe violence against minorities happens today. The lessons of tragic history are not learnt by our societies. We need to make sure the past is not forgotten. Even more importantly, we must react against the rise of racism and intolerance here and now! Experience proves that hatred kills!

To the occasion of the *International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism* UNITED unifies organisations all over Europe under one common slogan to commemorate the Holocaust and take a stand against present right-wing extremism. It aims at being an inspiration and motivation for those who want to organise low or no-budget activities to act against intolerance.

In the frame of the International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, hundreds of organisations from all over Europe got active to commemorate the 9 November 'Kristallnacht' pogrom Under the slogan 'Hatred Kills - Protect your Environment from Right-Wing Extremism' a wide variety of activities took place **in 49 different European countries**.

The campaign succeeded in raising consciousness of the history of racism and fascism and in making the public aware of the dangers and consequences of prejudice, hatred, ignorance and intolerance in our contemporary world. Coordinated by the international secretariat of UNITED, the participating NGOs organised football games, concerts, marches and torchlight processions, to name



only some activities. Thousands of antifascists all over the continent participated in manifestations, workshops, conferences, festivals and events featuring eyewitnesses.

This year's campaign was characterised by the use of new media. Using the Internet, activists reached a large audience in Hungary, Malta and Kosovo. With this powerful tool, activists in Kosovo made over 700 people aware of the International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, just by creating a Facebook group. 'Music against fascism' was the motto for many activists in Germany, Slovakia, Poland and Spain. Together with local bands the events reached the youth in particular, because music is one of the most significant means of self-identification for young people. UNITED material was widely spread all over Europe. Posters were hung in universities, offices, public places; postcards were distributed among students during workshops and sent to governments. The international UNITED secretariat motivated the activists, supporting them by providing information and publishing a press release.

UNITED collected diverse examples of good practice during the *International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism* and documented them in a special 'Campaign Report' and the 'Calendar of Internationalism'. Some examples of good practices related to the individual national situations are:

- The *Youth Initiative for Human Rights* (YIHR) is a regional NGO with programs on the territories of Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia Herzegovina and Croatia. YIHR was established to break prejudices and build new relations between post-war generations. One of the activities organised to mark the International Day against Fascism and Antisemitism was 'Clean the Walls!'. This action was organised in cooperation with Nisma Ime (My Initiative) in the central streets of Prishtina, Kosovo. The aim was to raise awareness against hate graffiti and inform the population that such smearing should not be tolerated in public spheres and that only little creativity is needed to show civil courage. Activists sprayed graffiti on the walls to cover hate symbols and painted on garbage cans of the capital of Kosovo the picture of the antifascist symbol: a man throwing a swastika in the trash. Moreover, the human rights activists organised street actions such as stands or public debates, to educate citizens about concepts of xenophobia, racism, fascism, antisemitism, nationalism, discrimination etc.
- At the train station Aspang in Vienna (A), which was the last departure for thousands of Jews that got deported into concentration and elimination camps, the antifascist initiative *Aspangbahnhof* held a big commemorative manifestation. Under the title 'Never forget! Never again fascism! Against the right-wing dazzler and seducers!' the initiative made the public aware about the macabre history of the train station.
- In Macedonia, the 10th anniversary of the *Youth Forum of Bitola* was timed to celebrate the 9 November. Music and sports is probably the most significant means of self-identification in the lives of adolescents and youngsters and, recognizing this, the NGO organised a rock and hip-hop concert against racism gathering youngsters for healthy antifascist music rebellion. The organisation also spread info-material during a football match in the city of Bitola showing that this sport has become a real intercultural game. The organisers printed 200 T-shirts with antiracist messages and invited children of different nationalities to wear them together with the players of the teams before the game kick-off.
- The fascist *British National Party* (BNP) is threatening to strengthen its presence in politics after the election of two of its members to the European parliament. It is the responsibility of the antifascist movement to highlight the true nature of the BNP - nazism combined with extreme nationalism, racial superiority and hatred towards minorities - and mobilise the anti-BNP vote for future elections. *Searchlight Magazine's* 'Hope not Hate' campaign is supported by trade unions and local anti-fascist groups throughout the UK and has been at the forefront of campaigns against the BNP. In the frame of the 9 November, they organised local actions all over the country. British antifascist organisations made real progress in British society to defeat the BNP.
- In Reims, France, a ceremony was organised in the square of the Gestapo Victims: the mayor of the city and the vice president of the *International League Against Racism and Antisemitism* commemorated the 'Kristallnacht' pogrom in a human chain against any kind of intolerance.



The produced campaign material for the *International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism 2009*, the complete listing of all actions and participating groups as well as the complete campaign report can be found and downloaded on the special campaign and publication pages on the UNITED website.

"I just want to inform you that the material has arrived! It is really great, and I am sure that it will improve our activity, and that it will leave good consequences in my community!"

[Dragana – Youth Initiative for Human Rights (XZ)]

"I still feel it is very important to do these things in Colleges. We have students coming from all over the world, many of whom have been taught to believe that the holocaust never happened. Those students need to hear the historical facts. In an era where antisemitism has far from disappeared, it is very important to keep on bringing the issue to the forefront. Thank you for your help."

[Ruth - Loughborough College (UK)]

"I am a freelance journalist working on a feature article to coincide with the International Day Against Fascism and Anti-semitism. My article is going to explore whether incidences of racial hatred have increased as a result of the Financial Crisis. I was wondering if I a representative from your organization may be able to talk to me about this."

[Kate – Freelance Journalist (UK)]



UNITED CONFERENCES: SHARING IDEAS FOR COMMON ACTION

UNITED We Can Do It! Civil Society Against Right-wing Extremism **Final Grundtvig project Conference in Sheffield (UK), 2 - 7 June 2009**

Far right political parties and extreme right groups across Europe have undergone a long period of growth and have established themselves on a national as well as European level. This development was underpinned by the European parliamentary elections held in June 2009, as far right parties from across Europe, experienced progress in the election with the fascist British National Party (BNP) winning its first two seats. There are many diverse consequences of this development, ranging from the continuing rise of fascism and racism to discrimination against minorities and the shameful conditions many refugees and asylum seekers now face. Thus, the challenges for European civil society are double-sided: on one hand combating the extreme right and on the other empowering minority communities and those combating the spread anti-immigrant prejudices.

From the 2nd – 7th of June 2009, 68 participants and experts representing 63 organisations from 30 European countries came together to participate in the ‘UNITED We Can Do It! Civil Society Against Right Wing Extremism’ conference in Sheffield, UK, to address these issues through practical analysis and learning.

The conference was the final event of the three-year partnership project ‘Civil Society Against Right-Wing Extremism - Developing New Lifelong Learning Strategies for NGOs’ - a project supported by the Grundtvig Program of the European Commission and implemented by UNITED for Intercultural Action in partnership with 6 partner organisations from Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Norway.

The challenge of fighting hatred, fascism and neo-nazi discourse must be based on good strategies and practices. Public and political indifference has always been one of the best allies of fascism. So overcoming indifference is one of the most significant aspects of this challenge and education is an excellent instrument, as knowledge provides an anti-serum to the poison of hatred. Thus the conference aimed to create a space for discussing this challenge, as well as sharing experience and best practices from a European perspective, by providing the participants with a space to develop concrete instruments for combating intolerance and ideologies of hatred.

This conference was made possible through the combined efforts of a number of organisations, individuals and sponsors. The underneath mentioned organisations from across Europe, together with UNITED were responsible for facilitating working groups and to realise the program:

- Never Again (Poland)
- ARI Immigrant. Association Rieti (Italy)
- Kulturbüro Sachsen (Germany)
- Duha - Rainbow Association (Czech Republic)
- Norwegian People's Aid (Norway)
- SOS Against Racism (Denmark)
- Show Racism the Red Card (United Kingdom)
- Minority Rights Group (United Kingdom)
- People Against Racism (Slovakia)
- No Border Project - Social Action Centre (Ukraine)
- Minority Rights Group (United Kingdom)
- Youth Fabric (Norway)
- Master on Immigration Program Ca' Foscari Università' Venezia (Italy)



“I hope you already gathered some new energies after this inspiring and interesting conference. Thank you very much for preparing this event, I’ve been involved in some UNITED conferences before but I still learned many new things. Especially the involvement of (very good) external speakers, the focus on good practice presentations and the opportunity to attend mini trainings made it a special and successful event. Thanks again and bon courage!”

[Maria – Netzwerk für Demokratie und Courage (D)]

“This UNITED conference was one of the best ones I’ve been to and I really enjoyed the warm non-formal atmosphere at the meeting. I met several interesting people and gained valuable feedback on ODIHR activities and my work respectively. I am convinced that we are fighting the same fight and therefore we should cooperate and coordinate our activities. It is not always easy, due to our organisational structure and the political character of our organisation, but I try to do my best to support such cooperation.”

[Daniel – OSCE-ODIHR]

International Networking Conferences

Every year UNITED organises international network conferences, bringing together around 60-80 NGO activists, experts, OSCE-ODIHR representatives etc. from all over Europe. With this conferences UNITED provides a training-, exchange- and working platform for NGO activists and experts. To ensure that different interests and viewpoints are taken into account and the diversity within the UNITED network is represented, each conference is prepared by a rotating International Preparatory Group (IPG) consisting of committed activists from different regions of Europe. A conference theme is chosen according to the needs of the network thanks to ongoing communication. Also the hosting country of the conference is rotating.

UNITED has an open invitation policy for its network conferences and every individual belonging to a NGO or active informal group within Europe can apply. The selection of participants is made according to the participants’ profile, which is evaluated by the IPG. Care is given to a gender and geographical balance as well as to a fair representation of minorities.

These network conferences work on the basis of non-formal intercultural learning. Organisations and activists are taking part in activities in ever-changing roles. Young activists gain experience from an educator-perspective as for example in leading a working group as facilitator – on UNITED conferences you will not find ‘ordinary’ participants as great importance is given to active participation from everybody. This concept has been developed in close co-operation with the youth directorate of the Council of Europe.

Education takes place in the form of cognitive learning, emotional learning and behavioural learning. UNITED conferences use all three methods. Emotional learning is stimulated through working with people in a safe environment. Cognitive learning is stimulated by presentations and lectures as well as plentiful written material to take home and study later. Behavioural learning is taking place in the practical ‘working groups’ as well as the ‘planning/campaigning working groups’. Conferences are often roughly summarised as ‘information – training – exchange – campaigning’. Participating to a UNITED conference is a unique experience that hardly will be forgotten.

The conferences make use of different non-formal education methods such as: panel discussion, working groups, debates, lectures, plenary sessions, political cafes, intercultural activities, video-presentations, study trips information market and many more. In the evening of the arrival day, participants are invited to get to know each other through so-called ice-breaking games.

Beyond the working sessions, there is time to socialise, to build fellowships, to network informally, to get inspired in one-to-one discussions or to create basis for future cooperation. A great spectrum of social and optional activities animates such burst of bridging of cultures and identities. During one evening of the conference, the ‘info-market’, all delegates get their space to introduce the activities of their own organisation and to share with the rest of the group a taste, a sound or a colour of their own culture. Everyone exchanges opinions, good-practice and know-how, and in particular, explores the possibilities of future partnerships.



The UNITED secretariat organises conferences as part of the network's overall work and conferences are seen as catalyst part of a longer process. The conferences have many links to other work and projects within the network, e.g. the campaigns and the publications. There is an interaction between the information exchange through publications and the conferences; there is an interaction between the conferences and the campaigns that are coordinated on a European level, etc.

UNITED We Build the Future! Empowering Civil Society to Face New Challenges **International UNITED Network Conference in Kiev (UA), 23 - 28 October 2009**

The theme of this conference: 'UNITED We Build the Future! Empowering Civil Society to Face New Challenges' came as follow up of a political café organised during the last UNITED conference held near Sheffield (UK), June 2009. The idea was to shake the anti discrimination movement out of its observer mode and find new methods, ideas and capacity for a stronger and more effective civil society.

Within the conference frame international participants from all over Europe committed themselves in working groups, workshops, plenary sessions and a special integrated seminar to work on specific issues, such as: concepts of commemoration; strategies against the rise of right wing extremism, populist propaganda and hate speech; revisionism and history interpretation; migration flows and 'migrantophobia'; institutional racism; human rights education; minorities and community cohesion; new challenges and new alternatives; future of international networking.

As many as 82 organisations from 31 countries came together in Kiev under the framework of the UNITED conference and worked intensively together for five days in total – brainstorming, sharing experiences, learning from examples of best practice, deciding on recommendations – but also socialising and experiencing the host country, an emerging democracy from a Soviet past.

Racism is an ever-changing constant; just like fascism it can change its form and targets. One of the thematic working groups looked at this phenomenon and suggested strategies for dealing with it. Another working group developed and presented strategies for anti-racist campaigning while two examples of best practice in anti-racist work in schools served as inspiration to the participants of the conference.

This conference was made possible through the combined efforts of a number of organisations, individuals and sponsors. The underneath mentioned organisations from across Europe, together with UNITED were responsible for facilitating working groups and helping to realise the program:

- No Border Project – Social Action Centre (Ukraine)
- Diversity Initiative (Ukraine)
- Augustaschacht (Germany)
- Encounters (Poland)
- Foundation of Subjective Values (Hungary)
- Kulturbüro Sachsen (Germany)
- Minority Right Group (United Kingdom)
- Youth Human Rights Movement (Russia)

"Thank you again for your great conference! I am sure, it will help us to strengthen ties with our international and Russian partners for more productive activity."

[Marie-Angell – Social Democratic Union of Youth (RUS)]

"I enjoyed the work at the conference in many respects - the possibility to share experiences, to contact with concrete possibilities for future work, etc. Of course, the wish for further cooperation is mine as well."

Alexandra - Roma Democratic Development Association (MK)



UNITED PROJECTS FROM THEORY TO ACTION

Civil Society Against Right Wing Extremism

As a response to the alarming spread of deeply rooted racism, antisemitism and right-wing extremism in Europe, UNITED has established in 2006 a 3-year partnership project “Civil Society against Right-wing Extremism - Developing New Lifelong Learning Strategies for NGOs”, which was realised in the frame of the European adult education program Grundtvig.

The project was developed after many years’ experience of the UNITED network in antidiscrimination campaigns and deep analysis on the current trends of European civil society active in the fight against rightwing extremism, racism and discrimination. There are effective ways to tackle discrimination at its local and regional level through innovative and informal learning strategies. There are as well ways to give the best practices a European dimension. Having these insights into the “scene” UNITED aimed with the project “Civil Society against Rightwing Extremism” to create a space for antiracist adult education and make it qualified, available and accessible throughout Europe.

The objectives were: the creation of feasible ways to enhance the work of local grassroots groups and NGOs active in the field of antiracist education, their training as learning facilitators in antiracist education, and the counterbalance of the unevenness in antiracist fight Europe-wide. The project’s direct target group are NGOs activists and ultimately it also reaches-out the NGOs’ target groups, mainly disadvantaged social categories with less opportunities to access education else way.

Initially 6 partner organisations active within the UNITED Network - a balanced mix of expertise and experience from Western and Eastern Europe - were closely cooperating with the UNITED secretariat in analysing occurrences, forms and strategies of right-wing extremism in Europe, sharing concepts how to deal with the increasing influence of right-wing organisations and actors in their respective countries and finding transferable approaches to push back the extreme right at all levels. Throughout the project period more organisations, reached through the UNITED Network, stepped forward to take an active role in the project.

The main activities were composed of continuous identification, selection and Europe-wide dissemination of best practices in the antiracist field; 3 international large-scale conferences; over 60 panel discussions, lectures, presentations, delegations, workshops and working groups; 3 large-scale European-wide campaigns; and eventually brought the following outputs: over 50 publications (handbooks, thematic leaflets and campaigning material in different languages), e-news and web-presence. The overall range of the project reached out - directly and indirectly - to approximately 200.000 individual actors in the field all over Europe.

This project marks a stepping-stone on the way to a future without hatred, violence and bias-based discrimination - but this vision of Europe’s future only will prevail, if we continue our struggle and build up on the lessons learned. On this place we would like to thank the European Commission, without whose funding the implementation of this very successful project would not have been possible.

The ‘Civil Society Against Right Wing Extremism’ partnership involved the UNITED secretariat as technical coordinator. The contents of the project were developed by an expert group consisting of:

- ARI - Associazione Rieti Immigrants (I)
- DUHA - Rainbow Association (CZ)
- MBT - Kulturbüro Sachsen - Mobiles Beratungsteam (D)
- Never Again Association - Stowarzyszenie Nigdy Wiecej (PL)
- NPA - Norwegian People’s Aid - Norsk Folkehjelp (N)
- Ca’ Foscari University of Venice (I).



Utilising the Network of Ethnic Associations Russia to provide support for Youth Organisations in Russia

Based on a partnership between UNITED for Intercultural Action and the Centre for Interethnic Cooperation in Moscow (RUS), a joint two-year project called 'Utilising the Network of Ethnic Associations in Russia to provide support for youth organisations in Russia' started-off in 2009. With the financial support of the European Commission (delegation Moscow), UNITED and the Centre for Interethnic Cooperation actively promote youth participation and a positive attitude towards cultural differences in Russia.

Thanks to the experience of the Network of Ethnic Organisations in Russia and the UNITED Network, a network of youth organisations will be created to provide support for youth organisations in the Russian Federation. The participation in the project of both ethnic and students' organisations will enable mutual understanding and will draw attention of youth organisations to the problems of xenophobia and human rights.



Related project activities in 2009

Related project activities in 2009

19-20 November 2009

"We Are All Together"

Training in Yaroslavl (RUS)

24-25 October 2009

"Using the Potential of Student Youth for Prophylaxis of Extremism among Youth"

Educational Seminar in Moscow (RUS)

16-18 September 2009

"A Space for Youth Initiatives"

Training in Astrakhan (RUS)

02-09 July 2009

"Seliger 2009"

Tolerance Training during Youth Forum in Seliger (RUS)

24-27 June 2009

"Culture of Tolerance Starting Point in Modern Youth Work"

International and Interregional Conference in Anapa (RUS)



17-19 May 2009
"Youth and Tolerance"
 Training in Samara (RUS)

1-3 May 2009
"The City of the Young"
 Festival in Kondopoga (RUS)



NEBEZPEČNÁ HROZBA POPULIZMU

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Civil Organisations Serving Society:

Youth Actions Against Racism, Nationalism & Xenophobia and for Human Rights & Intercultural Dialogue

A major problem of modern-day Russia is the high level of intolerance and aggression in society especially among youth, combined with a lack of models for positive actions for those people who share the values of Human Rights and equality. There is also no adequate anti-discrimination law installed or executed in Russia. According to the SOVA annual report 2008 racist violence continues to grow at a high rate, including, in addition to neo-nazi skinhead attacks, numerous everyday violent conflicts triggered by ethnic and racial hatred.

At the same time, there is a growing willingness among young people to undertake actions to counter the activities of the neo-nazi groups and xenophobia. Yet, there is a significant lack of activities in this field that could be offered to the young people. Therefore, UNITED together with the Russian grassroots organisation Youth Human Rights Movement (YHRM) developed the project '*Civil Organisations Serving Society: Youth Actions against racism, nationalism and xenophobia and for Human Rights and Inter-cultural Dialogue*' – which eventually has been launched 2009.

The three year (2009-2012) project was developed thanks to the support of the Matra Program of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after many years' experience of YHRM and UNITED in antidiscrimination work and after deep analysis on the current trends of civil society active in the fight against right-winged extremism, racism and discrimination.

The project goal is to strengthen and empower Russian Youth, Human Rights, Ethnic and Civil Society NGOs in counteracting racism, xenophobia and hatred. Therefore the project intends to increase the professional level of civil society activists through: the stimulation of mutual relations between concerned parties from governmental and nongovernmental sides, as well as between Russian and European actors by creating acceptable and attractive resources and materials to promote Human Rights and inter-cultural dialogue; educational programs and setting up cooperation and exchange of experience; promoting positive and progressive social changes; stimulating the shift in direction of the state to advance the process of realisation of an adequate anti-discrimination law by forming and implementing a common agenda on combating intolerance and discrimination into the work of the different actors in the field (both, from governmental and non governmental sides).

Civil Organisations Serving Society:

Geh Denken / Go and Think - Stop the Biggest Neo-nazi March in Europe

In 2009 UNITED built an alliance with the regional platform 'Geh Denken' in Saxony (D) to mobilise international resistance against Europe's biggest annual neo-nazi gathering in the city of Dresden (D).

Saturday, 14 February 2009, thousands of people followed the international call to take an active stand against Europe's biggest neo-nazi march in Dresden. Several demo-tracks of the regional platform 'Geh Denken' - a broad alliance of diverse national and international NGOs, the UNITED Network, German trade unions, politicians and local churches - and the (inter)national antifascist alliance 'No Pasaran!' occupied the city centre of Dresden with colourful demonstrations against right-wing extremism and were able to send out a meaningful anti-fascist message. With local, nation-wide and international participation in the demonstrations it was possible to block the city centre of Dresden and prevent that the neo-nazi march takes it's apparently 'traditional route', passing by the city's Synagogue.

Nevertheless, this day in Dresden the European neo-nazi scene mobilised its biggest gathering ever since the end of World War II and obscured the city's commemoration of the allied bombings in 1945 with a dark shadow of the past. Although beforehand local and national politicians stated unmistakable their resistance against right-wing extremism, the black crowd of neo-nazis could march for hours under massive police protection through Dresden. It became clear that the local authorities decided to let the neo-nazis march undisturbed and an enormous amount of police forces from several German states prevented with all possibilities the counter-demonstrators to interfere or come close to this shameful and revisionist manifestation.

The neo-nazis tried to present themselves as 'moderate' and silently carried their banners, with slogans like: 'Yesterday Dresden -



Today Gaza'; 'In remembrance of the victims of the bombing-holocaust - Never forgiven! Never forgot!'; 'Honour to whom honour is due' etc.

Shocking was the growing participation of women in the neo-nazi march and the picture of little children walking with 'mummy and daddy' or being carried on 'daddy's shoulders' within a crowd of boneheads. Anyway, violent attacks during arrival and departure to/from the demonstration against supposed 'left-wing people' and union busses, as well as harassments of people who don't fit in the picture of the far right groups showed the true face of the neo-nazis. These assaults are not individual cases in Saxony, but daily practice of far right groups that terrorise and claim entire districts and youth clubs. The local statistic counts 401 assaults of right-wing extremists in 2008, which is an increase of 30% compared with 2007 - maybe this explains why the neo-nazi march could walk protected through the city and why many local citizens of Dresden decided to stay at home or spend a 'normal' Saturday instead of taking an active stand against the growing far right in their community. Independently of the victims that Dresden's citizens have to bemoan due to World War II, it is necessary to prevent that history repeats. Dresden has become a symbol for the extreme right and the occasion on 13-14 February is misused in a massive scale. The annual gathering of neo-nazis to supposedly mourn the victims of the allied bombings in the end of World War II has nothing to do with dignified commemoration, nor with freedom of speech - it openly celebrates revisionism and holocaust denial, strengthen boundaries between fascist brotherhoods and attempt to promote the anti-democratic movement.

Dresden won't be able to close its eyes towards right-wing extremism and will have to deal also in upcoming years with the doubtful image of being the host of Europe's biggest neo-nazi gathering. Nevertheless, the 2009 counter actions showed that more and more people are getting active against the far right tendencies in Europe and Dresden won't have to struggle alone for a future without hate.

The follow-up actions in February 2010 successfully managed to stop the neo-nazis from marching in the city and forced that police eventually had to cancel the event. Masses of people blocked the way of the neo-nazis and took a brave stand against fascism and the taking over of commemoration places by right-wing extremists.

EU Parliament Elections 2009

Monitoring of Far-right and Right-wing Populist Parties

This partnership-project was realised in cooperation with the UK based anti-fascist Searchlight Magazine. The project aimed to analyse the specific country situations before the EU Parliament Elections, 4-7 June 2009, and monitor the far-right and right-wing populist parties. In total 27 European countries were profiled and a well-researched bank of information was established, which the UNITED and the Searchlight networks could draw upon for their own campaigns and researches in 2009 and beyond. The project results and analyses are available on the UNITED website under www.unitedagainstracism.org/pages/underframeEuropeanParliamentElection09.html

Here an abstract of Graeme Atkinson's, European Editor Searchlight Magazine, summary of the results of this common monitoring project:

"For the extreme right, the European Parliament (EP) elections brought mixed fortunes with some winners, some notable losers, but overall, no surprises in the election, in which 375 million people were eligible to vote in 27 countries and to decide which parties fill the Brussels/Strasbourg parliament's 785 seats.

In general, the results signify a retrenchment rather than a radicalisation of the right in which conservative parties profited both from the failure of the left to come up with coherent answers to the economic crisis and from varying degrees of political disarray in EU member states.

If anything, it was "local national circumstances" and their traditional themes of racism and immigration – or more accurately,



public concern and fears over it – that produced much of the far-right vote. Many of the right-wing extremists standing had nothing to say about the crisis, climate change or any of the other issues pressing on us all. Unfortunately, as usual, an over-excited media looked at the far-right's showing and hyperventilated itself into twitter about a surge forward for right-wing extremism without stopping to analyse the results objectively or properly or even, in many cases, to point out that the far-right won only 37 seats out of the 785 contested!"



COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT

UNITED Delegates Spread the Word

The UNITED network can boast of good links with the most important agencies and institution at European and international level. The growth of the UNITED network is guaranteed by its representation at international and local meetings, conferences and events all over Europe. Moreover, UNITED's presence in media helps the establishment and growth of the UNITED Network all over Europe. Throughout 2009 UNITED, parts of publications, results of projects and campaigns, enews etc. are referenced and reported about in newspapers, magazines, blogs and books; while articles from UNITED were published by well-known news and information hubs such as ENAR, MUGAK, ERIO, Institute for Race Relations, PICUM, International Searchlight Magazine and many more.

During 2009 UNITED delegates were invited to many different events and occasions all over Europe. Thanks to UNITED delegates the voice of the network became stronger and more visible and accessible in 2009. The mission of the delegate is to spread the message, and the voice of the network, its aims, results and material of the projects and of the campaigns. For this reason the 'delegation kit' comprehends all the UNITED material related to the topic of the meeting, but also the 'book of contacts' in which all the new contacts that the delegates made during their delegation are documented.

Experts of the UNITED Network provided advice and shared strategies and know-how during several meetings and conferences in Moscow (RUS), Kyiv (UA), St. Petersburg (RUS) and Riga (LV). Aims of these expertise exchanges were among others: creating a Latvian NGOs coalition for tolerance and anti-discrimination; addressing xenophobia in Ukraine; developing strategies for containment of youth racism, hate and violence in Europe; formation of intercultural dialogue in the children's environment.

In 2009 UNITED enjoyed a fruitful cooperation with the OSCE - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, based in Warsaw (PL): a representative of the UNITED Network was invited to OSCE meetings in Vienna (A) to give inputs from a NGO perspective while OSCE delegates participated in the UNITED conferences in UK and Ukraine.

Several UNITED delegates were actively involved in the *Meeting of the Prepcom of the Durban review Conference*, and the *Durban Review Conference* in Geneva (CH), where UNITED's contribution was highly valued, by officials as well as by NGO representatives.

Several members of the European Parliaments are directly supporting the UNITED Network - organisations that are part of UNITED are often consulted by MEPs regarding anti-racism and antidiscrimination issues. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), and the Fundamental Right Agency (FRA) invited regularly representatives of the UNITED network for strategic planning meetings to Strasbourg (F), Paris (F) and Brussels (B).

Our active contribution in several meetings of the CoE Advisory Council on Youth in Strasbourg (F), Molina (E) and Budapest (H) was highly appreciated, as well as our participation in the expert meeting at the *2nd Meeting of the Monitoring Group follow-up of the Africa Europe Youth Summit* of the CoE and the European Commission in Addis Abeba (ET). Moreover, the Delegation of the European Commission to Russia invited UNITED representatives to contribute to events in Moscow (RUS) in frame of the Institution Building Partnership Programme.

UNITED has special consultative status with the United Nations - Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Excellent connections exist with both, Council of Europe and European Commission. Within the Council of Europe, UNITED has a consultative and participative status in Advisory Council on Youth. Several times during the year the Council of Europe invites delegates of UNITED to take part in hearings and working meetings on issues such as migration, youth participation, youth policies, antiracism action plans.



"The objective to fight racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination in all its forms is a permanent one. We assure you of our full support for your activities in this regard. We are convinced that the renewed representation of UNITED in the Advisory Council of the youth sector of the Council of Europe will aid us keeping the fight against Nazism on the top of our agenda."

[Ralf-René - Director of Youth and Sport (F)]

"Association Dialogi.lv implements a project with a goal to create Latvian NGOs Coalition for Tolerance and Anti discrimination, and we will hold NGOs Forum we are planning to become a collective member of UNITED. I would like to invite a representative of UNITED to participate in the Forum."

[Anna - Dialogi.lv (LV)]

"Foundation "Open Policy" expresses its gratitude for the provision of an expert to participate on December 10 in an international round table. We hope that affected our theme will further its development."

[Irina - Open Policy (UA)]

"We are very glad that you accepted our invitation and pleased to have the opportunity to work with you through your delegate's participation as trainer and representative. We believe that the 3,000 young participants at Roverway 2009 will be very interested in learning more about UNITED for Intercultural Action and we will make sure that your action and activities get the appropriate visibility at the event. By means of this we hope that our individual members will go back to their associations and countries with an increased awareness of their fundamental rights as citizens and will have learnt how to work in order to fight racism, xenophobia, discrimination and anti-Semitism."

[Elisa - World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (B)]



THANKS TO...

First of all we want to give our very special **‘Thank You!’** to all the committed activists and people, network-organisations and supporters of UNITED that keep the anti-discrimination movement and the fight for human rights alive.

Thanks to the members of the International Conference Preparatory Groups (IPG) for the enthusiasm and voluntary engagement to make both conferences in 2009 an extraordinary experience.

Thanks to the dedicated UNITED volunteers and delegates without them the UNITED Network would not be able to contribute to a more open-minded Europe.

At this point, a special thank is due to the participants at UNITED conferences in Sweden (June 2008), Serbia (November 2008) and United Kingdom (June 2009), who made with private donations the publication of the European Address Book Against Racism 2009 possible.

We thank the hundreds of organisations all over Europe that spent great effort in organising activities during the UNITED campaigns.

And last but not least “Thanks!” to the diverse financial supporters of UNITED. Without them it would not be possible to keep up the UNITED Network structure and its political independence.

UNITED is supported by...

more than 550 organisations from 46 European countries, many prominent individuals, private supporters and long-term volunteers from Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste, the European Voluntary Service Programme, Austrian Peace Service, and Ca’ Foscari University of Venice. The Cyprus Youth Board regularly funds national participant to UNITED events.

Since 1992 financial support was received from various sponsors such as: European Commission (General Budget/Socrates/Grundtvig/Youth in Action Programme/DG Employment Social Affairs/TACIS IBPP), Council of Europe (European Youth Foundation/European Youth Centres), OSCE-ODIHR, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, World Council of Churches, Olof Palmes MinnesFond, Cultural Council Sweden, Ministry of Education Slovenia, Green Group-, Socialist Group-, and GUE/NGL Group in the European Parliament, European Cultural Foundation, Stiftung West-Östliche Begegnung, Aktionsbündnis Gegen Gewalt, Rechtstextremismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit Brandenburg, Home Office UK, Ministry of Interior-BZK NL, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs CH, the Matra Programme of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vuurwerk Internet, Instituto Português da Juventude, National Integration Office Sweden, Service Nationale de la Jeunesse Luxembourg, LNU - Norwegian Youth Council, Europees Platform Grundtvig, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Federal Social Insurance Office (Dep. for Youth Affairs) CH, Swiss Coordination Office of Youth for Europe, Federal Service for Combating Racism (Fund for Projects Against Racism) CH, Migros Kulturprozent CH, Comunidad de Madrid, Ministry of Youth and Sport of Azerbaijan, The Swedish National Board of Youth Affairs, Rothschild Foundation, Youth Board of Cyprus, Final Frontiers Internet, Dijkman Offset and others.



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