

EMPOWERING CHANGE:

A cross-country analysis of hate actions targeting youth
in educational settings




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Executive summary

The Butterfly Effect project, supported by the European Commission under the CERV-2022-EQUAL programme, investigates the pervasive nature of hate actions targeting youth in educational contexts across Austria, Croatia, Greece, and Italy. The present research, conducted in the framework of the project, highlights the systemic roots and consequences of such actions, which hinder educational, psychological, and social development.

Key findings

Hate actions in educational settings:

- Manifestations include educational segregation, linguistic discrimination, and biased educational guidance, which obstruct integration, participation, and the creation of inclusive learning environments.
- Hate actions compromise the cognitive and psychological dimensions of education, fostering an atmosphere of exclusion.
- Examples include verbal abuse, microaggressions, discriminatory assessments, and the projection of negative racial stereotypes.

Intersectional and structural roots:

- Hate actions are shaped by overlapping axes of discrimination, including “race”, gender, class, and sexual orientation, creating compounded vulnerabilities.
- The phenomenon reflects systemic inequalities in broader socio-political and economic contexts, exacerbated by weak institutional responses.

Psychological consequences:

- Victims face diminished self-esteem, stress, mood disorders, and social withdrawal, alongside barriers to identity formation and social participation.
- Invalidation and secondary victimization further entrench these negative effects.

Preventive and restorative strategies:

- Prevention and repair are deeply interconnected, requiring proactive measures like anti-racism training, emotional education, and community empowerment.
- Peer-to-peers support and safe spaces are pivotal for processing trauma, fostering resilience, and promoting collective empowerment.

The research also provides recommendations to address these issues, advocating for preventive, restorative, and inclusive measures:

- Integrated and intersectional frameworks: address hate actions across interconnected social domains to achieve systemic change.
- Revise curricula with decolonial and anti-racist perspectives.
- Implement inclusive language policies and foster civic awareness.
- Strengthen partnerships with community organizations to document and combat hate actions.
- Encourage school leadership to engage in restorative justice practices.
- Leverage the insights of racialized educators and parents to rebuild trust and provide tools for resilience.

The report underscores the necessity of a holistic approach to combating hate actions, transforming educational settings into inclusive spaces that empower young people and dismantle systemic racism.



1. Introduction

Hate actions represent only one aspect of a broader phenomenon that shapes the lives of racialized youth across Europe. These young people, in fact, experience discrimination in educational settings intended for the holistic development of both their personal identity and broader civic community. However, these experiences are not confined solely to pedagogical contexts. In numerous secondary interaction and socialization settings—such as work, sports, healthcare, and media—similar facets of this phenomenon contribute to the overall impact of discrimination on the lives of those affected. Such experiences create a “red thread” connecting the educational context to other spheres, outlining a phenomenon of a systemic nature.

Analyzing each specific aspect of the issue is crucial to understanding its overall functioning, with the aim of guiding communities and policymakers towards a dual activation, both top-down and bottom-up, capable of addressing both the roots and long-term consequences of the investigated problem. Based on these premises, this report offers an integrated analysis of research conducted simultaneously over the course of a year across four European national contexts (Italy, Austria, Croatia, and Greece), highlighting aspects of analysis and intervention with broad and transversal validity. For each of these aspects, a focused exploration is also proposed on the particular and most significant manifestations of the problem within individual national contexts.

This multidimensional approach reveals that hate actions are not confined to a single sphere of social life but manifest transversally, intertwining with the historical and cultural specificities of local contexts. This requires tailored responses to counteract a deeply rooted systemic issue.

This research was carried out as part of the *BUTTERFLY EFFECT* project, funded by the European Commission under the CERV-2022-EQUAL programme, and implemented by COSPE - Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti ONLUS (Italy), ZARA - Zivilcourage und

Anti-Rassismus Arbeit (Austria), Human Rights House Zagreb (Croatia), Symbiosis (Greece), Coordinamento Nazionale Nuove Generazioni Italiane – CoNNGI (Italy) and Dokustelle (Austria). The project aims to address racial and hate incidents frequently experienced by youth from ethnic minorities and immigrant backgrounds. Inspired by the “butterfly effect” concept, which suggests that small actions can lead to significant long-term changes, the project seeks to empower young people, educational communities, and youth organizations in recognizing, preventing and responding to hate incidents, while also providing support to victims.

The general objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of youth and educational stakeholders to effectively tackle hate incidents, using an intersectional and gender-sensitive approach. The project recognizes that addressing hate incidents is a shared responsibility and aims to foster a culture of collective accountability and proactive response.

Work Package 2 (WP2) focuses on conducting comprehensive research to outline the characteristics of hate incidents affecting young people. This research aims to identify patterns, triggers, and responses to hate incidents across the participating countries (Italy, Austria, Croatia, and Greece). The outcomes of WP2 serve as a foundation for drafting evidence-based recommendations aimed at guiding educational institutions, youth organizations, and policymakers on how to effectively respond to and prevent such incidents. This involves analyzing hate incidents from an intersectional perspective to understand the overlapping factors that exacerbate discrimination and hate.

WP2 research activities include gathering quantitative and qualitative data on hate incidents, assessing the experiences of victims, and analyzing the social, cultural, and institutional contexts in which these incidents occur. The findings are crucial for developing targeted interventions and guiding other components of the project, particularly in informing training programs, capacity-building activities, and policy advocacy efforts.

2. Operational framework for the study

The research employed a qualitative methodology, characterized by a standardized process outlined in the project's guidelines. This harmonized approach ensured consistency in the research design, data collection, and analysis phases across diverse national contexts. The research starts with a desk research in each country, examining existing literature, legal frameworks, and previous research data on hate incidents affecting youth. This was complemented by a field research phase, which involved three key components:

1. Focus groups: In the four countries, 6 focus groups were organized with stakeholders, including educators, youth workers, civil society representatives, and youth from different backgrounds (80 participants in total). These sessions were designed to explore firsthand experiences, challenges, and observations regarding hate incidents. The focus group findings helped to define the next stages of the research.

2. Semi-structured interviews: In all countries, 44 semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders. These interviews were crucial in capturing individual narratives and deeper insights into how hate incidents manifest in each national context. The interview protocols were based on a standardized set of questions, with flexibility to adapt to specific local contexts.

3. Questionnaire surveys: To gather quantitative data, 232 questionnaires were distributed to a representative sample of youth participants. The surveys aimed to capture the prevalence of hate incidents, the types of discrimination faced, and the responses or coping mechanisms employed by affected youth.

After the data collection, each national team conducted a thorough analysis using a prescribed coding system, ensuring a systematic approach to identify patterns, key findings, and areas of intervention. The results from each country were synthesized to develop targeted recommendations for creating inclusive environments and strengthening the capacity of educational communities and youth organizations to combat hate.

This unified and guideline-driven methodology allowed for comparability of findings across different countries, enriching the understanding of hate incidents from a cross-national perspective while respecting local specificities.

2.1 Key quantitative insights of the research

Austria

- **1 focus group** with **12 participants**, including teachers, youth workers, grassroots organizations, community organizations and other civil society organizations working with youth from different personal backgrounds and personalities. The focus group was conducted by ZARA and Dokustelle.
- **10 semi-structured interviews** were conducted in Vienna to explore personal experiences of racial discrimination and profiling. Three interviews were conducted by Dokustelle and six by ZARA.
- **27 questionnaires** were distributed to young participants, providing quantitative data on discrimination experienced in educational and professional contexts.

Croatia

- **1 focus group** involving **20 young participants** from different educational and social backgrounds explored experiences of racial and ethnic discrimination. The participants were students, with two different types of high school (art and general education) from two cities (Zagreb and Karlovac) represented in the groups.
- **10 semi-structured interviews** were conducted with members of civil society organizations and experts in the field dealing with human rights discrimination, hate incidents and hate speech.
- **22 questionnaires** were administered to gather perceptions of discrimination in public spaces, education, and employment.

Greece

- **1 focus group** with **13 participants** including adults with educational and organizational roles in both school and extra-school contexts, as well as youth, engaged in meaningful talks.
- **10 interviews** conducted by Symbiosis, including victims, witnesses, and perpetrators of racial hatred. The interviews attempted to map best practices, which were defined as preventive, contextual, and following activities discovered by centralizing the demands voiced by the parties involved, particularly those of victimized individuals.
- **170 questionnaires** were gathered in classroom contexts.

Italy

- **3 focus groups** with **35 participants**, including racialized youth and migrant workers, discussed their experiences in education and employment. Two focus groups were conducted by COSPE, and one was conducted by CoNNGI.
- **14 interviews** conducted with parents, educators, and activists.
- **13 questionnaires** focused on students.



3. Hate actions in educational settings

Research data show that the phenomenon of hate incidents is widespread in European educational settings. This phenomenon must first be analyzed within the specific context in which it manifests, understanding the unique nature of interpersonal interactions within institutional and extra-institutional pedagogical frameworks. The educational community is made up of a number of different actors—teachers, educators, students, technical and administrative staff—who assume various roles and responsibilities in managing

and nurturing community life, as well as in the educational process and the achievement of its goals. As highlighted by research conducted in the four European countries involved in this project, hate actions have significant consequences on the cognitive, ethical-moral, and social development of young people targeted by both school-based and extracurricular educational programs. These actions compromise not only individual well-being but also collective well-being, hindering formative processes aimed at full participation in civil and democratic life.

3.1 The structural and intersectional roots of the phenomenon

At a broader level, the phenomenon of hate actions is not confined to the boundaries of educational spaces but reflects the social and structural dynamics of society. Schools and educational environments are part of an interconnected system with other civic and political institutions that shape social relations and the systemic distribution of power. The political, economic, and symbolic inequalities that characterize society influence school dynamics, impacting educational and didactic horizons, as well as the management policies of these spaces and the daily interactions that shape them.

These structural inequalities intersect along axes of social class, “race”, gender, sexual orientation, as well as forms of discrimination and inequality based on age, physical and mental health, among others. Their simultaneous and interconnected effects create an intersectional framework of asymmetric arrangements that feed into each other, both within and outside the institutionalized contexts of political, cultural, and economic life in global society.

This study analyzes the phenomenon of hate actions in educational contexts across four European countries: Austria, Croatia, Greece and Italy. The comparative and integrated analysis of the results from these four national research areas makes it possible to examine hate actions in educational contexts, considering the structural premises of the phenomenon, its unique manifestations and its consequences across varying temporal scales.

The aim of this analysis is to outline integrated strategies for the prevention and counteraction of the phenomenon. These strategies include: mapping out existing best practices—both formal and informal, and whether fully developed or experimental—as well as providing a series of recommendations and new proposals. These new proposals aim to enhance the resources, capabilities, and possibilities expressed by the educational communities under study, leveraging their intrinsic diversity as a valuable asset. This approach seeks not to reinforce an involutory dynamic but rather to foster relational generativity that serves as the foundation of the educational mission.

The dual purpose driving the recommendations and proposals derived from this research is, on the one hand, to restore the potential of educational communities and, on the other, to rearticulate their horizons. This report, in this sense, seeks to focus on the transformative impetus of the analyzed contexts and the practices that animate them.

Overcoming the current static structural distortions of power requires promoting a relational framework based on a dynamic process of collective empowerment. This approach has the potential to trigger profound and lasting changes, manifesting as a permanent, multidirectional vibration. It is a genuine transformation capable of propagating, either incidentally or intentionally, like a lasting butterfly effect.

3.2 The research sample and methodologies.

A “potentiated emic-etic” approach

Overall, the research sample is primarily composed of individuals victimized by hate actions within educational settings, characterized by a background of racialization and multiple interconnected experiences of discrimination and marginalization.

The specificity of the research sample indeed highlights the possibility of assigning epistemological centrality to the personal experiences of the victimized subjects. These experiences provide the primary and essential material for understanding the phenomenon from an embedded perspective that elevates collective experience to a strategic terrain for theory production. But there is more. The interpretation of these experiences is approached in this research through both “etic” and “emic” perspectives, here described as an “enhanced emic-etic approach.”¹

While *emic approach* refers to the interpretation of socio-anthropological phenomena by the researcher as an external observer, the enhanced impact in this context stems from a research team that, at various levels, involves individuals who themselves operate from a position embedded within the phenomenon under study—that is, the embodied experience of victimization in educational settings. Simultaneously, the *etic approach*, which denotes the representation of the phenomenon from the perspective of the affected social subjects, here draws on the enriched viewpoint of individuals who, in addition to embodying the experience of educational victimization accumulated during formative years, also possess interpretive categories derived from their pedagogical training and professional expertise rooted in this specialized training.

On these grounds, not only are the analyses but also the action strategies-articulated here in the form of best practices and recommendations—are endowed with a unique “epistemic advantage” that enhances the originality and robustness of the proposals themselves.

¹“The introduction and formalization of the concepts emic/etic should be credited to the American linguist Kenneth L. Pike. (...) Pike defined emic and etic as ‘two basic standpoints from which a human observer can describe human behavior, each of them valuable for certain specific purposes’ (...) According to Pike, an etic approach would rely on a generalized classification system devised by the researcher in advance (...) in order to compare and classify behavioural data from across the world, analogous to the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet to compare the sounds of spoken language (...) Conversely, following Pike, an emic approach would dispense with a priori means of classification. (...) Its goal would be to discover and describe the structured patterns of mental and bodily activities that the [research subjects] consciously or unconsciously, regard as distinct and significant for their system of behaviour” (Mostowlansky, Till, and Andrea Rota. (2020) 2023. “Emic and etic”. In The Open Encyclopedia of Anthropology, edited by Felix Stein. Facsimile of the first edition in The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology.



4. The socio-political and juridical context.

4. An overview

In the educational settings of all four European contexts under analysis, hate actions—particularly those with a racial basis—must be understood within their connection to the broader socio-political framework and its institutional management. Relevant issues include the phenomenon of migration from the Global South to the Global North, conditions of economic and political instability, the rise of far-right movements, and the historical persistence of racial and ethnic discrimination within European contexts. Educational systems often reflect the institutional political management of these issues. The prejudices and structural discrimination evident across various spheres of social life are mirrored in hate actions, which are regarded here as the most explicit manifestations of the contradictions inherent within this framework.

In this sense, educational settings emerge as especially critical and exposed places, both reflecting and potentially perpetuating these contradictions as they take root among new generations during their formative years, shaping future civic and political participants. Based on these premises, those who experience hate actions firsthand do not limit this experience to educational contexts. Instead, their experiences echo across various other settings

where daily interactions occur—such as streets, public transport, and extracurricular spaces of youth socialization—with particular attention to sports, thereby outlining a continuity in the sociological scope of the phenomenon and in the psychological impact on individuals.

From the perspectives of both authors and witnesses, as well as those affected by hate actions, it is evident that experiences marking non-educational settings and relationships contribute to the occurrence of hate incidents in educational contexts and particularly affect the youth population. Conversely, educational experiences marked by hate incidents serve as a precursor to what transpires in other spheres of social interaction, where the peculiar nature of an educational experience compromised by hate further influences other areas.

As revealed by the research findings from the four case studies, the socio-political climate of each country has influenced both the nature of hate actions and the ways in which these are addressed institutionally. National histories, migration flows, and legislative frameworks are key factors in understanding how hate actions manifest and how they are dealt with across different institutional contexts.

4.1 Structural racism in Europe and its manifestations in various contexts

Each national context analyzed reveals manifestations of hate tied to specific historical backgrounds from which these phenomena draw strength to resonate in the present. These forms of racism do not emerge in a vacuum but are deeply rooted in historical legacies of exploitation, segregation, and institutional violence that persist in contemporary forms.

While much of European racial and colonial dynamics have traditionally centered on the actions of imperial powers, the role of countries without direct colonial histories—such as Greece—remains underexplored. These nations, often perceived as secondary players in the colonial order, have nonetheless been deeply implicated in the racialized hierarchies and logics shaped by broader European colonialism. For instance, Greece's construction of national identity, tied to notions of cultural purity and a “seamless” historical

continuity from antiquity, has fueled exclusionary ideologies and resistance to multiculturalism, particularly against migrants and ethnic minorities. This reflects a subtler yet significant participation in colonial and racial ideologies, albeit framed through a different lens.

Economic conditions also play a pivotal role in creating fertile ground for social tensions and the escalation of hate crimes. Economic crises, high unemployment rates and widespread precarity exacerbate frustrations, often misdirected at marginalized groups. In Greece, the prolonged economic recession and austerity measures since 2010 have heightened xenophobia and scapegoating of migrants, who are perceived as competing for scarce resources. Similarly, Croatia's economic challenges, including youth unemployment and limited opportunities in

rural areas, have contributed to the social exclusion of Roma communities and tensions with refugees. Austria, despite its higher economic stability, continues to grapple with disparities that disproportionately affect migrant populations, amplifying racialized narratives of criminality and social burden. In Italy, regional inequalities and economic stagnation have fueled far-right rhetoric, targeting immigrants and minorities as culprits for local socio-economic struggles.

These dynamics are reflected in the rising hate crimes and discriminatory incidents across the case study countries². As documented by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, in Austria 5,464 hate crimes were recorded in 2021, with 4,304 cases prosecuted and 184 convictions. This number rose to 5,865 cases in 2022, with 118 additional incidents reported by civil society organizations³. The Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia for

the promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms, confirmed that in 2023, in Croatia 28% of citizens reported experiencing discrimination in the last five years, an increase from 20% in 2016. However, it is important to clarify that this percentage encompasses all forms of discrimination, including but not limited to racial, ethnic, gender-based, and other grounds.

As such, while these figures highlight a general rise in perceived discrimination, they extend beyond the specific focus of this research⁴. In Greece, the Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN) documented 74 cases of racist violence in 2022, including 33 incidents targeting migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers, and 38 cases involving LGBTQI+ individuals. In Italy, 1,445 hate crimes were reported in 2021, up from 1,048 five years earlier, with xenophobia as the primary motivation behind most of these crimes.

a) Antigypsyism

Antigypsyism, or racial prejudice against Roma and Sinti people, has deep roots in European history, and it manifests particularly in Austria and Croatia as a legacy of exclusion and marginalization. In Austria, discrimination against these groups is historically linked to repressive policies, ranging from institutional racism to physical violence in interpersonal interactions. Research highlights that Romani children in Austria have high dropout rates, which exacerbates their social isolation and poverty.

As reported by the Ombudsman 2024 Report drawing on the 2023 Eurobarometer survey on discrimination, in Croatia, Roma communities constitute the most discriminated ethnic minority in the country. Often excluded from the educational system and subjected to social discrimination, Roma people continue to face stereotypes and racial segregation. Institutional policies have proven insufficient in overcoming this discriminatory condition, and numerous hate actions

against Roma individuals remain unpunished or ignored. This national context also displays high school dropout rates and elevated poverty levels within Roma communities.⁵

In Greece, the Roma population has faced deep-rooted marginalization across multiple areas, including housing, employment, health, and education since the establishment of the Greek state. This exclusion is compounded by stereotypes and institutional discrimination, with Roma frequently portrayed as unwilling to work, reliant on welfare, or involved in criminal activities. Such stereotypes are perpetuated through widespread hate speech, particularly in the media and during election periods, where Roma are often depicted as "others" and outsiders. Beyond verbal and media prejudice, Anti-Gypsyism manifests in violent, real-world consequences, including physical attacks by far-right groups and individuals, and mistreatment by public authorities. Police brutality against Roma individuals during arrests and

²The data on hate crimes are collected from national reports and statistics provided by government bodies and civil society organizations in each country: for Austria, from ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) reports and civil society organization reports available at <https://hatecrime.osce.org/austria>; for Croatia, from the Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia, as detailed in the interactive report for 2022, Zagreb, 2023, accessible at <https://www.ombudsman.hr/hr/interaktivno-izvjesce-za-2022/>; for Greece, from the Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN), with data published in 2022, available at <https://rsaegrean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ETHSIA-EKTHESH-2022.pdf>; and for Italy, from OSCAD (Observatory for Security against Discriminatory Acts), Ministry of the Interior, "Reports of discrimination: trends from 2010 to 2021," 2023, accessible at https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2023-01/segnalazioni_2010_-_2021.pdf.

³<https://hatecrime.osce.org/austria>

⁴Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia, Izvješće pučke pravobraniteljice za 2022, Zagreb, 2023.

⁵Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia, Izvješće pučke pravobraniteljice za 2023, Zagreb, 2024, p.141



interrogations has led to severe injuries and fatalities, highlighting the Roma community's precarious position regarding rights to life and security, despite constitutional protections.

b) Anti-Muslim Racism.

In Greece, the dominant Greek Orthodox Christian identity coexists alongside religious minorities such as Muslims and Jews, who are sadly subjected to prejudice and hatred. Greece's history is marked by a succession of conflicts, invasions, and territorial disputes that have resulted in long-standing hatred between diverse groups based on factors such as ethnicity, religion, and nationality. Key events, such as the Ottoman Empire, the Balkan Wars, and population exchanges after the Greece-Turkey War, have been firmly imprinted in communal memory, reigniting tensions in the present. Within this historical context, a fertile ground for the spread of hate speech has evolved.

The prevalent narrative in Greece portrays Muslim migrants as cultural and physical threats, reinforcing the perception that they are violent, prone to crime, and incompatible with local communities. This narrative has intersected with the rise of the extreme right, which capitalised on economic hardship and public discontent with traditional political parties. Political opportunism enabled these groups to exploit frustrations, using hate speech and anti-immigrant rhetoric to offer simplistic solutions to complex societal challenges. Golden Dawn, an ultra-right, fascist organisation, gained significant political influence, entering the Greek Parliament in 2012 with approximately 7% of the votes, a proportion it maintained in the 2015 elections. Its rhetoric, including slogans like "every foreign worker is a Greek unemployed" and "Greece belongs to the Greeks" has exacerbated hostility towards immigrants in Greece.

In Austria, anti-Muslim racism has increased in recent years, especially within political and social contexts, where Islamophobic groups have gained visibility and influence. Anti-Muslim racism often manifests through stereotypes linking Muslims to criminality and social benefit abuse. The most affected communities are those from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey, which have historically constituted a significant part of Austrian immigration. An indicator

of anti-Muslim racism in Austria is the introduction, in 2007, of a specific subcategory for Islamophobic crimes within the police reporting system.

In Italy, anti-Muslim racism is primarily associated with more recent migration trends. Many Muslim individuals in Italy come from African and Asian countries and face discrimination in various areas, from the labor market to social services.

c) Anti-Black racism and xeno-racism

The most recent study conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, titled "Being Black in the EU – Experiences of People of African Descent"⁶ reveals concerning trends in Austria and supports the data provided by different civil society organisations in the last few years. The survey indicates that 72% of respondents in Austria reported experiencing discrimination based on their skin colour, origin, or religion.

Public language and interactions tend to perpetuate negative stereotypes, attributing to Black bodies a presumed criminal or dangerous nature. Of particular relevance is the impact of these representations within national contexts that border the "Fortress Europe". Greece and Italy, in this regard, are particularly vulnerable due to European migration policies, which contribute to discriminatory actions where racism, intersecting with xenophobia, manifests in multiple expressions of what can be called xeno-racism.

In Italy, Black workers and migrants occupy some of the most precarious positions in the labor market. Approximately 75% of foreign workers are employed in manual labor roles, and 60.2% of foreign graduates hold low- to mid-skill jobs, compared to only 19.3% of Italians⁷. This overrepresentation of migrants and racial minorities in low-paid and precarious employment reflects systemic barriers to social mobility and integration.

Similarly, in Austria, 59% of job seekers reported experiencing discrimination, particularly related to race and nationality, according to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' report *Being Black in the EU – Experiences of People of African Descent*. This segregation reflects a racialized pattern that parallels an analogous phenomenon within the educational domain, namely vertical and horizontal

⁶ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>

⁷ Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione, XIII Rapporto Annuale. Gli stranieri nel mercato del lavoro in Italia (13th Annual Report: Foreigners in the Labor Market in Italy), Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita-immigrazione/focus/xiii-rapporto-mdl-stranieri-2023>

school segregation.

d) Gender-based racism and queerphobia

At the intersection of gender, "race", and class, migrant, Muslim, and non-white women in Europe face gender- and class-based racist hate actions. Excluded from stable labor markets, many are relegated to domestic and care work in informal and low-paid settings. This exclusion results in limited access to welfare services and exposes these women to violence. This structural discrimination is reinforced by stereotypes of "natural inferiority" assigned to non-white women, enabling abuse across various social contexts.

In Italy, data from the XIII Annual Report on Foreigners in the Italian Labor Market, published by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies⁸, shows that 75% of employment contracts involving foreign workers are for unskilled labor, with many migrant women confined to domestic work and care roles. Among these, 51.8% of female domestic workers, primarily from migrant backgrounds, operate informally without regular contracts, exposing them to precarious conditions and limited access to social protections.

In terms of structural queerphobia, legal protections

for LGBTQIA+ individuals are inconsistently enforced across Europe. Although in Croatia, the Anti-Discrimination Act⁹ prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, but hate speech and hate crimes targeting queer communities remain prevalent.

Greece's Law 927/1979, which was the first legislative effort to combat racial discrimination (in accordance with the 1966 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination), and the Anti-Racist Bill (Law 4285/2014) protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Italy's legislative framework includes measures for protection, yet incidents of queerphobia often go unaddressed by law enforcement, reflecting a gap between legislation and practice.

In Austria, despite the Equal Treatment Act¹⁰'s provisions for sexual orientation protections, instances of police abuse against queer individuals have been reported, with limited legal response. Harmful public discourse further perpetuates stereotypes, with cases of open discrimination against LGBTQIA+ individuals seldom leading to legal repercussions, underscoring the gap between legal provisions and enforcement across these contexts.

⁸Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione (Directorate General for Immigration and Integration Policies). XIII Rapporto Annuale. Gli stranieri nel mercato del lavoro in Italia (13th Annual Report: Foreigners in the Labor Market in Italy). Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita-immigrazione/focus/xiii-rapporto-mdl-stranieri-2023>

⁹Anti-Discrimination Act of Croatia, Official Gazette No. 85/08

¹⁰The Federal Act on Equal Treatment of Women and Men in the Workplace, known as the Equal Treatment Act (GIBG). Federal Law Gazette No. I 66/2004.



4.2 The European Legal Context of Hate Crimes

Limits of the punitive approach

Research findings highlight the limitations of relying solely on a punitive approach to effectively combat hate actions. While hate crime legislation is an essential component, its deterrent effect is weakened when it is not complemented by a broader cultural and institutional framework that actively promotes and invests in preventive and proactive measures. Furthermore, the limited enforcement of existing legal provisions undermines their potential impact, with no clear evidence linking harsher sanctions to a measurable reduction in incidents of violence.

The punitive framework alone is insufficient to drive positive and lasting changes in behavior and social relations, as it primarily targets individual perpetrators without addressing the broader social and institutional co-responsibility that fosters such actions. In Greece, for instance, while the legal framework has been expanded to include incitement to hatred based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability, the implementation of these laws—particularly those related to hate speech and racist offenses—remains a significant challenge.

a) Ambiguity and fragmentation in legislation

A second structural limitation, particularly evident in the Croatian context, arises from the fragmented nature of the legal framework addressing hate speech. In Croatia, relevant legislation is dispersed across various acts, including the *Anti-Discrimination Act*, *Criminal Code*, *Public Assembly Act*, *Offenses Against Public Order and Peace Act* and *Electronic Media Act*, leading to ambiguity in interpretation and enforcement. According to reports from *Human Rights House Zagreb*¹¹, this lack of cohesion creates significant challenges in categorizing and prosecuting hate speech, where overlapping provisions can lead to unclear qualifications and inconsistent

penalties. Civil society organizations report that this fragmented framework makes it difficult to intervene effectively in hate speech cases, as the dispersed nature of hate speech provisions limits the ability to address cases uniformly and systematically. Furthermore, the Ombudsperson of the Republic of Croatia has highlighted the need for a more coherent approach, recommending a unified legislative strategy to enhance consistency and protect victims more effectively.¹²

b) Ineffective implementation and procedural obstacles

All case studies highlight the structural difficulty in effectively implementing existing laws. Judicial authorities often fail to adequately enforce anti-discrimination regulations, leading to underreporting of cases and a low incidence of convictions.

The Italian legal framework on hate crimes shows significant structural weaknesses. Despite the Italian Constitution's provisions for the protection of human dignity and equality through Article 2 and Article 3, the application of these principles in combating hate crimes remains flawed. Laws such as the Scelba Law (1952)¹³, which bans the reorganization of the fascist party and the promotion of racial propaganda, and the Mancino Law (1993), aimed at penalizing racial, ethnic, and religious hatred, are not sufficiently effective in addressing the full complexity of discriminatory behavior. Even with additional provisions such as Article 604 bis of the Criminal Code, which criminalizes propaganda and incitement to violence based on discrimination, and Article 604 ter, which introduces aggravating factors for such crimes, the legal framework remains incomplete and often ineffective.

A major flaw in the system is the absence of a clear

¹¹Human Rights House Zagreb, Human Rights in Croatia: Overview of 2019, Zagreb, 2020, available at: https://www.kucaljudskihprava.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/KLJP_godisnjelzvjesce2019_ENG_web.pdf; Hate Speech and Euroscepticism in Croatia, Zagreb, 2022, available at: https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/media/attachments/14/09/2022/Hate_speech_and_EuroscepticismCRO_ACaljAf.pdf; Human Rights in Croatia: Overview of 2022, Zagreb, 2023, available at: https://www.kucaljudskihprava.hr/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/KLJP_GI2022_DIGI.pdf; Action Plan for Combating Hate Speech, Zagreb, 2024, available at: https://www.kucaljudskihprava.hr/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/KLJP_AkcijskiPlan-EN.pdf

¹²Based on these facts, it can be concluded that Croatia lacks systematic policies related to the hate incidents. Civil society in Croatia advocates for the adoption of a comprehensive action plan that would cover all forms of hateful occurrences and measures to address them, including capacity building for all stakeholders (Human Rights House Zagreb, 2024). The Ombudsperson of the Republic of Croatia gave recommendation to the Government of the Republic of Croatia, to urgently adopt a migration and integration policy (Ombudsman, 2024).

¹³Law No. 645 of 20 June 1952

¹⁴Law No. 205 of 25 June 1993

legal definition of “hate crime” making it difficult to uniformly apply the existing laws. This results in inconsistent enforcement and a systemic underestimation of hate crimes. The decriminalization of insult (*ingiuria*) illustrates a broader issue: aggravating circumstances like those provided by the Mancino Law¹⁴ can only be invoked in the context of conduct that remains criminally relevant. This means that for offenses that no longer fall under criminal jurisdiction, such as insults, it is impossible to apply the aggravating factor of racial discrimination, leaving gaps in the protection against discriminatory behavior.

Even for conduct that remains within the scope of criminal law, it is often difficult to have the aggravating circumstance of racial discrimination recognized and applied. This challenge is rooted in a failure to consistently acknowledge racism and hate as determining factors in victim selection, as they should be. The focus on the discriminatory intent of the perpetrator is often insufficient, leading to a failure in properly framing the offense as a hate crime. As a result, hate and racism are treated as peripheral elements, rather than being seen as central to the crime, reflecting a broader systemic failure to ade-

quately address the seriousness of these offenses.

c) Inadequacy of protective measures for victims

A significant structural issue in Austria's legal response to hate crimes lies not only in the inconsistent application of anti-discrimination laws but also in the lack of adequate protective measures for victims. Although comprehensive provisions exist within the *Criminal Code* and the *Equal Treatment Act* (GIBG), civil society organizations report that enforcement remains inconsistent and often inaccessible, particularly for marginalized groups. Procedural barriers, such as bureaucratic obstacles and limited support resources, complicate victims' ability to pursue justice and navigate the legal system effectively.

The gap between the number of prosecutions and convictions further indicates systemic challenges in investigatory and judicial processes, suggesting that limited training and resources may prevent law enforcement from effectively prioritizing hate crime cases. This focus on punitive measures, without robust support structures for victims, weakens the overall impact of Austria's legislative framework in addressing hate crimes sustainably.



5. Hate actions in educational contexts

Research conducted across the four countries involved in the Butterfly Effect project allows for an integrated analysis of the most common forms of hate actions within educational settings. These actions operate at various levels of daily life and within the mechanisms of the educational community, obstructing progress toward broader educational and formative objectives. For instance, in Italy, 25% of foreign students aged 17-18 leave school early, with the Early Leaving from Education and Training (ELET) indicator showing that 35.4% of foreign youth are outside the educational system, compared to the national average of 13.1%¹⁵.

The following analysis provides a comprehensive map of hate actions, listing the manifestations of the phenomenon that have the most significant and recurring impact across Europe, as revealed by the four case studies.

To understand the specific impact of hate actions in educational settings, this analysis considers how each type of hate action interferes with a distinct and specific objective of pedagogical intervention, which can be summarized into four fundamental dimensions: 1) social, 2) ethical-moral, 3) cognitive and 4) psychological.

1) Hate actions as obstacles to the social dimension of educational intervention

Hate actions within school settings represent a significant barrier to the social dimension of educational intervention, which aims to promote socialization, integration, and active participation in community life. The research highlights the considerable impact of educational segregation, linguistic discrimination, and biased educational guidance as predominant forms of structural discrimination and related manifestations of hate that obstruct the creation of an inclusive educational environment. These factors also hinder the process of young people's integration and active participation in the political, economic, and cultural life of society.

• Educational segregation

Overall, the research reveals that young people with migrant backgrounds are often funneled into educational tracks leading to lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs in the labor market, such as technical and vocational schools, rather than academic high schools. This "horizontal segregation" limits not only educational advancement opportunities but also social ones, reinforcing structural inequalities. In Croatia, for instance, Roma children face additional obstacles stemming from the unavailability of various forms of support and the still-present segregated classes. There is also a lack of support for refugee children and schools do not receive sufficient support from the system to create an intercultural environment¹⁶.

Race-based hate actions from teachers and peers can be theorized as contributing to an environment of exclusion and social isolation. Such an environment may hinder the academic progress of marginalized students, obstructing their pathways toward higher education and limiting their access to more stable and better-paid sectors of the labor market. While the research highlights structural inequalities such as educational segregation and insufficient systemic support for marginalized groups, this elaboration extends the discussion by considering how microaggressions and discrimination within educational settings could exacerbate these challenges. These dynamics reinforce systemic barriers, both in terms of academic achievement and social mobility, compounding the marginalization experienced by racialized and migrant youth.

Educational segregation can also take the form of transfers: in Austria, students from migrant backgrounds are disproportionately transferred to special education needs schools, a practice that, while presented as addressing educational requirements, effectively segregates and marginalizes them from mainstream educational opportunities. In fact, by

¹⁵Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR), Foreign Students in the Italian Education System: 2021 Report, Rome, 2021. Available at: https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/NOTIZIARIO_Stranieri_2021+%281%29.pdf/150d451a-45d2-e26f-9512-338a98c7bb1e?t=1659103036663

¹⁶Human Rights House Zagreb, 2023.

increasing social and spatial distance along ethnic-racial lines, this phenomenon contributes to reducing educational, higher education, and employment opportunities for this discriminated segment of the youth population, particularly in fields that require secondary and university-level qualifications. The research sample highlights the discriminatory nature of the criteria used for these transfers, which are often based on psycho-aptitude tests administered more frequently to children with migrant or racialized backgrounds than to white European children.

This practice presents issues on two levels, both of which are influenced by differential knowledge of the national language. Firstly, children are transferred to special schools based on the signing of an informed consent document by their parents. However, when the family's first language differs from the national context, this documentation is often difficult to understand in full. As a result, the family's consent is given with only a partial understanding of the operation and its long-term effects.

• **Linguistic discrimination**

In cases reported in Austria involving the transfer of racialized children to specialized schools (focused on so-called special educational needs), the linguistic competence of the families often determines their only formally informed consent to the process. The documentation provided by school authorities for parental legal guardians to sign is characterized by a technical and bureaucratic language that is difficult to decode, especially given the differential language proficiency of these families. This results in a dual discriminatory effect on both the youth and their primary caregivers, who remain marginalized within the educational community and its pedagogical objectives of social integration. Exacerbating linguistic discrimination is the fact that national language acquisition is often insufficient in these specialized school settings, further marginalizing these children and affecting their prospects for both education and social and workforce integration.

Linguistic exclusion also manifests through microaggressions, notably in Italy and Greece, where comments about national language proficiency are often directed at young people from non-European linguistic backgrounds. In Italy, data from the 2022 ISMU Report on Migrant Students¹⁷ shows that stu-

dents without Italian citizenship are disproportionately enrolled in technical and professional schools, where linguistic competence is undervalued compared to general secondary schools. These patterns reflect structural biases where students from migrant backgrounds are relegated to less academic paths, often based on assumptions about their language skills rather than their actual academic potential. This relegation, reinforced by negative assessments from educators, systematically limits their educational and social mobility.

In Greece, similar trends emerge, where students from non-Greek linguistic backgrounds face negative bias in language evaluations, often subjected to comments implying that their language skills mark them as outsiders. This form of discrimination is compounded by a symbolic association of linguistic competence with "Greekness," reinforcing a perception that those who deviate from this standard do not belong. Educational spaces thus become arenas for these microaggressions, with educators playing a strategic role in influencing assessments that can disproportionately disadvantage racialized or multilingual youth. This dynamic erodes their identity and limits their pathways toward active citizenship.

• **Discriminatory educational guidance**

Another significant area is that of educational guidance, which, based on stereotypes and prejudices, discourages racialized students from pursuing advanced studies. This is particularly evident in Italy, where educators often direct students with migrant backgrounds toward lower-qualified tracks, limiting their career prospects and negatively influencing their academic aspirations.

In all countries, socioeconomic factors intertwine with racial factors to influence educational guidance. Young people from lower social strata often come from immigrant families. This perpetuates a cycle of overrepresentation of youth with migrant backgrounds in vocational tracks that offer limited opportunities for professional qualifications.

2) **Hate actions as obstacles to the ethical-moral dimension of educational intervention**

The ethical-moral dimension of educational intervention pursues respect for human dignity, promoting the development of critical consciousness, moral judgment, and a sense of responsibility in young people, both toward themselves and others. In this

¹⁷Fondazione ISMU, Alunni con background migratorio: famiglia, scuola e società. Report 2023 (Students with Migrant Backgrounds: Family, School, and Society. 2023 Report), June 2023. Retrieved from: https://www.ismu.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Alunni-con-background-migratorio_famiglia-scuola-societa_Report.pdf



sense, pedagogy serves as an essential tool for fostering personal and collective growth that not only aligns with legal norms but is also inspired by principles of justice and equality. These principles can potentially expand ethical horizons beyond the mere adherence to the law.

As the research findings indicate, hate actions that permeate the relational spaces of educational communities undermine the philosophical and moral principles that shape educational perspectives, hindering and sabotaging the ethical purpose of pedagogical work. The normalization of hate indicators and the actions driven by them interferes with the development of moral judgment and the understanding of human dignity as a core value.

Verbal abuse and hate speech, while formally recognized as crimes under the law in most European countries, remain pervasive across social contexts due to challenges in law enforcement and unclear definitions of the crimes they aim to address.¹⁸ The non-punitive approach of contemporary pedagogy could help overcome this impasse, provided that educational settings become genuinely dedicated to practicing ethical relationships focused on respecting human dignity. However, what is observed instead is an intensification of impunity, which extends beyond educational settings to other community spheres, thus compromising the ethical-moral foundations of education.¹⁹

In all the European countries where the research was conducted, despite the fact that contemporary legal systems are built on the historical lessons of racial hatred that scarred 20th-century Europe—particularly targeting ethnic minorities such as the Roma or the Serbs in Croatia—schools have struggled to offer a relational experience that actively acknowledges the historical responsibilities associated with racial or ethnic hatred. For example, in Croatia, the Ombudsman's 2023 report, based on data from the Eurobarometer survey on discrimination, highlights that 59% of Croatian citizens believe discrimination against Roma is widespread²⁰.

The invisibility of many consequences of such hatred, particularly those stemming from European

colonial projects beyond Europe, exacerbates this issue, fostering the same seeds of intolerance that marred European history. This stands in stark contrast to the values education aims to impart.

From a legal standpoint, these episodes can be sanctioned under legislative frameworks in Greece, Austria, Italy, and Croatia, which penalize hate speech and discrimination based on "race", religion, or sexual orientation.

Education, as a dynamic and transformative institution, has the potential to foster environments where legal norms are not only taught but also enriched through meaningful and constructive engagement with diverse cultural experiences. By embracing this approach, educators can further strengthen their ongoing efforts to create inclusive and empowering spaces for all. In this way, the educational system can experiment with restorative justice approaches, as have been adopted in various countries to address hate and discrimination. In Austria, for instance, the need to address racial discrimination is also recognized within an educational system that, in theory, promotes awareness and inclusion practices.

An educational approach that tolerates or even justifies instances of discrimination risks normalizing such behaviors, which may lead future citizens to reproduce discriminatory principles within the framework of the rule of law.

3) Hate actions as obstacles to the cognitive dimension of the educational process

By interfering with the acquisition of knowledge, the development of analytical categories, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving abilities, hate actions obstruct the cognitive objectives of the pedagogical relationship. These actions undermine the core goals of education, which aim to foster intellectual growth, analytical capability, and the development of cognitive skills that are essential for understanding and engaging with the world in a thoughtful and informed manner.

• Decolonising didactics

As the research results show, instructional content

¹⁸Hate crime recording and data collection practice across the EU: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/hate-crime-recording-and-data-collection-practice-across-eu>

¹⁹Giorgio Crescenza, Stefano Pasta e Elena Zizioli, "Hate speech and manifestations of violence. Pedagogical perspectives and educational responses in the time of the unpredictable", QTimes - Journal of Education, Technology and Social Studies, Issue XV_n. 4, 2024, pp. VI-XX.

²⁰Ombudsman of the Republic of Croatia, Izvješće pučke pravobraniteljice za 2022, Zagreb, 2023.

often ignores or minimizes the history of racialized and colonized populations, as well as the cultures of ethnic minorities. As a tool directly accessed by learners and, more importantly, one that mediates the relationship between teachers and students, educational materials and curricula contribute to a sense of alienation, reinforcing feelings of exclusion among minority students. Additionally, the convergence between discriminatory instructional content and the delivery of lessons by educators reinforces the authority of hate speech within school settings. This contributes to invalidating the experiences and historical-cultural heritage of students from non-white backgrounds.

In Greece, school curricula often prioritize a Eurocentric view of history, neglecting minority experiences and reinforcing racial biases among students. Participants in interviews and focus groups in Italy describe the instruction they received as Eurocentric, critiquing its effects on the dominant cultural narratives that shaped their relationships with peers and pedagogical figures during their formative years. From a marginalized perspective, the racist and colonial biases embedded within the instructional content—and, more generally, an educational offering that rarely diverges from or challenges dominant narratives—confront students with migrant backgrounds or those who align their cultural or sexual identity with minority groups. These students are exposed to a body of knowledge that fails to provide frameworks for understanding their own and others' social and cultural identities.

As a result, students in Italy, as elsewhere, develop a cognitive deficit in understanding the social complexities around them and acquire limited critical skills, which are crucial for generating transformative thought and developing conflict resolution strategies to address both direct and indirect challenges.

- **Stereotypes, historical-cultural exclusion and the narrowing of horizons**

As it emerges from Italy's and Austria's research results in particular, school textbooks and learning tools that ignore the cultural and historical perspectives of minorities not only limit access to diverse knowledge but also reproduce stereotypical representations that restrict the development of critical

thinking. This critical thinking should recognize the plurality of human experiences and their historical determination.

What is excluded from didactics is not only non-dominant viewpoints but also the historical depth of challenges to these dominant perspectives. In terms of educational content, the invisibility of theoretical contributions outside the boundaries of European whiteness and the reproduction of stereotypical representations result in a dynamic of invalidation. This leaves young people without awareness of the historical tools of resistance against the very same demeaning actions they face. In this way, an experience of uprooting is reproduced and reinforced, both from present-day social contexts and from the history of which these young individuals are often unaware heirs.

In conclusion, hate actions within educational settings not only hinder the individual growth of racialized students but also contribute to perpetuating a system of inequalities that impedes social cohesion and transformation.

4) Hate actions as obstacles to psychological development

As it emerges from the research results - with particular reference to Italy and Austria - and as already attested by scientific literature, hate actions within educational settings also compromise the psychological development of young people, affecting their sense of identity, security, and self-esteem. The primary forms of hate actions that impact psychological well-being include microaggressions, verbal abuse, hate speech, and racial representations. While these actions constitute the core of what is referred to as "victimization" in this context, the psychological impact of the phenomenon extends beyond the hate action itself. When the harmful effects are unacknowledged, it leads to a process of "secondary victimization" and its associated psychological consequences²¹.

- **Microaggressions and devaluation of the individual**

Research reveals a high frequency of microaggressions and racist comments from both teachers and peers. Their effects can compromise individuals' relational and learning abilities.

²¹See Matthias Böhmer, Georges Steffgen (eds.), *Racism in Schools. History, Explanations, Impact, and Intervention Approaches*, Springer Wiesbaden, 2023



Discriminatory assessment of learning

As reported by participants from Italy's research frame, teachers may show discriminatory attitudes in evaluating academic performance and knowledge acquisition processes. According to interviewees, young people belonging to minority ethnic groups report receiving lower grades than their white peers, even when their performance is comparable.

From racial representation to racial profiling

Often perceived as "problematic" or "incapable of integrating" interviewees - with particular reference to Italy and Austria's research frames - report experiencing a projected image from various white components of the educational community (teachers, administrators, peers, and their parents) that characterizes them as dysfunctional individuals predisposed to exclusion or differential treatment. This image reinforces racial stereotypes that portray racialized others as inherently dangerous, and thus a threat to the social integrity of the white community.

This experience is described as closely related to behaviors commonly associated with "racial profiling" by extra-educational institutional figures, such as law enforcement, with whom young people from non-white backgrounds are systematically confronted. The research reports address the issue of racial profiling, emphasizing how this practice manifests and persists in various educational and non-educational contexts. It engenders a pervasive sense of insecurity, which interferes with these young people's ability to act and interact within the educational community. This is particularly concerning given that schools should ideally provide a sense of protection that extends beyond the immediate family context.

• **Verbal, symbolic violence and hate speech**

The experiences of explicitly harmful verbal assaults are consistently reported across all four research samples. Verbal violence and hate speech are among the most persistent forms of continuity between educational and extra-educational settings, emerging as some of the most visible symptoms of the structural dimension of hate actions. These forms of violence also blur the boundaries of educational spaces as protective barriers against surrounding contexts. In fact, they reflect similar distortions across these spaces, creating a framework of interdependence and reciprocity in the logic underpinning hate manifestations across different social interaction settings.

In Greece, for example, verbal violence is frequently

directed toward migrants, refugees, and ethnic minorities such as the Roma people, fueled by nationalist and supremacist political organizations that carry out propaganda campaigns locally. The far-right party Golden Dawn, in particular, has repeatedly employed hate rhetoric targeting immigrants, promoting the false belief that those with national citizenship rights face unemployment due to the presence of other citizens in the labor market. Other nationalist slogans foster hate speech, intolerance, and ethno-national segregation against immigrant communities and ethnic minorities.

LGBTQIA+ persons are also frequent targets of insults and hate speech, which aim to marginalize and dehumanize these groups. Although current laws prohibit incitement to hate based on sexual orientation and gender identity, difficulties in enforcement render these laws relatively ineffective in preventing and combating such hate actions. Similarly, the Muslim community in Austria and individuals with sub-Saharan African backgrounds in Italy are particularly subject to Islamophobic and anti-Black rhetoric, respectively. These expressions often appear in public statements and political propaganda, contributing to narratives that associate Islam, and particularly Black masculinity, with criminality, alleged threats to national security, and supposed sexual danger.

These circumstances have a dual impact on educational contexts. In Croatia, for instance, students from Serbian and Roma minorities frequently experience verbal and symbolic violence in schools. A notable case involved students manipulating digital equipment to display neo-Nazi swastikas in the classroom. Such incidents not only impede learning but also create an atmosphere of fear and isolation that extends into social interactions outside school. Hate speech, sometimes tolerated by school authorities, fosters a culture of impunity that reinforces ethnic tensions within and beyond educational communities.

This dynamic operates in the reverse as well: structural complicity within educational contexts with verbal violence and hate speech introduces intolerance into the civil and political spheres, with young people becoming active and passive carriers of such intolerance, as both perpetrators and silent witnesses of harmful actions. This includes both educational figures and youth targeted by educational and training programs. The two facets of this phenomenon are closely interconnected, as the verbal violence enacted by those in positions of authority perme-

ates pedagogical actions, embedding such behaviors into the educational relationship with youth. On one hand, young people are implicitly encouraged to emulate adult figures of reference; on the other, they are also disempowered, even as witnesses, from challenging adult perpetrators of hate actions. This is due to the adult's perceived authority and educational expertise, which places them beyond reproach from a subordinate position in terms of power and responsibility—both within the educational setting and in the broader framework of structural power asymmetries.

As a result, the invalidation effect observed in linguistic violence and hate speech is particularly pervasive within the entire relational field of the educational community. This plays a critical role in stagnating its dynamics and limiting its pedagogical, developmental, and social transformation horizons.

Invalidation of lived experience and the phenomenon of secondary victimization

Coherently with theoretical literature, the research results, with particular reference to the Italian and Austrian contexts, attest that the psychological impact of hate actions is heightened and exacerbated by the systematic invalidation of these incidents as harmful or even traumatic experiences. When victims react—often after some time rather than immediately—to the aggression they suffered, by challenging

its legitimacy with the perpetrators or reporting it to third parties (such as other pedagogical or administrative figures within the educational environment), they may encounter further invalidation.

This comes through the denial of their capacity to interpret, process, and judge their own first-hand experiences. In cases where parents attempt to mediate or contest the incident on behalf of their child, they may themselves become targets of discriminatory actions from those they approach for educational intervention, seeking to hold the educational community accountable for the incident. This additional layer of invalidation not only affects the parents but also reinforces the sense of devaluation that subsequently impacts their children²².

Croatian research results highlight a correlation between a sentiment of the “lack of trust” in the effectiveness of institutional procedures and the phenomenon of “underreporting”.

With particular focus on school contexts, by minimizing or implicitly justifying hate actions, the educational community fuels the process of secondary victimization.

The invalidation of discriminatory experiences increases the sense of inferiority and isolation felt by the harmed individual and contributes to a heightened risk of re-victimization, to the extent that these experiences become normalized.

²²See also: Welter, N., Wagner, J., Dincher, K., Quintarelli, H. (2023). Effects of Racist Discrimination. In: Böhmer, M., Steffgen, G. (eds) Racism in Schools. Springer, Wiesbaden; Antonopoulos, Georgios. Racist victimization: international reflections and perspectives. Routledge, 2016.



5.1 The psychological consequences of hate actions

Overall, the research highlights that hate actions have significant psychological implications for young victimized individuals, underscoring the specific role of educational settings, which are inherently designed to support the consolidation of psychological structures in individuals during their developmental years.

a) Impact on self-esteem and sense of self

The testimonies of victimization gathered throughout the research reveal that hate actions, particularly those with a racial component, often lead to the development of feelings of inferiority and worthlessness in the victim. The internalization of the devaluation conveyed by the harmful action—especially in the absence of individual and collective accountability from perpetrators and the surrounding environment—leaves the victim with a sense of helplessness, shame, and insecurity, leading to a negative self-image and diminished sense of personal capabilities. Without effective countermeasures and interventions following discriminatory actions, conditions are created for the recurrence of such actions, reinforcing the dynamic from two perspectives: that of the victimized individual and that of the perpetrators and witnesses.

On one hand, the invalidation of the victim's experience, resulting in secondary victimization, deepens and exacerbates feelings of devaluation, paradoxically involving the victim in an active role in their own devaluation process. On the other hand, these repeated hate actions reinforce a kind of "self-fulfilling prophecy", where young people begin to see themselves as less capable or less worthy than their peers. This affects their academic performance and professional aspirations, ultimately reinforcing the very same demeaning representations that the hate action perpetrators project onto them, both through the actions themselves and the justifications for these actions, rooted in these demeaning stereotypes.

b) Stress and mood disorders

Exposure to discrimination can lead young people to develop states of depression, anxiety, and anger. Feelings of helplessness and demoralization are common, and these negative emotions often spiral into an ongoing emotional cycle that is difficult to break. Secondary victimization, by exposing traumatized individuals to further violence or denial of their suffering, intensifies these feelings and can result in social withdrawal and isolation.

c) Effects on behavior and social participation

Primary and secondary victimization tend to foster introversion, discouraging individual interaction and participation in group activities. Compromised self-esteem leads the victim to doubt their own abilities to perceive, interpret, and act, which in turn reduces their motivation in academic pursuits and realization of relational and professional life goals. Feelings of vulnerability and exposure to the risk of new traumatic experiences become associated with the school environment, which is perceived as unsafe and is equated with other public spaces that are viewed as hostile.

d) Identity construction and psychological development

The phenomenon of hate actions in educational settings deeply impacts the identity formation of young people, often resulting in a fragmented identity accompanied by feelings of alienation or exclusion from the community. However, it is equally essential to view this phenomenon through the lens of agency, as victimized individuals express agency at every stage of the experience. In the absence of responsibility and protection from others, young victims often rely on their personal resources and sense of justice to deploy tactics and strategies for protection and resistance. In some cases, the family unit also becomes actively involved, validating the young person's lived experience. Parents, in particular, can assume a proactive role within the educational community to foster both individual and institutional accountability, and in some cases, even to promote alternative forms of education among peer groups targeted by the educational program.

While this parental role may risk overshadowing the expression of the young person's own agency, it can also provide a relational community space to address distorted perceptions and to strengthen resilience and trauma processing abilities.

Therefore, although the psychological effects of hate actions can deeply undermine the psychic structures and the individual and collective well-being of the educational community, the most effective reprocessing efforts and the experiences of those who have implemented resistance and resilience strategies can enhance the educational potential of the victimized individuals' experiences. This enables them to potentially transform the structural premises of the phenomenon under investigation.

5.2 The central role of educators in hate incidents

Across the various national contexts analyzed, one common factor stands out: the central role of educators. As it emerges from research results, these figures can be among the perpetrators of hate actions and, despite their position of educational responsibility, they sometimes do not take accountability for their behavior and the negative impacts it has—both educationally and psychologically—on direct victims as well as on young witnesses of these incidents.

In Italy and Austria, in particular, a lack of adequate training and awareness regarding hate phenomena leads educators to downplay or ignore incidents of racism that they themselves may perpetrate, as well as those occurring between peers. This leaves young people vulnerable to victimization without appropriate support. Research findings from Croatia reveal that teachers and school administrators face challenges in managing discriminatory incidents, especially those targeting the Roma and Serbian communities. However, lack of additional training to

support school staff in these processes, educational policies, and educational materials aimed at raising awareness limit the entire educational community's ability to better understand the roots of the problem and intervene effectively.

In Greece, educators may encounter a context where discrimination is also linked to the rise of supremacist political organizations and ideologies. For example, intolerance towards students with migrant backgrounds can be fueled by external influences, leaving educators without institutional support to address such situations.

This also increases the likelihood that teachers themselves may be influenced by the prevailing cultural and political climate of intolerance, sometimes unconsciously expressing opinions that mirror societal prejudices. Consequently, they may contribute to creating a hostile educational environment.

5.3 The role of extra-school civic and political institutions

Certain institutional figures outside the educational sphere contribute, directly or indirectly, to hate phenomena, thereby reinforcing the pervasiveness of these actions across various areas of social interaction in which young people are prominent participants. These actions impact young individuals' psycho-pedagogical development, further entrenching the negative effects within the broader social environment.

a) *The police*

In various countries, the police are reported to play a significant role. As attested in the annual Report provided by ZARA - Civil Courage and Anti-Racism-Work in 2023 as well in "Being Black in the EU - Experiences of People of African Descent", a recent study conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the persistence of racial profiling in Austria is evident, with Black individuals disproportionately subjected to stops and searches compared to the rest of the population²³. As attested by the investigated research fields, especially in Italy and Greece, the police have been noted either actively

or passively to obstruct legal recourse in cases of hate actions, both within and outside educational settings. The absence of guidelines for interactions with racialized individuals, along with a general lack of training on the social impacts of structural racism, means that the police may contribute to the institutionalization of hate actions and hate speech.

From a broader and more pedagogical perspective, research data and reports concerning racial biases in police interventions, can be interpreted as based on a lack of pedagogical competencies—both in terms of understanding the wider impact of their actions and when directly intervening or supporting cases that pertain specifically to educational contexts. This deficiency further impedes their ability to address hate phenomena effectively and sensitively, especially within environments that are intrinsically educational.

b) *The sport contexts*

Sports settings are both physical and media-driven arenas for hate actions that significantly

²³ZARA Rassismus Report 2021. See also FRA, Being Black in the EU – Experiences of People of African Descent, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>



impact young people, promoting the emulation of violent acts and the internalization of intolerant rhetoric. Research findings in Croatia highlight the prevalence of incidents such as the display of a swastika by Croatian national football team fans during a match against Italy in 2015. Similarly, in Greece, the rise of far-right groups has fueled hate speech in stadiums, often directed at migrants and ethnic minorities, particularly the Roma community. In Austria, young interviewees reported experiences of aggression in sports environments, particularly in football. Coaches were cited as perpetrators of microaggressions and verbal abuse, and young witnesses to these incidents often lack both the position and the tools to challenge the legitimacy of such actions. Instead, they learn to adopt a role of implicit or explicit complicity, embodying the “white audience” role that legitimizes harmful acts by failing to offer support to the victim and instead showing approval through laughter.

Whether this reaction is genuine approval or a response aimed at appeasing the aggressive adult, the consequences for the victim remain the same: victimization leads to relational and emotional isolation. For the witnesses themselves, the early

experience of complicity with the hate actions of an authority figure results in the internalization of a relational model. This model suggests that occupying a position of responsibility and authority entails the ability to exercise dominance over those in subordinate roles.

c) *The youth centers*

Testimonies from the educators working in youth centers, as they were collected within the research focus groups and interviews, provide significant insights into how these spaces can both address and perpetuate forms of discrimination and prejudice. These centers are often attended by young people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, and the educators within them play a key role in promoting resistance to hate actions and fostering an alternative, transformative set of values and relationships in response to the pervasiveness of the issue at hand.

In many cases, educators and staff at youth centers must mediate conflicts related to episodes of discrimination, racism, or intolerance. However, without adequate institutional support or specific training, their interventions often lack impact and effectiveness.

5.4 A comprehensive analysis through intersectional lenses

Hate actions target individuals based on a simultaneous multiplicity—in other words, an intersectionality—of hate indicators that overlap and reinforce each other. Attacks directed at a group due to a specific bias indicator, such as “race”, sexual orientation, or gender, often intersect, thereby intensifying the negative effects.

a) *The impact of economic conditions*

Economic conditions are a crucial factor in the perpetuation of hate actions, as many individuals from minority groups often live in economically disadvantaged situations exacerbated by barriers to accessing qualified employment, public services, and decent housing. Economic precariousness makes it more difficult for these groups to defend themselves against discrimination and to access the legal and psychological resources they need. Additionally, unfavorable economic conditions contribute to social stigmatization, which can intensify biases against specific ethnic groups.

b) *Gendered challenges*

Gender-specific challenges further intensify discrimination for women belonging to ethnic or sexual minorities, as they may face a combination of sexism, racism, Islamophobia, homophobia, or transphobia. This type of intersecting discrimination often manifests as more pervasive forms of violence and is met with less institutional protection. This double standard makes them more vulnerable not only to abuse but also to limited access to support resources.

Recognizing this overlap is essential for developing effective inclusion policies and practices that take into account the complexities of the lived experiences of those facing discrimination.

6. Best practices and recommendations

The following is a mapping of existing practices and policy recommendations emerging from the overall research framework.

Both in interviews and focus groups, various research participants acknowledged that hate incidents are structural issues requiring systemic solutions. Within the educational context, they suggested ongoing intervention and counteraction efforts rather than sporadic, one-off measures, especially if these are merely punitive. Instead, they emphasized the need to address the root causes of these incidents, focusing on the structural distortions that create the conditions for hate actions, rather than solely on the consequences.

These strategies focus on empowerment, awareness, and institutional involvement, with the aim of creating more informed and proactive support environments against racism. They also highlight the importance of de-stigmatization efforts and the effectiveness of reporting mechanisms as fundamental steps toward change.

a) Prevention and repair, or rather: prevention is repair.

Preventing hate actions means taking proactive measures through emotional education, community awareness, and the creation of an anti-discriminatory environment. Proposed initiatives include activities focused on psychological self-defense, the integration of anti-racist competencies into educational curricula, and the strengthening of active citizenship. There is also an emphasis on interventions that not only symbolically acknowledge the experiences of victims but actively involve them in the repair process.

This approach underscores the idea that prevention and repair are not separate processes but are intrinsically linked. Effective prevention strategies address the root causes of hate actions, which in turn repairs and strengthens the social fabric, reducing the likelihood of future incidents. By proactively creating supportive, inclusive, and informed environments, we prevent harm before it occurs, which also serves as a form of repair by fostering resilience and unity within the community.

b) Toward an integrated and intersectional framework for combating hate actions

It is not enough to intervene within a single context without considering all others, as these are inter-

connected and share similar issues that contribute to the reproduction of discrimination, even within educational settings. These recommendations are therefore designed as part of an integrated intervention that encompasses the various areas of socialization and interaction for young people, aiming for a more structural and effective impact on the mechanisms of systemic racism.

It is essential to both question and leverage the interdependence of social contexts. On one hand, racism in one sphere reinforces and legitimizes racism in others, creating a cycle that perpetuates the phenomenon. However, preventive and counteracting practices in one area can have positive effects on other environments frequented by young people, enabling them to transfer and apply the tools and skills they acquire. In this way, young individuals, equipped with new resources, can become active participants in the fight against the discrimination they face, helping to reduce the phenomenon on a broader and more collective scale.

c) Action-research as a testing ground for best practices

Action-research serves as a valuable platform for experimenting with and refining best practices. By directly engaging with the communities affected and addressing real-world issues, action-research allows for the development, testing and adaptation of strategies in real time. This approach enables researchers and practitioners to assess the effectiveness of interventions, foster a collaborative learning environment and build an evidence-based framework for counteracting hate actions. As such, action-research not only contributes to the immediate goals of empowerment and support but also serves as a dynamic foundation for long-term, systemic change.

The focus group, used as a research method, proved effective in facilitating peer-to-peer sharing among participants, creating a safe space for collectively validating and processing experiences of victimization. The coordinators played a crucial role, offering support and protection, and fostering an atmosphere of trust that helped restore a sense of security threatened by the offense.

These spaces for processing experiences are particularly significant as they allow for the sharing of language and concepts tied to the diverse cultural identities of the participants. An emblematic exam-



ple is the focus group conducted in Italy, where each participant expressed the concept of “resilience” in their native language. This created a shared healing ground that facilitated the transformation of trauma from an individual to a collective experience. Such interactions highlight the potential of peer-to-peer engagement as a tool for self-healing and mutual support.

d) Spaces for processing, support and peer-to-peer training

- The strategic importance of collective empowerment

Support organizations, both formal and informal, play a crucial role in providing safe spaces where victimized individuals can express themselves freely and openly discuss the discrimination they have faced. These listening and sharing spaces help to build a peer support network, fostering an environment where trauma is collectively acknowledged and addressed.

The creation of peer-to-peer spaces offers an environment for reprocessing inflicted wounds, facilitating a process where personal pain is de-individualized and transformed into a shared responsibility. Through mutual support, victimized individuals can participate in building collective empowerment, as connecting with others who have had similar experiences helps to reduce feelings of shame, alleviate isolation, and reframe their suffering as a contribution to developing transformative strategies and horizons.

Simultaneously, implementing peer-to-peer anti-racism training programs for young people can enhance this empowerment process. These programs can consolidate a theoretical framework—defining key categories for understanding structural domination, its relationship with hate manifestations, and anti-racism and intersectional practice as goals for systemic change. Similarly, peer-to-peer training programs can focus on developing and disseminating practical self-defense tools. In this way, young people can acquire essential skills to respond to discriminatory incidents immediately and over the long term, equipped with concrete legal and relational tools to react to and repair the harm they have endured.

- The role and strategic positioning of peer-to-peer facilitation figures

As highlighted in the focus group experience (see par. ‘Action-research as a testing ground for best

practices’), facilitators in peer-to-peer settings play a crucial role, with their situated positioning within the lived experience of victimization taking on strategic importance. These individuals, through their own experiences and expertise, can aid in rebuilding trust with the educational environment.

The pedagogical skills these racialized professionals have developed by reprocessing their experiences of discrimination provide valuable tools to help victimized individuals manage trauma. This process supports their reintegration into the social, ethical, and cognitive dimensions of the educational context, reactivating healthy pathways for psycho-emotional development.

- The strategic role of space

When implementing peer-to-peer work, it is crucial to consider the most effective location for these activities. Since school or educational settings may be associated with traumatic experiences and may have undermined a sense of safety (see par. ‘psychological impact of hate actions’), it can be essential to identify a physical context that is genuinely perceived as a safe space. This may even involve selecting venues outside of traditional institutional structures, to ensure that participants feel protected and comfortable.

- An intersectional approach to peer-to-peer practice

An intersectional approach to peer-to-peer practice involves expanding the traditional concept, which is often limited to factors such as age and role within the educational community. This broader perspective is crucial for addressing the complex and overlapping experiences of many victimized individuals. Firstly, peer-to-peer support should recognize and respond to various axes of discrimination, such as sexism or homophobia. Creating support spaces for people who have faced similar types of discrimination—such as racialized individuals or those who have experienced homophobic discrimination—enables the sharing of specific and targeted experiences. Such support groups can foster a deeper understanding of the particular challenges and resilience mechanisms associated with each type of discrimination.

Secondly, an intersectional approach to peer-to-peer practice allows for the integration of perspectives from those who have experienced multiple forms of discrimination, whether simultaneously or at different points in their lives. This approach facilitates

the comparison and interweaving of experiences from various oppressed groups, creating meaningful connections among those who have faced different yet interconnected forms of discrimination. Interactions among individuals who have experienced diverse, but related, oppression dynamics can lead to a broader reciprocal support, based not only on the specificity of their experiences but also on the shared condition of belonging to a minority group. Adopting an intersectional perspective in peer-to-peer processing thus enriches the practice with essential elements for a holistic understanding of discriminatory dynamics. It allows for the building of a solidarity network that more effectively addresses the complexity of intersecting oppressions.

- *Peer-to-peer support spaces as a preventive practice*

Establishing support spaces can also play a crucial role in prevention: fostering the continuous development of a community ready to mobilize in response to hate actions can have a more profound deterrent effect than merely punitive actions taken after the fact. Working with a community-based approach reinforces bonds and a collective sense of responsibility in countering discrimination and mitigating its impact.

- *The role of agency in the peer-to-peer reparative perspective*

In both cases, the focal point is to build practices centered on the agency of victimized individuals whose capacity for self-determination has been undermined by aggression. Restoring the ability of harmed individuals to act means reconstructing precisely where violence has severed and eroded,

both intra-individually and within interpersonal and community relationships. Validating the ability of victimized individuals to define the terms of reparative action is, in itself, an act of repair. It addresses the learned misperception that results from discriminatory actions and the potential experience of secondary victimization.

e) Other spaces for collective empowerment

- *Team Sports*

Team sports are identified as a valuable setting for developing cooperative relationships, explicitly teaching fair play as a metaphor for community collaboration. This approach not only promotes physical activity but also fosters mutual respect, teamwork, and a sense of shared responsibility.

- *Social Media*

Social media campaigns are encouraged for raising awareness, along with media literacy courses that promote ethical and conscious media usage. These initiatives aim to cultivate a digital environment where individuals are informed and empowered to engage responsibly and counteract online hate.

- *Youth Organizations*

Supporting the creation or expansion of collaborative spaces among various educational community figures, particularly youth organizations, is essential. This involves strengthening their local presence and influence, enabling them to play a transformative role in prevention and counteraction efforts. By fostering partnerships within the community, these organizations can contribute to a proactive and comprehensive approach to empowerment and social change.



7. Pedagogy of reparations

7.1 Recommendations for educational figures

1. Empathic listening and immediate validation:

Recognizing and validating young people's experiences is crucial. Through empathic listening, educators can reassure young people that their emotions are legitimate, counteracting the idea that their feelings are irrelevant.

2. Respect for youth autonomy:

It is essential for educators and facilitators to respect young people's decisions, even when they choose not to report an incident. This non-coercive approach maintains trust and supports freedom of choice.

3. Positive reinforcement and skill recognition:

Reinforcing self-esteem among discriminated youth is vital for building and rebuilding a positive self-image. Educators can achieve this by valuing specific knowledge or skills associated with the marginalized background, such as bilingualism or cultural heritage.

4. Promotion of solidarity and mutual support:

Fostering a sense of community among youth helps provide an internal support system. Educators can facilitate this by encouraging self-reflection, empathy, and introspection, promoting mutual understanding.

5. Encouragement of responsibility:

Educators play a key role in restorative justice pedagogy, demonstrating the importance of acknowledging one's own responsibilities in cases of aggression and microaggressions, particularly when unintentional. Helping young people understand that racism and hate actions do not solely stem from intentional actions provides them with cognitive and ethical tools to actively participate in validating and

repairing the harm done. While witnessing aggression by educators can be highly detrimental, witnessing an adult taking responsibility for a harmful and *non educational* action can be a profoundly educational experience. This association between positions of power and increased responsibility toward the well-being of others and the community counters the perception of power as synonymous with unchecked violence, control and dominance.

6. Empowerment through intervention:

Young people should be encouraged to intervene when witnessing discrimination, fostering a culture of mutual support and solidarity.

7. Theater as an empowerment platform:

Theater groups can address themes of identity and resilience, providing a creative space to explore and challenge discriminatory norms. Techniques such as Theater of the Oppressed can facilitate processing experiences, while irony serves as a narrative tool with a particularly cathartic effect, enabling youth to construct an active self-narrative that moves beyond passive material or emotional response.

8. Awareness workshops on rights and organizational support:

Teaching young people how to protect themselves and respond to discrimination is essential for enhancing their resilience in everyday contexts. Educators should inform youth about their rights and encourage them to reach out to support organizations. However, navigating various organizations and overcoming institutional mistrust remain significant challenges.

These recommendations underscore the importance of creating an educational environment where young people feel supported, validated, and equipped with the tools to actively participate in their own empowerment and that of their peers.

7.2 Policy recommendations

a) Plural languages for inclusive education

Rethinking teaching methods, both in terms of linguistic means and content, is essential to counter processes of exclusion, segregation, and stigmatization. To avoid isolating students in remedial language classes that limit interaction with national-language-speaking peers, it is recommended to integrate language support within regular classes. This approach can leverage the effectiveness of peer learning for language acquisition, fostering inclusivity.

b) Pluralistic teaching and civic awareness programs

Awareness programs addressing discrimination are fundamental to combating this phenomenon. A revision of curricula from decolonial, anti-discriminatory, and intercultural perspectives can encourage social interactions within the educational context that align with inclusive goals. Such programs help cultivate a culture of respect, understanding, and shared responsibility among students.

c) Collaboration with community organizations

A partnership model between educational institutions and local organizations is recommended to build an anti-racist educational community that includes associations and other local entities. Collaborating with organizations operating outside but close to the educational community—such as NGOs and network bodies documenting and combating racist violence—can provide valuable resources. Using outreach materials from these organizations, such as intervention guides and manuals, can assist educational settings in developing public awareness programs and promote methodologies for reporting and recording hate incidents. This collaboration not only supports the school environment but also extends a network of collective responsibility across the broader community.

d) The Role of institutional figures with responsibility

School leaders are encouraged to take an active role in restorative practices, engaging in formal actions such as receiving and validating complaint letters, and

issuing public apologies on behalf of the educational community. This approach aims to model collective responsibility for students and foster an environment of accountability.

Intervention letters to educational authorities: In cases of school-based discrimination, it is suggested to respond by writing letters to the institution, based on the victim's wishes, to address the issue at an institutional level and encourage systemic change.

Teacher training programs: Anti-racism and anti-discrimination workshops for educators and youth center staff have proven effective in preventing discriminatory behaviors. These training sessions should focus on educating these figures about the dynamics and structural roots of discrimination, equipping them with critical anti-racist competencies that enhance both their pedagogical practices and theoretical understanding.

e) The role of racialized educational figures and families

Parents as key figures: Parents, particularly those with professional expertise in social and educational fields, can play a crucial role in both preventing and repairing harm. They bring essential perspectives that can help dismantle racial stereotypes, and can serve as trusted figures who, due to shared experiences of victimization, may build peer-like relationships with younger individuals. This shared experience lays the groundwork for rebuilding trust with adults in the educational space.

Empowerment through lived experience: The pedagogical insights that racialized professionals bring from their own experiences with discrimination are invaluable.

These insights provide young people who have been victimized with robust tools for trauma processing and reintegration into the social, ethical, and cognitive dimensions of the educational setting. By drawing on their personal journeys of resilience, these figures contribute to reactivating healthy paths for psycho-affective development, supporting the young individuals in their overall growth and healing within the educational environment.



Project Partners Butterfly Effect

COSPE - Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti

COSPE, based in Florence, Italy, is an NGO with a focus on promoting human rights, democracy and sustainable development. It is the coordinating organization of the *BUTTERFLY EFFECT* project.

<https://www.cospe.org/>

ZARA - Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus Arbeit

ZARA, headquartered in Vienna, Austria, is a leading organization in the field of civil courage and anti-racism.

<https://www.zara.or.at/en/>

Human Rights House Zagreb (HRH Zagreb)

HRH Zagreb, based in Zagreb, Croatia, is a prominent human rights organization focusing on the protection of fundamental freedoms and the fight against discrimination.

<https://humanrightshouse.org/human-rights-houses/zagreb/>

Symbiosis

Symbiosis-Council of Europe School of Political Studies in Greece is a non-profit organization established in Thessaloniki, Greece, dedicated to promoting social inclusion and civic education.

<https://symbiosis.org.gr>

Coordinamento Nazionale Nuove Generazioni Italiane (CoNNGI)

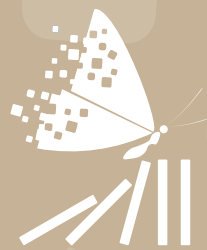
CoNNGI, based in Rome, Italy, represents and supports the new generations of Italians with immigrant backgrounds.

<https://conngi.it/>

Dokustelle

Dokustelle is an Austria-based organization dedicated to documenting and monitoring instances of racism and discrimination. It focuses on raising awareness, supporting victims, and advocating for more effective anti-discrimination policies.

<https://dokustelle.at/>



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