



BRISWA 2.0 - Handbook on racism

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Document description: This deliverable presents an Interactive Learning Environment (ILE) developed on the System Dynamics methodology. The model provides a structured way to explore how racist incidents emerge, spread, and can be countered through targeted interventions at multiple levels. It identifies the key variables, feedback loops, and policy levers that affect the system, translating them into an accessible interface that allows experimentation without prior technical expertise.

Table of contents

Table of contents	1
Introduction	2
Origins of racism in Europe	3
Historical elements	3
Socio-political elements relevant to today's rise in racism	5
Manifestations of racism	6
Systemic racism, microaggressions, dogwhistles	7
How to identify and react to manifestations of racism	10
What to do as a bystander	10
What to do as a perpetrator	11
Programmes and policies to fight against racism	13
Legal frameworks and policies	13
In Cyprus	13
In Greece	14
In Italy	15
In Spain	16
Programmes	17
In Cyprus	17
In Greece	19
In Italy	20
In Spain	22
Conclusion	34
Glossary	35
Suggested bibliography	36
Sources and references	37

Introduction

This handbook on racism aims to give an overview of the origins of racism in Europe, both through a historical and through a socio-political lens. It will then detail the different forms that racism can manifest as, before presenting some policies and best practices to efficiently combat racism.

It is aimed at university teachers and students, who want to refine their understanding of racism and the ways it can be fought against.

Throughout the handbook, the working definition of racism that will be used is the one presented by Oluo in *So you want to talk about race*: “Racism is any prejudice against someone because of their race, when those views are reinforced by systems of power.” This will allow us to see racism as a systemic issue rather than an individual one, and thus look for best practices in line with this approach. Additionally, this definition side-steps the issue of “anti-white racism”, as the systemic dimension makes it clear that such a thing does not exist (Oluo, 2018).

Finally, a last caveat on vocabulary: the term “race” will be used throughout this handbook. It will be used in the following sense: “A socially constructed way of grouping people, based on skin color and other apparent physical differences, which has no genetic or scientific basis. This social construct was created and used to justify social, political, and economic oppression of people of color by white people”¹. At no point will race be used to refer to a biological or genetic reality.

1

<https://www.bu.edu/diversity/resources/self-guided-education/living-language-guide/race-racism-anti-racism/>

Origins of racism in Europe

In order to explore and understand more in depth how racism manifests today, this section will explore the origins of racism in Europe, with a historical perspective in the first subsection, before delving into the socio-political elements that can drive rises in racism in contemporary Europe.

Historical elements

Racism has a long and storied history on the European continent. Although there is some debate among scholars, the consensus is that racism as we understand it today emerged in the modern area, during the colonization of the world by European powers. Racism was then used to justify atrocities committed against indigenous and native peoples in Africa, Asia and the Americas, helping to rationalize them through the idea that Europeans were superior to these peoples, and thus had a right to their lands, resources, and even bodies (Seth, 2020).

This culminated in the Atlantic slave trade, where Black Africans were abducted and sent to the Americas, where they were exploited for their labour. Although there was no large-scale slavery of Black persons on the European continent, European countries participated in and benefitted from the Atlantic slave trade, furthering the investment of Europe in considering Black people as inferior.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the emergence of modern science gave rise to scientific racism, a form of racism that purported to be based on objective, scientific differences between races. Scientific racism categorised humans based on physical traits, that were thought to be linked to intellectual and moral traits. European scientists, during that time, placed white Europeans at the top of the hierarchy, with brown and Black people considered inferior intellectually and morally, based on their biology (Ball, Steffens & Niedlich, 2022).

Scientific racism formed the basis for eugenics, a movement that gained momentum towards the end of the 19th century. Eugenics can be defined as “the practice or advocacy of controlled selective breeding of human populations (as by sterilization) to improve the populations' genetic composition”² . Under the guise of bettering humanity, proponents of eugenics hierarchized individuals and groups according to

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/eugenics>

physical characteristics, and the perceived intellectual and moral characteristics linked to them.

□ **FOCUS ON: Antisemitism**

Antisemitism can be defined as hostility (including hostile actions) and discrimination against Jews as religious or ethnic group. It is sometimes called the most ancient hatred, as texts with anti-Jewish sentiment were found dating back from the 3rd century BC.

In the antiquity, Jews were persecuted as they tried to remain a separate cultural group, rather than integrate into the larger society and take on its religion and customs. In the case of the Roman Empire, Jews were persecuted in the religious context, as they refused to convert to the Empire's official religion.

After the appearance of Christianity and the crucifixion of Jesus, antisemitism spread across Europe, as Jews were blamed for his execution, and they fled to various parts of Europe, after the failed uprising against the Roman occupation leading to the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel and the Diaspora ("scattering"). With the development of Jewish communities throughout Europe, and the spreading of Christianity, Jews were increasingly vilified and used as scapegoats throughout the Middle Ages. In particular, the myth of the "blood libel" arose, accusing Jews of kidnapping and murdering non-Jewish children to use their blood in religious rituals.

In the modern era, discrimination continued against Jews, especially in Eastern Europe, where pogroms, anti-Jewish riots, led to the deaths and displacement of thousands of persons (Berenbaum, 1998).

In the nineteenth century, laws were passed in many European countries declaring Jewish citizens to have the same rights as Christians. However, this did not erase antisemitism, as was illustrated, among others, by the Dreyfus affair (1895), in which a French Jewish military officer was falsely accused of treason by his superior officers, and was convicted.

The twentieth century saw the culmination of antisemitism in Europe, with the murder of approximately six million Jews, either through direct execution or through starvation, disease and forced labour, by Nazi Germany, following intense campaigns stoking anti-Jewish hatred and the passing of laws restricting the liberties and rights of German Jews.

After the end of World War II and the discovery of the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany, protections were put in place to protect Jewish citizens. However, antisemitism has not disappeared, and a rise in antisemitic acts has taken place in recent years.

□ **FOCUS: ANTIGYPSYISM**

According to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, antigypsyism is “a specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, which is expressed, among others, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation and the most blatant kind of discrimination”. Like antisemitism, antigypsyism is an old prejudice on the European continent, with a history dating back from the Middle Ages. For example, in what is today Romania, Roma people were routinely enslaved and kept in bondage, up until 1855 when the last slaves were freed. In Spain in the late eighteenth century, over ten thousand Roma were detained, deported and forced to work. In other countries, they were forced to assimilate (marriages between Roma, or speaking Romani were forbidden), or forbidden access to some cities or villages (Council of Europe, 2008).

In the twentieth century, antigypsyism culminated in the genocide of European Roma and Sinti people during World War II by Nazi Germany. Roma, like Jews, were classified as “enemies of the race-based state” in 1935, and subsequently deprived of their citizens’ rights, and subjected to incarceration, forced labour, deportation, mass murder, and compulsory sterilisation (Council of Europe, 2008).

Today, Roma people still face mass discrimination across the European Union. According to a 2021 survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, conducted in 10 EU countries, on average 25% of Roma respondents had experienced discrimination based on their ethnic background in the 12 months preceding the survey, with the highest percentages found in Portugal (62% of respondents) and Greece (53% of respondents). Additionally, an average of 80% of Roma surveyed were at risk of poverty, as opposed to an average of 17% across the EU.

Socio-political elements relevant to today's rise in racism

After this overview of the history and origins of racism in Europe, we can analyse the present-day manifestations of racism, and what drives their resurgence on the continent.

Although the situation of racism varies widely across Europe, most, if not all European countries, have seen a resurgence in racism in the last decade, especially following the so-called refugee crisis of 2015/2016, when over a million asylum seekers, in majority from Syria and Afghanistan, reached Europe to seek shelter and asylum. These arrivals led to a rise especially of xenophobia and anti/immigrant sentiments, compounded by anti-Muslim hate in many countries, in the wake of Islamist terrorist attacks (Ball, Steffens & Niedlich, 2022).

However, other factors play a role in the presence, rise and fall of racism in societies. Indeed, the history of each country, as well as its diversity and cultural legacy all inform the way racism and xenophobia develop in a given society, and how they present.

Looking at Nazi Germany, it is commonly accepted by historians that great poverty, linked to the worldwide economic depression of the early 30s, the instability that characterised the German parliamentary system, as well as resentment against the Treaty of Versailles whose terms were very unfavourable to Germany, all contributed to a political climate ripe for a providential man³. Hitler and the national socialist party instrumentalised all these factors, and promised a return to greatness, blaming all of Germany's ills on a few scapegoats, and especially the Jews and the Marxists. This was effective as antisemitism had deep roots in German society, and the difficult living conditions primed the population to look for a scapegoat (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

In most recent years in Europe, a rise in racism was observed, especially after 2015 and the arrival of many asylum-seekers and refugees, in majority from Muslim countries, on the continent. Although there had always been anti-Muslim sentiments in many European countries, these arrivals, together with a spike in Islamist terror attacks (such as the Charlie Hebdo shooting and the Bataclan massacre in France in 2015), sparked a rise in racism incidents, continuing into the early 2020s. Indeed, a FRA survey of 6700 Black people and people of African descent in thirteen European countries found in 2022 that 45% of them reported having experienced racial

³ <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-nazi-rise-to-power>

discrimination in the past twelve years, while they were 39% reporting these experiences in 2016.

Additionally, after the Hamas terror attacks and hostage-taking on October 7th, 2023, and the subsequent war in Gaza between Hamas and Israel, a sharp rise in both antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate speech and crimes was reported across Europe.

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Manifestations of racism

Now that we have a clearer idea of where racism comes from, what its history in Europe is, and how it currently exists on the continent, we can dive deeper into how to recognize racism around us.

In this section, we will explore various forms that racism can take, going especially into the less noticeable ones.

Racism can take many forms, and we will here analyse three of them: systemic racism, microaggressions, and dogwhistles, in order to learn how to recognise and fight them.

Systemic racism, microaggressions, dogwhistles

□ **Systemic racism**

Systemic racism is the racism carried and enforced by systems of power throughout society. It impacts the wealth, health and safety of people of colour. However, a key characteristic of systemic racism is that it does not require an active intent to discriminate. Thus, even policies that do not explicitly mention race can contribute to racism (Soken-Huberty, 2023).

For example, it can be that a healthcare professional does not believe a Black patient saying they are in pain, “because Black people exaggerate”, and thus does not prescribe further tests that could uncover the underlying cause of that pain.

It can also manifest in people of colour being offered less and lesser job opportunities, as they are considered less educated and more “difficult” to work with. This has a direct impact on many people of colour’s ability to build and pass on generational wealth, thus perpetuating the cycle of prejudice and poverty (Soken-Huberty, 2023).

Finally, and perhaps it is the most well-known example, people of colour are much more likely to be victims of police profiling and violence. Indeed a FRA (the European Fundamental Rights Agency) survey⁴ found in 2018 that:

- One in four (24 %) respondents of African descent were stopped by the police in the five years before the survey; 11 % were stopped in the 12 months before the survey.
- Among those stopped in the 12 months before the survey, 44 % believe the last stop they experienced was racially motivated. This view was shared at the highest rates by respondents in Italy (70 %) and Austria (63 %), and at the lowest rates by respondents in Finland (18 %).
- Overall, respondents' level of trust in the police is 6.3 on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'no trust at all' and 10 indicates 'complete trust'. Respondents in Finland trust the police the most (8.2). By contrast, respondents in Austria have the lowest level of trust in the police (3.6).

Additionally, a report carried out by FairTrials, based on the testimonies of people incarcerated, found that "In Greece, more than 50 percent of people interviewed reported having been subject to violence or having witnessed others being subject to violence by the police during arrest or while in police custody. Out of those reporting violence, 82 percent identified as other than Greek." (FairTrials report)

FOCUS ON: Intersectionality

The term of "intersectionality" was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe "the interaction and cumulative effects of multiple forms of discrimination affecting the daily lives of individuals, particularly women of color"⁵. For example, as Crenshaw developed in her article "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics, Black women face a double marginalisation, both as women and as Black. However, she argued that understanding this marginalisation as a simple addition did not accurately reflect the lived experience of Black women, who faced specific prejudices at the intersection of both identities, in addition to experiencing sexism in the Black community, as well as racism from white women.

⁴ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/being-black-eu#publication-tab-2>

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/intersectionality>

This framework is now used more broadly to describe the way that various aspects of a person's identity interact and can impact their experiences of privilege and oppression, by looking at race, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability status, or class.

Microaggressions

Microaggressions can be defined as “comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority)”⁶. These comments or actions can be invisible for anyone but their target, and seem minor (as they are, indeed, “micro”). Their negative effects stem from their compounding effects over time, and lead to the victims feeling othered, as they are constantly being reminded of their otherness (Limong, 2020). Examples of microaggressions include:

- someone clutched their purse as a person of colour walks by;
- a person with curly hair is asked “can I touch your hair?”;
- a person of colour is told they speak the local language really well, even though it is their native language;
- a white person claiming “I don’t see colour”.

In all the cases, the person of colour is reminded that they are seen as dangerous, exotic, or foreign; in all cases, as different from the white majority.

It is important to know that, contrary to overt aggressions and hostile actions, many people committing microaggressions are not aware of them, in particular when they are demonstrating bias through compliments (for example, when complimenting someone’s hair or their language level). This is important to keep in mind when discussing what can be done against racism, which will be explored in part 3.

Dogwhistles

Unlike microaggressions, dog whistles are racist actions that, although they can be perceived as innocuous by bystanders, are committed voluntarily by their authors. They can be defined as coded or suggestive language in political messaging, used to signal racist intentions to those who know, while seeming innocuous to the general public, in the same way that a dog whistle can only be heard by dogs and not humans.

⁶ “Microaggression.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/microaggression>. Accessed 31 Jan. 2025.

Among known racist dog whistles is, for example, the use of the word “cabal” to describe a shadowy plot. This word, derived from the Hebrew, is often used as a dog whistle to refer to a Jewish plot to manipulate and control the world to nefarious ends, a phenomenon intensified by the rise of the QAnon conspiracy theory and its spread across Northern America and Europe. Another term that has been commonly used in English-speaking spheres is “globalist”, to design a nefarious group of powerful people, pushing globalization to the detriment of “normal” people. This concept harkens back to old antisemitic tropes, of Jews being rich and powerful and working against the interests of regular persons.

Although there is no consensus on what exactly constitutes a dog whistle, the elements presented here can help identify them, and go beyond the plausible deniability that characterises them.

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND

- Practise tying manifestations of racism you can see to systems that give them power. It is easy to blame one individual for their racism, but recognising the systems that gave rise to this racism is key for dismantling it.
- Practise listening to people of colour when they call out racism. If you don't understand why something is considered racist, do research to find out.

How to identify and react to manifestations of racism

Now that we have explored some of the most common manifestations of racism, we can explore how to react to them. This section will explore possible reactions as a bystander or a perpetrator, and is not aimed at targets of racial discrimination.

What to do as a bystander

What you can do as a witness of racism varies wildly depending on the context. The most important thing to keep in mind, in any case, is the safety of the person targeted by the racist attack, should they be present.

☐ **The case of racist comments or jokes in person**

If someone makes a racist comment or joke, without any person of colour present in the vicinity, you have the opportunity to react by focusing on the result of the comment rather than the intent. As it is impossible to prove the person's intent, by focusing on the consequences their remarks can have, you allow for a new perspective to be presented.

In case you cannot directly confront the perpetrator after a racist or discriminatory joke, a way of reacting that can be effective is to ask the person to explain the joke, and what makes it funny. This will usually prompt the joker to self-reflect, as they will have to either recognise that the joke relied on racist/discriminatory assumptions, or double down on it. In the latter case, it is probably not worth the effort to engage in educating them. In the former case, it is an opportunity to start a conversation on racial biases and stereotypes and the harm they cause, however unintentional.

☐ **The case of racist comments or jokes online**

Acting against racism comments can seem easier online, especially when you do not know the person making those comments. As important as it is to educate persons making such comments, in the Internet, it is easy to fall into a trap set up by a troll: not someone who ignorantly made a racist comment, and could be taught what the effects of such comments can be, but someone who deliberately posted something offensive and is "looking for a fight", to debate in bad faith. In these cases, it is better not to engage ("do not feed the troll"), and, instead, if the platform has such tools, to report the publication in order for it to get moderated.

So, use your judgement: if you think the person is genuine, try to engage them in a discussion and explain why their comment or joke is racist.

☐ **The case of someone being overtly hostile to a person of colour**

In such a case, the safety of the person being targeted is the utmost priority.

First, tell the perpetrator to stop. Do that calmly: yelling or being aggressive towards the perpetrator is like fighting fire with fire, and will escalate the situation. Similarly, avoid lecturing the perpetrator or try to educate them on racism. People displaying overt hostility are not in a frame of mind to learn, and can see any attempt to do so as an opportunity for escalation.

If it helps, try to recruit other bystanders, if there are any, to stand with you. Several people calmly expressing that the action is not OK can make it easier to dissuade the attacker, and de-escalate the situation.

If the above is not possible, or you are not comfortable with it, focus on the target: talk to them, and ask them if they want to move away from the aggressor, or if they need any other form of support. If you are in public transport, for example, you can ask the target if you can sit next to them, physically showing your support and acting as a potential buffer (Abrams, 2021).

□ What about calling the police?

Many people of colour are not comfortable with the police, having experienced racial discrimination from police officers in the past, or knowing someone who has. For that reason, calling the police should not be the first reaction to witnessing a racist incident, and should not be done without the target's consent (Baker, 2020).

What to do as a perpetrator

Being called out as having perpetrated a racist act can be very difficult: most of us do not want to think about ourselves as racists. However, if you are accused of having said or done something racist, avoid lashing out against the person against the person pointing it out. This is an opportunity to grow; having committed a racist act does not mean you are irrevocably a racist, but instead that you still have more to learn. So, how do we do that?

Take a step back, and reflect on what has happened. If you are not sure in what way what you said was racist, do some research. There are many online resources that are set up specifically for these situations, as well as many resources to better understand racism.

Apologise to the person you hurt. When apologising, do not make it about yourself. Instead, take responsibility, acknowledge the mistake you make in specific terms, and offer to make amends, if appropriate.

Continue the work. We live in a society built on systems upholding racism, meaning that everyone of us holds racist beliefs. Continue educating yourself and learning about racism and systems of power. You can work with others in order to deepen your understanding of racism and anti-racism, follow courses and workshops, or participate in activities such as book clubs (George Brown College, 2022).

Programmes and policies to fight against racism

In this section, we will present some successful frameworks, policies and programmes to fight against racism, and promote inclusion and diversity, implemented in the participating countries: Cyprus, Greece, Italy, and Spain.

Legal frameworks and policies

The following frameworks and policies outline the various ways that European countries are combatting racism in the legal realm.

In Cyprus

- **Law on Combating Certain Forms and Manifestations of Racism and Xenophobia through Criminal Law of 2011 (134(I)/2011)**

YEAR: 2011

AIMS:

- tackle racial discrimination
- issue penalties for racist offences

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The law was issued to comply with the binding act of the European Union entitled "Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of the Council of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia through criminal law", which has been issued as a consequence of the "Joint Action to Combat Xenophobia and Racism 94/443/DEY" of 1996, which places positive obligations on the Member States to take steps at a legal level to deal with these phenomena.

The Framework Decision acts to create legal obligations on States to criminalize two forms of racism and xenophobia – namely "hate speech" and "hate crimes". It applies to every offense committed in the territory of the EU. and includes offenses committed through IT systems. The Framework Decision does not provide any specific interpretation of the term "hate speech", however, it gives as an example "the public incitement of violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of a group defined on the basis of race, colour, descent, religion or belief, or national or ethnic origin".

While in relation to the term 'hate crime' the most imperative is given that in any case, racism or xenophobia as a motive for an offence, are considered aggravating circumstances or alternatively, [and] the courts must be empowered to take such motives into account in the measurement of the penalty to determine the sanctions to be imposed". Parenthetically, it should be mentioned that the use of the verb "authorized", instead of (for example) "obliged", circumvents to some extent the spirit of the action of the Framework Decision itself.

□ **The 2008 Law on the Prevention and Suppression of Violence in Sports Venues (Law 48(I)/2008)**

YEAR: 2008

AIMS:

- tackle racial discrimination in sport
- prohibit racist symbols

BRIEF SUMMARY:

Prohibition of using racist or abusive slogans or symbols

72. Any person in a sports field or in the immediate vicinity:

- (a) carries, uses, places, displays or presents a banner, poster, placard or other similar medium on which is written or depicted racist or abusive or political or party slogans or symbols or slogans which may offend historical memory; or
 - (b) utters racist slogans or makes racist or abusive statements or speech; or
 - (c) gestures in an obscene or abusive or racist manner; or
 - (d) sings or shouts abusive or obscene or racist songs or slogans;
- is guilty of a misdemeanor and, on conviction, is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine not exceeding one thousand euros or to both.

In Greece

□ **Law on Combating Certain Forms and Manifestations of Racism and Xenophobia through Criminal Law of 2014 (4285/2014)**

YEAR: 2014

AIMS:

- Prevent and Combat Racism and Xenophobia
- Promote Inclusion and Respect
- Establishing a legal framework

BRIEF SUMMARY:

Law 4285/2014 in Greece criminalizes various forms of hate speech and incitement to violence or discrimination against individuals or groups based on certain characteristics such as race, color, religion, descent, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

The law applies to public incitement of violence or hate speech, as well as the endorsement or denial of certain crimes, including genocide and war crimes. It imposes penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment, with harsher punishments for public officials or employees found guilty of such offenses. Additionally, the law holds legal persons or groups accountable for crimes committed by individuals acting on their behalf. Prosecution of these crimes is initiated *ex officio*, without requiring a report or accusation from the victim(s).

In Italy

□ **DL 12.07.2018 ART 3 comma 1 -a,b,c,d-**

YEAR: 2018

AIMS:

- promote inclusion and social cohesion
- educational interventions to combat discriminatory

BRIEF SUMMARY:

Paragraph 1 of article 3 of the Decree Law of July 12, 2018, no. 87, establishes that financial resources are allocated to four main areas of intervention:

- a) Enhancement of the social role of sport to promote inclusion and social cohesion through the creation of networks and the establishment of territorial facilities.
- b) Promotion of educational interventions aimed at combating discriminatory language and attitudes in sports, involving athletes, sports personnel, fans, and families.
- c) Promotion of accessible and inclusive sports through active participation of people with disabilities and their families in integrated sports activities.
- d) Increase in the involvement of children and adolescents in sports activities, removing barriers to participation and promoting a safe and healthy environment, also through the training of sports personnel.

□ **National Observatory Against Discrimination in Sport**

YEAR: 2020

AIMS:

- Identify instances of discrimination in sports
- Monitor discriminatory practices and behaviours
- Address and combat discrimination effectively
- Promote values of respect, coexistence, and inclusion in sports

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The establishment of the National Observatory against Discrimination in Sports is a significant step in combating and preventing discrimination in sports in Italy. This body, born from the collaboration between UNAR, UISP, and Lunaria, aims to promote values of respect, coexistence, and inclusion through concrete actions and a support network spread across the entire national territory.

UNAR, with its commitment to ensuring equal treatment and combating racial and ethnic discrimination, provides a solid institutional basis for the Observatory's work. The active participation of UISP, with its extensive network of committees and sports clubs, offers an important channel for spreading integration values through sports. Furthermore, the contribution of Lunaria, with its commitment to social justice, inclusion, and the promotion of citizenship rights, enriches the Observatory's approach with a broader perspective on social cohesion.

Through the collaboration of these organizations, the National Observatory against Discrimination in Sports will be able to identify, monitor, and address instances of discrimination in sports while promoting a sports culture based on principles of equality and respect for diversity. Its presence throughout the national territory and involvement of diverse stakeholders from the world of sports and civil society are key elements for the success of its initiatives and the achievement of its objectives.

In Spain

□ **Law 15/2022, of July 12, comprehensive for equal treatment and non-discrimination**

YEAR: 2022

AIMS:

- Ensure fair treatment
- Promote non-discrimination

- Respecting the equal dignity of individuals
- Prohibit discrimination in employment
- Provide specific protections against illness-based discrimination
- Establishing principles of action for public authorities

BRIEF SUMMARY:

Law 15/2022, which came into effect on July 14, 2022, in Spain, aims to ensure fair treatment and non-discrimination across all sectors of society.

This law prohibits any form of discrimination based on personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, health condition, and others. It also prohibits discrimination in employment, including criteria for selection, promotion, remuneration, and working conditions. The law provides specific protection against discrimination based on illness and establishes sanctions for violations.

Additionally, it establishes an Independent Authority for Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination to protect and promote equality of treatment. In summary, Law 15/2022 aims to create a fairer and more inclusive environment throughout Spanish society.

□ Law 19/2007, of July 11, against violence, racism, xenophobia and intolerance in sport

YEAR: 2007

AIMS:

- Prevention of Violence
- Combating Racism and Xenophobia
- Promotion of Tolerance

BRIEF SUMMARY:

Law 19/2007, enacted on July 11, is designed to combat violence, racism, xenophobia, and intolerance in the realm of sports.

Its key provisions include measures to prevent violence during sporting events, address instances of racism and xenophobia within the sporting community, promote tolerance and respect among athletes and spectators, establish a legal framework for addressing such issues, and implement educational programs to raise awareness about the importance of inclusivity and respect in sports. Overall, the law aims to

create a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment in sports, free from discrimination and intolerance.

Programmes

In Cyprus

□ **KISA, Equality, No discrimination, No racism in Employment**

AIMS:

- raise awareness about discrimination and racism
- dissemination of information about the findings of the ENAR Shadow Report
- use both conventional and social media to raise awareness on discrimination and racism in employment
- bring to the forth the structural and underlying unequal treatment, racism and discrimination confronting migrants and refugees in the field of employment

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The project is a part of ENAR's (European Network against Racism) strategic approach to combat discrimination and racism in employment within the member states. ENAR Shadow report on Racism & Discrimination in Employment in Europe 2013-2017 highlights the problem of systematic racism and discrimination towards migrants and refugees in the field of employment.

The main objective of the project is the organisation of a campaign for the dissemination and promotion of the findings of ENAR's Shadow Report on racism and discrimination in employment in order to raise awareness about discrimination and racism confronting migrants and refugees in employment, at national and European level. This campaign will include the dissemination of information about the findings of the ENAR Shadow Report. The campaign will comprise a press conference to launch the Shadow Report in Cyprus, several bilateral meetings with the relevant stakeholders and a public event, in the form of a public or roundtable discussion. Finally, the campaign will use both conventional and social media to raise awareness on discrimination and racism in employment. The project aims to bring to the forth the structural and underlying unequal treatment, racism and discrimination confronting migrants and refugees in the field of employment.

□ CARDET and the Institute of Development, TACKLE Project

AIMS:

- Enhance the awareness and competencies of football coaches and managers in grassroots football to proactively manage and prevent racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance
- Contribute to the prevention & mitigation of racism and xenophobia incidents in grassroots football
- Enhance awareness of national and transnational football-sports stakeholders as well as the general public about the severe impact of racism on players, grassroots football and sports in general

BRIEF SUMMARY:

TACKLE was an Erasmus+ Sport project that sought to develop and put forward applied tools and methodologies to help prevent and address racism, xenophobia, and intolerance in grassroots football.

TACKLE actively contributed to combating racism, discrimination and intolerance in sport by putting forward a comprehensive approach to address and assist in rooting out racism in football, specifically in grassroots football. It was working on developing specifically catered training material to educate and empower practitioners (football coaches, manager, trainers) to take concrete action to prevent or address racist behaviours and incidents.

The project brought together a consortium of highly experienced partners who joined forces to research and identify present realities and challenges in grassroots football and formulate structured responses to tackle racism. Moreover, it identified, enhanced, and promoted best practices to prevent and mitigate hate-related issues in grassroots football through the development and implementation of capacity building and awareness-raising activities for football coaches – and related stakeholders- but also wider audiences.

In Greece

□ The EYESS project (European Youth Engaging in Solidarity and Sport)

AIMS:

- Promoting social inclusion through sports activities
- Combating racism within sports and broader society

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The EYESS project (European Youth Engaging in Solidarity and Sport), funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ Sport program and coordinated by UISP, aims to provide 20 young people from Greece, Hungary, Austria, and Denmark with a set of tools useful for organizing anti-racist sports events. In Greece, the young people involved in the EYESS project worked to organize anti-racist sports events, following the training and guidelines provided by the staff of the Anti-Racist World Cup. These events aimed to promote social inclusion through sports, combatting racism, and creating an environment of solidarity and cooperation

□ Education and Support for Refugees and Migrants: Intercultural Considerations and Practical Applications (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

AIMS:

- To offer and acquire the required knowledge concerning the management of ethnic and cultural diversity in society and in school.
- To provide the trainees with the necessary knowledge and methodological tools for dealing with ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity both in the social field and in the educational context.
- To provide the trainees with scientific formation and research training for a deeper understanding of the refugee phenomenon in its international and European dimension, the critical reflection on the integration policies of migrants and refugees, as well as the educational management of migrant and refugee populations.

BRIEF SUMMARY:

This programme is addressed to prospective and current teachers of primary and secondary education (public and private), education executives, graduates of departments leading to the educational profession (Pedagogical Departments, Nursery Schools, Schools of Philosophy, Schools of Social Studies, Schools of Science), sociologists and social workers, psychologists, those who wish to be trained in intercultural education for their dynamic integration in refugee structures

and "Accommodation Centres for Asylum Seekers", parents, as well as anyone interested in training on issues related to diversity, its social presence and its educational management.

In Italy

□ **Progetto Ultrà, Mondiali Antirazzisti**

AIMS:

- Promoting Antiracism
- Fighting Fascism, Homophobia
- Promote progressive change and social justice. They encourage active participation, grassroots organizing, and community involvement to address systemic issues related to discrimination and inequality, both in the world of sports and in society at large.

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The "Progetto Ultrà" is an initiative that promotes anti-racism, anti-fascism, and anti-homophobia within the context of sports events, especially in football. It is a movement born in Italy in the 1990s in response to the increasingly widespread presence of racist, xenophobic, and discriminatory behaviors in football stadiums.

The "Mondiali Antirazzisti" (Antiracist World Cup) is an alternative football tournament organized by the Progetto Ultrà and other anti-racist and anti-fascist movements. This tournament aims to promote social inclusion through sport and to counteract prejudices and discrimination based on skin color, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

The Antiracist World Cup offers an opportunity for players and fans from different parts of the world to come together in an environment of solidarity, respect, and brotherhood, highlighting the power of sport to overcome cultural barriers and promote positive values.

These events are crucial in raising awareness about issues related to racism and homophobia in the sports context and in society at large, encouraging positive cultural change through direct action and active participation.

□ **Progetto Ultrà, Piazza Antirazzista**

AIMS:

- Counteracting racism and xenophobia
- Promoting tolerance and inclusion
- Raising public awareness

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The Progetto Ultrà actively promotes values of solidarity, inclusion, and anti-racism through various cultural, social, and sporting activities. A key element of this initiative is the creation of Antiracist Squares.

These public spaces are dedicated to promoting diversity, equality, and the fight against racism in all its forms. Organized by associations, groups of activists, and volunteers, they provide a welcoming environment to participate in events and initiatives that foster intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, and the building of a more inclusive society.

Activities in Antiracist Squares include cultural events such as concerts, art exhibitions, film screenings, and theatrical performances, as well as awareness-raising meetings and debates on issues related to racism, discrimination, and tolerance. These events actively engage the local community and raise awareness about the issues of racism and the need to promote a culture of acceptance and respect for differences.

These spaces also serve as meeting places for people of different cultures, ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic backgrounds, facilitating the exchange of ideas and contributing to greater mutual understanding among community members. Additionally, Antiracist Squares provide support and resources to victims of discrimination, offering legal counseling, psychological assistance, and guidance to local resources to combat racism and promote human rights.

In summary, Antiracist Squares are an important tool for combating racism and promoting a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity. Through a wide range of activities, they engage and raise awareness in the community about the importance of building a fairer, more supportive, and tolerant society.

In Spain

- **Mancomunidad El Záncara, Interocio por la Diversidad**

AIMS:

- Promote the social inclusion of migrants and socially disadvantaged members of the Spanish community
- Engaging migrants in the local community through the program (preventing exclusion)

BRIEF SUMMARY:

The programme was funded by the National Ministry and regional governments of Cuenca, targeting migrants and members of the Spanish community who are socially disadvantaged. The objectives of the project it to facilitate social inclusion of the migrants through different activities, including; sport, Spanish courses, cultural workshops and other activities. This wide range of activities allows the migrants to integrate into the local community and prevent possible exclusion from locals, allowing for peaceful coexistence.

To increase participation and improve integration migrants were advised to invite friends and schoolmates, further helping to remove differences between immigrants and locals. This group of participants are then able to form close friendships through the programme and sport and various other activities.

☐ **"Together Vs Racism"**

AIMS:

- Join forces between professional football and the gaming community to promote equality and respect, eliminating any form of racial discrimination.

BRIEF SUMMARY:

A joint initiative between LaLiga and Electronic Arts (EA) that seeks to raise awareness of the importance of eradicating racism in all areas, including football and gaming.

Main actions of the campaign:

- Special kit in EA SPORTS FIFA 22: An exclusive kit was designed with the slogan 'Together Vs Racism' and different coloured fingerprints, symbolising diversity and the fight against racism. This kit was available to players in the Ultimate Team mode of the game.
- Visibility in LaLiga matches: During matchday 29 of LaLiga EA SPORTS and matchday 31 of LaLiga HYPERMOTION, players posed with 'VS RACISM'

t-shirts before the matches. In addition, visual elements were incorporated into the stadiums, such as messages on billboards and video scoreboards, to raise awareness among fans about the importance of combating racism.

- PUMA special ball: A special edition ball inspired by the campaign colours, created by urban art group Boa Mistura, was used, with colour as a symbol of strength and diversity. This ball was used in the matches mentioned above.
- Social media actions: A filter was developed on Instagram so that users could show their support for the campaign, using the hashtag #TogetherVsRacism and sharing awareness-raising messages.

Analytical Insights on Racism, Discrimination and Sports in Europe

Each project partner was asked to identify and collect reports on racism within their respective countries. This included systematic searches of national and EU-level databases, as well as open-source materials available online. The outcome is a heterogeneous set of documents, which were then grouped according to their nature and purpose in order to facilitate thematic comparison.

To ensure coherence, the material was divided into five clusters: NGO reports, policy briefs/government notes, institutional reports, European projects, and mixed sources. In addition to manual categorization, each cluster was subjected to independent topic modeling. Using TF-IDF transformation and Non-Negative Matrix Factorization (NMF), we extracted dominant word patterns while filtering OCR noise and irrelevant tokens. Importantly, the goal was not predictive classification but rather an exploration of discursive tendencies. This uniform methodological treatment ensures comparability across clusters and highlights the institutional lenses through which racism is framed.

NGO Reports

This cluster includes documents produced by non-governmental organizations, particularly those active in advocacy, community engagement, and anti-racism campaigns. Examples include (UNAR, 2019;2020), (KISA, 2023).

The thematic analysis revealed an emphasis on lived experiences and structural barriers. Two dominant threads emerged: Firstly, attention to children and minors, reflected in recurrent terms such as “*children and child*”, suggests concern with vulnerable populations, especially migrant minors. Second, the prevalence of terms such as “*service, access, and support*” underscores demands for institutional responsiveness.

Policy Briefs and Government Notes

This cluster covers administrative notes and bulletins issued by ministries and national observatories. These include summaries of immigration and residency in Spain (Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones, 2024a, 2024b,

2024c, 2024d, 2024e, 2024f, 2024g) as well as the the report from the italian ministry (Ministero dell'Interno, 2023).

These documents reveal high internal consistency, with recurrent themes of immigration procedures and labor market dynamics. Keywords such as “*familiare*”, “*igración*”, and “*tipo*” correspond to family reunification, monthly permit records, and categorical typologies. At the same time, terms like “*laboral*” and “*trabajo*” point to migrants’ employment status and integration challenges.

Institutional Reports

Institutional reports come from bodies mandated to monitor equality and discrimination, such as the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and other European monitoring institutions (ECRI, 2022a; 2022b; European Monitora, 2023).

Topic modeling reveals a fragmented linguistic field but still uncovers clear patterns. Education and children are emphasized, with terms such as pupils, identity, and workers pointing to youth and institutional contexts. Another strong thematic axis relates to racist incidents. Words such as incidents, seekers, online, and safety reflect the increasing salience of online racism and racial violence, particularly toward asylum seekers.

European Projects

This cluster includes project deliverables from EU-funded initiatives, such as the Erasmus+ report⁷. These documents are structured differently: rather than statistical monitoring or legal framing, they emphasize awareness campaigns, pedagogical strategies, and participatory interventions.

The analysis shows three dominant themes. First, the use of sport as a metaphor and tool of inclusion, with keywords like “*sport, giocare, anni, and olimpico*”. Second, digital empowerment, reflected in terms like “*digitali, personali, and potenziale*”. Third, narrative engagement through terms such as “*racconto, esperienza, and entra*”, highlighting storytelling as a pedagogical approach.

Mixed Reports

7

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/c07f59bb-d255-49f5-84be-c205fbd40fdc/raport_IT.pdf (Last accessed 20 August 2025)

The final cluster groups together heterogeneous documents that combine elements of essay, journalism, pedagogy, and visual reporting. Examples include (Associazione Italiana Calciatori, 2019), (Corsi, 2019) and national reports such as (ICS – Istituto per il Credito Sportivo & SVIMEZ, 2019).

The analysis highlights hybrid thematic structures. First, an intersectional emphasis on ethnicity and pedagogy, captured by keywords such as “*etnia, intercambio, and pedagogica*”. Second, an understanding of sport as a contested space, with terms such as “*azioni, osservato, and approccio*” linking behavioral framing with structural discrimination.

Apart from the thematic clustering, the reports reveal several threads that provide insight into how racism is officially treated across Europe.

A first finding is that Spain stands out for its explicit recognition of racism as structural. The Spanish Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración does not frame discrimination as anecdotal or limited to isolated incidents. Instead, its monitoring explicitly addresses structural disadvantages faced by Roma, Afro-descendants, Asians, and migrant communities⁸. This explicit acknowledgment distinguishes Spain from many other national contexts.

By contrast, Cyprus illustrates the limits of formal legal frameworks. The country still lacks a comprehensive anti-discrimination law. Its criminal code continues to rely on outdated terminology, which hampers the institutional recognition of racism and constrains enforcement capacities (Council of Europe, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance [ECRI], 2022a).

In Italy, the persistence of systemic anti-Roma and anti-Sinti discrimination emerges as a consistent theme. Reports document recurrent housing discrimination, including forced evictions, which are recognized as structural practices rather than anomalies (Council of Europe, ECRI, 2022b). This situates Italy as a case where institutional mechanisms acknowledge, but fail to prevent entrenched discriminatory practices.

Finally, across European sport institutions, a recurring pattern is the minimization of racism. Rather than recognizing it as a systemic issue, many institutions tend to frame racist incidents as isolated, often downplaying structural responsibility. The Italian National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) highlights this tendency in its report on football, where racism is frequently denied or diluted by framing it as a

⁸ <https://www.inclusion.gob.es/en/web/opi/estadisticas> (Last accessed 20 August 2025)

problem of “bad behavior” rather than an institutional or cultural issue (UNAR, 2019;2020).

Together, these findings show that while some national institutions (e.g., Spain) advance toward structural recognition, others (e.g., Cyprus, Italy) remain constrained by either outdated laws or entrenched practices. In specific domains such as sport, denial and minimization remain dominant, highlighting the ongoing gap between civil society reporting and institutional acknowledgment.

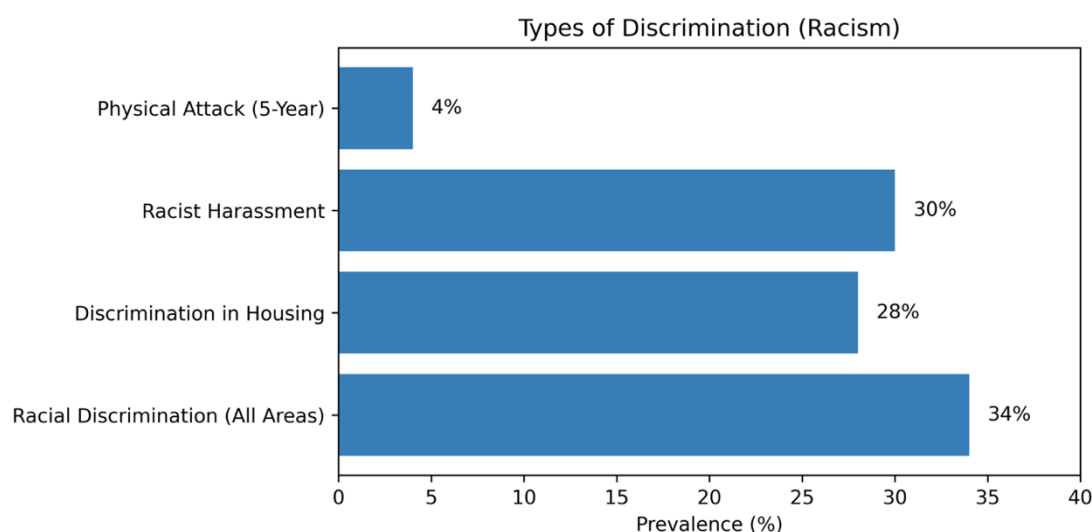


Figure 1 Reported prevalence of different forms of racial discrimination (EU survey data, 5-year recall period)

The qualitative insights from the reports are supported by data as shown in Figure 1. The results highlight the persistence of systemic racism across everyday domains of life. While direct physical attacks remain relatively rare (4%), subtler yet pervasive forms of racism dominate. Racial harassment (30%) and discrimination in housing (28%) illustrate how structural barriers manifest in both public and private spheres. Most strikingly, one in three respondents (34%) reported experiencing racial discrimination across different areas of life, confirming that racism cannot be dismissed as isolated or anecdotal. These findings align with institutional reports from Spain, Italy, and Cyprus that emphasize the systemic and structural nature of discrimination, and they demonstrate why denial by authorities and sport institutions represents a major obstacle to meaningful change.

A second thread that emerged in the reports is the intersectional nature of exclusion, where racism overlaps with gender, religion, and class to produce disproportionate effects on specific groups.

The Spanish Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración highlights how migrant women experience a triple burden of exclusion: they are marginalized as women, racialized as migrants, and exploited as workers. This layered discrimination situates them at the intersection of multiple vulnerabilities, intensifying barriers to both integration and protection.

Moreover, the same source documents how Muslim women in Spain face systematic barriers in education and employment when wearing headscarves. Such restrictions, often justified through claims of “neutrality” or “integration,” translate into concrete exclusion from schools and the labor market, reinforcing cycles of marginalization.

The Observatory also reports that Afro-descendants and Asians are subjected to racial profiling, particularly in public spaces and policing practices. Notably, Spanish institutions rarely acknowledge anti-Black racism explicitly, leaving these practices unaddressed and normalized in official discourse².



Figure 2 Migration, naturalization, and poverty risk indicators among foreign-born populations in Spain

The data illustrate the demographic and socioeconomic conditions of migrants in Spain. Out of over 7.5 million foreign-born residents, less than half hold valid residence permits, while only a small fraction obtained naturalization in 2024. Women constitute the majority of nationality recipients, yet they remain disproportionately exposed to precarity. Notably, 16.7% of migrant women in domestic work live in severe poverty, underscoring the intersection of gender, migration status, and labor exploitation. This pattern confirms broader findings across Europe that migrant

women, particularly from groups such as Moroccan nationals, face systemic barriers that translate into lower socioeconomic mobility and higher poverty risks.

Sports once again provide a visible arena for intersectional discrimination. Research on women athletes shows that female players of color are disproportionately targeted by online harassment, while institutional bodies often neglect or minimize these incidents. Calcagni and Mauro (2019) argue that this dual burden of racism and sexism leaves athletes exposed to systemic neglect, situating sport as a space where intersectionality plays out with particular intensity.

These findings demonstrate that racism in Europe cannot be understood in isolation from gender and class. The groups most affected are often those positioned at the crossroads of multiple exclusionary dynamics, underscoring the need for intersectional approaches in both research and policy.

A third theme evident in the reports concerns the mismatch between public perceptions of racism and its actual prevalence, alongside the chronic issue of underreporting.

In Italy, surveys reveal that public belief in “merit-based” access to sport often masks forms of color-blind racism. This outlook denies the existence of systemic barriers, reframing inequalities as individual shortcomings or lack of effort. Such narratives are particularly strong in the sporting domain, where success is seen as meritocratic, obscuring the structural disadvantages faced by racialized athletes (Istituto per il Credito Sportivo & SVIMEZ, 2022).

At the same time, underreporting of racist incidents remains widespread. Both Italy and Cyprus demonstrate persistent patterns of non-reporting, rooted in mistrust of authorities and fear of retaliation. Victims often refrain from filing complaints, perceiving institutions as unresponsive or even complicit, which perpetuates a cycle where systemic racism is invisible in official statistics (Council of Europe, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance [ECRI], 2023a, 2023b).

This dynamic is reinforced by the way institutions categorize incidents. In sports and schools, racism is frequently downplayed as bullying or mere misbehavior rather than recognized as discrimination. For instance, the Calciatori Sotto Tiro report shows that many cases involving players of color were recorded as general misconduct, stripping them of their racial dimension and weakening institutional responsibility (Associazione Italiana Calciatori AIC, 2019).

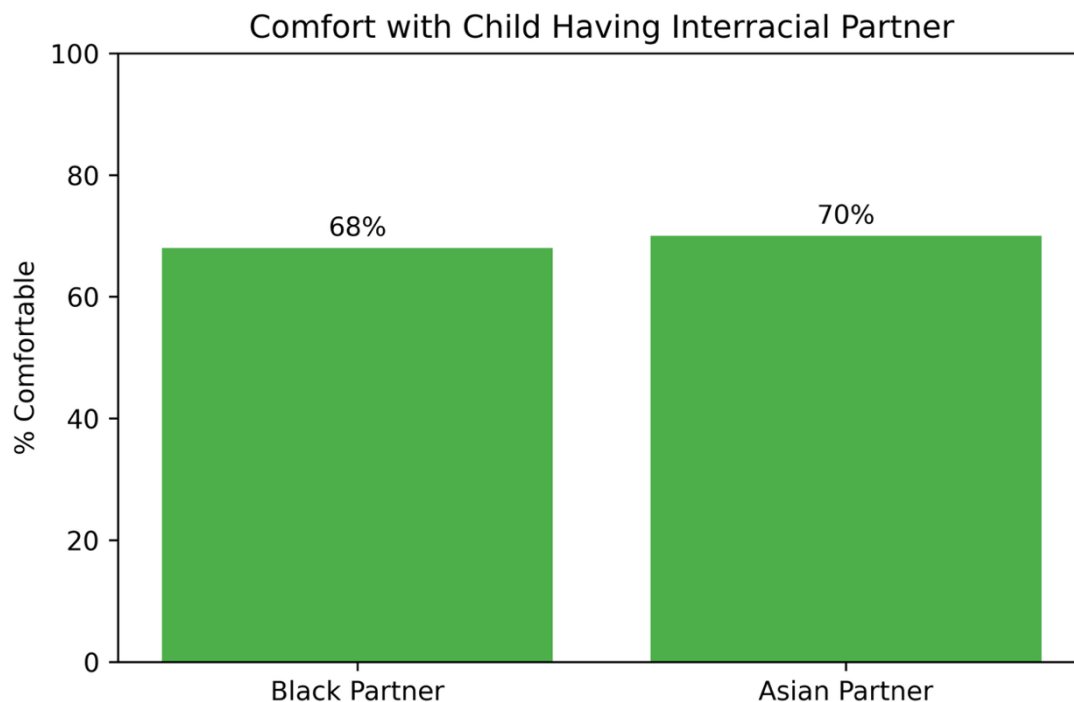


Figure 3 Levels of public comfort with their child having an interracial partner

The data suggest that while a majority of respondents express comfort with interracial relationships, the acceptance rate remains far from universal. Only 68% feel comfortable with a Black partner for their child, compared to 70% with an Asian partner. These figures imply that nearly one-third of the population retains discomfort with interracial partnerships, highlighting a lingering undercurrent of racial prejudice within private, family-centered attitudes. Such results illustrate how racism operates not only in visible arenas like sport and housing but also in more intimate and interpersonal domains, where discriminatory norms are often masked as “personal preference.”

At the European level, the EU Action Plan against Racism (2020–2025) provides the most comprehensive policy architecture to date. However, implementation varies significantly across member states, with southern states—including Spain, Italy, and Cyprus—lagging behind in developing coherent national strategies or in allocating sufficient resources to meet EU targets (Council of Europe, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance [ECRI], 2023a, 2023b, 2023c).

In contrast, Spain has moved towards participatory governance, explicitly incorporating civil society organizations and migrant associations into its anti-racism

framework. This approach highlights the recognition of racism as a structural issue and the need to involve those most affected in decision-making processes².

By comparison, Cyprus faces persistent institutional credibility challenges. Its Anti-Discrimination Body is formally mandated to monitor and respond to racism but lacks the enforcement powers and public legitimacy needed to function effectively. Civil society actors often describe the body as symbolic rather than impactful, contributing to the ongoing underreporting and normalization of racist incidents (Council of Europe, [ECRI], 2023b).

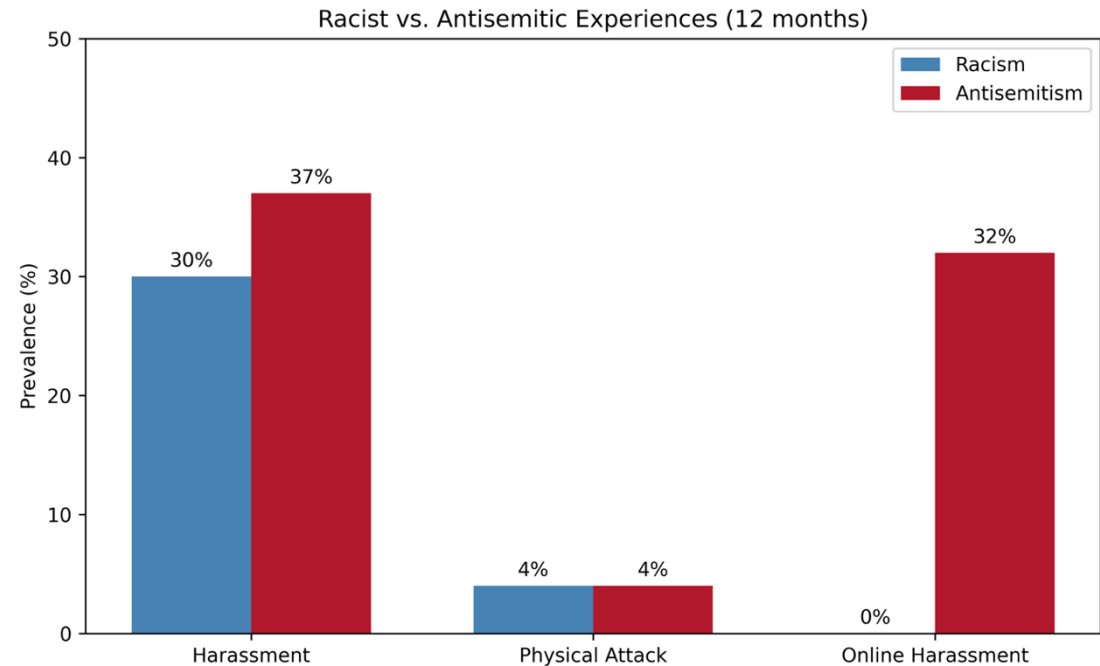


Figure 4 Comparison of racist and antisemitic experiences in the past 12 months, showing prevalence of harassment, physical attack, and online abuse.

The comparison illustrates both similarities and divergences between racist and antisemitic victimization. While physical attacks remain relatively rare (4% in both cases), harassment emerges as the most common form, affecting 30% of respondents reporting racism and 37% of those experiencing antisemitism. A striking divergence is visible online: 32% of Jewish respondents reported antisemitic online harassment, compared to negligible levels of racial harassment reported in digital spaces. These findings indicate that antisemitism retains a distinct digital dimension, whereas racism is experienced more broadly in physical and social environments. Together, they underline the importance of tailoring anti-discrimination strategies to the specific patterns of hostility faced by different minority groups.

In addition, the figure below illustrates that harassment is not a one-off event.



Figure 5 Temporal comparison of racist victimization: 12-month harassment versus 5-year physical attack prevalence.

The timeframe comparison shows that harassment is a frequent, recurring experience of racism, with 30% of respondents reporting incidents in just the past year, while physical attacks are less common but accumulate over time, with 4% reporting assaults over a five-year period. This indicates that harassment constitutes the everyday face of racism, sustained and widespread, whereas physical violence—although rarer—is a persistent background risk that becomes more visible when viewed over longer periods.

A final, visible dimension across the material concerns racism in sport, where discriminatory dynamics are simultaneously normalized and contested. The evidence suggests that while legal frameworks exist, enforcement is weak and institutional resistance remains strong.

The UNAR 2019 and 2020 reports highlight that racial and homophobic slurs continue to circulate widely in Italian amateur leagues, with sanctions against offenders being rare or symbolic. This reveals both the pervasiveness of discriminatory language and the reluctance of disciplinary bodies to act decisively (UNAR, 2019; 2020).

Institutionally, sports federations have resisted anti-discrimination obligations despite binding frameworks under the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) and the Italian Football Federation (FIGC). The Osservatorio Nazionale sulle Manifestazioni Sportive documents how obligations often remain on paper rather than in practice, as federations prioritize autonomy over compliance (Ministero dell'Interno, 2023).

The Monitora 2023 report extends the analysis to digital spaces, documenting spikes in online racist hate speech against players and teams during periods of high visibility. These surges are most evident following player activism—for example,

when athletes publicly denounce discrimination—or when matches involve racialized teams, underscoring the fragile relationship between sport, representation, and online discourse (Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS; Monitora, 2023).

Across all contexts, a persistent obstacle to effective monitoring and intervention is the lack of reliable, disaggregated data on ethnicity, race, and discrimination. Without such data, the capacity to track systemic disparities or prove institutional bias is severely undermined.

The ECRI reports on Italy and Cyprus note that neither state has developed consistent equality data collection mechanisms. Instead, information is fragmented across ministries, outdated, or entirely absent. In both countries, this absence functions as a structural barrier, preventing institutions from addressing racial inequality in a systematic way (Council of Europe, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance [ECRI], 2023a, 2023b).

The Italian case is further marked by the absence of disaggregated ethnic data, which limits the ability of civil society actors and policy makers to demonstrate patterns of exclusion. Similarly, in Spain, although anti-racism bodies like OBERAXE exist, coordination between national ministries, municipal authorities, and specialized agencies remains weak. The 2011 OBERAXE report already identified gaps in cross-institutional collaboration, noting that overlapping responsibilities and inconsistent reporting mechanisms rendered interventions ineffective (OBERAXE, 2011).

Even in sectors where monitoring systems exist, such as sport, equality data remain inconsistent. The UNAR report on discrimination in sport documents both a lack of systematic ethnic monitoring and the tendency of federations to underreport incidents, with many cases downgraded to disciplinary misbehavior rather than recognized as racism (UNAR, 2019; 2020).

Beyond national reporting and civil society initiatives, the European Union has sought to compensate for persistent gaps in monitoring by conducting surveys, questionnaires, and communications-based reporting. These EU-wide efforts provide harmonized insights into racism and antisemitism across member states while also underpinning legislative and regulatory measures.

Discrimination Across Domains. Surveys show that one-third (34%) of immigrants and their descendants experienced racial discrimination in the past 12 months, with significant exposure in housing (28%), harassment (30%), and physical attacks (4% over five years) (European Commission, COM(2024) 419).

Social Acceptance of Interracial Relationships. At the same time, public attitudes reveal a mixed picture of progress: 68% of Europeans expressed comfort if their child were to have a Black partner, and 70% if their child were to have an Asian partner (European Commission, COM(2024) 419).

Rising Antisemitism Post–October 2023 Events. Following the escalation of conflict in Gaza (October 2023), antisemitic incidents rose sharply across the EU: tripling in France (1,676 cases), quadrupling in Austria, and increasing eight-fold in the Netherlands compared to 2022 (European Commission, COM(2024) 476).

Antisemitic Harassment & Attacks. In 2023, 37% of Jews in the EU reported harassment, 32% online abuse, and 4% physical violence, while 91% identified online hate as one of the most dangerous forms of antisemitism (European Commission, COM(2024) 476).

Institutional Responses. To confront these realities, the EU has strengthened its anti-racism action plan (2020–2025) and enacted binding legislation such as the Digital Services Act (DSA). It has also invested in training for public servants and enhanced the capacity of national equality bodies (European Commission, COM(2024) 419).

Data & Monitoring Shortcomings. Despite progress, the lack of disaggregated equality data in many member states remains a barrier to effective enforcement and policy evaluation (European Commission, COM(2020) 565).

Online Hate & Digital Regulation. Analysis of X (Twitter), Reddit, and other platforms confirmed a sharp increase in antisemitic and anti-Muslim content after October 2023. The Digital Services Act (DSA) is now being used to hold platforms accountable for mitigating hate speech and ensuring compliance (European Commission, COM(2024) 476).

Conclusion

The handbook has illustrated through the different chapters that racism in Europe exists and is rooted in colonial history, slavery and pseudoscientific theories that are overwhelming society and are used to justify inequality. Among the forms that racism manifests, antisemitism and antigypsyism hold a critical share. These two forms of racism show how racism has permeated societies over the centuries and still stigmatizes social groups today. Moreover, contemporary racism has emerged due to migration waves, the economic crises and the political exploitation of fear. The flows of migrants and refugees arriving in Europe have become targets of racism and scapegoats for the hardships experienced by a society due to the aforementioned crises.

The evolution of our society has also brought an evolution in the forms of racism we encounter. Racism is a complex and multifaceted form of discrimination, and manifests in multiple forms: systemic discrimination, microaggressions, and coded dogwhistles. However, this does not mean, as we see in the handbook, that the victims of racism will only face one form of it. On the contrary, the intersectionality that can characterize an individual reveals how race, gender, class and religion overlap to deepen exclusion. In this way, daily racism appears in subtle but cumulative acts such as harassment, racial profiling and/or workplace barriers.

Responding to racism and finding ways to combat it, especially in sectors such as sports, education, culture, but also in society in general, is essential in the modern era. The aim of the handbook is to present policies and good practices that can combat racism. Legal frameworks exist across Europe but vary in strength and effectiveness. States have their own discretion in how it will proceed in this area, which often results in gaps in the implementation of the legislative framework.

Sports and digital spaces remain places where racism is both visible and normalized. The stereotypes prevalent in these spaces combined with minimal oversight allow racist actions to thrive. To combat the phenomenon, initiatives are needed that aim to educate society and perpetrators, who must acknowledge harm, learn, and commit to ongoing unlearning of racist behaviours. The civil society organisations' initiatives

show that education, raising awareness and grassroots action that involve the local community can have a positive impact and promote inclusion. Overall, combating racism requires a systemic change in the way that we confront racism. This change must include in its core stronger policies, continuous and reliable data collection and increased collaboration between local community, national and European institutions.

Glossary

Antigypsyism

A form of racism targeting Roma people rooted in dehumanisation and institutional discrimination. It manifests in violence, hate speech, stigmatisation, exclusion and systemic inequalities against Roma.

Antisemitism

Prejudice, hatred and/or discrimination against Jewish people. It has existed for centuries and was central to the Holocaust.

Dogwhistle

Coded language that sounds neutral but it is used to send racist and/or discriminatory messages to certain audiences.

Intersectionality

It is a framework for understanding how different aspects of a person's identity (race, gender, class and ability, etc) can intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

Racism

Prejudice against someone because of their perceived race, reinforced by systems of power. Racism can be systemic and institutional, not just merely individual bias.

Xenophobia

Fear, prejudice and/or hostility toward people perceived as foreign or outsiders, often directed at migrants, refugees or ethnic minorities.

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