



RESEARCH REPORT ITALY

Countering racism and
invisible racism among youth



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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



This report was developed within STAR – Stand Together Against Racism project – cofunded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The content of this work is solely the responsibility of its authors and does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Union.



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The National Context: the juridical frame

Racism is not an opinion! It is a crime!

Italian Constitution condemns all forms of racism.

Article 3 states that: "All citizens have the same social dignity and are the same before the Law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political views, social and personal conditions". The Constitution refers both to Italian and foreign citizens, based in this country.

In Italy, according to the law n.654 of 1975 whoever spreads any form of ideas based on racial or ethnic hatred or entices people to commit acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality or religion can face up to a three-year imprisonment term.

Whoever instead commits or entices people to commit acts of violence or provocation for the same reasons can face six months to four years imprisonment.

Moreover, the law June 25, 1993, No. 205 (Legge Mancino) is a law that sanctions and condemns gestures, actions and slogans related to the fascist ideology, having for purpose the incitement to violence and discrimination for racial, ethnic, religious or national issues. The law also punishes the use of symbols related to these political movements. It is today the main legislative instrument that Italian law offers for the suppression of hate crimes.

Italian law condemns also any act of discrimination (art 42 D.lgs 286/98) saying that this occurs "when any behavior is directly or indirectly connected to attitudes of distinction, exclusion, restriction or preferences based on race, colour, ancestors, origin, or religion." This behavior is considered illegitimate even it is unintentional, because it challenges the recognition, the enjoyment or the exercise of each one human rights and fundamental liberties.

Even though In Italy, the law n.39 on March 1, 2002 absorbed the European Directive 2000/43/CE on the equal treatment of persons, regardless of race and ethnic origin, it is difficult to provide proof of having been victim of discriminatory acts.

As clearly stated by Lunaria and as noted by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance in its latest report on Italy, "our country does not yet have a



coordinated, systematic and transparent national system for collecting data on discrimination and racist violence (ECRI, 2016).”

“The data collected by Unar (Ufficio nazionale antidiscriminazioni razziali), Oscad (Osservatorio per la sicurezza contro gli atti discriminatori), the database of the Investigation System of the Judicial Police (SDI), the Ministry of Justice and ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics) differ in terms of the purposes and methods of data collection, the timing of publication, the classification systems adopted and the heterogeneity of the data. The available official data must therefore be read in with such limitations in mind.”

In general, when looking at the data related to acts of racist violence and discrimination, we should consider that they represent only those incidents that are the object of a formal complaint.

In 2017, Lunaria has published very interesting data in “Chronicles of ordinary racism”, that show that acts of racist verbal violence are the most frequent at national level, even though between 2015 and 2017 they were decreasing (at least the ones recorded) from 611 to 171.

Physical violence, damage to property or things and discrimination are the other acts that complete the types of racist acts in Italy.

As for the verbal violence, it seems from Lunaria Report that from 2015 to 2017 acts of racist violence considerably decreased.

Hereafter the table, with the details about the different types of acts of racist violence and discrimination as recorded between January 2015 and May 2017.





Chronicles of Ordinary Racism: The Data

TABLE 1.A ACTS OF RACIST VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION RECORDED BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 2015, AND MAY 31, 2017

ACTS	YEARS			TOTAL
	2015	2016	2017	
VERBAL VIOLENCE	611	415	171	1197
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE	41	28	15	84
DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THINGS	18	15	11	44
DISCRIMINATION	69	66	23	158
TOTAL	739	524	220	1483

Source: Lunaria, www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org

TABLE 1.B ACTS OF RACIST VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION RECORDED BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 2015, AND MAY 31, 2017

ACTS	YEARS			TOTAL
	2015	2016	2017	
VERBAL VIOLENCE	611	415	171	1197
A1 Racist insults, threats or harassment	76	79	41	196
A2 Propaganda	481	261	91	833
of which				
A2A Racist statements and debates	402	160	42	604
A2B Racist writing	48	83	33	164
A2C Racist posters	4	16	0	20
A2D Racist publications	23	0	2	25
A2E Racist websites, blogs, social networks	4	2	14	20
A3 Public demonstrations	54	75	39	168
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE	41	28	15	84
of which				
B1 Bodily violence	39	24	10	73
B2 Deaths caused by violence, abuse, ill-treatment	2	4	5	11
DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THINGS	18	15	11	44
of which				
C1 Damage	10	7	6	23
C2 Fire	8	8	5	21
DISCRIMINATION	69	66	23	158
of which				
D1 Injunctions	32	19	2	53
TOTAL	739	524	220	1483

Source: Lunaria, www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org

Lunaria, in ten years, between January 1, 2007, and May 31, 2017, documented 5853 cases of discrimination, speeches, propaganda material, offenses, property damage, aggression and racist murder.

There are 1483 cases of which they became aware between 1 January 2015 and 31 May 2017.





Racism – shameless racism

What is new in the most recent period is the emergence, in addition to ordinary racism, of a cowardly and at the same time shameless form of racism especially on-line.

“Cowardly, since not all the perpetrators of on-line malicious denigrations, threats and insults would dare to do the same in front of a person. Shameless, because violence today, much more than ten years ago, is one of the ordinary ways that characterize the system of social relations and public debate, especially on-line.”

Social media and racism

Only in 2014, Unar had recorded 347 cases of racist expressions in social media, of which 185 on Facebook and 185 on Twitter and Youtube. To these were added 326 other cases in the links that relaunched them. In total, almost 700 episodes of intolerance. This seems to be a significant number but certainly underestimated in respect of what are the used expressions on-line and, more and more often, off-line.

Cybercrime counter – Measures

In March 2015, the Council of Ministers, on the proposal of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paolo Gentiloni, approved a Draft Law to ratify and implement the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime

The text, adopted in Strasbourg on January 28, 2003, provides for the possibility of sanctioning acts of racism and xenophobia committed by computer systems.

Signed on November 9, 2011, by Italy, it has never been ratified.

On May 10, 2016, the Presidency of the Chamber established a Commission on intolerance, xenophobia, racism and hate phenomena

Still in 2016, some legislative proposals were presented, that provided for an extension of punishable hate speech.

In today's societies, in which more and more discomfort, dissatisfaction, poverty and social exclusion generate isolation, hate between peers more than against those that are in power that very often have the tendency to stand against vulnerable people, such as Roma people, migrants and refugees and LGBTQ+ community.

Hate discourses are so widespread that they tend to be normalized, in nowadays societies and communications both online and off-line.





- What are the needs to tackle it?
- What are the existing practices and policies in the local and national contexts that are there to address these needs?

To give an answer to the above-mentioned questions, the Italian team decided to use a quantitative and qualitative approach to collect relevant data and information, as solid basis of the STAR project.

1. *Desk research:* we analysed Italian Constitution and different International Human Rights' treaties that have been ratified by the Italian Government to identify the juridical frame of reference; we consulted different websites and materials to collect data and information on policies and practices online and offline; we analysed Lunaria report "Chronicles of ordinary racism" to identify cases and stories.
2. *Online questionnaire for young people:* we launched an online questionnaire for young people to get their point of views, experiences, perceptions and needs to tackle racism and invisible racism.
3. *Online questionnaire for youth workers and educators:* as for the young people, we launched an online questionnaire for educators, youth workers, people that work on daily basis with young people, to get their point of views and perceptions on racism and invisible racism amongst youth.
4. *Focus group with young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers:* it was organised a focus group with youth workers and young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in order to get also their point of views and stories.

Main findings: a youth perspective

72 young people filled in the online questionnaire and 10 persons participated to the focus group.

Hereafter, the young people perspective in relation to racism, invisible racism and how these phenomena can be contrasted.

Speaking about definitions...

The respondents believe that **Racism** is mainly associated to fear, discrimination, prejudice, hate, ignorance, intolerance, while **Invisible Racism** is mainly associated to fear, discrimination, discomfort, acting prejudices towards "others", ignorance.





Invisible racism is defined mainly as indirect racism or implicit/non declared racism. Someone defines invisible racism as bullying or cyberbullying, action taking place in social media.

Most of the respondents declare to be quite aware about the meaning of invisible racism: "The invisible racism is "normalized", so assimilated and diffused that it is no longer considered as such".

For some people both racism and invisible racism are related to a persistent intolerance towards others.

12% of the respondents declare not to know it!

Witness of racist actions...

To the question, have you witnessed any racist action, young people answered as follows:

- 20 out of 72: NEVER
- 21 out of 72: Towards black people
- 10 out of 72: Towards migrants
- 7 out of 72: Offenses in social media
- 7 out of 72: Jokes and offenses towards someone that is different from you
- 1 out of 72: Fascist manifestations
- 1 out of 72: Personal experience
- 5 out of 72: Others

Youngsters attitudes and behaviours towards diversity: youth point of views...

The respondents feel that young people have positive and negative attitudes and behaviours towards diversity, depending on their personal situation and background and also depending on the context where they live.

The identified positive attitudes and behaviours towards diversity are:

- Acceptance as correct behaviour even if not always practiced
- Try to integrate and share with others
- To be open and curious
- To believe that diversity is an added value/richness

The negative attitudes and behaviours, they have identified are:



- Lack of knowledge
- To be suspicious
- To be prejudicial
- To be close, distrustful
- To be pietistic, fascist
- To fear the “others”
- For most of the respondents, Romaphobia is one of the most diffused form of racism, together with antisemitism (even among youth workers)

The respondents feel to be very influenced by family, peer groups, media, social network. They declare to be very concerned about the increasing racism and invisible racism phenomena.

Competences needed to contrast racism and invisible racism...

- Young people believe that it is essential to:
- Be informed and curious to know about others
- Be open – minded and eager to understand others and others' point of views, stories, cases
- Be respectful and empathic
- Know other cultures, being exposed to people with a different background, believes, culture
- Know human rights and laws
- Believe in democracy

Competences young people have to contrast racism and invisible racism..

The respondents believe that young people have the following competences to contrast racism and invisible racism:

- Ability to listen and understand
- Knowledge and experiences of other cultures/contexts
- To be respectful and curious
- To be open-minded
- To be solidare
- To be brave

Someone said that more than competences, it is important to speak about VALUES.



Which competences youth workers should have to contrast racism and invisible racism: youth point of views...

The respondents affirmed that youth workers, educators, anyone playing and educational role, should have the following competences, to be able to contrast racism.

- To have a solid knowledge and information
- Languages' skills
- To be honest, patient, humble
- To be able to respect and tolerate
- To be human and empathetic
- To be open-minded, creative
- Ability to involve young people and stimulate them, activating peer learning processes
- Ability to persuade
- Ability to stimulate young people to have a critical thinking, to be empathic, to be curious

Anti-racist practices young people know about...

57 out of 72 respondents do not any practice contrasting racism or invisible racism.

15 young people declared to be aware of existing practices to contrast racism and invisible. Amongst the most relevant practices to contrast racism and invisible racism, they quoted:

- Reading and conferences to stimulate the knowledge of cases, stories, laws
- Psychological services at school to support young people to identify cases of racism and invisible racism and to denunciate them
- Campaigns to raise awareness
- National and International laws and their implementation into practice.

Main findings: youth workers' perspective

13 persons responded to the online questionnaire, contributing to the STAR research.

Most of them were aware about the concepts linked to **racism and invisible racism**. While trying to associate key words to racism and invisible racism, most of them were



referring to ignorance, fear of the others, persistent intolerance against others, racial discrimination, attitudes and behaviours inspired by prejudices to marginalise specific groups of people.

Your perception about young people's attitudes and behaviours towards diversity...

Respondents feel that young people have uncertain or negative attitudes towards diversity, depending on their personal background and on the context where they live.

Negative attitudes and behaviours

Some respondents feel that young people mainly:

- Lack of knowledge
- Have attitudes and behaviours that are results of fake information or manipulated information
- Are worrying
- Are prone to racism in most cases: if not more towards the color of the skin, towards other aspects
- Are struggling to accept attitudes of exclusion when they or people they love suffer them directly

Uncertain attitudes and behaviours

Some other respondents feel that young people:

- Are open minded, ready for reflection and dialogue. Others are conditioned.
- Are open minded attitudes, but not really inclusive in the facts.
- Are aware of the phenomenon in its evident manifestations. Not so aware when speaking about invisible racism.
- Are not racists in general, but they can express racists thoughts and points of view (such as we have to support them in their country of origin!) that tend to establish a dichotomist discourse based on we and them.

Open racism comes at least in words usually condemned by the youngsters, although sometimes it is provocatively claimed; Invisible racism is generally not recognized as racism.



At the obvious level, overall I have rarely found racist youngsters in the first meaning; While I find it easier to find in the second case, that of invisible racism: precisely because-as I remembered before-the fragility of young people, their need to feel accepted in a world that seems to accept no one, can easily lead them to racist attitudes without even being aware of it

I believe that young people today are less racist than in the past, but they can be strongly affected by conditions of vulnerability and poverty.

As mentioned before I'm noticing an increasing anti-Semitism even between social workers/youth workers

Which competences do young people have to contrast racism and invisible racism...

Some respondents stated that young people do not have competences to contract racism and invisible racism.

Some others felt that young people have the following competences:

- Tolerance
- Empathy
- Social skills
- Good sense
- Listening
- Flexibility
- Self-reflection
- Critical thinking
- Adaptability
- Ability to change idea and perspective. Inclusive attitudes
- Curiosity
- Digital skills
- Knowledge

Which competences should youth workers have to contrast racism and invisible racism...

The respondents felt that the following competences are needed...

KNOWLEDGE:



- A thorough knowledge of the psycho-social dynamics of young people and the ability to bring out in their empathic abilities.
- More knowledge of cultural diversity
- Before: Knowing how to listen to young people; Then know how to speak with them through example and dialogue. Know how to respect their opinions and, above all, acquire the conviction of not having a proposal.
- Know youngsters' skills

ABILITIES/SKILLS

- The ability to listen
- Ability to recognize their own prejudices, ability to understand the reasons behind the prejudices of others without being judgmental and paternalist
- Ability of self-observation and reading of group dynamics, as well as skills on effective communication, necessary in situations of clash.
- Flexibility and open-mindedness towards what appear different and not very understandable
- Facilitating dialogue between people, increasing understanding of the concept of cultural diversity
- Use of the emotional Intelligence

ATTITUDES

- Collaboration, dialogue
- Readiness for sharing
- Empathic attitudes

Are you aware about anti-racist practices...

4 persons out of 13 were not aware.

9 persons mentioned the following practices:

- Team work
- Readings, video projections and documentaries on the topic, debates, meeting opportunities
- Constant and systematic reflection on language
- Read texts, newspapers, or other genres that make young people reflect and stimulate reflection and discussion.





- Consolidated projects such as the Living Library and Balon Mondial. In broader terms I would say an urban planning that over the years has prevented the creation of ghetto neighbourhoods in Turin, supporting the coexistence between different groups in areas both centre (districts San Salvo, Borgo Dora) and in the suburbs
- The Moltivolti, a co-working and Sicilian-ethnic restaurant in which different people from diverse cultural contexts find hospitality. The common work enriched the cultural heritage of a small community
- Demonstrations such as that for Ily Diene, was a great demonstration of rejection of racism.
- Training courses on legality; Training courses on the Shoah; meetings on gender identity

Conclusions from the online research

From the online questionnaires, both for young people and for youth workers and educators, it is evident that racism and invisible racism are actual phenomena.

If it is almost clear what racism is, invisible racism is so well normalised that it is hard to be detected and identified. More awareness raising activities should be organised to stimulate a critical analysis of daily reality.

Despite the existing practices and tools to contrast racism and invisible racism at national and local level, people are not completely aware of their potential and their power to have a say to contrast racist attitudes and actions.

Education is still needed to improve own competences and behaviours.

Activism at very local level, in own community, is needed to put into practice what norms define.

Some Inspiring Practices

UNAR stands for Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali. The office for promoting equal treatment and repressing race and ethnicity discrimination, briefly named UNAR- National Anti-Racial Discrimination Office, is the office destined by the Italian State to guarantee the population the right of an equal treatment, regardless their ethnicity or race, age, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. The Office was established in 2003 (l.d. n. 215/2003) due to a community directive (n.200/43/CE), requiring each Member State to activate a system purposely





dedicated to opposing all forms of discrimination. In particular, UNAR manages cases and events related to any kind of discrimination, studies possible solutions, promotes the culture of respecting human rights and equal opportunities and provides practical assistance to the victims.

Rete Nazionale dei centri antidiscriminazione. The National Network of Anti-Discrimination Centers is the set of regional territorial units that collaborate with Unar in the activity of prevention, contrast and removal of discrimination.

Cronache di ordinario razzismo: Cronachediordinariorazzismo.org is an information and communication website dedicated to the phenomenon of racism in Italy, edited by Lunaria. Our goal is to promote the spread of a culture founded on the guarantee of citizenship rights and equal opportunities and to multiply the anti-racist practices in Italy. Our site is a tool open to collaboration with all those who, at an individual and collective level, repudiate all forms of discrimination and racism, and take steps to combat them

OKKIO ALLE PAROLE is a project, promoted by REDU and founded by the Municipality of Florence to run workshops in Secondary School to raise awareness about discrimination and racism. At the end of the project, all students have implemented an awareness action, creating a video against violence, discrimination and racism. The videos are available in REDU youtube channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG1RWeXTC_pdtEcjEnBRc6g

CNAC stands for Centro Nazionale anti cyberbullismo. It is a platform that offers legal advice to victims of cyberbullying and their parents.

A school where to get to know the world A place where you can learn not only to read and write, but also and above all to grow: this is the mission around which Carlo Pisacane, a nursery and a primary school, revolves. Thus deciding, for teaching purposes, not to follow exclusively the didactic programme. In the heart of the Roman district of Tor Pignattara, which has always been a place of immigration, stands the Pisacane Institute. Students come from more than 18 countries of the world: for this reason it has been renamed Scuola Internazionale (International School), a place of meeting and inclusion as well as learning, in which a primary role is played by teachers, but also by parents, who in 2013 gave birth to the Associazione di volontariato Pisacane 0-11, which works on social inclusion and interaction between families in the neighbourhood: after-school activities, language courses, music, theatre and dance.





Metropoliz, a hybrid city A former meat factory on the outskirts of Rome. A factory in disuse and abandoned. A group of people decide to occupy it, and creates a successful experiment of sharing and fighting for the right to housing. A dwelling that is not only a roof above the head, but something more: a free and liberated space, a self-organized experience of recovery of the former factory, but also a sociality that unites, that overcomes prejudices and mistrust. This is Metropoliz, in Via Prenestina 913, in the Roman neighborhood Tor Sapienza, where about two hundred people from different parts of the world live together: Peru, Santo Domingo, Morocco, Tunisia, Eritrea, Sudan, Ukraine, Poland, Romania and Italy.

VOCI DI CONFINE <http://www.vocidiconfine.com>

a path to be taken together with those who live the migration every day, starting from the experiences of the border in the territories they host, such as Lampedusa, and in the communities of origin of the migrants, in Africa and elsewhere.

To succeed in this project - co-funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) - the association has put together organizations involved in the defense of human rights, local border authorities engaged every day in the management of migration, associations of diasporas and volunteer work, social enterprises, research bodies and communication experts. A chorus of sixteen voices that come together to discuss the narration of migrations: Amref Health Africa Onlus, Amref Health Africa - Headquarters, Africa and Mediterranean, Le Réseau Association, Marche Voluntary Service Center, Idos Study and Research Center (IDOS), Standing Committee for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (COPPEM), the Municipality of Lampedusa, the Municipality of Pesaro, Etnocom, Internationalia, the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, the Puglia Region, the African Black Diaspora Network in Italy (REDANI), Step4, Terre Des Hommes Italia.

By the end of 2018, information campaigns will be planned based on concrete data and life stories; educational paths in schools and centers of aggregation, to bring to the young people a point of view based on the objectivity of statistics and experiences; and exchanges of good practices, with territorial meetings that will involve diasporas and voluntary associations, local authorities, NGOs and private individuals





Other sources of information used within the research

Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

Italian constitution <https://lexscripta.it/codici/costituzione>

Cronache di ordinario razzismo (<http://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org>)

Centro diritti umani dell'Università di Padova <http://unipd-centrodirittiumani.it/>

Lunaria Organisation and activities <http://www.lunaria.org>

UNAR <http://www.unar.it/>

The National Network of Anti-Discrimination Centers
<https://www.facebook.com/Rete-Nazionale-Antidiscriminazioni-386869691477931/>

Fondazione Kennedy educational activities and tools <http://www.rfkitalia.org/>

No hate movement in Italy <http://www.nohatespeech.it/menu-azioni/la-campagna/>

Human Rights Education Youth Network organisation and activities <http://www.hre-youth.net/>

REDU organisation and activities <http://www.educareaidirittiumani.net/>

E-WORDS project <http://www.e-words.unisi.it>

OFF BOOK project <https://off-book.pixel-online.org/index.php>

I have rights project and research on discrimination and racism
https://ihaverights.pixel-online.org/CS_RElist.php

OKKIO ALLE PAROLE project <http://www.educareaidirittiumani.net/722-2/>

UNICEF Projects https://www.unicef.org/media/media_10446.html

Evaluation report of the "Stop Bullying!" project promoted by Amnesty International in Poland, Italy, Ireland and Portugal.