

**Smart
for Democracy
and Diversity**

**Fighting racism and
discrimination: recommendations
for political decision-makers,
associations, and lobby-groups**



SDD Policy Recommendations

Contact details, the list of Associated Partners, all the project updates, news and publications are available on the SDD website www.sdd-game.eu



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Table of content

1. Introduction: the SDD project	5
The SDD approach.....	5
The SDD contents and outputs	5
2. Policy recommendations at EU level	7
3. Policy recommendations at national level	11
4. Policy recommendations at regional level	13
5. Policy recommendations at local level	15
6. Good practices	17
Czech Republic	17
Germany	18
Italy.....	19
The Netherlands.....	20
Portugal	21

Experiencing Hate Speech

Responses, Coping Strategies
& Interventions
Compendium

Smart for Democracy
and Diversity



1. Introduction: the SDD project

The Smart for Democracy and Diversity (SDD) project has aimed at strengthening democratic competence, i.e., participatory citizenship, through civic education by:

- Making dissent visible: civic education must take up discussions and highlight fundamental differences of opinion.
- Recognising reflexivity: the project is intended to promote critical thinking with the aim to encourage reflection on one's own attitudes.
- Bringing about change: those who are well informed about critical issues can confidently advocate change. Knowledge about forms of discrimination, as well as familiarity with strategies against them, leads to question one's own positions and to stand up for more equality, democracy, participation, and social inclusion.

The SDD approach

SDD aims to make positions and experiences of discriminations more visible. In this way, a self-reflexive and empathetic approach to the topic is to be promoted, as it is used, for example, in anti-racist and feminist educational workshops. Experience shows that participants often find it difficult to change perspectives if conventional means such as knowledge transfer are applied. The project wants to close this gap by the multimedia-based approach of the game and the accompanying material.

The SDD contents and outputs

Equality and participation are fundamental values in a democratic society. Conversely, it is important to recognize inequalities and discriminations, and to be able to propose solutions. This requires the ability to address issues, highlight fundamental disagreements, and critical thinking. It is key to get empowered from within, leveraging on reflected and exchanged understandings and positions, thus strengthening the ability to develop one's own attitudes.

- The [Compendium](#) “Experiencing Hate Speech: Responses, Coping Strategies & Interventions” - includes interviews with experts, NGOs, persons who have experienced discrimination, testimonials, experiences, and options to act. It can be found on the SDD website. It is available in English, Czech, Dutch, French, German, Italian and Portuguese.

The hate speech effects for the victim are devastating: hate speech, particularly in the young and adolescent ages, may undermine self-esteem, which is essential for the full development of individual potentials.

From an SDD interview.

- The core of the project is the SDD interactive learning platform, with the [learning game](#). Scenes and materials have been developed jointly with persons who have experienced discrimination. The aim is to gain access to the experiences and views of the people concerned. And to experience and test options for action. For this, the player can move freely in the game and explore the different contents.
- The Trainer Manual has been developed to accompany the learning platform and contains background knowledge and workshop concepts. It serves as a guide for adult educators.

In the experience of racism, it is a very important aspect, I call it the racism triangle - in terms of the people involved. The offender, the victim and the third party the bystanders, the spectators.

From an SDD interview.

The following policy recommendations and identified good practice examples, which have emerged from the SDD activities and desk research carried out by the SDD Partner Organisations, are addressed to political decision-makers, associations, and lobby-groups to hopefully inspire their future actions.

2. Policy recommendations at EU level

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights- Article 21: Non-discrimination.

- EU Member States, which violate the Charter need to be held accountable. New Members need to be reviewed for their emphasis on fighting discrimination and whether they can implement non-discrimination through national laws and policies.

The European Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law is limited in its scope.

- Extend the list of EU crimes to cover hate speech and hate crime beyond the grounds currently covered by Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA. The list of EU crimes and EU legislation and initiatives to combat hate speech and hate crime should also cover the ground of age, among other discrimination grounds included under Article 19 TFEU.

Regarding the Victim's Rights Directive in the EU: Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support, and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

- Ensure that officials who are most likely to be in contact with victims (police officers, court staff, such as lawyers, judges, and prosecutors) receive: A. Mandatory training on structural racism and how it impacts communities and individuals. B. Mandatory training on what ageism and age discrimination are how they negatively affects older people victims of hate speech. C. Guidance and methodology on how to apply an intersectional approach when dealing with hate crimes. It is key that practitioners understand the structural barriers and inequalities that minority groups face and how diverse these groups are.
- Ensure that the revision of the Victim's Rights Directive in the EU and the EU Victims' Rights Strategy 2020-2025, address the structural barriers that older people face to access justice, which include ageist attitudes in

law enforcement and justice systems, as well as hate speech and pervasive societal ageism.

On the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025 of the European Commission.

- Develop a similar Action Plan but targeted older people. Such an EU Age Equality Strategy would allow for the recognition of the diversity that exists among older people. It would help to raise awareness of the prevalence of ageism and how it may act as a driver for hate speech, violence, abuse and neglect and other forms of hate crime. This should be the key goal of an EU Age Equality Strategy, which would help address age discrimination systematically in all EU policies. An EU Age Equality Strategy would allow for a human rights-based approach to make sure that the rights of older people are respected, protected, and fulfilled at EU level.

The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 09 December 2021 on 'A more inclusive and protective Europe: extending the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crime' (09 December 2021) aims to trigger a Council Decision extending to hate crime and hate speech the current list of so-called 'EU crimes' as laid down in Art 83 TFEU.

- In addition to strengthening the legal framework on tackling hate speech and hate crime across the EU, the EU should also develop prevention measures: A. Collect age and sex-disaggregated data on ageism, age discrimination, hate speech and hate crime. Data should be disaggregated by different age groups to get a clear understanding of the links between ageism, hate speech against older people and elder abuse. B. The EU should improve access to justice and tackle the structural barriers that older people experience when accessing justice. These include ageist attitudes in law enforcement and justice systems, as well as hate speech and pervasive societal ageism.

The proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 08 March 2022 on combating violence against women and domestic violence aims to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence to ensure a high level of security and the full enjoyment of fundamental rights within the Union, including the right to equal treatment and non-discrimination between women and men. The proposal thus contributes to the

establishment of an area of freedom security and justice (Title V TFEU). This proposal considers recent phenomena such as cyber violence against women, which is not specifically addressed by the Istanbul Convention.

- Implement an intersectional approach when combatting cyberviolence and hate speech online. Further inequalities exist among women who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Hate speech is in itself an attack on tolerance, inclusion, diversity and the very essence of our human rights norms and principles. More broadly, it undermines social cohesion, erodes shared values, and can lay the foundation for violence, setting back the cause of peace, stability, sustainable development, and the fulfillment of human rights for all.

Secretary-General António Guterres upon launching the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech.

With reference to the proposal for a Council Directive of 07 December 2022 on standards for equality bodies in the field of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, equal treatment in the field of employment and occupation between persons irrespective of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, equal treatment between women and men in matters of social security and in the access to and supply of goods and services, and deleting Article 13 of Directive 2000/43/EC and Article 12 of Directive 2004/113/EC.

- Allocate adequate and sufficient resources to equality bodies across the EU for them to be able to provide adequate support to victims of racial discrimination and tackle multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Limited resources will impede equality bodies from fulfilling their role.
- Guarantee the participation of Non-Governmental Organisations in monitoring and reporting forms of discrimination, notably membership organisations. Membership organisations are key in representing the voices of people who face structural barriers.

In the current EU framework, age discrimination is only covered in the field of employment and vocational training, under the EU Employment Framework Directive.

- The EU should explicitly recognise age discrimination beyond this field, to tackle ageism and age discrimination in all areas that affect older people, including when addressing hate speech and hate crime.



3. Policy recommendations at national level

All forms of discrimination, racism, hate speech and crimes, ethnic profiling should be banned, and punished by law, within a dynamic perspective to include new emerging patterns such as cyber ones.

- Include the ban in national constitutions and set up national monitoring mechanisms to implement efficient controls countering and punishing all forms of discrimination and reverse the burden of proof to prevent ethnic profiling.

Not all society groups currently suffering discriminations are covered by existing legislations and the willingness to report is limited: according to the data released in 2020 by the Social Cultural Planning Office on Discrimination over a quarter of Dutch residents experience discrimination, with annual figures showing that only a few thousand people report experienced discrimination.

- Explicitly foresee legal protection measures for victims of ageism, anti LGBTQ+ and disabled groups and launch measures facilitating the willingness to report.

In the recruitment and training of police and other law enforcement officers against all forms of discriminations need to be improved, upgraded, and updated in connection with social developments and migrations, bearing in mind that the society in which we live is becoming increasingly multicultural.

- To avoid mistrust in national legal systems which may lead victims of discrimination and hate speech closing themselves into a “mental ghetto” reinforcing the formation of segregated population groups and create fertile ground for social polarization, regular human rights education and anti-discrimination training and the education for sensitive approach to hate speech victims should be planned for all police and other law enforcement officers.

I had a very negative experience with the judiciary and the media system: I reported the stalking I was victim of, and I was left alone. Nothing happened.

From an SDD interview.

Potential discrimination victims are not informed about their rights.

- National governments should launch media and social media information campaigns to inform all citizens what kinds of discrimination they can legally proceed against and how. Marginalized social groups where they live and meet should be specifically addressed, with details about safe places for discriminated people to be informed and receive help.

Residence permits for humanitarian reasons and/or deriving from international obligations are still not guaranteed and Memoranda with Third Countries allow human trafficking.

- Humanitarian residence permits should be recognized as legally binding; migrations should be handled according to the Geneva and European Convention on Human Rights; Memoranda with third Countries, such as the Italy – Libya one, should be (re) negotiated based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights; national citizenship laws should favour social inclusion, combat the stigma of foreignness, and recognize as citizens all people born, brought up and schooled inside EU Member States.

It happened last January during the online presentation of my latest book “The desert generation”, organized by the Turin Hebrew Studies Group and by the Institute for the History of Resistance. A few minutes after the start of the speech by one of the guest speakers a Zoom bombing was started, by individuals who join videoconferences. They entered with false profiles and screamed “Since when is a Jewish woman allowed to publish books?”, “Jews in the ovens”, “Go hide yourselves”, with Adolf Hitler images appearing on their screens and “Faccetta nera” (one of Mussolini’s times popular songs) as musical background.

From an SDD interview.

4. Policy recommendations at regional level

Citizens' awareness about the importance of opposing discriminations and contribute to social relations in which diversities are recognised as richness needs to be increased.

- Regional governments should launch ad hoc information campaigns involving shops, business companies, trade unions, professional and civil society organisations, religious centres and groups, schools, universities, and local media to raise awareness about the need to oppose discriminations in daily life and behaviours, thus improving everybody's quality of life.

Respect for all religious communities is far from being satisfactory.

- Regional authorities should approve comprehensive regional laws on religious freedom that, by guaranteeing respect for all religious communities, freedom of worship and dignity in the exercise of religious rights, will combat institutionalised hate and discrimination at the regional level.

Education plays a crucial role against discriminations and educators should be supported in taking advantage of all the opportunities involved.

- Regional education ministries should develop an effective system of training for teachers and educators with the assistance of associations for the defence of civil rights and the rights of families; encourage collaboration among the various individuals and entities working to counter discrimination and hate speech, such as research institutes, teachers, the judiciary, law enforcers and civic associations.

Proactive anti-hate speech initiatives.

- Regional media should support and promote "No Hate" blogs and activists, and publications that offer counter narratives or sponsor information campaigns against hate speech, especially if they are part of a non-profit organisation, school, or university. Additionally, the awarding of a "No Hate" certification issued by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Alliance against Intolerance and Racism is possible.

Media play a special role in preventing and opposing discriminations and they should be mobilised also at the regional level to ensure that what they publish is correct.

- Oppose stereotyping and racism by enhancing a sense of responsibility in regional media, especially online, to prevent all forms of hate speech, which includes baseless, false, and defamatory reports.

As hate speech takes place on daily basis and only rarely it does reach police and courts, it is important to cultivate such culture via education so that bystanders do act when witnessing hate speech situation.

- Promote a culture of civic courage through programmes, actions, and initiatives at the regional and local levels.



5. Policy recommendations at local level

Research shows that there is still a lot of discrimination in the housing market.

- Develop objective conditions for estate agents and landlords when selecting applicants for housing. If they do not use them, municipalities should be given the power to fine them.

To address discrimination also locally, every municipality should have a so-called anti-discrimination facility.

- Make it possible to complain about discrimination or racism to an independent body in all municipalities.

Victims of hate speech often mentioned that the psychological support network should be denser, more accessible, well-trained, and with more staff.

- Local counseling organisations and staff working on anti-discrimination education should be better equipped, they too should receive training against discriminations and hate speech crimes issues to better respond to the needs of the victims, their positions should be more stable in the long term with no precarious working conditions due to unstable, limited, short-term funding systems.

Sport and racism.

- Engage the local sport federations in a campaign against racism in stadiums and in sports in general, and demand enforcement of the rules on the suspension of matches and sporting contests in the event of racist or anti-Semitic behavior or chants.

Citizenship and Anti-Racist Education.

- Stimulate a wide discussion about national and European expansion and colonialism, starting from local schools, based on historical research work in this area. This discussion should recognize and integrate complex and diverse points of view, temporally contextualized, that make visible different histories and actors, including suffering and resistance and systematic human rights violations in the occupied territories.

My recommendations, wishes and needs are more a call to individuals to act: if they witness hate speech, they should intervene and support the victim/s in front of the hater/s or, in case they cannot, call the police.

From an SDD interview.



6. Good practices

Czech Republic

HateFree Culture

A project of the Agency for Social Inclusion at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. It was established in November 2014 as part of the Campaign against Racism and Hate Violence. It responds to the increase in negative attitudes against groups of people because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, subculture, disability, or other differences. Since 2015, it has also focused on the European migration crisis. Furthermore, the initiative focuses on debunking rumours and hoaxes.

Varianty

It has been among the educational programmes offered by People in Need Foundation since 2001. The programme offers one-session and long-term courses for teachers, school management, teaching assistants and students in all fields of pedagogy. The courses cover inclusive education, education towards global responsibility, encouraging active citizenship, developing communication at school and modern tuition methods.

The *Hlavák* Initiative (“The Main station Initiative”)

Founded in 2015 in response to the arrival of refugees from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. It has been active at the Main Station in Prague for 7 years and has helped more than ten thousand refugees in that time. Currently, it is the only organization that coordinates and provides assistance to refugees from Ukraine, Syria and people from other countries at the station. The initiative helps with orientation on the ground, providing information and basic humanitarian assistance.

Germany

Hessischer Aktionsplan für Akzeptanz und Vielfalt (APAV)

An Action Plan developed by the self- advocacy organizations of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, intersex and queer people together with the Hessian state government under the auspices of the Anti-Discrimination Agency, published in June 2017. It aims on presenting comprehensive recommendations for action to focus on the living situation of the LGBT*IQ community, to improve it and to sustainably reduce existing discrimination. This includes the promotion of acceptance of sexual and gender diversity, appreciation of diversity in the state administration and prevention of homophobic and trans* violence to empowerment and support in the development of structures, networking, and exchange.

stadtRAUMfrankfurt

“stadtRAUMfrankfurt” is provided by the Office for Multicultural Affairs in Frankfurt (AMKA). AMKA was founded in 1989 and is the oldest municipal office for all issues relating to diversity, immigration, and anti-discrimination. The workspace is provided since late 2019. It offers space for associations, initiatives, and other communities to host cultural or sports events, workshops and exhibitions regarding antidiscrimination or intercultural life in Frankfurt. The use of “stadtRAUMfrankfurt” is free.

Hessen. Da geht noch was

“Hessen. Da geht noch was” is a campaign running from December 2022 until 2024 focusing on raising awareness of the experiences of discrimination that many people in Hessen suffer. The campaign also wants to lay a large focus on intersectionality. It wants to share stories of persons affected by discrimination and is present on social media. From April 2023 onwards intersectional anti-discrimination workshops as an educational offer are being planned.

Italy

UNAR

With the motto “In defence of differences”, *UNAR* works independently within the Equal Opportunities Department of the Italian Council of Ministers’ Presidency. Created in 2003, *UNAR*, as a national point of contact against discrimination and through the construction of a subsidiary and integrated governance model, stipulates agreements and protocols and activates technical tables and working groups with local and national institutions, NGOs and associations, social and civil society, with the aim of building and strengthening a culture that opposes all forms of racism.

The Italian House of Parliament’s Committee on hate, intolerance, xenophobia, and racism – 2016 - 2017

The Committee has examined the extent, causes and effects of hate speech, defined as “advocacy, promotion or incitement, in any form, of the denigration, hatred or vilification of a person or group of persons, as well as any harassment, insult, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, or threat in respect of such a person or group of persons and the justification of all the preceding types of expression, on the ground of “race”, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, language, religion or belief, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and other personal characteristics or status.” (ECRI-Council of Europe definition).

The Extraordinary Committee of the Italian Senate for the fight against intolerance, racism, anti-Semitism and incitement to hatred and violence

27 January 2023 marks the International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 78th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. On 19 January 2023 the Italian Senate has unanimously voted to set up the Committee, under the presidency of life Senator Liliana Segre who survived the Auschwitz concentration camp.

The Netherlands

National Coordination against Discrimination and Racism

A National Coordinator against Discrimination and Racism was appointed in the Netherlands in 2021. This has drawn structural attention to discrimination and racism at the national level with a multi-year national programme.

In 2022 that led to the ad hoc report with policy recommendations.

Education: information, training aimed at prevention

The Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Foundation organises targeted education and training in its programme “Recognise, spot and help further”.

The training aims to empower citizens to deal with incidents, discrimination, and exclusion. The Foundation also provides training and information to primary and secondary education, for example on how to deal with bullying, why do people have prejudices and how to respond to discrimination.

Exclusively for Inclusion: bottom-up work on inclusion and anti-discrimination by vulnerable groups

The Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Foundation has set up the “Exclusively for Inclusion” programme in several municipalities in which citizens, local civil society organisations and others take the initiative to share information on social problems. This social capital is made visible in local platforms and used to promote non-discrimination and inclusion.

Our football is for everyone

Following the racist remarks made to Excelsior player Mendes Moreira during the FC Den Bosch- Excelsior match on 17 November 2019, the KNVB, VWS, J&V and SZW have made agreements to counter racism and discrimination in football, with the campaign which produced the Report “Our football is for everyone”. The aim is to create a broad positive movement working along three lines; (1) prevention (2) signaling and (3) sanctioning.

Portugal

National Plan to Combat Racism and Discrimination (2021-2025)

Portugal developed, approved and has been implementing the first National Plan to Combat Racism and Discrimination (2021-2025). This plan presents an integrated strategy, with transversal and specific approaches, and recognizes racism as a structural problem. It defines key areas for intervention: governance, education, security, justice, health, housing, employment, data collection, social participation, and mass media.

Education: information, training

The history of slavery is part of the history of Portuguese society. Portugal was the country that started the transatlantic trade of people, mainly coming from Africa. Unofficial estimates suggest that around 30 million people were taken from Africa to be sold as slaves since the 14th century. Even so, it's a story little talked about by the Portuguese.

The “African Lisbon Tour” is a tour in Lisbon in which information is shared about how this trade was done, showing some legacies of the African presence in Portugal. It is important to talk about the history of the black people enslaved for centuries and which is hidden.

In this visit, it is possible to get to know Lisbon, understand the origin of issues related to racism and discrimination in the Portuguese past and present, and also get to know part of the history of resistance and struggle of the black people in Lisbon.

The *Gaia 100 Preconceito* project

The “Gaia 100 Preconceito” project is funded by the Cidadãos Ativ@s Programme. The Association for Family Planning, in partnership with the Icelandic Humans Rights Centre, the Municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia, the Association of Roma Mediators of Portugal and the School Grouping of Villa d'Este are working using a proximity approach for promoting the social inclusion of Roma people living in Vila Nova de Gaia (North of Portugal). This project aims to increase access to health (especially sexual and

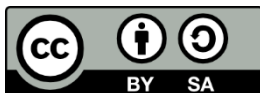
reproductive health), education, employment, and justice. It also aims to combat discrimination by deconstructing negative representations and promoting active participation and full citizenship.

The project will empower Roma women in activism for gender equality, prevention and combating gender and domestic violence; and also promote financial literacy. Among professionals in the social and health areas, the project will focus on developing skills and knowledge to promote the inclusion of Roma people and empower professionals in the area of advocacy.





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While every care has been taken in the editing of this publication, we apologise in advance for any misspelling or other mistakes, which unwillingly may have slipped in.



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