



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION FOR PUBLIC BODIES



E-Learning
for Standing
Together
Against Racism

RECOMMENDATIONS ITALY



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Among the dangerous behaviours, more or less accepted by society, invisible racism remains a dramatic constant. It is still a widespread practice, sometimes considered normal and tolerated, but which perpetuates exclusion, anxiety and social unease.

Youth work can make an important contribution to raising awareness of young people on the issue, developing their critical thinking and accompanying them to recognise the harm this type of violence can cause to them and their communities. Youth work can support the development of youngsters' capacity to face new challenges and their efforts to become promoters of the change they aspire to have in their living contexts.

Specific interventions, practices, educational programmes and awareness raising campaigns that involve different actors of the society (including youth workers, social workers, teachers, technicians of the public sector, etc.) are needed to facilitate inclusion, cultural diversity and contribute to counter invisible racism.

To this regard, public bodies play an essential role.

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PUBLIC BODIES SHOULD PROMOTE...

A culture of listening and dialogue versus a culture in which racism is strongly engrained should be one of the top priorities of the public agenda trying to find solutions to the current divisions, conflicts and violent behaviours emerging in Italy and in Europe.

The encounter and exchange between cultures, ages, languages, people facilitated through socio-educational initiatives and pathways can fight racism, whether in a visible or invisible form, by discouraging prejudices and behaviours that fuel discrimination and hate, especially in neighbourhoods with a strong multi-ethnic degree.

Public debate on human rights and (invisible) racism should be kept alive supporting the initiatives of various associations and bodies engaged on awareness raising and educational actions aiming towards social and cultural change.

PUBLIC BODIES SHOULD SUSTAIN...

Invisible racism is, to all intents and purposes, a social problem. The contribution of public bodies and policy makers to fight it could have a greater impact if involving **a close collaboration with the third sector**.

Focus groups could allow public bodies to investigate and better read the needs of young people and youth workers concerning racism and invisible racism, and plan a responsive **socio-educative programme that facilitate awareness raising and inclusion**.

Training of youth workers and other key actors (teachers, social workers, technicians of the public sector, etc.) on invisible racism and other specific topics (discrimination, interculturality, etc.), also through international learning opportunities and exchange of experiences, is fundamental.

The future of our society is in the hands of our youth. **Youth work projects and good practices that promote the value of diversity and foster multicultural knowledge and intercultural dialogue** should be reinforced.

The collaboration between youth centres and schools, promoting **non formal education interventions tackling invisible racism should become a permanent part of the youngsters' training and school curriculum**.

Synergies and cooperation between associations at local level is a key element for a coordinated approach and a widespread impact.

A transversal approach involving the society as a whole, including relationship education, civic education and community projects aimed of different age groups of residents should be part of the public agenda.



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PUBLIC BODIES SHOULD CHECK WITHIN THEIR OWN STRUCTURE / SERVICES...

Racism remains invisible most of the times. Invisible racism may often happen on a subconscious or unconsciousness level which may even operate in such a way that both victims and perpetrators may not be aware of its operation. Invisible racism is cultural and often systemic: systems produce differential expectations for different racial, gender, or sexual groups.

For this reason, it is highly important that **the presence of possibly exclusionary elements for some groups of people concerning gender, sex, disability, cultural origin etc.** be constantly checked. This attention should look at what concerns both public bodies staff as well as beneficiaries of the public services.

The level of specific knowledge and competences that the public body owns on key topics as invisible racism, intercultural dialogue, cultural mediation, etc. influences the type of interventions it promotes. Constant capacity building can keep public bodies updated and able to answer the emerging needs.

The organisational culture of the public bodies should promote **the values** of diversity, multiculturalism, integration and service, fighting against judgemental, biased or discriminatory approaches, in the institutional communication as well as in all its practices.

The induction training of new staff joining the public bodies should foresee the training on the principles and values promoted by the organisational culture.

PUBLIC BODIES SHOULD EQUIP THEMSELVES OR THEIR STRUCTURE WITH...

A designated office that keep a focus on the issues of (invisible) racism, diversity and intercultural dialogue could be a good practice for public bodies to adopt in the multicultural and global society in which we live.

The figure of Community Organiser could be a professional figure that play an active role for the public body, able to listen to local needs, mediate and collaborate with third sector organisations in territorial transformation processes, limiting the emergence of *ethnic suspicions*.

Ongoing training and exchange opportunities for public bodies and staff are two main benefits considered fundamental for improving and maintaining the quality of the public services, also concerning equal access and rights.

Innovative tools may furthermore facilitate equal access to services and support the work of community education and awareness raising on issues such as (invisible) racism, diversity and intercultural dialogue.

The efforts towards a culture of inclusion and integration passes through people. Including **foreign staff** in the public body team may help favour exchange, contrast biases and facilitate intercultural learning, leading to a more empathic public service delivered to its beneficiaries.





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PUBLIC BODIES SHOULD FINANCE...

Social and cultural change starts with the education of children and young people. An integrated approach is needed in order to break down as much as possible the gaps and discomfort that can exist between learners (even more now following the consequences of Covid-19 pandemic and lock-downs) and should tackle the contemporary issues concerning (invisible) racism, bullying, cultural awareness, intercultural dialogue, diversity.

Non formal education pathways can integrate non formal learning methodology to school education and promote socio-educational and cultural workshops within and outside the classroom, using play, art, gardening, reading, comics, cinema, role-play, digital tools etc. in a way that promotes awareness raising, critical thinking and empowerment. Involving also youth workers and artists of migrant origin can be a strategic choice.

L2 language teachers for migrant students in schools, to accelerate language learning, would have a very positive effect on the school performance of the students and on their integration in the class group with the other students as well as in relation to their teachers.

Training programmes on racism and invisible racism and on intercultural dialogue for youth workers and teachers should be foreseen periodically to assure their continuous update of their knowledge, competences and tools for learning used.

Good practices and innovative tools that can promote solidarity, exchange and community learning can make a change. To foster access they should also include a multilingual dimension.

Permanent intercultural centres could be promoted as public spaces where encounter and exchange can take place, facilitating intercultural and intergenerational learning.

Initiatives and awareness campaigns top-down as well as programmes that enable a bottom-up approach of the citizens that reflect the local contexts, can foster the sharing of personal stories and testimonies, promoting empathy and the understanding of the other.

See Through

E-STAR: E-Learning for Standing Together Against Racism is a project that tackles the topic of racism, in particular that of invisible racism, aiming to provide youth workers with new knowledge and tools useful to foster awareness and learning among young people, fighting discrimination and valuing diversity.



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