

## ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

21 March 2021

### *English only*

On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Advisory Council on Youth would like to highlight the efforts of young people – particularly of those from marginalised and racialised groups – to put an end to racial discrimination through awareness-raising, demands for justice and human rights education.

“Racism is a pandemic”, “No Justice, No Peace”, “Black Lives Matter”, “Hijabis Fight Back”, are only a few of the slogans we have seen and heard chanted by young people throughout the past year. The Advisory Council recognises the arduous and relentless work done by NGOs, movements, and unorganised individuals that articulate the voice of those who experience structural discrimination<sup>1</sup> on the basis of their skin color, attributed ethnic or religious identities, or by belonging to an ethnic or religious community.

The Advisory Council on Youth also recognises the important steps taken by member states to name and address the issue in speech and policies. The European Commission’s Anti-Racism Action Plan,<sup>2</sup> the European Parliament’s resolution on fighting anti-Gypsyism<sup>3</sup> and anti-Black racism,<sup>4</sup> and the Council of Europe’s many efforts in educating about all forms of discrimination are important and timely developments.

However, **anti-racism requires not a one-off effort, but an ongoing and tireless commitment.** The Advisory Council is committed to continuing calling racism by its name and addressing structural discrimination in our work. In this vein, we call on policymakers to actively tackle racism, especially when and as it persists in the very branches of government across Europe. The training of police, prosecutors, and judges on hate crime and anti-racism is essential to support these groups to reflect critically on their own work and address hate crimes in a more thorough and serious manner. Moreover, we urge member states to adopt an intersectional approach in policy-making by extending their co-operation with civil society, and particularly young people. Without the participation of those impacted by racial discrimination, policies that intend to do good might lack a necessary reality-check.

Finally, we encourage the member states to implement human rights education in formal education in a way that adheres to the standards set by the Council of Europe and by enabling stronger co-operation between formal and non-formal education sectors. As many teachers across Europe do not feel adequately prepared to teach in a diverse environment, and often do not feel comfortable addressing – or lack the capacity to identify – instances of racism, member states should provide training for educators of different levels on the topic of racism in schools.

*The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the Advisory Council on Youth and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Council of Europe or its member states.*

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<sup>1</sup> [ECRI](#) defines structural discrimination as rules, norms, routines, patterns of attitudes and behaviour in institutions and other societal structures that, consciously or unconsciously, present obstacles to groups or individuals in accessing the same rights and opportunities as others and that contribute to less favourable outcomes for them than for the majority of the population;(§ 20 of the EMto GPR 2).

<sup>2</sup> See the Action plan here: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025_en)

<sup>3</sup> See the European Parliament’s text adopted here on 25 October 2017: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0413\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0413_EN.html)

<sup>4</sup> See the European Parliament’s text adopted on 26 March 2019 here: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0239\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0239_EN.html)