Islamophobia and its consequences on Young People

European Youth Centre Budapest
1–6 June 2004

Seminar report
Ingrid Ramberg

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Introduction – Questions about the Question

This report documents an activity that is and will remain special for many reasons. Islamophobia is not an easy subject to deal with and, therefore, to write about. To start with, there is the questions of the definition: does Islamophobia exist? Is it useful to use the expression "Islamophobia"? Shouldn't we simply talk of "discrimination" or "intolerance"? Is it true that the usage of the term Islamophobia can provoke more Islamophobia and hence further victimise Muslims in Europe? Is there anything special about Islamophobia and the way it affects young people in Europe? What is the point of a seminar on Islamophobia and its effects on young Europeans? And a report about it? Is there a risk that we are "overdoing it"?

There is a general consensus that racism and racial discrimination are unacceptable forms of human rights violations anywhere. They certainly remain a major concern for the Council of Europe. The forms that they take today are multiple, often apparently disconnected from "race" or racism. They are, however, worrying by their persistence, their consequences and also their trivialisation. It is practically undisputed that they have also recently taken a particular religious and "civilisational" connotation after terrorist attacks by groups claiming Islam to justify their acts. The debates about secularism and its implications in France and other countries and the application of Turkey to join the European Union have revealed uneasiness about accepting and managing religious and cultural diversity in Europe. This obviously refers to Europe itself – and what may be labelled as "European identity", but we know that

debating any "otherness" is always first and foremost a debate about ourselves. The concept that "ourselves" also includes, for example, Muslims, Jewish, Sikhs or Rastafarians is often neglected, so much so that it is easy to see them as part of the "others" without whom "we" would not make much sense.

Islamophobia can be defined as the fear of or prejudiced viewpoint towards Islam, Muslims and matters pertaining to them. Islamophobia is not a new phenomenon but we know that today many Muslim communities in Europe are experiencing an increasingly hostile environment towards them characterised by suspicion, deep-rooted prejudice, ignorance, and, in some cases, physical and verbal harassment. Whether it takes the shape of daily forms of racism and discrimination or more violent forms, Islamophobia is a violation of human rights and a threat to social cohesion. Young people are of course not immune to this. Young men and women are obviously affected when they become targets of Islamophobic attacks and abuse. But, just as importantly, they are also concerned by the general rise in discrimination and xenophobia, be it active or passive. In this respect, Islamophobia is a threat to our societies and to the values of human rights, pluralist democracy and the valuing of diversity as an asset.

The seminar has shown that Islamophobia is not a marginal phenomenon, it appears embedded in other forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. It has also shown in an exemplary manner that Islamophobia can not be analysed nor dealt with outside the wider context of racism and discrimination in Europe, in new and old forms. One needs, therefore, to take into account, for example, the troubling resurgence of Anti-Semitic attacks, the persistent forms of Romaphobia and segregation of Roma communities. Islamophobia can not be the concern of Muslims alone, in the same way that there are no "better" and "worse" forms of discrimination or xenophobia: for the one who is discriminated against, it is always a denial of dignity and an unacceptable form of humiliation.

The seminar was very fruitful with regards to the sharing of experiences and realities by the participants. Particularly valuable and inspiring were the examples of good practice and of projects through which young people engage in making cultural diversity more than a fashionable buzz word. Youth activities and projects alone can

not stand against the dangers of irrational fear and hatred: public institutions and policies have an important role to play. The recommendations arising from the seminar provide useful suggestions and guidelines for actions and policies at both local and national level. They are intended first of all to be an inspiration and a reminder that we are all responsible for what we do and also for what we fail to do. In the face of that, it does not always matter if questions do not find an immediate and commonly voiced answer.

Acknowledgements

An activity that addresses Racism, Islamophobia, Romaphobia and Anti-Semitism is bound to be charged with emotional debates and controversial questions. To see clearly through it all, to become part of the discussions and yet to be able to preserve objectivity in order to be able to tell others about it is a very special art and talent. *Ingrid Ramberg* has succeeded in both of these areas in a way that was personal and real while being credible and faithful to the participants. We thank her for not giving up in the face of the difficulties which inevitably arose from her task.

Thanks are also due to the preparatory group of the seminar, the committed volunteers and their organisations, in other words all those who prepared for the programme and kept it on track:

Michael Privot, Forum of European Muslim Youth and Students Organisations,

Kélig Puyet, European Youth Forum,

Alexandra Raykova, Forum of European Roma Young People,

Mariam Yassin (Young Women from Minorities), Advisory Council on Youth

Sarah Eberle. Trainee at the European Youth Centre Budapest,

A big thank you also to the participants for their contributions to the programme and for volunteering. Without that the seminar and this report would not have become a reality.

Foreword

By the General Rapporteur

The seminar on *Islamophobia and its consequences on young people* was intended as a contribution to the combating of Islamophobia, by exploring political and educational action aimed at increasing understanding and respect for religious diversity among young people in Europe. I think the get-together over four days served the purpose very well! It brought together people who, in spite of different religious affiliation, could share the same views. It showed that all faiths could be embraced in very different ways. And at some points it illustrated that putting oneself in the shoes of somebody else and seeing things from the perspective of others is easier said than done.

I would like to thank all participants who contributed generously to my work, both by producing reports and through sharing more personal experiences and reflections. Thanks are also extended to Rui Gomes and Zsuzsanna Molnár at the EYCB. It is my hope that this report will serve its purpose by keeping the dialogue going and by promoting mutual understanding and respect among young people of all beliefs and origins.

Stockholm, Autumn 2004
Ingrid Ramberg

Conclusions

By the General Rapporteur

Suspicion, prejudice, ignorance, verbal and physical harassment … The seminar on *Islamophobia and its consequences on young people* brought to the fore the ongoing, systematic and totally unacceptable discrimination and marginalisation suffered by many European minority groups. Besides young Muslims, who are the main focus of the seminar, the situation of Jews, Roma and visible minorities was addressed with the same concern.

The participants at the seminar included representatives of youth organisations as well as researchers and administrators. Some participants came from official institutions such as schools or municipalities, the majority however came from human rights organisations or students' organisations. They belonged to different faiths and religious communities. They brought with them, from daily life and from their respective fields of activities, both the experience of having had their human rights violated and the experience of having fought for fair and equal treatment of all members of society. They all departed, I believe, better equipped to carry out the responsibility of being 'multipliers' or promoters of our conclusions, forwarding the discussions and the outcomes of the seminar in their own communities and areas of work.

Forming the future for individuals and for society.

What young people experience – what they are exposed to from others, as well as their own behaviour and attitudes – matters tre-

mendously. Like Ms Hadia Himmat said in her talk on the situation of young women: "Young Muslims, as every young person, are in the process of building their personality and identity. They are subject to many influences which come from outside and from different directions." What then, if the young people she referred to are constantly exposed to Islamophobic acts and attitudes? Hadia Himmat summarises the detrimental effects: Lack of self-esteem, of confidence and of a sense of belonging. Furthermore: as much as this matters on the individual level, it also helps shaping an entire generation's expectancies of life.

Discrimination is not something that people grow out of or that you easily recover from. This goes for the victims of Islamophobia, and it is equally true for the perpetrators. The prejudices that children are fed with during their upbringing have a very strong tendency to remain part of their worldview as adults. There is no guarantee, hence, that wisdom grows with age alone. Quite the contrary: once carved out, a person's sense of normality, of what can be expected from life, can not easily be changed.

The above statement makes the role of the perpetrator and of the prejudiced majority, all the more important. As we shall see in the following, this was also where the emphasis of the seminar was placed.

Majority, minority and the question of responsibility

Approaching the phenomenon of Islamophobia does not mean having Islam or Muslims per se as a first focus of interest. Instead it is centred around an attempt to analyse and understand *images, ideas and perceptions held by the majority*, on the minority. This perspective was elaborated by sociologist Vincent Geisser in his presentation. Using precisely the words image and idea, Mr Geisser underlined the importance of not mistaking the perceptions of the majority for being *real* portraits of *real* people(s). The unity of the European conception of self, he exemplified, was forged out in contrast with a constructed "Muslim Other." Images of course do get coloured by their historical contexts, but they tell us much more about the majority than about the minority.

The fact that Islamophobic representations of Islam or Muslims are the creations of the majority (as are Romaphobic representations of Roma or Anti-Semitic representations of Jews) means that the minority cannot be held responsible for their content. Nor can the minority shoulder the responsbility for change to come about. In a relation characterised by imbalance of power it is simply not possible to expect change to come from the less powerful side. Responsibility for this lies vith the perpetrators, not with the victims.

This may sound self-evident, but tendencies in the other direction did appear during workshop discussions. As one group wrote: "The group also felt that Muslims are partly to be blamed as they are not really able to project a right image of themselves." It may well be true that more could be done on the side of the Muslims as regards self-presentation. Or from somebody else's perspective. Still, this is an independent discussion that must never be related to the excusing of discrimination. One case of wrongdoing does not ever justify another.

The function of the seminar, being composed of minority representatives alone, was not to enter into direct dialogue with a non-present counterpart. Instead it was a gathering that enabled people to share and compare experiences, and on the basis of this discuss ways to promote understanding, respect and dialogue. Also it was an occasion that enabled people to feel part of an unquestioned normality, and to gather strength from this.

Fear beyond reason – or strategically exploited?

Ms Mariam Yassin, in her opening statement, described Islamophobia as fear of the unknown. The nature of this fear is furthermore explained if we go deeper into the notion of phobia, which stands for fear beyond reason, a strong and irrational reaction. Mr Geisser too, illustrated this, when he spoke about highways between the peaceful village and terrorism, between the Muslim next door and Bin Laden.

Mr Farid Abdelkrim, during his input on the situation of young men, made an important distinction between what he called individual and social pathologies. The former he exemplified by agora-

phobia, the latter by Islamophobia. Unless we make this distinction, he argued, we risk excusing Islamophobia as being a reaction of fear in the face of a threat perceived as objective. Society, concluded Farid Abdelkrim, must take action against this ill that afflicts many of its members and undermines the very foundations on which it is built.

That Islamophobia is not just a feeling, pure and simple, becomes clear also from the ways it is in fact reinforced and made use of. During discussions many participants were able to contribute names of parties and individuals involved in the exploitation of fear: the Vlaams Blok (expected to reappear under a new name after having been ruled racist by Belgium's High Court in November 2004) does it in a very rational and strategic way. Many others do it for populist reasons, not caring the slightest about consequences. And, unfortunately the list does not end with the ones that stand out as extreme, or as extremists. It has to include also the many mainstream politicians who, because of very minor or personal concerns, do not speak up when it is needed.

Interrelated issues shedding light on each other

Apart from Islamophobia, the seminar programme also highlighted other, related forms of racism and discrimination: Anti-Semitism, Romaphobia and racism against visible minorities. The presence of different perspectives brought forward more concretely the many faces of racism and the many directions it may take. Among the dimensions touched upon were:

- *Illegitimate accusations*. Parallel to having talked about how racism may be exercised in disguise – as in the case of many populist parties, the seminar also had reason to discuss what happens when legitimate political criticism is wrongly accused of being racist, and is, therefore, rejected. Both these risks were brought up in relation to the present situation in the Middle East. Unfortunately, the problems of communication were illustrated in that some of the discussions came to a deadlock, rather than leading deeper understanding. Another dimension of this topic is the wrongdoing it implies when people are forced into defend-

ing things for which they cannot be held responsible. To hold an individual European Jew responsible for the politics of Ariel Sharon is simply not acceptable. Of course it is equally unacceptable to hold any individual Muslim responsible for the acts of Usama Bin Laden.

- *Simultaneous discrimination*. Examples were brought up of situations where it is unclear if people are discriminated against on ethnic or religious grounds, or in fact on both grounds at one and the same time. The very difficult issue of double discrimination was particularly relevant to the working group on visible minorities. During her presentation, Ms Hazel Baird mentioned simultaneous discrimination as a special concern.

- *Pros and cons of minority rights*. In relation to this it is relevant also to mention the concept of minority, and the minority status of a certain group as a point of departure for defending the rights of this group. Safeguarding minority rights must never be done at the expense of anybody losing the right to take their place within the framework of mainstream society.

- *Social and economic factors*. The paramount importance of social and economic factors kept coming back in many of the discussions. Just to mention one example: If Roma children live in an area where there is no school, and if for the sake of poverty parents can not buy bus tickets, then ethnicity or culture must not be put forward as the explanation to why these children do not attend school regularly. As underlined by the European Roma Information Office. "the problems of the Roma originate in the antigypsism of the majority. /…/ Roma are put down to their 'habits'. Victims are made perpetrators, the behaviour of the majority appears to be some kind of self-defence."

- *The role of the media.* Participants were given quite a lot of input on the role and responsibility of the media. Even without intentional manipulation, insensitive reporting on seemingly trivial matters can promote racism, when multiplied across the media. Also, as was illustrated in an input by Mr Michael Privot, there is

a lot of stereotyped reporting on different groups and issues. The media image of Islam as an unchanging entity beyond time and space, was opposed by Mr Vincent Geisser, who instead underlined the importance of modern politics for the shaping of an equally modern form of anti-Muslim racism.

What the situation looks like throughout Europe

It goes without saying that Europe today is a very diverse continent and that the general conditions vary very much in different countries and regions. Equally, the lives of individuals may vary still more, out of choice, or necessity.

Dimensions of this diversity were highlighted throughout the entire seminar. An exploration into regional diversity, as described and discussed by the participants, formed the outline of an initial workshop. Eight different groups sat down to share experiences from their particular regions. The size of the minority groups, the history of societal change (including migration history and economic development) as well as the ideological fundaments of different states – all these were factors reported back on as being important.

The diversity of experiences and settings did not lend itself to any easily reached generalisations. In Poland for instance, with its comparatively small group of Muslims, invisibility in society was one issue brought up, partly because it created problems for converts finding people sharing not only the same belief but also a common language. In Turkey, with Muslims being in the absolute majority, discrimination was very much on the agenda, because of the secular nature of the state.

Further explorations into contemporary European diversity were heard in parts of different presentations. In particular Mr Vincent Geisser discussed in quite some detail the situation in four given countries: United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Spain and France. These four examples served as an elaboration of the thesis that "in the European Union we are all afraid of Islam, but not necessarily for the same reasons or in the same way," as Mr Geisser put it.

To what extent can hostility be explained?

As with any social phenomenon, establishing clear-cut relations between cause and effect is simply not feasible. The seminar, having departed from the notion of phobia, made it quite clear that there are no simple explanations for the issues raised. A seminar programme that made room for comparisons elaborating history, demography, social and economic situation, as well as politics and the role of the media, gives some indication of the level of complication. If the universal, all-explaining theory remains elusive, there were at least some facets that stood out as unquestionable in that they do play a role in how social relations develop.

An analysis of international research on racism and xenophobia (carried out by Swedish social psychologists Lange & Westin. *Ethnic discrimination and social identity*, 1981, is although not very recent still highly relevant) that combines findings and theories from different scientific disciplines and suggests the following three elements being particularly important for racism and xenophobia to arise or grow. 1) Unequal distribution of power and resources in society; 2) insufficient contact between different ethnic groups; and 3) insufficient self-esteem among individuals. By themselves or in combinations these factors influence processes in society.

Another, recent study on Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism in Sweden (Forum för levande historia, October 2004), has tried to establish central features shared by tolerant/intolerant young individuals in Sweden. Results show that boys are more intolerant, and that intolerance is more frequent in families with low education, in families living in less urbanised areas, as well as in families with only Swedish-born members. The survey shows little difference between attitudes towards Muslims and Jews (i.e. no marked post-Sept.11 effect). The majority of young people are positive in their attitudes; one in twenty holds markedly intolerant attitudes. On the other hand, as many as one in four are undecided in their attitudes.

These two examples, out of an innumerable number of possible studies, show clearly that "lack of information" is not the source of the problems we face, and, hence, that "information campaigns" are not the answer. The contents and working forms of the seminar too

suggest a much more complex response to a situation that involves very deeply the perceptions of both self and of others, as well as the concrete living conditions of all.

Practical response – what can be done?

Diversity is a reality beyond doubt or discussion; how then do we safeguard the rights of all members of society? And how do we promote co-existence and dialogue? These questions were at the heart of the presentation made by Mr François Sant'Angelo, deputy member of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance. He gave an overview of the Council of Europe's standards and instruments related to the fight against Islamophobia, with special emphasis on ECRI's action in this field.

The programme stated that participants should *explore political and educational action aimed at increasing understanding and respect for religious diversity*. One very practical way of promoting action against Islamophobia at home is by making use of ECRI's country monitoring reports and General Policy Recommendations, which possess the authority of an international human rights monitoring body composed of independent experts.

Another valuable resource is, of course, the network of European Youth Centres. By ways of arranging for people to actually meet and interact and also by ways of supporting the multiplicator factor through documentation and support for networking. Since two years ago, there is also *Compass – the Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People*. The far-reaching and very comprehensive experience poured into this manual has turned it into a well of wisdom; both for instant or limited support, as well as for deeper reflection. Approaching the topic of human rights by way of religion, a dimension not treated independently in *Compass*, the participants at the seminar on Islamophobia could even make a valuable contribution to the further development of this educational tool.

The comprehensive understanding of the education process that characterises the activities of the European Youth Centres is something apart from just disseminating facts and figures. It aims at really reaching the individuals involved, and at making individuals meet

and interact with one another. And it aims at highlighting not only symptoms but also society's real problems.

Diversity: a prerequisite for cohesion

Diversity is not a threat to cohesion, it is a prerequisite! The essence of this message, embraced by the United Nations and the Council of Europe among others, is of major importance when we want to understand problems and possibilities inherent in contemporary social processes. When and why is it that we place things on the positive or the negative side of the scale – as drawbacks, or assets?

There is, in Recommendation 1202 on religious tolerance in a democratic society (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 1993), a point that reads: "There is a recognisable crisis of values (or rather the lack of them) in present-day Europe. The pure market society is revealed as inadequate as was communism for individual well-being and social responsibility." If this is an adequate description, then the need and the willingness to put values high on the agenda, together with a vocabulary to carry the discussion forward, is a quality that Muslims, and other minority groups, could contribute to meet the said crisis.

If looked upon from this perspective, it also makes sense that "… cultural diversity can bring about a strengthening of peace, through knowledge, recognition and development of all cultures, whether they originate and still exist in Europe or originate from geographical areas outside Europe." (Declaration on intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention. DGIV/CULT/PREV(2004)1E)

Many of the directly contrasting oppositions that we meet on a daily basis, in for example the media, can be interpreted quite differently. Sometimes this may be in the sense that value has to be attributed anew, sometimes in the sense that the opposition itself vanishes.

- *Islam is not new in Europe.* Recommendation 1162 (1991) on the contribution of the Islamic civilisation to European culture, states that "Islam in its different forms has over the centuries had an influence on European civilisation and everyday life, and

not only in countries with a Muslim population such as Turkey". It also verifies the complexity of impulses, having more that one origin: "Current influence from, on the one hand, regions of predominantly Islamic culture, on the other through immigration from the wider Islamic world."

- *There is no clear-cut 'us' against a crystal clear 'them'*. A Muslim is not necessarily an Arab. "The Islamic world" is not homogenous but comprised of peoples and countries from Asia and Africa as well as the Middle East and Maghreb. Had the seminar had a global perspective, it should have had to consider the fact that the majority of Muslims in the world are not Arabs, and that they do not live primarily in the Middle East. The worlds largest Muslim population is in fact that of Indonesia. "Staying European" is a reasonable limitation of the scope – the seminar being a Council of Europe activity – but it does not exhaust the topic. Still, within this framework: who are the European Muslims, or Muslims in Europe? The paper by Mr György Lederer that was handed out to the participants recalls that statistically speaking, the majority of Europeans of Muslim origin or faith live in the Eastern part of the continent. The problem with misrepresentation, for example through hostile or oriental stereotypes has its explanation in "historical errors, educational eclecticism and the over simplified approach of the media are responsible for this situation." (Recommendation 1162 (1991) on the contribution of the Islamic civilisation to European culture.)

- *The relation between religion and society is an open question*. Extremism, for instance, exists in all religions; it does not constitute the essence of any one religion. As a consequence of this it is a misconception to see Islam only as incompatible with democracy and human rights. "Extremism is a human invention that diverts religion from its humanist path to make it an instrument of power." (Recommendation 1396 (1991) Religion and democracy.) There is also no one model of either a secular or a religious state. There is the Belgian principle of pluralism, the French principle of secularism. Also, predominantly Muslim Turkey is a secular state.

- *The diversity of experiences must be taken into account*. Not everybody shares the same experiences. This topic was discussed in relation to the Holocaust. Those atrocities occurred in Europe, but the memory is not an exclusively European matter. Learning about the Holocaust cannot be something that young people are expected to learn or not to learn about, depending on their background. Still, in an era characterised by migration, we cannot know, or foresee, what experiences are of relevance in a given situation. Memories from different times and places may interact in quite unexpected ways.

- *The right to self-definition must be defended*. There is no one way to be a religious person, be it as a Christian, a Muslim, a Hindu, a Baha'i or a Jew. One dimension of this is that I cannot know who you are until we start interacting and presenting ourselves to one another. The right to self-definition is a very important right that needs universal support and protection. (Compare also what is said in ECRI general policy recommendation No 3, Combating racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies, that "the name used officially for the various Roma/Gypsy communities should be the name by which the community in question wishes to be known). Compare also the warning not to "... single out minority cultures and communities and categorise and stigmatise them, leading to the association of certain types of social behaviour and cultural stereotypes with specific groups."
  (Declaration on intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention. DGIV/CULT/PREV(2004)1E)

Time to speak up!

The point of departure of the seminar was the alarming fact that many young Europeans are bereaved of their fundamental rights to live as equals in peace and dignity. Islamophobia, as it was underlined by Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni in her opening speech, is a violation of human rights and a threat to social cohesion.

As every activity at the European Youth Centre Budapest, this was a seminar with young people at its heart. Young people should have

the right to an identity (to be developed in an atmosphere of confidence); the right to a belonging (that is not having to hear that they should "go home…"); and the right to a belief in the future (including education, job opportunities, stability and security). All these rights are embraced in the International Bill of Rights. Still this does not mean that they are in any way safeguarded. These rights have to be fought for and defended.

I will never forget what Ms Oksana Chelysheva from Russia mentioned during a break. She is involved in building a Russian–Chechen dialogue of mutual confidence. Since this is not a very safe undertaking she has recently received advice and warnings: "You have a daughter – don't do this!" "But they don't understand," she said to me: "It is precisely for the sake of my daughter that I feel I have to engage! I have to think of the world in which I would like her to live."

In line with this Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni noticed how the best way to protect *our* rights is to defend the rights of *others*.

The same way of thinking is expressed also in a quote in *Compass*. Let me finish with the help of Pastor Martin Niemoller, and the following words of his:

> "… they first came for the communists; I did not speak because I was not a communist. Then they came from the Jews; I did not speak because I was not a Jew. Then they came to fetch the workers, members of trade unions; I was not a trade unionist. Afterward, they came for the Catholics; I did not say anything because I was a Protestant. Eventually they came for me, and there was no-one left to speak."

Background and objectives of the seminar

From the letter of invitation

In recent years, specifically since the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001 in the USA, many Muslim communities in Europe have experienced an increasingly hostile attitude towards them, characterised by suspicion, deep-rooted prejudice and in some cases physical and verbal harassment.

The Council of Europe's concern about Islamophobia dates back to before 2001 and is marked by ECRI recommendations and the "All different – all equal" youth campaign in 1995.

As a contribution to the combating of Islamophobia the Directorate of Youth and Sport and ECRI organised a seminar from 1-6th June at the European Youth Centre Budapest with the participation of youth leaders, youth workers, associations and policy developers. The seminar was a starting point for developing strategies and educational approaches aimed at increasing understanding and respect for religious diversity among young people in Europe.

Objectives

- To explore the concept of Islamophobia and its relevance in Europe today;
- To share and analyse the realities and manifestations of Islamophobia and discrimination faced by young Muslims across the Member States of the Council of Europe;
- To examine the perceptions and the manifestations of Islamophobia in today's societies;
- To collect examples of good practice in overcoming prejudice and promoting inter-community relations and inter-religious

co-operation with young people;

- To identify criteria for good practices on intercultural and inter-religious youth work;
- To identify strategies and approaches to prevent Islamophobia and its consequences on young people;
- To examine similar forms of racial discrimination and intolerance involving young people, such as: Anti-Semitism, Romaphobia and racism against visible minorities;
- To raise awareness of Islamophobia and mobilise institutions and organisations active against discrimination in the fight against it;
- To propose measures for political and educational action aimed at increasing understanding and respect for religious diversity among young people in Europe;
- To promote co-operation between Muslim and other young people and faith-based youth organisations in Europe;
- To explore the local reality in Budapest in relation to the topic of the seminar.

(*According to the wording of the invitation*)

MAKE GOOD USE of these days for learning, exchange and dialogue. Make use of them to create networks and common projects. I invite you all to speak up, participate and contribute.

Ms Antje Rothemund,
Executive Director of the European Youth Centre Budapest

THIS SEMINAR IS a first step – not the end. Together you will produce proposals with political meaning and implications. You will also discuss educational objectives and methods. For that end we have structured the seminar in three different steps:

- what are we talking about – examine the topic and terminology
- what is the reality like –exchange experiences
- where do we go from here – identify and propose good practice

Mr Rui Gomes,
Programme and training administrator, EYCB

Introductory Speech

Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni
Director General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport at the Council of Europe

I would like to thank you for participating at this seminar and contributing with your time, experiences and knowledge to a seminar that was long overdue.

Racism and racial discrimination are unacceptable forms of human rights violations anywhere and they remain a major concern for the Council of Europe. The forms that they take today are multiple but equally worrying by their persistence, their consequences and also their trivialisation.

Islamophobia – the fear of or prejudicing against Islam, Muslims and matters pertaining to them – is not a new phenomenon. But we know that today, and especially after September 2001 many Muslim communities in Europe are experiencing an increasingly hostile environment towards them, characterised by suspicion, deep-rooted prejudice, ignorance, and, in some cases, physical and verbal harassment. Muslim communities and people associated with Islam across several European countries are often exposed to acts of discrimination and hatred that may vary in degree and dimension but are based on a form of prejudice towards Islam as a religion or its practice. Whether it takes the shape of daily forms of racism and discrimination or violent forms, Islamophobia is a violation of human rights and a threat to social cohesion.

As a violation of human rights, Islamophobia can not be justified by the concerns about security or the fight against terrorism: "there is no sustainable security except through respect for human rights", as Amnesty International remind us in their 2004 report.

As you know too well, young people are directly affected in both

of the above ways. On the one hand, young Muslims are directly affected as the debates around the hijab ("Islamic headscarf") have shown; on the other hand, young people in general should be involved in preventing Islamophobia and in upholding the values of respect for cultural and religious diversity, equality and non-discrimination. This was the rationale behind the "All different – all equal" youth campaign against racism and intolerance and it remains the aims of the human rights education youth programme. This is, I believe, also the value and the sense of this seminar: to associate young people in the struggle for equality and human rights and against all forms of discrimination.

I am also pleased to notice that you will not be discussing Islamophobia alone, but looking at it in the wider context of racism and discrimination, in new and old forms, and especially taking into account the troubling resurgence of Anti-Semitic attacks, the persistent forms of Romaphobia and segregation of Roma communities. Indeed, this is not a seminar about Islam, nor is Islamophobia the concern of Muslims alone: we must combine our efforts to address all forms of discrimination: the best way to protect our rights is to defend the rights of others.

I also hope that this seminar will be an opportunity to learn from and with each other: the wide variety of experiences and practices around this room should allow for more effective and concerted action, beyond the prejudice that we are all subject to.

The Directorate of Youth and Sport – of which this European Youth Centre is an essential part – prides itself in working with youth 'multipliers': youth leaders and young people who put their learning at the service of other young people and youth groups. I have no doubt that the matters under discussion here are among those where we most need multipliers and role models to show that beyond religion, colour or ethnicity we are first of all human beings, equal in rights and dignity.

It is very much up to you to make the most of the opportunity of being together here to forge new alliances and develop projects that can be of example to others. The matters under discussion are of too great a dimension and importance to be left to organisations like the Council of Europe alone.

What we can assure you, from the Council of Europe's side, is that we'll keep these matters high on our agenda. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance has played a key role in drawing attention to Islamophobia, since way back in 2000, and I am confident that its country reports will continue to look closely into these matters. NGOs, including youth organisations, have also a role to play in this matter, and I encourage you to follow closely the work of ECRI, especially in as far as your country is concerned.

Within the Directorate of Youth and Sport, next year will be a very important year, especially because it marks the 10th anniversary of the "All different – all equal" European Youth Campaign Against Racism, Antisemitism Xenophobia and Intolerance. This seminar is very close to the spirit of that campaign and I am sure that your conclusions will be of relevance when assessing the new challenges faced by young people in relation to racial discrimination. They should also be reflected in the conclusions of the Conference of Youth Ministers of the Council of Europe, also happening in Budapest in 2005, which has matters of human dignity and human rights at the centre of its agenda. I should also mention that possibilities already existing within the Human Rights Education Youth Programme, including Compass (the manual on human rights education with young people), which we expect will be continued after 2005.

We can not compromise on human rights matters. I would like to encourage you to be firm, innovative and demanding in your conclusions and recommendations. But we all know that education has a central role to play in any programme against discrimination and prejudice. Education takes time and is never over, we have permanently to start all over again. Therefore, I would also like to encourage you to be persistent, patient and confident in the power of our actions and convictions. They may be less visible and impressive than the burning of mosques and synagogues or the segregation of entire communities, but they are stronger because they are just. And because we stand for them.

Opening statement

Ms Mariam Yassin
On behalf of the Advisory Council on Youth and Young Women from Minorities

The Advisory Council on Youth brings together 30 young people from NGOs, and forms one half of the co-management bodies of the Council of Europe's youth sector, alongside the government representatives. We are, within the Advisory Council, very keen to promote intercultural and inter-faith dialogue which can lead and strengthen a pluralistic Europe where diversity is always seen as a richness, and in this respect I know that you can count on our support and involvement in any actions that might be agreed on by all of us here at this seminar as a follow-up to our discussions.

Islamophobia and any kind of "phobia" originates from fear, ignorance, and non-acceptance of diversity: the fear of the unknown.

Discrimination is not acceptable in Multicultural Europe, a continent where people from different cultural and religious backgrounds are living together.

After September 11th, many Muslim communities in Europe have experienced increasingly hostile attitudes towards them. However, the prejudices and "fear of Islam" is deeply rooted. Signals of intolerance towards Muslims were present even before those tragic events.

Islamophobia is more "visible" today as the delicate international situation has increased the fear and rejection of Muslims. It has given many people an excuse to be anti-Islam and made their intolerance even more visible, in some cases, with physical and verbal harassments.

Suspicion, prejudices and intolerance are becoming an everyday reality for many Muslims in Europe.

How many of you, while applying for a visa, have received the

following answer: "Sorry, we are not giving visas to citizens from Muslim countries at the moment".

How many of you who look "different" or "Muslim" have been stopped at the airports or by the police for "security reasons"? Most of the time the suspicion starts from the way you look: the more you look different, maybe by wearing a scarf, the more you are more likely to be stopped. It is the duty of the Police Authorities to ensure our security. However, people should be approached equally without any sort of prejudices.

Young people are not excluded from the effects of Islamophobia: young Muslims are often victims of discrimination and social exclusion on different levels within society.

I will quote here a testimony, the voice of a young person. Young Women from Minorities-WFM has conducted research in four European countries (Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden) on the attitudes and expectations of young minority women towards Europe. Silvia, a young Somali woman, interviewed about religion and the related discrimination said: "I have been discriminated against by the way I dress because I wear the veil. That's why I often could not get a job ... I must be valued and accepted for who I am, not for how I dress, what language I speak, what's my religion ..." We all agree with Silvia, don't we?

The frequent episodes of discrimination, the image of Muslims portrayed in the media is negatively affecting young Muslims and it is especially challenging their participation in society and their sense of belonging: young Muslims should not be confronted with the dilemma: am I Muslim *or* European?.

Europe must be a place where everybody is respected and valued: this is, in my opinion, the basis of a pluralistic society and genuine democracy.

During this seminar, we will share experiences and will talk about challenges and difficulties. It is important that we go beyond and see how we can overcome these challenges. The solutions are many. Only by a strong commitment and co-operation between different faiths and communities can we build a peaceful interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding.

And in this respect, it is significant that this seminar is the result of a collaboration between two sectors of the Council of Europe,

namely the Directorate of Youth and Sport and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance – ECRI along with youth organizations.

More than 50 years ago the Council of Europe was created with a strong commitment: "NEVER AGAIN!". Hindus, Christians, Jews, Muslims … believers or not believers, WE – the inhabitants of our European House – must make sure that this is put into action every day. This can be done by our motivation and engagement to a cause: build and strengthen a Multicultural Europe where diversity is seen as a richness. It is fundamental that young people take part in this process, we are the present, not only the future. A better future starts from our commitment and active participation at a community, local, national and European level.

Before I finish, I would like to express my gratitude to the Council of Europe for the excellent work they are doing to make sure that we NEVER AGAIN face racism or other forms of discrimination and to ensure the eight hundred million citizens living in the Member States have a genuine and pluralistic democracy.

The Council of Europe and the work against Islamophobia: Existing instruments and standards

Mr François Sant'Angelo
European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

It is a special pleasure for me to be here today and to represent here at this seminar the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). This seminar is part of ECRI's endeavours to strengthen its cooperation with the Council of Europe youth sector – a cooperation which dates back to as early as the European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia Anti-Semitism and Intolerance "All different – all equal" in 1994.

My role here today is to give you a general overview of the existing standards and instruments of the Council of Europe with a special emphasis on ECRI's action in this field, since ECRI is the Council of Europe's monitoring body on issues related to racism, xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and intolerance.

I will also tell you a little bit about the situation of Muslim communities in Belgium, which I personally know very well as a member of the Belgian Centre of Equal Opportunities and fighting Racism.

The Council of Europe has the statutory mission to safeguard and realise the spiritual and moral values which are the common heritage of its member States. Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights enshrines the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and provides as follows:

> (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others

in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

In its first judgment on this subject (Kokkinakis, 25/05/93), the European Court of Human Rights affirmed: "As enshrined in Article 9, freedom of thought, conscience and religion is one of the foundations of a 'democratic society' within the meaning of the Convention. It is, in its religious dimension, one of the most vital elements that go to make up the identity of believers and their conception of life, but it is also a precious asset for atheists, agnostics, sceptics and the unconcerned. The pluralism indissociable from a democratic society, which has been dearly won over the centuries, depends on it." (para. 31).

This freedom entails, *inter alia*, freedom to hold or not to hold religious beliefs and to practise or not to practise a religion (see Kokkinakis v. Greece, judgment of 25 May 1993 and Buscarini v. San Marino, no.24645/94I). It extends to all religions and includes a prohibition of discrimination towards particular religions and religious communities.

The Court has frequently emphasised the State's role as the neutral and impartial organiser/supervisor of the exercise of various religions, faiths and beliefs and stated that this role is conducive to public order, religious harmony and tolerance in a democratic society. It also considers that the State's duty of neutrality and impartiality is incompatible with any power on the State's part to assess the legitimacy of religious beliefs (see Cha'are Shalom Ve Tsedek v. France, no.27417/95) and that it requires the State to ensure mutual tolerance between opposing groups (see Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia and Others v. Moldova, no. 45701/99).

Besides the European Court of Human Rights many other sectors of the Council of Europe are very actively involved in promoting the co-existence of various beliefs and creeds, including Islam. Noteworthy in this respect are the Recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Rec.1202 (1993) on religious tolerance in a democratic society and Rec.1396 (1999) on religion and democracy.

Special emphasis is also put on the strengthening of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, which is promoted through a variety

of measures and programmes within the Council of Europe among which the role of education in promoting religious tolerance is of particular importance as this seminar will seek to prove.

This was a short overview of Council of Europe instruments and standards which apply indiscriminately to all religions and religious groups, including Muslim communities.

But at present to the main topic of the seminar remains the combating of Islamophobia: an issue, which has featured prominently for many years in the work of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

In the past ECRI has repeatedly voiced its deep concern about the increase of religious intolerance and prejudice against minority Muslim communities in European countries and the inaccurate ways in which Islam is sometimes portrayed as a result of hostile stereotyping. At the same time ECRI has always underlined the important and valuable role and influence that Islam has and had over the centuries upon European civilisation of which it is an integral part, as was already underlined in the PACE Recommendation 1162 (1991) on the contribution of the Islamic civilisation to European culture.

But before going more into detail on ECRI's action in this field, please let me first introduce you briefly to the work of ECRI and set the context of ECRI's position with regard to the issue of combating Islamophobia.

ECRI IS AN independent human rights monitoring mechanism, set up within the Council of Europe in order to combat racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance at the level of greater Europe. It is composed of independent experts (one from each of the Council of Europe's member States) appointed on the basis of their in-depth knowledge in the field of combating these phenomena.

ECRI's assumption has always been that all member States want to tackle the problems of racism and intolerance that damage their societies. ECRI's aim is therefore to co-operate with governments and assist them in dealing with the problems they face by proposing practical, target-oriented and reasoned solutions as to how these problems might best be solved. It is an ambitious and challenging task, which ECRI tries to fulfil through a threefold programme of activities.

- First, through its country-by-country approach, ECRI carries out monitoring work on the situation as concerns racism and intolerance in each and every member State of the Council of Europe. This exercise, which is based on extensive research and on visits to the countries, includes the preparation of country reports containing specific recommendations addressed to individual governments.

- The second aspect of ECRI's programme of activities is its work on general themes. This type of work is not country-specific; it addresses all member States at the same time. It consists of the elaboration, circulation and promotion of documents (general policy recommendations, collections of good practices, research work, etc.) and of activities that focus on themes that are of particular importance in combating racism, xenophobia, Anti Semitism and intolerance. In the framework of this aspect of ECRI's work, for instance, ECRI has produced several general policy recommendations. One of these (to which I will come back in a few moments) is on "Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims".

- The third aspect of ECRI's programme is called "relations with civil society" and aims through the organisation of information sessions in member States and a close co-operation with NGOs, to ensuring that its anti-racism message filters down to the whole of civil society. It also aims to involve the various sectors of society in an intercultural dialogue based on mutual respect. This is important, as tackling racism and intolerance requires not only action on the part of governments (to whom ECRI's recommendations are addressed) but also the full involvement of civil society.

Now, with this background in mind, I will give you a short overview of ECRI's position and contribution to the fight against Islamophobia in Europe:

In its last annual report ECRI voiced its deep concern about the increase in prejudice against Muslim communities following the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001, both within society in general

and within certain public institutions. Such prejudices find their expression in various forms, such as acts of violence, harassment, discrimination, negative attitudes and stereotyping.

Physical attacks against individuals, such as the case of a Moroccan Muslim couple killed in the Schaerbeek district of Brussels by their neighbour in May 2002 or the killing of a young Moroccan Muslim in Borgerhout in November 2002, as covered in ECRI's last report on Belgium, are only the tip of the iceberg. There is worrying evidence, as ECRInoted in its recent reports on Belgium, Norway and Switzerland, that Muslims are the target of generalisations and stereotypes in many aspects of life and that in particular women wearing a headscarf are especially vulnerable in this respect.

Islamophobia is, however, not a new phenomenon and ECRI already addressed this issue some eighteen months before the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001 in its General Policy Recommendation no.5 on "Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims". In that recommendation ECRI proposes a wide range of measures that governments can take to counter discrimination and intolerance against Muslims. This includes, for example, that any unnecessary obstacles to the practice of their religion should be removed, such as administrative bars to the construction of places of worship, as also noted by ECRI in its last reports on Slovenia and Switzerland.

ECRI encourages member States to implement measures to actively combat any manifestations of Islamophobia, whether latent or overt. Such measures should include implementation of 'incitement to hatred' legislation and other relevant legal provisions. Particular attention should be paid to the elimination of discriminatory practices in the areas of access to citizenship, education and employment. In this context ECRI has repeatedly underlined the importance of ensuring that adequate anti-discrimination legislation is implemented. This was further outlined in ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination.

There is no doubt that discrimination in education, employment, housing or other areas of life are a direct consequence of the general negative climate of opinion as regards Muslim communities in many European societies. This negative climate of opinion is often

reinforced by the way Islam and Muslim communities are portrayed by certain areas of the media and by some politicians. ECRI considers therefore that these key opinion makers need to be made more aware of their responsibilities in this respect and seeks to encourage them actively to promote dialogue based on mutual respect between Muslim communities and society as a whole.

I SHOULD NOW like to say a few words about the situation in Belgium, which I personally know very well as a member of the Belgian Centre of Equal Opportunities and Fighting Racism:

In Belgium we have a large Muslim community (a little over 3% of the population). Most of its members are from Moroccan and Turkish immigrant backgrounds but many of them have Belgian nationality.

The manifestations of Islamophobia that we are facing in Belgium include attacks against mosques, physical attacks against individuals such as those I have already mentioned, harassment at work and elsewhere as well as instances of discrimination in job recruitment, especially the targeting of and discrimination against qualified young women who wear the Islamic headscarf and who are looking for their first job.

In some cases there seems to have been a shift from racism on economic or ethnic grounds to racism on religious grounds.

Islam has been recognised as a religion in Belgium since 1974 but it was only after 1999, when a Muslim Executive Council was elected, that the institutional framework was set up to ensure equality with the other recognised religions, in terms of providing subsidies for places of worship, and financing ministers of religion.

I would also like briefly to mention that the Belgian Centre of Equal Opportunities and Fighting Racism has launched a wide consultation process with the different sectors of civil society – about the issue of visible signs of religious and philosophical belief.

The Centre is also in the process of tackling another major task; which is the drive to get the national courts to interpret and to put into practice the new anti-discrimination act of 25 February 2003, which outlaws discrimination on grounds of religious or philosophical belief and which could serve as a legal basis for taking legal action against Islamophobic acts in particular.

Lastly, the Belgian Minister for Equal Opportunities has also given the Centre the task of fostering intercultural and inter-religious dialogue in order to strengthen social and cultural cohesion in Belgian society. This is also very much in line with what ECRI has constantly been recommending in the framework of its country monitoring work and its General Policy Recommendations, namely that intercultural and inter-religious dialogue based on mutual respect is essential in the combating of racism and intolerance in all its forms, including Islamophobia.

Islamophobia in Europe: from the Christian anti-Muslim prejudice to a modern form of racism

Mr Vincent Geisser
Researcher at the CNRS, *National Council for Scientific Research, Marseille, France*

In his brilliant study *Islam and the West. The Making of an Image*, the British historian Norman Daniel writes:

> "The earliest Christian reactions to Islam were something like those of much more recent date. The tradition has been continuous and it is still alive. There has been a natural variety within it, and the European West has long had its own characteristic view, which was formed in the two centuries or so after (the year) 1100 and has been modified only slowly since".

Further on in his book, he adds by way of conclusion: "Modern attitudes to Islam owe much to the Romantics, as well as the Middle Ages and the Enlightenment. One idea is so general that it seems worthwhile to single it out". Norman Daniel refers to a "war psychosis" which would still appear to affect the ways in which we perceive the Islamic life, culture and peoples in France, Europe and the rest of the world.

As Maxime Rodinson convincingly shows in his book *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, the image of Islam and of the *Muslim Other* also helped to forge the ideological and theological unity of western Europe. He writes:

> "It is striking how much the Christian world's attitude to the Muslim world as a political and ideological structure resembles that of today's western capitalist world to the communist world. In structural terms the analogies are obvious. In both cases two

systems confront each other, both comprising countries divided by rivalry but united by ideology."

A closer look at the work of these two prestigious authors, Norman Daniel and Maxime Rodinson, points to a collective feeling of fear and sometimes hatred of Islam, which predates the present day – the period after 11th September. This ties in with the idea of fascination with the "mystique of Islam", which refers to cultural and ideological perceptions that differ according to historical period and social environment, but has clearly been a virtually permanent feature of European societies since the 11th century. Incidentally, this fascination is not always expressed in conflictual and aggressive terms, but also by phases of dialogue, closer relations and even admiration for Islam and the Muslim world.

Hypothesis: the passionate debate surrounding the establishment of Islam as a fixed or sedentary component of western Europe should today be analysed from this viewpoint of *fascination with the mystique of Islam*, not necessarily from that of hate-driven Islamophobia. Yet the persistence of this fascination does not mean that it has not varied: we have moved on from the mediaeval Christian hostility to Mohammed – which Norman Daniel calls the "substance of the mediaeval canon" – and our European relationship to Islam has, as it were, become more secular. It no longer stems exclusively from theological and religious impulses and motives. Particularly since Vatican II, the ecumenical council of October 1965, the Catholic Church's approach to the other monotheistic religions (Islam and Judaism) has been based on openness and dialogue It should be remembered that the Vatican II Council paid tribute to Islam for the "truths" it has conveyed to humankind. This open approach to Islam is even more marked among Protestant churches.

I now come to the crux of the matter: fear of Islam in Europe today. Personally, I would prefer to speak of European variants of a common fear (of Islam), embedded in national traditions. As I said earlier, Europe's relationship to Islam and the Muslim world has become more secular. But it has also acquired a more national dimension, in the sense associated with the nation state: we are all afraid of Islam, but not necessarily for the same reasons or in

the same way. We have all inherited the "mediaeval canon" and the Christian hostility to Mohammed, but we have also followed different national paths, which largely explains why, contrary to appearances, we have experienced Islam and the Muslim presence in different ways.

I. *An ancient fear that forged our European identity*

"For a very long time the Christian West perceived the Muslims as a danger before they became a problem", remarks Maxime Rodinson. Norman Daniel likewise notes that "A communal mode of thought developed. Establishing great internal coherence, it represented the doctrinal unity of Christendom in its political opposition to Islamic society, a clear social function that correlated military and intellectual aggression".

In other words, in order to fully achieve its ideological and theological unity, western Europe needed to set itself a common enemy with clearly defined and highly specific features. That was how the anti-Mohammedan attitude developed:

- Mohammed as the figure of the Antichrist,
- Mohammed as the treacherous magician with a thirst for sex and blood,
- Mohammed as the *desolator*, the destroyer of the African and Eastern churches,
- Mohammed portrayed as a schemer and idolater.

In the 15th century the Ottomans still embodied a danger to the West, but the danger was more temporal than religious or theological. The emphasis was less on the "Muslim threat" than on the "political threat" (geo-political, as we would now call it) constituted by Ottoman power.

The 17th and 18th centuries even saw the emergence of a comparatively brotherly and understanding view of Islam and the Muslim world. The Enlightenment was chiefly obsessed by the fight against "Christian mediaeval obscurantism" and developed a "positive" image of Islam as a religion characterised by moderation, tolerance and open-mindedness. Islam tended to be regarded as a form of

deism, close to the spirit of the Enlightenment and far removed from any spirit of clerical domination. Muslims tended to be perceived as "ordinary men".

A pejorative – some would say regressive view of Islam and the Muslim world re-emerged in the 19th century with the invention of *homo islamicus*:

- Eurocentrism,
- the theory of the superiority of Western civilisation over Arab Muslim civilisation,
- a shift from tolerant to contemptuous universalism,
- a resurgence of the themes of Muslim fanaticism and Islamic obscurantism,
- an obsession with the return of pan-Islamism – at a time when Islamic terrorism was not yet on the agenda – and with the threat of a reconstitution of the Muslim theocratic state.

In some respects we have still not emerged from this relationship with Islam, which is fuelled less by theological fantasies stemming from religious rivalry (the Christian controversy surrounding Mohammedanism) than by universalism, a product of our modern politics. In this sense, Islamophobia is not a resurgence of the old issue of *Crusades vs Jihad* – though it retains occasional traces of theological argument – but a deeply modern form of anti-Muslim racism.

This brings me to today's topic: has anti-Muslim racism, or Islamophobia, progressed in European societies over the past few years, particularly since 11th September?

II. *European variations on a common fear: the weight of history and national tradition*

In my view, the re-emergence of a form of fascination with Islam in today's Europe reveals a range of relationships to it, which are specific to our national identities. In this sense there are not one but many forms of European Islamophobia, in spite of some similarities in representation, attitude and behaviour from one country to another.

The "European wave" of Islamophobia in the wake of 11th September

In all countries, according to the experts of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia and the RAXEN network, latent Islamophobia took advantage of the present circumstances to emerge in the practical form of physical attacks and verbal insults; these episodes and other signs suggest that the gap between minorities and the population as a whole remains considerable.

The Monitoring Centre's report distinguishes between three series of trends in the period following 11th September:

- the increase in acts of physical and especially verbal aggression;
- the changes in attitude and opinion among the European Union's population: anxiety, hostility, curiosity but also a desire for dialogue;
- attempts by certain parties, organisations and movements to make political and electoral use of the fear of Islam.

However, the situation differs markedly from one country to another. I would reiterate my initial hypothesis: in the European Union we are all afraid of Islam, but not necessarily for the same reasons or in the same way. From this perspective, I shall outline the situation in four European countries:

- *the United Kingdom*, which is often portrayed as an example of a communitarian society,
- *the Netherlands*, which were for a long time praised as a model of tolerance and wise management of cultural and religious pluralism,
- *Spain*, which tends to be regarded as having a special relationship to Islam on account of the "myth of El Andalus" and the *Reconquista*,
- and lastly *France*, which sometimes views itself as the "European model" of secularism.

Contrasting situations depending on the country's history of nation-building and its specific relationship to "Muslim" population groups

A. *United Kingdom*: two-way tensions (1.5 to 2 million Muslims)

The Monitoring Centre's report states that in the aftermath of 11th September the United Kingdom experienced a wave of Islamophobia in the following forms:

- acts of verbal and physical aggression, particularly against young women wearing the hijab or Muslim headscarf;
- minor acts of vandalism against mosques (graffiti and fire-bombs);
- explicitly Islamophobic messages circulated over the Internet and through e-mails and telephone calls;
- anonymous insulting letters sent to local and national Islamic associations;
- disproportionate media coverage of radical Islamist groups located in the United Kingdom;
- and lastly, a degree of political exploitation by marginal organisations such as the British National Party (BNP), which widely played on the imaginary danger of a war of civilisations in Britain.

Generally speaking, British authors who focus on minorities and migration issues are extremely critical of their country's political and institutional system, and speak out against a certain hypocrisy in the treatment of Muslim communities. Werner Menski of the School of Oriental and African Studies writes on this point: "Irrespective of their nationality of origin, Muslims in Britain are citizens without being so. This is equally true from their own point of view and from that of the British authorities". He adds further on: 'From a British point of view, the complex and layered historical context is probably less marked by the antagonistic image of the Crusades and Jihad and by the issue of Muslims' contribution to European culture than by the colonial experience of the subjection of non-Christian popula-

tions and the marginalisation of their rights, religion and cultures". The effect of this context is to generate among British Muslim communities what he calls a strategy of minimal contact with the state: "a significant number of British Muslims have thus developed and fashioned a strategy of minimal contact with the state. They live in Britain but in their own world, over which they have a much greater hold".'

B. *The Netherlands*: the pluralist model in crisis (500,000 – 1 million Muslims)

According to the Monitoring Centre's experts, the Netherlands is by far the EU country most seriously affected by Islamophobia and Arabophobia in the wake of 11th September. These racist attitudes mainly took the form of:

- acts of verbal and physical aggression against young women wearing a headscarf;
- acts of vandalism against Muslim places of worship and schools;
- political exploitation of the fear of Islam, which was much greater than in the United Kingdom or France: two political parties, the Populist Party and the New Nationalist Party, extensively played on the imaginary fears of Islamicisation.

Regarding the situation in the Netherlands, the Monitoring Centre's report refers to the mass hysteria that swept the country, which may seem surprising for a country traditionally presented as a model of tolerance and pluralist management. Yet this mass hysteria is nothing new. As early as 1995 Professor Van Koningsweld of the Faculty of History of Religion, University of Leyde, pointed out that "over the past few years, especially since the Rushdie affair, Dutch society has seen the rise of an anti-Muslim discourse whose themes are regularly exploited by politicians and intellectuals. This discourse is coupled with various forms of social, economic and racial discrimination and a growing number of acts of verbal and physical violence targeting members of ethnic minorities in general and Muslims in particular /…/. The attraction of the anti-Islamic line of argument would seem to derive mainly from the fact that it provides its supporters with a socially acceptable response to accusations of racism".

The situation is fairly similar in other northern European coun-

tries, particularly Denmark, where the wave of Islamophobia seems to have become entrenched. The crisis in the model of the welfare state based on the pursuit of a fairly homogenous society (in cultural, social and economic terms) seems to be producing rather clear effects on collective attitudes: the Norwegian journalist Nina Dessau, a specialist in migration issues, talks of the institutionalisation of racism in Denmark and Norway and of an increase in administrative harassment of Muslims, with attempts to introduce covert forms of national preference in connection with marriage and a number of social rights.

C. *Spain*: islamophobia reflecting "standard" xenophobia, but a change since the Madrid terrorist attacks (250,000 – 500,000 Muslims)

Contrary to widespread belief, Spain did not experience a growing wave of Islamophobia in the aftermath of 11th September. I would describe it as a more or less "middle-ranking" country in terms of Islamophobia in Europe:

- no noticed increase in acts of verbal or physical aggression against Muslim women wearing the headscarf,
- no attacks or acts of vandalism against mosques.

According to the authors of the report, xenophobia has pursued its normal course and has not been heightened by the tragic events of 11th September (pacifist demonstrations were held at the time of the second Gulf war). The report in fact refers less to Islamophobia than to "pre-existent ethnic xenophobia".

These comments by the Monitoring Centre experts are confirmed by Spanish specialists in migration issues. In Spain the Muslim issue might be summed up as follows:

- Owing to the experience of regional self-government, there is no French-style republican and Jacobin dogma (the debate on secularism is less impassioned than in France). On this point I quote Miguel Angel Moratinos, former Director General of Co-operation Policy for Africa and the Middle East: "As a result of the Spanish political system, the monarchy, the country's pseudo-federal structure and its self-governing communities, the impassioned debate seen in France on the nation state secularism

and secular education is diluted here into central government's relations with the self-governing regions and with other types of community and association of various origins".

- Consequently, in spite of the considerable weight of history, the country's relationship to Muslims is still largely determined by the relationship to immigrants and foreign workers; although the word "El Moro" is often used, it does not necessarily have religious connotations, as if the Reconquista still underpinned Spanish people's imagination with regard to Muslims. As Antonio Izquierdo Escribano, Professor of Political Science at the University of Madrid, points out: "There is no entrenched, stubborn, systematic prejudice against Muslims: this is because immigration started only recently and the population has very little contact with immigrants".

D. The case of *France*: the seal of republican ambivalence, which might spread across Europe (2 to 3 million Muslims)

The case of France is particularly relevant, in my view, because the ambivalence of its relationship to Muslims of French nationality, which is as yet a distinctive feature of France, it might well spread to most of the EU countries.

1. Strong support and encouragement from central government to highlight and institutionalise the Muslim presence in France:

- national institutionalisation: the CFCM (French Council for Muslim Worship), official speeches,
- local institutionalisation: the CRCM (Regional Councils for Muslim Worship), closer relations between Muslim associations and local authorities, establishment of new places of worship,
- institutionalisation in social terms: French people's curiosity about and fascination in the ways of Islam.

2. The weight of the colonial legacy: security-oriented approach and implicit definition of a threshold up to which French society can tolerate Islam:

- an ideology of emancipation;
- a somewhat uncomprehending attitude to the practice of Islam;
- a tendency to infuse ideology into the debate on secularism by

focusing on Islam;
- the issue of Muslim women, a "fantasy within the fantasy".

3. The controversial issue of the status of women: hijabophobia?

Why does French society focus so strongly on young women wearing the Muslim headscarf? Islam produces fantasies and Muslim women are in a sense the "fantasy within the fantasy", associated with three imaginary conceptions of them:

- erotic: Muslim women as sexual objects and objects for subjection,
- exogamous: Muslim women titillate our marital imagination,
- assimilationist: Muslim women as a channel for integration.

Muslim women associated with erotic fantasies. The prevailing vision of Muslim women is a dual one, with women as "objects of desire and pleasure" on the one hand and "subjected, cloistered victims of the domination of male Muslims" on the other. Precisely, however, young French women who wear the headscarf contradict this erotic fantasy since they reject this split view of Muslim women: they are neither objects of pleasure nor submissive young women.

Muslim women associated with exogamous fantasy. The ban on Muslim women marrying a non-Muslim man titillates our marital imagination. We uphold the idea that to bolster our "republican model" we need to smash endogamy and liberate Muslim women from this religious prohibition by appropriating them. A woman of Muslim culture married to a non-Muslim tends to embody the standard of republican emancipation.

But what precisely do the young women wearing the headscarf tell us? "We are French, assimilated and integrated, but we want to marry Muslim men". And that is perceived as betraying the republic.

Muslim women associated with assimilationist fantasies. In our republican fantasy world, the assimilation of the "Muslim natives" depends first and foremost on women:

- they achieve better at school and at work,
- they are gentler and more law-abiding,
- they are part of a process of social emancipation,
- they are the channels for modernising this new barbarian world of the "French suburban ghettos".

Altogether young French women who wear the Muslim headscarf meet with complete incomprehension, since they essentially tell us, "I am French, I am socially and culturally integrated, but I want to be able to assert my religious nature in public".

Conclusion: "cold tolerance" of Islam at the same time as many-sided integration into European society.

- The Muslim presence is increasingly recognised as a fact of European life and no longer as the mere expression of radical otherness;
- "Muslims" are now fully fledged players in European societies and their right to live their spiritual life and practise their religion is accepted;
- Islam is in the process of being institutionalised in Europe:
  - in terms of religious practice (the European Fatwa Council),
  - in cultural terms (development of associations and forums),
  - in the media (ethnic community newspapers, websites and radio stations),
  - in commercial terms (the "halal" business).

Nevertheless, the persistence of tension, friction and a form of "cold tolerance" with regard to Islam and Muslims underscores the need to revive the spirit of the Enlightenment and a liberal conception of secularism.

The Muslim presence is speeding up the emergence of a new Europe-wide opportunity for dialogue between the different spiritual approaches, encouraging us to reflect on our own beliefs and practices and on the position of religion in democratic and pluralist societies.

Islam in the Media. A pathway to Islamophobia?

From a presentation by Mr Michael Privot
Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations

As Mr Michael Privot said when introducing his presentation, his focus was on images and texts from the press. Other media (Internet, tv, radio, cinema …) had not been taken into account but could, according to Michael Privot, be approached with a similar frame of reference. The presentation gave a thematically based overview of stereotypes as reflected in photographs, other illustrations and text in the press.

Islam in general. The media distortion of the look towards Islam was not born yesterday. As early as in 1982, the arrival to power of Mr. Kadhdhafi was read according to an awakening of Islam illustrated by a troop of horsemen, with drawn swords and a green banner in the wind, throwing themselves into an imprecise reconquest. The "Islam and violence" duality was already there.

Another topic is the famous "Islam – politics" relationship. One magazine even sees a continuum from the Prophet Muhammad to Bin Laden: an ultra-reducing vision of a constant interference of Islam in politics. Conclusion: Islam has been, from the very beginning, completely irreconcilable with modernity.

In a metaphor "The Islamic belt of the world" is burning its belly for today there would only be conflicts in areas Muslims are living in, from Kashmir to our sympathetic high-rise/dormitory suburbs.

From there on, the bias in the presentation of conflicts: when one speaks in a non-specialised article about intercommunity violence in Kosovo, the text is illustrated by a picture of a destroyed Orthodox church, although every community suffered identical humiliations.

Is there only Muslim violence in this area?

And in the fanaticism department, the "Muslim Brotherhood" that cannot be ignored: 'tentacular sect', 'fundamentalist society', all terms are used to make it the paragon of obscurantist, anti-modern and anti-Christian Islam. How are we to talk about an organisation that most journalists do not know anything about?

Finally, from Alger to Tehran, the great cliché of the media reification of Islam and oriental populations: the (Arab, Iranian, Islamic ...) masses. There are no individuals gifted with reason in that part of the world, but indomitable and unpredictable masses one has to be wary of. Any attempt at a more complex analysis of the situation is thus avoided.

WOMEN. Masses, women, Islam, black colour, exaltation and Islamism: a detonating cocktail to be sure not to go beyond prejudices and ready-made representations ...

Some see a danger while other good consciences are surprised ... How can one be a Belgian citizen, even royalist, and wear the headscarf? How many false representations are still to be broken down?

The unavoidable in feminine Islam: either fundamentalist or ecstatic (and thus fanatic or mentally perturbed). When will we see peaceful representations of the pacific day to day Islam?

MEN. Let's pass to the men and more particularly to Osama: from out of context quotations in 2001 to the extreme difficulty to portray him as the great villain (cf. the smile) ... or how to diabolise the public enemy number 1 when his picture does not lend itself to the game?

Muslim men and their photogenic bottoms! From desert to mosque, from past to present: the appeal for the "bums in the air" Islam has never been denied! But what can be the meaning of a religion compelling you to breathe the dust?

CULT AND RELIGION. One can wonder about the fate of other religious minorities in the Union. "Jewish AND Belgian"... Would we imagine in a big daily newspaper the title "Christian AND Belgian"?

Let's conclude with another representation of the religious people

in the media: the illuminated or the ecstatic. We have already seen it concerning Muslim women, but nobody can escape it: the extremist Jew and of course the Afro-Americans or the Africans. How can one escape from tendency to trancelike states when one has black skin? From the Candomblé ceremonies in Brazil (as shown here in a non specialised article on religion) to the Gnawa of Mauritania, to the Pentecostal church.

It seems that there is nothing but trance in religion … Thus no rationality, thus no "modernism" and thus only obscurantism … And to parody Montesquieu who was wondering "How can one be Persian?", seeing all this, one can legitimately wonder "How can one be a believer?" or even "How can one be Muslim?"

On the origin of images

"I began the day listening to all the talk about Islamophobia feeling quite overwhelmed. I had this fear, somewhat irrational perhaps, that Muslim women were oppressed – this is the image portrayed by the media. I have always thought that the wearing of the scarf was something which is enforced by Muslim men. Perhaps the reason for my belief is that, in Ireland, when we wanted to set up "girl guides" we had to do it through the men. It looks like the Muslim men own the Mosque, and the women only get to use it when the men are otherwise occupied. I have always worried about Irish Catholic women marrying Muslim men for that reason.

Then I hear the Frenchman (Vincent Geisser) saying that in France they want the Muslims to change in order to integrate. This suddenly made me feel very angry. It reminded me of my Irish history. When Ireland was occupied by the British we were not allowed to practice our Catholic religion. We were oppressed in every way. Protestants took over our country and took away all our land and sold our crops to enrich themselves, leaving the Irish to live on potatoes alone, and hence causing the famine when the potato crop failed. Our religion became very important to us. I think because it was part of our culture and we had to fight for our freedom and win back our independence.

I think in order for the politicians, i.e. English imperialism, to win the English citizens' agreement on the oppression of the Irish and the demonization of Irish Catholics was used, and is still used today in Northern Ireland. It is made to look like a religious war, when in fact it is political."

Personal reflection by Ms Dympna Smith

Working groups on manifestations, causes, and factors of Islamophobia

Objectives of the Workshop

- to present the situation of the Muslim communities in the countries represented
- to describe the forms and the importance of Islamophobia in the region
- to look at the possible causes of Islamophobia
- to detect common aspects in the region
- to make a brief recommendation in preventing Islamophobia in the region

Hungary and Poland

Participants: Annamária Nagy, György Lederer, Dominika Blachnicka
Rapporteur/chairperson: Dominika Blachnicka
Facilitator: Maciej Wasyluk

Summary of the discussions. In both countries, the Muslim community is small if compared to other European countries (Poland: approximately 10 thousand Muslims out of a population of 39 million; Hungary: around 4 thousand out of 10 million inhabitants).

The communities are not that visible in either country, so there is no big interaction within society on an individual level and the community is not used or referred to in political debates as problematic.

However, Islamophobia is visible in media headlines, especially in Poland which is more involved in the war in Iraq. For both countries, the media was cited as the main factor in the rise of Islamophobia, generating negative feelings towards Muslims.

The following causes of Islamophobia were mentioned:

- Lack of basic knowledge about Islam and Muslims
- Media discourse – the language and images
- Involvement of Poland and Hungary in the war in Iraq
- No interaction on a personal level of Muslims with non-Muslims

Bulgaria, Russia, Moldova, Ukraine

Participants: Oleg Guzic, Tatiana Sirbu, Svetlana Nikolova, Oksana Chelysheva, Tounkara Aliou
Rapporteur/chairperson: Oksana Chelysheva

Summary of the discussions. The group discussed the situation in Bulgaria, Russia, Moldova and Ukraine. Intolerance is manifested in these countries but at different levels and it is manifested in different ways.

The situation seems quite mild in Bulgaria where there are many more cases of Romaphobia compared to Islamophobia.

As for the post-Soviet republics the situation is different there. However, there is one common point: Islamophobia in these countries is caused mostly by political and economical factors. It is the mass media that are used as a way to impose the negative attitude concerning people practising Islam to the general public. Russia seems to face the most crucial problems as the situation has worsened there over the last five years. Minorities suffered from verbal humiliations five years ago whereas at present there are more and more cases of physical abuse that occasionally result in murder. All minority groups become targets of violent attacks.

The situation in the Ukraine is affected by the so-called "war on terrorism" the Russian authorities are carrying out in the North Caucasus. As a result, representatives of some Muslim countries are not allowed to enter the Ukraine.

In Moldova there are a few signs of Islamophobia. It is the police who are likely to stop people from Africa or Arab countries under the pretext of checking their documents. There is one more manifestation of Islamophobia: the unofficial prohibition of selling kebabs in public, as the authorities state that they are not healthy.

South Eastern Europe (The former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia, Turkey)

Participants: Ljubica Nikolic, Zijad Imamovic, Hasan Idrizi, Suzana Ricea, Fatma Nur Zengin, Rabia Mercimekci Cemrek, Florin Dorian Dascalescu
Rapporteur/chairperson: Florin Dorian Dascalescu
Facilitator: Alexandra MacRae

Summary of the discussions. Firstly, we stated that South Eastern Europe is a unique region, mainly because of the indigenous Muslim population – very old Muslim communities, dating from the Middle Ages and being linked to the Ottoman invasion in the area.

The attitude towards the Muslim communities can hardly be defined as "Islamophobia", it doesn't seem the best term to use in this context and it's not characteristic for this region. Still, we decided to use the term, being aware that we're talking about a particular form of Islamophobia (a "soft" one).

Islamophobia has mainly historical roots, generated by the Turks invasion in the region in the Middle Ages. The image of the Turks as cruel invaders or conquerors was used, for example, in the former Yugoslavia for political aims or in order to generate ethnic divergences.

We observed the different attitudes towards the Muslim communities in the area, going from ethnic tolerance and coexistence to discrimination and hate.

Therefore, in Romania (which has a very small Muslim community, under 1%) and FYR Macedonia (40-50 % of the population) the Muslims' rights are well protected, at most levels: politically (they

are represented in the national Parliament, basic rights guaranteed in the Constitution, etc), educationally (free access), culturally (they have their own TV shows, broadcastings, cultural spectacles. etc).

In Serbia and Bosnia the situation is different, and was really severe during the Balkan war. In Bosnia, even if the present situation is relatively calm, Muslims (representing around 50% of the total population) sometimes face discrimination or hostile attitudes in some regions. In Serbia, Muslims (representing 19% of the population, 29% with the Kosovo region) usually hide their religion, in order not to have to endure negative attitudes.

The main cause for these negative reactions seems to be, apart from historical causes, ignorance concerning the Islamic values and way of life.

A very interesting side of Islamophobia can be met in Turkey, a country with 99% Muslim population. The discrimination is faced by those women, as practicing Muslims, who are allowed to wear a headscarf neither in private nor state funded universities or who regularly face discrimination in the labour market. The "modernists" banned the headscarf in the universities between 1980 and 1987 and from 1999 until the present. Thus, veiled students were expelled from the higher education system because of their religious convictions, and this measure encouraged a degree of emigration towards Western Europe.

Conclusions / Recommendations. In order to assure ethnic tolerance and to prevent Islamophobia we must raise awareness of the true Islamic values and the Muslim religion. A sincere and deeper approach to Islam will definitely prevent Islamophobic reactions and ethnic intolerance.

Taking into consideration the historical roots and the conflict between Turks and Christians in the region, we also suggest a fair approach and a scientific discourse on historical matters (especially in the educational system), not using historical facts for political propaganda.

Israel and India

Participants: Khorrum Anis Omer, Ayelet Roth, Amit Kossover
Rapporteur/chairperson: Khorrum Anis Omer
Facilitator: Mariam Yassin

Summary of the discussions. The group, though small, consisting of only four people had a very interesting and long debate about Islamophobia and the general conditions of Muslims in the respective countries of the participants. Though the countries represented i.e. Israel and India contain a very large number of Muslims, they have big problems of discrimination and atrocities against Muslims as they are a minority in those countries.

India: In spite of the fact that India has approximately 150 million Muslims, The condition of Muslims is very bad in comparison to other major faiths in India including main stream Hindus, and much smaller numbers of Sikhs, Christians and even the miniscule numbers of Bahai's or Parsi (Zoroastrian's).

There is a long history of communal riots in northern India in which mostly Muslims were on the receiving end. Even though the constitution of India gives equal rights to all Indians regardless of their beliefs and race the general practice is not the same. The fundamentalist Hindu organisations constantly try to create problems for Muslims and other minorities like Christians by spreading hatred in the general public about these minorities.

The situation today is much better that what it was 10 years ago and credit for this goes to the national media (both electronic and print) and to many secular minded Indians. But there is still a long way to go. Hopefully the new elected government will take many more effective steps to counter the partisan policies of the previous fundamental Hindu government.

Israel: Even in Israel, as per the law of the land, all its citizens are equal but the situation of Muslims is far worse than that of Israeli Jews. There is widespread discrimination in many forms. The Muslims have much fewer job opportunities and in the name of

security many government jobs are not accessible to them. Even in the private sector since the whole economy is controlled by Jewish people, they prefer to employ their own people instead of Muslims, who are left to do menial jobs which most people from the Jewish community will not do.

Even in the field of education, in many good schools Muslim children would automatically be turned away and refused admission without any valid reason being given. Hence, the Muslim population is left largely uneducated as there are not many educational institutions that are open to its students.

Conclusions / Recommendations

- The isolation and lack of knowledge about Islam and Muslims created a fear that if Muslims are stronger financially and socially they will take over and will try to oppress other communities 'as Islam preaches'.
- The group felt that it is very much a political issue also as in the recent history when Western governments rightly or wrongly picked up state enemies to divert the attention of their general population from their own problems. There was always this creation of *bad guys* who were labelled enemies of the developed world. Presently, the Muslim community and its so-called leaders (which they are certainly *not*) like Saddam Hussain and Bin Laden etc. and the likes of them, including their respective countries, are the favourite target of some Western countries.
- The group also felt that Muslims are partly to be blamed as they are not really able project the 'right image' about themselves and Islam in their respective countries, They rather segregate themselves from main stream communities and this projects them as antisocial and in turn creates negative images in the eyes of members of majority communities.
- Another aspect is the role of the Media which tries to sensationalise every issue forcommercial gain. The recent acts of certain so-called Muslim terrorists in the USA and other parts of the world added much more fuel to the fire which was already burning and the image of bad or evil which was already used by certain Western governments about Muslims got a stamp of approval for many people who are not aware of the true aspects of Islam.

Western Europe

Participants: Kaaoiss Najatte, Francois SantAngelo, Maria Errafiq, Corinne Grassi, Samia Hamdiken, Touria Arab, Nedzad Cengic, Mohamed Beldjehem, Aicha Tarfi
Rapporteur/chairperson: Maria Errafiq
Facilitator: Corine Grassi

Summary of the discussions

- Freedom of expression (religious) – lack of respect for fundamental rights
- Discrimination in the labour market, both when hired and fired
- Pictures prefered by the media
- Denounciation of the other – view of the other – colonialism/paternalism/essentialism
- Processes of victimisation and accusation
- Banalisation / anti-globalisation
- Extreme right – differences in treatment – reactions of the state – the main forces in society that hide fundamental rights
- Israelo-Palestinian conflict
- Belgian principle of pluralism, French principle of secularism – legal tools not being made use of
- School programs not adapted to the change of society
- Lack of self esteem
- Sterile dialogue – monologue

Conclusions / Recommendations

- How to find strategies to counter-balance the manipulation of the media – the creation of an alternative media or media control
- The need to review pedagogics and school manuals
- Bring forward contributions of Arabic/Muslim civilisations
- Strong and clear sanctions on all levels or against employers for discrimination when hiring and firing. Higher fines. Change in mentality, improved sensitivity, – work or rendering contentious – realisation of banalised act of racism
- Community work to provide the population with the necessary tools to fight all forms of discrimination/intolerance/disrespect

Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands

Participants: not named in the report
Rapporteur/chairperson and facilitator:
not named in the report

Antwerp is the 'most racist area of Europe' according to 'Eurobarometer'. In the last three years, there were four Muslims killed in racists attacks. The right wing party Vlaams Blok gets one out of three votes, the voters represent the whole society. Islamophobia is institutionalised at all levels: educational, housing, the job market, the police and media. Attacks mainly against Moroccans. Muslims are an easy target, 60% of them are unemployed. According to the media and politicians 'Muslims equal criminality'. The traditional political parties take up the racist discourse in order to attract voters. The few Muslim organizations that exist are subsidized and don't dare to criticize the government. For 2 years an emancipatory grass-roots based organisation "the Arab European league" has been attracting many Muslims in order to stand up for their rights, but is highly stigmatised by the media. But for the first time young Muslims feel represented and are interested in politics.

In police reports they use "zero tolerance towards Moroccans". Now they call it just 'zero tolerance', but it is still against Moroccans. The case of Flanders resembles that of the Netherlands. Except in the Netherlands Islamophobia is still more hidden. The main political parties use Muslims as alibis to attract votes, but do not represent them: 'alibi Ali'. After 9/11 the right wing movement of Pim Fortuyn gained much support. After his death, the issues he raised were taken over by traditional parties but covered in a more democratic discourse.

Germany used to be hypertolerant, but after the fall of the Berlin Wall there was a tendency to forget about the past, and a policy of "protection" towards immigrants arose. There is Islamophobia but it is not as institutionalised as in the Netherlands and Flanders.

In Switzerland the situation depends on the canton. The Italian-speaking cantons are not so much affected by Islamophobia, but

there have been some cases of verbal and physical attacks. The mass media is neutral but people are influenced by Italian mass media which is highly Islamophobic. In the German-speaking cantons Islamophobia is not much of an issue: Xenophobia is. The French-speaking cantons are influenced by politics in France. The issue of the *hijab* is discussed at a social and political level.

N.B: Anti-Semitism is different from Anti-Zionism.

Causes

- Situation in the Middle East
- The failure of integration policies. Integration has always been perceived as assimilation, which is discriminatory. Integration comes from both sides.
- Muslims are an easy target, because they are not well structured and the unemployment rate is high. They are mostly in the low economical/income classes.
- If you don't use secularism as an ideological framework, you are perceived as undemocratic and unmodern. Secularism is the rule.

Recommendations. The issues raised by Islamophobia should be discussed, but on an equal level. Both sides of a discussion deserve to be heard and should have the same weight. Paternalism should not be allowed. Emancipatory forces come from within the community and should be given the opportunity to develop.

Belgium, Spain and Italy

Participants: Raquel Amaranta Santos Perez,
Juan A. Maza Amodeo, Antonella Aduso,
Giulia Micciche, Fabio Di Nunno, Michael Privot
Rapporteur/chairperson: Fabio Di Nunno
Facilitator: Michael Privot

Summary of the discussions. Each member of the group talked about some personal or working experiences. We decided at first to make a list of the areas where there could be forms of Islamophobia. Together we identified the following areas:

- Social
- Political
- Working
- Educational
- Cultural and linguistic

Now some examples

In Belgium a Muslim man with a long black beard was stopped several times by police … he is a doctor.

In Italy a right-wing political party had a manifesto before the elections against Muslims and Arabs in Italy.

In Spain after 11th March people believed that Islam and Muslims were responsible for the terrorist attacks in Madrid and many forms of sanction started towards Arab people based on a fear of terrorism. Still in Spain the new government has proposed a law to control the activities occurring in mosques, fearing terrorist attacks.

In Italy, a young Arab was stopped by police while filming with a video-camera at the railway station. They thought that he was filming the areas of the station to plan a terrorist attack. In Torino, Italy, after 11th September 2001, some uninvited people entered the house of the Imam and harassed those within.

We agreed on the following causes

- Broad ignorance of Muslims and Islam
- Lack of contact between different religions and communities
- Lack of focused education on the matter
- Fear of terrorism in recent years
- Prejudice
- Bad things about Islam are always stressed, forgetting the contributions and the links between our cultures
- Some Muslim communities are not open and are perceived as 'closed' to social contact and social intervention

Ireland and the UK

Participants: Alexandra MacRae, Hazel Baird, Rebecca Williams, Dymphna Smith, Fortune Pouela, Esa Bateman and Henrietta Szovati
Rapporteaur/chairperson: Henrietta Szovati
Facilitator: Kélig Puyet

Summary of the discussion. Surprisingly, the group had very diverse views even though all participants were from so-called Non-Continental Europe. We shared our experiences about Muslim communities living in different parts of the United Kingdom as well as our ideas about Islamophobia. Ireland proved to be a country where there are a lot of issues around Islamohobia and Islam in general being rather different from the rest of the UK.

At the end of our discussion we tackled some more controversial issues (such as the veil, involvement of women in community projects …etc), nevertheless we came up with some constructive points.

When talking about hidden and/or open forms and manifestations of Islamophobia we started our discussion by writing a list. However, after a while we realized that they are actually not very far from each other. In fact, we decided not to make any differentiation between the two because they are interchangeable. It was also noted that attitudes etc. hidden at a certain stage can later become an open form of discrimination.

Open forms of discrimination

- The rise of the British National Party (BNP) – which was sidelined until recently
- Increase in stop and search tactics by the police
- Sensationalist media coverage
- More physical attacks and verbal abuse
- Racial attacks and Arabizing Islam

Hidden forms

- discrimination in obtaining employment
- remuneration for work (especially in Ireland)

- discrimination in educational provisions for Muslims
- Job refusals (based on dress code)
- Access to funding

Open or hidden forms of discrimination

- Reversal of the sense of integration into British society
- Visa applications
- Media coverage (Muslim representation)

Then the discussion focussed on the areas in life in which Muslims face these types of discrimination. We all agreed that any form of discrimination would have a long term effect in almost all areas of life. (housing, education, etc) but more importantly it demonizes communities and fragments them. Furthermore, it denies human rights completely, as well as isolates communities even more from the rest of the society.

However these forms are not new forms necessarily but perhaps they are more visible since they more often relate to the Muslim community in the UK. The theory of discrimination has existed for many years in history but now it is taking different forms and shapes.

The causes of Islamophobia

- Strong sense of Britishness and self-sufficiency
- Imperialistic, colonial UK history
- lack of education (which is not necessarily lack of awareness)
- the Media and its representation of the image of Muslims, especially women
- the Defensive attitude of the Muslim community (as Muslims are rather pre-occupied with defending themselves and justifying who they are)
- Strong cultural interpretation of Islam (Muslims from the Indian subcontinent represent 80% of Muslims in the UK)

Conclusion. The discussion was very open and frank. It was particularly interesting how representatives from different parts of the UK expressed their ideas and that certainly added a new element to our discussion.

What is a European Muslim identity?

"European Muslim identity is not an easy topic for those who have not been following the dynamic development of the Muslim communities in different parts of Europe. There is a new voice – a stronger, more confident Muslim voice of the youth finding comfort and solace in Islam and wanting to discover the religion in its full details. Euro-Islam is an invented term but does not necessarily cover the idea of European Muslim identity. Muslims need to invent new methods to express themselves and make non-Muslims understand Islam in its totality. Furthermore, they need to learn how to organize themselves and be able to interact with the wider society fully. Muslims need to act as serious partners in politics and be more reliable in being able to solve social and other problems.

Islam is not another church; it is not an institution that can be understood with religious terms only. It is a more comprehensive way of living and has specific psychology around it. In Bosnia there is a collective patience and small communities take care of their Imams who often come from a non-educated background. These Imams have to be the foundation of any academic pursuit within the Muslim community."

Ms Henrietta Szovati quoting from a conversation with Mr Zijad Imamovic:

On Islamophobia in Eastern Europe

From a paper by Mr György Lederer distributed to the participants

"While Islamophobia in the West is overwhelmingly related to immigration and racism, in East Europe the situation has been different. In the 19th century, Balkan nationalisms and nation states were born in struggles of independence against the markedly Islamic Ottoman Empire. Throughout the 20th century, Balkan Muslims and those of the European part of the Soviet Union were on the defensive and victims of discrimination, if not persecution, mostly as ethnic minorities. They had to endure and adapt.

Their patterns of secularization have been quite dissimilar to those of their more Islamically-conscious western coreligionists, who live and complain in established democracies. Comparison can be misleading. In Eastern Europe, 'ethnic Muslims' tend to identify themselves with the *laicité* of the French Revolution as much as others do. This would be inconceivable by most Mideastern standards.

The collapse of socialism was rarely followed by the genuine religious rebirth expected by many. A number of 'Muslims' became curious about their roots and their forebears' faith. Nonetheless, few sympathized with the anti-secular sermons of the ubiquitous Saudi-sponsored 'Salafi' Arab proselytizers who hijacked mosque pulpits in the region. September 11th shed a different light on them and the generous funding they received.

In this context, Bosnia-Herzegovina is of paramount significance, not only for its unique Islamic institutions and the Muslim world's 1992-1995 solidarity with the victims of western indifference. In the course of the bloodshed, late President Alija Izetbegovic and his associates made a formidable (in some respect authoritarian) ideological and political attempt to generate nationhood in the minds of secular (Bosniak) Europeans of Islamic ancestry by identifying them as

'Muslims'. In socialist Yugoslavia, many had not primarily, or at all, considered themselves as such, but later their Serbian executioners did. ['*Juifs par le regard de l'autre*' Sartre] The falsehoods of the Serbian propaganda of the 1990s on 'fundamentalism' and Muslim terror threats are instructive as far as Islamophobia is concerned. For the Chechen war, similar accusations appear in Russia and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere. It is true nevertheless that during the war, Bosnia had had to accept assistance from Arab governments, shady humanitarian organizations and anti-western Arab Mudjahidin fighters whose presence in the country was increasingly viewed, lately, as a source of embarrassment. The identity search of Bosniaks remains an exciting open question. Religion-based tradition and culture is, in actual fact, the sole criterion for distinguishing them from their 'Christian' South-Slav neighbours. Among the countries governed by Communist parties until 1990, Yugoslavia was, by far, the most open one, whose several million 'Muslim' citizens were free to study Islam, at home or abroad. Not many did.

Even without Islam, Albanians, Balkan Turks, Tatars, Azeris and other Eastern Europeans of Muslim extraction do constitute Nations or national minorities and tend to be disliked or discriminated by their neighbours as such, not primarily as Muslims. (Muslim Slav Macedonians or Bulgarian Pomaks are particularities originating in religious tradition.) Ethnicity should be distinguished from Islam, which is par excellence supranational! Despite or because of the Yugoslav wars, the anachronistic concept of religious communitarianism should not be encouraged in this part of the world.

The foreign (mainly Arab) missionaries of re-Islamization had to realize how far their supposedly Muslim post-socialist audiences stood from the uncompromising anti-secular and anti-western Islam they zealously preached. Only a few indigenous young Muslims joined them, some of whom had been educated at Mideastern faculties of theology. Women's role in society, attitudes towards non-Muslims, Sufi spirituality, popular Muslim beliefs proved to be sensitive issues. Tensions increased further when radicals started to bomb in the West, which represents a set of highly appreciated models for most East Europeans, Muslims included. More respect for civil liberties and rights would benefit the latter, who live as minorities under more or less authoritarian regimes.

Certain religious dignitaries felt the need to denounce radicalism, hatred and intolerance, as Judeophobia, which had practically no tradition among the region's Muslims. Some of those leaders were threatened and declared as un-Islamic. Albanian Islamic Community Secretary-General Sali Tivari was shot dead in his office in January 2003. No one has been convicted of his murder. He was a brave, western-minded person, who envisioned Islam in Albania as a 'church' among other churches with a limited role in the public life of a secular republic.

It is argued that in East Europe too, Islamist radicalism represents a genuine threat in terms of hiding, recruitment and logistical support for international terrorism, or feeding its ideological background, although Islamism (principled Islamic social reasoning) should be clearly distinguished from terrorism. Dialogue should start in the post-socialist countries too, the earlier the better. Criminal investigations alone will not be effective. This fear is probably going to be the main dimension of Islamophobia in the near future.

The ECRI General Policy Recommendation No.5 on Combating Intolerance and discrimination against Muslims (CRI(2000)21) obviously focused on the predicament of West Europe's immigrant Muslims. The clear majority of Europeans of Islamic tradition live in the Eastern portion of the continent, including Tatarstan and Azerbaijan, even if Council of Europe member Turkey is not taken into account. For many, Europe still means the West, which is hardly disturbing in this particular respect. Many East European 'Muslims' should not be addressed as Muslims, just as many of us would not like to be identified as 'Christians'. (For instance, we should stop considering, on the basis of 1945 estimates, 70 percent of Albania's population as Muslim, while most of today's Albanians are secular.) Eastern Europeans of Muslim ancestry or faith need no special human, minority or other rights, even if positive discrimination may, to some extent, be justified in the West with regards the anti-immigrant bias. Most Bosniaks would also content themselves with democracy and prosperity, even without any religion-related legal distinction. The end of nationally-minded and other authoritarianist agenda would liberate the region's peoples, 'Muslims' included."

György Lederer

Romaphobia – introduction and workshop

I WANT TO talk to you about the discrimination that Roma in Europe are suffering. Roma are the largest minority group in Europe, numbering an estimated 8 to 12 million people. Within this group there are different sub-groups, sometimes calling themselves differently, such as the Travellers in Ireland (who are not ethnically Roma, in fact). Discrimination against Roma is a wide phenomenon, being unwanted everywhere and suffering a universal discrimination, means that the situation demands common solutions.

Discrimination starts rights from the top, from state authorities. There was an official statement available on the Internet published by a Romanian minister that stated that "something must be done about the criminality, and the Roma attempt to ruin civilisation." In Slovakia there has been a recent change in the social security system: "They are lazy, they don't want to work. I haven't seen any Roma dying from hunger" – that is the new attitude.

Still today, the old method of taking Roma children away from their parents is practiced in some parts of Europe. In Slovakia we also know that Roma women have been subject to forced sterilisation.

From Scandinavia we know that women wearing long skirts are received with reluctance in shops, taken for potential shop-lifters.

And, finally, municipal garbage dumps are not unusual as the only place left over for Roma to settle.

To sum up – what do we have? A group facing various problems, living on the margins of society. Much of what is described as social problems, is as a matter of fact the result of discrimination.

Input by Mr Cristi Mihalache, European Roma Rights Centre

More on Romaphobia

To add to the above picture of the situation of Roma in today's Europe follows below an extract from a "*Common Statement by the European Roma Information Office*" addressed to the EU-Commission Conference "Roma in an Enlarged European Union" Brussels, 22nd–23rd April 2004. What is underlined as important in this statement ties in also with the discussions of the workshop (see below).

"In 21st century Europe, the treatment of Roma will be the most important factor in gauging human rights conditions and the treatment of minorities. A united, democratic Europe which respects the rights of minorities inevitably presupposes respect for Roma and their claim to equal rights. Without the Roma's inclusion in democratic processes there can be no peaceful, normal relationship between them and the majority population.

Over 12 million Roma currently live in Europe, the majority in countries of the former Eastern block. The ongoing break-up of nations into ethnicity-based states leads irrevocably to the isolation of Roma as outside the ethnic majority, and often deprives them of their citizenship. Ex-Yugoslavia, ex-Czechoslovakia and the former USSR are but a few examples of places where the status of Roma is unstable. Despite constitutions assuring citizenship to all, these states are created around ethno-national characteristics and the public very predictably perceives belonging to these states as being tied to ethnicity. Being foreign in their own land is a situation Roma experience over and over again.

Violence against Roma, marginalisation in all sectors of society, inadequate and unequal education opportunities, illiteracy, high child mortality rates, discrimination and unemployment: these do not cause the problems, rather they are the symptoms of the majority's obsessive Anti-Gypsism, or Anti-Ciganism; its discriminatory attitude towards Roma.

The main feature of the Roma's history in Europe has always been their continuous expulsion. In Germany, Croatia and Czechoslovakia, this policy of 'fighting the gypsy problem' developed into genocide under National Socialism. This inhuman, horrible escalation ended

in the national-socialist way of 'solving the gypsy question' which was silently disregarded after the Second World War. The state mostly continued the special treatment of the survivors to solve the supposed 'gypsy problem' this way.

Traditionally, the Roma are regarded by societies as a social problem, which is to be dealt with by state repression and "education". Roma are not accepted as a minority according to international law. Until now, this discriminating point of view usually led to problem solutions concentrating on treating the Roma as a 'socially provocative group problem'. But the situation of the Roma in Europe has unambiguously shown that the problems of the Roma originate in the Anti-Gypsism of the majority.

A real intention to improve the living conditions of the Roma still seems very far off. Since the former East bloc was abolished, the situation of the Roma has been continuously getting worse. Discrimination, missed education and violence against Roma are put down to their 'habits'. Victims are made perpetrators, the behaviour of the majority appears to be some kind of self-defence.

Programs should be based on the following general principles to the situation of the Roma, its background, and future perspectives:

- The Roma are a Pan-European minority and citizens of the countries they live in; their participation process needs to draw on common roots and common perspectives beyond citizenship, group affiliation, or country residence. The non-Roma majority population must recognize that Roma are not a fringe group but a national minority and as such part of the society they live in.

- As a de facto Pan-European minority in Europe, the Roma occupy a unique position, both historically and politically. Their situation is comparable with that of the European Jews, except unlike Jews, the Roma do not have the option of claiming political sovereignty as an independent state. Efforts to improve the situation of the Roma in Europe must acknowledge this special position.

- The main problem confronting the Roma is racism and Anti-Gypsism; poverty, lack of education, unemployment, and cul-

tural deprivation which are a result of society's hostility toward the Roma and as such they are symptoms, and not the core of the problem.

- Through active participation and civil rights work in the societies in which they live, Roma must contribute to the removal of prejudices and stereotypes. Roma must recognize that not only the majority but they too are responsible for their future which they can and have to influence."

Source: www.erinet.org *Newsletter March 2004.*

Workshop Romaphobia

Participants: Mr Zijad Imamovic, Ms Dympna Smith, Mr Hasan Idrizi, Ms Hazel Baird, Ms Alexandra MacRae, Ms Ammamaria Nagy, Ms Tatiana Sirbu, Mr Florin Dorian Dascalescu, Mr Juan A Maza Amodeo, Mr Gerrit Neomagus, Ms Fatma Nur Zengin, Mr Michael Privot.

Objectives of the Workshop

- are there any new dimensions of Romaphobia?
- are there any new approaches to address it i.e. existing or newly necessary ones?

Summary of the discussions. There is a difference in the economic situation among Roma throughout Europe. In some countries there is government funding for Roma communities, especially for education, housing and workshops.

- There is discrimination, such as "Anti-Gypsism"
- The majority can't understand the life style or culture of Roma. There are different types of attitude towards them: patronising, romantic, prejudiced.
- There is pressure by international institutions to involve Roma representatives in local activities.
- There is a need for resources, representation.
- Some money has been spent on irrelevant projects.

Travellers in Ireland and Great Britain appear to have a special situation and may be of a different origin. There are also Roma there who arrived from the continent. All of these groups share the same problems and experience the same discrimination. They are forced to change their traditional life style from travelling to settled state.

In Ireland and Great Britain Travellers are not finding easy access to the seasonal work that they used to and there is a question of co-existing co-habitation with different groups at the same site. There is discrimination or abuse at work and an inability among the Travellers to address this problem.

In the Netherlands Roma are not a big issue. They are called Campers or Travellers. In the year 2000 there were 5000 Sinti and 800 Roma registered with a Dutch passport. That's only 0.025% of the population. After 50 years they were forced to settle and unemployment became a problem which left the Sinti population claiming social welfare. At the end of the 20th century there were 3700 Gypsies of which half held a Dutch passport.

In Hungary there are different groups with different economic situations and traditions. There is representation in Parliament and in the media. Discrimination in Hungary is a challenge, because there are many Roma groups. They often have many children and are accused or feared of seeking disproportionate access to social benefits. Hungarians are often believed not to want Roma to live next door to them. There are a variety of groups and a variety of problems. For centuries people have had prejudices about Roma (kidnapping children, theft, dirtiness, an unwillingness to work and integrate). The relationships with Roma, looking from a historical perspective, were never based on equality. Sometimes, governments enforced sedentarization and industrialization of Roma communities. Middle strata of Roma community melted into the lower strata as a result of the transition to democracy and market economy.

In Spain there were 500 years of repression of Gypsy language and identity. There are some 500,000 Roma in Spain. Those who are poor and live in marginal situations experience bigger discrimination. Prejudice and physical attacks by skinheads do occur. The majority of parents do not want their children to share classrooms with Roma. Also some Roma immigrants from Romania came to Spain.

In Turkey official statistics cite 100,000 Roma citizens but data is hard to collect, as Roma families don't always register.

Conclusions / Recommendations

- Address ethnic and economic inequalities and discrimination.
- A need for relevant and efficient programmes.
- Government strategy for integration of Roma.
- Political representation.
- Address lack of ID.
- Collect precise data.
- Affirmative action, access education, representation in local government, improve labour market, improve access to legal entitlements.
- European programmes, but well supervised.
- Address misuse of allocation of funds both by NGOs and authorities.
- Involve Roma in the implementation of the projects.

Anti-Semitism – introduction and workshop

"The Anti-Semite hates the Jews because they are Jews, irrespective of their actions. Jews may be hated because they are rich and ostentatious or because they are poor and live in squalor. Because they played a major role in the Bolshevik revolution or because some of them became incredibly rich after the collapse of the Communist regime. Because they crucified Jesus or because they infected Western culture with the 'Christian morality of compassion'. Because they have no fatherland or because they created the State of Israel."

The person speaking in the above is Uri Avnery, (www.avnery-news.co.il), Israeli journalist, writer and peace activist. He explains further how this kind of hatred "is in the nature of all kinds of racism and chauvinism: One hates someone for being a Jew, Arab, woman, black, Indian, Muslim, Hindu. His or her personal attributes, actions, achievements are unimportant. If he or she belongs to the abhorred race, religion or gender, they will be hated. The answers to all questions relating to anti-Semitism", Avnery concludes, "follow from this basic fact." Famous for his engagement, intellectual as well as practical, in the peace movement, Avnery is crystal clear in his stand on Anti-Semitism, what it is and is not. The above quoted article continues with a series of questions and answers. For example:

> "– Is everybody who criticizes Israel an anti-Semite?
> – Absolutely not. Somebody who criticizes Israel for certain of our actions cannot be accused of anti-Semitism for that. But somebody who hates Israel because it is a Jewish state /. . ./ is an anti-Semite. It is not always easy to distinguish between the two

kinds, because shrewd anti-Semites pose as bona fide critics of Israel's actions. But presenting all critics of Israel as anti-Semites is wrong and counter-productive, it damages the fight against anti-Semitism. Many deeply moral persons, the cream of humanity, criticize our behavior in the occupied territories. It is stupid to accuse them of anti-Semitism.
– Can a person be an anti-Zionist without being an anti-Semite?
– Absolutely yes. Zionism is a political creed and must be treated like any other. One can be anti-Communist without being anti-Chinese, anti-Capitalist without being anti-American, anti-Globalist, anti-Anything. Yet, again, it is not always easy to draw the line, because real anti-Semites often pretend just to be 'anti-Zionists'. They should not be helped by erasing the distinction."

Invited speaker, Adam Mouchtar from the European Union of Jewish Students, started his introduction to the workshop on Anti-Semitism recalling how, after World War II, Anti-Semitism became a taboo word in Western Europe. Bringing this kind of attitudes out in the open would disqualify any politician for instance. Still, even if there was little open Anti-Semitism, it lingered on under the surface. But, as Adam Mouchtar asked, how do you measure it, when it is hidden?

Adam Mouchtar then described how Anti-Semitism has recently become more open. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, as he said, Anti-Semitism has grown in Eastern Europe, where by tradition communists were seen as the victims of the Second World War, more than the Jews.

Adam Mouchtar called for a third stand, beyond polarisation, and said he wished to be able to stand together with Muslims, defending the rights of both groups, "when there is a common background to anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim movements". Had he taken these wishes as points of departure it would probably have meant a lot for the discussion. As it was, distinctions became blurred and the reluctance to separate critique of Israeli politics from Anti-Semitism, severely damaged the workshop that followed.

Workshop Anti-Semitism

Participants: Maciej Wasyluk, Mohamed Beldjehem, Vincent Geisser, Kadafi, Fatima, Basema, Tara Aicha, Maria E, Scherezade, Vusala, Arab Touria, Antonella Aduso, Rabia Mercimekci, Samia Hamdiken, Rebecca Williams, Francois Sant'Angelo, Adam Mouchtar, Cemek, Nedzad Cengic
Rapporteur/chairperson: Eva Vergaelen

Objectives of the Workshop

- Overview of and general remarks on Anti-Semitism
- Manifestations of Anti-Semitism
- Causes and solutions of Anti-Semitism

Summary of the discussions

Overview of remarks

- In Europe a taboo has been established on open Anti-Semitism. Instead Anti-Semitism may disguise itself as Anti-Zionism.
- The debate on Zionism in the Arab world, cf. feuilleton in Egypt that stereotypes Jews.
- Arabs tend to have a different perspective: they do not have that feeling of responsibility regarding the Holocaust, as many Europeans do.
- The debate is difficult since critics of the state of Israel are easily interpreted as Anti-Semitic. Some Jewish groups – in order to defend the state of Israel – start stereotyping Muslims.
- The media stereotypes on both sides, cf. 10 years old Muslims telling that they hate Jews do not represent the Muslim community.
- Anti-Semitism is a general social and political phenomenon, certainly not restricted to Muslims.
- Be clear about what the concept of anti-Semitism is. Semitism covers Jews and Arabs.
- Jews are not and cannot as a whole be held responsible for the Middle East situation
- The Middle East and the situation in Palestine are major issues in this context and represent an obstacle to address the issues in an independent and lucid manner.

- According to the Koran Jews and Muslims must defend each other and there is a freedom of religion generated in Islam.
- Jews have lived for centuries in safety in Muslim countries, Anti-Semitism has become more acute with the Israeli-Arab conflict.
- anti-Semitism coming from Muslims is mainly the result of the Middle East conflict.
- anti-Semitism exists in all levels of society. The media mainly focuses on what is witnessed from young Muslims, although anti-Semitism originating from politicians or intellectuals is equally dangerous.
- In France the majority of Muslim organisations actively combat anti-Semitism.

Manifestations of Anti-Semitism

- negationism
- verbal aggression
- Molotow cocktails thrown at/into mosques
- Jews feel they cannot meet in safety unless there is security
- Graffiti at Jewish cemeteries
- Some extreme right political parties flirt with Jews in order to gain legitimacy and at the same time turn their racist discourse towards Muslims. In Antwerp 10 percent of the Jewish population votes for the extreme right.
- Although those parties flirt with Jews, they are still anti-Semitic.
- Many Muslims do not get the opportunity to react against lies in the media: their reactions are not accepted because they are Muslims. Jews are more organised.
- Context and realities change from country to country but facts are equally worrying.
- Discrimination may be experienced differently but its effects are always negative and destructive to social cohesion and diversity.
- So called friends of Jews are not really friends but act out of opportunism, cf. fundamental Christian groups in the US and some extreme right parties.
- In Italy *Jew* is a term used even to swear at blacks.

N.B: This report caused strong reactions from some participants who did not regard it as a true reflection of their discussion.

Racism towards visible minorities – introduction and workshop

Visible minorities face both racism and discrimination. I don't think it is a matter of new forms of discrimination. But the attacks of 11th September caused confusion: who is 'the enemy', and what does the enemy look like? In Italy there is this reaction that you can sense in the atmosphere: "Oh, my God ... maybe she is carrying a bomb", whenever a woman wearing a scarf enters the bus.

There is also an increased sexualisation in Italy, in that black women are treated as presumed "sex workers". It is a fact that there are young black women who have been trafficked to Italy, young women who are again victimized by the new country and others.

I think that a starting point for our further discussion could be how European identity is constructed according to the contrast of "we" against "the others". On the one hand this locks people up in the box called "the others", on the other it breeds the idea that Europeans are all one and the same.

Input by Ms Mariam Yassin, Advisory Council on Youth

"The processes we are talking about go back far beyond 11th September. They have been present all through the history of colonialism. And today, within "Fortress Europe", the level of acceptance is appalling. Just think of the way it is taken as inevitable that people actually die at sea. There is a visibility also of poverty."

Mr Rui Gomes, European Youth Centre Budapest

The colour of the skin or the outward signs of religious affiliation. As Marian Yassin said in her introduction, which was one of countless

testimonies, it doesn't take more than this, for people to be ostracized. The appalling fact is that the same thing happens, not 'only' on buses, but also for instance at sea, where the same ostracism – Europe closing the eyes, or looking in another direction – becomes a matter of life and death:

"In the last 6 or 7 years more than 6000 people have died when trying to cross the sea from Africa to Europe, either over the Straights of Gibraltar or via the Canary Islands. Spanish borders are controlled. People arriving by plane are made to turn back. But what about the many that come in boats from Africa? If they make it, they arrive in horrible condition. Of course you can see on TV individual Red Cross members helping. But in principle I don't think the Spanish government wants to do anything about the situation. Having this killer border is just another way of controlling immigration. I know of people having been arrested for helping the people as they arrive. To me this is a metaphor for Islamophobia."

Personal reflection by Mr Juan A. Maza Amodeo

Visible minorities, Workshop 1 (English)

Participants: Over 15 people, among others Domino Kai, Janette Grönfors, Britta Kolberg, Unni Irmelin Kvam, Oksana Chelysheva, Blachnicka Dominika, Esa Bateman, Raquel Amaranta Santos Perez, Henrietta Szovati, Jille Belisario, Eleftherios Eleftheriou
Rapporteur/chairperson: Giulia Micciche
Facilitators: Mariam Yassin, Larry Olomoofe

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- to find out about new dimensions in manifestations of discrimination against visible minorities
- to find out about new approaches for addressing such discrimination (existing or needed)

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS. The group was quite large and only managed to discuss the first objective. It came to some impor-

tant conclusions:

Discrimination against visible minorities differs from country to country according to what can be more visible or not in a certain spatial/geographical context (for instance Roma seem to be more discriminated in East Europe where they will be easily recognised as such, while in West Europe they might easily be taken – for their physical aspect – as people from South Europe and hence less discriminated against).

In certain countries (Norway and Italy, for instance) there is no multicultural experience; they recently became migration 'goal' countries and new forms of discriminations are linked to the migration phenomenon.

In other countries (UK, for instance) there are second and third generation migrants instead who are becoming less and less visible but they might still be discriminated against whenever their ethnic origin comes up. It would be interesting to deepen the subject and discuss which form of discrimination (the one against non-citizens and "more visible" migrants or the one against the citizens and "less visible", the latter being definitely very recent) is more dangerous.

Russia as well has always been a multicultural and multiethnic country but recently new forms of discriminations have been arising (e.g. against Roma or against people from the Caucasus).

Discrimination is often caused by the subjective interpretation of history and facts which are maintained by the "majority", whereas minorities rarely have the chance – for example – to write their own history or make their own policies. Similarly, there is no a real possibility for minorities (and particularly migrants) to give their contribution as citizens, they are only expected to give an economic contribution.

New forms of discrimination are also starting to appear between different minorities groups and even among the same ethnic group.

New technologies are used to spread racist messages (emails, websites, xenophobic video-games, etc…);

Conclusions / Recommendations. For a few years all European countries have been creating barriers and building up a "fortress Europe". National laws on immigration can prove this. September 11th has definitely increased discrimination, above all

against Muslims which has then spread to all migrants and minorities: many politicians and media agents have worked a lot in order to create a popular consensus that would increase this fear and discrimination.

Each State has its own laws against discrimination but in none of the states is it being implemented (and very rarely cases of discrimination are considered as such and therefore taken to the Courts). Laws should be used and discrimination cases should be taken to National Courts and, if not effective, to higher levels as the European Court.

Visible minorities, Workshop 2 (English/French)

Participants: Aliou Tounkara, Fortune Pouela, Fabio Di Nunno, Kelig Puyet, Siru Kovala

The workshop members of this group were from very different countries both geographically and culturally. The living conditions, legislation and the practises in the different countries vary a lot.

France and Italy. The visible minorities face discrimination based on religion in France and in Italy. The women who wear a veil as well as Muslim people in general are not always able to practise their religion in peace. There are difficulties in finding a job or a flat. There is even verbal and physical aggression against Muslims. Also their children who go to school suffer from this phenomenon. The Islamic people are discriminated in public services like police, social work etc.

Finland. In Finland there are several visible minorities, some of whom have a different accent and some of whom look different, for instance the Roma, the Sami, the Russians and the Somalis. They are not discriminated because of their religion, but they are not always welcomed either. The visible minorities in Finland suffer from verbal and sometimes even physical aggression.

Russia and Ireland. In these two countries visible minorities are not discriminated because of religion. In Russia and Ireland visible

minorities are discriminated purely for racist reasons. The discrimination against visible minorities is much more serious in Russia than in Ireland.

Some concrete actions

- Education
- Information
- Information about legislation
- Knowledge about the rights of minorities
- Assistance in legal matters
- Intercultural campaigns
- Monitoring that the laws supporting minorities are respected and followed

The consequences of Islamophobia on young men. The viewpoint of a Muslim citizen of France

Mr Farid Abdelkrim
member of UOIF,
Union of Islamic Organisations in France

The presence of Islam in France raises problems – France is no doubt the country in Europe today where the presence of a Muslim community raises most problems. History must be taken into account, avoiding hasty judgments by placing the Muslim presence in its historical perspective, for example by simply considering:

- Secularity
- Colonisation
- Immigration
- The sudden visibility of Islam
- 9/11 plus the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Balkans, Algeria, Iraq, etc.

The shock effect of the sudden visibility of Islam. Why this sudden visibility of Islam? There is no smoke without fire. We have to see responsibility on both sides.

There are fears and anxieties that must not be minimised. Does the irrational character of the debate itself not prove the existence of these fears and anxieties? Not to mention the fear factor within the Muslim community itself!

Obvious instances of racism and discrimination. There is certainly discrimination against young people in which their Muslim faith is a factor:

- In the justice system: double punishment: Muslim detainees bear the dual stigma of being Muslims and detainees.
- In school: general teaching, syllabuses, even just being called Usama.

- In employment: in recruitment and in the workplace.
- In housing.
- In the media: from silence (when the news is good) to denigration.
- In politics.
- In voluntary work: refusal of subsidies, lack of recognition, refusal of partnerships, association members placed under surveillance.
- In sport: obligation to wear swimming trunks rather than shorts in swimming pools.

Although its origin remains to be determined, there is a lot of confusion in people's minds between:
- immigrant children and young people
- Arabs / North Africans
- Muslims
- Fundamentalists

Is there a justification for Islamophobia? This rather debatable term gives rise to a number of questions: Is there a serious observatory monitoring Islamophobic acts? When and on what grounds is an act considered Islamophobic? How and why do people become Islamophobic? Is their phobia not fear of fundamentalism rather than fear of the Islamic faith? When one falls prey to this sort of phobia, can it be directed against one religion only, or is it against everything that develops fundamentalist attitudes in general?

9/11. How it is used by:
- Muslims?
- the media?
- politicians?
- specialists?

Victimisation and escalation? Does the inability of France's Muslim citizens to tell their story, to explain who they are, to describe themselves, not help to maintain the confusion? Do the international situation in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular not prevent people from seeing clearly? Is the inappropriate, often unthinking use of the word "Islamophobia" not simply

a reflection of psychological postures? Does victimisation itself not generate Islamophobia? Is there not a degree of exaggeration where victimisation is concerned?

Maybe one could speak of a tendency towards instrumentalisation. "Islamophobia" is a vague concept that could lend itself to be used by sensation seekers, hence maybe help escalate the situation.

What about the fight against all forms of racism and exclusion? Is it always Islamophobia that we see around us, or is it racism? Islamophobia, perhaps, sometimes. Racism and discrimination, certainly and often! What about the frame of mind that considers members of another race, culture or condition inferior? Who detests foreigners?

Islamophobia: hate, rejection of Islam reduced to a malevolent essence, whereas Islam is in fact plural in social, geographical, historical and cultural terms. This hatred is fuelled by negative prejudices and stereotypes which more often than not perpetuate the confusion between "Islam, Arab, Muslim, fundamentalist and terrorist", and also between culture and religion.

The Etymology of the word can lead to confusion, "phobia" coming from the Greek "phobos", which means fear. This presents Islamophobia as a reaction to fear in the face of a threat perceived, rightly or wrongly, as objective. In fact this phobia is a form of social pathology, just as agoraphobia is an individual pathology. And just as the individual tries to come to terms with the ailment from which he or she is the first to suffer, so society must take action against this ill that afflicts many of its members and undermines the very foundations on which it is built.

It is also important to distinguish Islam, which, like any religion, deserves respect – which in a democratic, open and secular context does not exclude dialogue or criticism – from the Islamism that uses religion for political, ideological or personal ends. Just as criticising Islam within the legal framework of the respect owed to all religions is a right, combating Islamism in its terrorist excesses is a duty. But lumping together Islam and Islamism, Muslim and Islam fundamentalist is an intellectual error compounded by a moral one, an incitement to hatred, punishable by law.

Islamophobia and its consequences on young women

Ms Hadia Himmat,
vice-president of FEMYSO,
Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations

Is it really the reality – the topic we have gathered to talk about? Yes, it is, and I think many of us can contribute examples of personal experiences. I think of what happened to me, last month as I arrived at the airport, intending to travel someplace. I was put in a corner, the staff were busy checking data, then they went on to cross-examining me: "Where did you get this passport?" I felt completely powerless. Beyond this personal experience, research on the topic shows that, yes, there is a problem. And we have to deal with it.

First of all I would like to thank the Council of Europe, in particular ECRI and the Directorate of Youth and Sport, for organizing this seminar on "Islamophobia and its consequences on Young People". It is important to create an awareness concerning the phenomenon in order to be able to prevent it and to find suitable solutions to combat this form of discrimination.

Islamophobia is the fear of Muslims and Islam which leads to a hostility and often discrimination against individuals and communities. Frequently it is connected with the belief that all Muslims are fanatics, have a violent tendency towards non-Muslims and that they all reject values like equality, tolerance and democracy.

An Islamophobic attitude has existed in many Western countries for several centuries but it became more explicit and dangerous in the last 30 years, peaking after the 11th September 2001 and unfortunately the media had a big role in its growth.

According to the Runnymede Trust Report[1], which is apparently the first study on the subject, Islamophobia is the result of a closed view of Islam, i.e. a view of Islam as a static religion, separated from

the other faiths, inferior to other cultures, an enemy and thus not a partner to work with, which is not sincere and seeks to manipulate everything and everybody.

This view, which is not trustful of Islam, is very widespread in the west and influences the way of thinking of many people.

Unfortunately, to date, there has been a lack of reliable and comprehensive data on the consequences of Islamophobia on young people and this is an obstacle to identifying discrimination and exclusion. For instance in Europe we see few reports and little research (e.g. EUMC[2], ECRI[3]) and only a small number of countries have a body which monitors and cope with Islamophobia's cases (e.g. FAIR in the UK and the CCIF in France). Therefore, I recommend your organisations and mine, FEMYSO, to conduct proper research on the problem so that in the future it will be easier to argue the subject.

SUBJECTS WITH STRONG INFLUENCES. As you can easily imagine, Islamophobia has several consequences and among these, some are related specifically to young people. The current studies highlight the worrying effects of Islamophobia which concern both young women and men and I would like to stress this point before concentrating exclusively on the case of young women. I'm referring to the lack of self-esteem, lack of confidence and sense of belonging.

Young Muslims, as every young person, are in the process of building their personality and identity through their youth. They are subject to many influences which come from outside and from different directions. Within the family they receive certain teachings and are influenced by the behaviour of their relatives; in the mosques they learn the Holy Quran and the practice of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him); some young people join Islamic societies, where the approach to Islam is more dynamic and interesting. They are influenced as well by their peers, by the so called 'street culture' which surrounds them and often is contradictory to Islamic teachings, by the culture of the society where they live and they have the pressure of the media's messages which are almost always Islamophobic. Especially it is the latter which may cause a sense of cultural inferiority in the young Muslims and may root in them the lack of confidence and of sense of belonging. Thus some young

Muslims are not able to maintain their own religion and values and at the same time participate freely in everyday life. Some become ashamed of "their parents'" religion, some others, unfortunately, look to find their sense of identity in extremists groups.

YOUNG WOMEN AS EASY TARGETS. Concerning the consequences of Islamophobia on young women, we have to be aware of the fact that women can be an easier target because of their appearance. In fact, the victims of discrimination and racist violence are usually identified as representative of a specific group, in our case Muslims, according to their skin, facial shape, place of worship or dress, etc. Many Muslim young women choose to wear the Islamic headscarf (*'hijab'*) and thus they are easily recognized and become, in different ways, victims of Islamophobic acts.

Indeed, as reported by the EUCM, after 11th September 2001, "the hijab seems to have become the primary visual identifier as a target for hatred, with Muslim women being routinely abused and attacked across those countries in the EU where Muslim women could be identified in this way"[4].

All over Europe, young Muslim women, are attacked in different ways and, as mentioned before, more frequently after the 11th September. Some of them experience insults and threats during their every day life, especially in public places and on public transport. Many girls at schools have been told by their mates "go back to your countries", "sister of Bin Laden", "you are a terrorist", "take off that cloth from your head", etc. Other girls are victims of physical assaults: their headscarf is pulled away; objects like lighters or cans are thrown at them; people spit on them; etc.

The result: this kind of attack harms not only the person attacked, but all the other girls in her same situation, as they all tend to feel insecure and unable to enjoy a normal life.

VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION. Another relevant consequence of the Islamophobia on young women is the discrimination they face in several areas, particularly in employment, education and sport.

There are no specific studies and statistics concerning the discrimination at work, but many cases have been reported by newspapers and internet websites. For example in Italy a Muslim woman

was not allowed to teach in a kindergarten because she wears the hijab and according to the school, supported by all the parents, she might frighten children with her dress code. After this recent event several young Muslim women were interviewed by the media[5] and they all complained of difficult access to jobs, especially if they wore the hijab. Many of them were insulted because of their dress during the job interviews, some others were sacked on the day they started wearing the Islamic headscarf.

In general young Muslim women are disadvantaged first of all for their employment, then with regards promotion; the majority, especially if wearing the hijab, do not easily have access to higher level professional positions.

The situation is much more problematic in France, more than ever after the law banning religious symbols. Even though this law will only be implemented in September 2004 and it refers to the specific context of schools, it had a wide impact on Muslim girls who wear the hijab. Not only are they forbidden to attend certain schools but also they do not have access to the labour market. Moreover many cases have been reported[6] concerning women who were not allowed to express their right to vote, to get married in certain councils, to use public transport, to participate to sports competition, etc.

Strictly related to both employment and education, two German Provinces (Laender) approved the hijab ban law and now Muslim female teachers can not wear hijab in the classroom and thus their freedom of religious expression is violated.

Monitor and act! What I've been telling you, are only a few cases of a spreading reality. These are negative signs that we have to be aware of before the problem becomes too big. We've already seen in Europe similar bad experiences of Anti-Semitism and Romaphobia and we don't want to see such troubles repeated in future.

I believe it is necessary to create awareness in relation to the Islamophobia problem and to keep monitoring the situation in order to be aware of its development. When the problem is clear it becomes easier to identify the right solutions.

I believe that we should engage ourselves in projects that will improve the image of Islam and Muslims, offering realistic knowledge and not a biased view (e.g. interfaith dialogue, open mosques,

etc.), all this will help to prevent Islamophobia and will be beneficial for all the society. Furthermore, during this seminar you are going to have a very good opportunity to learn about some 'good practices', make sure to benefit from other positive experiences in order to implement them and combat all forms of discrimination and racism towards Muslims as well as all minorities in Europe and in all the world.

Notes

1 'Islamophobia a challenge for us all', *Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, The Runnymede Trust, 1997 UK.

2 'Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001', *European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia*, by Chrisopher Allen and Jorgen S. Nielsen, Vienna, May 2002

3 ECRI General Policy Recommendation no. 5: '*Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims*', CRI(2000)21, 27/04/2000

4 'Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 200', EUCM, page 35

5 See for example, '*Sempre più straniere discriminate per le loro tradizioni, ancora troppo poche quelle che si ribellano. "Non assumo donne cosi" Rania e le altre scartate per velo'*, by Maurizio Corsetti, www.repubblica.it, 24 March 2004

6 See for example Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France, www.al-muslimah.com/islamophobie

I find my own way of life

"Wearing the head scarf in Turkey means that I am not allowed to study at university, and I am not allowed to work in public institutions.

In Turkey there is often a view that we are backwards or that we are terrorists. In 1998 my entire class in school (a girls' class where we all had scarves) was thrown out of school for three months, just because of our headscarves. They called in a psychologist to persuade us to change: to be more modern, more good-looking ... For three months we were thrown out. The school was protected by antiterrorist guards – protected from us! During this period came also the arrest of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan and reactions became even harsher: are you planning an attack? Many of us had psychological problems after this.

A preliminary solution was found in that we had a woman teacher – that way we could take our head scarves off as was required. From eight in the morning until four in the afternoon we stayed in our classroom. At lunch we had to make do with the bread that we sent for.

It is very unfair, the discrimination that we face, not only for the sake of religion, but also for being women. A man, however much of a fundamentalist, will have no problems in Turkey, he will not be stopped. Whereas I, on the other hand, can not be employed by the state, and will not be accepted to the university.

Still I feel very self confident. I know who I am and I know what I do. My way of being sometimes causes positive reactions, like: 'You are normal!' But it is only because I don't accept taking on guilt, when there is no wrong-doing. Like shaking hands with men, or sitting next to one on a sofa – I think this is ok, I don't see it as a threat to my religion."

Personal reflection by Ms Fatma Nur Zengin

Practising or moderate? Why should I need to choose?

"We have witnessed in the conference that there is a lot of prejudice towards Islam in Europe. Towards other religions too, but Islam is seen as something extreme, something unknown.

How else could we explain the frequent use of attributes like 'moderate' and 'modern' in relation to the terms Islam and Muslim, as well the term fundamentalist? Actually, it is a standard prejudice to consider an individual as 'moderate Muslim' and/or 'modern Muslim.' This is the way that a person is judged as an acceptable individual within the framework of 'Western' civilisation.

Even during this seminar I personally have been tried out against these attributes and I started to ask myself why? Let me briefly describe two cases that happened, and that I think are very demonstrative:

In the first case someone said to me: 'Ah, you see, you're a modern Muslim, you shave …' The second case was a question: 'You're Muslim, aren't you? Are you practising or are you a modern Muslim?'

First, how do you consider the attribute 'modern' with the word 'Muslim'? Is it true that someone who doesn't wear a beard is a modern Muslim? Or the opposite? What is moderate for you? I am moderate as I am a believer? Or is it moderate not to believe? Being happy or sad – is that moderate? Or being angry? I don't agree with this prejudice that the way we appear from the outside should dictate the judgement we are subject to from others. Rather judge by the personal behaviour, and only after getting to know that person well!

Somebody once told me that they saw in the streets of Den Haag in the Nederlands a big Surinami boy. Well-built, with shaved hair and a fearful look – the one that you might just catch sight of on the other side of the street when passing by. This boy had a big tattoo over his back, reading 'Only God can judge me' …

The other case too, is very interesting to me: is practising your religion some exaggeration? What to say then about the Dalai Lama (we all have a 'good picture' of that guy – nice, peaceful, happy and always ready to help): he's a religious person in the eyes of the world! Does it look like he is exaggerating something?

Again this word 'moderate' is used too easily, without any deeper consideration. Like in the case of the word 'modern.'

I had another feeling too: Whatever you say about accepting different races, I feel that by having a white skin, unconsciously, in the eyes of other people I pass as not being a 'usual' Muslim, the one you can see on CNN and BBC. I think that is why I am so often faced with these kind of questions.

The first reaction after I say I am a Muslim is: 'Are you practising?' Here I can hear the other part of the sentence, expressed also in the seminar: '... or are you a moderate Muslim?' or 'Do you drink alcohol?' In the case of 'Yes': 'Why? But you're a Muslim?' And in the case of 'No': 'Why? Because of religion or because of your personal convictions?' I always have to justify my convictions in some way, because I don't fit in with the general picture (the race, ethnic appearance ...) of Muslims in media.

I feel that if I had an Arabic appearance, I would have been spared this kind of question. Saying that I was a Muslim would have been enough.

My conclusion is that there are deeply rooted prejudices in Western, Central and Eastern Europe about Muslims. It is very difficult to pass that notion by without associating it with some kind of exaggeration or fanatism, with some kind of 'They are not modern, like us.' agenda.

I would like to ask the participants of the seminar to look back upon their own lives and try to find out if they have ever had these kinds of reflexions when facing people of Muslim origin. I think that would help us, next time, to look at one another in a different way and to become more conscious of our differences and that if we don't have the same habits, skin, culture or way of dressing, it doesn't mean that we are fanatics, ignorant, or anything else ... We can all be modern and moderate even if we are all different! This technique counts for me as well! And not only in this particular situation.

Personal reflection by Mr Nedzad Cengic

Personal encounters as a way to better understanding

One dimension of the seminar that took participant out from the EYCBand into the town of Budapest was the afternoon of study visits devoted to "getting to know multicultural and multi-religious Budapest". As one example of the outcome of these visits follows below the notes taken by Henrietta Szovati whose group went to the Bahá'í Centre in Budapest.

Visit to the Bahá'í Centre in Budapest

The visit was arranged for us to the Bahá'ís centre in Budapest on the second day of the seminar. The group was very small indeed; only six people were interested in knowing more about the centre and this new religion. At first we all were happy to notice that our small group was an enthusiastic and sincerely interested in religion. Later on we realized that it was getting more and more exciting as the discussion went on. Especially the Muslim participants got into it because Bahá'ísm is rooted in Islam and has many common elements in practice.

We were greeted warmly by the leader of the Bahá'í community in a beautifully decorated elegant flat in the inner city of Budapest. We were told that the number of people who follow this new religion is about one thousand in Hungary, out of which 70 live in Budapest. Later on, the leader of the centre informed us about the principles of the religion. This was followed by many questions from us. Bahá'í originates from Iran from the middle of the 19th century and was

preached by an Iranian man called Bahá'u'lláh. He wrote his teachings in a book that contains detailed description about the formation of the Bahá'í community as being free from politics. In his book that is in Arabic and Persian he also guides those wanting to follow Bahá'ísm to the unity of humankind and the respect of nine main religions.

The questions we asked mainly focused on the daily practices of Bahá'ísm and principles that are common with Islam.

As the discussion developed, all of us came to realize a little more how important religion is in a person's life, this being confirmed by visitors who did not follow any particular religion at all. I suppose it was not only the warm welcome with tea and coffee but also the open minded approach that we all took that made all of us realize that it is necessary to work for a better society and regardless of differences and that we all need to strive for a better future. We created a very positive atmosphere where we could ask questions comfortably and get the discussion going with grace and inner calmness.

From the notes of Ms Henrietta Szovati

The Bahá'í Faith is the youngest of the world's independent religions. Its founder, Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892), is regarded by Bahá'ís as the most recent in the line of Messengers of God that stretches back beyond recorded time and that includes Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ and Muhammad. (source: www.bahai.org)

Examples of good practises

Objectives of the workshops

- To present examples of good practises and discuss why these initiatives were so successful.
- To touch upon examples of less-successful practises and take those into consideration while formulating our recommended guidelines.
- To discuss what we feel are constructive guidelines to implement in our work: on an individual level and on an organisational level.
- To focus on the possibilities within (existing) NGOs in combating Islamophobia.

The "Jewish-Arab and citizens' group for Peace" in Strasbourg, France by Corinne Grassi and "Global Peace Works" in Delhi, India by Omer Khorrum Anis

Participants: Alexandra MacRae, Annamária Nagy, Britta Kollberg, Corinne Grassi, Fatma Nur Zengin, Janette Grönfors, Kovala Siru, Maartje van Rije, Nedzad Cengic, Omer Khorrum Anis, Rabia Mercimekci Cemrek
Rapporteur/chairperson: Maartje van Rije
Facilitator: Sarah Eberle

Summary of recommendations

1. *Policy on Public Relations*

- Raise awareness about issues which the media do not cover.
- Document violations and hate-crimes and publish/distribute them on a regular basis. [Added by Maartje while writing report: I advise you to subscribe to the anti-racism mailing list: antiracism@icare.to. More than 600 people world-wide are subscribed and e.g. Islamophobia and Romaphobia are addressed on a regular basis!]
- Organise large events to increase awareness of the public and co-operate with other NGOs.
- Invite role-models and opinion leaders to get involved in and stimulate projects: to grasp young people's attention.
- Be careful about the media and with the information you provide them [agenda- setting]. Instead, provide them with an official press release.

2. NGO *internal policy*

- Keep to medium/middle-ground on religious and political issues.
- Stay modest; do not be opportunistic and be strong about your principles. Build up strong and long-term relationships with the young participants/ volunteers.
- Network to set up NGOs/projects.
- Be aware of the power of networking and lobbying and the power that NGOs have.
- Make sure data and argumentation are based on reliable and replicable sources. Make good documentation of your work and establish an archive.
- Make sure you have a diverse group of people working on issues and that all parties are represented.
- Acquire knowledge on local conditions.
- Make use of the internet; to raise awareness and to communicate with each other.
- Stress the importance of follow-up projects and implementation at local level. ("At home")
- Stress teamwork and sharing/delegating of tasks.
- Keep each other and all others involved motivated!

3. NGO *external policy*

- Network with other NGOs and public officials.
- Lobby/network with state agencies to address cases of racism and stimulate them to act upon them. Urge them to abide by existing legislation or pass new charters.
- Work towards the establishment and strengthening of an advisory body: especially a Youth Council – involve the youth!

4. NGO *general project methodology*

- Make use of the skills that young people already have.
- Give participants an active part in the projects; make them feel responsible by giving them specific tasks.
- Provide skill training courses to equip the engaged youth.
- Implement already existing methods which turned out to be good practises and keep developing them.

5. NGO *specific project tools*

- Use interactive learning methods, those who are appealing to the youth/target group [formal & informal methods].
- Make use of creative and practical approaches: build a house together or go on a kind of field trip: hands-on!
- Make use of the internet to make it interesting.
- Have an "exotic" element to grasp people's attention.

Swapping cultures – Minorities of Europe

Minorities of Europe (MoE), represented at the seminar by *Sanil Modessa*, was formed in 1995 by a group of minority youth leaders in Levocha, Slovakia, during a training course held within the framework of the European Youth Campaign against racism, Anti-Semitism, xenophobia and intolerance: "All different – all equal".

The model helps young people come together, share and exchange their culture, experiences and thoughts with other young people.

SOME BENEFITS OF THE BEYOND TOLERANCE MODEL

- Involves everyone irrespective of their colour, religion, nationality and or age

- Is flexible and can be adapted to be used in urban or rural settings. Can be used within schools (for a particular year group, tutor group etc) or between schools or youth groups
- Participants enjoy discovering their culture and having fun sharing this with others from a different cultural background. Together they learn how to value their differences and similarities
- Participants are helped to generate ideas to celebrate their and other people's culture
- Participants can learn how the differences and similarities between different cultures can/are a benefit and are an asset to society

The four key stages contained in the Beyond Tolerance Model

1 *Face to Face*

Two people or a small group of people, (who are different from each other) take time to exchange information about their individual culture, backgrounds & experiences.

2 *Same, Similar, Different*

Time is given for the individuals to reflect on what they have heard or learnt about each other. They are then encouraged to illustrate their level of understanding of the similarities and differences in either written or pictorial form.

3 *Swapping Cultures*

After checking that what they have produced is an accurate picture, they then share information with another person

4 *Working Together*

Working in small groups, people are encouraged to generate ideas on how to celebrate the diversity of their cultures, traditions & backgrounds through song, drama, visual media, exhibition etc.

Intercultural youth work with Ms Antonella Aduso, Alouan Intercultural Youth Center, Torino, Italy

Participants: Antonella Aduso, Mariam Yassin, Fatima Doubakil, Basema Spijkerman Salman, Esa Bateman, Oleg Guzic, Jille Belisario, Domino Kai, Ola Himmat, Fatma Nur Zengin, Suzana Ricea, Gerrit Neomagus, This Fetzer
Rapporteur/chairperson: Ola Himmat
Facilitator: Mariam Yassin

Objectives of the Workshop

Workshops on examples of good practice, concrete positive experiences and action, useful for drawing guidelines for projects and youth work and to encourage people to take action.

The word Alouan (which is also the name of the association she is working in) means colours in Arabic. It is a young organization that started as a project in Torino, it is an association for young people (migrant and native), that operates in schools (the mediator organizes some activities for the schools); or have school groups that come to visit it. They always try to think positively.

Alouan organization offers:

- Laboratories (intercultural parties, ethnical food, music, talk, all with an informal approach).
- Kindergarten (0-3 years old)
- Women's activities with visits to the town (they start meeting other people and start integrating).
- New area: intercultural mediating in the street: operates in the street with the role of being a friend, he circulates there, gets to know people, raises awareness. A very important thing is that people there are free and they do whatever they want, but they know there is a person who can help them in the case of need.
- Different activities in the afternoon (batik, theatre, tajkwando, sport, DJ-ing, . . .) always open and free of charge.
- Intercultural mediation meeting: go to the school and join an

activity, for example there is a class with 4 Albanians, an activity of getting to know Albania can be joined… like learning about Albanian food, games, tales, songs, drawings, … the children that will attend this class will then talk about it to their family, so it is a kind of exchange.

- Seminars, invite a person who may wish to join in.

In the centre there are different nationalities and everybody is at the same level, most of the people come from Morocco, Albania and Italy. The young that come can find some older people of their same nationality; it is like having a big brother. Youth leaders of the same country can act as good mediators.

Sometimes they have trouble with criminals, people that attack the place by writing "Mussolini" or drawing the swastika.

Examples of good practice

- Empowerment: young people together feel good because they are good in one skill or another and they can teach other people.
- Operators are from the same country of the youngsters (same culture). For example the president of the association is Egyptian; there are operators from Tunisia, Morocco, Italy, Somalia, Egypt and Nigeria.
- One new service is the information desk where people are welcome to free information. It is very successful, in fact it is always full of people, and they now have had to add chairs. At this information desk they help filling in the forms, giving information about equipollenza, information about health institutions (where can they do the blood exam, …) and so on.
- Innovative measures: do what young people are interested in (eg. Break dance), it is important to keep up to date.
- Serious projects like giving information on a specific culture
- What they believe in: young people are the subjects, the actors. We have to treat them as experts. They know and we listen to them.

Why was it successful?

- Operators listen to the young
- They discuss every week about the problems there are

- They listen to young people and try to give positive answers
- Empowerment, the youngsters could be a good example
- Training + multiplying the experiences
- There were young leaders from different countries and cultures
- Intercultural mediator.
- Friendly and intercultural relationship
- "Long term aim" in the projects

Why was it innovative?

- Multicultural mediators
- Street work
- Continuous training
- Ongoing training for the youth workers

Experiences from other members of the group

Netherlands – Gerret. There was a case of a young Moroccan doing bad things in the streets. So they sent Moroccan fathers to talk to them. It was very successful.

Why was it successful? Maybe they respect more the people of their own country because they have the same culture. It was something innovative.

Sweden – Domino. "Theatre of the oppressed" plays something that somebody has lived and where there was oppression. On whatever topic, for example AIDS or something else.

Use creative methods is beneficial.

The work was successful because the audience lives, sees, hears… It is not just like a lecture or a lesson, it is more interactive.

Sweden – Fatima. To deal with young people should be a neighbourhood task (they know the family, the situation …). It is important to work in a way that does not take them away from their culture. There should be a balance between their culture and the culture of the country they live in.

UK – *Esa*. Religious people should work to reduce prejudices. There should be "long term aims and motivations". It is important to raise knowledge among minorities.

Romania – Latifa. They have a centre for people with a very low social condition and they help them by giving lessons, food … There are cases of domestic violence and they try to solve problems.

Turkey – Nur. People arriving in Ankara are given accommodation, scholarships, touristic tours, cultural meetings, historical knowledge,

Netherlands – Jille. The project of global sustainable society has three main points: orientation, confrontation and objective.

They go on trips, talk with youngsters, "theatre of oppressed", reflection with network friends.

Ukraine – Oleg. Gives space to the minorities, like for example prayer rooms, studies of the Qur'an, libraries, space in newspapers, radio programs, … it is also important the dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims.

The Commission for Racial Equality. Presentation by Ms Hazel Baird, The Commission for Racial Equality, United Kingdom

United Kingdom has a longstanding history of special legislation related to racial discrimination. It dates back more than 40 years. The body in which I work is The Commission for Racial Equality, a publicly funded, non-governmental body set up under the Race Relations Act 1976 to tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality. The Mission statement for the CRE reads:

> The Commission for Racial Equality works in partnership with individuals and organisations for a fair and just society which values diversity and gives everyone an equal chance to work, learn and live free from discrimination, prejudice, and racism.

We work in both the public and private sectors to encourage fair treatment and to promote equal opportunities for everyone, regard-

less of their race, colour, nationality, or national or ethnic origin.

We provide information and advice to people who think they have suffered racial discrimination or harassment.

We work with public bodies, businesses, and organisations from all sectors to promote policies and practices that will help to ensure equal treatment for all.

We run campaigns to raise awareness of race issues, and encourage organisations and individuals to play their part in creating a just society.

We make sure that all new laws take full account of the Race Relations Act and the protection it gives against discrimination.

In 2001 more than 2 million people in United Kingdom identified themselves as Muslims, and, clearly, they have become more vulnerable than before.

However, in relation to discrimination on religious grounds, there is no direct protection in the Race Relations act. The grounds for discrimination spelled out in the act are nationality, colour, dress . . . – but not religion. Religious discrimination, hence, has to be addressed by looking at the consequences.

Recommendations

Introduction

The seminar "*Islamophobia and its consequences on Young people*" was jointly organised by the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe and the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance at the European Youth centre Budapest from 1 to 6 June 2004.

The seminar brought together more than 60 youth and NGO representatives, human rights activists and educators, policy makers and researchers to:

- share and analyse the realities and manifestations of Islamophobia and discrimination faced by young Muslims across the Member States of the Council of Europe;
- examine similar forms of racial discrimination and intolerance involving young people, such as Anti-Semitism, Romaphobia and racism against visible minorities;
- collect examples of good practice in overcoming prejudice and promoting inter-community relations and inter-religious co-operation with young people;
- identify strategies and approaches to prevent Islamophobia and its consequences on young people and propose measures for political and educational action aimed at increasing understanding and respect for religious diversity among young people in Europe.

The seminar built on previous work of ECRI and the Directorate of Youth and Sport and took into account the results of other related activities the Council, such as the Opatija Declaration on intercultural dialogue and activities of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on the participation of migrants.

The participants were concerned about the extent to which Muslim communities and people associated with Islam across several European countries are exposed to acts of discrimination and hatred that, while varying in degree and dimension, are based on a form of prejudice towards Islam as a religion or its practice.

Islamophobia must not be the concern of Muslims alone as it has negative effects on all children and young people, men and women alike, and the whole of society. Similarly, Islamophobia needs to be looked at in the wider context of racism and discrimination in Europe today, in new and old forms, and especially taking into account the troubling resurgence of Antisemitic attacks and the persistent forms of Romaphobia and segregation of Roma communities.

Islamophobia is a violation of human rights and a threat to social cohesion. Young people and youth organisations have an important role to play in preventing Islamophobia and raising awareness about the negative impact of prejudice and discrimination. Such was the rationale behind the "all different-all equal" European Youth Campaign against Racism, Antisemitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance and remains that of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme. Their actions need to be supported and complemented by the Council of Europe and by national and local authorities. The following recommendations elaborated by the participants provide several suggestions of such actions.

Recommendations addressed to

The Council of Europe

1. We ask the Council of Europe to take the opportunity of the 10th anniversary of the "All different – all Equal" European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism

and Intolerance to launch a follow-up Youth Campaign with a special emphasis on combating Islamophobia and promoting religious diversity.

This follow-up campaign should be aimed at young people in general, and at young people from religious and cultural minorities in particular, and put a special emphasis on:

- providing young people with the tools to participate in political and decision-making processes in their own communities and countries at local, national and European levels, with a view to making their voices heard with regards issues relating to discrimination against religious and cultural minorities, especially Islamophobia, Romaphobia and Anti-Semitism.
- conveying a broad, diverse and above-all inclusive definition of European citizenship, which includes equality of rights and in particular the right to non-discrimination.

2. We urge the Council of Europe to reinforce monitoring, research, analysis and evaluation in the following two specific areas:
   - The representation of religious minorities in the media, especially of Muslims following the events of September 11th
   - The situation in Member States regarding the balance between human rights and civil liberties on the one hand, and security/anti-terrorism measures on the other.

3. We request the Council of Europe to investigate the possibility of developing a more effective methodology for following-up and monitoring the implementation of recommendations made by ECRI in its country-by-country reports. We also urge the Council of Europe to provide ECRI with the necessary funding and other resources to follow-up such activities.

4. We urge the Council of Europe to exert as much pressure as possible on the Member States to ratify Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Legal measures

5. To adopt or enforce existing legal frameworks for combating discrimination on religious grounds;
6. To better inform minority communities about existing legal tools and mechanisms protecting their human rights, particularly the right to free practice and expression of religion;
7. To ensure and protect the right of all children and young people to education;
8. To ensure the right to religious education for children;
9. To extend the mandate of existing human rights monitoring bodies, or national specialised bodies to combat racism and racial discrimination, to put a special emphasis on discrimination of people on religious grounds and to look at whether there are provisions which allow for Islamophobic treatment of people with Muslim religion for social, psychological and other potentially damaging consequences on them.

Political measures

10. To promote respect for religious diversity within the framework of human rights and strengthen the role of human rights and human rights education organisations;
11. To involve youth and emphasise the role of young people in the decision-making of political parties and other relevant institutions, including those from minority backgrounds and religions;
12. To promote dialogue with religious leaders;
13. To create conditions for representation of religious/Muslim communities at national level;
14. To ban anti-Muslim/Islamophobic statements in political election campaigns as well as any kind of materials, slogans etc., which discriminate against people on racial or religious grounds. Enforce penalties for politicians, who transgress this.
15. To establish Commissions on religious matters within national Parliaments where such are not existing;
16. To establish representative religious Councils, which examine relevant national policies;

17. To increase the participation of minority leaders in political and governmental institutions;
18. To condemn and undertake actions against politicians at national and European level, who abuse the right to freedom of speech to make racist statements.

Educational

19. To recognise and put an emphasis on the contribution of Islam to European civilisation;
20. To include human rights and intercultural education in the formal education systems.
21. To ensure objective history and religious teaching (in particular objective teaching about Islam).
22. To educate young people to be critical towards presentations or prejudice in the media;
23. To promote ecumenical religious education;
24. To encourage research about Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination.
25. To develop or adopt relevant human rights education materials – such as Compass, the manual on human rights education with young people – which can be used at national level;
26. To introduce intercultural and inter-religious education and training of teachers in order to raise their awareness;
27. To introduce one theme-day in schools on learning and organising events about different religions;
28. To train administration officials, social and youth workers, on issues related to minority communities and religions;
29. To develop a closer interaction of formal and non-formal education in as far as human rights education and anti-discrimination are concerned.
30. To introduce inter-faith and intercultural education as integral parts of school curricula. (Faith communities should be involved in designing and delivering these programmes)
31. To organise and support training for young people about Islamophobia and Antisemitism.

Local Authorities

32. All local institutions should reflect the ethnic balance of their communities. This should be monitored through effective monitoring and record keeping.
33. Especially when community needs/interests are at stake, Muslim community representatives must be involved in decision-making processes.
34. Local authorities should put into place ways to effectively involve and represent the concerns of minorities at all levels.
35. The resources of Muslim communities should be better valued by involving community leaders and cultural mediators in consultations and decision-making.
36. To create an Award system for local institutions to compete across Europe for "Best inter-community project". The Council of Europe could award the prize.
37. Local authorities should use their licence and powers to curb racist behaviour of football crowds. Coaches should be trained in race awareness in an effort to stop racial harassment in sporting events
38. Local authorities should ensure that Muslim young men and women have equal and unthreatening access to public sport facilities (e.g. swimming pools).

Non-Governmental Organisations
(including youth and faith-based organisations)

39. To put the issue of Islamophobia and related discriminations on their agenda;
40. To develop international intercultural and inter-religious youth exchanges.
41. To cooperate at all levels with other youth organisations in order to create permanent and sustainable networks;
42. To work with schools/educational systems/local authorities in order to promote, for pupils and teachers, non-formal education as a tool to prevent Islamophobia and related discriminations;
43. Local NGOs should encourage and help local Muslim people to exercise their rights.

44. Local organizations should take initiative in organising campaigns against Islamophobia.

    Networking and cooperation between different communities should be actively supported.

Closing words

By the General Rapporteur

In order to make the seminar a stepping stone for further, and joint efforts in the direction of mutual tolerance, understanding and positive interaction I think that the – by now ten-year-old – key-words "*All different – all equal*", constitute the best possible starting point, and guideline. There is no one person on this earth with whom I share everything (we are all different!), and for every individual I can expect to find at least something that we have in common (we are all equal!).

For a seminar that treads a difficult terrain, and that goes deep into sensitive topics, it is vital to hold on to this view. There are no fixed demarcation lines. Not between believers and non-believers. Not between adherers to different faiths. Not between people of different origins. Whatever direction we look, we will find both similarities and differences. What is crucial for our chances to build alliances is *the way* in which we uphold or embrace a belief, a world view, a heritage …

The setting of the seminar, within the Council of Europe, provides the ideological platform for all interaction. It is contained within the European Convention on Human Rights, article 9, that reads:

1. "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject

only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

In its recommendation 1396 on *Religion and democracy* the Parliamentary Assembly develops its view on these two concepts and their interrelatedness:

"Democracy and religion need not be incompatible; quite the opposite. Democracy has proved to be the best framework for freedom of conscience, the exercise of faith and religious pluralism. For its part, religion, through its moral and ethical commitment, the values it upholds, its critical approach and its cultural expression, can be a valid partner of democratic society." (point no. 5)

Human Rights are not something that you have to deserve. Human Rights are for everybody. Without exception. We all know that rights can be violated, but they cannot be lost. A topic that was touched upon during the seminar, but that deserves further inquiry, is the balance between individual and collective rights. It is not evident that group rights, be they ethnic or religious groups, is the best way to defend the rights of every individual belonging to that very group. Again, if anything, the framework of the Council of Europe, as well as the working methods of the European Youth Centres, should be able to house discussions of balancing values in a positive and trustful atmosphere.

With its focus on direct interaction and with its belief in informal education the European Youth Centres can pave a way forward. Making good use of it is up to each and all of us.

Further readings

The European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance: http://www.coe.int/ecri
The European Union Monitoring Centre: http://www.eumc.eu.int
The Forum against Racism and Islamophobia: http://www.fairuk.org
The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC): www.errc.org
The European Network against Racism: www.enar-eu.org
The Internet Anti-Racism Centre in Europe: www.icare.to
The European Roma Information Centre: http://www.erionet.org
Antisemitism and Xenophobia Today: www.axt.org.uk
La Ligue Internationale contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA), France: www.licra.com
The Anti-Defamation League: http://www.adl.org/anti_semitism/

For an overview of the youth policy and activities of the Council of Europe, please consult directly http://www.coe.int/youth

Compass. A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People. Council of Europe Publishing 2002.
http://www.coe.int/compass – the basic information about human rights and human rights education is all there, in English, French and Russian.

Participants

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Bori Simonovits. Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in Social Sciences
Annamária Nagy. The Bahá'i Community, Budapest
György Lederer. Alice Lederer Foundation

India

Khorrum Anis Omer. Global Peace Works

Ireland

Fortune Pouela. African Refugee Network
Dympna Smith. Irish Girl Guides

Israel

Ayelet Roth. IPCRI – Israeli/Palestinian Centre for Research and Information
Amit Kossover. Central Galilee Academic College

Italy
Giulia Micciche. Kinkoba, Voci Lontane
Antonella Aduso. Nonprofit Association Alouanur
Fabio Di Nunno. Rinascita Sociale Salam House

Moldova
Tatiana Sirbu. Youth Helsinki Citizens' Assembly of Moldova

Norway
Kadafi Zaman. Verdens Gang
Unni Irmelin Kvam. The Norwegian Youth Council

Poland
Blachnicka Dominika. EPTO – European Peer Training Organisation
Rebecca Williams. Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
Maciej Wasyluk. Association of Polish-Algerian Friendship

Romania
Florin Dorian Dascalescu. AEGEE-Europe (Association of European Student Organisations)

Russian Federation
Oksana Chelysheva. 'The Society for Russian-Chechen Friendship'
Tounkara Aliou. 'African Union' Social Organisation of Saint Petersburg

Serbia and Montenegro
Ljubica Nikolic. Democratic Party (Democratic Youth)

Spain
Raquel Amaranta Santos Perez. A.S.I. Avanza Sociedad Internacional
Juan A. Maza Amodeo. M.P.D.L (Movement for Peace, Disarmament and Liberty)

Sweden
Fatima Doubakil. Young Women from Minorities
Domino Kai. National Roma Union of Sweden

Switzerland
This Fetzer. Federal Service for Combatting Racism
Ola Himmat. Islamic Community in Ticino kanton and GM Ti

'the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia'
Hasan Idrizi. Association of the Roma Intelligensia

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Basema Spijkerman Salman. WEBB

Turkey
Fatma Nur Zengin. ICANO – International Council for Awqaf and Non-Governmental Organizations

Ukraine
Guzic Oleg. Federation of the Social Organisations in Ukraine "Arraid"

United Kingdom
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Henrietta Szovati. Islamic Society of Britain
Alexandra MacRae. The Race Equality Council of Gloucestershire
Hazel Baird. Commission for Racial Equality

Preparatory group

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Kélig Puyet. European Youth Forum
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Larry Olomoofe. European Roma Rights Centre
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Zsuzsanna Molnar. Programme Assistant
Sarah Eberle. Trainee at the European Youth Centre Budapest

Programme

Tuesday, June 1st

Arrival of participants
19:00 Dinner
20:30 Welcome evening

Wednesday, June 2nd

09:15 Opening of the seminar
Round of introductions of participants
Introductory speeches by:
Ms Antje Rothemund, Executive Director of the European Youth Centre, Budapest
Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Director General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport at the Council of Europe
Ms Mariam Yassin, representative of the Advisory Council on Youth and member of the preparatory group of this seminar
09:50 Introduction to the seminar's objectives and program
10:05 Expectations of the participants with regards the seminar
10:35 "The Council of Europe and the work against Islamophobia: existing instruments and standards", by *Mr François Sant'Angelo*, deputy member of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance
11:00 Coffee Break
11.30 "Islamophobia in Europe: from the Christian anti-Muslim prejudice to a modern form of racism" – keynote speech by *Mr Vincent Geisser*, researcher at the CNRS, Marseille, France

Questions and exchange of views with the participants

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Islam in the Media, introduction by *Mr Michael Privot*, representative of FEMYSO in the preparatory group of the seminar.

15.00 Working groups on Manifestations, Causes and Factors of Islamophobia

16.00 Break

16.30 Continuation of the working groups

17.30 Reports of the working groups

18.15 Closing of the day

19:00 Dinner

20.00 Cultural evening: "Everything you always wanted to know about Islam / Judaism / . . ."

THURSDAY, JUNE 3RD

09:15 Opening and introduction to the programme of the day

09:25 Plenary introductions to other [new?] current forms of discrimination

- Romaphobia, with *Mr. Christi Mihalache*, European Roma Rights Centre
- Anti-Semitism, with *Mr. Adam Mouchtar*, European Union of Jewish Students
- Racism towards visible minorities, with *Ms Mariam Yassin*, Advisory Council on Youth

10:15 Workshops exploring those [new?] forms of racial discrimination and their manifestations in participants' social context

- Romaphobia with *Mr. Christi Mihalache*, European Roma Rights Centre
- Anti-Semitism, with *Mr. Adam Mouchtar*, European Union of Jewish Students
- Racism towards visible minorities, with *Ms Mariam Yassin* and *Mr. Larry Olomoofe*

11:00 Coffee break

11:20 Workshops continued

12:15 Feedback from the workshops and organisation of the field visits in Budapest

13:.00 Lunch

14:30 Getting to know multicultural and multi-religious Budapest
Visits to and discussion with representatives of local religious communities
- Synagogue / Jewish Cultural Centre
- Mosque
- Roma Community Centre
- Orthodox church / Cultural Centre
- Catholic Centre / Cultural Centre
- Bahâ'i Centre

19:30 Barbecue dinner at the EYCB

FRIDAY, JUNE 4TH

09:15 Opening and introduction to the programme of the day

09:20 Feedback from the visits to Budapest

09:30 Panel discussion about consequences of Islamophobia on
- young men, with *Mr Farid Abdelkrim*, member of Union of Islamic Organisations in France
- on young women, with *Ms Hadia Himmat*, FEMYSO

11:00 Break

11:30 Workshops on consequences: sharing experiences, deepening the issues and looking for commonalities

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Presentation of the reports of the morning groups

15:10 Workshops on examples of good practice, concrete positive experiences and action, useful for drawing guidelines for projects and youth work and encourage people to take actions. Possible examples:
- Jewish and Arab cooperation, with *Ms Corinne Grassi*, Jewish-Arab Group for Peace, Strasbourg, France
- "Swapping Cultures", with *Mr Sanil Modessa*, Minorities of Europe
- Intercultural youth work, with *Ms Antonella Aduso*, Alouan Intercultural Youth Centre, Torino, Italy
- Conflict resolution and intercultural dialogue in the Caucasus, *Ms Pervana Mammadova*, Azerbaijan

18:15 Closing of the day

19:00 Dinner. Evening free.

Saturday, June 5th

09:15 Introduction to the programme of the day

09:25 Presentation of consolidated reports with guidelines for good practice

10:20 Working groups on conclusions and recommendations addressed to/regarding:

- European Institutions
- National Governments
- Local authorities
- NGOs

12.45 End of the group work sessions

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Presentation of the recommendations of the working groups

15.15 Conclusions by the General rapporteur

15.45 Evaluation of the seminar

16.45 Closing of the seminar

17.00 Free time

20.00 Dinner and Boat Trip on the Danube

Sunday, June 6th

Departure of participants