



Equal Rights - Multiple Benefits

The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All 2007

Political participation of immigrants in the EU

Another type of Euro-Vision

Encouraging Diversity - Strengthening Cohesion: the leitmotif of integration policy in Berlin

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Welcome to Equal Voices

The EUMC team is pleased to welcome all readers to the 20th issue of Equal Voices. Equal Voices consists of in-depth articles and features with analysis, new research, surveys, expert input, concepts for successful integration and comments. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the EUMC.

To develop the magazine further we would very much welcome your comments, suggestions or proposals for issues to be covered in the magazine. You can contact us by e-mail: media@eumc.europa.eu.

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The EUMC team



Bienvenue à notre magazine Equal Voices

L'équipe de l'EUMC est heureuse d'accueillir tous les lecteurs d'Equal Voices dans les pages du vingtième numéro de ce magazine. Equal Voices contient des articles et des éléments de fond ainsi que des analyses, des nouvelles recherches, des enquêtes, des contributions de spécialistes et des idées pour une intégration réussie et des commentaires. Les opinions exprimées dans cette publication ne représentent pas nécessairement celles de l'EUMC.

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L'équipe de l'EUMC



Willkommen bei Equal Voices

Das EUMC-Team begrüßt alle Leserinnen und Leser zu dieser zwanzigsten Ausgabe des Magazins Equal Voices. Der Inhalt von Equal Voices besteht aus Artikeln und Dokumentationen mit Analysen, neuen Untersuchungen, Erhebungen, Beiträgen von Experten, Konzepten für eine erfolgreiche Integration und Kommentaren. Die in diesem Magazin veröffentlichten Meinungen müssen nicht unbedingt mit denen des EUMC übereinstimmen.

Um das Magazin weiter zu entwickeln, nehmen wir gerne Ihre Kommentare, Anregungen und Vorschläge zu Fragen entgegen, die in dem Magazin behandelt werden sollen. Sie können uns per E-Mail erreichen: media@eumc.europa.eu.

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Das EUMC-Team



Editorial

“Equal opportunities for all” are enshrined by law across the EU. But is this ‘right’ in theory really a ‘right’ in practice? How far have we come in breaking the circle of deprivation, prejudice and discrimination against disadvantaged groups in our society?

The EUMC is one of the bodies entrusted with monitoring the situation on the ground. Our reports provide ample evidence of the continuing disadvantage and discrimination faced by migrants and ethnic minorities, for instance in employment, education and housing. EUMC reports show that migrants and minorities are far from enjoying the same opportunities as the majority population in spite of laws against discrimination. In a number of EU Member States, the unemployment rate of migrants is up to twice as high as that of the majority population. Educational achievement of migrants is lower than that of the majority, and drop out rates are higher.

The EU has put in place a strong legislative framework against discrimination (EU Anti-Discrimination Directives 2000/43 and 2000/78). Yet, this legislation will be effective only when people bring discrimination to the surface by taking cases to court. For this to happen people first need to be aware of their rights under the Directives.

The European Commission has designated the year 2007 as the “European Year of Equal Opportunities for All”. This thematic Year aims at improving people’s awareness about their rights to enjoy equal treatment and a life free of discrimination. How can we bring about Respect, Recognition, Rights, and Responsibility – the four key themes of the Year – for everyone?

During the Year, European institutions, governments, NGOs, and civil society will undertake activities to support equal opportunities for all - in employment, education, healthcare, and in many other areas in which disadvantage can undermine people’s right to equality. Above all, the Year is about reflecting, discussing and further developing equal opportunities in the EU. This issue of Equal Voices aims to contribute to this.

This magazine gives some background on the European Year of Equal Opportunities, and features an interview



Photo: EUMC/Bruckberger

with Vladimir Špidla, the EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Further articles are devoted to the key themes of the Year, highlighting experiences, research or good practice, for example, in the fields of political participation of migrants or diversity in the media, or the experience of the multicultural city of Berlin.

This edition of Equal Voices will be the last one under the EUMC’s current mandate. In early 2007 the EUMC will become the EU’s Fundamental Rights Agency, which will continue the work of the EUMC against racism and xenophobia. Placing the combat against discrimination into a fundamental rights context conveys an important message to all: Equal treatment is a right and not a privilege. Not making progress in the struggle for equality means withholding a fundamental right from disadvantaged groups in the EU.

The key word is respect, respect for people, values and principles that underpin our societies. Europe’s key challenge for the future is to promote an inclusive society on the basis of respect for diversity, equality and fundamental rights for all of us.

Beate Winkler

The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All - 2007

Celebrating diversity, ensuring equality.

By the European Commission's Anti-Discrimination Unit,
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

The European Commission has proposed to designate 2007 as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The idea is simple and straightforward. The Year of Equal Opportunities for All will be a strong, one-off political initiative across the EU for more equal opportunities, which goes beyond the usual stakeholders in order to create momentum and reach out to the wider public. Six years after the European Union adopted two wide-ranging directives¹ to prohibit discrimination in the workplace and in other aspects of daily life, the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All will provide a fresh impetus to promote equal opportunities for all, while conveying a positive message about diversity.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the EUMC.

Past experiences have shown that European Years, if launched at the right moment and carried out with great commitment in close cooperation with stakeholders, can make a real difference. Take the example of the European Year against Racism in 1997: That Year led to the inclusion of the anti-discrimination article in the EU Treaty, to the two anti-discrimination Directives, and later to the Action Programme to combat discrimination, as well as to the creation of the European NGO Network Against Racism (ENAR). In the same year, the EU Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) was installed.

The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007 has three key aims:

1. First, to make the citizens of the European Union aware of their rights to non-discrimination and equal treatment.

2. Second, to promote equal opportunities for all – access to employment, education, in the workplace or in the healthcare sector.

3. And third, to exemplify the benefits of diversity for the European Union.

The Year has three main goals: to make people aware of their rights, to promote equal opportunities for all, and to exemplify the benefits of diversity.

Making people aware of their rights

Calling for equal rights and adopting laws to guarantee them is important. However, it must also be ensured that equal opportunities are available for everyone in practice. The European Union has every reason to be proud of its anti-discrimination legislation, which is one of the most extensive in the world. But very often people are not aware of their rights. That is why one of the main aims of the European Year of Equal Opportunities is to help to turn equal rights in theory into equal rights in practice. Steps have to be taken to tackle the intricate patterns of inequality suffered by certain groups and communities in Europe.

Based on Article 13 of the EU Treaty, in 2000 the Council of Ministers adopted two directives against discrimination. The EU has run a campaign 'For Diversity. Against

Discrimination' (see box) for several years in order to raise awareness about the rights and obligations under these laws. The Year should also give an extra boost to Member States which lag behind with the implementation of the anti-discrimination legislation at national level.

Equal opportunities for all

The motto of the EU is “united in diversity”. In order for this ideal to become true, everyone living in the EU must enjoy equal opportunities in all spheres of private and public life. Rather than confining itself to eliminating discrimination, an equal opportunities policy has to try to provide all individuals with opportunities to become fully involved in a society. Certain communities, such as the Roma, are so deprived that positive action might have to be taken for them so as to eliminate this inequality.

The European Parliament has recently issued an opinion on the future of anti-discrimination policy. It is emphasising the need for reliable data and the development of positive action as key tools to remove barriers in the way of equal opportunities. These are two areas where the European Commission supports Member State activities by developing tools, disseminating information and facilitating the exchange of good practice.

The benefits of diversity

Diversity holds many benefits for the EU. Only by using the potential of all its people the EU will be able to develop further socially, economically, and demographically. The

Discrimination is devastating for the people directly affected. It also has a cost to society at large and to the economy as a whole.

Year of Equal Opportunities for All aims to ensure that people become better aware of the advantages of involving all people in society and in the labour market, and also to remind them of the challenges of ageing and globalisation. Discrimination is devastating for the people directly affected. It also has a cost to society at large and to the economy as a whole. If the EU is to meet the challenges of globalisation and create more and better jobs, all of its people must have the same chances and opportunities.

In a recent survey by the European Commission, 83% of companies with diversity policies say that these bring real benefits to their business such as tapping into a wider pool of potential employees, improving staff motivation and benefiting from more innovative workforces.

The Year’s four key themes

The activities during the Year will be based on four key themes:

1. **Rights** – Raising awareness on the right to equality and non-discrimination. All people in the European Union are entitled to equal treatment, irrespective of their sex, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation – this is the key message that the Year will strive to put across. Attention will also be paid to multiple discrimination.² The idea of the Year is also to show that being equal does not mean being identical.
2. **Representation** – ways to increase the participation of groups which are victims of discrimination. Women are in the minority in our parliaments, ethnic minority MPs are even scarcer, and disabled people tend to be sidelined. Against this background, the Year will launch a



2007 — European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

series of debates on how to make it easier for under-represented groups to participate more in society.

3. Recognition – facilitating and celebrating diversity and equality. During the Year, action will be taken to involve the general public in an open debate on the meaning of diversity in contemporary Europe and ways of valuing differences in society.

4. Respect – Promoting a more cohesive society.

The European Year will strive to promote the values underlying equal treatment and the fight against discrimination. Action will be taken to raise awareness on the importance of eradicating clichés, stereotypes and violence, and promoting good relations among all members of society, particularly young people.

Organising the Year

The Year will be marked by hundreds of different activities staged throughout the European Union: locally, regionally, nationwide and EU-wide.

Each participating country had to name a national implementing body and to present a strategy and a list of activities for the Year. The national activities can take a number of different forms, from conferences to studies, from competitions to information campaigns. The activities across Europe include an “Equality Summit”, where ministers, social partners and non-governmental organisations will gather for the first time to consider the themes of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, a new survey to discover Euro-

peans’ attitudes towards discrimination, and a pan-European campaign on European anti-discrimination policies and legislation. The Portuguese Presidency will then round up the Year and look forward to the 2008 Year on Intercultural Dialogue

The Year is first and foremost about willingness to renew and strengthen political and official commitments to equal opportunities for all.

at a closing conference in Lisbon. The European activities will not happen in a vacuum but will support directly what is going on at national level.

Around € 7.5 million has been set aside for European level activities for the Year. A further € 7.5 million is available for national activities, and this will be increased to €15 million by matching co-funding from national sources. At the same time it is important not to overstate budgetary issues as the Year is first and foremost about willingness to

renew and strengthen political and official commitments to equal opportunities for all, and to present new and practical examples of how this can be achieved together.

Two things are crucial to remember: there has to be a balanced treatment of the grounds of discrimination (i.e. all of them have to be covered during the Year), and civil society has to be involved. This makes good sense. Previous thematic years have shown that the involvement of the people who actually deal with the issues on the ground and/or are directly affected is key to success.

The success of the Year of Equal Opportunities will depend on active contributions by both governments and civil society in all parts of the EU. The European Commission therefore invites everyone to participate in the Year at events, competitions etc. and through individual everyday activities. Together we can make Europe a place where all people can live “united in diversity”, and with equal opportunities for all.

For more information on the European Year, please see <http://equality2007.europa.eu>

1 The Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC implements the principle of equal treatment between people, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin. The Employment Equality Directive 2000/78/EC implements the principle of equal treatment, irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in employment, training and membership and involvement in organisations of workers and employers.

2 Multiple discrimination refers to individuals suffering from unequal or unfair treatment for several reasons: for example, when a person is a woman and member of an ethnic minority.

“For Diversity. Against Discrimination.”

“RESPECT”: information campaign of the European Commission on EU anti-discrimination legislation

For Diversity



Against Discrimination

In 2000 the EU adopted two Equality Directives, which tightened European anti-discrimination legislation and were to be implemented by each Member State by December 2003. This anti-discrimination legislation demands that everyone is treated equally regardless of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.¹

To inform citizens about their rights under the new EU anti-discrimination legislation, and to promote the benefits of diversity in the workplace, the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) launched a five-year pan-European information campaign “For Diversity. Against Discrimination”.

The campaign pays particular attention to an individual approach to information and promotional activities. Different awareness-raising events, seminars and ongoing media activities are implemented on all levels across the EU. One of the campaign’s main assets is its website - <http://www.stop-discrimination.info> – which provides information for 25 Member States in 20 languages.

Through pan-European, national and regional measures, organised in co-operation with national partners, NGOs, ministries, trade unions and employers’ associ-

ations in each Member State, the dialogue between the EU and the different target groups is intensified. “For Diversity. Against Discrimination.” campaign projects in 2006 were, for example, a European Journalist Award, an EU Information Truck Tour, an MTV photo contest and a poster competition called “Breaking Stereotypes”.

These projects encourage EU-wide involvement in the Commission’s anti-discrimination work and invite people to engage actively and creatively with the idea of “For Diversity. Against Discrimination.” This engagement and involvement encourages two-way communication between the European Union and its citizens. On the one hand this raises awareness of discrimination and diversity and on the other it allows the European Commission to relate better to public opinion.

**To find out more about the campaign please see:
<http://www.stop-discrimination.info>**

¹ Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 (OJ L 180 of 19.7.2000, p. 22) implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 (OJ L 303 of 2.12.2000, p. 16) establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

Interview with Vladimír Špidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities



Photo: Copyright: European Community, 2006

Vladimír Špidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

EUMC: Commissioner Špidla, the motto of the EU is “united in diversity”. However, as also the reports of the EUMC show, we still have a long way to go in order to achieve this European ideal. Can you give some practical examples what the EU does to promote more inclusive societies and to fight racial discrimination?

Vladimír Špidla: One of the most impressive steps was, back in 1999, to add a new article in the

EU Treaty which, for the first time, gave the EU the powers to take action to combat discrimination on a whole range of new grounds – racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation. This was one of the key achievements of the 1997 European Year Against Racism, together with the creation of the EUMC. It also allowed us in 2000 to adopt two new pieces of legislation which give a practical dimension to this new respon-

sibility, the so-called Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directives.

Yet legislation itself cannot bring all the required changes. People have to change their mindset. This is why we have invested over € 100 million since 2001 into very concrete activities that contribute to combating discrimination. For example, we have trained hundreds of NGOs, judges, employers and trade unions across all EU

Member States. We have reached out to the younger generations through several initiatives, the latest being a photo contest on MTV that proved extremely successful. We have launched a European Journalist Award and have an information truck touring Europe. We have also issued numerous studies on discrimination-related issues. The latest concentrated on the business case for diversity.

Our newest initiative is the “2007 European Year for Equal Opportunities for All”, which will give a fresh impetus to the fight against discrimination. This strong, one-off, political initiative will allow us to go beyond the usual stakeholders in order to create momentum and reach out to the wider public.

You are currently preparing the Commission's first report about the transposition of the Racial Equality and the Employment Equality Directives. What is your interim assessment about the state of affairs in the Member States?

Transposing the Racial Equality Directive was challenging for many Member States. It extends the prohibition of discrimination beyond the traditional areas of the labour market and vocational training into new areas such as education, social security, access to goods and services, including housing, which are available to the public. This wide scope meant that many different parts of Government were involved at national level. In addition, those Member States which did not already have an Equality Body had to create one.

Whilst there are problems with the transposition of the Race Directive in many Member States, these vary in number and severity. The Commission is pursuing these issues with the Member States, but despite the various problems there is no doubt that protection against discrimination on grounds of race and ethnic origin across all the EU Member States is now much greater than it was prior to the adoption of the Directives in 2000, as also shown by reports of the EUMC.

Some Members of the European Parliament, NGOs and others have called for updating the Directives by including data collection among the tasks of the Equality Bodies or by expanding their scope. Is it time to review the Equality Directives?

As I said, the Equality Directives were adopted in 2000. This is not such a long time ago, yet it is indeed a good idea to take stock. I want us to make a careful judgement, based on a strong analysis. This is why my services have commissioned an in-depth study, which will examine the provisions which go beyond the requirements of the Directives in the Member States. The study will consider the relative merits of legislative and non-legislative measures. It will also produce a synthesis of cost/benefit analyses of different policy options carried out at national level. On the basis of this material, which should be available at the end of 2006, the Commission will assess the feasibility of possible new initiatives to complement the current legal framework.

Beyond implementing the anti-discrimination legislation, what else do you find important for Member States to do to fight racism and xenophobia and to promote equal opportunities? What is the role of local authorities and NGOs?

Governments cannot make it happen all alone. The fight against racism is a matter for society as a whole. As the tier of government closest to people, local authorities have a key contribution to make in this respect. They are also large employers and providers of goods and services, and as such have a duty to combat discrimination. I am pleased to say that we also have close contacts with the Committee of the Regions, which is keen to get involved in the activities for the Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

NGOs representing and defending people exposed to discrimination play an essential role in making anti-discrimination rights effective through their advocacy and awareness-raising activities. Involving civil society in the design and implementation of various activities to be undertaken during the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All is therefore one of the European Commission's key principles – both at European and national levels.

Now there are other important agents of change that we work with and which should also be mentioned, such as the employers, the trade-unions, and the Equality Bodies. They all have an important contribution to make.

In what respect can information campaigns contribute to the fight against racism and discrimination on the ground of race and ethnic origin? Concretely, what would you like to achieve with the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All?

First of all, let me recall the achievements of the European Year Against Racism which took place in 1997. The Year sparked off a broad range of initiatives at all levels, which have had far reaching results, such as the introduction of a new Article into the EC Treaty, which, as I explained earlier, represented a quantum leap forward in the fight against discrimination. These actions have served as a signal to our Member States, our neighbours and those countries that would like to join the EU that the principle of equality and non-discrimination is part of the bedrock of fundamental rights on which the EU is based.

I am confident that the new European Year of Equal Opportunities for All will be as successful. What do we want to achieve? First, we want to improve people's awareness about their rights to enjoy equal treatment and a life free of discrimination. Although the EU has one of the most advanced leg-

islative frameworks in the world in this respect, there appears to be limited public awareness of the rights and obligations that this legislation confers. Awareness-raising will be a key objective of the Year.

In addition, we also want to promote the benefits of diversity for our societies. Too much talent in Europe is poorly utilised and we cannot afford this waste. Recent research suggests that 83% of companies with diversity policies found these policies had brought benefits to their business such as recruiting and retaining skilled workers, as well as benefiting from more innovative workforces. The European Year will seek to engage the wider public in an open debate on what diversity means in today's Europe and how to create a positive climate in which differences are valued.

Activities during the Year will be organised around four key themes: rights, representation, recognition and respect. We will emphasize that equal opportunities policy is not simply limited to the elimination of discrimination. The disadvantages experienced by some communities, e.g. the Roma, are so wide-scale and embedded in the structure of society

that positive action may be necessary to remedy the nature of their exclusion. The European Year will seek to highlight the need to promote and develop policies and initiatives to increase the participation of groups that are under-represented in society.

How does the European Year link in with other Commission activities on equal opportunities? And what are the next steps and activities in your efforts to enhance equal opportunities for ethnic minorities in Europe?

The European Year is about mobilising energies and moving up a gear. The dynamics created by twelve months of activities to promote equal opportunities and combat discrimination will be felt for a long time to come. New tools, new approaches and a new impetus will help Europe to continue to move forward with its efforts in the field of equality and non-discrimination. The EU's PROGRESS programme – to fund activities in employment and social affairs from 2007-2013 – is expected to take up some of the best ideas generated during the European Year, ensuring they make a real impact in the long-term as well.

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Realising the potential of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All: the challenges of solidarity and independence.

By ENAR

The decision to designate 2007 as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All was welcomed by the members of the European Network Against Racism (ENAR)¹ as an opportunity to remind European people and their governments of their rights and duties in the field of anti-discrimination. However, during its preparations for the Year, ENAR has become increasingly aware that anyone interested in realising the full potential of the Year faces two major challenges: first, fostering solidarity across the grounds of discrimination, and second, achieving credibility and independence in the context of the Year's decentralised implementation.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the EUMC.

Despite the concerns regarding the 'proliferation' of European Years, as one of the outcomes of the 1997 European Year against Racism, ENAR is very aware of the potential impact of such initiatives. Consequently, ENAR decided to contribute proactively to the preparation of the Year of Equal Opportunities for All by organising a series of national roundtables during the second half of 2006. The roundtables aimed to:

1. Inform anti-racist and other anti-discrimination NGOs about the 2007 Year;
2. Articulate expectations and challenges for the Year in national contexts;
3. Provide a space for networking and exchanging of ideas on possible projects.

By the end of 2006, ENAR will have organised a total of around 20 national roundtables across Europe,

thanks to the dedication and commitment of its members, who have embraced this project with enthusi-

ENAR members attribute high importance to awareness-raising and to the European dimension in the fight against discrimination.

asm regardless of the absence of financial assistance. This commit-

ment of ENAR members clearly demonstrates the importance they attribute to awareness-raising projects and to the European dimension in the fight against discrimination.

While ENAR received a great deal of support and interest from the European Commission and its peer networks focusing on gender, disability, age and sexual orientation, it has faced a number of recurring challenges in the implementation of its roundtables preparing for the Year. This article highlights two of these challenges: working in solidarity across the different grounds of discrimination, and achieving independence in the context of the decentralised approach to implementation.

The challenge of working in solidarity

In their day-to-day work, ENAR members are acutely aware that discrimination is a multifaceted experience, and that identity cannot be defined on a single basis. ENAR

therefore welcomes that the activities undertaken during the Year of Equal Opportunities will focus on the different forms of discrimination some individuals suffer, owing to

the networks working on different forms of discrimination, this approach is not reflected nationally in most EU Member States. In practice, national level civil society or-

cooperation with one other ground of discrimination. Initiatives across multiple grounds are infrequent.



ENAR is a network of some 600 European NGOs working to combat racism in all EU Member States. Its establishment was a major outcome of the 1997 European Year against Racism. ENAR is determined to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local/regional/national initiatives with European initiatives.

More information on: <http://www.enar-u.org>

ENAR's national roundtables, intended to reach out beyond anti-racism to the other grounds of discrimination, proved how difficult it is to bring people and organisations working on different grounds into the same room to discuss the forthcoming European Year. While many questions remain concerning these dynamics, it is far from clear if the opportunity presented by the European Year will be able to overcome this situation. Whatever the motivation, any attempt to overcome or circumnavigate the existing practice and ways of working will present a major challenge for the implementation of the Year.

their race or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability. The intention is that the Year's projects should address all forms of discrimination as well as multiple discrimination, if possible. The EU Commission recommends to organise projects that would tackle different discrimination grounds or that would be articulated around the four key objectives of Rights, Representation, Recognition and Respect. This should encourage organisations working on different grounds to collaborate, build partnerships and reinforce their political weight by joining forces. While there is much to be welcomed in this approach, many anti-racism organisations are concerned that this approach does not recognise the concrete realities facing NGOs working in the field at national and local levels. This was also pointed out during ENAR's roundtables.

organisations, which are frequently under-funded and work under huge

It is a challenge for civil society organisations to work on different grounds of discrimination "in solidarity".

The key challenge in the implementation of the Year of Equal Opportunities will be to promote equality mainstreaming. Solidarity must be fostered, while at the same time responding to the specificities of particular forms of discrimination and the capacity of civil society to engage across the grounds of discrimination in a systematic and holistic way. Indeed, by adopting too broad an approach, or by focusing only on soft positive messages ('diversity is nice'), there is a risk that the Year will not be able to respond to the harsh realities and specificities of racial or multiple discrimination in the European Union.

While there is increasing collaboration at the European level between

pressure, tend to concentrate their activities on a particular ground of discrimination. When they collaborate across discrimination grounds they tend to do so through bilateral

Balancing independence and decentralisation

Drawing on the lessons of the 2003 European Year of People with Disabilities, according to the EU Commission the 2007 Year will have a

strong national focus, and funding for it will be allocated through National Implementation Bodies. Given the realities of an enlarged European Union and the wide range of organisations and individuals with an interest in this Year's topic, pragmatically, implementation of funding directly by the European Commission would be difficult. However, during the ENAR roundtables many raised concerns that in the current political climate, decentralised implementation will give undue influence to national governments, and that this could even undermine the vision for the Year in certain countries.

Indeed, while the administrations of some countries have a long tradition of cooperating with civil society organisations, other countries face real difficulties in implementing this dialogue. Particular issues have been raised regarding the capacity of certain governments to engage effectively with a wide range of civil society voices, expressing a broad range of concerns that at times have conflicting priorities. In other contexts obstacles are political, and there is a risk that political and ideological boundaries might undermine the implementation of the Year of Equal Opportunities, either passively by failing to disperse information, or more actively by excluding particular projects, organisations or grounds from the implementation of the Year. Concerns have also been expressed that some European governments might misuse civil society organisations for

political purposes, in some cases even foster competition between

There is a risk that political and ideological boundaries might undermine the implementation of the Year of Equal Opportunities.

discrimination grounds, and hence directly undermine the combined influence and impact. In this context it must also be ensured that governments are not just concentrating on some grounds of discrimination in the implementation of the European Year, while excluding others.

Consequently, a centralised management of the European Year by the European Commission would have reassured civil society organisations with regards to being granted fair and equal access to the Year, and protecting the Year from

falling subject to political nuances. However, ENAR members also recognise the value of the approaches that can respond to the reality of national contexts, as well as the pragmatic constraints of implementing the Year across 27 countries.

Preparation is the key to success

By outlining two of the key issues that have emerged during ENAR's preparation for the Year, the challenges of working in solidarity across discrimination grounds, and the need to ensure independence in the context of the decentralised implementation of the Year, we hope to contribute constructively to realising the maximum possible impact of this opportunity.

ENAR is convinced that the 2007 Year of Equal Opportunities can make a real difference to the lives of those who experience discrimination, and is actively encouraging the European Commission and the National Implementation Bodies to recognise and account for the realities and concerns facing European civil society organisations in their efforts to support the victims of discrimination.

1 ENAR has approximately 600 member and associated organisations throughout Europe. A list of members per country can be found at: http://www.enar-eu.org/en/info/2_1.shtml

Political participation of immigrants in the EU

By Marco Martiniello

In most European countries, political mobilisation, participation and representation of immigrants were considered unimportant for a long time. But as immigrants stayed on in their new countries of residence, they asked for more rights to participate in the society also politically. Today, evidence shows that immigrants are in principle not more or less politically passive or active than other citizens, but that their political participation depends on the structure of political opportunities that are offered to them, such as voting rights, the extent of freedom of association, etc. Because of the lack of formal opportunities, ethnic minority representation in political or administrative bodies remains low. Thus, if we want to create cohesive societies in Europe, we must fully include minorities in education, employment, and politics. Granting voting rights for third country nationals at least at the local level is a first step towards inclusion.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the EUMC.

In most European countries, political mobilisation, participation and representation of immigrants and their descendants were for a long time not considered to be important issues either in politics or in academia. As migrants used to have only an economic role in the host society - to work and to produce - they were not regarded as potential citizens. They had been invited as “guest workers” – and as guests it was neither expected nor desired for them to become politically active. Migrant workers were considered to be “apolitical” and characterised by political apathy.

The point of departure was correct: in many countries that received guest workers, migrants had virtually no political rights. They could neither vote nor be elected, and did not enjoy any form of direct or indirect representation within political bodies. Some point to the exclusion of immigrants from the electoral process as a reason for their alleged

political passivity. Others say that many migrants came from countries that lack democratic cultures and had therefore not been “educated” to participate in politics. Initially

Evidence shows that migrants are not more or less politically passive or active than other citizens.

many migrants also thought that they had come to stay only for a short period of time and therefore continued to be oriented more towards their homeland, and towards achieving short-term economic goals before returning home.

However, reality shows that many of those who came to stay for some years only, have now spent their entire lives in their host country, where a second and even third generation have grown up.

How politically active are migrants?

So what is the political reality of today? How active or inactive are migrants in European politics? Research shows that migrants are not more or less politically passive or active than other citizens. They have always been involved in politics, either outside or at the margin of the political system of both their country of origin and their country of residence. Over time, more and more migrants and their descendants have become more actively involved in the mainstream political institutions in their countries of residence. This process has been facilitated by an extension of the voting rights to foreigners in several countries – at least at the local or regional level – and by liberalising nationality laws in others.

Participation depends on opportunities

Research suggests that the forms of immigrants’ political participation largely depend on the structure of political opportunities that are offered to them. For example, states can open or close avenues of political participation for migrants, and provide them with more or less opportunities to participate in the management of collective affairs by:

- granting or denying voting rights to foreigners;
- facilitating or impeding access to citizenship and nationality;
- granting or constraining freedom of association;
- ensuring or blocking the representation of migrants’ interests; and
- establishing or not establishing arenas and institutions for consultative politics.

Whether immigrants and their descendants will seize these opportunities in this changing and institutionally defined framework depends on several variables such as:

- their political ideas and values;
- their previous involvement in politics (including in their country of origin);
- the vision they have of their presence in the country of residence as permanent or temporary;
- their feeling of belonging to the host and/or the origin society;
- their knowledge of the political system and institutions; and
- the density of immigrant associational networks.

In addition, the usual determinants of political behaviour apply, such as



Omid Nouripour

“My motto is that if you want to achieve something, you have to do it yourself. You have to remember that all resources are finite, including those of society. This is why distribution issues are issues of power. And you will have the power to shape things only if you take part yourself. Anything else means handing over your fate to the raging torrent.”

Omid Nouripour is from Iran and now lives in Germany, where he is a member of parliament for BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN. In September 2006 he took over the mandate of the former Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, after being a member of the federal executive committee of the Green Party for four years. His political commitment is rooted in the need to modernise German citizenship law, under which it took him nine years to obtain a German passport.

Photo: copyright Nouripour

level of education, linguistic skills, socio-economic status, gender, age, or age cohort.

Political action can take place at different levels: apart from at national or international level, opportunities exist for participation and mobilisation at all local and regional levels (district, town, municipality, county, land, region, province, canton de-

partment, etc.).

Immigrant involvement in state politics

As far as state politics is concerned, three main forms of ethnic participation and mobilisation can be considered: electoral politics, parliamentary politics, and consultative politics. In this context it is impor-

Electoral Rights for third country nationals in the EU¹

	Local level		Regional / provincial level		National level	
	Right to vote	Eligibility	Right to vote	Eligibility	Right to vote	Eligibility
Austria	—	—	—	—	—	—
Belgium	A	—	—	—	—	—
Cyprus	—	—			—	—
Czech Republic	[RE]	[RE]	—	—	—	—
Denmark	A/AS	A/AS	(A/AS)	(A/AS)	—	—
Estonia	A	—	—	—	—	—
Finland	A/AS	A/AS			—	—
France	—	—	—	—	—	—
Germany	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greece	—	—			—	—
Hungary	A	—	(A)	—	—	—
Ireland	A	A			—	—
Italy	—	—	—	—	—	—
Latvia	—	—			—	—
Lithuania	A	A			—	—
Luxembourg	A	—			—	—
Malta	[RE/AS]	[RE/AS]	[(RE/AS)]	[(RE/AS)]	—	—
Netherlands	A	A	—	—	—	—
Poland	—	—	—	—	—	—
Portugal	RE/RECS	RE/RECS	RECS	—	RECS	—
Slovakia	A	A	(A)	(A)	—	—
Slovenia	A	(A)			—	—
Spain	RE	RE	—	—	—	—
Sweden	A/AS	A/AS	(A/AS)	(A/AS)	—	—
United Kingdom	CL	CL	CL	CL	CL	CL

NOTE:	A	Electoral rights for all foreign nationals (under certain circumstances such as permanent residence. Nationals of EU countries have electoral rights in local and regional elections in all EU countries.)
	AS	Electoral rights only for citizens of countries in the same alliance of states (other than the EU, e.g. Nordic states, Council of Europe)
	CL	Electoral rights for citizens of certain countries on the basis of colonial links in the past
	RE	Electoral rights under condition of reciprocity
	RECS	Electoral rights under condition of reciprocity and cultural similarities
	—	No electoral rights.
		No regional / provincial elections
	Codes in parentheses – “()” – in column “Regional / provincial elections” indicate that even though there are elections to authorities situated between the municipal and the national level, these elections are considered to be part of local self-government. Codes in brackets – “[]” – indicate that legal rules are of no practical relevance at the moment.	

1 From: Harald Waldrauch: “Electoral rights for foreign nationals: a comparative overview”, 2005

“Participation in politics is important - for politics, for politicians and most of all for people. We believe that listening and responding to the views of all communities, including migrants, is a crucial part of the policy making process. That means that migrants need a voice, and that in turn rests on things like participating in elections, and campaigning - especially at local level - for change and improvement. So we strongly favour migrants, and all other communities, playing a full part in politics.”

Born in Guyana, Baroness Amos worked in Local Government in the UK until she became Chief Executive of the Equal Opportunities Commission, a post she held from 1989-1994. She was made Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2001. In May 2003 she joined the Cabinet as International Development Secretary before becoming Leader of the House of Lords and President of the Council in October 2003.



Baroness Amos

Photo: Copyright UK Cabinet Office

tant to underline that in nearly all European States and also in non-European democracies, full electoral rights are reserved only for the nationals of the countries in question¹, even though some of them have enfranchised third country nationals at the local level (see table). Therefore, ethnic participation in elections is essentially determined by rules on access to citizenship. An interesting development regarding immigrant participation in electoral politics might currently be emerging in France. Following civil society campaigns to vote as a response to the violent riots in 2005, a considerable number of French citizens from visible minorities, who had not made use of their voting right in previous elections, have now officially registered as voters.

In this context, the issue of a possible “ethnic vote” may be of interest. In fact, there is no convincing evi-

dence or theory that would explain a link between ethnic or religious belonging and political or electoral behaviour.

The representation of ethnic minorities in the central government, parliament and local government is also an increasingly important issue. However, for the time being, ethnic minority representation in these bodies remains low, although increases can be noted in some countries in particular at the local level.

However, electoral politics and parliamentary assemblies are not the only arenas for ethnic political participation. Several states have created consultative institutions at the periphery of the state to deal with ethnic categories and immigration problems. Usually, these bodies have only little power, for example, as advisory boards. Among the earliest examples of this were the Bel-

gian “Conseils Consultatifs Communaux pour les Immigrés” (Consultative Local Councils for Immigrants) that were established in the late 1960s. Political scientists have generally criticised the idea of establishing special consultative bodies for immigrants, as they marginalise immigrants further while giving them the illusion of direct political participation. The Council of Europe issued a far-reaching recommendation on the issue in 2001² and developed a manual of principles and guidelines for the hundreds of consultative bodies across Europe.³

Involvement in non-state politics

As far as non-state politics is concerned, four main avenues of ethnic and immigrant political participation and mobilisation can be singled out: involvement in political parties, union politics, other pressure

groups, and direct mobilisation of ethnic communities.

In Europe, the issue of ethnic involvement in political parties emerged first in Britain with the debate about the Black section in the Labour Party in the 1980s. Today, membership in political parties for third country nationals is still not equally accepted across Europe. The presence of immigrants in unions is an older and better known phenomenon. One could even say that union politics is the cradle of immigrants' political participation in Europe. Unions have responded to the ethnic issue in different ways. Some have organised specific institutions for "migrant workers" within the union, while others have refused to do so in the name of the unity of the working class.

Immigrants can get involved more easily in pressure groups and movements, such as the sans-papiers movements or anti-racism organisations, as well as environmentalist movements, animal rights groups, customers' associations, neighbourhood committees, and similar initiatives. In order to promote and defend political interest and to exert some pressure on the political system, immigrant groups also organise as collectives along ethnic, racial or religious lines. In recent years, the mobilisation of Muslims immigrants around religious concerns has received wide attention.

If we want to create more cohesive, open and participatory democracies



Omar Al-Rawi

"Integration of immigrants means that they participate in all areas of society – culturally, professionally, in academia, in industry and in particular politically. Political participation means two things. Firstly, by taking an interest in what is going on politically and by voting in elections, and so helping to shape the future. Secondly, by standing for political office and hence making a direct contribution to the formulation of policy. It ought to be the most natural thing in the world for immigrants to be politically active, but the political parties need to do a great deal to encourage this, as there is still a long way to go."

Omar Al-Rawi came to Austria from Iraq to study when he was seventeen. He works as an engineer and has "always" been politically active, in particular since 1993 in the works council and as a trade unionist, but also before that during his alternative civil service and as a student representative. After the FPÖ's xenophobic election campaign in 1999 his commitment increased, and since 2002 he has been a member of the Vienna regional parliament and Vienna city council.

Photo: copyright SPOeAlRawi

in Europe, granting voting rights for third country nationals at least at the local and regional level is an important step. Only those who can participate can really develop a feeling

of belonging to a society and share its present and future.

Marco Martiniello is Research Director at the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS). He teaches Sociology and Politics at the University of Liège. He is the Director of the Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM) in the same university.

- 1 The United Kingdom is exceptional in this regards since it extends active voting rights as well as eligibility in national elections to all Commonwealth and Irish citizens.
- 2 Recommendation 1500 (2001): Participation of immigrants and foreign residents in political life in the Council of Europe member states (Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly)
- 3 "Local consultative bodies for foreign residents – a Handbook", Council of Europe (Sonia Gsir and Marco Martiniello), 2004

Another Type of Euro-Vision

By Ed Klute

In Europe, media audiences are changing and ethnic minority communities are a growing part of them. In a multicultural society, national media have therefore an increasingly important role as platforms for inclusive intercultural dialogue. To fulfil this role, diversity is needed both among staff as well as in content. However, recent studies show that ethnic minorities are still under-represented in the media. This calls for new recruitment policies to be implemented. Diversity issues should also figure in training programmes. In addition, teaching media literacy is needed. NGOs are particularly active to put media and diversity on the political and media agenda.

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In recent years 'breaking news', unfiltered from distant conflict zones, have been brought directly to television and computer screens. This speed and decontextualisation of news has implications for national debates concerning cultural diversity, integration, religion and asylum, and affects the life of particular minority communities.

Although most ethnic minority audiences rely on national mainstream television news as their main source of news, when critical stories break, they rely heavily on the internet, local community media and transnational satellite television stations, such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabia. Although these channels are not watched by large numbers of the younger generations, they have a disproportionate influence on these audiences. The insertion of Al Jazeera and other Arabic language footage in mainstream news bulletins, however, tends to reinforce the notion among the indigenous audiences that such channels adopt an Arab-Muslim perspective. Some believe that they provide a mouthpiece for terrorist voices and views, in contrast with Arabic speaking Mus-

lim viewers who regard Al Jazeera as a news channel founded on principles of balance and impartiality. Indigenous audiences feel comfortable with national media, as they see their own opinions and prejudices reinforced, because their news bulletins interpret events based on

within a Western ideological realm and to reproduce the discursive logic of the government, because journalists' access to information is seen to be dictated to a large extent by governments.¹

How to deal with this dilemma and fulfil the social responsibility of the media in view of social cohesion and to produce news for all? The media audiences are changing and ethnic minority communities are a growing part of them. How can news and information programmes reach all parts of the public and what is the impact of news and information on them?

Diversity deficit

To create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and intercultural communication, national media have an increasingly important role as platforms for inclusive intercultural dialogue and as news and information providers trusted by all sections of the multicultural society. To fulfil this role, diversity is needed both among staff as well as in content. However, minority groups are confronted with issues of access, power and portrayal in the media sector: recent studies show that ethnic minorities are relatively invisible in the media. In particular, they are seriously under-represented

In a multicultural society, national media have an increasingly important role as platforms for inclusive intercultural dialogue.

their established and trusted cultural, and often religious, perspectives and values. For Muslim news consumers who use multiple and multilingual sources, mainstream Western news are seen to be marred by ethnocentrism, to operate from

in decision-making in the sector. This calls for new recruitment policies to be implemented. Diversity issues should also figure in training programmes and provide benchmarks for the judgement of newsroom performance.

Media need to report professionally on equality issues and the concerns of minority communities in order to raise awareness of intolerance in society. There is a need to have more dialogue between media professionals and civil society actors on these matters and for more efficient mechanisms of media monitoring on diversity issues.

Teaching media literacy

In pursuit of these objectives media literacy at all levels of schooling is needed to help media users understand how and why media content is produced. Awareness of techniques, languages and conventions used by media is crucial to understanding their message. This encourages people to develop their own ways of making their voice heard. Confident and aware media users are better able to identify, challenge and engage with media to combat misleading, offensive or harmful material and to

participate effectively in the multicultural information society. Educating the public about media and digital communication technologies is a guarantee of freedom and independ-

Although ethnic minority communities are a growing part of media audiences, they are relatively under-represented in the media.

ence in relation to the media. It is a key element of an inclusive information society that respects the dignity of others, particularly women, minorities and vulnerable people, and of the promotion of human rights. Media literacy should also be seen in a

larger context of citizens' active and productive participation in old and new media platforms. Models for the role of participatory community media should be further evaluated and better integrated in future policies on propagation of media literacy.

Efforts of NGOs

A lot of work undertaken by NGOs is aimed at putting media and diversity on the political and media agenda.

- NGOs are involved in media monitoring and dialogue with journalists on how to make media output more diverse and better reflect the societies.
- Contact databases with minority spokespersons have been developed and minority organisations received training to take a more proactive part in the public media debates.
- Ethnic media professionals have been encouraged to play a more active role in the media industry, while efforts are made to make the industry more aware of its responsibilities in multicultural society, as well as of the commercial potential of growing minority audiences.

European media NGOs:

IFJ	International Federation of Journalists - http://www.ifj.org
EFJ	European Federation of Journalists - http://www.efj.org
OSI-EUMAP	Open Society Institute - EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program) - http://www.eumap.org
AMARC	World Association of Community Radios - http://www.amarc.org
OLMCM	Online/More Colour in the Media network - http://www.olmcm.org
SIGNIS	World Catholic Association for Communication - http://www.signis.org
Article 19	Global Campaign for Free Expression - http://www.article19.org

- Using the possibilities offered by new technology, it has become easier to create community media, such as websites, digital radio or television stations. In several countries, NGOs are involved in setting up multimedia projects, like press agencies with young people, to make them aware of how media are being made and in which way they can make their voice heard.
- At the European level the major European media NGOs recently joined forces to create a European NGO lobby platform on media and diversity.

European Week of Media and Diversity

In order to highlight the national and transnational efforts and to continue the established broad coalition, the European network Online/More Colour in the Media initiated the European Week of Media and Diversity, which will take place from 19 to 25 March 2007 in at least 15 EU countries with the slogan “Equal opportunities for all!”

To achieve diversity in the media is not an end in itself, but a means to more quality journalism, to economic success for the media and, in the long-term, to more cohesive societies. It may be a long and difficult road, but it is one that is worth and necessary taking.

Ed Klute is since 1989 director of Mira Media, an independent Dutch NGO promoting the representation of minorities in the Dutch media since 1986. He has initiated and coordinated national and international media projects focusing on intercultural programming, media empowerment of ethnic minority

and religious organisations, employment and training of ethnic media professionals and intercultural media education. Ed Klute is also co-founder and chairperson of the European network Online/More

Colour in the Media (OLMCM). see <http://www.miramedia.nl> and <http://www.olmcm.org>

¹ For example in the case of the war in Iraq, where only “governmental” reporters were allowed to cover the field operations.



European Week of Media and Diversity
Equal Opportunities for All!

The European Week of Media and Diversity

Edition 2007:
equal opportunities for all!

19 TO 25 MARCH 2007

Why a Week for Media and Diversity?

The annual European Week of Media and Diversity has been initiated by the network Online/More Colour in the Media since 2003 to highlight the necessity of diversity in the media and to start a dialogue between media professionals, NGOs and minority audiences. During the last three years, the Week has become a platform to draw attention to the resolutions and recommendations of national bodies and to the presentation of monitoring efforts made by NGOs.

Who is participating in the Week?

During the Week of Media and Diversity NGOs, unions of journalists, schools of journalism, research institutes, media education and vocational training organisations, diversity managers from

public broadcasters, programme makers, media-watch organisations, workers’ unions and ethnic community media across Europe organise events in a number of EU Member States.

Do you want to join us in 2007?

The 4th edition of the European Week of Media and Diversity will take place from 19 to 25 March 2007 in at least 15 EU-countries with the slogan “Equal opportunities for all!”. If your organisation wants to join the Week by staging a national or local event, we can provide you with the logo and other communication tools, advertise your initiative through our network websites, and put you in touch with peers working in the same area. You can join the Week with your own idea or use one of the formats we propose in the European Week Handbook (available on request).

To receive more information or to join the European Week, please contact:

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<http://www.olmcm.org>



Edouard Pellet

Interview with Edouard Pellet, Integration and Diversity Representative of France Télévisions

Edouard Pellet, when and why did France Télévisions create the post of Integration and Diversity Representative? What does your job involve?

The former Chief Executive of France Télévisions, Marc Tessier, asked me to head up a think tank to investigate whether the Group was properly fulfilling its commitment to integration, through expression on the part of the diverse components of the French population, on the airwaves, in programmes and in the structures of the public-service channels. This request followed a meeting he had, in late 2002, with the Chairman of the BBC who told him about the ‘ethnicisation’ of its airwaves. He was also influenced by the 2002 presidential elections in France which in the second round saw a head-to-head challenge between the extreme right and the moderate right – the left having already been defeated. I published my final conclusions in July 2003, which confirmed that we were indeed lagging behind on this issue. This led to the setting-up, in January 2004, of the Positive Action Plan for Integration (PAPI), which I manage as part of the duties arising from a specifically created post directly accountable to the Chief Executive. This plan focuses on three main areas (Programmes and editorial content, Human resources, and Ethics) and aims to raise the profile and enhance the representation and promotion of ethnic and cultural diversity within the Group. In September 2005, the new Chief Executive, Patrick de Carolis, asked for the Positive Action Plan to be expanded and for an early dialogue concerning the action already taken, while still emphasising steady, day-to-day work rather than media scoops.

Why are there not more journalists of minority ethnic origin? What can be done to remedy this situation? Do you believe that the media have a specific responsibility in this area?

French public TV broadcasting reflects the reticence, reservations and resistance to diversity of French society as a whole. We are adopting a pragmatic approach to combat this, particularly through the specific use of ‘common law’. As an example, we have set up around 30 bursaries and awarded apprenticeship contracts to journalism students from Priority Education Zones who are attending our partner journalism colleges, such as Sciences-Po or the IPJ. Furthermore, as well as the most well-known case of Audrey Pulvar, the first black presenter on a national French prime time TV news bulletin, around 30 ‘minority’ professionals have been given a higher profile on the different France 2, France 3, France 4, France 5 and France Ô channels.

To what extent might increased diversity affect public opinion and society in general? Can diversity in the media help to combat discrimination and prejudice against visible minorities?

Viewers’ emails to France Télévisions’ ombudsman indicate that people feel there is too great a differential between the diversity of French society and the presence and representation of minority and ethnic groups in the programmes. It is the paramount duty of public-service broadcasting to remedy that situation. The ultimate aim of the policy we have implemented is, in the long term, to re-establish the ‘right to indifference’, without having recourse to quotas or positive discrimination.

In Europe, public confidence in the notion of diversity seems to have been undermined by events such as the recent social unrest in French urban areas, the Danish caricatures or the London July bomb attacks. What can or should the media be doing to promote mutual respect and equal opportunities for all?

As regards the unrest in France, this was considered to have been treated in a balanced, unbiased way by public broadcasters since it was primarily social and not ethnic or racial in nature. It prompted our editorial teams to go into the secondary schools in Priority Education Zones and so-called ‘sensitive’ campuses to talk to young people of various origins in order to get a better idea of what the true situation in France is really like. In addition to that, another major contribution is the European media conference, organised by France Télévisions and WDR and ARD from Germany, on ‘Migration and Integration – Europe’s big challenge. Which role do the media play?’, which was held in Essen in November 2006, with a follow-up conference in Paris on 23 November 2007. This should help us gain a focused, joint response to this shared problem.

Interview with Gualtiero Zambonini, Commissioner for Diversity of German Television Channel WDR

Public broadcaster Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) carried out a study on minorities and migrants and the media. What were the main findings?

In 2002 and 2004, the WDR commissioned two representative studies on the way Greeks, Italians, Turks and immigrants from the former Yugoslavia living in North Rhine-Westphalia use the media. The main findings were that immigrants, particularly Turks, mostly use television as an information and entertainment medium. Their use of the media is complementary, in other words, they watch both German-language channels as well as programmes in their mother tongue on satellite channels. Fewer than 5% use only German language or only mother-tongue media. There is also a clear preference for entertainment programmes broadcast by commercial channels. Nonetheless, the information programmes of public broadcasters are well regarded. In 2004, we wanted to find out the contexts in which immigrants appeared in our information programmes. We commissioned a programme analysis, which found that people with a foreign background are mostly portrayed as a natural part of our day-to-day lives. While it is our duty to report on and explain the background to the problems and conflicts affecting immigrant society, here at the WDR, we are especially careful that immigrants should be treated as equals and protagonists and not just as the 'subject-matter' of a report.

For decades now, media experts have talked about the need for greater diversity in the media. Why has Europe been so slow in putting these words into action? And what can the media do to ensure diversity in its structures and programmes?

Here at the WDR, we have made considerable progress in this regard. Integration has been mainstreamed throughout the organisation. We actively seek out and promote talented young people of immigrant origin. Our efforts have paid off: Asli Sevindim is the first presenter of Turkish origin of the prime-time news programme 'Aktuelle Stunde', while Birand Bingül, also from the WDR, was the first German-Turk to join the team of commentators on the ARD programme 'Tagesthemen'. Through extensive research, content analysis and studies on media use, we are attempting to gain an insight into the media habits of immigrants and to put our findings to good use. Although our work is still in the early stages, the WDR is at the forefront in this field.

The reason is that politicians, the media and society realised too late that immigration poses a major challenge to social development and peaceful co existence in Europe. We take this development very seriously and believe that the media – above all



Gualtiero Zambonini

the public broadcasting service – has a key role to play. With that in mind, the WDR, together with ZDF and France Télévisions under the umbrella of the EBU (European Broadcasting Union), organised a European conference on the role of the media in Europe's immigrant society, which was held in Essen on 23 and 24 November 2006. A follow-up conference is scheduled for November 2007 at UNESCO in Paris.

Representatives of minority groups call for greater representation in prime-time programmes rather than the current 'niche programmes' for minorities. What do you think about this?

So-called niche programmes have played an important role in the past. Today, in the age of satellite television, a rethink is called for. It would be a mistake, however, to cancel programmes aimed specifically at immigrants without finding an alternative, as has happened repeatedly. In my view, specialised editorial departments can play a key role in an organisation, by transforming them into competence centres for the channel as a whole. They could act as centres of excellence and recruiting grounds for up-and-coming journalists with an immigrant background. To achieve this, however, we need to devise a corporate strategy in order to foster successful links between specialist editors and the channel as a whole.

In your view, how should the media deal with right-wing extremist parties and opinions?

We should keep a close eye on right-wing extremism and its breeding ground and take it very seriously. The media should report on the activities of right-wing extremists and their background and investigate the causes of violence committed by these extremists. Rather than silence them, elected politicians of right-wing extremist parties should be exposed to critical, serious questioning from journalists. At the same time, it is essential that we foster a climate in which immigration is accepted and cultural differences are valued. In the context of television, this could involve creating role models or 'heroes', with whom viewers will eventually identify.

Encouraging Diversity – Strengthening Cohesion: the leitmotif of integration policy in Berlin

By Sabine Kroker-Stille

‘Encouraging Diversity – Strengthening Cohesion’ – in essence, this leitmotif of integration policy in Berlin aims to achieve respectful dealings between people in a city characterised by its diversity. Modern urban societies live on the diversity of their citizens and attain their potentialities and future prospects through them. The coming together of a diverse range of different lifestyles because of immigration is per se an irreversible process, but ensuring that these immigrants live and work together without friction also requires political action in order to avoid fragmentation of society. Important examples of this in Berlin are:

- Undertaking extensive programmes and initiatives to fight against right wing extremism, racism and antisemitism.
- Strengthening anti discrimination work by providing institutional backup.
- Enhancing the integration of Muslims through dialogue and binding agreements.
- Providing acceptance and support for migrants by means of public relations work and awards.
- Improving opportunities in education and on the job market.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the EUMC.

‘Encouraging Diversity – Strengthening Cohesion’ – in essence, this leitmotif of integration policy in Berlin aims to achieve respectful dealings between people in a city characterised today by its diversity. On the basis of this reality, integration policy in Berlin faces particular challenges. 13.5% of the city’s inhabitants do not have German nationality. If immigrants who have subsequently obtained a German passport are also taken into account, almost one Berliner in four comes from a ‘migrant background’. Among them, the largest groups of

migrants come from Turkey and Central and Eastern Europe. Consequently, a relatively large proportion of migrants are of the Muslim faith (210,000). At 6.5% of the population, Muslims are the third largest religious group in Berlin.

So what is Berlin doing to bring about a more tolerant and more united society against this backdrop? There is broad consensus in the city that Berlin’s future will depend substantially on the extent to which it succeeds in further developing Berlin as an immigration city. However, this is not an objective which can be reached by one single measure; it requires a very wide range of approaches. Integration policy is a multidisciplinary task which concerns all spheres of poli-

tics. A few examples are mentioned below.

1. Fostering respect and tolerance by fighting against right wing extremism, racism and antisemitism

A special programme run by the federal state (*Land*) of Berlin is aimed directly at eradicating right wing extremism, racism and antisemitism and thus building up respect for others and achieving acceptance of their (supposed) differences. Each year, the city of Berlin supports around 30 projects with a current budget of €1.22m. The programme covers areas including prevention, advice for victims, empowerment and strengthening existing community democratic structures.

The areas of action are:

- Mobile advice and networks,
- Democratic youth culture,
- Strengthening civil society,
- Strengthening local integration/neighbourhood,
- Victim support,
- Documentation and research.

For example, young people learn to deal with conflicts without using violence, to break down prejudices and to accept differences among themselves. The projects have different approaches; depending on the target group the topic is introduced by theatre work, rounds of discussions, talks, excursions or joint recreational activities. The programme also advises local activists and links up existing community initiatives. Most recently, it held rounds of discussions and provided advice to local government politicians after the extreme right wing NPD (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands, German National Democratic Party*) gained seats in some of the *Bezirksparlamente* (district parliaments). The objective was to discuss ways of preventing the NPD from using the parliaments as a platform for its anti democratic ideologies and slogans, while still dealing with it on a democratic footing.

2. Strengthening anti discrimination work through a Senate Co ordinating Centre Against Discrimination

At the beginning of 2005, the Senate of Berlin established a Senate Co ordinating Centre Against Discrimination Based on Ethnic Origin, Belief and Religion (*Senatsleitstelle gegen*

Diskriminierung aus ethnischen, religiösen und weltanschaulichen Gründen). This centre, based at the offices of the Commissioner for Integration, provides advice in the first instance to victims of discrimination before any court case, clarifies facts and if required arranges to provide legal clarification for lawyers. In cases of structural discrimination it may be possible to bring about a political solution. The Senate Co ordinating Centre's duties also include raising awareness of discrimination by means of public relations work, dialogue and empowerment. The fact that the Senate has provided institutional backup for the anti discrimination work by setting up its own centre was perceived as an important symbolic action with respect to migrants in particular and has reinforced the *Land's* previous anti discrimination work. In addition to fighting against right wing extremism, the Centre has made the integration of Muslims a further focal point of its work.

3. Enhancing the integration of Muslims through dialogue and binding agreements

Recently, the topic of religion, including the different religious communities, has been playing an increasingly important role in public discussions. When dealing with the various religions in Berlin, local politicians must safeguard the freedom of religion guaranteed in the constitution and at the same time are obliged to maintain religious neutrality.

- In order to safeguard the religious neutrality of the state, in areas where state functions are

carried out by civil servants (the judiciary, police and schools), **state law** (the 'neutrality law') **imposes a ban on wearing religious symbols** (skullcap, turban, headscarf, large cross, etc.).

- **A working group within the education authority** is currently working with representatives of Islamic organisations, seeking consensual solutions in situations where conflict arises for Muslim pupils between their faith on the one hand and their obligations at school on the other hand (participation in sports and swimming classes, class trips and sex education).
- **The Berliner Islamforum (Berlin Islamic Forum)**, set up a year ago, has raised the quality of and commitment to dialogue with the Muslim community to new levels. The Forum holds quarterly meetings where representatives of various mosques, the Catholic and Protestant churches, the Jewish community, politicians (including officials for the protection of the constitution), representatives of the administrative authorities and of civil society hold an open dialogue (which is however not open to the public). The meetings deal with subjects such as security, life and cooperation in the district as well as current topics of interest.
- Representatives of the Islamic Forum also carry out joint campaigns, for example commenting publicly on the current conflict surrounding the building of a mosque in the city. To date, the Forum's largest and most suc-

successful exercise has been the **Act of Remembrance for the Victims of the Terrorist Attack on 11 September 2001**. In September 2006, at the instigation of the Islamic Forum, 40 Berlin mosques called for peace at Friday prayers, alluding to Islam's peaceableness, and remembered the victims of the attacks. On that occasion, six mosques also opened up Friday prayers to non-Muslims, an invitation which was accepted by several well known figures.

- Furthermore, the Islamic Forum is currently drawing up recommendations describing the most successful instances of cooperation between mosques and the community as a whole that have already been put into action. There are already more than **35 examples of good practice** in this field in Berlin, and it is an increasing trend. Describing these examples is intended to encourage imitation and to make the efforts and successes public, so that negative reports and a negative image of 'Islam' and 'Muslims' can be countered to some extent.
- The participation of well known political, social and administrative figures in the **breaking of the fast** ('Iftar' meal) during Ramadan has also enabled the communities to get better acquainted and has improved contact between them. The 'Open mosque day' that has taken place on 3 October for many years has had a similar effect.

An ongoing survey requested by the Berlin Commissioner for Inte-

gration on the lives of Muslims and mosque congregations in Berlin has concluded that in the last eight years the mosque communities have become more open, and that they have also become more professional in their dealings with the

Integration policy is a multidisciplinary task which concerns all spheres of politics.

rest of the population as well as political representatives and representatives of the administrative authorities. In addition, they have expanded the social activities they offer outside the direct practising of their religion. One of the reasons for this is considered to be that the younger generation has gained greater influence within the mosque communities, which already attracts positive attention because their language skills are better. However, the fact that politicians have become more aware of mosque communities in Berlin in the last few years and are now more likely to approach them and involve them to a greater extent in relevant decisions certainly also plays a role.

4. Providing acceptance and support by means of public relations work

Enhancing mutual acceptance and improving the experience of living and working together in solidarity also requires that appreciation for one another is promoted and attention is directed at positive, successful instances of integration and co-existence. Since public perceptions are repeatedly shaped by problem cases which do not reflect the cultural, religious and social experiences of the people who live here Berlin politicians regard it as their duty to counter this prejudicial image by depicting the reality. The Berlin Integration Commissioner's public relations work makes the public aware of successful initiatives and successful migrants. For example, there is an annual **Integration Day** when successful migrants or initiatives are publicly honoured by the award of the **Integration Prize**. It is announced in advance that the prize will be awarded in a particular field, and a jury then chooses the winner or winners.

5. Improving migrants' opportunities in education and on the job market

As long as educational successes are insufficient and opportunities on the job market are consequently limited, many of the endeavours identified, such as the fight against racism, right wing extremism and discrimination, and dialogue, participation and acceptance, are likely to remain unsuccessful. The high unemployment rates among foreigners provide shocking proof of this: almost one foreigner in two is cur-

rently out of work in Berlin. Anyone who feels excluded from social participation on the job market, who believes he has no professional prospects or who has been unsuccessful at school will have doubts about the solidarity of society and runs the risk of losing his feeling of solidarity with his fellow citizens. In this respect, a tolerant and united society undoubtedly needs a political system that will improve immigrants' opportunities in school, education and working life.

- In order to improve the linguistic abilities of migrants' children, Berlin kindergartens carry out a language test and follow it up with language support tailored to the particular needs of the child.
- At special mothers' courses, language courses for mothers take place in parallel with their children's lessons. A few mosques also offer language classes, run in cooperation with the *Volks-hochschulen* (adult education centres) on mosque premises; this low threshold provision reaches an important target group.
- From 2007, the last year at nursery will be free of charge for all children living in Berlin. This provision is aimed in particular at teaching children from poor social backgrounds and children

of migrants social and language skills and thus making the transition to school easier for them.

- There is a special programme which targets migrants who are seeking training places or jobs but have not yet been successful.
- A two year pilot project supported by the EU investigated the transition from school to employment. It was found that a great deal of action is needed here, because schools and business have hitherto failed to cooperate sufficiently. As a result, schools, employers' associations and companies are planning closer cooperation in order to prepare young people better for training and employment.

Above all, diversity means strength, dynamism, liveliness and openness.

Diversity as strength

Modern urban societies – such as Berlin – live on the diversity of their

citizens and attain their potentialities and future prospects through them. Above all, diversity means strength, dynamism, liveliness and openness. This diversity of cities is manifested in their social, ethnic, cultural and religious characteristics. It is an irreversible process which must be acknowledged but which also makes specific demands on everyone. It is precisely for this reason that a formative integration policy is an integral part of modern city politics.

We must do more than merely tolerate the numerous different lifestyles that have developed in many European cities in the last few decades; this would be insufficient. If we want to avoid or at least reduce the conflicts that accompany them, we must shape their structural conditions. This means that a policy fostering mutual acceptance goes hand in hand with a policy that safeguards social cohesion and prevents the fragmentation of society. The Berlin leitmotif 'Encouraging Diversity – Strengthening Cohesion' symbolises all of these things.

Dr. Sabine Kroker Stille is head of the Berlin Senate Co-ordinating Centre Against Discrimination Based on Ethnic Origin, Belief and Religion, which was set up in February 2005.

<http://www.berlin.de/lb/intmig/leitstelle/>

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2007

European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

2005-2015

Decade of Roma Inclusion

1 January 2007 - 30 June 2007

German Presidency of the EU

- Symposium on crime prevention and criminal justice, Helsinki (Finland), organised by the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI); 22-23 January 2007

- Equality Summit: Launching conference of 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities; Berlin (Germany); 30-31 January 2007

- 70th Session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD); 19 February - 9 March 2007

- Council of Europe/ECRI Seminar with national specialised bodies to combat racism and racial discrimination on the issue of positive action; Strasbourg (France); 22-23 February 2007

- UN Intergovernmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; 5-9 March 2007

- March Conference: "Integration and Diversity" on the results of the XENOS Programme – Living and Working in Diversity, organised by the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Lübeck (Germany); 14-15 March 2007



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