**THE CALL / DECLARATION “SCHOOL WITHOUT RACISM”**

- We, students, teachers and staff, the head teacher and governing bodies say “NO” to racism.
- We fight against all forms and manifestations of racism and discrimination in our school.
- Our school must be faithful to its educational mission to take initiatives against racism.
- Our school rejects racist propaganda and racist organisations.
- Our school organises initiatives against racism and for a multicultural society every year.
- Our aim is that a majority (a given percentage) of students, teachers and other members of staff, the board and governing body support this call. This gives our school the honourable name “School Without Racism” and we are committed to maintaining this status.
- You can choose whether you prefer 60%, 70% or another amount, but make your chosen percentage clear to everybody.

Good luck and inform UNITED if you aresuccessful!

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- www.wcpm.com (in Spanish, French & English)
- www.aktivhaus.org (in German)
- www.radair.nl/read/scholenproject_n (in Dutch)
- www.o斜ce.org/c/25634 (Statement in English)

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**UNITED for intercultural action**

**EUROPEAN NETWORK AGAINST NATIONALISM, RACISM, FASCISM AND IN SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

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**A Choice for the Future?**

From a School Without Racism, to a world without racism.

School Without Racism (SWR) is a grassroots project initiated and coordinated by young students themselves, in which the population of a school votes to position itself actively against racism. When at least 60% of the student population has signed the “declaration against racism” or “the Call”, the school receives SWR status. Once the honourable SWR shield is displayed at the main entrance, the school maintains its status by organising activities that are focused on tolerance, respect and combating discrimination. In this leaflet you can find some information, with a step-by-step guide, about how you can start making your school a “School Without Racism”. 

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**UNITED FOR INTERCULTURAL ACTION**

**EUROPEAN NETWORK AGAINST NATIONALISM, RACISM, FASCISM AND IN SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

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**UNITED for Intercultural Action**

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**STEP 8**

Is it NO or is it YES?

If it is NO you have to accept that and organise a meeting with your preparation group to discuss what to do now. One option is to discuss the possible reasons for this outcome, what kind of amendments you need to make to your project and then restart it.

If it is YES you can have a small party and plan how you wish to organise the official moment that the SWR shield appears on the wall of the school. You have to make your own SWR shield, look at the example on this page.

Find a creative artist to paint or spray paint the shield, or ask the art teacher to help you. Make sure it is vandalism-proof!

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**STEP 9**

The official day

Make it special with a lot of positive media attention. Keep your eye out for a good date; maybe there is a special memorial day or an activity scheduled in your country/city that you could use. Invite your board of recommendation, the mayor of the city and/or a minister who is involved in this issue. Maybe the minister will be keen to present you with the shield bearing the name “School Without Racism”, and you will present the shield, on behalf of the students, to the head teacher of the school. Ask him/her to hang the SWR shield up at the front of the school next to the main entrance, which is also a great way to attract media attention. Also include your SWR status in writing somewhere in the school’s rules and regulations or code of behaviour. Everybody should know about the content of your call and know that your school is a SWR school.

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**STEP 10**

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**UNITED is supported by:**

- More than 500 organisations from all European countries, many prominent individuals, private supporters and long-term volunteers from Action Schleswiger Federate, the European Voluntary Service and the European Solidarity Corps and several other national and international organisations.

Since 1994 financial support was received from various sponsors such as: European Commission – General Budget/Erasmus/Grundtvig/Youth in Action/Programme DG Employment Social Affairs-TACIS IBPP, Council of Europe-European Youth Foundation/ European Youth Network, OSCE/OIAC/ ODIHR, Halberstädter, World Council of Churches,olf Palmer Israel, Cultural Council Sweden, Ministry of Education Slovenia, Green Group, Border Group, and SDC.

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A SHORT HISTORY
Europe is in constant change and this allows us to become acquainted with a multitude of different cultures and ethnicities which all enrich our lives. Unfortunately there are some who resist these inevitable changes and fear a change in the moral fabric of our society. Today’s youth will live and work in a multicultural Europe and they will have to live up to the challenge of exclusion and senseless violence stemming from racist sentiment in, and around, schools.

Many years back in 1988 they gave the population in Belgium the idea of a multiculturalism and equal treatments. They also worked to prevent hatred and discrimination in schools. Their success was noted by Dutch activists, who in Antwerp started an antiracism project in 1989. Their principles and the resulting active participation in antiracism work.

School Without Racism was inspired by the group of people who started the movement, and the media...
A SHORT HISTORY

Europe is in constant change and this allows us to become acquainted with a multitude of different European cultures, both the present and the past, which all enrich our lives. Unfortunately there are some who resist these inevitable changes and fear a collapse of their culture. Today’s youth will live and work in a multicultural Europe. How to prepare for this reality is an important question. It has added a new dimension to the issue of racism and exclusion and senseless violence stemming from racist sentiment in, and around, schools is a common problem, and they are looking for something against it by using good practices in antiracist work.

When the Belgian extremist-right party Vlaams Blok gained a high number of votes in the local elections, twenty young students in Antwerp started an antiracism project in their school. Many years back in 1988 they gave the impetus to start a movement of young people, teachers, parents, and councillors to fight against racism. This movement is called “School Without Racism” (School Without Racism, SWR). Their success was noted by Dutch activists, who helped to create a Movement under the same name in the Netherlands in 1993. The first large Dutch SWR activity was in February 1994, when 1500 students and other young people demonstrated on the streets against a series of hate incidents and extreme-right violence against asylum seekers in the Dutch city of Terneuzen. A high school started schools within 3 years in Antwerp and in the Netherlands bearing the SWR shield on their door. The Belgian and Dutch coordinators organised a large number of activities in the different countries, and in 1994 the Dutch and Belgian coordinators started the European Youth Movement School Without Racism. In 1995, SWR became one of the model projects of the European youth campaign “All Different, All Equal”. These workshops were extremely helpful – in the German NGO Aktion Courage became very interested in SWR methodology, approached the coordinators and in that year, SOR [Schule Ohne Rassismus] began in Germany with help of SWR Belgium and SWR Netherlands. In 2001 a new network between Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain started. And now the project operates in Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Bolivia and Venezuela, is being started up in Italy, Ireland and England and has been introduced in Switzerland, Romania, Lithuania and Hungary. So at this very moment the project has already reached a lot of youths in different countries.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

School Without Racism is a youth project, initiated and sustained by youngsters themselves, who are very interested in all forms of racism and discrimination. Not just at school, but in many places where young people meet, be it in their own community centres, or in after-school activities, or in their local communities. Whenever a school has a sign in its entrance carrying the words “School Without Racism”, it means that the head teacher or the director of that school has declared itself, with a big majority, against racism and discrimination. The code of conduct (the Call) of SWR chooses this grassroots approach because democratic principles and the resulting active participation of young people guarantee a greater educational effect. It is democratic as every- one at school votes yes or no for a SWR. Every student has read the ‘Call’ [see step 10] and knows what it means to be a SWR student.

School Without Racism depends on voluntary work. Work in which young people, teachers, members of the board and parents cooperate, but that is instead also coordinated by the students (youngsters). There is already a certain stage there where students in a school or in a region, can organize one or more “Points of Support” staffed with teachers and parents. These Points of Support can be responsible for developing and/or distributing intercultural exercise books and materials as well as planning intercultural activities. They can also give further training to teachers and parents, and thereby increase their combined activities and communication between participants. In addition, they can also be responsible for the sustainability of the project, and finally, these Points of Support can stimulate research on the effectiveness of the project.

EDUCATING A NEW GENERATION

School Without Racism does not solely concentrate on intercultural education and discrimination on the basis of colour and origin. It also focuses on discrimination on the basis of religion, philosophy of life, political persuasion, gender, sexual preference and disability. The basic premise of SWR is that it is currently directly related to the existing treaties and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That means that the SWR approach is suitable for schools all over the world, and can contribute to the education and emancipation of a critical generation. The basic principles remain the same, although some aspects may differ from the original Belgian philosophy depending on national relevance.

THE POSITIVE APPROACH

School Without Racism wants to stimulate people to identify social problems and consequently try to solve them. In this way they realise that they can influence their community and influence society as a whole. SWR aims to achieve changes through open-minded, constructive action and not by demonising groups of people. The purpose of this approach is reflected in working methods that focus on participation, creativity, learning by experience, grasping and peer-to-peer education. A few examples include the alternative school trip like a “Different View on Brussels” and a “Different View on Amsterdam”, designing posters, T-shirts and cards; writing songs, essays, exchanges, and the “Growing Box”, a pack of educational materials that expands constantly through the contribution of those working with them. Of course SWR takes part in united activities: the European-Wide Action Week Against Racism in March, the International Days against Racism and Antisemitism on 9 November and against Racism and Antiterrorism in February. SWR also participates in other European and global activities like International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January and 70th anniversary and internationally important days that concern racism, minorities and discrimination.

A TRADEMARK FOR SOLIDARITY

School Without Racism is a project that wants to involve people in the society. It strives for a society with equal opportunities and equal rights for all. Every individual participating in SWR knows that he or she is part of a growing international network that is supportive and united. For help and guidance, all interested parties can contact one of the other Points of Support. Each school that is involved can learn from the experiences of other schools and each SWR school is recognizable by the blue and red shield at its entrance. By means of exchanges, conferences and action-meetings, but also by internet and e-mail it is possible for everybody to stay informed on the latest developments and - last but not least - making the experience being part of a common goal: a just, colourful and peaceful European without racism.

A MANUAL FOR ACTIVISTS

School Without Racism is not simply created by a magic formula. You have to work at it, and this leaflet shows how students have done this.

The thing is, you want to do something against exclusion and racism in and around your school, that is for sure! So, write this goal and your main ideas for achieving this down, and then you have a starting point for your project.

Cooperate... and create a strong group

Do this with the help of antiracist organisations and you can use the free UNITED training leaflets (www.unitedagainstracism.org - publications).

When your group is strong and has made good plans, appoint some positions in your team like who is doing what and is responsible for what, and use all students’ own creativity and knowledge. But always cooperate; make sure that no individual’s personal interests become the most important topic. It should be clear that your project will involve many discussions about a broad range of issues racism, migration, colonialism, women, genocides, different views, homophobia, sexism, etc.

Now it is time for your strong action group to involve one or more teachers. Look at how teachers are giving their lessons; how do they talk about North-South, poor-rich, human rights, gender, etc. Also, racism can come in all shapes.

Look for a teacher you (the whole group) really trust! This will help other teachers see that you are a serious group and maybe get enthusiastic about your ideas as well (most teachers are also against racism). Make your vision clear before you talk to your teacher involved.

Meetings...

Not many and not too long

The moment when everything is in place (plans and organization involved, the group is strong) it is time to move forward with a small, medium, or large delegation. Before making this direction, you will have decided, together with your group, that...

- the exact content of the SWR Call;
- a strategy for group members to mobilise students and teachers for this project;
- which activities are coordinated by whom and when they should be done.

Also...

make good, short agendas;
write everybody’s positions and responsibilities down;
start activities within the working group like making posters, making songs, stories or poems for the school newspaper, etc. You can have a project group, not a delegation.

Board of recommendation

Now it is time to start a “Board of Recommendation”. Make contact with antiracist organisations for help and advice. It is very important to have a lot of partners, friends in the beginning. Maybe a school board or school newspaper-working group already exists, who is interested in cooperating with the SWR team. You also can look for human rights—, refugee—, gay—, lesbian—, minority— or other groups to be partners or friends of your SWR initiative.

Inform the head teacher

In your SWR working group, a board of recommendation, good plans, your first action, and a delegation, one or more teachers who are kind (or crazy!) enough to help…. but it is still your action group doing nothing. So now make good, short agendas;

Ask them to write down their reason and for being member for a SWR being board in a short letter.

STEP 6

Start voting procedure

Make clear that it is making decisions with others; no one can tell you what to do. But it must be 100% secret! Do it with ballots and give everybody the possibility of voting yes or no. Do not use NOS and let the voting be secret. Later write down the voting booths and use a name list to tick each vote off.

An OK from your head teacher...

Now it is time for action!

Contact your local or national antiracist organisations and you can use the free UNITED training leaflets (www.unitedagainstracism.org - publications).

Remember one (or two) of your friends, classmates and schoolmates to join you. Do not involve the teacher in your grassroots project! That is the formula for success. So now you can make a SWR action team and call it the “Initiation SWR Group”. Look for local antiracist organisations for help and advice. It is very important to have a lot of partners, friends in the beginning. Maybe a school board or school newspaper-working group already exists, who is interested in cooperating with the SWR team. You also can look for human rights—, refugee—, gay—, lesbian—, minority— or other groups to be partners or friends of your SWR initiative.

Read the declaration/call, hang it everywhere!

Display the declaration/call, hang it everywhere!

STEP 3

Find allies and partners

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At the end of the school day, do a public count of the votes, maybe with some music and intercultural snacks to eat and drink.

Is it NO or is it YES?
If it is NO you have to accept that and organise a meeting with your preparation group to discuss what to do now. One option is to discuss the possible reason for this outcome, what kind of amendments you need to make to your project and then restart it.

If it is YES you can have a small party and plan how you wish to organise the official moment that the SWR shield appears on the wall of the school. You have to make your own SWR shield, look at the example on this page. Find a creative artist to paint or spray-paint the shield, or ask the art teacher to help you. Make sure it is vandalism-proof!

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- We, students, teachers and staff, the head teacher and governing bodies say “NO” to racism.
- We fight against all forms and manifestations of racism and discrimination in our school.
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- www.schulenrausen.org (in German)
- www.radar.nl/read/scholenproject_n (in Dutch)
- www.oecf.org/icto/25894 (Statement in English)

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- 2013 is the 40th Anniversary of the European Youth Foundation

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STEPS

Step 8

Step 9

Step 10