

**TOOLKIT FOR
COMMUNITIES**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Islamophobia as a phenomenon

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism

Manifestations of anti-Muslim racism

Islamophobia on individual level

Islamophobia on institutional and structural level

How to react to anti-Muslim racism?

How to react on the Internet and in discussions:

Regional centres for monitoring hate speech:

Real life situations

Activities to counteract islamophobia

Folkekøkken. Community dinner concept

Women's Choir

Community Working

Podcast

Other activities

Storytelling: story.one project

Open art workshops

Intercultural concerts

Movie Nights

Community cafés

Book Reading in the parish

Dialogue instead of hate – a programme of the
association Neustart in Austria

Contact

WHO ARE WE?

COPE FOCUSES on the problem of anti-Muslim hatred.

COPE AIMS at fostering a better understanding.

COPE IMPROVED dialogue among different groups and communities, especially non-Muslim and Muslim communities.

OUR GOALS

PREVENTION AND DECREASE OF ANTI-MUSLIM HATRED

by increased tolerance, trust, mutual understanding and social cohesion between non-Muslim and Muslim communities.

INCREASING AWARENESS among the general public for the discrimination the Muslim community is facing.

EMPOWERMENT OF VICTIMS and groups at risk of anti-Muslim hatred.

SUSTAINABLE LEARNINGS about how to raise the level of social cohesion and combat religiously motivated racism.

Enabling non-Muslim and Muslim communities in
CONSTRUCTIVE HANDLING OF DIFFERENCES.

INTRODUCTION

Muslims are the second largest religious group in the EU, consisting of around 25 Million people*. Right now, many Muslims cannot live free from fear because of widespread experiences of hostility in their respective societies. This anti-Muslim hatred is often fueled by politicians and media and feeds existing prejudice and fear in the population, as the following data show.

In Austria for example, the far-right portrays Muslims as a threat to the Austrian identity and welfare state by using stereotypical images and by fueling hatred and fear.

In Slovakia, former Prime Minister Robert Fico stated that "Islam has no place in Slovakia". Also Slovak members of the Parliament, especially from opposition parties, continued to make anti-Muslim statements.

* Pew Research Center <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/>

The Polish government uses anti-Muslim narratives as well, especially connected to refugees. Such statements contribute to the hostile atmosphere Muslims face no matter what country they live in.

As NGO's working in the area of human rights and non-discrimination we agree that on the level of individuals there is a need of concrete encounters between Muslims and non-Muslims as well as a need of empowerment and competences in conflict resolution. On the level of society it is necessary to develop public awareness about Anti-Muslim-hatred and sustainable strategies how to tackle it.

In this publication, we present key facts about anti-Muslim racism together with some tips on how to respond it. We also shared the ideas for actions to counteract Islamophobia. These are actions that we carried out as part of the COPE project and which we believe have proven to be effective.

ISLAMOPHOBIA AS A PHENOMENON



Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism

Anti-Muslim racism, often synonymously called Islamophobia, is the contrived fear, discrimination, hatred or prejudice against Muslims and people perceived as Muslims. It can be demonstrated as verbal abuse or physical violence, social exclusion, stigmatization or discrimination targeting Muslims or those perceived as Muslim in all areas of daily life. Within Islamophobic narratives, all Muslims are presented as unadaptable, dangerous, backwards and possibly perpetrators of terrorism.

Manifestations of anti-Muslim racism

There is no single nor standard manifestation of anti-Muslim racism. It comes in various forms, expressed both as prejudice and hostility committed by individuals as well as enshrined in institutional and social structures.

Islamophobia on individual level:

- Verbal and/or physical abuse based on perceived Muslim religious affiliation because of a particularly sounding name, skin color, spoken languages and/or origin.
- Social exclusion and stigmatization in the form of avoidance of any contact with members of this group.
- Hate speech targeting Muslims on the Internet.

Islamophobia on institutional and structural level:

- Discrimination in daily life taking a form of barriers or unequal treatment, such as in access to public and private services, access to employment and professional growth, equal opportunity in education, political representation, freedom of religious practice and freedom of speech.
- Presence of Islamophobia on political level and in media.
- Association of various socio-political issues, such as migration, terrorism or crime with Islam and Muslims.

How to react to anti-Muslim racism?

Anti-Muslim racism occurs in daily life of many people around us. But what can we do when we become witnesses of anti-Muslim racism?

How to react on the Internet (social media) and in discussions:

- Be polite and reasonable, do not engage in a discussion with a negative attitude.
- Define your own limits for the discussion – set boundaries for what will not be tolerated.
- Try to look for what you, the perpetrators and the targeted group have in common – values, similar backgrounds, education. It is very important to build

positive narratives about Muslim and portrait them as decent human beings in understandable terms.

- Ask questions – to break down the comment, ask for sources, relevance or ask why is this topic important to the perpetrator.
- Rely on facts, statistics to refute individual impressions or popular inaccuracies. Use and explain proper terminology – distinguish between personal experience and facts.
- Consider who you are talking to and try to put on their shoes. Is it a man, youngster, a mother or a student? Is there anything you can build on?
- Don't engage in discussions under content you do not want to spread – every comment under a conspiracy article increases its reach to other people. Instead write your own positive comment in order to spread cohesion and solidarity
- If you find a dangerous hate speech comment, screenshot it, report it on a given social media and

contact the regional centre for monitoring hate speech via email. This documentation is necessary for statistics in order to urge the necessity to tackle hate speech and racism.

Regional centres for monitoring hate speech:

Austria: ZARA (office@zara.or.at) and Dokustelle (office@dokustelle.at)

Slovakia: NAKA (extrem@minv.sk)

Poland: hejtstop (hejtstop.pl)

Real life situations

Being a witness of anti-Muslim racism is never an easy task. Therefore, the Austrian NGO ZARA came up with 4 steps on how to show civil courage.

1. Perceive the situation

Do you sense injustice towards someone? For example when someone is being shouted at, insulted or physically attacked in public.

2. Evaluate the situation

Is it dangerous? What are my risks when confronting the perpetrator? Are there other people around that could help me?

3. Take responsibility

If the situation is not dangerous, take responsibility and

don't rely on others to do the job. Individuals are more willing to help than people in a group as we tend to think that there will be someone else interfering.

4. Get active

If the situation does not seem dangerous, you can help in many ways: draw attention to yourself by being very loud, or distract the perpetrator, or approach the victim and start another conversation with him/her, start staring at the perpetrator or engage other people by calling them out very concretely. Even after the incident you can still help: approach the victim and ask how they are, offer your help as a witness. Doing anything is better than nothing!

ACTIVITIES TO COUNTERACT ISLAMOPHOBIA

Integration takes place at the local level – neighborhood, school, playground, local community center or non-governmental organization. That is why we present activities that may seem obvious or threadbare, but which, in our opinion, work and have the power to change our environment for the better. Their strength is that they are bottom-up activities that can be organized within the resources of the local community and do not require systemic changes or changes to regulations.

Folkekøkken. Community dinner concept

Mareena (Slovakia) organized community dinners on a regular basis. Folkekøkken (literally people's kitchen) is a Danish concept of social dining, where people and conversations are the key ingredients of the evening, where cultures and stories are shared in a cozy environment and where each attendant has an opportunity to meet new people from different walks of life.

It takes us beyond dining as we know it and creates a space that brings together strangers of all nationalities, religions or ages, who can get to know one another over a plate of meal. Each edition of Folkekøkken is hosted by

a person with a migrant background. The chef of the dinner, cooks for guests and also introduces his /her country of origin, culture and cuisine. Guests have an opportunity to talk to other guests, but also with a chef, so it is a good opportunity to destroy myths and stereotypes in the community. It was always a very interesting experience for both, for participants and also for the chef.

Benefits of community dining

In the past, Mareena organised traditional Folkekøkken e.g. with Afghani, Yemeni, Iraqi, Cameroonian and also Mexican communities. It brings the opportunity to empower community members, especially women with refugee backgrounds, single or unemployed mothers. Cooking for the community encourage them to show their skills, develop their communication skills and also give them a small opportunity for job experience. For organisations it is also a great opportunity to establish and increase contact with specific migrant community. There are usually many newcomers from the migrant community, which is connected with the event. Thanks to

these “first contact” meetings, organisations can improve relationships with migrant communities in general.

How to deal with the challenge of online dining

During the world pandemic of Covid-19, Mareena accommodated the community dinners concept to online version, serial “Mareena Cooking club”. Each episode of the cooking club was hosted by one chef from the migrant community, people from the auditorium could buy ingredients before the event and cook online with the chef. Whole program was streamed live on Mareena’s facebook page. During the live stream, people could ask questions and discuss with the chef about many topics like cuisine, country, culture etc. Online cooking opened the concept to a wide auditorium, all around Slovakia, sometimes all around the world. It also helped the community be in touch during the isolation time.

At the beginning it was complicated to find people from communities. Many people did not have the technical skills to provide live stream. In many cases, people didn’t

even have their own facebook accounts or basic facebook skills and quality mobile phones, good for live video.

On the other hand there were few members of Mareena's community, who are professional on gastronomy. This was the reason why Mareena at the beginning started to cooperate with them. Professionals had better skills in the explanation of the whole process of cooking, they were more prepared for questions from the audience. It was also a way to show solidarity with the gastronomic sector, during the lock-downs. With first experiences, more people were open to be a part of the cooking club.

Mareena team supported chefs with training before the real livestream. They introduced them, how to work on facebook page, how to provide live stream and give them an opportunity to try it before a real event.

Mareena also prepared a photo guide for chefs and a list of topics and them, which chefs could use during livestream, if they had a problem to start a conversation with an audience. In a few cases, when restrictions allowed it,

Mareena's team also helped people with live-streaming in person. In many cases it was not an activity only for one person, but the whole family was involved.

From spring 2020 until summer 2021, Mareena introduced an online cooking club Iraqi, Indian, Kenyan, Afghani, Iranian, Thai, Filipino, Ugandan, Ukrainian and Slovak cuisine. Few of episodes were also connected to specific festive recipes, like the Ukrainian cooking club about feast Paska.

On special occasions during Ramadan, Mareena also organised an online Afghani Iftar cooking club with dinner. It was important for Muslim community members because it wasn't possible to organise bigger Iftars as usual. During the pandemic situation, it was a very successful project and a good reaction to the needs of the community.

Women's Choir

The participants of the COPE Women's Choir come from different cultures and social backgrounds and are singing in all the various languages they speak, such as Arabic, German, Kurdish, Turkish, Farsi or Spanish. This choir is about empowerment, intercultural encounters, learning from and with each other, and raising one's own voice.

COPE project coordinator Ümit Mares-Altinok has built a network with various communities, associations and counseling centers and was thus able to win over the women for this choir.

At the first rehearsals, many of the participating women were still very reserved and had to be motivated again and again to continue coming to the rehearsals. In the meantime, the choir rehearsals have been taking place for several months and the development of the women is

remarkable. They raise their voices with self-confidence, feel very comfortable in the museum and the surrounding area, and have also developed a lot in terms of singing techniques. It is a major concern of the women to continue this choir after the end of the project.

How do you make a museum more inclusive and accessible and a place that connects people?

By making personal contact with various associations and counseling institutions. If you want to attract new groups of visitors to the museum, you not only have to invite them personally, but also build relationships with them. Only if there is enough trust, new visitors, who may never have been to a museum before, will come to the house more often.

In order to become a place that connects in the long term and in a sustainable way, staff members are needed who specifically engage in community building and outreach, in order to bring new and diverse target groups into the museum and also to learn from new visitors. Learning from and with each other should be the focus.

How do you start a choir?

Our project coordinator Ümit Mares-Altinok has many years of experience in community building and outreach and has built a very diverse community herself. She approached women from her network to see if they would like to participate in an intercultural women's choir. No previous musical training was necessary to participate in this choir, it was simply a matter of discovering one's own talent, voice and the fun of singing for oneself.

What does it take?

It takes an experienced choir director, a room or place where singing or rehearsing can happen undisturbed, this place can also be outdoors. Due to the Corona pandemic it was important to be able to rehearse outdoors as well. Each participant could bring song texts or music in all different languages. These song texts were then translated in the group before singing, also to make sure all the participants could understand the meanings of the songs.

How do you motivate the participants to come regularly to the choir rehearsals?

Regular contact is an essential point in this process! It was important that the women had the impression of being able to come forward with any concerns, no matter what. In addition to singing, there also was room for conversations about sensitivities and everyday topics. The fun factor was also a central topic: there has been a lot of laughter together and every woman went home with a good feeling and at least one catchy tune. These feel-good factors were very important in order to encourage the women to come back, meet on a regular basis and regard the museum as a place that also belongs to them.

Community Working

Community working is a working method that makes it possible to reach groups and individuals experiencing or exposed to bias-motivated crimes. A community worker seeks, establishes and maintains contact within various communities.

There are a number of aspects to the day-to-day activities of a community worker. Above all they should be often and – at best – regularly present in places where people exposed to bias-motivated crimes gather.

By their regular presence community workers create bonds which allow for:

- identifying needs of a group / individuals;
- face to face education on the subject of bias-motivated crimes and the ways to react to them;

- dissemination of information about the possibilities of obtaining support;
- promotion of reporting bias-motivated incidents to the prosecuting authorities and organisations which monitor such incidents and provide support;
- monitoring the situation regarding bias-motivated crimes in your area.

In the actions of a community worker, the snowball method is naturally applied. People from a given community with whom we managed to establish relationships lead us to other people from that community. This gives us an opportunity to recognize a group and to diagnose its situation.

Community working requires responding to the needs of people we wish to reach. These needs often do not concern bias-motivated crimes as such, and can be related to family, residency, job matters. Usually the experience of bias-motivated violence is one of a large number of problems faced by the client.

To be able to obtain information about a person's experiences of bias motivated violence, you first need to gain their trust. The way to do it is to identify other needs of that person and to be able to find ways to respond to them. The knowledge of cultures and history of particular minorities that we want to reach may be helpful. Community workers should have basic legal knowledge regarding bias-motivated violence and should be provided with the support of a lawyer when necessary.

How to reach target groups

- Visiting the places where people from the communities we want to reach spend their free time.
- Visiting dormitories.
- Identifying leaders, mentors, authorities in particular groups and reaching others through them e.g. the Imam.
- Participating in events organized by the communities or individuals.

- Organizing events that they would find attractive (e.g. football matches, movie screenings, music events).
- Maintaining contacts with institutions, organizations, informal groups that bring together or support a particular group.
- It may be useful to create a list of bars, restaurants and other places our target groups hang around at and to update it on a regular basis.

Code of conduct

Community working requires attention and reflection and is to a great extent based on the personal skills of the person who does the job. It is good, however, when “soft” skills are supported by a code of conduct that defines the main principles and ethics of this work. Each organization has different resources, experience and working methods that will influence the content of the code of conduct. Below we present the one created by NOMADA:

- **Respect** for other cultures and different lifestyles.
- **Adequate support** tailored for a particular individual.
- Providing support **entirely free of charge**.
- **Discretion** – don't tell people outside your organization about your clients' issues. Don't discuss their cases in public places where an outsider might hear you.
- **Be honest and present your scope of support clearly**. It may be helpful to prepare a few introductory sentences about who you are and why you are here.
- Be ready to **explain your relations with institutions** – mainly with the police and the border guards.
- **You can refuse support** if the nature of the case is inconsistent with your beliefs. However you should honestly explain it to the client and if possible, redirect the person to another place where they can get support.

Useful tips for a community worker:

- Don't be intrusive, let your clients to tell you as much as they decide to, don't push them.
- Refer to your own experiences – talk about situations in which you felt discriminated.
- Be attentive to the person you talk to – the moment you feel that the conversation becomes difficult for them, say that you understand it and suggest changing the subject.
- Be patient – give yourself and your interlocutor time to reach the subject of hate-motivated crime – sometimes it is better to meet couple of times before you start talking about bias-motivated crimes.
- Meet your interlocutors in neutral places: cafes, parks, etc.
- Emphasize the rule of discretion and respect.
- Avoid the word 'victim'. It creates the risk of stigmatization, suggests helplessness and a lack of possibilities to change the situation.

Actual support by a community worker

The task of a community worker is not only to inform, gain trust and maintain contact, but also to provide support when a bias motivated incident happens. It is important that this support covers the entire process – from assisting a client in reporting the incident at the police station until the verdict is handed down by the court. A lot can happen during this period: a loss of client's interest in the process, forgetting the details of the incident, changing of the place of residence.

Misunderstanding of particular stages of the proceedings, a sense of never-ending hearings, and the necessity to recall traumatic events during subsequent interrogations cause a lot of frustration. In such moments, the role of the assistant is crucial – explaining particular stages of proceedings and giving strength in the struggle for their rights helps sustain the client's interest in the ongoing trial.

Podcast

Why start a podcast?

If you want to expand your NGO's reach and networks, the podcast is an effective format. Podcast episodes are free and available to listeners at any time. The content should be short, crisp, and easy to digest so that listeners will listen to the end. Podcast listeners are relatively young and their use is mostly at home while cleaning, driving or jogging. In order to establish a close relationship with the listeners, it is important to speak authentically and at eye level in the recordings. The time required for interviews, for example, is not very great, but a lot of time goes into planning, preparation, scheduling and post-production.

What is needed for a podcast recording?

Location

The location of the recording can vary from a smart-phone recording to a fully equipped recording studio. It is always important to consider the surrounding conditions that may affect the quality of the recording, such as ambient noise, reverberation, or writing and dish noises.

Microphone

There are two types of microphones that can be used in podcast recording: dynamic microphones and condenser microphones.

Headphones and Headsets

Headphones are an important tool to check the quality of the generated audio signal in real time during recording. If all interviewees wear headsets, it also simplifies communication and draws attention to background noise.

How is the content designed?

1. Intro

To generate interest among listeners, it is important to briefly and crisply explain the general topic of the podcast and who or what NGO you are in an intro. The intro always remains the same across all podcast episodes.

2. Introduction

In the introduction, you briefly describe the content of the respective episode. What can listeners expect in this episode? What is it about?

3. Main body:

The Empowerment Podcast by COPE (Austria) is an educational series on the topic of anti-Muslim racism in Austria. Affected people describe their perspectives and talk about personal experiences and what it is like to be constantly perceived as "different", which contributes to cultural exchange. Above all, those people have their say who are usually only talked about. They deal with the topic on an emotional level and thus create interest for people

who deal with racism little or not at all. The topics of the episodes range from definitions, Black Lives Matter, to everyday racism, stereotypes and the wearing of headscarves from the perspective of the wearers themselves. In addition to those affected, experts also have their say. In cooperation with a Viennese recording studio, up to 10 episodes were recorded.

Among many different podcast formats, COPE (Austria) has chosen the interview format. Here, the host of the podcast interviews a guest on professional topics, experiences or life paths. There are interviews about the person (life circumstances, turning points, attitudes, visions, special skills, knowledge, special difficulties), factual interviews (facts that are explained in a professionally competent and clear and understandable way) and opinion interviews (people who have a personal position on a particular issue).

4. Conclusion

It is said that podcast listeners remember mainly the beginning and the end of a podcast episode. Therefore,

it is helpful at the end of the episode to briefly summarize the content again.

5. Outro

For the structure of a podcast episode, the outro is just as important as the intro. This also always remains the same. It can be used to refer to contact possibilities of your NGO or simply to thank for listening.

Content

When it comes to content, it is important to know who my target audience is. Who do I want to reach and what do I want my content to trigger in that audience? We connect with narrated content by:

EMPATHY "I understand how this feels."

IDENTIFICATION "I know how you feel."

IMMERSION "I'm experiencing this right now."

Content should be guided by the questions What? How? Why?

- **What** is the topic?
- **How** is the topic being implemented?
- **Why** is this topic being talked about? What is the emotional, human universal theme?

Which people do I need for the podcast?

Moderator

Ask yourselves who would like to take on this role and who is confident in speaking.

Interview guest

It is important to ask yourself how many people should be interviewed. Ideally, no more than three people should talk to each other, otherwise the listeners will have difficulty following the content.

Technician

Either find an experienced recording studio to record, edit, and package your podcast episodes into a file, or do it all yourself. There are free recording programs for

this purpose: Garageband for Mac, Audacity for Mac and PC. It is also important that all speakers have their own microphone.

Target audience

Ask yourself which people you want to reach with which content.

How is the podcast published?

After your podcast episode is converted to an mp3 file, you'll need to sign up with a podcast hosting company that will store your podcast and create an RSS feed.

There are free providers that publish the podcast to various streaming services, such as Spotify and iTunes. However, you can also just use the podcast feed for your NGO website and not have to publish it on streaming services. Most websites explain each step well and understandably.

Furthermore, texts are important for podcast publishing:

- **Title of the podcast:** relevant keywords and names should be used here.
- **Description of the podcast and the respective episodes:** The podcast description and that of the individual episodes should be designed in a consumer-friendly way – “Write for humans and then optimize for the search engine”.

Overall, quality is more important than quantity when it comes to podcasting. It is sometimes enough to just produce a mini-series on the most relevant topics for your NGO and your target audience. The topics should be timeless, always listenable, and add value.

Before you publish your podcast, it is advisable to get feedback from the community and friends.

Got it? Then you're ready to go!

Other activities

Storytelling: story.one project

In June 2021, short stories on the topic of diversity were collected via the story.one platform. A total of 273 stories were submitted, which could not be more diverse. They dealt with topics such as origin, age, sexuality or impairments, and the stories showed very clearly how diverse our society actually is. A jury of experts selected 17 winners from the stories submitted. These 17 stories have now been published in a book entitled "Diversity at the mumok" and the best five authors were invited to read their texts aloud in front of selected works at the current mumok exhibition "Enjoy". Film footage was made by the filmmaker Soza Jann, that was shared with the public via the mumok's social media channels. The museum received a lot of positive feedback about this challenge.

Open art workshops

Under the title WeltBilder (World Pictures), mumok invites participants to an open art workshop, offering people of all backgrounds, with and without migration history, a creative place to meet and exchange ideas. During the workshop, participants first get to know each other and then together take a short trip to one of the current exhibitions. Afterwards, while working together in the mumok studio, they have the opportunity to get to know different views of the world, to broaden their horizons, to develop new ideas or to make friends. The idea is not to integrate the “foreign” into an existing system, but to create enrichment for all sides. In this workshop format, art provides the initial impetus through which many of the participants dare to share their lives and experiences in Austria. During the afternoon, extraordinary works of art are created – each as unique as the stories of the people who created them.

Intercultural concerts

COPE (Austria) for example organized them in parishes and churches, but you can organize them in whatever public or private space you have access to COPE cooperated with musicians including an Afghan singer and composer, two Kurdish-Syrian musicians, an Austrian percussionist and members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

Sounding solidarity that overcomes musical borders and connects hearts! – was the motto of these events and contributed to a dialogue of cultures, togetherness and charity. People from different parishes in Lower Austria and Vienna were invited to the concert followed by a Q&A over tea and cake. The offer was especially well received by the older Austrian population, who could ask their questions in a non-judgmental space and by that connections could be created easily and peacefully

Movie Nights

One low-threshold way of introducing people to other ways of life is through the medium of film. In addition to autobiographical films and films based on true events, historical films can also help people acquire knowledge about other cultures and overcome prejudices.

A film allows us to gain new perspectives and insights and stimulates processes of identification and transference that can help overcome prejudices. They allow us to distance ourselves from the problem, and a variety of issues are highlighted that are immediately thought-provoking. COPE (Austria) hosted several film screenings on Vienna's most popular cinema roof with a large open air screen.

Tickets were raffled via Instagram and registrations were accepted via the newsletter. But it is also possible to organize movie screenings at home with your friends, in a community center, in a municipality or association or at other places.

Community cafés

The community programme of Mareena (Slovakia) started to organize community cafés focused more on cultural or religious holidays like Diwali, Nowruz, Pascha, Fatika and others, important for specific minorities. The events were very successful and interesting for the local Slovak community because they brought new information and experiences associated with migrant communities, which are generally inaccessible to outsiders.

At the same time, celebrating holidays with migrant communities helps Mareena to establish closer mutual relationships since participation in important events for their community is perceived as an expression of goodwill. Mareena also started to organise themed community cafés, usually connected with some city, country or continent.

Format where three local speakers talk to people in small groups and provide their knowledge about their home country or continent with a cup of coffee or tea from the

region. This way migrant communities had an opportunity to introduce Kabul, Nairobi, Bombai and Africa, in the occasion of Day of Africa 2021

Book Reading in the parish

There are many authors in Austria whose voices should be heard. However, especially authors with a migrant background are often under-represented. Therefore, organizing readings of their books is a great way to find representation for their work as well as raise awareness for their topics in the general public which might be the audience in your community, association or field.

As part of a cooperation with Lower Austrian parishes, readings were held in the parish garden. Among the authors were Ümit Mares-Altinok and Omar Khir Alanam, whose texts deal with topics such as diaspora, homeland, interculturality and the reality of life of people with migration biography. The local parish community and other interested people from the village were guests.

The aim was to give the visitors an insight into the views and diversity of migrant voices. After the reading, the guests had the opportunity to ask questions and thus an exciting exchange about the content of the texts always developed.

DIALOGUE INSTEAD OF HATE – a programme of the association NEUSTART in Austria

from Nikolaus Tsekas,
Neustart Austria
neustart.at

In the recent past, there has been an increase in agitation against asylum facilities, asylum seekers and their supporters, not only in Austria, but also internationally, due to the current refugee and migration movements. The majority of these agitations took the form of incitement and right-wing extremist motivated anti-asylum propaganda crimes via the Internet.

Hate crime on the Internet via social media is increasingly proving to be a growing problem. Society, but above all those affected and victims of this degrading and hurtful development, is calling on the state to provide an adequate response. The desire is clearly the end of this behaviour and a sanctioning of hate crime. The reflex to take strict legal action against these individuals is understandable and comprehensible, but does not create a confrontation and sustainable change in behaviour.

As a long-standing partner of the Austrian judiciary, more than 5 years ago the association NEUSTART was made aware of these developments, by the court and the public prosecutor's office, and asked whether socially constructive alternatives could be useful.

The program was developed together with the judiciary and is applied in Austria on the one hand within the framework of diversion as a requirement instead of criminal proceedings, whereby the proceedings are discontinued if successfully completed, or on the other hand as an instruction after a conviction. In a more

intensive confrontation, work is done on changing behaviour and increased open reflection, both in individual discussions and in group offerings. Dialogue is the goal and the development of alternative courses of action to prevent new offenses. The focus is on acceptance of human rights and preventing new hate crimes. The model "Dialogue instead of Hate" creates the possibility of a different communication with dissenting opinions in the sense of norm clarification and is a socially constructive answer to the polarization of society.

Goals of the project with regard to the clients:

- Clients are familiar with and respect the statutory standards and limits with regard to discrimination.
- Clients analyse the topic of discrimination on a theoretical and personal level and reflect on their behaviour.
- Clients develop a sensitivity for the manner and effect of expressing an opinion.

- It is not about changing attitudes but about ensuring that future behaviour is compliant with law.
- When dealing with social media, clients know the effects of their actions and the legal situation.

Modules of the programme “Dialogue instead of hate”:

- Clarification of the norm – Information about instruction/obligation, explanation of the legal norm and preventive information about the law.
- Media expertise focusing on social media.
- Processing of the offence to prevent relapse.
- Discourse expertise: expressing criticism without using derogative language.
- Change of perspective – Sensitization and raising awareness for the effects on victims and victim groups.
- Introduction of the victim perspective through films, experts and other didactic possibilities.

- Discrimination – Awareness for negative discrimination, the influencing parameter of the group.
- If applicable, contact to establishments (for instance, refugee support) to highlight the living situation of the victims.

CONTACT

Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien

Albrechtskreithgasse 19-21

1160 Wien

www.caritas-wien.at

NOMADA

**Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Integracji Społeczeństwa
Wielokulturowego**

ul. Paulińska 4/8

Wrocław 50-247

nomada.info.pl

MAREENA

Lazaretská 32

811 09 Bratislava

mareena.sk

mumok

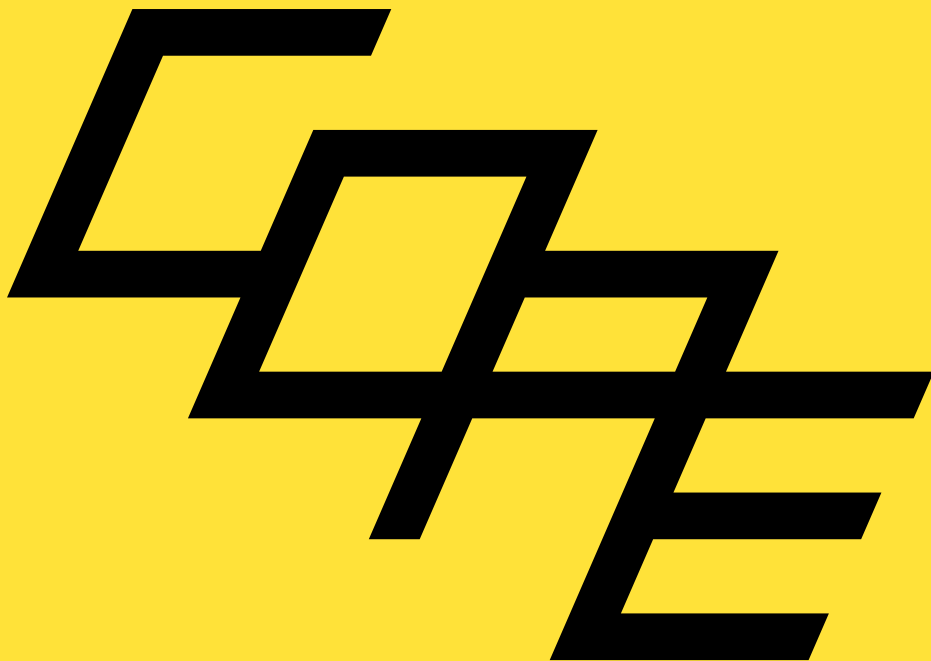
Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien

MuseumsQuartier

Museumsplatz 1

A-1070 Wien

www.mumok.at



ORGANISATIONS FROM AUSTRIA, POLAND AND SLOVAKIA

have teamed up to prevent anti-Muslim
hatred in their countries.

**Caritas
&Du**

mumok



