

ID TALKS!

A series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics in the promotion of “Let’s talk about (anti)racism” - how to form a general understanding of (anti)racism and its link to quality youth work.



ID Talks:

EVERYDAY'S RACISM
COMBATING RACISM
INVISIBLE RACISM
INTERSECTIONALITY & RACISM
PRACTISING ANTI-RACISM

Download this and other SALTO Inclusion & Diversity booklets for free at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/. This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre or the organisation co-operating with them.

ABOUT SALTO

...‘Support and **A**dvanced **L**earning and **T**raining **O**pportunities within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes’. The European Commission has created a network of seven SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the EU Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes, which provide young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to support the implementation of the European Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps Programmes with regard to priorities such as Social Inclusion, Diversity, Participation, and Solidarity. SALTO also supports co-operation with regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe, or Eastern Europe and The Caucasus and coordinates all training and co-operation activities, as well as information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides resources, information, and training for National Agencies and European youth workers. Most of these resources are offered and disseminated at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net. Find online the [European Training Calendar](#), the [Toolbox for Training and Youth Work](#), the database of youth field trainers active at the European level ([Trainers Online for Youth or TOY](#)), links to online resources, and much more.

SALTO-YOUTH actively co-operates with other actors in the European youth field, among them the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers, and training organisers.

THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (based in Belgium Flanders) works together with the European Commission to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Through that, it works to contribute to social cohesion in society at large. SALTO Inclusion and Diversity also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing training, developing youth work methods, disseminating information via the newsletter, etc. By offering opportunities for training, exchange, and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility, and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ and ‘positive diversity management’ a widely supported priority.

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion & Diversity pages at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/



DISCLAIMER

This magazine contains pictures as a result of the Graphic Recording which is an integral part of all the ID Talks events. There are four types of styles throughout the whole magazine.

- **General Cover Picture.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events. It is displayed as a cover picture of each ID Talks version.
- **Portrait of Speaker.** It depicts each speaker and a few graphic recording elements such as written parts of their "speech" and/or any other graphics according to the style of each ID Talks version. It is displayed on top of the speaker's description page.
- **Main Graphic Recording Card.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events, including the specific name of the event, the portrait of the speaker, written quotes of their "speech" and/or any other graphics. It is displayed on top of the first page of each article.
- **Graphic Recording Elements.** Throughout each article, the graphic recording elements complement the text with essential parts of each speaker's "talk".



I & D Talks

“Let’s talk about (anti)racism”

What is it all about?

ID Talks is a series of 5 stand-alone online events (workshops) of up to 90 minutes each, with inspiring guest speakers, thought-provoking insights, discussion in small groups, and Q&A sessions.

“We need to talk about racism. And we need to act. It is always possible to change direction if there is a will to do so. I am glad to live in a society that condemns racism. But we should not stop there. The motto of our European Union is: ‘United in diversity’. Our task is to live up to these words, and to fulfill their meaning”.

- President von der Leyen, European Parliament, 17 June 2020

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resources Centre offers a series of ID Talks under the motto “Let’s talk about (anti)racism” as a space for reflection and putting our own, social and organisational attitudes, beliefs, and practices under the magnifying glass, to create a better understanding the power structures and dynamics, to analyse the roots and mechanisms of the racial discrimination, as well as to examine our own biases and powers as professionals.

For whom?

Youth workers, youth leaders, professionals, and volunteers involved in ID in the EU youth programmes, as well as all those interested in youth work and Inclusion & Diversity topics.

Main objectives:

- To provide food for thought and learn from inspirational ID stories;
- To provide an opportunity to learn about ID topics from the youth work sector and beyond;
- To get information, inspiration, and methods to help the youth sector address ID;
- To inform about and contribute to quality (international) youth work;
- To identify and learn how to tackle existing and future challenges within ID;



Event Dates:

- 7 September (13h CET) > **ID Talks Everyday's Racism:** For many young people, facing racism is a daily struggle, affecting their well-being and mental health. Explore with us how racism affects health, housing, education, employment, political representation, and many other not-so-obvious aspects of daily life. What are the main challenges and why can youth work be the answer? Guest speaker: **Mohammad Omar, Municipality of Sundsvall & Vision24, Sweden**
- 21 September (13h CET) > **ID Talks Combating Racism:** Several EU policies and national instruments are in place to combat racism. But do you know about them? Come and discover how institutional and policy tools to combat racism can help your work at the grass-root level. And is there space for personal stories in combating racism at the policy level? Guest speaker: **Cătălina Olteanu, Romanian National Council for Combating Discrimination, Romania**
- 5 October (13h CET) > **ID Talks Invisible Racism:** Racism is often hidden behind closed doors. Hate speech, fake news, and lack of critical thinking contribute to new forms of racism. How can youth work address this invisible racism? Learn about good practices from the field and join this important and urgent mission. Guest speaker: **Balint Jósa, United for intercultural action**
- 19 October (13h CET) > **ID Talks Intersectionality & Racism:** What if you don't only have a minority ethnicity, but also a disability, a different religion or sexual orientation... Multiple discrimination makes it more challenging to defend your rights. We zoom in on the intersectionality between disability and race, and where you can find support and inspiration for activism. Ready to challenge discrimination and racism and their negative personal and professional impact? The talk will have international sign interpretation! Guest speaker: **Lydia Gratis, Saved by the sign & EU Youth Deaf Association, Ireland**
- 2 November (13h CET) > **ID Talks Practising Anti-Racism:** Find out how EU youth programmes provide opportunities and formats for anti-racism youth work. Come and learn from the existing experiences. We give you tips and tricks you can use in your youth work practice locally and internationally. Find out how you can make the best use of youth work to promote and practice anti-racism. Guest speaker: **Miriam Petra Ómarsdóttir Awad, Erasmus+: Youth in action National Agency, Iceland**

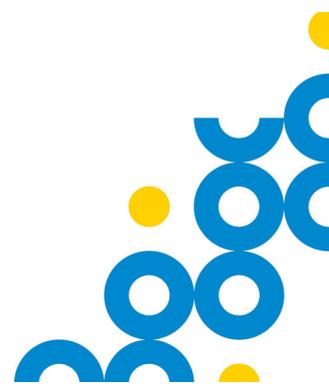
ID Talks: Practising Anti-Racism

Find out how EU youth programmes provide opportunities and formats for anti-racism youth work.



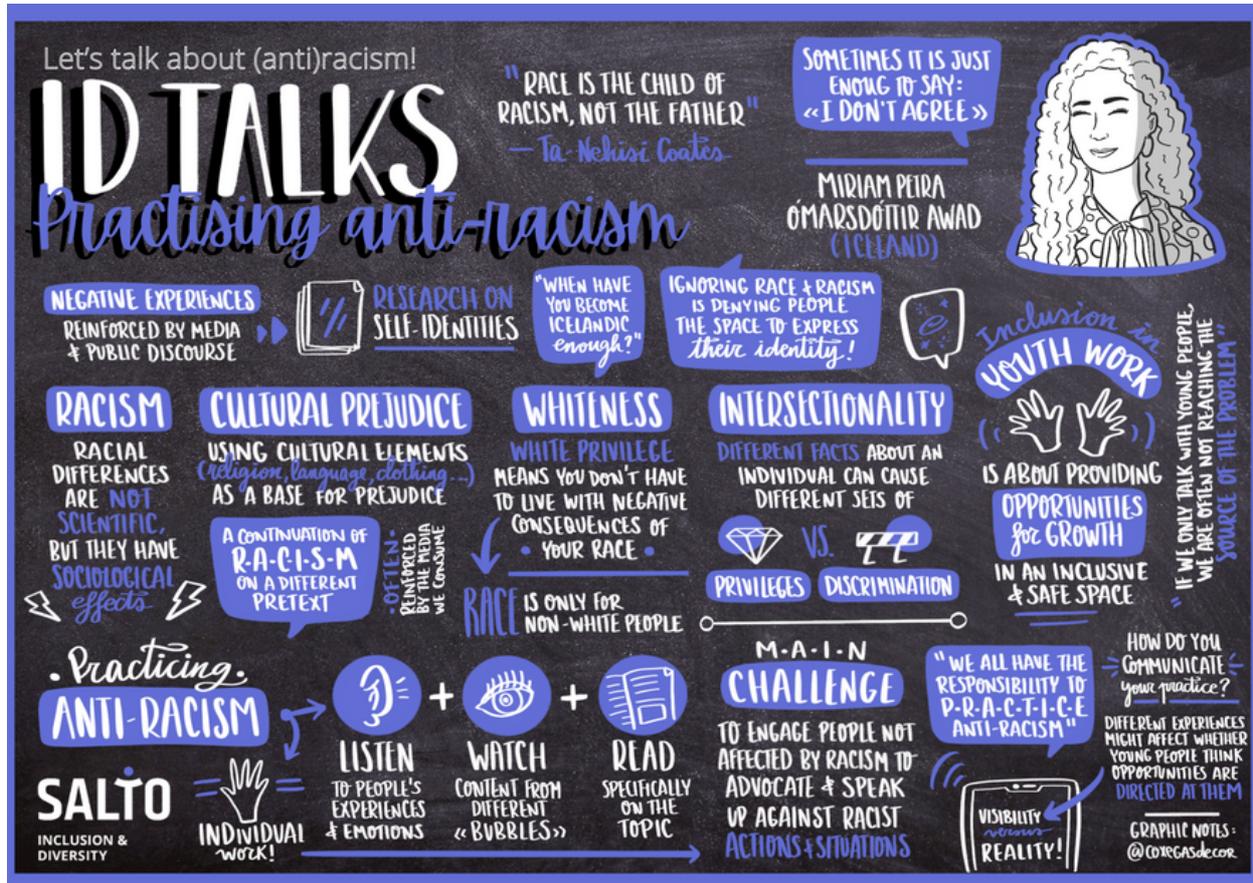
GUEST SPEAKER: MIRIAM PETRA ÓMARSDÓTTIR AWAD

My name is Miriam Petra Ómarsdóttir Awad and I work at the Icelandic National Agency for Erasmus+ where I am both the Eurodesk officer and the NA's Inclusion and Diversity officer. I have a master's degree in Global Studies with a focus on anthropology. My thesis studied the effects of racism and prejudice on self-identities. I am an Icelandic person with a mixed background and I draw from my own personal experiences of prejudice as well as my studies when I work with inclusion and diversity. In my personal time, I am also an anti-racism educator. I mainly work with young people and youth workers, sharing my personal and professional experiences in the hopes of creating an understanding of the importance of inclusion when it comes to tackling prejudice.



Article

Miriam Petra Ómarsdóttir Awad



Introduction

To conclude this series of talks I was asked to share with you my wisdom on practicing anti-racism. Before I start, I will tell you a little bit about myself. I am a 32-year-old woman, born and raised in Iceland. I grew up spending my time between the capital city Reykjavík and my grandparent's village in the remote Icelandic West-Fjords. My upbringing was quintessentially Icelandic in many senses. I read books and sang songs in Icelandic, my mother tongue.

That is, however, not all of me. My father was originally from Egypt, he had long immigrated to Iceland before I was born. Many people who know me know I look a lot like my Icelandic mother, but I have the complexion of my father, with darker skin than most people in Iceland. That's why many automatically assume I look mostly like my father and nothing like my 'mamma'. For those of you who know Icelandic names, you can tell that mine is also not a very Icelandic one. Those who don't recognize it as such will just need to trust me on that.

Throughout my life, I have experienced negative life experiences because of racism and cultural prejudice due to the combination of these factors, i.e. my darker skin, my Middle Eastern background, and my non-Icelandic sounding name. Ranging from not being Icelandic enough, to strangers telling me that my definition of self (I am Icelandic) could not be true because I didn't look like it – no matter how true it felt to me. From being excluded for being a foreigner and more seriously, experiencing hurtful and rude words and actions. I will not repeat any of the things I have endured as this is not what I will be spending my time on today. However, I can assure you that for a young me, the repeated reminders of not fitting in, not being allowed to define myself, and being told that the essence of my being was somehow unwanted, inferior, and did not belong in the place I call home, gravely affected me.



I rejected my Egyptian side by completely denying it space in my life. I sadly lost some valuable years where I could have gotten to know my father's culture through him, but he passed away when I was 25. At that time, I had finally just started giving myself time to know what being Egyptian meant to me. This is of course my personal tragedy, but it was influenced by being subject to racism. At that point in my life, I quickly became curious about the reasons behind my experiences. That is historical, sociological, and cultural reasons for racism and prejudice. I studied the effects of colonization on colonized subjects, cultural hegemony, and the so-called Nordic "denial" (the tendency to deny that racism exists in the Nordic countries) throughout my entire university studies.

It was during my master's degree in global studies that I really jumped into the subject. My thesis was qualitative interview research into the experience of Icelandic women with Middle Eastern backgrounds. I looked at their experiences of racism and prejudice. Almost all of the women said straight away they had been subject to some form of racism or prejudice. The ones who claimed they hadn't endured such things still discussed incidents in their lives where they were subjected to racial discrimination – although they didn't label it as such. Interestingly, from what I learned I saw a tendency: the more "white-passing" they were, the easier it was for people to accept them as Icelandic. This made me think a lot about how our self-identity as a nation was constructed around race and how inherently excluding these ideas could be.

"WE ALL HAVE THE
RESPONSIBILITY TO
P-R-A-C-T-I-C-E
ANTI-RACISM"

Consequently, I was presented with the chance to present my thesis and speak about my experience on the radio. Following that, I started doing lectures and presentations on anti-racism in general. Doing this has been emotionally exhausting but also a very giving process. I have realized through trial and error how to present these topics to adults, youth workers, and young people. One of the things I've learned is that most people are very enthusiastic about anti-racism but they either do not give themselves time to actively be anti-racist or they don't know how to do it. I.e. most people don't want to be racist but they still often fail to do so – or they simply trust that other people will take the responsibility of fixing the problem of racism in our societies. This usually means that those who mainly get toiled with the emotional labor of fighting racism – are the ones experiencing it on their own skin.

M-A-I-N
CHALLENGE

TO ENGAGE PEOPLE NOT
AFFECTED BY RACISM TO
ADVOCATE & SPEAK
UP AGAINST RACIST
ACTIONS & SITUATIONS

RACISM
RACIAL DIFFERENCES ARE NOT SCIENTIFIC, BUT THEY HAVE SOCIOLOGICAL effects

I think it is very important in all discussions of anti-racism that everyone is on the same page regarding what racism is. What the differences (and similarities) are between racism and cultural prejudice? So, racism is inherently mistreating, judging, or having negative views of people based on their race. Believing in the superiority of one group of people over the other. Racial differences were put forward as a scientific classification of humans during the 17th and 18th centuries. The European scientists at the time put these theories forward in line with their worldview. A worldview that benefitted from maintaining a hierarchy, justifying colonialism and subjection of other peoples they considered inferior. Therefore, their racism (although they didn't call it that) created the notion of different races, not vice versa. Not only did they classify humans by racial lines, but they also attributed certain personality traits, behaviors, and temperaments to these so-called races.

Although we know today that there is absolutely no foundation for these classifications, they still have a socio-economic effect. It is therefore very important we allow people to speak of racism, of their racially related experiences, and the way their personal identities and histories are impacted by race and racism. I have often heard that the solution to racism is just not to speak of it. Or people say, "I don't see race". This mainly does one thing. Negatively affects the people who are subject to racism and those who never experience it, never get to hear about the ugly effects of it. I usually also speak of cultural prejudice, as it can be closely connected to racism. Cultural prejudice is when, instead of race, cultural elements such as religion, language, clothing, etc. are used as the basis to attribute negative elements to a group of people, to discriminate, or to justify the superiority of one group over others. The connection with racism is deep-rooted though, as can be seen in how often people connect certain looks to certain cultures. A person can therefore experience cultural prejudice simply for looking like they belong to a cultural group regarded negatively by the perpetrator. But cultural prejudice can also appear without any connotation to racism. I.e. people may have cultural prejudice towards others they would still regard as belonging to the same race as themselves. It is good to keep these differences in mind.

CULTURAL PREJUDICE
 USING CULTURAL ELEMENTS
(religion, language, clothing...)
 AS A BASE FOR PREJUDICE

A CONTINUATION OF
R-A-C-I-S-M
 ON A DIFFERENT
 PRETEXT

**-OFTEN-
 REINFORCED
 BY THE MEDIA
 WE CONSUME**

When speaking of race and racism, we also must speak of whiteness and white privilege. Race and racism have somehow just become a problem for people of color. White is not something people think of when they discuss race. When people think of racism as a problem, it's a problem only concerning people of color. But if races are a color spectrum, white must be on the spectrum too. White people need to realize that racism affects their lives as well – namely by granting them white privilege. Even those who believe in equal and just societies can still be blind to their own privilege linked to being white. When it comes to privilege in general, being blind to one's own privilege can result in behavior or actions that is rude or excluding, even though we do not mean to.

To avoid all misunderstanding, having white privilege **does not mean** that a person is wealthy or that their life is automatically good. White privilege only means that **people do not have to live with the negative consequences of their race**. And these consequences can be many when racial discrimination still exists in schools, in the job market, in media, and in politics. In a society in general. And I don't mean that it's always overt – in policies or such: it can also be in personal interactions and the attitude people face. This (micro) aggression experienced by those who are subject to racism has both mental and physical effects. It not only causes anxiety and withdrawal, but sometimes it even causes aggression. It can also have long-lasting effects on physical well-being. Stomach aches, chronic pain, and shortness of breath are all symptoms of racial fatigue (<https://medium.com/racial-battle-fatigue/racial-battle-fatigue-what-is-it-and-what-are-the-symptoms-84f79f49ee1e>). No matter the definitions, the bottom line is basically that racism and prejudice create and foster inequalities in our societies, both because people don't get the opportunities they deserve, but also because they become unhappy. Unhappy people and unhappy societies can't be successful societies.

In societies like the one I grew up in, being white is the norm. Most people are unaware of their own white privilege and at the same time, they want to believe that we're all treated equally, as we should be. They get shocked when I tell them about my experiences. Of all the stories of people being rude to me based on nothing except my lack of looking Icelandic enough. Surprised when other Icelanders with Middle Eastern backgrounds and I speak of having random security checks at airports surprisingly regularly when few of them have ever had to. Some get angry when I point out their privilege. Some start crying because they feel bad. There are a lot of emotions that come up when we speak of injustice and when we speak of the way people either benefit from or unknowingly keep racism alive. How are you feeling right now, reading this text?



WHITENESS
 WHITE PRIVILEGE
 MEANS YOU DON'T HAVE
 TO LIVE WITH NEGATIVE
 CONSEQUENCES OF
 • YOUR RACE •

↓

RACE IS ONLY FOR
 NON-WHITE PEOPLE

I don't want you to get hooked on any negative feelings and anger. Simply because usually that energy doesn't get put into the right place. Stay with those feelings for a moment and then your next step should be spent actively working against racism. Because nothing will happen if you do not put in the work. This you can do for example by reading articles such as this one, but you can also do so much more. Show up for protests (don't just like the event on Facebook). Search for information yourself and don't expect people of color to educate you. Talk about racism with other people, especially with people that never experience it. Listen to audiobooks or podcasts on the topic. Follow some accounts on social media that highlight racism - not because following in itself is activism, but because you need to be reminded every day that racism is real. Bring the subject up at your institution or workplace. Look at whether there is a policy in place to combat racism or to tackle it if it comes up. Being anti-racist is something we all must do, all the time - we cannot trust someone else to do the work for us.

And if you think putting in the work is hard, I want you to imagine how it is being someone who experiences racism, prejudice, and subtle reminders that they don't belong in their society, all the time. This you can try doing for example by thinking of something in your life that you would say defines you for yourself. Something so intrinsically a part of you that when someone asks, who are you? It can be anything. Now, imagine that this part of who you are (a part you wouldn't change about who you are), is the reason why you will not get the next job you apply for, even though you are qualified for it. This will be the reason you are not allowed to travel to your next holiday destination. This will be the reason a doctor will misdiagnose you or a service provider will be rude to you. Imagine the feeling. Now imagine that over and over again. All the time. Imagine that the media will also reinforce it, so you see it everywhere. The way history is taught will justify it.

Try to imagine this. If you can imagine this for a second, you still have not even begun to understand what it is to be subject to racism. This is only a small glimpse into the world of those who experience racism on a daily basis. A small exercise I created just to get people to reflect from the inside. For me, writing this article is sharing with you a part of my experiences, in the hopes of influencing a changed mindset towards anti-racism. In the end, we both know that the existence of racism is not your fault personally, you didn't create it. However, you have the personal responsibility to actively fight it - otherwise, you are supporting its continued effect on our societies and all of our lives. And you must hold yourself accountable for that.



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!

