Intercultural awareness

In 2013, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth Slovenia initiated the Council of Europe youth campaign **NO Hate Speech Movement**. Its main purpose was to raise youth awareness of the harm caused by hate speech. Activities during the campaign included seminars, workshops, conferences and symposia. In 2015, the campaign grew into the **Don’t Hate** (Ne sovraži [1]) movement. In Slovenia, the movement’s national board is under the jurisdiction of the Youth Council of Slovenia.

Since 1995, when the Council of Europe launched the campaign '**All Different—All Equal**', the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth has encouraged tolerance, equality, solidarity and understanding, along with human rights education. The Office for Youth co-finances programmes that encourage intercultural learning and competences. The key purposes of this project are as follows:

1. Fight against discrimination and promotion of diversity
2. Interreligious and intercultural dialogue
3. Participation, democracy and good governance as the fight against structural discrimination

Young ambassadors of intercultural dialogue (Mladi ambasadorji medkulturnega dialoga)

Supported by the European Social Fund, the project's activities focused on youth’ understanding of other cultures. Through information and training activities for young people and promotion of the accessibility of culture, the project partners ensured dissemination of the project network’s effects, as well as quality of structure and content. Following a public tender published by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the project was implemented by a network of youth organisations.
The Youth Centre of Dravinjska Dolina ([Mladinski Center Dravinjske Doline](#)) continues to work on a project under this initiative. The main goal of the project is to encourage greater tolerance in a multicultural society, where people of different cultures and ethnic groups living in the same place learn to maintain relations based on open interaction, exchange and diversity recognition. The project began in 2009 as a national initiative with 23 partners and was co-financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the European Social Fund. The first phase of the project ended in 2012. Because of its success, the Youth Centres of Dravinjska Dolina, Celje ([Mladinski Center Celje](#)) and Trbovlje decided to upgrade the programme, and in 2013 and 2014, it included 12 high schools from 11 Slovenian regions. In a second upgrade by the Youth Council of Slovenske Konjice Municipality ([Mladinski Svet občine Slovenske Konjice](#)), the target group was primary school pupils. The Youth Centre of Dravinjska Dolina has organised free training courses ([5](#)) for youth, educators and leaders. This training addressed intercultural dialogue, focusing on Muslim and Roma culture, migration and refugees. The project ended in October 2016.

A number of (youth) organisations have developed programmes to promote intercultural awareness.

- The Institute Circle ([Zavod Krog](#)) encourages intercultural dialogue, including open, tolerant and equal relations among people from different sociocultural, religious and ethical backgrounds. Through intercultural education, they aim to raise awareness of intercultural diversity among children, youth and others. For this purpose, the Institute Circle implemented interactive workshops designed to understand other cultures and nationalities and based on active participation.
- The Intercultural Dialogue Association ([Društvo medkulturni dialog](#)) was established in 2007 to promote dialogue across peoples and cultures and to integrate societal and personal values. The association organises events that include friendship dinners, cultural nights, debate forums and dialogue dinners.
- The Philanthropic Charity Society HOPE Jesenice ([Človekoljubno dobrodelno društvo UP](#)) implements projects that focus on learning about different cultures to raise awareness of the importance of intercultural activities among young people. The target groups are kindergarten children as well as primary and high school students.
- As an example of social inclusion projects, the Association Youth Guild ([Društvo mladinski ceh](#)) 'Social Innovators of the future' ([Socialni inovatorji prihodnosti 2.0](#)) supports young social innovators and entrepreneurs through incubator and accelerator programmes, as well as providing education and infrastructure. Targeting youth employment is an important means of promoting social inclusion, especially in the case of women, who are particularly vulnerable. Other programmes addressing the problem of social inclusion within the national structured dialogue include the following.

**Young people's rights**

Advocacy for youth ([Zagovorništvo za mlade](#)): The Youth Council of Slovenia represents young people in dealings with decision-makers at national and international level. The Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia promotes children's rights on its website ([12](#)). The Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth ([Zveza prijateljev mladine Slovenije](#)) has its own children's rights committee, which calls for the exercise of those rights. In 2015, the Youth Council of Slovenia organised a round table entitled ‘Human rights and the youth situation’ ([14](#)) (Okrogl miza: človekove
pravice in položaj mladih). The main purpose of the discussion was to articulate the views of young people on the concept of human rights and to highlight the most common violations of those rights.

**Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism**

CivICT (Initiative for civic application of ICT) is a set of projects coordinated by Assoc. Prof. Tomaž Deželan at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Social Sciences. One of these projects, called trACES: Tackling Radicalism through Active Citizenship of Europe in Schools [15] (Reševanje radikalizma preko aktivnega evropskega državljanstva skozi šole), tackles radicalism by developing a curriculum to combat youth radicalisation. The trACES project addresses the growing concern about radicalisation through special seminars, developing educational tools for teachers and trainers to empower them to tackle radicalisation. The newly-designed anti-radicalisation curricula for primary schools, general secondary and VET schools and youth centres and youth clubs aims to improve young people’s knowledge of European political processes and facilitate European values, steering them towards democracy and tolerance. Responding to the opportunities and challenges created in the EU by the increasing numbers of refugees, the curriculum condemns stereotyping and xenophobic violence against refugees and immigrants. Based on the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, the project provides quality assurance and the translation of results into actual policies. The project is financed by the University of Ljubljana (Faculty of Social Sciences) and the Erasmus+ Programme.