



- DISCUSSION NOTE -

Session I.b: The role of local authorities, education and grass-root projects

Local authorities and civil society organisations are the closest interface with citizens and are best placed to grasp the challenges on the ground. This session will examine their role in preventing antisemitic and anti-Muslim hatred and in promoting a culture of inclusive tolerance. Initiatives that have shown tangible results on the ground will be discussed and participants will reflect on how such best practices can be disseminated and similar initiatives fostered. Effective ways for local actors to cooperate will also be explored as well as how national and European actors can offer support.

Specific attention will be paid to the role of education and training in the wide sense: Be it by working on school curricula and reinforcing training opportunities including for teachers and officials, or through fostering participatory projects with children, young people, teachers and other local actors. The part families and role models such as religious leaders can play will also be discussed.

Indicative questions to steer the discussions:

- 1 - Given the experiences of harassment and discrimination in the field of education and in the public space (in the city streets, shops, cinemas, etc.), what are the most effective practices at local level that have effectively evidenced a positive impact and a potential for replication, including by and with young people? How could these good practices be best exchanged? Which cross-sectorial approaches among local authorities, education institutions, communities, youth organisations and civil society have proven effective?
- 2 - What are the challenges for communities, civil society organisations, schools and local governments to gain support for intercultural initiatives? What strategies have been helpful for overcoming these challenges?
- 3 - Which initiatives could Member States, EU institutions and international organisations take in order to promote common values and mutual understanding and counter stereotypes, in particular in the educational sphere (e.g. citizenship education; education about the EU, its history, its fundamental values and EU rights; educational material such as booklets or websites; religious literacy; intercultural/interreligious workshops and projects in schools and out of schools; specific training for teachers; guidelines for educators on countering intolerance and discrimination; peer learning; youth projects, including through culture and sports, etc.). What are already existing best practices in this respect and how can they be fostered?