

SEMINAR REPORT

**Burning Cities: Lessons from the French
Uprisings for Europe and Britain Today**

A UKREN seminar held on
19th January 2006
at
The Commission for Racial Equality

Introduction

BACKGROUND

Since its inception, the UK Race & Europe Network's objectives have remained the same, namely to:

- Ensure that black and race equality community groups are aware of European developments in the field of race equality and anti-discrimination in order to provide added value to their work
- Ensure in turn that these community groups have a voice at European decision-making level on the same issues.

With this in mind, it seemed both necessary and appropriate for UKREN to hold a seminar on the recent disturbances in France and Britain and lessons to be learnt from these events and European, national and local reactions to them. Though the French uprisings and the upheavals in Lozells have receded from British headlines, issues heatedly debated at the time and immediately after – community leadership, 'self segregation' and models of integration, to name a few – continue to affect communities across Europe and are more than ever relevant to the UK.

At a European level, the introduction of the Common Basic Principles on Integration, and other European initiatives show that there is a slow but definite shift towards a greater focus on integration, a development important to organisations in the UK other Member States. As argued by our main speakers, though the EU integration agenda has its limitations and a fear of 'radicalisation' of black and minority ethnic youth and terrorism partly driving its focus may not be optimal for anti-racist work, it is nonetheless an opportunity for NGOs to engage with these issues beyond the national context.

Particularly in the light of recent events and this relationship between integration and security agendas, disappointment has been expressed by anti racist organisations over the British presidency's failure to push forward on the anti-racism agenda, which, as key speaker Anna Visser described, is part of a trend whereby anti-racism is slipping off presidency priorities. For this reason, European-wide NGO pressure on forthcoming presidencies is vital.

It is therefore important to examine the factors underlying recent developments in 'race relations' and to look at the role that organisations such as UKREN can play to address and engage with these on a local, national and European level.

OBJECTIVES

- To hear a wide-angled view of recent uprisings in Britain and in France.
- To discuss the factors underlying and contexts surrounding these uprisings.
- To examine how civil society in general and UK race equality NGOs in particular can engage with European agendas impacting on 'race equality' in Britain.

THIS REPORT

Section 1 of the report consists of contributions by our 4 speakers:

- Professor Tariq Ramadan, Visiting Fellow, St Antony's College Oxford talks about the *issues facing Muslim young people across Europe today particularly reflecting on the recent situation in France*;
- Sarah Spencer, Associate Director at the Centre on Migration Policy & Society, Oxford University and Chair of the Equality & Diversity Forum, *introduces recent European developments in migration and integration and provides an overview of the way in which UK based organisations can make use of the EU in matters of migration and integration*;
- Anna Visser, Policy Officer, European Network Against Racism *talks about various EU programmes relevant to race equality work, in particular the upcoming 3 European Years and their implications for UK organisations*;
- Joy Warmington, Chief Executive of Birmingham Race Action Partnership (b:RAP) reflects on the *recent disturbances in Birmingham and how these were tackled at local level*.

Section 2 of the report focuses on the questions and discussion held during the seminar between speakers and participants. These were wide ranging and can be divided in the following broad themes:

- Victim mentality, 'blame culture' and self-segregation of Muslims in Europe
- The role of integration in the uprisings and its definition
- The French republican model
- Islamophobia
- How local organisations can get involved on a European level
- The Single Equality Agenda
- Community Leadership
- The relationship between security and integration agendas
- Competition for resources amongst ethnic groups
- Ethnic monitoring

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

UKREN would like to extend its warmest thanks to the Commission for Racial Equality for hosting the seminar.

UKREN would also like to thank all speakers for their invaluable contributions to the seminar.

Race, faith and class: The subtleties of an integrated approach to tackling discrimination

Tariq Ramadan

Let me just bring to the fore a few points in fifteen minutes or so and then open the floor for questions. What I want to share with you today are my thoughts on the new situation that Muslims are facing, but also to think about how we can tackle racism and discrimination and how national discourse is built around these issues.

Connecting interpretations related to socioeconomics and faith

I would like to start by raising three main points as an introduction. First, when it comes to issues and discussions around racism, discrimination, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, we need to have a comprehensive and complex approach to what is going on, and toward what needs to be done to deal with these issues. This brings me back to the situation in France that we experienced over the last few months. What is sometimes missing in discussions around racism is this comprehensive approach: we tend to focus on socio-economic problems only, or racial problems only, and the connections between both are not clear in our minds.

So we need – and this is my second point – to have a deconstructive approach whilst at the same time being careful not to disconnect the fields. We do need to identify what the main factor is in a particular situation, but at the same time, we also need to identify how different problems and factors might be connected to one another. When talking about racism and discrimination, we must also talk about socio-economic problems, and about education. I think that among Muslim communities throughout Europe, the perception is that Islamophobia is a reality – that there is a new kind of racism. But we tend to put Islam or Islamophobia at the centre of everything, and label everything as being “against Muslims”. This reaction is not always accompanied by an ability to deconstruct the whole thing and to differentiate between what are socio-economic or social problems, for instance, and what might be *real* religious problems. On the other hand, we see a tendency in mainstream society, when talking about social problems, of putting everything in the same box and saying, ‘we have problems with the Muslim community today, and Islam is a problem *per se*,’ without mentioning or without considering that what the Muslims are facing today is very old and not specific to their community but was faced by other immigrant communities in the past. This discourse also fails to acknowledge that the religious aspect is not the main one, that it is maybe the third or fourth element in the whole process.

Right wing thought in mainstream society

My third point is something of increasing worry: it is the fact that although in reality, we may not have an increasing representation of far-right parties in the West, nevertheless we are seeing far-right views creep into mainstream discourse. For example, a recent survey in France found that 68% of the French population support the far-right discourse when the Front National is not mentioned. However, when it is mentioned that these arguments are coming from the Front National, less than 25% actually agree with these arguments. So whilst the extreme-right party is not accepted as such, its political discourse now is, and you will find that in the mainstream – or the so called ‘classical parties’ on both left and right of the political spectrum – there is increased acceptance and normalisation of this discourse, as it relates to immigrants and Muslims, and as it relates to who they are and what they want.

This reality is not only a French one; it can be seen here in Britain as well as in other parts of Europe. If you think about and read or listen to what was said just after Theo van Gogh's murder in Holland, you find a similar situation: very old thoughts which were conveyed yesterday by the far-right parties are now in the mainstream political discourse, and to me this is worrying. This situation can be seen in various European countries, such as Denmark of course, or Belgium, and I think that our strategy should be to resist this tendency to oversimplify and confuse matters. As I said, we have to deconstruct the discourse on racism and discrimination in order to distinguish between what is racism, and what is mainly coming from socio-economic problems. What far right parties are doing is to confuse everything and say: "These social problems are present in our society solely because these people are Muslims, solely because they are immigrants, and solely because they are not genuine citizens'.

Let me here come back to the recent situation we had in France, which exemplifies that confusion. The riots took place in the suburbs, and we said straight away that it had nothing to do with Islam; it is a socio-economic reality: you put people in the suburbs and the common point between all these people is that they are experiencing the reality of a socio-economic fracture in society. To say this is right; however, to disconnect it and to say that there is no relationship between the fact that these people are facing this socio-economic reality and the fact that they are coming from a North African background or that they are Muslims would also be simplistic. So, the connection is really important, but it must not be the wrong connection. Islam has nothing to do with these problems, but we have to ask ourselves *why* the majority of the people facing these problems are Muslims, or Arabs. So we have to disconnect the problem to avoid 'Islamising' social problems, and to avoid an exclusively ethnic reading of the reality, but we also have to keep in mind the complexity of the relationship between racism and the reality of people living here.

In the majority of European countries today, in Britain, Denmark, Holland, as well as now in Spain and in Italy, we are seeing examples of what is purely institutionalised racism and accepted normalised racist discourse on 'these people who are not *really* citizens or not *really* the immigrants we want'. More and more, Islam is connected to terrorism or violence and used by some mainstream parties to create an atmosphere of fear amongst voters and to claim that Western Europe needs to protect itself from the new threat that the Muslim presence in our society represents. So if you add all these elements together, you have a picture that is complex and that is sometimes used in a confused way, and we have to counteract these claims with a discourse which is very deep and not simplistic. The problem I have with some of the anti-racist movements' interpretations today in Europe is that they could benefit from making these nuanced connections. Some, for instance, only see the social element of the problem – we were talking about this earlier.

Let's ask ourselves firstly why these social problems affect some people and not others. Secondly, let's ask ourselves how, within our community itself, we address these issues of citizenship and social exclusion, and why we sometimes have a self-segregation approach to these issues as they affect our community. I think that this is what Muslim communities are facing today throughout Europe.

Engaging in a complex discourse on racism and social problems

The last point I would like to make in my very quick presentation is that we are seeing the instrumentalisation on a very large scale of what I call the "reality of fear" in Europe today. Violence is there; what happened in this country is a reality...but, it is also used as a political weapon. Let me just tell you a story to highlight this: I was in Italy last week where I was to give a lecture at Padova University. When I went there, the far-right party had the following public

reaction: 'This person was prevented from going to the United States, so he is coming here and it is very dangerous'. What they wanted was media coverage. As a result of the party's outcry and media coverage, we had the police in front of the university and the day after the lecture, they had what they wanted. Why? Because they then turned the argument around and said: 'For him to speak in our city we need all these people to protect the university, so *per se* he might not be a threat, but to protect him we need the police, we need a security policy. He is therefore putting our society in a danger and posing a security risk". And these images are enough to spread the idea that my presence was dangerous *per se*. Again, this is not only done by far-right parties, and *all* the parties within the political spectrum should take a stand on that. And as long as we have this reality of fear it is very difficult to envisage how one can build a complex political discourse on racism, social problems, in which way the two might be connected or not in order to have a very strong analysis about us living together.

This is what I want share with you: my perceptions today, as a European Muslim travelling throughout this continent, that there is a great deal of fear, that this fear is used as a political weapon, and that consequently, we are facing both institutionalised racism and discrimination, in addition to the reality of social problems. So, as I said earlier, we must make sure we do not 'islamise' the social problems, but we must also connect to the reality of why, today, the great majority of the people facing this discrimination come from the same background, and why this discourse of 'islamising' the situation is gaining ground, both in terms of voters and in terms of people who want to hear the situation analysed in this way. I think that if we are serious about acting against discrimination and racism, we cannot come at it with a simplistic approach that does not connect all these different fields.

Sarah Spencer

I was asked to talk about the European Integration Agenda and in particular what role NGOs might play in actually pursuing that agenda, which does provide some opportunities which we're not perhaps all taking up as we could.

Migration is here to stay

I will start with two points on the European Integration Agenda. **First** the recognition, which I think we have but not all states do: migration is here to stay at different levels and in different forms. Whether it's for work, for asylum, to study, for family, it's a permanent part of Europe's future. It brings huge economic and social benefits to Europe. It also brings big challenges for migrants as well as for receiving societies and public policy cannot ignore that. The policy-makers who once thought that migrants were here temporarily and would go home were wrong because many stayed. The policy-makers now who seem to think that all migrants are going to stay and become citizens are also wrong. They are not: many people come intending to stay but they go, some intend to stay and move on, others do stay. Migration is inherently fluid, unpredictable and nuanced and shifting patterns of demand and pressures to migrate mean that the patterns of who comes and goes will continually change. My argument would be that policy needs to be equally fluid and equally nuanced to reflect the reality of migration, rather than be based on preconceptions about who's coming and why they are here and what they intend to do next.

Integration as a two-way process

My **second** starting point is that the whole discussion on the policy of integration is hampered by the word itself, and our objections to it. There are connotations of assimilation in integration, the idea that somehow this is a one-way process, that it's migrants who have to change, that they have to shed their culture, that we measure migration by how much they've become like us, that if there's a failure of integration it's obviously their fault, rather than looking at the barriers that migrants face. The response then in some member states is "if they fail to integrate, they've not taken up the opportunity so we'll make it compulsory - they must go on integration programmes and if they fail the integration programmes they have their right to be removed."

But I don't think we should reject the debate on integration, ignore it and stay out of it because we don't like the terms. That's not the definition of integration that the European Union as a whole, collectively have recently signed up to. The Common Basic Principles on Integration were agreed to by all twenty-five member states just a year ago under the Dutch presidency. You will see that they very clearly say that we are talking about a dynamic two-way process which requires receiving countries to adapt. It requires them to open up their doors to provide opportunities for migrants. It requires them to dismantle the barriers that migrants face. That's now been followed up by a communication from the Commission in September 2005 and is currently the focus of debate and a Rapporteur's comments are forthcoming in the European Parliament. What this means, is a slow but definite shift at the European Union level towards a greater focus on the importance of integration, which I think we could take advantage of. There is a huge way to go before it actually delivers very much at the European Union level and certainly before it influences the approaches that member states are taking. But I would argue that it provides us with some opportunities and some levers for influence here in the UK and it potentially provides us with new money. The European Commission has just set up a new integration fund. Figures of 1.7 million Euros have been talked about, which is certainly

significantly larger than the European Refugee Fund, and that, if for nothing else, is worthy of NGO attention.

The relationship between EU security and integration agendas

It is true that the reasons why integration has risen up the EU agenda is not perhaps for those we might have hoped. It is certainly dominated by the security agenda and the fear of radicalisation and terrorism following the Madrid and London bombings. But it is also, and this is particularly true in the DG on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission, because of the growing body of evidence about the failure of the integration process. All the key indexes show that whether it's unemployment, under-skilling, poor housing, health, education, many, if not all migrant communities and of course the second generation, are affected. But it is the radicalisation of the security agenda, which has dominated debates within the DG Justice, Security and Liberty (which used to be called DG Justice and Home Affairs). They – rightly or wrongly – are the directorate that leads on the integration agenda. We always have to bear in mind that whilst they are preoccupied with the security agenda they lead in terms of drafting policy on the integration agenda as a whole. The social exclusion and discrimination dimension are all in DG Employment and Social Affairs, who don't lead on the integration agenda. There undoubtedly lies a problem here: there is a tension within the European Commission itself in the lead not being in one place, not being in the place which perhaps has the levers to really do something about this agenda, namely in Justice and Home Affairs. There is certainly a lack of a co-ordinated approach and the case is the same here in the UK where it is equally fragmented. We don't have a strategy on the integration of new migrants. At least not one which engages the department of health and the department of education. We have an agenda on refugee integration, but there is no agenda for the integration of other new migrants. Clearly, there are different experiences, different rights there, but the fact that we have an agenda on one and not on the other is clearly a problem. We need to do joined-up thinking and a coherent strategy that reflects the very different needs of different categories of migrants and the barriers they face.

Compass Research on East European Migrants to the UK

I would like to give you one example. We have just completed some research in Oxford on East European migrants in the UK who came before 1 May 2004, before they were European Union citizens. We did a survey then and repeated it eight months later after they became European Union citizens to see what difference it made. One of the things we found was that when they were new to the UK, half of them didn't know what conditions were attached to their immigration status. They did not know what the rules were about when and where they were allowed to work or what services they were entitled to. More than half of them didn't know how to access a GP, didn't know about their rights at work and where to find advice. A high proportion reported they did not feel treated as an equal. Few of them had much social contact at all with British-born people, and when they did meet British-born people, the Brits would ask question such as "do you have electricity in Lithuania?" East Europeans do not figure on anyone's integration agenda, though clearly they need information, advice and support, and evidently British people need educating. But there is currently no agenda to make that happen. And yet, the East European migrants are simply the tip of an iceberg of a plethora of migrants groups from all over the world, living and working here, some with far greater needs.

I suggest that we ought to be working towards a coherent public policy that supports the integration process and does so with three objectives: to move towards equality in access to jobs and services, towards participation in decision making and towards positive social interaction, so that migrants and indeed Britain itself can achieve the full benefit from their presence here.

Integration as a local process

The integration process of course happens at the local level. It is down to community groups, NGOs, unions, employers who are really the key players, with the migrants, in making that process successful. The National Policy Framework is important as a necessary context forward. But it is also a European issue. It's a European issue because what happens in one member state affects another. And it is on those grounds that the EU and the European Commission in particular moving towards having a strategy of its own with a view to providing not a blue-print for how every member-state has to do it, but just a framework of principles and an action plan that they can pick up and run with.

Legal mandate legislation and recent developments

Europe has a legal mandate for some of the key dimensions of the agenda, for instance immigration controls. There is a framework on family reunion; there are rights of long-term residents; and of particular importance to us all, there are the directives on race, but also on religion and belief in relation to access to jobs. There is also a requirement to establish a body like the CRE to support victims and enforce the law. The European Commission is currently chasing up the member-states that have failed to implement this European legislation or haven't done it properly. There's also an anti-discrimination action plan, which is up for renewal this year. But the EU has recently gone further: the Commission now produces an annual report, which monitors progress on the integration policy and outcomes across member-states. There's quite a lot of discussion about whether they should be using indicators to measure progress. If they did so, that could be used as quite a valuable stick to shame the poor performers, the ones that don't have the policy or those that aren't putting in the resources. There is also a system of national contact points, which are officials and experts who meet regularly and produce for instance a handbook on integration with a view to trying to spread good practice across member-states. There's also the little INTI fund for integration initiatives that NGOs can apply for, as well as the much bigger EU Refugee Fund. There is the new European Migration Information Network which is designed to share comparable data and new budgets for new research to build up the evidence base. There's also an agreement to establish a new forum for NGOs at the EU level that want to engage on integration issues. And all of that is taking place within at least some recognition that integration isn't a strategy that you can marginalise in a separate programme with a separate budget, but that it has to be mainstreamed within the rest of the EU policy agenda. A good example of this is the fact that some key agendas, such as the action plans on employment and social inclusion, now have a migrant dimension. It's thin and it doesn't have its own target and performance measures, but it's there and it could go further if they felt under pressure to do so.

Action still needed

That's a long way from having mainstreamed it effectively and it's a long way still from a willingness to discuss at the European level some of the most contentious issues, for instance the regularisation of irregular migrants, which is absolutely vital to the integration agenda, but nobody will talk about it. We need some common rules on access to citizenship. It's so much easier to become a citizen in some countries than others. We also need to review the barriers in immigration controls themselves, which prevent people getting jobs or access to services. Finally, we need indeed to go beyond the current European anti-discrimination legislation by establishing duties on public bodies to promote equality. All of that is an awful long way from the rest of the European Agenda.

Eleven useful EU Common Basic Principles

But, that said, we have the Common Principles which you may already be well aware of, but perhaps not because the UK government are very thinly aware of them itself (although it's signed to them) and there's no debate about them here. I'd suggest that the principles have in

them language and commitments which, while not entirely optimal, are nevertheless ones that can be usefully called in aid if you're either trying to press for a broader and stronger European agenda or for a better agenda here in the UK. The Principles unequivocally reject assimilation. They commit states to creating opportunities for the full economic, social, cultural and political inclusion of migrants. They say everyone in the EU has to respect basic values. They don't point the finger at migrants. They stress respect for diversity. They emphasise all the practical barriers that need to be removed if migrants are going to be integrated, for instance the big issue about recognition of qualifications, access to education, participation in democratic structures and discrimination. They talk very much not about having migrants leading parallel lives and the need for dialogue and engagement across communities. They also talk about the importance of mainstreaming and the importance of targets and monitoring. Particularly important for you is that they recognise that this isn't all a state top to bottom driven agenda, and that the community and the voluntary sector have a vital role in making it happen, as key players in the integration process. I think it's interesting that some of the European Foundations have now picked this up and are talking about what they can do to fund the voluntary sector to enable them to expand their role in supporting migrants in the process.

Communication on Integration

That was all followed up last September by the Communication on Integration by the European Commission, which is currently being considered in Parliament where there is a Rapporteur, Stavros Lambrinidis MEP, writing a report about how it should be taken forward. I think we have to acknowledge this is an extremely modest document from the Commission. One wonders where the energy is in this agenda given the seriousness of the issues that we're talking about. I cannot understand why the UK presidency last year, for six months in charge of this agenda, did not take it forward at all. The communication lacks any analysis and argument, any passion that was in some of the earlier documents. It simply lists actions that can be taken at the EU and the national level to take forward an integration strategy. But it is a useful list that we can use nevertheless. It focuses on what needs to change in the host society - the media, public attitudes, discrimination, as well as the support migrant's need, everything from language classes and voting rights to neighbourhood safety so that they can take advantage of the opportunities that their host society should provide. There is a lot of commitment in the Commission but where are the resources for an agenda as important as this? And of course as I said, all the key policy areas like jobs and health are all off in other directorates. But the shortage of resources there means that the officials are so much more open to ideas and evidence from NGOs and academics than they would be if they had their own research department, which they don't. And that provides us with an opportunity to influence that simply wouldn't be there if they had all the ideas that they needed.

The EU agenda as opportunity

So, my message is simply that the EU agenda provides an opportunity. It has limitations, the integration agenda is weak, these principles aren't binding and there are some terrible gaps in it, such as for instance the fact that very little is said about anti-racism and tackling the far-right. But there are opportunities there. Amongst other things we can use them to remind the government of its commitments that it signed up to as part of the need for a comprehensive well-resourced strategy here. But also, given the tension at the EU level between the security agenda for which there are strong voices, and the integration agenda for which there are rather weak voices, NGO pressure coupled with the social partners, the employers and trade unions, to put more resources and emphasis on the integration agenda and the needs which migrants have and the barriers that they face, just would help to tip the balance on what I think we'd all agree is a rather urgent agenda.

Anti-racism NGOs in Europe: why now?

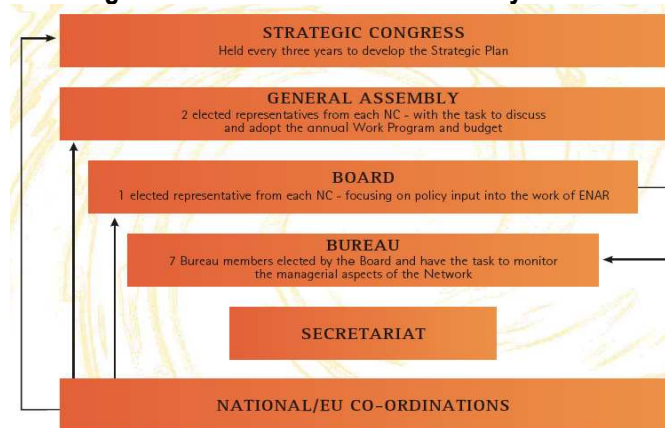
Anna Visser

Thank you very much for the opportunity to come and discuss these questions with you today. I was just thinking about what Professor Ramadan and Sarah Spencer said about the complexity of the issues and I think that's particularly true when we think about engaging in EU policy and what that means. Sarah just illustrated the integration agenda, which by itself is complex, and that's of course just one small element of a much broader EU picture. So there's a bit of a contradiction at the moment, which I think makes it an interesting time for NGOs who are looking to Europe. *Politically*, anti-racism is slipping off the European Agenda. I don't know whether that's just because we've had the Race Directive and there's a sense that we've done our bit or if it reflects the political reality in many of the EU member states and the shift to the right. So you have a divergence between racism as such slipping off the political agenda but at the same time a kind of explosion of policy areas in the EU context which are relevant to anti-racism and which we try to follow and try to engage in. This is what I wanted to talk about briefly today.

European Network against Racism (ENAR)

ENAR has a membership of about 500 anti-racism organisations across the European Union and it came out of the 1997 European Year against Racism, which really provided the first opportunity for European NGOs to come together and present a collective vision of what they wanted from the European Union. We try to present that collective view to the EU institutions, but similarly provide information at a national level, which facilitates the interaction between the EU and the national as well as regional and local initiatives. And there are a number of ways we do that practically. Sarah mentioned the email bulletin but we also produce a series of reports on each of the EU member states annually which we use in our lobbying activities. We have various different information tools as well as conferences, training, seminars, a whole range of things. I won't go into the detail but it is available on our website and we make that available to our members. In the UK this happens through UKREN.

Figure 1: Overview of ENAR statutory bodies



One of the key challenges for us initially was thinking about how we structure the organisation. It's all very well to say 'we provide a collective voice in the European Union', but what's the

practice of that, what happens? And the way that's been elaborated is through a series of statutory bodies, the biggest being the strategic congress, which meets every three years where three representatives from each of the co-ordinations come together and set the broad strategic vision for the organisation. That then is implemented through a general assembly annually. The Board elect a Bureau, which runs the more day-to-day operations. There are six and a half of us in the secretariat who are responsible for implementing a lot of those things. I work specifically on the policy side, but we also have information functions, networking functions, campaigns, the details of which again are on our website.

Why is acting at the European level important?

We often get asked why acting at an EU level is important, not just from NGOs who are thinking about joining ENAR, but also from the Commission, as our primary funders, and the various different EU stakeholders. Of course one of the key questions is that people are very busy at a national and local level working on day-to-day anti-racism work and are seriously overburdened and under-resourced, so why then would they do this additional layer of work engaging in Europe? Why would they go out of their way and take time out from what's already a very important and busy workload?

The way we see it is there are two key elements to this. The **first** is very much about information sharing and learning. Of course there are very different national contexts across the European Union, but there are also common strands, and there is a lot to be learned from sharing that information, and that's something that we try to do in ENAR both through our reports but also in our meetings where we bring people together to look at different issues. And the **second** element is very much about making sure that the European Union takes action when it comes to anti-racism. There is certainly evidence over the last few years, particularly when it comes to things like anti-discrimination legislation, that member-states are prepared to move in Europe on things that they would not necessarily have pushed forward at a national level. So you can push national agendas forward by engaging with Europe.

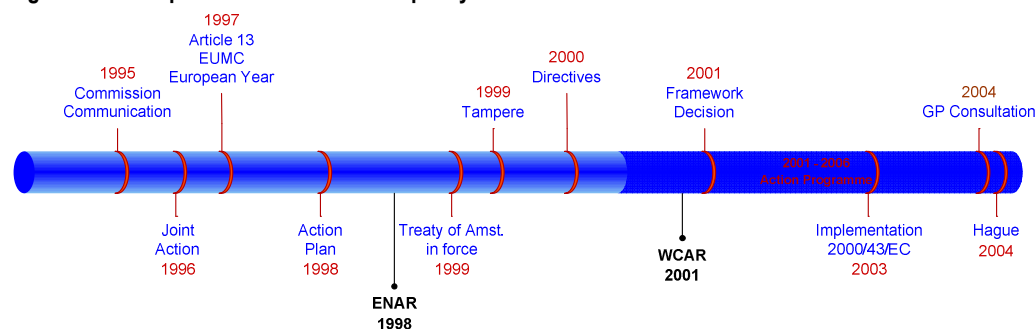
When it comes specifically to the role of civil-society in that process, there are a range of things that we can do through ENAR. Perhaps the most important is getting anti-racism on the European agenda. This is something that civil society has been very successful in doing. If you look at the history of this over the last ten years - getting the Article 13 on anti-discrimination into the European treaties, getting the Race and Employment Directives - civil society organisations have been really key in achieving that and setting a European agenda. Europe has a long history of racism and anti-racism. Despite EU institutions themselves coming relatively late to this debate NGOs have proved crucial in making sure that that happens. A key thing of course is providing evidence and data as well as rationale and arguments for that action. But we must not just demonstrate that there's a problem, we need to also develop new ideas about what works. What's working nationally or locally? What good practice can be mainstreamed at the European level? The Commission itself, who proposes European initiatives, are seriously under-resourced. So when you come to them with an idea about doing something in a certain way, a new project or a new approach, they're always very open to listening to that, so it's important that we're there to feed that in. And then there's the oversight and monitoring role. Of course NGOs do this nationally all the time and it's very important to keep an eye, so to speak, on what's happening politically at a national level. But that's also important at a European level, because we often hear criticisms that the European Union can take decisions behind closed doors in a very opaque way so it's important we track some of those, because they do have direct implications. I'm thinking here particularly of some of the counter-terrorism initiatives of recent years. So it's important that there is this structured response to that.

Another very practical thing to mention is that because we now have anti-discrimination legislation through the Race Directive, an important thing to do now is to elaborate on what some of these principles in the Race Directive mean. There's actually a lot of confusion when it comes to the principles and tools in the Race Directive, and we need cases to start testing some of these things, to start seeing how it works and start setting jurisprudence. NGOs are key when it comes to strategic litigation and identifying cases. Interestingly, despite the fact that the Race Directive actually happened *earlier* than the Employment Directive, there haven't been any race-cases in the European Court of Justice. There have been some cases on other grounds but not on race. That's something that we are very interested in – why is that happening? This is particularly important when there's some question about whether member states are implementing them effectively or not.

Development of EU anti-racism Policy

Over the last ten years there has actually been quite a lot of action on anti-racism in the European context, culminating in the Race Directive as I said. But the question is - does that represent a good start in Europe? Or are people saying 'we've done the anti-racism thing'? What does it mean politically for anti-racism in Europe at the moment?'

Figure 2: Development of EU anti-racism policy 1995-2005



What does the experience of the recent Presidencies tell us?

I will not go into the detail of the recent UK Presidencies record – or should I say non-record – when it comes to promoting anti-racism or even anti-discrimination over the last six months. But I did want to flag it in the context of the last eight or ten presidencies. What we very much noticed over the last number of years is that actually racism isn't featuring in the presidency conclusions, just to take that particular set of documents as an indication of the political focus.

Figure 3: Racism in the EU Presidency Conclusions 1999–2005

Year		Presidency conclusions
2005	UK	
	LUX	
2004	NL	Mandate of the EUMC "Commitment to oppose any form of racism" "special attention to the fight against anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia"
	IE	
2003	IT	Extension of the mandate of the EUMC
	GR	
2002	DK	
	SP	Integration and racism.
2001	BE	Immigration and the need for programmes to combat racism "racism on the increase"
2000	FR	

	PT	Racism in the Mediterranean region
1999	FL	Tampere: "step up the fight against racism and xenophobia"
	DE	

With the exception of the Dutch Presidency in 2004 there hasn't really been a substantive reference to anti-racism in the presidency conclusions since 2001 in Belgium. That's quite concerning for us. There have been some references in the context of migration and integration and the Italians of course announced the extension of the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism (EUMC) to become the Fundamental Rights Agency – not something that we would see as particularly characteristic of giving special attention to anti-racism, in fact quite the opposite in some respects.

What this really tells us is that there's something happening within the EU context. There is a move away from focussing specifically on anti-racism to a slightly broader anti-discrimination agenda, and we now need to think about what that means for our work.

The current Austrian Presidency doesn't improve that picture. In fact, they more or less failed to mention even 'equality' on their priorities. There is a reference to gender equality but not to equality on any other grounds, which is something we have brought up with them. We're trying to convince them of the arguments for approaching equality generally but also anti-racism specifically. What we feel now is that there really is an urgent need to get this reference back into the presidency's conclusions in terms of setting an agenda around anti-racism, especially because of the developments like the setting up of a Fundamental Rights Agency. We're losing the specific anti-racism focus in the context of the EUMC developments towards a single equality approach both in Europe but also nationally (of course there's the experience here in the UK). We need to really make sure that the specificity of racism is maintained in those developments and to make sure that at a political level we maintain that commitment.

Despite the efforts of the Luxembourg Presidency with regard to the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia, neither the UK nor the Luxembourg Presidencies mentioned the substantial issue of racism in their conclusions. This is in contrast to the Dutch Presidency which in November 2004 invited the 'Council and the Commission to give special attention to the fights against anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia'.

Both in terms of the long history of experiences of racism but also the new and emerging forms of racism that we hear a little bit about today, we are far from a position where we can say we've dealt with this issue. In fact the situation is quite the opposite. So really what we need is to make sure that we maintain that focus.

Current policy context

In terms of the current policy agenda, unfortunately losing that specific focus on racism certainly hasn't meant simplifying the policy agenda when it comes to the things that we have to engage in at a European level. I referred earlier to this kind of explosion. As the EU has developed more competence in different areas, this has had a direct impact on our work as anti-racism NGOs in terms of availing of the opportunities that are there. Of course there's the anti-discrimination work and we do have the Race Directive and the Employment Directive. We shouldn't underestimate the impact that those initiatives have had, both at a legislative level but also in terms of the programmes of the Commission and what they have been engaged in. But there are problems in implementation and there are certainly gaps in the protection. The Race Directive gives us a lot but it doesn't deal with nationality discrimination, it doesn't mandate for positive action and doesn't deal with institutional discrimination, which are a lot of the debates

that happened in the UK over a long period of years. There are the gaps and politically it's difficult to get energy behind that. The European Commission now requires NGOs to focus on implementation, and anti-racism civil society is responding to this mandate. However, five years after the adoption of the Race Directive, it is clear that not even this instrument is achieving its full potential. In a recent report to the Commission ENAR has raised both the problems of implementation of the Directive and the gaps in the protection. Also, there is this single equality approach that I referred to. A lot of the programmes now that we're dealing with in the European context are cross-ground. And while there are definite advantages to that approach we are also very aware that in terms of dealing with the specific realities of certain forms of discrimination, it's important to maintain a focus on what's specific and where the common ground is.

Far from simplifying policy engagement for NGOs at the European level, policy developments in recent years have in fact made it substantially more complicated. There is now an even bigger policy agenda for anti-racist NGOs to keep an eye on. There are a broad range of areas across which it is important that anti-racism civil society engage, to a greater or lesser extent:

Just to give you a sense of where the Commission is going on anti-discrimination, they outlined towards the middle of last year what the framework strategy for the next few years in going to be, highlighting key actions that they want to engage in. One of these is specifically on the integration of Ethnic Minorities, social and economic inclusion of Ethnic Minorities. But most of the other initiatives are cross-ground including the European Year of Equal Opportunities in 2007, which I want to come back to in a minute. So, as you can see there is a big agenda there when it comes down to discrimination and there are a lot of different aspects to it.

Figure 4: Overview of the European Commission's Framework Strategy on anti-discrimination and equal opportunities

Biannual report of the situation of persons with disabilities	2005
Evaluation of the Community Action Programme	2005
First high level advisory group on integration of ethnic minorities	2006
Five year report on the transposition of the directives	2006
Publication of a feasibility study into new legal initiative	2006
Handbook on data collection	2006
First high-level equality summit	2006
Year of Equal Opportunities for All	2007
Tools to promote mainstreaming of non-discrimination	
Annual report on the implementation of the directives	

There are also all the other policy areas, anti-discrimination being perhaps the most obvious one. But in the last few years the European Union has really come into its own when it comes to employment and social policy through things like the Lisbon Agenda and the Open Method of Co-ordinations. There really is concern at the moment amongst social NGOs that the social inclusion aspect of some of that work is being lost a little and particularly social inclusion of Black and Minority Ethnic Groups.

There is of course also the migration and integration agenda, which Sarah Spencer spoke about already. In addition, there are developments in criminal justice, which are relevant to our work. The most obvious case is the proposed Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia dealing with racism as a crime, which there hasn't been any agreement on at a European level. But despite that block, there are other aspects of progress. The European Arrest Warrant Initiative names racism as a ground for extradition and there are different developments in the

area of television and Internet. There's the Fundamental Rights approach very much coming to the fore in terms of how these policies are articulated. And I'm thinking specifically of the development of the agency, but also there's a new process of impact assessment. All Commission proposals now need to be impact assessed for their implications on fundamental rights. That's a fairly big job, as you can imagine, with I think two people in the Commission responsible for it. So, it's a big job for anyone, but we're concerned that when that happens anti-racism is also recognised as one of the most widely recognised fundamental rights.

Recent counter terrorism is a good illustration of the need to be a bit wary when we approach Europe. Not all developments are positive. There's also a negative side to it, which really necessitates the monitoring and tracking of what's happening. I'm thinking here particularly of initiatives around data collection, efforts to try and merge immigration data and criminal data and what that means. And of course, there are the more restrictive developments when it comes to migration. So we need to achieve a certain balance. It's very difficult to talk about these things, and I think this is what Professor Ramadan was talking about a little bit earlier. You can't talk about social inclusion without talking about integration and you can't talk about integration without talking about fundamental rights. And so there is very much this disconnection when it comes to some of these policy areas and how you bring those together. That's where NGOs and the role of UKREN are particularly important in trying to find the synergies between all these different areas.

European Years

I'm just going to briefly illustrate what I have been trying to say with reference to the three upcoming years. This is a good example of the kind of complexity of the policy framework that we are talking about. There are three upcoming opportunities. They're all totally different in terms of implementation and different in terms of focus, but there are overlaps and there are synergies to be drawn between them. We can remember 1997 (European Year Against Racism) quite fondly and it was quite key in setting both a policy agenda but also in galvanising civil society. Whether it means the next three years are going to have that impact, I don't know. There are some uncertainties as to the way we should take these forward but I think it's still important to bear them in mind.

2006 – European Year for Mobility

At the moment of course it's 2006, The European Year of Mobility. It's officially launched in February, but they have started doing funding under it. There was a call for funding proposals in December and there is going to be another one. If you look at the Commission material on it, it is very much linked to an economic agenda around mobility both between jobs but also geographical mobility. But nonetheless it does raise interesting issues when we are looking at discrimination and racism, particularly when it comes to racism as a barrier to free movement. There is some evidence, though it's not clear how big a factor this is, that racism does serve to put people off. Certainly the experiences recently in France won't have acted as a pull factor when it comes to some people thinking about whether or not to migrate to France. There are also specific issues around mobility when it comes to the rights of third country nationals and migrant workers. Sarah Spencer spoke about the experiences of accession state nationals, EU10 nationals. There have been some experiences in the UK, Ireland and Sweden, the only countries not to introduce restrictions, which do raise questions. For instance, there's a situation with regard to Russian speaking minorities in Latvia and Estonia who don't have Latvian and Estonian passports of citizenship. What happens to them when it comes to mobility within the European Union? There's that kind of detail which is going to become more and more relevant as other member states begin to drop their restrictions. As I said, there is going to be another call for proposals in the next month or two, so it's worth keeping an eye on the website to see what kind of project funding there is.

2007 European Year for Equal Opportunities

This proposal has more or less been finalised in terms of the negotiations between the Commission and the Council. They're looking at the preparations for the year now. There will be, they tell us, some money available during 2006 for preparations, but primarily during 2007. There's also a very strong focus on national implementation in this year, perhaps the strongest of all of the years, which means that they really see the bulk of the money going to national level activities implemented through national implementation bodies. So I think there will be real opportunities there in terms of funding. However, they have indicated to us that they haven't decided yet whether there's going to be funding available for particular ground-projects or whether they want each project to cover the anti-discrimination framework and equal opportunities more broadly. So one of the things we want to do next during this year is promote those opportunities for dialogue with some other NGOs in terms of thinking about how we take advantage of this opportunity.

2008 Year of Intercultural Dialogue

This is a new proposal. Most member states are quite in favour of it but the negotiations of the detail of it are just starting. It will be a bit different from the 2007 Year in so far as there's much less emphasis on national implementation. They really see the money for this coming through mainstream funding lines within DG Education and Culture on intercultural dialogue and they do have a new funding-line starting this for 2007 under the new financial perspectives. But again, they see this more as a European awareness-raising project. So it's not clear yet what exactly the opportunities will be for NGOs. What we do now however, is that they are talking about intercultural dialogue on the ground, at the local level. They have said to us is that they're not interested in high-level political projects, but that it really will be on the ground.

Conclusion

This complex environment when it comes to policy within the EU really reflects how complicated it is when you start to deal with anti-racism in general. It's very important, particularly at an EU level, that there is a collective voice, especially now with a move to a single identity approach in the context of various different developments. The role for ENAR is very much both to respond to this emerging agenda but perhaps more importantly to try and set that agenda in terms of the experiences of the member organisations so that these developments do have a significant positive impact both at the national as well as the regional and local levels.

Joy Warmington

What I was asked to do is to talk about the character of the Lozells disturbance last year. And I will do that, but I also wanted to offer in the time that I have got some broader lessons in relation to the Lozells events. I hope that those of you who know a lot about Lozells, because there was an awful lot of media coverage at the time, will be a bit patient if I go through some of the background as I'm not assuming that everybody is actually familiar with everything.

The Lozells and Handsworth disturbances

October 2005 was a very busy month with the disturbances in Lozells and France separated by barely a week, though they were on very different scales.

And these disturbances were also different in character and the causes obviously were different too. In fact, the French uprisings had much more in common with the British inner-city uprisings of 1981 and 1985, a comparison which I think people hadn't necessarily been able to draw when they discussed these in the past.

In late October, tensions between the African Caribbean and Asian communities in Lozells exploded. Properties were damaged and burned down. There were stabbings; there were shootings and at least one death.

What sparked these tragic events was a rumour - which was propagated by a local radio station - that a young African Caribbean woman had been gang-raped by Asian men associated with a beauty shop that she had stolen from. Having had a dialogue at a local level with police and with other statutory authorities, they say that no single element has been substantiated. However, when you talk to people in the community, everybody knows the family and everybody knows the girl. Despite the fact that the rumours weren't substantiated, there was a belief at the time amongst African-Caribbean community members that this had in fact taken place and there was no way of actually seeking any justice for it.

Media coverage

The media coverage has fallen into two broad categories:

- The "inter-communal strife" camp - which sees two ethnic minority groups divided by increasingly irreconcilable religious and cultural differences;
- The "economic grievances" camp - which sees two ethnic minority groups bitterly contesting the socio-economic divide that has emerged between them

These two arguments are not really mutually exclusive in terms of their analyses and we find that there is a mixture of both views, often jumbled up together, with a hefty dollop of gang and youth rivalry thrown in for good measure. Lozells is a situation that challenges neat classification. We have already heard from numerous speakers who have talked about the complexity of this. There is a real need to unpack things and to see the bigger picture in relation to these issues.

The Demographic Profile of Lozells and Handsworth

For those who are not from Birmingham, I felt it would be important to look at the demographic profile of Lozells & Handsworth. Handsworth ward is one of the four wards that make up the Perry Barr constituency, just a mile or two away from city centre.

- Lozells is the fourth most deprived Ward out of the 41 wards that make up the city of Birmingham. It is a very deprived area.

- Four-fifths of the residents are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities make up over half the total population in that area. The African Caribbean community is about 17%. Ten years ago the African-Caribbean community was about 30% and the white ethnic community was also about 30%. So there has been quite a change in terms of population shift.
- Proportionally, Lozells has twice as many Pakistani residents as Birmingham, three times as many Indian and African Caribbean residents, and almost six times as many Bangladeshi residents.
- Less than half the ward, which is quite an important statistic, is economically active. This is quite a lot below the Birmingham figure overall. Unemployment rate is almost double the rate of the rest of Birmingham.
- Less than half the homes in Lozells are owner-occupied, compared with 70% in the rest of the Perry Barr area and 60% across the city.
- The number of households that are overcrowded, that have no central heating or car ownership, are all higher than the Birmingham average. Over two-fifths of children live in households where there is no adult in employment.
- Less than 10% of people in the area are in professional or managerial positions compared with 17% across the rest of the city. Well over a quarter of residents are semi- or unskilled manual workers and well over a quarter are in receipt of state benefits or are unemployed. Almost one-third have no qualifications.
- Almost one in five has a limiting long-term illness, which is much higher than the other districts. Mortality rates are 10% higher than the District and 6% higher than the city.

So you are getting a flavour of the kind of issues that are within these areas, the long-term systemic issues, which people actually have to deal with.

Structural inequality and discrimination and racism

I think it is futile to deny that there are real tensions between the Asian and African Caribbean communities in Lozells. But overall we can see from the pictures that I've just quoted, it is about deeply entrenched *structural inequality* that is shared – not always equally shared, but shared nonetheless – by Lozells' communities. BRAP's analysis is that the roots of the Lozells events lie firmly in this context of *structural inequality and discrimination* rather than in a clash of faiths or cultural identities, and *that* is really the point that holds lessons for Birmingham and also for the UK and our European neighbours.

While some commentators saw Lozells as an example of a new and disturbing inter-communal racism, others have seen it as a new 'non-white' variant of racism. When we were being asked for interviews around this time, the media actually wanted us to talk about this 'inter-community' racism. They were very keen: "can you say something about the tensions between African Caribbean and Asian people?" They didn't want to be talking to us about structural inequality and the long-term starvation of that particular area.

But in our view, this 'new' racism is as familiar to us as the 'old' racism – because its roots lie in the same policies. Policies that:

- Have divided rather than united communities;
- Emphasised 'ethnicity' as the key to entitlement and has as a consequence set community against community;
- Encouraged groups to "play up their victimhood and unique cultural identities in a bid for public funds and social authority", as quoted in the online magazine *Spiked*.

These are the policies which formed the response to the inner-city uprisings of 1981 and 1985 and which went on to form the backbone of the UK's "multiculturalist" approach to race relations. It is this which brings me to the crux of my argument.

The multicultural system as an underlying factor

How institutions and policy-makers respond to social convulsions such as British inner-city riots in 1981 and 1985 – and to the French uprisings, which were significantly of a greater scale – plays out over years rather than months. It is now evident, for example, that the way Britain responded to a variety of different uprisings over the 1980s has set the agenda for managing race relations in this country, not just by ensuring that the policies deal with those particular issues in the one or two years after, but they've actually led the way for over two decades of multicultural policies.

The model that we call "multiculturalism" – on the one hand, ameliorating inequality through the managed process of promoting diversity and ethnic identity but on the other funding based on ethnic need, frequently through the intermediary channels of community leaders – was cast at that time. It has remained the centrepiece of British thinking on race, largely unchanged, right up to the present day. But the consequences of this policy – coupled with dramatic demographic change – are now being played out in dispossessed and divided communities such as Lozells, and before that, in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford.

I don't know how many of you know that the demographic profile in Birmingham makes us on target – we're actually racing against Leicester – to be Britain's first majority 'Black' city. What we are seeing now is communities mobilising themselves and ethnic enclaves being created all over Birmingham, as part of this movement to get resources and to get social and political control. I think we are therefore left in a position where the messages are unclear.

Is our primary purpose to encourage and if necessary enforce a more cohesive and better integrated society? Or is the main task of our work to build a fundamentally more equal society? Community cohesion or equality? I believe that what France, Birmingham and Burnley, Oldham and Bradford are showing us is that we cannot have the former unless we achieve the latter. This, I think, is a key lesson that we in the UK may have to offer.

Questions and Discussion with the audience

A question and discussion session took place after each of the speakers' presentations. However, due to the wide range of the discussion, we are presenting it in a schematic way, rather than after the transcript of each speech.

VICTIM MENTALITY, ISLAMOPHOBIA, BLAME CULTURE AND SELF-SEGREGATION OF EUROPEAN MUSLIMS

Question from the audience: How long can we continue to work with this blame culture? By blaming the institutions and other people for the problems we face we ignore the weaknesses and the problems we have within ourselves; I think that the communities themselves have got to deal with that.

Question from the audience: Could you comment further on what you said about self-segregation and social problems, in particular in the context of the history of decreased employment in France?

Tariq Ramadan:

I agree with the comment on blame culture. We have to address this self-segregation but also this tendency to blame the society around us and to bring all our problems down to the fact that mainstream society does not like Islam or Muslims. I think that the starting point of our discussion should be as follows: it is about citizenship and about rights. It's about being a committed citizen. Here I have to mention something which I can see is part of the British psyche and in the British political discourse: this tendency to always refer to minorities when we are talking about social problems. If I am a British citizen, I am not a minority British citizen; I am a British citizen and *part* of this society. So, I have to use our common values, our common rights and our *equal* rights to say 'you don't have to treat me like this and I will not accept that, in the name of my rights as a citizen involved in this society'. I believe that the first thing to do is to change the perception of your relationship with your own society. That is an educative process, which is very difficult. This is your country and you have rights. My second response is that you will at the end of the day get what you deserve. If you blame the other – and it's only a question of perception that they don't like us – you are not going to change the reality. So it's important to change your perception of your own society and then to be a committed citizen in the name of your rights and to change things from within. This does not mean to say that changing our perception within our community will be enough, because once again it is complex. There are people using 'the politics of minority' as a political tool in periods of elections. Sometimes society also labels you as a minority because it benefits its political objectives. I do think that we have to be very cautious about that and we need to promote a culture of citizenship, a culture of rights, a culture of responsibility towards our own destiny as citizens of this country. My main concern in the Muslim community is that because we nurture this perception of being constantly a minority, it's very easy to develop a victim mentality, which is really the wrong the thing to do.

I see a major development across Europe though, in Britain, in France and beyond. We are witnessing what I call a silent revolution. You now have citizens understanding better the reality of their *own* society. They know that this is home for them and that they have to be committed to the society they live in. I believe this has to be achieved in three ways. Firstly by knowing more about the constitution and the legal framework within which we live. Secondly by acting

as citizens and asking for our rights and acting within society. Why are we facing these problems today in France? It's not because these youth are invisible. It's exactly the opposite: the crisis is becoming a reality because the young generations are more and more visible in the mainstream reality of society. Thirdly, we need to foster partnerships across boundaries. We are not citizens in the name of our community but citizens in the name of our values. It is about promoting a transversal citizenship ethic. This is why it's really important to have organisations such as UKREN bringing people together in the name of their principles and values and not in the name of their belonging to a specific community.

Comment from the audience: It strikes me that one of the things that is often said about particular minority groups is that they refuse to integrate and separate themselves off in terms of unfettered choice. I can't believe that in France those Muslim communities would individually or collectively live in those parts of the French cities in which they actually do if they had a choice. People keep saying that one of the major problems in England is that minorities, particularly Muslim groups, tend to want to separate themselves off. But in fact the evidence is actually the opposite - that the level of out migration, if you like, from a range of settlement areas is small and slower for Muslim communities, but it is happening. You've got the evidence there. I think it's largely a question to some extent of some members of those groups who in fact don't have the opportunity to move out of those communities and to some extent for some the fear of moving out. That is the evidence - it's not a choice.

Question from the audience: What is your understanding of the term Islamophobia? Do you think that by using the term Islamophobia we are actually 'islamising' the secular anti-racist work? That is my understanding of what is happening. By overusing the term we seem to be downgrading the secular anti-racist campaign and work over the years.

Tariq Ramadan: Yes, it is a very important question and I dealt with this in the past because I was criticised in France for having used this term, which was in fact used in Britain with the Runnymede report in 1997 much before I used it in France. I do think we have to be very cautious in the way we use it, but I am still finding the term useful. When you have the kind of racism that attacks people because of the fact that they are Muslim, *this* is Islamophobia, because Islam *per se* is the problem. When you listen to the recent comments of the leader of the BNP about the Quran, he is attacking Muslims and Islam is the target *per se*. In this case, you have a kind of racism that is targeted against Muslims *only* because they are Muslims. But in France it was not all about Islamophobia. It was also racism against Arabs. This being said, I think that you have to bring into the picture of the secular struggle against racism, the new struggle of racism against a religion. It is happening and has been exacerbated after 11 September or 7 July. It's a reality and to remove it from the picture would be too simplistic. But to be obsessed by it and to confuse *everything* and label everything Islamophobia is dangerous within the Muslim community because it nurtures that victim mentality I talked about earlier. I prefer to speak about racism against Arabs and Muslims; I use the term Islamophobia but I am very cautious in the way I use it.

INTEGRATION AND THE FRENCH UPRISINGS

Question from the audience: How does integration factor in the social situation of the French uprisings?

Tariq Ramadan: I believe that the main problem around what happened in the suburbs is linked to the dire socio-economic reality that they are facing – unemployment, marginalisation etc. The reality of these suburbs is not being *really* reflected within French society and the

French psyche. I spoke to a number of MPs in France and in the UK and they still talk about 'these immigrants'. This is the core of the problem - the fact that they are still referring to these citizens as immigrants. They are not immigrants. After four generations, French society does not see them as genuinely French. The problem is *really* the way these people in the suburbs are treated – as second-class citizens. They are *not* considered true citizens. This is a reality. But this does not mean that it is only about that. We should also not disconnect it from the fact that they are Arab and Muslim and that there is a great deal of racism and that they are not considered as people contributing anything positive to their country - unless they are Zidane and score some goals for the French football team!

INTEGRATION DEFINITIONS

Comment from the audience: We were involved with the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) about 7 or 8 years ago in defining integration. The definition is more or less the same as the Commission's which came out last year. So in one way we're very pleased, but in another way we wonder why it hasn't developed since then. How much serious can we really expect governments responsibility in Europe to see in the second part of the two way process?

Sarah Spencer: I remember the ECRE definition and how influential it was at the time. While we are now so familiar with the idea of arguing that it's a two-way process, I can remember the clarity that that brought to the debate and I think it must have been influential in helping to shift perceptions. Your question was can we rely on governments? I think yes but they're stepping in the wrong way in many respects. They're coming in heavily on the migrants as being at fault: 'they're failing to integrate, they're refusing to learn the language, we must step in and force them to do it.' Our task is first of all to persuade them to do the right things rather than the wrong things and to persuade them to implement the things that they said they would implement, like the anti-discrimination legislation, which they have signed up to at the European level but which has huge failings in terms of implementation on the ground. The other message is that it is not only governments' responsibility. There's a huge role for NGOs to play. Perhaps the perception we want to get across is that while the state has an important role to play and there are certain things that only it can do, like setting up legal enforcement mechanisms, there are key roles which actually only other organisations could have and that the state should provide the framework and the resources for to let them get on with it and not try and do it all entirely through the state.

THE FRENCH REPUBLICAN MODEL

Comment from the audience: The question in the French case in particular - and it raises the question of how we can generalise from one country to Europe as a whole since the topic of this afternoon is in fact lessons from the French uprising – is the relationship between rights as an individual issue and any kind of recognition of collective rights or collectivities in the discrimination they face. As we know in France, there is a lot of discussion about the republican model and whether it is adequate. This is a major issue because there has been a refusal to recognise that there is discrimination. This has been changing since the 1990s but there has been a refusal to use the word until the late 1990s and a refusal to recognise the kind of deep seated racism that there is, not just against North Africans or Arabs but also against Africans. So I think that we need to look at that relationship between individual rights and collective rights or discrimination against groups as collective groups. This does not have to be necessarily done in the multicultural communitarian way that the French hate, but we need to address this kind of issue.

Tariq Ramadan: I would like to comment upon the British model and the French model and the fact that the republican model only considers the individual and does not accept the concept of community in France, at least in the political discourse. I'm not sure that it's a question of the way we deal with community versus individuals. I think we have to put it in every specific context. I agree that we cannot export our analysis from one country to another. We don't have to do that because the British reality is different to the French one. But at least we have common trends and common realities and there is something that we can do in every single country: it is to compare the ideals of your political discourse with the practices of your daily life. I believe that the individual integration model promoted by the French has many good aspects. I prefer in many respects the way the French are speaking about *you* as an individual and a citizen, than the way we are speaking here about having a Muslim MP. Having a Muslim MP is not for me the political way forward. The problem in France is the gap between the political ideal – individual integration, equal citizenship etc. - and the political reality. And this gap between the ideals and the reality can be assessed in each country. So in Britain we hear about multiculturalism and the great mixing of communities and London is always used as this great example of a successful multicultural place. But if you go to other parts of this country and look at the reality of this multiculturalism, we see that again, it's a dream, it's not a reality. The reality of this country is much more a patchwork of communities. So there is an ideal in the discourse and there is altogether a different reality in the way we are dealing with this. And here we can assess how each model fares in relation to discrimination and institutional racism. I think that this is better for us than to compare models.

ETHNIC MONITORING IN EUROPE

Question from the audience: In France ethnic monitoring is illegal because it is described as discriminatory, but in Britain it was at once seen as a solution. Is ethnic monitoring in Europe a good thing or a bad thing? Should we advocate it?

Anna Visser: Of course this is a huge issue in terms of the European agenda. What is interesting is that the French have even started to talk now about data collection and the need to monitor discrimination. So it is not as polarised as it is sometimes presented. The key thing for us is that there is no contradiction between ethnic monitoring and some of the other rights which are often put forward. Ethnic monitoring where it does not identify individuals is clearly different from some of the concerns that people express and some of the arguments that we hear at a European level. There is a lot of work on this happening; the European Commission set up a working group on it and it is developing indicators. I think it will continue to be a political issue as a lot of the objections to ethnic monitoring we hear in Europe are political rather than substantive.

HOW CAN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS GET INVOLVED ON A EUROPEAN LEVEL?

Question from the audience: We have heard already some things which are incredibly problematic for the type of work that we're trying to do at the moment to actually build a progressive European race equality programme. So much of what motivates the life of community organisations is incredibly low key based, regionally based, and never mind nationally based between France and the UK. There are also differences between London, Birmingham, Glasgow, etc. There is a potential for community organisations like ours to be not exactly governed, but at least a substantial part of our lives to be determined by a different set of indexes, a different set of pressures and, for the content of race-equality politics for that reason, to have a different shape and a different direction. And yet on the other hand, we've

also got the burning need for a constituency that will emerge at the European level in order to be able to address itself to the potentially progressive programme for a European wide race-relations, some of the elements of which Sarah has spelled out for us. This really poses a big question certainly for those of us who are active in UKREN, who are dealing with this all the time, but also hopefully for those of you who are working in your different organisations. How do we actually transcend the purely local basis of so many of our preoccupations in order to be able to deal with the political content of any movement in Europe which is currently pressing against reactionary forces, right-wing forces and conservative forces in order to be able to press ahead with progressive policies? What exactly can we do? What added value could we bring to our work at local level that will allow us to address and give real substance and content to the political programme which needs to be pressed at the national and the European level?

Sarah Spencer: I can see the issue. People are operating at the local level but we also need action at the EU level. However, we also need evidence at the EU level. It's not just that you need to mobilise together in order to apply pressure at the EU level, but the EU policy-makers need to hear the evidence of what actually happens on the ground. I don't know if that's part of UKREN's function. It's not just a question of mobilising the arguments I think, but actually getting the evidence out there about what the problems are and what it is that works and what doesn't work.

Joy Warmington: Concerning the campaigning issue and building constituencies at local level, I would like to say that I wholeheartedly agree with what has been said about the way in which local organisations have a very inward-looking perspective. But I also feel that the situation is going to get worse in the future. In part, this is because the government funding regime is focused on delivery and organisations that would in fact look at policies, strategy and advocacy. All of those issues seem to have gone completely out the window. So as far as a Birmingham based organisation like us is concerned it is quite hard to even build constituency around some of the issues that we are talking about at a local level such as looking at advocating in relation to council services and local practices, let alone getting people to look outside of that and think about how they actually might lead these issues into a European agenda and use European rights and entitlements. So I think that's a huge problem. I have no solutions to it whatsoever. All I can say is that if in Birmingham you call a strategic meeting you will get the same twenty people coming all the time and unfortunately unless those people leave the country and go somewhere else, you wouldn't get new people replacing them. It is a real critical issue in relation to our thinking and progression.

SINGLE EQUALITY AGENDA

Comment from the audience: I am relatively new to this field of anti-racism and migration and I know there is a lot of controversy, perhaps among colleagues here, about the merits of the single equality approach. I'm very glad that Anna raised this issue because I think it's the biggest challenge facing us. It occurs to me that racism is a notoriously difficult concept to measure when you actually do social research on the subject. And as we move to the single equalities agenda, a challenge is going to be this issue of picking apart what causes discrimination. Is it racism? Is it gender? Is it religion? It could be quite expensive and time consuming, particularly for small NGOs doing that kind of information gathering, to keep making the case for the ant-racist approach.

Anna Visser: On the single-equality approach - it is a very complex phenomenon which is happening in a lot of different ways at the European level. There is talk about mainstreaming equality. You only have to have a very brief conversation with the European Women's Lobby

and they will tell you about some of their experiences of mainstreaming gender and the impact that that has had in terms of focus. There is also an idea floating around about the need to level-up the anti-discrimination legislation so that all the grounds are equally protected. And this is something we'd very much support because we think that race will be more protected in the context of the other grounds being equally protected. However, that does not mean we should not have specific policy initiatives and specific actions addressing race, disability or whatever it happens to be. In relation to plans to set up the Fundamental Rights Agency, the response which we have had to our concerns has been that we're going to get a much bigger agency with much more resources. Racism is going to be named in the annual work programme of the Fundamental Rights Agency and work around racism will therefore still be high on the agenda. Our concern is twofold. First, the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism will not be made proportionally bigger to take on all grounds; we would end up with an agency which has a staff of billions and a budget of billions. It has been made quite clear that there are going to be fewer resources for anti-racism work. Secondly, our concern is that this is going to become a battle about who gets priority and whose agenda is more important and where we should be focusing our attention. We are concerned about the risk that anti-racism will again begin to slip off that agenda in the long term. It will be guaranteed initially, but what happens over a period of time? We also have concerns around funding. The single equality approach has implications when it comes to specific EU funding initiatives. We can't overestimate the amount of money we are talking about. The EU budget, we sometimes forget, is small when it comes to these funding programmes - but nonetheless significant. So it is a difficult situation - not just the UK but of course in other Member States as well. There is this trend towards a single equality approach and you see it reflected very much in the debate around the equality bodies. A lot of the equality bodies that have been established purely on the race ground are now looking to what has happened in Ireland and the UK or some other countries around a multi-ground approach. This has a lot of benefits, but we also need to remember that there is a danger associated with it.

Comment from audience: I thought Joy's presentation was not only fascinating but also tied in so very well with what Tariq said earlier about the need to deconstruct the situation so that we are not falling for easy labels but actually looking at the real factors that are at play in each of these situations. I am the head of a project which is specifically looking at the single equality debate. I don't think that race has anything to lose in the single equality debate. What we really need is to have common standards across each of those grounds so that people have a clearer appreciation of what discrimination means and what laws they need to be following. In the UK we have so many minor differences between one ground and the other that it is very difficult for those that have to apply the law to actually understand what they are trying to apply. The other thing is that what discrimination is so commonly about is how we can out-define the other, how we can eliminate someone from our consideration so that we can push someone else on. This is not what we want to see. What we want to see is everyone being valued for the particular person they are. In other words, we need to deconstruct - whatever the requirements and conditions are that we are looking at - so that we are really only looking at those that are necessary for the situation. In the case of a job you are looking at what the real requirements are that you *need* for the person that is going to do that job. Not the ones you think might apply, like people who might fit in or might look right here, but actually look at the qualifications you really require or for that matter if it's giving out grants etc., then what are the real criteria? Let us deconstruct it to the basic level and get that right. The other thing about the single equality argument is that increasingly we are realising that people are not just discriminated against on the grounds of one label but they're discriminated against for a number of different labels. We want to be able to encompass that experience. I think that in the years to come we will be seeing a lot of that and therefore we need to have provisions that enable people to pick up all the things that feel relevant to them in the way that they are treated. As an example, I was in

Canada about nine months ago where they actually have single equality provisions and commissions that deal with all the different grounds for inequality. People from the Ontario Human Rights Commission told me that just under 50% of the cases that they deal with are actually multiple discrimination. So I think that with the new Commission for Human Rights and Equalities that we have coming here, we will be seeing much more attention to those places where different grounds cross and for multiple discrimination as well as for the single grounds. So, whereas I think that there are times when you need to make specific distinction between one ground and another, I think that they are fairly limited and that we need to minimise those as far as possible.

Sarah Spencer: Having all spent a lot of the discussion bemoaning the fragmentation in equality agendas which fail to make connections and recognise commonalities and make it so difficult for us to actually achieve anything, we come to a debate where we are suddenly afraid of all coming together, recognising commonalities and working together for fear that a bit of the key agendas will become marginalised in the process. I do not think coming together means collapsing agendas. I don't think that it means pretending that somehow all the equalities are exactly the same and we deal with them all in the same way. I think it means recognising commonalities *and* recognising differences, working together where that is what we need to do and *definitely* dealing with race separately where that is the way it needs to be dealt with. Some of us here are part of a network of national organisations that work on equality called the Equality and Diversity Forum. We came together a couple of years ago and we looked at each other suspiciously – what could age possibly have to do with gender? What could race possibly have to do with gender? What could race possibly have to do with disability? After a couple of meetings people realised how much of what we were saying was the same and how much of what we needed to do was the same. *But*, there are also some very real differences between us. And to finish on this note, one of the current and sensitive issues that divide us is between the attitudes amongst some faiths towards people of a sexual orientation. We discussed that in the forum yesterday between people from faith organisations and LGBT organisations and everybody else. It's important to actually have a forum at which you can sit down where people work together regularly, they know each other, they know that they share a lot of common agendas and they disagree profoundly on that agenda, but they actually have a space where one can talk about those things in an atmosphere of mutual respect. How much better to be able to do that than to deal with only a sense of megaphone diplomacy in an atmosphere of fear and distrust? The Equality and Diversity forum is about actually working together to overcome those very real differences of view while never forgetting that there are differences in the equality agendas that we always have to deal with.

Anna Visser: I was not for an instance suggesting that we should not have a legislative single equality approach. I think there is a huge amount to be gained from having that commonality in terms of a legal perspective and the agenda that sets. I was simply reflecting that it does not necessarily mean, at a policy level, or a funding and practice level, that there is no room for specificity as well. The debate on multiple discrimination is very interesting when it comes to this agenda, and particularly issues of redress. Maybe we need to be thinking about the impact on the individual rather than the causes in terms of a particular ground, which in a way is quite artificial. I also think that if we approach the single equality agenda from the perspective of 'well there are six grounds for discrimination', that this in itself misses the point a little bit, because there are lots more grounds for discrimination that simply do not get recognised in our current framework. So I think that for us it is quite clear that we need a levelling up. Not just a levelling up in terms of the current standards but also in promoting these standards and at the same time getting the balance of this specificity in order to recognise as well that there are additive as well substantive changes when people experience that intersectionality.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND ETHNIC GROUPS COMPETING FOR FUNDING

Question from the audience:

What role did you think, in the light of all the recent disturbances, community leaders, who tend to be mainly male, played in what happened in Lozells?

Comment from the audience: I would like to add the French dimension to that question. Because the French government refuses to recognise multiculturalism, it has actually been doing a lot of multiculturalism on the soft, you could say, by having this community leadership. This is particularly true in relation to Muslims, where they have created a national council of Muslims. So Islam has been formally recognised and its relation to the French state was institutionalised as it has with other religions, which creates a whole mediation process of community leaders who fight amongst themselves. The other question is who do they represent? It is also not exactly promoting gender equality, as we see here in Britain, and it is certainly not doing it in France either.

Joy Warmington: On a personal and professional level I was really appalled by the comments of community leaders at that time. It was very emotive and it set communities against each other. I was in several meetings at the time where people were getting up and walking out and throwing things. Even though I was not around 30 years ago, people who were there were saying 'this reminds us of the 1970's and 1980s'. I have got huge problems with community leadership, but in terms of taking the analysis a little bit further, it is more a question of how do we give people permission to speak about issues of equality? At the moment this is very much camped in the basis of experience. There is an assumption that everybody who is "othered" in some way, has this natural experience of discrimination and knows all about race relations in this country and in the world and can come round the table and can talk with great eloquence about those issues. We have to recognise that if we are trying to really elevate the outcome, we have to elevate the input as well. For ages now we have been talking about professionalising what we do as equality practitioners, and recognising that there is some skill and there is some knowledge attached to this area of work. We have to start to do those things.

Comment from the audience: Not only was I around in the 1970s and 1980s but a quarter of a century ago I actually wrote a book on racism in Handsworth and Lozells that came out rather eerily two weeks before the place exploded. One of the things that came out of that work all that time ago was that major inequality is not only between minority communities and people like the majority people. These inequalities existed of course between the various communities in the area and there were almost certainly tensions at the time that were economically based. One of the major explanations I have heard recently is that the so-called catalyst of violence was actually economic inequality of a particular kind. That, in terms of business success in particular, certain sections of the south Asian community were a lot more successful than African-Caribbean communities. That is really questionable, but that is the presentation I have heard on a number of occasions. There is a general issue that there is another form of discrimination/racism working here. A lot of research shows that it is much more difficult for someone from the African-Caribbean community to get the support for setting up businesses. So I think there is another form of stereotyping going on here, including that people of particular backgrounds are more prone to be successful.

Joy Warmington: There has been a huge change in the ownership of business in Lozells. I have heard it being described as a cultural practice that South Asian people pull together, buy businesses, that people work within the business after school etc. and that this is the way they

have been able to build up the success of their businesses in the area. But the big issue, which I haven't got time to go into, is whether or not it has been at the expense of African-Caribbean businesses within the area - which is the African-Caribbean argument. This is the bit that people are actually very concerned about.

Question from the audience: My particular interest is inter-religious dialogue. While we have been trying to address the issues surrounding inter-religious dialogue with local authorities, we have been shunted off and shoved into the same "Black and Minority Ethnic Groups" category. There are these new programmes coming out about why we need engagement and change, and these sorts of things. In order to get this funding, we are told to work with "Black Minority and Ethnic groups, asylum seekers and refugees and travellers" and that we all have the same kind of issues. There is almost a competition between all of the groups for a very limited amount of funding. Rather than building community cohesion it actually sets up lots of little groups in competition with one another and prevents us from working together on the things that we have in common. It also disrespects the things that we have that are different and as a result, the things that we need to address separately are ignored. How can we extract ourselves from this process we have been shoved into and find a way of building the community together rather than competing for funding?

Joy Warmington: In terms of community groups and religious groups or religious dialogue - and these are groups that we work with as we do lots of work with voluntary community organisations around capacity building issues - often people don't ask themselves *why* they want to have dialogue with the local authority? What's in it for you? Quite often people see it as a route to funding and to power. That point that you made about what it is that we want to do for ourselves, is not really something that groups consider. Usually they get into a kind of formation of some kind because they want to address a particular problem out there. For agencies like local government it is just another tick-boxing exercise. It should not be about having South Asian groups, Indian groups and Sikh groups. I think that there is a political astuteness which is completely lacking within the voluntary sector in relation to this. As soon as there is a bit of money dangling around that is what we go for. That is not meant to be an intense criticism because we have to keep ourselves going as well. But we need to have time to think about what we really are doing with our energy and resources and who we are serving and working for ultimately in terms of the end result.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SECURITY AND INTEGRATION AGENDAS

Comment from the audience: I think there is a very important dimension to what Tariq said in terms of the agenda of securitisation. He was talking about the tension between the socio-economic agenda and the usual political, religious and cultural discrimination. This is important in order to view the whole agenda of integration in a way that will not just look at it in terms of whether or not people and communities *belong* to the nation, to the society, but realise and legitimise that people can belong at the same time to more than one community. It is not even the issue of what was in the Runnymede report 'Community of Communities', but that it also crosses boundaries; that in a way when people move here, for example from Eastern Europe or from Africa or from anywhere else, it does not mean that they stop or they should stop also belonging to other communities. The agenda of securitisation in a way dichotomises - if you still continue to be loyal to another community, that means you are a traitor, that you do not belong. This is a basic dimension in all these agendas that we have to struggle against and delegitimise before we can look at all the other issues.

Sarah Spencer: I think that you're absolutely right that the security agenda has forced the issue about whether people can have multiple identities and multiple belongings, which on the whole is not something the UK has had a problem with but it has certainly always been a problem in some other Member States. We need to get across the argument that people can have multiple belongings which do not pose a threat to the state that they are in, and indeed that the multiple identities are a strength, rather than a weakness.

Comment from the audience: Talking about multiple identities in the context of Europe can be sometimes a double-edged thing. On the one hand we talk about solidarity, but on the other hand that can play into the hands of fortress Europe and say our boundaries are European, thus creating another layer of exclusion - those beyond the European borders - which is definitely not the objectives of UKREN and others here. We have to be very sensitive to this issue because it is so easy to fall into this kind of essentialist discourse, which in a way has been co-opted by the extreme right, whether it is about integration or identities. It is also not just brought by an agenda of securitisation - Norman Tebbit talked about the cricket test before 9/11. These are issues that we have to be very aware of.

INTEGRATION AGENDA VERSUS ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AGENDA AT EU LEVEL

Question from the audience: The speakers described that the anti-discrimination agenda is led by DG Employment and Social Affairs whilst the integration agenda is led by DG Justice, Freedom and Security. To what extent do these two units interact? For instance, concerning this high-level advisory group on the integration of ethnic minorities, some ethnic minorities are migrants. Is there any joined-up thinking here at all or are we really talking about two separate agendas which in some ways are dealing with the same thing, as in some ways they are not?

Anna Visser: On the specific issue of the relationship between the DG Employment and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Freedom, Security and Justice DG – that's a very good point. For us it is particularly salient because when you are talking about anti-racism, you deal with one DG and one set of civil servants for anti-discrimination employment issues, but when you are talking about racism as a crime or hate speech you deal with a totally different agenda. We have always argued that it is impossible to separate them out structurally like that, because it is all intertwined. They do recognise the issue and recently there have been some initiatives to try and deal with this. So for instance there is an informal group of the various different Directorate Generals dealing with racism to bring everybody together. They haven't shared it with us but I know that they are putting together a document at the moment trying to record what is going on in anti-racism, not just in those two Directorate Generals but across the European policy framework. And of course it is much wider than these two DGs. There are many other funding lines and policy areas dealing with anti-racism, particularly education and culture. From my own experience in the Irish case, I would say the relationship is less antagonistic than I have seen in some national contexts. You often hear of great big battles between the departments of justice and the department of employment. That certainly does not happen to the same extent in the European context and I think they are a little more open to co-ordination. But of course you are dealing with relatively small units within DGs and relatively small numbers of people, so the actual capacity and resources to engage in it is a challenge.