

### African Cultural Foundation Publications

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### Beyond the Hashtag: 4 Years of Black Lives Matter - An Analysis by Austrian Civil Society Organizations and Activists

**African Cultural Foundation/Organization Vienna** 

June 2024



#### Summary

The African Cultural Foundation (formerly African Cultural Promotion), founded in 1997, is a leading advocacy organization committed to creating educational, political, and participatory opportunities for people of African descent both in the Diaspora and across the African continent. Our work is grounded in the belief that cultural preservation, civic empowerment, and equitable access to education and employment are essential for building inclusive societies. Through all our initiatives, we seek to connect research, community action, and cultural identity to challenge structural inequality and amplify African perspectives.

This publication is part of our broader effort to document and address the intersectional issues affecting the black Community in Austria.

This report examines the state of racial discrimination in Austria, with a specific focus on anti-Black racism. While racism affects a wide range of racialised communities—including Muslims, Roma, migrants, and people of African descent—this paper centers the experiences of Black individuals and communities, whose struggles are often underrepresented in policy, data, and national discourse.

Austria has yet to adopt a comprehensive National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR), despite prior commitments in the 2020–2024 government program. The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) awarded Austria a low score of 5 out of 20, citing the absence of a strategic framework, insufficient resources, and limited institutional accountability in addressing systemic racism. This has drawn international criticism, including from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and Amnesty International, both of which have urged Austria to implement a cohesive anti–racism policy and establish an independent human rights institution.

Black people in Austria face structural and everyday racism across multiple sectors. Data from ZARA's Racism Reports document frequent incidents of verbal abuse, online harassment, and discrimination in employment, housing, and policing. Racial profiling by law enforcement remains a persistent issue, and access to public services is often marred by bias and exclusion.

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At the same time, Austria's anti-racist response has been led largely by civil society, with initiatives such as the Black Voices Volksbegehren, AFRIEUROTEXT, and numerous small grassroots organizations driving advocacy, public education, and policy demands. These actors highlight the urgent need for state recognition, institutional reform, and inclusive policymaking that centers the lived experiences of Black communities.

This paper draws on national and international data, community-based research, and policy analysis to provide a focused account of anti-Black racism in Austria, while situating it within the wider context of racial injustice. Its goal is to inform future strategies that ensure dignity, equity, and participation for all.

## Published by African Cultural Foundation/Organization Vienna

Registered Non-Profit Organization

In Austria, racism manifests in multiple forms, including verbal abuse, online harassment, discrimination in services, and racial profiling. Verbal abuse—often unchallenged in public spaces—is frequently directed at people of colour, particularly Muslim women.

Online platforms have become a growing space for hate speech and racist content, further normalizing discrimination. Racialised individuals also report unequal treatment when accessing services such as housing, shops, and restaurants.

Additionally, racial profiling by law enforcement remains a major concern, with disproportionate targeting of Black people and other visible minorities. These patterns reflect a broader climate of systemic and everyday racism, as documented by ZARA and other civil society organizations.

## DIFFERENT FORMS OF RACISM EXAMINED IN THIS PAPER

#### **Verbal Abuse**

One of the most frequently reported forms of racism in Austria is verbal abuse, which includes racial slurs, insults, and dehumanizing language directed at individuals in public spaces. According to ZARA's Racism Report 2022, many incidents occur on public transport, in shopping areas, or near schools, where people of colour—especially women wearing visible religious symbols—are subjected to offensive and threatening comments. These verbal attacks often go unchallenged by bystanders and are rarely reported to authorities, which contributes to a climate of normalized hostility towards racialised groups (ZARA, 2022).

#### **Online Harassment**

The rise of digital platforms has opened new avenues for racism in Austria, with online harassment emerging as a growing concern. ZARA documents an increase in hate speech, racist memes, and discriminatory content targeted at Black people, Muslims, Roma, and migrants on social media and in online forums. Perpetrators often hide behind anonymity, making it difficult to hold them accountable. Reports by The Guardian (2024) and Liga für Menschenrechteemphasize that the digital environment enables the rapid spread of dehumanising narratives, further reinforcing stereotypes and emboldening offline discrimination.

#### **Discrimination in Services**

Many individuals in Austria continue to face discriminatory treatment when accessing goods and services. This includes being denied entry to bars and clubs, receiving unequal treatment in restaurants and shops, or facing biased behavior when applying for housing. ZARA's annual documentation highlights numerous cases where racialised people, especially those perceived as African, Roma, or Muslim, were either refused service or treated with suspicion. These experiences illustrate how racism permeates everyday interactions and creates barriers to full societal participation (ZARA, 2022).

#### **Racial Profiling**

Another persistent and deeply concerning form of racism is racial profiling, particularly by law enforcement. Individuals perceived to be non-white are disproportionately subjected to identity checks, stop-and-search actions, and surveillance—often without reasonable cause. This is especially pronounced among Black Austrians and people of African descent. Civil society organisations such as ZARA and Black Voices Volksbegehren have repeatedly called for independent oversight mechanisms and anti-bias training for police. These practices not only undermine trust in institutions but also violate fundamental rights and reinforce systemic exclusion (ZARA, 2022; Black Voices, 2021).

Discrimination in Austria rarely exists in isolation. It often intersects with other structural factors such as gender, religion, and socioeconomic status, compounding the experiences of marginalised groups and creating deeper layers of exclusion and inequality.

#### GENDER AND RELIGION

Muslim women, particularly those who wear headscarves, face a double burden of discrimination—both as women and as visible members of a religious minority. According to reporting by The Guardian (2024),

Muslim women across Europe, including Austria, report significantly higher rates of verbal abuse, social exclusion, and employment discrimination than their male counterparts or women of other religious backgrounds. In Austria, headscarves have been at the center of political debate and policy proposals, some of which have sought to ban religious coverings in schools or public spaces.

These policies not only stigmatize Muslim identity but also limit Muslim women's access to public life and economic independence. As ZARA and other civil society organizations have highlighted, such policies reinforce stereotypes and create a hostile environment that legitimizes everyday acts of exclusion and violence.

#### SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Discrimination is also deeply intertwined with socioeconomic inequalities, particularly affecting migrants and racialised communities who are overrepresented in lower-income brackets. Individuals from these backgrounds often face systemic barriers to quality education, secure housing, and adequate healthcare.

According to a research summary by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), many marginalized groups in Austria encounter both language and structural barriers when accessing public services, leading to poorer health outcomes and reduced educational attainment.

The effects are cyclical: socioeconomic exclusion reinforces vulnerability to racial discrimination, while racism further entrenches economic marginalization. For example, migrants may be excluded from employment opportunities not only due to their legal status or qualifications but also due to racial bias in recruitment practices.

These intersecting forms of discrimination underscore the importance of adopting an intersectional policy approach in anti-racism efforts—one that accounts for how race, gender, religion, and class function together to create complex systems of disadvantage.



Austria has not yet implemented a comprehensive National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR), despite plans outlined in the 2020–2024 government program. The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) rated Austria's efforts poorly, scoring just 5 out of 20, citing the absence of a unified strategy and limited institutional mechanisms.

While Austria has anti-discrimination laws—including the Equal Treatment Act, Criminal Code Section 33(5), and the Federal Constitutional Act on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination—the legal framework is often viewed as fragmented and inconsistently applied, creating gaps in protection across regions.

Austria's institutional response includes the Ombud for Equal Treatment and the Equal Treatment Commission, which offer support and review discrimination cases. However, both bodies have been criticized for lacking the authority and resources to enforce measures effectively.

Internationally, Austria has faced pressure from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and Amnesty International for delaying its national anti-racism plan and for the absence of an independent human rights institution. Although Austria has acknowledged the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan (2020–2025), it has yet to align with its call for a national strategy. Overall, Austria's efforts remain limited, and civil society continues to call for more coordinated, well-resourced, and accountable action against racism.

# NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM (NAPAR)

As of now, Austria has not adopted a comprehensive National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR). Although the government's program for the 2020–2024 legislative period included plans to develop such a strategy, it remains unimplemented. The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) evaluated Austria's efforts and assigned a score of 5 out of 20, highlighting the absence of a cohesive action plan and insufficient institutional mechanisms to combat racism effectively. (Federal Ministry for Europe, MigPol Group)

In contrast to Austria's lack of a comprehensive **National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR)**, Finland has taken a proactive and coordinated approach to combating racism and promoting racial equality. Finland adopted a **National Action Plan for the Prevention of Racism and Discrimination (2021–2023)**, which includes clearly defined goals, monitoring mechanisms, and funding commitments.

The plan was developed in collaboration with civil society, particularly with representatives from racialised communities, and integrates measures across education, policing, employment, and media. As a result, Finland received one of the highest ratings in ENAR's comparative assessment, recognized for its inter-ministerial **coordination**, **inclusive stakeholder engagement**, and **institutional accountability**.

Austria, by contrast, scored only **5 out of 20**, reflecting the lack of a cohesive strategy, inadequate implementation structures, and limited engagement with affected communities. This comparison illustrates the gap between intention and implementation in Austria and highlights the need for stronger political will, civil society partnership, and institutional reform to build an effective antiracism framework.

## EXISTING ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION

Austria's legal framework against discrimination is established through various laws:

- **Equal Treatment Act (GIBG)**: Prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, belief, age, or sexual orientation in employment and access to goods and services.rm.coe.int
- Criminal Code Section 33(5): Allows for enhanced penalties for crimes motivated by racist or xenophobic intent. (<u>European</u> <u>Commission</u>)
- Federal Constitutional Act on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: Enshrines the commitment to eliminate racial discrimination at the constitutional level.

Despite these provisions, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has noted that Austria's anti-discrimination legislation is complex and fragmented, leading to legal uncertainties and inconsistent protections across different regions. (Federal Ministry for Europe)

#### INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Austria has established bodies to address discrimination:

- Ombud for Equal Treatment: Provides support and advice to individuals facing discrimination.
- Equal Treatment Commission: Assesses cases of discrimination and can issue non-binding recommendations.

However, both institutions have been criticized for lacking sufficient resources and authority to enforce anti-discrimination measures effectively.

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND CRITIQUES

Austria has faced sustained international criticism for its insufficient commitment to combating racism and its failure to implement a cohesive National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR). The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has repeatedly expressed concern over Austria's delays in adopting such a plan.

In its Concluding Observations (2012 & 2018), the Committee called on Austria to "develop, adopt, and implement without delay a comprehensive national action plan to combat all forms of racial discrimination" in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

The Committee also criticized Austria for failing to ensure full protection against racial profiling, hate speech, and the underreporting of hate crimes, particularly affecting people of African descent, Roma, and Muslim communities (UN CERD, 2018).

In addition, Amnesty International has repeatedly flagged Austria's lack of a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, and has criticized the government for being slow to develop an inclusive anti-racism strategy. In its 2022 annual report, Amnesty noted Austria's "piecemeal approach to tackling racial and ethnic discrimination" and stressed the urgent need for institutional accountability, adequate funding, and formal consultation with civil society and racialised communities in developing anti-racist policy (Amnesty International Report 2022/23 – Austria).

Moreover, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), in its 6th Monitoring Cycle report (2020), observed that Austria's anti-discrimination legislation is fragmented and difficult to navigate, leading to inconsistent enforcement and leaving many victims without effective remedies. ECRI also recommended the creation of a dedicated national strategy against racism and the consolidation of existing equality mechanisms into a stronger, more independent institutional framework (ECRI Report on Austria, 2020).

Together, these critiques from UN bodies, international NGOs, and European institutions underscore the urgent need for Austria to adopt a coordinated, well-resourced, and inclusive approach to tackling systemic racism.

# EU ANTI-RACISM ACTION PLAN (2020–2025)

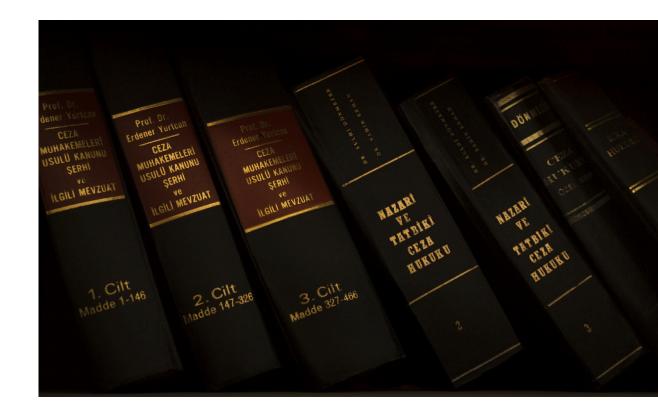
The European Union's Anti-Racism Action Plan calls on member states to develop national action plans against racism. While Austria has acknowledged this initiative, it has yet to implement a corresponding national strategy. (European Network Against Racism, OECD)

However, both institutions have been criticized for lacking sufficient resources and authority to enforce anti-discrimination measures effectively.

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND CRITIQUES

Austria has faced international scrutiny for its handling of racism and discrimination:

- The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has expressed concern over the postponement of Austria's national action plan against racism and xenophobia. <u>UN Human Rights</u> <u>Office</u>
- Amnesty International has highlighted Austria's reluctance to develop a comprehensive NAPAR and the lack of a national human rights institution. <u>Amnesty International</u>



### ORGANIZATIONS IN AUSTRIA DEVOTED TO FIGHTING RACISM

Austria's anti-racism movement is shaped by a dynamic network of organizations, campaigns, and community-led efforts that work to address systemic discrimination and promote racial justice. Among the most influential initiatives is the Black Voices Volksbegehren (People's Petition), launched in 2021 as Austria's first anti-racist citizens' initiative led by Black Austrians. The campaign advocates for bold structural reforms, including political participation for non-citizens, increased representation of Black and racialised people in public institutions, the appointment of anti-racism officers, equitable healthcare, workplace diversity, and reforms in media ethics.

In addition to Black Voices, larger organizations like ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit play a critical role in documenting racism through their annual Racism Report, providing legal aid, and advancing public education. AFRIEUROTEXT contributes through diaspora-led research, cultural workshops, and awareness-raising around colonialism and anti-Black racism. Initiative Minderheiten focuses on minority rights, especially for Roma, Sinti, and migrants, while the Dokustelle Islamfeindlichkeit addresses anti-Muslim racism and supports victims. The Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) supports anti-racism work through events, intersectional analysis, and migration policy research.

Equally important—but often less visible—are the contributions of small community organizations and grassroots activists. Local initiatives such as Pamoja – Movement of the Young African Diaspora, Radio Orange's anti-racist programming, and individuals like Belinda Kazeem–Kamiński and Noomi Anyanwu (artist–activists and educators) have been central to sustaining the movement. These actors not only create platforms for lived experiences but also provide community–based support, political education, and creative resistance. Their work highlights the vital role of decentralized organizing and cultural activism in confronting everyday racism and pushing for systemic change.

Together, these diverse efforts reflect a vibrant and growing anti-racist ecosystem in Austria—one that draws strength from both institutional advocacy and grassroots mobilization.

# BLACK VOICES VOLKSBEGEHREN (BLACK VOICES PEOPLE'S PETITION)

The Black Voices Initiative is Austria's first anti-racist people's petition (Volksbegehren), launched in 2021 by Black Austrians and allies to combat systemic racism. It represents a broad coalition of activists, artists, and civil society actors advocating for structural change.

#### **KEY DEMANDS FROM BLACK VOICES VOLKSBEGEHREN:**

- Political Participation: Grant people the right to vote and run for office after five years of legal residence, regardless of citizenship status.
- Representation: Increase the presence of Black people and People of Color in political, public, and supervisory roles.
- Anti-Racism Officers: Appoint trained anti-racism representatives in all state institutions to promote accountability and inclusive policymaking.
- Media Guidelines: Enforce the prohibition of ethnic or racial identification in media reporting unless relevant and necessary.
- Healthcare Equity: Promote diversity in medical research and improve access to adequate healthcare for Black and racialised communities.
- Workplace Diversity: Require anti-racism training in public sector workplaces and promote diversity hiring practices, particularly in state-owned enterprises.

### ZARA – ZIVILCOURAGE UND ANTI-RASSISMUS-ARBEIT

Austria's most prominent NGO dedicated to documenting racism, offering legal support, and advocating for anti-racist education and policy change. ZARA publishes the annual Racism Report, a vital source of data on discrimination across sectors.

### AFRIEUROTEXT – AFRICAN-EUROPEAN STUDIES AND EMPOWERMENT

A research and advocacy initiative promoting African diaspora voices, conducting workshops, and supporting public education on racism, colonial history, and identity.

#### INITIATIVE MINDERHEITEN

Focuses on the rights and representation of ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities in Austria, including Roma, Sinti, and migrant communities. Engages in policy advocacy, cultural work, and education.

- 4.5. Dokustelle Islamfeindlichkeit & antimuslimischer Rassismus
- Monitors and documents Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, providing counseling and legal support for those affected, while also informing policy-makers and the public.
- 4.6. Verein VIDC Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation
- Works on migration, anti-racism, gender, and global justice, organizing public events and research projects. Strong focus on intersectional discrimination.

### DOKUSTELLE ISLAMFEINDLICHKEIT & ANTIMUSLIMISCHER RASSISMUS

Monitors and documents Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, providing counseling and legal support for those affected, while also informing policy-makers and the public.

# VEREIN VIDC – VIENNA INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION

Works on migration, anti-racism, gender, and global justice, organizing public events and research projects. Strong focus on intersectional discrimination.

#### THE DATA LANDSCAPE

Understanding the current landscape of racism and discrimination in Austria—and across Europe—requires a multifaceted approach that looks beyond isolated incidents. One critical entry point is the individual experience of discrimination, which is well documented through large–scale surveys such as the EU–MIDIS (European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey) and the Eurobarometer. These surveys provide detailed data on the frequency, type, and severity of discriminatory experiences across different communities. Particularly affected are Roma, people of African descent, Black Europeans, Muslims, Jews, and migrants, all of whom face disproportionately high levels of exclusion and abuse in both public and institutional settings.

Importantly, discrimination does not occur in a vacuum. It is often intersectional, meaning that it is compounded by other identity markers such as gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. For example, Muslim women who wear visible religious symbols like the headscarf frequently report higher levels of employment discrimination. Migrants from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often face simultaneous barriers to education, housing, and healthcare—demonstrating how systems of inequality reinforce one another.

Beyond individual experiences, it is equally vital to understand societal attitudes toward discrimination. Eurobarometer surveys consistently measure how people perceive ethnic discrimination in their countries. These perceptions, along with public attitudes toward diversity and minority representation, are often influenced by national and EU-level policies aimed at combating racism. Tracking these shifts helps assess whether anti-racism efforts are truly resonating with the broader public.

From a legal perspective, the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive form the backbone of EU anti-discrimination policy. While these have been transposed into national law in Austria, the effectiveness of enforcement remains uneven. Monitoring efforts, court action, and the work of equality bodies are essential in holding institutions accountable and ensuring real protection.

Additional areas of analysis include hate crime statistics, which shed light on the types of offenses, their frequency, and the communities most affected. Similarly, disparities in employment, income, and access to public services reveal deeper systemic inequalities that go beyond overt racism.

Finally, any serious analysis must take into account the historical context—including Austria's colonial entanglements and migration history—which continue to shape societal structures and inform patterns of exclusion today. Together, these dimensions provide a more complete picture of racial inequality and help identify where change is needed—whether in public discourse, legal frameworks, or structural access to rights and opportunities.

#### THE DATA FOCUS IN THIS PAPER

#### INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

- **Surveys:** The European Union's Eurobarometer and the FRA's EU-MIDIS surveys provide data on discrimination experienced by individuals, including the frequency, type, and severity of incidents.
- Focus on Vulnerable Groups: Pay close attention to data on Roma, people of African descent, Black Europeans, Muslims, Jews, and migrants, as these groups have been identified as facing higher levels of discrimination.
- **Intersectionality**: Consider how discrimination intersects with other factors like socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender, as racism often manifests alongside other forms of discrimination.

#### **SOCIETAL OPINIONS ON DISCRIMINATION:**

- **Eurobarometer Surveys:** These surveys measure public perceptions of how widespread ethnic discrimination is in different EU member states.
- Attitudes towards Diversity: Track public opinion on the acceptance of ethnic minorities and their representation in political and social life.
- **Impact of Policies**: Assess how public attitudes are influenced by EU and national policies aimed at combating racism and promoting equality.

#### **POLICIES AND LEGISLATION:**

- **EU Directives:** Examine the impact of the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive on employment and other areas.
- **National Laws**: Analyze the effectiveness of national laws implementing EU directives and those addressing racism more broadly.
- **Enforcement and Monitoring:** Assess how well policies are being enforced and monitored, including the role of national equality bodies and courts.

#### **ADDITIONAL DATA POINTS:**

- **Hate Crime Statistics**: Analyze data on hate crimes targeting racialized groups, including the types of offenses, perpetrators, and victims.
- **Employment Data**: Compare the employment rates, wages, and occupational distribution of different ethnic groups to identify disparities and patterns of discrimination.
- Access to Services: Examine data on access to education, healthcare, and other social services by ethnic group to identify disparities and potential barriers.
- Historical Context: Consider the historical context of migration, colonialism, and other factors that may have contributed to the current patterns of racism.



Foto: Gabriel Bangura - 4 Years Black Lives Matter: Was it worth it?

### THE LEVELS OF DISCRIMATION IN AUSTRIA WITH FOCUS ON PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

Recent data confirms that **Muslims, Roma, and people of African descent** in Austria experience some of the highest levels of racial discrimination in the European Union. According to a 2024 survey by the **EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)**, an alarming **71% of Muslims in Austria** reported having experienced racism within the previous five years. This figure not only places Austria among the EU countries with the highest incidence of **anti-Muslim racism**, but also represents a sharp increase compared to earlier years. Many Muslim respondents cited discrimination in everyday settings—particularly in the job market and while accessing public services. These findings were also highlighted in international media, including The Guardian (2024), which emphasized growing concerns around institutional bias and Islamophobia in Austrian society.

Similarly, the Roma community continues to face systemic and widespread discrimination, as detailed in the **EU-MIDIS II survey (2017)**. In Austria, over 80% of Roma respondents reported experiencing unfair treatment in key areas such as housing, education, healthcare, and employment. The data underscores the persistence of anti-Roma sentiment and the failure of national policies to close inclusion gaps. According to the **FRA, Roma in Austria** also report a high degree of social isolation and mistrust in public institutions—barriers that severely hinder long–term social integration.

Additionally, people of African descent in Austria face disproportionately high levels of discrimination, particularly in employment, policing, and housing. The **EU-MIDIS II survey** found that individuals from this group are more likely to be subjected to **racial profiling, job discrimination, and housing exclusion** than many other minority communities in Austria. Independent legal scholars and human rights organizations (e.g. Castellaneta, 2022; Academia.edu reports) have echoed concerns that **Austria's anti-discrimination legislation** lacks sufficient enforcement mechanisms to protect Black Austrians from these forms of racialised exclusion.

Collectively, these statistics paint a concerning picture of entrenched, intersectional, and structural racism in Austria. They also highlight the urgent need for comprehensive national policy responses, stronger anti-discrimination institutions, and greater political commitment to racial equity.

#### SOCIETAL OPINIONS ON DISCRIMINATION

The Eurobarometer Surveys assessed the Perception of Discrimination in Austria. According to the 2023 Eurobarometer survey, 61% of Austrians believe that discrimination based on skin color or ethnic origin is widespread in their country.

Additionallt the Eurobarometer found that attitudes towards Diversity have changed over the years. The same survey indicated that a significant portion of the Austrian population supports diversity and equal rights for all ethnic groups, though challenges remain in changing deep-seated biases.

#### **ADDITIONAL DATA POINTS**

#### HATE CRIME STATISTICS

**2023 Data:** Austria recorded **5,668 bias-motivated criminal offenses**, with **1,612 incidents** related to national or ethnic origin and **293 incidents** related to skin color. (<u>BMI Austria</u>)

#### **EMPLOYMENT DISPARITIES**

**Employment Rates**: Migrants and ethnic minorities in Austria face higher unemployment rates and are often overrepresented in **low-skilled jobs**. (European Network Against Racism)

#### ACCESS TO SERVICES

**Healthcare Access:** Migrants and **ethnic minorities** often encounter barriers to **healthcare**, including language difficulties, lack of information, and discriminatory attitudes.

#### **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Austria's current patterns of racism are influenced by historical factors, including its **colonial past and migration policies.** Understanding this context is crucial for addressing systemic discrimination.

#### **RACISM IN AUSTRIA: KEY DATA AND TRENDS**

#### REPORTED RACIST INCIDENTS

- 2022: ZARA documented and handled 1,479 reports of racism. (<u>EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, zara.or.at</u>)
- 2021: There were 1,977 reported cases, indicating a decrease from the previous year. (<u>zara.or.at</u>)
- 2020: A significant spike with 3,039 reports, partly attributed to the Vienna terrorist attack and the COVID-19 pandemic. (<u>EU Agency</u> for Fundamental Rights)

#### REPORTED RACIST INCIDENTS

2022: According to ZARA's 2022 Racism Report, the reported incidents were categorized as follows:

- Public Sphere: 999 cases (Vienna Würstelstand, www.zara.or.at)
- Internet: 167 cases (Liga für Menschenrechte)
- Politics & Media: 134 cases
- Employment & Entrepreneurship: 85 cases (zara.or.at)
- Police: 59 cases (Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, zara.or.at)
- Public Authorities & Institutions: 35 cases (zara.or.at, Liga für Menschenrechte)

In 2021 ZARA published the following Racsim Report:

- Public Sphere: 273 casses (zara.or.at)
- Internet: 1.977 cases (zara.or.at)
- Politics & Media: 84 cases (zara.or.at)
- Employment & Enterpreneurship: 104 cases (zara.or.at)
- **Police**: 112 cases (zara.or.at)
- Public Authorities & Institutions: 112 cases (zara.or.at)
- Goods & Services: 185 cases (zara.or.at)

In 2020 ZARA published the following Racsim Report:

- **Public Sphere**: 273 casses (zara.or.at)
- Internet: 2.148 cases (zara.or.at)
- Politics & Media: 84 cases (zara.or.at)
- Employment & Enterpreneurship: 104 cases (zara.or.at)
- Police: 175 cases (zara.or.at)
- Public Authorities & Institutions: 175 cases (zara.or.at)

This distribution highlights that the majority of incidents occurred in the public sphere and online platforms.

#### **INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENTS**

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) evaluated Austria's National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR) and awarded a score of 5 out of 20, citing the absence of a comprehensive action plan and lack of intersectional approaches. <u>European Network Against Racism</u>



Foto: Gabriel Bangura – 4 Years Black Lives Matter: Was it worth it, Tayla Myree, Anna Gabersick, Lisa Jackie. Moderated by Iris Neuberg.

#### **IMPLEMENTING ANIT RACISM ACTIVITIES**

On July 11, 2024, the African Cultural Foundation (ACF) hosted the event "4 Years Black Lives Matter – Was It Worth It?" in Vienna, Austria. This gathering aimed to reflect on the impact of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement since its resurgence in 2020, examining its influence on civil society, the arts, and everyday life.

#### **PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

Black Lives Matter, Civil Society Action & Everyday Lives
Moderated by Iris Neuberg from Radio Afrika and Dokustelle, this panel
explored BLM's influence on activism, community engagement, and policy
reform Panelists included:

- Noomi Anyanwu, Chairwoman at Black Voices Austria, who discussed the organization's efforts in combating racism and promoting equality in Austria.
- Lisa Tackie, co-founder of Disrupt, an association focused on antidiscrimination and anti-racism education.
- Leni Charles, founder of Kids of the Diaspora, a movement connecting people across continents through shared experiences and emotions.
- Performative Action Only or Real Change? Black Lives Matter in the Arts Moderated by Joy Breiner from Fresh Vibes, this panel examined the role of BLM within the arts, questioning whether actions taken have led to substantive change. Panelists included:
  - Tonica Hunter, a curator, lecturer, and DJ based in Vienna, who discussed the impact of BLM on artistic expression and industry practices.
  - Tayla Myree, a visual artist and historian focusing on memory and identity politics related to Blackness and marginalized identities.

#### **CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

The event also featured cultural performances and artistic expressions that highlighted the creativity and resilience of Black communities. These contributions underscored the importance of art as a medium for activism and social change.

#### SPECIAL GUESTS, SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS & CLOSING PROGRAM

The event was honored by the presence of Rita Isiba, Managing Director of ZARA – Civil Courage and Anti-Racism Work. Her participation brought a powerful perspective to the discussion, highlighting the critical importance of institutional commitment to anti-racism and the lived realities of Black communities in Austria.

Ms. Isiba's reflections enriched the dialogue on the role of advocacy, policy, and allyship in confronting structural discrimination.

We were grateful for the support and collaboration of several dedicated organizations that contributed to the success of the event, including:

- Dokustelle for their expertise in documenting racism and advocating for affected individuals
- Disrupt for bringing a strong intersectional and decolonial lens to the conversation
- Radio Afrika TV for supporting media outreach and amplifying the narratives of Black communities
- Fresh Vibes for engaging young audiences through creative and cultural expression
- Schwarze Frauen Community for grounding the event in the lived experiences and leadership of Black women in Austria

The event concluded with a moving film screening of Voices Uprising by Joana Adesuwa Reiterer. The documentary offered a compelling reflection on collective resistance and the ongoing struggle for justice and recognition. It served as a resonant closing to an evening of dialogue, remembrance, and renewed commitment to racial equity.

#### CONCLUSION

"4 Years Black Lives Matter – Was It Worth It?" served as a platform for critical reflection on the progress and challenges of the BLM movement in Austria and beyond. By bringing together activists, artists, and community members, the event fostered dialogue on sustaining momentum against systemic racism and promoting inclusivity in various sectors of society. For more information, please visit the African Cultural Foundation's official website: <a href="https://www.africancultural-foundation.org/blmin2024-austria">https://www.africancultural-foundation.org/blmin2024-austria</a>



Foto: Gabriel Bangura - 4 Years Black Lives Matter: Was it worth it? Panel 1

ZARA	Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit: Annual Racism Reports (2020, 2021, 2022), Website: https://zara.or.at
FRA	EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) EU-MIDIS II: European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey
ENAR	European Network Against Racism, National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR) Country Assessments, Website: <a href="https://www.enar-eu.org">https://www.enar-eu.org</a>
ECRI	ECRI – European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (Council of Europe) 6th Monitoring Report on Austria (2020),
UN	UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Concluding Observations: Austria (2012, 2018), Website: <a href="https://tbinternet.ohchr.org">https://tbinternet.ohchr.org</a>
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