



D2.2 Action Plan

WP2 Development of an Action Plan combating racism through active civic participation of people of African origin at local level

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Executive summary

The report at hand provides a roadmap of the AFROEQUALITY methodology and implementation. It begins with a brief contextualisation of the Project through an identification of the ways in which discrimination, hate speech and other racist and Afrophobic behaviours take place, as those have been reported within research activities of WP2. This section summarizes the key findings and observations from the AFROEQUALITY research activities (WP2) which inform and contribute to the development AFROEQUALITY empowerment toolkit activities that will be implemented within WP3.

Next section describes means for empowering people of African origin through tailor-made capacity building activities. It focuses on the key aspects of the AFROEQUALITY empowerment activities, implemented within WP3 of the project. It describes concrete strategies of civic participation through an argumentative and discursive lens, emphasising on five key dimensions: education and civic literacy, community empowerment, political representation, anti-discrimination measures, and digital inclusion. It aims at contributing to how a transnational awareness of race may potentially emerge through international cooperation and transnational solidarity activities, initiatives and synergies. To this end it conceptualises civic participation of Afrodiasporic people as a multifaceted commitment to justice, equity, and inclusion, requiring addressing historical legacies, dismantling structural barriers, and investing in the capacities and aspirations of Afro-descendant communities.

Section 4 provides a comprehensive set of policy recommendations for empowering people of the Afrodiaspora across partnering countries. This section provides a policy framework for engaging with diasporic thinking towards Afrodiasporic communities. Drawing on lived experiences, comparative legal analysis, and identified best practices, the recommendations aim at promoting inclusive, intersectional, and transformative approaches to governance that prioritise Afrodiasporic individuals' voice and positioning. This section includes both general recommendations applicable across all countries and a set emerging from country-specific legal analysis, identified best practices and research activities.

The report finishes with a detailed description of the Empowerment App, a playful and sustainable digital tool for combating Afrophobia, xenophobia, and hate speech, while promoting cultural understanding and civic participation. The App is designed to support the ongoing efforts of the AFROEQUALITY project in promoting cultural identity, interculturality, and alternative narratives. The section includes an elaborate description of the nature, architecture and expected impact of the tool for users who may potentially be Afrodiasporic communities and migrant or refugee communities more broadly, but also the general public.

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Partners List Abbreviations

Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
NKUA (Department of Communication and Media Studies)	The University of Athens is the largest public Higher Education Institution in Greece, and among the largest universities in Europe. The Department of Communication and Media Studies at the NKUA is one of the preeminent Media departments in Greece and the region and is particularly active in promoting and supporting research through its research laboratories; department-based publication outlets; dissemination events of international symposia organised by the department and active dissemination.
CONVERGENCE (CONV)	CONVERGENCE is a Greek NGO focusing on generating unbiased technology-based systems and establishing reliable human-machine collaboration environments, bridging the gap between the needs of diverse stakeholders, through research, consultancy, targeted capacity building, awareness raising activities etc, towards the vision of Society 5.0. Our approach is guided by the various social markers, such as gender/sex, sexual orientation, cultural background, dis/abilities.
SCI-Hellas	SCI-Hellas (a branch of the Service Civil International), the Greek NGO partner, SCI- hellas is a Non-for- Profit organisation based in Athens. SCI-hellas is a key actor as it has long experience working on issues of social inclusion of vulnerable groups -mainly refugees, migrants and asylum seekers from African countries (including Muslims and people of African descent). They also work towards organizing women of African descent to address incidents of domestic violence.
CESIE	CESIE is a non-profit, non-political, and non-governmental organisation based in Palermo (Italy), active in the field of social inclusion and empowerment of vulnerable groups such as migrants and refugees, including immigrants from Africa. CESIE is committed to promote the cultural, social, educational and economic development at local, national, European and international levels. CESIE contributes to growth and development through the active participation of people,

	civil society and institutions, always valuing diversity. CESIE is therefore considered to be a very concrete and positive example of European values.
Instrategies	Instrategies is a think & do based in Barcelona specialized in European and international affairs, focusing on mobility, migration, inclusion and integration operating within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and mainstreaming gender equality. Instrategies work is dedicated to innovation through both knowledge and practical experience, designing, implementing and evaluating projects and policies. Instrategies has a multidisciplinary team and an extensive network of collaborators with a track record on EU funded projects.

1. Introduction

1.1. Description and Objectives of the project

The AFROEQUALITY- ‘Empowering people of African Descent: Hate Speech, Violence and Racism- Training on Digital Skills and Civic Participation’ project aims at empowering Afrodiaspora towards claiming inclusion and belonging, through modes of citizenship and culture that include:

- identifying, reporting and addressing incidents of racism and Afrophobia in the partner countries
- developing digital citizenship and civic awareness skills that will increase civic participation and local capacity building within the African Community in the partner countries
- exchanging cultural knowledge through ‘everyday cultures in the city’, to increase empowerment against Afrophobia, xenophobia, hate speech and violence in Greece, Italy and Spain
- assist in a holistic approach towards ending gender and racial stereotypes, baseless notions of racial superiority, and incitement to racial hatred.

The project is implemented under the coordination of the Department of Communication and Media Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) in collaboration with 4 partners in 3 countries, Spain, Italy and Greece.

Through a gender-sensitive and multi-stakeholder approach, AFROEQUALITY brings together a leading research public institution in Greece, CSOs working actively with Afrodiasporic communities in Greece, Italy and Spain, as well as a socio-tech partner, who is an expert in data mining and app development, in order to explore, address and contribute to fighting Afrophobia and racism against People of Colour, via empowerment activities on digital and civic skills. Therefore, the project will assist directly Afrodiasporic people (hereinafter also mentioned as “target group/population” or “beneficiaries” or People of Concern) women and men aged between 18-45 – residing in Athens, Palermo, Barcelona and the respective regions. It provides training in civic participation and cultural awareness, including notions of human rights and digital/media skills, drawing upon our objective to empower beneficiaries on issues of racism, violence, hate speech and related hate crimes through an intersectional perspective.

The following outcomes are expected to be produced by the end of the project:

- 60 people of African descent per partner country (target reach 180 in total) will benefit from hands-on training, empowerment and local skills-building activities.
- Increased awareness raised within the general public in each of the three countries
 - via an e-survey which will address national audience perceptions and attitudes towards the Afrodiaspora in respective countries (500 people surveyed in each country)
 - through AFROEQUALITY visibility activities in social media
 - via beneficiaries’ stories and posts in social media, using #MylifeinAthens, #MylifeinPalermo, #MylifeinBarcelona hashtags, and
 - the project’s awareness raising campaign
- Epistemologically robust quantitative and qualitative data collected across the three participating countries:
 - Survey with 1500 individual responses across the three participating countries, about perceptions of Blackness and issues of inclusion, racism and human rights regarding Afrodiasporic people
 - 6 Focus Groups across participating countries with 6-10 Afrodiasporic participants each (36-60 participants in total, exploring lived experiences, issues of racism, hate speech and Afrophobia)
 - 6 roundtables across participating countries with 4-6 stakeholders each (24-36 participants in total), aiming to identify perspectives of institutional and civil society stakeholders on xenophobia and racism targeting Afrodiaspora with special focus on identifying possible synergies to promote civic participation to combat racism.

- Press and social media analysis across the 3 participating countries, focusing on the representation of Black people in the media with special focus on hate speech and incidents of violence and racism in Greece, Italy and Spain
- For the first time, beneficiaries, stakeholders and the general public across all countries will benefit from knowledge emerging from the lived experiences, cultural background and cultural histories of Afrodiasporic people
- Sustainability and added value from the development of a gaming empowerment App targeting diverse groups of citizens (at least 60 users in each country, 180 in total) and aiming at both informing and empowering them towards a more inclusive understanding of diversity deriving from colour.

The project is organized in 4 work packages:

WP1: Project Management and Coordination which includes all activities related to the proper and effective implementation, monitoring and management of the project, the internal procedures and communication of the partnership as well as effective project evaluation. Key objectives include: effective administrative and financial management of the project as well as guaranteeing the scientific quality of proposed activities and deliverables.

WP2: Development of an Action Plan combating racism through active civic participation of People of African Origin at local level. This WP includes all research activities leading to the development of an Action Plan that will be addressing issues of racism and will be promoting practices and modes of active participation of the Afrodiaspora. Key objectives include: a) mapping perceptions about representations of People of African Descent in the public sphere in Greece, Italy and Spain b) mapping incidents of xenophobia, Afrophobia and racism at the local level as well as c) the needs of the African diaspora in terms of participation and inclusion in the local community, and ways of engagement and interaction with host country culture and d) identifying good practices promoting civic participation of the Afrodiaspora in the host population

WP3: Enhancing civic participation activities for People of African Descent. This WP includes all empowerment activities aiming to benefit 180 Afrodiasporic people across participating countries through a number of 'empowerment workshops', which will unfold in the axes of Cultural identity, Interculturality and Alternative Narratives. Key objectives include: a) the provision of training resources towards the capacity building of the Afrodiaspora to address hate speech through media literacy skills b) the provision of training materials on digital education and digital citizenship c) the promotion of African cultures in the 3 partner countries

WP4: Initiatives to fight Afrophobia, xenophobia and hate speech. This work package focuses on formulating project outcomes and activities into sound policy briefs and educational cultural knowledge (gaming app), and in their effective dissemination. Key objectives include: a) communication and therefore advocacy of the project outcomes and

proposals to combat xenophobia and racism at a policy level b) raising awareness and engagement of both stakeholders and the general public on matters of equality, participation and culture of Afrodiaspora c) communication and dissemination of the project at local, national and international level so as to further exploit its results d) bolstering its added value through sweeping activity in social media (hashtag culture) and fun cultural practices (gaming app).

1.2. An ontological statement of the AFROEQUALITY consortium

This report is the first public deliverable of the AFROEQUALITY project, a three-country project aiming to address issues of racism, hate speech and Afrophobia in Greece, Italy and Spain through research and empowerment activities in close collaboration with the African diaspora in all three countries. It is not though merely an EU project identifying the needs of people who are being targeted for their colour, ethnicity and religion (and related social and cultural categories like gender and sexuality). Neither is it merely a project attempting to design and implement training activities wherein members of the African diaspora will participate as beneficiaries of one-way information about citizenship. Instead, it embraces a decolonial perspective towards how the Afrodiaspora across all partner countries is being acknowledged through their voice and cultures at all levels of project design, implementation and monitoring. At the same time, it aims at establishing a dialogue with members of the Afrodiaspora in Italy, Greece and Spain, as well as at ensuring that the signifiers of colour, race, ethnicity and religion which are centrally the target of racism and hate speech (systemic and everyday) remain at the top of public and policy agendas. To this end, the AFROEQUALITY project progresses via making continuous changes in the terminology used in research material and deliverables, but also by inviting more members of the national Afrodiasporic communities to have a central role in the Advisory Boards and empowerment activities.

For this reason, the AFROEQUALITY consortium would like to begin by listing the changes made in the project design, monitoring and implementation as a result of continuous critical reflection and feedback from members of the Afrodiaspora in all three countries who participated in its research activities and sit at the national Advisory Boards, as well as from the partners' systematic dialogue and networking with key figures of the Afrodiaspora across countries (e.g. Activists, Community Chairs, NGO representatives, politicians, public figures and celebrities):

- Instead of a single Advisory Board, the partnership decided early on to set up three National Advisory Boards attending to the needs of each national case separately, but also paying due respect to the Board members whose role is vital to the project but do not speak a language other than their national one. This decision led to smaller and more flexible Advisory Boards that reflect upon the project's nature and progress on a regular basis and are able to provide targeted and context-specific feedback on the project.

- The National Advisory Boards include at least two members of the Afrodiaspora per country, while, as the project unfolded, people who participated in research activities (e.g. Roundtables) were invited to become members of the National Advisory Boards (e.g. Greece). As a result, the National Advisory Boards (which convene twice a year with the national project teams) have become larger (yet flexible) and include more members from each country's Afrodiaspora. This leads to a more extensive and inclusive Afroequality Network.
- In the course of the project, AFROEQUALITY teams are conducting regular meetings with community representatives and prominent figures of the Afrodiaspora, while also attend forums and spaces of dialogue and cultural expression, in order to spread the word about the project and establish the need for a constructive and reflexive dialogue between Afrodiaspora and national stakeholders to progress.
- The AFROEQUALITY project originally used the term 'People of African descent' to include all people of African origin in partnering countries. However, after incorporating feedback from participants in Focus Group and Roundtable activities and from the National Advisory Boards, the partnership decided to shift towards the terms 'Afrodiaspora' and 'African diaspora'. Especially for the design and implementation of the e-survey across all countries, the terms adopted changed from 'People of African descent' to the following: AfroSpanish (AfroGreek and Afroltalian), Afrodescendants, and Greeks (Spanish or Italian) of African Origin. Those terms -the partnership contends- embrace a more inclusive and just approach to all members of Afrodiasporic communities whose citizenship, ethnic and racial status might differ.
- From April 2025 onwards, all deliverables submitted by the AFROEQUALITY project, including all related material, steadily adjust to the revised terminology explained above so that the partnership's shift to more inclusive and fair terms is practically imprinted in the project's activities, impact and added value.

The rationale behind this statement at this point in the report serves to establish how the AFROEQUALITY project evolves as an ongoing platform of dialogue between Afrodiasporas and policy-oriented and research discourse in Greece, Italy and Spain. It also evolves as a platform prompting this dialogue to highlight usually unseen or obscured aspects of Afrodiasporic identities, cultures and challenges in said countries. Such a dialogue prolongs and bolsters the focus on matters of race and racism at this historical, social and political conjuncture, wherein the overlapping conditions of Afrophobia, Islamophobia, colour and religious stereotyping permeate the social and political fabric of democratic EU societies.

1.3. Overview – The context of WP2- Scope of this report

The context of WP2 research activities

Work Package 2 of the AFROEQUALITY project aims at providing an overview of how African diasporas across Greece, Spain and Italy are being represented in public, media and policy discourses. In addition to this, it also provides insights about how members of the African diasporas across the three countries reflect upon issues of Black identity, citizenship, Afrophobia, racism and hate speech. In short Work Package 2 employed mixed methodologies research to:

1. explore perceptions about and representations of people of African descent in the public sphere in Greece, Italy and Spain
2. map incidents of xenophobia, Afrophobia and racism at the local level
3. map the needs of the African diaspora in terms of participation and inclusion in the local community, and ways of engagement and interaction with the host country culture
4. identify good practices promoting civic participation of Afrodiasporic people in the host population

To this end, the following activities have been designed and developed across all three partner countries:

- *Desk research to collect evidence on racist incidents against members of the African diasporas and identify good practices across Greece, Spain and Italy (T2.1)*

This Task focused on reviewing studies and documents about representations of Afrodiasporic people in Greece, Italy and Spain; furthermore, about the construction of Black identity and Black cultures across the three countries. This review has included relevant academic and policy literature and resulted in three national reports and a final comparative report. The task and resulting reports managed to a) map the literature and identify gaps at both the research and policy level and b) to identify at least 3 good practices on active citizenship, means of preventing racism and combating hate speech in each country. The final comparative report provided a summary of the research about how the Afrodiaspora is constructed across the three cultures and about issues of racism and Afrophobia while it also provided a cross-country comparison on issues emerging in research and policy making. On the same grounds, it managed to identify and list some incidents of racism together with a list of good practices at the national or international level on how to address this.

- *E-survey addressed to the general public in Greece, Italy and Spain (T2.2)*

All participating countries (Greece, Italy and Spain) have designed and run an e-survey to map current attitudes towards the African diaspora in each country. Through this survey, partners managed to gather information about how members of the African diasporas are seen in each culture, as well as map stereotypes and possibly xenophobic and Afrophobic notions within the general population. NKUA has developed an online questionnaire of eighteen questions

(18), thirteen (13) closed and five (5) open ended, grouped in 4 thematic sections (social media and news consumption; knowledge about people of African descent, issues of discrimination; knowledge holders' demographic profile). The e-survey has resulted in three national reports and a cross-country comparative report (D2.5). NKUA has developed the questionnaire with contributions from CESIE and Instrategies. NKUA, CESIE and Instrategies pilot-tested the questionnaire, conducted country analyses and produced each country's report, while all partners have disseminated the questionnaire as widely as possible.

- *T2.3 Conduct 2 focus groups per country with Afrodiasporic people (NKUA lead, SCI, CESIE, Instrategies)*

In order to explore the experiences of people of African descent in the three countries, 2 focus group discussions have been conducted per country (6-10 participants, maintaining a gender balance for participants, max 10 participants per country with max 5 men and 5 women in the FG). Participants have been selected from local African communities from partners' networks, paying attention to community level and host communities. WP lead (NKUA) has prepared a Focus Group Guide with instructions, questions, tips and suggestions for partners. The aim was to identify personal experiences of Blackness in each country (including issues of Afrophobia, racism, violence and intersectional discrimination based on gender and other), willingness to participate in the local activities and processes designed and implemented by different agencies or stakeholders (local NGOs, the Municipality, Universities), the existence of intercommunal interaction and to make sense of the level of inclusion by giving voice to Afrodiasporic people themselves. Data from the FGs will be used to design the training activities as well as to inform policy recommendations and the content of the empowerment app.

- *T2.4 Conduct 2 roundtables per country with key stakeholders (NKUA lead, SCI, CESIE, Instrategies)*

In order to engage relevant key stakeholders (associated with combating racism and bias against people of African descent) to the project activities, 2 roundtables (4-6 participants) per country have been organized. Stakeholders were selected from academia, policy makers and CSOs, with the assistance of associated partners. The aim was to get further acquainted with the issue of xenophobia and racism against Afrodiasporic people. Participants of Roundtables are expected to be representatives of public institutions related to Human Rights, Associations of Migrants, African NGOs, local initiatives for civic participation and coexistence etc. Said representatives will form an informal Afroequality network.

- *T2.5 Conduct media analysis of online press and social media in Greece, Italy and Spain (NKUA lead, SCI, CESIE, Instrategies, CONV)*

As part of this activity, an analysis of online press and social media has been conducted in all three countries. The analysis has been accompanied by a mapping of incidents of verbal violence and other non-appropriate behaviour towards Afrodiasporic people in e-resources (i.e. social media, e-press). The aim of the activity is to collect data on the representation of Black people in the media with special focus on hate speech and incidents of violence and racism in Greece, Italy and Spain. The data, if possible, will be disaggregated to media, gender and racial approach. CONV has been responsible for this action as it has great experience in research techniques in online sources. The partners provide the online links from where data sources can be extracted (always following the GDPR regulation). A list of potential words or phrases leading to hate speech has been identified by the research team of NKUA. The media analysis sought out words or phrases that have a “hate speech” goal. Data collected from the media analysis have been processed by the NKUA team and are part of the Integrated Afroequality report (having included all information from T2.1-5).

- *T2.6 Development of the Action Plan of the project (NKUA lead, SCI, CESIE, Instrategies)*

Based on data collected from previous activities, the methodology of the project has been developed together with the report, an action plan has been developed, to be followed as part of its implementation. The action plan will thoroughly address the activities aiming at a) identifying the ways in which discrimination, hate speech and other racist and Afrophobic behaviours take place b) providing means of empowering people of African origin through tailor-made capacity building activities (as described under WP3) to address racial stereotypes, discrimination and hate speech, c) Develop SOPs for developing the Policy Recommendations by the members of the African community, and d) outline the scope and design of the Empowerment App (see next). The Action Plan will be shared with the participated stakeholders and will be widely disseminated via partners’ networks.

Scope of this report

The report at hand (D2.2) focuses on :

- a) identifying the ways in which discrimination, hate speech and other racist and Afrophobic behaviours take place, as those have been reported within research activities of WP2
- b) thoroughly describing the means for empowering people of African origin through tailor-made capacity building activities
- c) SOPs which will allow for members of the African communities' effective contribution in Policy Recommendations
- d) outlining the scope, design and expected implementation of the Empowerment App

Therefore the report is structured as follows:

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Section 2: Acknowledging the social realities in the lives of Afrodiaspora: The conceptual framework of the project; insights from empirical research in Greece, Italy and Spain. This section provides the context within which the AFROEQUALITY empowerment activities and tools will be developed. The discussion derives from the analysis conducted for and presented at the Integrated Afroequality Report (D2.1).

Section 3: The project's roadmap: Enhancing civic participation activities for the Afrodiaspora. This section focuses on the conceptual framework and key aspects of the AFROEQUALITY empowerment activities, implemented within WP3 of the project.

Section 4: Collaborating with Afrodiaspora in effective policy making: policy recommendations for empowering Afrodiasporic people in Greece, Italy and Spain. This section provides a comprehensive set of policy recommendations for empowering people of the Afrodiaspora across partnering countries. It aims at providing a policy framework for engaging with diasporic thinking towards Afrodiasporic communities.

Section 5: "The Empowerment App": A playful everyday tool for incident monitoring and awareness raising. This section presents a playful and sustainable digital tool for combating Afrophobia, xenophobia, and hate speech, while promoting cultural understanding and civic participation.

2. Acknowledging the social realities in the lives of the Afrodiaspora: The conceptual framework of the project; insights from empirical research in Greece, Italy and Spain

2.1. Identifying needs through comprehensive research- Research Methodology

Among the key priorities of the AFROEQUALITY project has been to develop a set of comprehensive research activities that would gather knowledge about a) the available policy discourse, initiatives and best practice at a national and EU level b) attitudes of the host societies towards the Afrodiaspora in Italy, Greece and Spain c) experiences of Afrodiasporic people and knowledge from experts and representatives of the Afrodiaspora regarding racism, Afrophobia, citizenship and social inclusion d) the ways in which media and online

discourse constructs race and Afrodiasporic identity across all countries. National teams to produced ***national desk research*** reports in which they reviewed studies and documents about representations of Afrodiasporic people in Greece, Italy and Spain and about the construction of Black identity and Black cultures across the three countries at a policy and academic level. The national reports have then informed a ***Comparative Desk Research Report*** (M7) (Mastora et al., 2024)¹ which provided a summary and a critical reading of the how the Afrodiaspora is understood in national policy discourse and the national legislation and the forms that systemic racism takes, posing challenges to social integration of Afrodiasporic people and poses. It also provided a cross-country comparison on issues emerging in research and policy making together with a list of transferable best practices that may well inform the activities to be planned within AFROEQUALITY project WP3.

In what concerns empirical research, national teams designed and conducted qualitative research through Focus Groups and Roundtables, to gather knowledge, experiences and information about each national case on topics such as Afrophobia, racism and hate speech, but also explore how to open the space for the Afrodiaspora to increase visibility of African and mixed cultures, traditions, values' systems and religions. In this context, ***each national team conducted 2 Focus Groups*** with Afrodiasporic people, selected from local African communities from partners' networks. Knowledge holders provided experiences of Blackness in each country (including issues of Afrophobia, racism, violence and intersectional discrimination based on gender and other), and discussed critically how they stand towards participating in local activities and processes designed and implemented by different agencies or stakeholders (local NGOs, the Municipality, Universities). The consortium ensured balanced participation in terms of gender, age and African ethnic origin so as to collect diverse knowledge and experiences from different Afrodiasporic communities. Overall **26** members of the Afrodiaspora participated in all Focus Groups across the three countries: **14** women, **12** men, **6** young adults between 17-21 years old, **6** adults between 25-40 years old, **6** adults between 44-55 years old and **8** adults who did not wish to share their age. The majority of knowledge holders came from Nigeria, Tanzania, Mali. The rest of knowledge holders came from Ghana (and Greece), Guinea, Ivory Coast, Gambia (and Spain), Morocco, Tongo and Burkina Faso.

The second qualitative research activity included the organisation ***2 Roundtables in each country***. It engaged relevant key stakeholders (associated with combating racism and bias against people of African descent) selected from academia, policy making and CSOs, with the assistance of associated partners. Knowledge holders of the Roundtable activities were representatives of public institutions related to Human Rights, Associations of Migrants, African NGOs, local initiatives for civic participation. The participants elaborated on the topics of social integration, everyday, institutional and systemic racism as well as on the topic of

¹Mastora, L., Tsaliki, L., Chronaki, D., Bashir, O. M., Caraballo, S., Pinyol-Jiménez, G. (2024). *AFROEQUALITY Desk Research Comparative Report*. Internal Project Report. Athens, NKUA: AFROEQUALITY Project (GA 101144500).

policy making. The consortium ensured balanced participation in terms of gender and age while extra emphasis has been given to ensure the participation of representatives of the Afrodiaspora, including prominent public figures (e.g. celebrities). In total, **19** participants contributed expertise and knowledge to the Roundtables, with **2** individuals representing the academia, **2** representing public institutions, **3** representing associations of migrants, **11** individuals representing CSOs and **1** public figure.

As per provisions of the AFROEQUALITY Project, all participants of the qualitative research activities and the members of the national Advisory Boards form the Informal AFROEQUALITY network and serve as internal evaluators and points of reference for the project's activities.

The primary research activities included two activities of quantitative nature, an electronic survey across all countries mapping attitudes and stances of the host societies towards Afrodiasporic people and a media and online discourse analysis of race related public information. The questionnaire was designed following a quali-quant approach, wherein both open-ended and closed questions have been included in the research tool. This methodological approach resulted in rich datasets of both quantitative and qualitative nature. Each national team had significant challenges in collecting responses through the e-survey, which has been acknowledged as a general symptom across countries and a result of i) 'survey fatigue', ii) certain groups' (i.e. 65+) limited access to the platforms where the questionnaire was distributed and iii) difficulty in using online tools for such purposes. The **e-survey** gathered **416 responses** in total in Italy, Greece and Spain, aiming at mapping current attitudes towards the African diaspora in each country. Three national reports were generated to describe each national case, while a cross-country comparative report provided a comprehensive overview of the data.

The second quantitative research activity included a press and online discourse analysis across all countries to collect data on the representation of Black people in the media with special focus on hate speech and incidents of violence and racism. Online discourse upon which sentiment analysis and AI-generated hate speech detection have been applied was retrieved from public datasets available primarily through Twitter. The consortium takes into consideration the limitations of this online research method, such as the inability to return culturally and geographically specific results and difficulties in detecting irony, cultural nuance, and structural or implicit forms of racism due to the inability of AI technology to 'read' context specific linguistic information. Nevertheless, the analysis provides interesting insights regarding the availability and general 'tone' of the online discourse, as does for the press analysis too.

The employment of mixed methodologies to identify the public constructions of the Afrodiaspora, the nature and trends in policy discourse and the legal framework across all countries, as well as the experiences of Afrodiasporic people in Greece, Italy and Spain contributed rich data and knowledge about how the empowerment activities and the empowerment collaborative tools need to be developed and implemented. Below we

summarise the needs identified through research activities for empowering the Afrodiaspora in all countries of the project.

2.2 Identified needs for empowering the Afrodiaspora in Greece, Italy and Spain

This section summarises the findings of the aforementioned research activities aiming at providing a contextual framework wherein needs for empowering the Afrodiaspora in Greece, Italy and Spain are identified. As extensively discussed in Deliverable D2.1, the Integrated Afroequality Report (Tsaliki et al., 2025)² the AFROEQUALITY project and respective activities emerge from a) *policy-oriented knowledge* gathered from national and comparative analyses across the three countries b) insights into the *social construction of the Afrodiaspora* as reflected in attitudes mapped across host societies and c) Afrodiasporic people's *lived experiences*. Those sets of knowledge reinforce the need to *think diasporically* at the level of EU intervention based projects such as the AFROEQUALITY project, which are expected to shape and foster spaces of collaborative action and empowerment for Afrodiasporic people and cultures.

Policy-driven knowledge (a) confirms the **multiple challenges for Afrodiasporic people's social and cultural integration across Italy, Greece and Spain**. Ongoing **extensive institutional racism** across all three countries may come in different forms (covert, overt, subtle or otherwise), however it is **dependent upon discrimination on the basis of colour** and contributes to **challenges in employment for the Afrodiaspora**, to its **social, economic and cultural invisibility and shadowbanning**. Challenges with citizenship and systemic racism reinforce everyday instances of racism and Afrophobia, leading to a **further marginalisation of Black communities** and as a result to **obstacles in accessing housing, health services and education**. On top of those everyday instances of marginalisation and racism, **gaps in law and policy-making**, i.e. loose, inefficient or even hostile integration policies **translate in enduring challenges** in the everyday lives of the Afrodiaspora. Moreover, **lack of systematic data about Afrodiaspora** (with the exception of Spain), pertaining to employment, housing, health, social relations and incidents of racism, **does not help to shape systematic and sustainable Action Plans, strategies and synergies** promoting social integration and interculturality and motivate victims of racism to speak out. To those add a widespread culture of fear for reporting hate crimes and discrimination at work, health services, public spaces (e.g. streets, shops and businesses, means of transportation), police departments and public administration. The AFROEQUALITY projects acknowledges how such factors and lived experiences of institutional invisibility and racism **co-exist and function in tandem**, and as a result affect the

² Tsaliki, L., Chronaki, D., Mastora, L., Pinyol- Jiménez G., Bashir-Omar, M., Caraballo, S. (2025). *D2.1 Integrated Afroequality Report*. Available at: <https://afroequality.eu/deliverables/>

Afrodiaspora's social and cultural integration. Therefore the AFROEQUALITY partnership aims at *developing a space of collaborative activities, wherein those challenges and gaps in policy-making are addressed as factors that by default create an inefficient context of social integration that affects Afrodiasporic people heavily.*

At the level of public perceptions (b) towards Afrodiaspora across all countries findings show that Blackness is **largely invisible in much of the media discourse**, and where visible it is mostly 'imported' since most Black figures in the media or online appear in foreign productions of are global influencers and celebrities. **Well embeded narratives about race, colour and the Afrodiaspora in specific, circulate across the news discourse and popular culture genres.** Even forms of congenial racism, but also covert stereotypical assumptions of Blackness emerge as **overarching constructions for the Afrodiaspora (as 'different' due to colour, as low-lives, as villains, intruders or a threat to society)**, as if Afrodiasporic people are a homogenous group. Such understandings of how Afrodiasporic people appear in media and online discourse, also **translate in how host-societies think about the Afrodiaspora in the market place.** They are rarely, if ever, seen to occupy medium and high-ranking positions in the public or private sector, managerial positions or educational/ training posts. Instead, they are **mostly assumed to occupy low paid, precarious and even dangerous jobs.** This reality translates to further challenges in achieving social and cultural integration of the Afrodiaspora across the three countries.

Different forms of racism originating from colour in combination with country of origin, gender and religion are acknowledged as reasons why Afrodiasporic people do not enjoy same full citizenship rights as other (white) citizens. To this adds the severe backlash in human rights and racial equality in a social, political and cultural environment where hate speech and racist discourse unleashes with the rise of far-right ideologies across the globe. Nevertheless, **people in host-societies do not easily identify subtle or covert forms of discrimination as racist.** At the same time, Afrodiasporic people are led to adapt to everyday forms of racism and discrimination as an unavoidable everyday condition, which sustains a culture of trauma, discouraging them from claiming their rightful position within the societies where they contribute economically, socially and culturally. Therefore, there is a **need to develop an understanding of how racist lay discourse works**, in order to contribute to debunking and decolonising dominant narratives of race and cultures of appropriation. This might entail acknowledging one's own predominantly white, western privilege which is, in many cases, an uncomfortable condition for western societies.

Among the needs to be addressed further and more effectively regarding the Afrodiaspora in Italy, Greece and Spain concerns the ways in which everyday cultures and lived cultural histories are informing activities, interventions and programmes. The knowledge produced from gathering and analysing Afrodiasporic people's *lived experiences* (c) within the AFROEQUALITY project is particularly telling. It shows that sustaining elements of African identity such as a) speaking or being familiar with the maternal or paternal language,

b) learning or practicing religion, c) to being part of one's own ethnic African community where collective cultural and social practices take place, d) travelling to the country of origin in Africa and e) people's values that are passed on through parental cultural upbringing, are essential in how the Afrodiaspora negotiates citizenship in host countries. At times, nurturing of cultural identity through practices of language learning, passing down oral histories and family historical trajectories or carrying on religious and social practices, is also an act of resistance and identity affirmation. Therefore, understood within a broader politics of identity, **African cultural identity is essential in achieving social and cultural integration, while a pressure to socially adapt through the disavowal, rejection or caricaturing it, is another performance of racially categorising, devaluing and segregating people who are constructed as less deserving.** To further acknowledge the multiplicity of African identities within the AFROEQUALITY project, **the partnership decided to change all terminology and references to: Afrodiaspora, citizens of African descent, Afro-Greeks/Italians/Spanish, Greeks/Italians/Spanish of African descent and the use of both nationalities for mixed race citizens**

Religious values and practices frequently result in victimization and additional racist and discriminatory behaviour from citizens in host countries, while reflections and constructions of what it means to be a good person are also at times seen as a 'collective burden' and a scrutinising social expectation within the host society, which all Afrodiasporic people are expected to fulfill. **To this adds hostility and well-embedded racial stereotypes within local communities create an unfriendly and unprotected space for Black people in the countries of interest,** while institutional racism experienced across authorities and public services make everyday life, social and economic activity even more challenging. At the same time, **mixed race nationals face separate challenges emerging from their social and cultural encounters with both white people and Afrodiasporic communities,** which contributes another component in how complex and rarely acknowledged is the negotiation and struggle for identity and belonging for certain members of the Afrodiaspora.

Apart from being attacked for their identity, skin tone, religion and ethnic origin the **Afrodiaspora is almost expected to learn to cope with racist attacks and discriminatory behaviours in different public spaces** like schools, public transport and the streets, places of high visibility but also institutional spaces where victims of racism should be able to feel protected. Those attitudes appear to be further intensified within the family space too, a condition that reiterates and multiplies cultures of racism and Afrophobia. Moreover, misogynoir is a particularly intense problem for Black women who are being judged and discriminated against both because of their colour and gender.

At the level of empowerment to address racism, Afrophobia and the full spectrum of discriminatory attitudes and behaviours against the Afrodiaspora, EU funded initiatives and projects of the sort of AFROEQUALITY project, **respective stakeholders and interested parts need to acknowledge more practically how much personal and work time Afrodiasporic**

people are investing when invited to participate in relevant activities. Those need to be designed with the aim to have a permanent, tangible long-term and change-making result in their everyday lives or in policy making and legal issues of citizenship.

The point above leads to the final point in this section of the report, **the need to embrace diasporic thinking (Rizvi, 2015; Hall, 1980)³, if it is for intervention-based projects such as the AFROEQUALITY project, to shape and foster spaces of collaborative action and empowerment for Afrodiasporic people and cultures in Europe.**

To embrace diasporic thinking at the level of initiatives, strategies, action plans and projects, whether at a national or EU level, interested parts in host societies need to acknowledge how a number of factors and realities co-exist and are deeply intertwined in how Afrodiasporic people are understood and why they are constantly othered and marginalized. A first crucial need is to establish clearly that **complex and unfriendly legislative and policy frameworks engenders a culture of discrimination against non-white and non-western citizens.** This goes hand in hand with **Afrodiasporic people's lack of representation, and invisibility in the public sphere and public space, on top of the institutional and everyday racism and the challenging social and economic context in which they are expected to live and make a living.** Such conditions reduce the interest in looking for language learning programs, empowerment programs, business development schemes or even cultural and social exchange initiatives or political activities, since **they feel unwelcome, unwanted, unsafe and invisible.** Such conceptual elements of the 'migrant' discourse (wherein Afrodiasporic people are assumed as a homogenous group of migrants) and their **lack of access to housing, advanced education, healthy entrepreneurship, denies the Afrodiaspora the right to be considered foundational to western (white) societies across Europe.**

Therefore, to proceed with establishing safe, welcome and inclusive societies for their Afrodiasporic members: a) synergies between academia, field workers, activists, communities and policy advocates are seen as a much needed strategy **to ensure that the Afrodiaspora has a 'seat at the table' in discussions about issues that matter to them;** b) **strategies for promoting participation and coexistence that work towards engaging Afrodiasporic communities within the broader community,** but also debunk and conceptualize the narratives about race, ethnicity and colour; c) there is a need to **incorporate courses about black history and colonialism into school and university curricula and educators to be taught ways of preventing discrimination at school** and develop ways of supporting young people of the Afrodiaspora to pursue tertiary education and professional success

³ Rizvi, F. (2015). Stuart Hall on racism and the importance of diasporic thinking. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 36(2), 264–274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2015.1013251>.

Hall, S. (1978). Racism and reaction. In B. Parekh (Ed.), *Five views of multiracial Britain* (pp. 56–70). London: Commission for Racial Equality.

Hall, S. (1980). Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance. In UNESCO, *sociological theories: Race and colonialism* (pp. 305–345). Paris: UNESCO.

3. The project's roadmap: Enhancing civic participation activities for the Afrodiaspora

Civic participation is one of the fundamental pillars of democratic societies. It includes a wide range of activities through which the Afrodiaspora engages in the life of their communities and influence decision-making processes—such as voting, advocacy, public dialogue, volunteering, and participation in civil society organizations. For the Afrodiaspora, however, civic engagement has historically been constrained by systemic barriers, including racial discrimination, socioeconomic disparities, limited access to information, and underrepresentation in political institutions. In order to create truly inclusive societies, it is imperative to adopt concrete strategies that enhance civic participation for these communities. This section explores such strategies through an argumentative and discursive lens, focusing on five key dimensions: education and civic literacy, community empowerment, political representation, anti-discrimination measures, and digital inclusion.

3.1 The Role of Education and Civic Literacy

Education plays a vital role in equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to participate actively in civic life. For the Afrodiaspora, access to quality education remains unequal in many parts of the world. Furthermore, school curricula often overlook African and Afro-diasporic histories, contributions, and struggles for civil rights. This erasure contributes to a sense of alienation and disconnection from civic structures.

To counter this, educational systems must be reformed to include inclusive curricula that reflect the histories and experiences of African-descended communities. Civic education programs should be expanded, with specific outreach to Afro-descendant youth and adults. These programs should not only teach how institutions work but also empower participants to question, critique, and engage with those institutions. When people understand their rights and see their identities reflected in public narratives, they are more likely to feel invested in civic processes.

Moreover, informal education and community-based workshops can fill gaps left by formal schooling. NGOs and local governments can partner with Afro-descendant communities to create accessible learning opportunities—such as town halls, seminars, or cultural events—that foster dialogue and awareness. Civic literacy must be understood not only as theoretical knowledge but also as practical experience in engaging with one's environment.

3.2 Strengthening Community-Based Organizations

Community-based organizations (CBOs) often serve as the backbone of civic life in marginalized communities. They provide spaces for dialogue, cultural expression, mutual aid,

and political mobilization. For Afro-descendant populations, these organizations have historically been central in organizing resistance, celebrating identity, and advocating for change. However, many of these organizations are underfunded, overlooked, or excluded from mainstream policy discussions.

Supporting and strengthening CBOs led by the Afrodiaspora is a powerful way to enhance civic engagement. Governments, philanthropic institutions, and international organizations should provide funding, technical assistance, and capacity-building opportunities to these groups. But beyond resources, there must be meaningful inclusion of these organizations in policy-making processes. Participatory governance models that incorporate CBO input into municipal or national decisions can ensure that Afro-descendant voices are not just heard, but integrated.

Furthermore, leadership development within these communities should be prioritized. Creating mentorship programs, fellowships, and training institutes focused on civic leadership can empower new generations of Afro-descendant leaders. These efforts help create a sustainable pipeline of engaged citizens equipped to advocate for their communities.

3.3 Political Representation and Institutional Inclusion

One of the most visible indicators of civic participation is representation in political and decision-making bodies. Unfortunately, Afrodiasporic people are often underrepresented in elected offices, public institutions, and leadership positions. This lack of representation can foster disillusionment and mistrust, reinforcing the perception that civic engagement does not lead to tangible outcomes.

To address this gap, political parties and institutions must commit to diversifying their ranks. This may include establishing quotas or affirmative action policies to ensure the inclusion of Afro-descendant candidates. Political education campaigns that encourage Afrodiasporic people to run for office, vote, and join public institutions are equally important.

However, representation must go beyond numbers. Afro-descendant politicians and officials should have the support, autonomy, and resources needed to advocate effectively for their communities. Institutional cultures must evolve to become more inclusive and responsive to the concerns of all citizens. Representation is not symbolic—it is transformative when coupled with structural change.

In addition, civic participation can be fostered by creating advisory councils at local, regional, and national levels that specifically focus on Afro-descendant issues. These councils can act as formal mechanisms for consultation, policy proposal, and oversight, ensuring that the needs of these communities are continuously brought to the forefront of public debate.

3.4 Addressing Discrimination and Rebuilding Trust

Systemic racism remains a major obstacle to full civic participation. Afrodiasporic people often face discriminatory treatment in schools, workplaces, law enforcement, and public institutions. These experiences of exclusion and injustice contribute to a sense of alienation from civic life.

A foundational step in enhancing civic participation is the enforcement of strong anti-discrimination laws. Governments must ensure that laws against racism are not only in place but effectively implemented. Institutions should adopt equity frameworks and conduct regular audits to identify and address racial disparities.

Equally important is the work of rebuilding trust. Many Afro-descendant communities view civic and political institutions with skepticism due to historical and ongoing injustices. Building trust requires consistent, transparent engagement; the creation of safe spaces for dialogue; and public acknowledgment of past wrongs. Truth commissions, public apologies, and reparations programs can play a role in recognizing historical harms and creating conditions for healing.

Involving community members in policy design, evaluation, and oversight also promotes accountability and responsiveness. Trust grows when people see that their voices matter and that institutions act on their input.

Additionally, the promotion of restorative justice programs in Afro-descendant communities can strengthen civic bonds and reduce tensions. These programs allow for community-driven resolutions to conflicts and can serve as models for inclusive and participatory justice.

3.5 Digital Inclusion and Innovation

In today's digital age, technology offers new avenues for civic engagement—but only for those who can access and navigate it. Afro-descendant communities may face digital exclusion due to socioeconomic barriers, limited infrastructure, or a lack of digital literacy.

Bridging the digital divide is essential for equitable civic participation. This means expanding internet access, providing affordable devices, and offering training in digital skills. Public libraries, community centers, and schools can become hubs for digital inclusion.

Beyond access, it is important to develop digital platforms that amplify Afro-descendant voices and facilitate civic participation. For example, mobile apps can provide information on voting, community events, or public services. Social media campaigns can raise awareness, mobilize action, and connect activists across borders. Digital storytelling projects can preserve and share cultural narratives.

However, digital spaces must also be made safe and inclusive. Online hate speech, racism, and misinformation are real threats to civic discourse. Platforms and governments must implement policies to prevent and respond to digital harassment, ensuring that all citizens can participate in online civic life without fear.

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and open data systems can also be harnessed for transparency and community engagement. For example, participatory budgeting platforms based on blockchain can allow Afro-descendant communities to have a direct say in how local resources are allocated.

3.6 International Cooperation and Transnational Solidarity

Enhancing civic participation for the Afrodiaspora is not only a national issue but also a global one. Afro-descendant populations are found across the Americas, Europe, the Caribbean, and beyond. International organizations, including the United Nations and regional bodies like the African Union or the Organization of American States, play a critical role in advocating for these communities.

States should ratify and implement international human rights frameworks that protect the rights of the Afrodiaspora. These include the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the UN's International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024).

Moreover, transnational networks and diaspora alliances should be encouraged. These platforms facilitate the sharing of strategies, resources, and solidarity across borders. For example, conferences, cultural festivals, and online forums that bring together Afro-descendant leaders from different regions can strengthen global advocacy efforts and inspire localized action.

3.7 Toward an Inclusive Civic Culture

Enhancing civic participation for Afrodiasporic people is not a singular initiative—it is a multifaceted commitment to justice, equity, and inclusion. It requires addressing historical legacies, dismantling structural barriers, and investing in the capacities and aspirations of Afro-descendant communities.

Through inclusive education, the empowerment of community-based organizations, increased political representation, anti-discrimination efforts, and digital innovation, we can create conditions where civic participation is accessible to all. Importantly, these efforts must be guided by the voices and leadership of people of African descent themselves.

Democracy thrives when it reflects the diversity of its people. By ensuring the full participation of Afro-descendant communities, we move closer to societies that are not only

formally democratic, but substantively just and inclusive. Civic participation is not only a right—it is a vital mechanism through which communities shape their futures, defend their dignity, and realize their full potential.

4. Collaborating with Afrodiaspora in effective policy making: policy recommendations for empowering Afrodiasporic people in Greece, Italy and Spain

The AFROEQUALITY project, complemented by extensive desk and field research, underscores the urgent need for structural reforms and participatory policymaking that addresses the systemic marginalization of Afrodiasporic people in Greece, Italy, and Spain. Drawing on lived experiences, comparative legal analysis, and identified best practices, the following recommendations aim to promote inclusive, intersectional, and transformative approaches to governance that place Afrodiasporic individuals at the centre.

1. Institutional Recognition and Representation

Institutional recognition and representation are crucial to ensure that Afrodiasporic people are not just passive recipients, but active co-creators of the policies that affect their lives. National and local consultative bodies must be reinforced with mechanisms that guarantee meaningful and proportional participation of Afrodiasporic people, so they can help design, monitor, and improve public policies from the inside. This also means transforming public institutions by implementing affirmative action and inclusive recruitment strategies to open access to advisory councils and decision-making positions, ensuring Afrodiasporic perspectives are reflected at all governance levels and that institutional structures no longer perpetuate exclusion.

2. Combating Racism and Afrophobia

Effectively combating racism and Afrophobia requires going beyond laws to address deep-rooted societal biases and institutional practices. Enforcement of anti-discrimination and hate crime legislation must be strengthened through well-resourced independent oversight bodies, streamlined reporting pathways, and mechanisms that guarantee accountability. National campaigns and educational programs should actively challenge Afrophobia, racial profiling, and hate speech in public spaces, workplaces, and institutions, with particular attention to the police, media, and other sectors where bias is often perpetuated and normalized, so that cultural attitudes shift alongside legal protections.

3. Empowerment through Civic Participation

Empowering Afrodiasporic individuals and entities through civic participation means enabling them to exercise their rights, shape decisions, and amplify their voices in public life. This requires institutional backing and long-term, sustainable funding for Afrodiasporic associations, cultural platforms, and youth-led networks, ensuring they have the resources to build capacity and influence. Governments should create structured dialogue mechanisms, such as citizen assemblies and designated community liaisons, to establish regular, meaningful interactions between Afrodiasporic communities and authorities, making sure that participatory governance leads to real influence rather than symbolic consultation.

4. Inclusive Education and Cultural Policy

Inclusive education and cultural policies are essential for reshaping public narratives and dismantling harmful stereotypes. African histories, cultures, and contemporary contributions must be fully integrated into curricula, teacher training, and educational materials across all levels of schooling to foster critical thinking, diversity awareness, and historical accuracy. Governments should also actively support cultural events, museums, artistic projects, and public media campaigns that elevate Afro-descendant stories, challenge exoticized or deficit-based framings, and promote a vibrant, multifaceted image of African heritage that reflects both past and present.

5. Religious and Cultural Inclusion

Religious and cultural inclusion means ensuring that Afrodiasporic individuals can fully practice their faiths and cultural traditions in dignity and security. Policy frameworks and urban planning must guarantee access to appropriate religious spaces and uphold freedom of worship, while also supporting initiatives that foster interfaith and intercultural dialogue. Prioritizing Afrodiasporic projects that bridge diverse communities and challenge religious prejudice is key to building trust, strengthening social cohesion, and preventing the marginalization of Afro-descendant religious and cultural identities.

6. Gender and Intersectional Justice

Advancing gender and intersectional justice demands that public services and policies explicitly address the compounded discrimination faced by Black women, LGBTQI+ individuals, and other marginalized subgroups within Afrodiasporic individuals. Governments should adopt intersectional frameworks that recognize how overlapping identities shape experiences of inequality and ensure that services respond accordingly. At the same time, they should support mentorship, leadership development, and safety initiatives led by and for Black women and youth, creating spaces of empowerment that strengthen individual agency and collective resilience.

7. Legal Pathways and Socioeconomic Rights

Creating fair legal pathways and guaranteeing socioeconomic rights are essential for dismantling exclusionary structures affecting the Afrodiaspora. Citizenship laws and documentation procedures must be reformed to eliminate discriminatory barriers, with

particular attention to the challenges faced by second-generation youth and undocumented workers. Governments should enforce labour protections and ensure access to social services, especially in sectors like domestic work and agriculture where the Afrodiaspora are highly vulnerable to exploitation, so that economic participation is grounded in rights, dignity, and equal opportunity.

8. Monitoring, Data Collection, and Accountability

Robust monitoring, data collection, and accountability systems are critical to track progress and address systemic inequalities. Governments need to develop standardized methods for collecting disaggregated data on racial discrimination, violence, and socioeconomic outcomes to inform evidence-based policymaking. At the same time, independent observatories and civil society organizations should be empowered and funded to evaluate national policies, report on structural racism, and hold institutions accountable, ensuring that commitments to racial equity translate into measurable and sustained change.

4.1 Country-specific recommendations

GREECE

- Accelerating and simplifying access to legal status and nationality for Afrodiasporic youth and long-term residents is essential given Greece's highly bureaucratic, restrictive, and often exclusionary legal system, which particularly burdens second-generation Afro-descendant youth. Inclusive reforms should reduce excessive requirements (such as long employment histories) and simplify naturalization processes, while outreach programs actively guide communities through legal hurdles, ensuring they are informed and supported throughout.
- Institutionalizing anti-racism and intercultural training for frontline public servants is crucial, as the gathered information points to entrenched institutional racism and exclusionary practices. Training should target police, administrative offices, and social services, and include community-led monitoring systems to ensure accountability and build trust, particularly as many Afrodiasporic people feel ignored or dismissed in public spaces.
- Creating safe spaces for interaction, offers not only cultural and social opportunities but also much-needed protection and empowerment. These spaces would provide access to services, cultural dialogue, and civic tools, allowing Afrodiasporic people to reclaim agency, share experiences, and build resilience against everyday discrimination and isolation.
- Combating employment exclusion in Greece requires tackling the informal labour market, which traps many Afro-descendants in precarious, unregulated work. This means introducing accessible regularization pathways for workers, strengthening anti-discrimination enforcement, and supporting Afro-descendant workers' rights in

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sectors like agriculture and domestic work, where they face disproportionate exploitation.

ITALY

- Reforming citizenship laws to recognize second-generation Afrodiaspora is an urgent task in Italy, where despite being born or raised locally, many young Afro-descendants remain excluded due to rigid legal frameworks. The project actions, have highlighted the need to remove discriminatory barriers and acknowledge these individuals as rightful Italian citizens, fully integrating them into national life.
- Establishing intercultural community centres in high-density Afrodiasporic areas, particularly in diverse cities like Palermo, should be co-managed with Afrodiasporic leaders to provide culturally sensitive services and strengthen local cohesion. These centres would foster cross-cultural exchange, offer youth programs, and support social integration, addressing the specific needs of both first- and second-generation individuals.
- Developing anti-racist media literacy and public education campaigns is key, as Afro-descendants in Italy face gendered, Islamophobic, and racialized stereotypes in media and public discourse. Campaigns should challenge harmful narratives, promote positive representations, and engage media actors in reshaping how the Afrodiaspora is portrayed, helping reduce prejudice and raise awareness across Italian society.
- Funding collaborative programs between municipalities and Afrodiaspora-led initiatives is essential for participatory governance. By embedding Afro-descendant perspectives into local planning, budgeting, and urban development, these programs can co-create solutions, foster shared ownership, and ensure Afrodiasporic people's voices actively shape the environments they inhabit.

SPAIN

- Strengthening educational policies to include African and Afro-descendant perspectives is vital in Spain, where results of project activities have shown a need to dismantle stereotypes and colonial legacies still embedded in curricula. Schools should adopt intercultural teacher training, integrate Afro-descendant histories, and develop resources that promote historical awareness and pride.
- Promoting the social and economic empowerment of Afro-descendant women and youth requires targeted investments in employment access, entrepreneurship, leadership training, and intersectional initiatives. Recognizing that women and youth face compounded barriers, these programs should ensure equal access to economic opportunities while fostering confidence and leadership in community spaces.
- Enhancing public oversight of policing practices is critical, as ethnic profiling and discriminatory policing remain persistent problems. Introducing robust rights-based

training for security forces, setting up independent monitoring mechanisms, and ensure that the Afrodiaspora is involved in shaping fair and accountable policing practices are actions to help reduce these practices.

- Fostering local citizenship initiatives and reinforcing participation at the municipal level can institutionalize inclusion. By adopting participatory budgeting and inclusive planning frameworks, municipalities can empower Afro-descendant residents to help design local policies and decisions, strengthening civic engagement and addressing local inequalities from the ground up.

These recommendations reflect a holistic, evidence-based approach rooted in both comparative policy analysis and the lived realities of Afrodiasporic individuals. Moving beyond integration toward empowerment, these actions call for collaborative governance and sustained investment in equity and dignity. Recognizing the richness of African heritage and dismantling systemic barriers is not only an ethical imperative, it is also foundational to building cohesive, democratic societies across Europe.

5. “The empowerment App”: A playful tool for incident monitoring and awareness raising

The **AFROEQUALITY Empowerment App (WP4 – D4.5)** is designed to support the ongoing efforts of the AFROEQUALITY project in promoting cultural identity, interculturality, and alternative narratives. It functions as an interactive platform aimed not only at the Afrodiasproa but also the broader public, providing both educational tools and engaging features to combat issues such as Afrophobia, xenophobia, hate speech, and racial discrimination. The app will be developed as a **desktop application** and will leverage gamification to encourage users to engage, learn, and share experiences related to these critical social issues.

The **Empowerment App** will be structured in a way that combines multiple functionalities such as informational resources, gamification, user interaction, and capacity-building components. It is important that the app becomes an essential tool for **cultural engagement** and **awareness**, while also empowering individuals to address the socio-political issues faced by marginalised communities.

5.1. Key Features of the Empowerment App

5.1.1 Gamification & Learning

○ Interactive Games and Quizzes

Modeled on the **Council of Europe quiz**, the app will offer interactive games and quizzes designed to inform and educate users about key topics such as multiculturalism, civic participation, and racial discrimination.

- Questions will cover a wide range of topics, from **Cultural Identity, Intercultural Dialogue**, to the issues surrounding **Afrophobia, hate speech, and xenophobia**.
- The user will be able to earn points, badges, and progress through levels based on their participation and understanding of the topics.
- Users will be rewarded with different types of badges—**bronze, silver, gold**—reflecting their progress, engagement, and learning.

○ Skills Tree and Personal Progress Tracker

The app will incorporate a **skills tree**, which visually represents a user's progress in terms of their understanding and actions towards **Afrophobia** and **multicultural integration**. This model will provide a roadmap of learning where the user can track their personal development.

- Users can observe their position within specific competencies such as **Cultural Identity Awareness, Anti-Racism Advocacy, and Hate Speech Reduction**.
- Each user will have an individualised **progress dashboard** that displays their achievements, badges earned, and activity contributions.

5.1.2 User-Generated Content and Social Interaction

○ Activity Sharing & Rating

Users will be encouraged to log personal experiences or activities they have undertaken to combat **xenophobia** and **racism**. These actions will be shared in a **social** format, where other app users can view, comment on, and **rate** the activities.

- The activities will be screened and moderated before being published, ensuring that only constructive and positive content is shared.
- Rating and feedback mechanisms will be employed, allowing users to rate activities on a scale of 1-5, with higher ratings earning additional points or badges.

○ Citizens of the Month

To foster healthy competition and peer engagement, a **Citizen of the Month** section will be introduced. Users who contribute most significantly to combat Afrophobia and promote intercultural dialogue will be recognised and celebrated within the app.

5.1.3 Cultural Engagement & Awareness

○ Resource Library

The app will include a comprehensive **knowledge base** containing resources aimed at increasing cultural awareness, understanding Afro cultures, and addressing social issues related to race and ethnicity.

- The library will feature articles, videos, and guides related to **cultural identity, interculturality, and alternative narratives**. It will also include instructional material on how to combat hate speech, providing practical tips on how to respond to discriminatory language and behavior effectively.
- This content will serve not only as educational material for individuals but also as a tool for **social workers** who aim to address issues related to **ethnic violence and discrimination**.

○ Video Making Guides

To promote active participation, the app will provide detailed **guides on video-making**. These will focus on how users can create impactful videos aimed at raising awareness of hate speech, promoting social inclusion, and educating others on issues related to Afrophobia. This component will encourage users to share their messages visually and amplify their voices in a creative format.

5.1.4 Incident Reporting & Data Collection

○ Incident Logging

The app will allow users to report instances of **racial and ethnic discrimination, hate speech, and violence** they encounter. This feature will not only enable individuals to express their experiences but also contribute to the creation of a **comprehensive database** that can be used for **advocacy purposes**.

- The logged incidents will be analyzed and used to identify common trends and specific areas that need intervention. The collected data will also be shared with relevant organizations and policymakers for evidence-based advocacy.

5.1.5 Multilingual Support & Accessibility

- The app will be available in multiple languages to ensure accessibility to a diverse user base. Initially, the app will support **English, Greek, Italian, and Spanish**. Other languages, such as **French**, may be added based on demand.
- This multilingual approach ensures that the app can cater to the needs of users across different regions, making it an inclusive tool for tackling xenophobia and Afrophobia at local, national, and international levels.

5.2. Structure of the Empowerment App

5.2.1 Home Screen / Dashboard

- **Quick Overview:** Access to personal profile, progress, and recent activities.
- **Activity Feed:** View and interact with user-uploaded content (e.g., activities, achievements).
- **Current Challenges:** Display ongoing quizzes, tasks, and challenges to engage with.

5.2.2 Knowledge & Information Section

- **Cultural Identity Resources:** Learn about the histories, languages, and cultures of Afro-descendant communities.
- **Intercultural Dialogue:** Read materials on fostering cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.
- **Alternative Narratives:** Discover and engage with media that offers perspectives countering stereotypes.
- **Hate Speech Guidelines:** Access tips on identifying and addressing hate speech.

5.2.3 Quizzes and Games

- **Multiculturalism Quiz:** Participate in quizzes that test knowledge of multiculturalism and global diversity.

- **Civic Participation Game:** Answer questions related to the importance of civic engagement and human rights.
- **Anti-Racism Challenge:** Take part in scenario-based games where users choose the most effective ways to combat racism.

5.2.4 Progress & Badges

- **Skills Tree:** Track development in key areas such as anti-racism, civic participation, and cultural awareness.
- **Badges:** Earn badges (bronze, silver, gold) for completing tasks, quizzes, and challenges.
- **Leaderboards:** Display top users with the most points, activities shared, and badges earned.

5.2.5 User Activities & Contributions

- **Activity Log:** Users can add activities they have engaged in to promote equality and combat racism.
- **Activity Rating:** Each user's activity can be rated by others based on its impact and relevance.
- **Citizens of the Month:** Recognize top contributors with special badges and profile highlights.

5.2.6 Incident Reporting

- **Report Discrimination:** Submit reports of racial discrimination, hate speech, or violence.
- **Incident Database:** View and contribution to a growing database of reported incidents.

5.2.7 Help Points / Resources

- **Help Points:** Provide a list of national and international organisations that support victims of hate speech and racial discrimination.
- **Legal Aid & Services:** Include information about legal aid available in different countries.

5.2.8 Settings

- **Profile Customisation:** Users can update their personal details, set language preferences, and manage notifications.
- **Privacy Settings:** Control how user data is shared and with whom.

- **Feedback Section:** A place for users to provide suggestions, ask questions, and report issues with the app.

The **AFROEQUALITY Empowerment App** will serve as a powerful tool for combating Afrophobia, xenophobia, and hate speech, while promoting cultural understanding and civic participation. By leveraging **gamification**, **user-generated content**, and **educational resources**, the app will empower individuals to act, enhance their knowledge, and contribute meaningfully to the fight for racial equality. It will be a cornerstone of the **AFROEQUALITY Project**, helping to shift public perception, reduce discrimination, and build a more inclusive society.