Racism and anti-racism in Europe


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Abstract

‘Remarkable ... a major contribution to our understanding and handling of one of the crucial contemporary issues that acquires more gravity by the day.’ Zygmunt Bauman ‘[This] is the most comprehensive attempt at discussing the current crisis of anti-racist discourses and politics in Western Europe.’ Etienne Balibar ‘An excellent book, which enriches the tradition of political sociology conceptually, methodologically and substantively.’ Peter Wagner This is an in-depth sociological study of the phenomenon of anti-racism, as both political discourse and social movement practice in western Europe. Lentin develops a comparative study of anti-racism in Britain, France, Italy and Ireland. While ‘race¿ and racism have been submitted to many profound analyses, anti-racism has often been dealt with as either the mere opposite of racism or as a theme for prescriptives or polemics by those concerned with the persistence of racist discrimination. By contrast, this book views anti-racism as a variety of discourses that are central to the understanding of the politics of modern states. Examining antiracism gives us insights not only into current debates on citizenship, immigration and Europeanisation, but it also crucially assists us in understanding the nature of race, racism and racialisation themselves. At a time of mounting state racism against asylum seekers, migrants and refugees throughout Europe and beyond, this book provides a much-needed exploration of the discourse of anti-racism that shapes policy and public opinion today.

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Anti-Black racism, or Afrophobia, is what most people instinctively associate with racism. There are an estimated 15 million people of African descent living in Europe. Yet paradoxically, people of African descent are the most invisible ‘visible’ minority on the European political agenda. The European Union and its member states urgently need to tackle the structural racism that prevents the inclusion of Black people in European society. The European Parliament has taken an important first step by holding a discussion on Afrophobia in Europe in its civil liberties committee on 7 Sept New racist movements such as the symbol of the New Right, the Identitarian movement, are recruiting more subtle and post-modern forms of racism. They are also able to mobilise because of the weak consciousness that exists in Austrian society regarding what actually constitutes racism. Breaking the silence is fundamental for anti-racist politics. And institutionally, it will be crucial for Austria’s future, how we can enable a much more critical understanding of our own history in Austria – and racism as a central feature of that history. Disclaimer: The viewpoints expressed by the authors do not necessarily reflect the opinions, viewpoints and editorial policies of TRT World. A study that ran from 2002–15 into social attitudes by Harvard University has mapped the countries in Europe with the highest incidents of racial bias, based on data from 288,076 White Europeans. It used the Implicit-association test (a reaction-based psychological test designed to measure implicit racial bias). The weakest racial bias was found in Serbia and Slovenia, and the strongest racial bias was found in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Malta, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Slovakia and