

FBK and students at work to overcome hate speech

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The "DicoDiNo" project, a laboratory created to reflect on intolerance in the time of social networks has wrapped up today



The DicoDiNo project at the MAXXI in Rome for the Festival of Human Rights

A double opportunity to present the results of the DicoDiNo project (DIsCOrsi d'oDlo e cultura giovaNili On line): first at the Festival of Human Rights in Rome and then in Trento, at the ITT Buonarroti – Pozzo, one of the six participating schools. *“The goal we set ourselves – explains Valeria Fabretti, researcher at the FBK Center for Religious Studies and project coordinator – was to promote a reflection on stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination and verbal violence against religious minorities, with particular attention to hate speech analysis spread through the web, social networks and the media in general that would target high school students. A way to “say no” to refusal and intolerance to “say yes” to knowledge, to meeting and discussing with people with different views”.*

The project, funded by the **Fondazione Intercultura Onlus**, targeted high school students (3 from Trento and 3 from Rome) in its early stage focused on the **monitoring of hate speech** on the web with the help of the [“Hatometer”](#), a tool developed by the Foundation to identify hostile

conversations on social media. After that, with the support of researchers, students practiced creating narratives and forms of counter-narration about prejudice and discrimination through another FBK tool: “Communics”, a platform for the creation of comics based on digital story telling methods. Finally, through a series of discussion sessions with the students, the connection between religious diversity and hate speech was

explored. The results of this work will then be displayed in various workshops, conferences or other similar events. A particular aspect from the scientific and educational standpoint was the interdisciplinary nature of the project, which led to the involvement of very heterogeneous research areas within the Foundation: on the one hand, the Center for Religious Studies (FBK-ISR) which coordinated its implementation within the framework of its Religion and Innovation mission; and, on the other hand, the Information and Communication Technologies Center (FBK-ICT), with its unit



studies and communities. This resulted in the integration of the tools of artificial

Intelligence (AI) and other technologies that deal with religions and innovation processes in today's society.

*“Compared to traditional lessons, the project offered **a more***

interactive approach – said Sandra Fusco, a teacher at the Buonarroti – Pozzo High School – in which the kids felt free to express their opinions and, above all, found time to do it, which in everyday teaching is not always possible. ” Positive stories also come from teachers in Rome, as is the case of Abdo Ghraieb of the “Tor Carbone” High School: “Adults have **lots of prejudices**, so let’s imagine how many do kids and how they are able to face situations such as hate speeches. We must do more projects like this and get the kids used to taking them out of the classroom, making them think about current issues”. It was an opportunity to offer young people spaces for reflection in which they could elaborate on their experience and build tools to understand and deal with plurality, creating “dialogue training” workshops, where participants can ask questions and express their thoughts without infringing on respect for the identity and dignity of others. “**The students discussed stereotypes and their personal stories**, – Alessandra Vitullo, FBK-ISR researcher, explained – on how they talk about discrimination and how they experience it. The need showed by the workshops we created is that kids need to receive information on the issues of

diversity, especially as they often are victims of the distortions in the media without having the right tools to process them”.

“DicoDiNo” represents the extension of a first pilot project, [Racconta un'altra storia!](#), created by FBK-ISR with some high schools based in the province of Trento, during school year 2017-18. An initiative that is part of the important activities that FBK carries out for and with young people: “*These are important and innovative programs that FBK offers schools – said Claudia Dolci (Research and Innovation for Education, FBK), who contributed actively with her staff to the success of the project and to its inclusion in the School-to-Work Program – The participating schools took up the challenge, got involved and worked hard during these months, always contributing constructively to the workshops. **Thanks to the successful results of these two projects, we hope to be able to continue next year with new initiatives on these issues, since they fit into what is FBK-ISR's mission of Religion and Innovation.***”

During the closing event, bookmarks made by the kids who participated in the project were distributed by the [Trentino Library System](#) and by the [Italian Library](#)







The project's team included: Valeria Fabretti (Project Coordinator, FBK-ISR), Alessandra Vitullo (FBK-ISR), Massimo Zancanaro and Carolina Rutta (Smart Cities and Communities, FBK-ICT), Claudia Dolci (Research and Innovation for Education, FBK), Sara Tonelli and Rachele Sprugnoli (Digital Humanities, FBK-ICT). The schools involved were: Buonarroto-Pozzo (Trento), Niccolò Machiavelli (Rome), "G. Garibaldi" (Rome), G. Veronesi (Rovereto), Sophie Magdalena Scholl (Trento), "Tor Carbone" (Rome).

PERMALINK

<https://magazine.fbk.eu/en/news/fbk-and-students-at-work-to-overcome-hate-speech/>

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- "Racconta un'altra storia!" project website: <https://fbkjunior.fbk.eu/projects/detail/racconta-unaltra-storia/>

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