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### **Mainstreaming anti-racist approaches in social work in Europe**

Issues of discrimination on cultural, ethnic and religious grounds still get raised predominantly in the context of immigration and the integration of minority populations. In this area lessons have been learned concerning the inadequacy of constructing methods and approaches in social work that address merely the cultural dimension ('tolerance', 'understanding', 'participation'). Instead, rights and structural changes are recognized as essential for progress. Yet social work deals with the construction of identities in all its fields and neo-liberal social policies foster a tendency in diagnosis and intervention that resorts to 'intrinsic qualities', often with reference to genetic dispositions. Hence, the lessons from the field of migration need to be applied across all fields of social work to oppose the use of 'given' identity characteristics, a device at the core of racism, and to make the right and the skill to negotiate identities a central concern of social work practice. Anti-racism thereby is seen as a core communicative competence in the co-construction of social realities at personal and political level.