

Action for (Human) Rights and World Issues (AFRIW) e.V.

Thank you Madame Chair, Distinguished Panelists, Delegates, and Colleagues.

Across Europe today, civil society witnesses a deepening crisis of trust, right-wing extremism, and the flood of disinformation online, fueling fear and polarization and turning minorities and migrants into scapegoats for every social and economic challenge, from unemployment to housing shortages. Some extremist parties in Europe use culture as a political tool to mobilize anti-immigrant and anti-minority sentiments to reinforce the delineation between majority and minority groups within society. Digital platforms, once meant for dialogue, have become amplifiers of hate, eroding social cohesion and targeting the most vulnerable. These narratives thrive on entrenched inequalities and invisibility. Many minority communities continue to face systemic barriers in education, employment, and participation, and live with the constant fear of cultural absorption within dominant national identities. Too often, states deflect attention on minority issues by blaming globalization or external enemies, while ignoring their own hegemonic policies that perpetuate exclusion. We therefore urge the Forum and member states to take stronger action in two key areas. We strongly believe that inclusive education is a key to the empowerment of minority issues, incentivize and encourage positive actions that ensure minorities have unrestricted access to education at all levels, fostering their full inclusion and participation in mainstream society. Integrate minority histories, languages, and contributions into national curricula, adopt multilingual and multicultural education policies from early schooling onward, and shape teacher training to address prejudice and online misinformation in classrooms, and second, community-based trust-building. Support local mediation and dialogue programs involving minority leaders, youth, and faith communities to enhance their participation. This [cut off by chair].