



“Race”, Racialisation and Global Migration

Guideline
for School
Textbook Authors:

“Race”, Racialisation and Global Migration

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Introduction



The Tolerance and Diversity Institute (TDI) has been studying various school textbooks for years now. The aim of this exercise is to analyze whether the content of textbooks reflect cultural, religious and ethnic diversity, advocate tolerance, equality and human rights, and prohibit discrimination, and to then draw up relevant recommendations.

In 2018, TDI produced a guideline for authors of textbooks in Georgian language and literature, history, and civil education. The guide presents the results of the study into these textbooks as well as the recommendations on how to improve the content of the textbooks by incorporating intercultural aspects, ethnic and religious diversity, and a culture of tolerance.

The analysis conducted by TDI in the following years also revealed that school textbooks (mainly in geography) often used racist terms and theories. Furthermore, topics on global migration and migrants contain stereotypes that incite xenophobia and Islamophobia and present migrants and refugees, especially, undocumented migrants in a negative light.

Therefore, the goal of this guide is to offer the Ministry of Education, textbook authors and publishers the recommendations that have been drawn up based on scientific evidence and international academic experience. These recommendations will help authors avoid the abovementioned shortcomings and errors.

The guide describes the historic context and gives scientific definitions of “race”, racial classification and racism; it also provides an analysis of common stereotypes about migration and alternative examples, as well as exact definitions of the terms used in textbooks.

Examples of Racist Terminology in Georgian School Textbooks



“Please, recall what race means? What are the traits used to classify people racially? How many major races is humankind divided into?”

“Racial structure is the distinction of a population by their physical characteristics. Boundaries of races are nominal because a large segment of the population originated through mixing various races and represent an intermediate and mixed race. Representatives of intermediate races are mulattos – people of mixed European and Negroid ancestry, sambo¹ – people of mixed Indian and Negroid ancestry, etc.”

“The racial structure of the population (percentage share in the world population): Europid – 42.9%; Mongoloid (Asian and African branches) – 19.1%; Negroid – 7%; Australoid – 0.3%; mixed (Métis²).”

“There are many regions and countries on Earth where representatives of various races, ethnicities, religious and language groups live side by side.”

“The exercise: look for additional information and discuss how people of various races and ethnicities live in different geographic environments, what type of culture they have and what is their activity.”

“The African continent is inhabited by people of all the three major races - Europid, Equatorial and Mongoloid.”

“The Ethiopian Highlands are inhabited by Ethiopians who are of mixed Europid and Negroid origin. They look like Europeans by their features but Negroids by their skin color, though their skin is lighter.”

¹ Sambo is a derogatory term for an indigent population; sometimes it was also used to denote African origin.

² The Métis are a multi ancestral indigenous group in Canada and the Great Lakes region. The Métis are a concrete people with a distinct culture and language. In several South American countries, they even constitute the majority of the population (Paraguay – 95%, Ecuador – 65%, Colombia – 58%). In North America, the Métis have been recognized as a distinct Indigenous people under the Constitution of Canada.

“The Malagasy people live in Madagascar. They originated from a mix of Mongoloid and Negroid races.”

“The core of the indigenous African population is Negroid, belonging to the African branch of the Equatorial race while the northern part of the continent is inhabited by Arab peoples. As many as 97% of the Australian population are re-settlers from Europe while the rest are aborigines.”

“Black people have often rickets.”

“Race” and Racism: Context and Definitions

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines “race” as “the idea that the human species is divided into distinct groups on the basis of inherited physical and behavioral differences. Genetic studies in the late 20th century refuted the existence of biogenetically distinct races.” Meanwhile, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy also notes with regard to racial categories that “there is a widespread scholarly consensus that discrete or essentialist races are socially constructed, not biologically real.”³

“Race” as a category was constructed by scholars when studying biological species and evolution. This term was used increasingly frequently since the 17th century to denominate groups of people with common inherited biological or anthropological traits. Biologists, physicians, anthropologists or philosophers all grouped people by physical characteristics, skull forms, body shapes, skin color and other features.

For example, in the 18th century, the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus published the 10th edition of his major work, *Systema Naturae*, about the classification of the natural world. Linnaeus classified human beings as part of the animal kingdom. He specified four basic races of humans and two additional types – monsters and wild people. He also described the behavioral traits of the four races. The influence of Linnaeus lingers in debates about the racial categories to date. Then the German physician Johann Blumenbach, using skull forms and skin colors, divided the world’s population into five “principal varieties”: “Caucasian,” “Mongolian,” “Malayan,” “Negro,” and “American.” Blumenbach believed that the “original” form of the human skull was “Caucasian” because the ideal climate conditions for early humans would have been near the Caspian Sea. He believed erroneously that other forms were “degenerated” or “transformed” varieties of the original (Caucasian or European race). However, scientific evidence available today has proved that the place of origin of early human species is sub-Saharan Africa.⁴

³ See <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/race/>. Last revision 25 May, 2020.

⁴ See, Michael B. C. Rivera, *Race and Human Variation*, (University of Cambridge, 2019), <https://www.dw.com/downloads/53790471/race-and-human-variation-by-michael-b.c>



In the 19th century, the American physician Samuel Morton ranked intelligence by measuring the capacities of skulls. He filled collected skulls with mustard seed and lead shot and then divided them into categories: he claimed that “Caucasian” skulls have the greatest capacity, followed by “Mongolians,” “Malaysians,” “Americans,” and “Ethiopians.” Later it transpired that Morton skewed the results. Contemporary science proves no link between skull size and intelligence.

In the 19th century, another scientist, Joseph Arthur de Gobineau popularized the theory of races. Gobineau claimed that the civilizations established by the three major races of the world (white, Black, and yellow) were all products of the white races and that no civilization could emerge without their cooperation. According to him, the purest of the white races were the Aryans. When Aryans diluted their blood by intermarriage with lower races, they helped to bring about the decline of their civilization (“Essay on the Inequality of Human Races”).

In the 20th century, the influential American anthropologist Carleton Coon designated five groups of Homo sapiens: Caucasoid, Mongoloid (indigenous peoples of American and East Asian) Australoid (indigenous people of Australia) and two types of Negroids - Capoid and Congoid (South Africa and Congo). Modern science rejects this classification.

The abovementioned typologies were created before the research done by Mendel and Darwin. Therefore, they do not correspond to modern principles of natural selection. According to a Mendelian principle, there are no sets of traits specific for different races. Also, one cannot always find, for example, a combination of blonde hair and blue eyes; nor is a skin color always linked to the color of hair, but rather these traits are independent of one another.

In 1854, Josiah Nott and George Gliddon published their book *Types of Mankind* which promoted “polygenism” - the idea that human races are distinct species having originated separately. Proponents of polygenism were confronted by numerous opponents. The year 1972 saw the publication of “The Apportionment of Human Diversity,” an analysis of genetic data for many different blood types. The evolutionary biologist and geneticist Richard Lewontin asserted that the genetic differences among “races” were small compared to the genetic diversity among members of a single “race.” Subsequent studies affirm these results.⁵

Racial classification was a weapon in the hands of the powerful for years, used to achieve political, economic and social aims. In the late 1880s, the biologist Francis Galton and his followers pioneered a movement called “eugenics”. Scientists pursued the aim of ‘improving’ the human race by selective breeding. Later, the Nazis used the ideology of “racial purity” to justify forced sterilization of people and the Holocaust. The Nazi regime took the lives of millions of people, including Jews, Roma and homosexuals.

Racial classification of people is rejected today. “Race” is a special social and political construct. Consequently, the use of racial typologies in describing phenotypical, physiological or intellectual characteristics of humans is no longer considered ethical.⁶

⁵ See Alan H. Goodman, Yolanda T. Moses, and Joseph L. Jones, *Race: are we so different?* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10634642>

⁶ Materials on this topic are available in the documentary series *RACE—The Power of an Illusion*, authors: Othering and Belonging Institute; California Newsreel, Barkley University, The American Culture Center <https://www.racepowerofanillusion.org/videos/measuring-genetic-variation-between-groups>



As early as in the 19th – 20th centuries, the American sociologist Edward Du Bois asserted that what was used for the biological explanation of “race” was in fact cultural and social differences. He even opposed racial categorization into “whites” and “blacks” and believed that such typology ignored cultural and biological diversity.

While talking about human beings as a species, some scholars proposed to replace “race” with the term “population.” In their opinion, this term better describes the genetic differences on the level of the individual and population. The idea of replacing “race” with “population” was proposed by pioneers of the “new physical anthropology,” namely Sherwood Washburn, Theodosius Dobzhansky, and Julian Huxley after 1950. According to their interpretation, a “population” is a group of individuals potentially capable of interbreeding due to shared geographic proximity, language, ethnicity, culture, and other characteristics. Members of the same population may have many genetic traits in common (and, as a result, many phenotypic traits that may or may not be visible).⁷

⁷ See, Michael B. C. Rivera, *Race and Human Variation* (University of Cambridge, 2019) <https://www.dw.com/downloads/53790471/race-and-human-variation-by-michael-b.c>

Scientific Evidence on the Subject of “Race”



Today not only social scientists but also biologists and genetics reject the racial classification of people. Numerous papers have been published on this topic in scientific magazines, where the absolute majority of scholars assert that racial categories are erroneous, do not describe genetic diversity and should no longer be used.⁸

In March 2018, National Geographic dedicated the entire edition to the topic of races: how “race” divides, defines and groups people.⁹

The author Elizabeth Kolbert provides an extensive recount of the emergence and interpretations of the idea of races. Our species, *Homo sapiens*, originated in Africa. The most recent fossil, found in Morocco, suggests that an anatomically modern human appeared 300,000 years ago. For the next 200,000 years, humans remained in Africa, but during that period, groups began to migrate to different parts of the continent, became isolated from one another and found new populations.

Genetic variations in humans, like in all species, are the result of evolution. Random mutation is one such evolutionary process - tiny tweaks to DNA. Mutations occur at a more or less constant rate and the longer a group persists, transmitting genes from generation to generation, the more these genes will mutate. Meanwhile, the longer two groups are isolated from each other, the more distinctive tweaks they will acquire.

8 See, “Race Is a Social Construct, Scientists Argue: Racial categories are weak proxies for genetic diversity and need to be phased out,” *Scientific American*, 2016, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/race-is-a-social-construct-scientists-argue/?fbclid=IwAR3uHiTivt6chUd08hjd3Gc0Kyq3hxAuX4rD1NBrt-5jt9oQR2p8GlfgTEsE>

9 See, Elizabeth Kolbert, “The Race Issue, There’s No Scientific Basis for Race—It’s a Made-Up Label,” *National Geographic*, March 12, 2018, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/04/race-genetics-science-africa/>

Modern humans have lived in Africa the longest. They have had plenty of time to evolve enormous genetic diversity, which also extends to skin color. Researchers who study this topic sometimes use Africa's linguistic diversity, which consists of more than 2,000 languages, as a guide.

DNA is often compared to a text, with the letters denoting chemical bases: A for adenine, C for cytosine, G for guanine, and T for thymine. The human genome consists of three billion base pairs - page after page of As, Cs, Gs, and Ts - divided into roughly 20,000 genes. The tweak that gives East Asians thicker hair is a single base change in a single gene, from a T (thymine) to a C (cytosine).

Similarly, the mutation that resulted in the lighter skin of Europeans is a single tweak in a gene known as SLC24A5 and which consists of roughly 20,000 base pairs. In one position, where most sub-Saharan Africans have a G (guanine), Europeans have an A (adenine).

Studying DNA from ancient bones, paleogeneticists found that the G-to-A substitution was introduced into Western Europe relatively recently, about 8,000 years ago, by people migrating from the Middle East, who also brought a new technology to Europe: farming. That means the inhabitants of Europe of that time - hunter-gatherers, who created the spectacular cave paintings at Lascaux, were probably brown, not white. Moreover, ancient DNA suggests that many of those dark-skinned Europeans also had blue eyes, a combination rarely seen today.

Consequently, as the majority of scientists believe, the genetics show that mixture and displacement have happened again and again and that our past perceptions of racial structures are almost always wrong. Moreover, although isolation has created differences among populations, migration and mixing have blurred or in some cases, erased these differences.

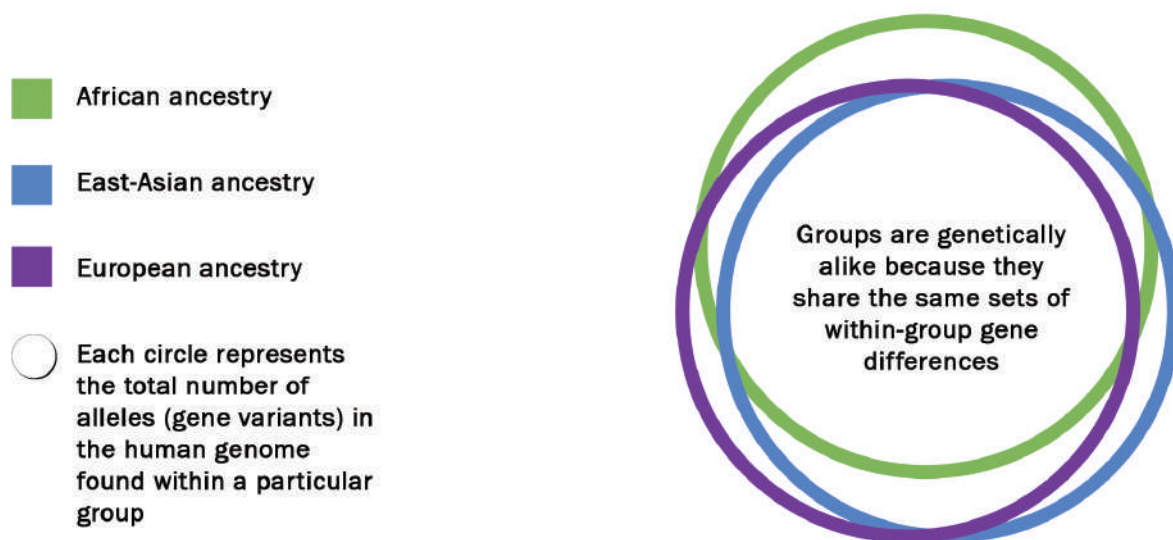
Studies of the human genome conducted in various parts of the world have shown that biologically homogenous groups of people do not exist and have never existed. In other words, socially constructed racial categories do not



correspond to the genetic characteristics of our species. The DNA of any two individuals is identical by more than 90%, which means that there is only a tiny difference in the DNA of individuals. According to studies, on average, 4.3% of genetic variability in humans occurs between continental populations (for example, Africa, Asia, Pacific Islands, Europe). In contrast, 95.7% of human genetic variation occurs between individuals within those same groups (Rosenberg, 2011; Rosenberg et al., 2002).¹⁰

See the Figure (Rosenberg, 2011).

Source: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/sce.21506#sce21506-bib-0134>



¹⁰ See, Brian M. Donovan Rob Semmens, Phillip Keck, Elizabeth Brimhall, K. C. Busch, Monica Weindling, Alex Duncan, Molly Stuhlsatz, Zoë Buck Bracey, Mark Bloom, Susan Kowalski, Brae Salazar, Toward a more humane genetics education: Learning about the social and quantitative complexities of human genetic variation research could reduce racial bias in adolescent and adult populations (Science Education, 2019), 103: 529–560, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.21506>

According to one scientific hypothesis, natural selection also played a decisive role in the emergence of differences in skin coloration. For instance, peoples inhabiting sunny, equatorial regions developed a dark skin to protect themselves against ultraviolet rays and their harmful effect. Over time, the distribution of skin colors happened through natural selection in accordance with the intensity of exposure to sunlight.

The palette of skin color in the African continent is far greater than anywhere else. People in Africa as well as African Americans are more diverse genetically than any other people across the world.¹¹

Besides evolutionary processes, the physical environment and culture have a great impact on human variations. Genetically similar individuals may develop different traits in different social and cultural environments. Cultural representations form our behavior, traditions, way of life, diets, living conditions and working environment. By the same token, these conditions also encourage or hamper human development. In the end, despite our physical or cultural differences, we all belong to the same species – populations of modern humans are the result of an exchange of an enormous number of genes. Physical differences, like height, color of skin, hair structure and facial features are easily discernable. Some distinctive characteristics are hereditary, while others are influenced by culture.

11 Adam Rutherford, “How to fight racism using science,” the Guardian, January, 2020
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/26/fight-racism-using-science-race-genetics-bigotry-african-americans-sport-linnaeus?fbclid=IwAR3PvYxGn3hdFDxIZgr-cj_IPSK5ywPF4DqC-4RESv86yyycS44zX-pbSGmk

In 2019, the Friedrich Schiller University Jena and the Board of the German Zoological Society adopted a declaration¹² saying that the classification of humanity into races has led to the persecution, enslavement and slaughter of millions of people. Even today, the term “race” is still frequently used in connection with human groups.

“However, there is no biological basis for this and there has never been one,” note the authors of the declaration, “So, let us... remind ourselves and others that it is racism that created races and that zoology/anthropology has played an inglorious part in producing supposedly biological justifications.”

¹² See, the Friedrich Schiller University Jena Declaration, 2019, https://www.uni-jena.de/en/190910_JE_en

In 1998, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) made a statement saying that:

“Evidence from the analysis of genetics indicates that... there is greater variation within ‘racial’ groups than between them... Throughout history whenever different groups have come into contact, they have interbred. The continued sharing of genetic materials has maintained all of humankind as a single species.”

“Thus ‘race’ was a mode of classification linked specifically to peoples in the colonial situation. It subsumed a growing ideology of inequality devised to rationalize European attitudes and treatment of the conquered and enslaved peoples. Proponents of slavery in particular during the 19th century used “race” to justify the retention of slavery.”

“Racial myths bear no relationship to the reality of human capabilities or behavior. Scientists today find that reliance on such folk beliefs about human differences in research has led to countless errors.”¹³

¹³ See, the full text of the statement at: <https://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>

The American Association of Physical Anthropologists (AAPA) has also issued a statement on Race and Racism (1996).

“‘Race’ does not provide an accurate representation of human biological variation. It was never accurate in the past, and it remains inaccurate when referencing contemporary human populations. Humans are not divided biologically into distinct continental types or racial genetic clusters.”¹⁴

¹⁴ See, the full text at: <https://physanth.org/about/position-statements/aapa-statement-race-and-racism-2019/?fbclid=IwAR3hIGtszkUk89mbdzzXJj544bWZB1XT-ImcwoZrVSJzYfpJHGgxKDyi3x8>

Why and In What Sense is the Term “Race” Used in Legal Documents?



If the majority of scientists agree that the term is outdated, racist and un-academic, why then is it still found in numerous legal documents, including international acts and declarations?

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was adopted in 1965, according to which, “racial discrimination” is any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, national or ethnic origin.

However, the word “race” in the Declaration has a different connotation and meaning from that in racial typology. Hence, in the Declaration, “race” is used **to describe discrimination on the ground of race, and not to denote racial differences.**

This is what EU directives say, for example, the Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000¹⁵ when implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

“The European Union rejects theories which attempt to determine the existence of separate human races. The use of the term “racial origin” in this Directive does not imply an acceptance of such theories.”

¹⁵ See, Council Directive, “Implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin,” 2000/43/EC, June 29, 2000, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32000L0043&fbclid=IwAR0c-UAAjULWADCKLtkGYDq4nPEgiAWRC3st4axpRpwkctUmyT2VcHfybV8>

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) explains its position regarding the term “race” in its Recommendation No. 7 on National Legislation to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (2002)¹⁶.

According to the Recommendation, “Since all human beings belong to the same species, the **ECRI rejects theories based on the existence of different “races”**. However, in this Recommendation the ECRI uses this term in order to ensure that those persons who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to “another race” are not excluded from the protection provided for by the legislation.”

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) has developed guidelines for educators on countering intolerance and discrimination. In this document, the word “race” is used in quotation marks to denote discrimination and intolerance on this ground.¹⁷

Consequently, the term “race” must be interpreted in accordance with international human rights standards.¹⁸

Every time the term “race” is used in a legal and human rights context, it implies discrimination, an artificially created distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference on this ground, and not a biological or genetic trait.

16 Amended in 2017; available at: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-7-revised-on-national-legislatio/16808b5aae>

17 Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, OSCE/ODIHR, Council of Europe, UNESCO, 2011, <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/4/2/84495.pdf>

18 See, EU Human Rights Guidelines on Non-discrimination in External Action, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6337-2019-INIT/en/pdf?fbclid=IwAR0bazHZNv1LjmGDqODf49gBqRTYo53ewLb-fn-l52A7pL6RH0JngGPpkuw8>

In 2018, the word “race” was removed from the Constitution of France as outdated and racist in itself. After the George Floyd killing in the USA in 2020, the Parliament of Germany started a debate on the removal of the word “race” from the Constitution of Germany, due to its racist connotation.¹⁹ This issue has aroused a vast array of different opinions. For example, the proponents of intersectional²⁰ approaches do not welcome the idea of removing “race” as a legal and analytical category, and assert that it is an important analytical variable for identifying structural racism. Moreover, it is postulated that if we exclude it from legislation, then victims of racism might find it harder to seek justice.

On 8 December 2021, the ECRI delivered its opinion on the matter and the concept of “racialisation” at the 87th plenary meeting.²¹

The ECRI noted, that the term “race” was to be deleted as a ground for discrimination in existing constitutional or other legal provisions in some Council of Europe member states. However, the ECRI considered it important to keep “race” in the list of grounds falling within its mandate in order to ensure

19 See, Volker Witting, “‘Race’ has no place in the German constitution — or does it?”, DW, June 13, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/race-has-no-place-in-the-german-constitution-or-does-it/a-53790056>

20 An understanding of identity that acknowledges the existence of multiple and overlapping aspects of identity (for example, it studies not only problems of black people but also other aspects of identity such as sexual orientation, religious belief, gender which may make systemic, structural discrimination against an individual more severe).

21 See: The ECRI’s opinion on the concept of “racialisation” (adopted at the ECRI’s 87th plenary meeting on 8 December 2021) <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-opinion-on-the-concept-of-racialisation/1680a4dcc2>

that all persons who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to “another race” are not excluded from the protection provided for by law and other standards. The ECRI underlined once again, that in its adopted texts references to “race” do not correspond to any existing personal biological characteristic.

Against this background, the ECRI welcomed the usage of a new term “racialisation”. “According to its proponents, it provides for an insight into the social and ideological processes that develop the stereotyping and reductive understanding of diverse human identities in racial terms as an exercise of power. In their view, human populations (identified by, for example, phenotype or cultural identifiers) are ascribed – through a process of racialisation – certain characteristics and attributes that are presented as being innate to all members of each group concerned. Regardless of where one is from and of personal circumstances, once identified or perceived as a member of a group, one is deemed as embodying characteristics based on, for instance, skin colour, ethnic or national origin or religion inherent to all members of that group. This process is therefore described as turning a diverse set of people into an allegedly homogeneous group, whose members are presented as “Other”.”

The ECRI noted, that in case of proper usage and contextualization, the concept of “racialisation” can help to understand better, expose further and address in a more proactive manner the very conditions that allow racist thinking, discourse and practices to take root and spread in today’s Europe and beyond.

What does Georgian legislation say about racial discrimination?

Article 11 of the **Constitution of Georgia** prohibits discrimination on the ground of race and skin color.

The **Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination** lists race and skin color among the grounds of discrimination.

The **Criminal Code of Georgia** determines “racial discrimination” as a type of crime while a **motive of intolerance**, including on the **basis of race**, as an aggravating circumstance for liability for all crimes envisaged in the Code.

How is “Race” Interpreted in School Textbooks and Curricula of Different Countries?



In 2017, The American Biology Teacher, a journal of the US National Association of Biologists, published a scientific article, “Teaching Race (Bioculturally) Matters: A Visual Approach for College Biology Courses”.²²

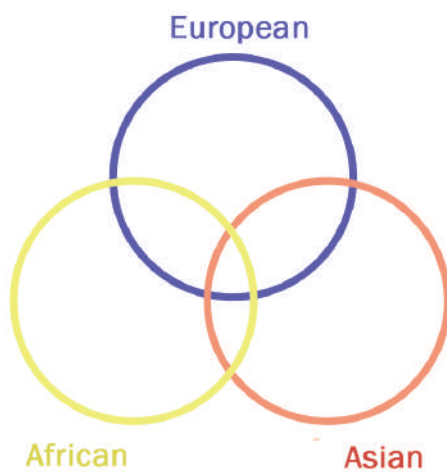
The author of the article notes that when teaching about race, three factors must be emphasized:

- 1) The idea of biologically distinct races is not supported by research;
- 2) Yet, social and cultural constructions of race are real.
- 3) Race is not biologically determined, but racism has impacts on our biology.

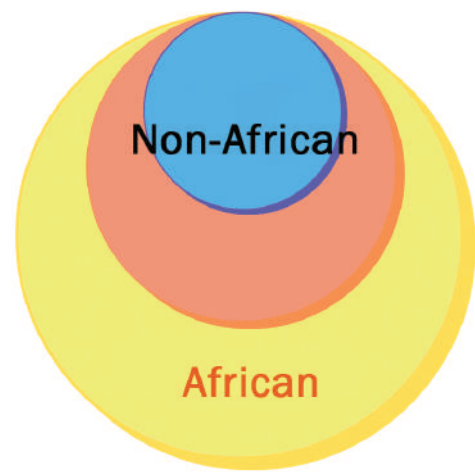
According to the author, it should be explained to schoolchildren that physical features (phenotypes) are complex traits affected by genetic potential (genes), interaction with the physical environment (environment),²³ and human behaviors (culture). The figure below shows genetic variation globally versus how we interpret genetic differences based on physical characteristics.

²² See, Amelia Hubbard, “Teaching Race (Bioculturally) Matters: A Visual Approach for College Biology Courses,” The American Biology Teacher, 79(7), (September 2017): 516–524.

²³ See, Guns, Germs and Steel, by an American geographer, historian and anthropologist Jared Diamond, 1997. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2005/07/news-guns-germs-steel-jared-diamond-interview/>; <https://jamesclear.com/book-summaries/guns-germs-and-steel>.



How **we** imagine
genetic variation



How it is
really like

Source:

<https://online.ucpress.edu/abt/article/79/7/516/18947/Teaching-Race-Biocultural-ly-Matters-A-Visual>

National Association of Biology Teachers

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) has prepared a guide for school teachers on how to discuss and teach racism. This document underlines that racial categories shall not be used for indicating genetic and biological differences²⁴

²⁴ See, Race: Joseph Jones, Mary Margaret Overbey, Alan Goodman, Carol Mukhopadhyay, Yolanda Moses and Amy Beckrich, A Teacher's Guide for Middle School (American Anthropological Association, 2007) <https://www.understandingrace.org/resources/pdf/racemiddleschoolteachersguide.pdf>



The **National Council for the Social Studies** believes that racism must be discussed at schools, but that race should be interpreted as a social construct, and not as a biological reality.²⁵

There is intense debate in European scientific circles on how to provide knowledge and information about race and racism to schoolchildren.

Great Britain's national geography curriculum does not contain either the term “race” or the concept of race²⁶ According to the **French** national curriculum, the term “race” is not part of the curriculum and only the term “racial discrimination” is used in history and civil education programs.

Racial theories are not taught in **Germany**. However, an intensive discussion is underway on how to raise the awareness of racism and races as scientifically wrong classification among schoolchildren²⁷ For example, within the framework of the Global Development in Middle School – GEMS project, the Pedagogical State Institute Rheinland-Pfalz (which is subordinated to the

25 See, LaGarrett J. King, Amanda E. Vickery, Genevieve Caffrey, “A Pathway to Racial Literacy: Using the LETS ACT Framework to Teach Controversial Issues,” National Council for the Social Studies (December 2018):36, <https://www.socialstudies.org/social-education/82/6/pathway-racial-literacy-using-lets-act-framework-teach-controversial-issues>

26 See, National Curriculum in England, Geography programmes of study: key stages 1, 2, 3, (Crown copyright 2013), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239044/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Geography.pdf
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239087/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_Geography.pdf

27 See, a guide for teachers and pupil prepared by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung/bpb), Themenblätter im Unterricht Nr. 110, Alltäglicher Rassismus, September 2017, <https://www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/themenblaetter/>

Ministry of Education) has published a guide for pupils on interdisciplinary learning of race and racism.²⁸ The guide underlines that races may be used for the classification of animal species, but not humans. The document contains exercises for teachers and pupils on how to better understand the absurdity of racial classification of people and the results of racism.

The textbooks contain exercises that require pupils to characterize a population by racial structures, use outdated classification, and describe people by races.

²⁸ See, Pädagogische Landesinstitut Rheinland-Pfalz, RASSISMUS – GRUNDLAGEN, AUSPRÄGUNGEN, FOLGEN, Fächerübergreifendes Projekt in Biologie und Sozialkunde Klassenstufe 10 Gymnasium zum Orientierungsrahmen für den Lernbereich Globale Entwicklung, (PL,2016), https://static.bildung-rp.de/pl-materialien/RP-079955885_Rassismus_Heft_4_2016.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1AlW-9u-wbkEJJeb6ZkhOZnhTKUdq9jI7OS2c10Kb-zL346mynglPurR4Y

Why Racial Classification Should Not Be Taught at Schools

According to the Law of Georgia on General Education (Article 3), one of the basic state policy goals in the field of general education is to create conditions for “developing pupils into free persons with national and universal human values” and to this end, the educational environment must be conducive to “forming civil awareness based on liberal and democratic values, ensuring respect for cultural values by the pupils and understanding rights and obligations before their family, society, state and community.”

Moreover, according to the ordinance of the Government of Georgia on national objectives of general education, “schools should give adults the skills of human rights protection and respecting of human dignity, which he or she would use to preserve their own or others’ identities.”

In its Recommendation No. 10 on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education (2006)²⁹, **the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)** calls on the states to remove from textbooks any racist material or material that encourage stereotypes, intolerance or prejudice against any minority group; the education system must equip pupils with critical thinking skills so that they become aware of and react to stereotypes or intolerant elements contained in material; and that the states must ensure that school textbooks are regularly monitored so as to remove any racist or discriminatory elements.

It is important that racial theories and the term “race” (in the meaning of human classification) must be removed not for the sake of political correctness but because modern science rejects racial classification and agrees that races as geographically separate combinations of genes do not exist.

Such theories provide pupils with false, unscientific information, contribute to the forming of incorrect, stereotyped and discriminatory attitudes and values, and run counter to general education goals and fundamental human rights.

²⁹ See, the ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No 10 on combating Racism and Racial Discrimination, <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-10-on-combating-racism-and-racism/16808b5ad5>

Topics Related to Migration and Migrants in School Textbooks

Racist narratives are often related to hostile attitudes towards migrants. Those people who oppose migration, often have xenophobic and racist notions about people of certain origin and citizenship. In this context, school textbooks reflect societal attitudes. Topics related to global migration and migrants may sometimes contain stereotypes that incite xenophobia and Islamophobia and portray migrants and refugees, especially, undocumented migrants in a negative light.

Migration flows to Europe were regulated to some extent since the 2000s; however, with the armed conflict erupting in Syria in 2011, hundreds of thousands of migrants fled to European countries to find refuge there. This entailed economic, political as well as integration-related crises, which are often collectively referred to as a “migrant crisis.” A wave of populism and emboldening of extreme right-wing political parties gave a new spur to anti-migrant, Islamophobic and xenophobic sentiments.

Xenophobic and violent groups in Georgia often target representatives from Asian and African countries. A prevailing trend in Georgian society is to portray migrants as criminals, sexual offenders, swindlers and deceitful and present migration as a process of the Islamization of Europe. Moreover, an anti-Western connotation has been attached to the topic of migration in the context of Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic integration – groups spreading disinformation often interpret the Open Door Policy of the European Union, which is designed to solve the migrant and refugee problem, as binding on the countries associated with the EU, including Georgia. Consequently, the process of Euro-Atlantic integration has been erroneously equated with the obligation to admit migrants and the threat of cultural assimilation.

Bearing in mind both global and local contexts, when discussing migration-related topics with school students, it is important to provide correct information and reliable sources about the phenomenon of migration. When speaking about modern migration processes, we must avoid spreading such stereotypes that may foment Islamophobic and xenophobic attitudes.



It is also important that students realize that migration is a determining factor in human and cultural evolution. Throughout evolution and the existence of humankind, human beings migrate – it is a natural and indelible part of being a human.

In addition, it is important to put migration-related topics in the context of human rights. Everyone has rights regardless of their migration status. All people, including legal and undocumented migrants, have fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed under international documents and national legislation. In Georgia, all foreigners are equal before the law irrespective of their origin, social and property status, race, national belonging, sex, education, language, religion, political or other opinions, profession or other characteristics. Georgia protects the life, privacy, rights and freedoms of foreigners on its territory. Meanwhile, Georgia’s migration policy is defined in its state migration strategy for 2021-2030 which recognizes the importance of immigration for the development of the country.

For example, a chapter on migration in a school textbook may contain the following topics for discussion:

- Launch of a discussion on the topic of migration – what can students recall about migration, the parties involved in migration, causes of migration;
- History of migration – examples of migration since prehistoric times to date;
- Refugees and asylum seekers – why do people leave their homelands to seek asylum in other countries? – social and economic reasons of migration, discrimination, persecution, armed conflicts and other factors;
- How may a country benefit economically and culturally from migration?

Stereotypes, wrong perceptions or incorrect statistics about migrants are often spread across the world, including in Georgia, and generalized to a particular group as a whole. It is therefore important to be aware of these stereotypes and to be able to debunk them.

There are a number of widely spread stereotypes, wrong perceptions, or false and improper generalizations in Georgian society:³⁰

X *Migrants endanger cultural identity and the economy.*

Some political parties and xenophobic groups exploit this argument thereby stirring up hatred towards migrants. In reality, migration contributes to the diversification of society. Migration and foreign investments create new jobs and help economies grow.

As part of the Kremlin's disinformation campaign in Georgia, such myths have been spread by pro-Russian, Georgian-language media and political groups for many years now. It aims to divert attention away from the occupation of the country, social and political problems and to create enemy images of particular countries and ethnicities.

Examples of migration and the contribution of migrants:

- Some 70,000 - 100,000 years ago, Homo sapiens began migrating from the African continent towards Europe and Asia. The modern man and civilization have evolved as a result of migration and mobility.
- The United States of America, one of the most developed and strongest states in the world, was founded and built by migrants.
- Migrants bring new skills, experience and knowledge. In 2020, a vaccine against COVID-19 was developed as a result of cooperation between two companies - BioNTech and Pfizer. BioNTech was founded by a married couple of Turkish descent who are citizens of Germany.

³⁰ On this topic, please, see the TDI video at: <http://tdi.ge/ge/multimedia/gavrcelebuli-mitebi-migranteb-sa-da-migraciaze>



● A positive example of migration in the history of Georgia is the emergence of German settlements in the 19th century. The Germans opened a brewery as well as a mineral water factory, launched the production of artificial ice, and made a huge contribution to the development of architecture. In general, Georgian cuisine, literature, architecture and clothing are all perfect manifestations of the positive influence of diversity and interaction with other cultures.

✗ *Migration is illegal. Migrants live illegally in Georgia.*

Migration is not always illegal. According to the definition of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), migration is a movement of a person either across an international border, or within a state. This includes the movement of refugees and forcibly displaced persons as well as labor and economic migrations. The majority of immigrants in Georgia are here to either **study or work**.

For example, over the period between 2014 and 1 August 2020, Georgia issued 27,080 **student residence** permits. More than half of those permits, 15,328, accounted for students from India. Most of the students arriving in Georgia come here to obtain medical education.

As regards **work residence permit**, over the period between 2014 and 1 August 2020, a total of 44,269 work residence permits were issued in Georgia (28% of all permits issued). Of those permits, the largest share, 9,598, was issued to citizens of Turkey. However, since 2018 the number of work permits has plummeted assumedly because of the decline in foreign direct investments to Georgia.³¹

31 Immigrant Integration Policy and Practice in Georgia – Achievements and Challenges. International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2021, <https://bit.ly/3klSY8E>

X *Iranians, Turks and Indians own a chunk of real estate in Georgia*

In reality, in 2015-2018, some 40% of all agricultural and non-agricultural real property owned by foreign citizens in Georgia belonged to **citizens of Russia**, according to official data.³²

As regards permanent residence, a total of 14,722 permanent residence permits were issued in Georgia over the period between 2014 and 2020. The highest share of those permits was issued to **citizens of the Russian Federation** – 3,903, followed by citizens of Azerbaijan – 3,258 permits, and citizens of Armenia – 2,058 permits.

X *Migrants in developed countries basically represent cheap workforce and perform only low-paid labor. It is extremely difficult for representatives of Asian and African countries to integrate and they do not accept cultural norms of the host countries.*

The opinion that migrants from poor countries go to developed countries and perform unqualified jobs is a widely spread one. Furthermore, with the onset of the migrant crisis, attitudes towards refugees and undocumented migrants who escaped political persecution, armed conflicts or unbearable situations in their home countries and found refuge in European countries have become increasingly hostile. It is these very attitudes and rhetoric that populist groups and extreme right-wing political parties in Europe build their agenda on. They assert that migrants pose a threat to their culture and traditions and do not want to integrate into a host country.

³² See, the article of Myth Detector, <https://www.mythdetector.ge/ka/myth/2-miti-utskhoelebis-mier-sakartveloshi-udzravi-konebis-plobis-shesakheb>



This stereotype was challenged by the street artist Banksy when he created his famous artwork on a wall of the so-called Jungle refugee camp in 2015. The stencil depicts Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, wearing his signature turtleneck. However, in this case, Steve Jobs is depicted as a Syrian refugee with a large sack thrown over his shoulder and the original Apple computer in his hand.

The graffiti is a clear reference to Steve Jobs's background and ancestry – he was the son of a Syrian migrant who moved to the United States after World War II. In a rare statement which accompanies his work, Banksy wrote: “We’re often led to believe migration is a drain on the country’s resources but Steve Jobs was the son of a Syrian migrant. Apple is the world’s most profitable company, it pays over \$7billion a year in taxes - and it only exists because they allowed in a young man from Homs.” Steve Jobs’s father was born in Homs, a city in Syria. Later, Steve was given up for adoption in San Francisco.

Source: WideWalls: <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/banksy-steve-jobs-calais>

Terms Frequently Used in Textbooks and Their Correct Definitions

Materials about migrants living in Georgia produced by media organizations in partnership with TDI (Only materials with English translation/subtitles included):

- Kutaisi Post: “I love Georgia as if it were my homeland” – a story of Iraqi students from Kutaisi: <https://cutt.ly/yTsIMsr>
- On.ge: “From Iran to Georgia – what Farzan and Fujan went through and what they dream of”: <https://cutt.ly/UTsIJsZ>
- Batumelebi: The story of Jonas Shaik, a 35-year-old Belgian from the village of Tago: <https://cutt.ly/GTsIOaV>
- Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: Mariam’s “absolute freedom” – a story of Iranian Mariam Sharif: <https://cutt.ly/9TslyLL>
- JAMNews: Nigerian students speaking about racism and friendship they found in Georgia: <https://cutt.ly/JTsIa8B>
- Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: “PEGAH – light before sunrise” – the life of an Iranian girl in Georgia: <https://cutt.ly/fTsU23M>

Video-stories:

- [George from Cameroon](#)
- [Tarashi from Sri Lanka](#)
- [Nigerian girl in Tbilisi](#)
- [Soroush from Iran](#)
- [Darispan's Happiness](#)

Photo-stories:

- [Nigerian Protestant Church in Tbilisi](#)
- [Luka: Images of Diversity](#)
- [Aaron Shikamaru Charles](#)
- [Oyinlande and Stephen](#)
- [Aluth Avurudda](#)



Terms Frequently Used in Textbooks and Their Correct Definitions

Aborigine – use of the term “aborigine” in reference to the indigenous peoples of Australia is considered outdated, on the one hand, and insensitive, on the other. The word “aborigine” has Latin roots and means indigenous people. However, indigenous people often find this term offensive due to the negative connotations attached to it, especially when used as a noun (in contrast to aboriginal people). “Indigenous people” is a neutral term.

Illegals – the term is unethical and is wrongly used to describe illegal migration and illegal migrants. The terms used in reference to illegal migrants are: “persons without documents,” “undocumented migrant.”

Indians – the name “Indians” is an insensitive and wrong term arising from an error made by Columbus. The correct usage is “Native Americans” or “Indigenous peoples of the Americas,” the terms with which they call themselves. There is also a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

The Métis – the Métis are polyethnic Indigenous peoples in Canada and the Great Lake region. The Métis are distinct people with their culture and language. The Canadian constitution recognizes them as a distinct group of indigenous peoples.

Mulatto – is a term of racial classification used to refer to people of mixed African and European ancestry.

Negro – is one of most vivid examples of how an established term may take on a negative connotation in modern colloquial language. While etymologically “negro” refers to skin color, in the collective conscience it has a negative, belittling meaning. For example, the phrase: “are we negroes or what” or another one: “have turned into negroes” are both expression of slavery and oppression, racism, a humiliating status. Hence, instead of negro, we must use “black”, “people of color” “dark-skinned” or “Afro-American.” This recommendation does not apply to sources or fiction but to editorial narrative, comments and questions.

Note: Not all blacks should be called African American, but only those who are Americans and have African descent. For instance, a citizen of Nigeria who is living in Georgia is not an African American.