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PREFACE FOR THE PEER TOOLKIT

For grassroots NGOs especially minority organisations to have a real affect and make a real difference to peoples lives, it is critical that they are empowered with the crucial NGO campaigning skills – political lobbying, fundraising, networking, effective media relationships – combined with a firm knowledge base.

As an MEP with an NGO background I'm delighted to introduce the PEER toolkit and am very happy to continue the strong link that exists between ENAR and the Anti-Racist Inter Group of members of the European Parliament who are committed to the excellent work done by ENAR and its associated organisations.

Why do minority organisations active in the field of anti-discrimination work need to improve their key campaigning skills?

The answer is perhaps obvious. We are now in an exciting legislative period. Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty has ensured that race equality and anti-discrimination directives in the field of employment must be enacted in all fifteen member states.

NGOs associated with ENAR were at the forefront of the campaign to make directives a reality. NGOs including minority organisations now have the critical task of ensuring that the legislation is transposed properly in the member states – and more importantly that it is properly enforced and implemented.

These are also the continuing challenges of asylum and immigration campaigns. Here the EU is moving towards common policies and increasing NGO input is vital for the debate.

NGOs are operating in an increasingly complex environment – more media outlets, the need to lobby politicians at national, EU and international levels, more complex inter-NGO networking. All of this comes against the backdrop of the needs to access often scare NGO funding.

A project, which aims to provide minority organisations with the skills they need to tackle these new challenges, is worthy of our fullest support

Claude Moraes MEP

Anti-Racist Intergroup, European Parliament



PREFACE

The European Network against Racism (ENAR) has carried out in 2001 and 2002, with the support of the European Commission – Directorate General Employment and Social Affairs, the project *'Paths for Empowerment of EU residents'* (PEER), in partnership with Centro di Iniziativa per l'Europa (CIE) from Italy, European Network of Women (ENOW) from Greece and Minority Rights Group International (MRG) from United Kingdom.

ENAR experience, as well as statistical evidence and daily life evidence, shows that discriminated against groups and "minorities" are underrepresented in the political decision making process on the EU and national level, as well as experiencing greater difficulties in participation to social, cultural and political life, comparing to mainstream "majorities".

Their crucial role in defining policies and legal measures to fight discrimination is therefore neglected and their valuable voice and expertise is wasted; although "minorities" organisations want to make themselves heard by decision makers, and decision makers need to listen.

PEER objective aimed to help in changing this situation improving specific skills to empower non-governmental organisations representing, in particular, persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities and elderly groups, in order to enhance their political participation.

The major visible outcome of the PEER project is the toolkit in front of you. This was possible through the support of numerous experts from throughout Europe whom we cordially thank for their contribution, support and fruitful discussions during the development process.

The implementation of empowerment training needs to take place was minority organisations work. Requirements of training on the EU, national or local level might need different approaches and the training might need to reflect specific situations of the countries, dynamics and legal possibilities.

ENAR and the partner organisations in the project would like to offer this toolkit to be used by NGOs and organisations, be further developed, modified and improved by the users according to their needs. We shall welcome feedback from its users.

Vera Egenberger

Director of ENAR