



PRESS RELEASE

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ENAR Shadow Report on racism: a Europe free from racism and discrimination is still distant

Ethnic and religious minorities in Europe continue to suffer from discrimination, prejudice and disadvantage on a daily basis in most if not all walks of life, from employment to education, from housing to policing. This is the worrying conclusion of ENAR's 2008 Shadow Report on racism in Europe¹.

Data collected by anti-racist civil society across the EU point to manifestations of racism in a broad range of areas, including employment, housing, education, health, policing, access to goods and services, and the media. It also identifies the Roma, migrants and religious minorities as particularly vulnerable to racism.

Ethnic minorities remained disproportionately affected by unemployment and employment under precarious conditions. Even when employed, they tend to face a glass ceiling effect with regard to career progression and occupy jobs that do not reflect their qualifications. In the Netherlands for instance, non-Western migrants "feel that they have to work harder than their indigenous counterparts to achieve the same labour market position" and "that they constantly have to demonstrate that they do not fit the - unfavourable - stereotypical image of their group". Racial discrimination in education manifested itself, amongst others, in the allocation of places in schools. The continuing increase in incidents of racially motivated crimes against minorities is another alarming finding.

The report shows some areas of improvement, such as the positive impact of EU anti-discrimination legislation in EU member states in terms of ensuring that racial discrimination is outlawed. However, the effectiveness of legislation varies from one member state to the other. In addition, increasing popularity of anti-immigrant parties in many countries, restrictive migration policies, a negative political and public discourse on migration, and a security focused agenda have had a detrimental impact on the integration of migrants and ethnic minorities in Europe.

Mohammed Aziz, ENAR President, said: "Unfortunately, anti-discrimination often remains a right on paper and ethnic minorities continue to face discrimination and exclusion. In the field of migration, the lack of political will and an essentially negative approach has meant migrants are often treated as second class persons. The report highlights the urgent need for a concerted effort across the EU to overcome barriers and challenges that hinder effective equality for all."

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of NGOs working to combat racism in all EU member states and represents more than 600 NGOs spread around the European Union. ENAR aims to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local/regional/national and European initiatives.

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¹ ENAR's Shadow Report draws on 22 national reports prepared by ENAR members across the European Union. It identifies communities vulnerable to racism and presents an overview of manifestations of racism in a range of areas, as well as an assessment of the legal and political context. The European report and national reports are available here: www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=15294&langue=EN.