



European Network Against Racism  
réseau européen contre le racisme

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Racism and discrimination still pervasive across Europe against backdrop of economic downturn**

**Brussels, 21 March 2012 – At a time of economic crisis, migrants and ethnic minorities are disproportionately affected by unemployment and precarious working conditions. Economic downturn also creates fears among the general public that incite racist behaviour, while it has led to financial cuts to anti-racism activities in many countries. These are some of the conclusions of ENAR's Shadow Report on racism in Europe 2010-2011, released on International Day Against Racism.**

Economic turmoil has resulted in increased unemployment across the board, but in particular for ethnic minorities. In Spain for instance, the highest unemployment rates are found among migrants from Morocco and Sub-Saharan countries (with figures close to 50% during the second quarter of 2010). Several countries also highlight the negative impact of financial cuts on anti-discrimination efforts. In Lithuania, for instance, the national anti-discrimination programme for 2009-2011 received less than 1% of the funding which was initially planned for 2010.

In addition, racially motivated violence committed both by neo-Nazi groups and other perpetrators is on the rise, in parallel to a growing success of far right parties and movements, for instance in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Hungary, Greece and Poland.

The report also highlights that people of African descent are particularly vulnerable to racism and racial discrimination in several EU Member States, and their visibility heightens this vulnerability. In the United Kingdom for instance, black people are at least six times more likely to be stopped and searched than a white person. In Latvia, most members of the African community hold university diplomas but few are able to find a job that corresponds to their educational level.

Although EU Member States have transposed EU anti-discrimination legislation into national law, few cases are brought forward and the legal provisions are often not implemented in practice. In most EU countries, there is also a shift towards more restrictive migration policies with states seeking to maintain more control of their borders, and of those seeking the right to reside within EU territory.

ENAR Chair Chibo Onyeji said: *"Today in particular, on International Day Against Racism, it is worrying to see that racism and discrimination continue to be so pervasive across the EU. Politicians must convey the message that equal access to jobs, housing and schooling are crucial to build a prosperous and cohesive society - all the more so in an economic crisis. We cannot afford to leave whole sections of the population on the sidelines."*

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**Notes to the editor:**

1. The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of more than 700 NGOs working to combat racism in all EU member states. ENAR aims to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals.
2. [ENAR's Shadow Report on racism in Europe](#) draws on 27 national shadow reports prepared by ENAR members. 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.
3. On 21 March 1960, 69 Black demonstrators were killed at a peaceful protest against apartheid laws in South Africa. As a result, 21 March was declared "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" by the UN in 1966.