ENAR’s 13-Point Call for Action to the Cyprus Presidency of the European Union
For building an equal Europe for all

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) welcomes the Cyprus Presidency of the European Union. The Cyprus Presidency comes at a crucial time, as Europe faces major challenges including a difficult economic situation related to the European sovereign debt crisis and tense debates about the future of the European social model. It is imperative that a purely economic analysis does not undermine the values of the Union. The Cyprus Presidency should ensure that the Europe 2020 Strategy effectively delivers inclusive growth and guarantees non-discrimination and fundamental rights for all.

ENAR’s most recent Shadow Reports on Racism in Europe highlight that racism remains a deep-rooted problem in the EU. With the increasing insecurity that people feel about their future, particularly in times of economic downturn, racist acts are likely to increase in the coming period. In this context, ENAR is strongly concerned about the progress made by far right ideologies resulting in racism and social exclusion in many EU Member States. A holistic approach is vital to respond to the challenges of creating a fairer Europe, where equality is a reality and the rights of all are fully recognised, respected, and fulfilled without discrimination. ENAR is confident that the Cyprus Presidency will show the necessary leadership to mainstream this vision.

13 actions for the Cyprus Presidency to contribute to building an equal Europe for all

1. **Lead the negotiations on the future multiannual financial framework to ensure sufficient funds will be allocated for programmes that foster equality and fundamental rights.** Social inclusion should be prioritised as one of the three priorities of the EU 2020 Strategy. In particular, ENAR urges the Presidency to back the allocation of at least 25% of the Cohesion Policy budget to the European Social Fund (ESF) as well as the earmarking of at least 20% of the ESF to social inclusion and poverty reduction. ENAR encourages the Presidency to support the inclusion of general ex-ante conditionalities for the use of EU Structural Funds, to ensure that funding never goes toward programmes serving to discriminate or result in further segregating and marginalising disadvantaged groups.

2. **Ensure that the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders are respected within Europe and that a policy to provide support and assistance on human rights defenders is developed within the EU.** ENAR is concerned about the situation of human rights defenders working on migrant, asylum seekers, refugees and ethnic minority related issues. As highlighted in ENAR’s Shadow Reports, the situation of human rights defenders in Europe has become increasingly difficult in recent years. Human rights defenders are targeted, harassed, and falsely prosecuted in various European countries. However, the EU has only taken concrete steps to enhance the protection of human rights defenders in non-EU countries. The criminalisation of human rights and migrants’ rights defenders is a European problem and should be addressed as such. ENAR calls for concrete and effective actions to be taken to ensure EU support and protection of human rights defenders within the EU.

3. **Apply a positive approach to migration when leading negotiations linked with EU migration law and policy.** ENAR reminds the Cyprus presidency of the dangers involved in “criminalizing” migration and referring to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as a so-called “threat” to society, responsible for unemployment or as “illegal” and the discriminatory effects of such narrative. The Presidency should also discourage the externalisation of EU migration policies and intentions to manage migration from the countries of origin, as this serves as a type of pre-selection process, which effectively discriminates along varying criterion. The Presidency should lead the negotiations on migration based on respect of human rights and the right to equality for all.

4. **Ensure that the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) is truly a fair and effective and incorporate the exchange of good practices and trainings on human rights of asylum seekers and refugees.** ENAR reiterates the need for fair and effective asylum procedures, including interview proceedings, the consideration of objective
and reliable country of origin information and respect of the right to an effective remedy for all applicants in full equality. Moreover, particular topics must be addressed in awareness and sensitivity raising trainings, such as the particulars of gender and equality mainstreaming in the interview proceedings.

5. **Take the lead in enhancing Member States’ cooperation to improve integration policies and develop a progressive narrative on equality and diversity.** ENAR welcomes the Presidency’s intention to focus on promoting solidarity and fostering social cohesion, essential elements to achieve a better future for social Europe.

6. **Strengthen the Social Pillar of the Europe 2020 strategy.** ENAR is concerned that a greater focus is placed on economic policies and less focus is allotted to reaching the poverty target and tackling the social consequences of the crisis. This particularly affects migrants and ethnic minorities. We urge the Cyprus Presidency to ensure that the targets set on inclusive growth and the mainstreaming of equality and non-discrimination in the National Reform Programmes are taken just as seriously as purely economic issues.

7. **Ensure that the Social OMC instrument will remain a strong tool to enhance the social inclusion of minorities and migrants.** ENAR recommends including migrants and ethnic and religious minorities in national social reports as a specific target group, and to ensure that targets are disaggregated, where possible, to examine the particular situation of migrants and ethnic and religious minorities.

8. **Take the lead in ensuring the adoption of the proposed Equality Directive, filling the existing gaps in the legal anti-discrimination framework.** It is crucial to sustain the political will to reach the adoption of a Directive that is consistent with the Race Equality Directive by engaging in constructive negotiations in a transparent manner, open to the input of human rights and anti-discrimination experts including civil society.

9. **Demand full compliance with existing Equality Directives in all Member States.** The Race Equality and Employment Equality Directives (2000/43 and 2000/78) have had a significant impact on the European anti-discrimination landscape. Nonetheless, the quality of transposition and implementation remains problematic in most Member States. Pressure from the Presidency could be instrumental in ensuring the enforcement of EU legislation.

10. **Strengthen the process of the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies to achieve real policy results.** Efficient implementation of the EU Framework must be ensured through national strategies and its monitoring. While social and economic inclusion is important, the strategies should also include fundamental rights and anti-discrimination measures and involve Roma civil society in the process.

11. **Take a leadership role in ensuring that the European Year 2012 for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations raises awareness to the situation of older migrants and ethnic minorities in EU countries.** Including the needs of older migrants and ethnic minorities within all relevant policies is crucial. This is necessary because the population of older people with a migrant background is growing and necessitates specific solutions that respect and value different cultures, religions and beliefs. ENAR suggests the Presidency use the European Year 2012 to tackle the needs of older ethnic minorities and migrants and to promote their active ageing.

12. **Ensure that the Seasonal Workers Directive guarantees equal treatment regarding working conditions, social rights and access to legal redress.** Decent working conditions and comprehensive social protection measures should be provided. Third-country nationals who already reside in an EU Member State and who do not have access to the labour market should also be included in the scope of the Directive.

13. **Ensure that the Victim's Package provide needed support to victims of hate crime, regardless of legal status.** The Package should dedicate particular attention to vulnerable groups to hate crime including ethnic and religious minorities and migrants. Furthermore, any racist act of violence in any EU Member State should be systematically condemned by the EU Presidency and addressed in the Council.

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The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of organisations working to combat racism across Europe. ENAR combats racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, promotes equal treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and links national & European initiatives.

欧洲网络反对种族主义

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