

ENAR's 9-Point Call for Action to the Belgian Presidency of the European Union

For a Europe that is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, and respect for human rights...
... including the rights of persons belonging to minorities

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) welcomes the upcoming Belgian Presidency of the European Union. The Belgian Presidency comes at a crucial time, as Europe faces major challenges including high unemployment rates, poverty, inequality and discrimination. In this context, debates on the future of the European social model are fraught and strenuous, and it is imperative that a purely economic analysis does not undermine the values of the Union. **The Belgian presidency will have the opportunity to ensure that the Europe 2020 Strategy will effectively deliver inclusive growth and guarantee 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, and with the increasing insecurity that people feel about their future it is likely to increase in the coming period. In this context, ENAR is strongly concerned by the progress made by the far right in many EU Member States. Since the entry into force of the **Lisbon Treaty** provides a number of new mechanisms and increased opportunities to combat racism and xenophobia, **ENAR calls on the Belgian Presidency to ensure its full implementation to maximise its impact on fundamental rights and anti-racism.**

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 Belgian Presidency will show the necessary leadership to mainstream this vision.

9 actions for the Belgian Presidency to contribute to building an equal Europe for all...

1. **Take the lead in ensuring the adoption of a new Equality Directive filling the existing gaps in the legal anti-discrimination framework. It is crucial to maintain the political will to reach the adoption of a Directive** which is consistent with the Race Equality Directive. ENAR recommends in particular that multiple discrimination is provided for, the use of 'blanket exceptions' is avoided, and positive action is recognised as a vital tool in securing the right to equal treatment.
2. **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, and pressure from the Presidency could be instrumental in ensuring the enforcement of EU legislation.
3. **Develop strategies for the new European Employment Strategy to address the issues and challenges related to better participation of migrants and ethnic minorities in the labour market.** ENAR recommends in particular the disaggregation of relevant targets and indicators on migration-related grounds and the effective use of data that is already available. Insight into the specific barriers migrants

and ethnic & religious minorities face and strategies to overcome them should be offered in the EU integrated guidelines on employment. Furthermore, the issues of ethnic entrepreneurship, undocumented migrants in the informal economy, and the need to reduce early school leaving should be prioritised. Member States should be encouraged to collect data for monitoring the situation of migrants and ethnic & religious minorities.

4. **Ensure the adoption of effective tools to strengthen the Social Pillar of the Europe 2020 strategy.** The inclusive growth objective of the Europe 2020 strategy should be supported by strong implementation mechanisms. An effective platform against poverty should be set up to strengthen the social OMC and address current social realities in close cooperation with civil society. ENAR urges the Belgian presidency to ensure that the reflection on the establishment of targets and indicators continues and addresses the impediments that hinder the well-being of ethnic and religious minorities including migrants within the EU. ENAR recommends in particular to include migrants and ethnic & religious minorities in National Action Plans on Social Inclusion as a specific target group, to ensure that targets are disaggregated, where possible, to examine the situation of migrants and ethnic & religious minorities, and to give consideration to a number of data sources that can provide a better understanding of the situation of migrants and ethnic & religious minorities.
5. **Take a leadership role in ensuring a strong political legacy for the European Year 2010 Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, encompassing all aspects of the issue.** The legacy should consequently include awareness raising of the situation of disadvantaged ethnic and religious minorities and migrants experiencing poverty and social exclusion, as well as the reaffirmation that poverty and social exclusion are also caused by structural inequalities and discrimination, particularly in the fields of employment, education, and housing. Addressing the impact of legal status on situations of exclusion should be a priority, particularly in the case of migrants, refugees/asylum-seekers and Roma, Travellers and Sinti who are more likely to face multiple discrimination.
6. **Strengthen the process of the European platform for Roma inclusion to achieve real policy results that can lead to the development of an ambitious and comprehensive EU Framework Strategy on Roma Inclusion.** Growing anti-Roma sentiment and Romaphobia in Europe should be one of the core concerns of the Roma Platform as they are indicative of the levels of discrimination and exclusion still faced by the Roma. Therefore, any kind of anti-Roma attacks, murders and brutality by groups or even states should be systematically condemned by the Roma Platform itself, and by the EU Presidency.
7. **Pave the way for negotiations on a new European integration strategy grounded in principles of human rights and equality, and ensuring the promotion of positive values, conceptions, and principles about migration.** Special attention should be dedicated to developing the links between anti-discrimination, integration and social inclusion, in order to ensure coherent policy making at all levels.
8. **Take the lead to move forward on reaching an agreement on the Framework Directive on the basic socio-economic rights of all third country workers.** ENAR urges the Belgian Presidency to take action to address the shortfalls in the scope of this proposed Directive. It should also ensure that European migration and asylum policies respect all international human rights instruments and standards and take positive steps to ensure equal access to, and the effective enjoyment of, fundamental rights by third country nationals.
9. **Take a leadership role in promoting the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families by all European Union Member States.**

Additional details on these proposals for action are available in ENAR's Memorandum to the Trio of Presidencies published in February 2010.

The European Network against Racism (ENAR) includes some 700 NGOs working to combat racism in all EU Member States. ENAR is determined 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.