



FRA Press Release
Vienna, 20 December 2013

FRA report

Racism, discrimination, intolerance and extremism: Learning from experiences in Greece and Hungary

Racism, discrimination, extremism and intolerance currently pose a great challenge for the European Union. In a new report, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights examines the responses of two Member States, taking these countries as case studies to demonstrate the need for more targeted and effective measures to combat these phenomena throughout the EU. The report ends by proposing a number of steps to improve the situation.

Today's publication, a thematic situation report, also addresses a phenomenon currently unique to Greece and Hungary. This is the significant parliamentary presence of political parties standing for and promoting an extremist ideology that particularly targets irregular migrants (in Greece) and the Roma and Jews (in Hungary), and which are either themselves or have links to paramilitary organisations committing racially motivated acts of violence.

The EU and its Member States already have strong legislation in place to fight racism, intolerance and extremism. However, greater efforts are needed to ensure effective implementation. In addition, more needs to be done, particularly at local level, to foster social cohesion and increase trust in the police and other law enforcement authorities.

The overall aim of this report is to provide a better understanding of the barriers to combating racism and intolerance, and fulfilling fundamental rights throughout the EU. The proposals contained in the final section of the report are therefore relevant for all Member States when developing their own strategies for combating racist discrimination and violence, as well as the emergence of extremist ideologies on the political scene.

Key proposals suggest that EU Member States:

- Review their legislation to ensure that the formation of associations or political parties does not serve as a basis for promoting hatred and racist violence.
- Consider adopting national strategies to tackle racist and related crime, focusing on issues such as how to prevent hate crime, increase reporting, improve recording, prosecute hate crime offences, and provide effective victim support.
- Explore ways in which trust in law enforcement agencies can be increased among members of minority groups, and fight ethnic discrimination and racist abuse on the part of the police and other public officials. One of the principal barriers to reporting racist and related incidents is victims and witnesses' distrust in the police.

- Assess the benefit of enhanced penalties in sentencing perpetrators of hate crime, in order to ensure that the bias motivation behind the offence is always taken into consideration.
- Consider developing exit strategies and programmes for people involved with extremist groups and organisations. For these to be effective, close cooperation would be needed between law enforcement agencies, the criminal justice system and civil society organisations.
- Ensure that victim support is provided in close cooperation with civil society and representatives of minority groups, and facilitate the active involvement of the police in supporting victims.

You can download the report here:

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/thematic-situation-report-3>

FRA's previous thematic situation reports are available here:

- [Violent attacks against Roma in the Ponticelli district of Naples](#)
- [Coping with a fundamental rights emergency - the situation of persons crossing the Greek land border in an irregular manner](#)

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Notes to editors:

- FRA is mandated to provide evidence-based advice to EU and national decision makers, thereby contributing to more informed and better targeted debates and policies on fundamental rights.
- FRA collects objective, reliable and comparable data and information across all or some Member States, depending on the relevance of a given topic to different countries.
- EU Member States are committed to respecting and protecting the values enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union: *"The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail."*