

EUROPEAN MONITORING CENTRE ON RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA
OBSERVATOIRE EUROPÉEN DES PHÉNOMÈNES RACISTES ET XÉNOPHOBES
EUROPÄISCHE STELLE ZUR BEOBACHTUNG VON RASSISMUS UND FREMDENFEINDLICHKEIT



European Monitoring Centre
on Racism and Xenophobia

ANNUAL REPORT 1999

SUMMARY

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Shaping Reality

“The year 1999 may be seen as one that has summed up the evolution of Europe during the past century. No matter how large the achievements, Europe has witnessed another shake up of its foundations only fifty years after the Holocaust. The war crimes against the Albanian people in the Kosovo, have shown us again that racism, xenophobia, intolerance and violence are phenomena still prevalent in Europe as it enters a new millennium. The conflicts in the Balkans together with the continual violent discrimination experienced in many Member States by ethnic minority people have made it clear that the fight against racism and xenophobia requires, more than ever, our joint efforts, our spirit and devotion.

These recent developments have made it very clear that the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, the “youngest” of the decentralized agencies of the European Union, situated in the very heart of Europe, is an indispensable institution that is bound to play an important role in making Europe a better place, striving for togetherness and understanding”.

Jean Kahn, Chairman of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia

1 Situation in the EU Member States

1.1 Introduction

The prime objective of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) is to provide the Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and comparable data at European level on the phenomena of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, study the extent and developments, analyse the causes, consequences and effects, and examine examples of good practice in dealing with the problems.

The Annual Report has the objective to illustrate the nature and the extent of the challenges facing the European Union, its institutions and Member States in the field of racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia.

At present there is a lack of uniformity and common definitions in the Member States for the purpose of data collection on the subjects of racism, racial violence or even racial/ethnic minorities. The way the acts of racism and discrimination are monitored and registered varies considerably from one Member State to another. There is a common feeling among the data collectors across the Member States that there is under-reporting and under-recording of racist incidents. Victim studies indicate that only a small proportion of racial incidents are reported. Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom are the Member States that keep official, detailed records of racial crimes and acts of racial/ethnic discrimination.

The EUMC therefore still lacks the complete set of tools to measure and monitor racism effectively at a European level. In this light the recent adoption of the Directive 2000/43/EC implementing

principles of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin¹ is a positive step forward.

The sources of information used for the Annual Report 1999, are official and unofficial and range from the EUMC's own projects, official publications by EU institutions, government publications, scientific studies to NGO reports. In addition, information from the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has been considered.

The various reports in Europe on racism in 1999, whether the subject of the mass media, the official authorities or non-governmental institutions, reveal that racism is a severe problem and no country of the European Union is immune from it.

The EUMC will publish in early 2001 the results of a special Eurobarometer survey on attitudes towards immigrants and minorities. The Eurobarometer is a tool for the European Union to monitor what values and attitudes, their variations and changes, are shared by which groups of people in the 15 EU Member States.

1.2 Acts of Racism and Discrimination

For the interpretation of racism the EUMC employs the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, ratified by all the EU Member States except Ireland². This broad definition covers any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

This definition includes a spectrum of incidents that are racist in their consequences. That means not only overt racist violence is called racism, but also the subtle expressions of exclusion on grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or culture, anti-Semitism and xenophobia.

1.2.1 Racial violence

Serious acts of racial violence are the racial incidents widely known to the public, because it becomes - as all serious crimes - headlines in the mass media. In 1999 murder and attempted murder on racial, ethnic, religious or cultural grounds were reported in the national mass media in Austria, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

1.2.2 Neo-Nazi crimes

In 1999, there was an increase in the number of recorded racial crimes associated with neo-Nazi groups in Germany and Sweden. In Germany there was a decrease in the total number of criminal offences, but an increase in violent attacks. Racial violence associated with neo-Nazis and skinheads has also been reported in Spain and Portugal where these groups were identified as being responsible for much of the racial violence.

¹ Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin

² The Government of Ireland has signaled its intention to proceed with steps for Ireland's ratification as soon as the Equal Status Bill, currently before Parliament, is enacted.

1.2.3 Victims of racial violence and discrimination

The reports from the Member States in 1999 show that there are ethnic/racial minorities, immigrants and refugees in all the Member States vulnerable to racial crime and discrimination. The crimes committed by the neo-Nazi organisations are first of all directed towards immigrants, people of foreign descent and the Jewish community. There has also been an increase in attacks on homosexuals and political opposition figures, journalists and police officers.

Discrimination against the Roma minorities was reported in several Member States in 1999. Human Rights organisations paid attention to the ill-treatment and discrimination of Roma in Italy, Spain and Greece. The refugees from Kosovo and from Albania were reported as being major victims of racial violence in Italy and Greece.

Immigrants - with and without regular status - from countries in Africa are other groups vulnerable to racial violence and discrimination in the Member States. According to studies in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, presented in 1999, immigrants from African countries have to a high degree experienced racial violence and discrimination. The reports also showed that only a minority of the victims report discrimination to the authorities.

It has been suggested that the number of victims reporting acts of discrimination will increase a) when specific anti-discrimination legislation is introduced b) independent/specialised bodies are established, c) information and knowledge of procedures are disseminated and d) the mistrust or fear of authorities is reduced.

1.2.4 Racial violence and discrimination by the police

Acts of racial violence are not necessarily confined to the extreme fringes of the European society. Members of the public and those who administer the criminal justice system have also been responsible for acts of discrimination and violent incidents.

Cases of ill-treatment by the police authorities were reported in several Member States in 1999. The reports on discrimination and ill-treatment by the police are related to three main areas: during identity checks; during deportations of immigrants; and in the treatment of detainees.

In 1999 Amnesty International and the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights have reported on cases from several Member States. Some cases have been investigated by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment. Most of the persons reported to have been allegedly mistreated during deportations as well as ill-treated in detentions, were from countries in Africa. In Belgium and Austria men of Nigerian nationality died during deportation. A man from Mali was physically assaulted by French police during deportation. A man from Tunisia died in a French Retention Centre and three wardens were suspended for molesting detainees of North African origin. In Austria eight attacks by members of the police force on persons of foreign origin were recorded.

The reports from the Member States show that skin colour and cultural origin are still important factors. Persons with "black" skin are according to statistics in the UK far more likely to be arrested by the police than people with "white" skin. This phenomenon is not restricted to the UK. There were reports from several Member States in 1999 indicating that "black" persons or persons with Roma traditional clothing were more likely to be arrested than the majority of the population.

According to the report on Greece made by ECRI in 1999, Roma, Albanians and other immigrants are frequently the victims of misbehaviour by the police.

1.2.5 Racial offences and propaganda

The most common racial incidents are not the violent acts covered by the mass media. The official statistics from Germany show that out of a total of 10,037 registered criminal offences with racist/xenophobic motives, 66% fell under the category of propaganda offences. The total number of racially aggravated offences in the UK, from April to September 1999, was 10,982, of which half related to harassment. In Sweden the number of reported crimes with racial/xenophobic incentives was in total 2,363 in 1999. Of these, unlawful threats, assaults and harassment were the three most common types. The number of anti-Semitic crimes in Sweden in 1999 was 125, persecution was the most common type of crime.

1.2.6 Mass media and xenophobia

Mass media could be examined for ways in which it may unintentionally cause xenophobia, either in the way it reports negatively on immigrants and asylum seekers or the way it reports on neo-Nazis. In 1999 the reporting by media in Greece and in Italy may have contributed to the criminalizing discourse on immigration related to a recent wave of migration from Albania. Reports from Ireland show how the negative attitudes towards asylum seekers, refugees and travellers created a climate of racism followed by an increase in the number of physical and verbal abuse and attacks. In the election campaign in Austria in 1999, some mainstream media carried campaigning adverts of the FPÖ, and made the term “Überfremdung” a household concept.

1.2.7 Discrimination on racial, ethnic, religious or cultural grounds

Discrimination on racial, ethnic, religious or cultural grounds hardly ever becomes the headlines in the mass media. These acts are often diffuse and therefore difficult to prove. The Commission on Racial Equality in the UK as well as the Ombudsman of ethnic discrimination in Sweden reports an increase of discrimination at all levels of society.

The most reported acts of discrimination in the Member States in 1999 concern employment and the labour market. The Swedish Ombudsman registered in total 184 acts of discrimination, out of which 142 referred to employment. A study in Belgium from 1999, confirmed that Belgian employers discriminate on racial grounds in recruitment. From Austria it was reported that immigrants in general work in poorer conditions for less pay, with lower employment security and less benefits than their Austrian counterparts.

The level of unemployment among minorities and the immigrant population could be an indicator of discrimination, and the level is in general higher among non-Europeans, immigrants and minorities compared to the majority of the population. In the UK a report from the Trade Union Congress shows that the chances of being unemployed are higher if you are “black”, and higher if employed in low paid work if you are “black” or “Asian”. The National Advisory Commission on Human Rights reported that the unemployment rate of non-Europeans in France is three times the level of the French citizens. The National Bureau against Racial Discrimination in the Netherlands reported that there were a disproportionately higher level of unemployment among ethnic minorities.

Social exclusion of young people of immigrant background is another area of particular concern, as it may result in high levels of juvenile delinquency. In Germany, the Trade Union representatives reported that non-Germans, in particular juveniles, encounter discriminatory practices in training and jobs and suffer the most from structural changes in the labour market. This problem has also been reported from France, Italy and Ireland in 1999.

For Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal, scientific reports as well as reports from Human Rights organisations, show that immigrants (from North Africa, Albania, Kosovo, the Middle East, the Eastern part of Europe and Asia) are to a high degree employed in the shadow economies. They are often paid less than the majority population and work under more unsafe and unhealthy conditions. At the same time undocumented labour power has been reported as crucial for the survival of sectors such as agriculture, tourism and construction.

Discrimination in the sector of education and housing has also been reported from several Member States in 1999. The number of children of ethnic minorities or with immigrant background not attending primary education in school is an indicator of exclusion or discrimination. This was reported from the Netherlands, where parents of white children opt not to send their children to schools with a majority of “black” children according to the National Bureau against Racial Discrimination. In Portugal reports show that immigrants from former Portuguese colonies in Africa live under extremely poor living conditions.

The situation for the Roma and the Travellers in the Member States with regards to exclusion and discrimination was of a particular concern in 1999. Studies done in Italy have shown that a very high percentage of Roma children and children of Travellers do not attend primary and secondary schools. And with regard to housing, reports from the Italian Commission for Policies for the Integration of Immigrants, show that immigrants in general and Roma in particular are subject to discrimination. In Ireland discrimination of members of Travellers community has been recognised across a wide spectrum, including housing, employment and health.

1.2.8 Racism in cyber space

Racism on the Internet has become a special area of concern in some of the Member States, as the Internet is widely used by racist groups for disseminating racist, anti-Semitic, xenophobic and hate-filled ideas to a wide audience and with a great degree of impunity.

Platforms and message boards in particular those of online newspapers and magazines are used increasingly by neo-Nazis and other racist groups for propaganda. According to researchers at the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, the number of racist websites has risen from 1 in 1995 to 2,100 in 1999.

1.3 Combating Racism and Discrimination

The problem with racism and discrimination is not new and all governments in the Member States have taken some measures to prevent discrimination on racial, ethnic, cultural and religious grounds, and to promote integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities.

The legal and institutional framework in the EU Member States varies considerably. Some countries have more extensive and comprehensive legislation and possess an institutional framework, ranging from independent specialised bodies to an Ombudsman. The new European

directives based on Article 13 of the EC Treaty should make a major contribution to an improvement in the situation.

1.3.1 Legislative improvements in 1999

In 1999, new legislation was enacted in several Member States to provide instruments for combating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity. In Belgium legislation was enhanced with an Article giving summary jurisdiction over racist press offences and legislative measures were taken against non-democratic political parties, which may encourage racism. The legislation in Belgium will empower the judges to impose an additional penalty of forfeiture of certain political rights. In Denmark a new Act on Integration came into effect. The Act concerns the reception and living conditions of, primarily, refugees for the first three years of their stay in Denmark. In Greece Presidential decrees were issued to regulate issues related to the situation for asylum seekers and refugees (including humanitarian reasons). In Spain a new immigration law was established, which will guarantee foreigners the same conditions as Spanish nationals in accordance with the constitution. In Portugal two new laws against racial discrimination were adopted unanimously in the Portuguese Parliament. In Finland several new pieces of laws related to anti-discrimination entered into force, among them a new Act on the Integration of Immigrants and the Reception of Asylum Seekers. In Sweden a new Act on Measures to Counteract Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life came into force.

1.3.2 Specialised bodies, Ombudsmen and Human Rights Commissions

In some Member States specialised bodies to handle racial/ethnic discrimination have been established. In 1999 the Swedish Ombudsman was given a 60% increase of resources to be able to implement the new anti-Discrimination law. The Danish Board of Equality proposed the creation of an institution for ethnic discrimination. In Finland the preparation for extending activities of the Ombudsman for Aliens to cover ethnic minorities and ethnic discrimination began. In France a public interest group was established by the French authorities, with the task of analysing discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. And in several Member States such as the UK, Sweden, Ireland, Austria and Greece commissions and committees were set up for the protection of human rights.

1.3.3 Awareness raising

Legislation, though crucial in the fight against racism, requires supplementary and complementary actions in other spheres. These include education, training, information and communication to raise the awareness of the public to issues surrounding racism and xenophobia. Values of tolerance, respect for others, compassion, justice and equality must be shared by all Europeans. The ways and means to achieve this differ from one Member State to another. The roles of schools and the mass media are often considered the most important institutions for awareness raising by the governments.

1.3.4 Police training

In 1999 the governments in several Member States set up training programmes for police officers and public prosecutors. This was reported for example in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, Sweden and the UK. Programmes for training of police include human rights training and intercultural diversity or training in how to deal with diversity.

1.3.5 Integration of immigrants

Other initiatives by governments in the Member States in 1999 were programmes for integration of immigrants and minorities. Integration programmes could focus on training and preparation of young immigrants for the labour market, as was the case in Germany and in Sweden. In Luxembourg projects have been launched for dialogues between young immigrants and elderly people in neighbourhoods. In France an initiative was taken to promote awareness and learn respect for the culture of the immigrants in French primary schools. The use of Internet for anti-racism was another French NGO initiative in 1999.

Other initiatives taken in 1999 in several Member States focused on reducing the number of children of immigrants and ethnic minorities who do not attend schools. In Italy, the success with Roma mediators to brake the low rate of school attendance among children of Roma and Travellers, resulted in 1999 in a national experiment in a European programme. In Greece two Human Rights organisations started an educational centre for Muslim and Roma minorities. In Finland a project called “From School to Working Life” was especially aimed at helping non-educated Roma to acquire basic education and equal status in the labour market.

1.3.6 Mass media in the struggle for diversity

The mass media can be considered as an instrument for education and awareness raising. Although the perceived need for spectacular news often cancels out any educational role that the media could play. Apart from during violent upsurges of racism which sway public opinion, the media is not generally prepared to conduct prevention campaigns. One of the EUMCs tasks is to make them aware of their crucial role in combating racism, not only in moments of crisis, but on an ongoing basis

Of importance for the media not to promote xenophobia is to avoid printing information about person’s nationality or ethnic background in negative situations. In Belgium the government initiated a circular in 1999 stipulating that all authorities will only communicate ethnic origin or nationality if relevant, to avoid the stigmatisation of minorities.

1.4 Recommendations

The EUMC makes recommendations based on its reports and activities in various areas related to the fight against racism and xenophobia. The recommendations for 1999 focus on the areas of legislation, data collection, independent bodies, monitoring and the role of political parties.

1.4.1 Legislation

The EUMC calls upon all Member States

- to provide for legislative protection for all persons against discrimination on grounds of racial and ethnic origin
- to improve the effectiveness of criminal and civil law in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

- to establish machinery, where none exists, for examining the conforming of draft legislation with principles of non-discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, especially in relation to potentially discriminatory effects on members of groups that are vulnerable to racism.

1.4.2 Data collection

The EUMC draws attention to the importance of collecting and publishing accurate data on the number and nature of racist and xenophobic incidents or offences, the number of cases prosecuted or the reasons for not prosecuting, and the outcome of prosecutions.

Statistical, documentary or technical information processed or produced must help give regional and international organisations an overview of the phenomena of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance - their extent, causes and manifestations - as well as effects of measures already taken to combat these phenomena. The information so gathered must be such as it enables the receivers to draw meaningful comparisons between Member States and assist them and bodies working on racism to formulate courses of action.

Collection and analysis of existing data

Organisations at the European level charged with collecting, recording and analysing data should collect the data from sources that should include Member States, third countries, European and national non-governmental organisations, research bodies and international organisations.

Improving data comparison methodology

Common indicators and criteria should be established for data comparison methodology used by regional and international organisations to assist the quality, objectivity and reliability of data used in analysis and the formulation of measures to combat racism. They should be reviewed regularly to improve the consistency of the methods of measurement and analysis used by Member States and the European institutions.

1.4.3 Independent/specialised bodies

The EUMC points to the range of functions independent specialised bodies may undertake at national, regional and local levels which enhance government policies in combating racism:

- offering opinions and advice to government bodies
- make recommendations to amend legislation related to racial, ethnic and religious discrimination
- monitoring the situation in the country
- carrying out surveys or studies on discrimination
- undertaking public education and awareness-raising activities
- contributing to training programmes for certain target groups
- making the general public more aware of discrimination issues and aiding and assisting victims, including through the provision of legal assistance to enable them to enforce their rights in the courts and other institutions

The EUMC urges Member States to ensure that members of the independent/specialised body are representative of the population as a whole and to allow the body to set its own priorities.

The EUMC calls for the establishment/designation of such independent specialised bodies, or in countries where these exist, review and reinforce their effectiveness, while providing them with adequate financial resources, competence and capacity to ensure their effective functioning.

1.4.4 Monitoring

The EUMC strongly recommends monitoring with more accurate statistical data the situation of vulnerable or minority groups and all policies and programmes aimed at combating racial discrimination. Monitoring of programmes and policies should also include evaluation and follow-up over a recommended period. Such statistical data may be completed with public opinion surveys and also targeted surveys to ascertain the experience and perception of discrimination and racism from the point of view of potential victims.

The framework established for monitoring should clearly incorporate the role of independent bodies, including international bodies such as ECRI and the EUMC in the monitoring process by providing regular reports on the operation of the national provisions.

1.4.5 Role of politicians and political parties

The EUMC calls upon political parties to take a number of concrete steps to provide fair representation of people of different ethnic and cultural origin in public life and to explain issues to the general public in such a way as to increase understanding and acceptance of difference. Such steps include:

- to sign the *Charter of European political parties for a non-racist society* and follow its principles concerning responsible behaviour on issues of racism, both with regard to the parties' own organisation and to their activities in the political field;
- to include anti-racist policies in election programmes and to condemn racist exploitation of issues such as immigration and asylum for electoral purposes, ensuring through their internal selection procedures that any candidate for elected office is committed to anti-racist policies;
- to refuse any support, explicit or implicit, to extremist parties of racist and xenophobic character.

The EUMC works to ensure that basic common values of the EU – such as the respect for the rights of minorities, diversity and equality – are met in politics and society. The EUMC is therefore deeply concerned about the growth of political extremism where political parties employ racism and/or xenophobia in their campaigning activities and platforms. The EUMC will address this important issue in a report, which will be published in early 2001.

2 Major Operative Events

During 1999 the EUMC focused on the necessary preparatory steps for its main task, creating a European-wide information network on racism and xenophobia (RAXEN). The Management Board Members of the EUMC initiated national Round Tables in most of the Member States. The EUMC undertook various research studies in the fields of legislation and politics, society, education and the media to assist the Member States in combating racism. Many of those initiatives are taken together with NGOs and academic institutions.

2.1 RAXEN

One of the key tasks of the EUMC is to develop and co-ordinate a European information network on racism and xenophobia (RAXEN). RAXEN's task is to collect data, assess its comparability and make the results available to the Member States. It will identify what is known, where and by whom, enlarge the exchange of knowledge and disseminate examples of "good practice".

In 1999 the EUMC successfully established procedures designed to define RAXEN participants, the development stages of a RAXEN operating system and the identification of the problems related to the collection of data and information.

The EUMC elaborated a proposal for the implementation of the next steps, inter alia the definition and nomination of the National Focal Points by means of a public call for tender.

2.2 Round Tables

Another core task of the EUMC is to facilitate and encourage the organisation of regular Round Table discussions or meetings of other existing, standing advisory bodies within the Member States. The participation of social partners, research centres, representatives of competent public authorities, NGOs and other persons or bodies involved in dealing with racism and xenophobia is part of the mandate.

During 1999, a general concept for the Round Table Conferences was established and will be further elaborated and amended in 2000.

EUMC introduced the following topics at the Round Tables:

- The Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-Racist Society (Action Plan to be developed)
- The "good practice" Mapping Exercise / Survey of existing practices. All the Round Tables have started dealing with "good practice" and will continue with this approach.
- Inventory of effective programmes on intercultural communication
- Developing a common approach with regard to the implementation of Article 13 of the Amsterdam treaty and pertinent directives

2.3 Special Issues

2.3.1 Legislation and politics

Article 13 of the EC Treaty as amended by the Amsterdam Treaty

The legal basis for Community level measures and action to combat discrimination is Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty. The EUMC as the body of the European Union responsible for monitoring racism and providing advice to the EU institutions relies heavily on Article 13. The EUMC designed a research project encompassing national reports from each Member State and a synthesis report comparing existing EU and national legislation to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, their implementation and examples of good practice, as a joint project with the Migration Policy Group.

A Charter of European Political Parties for a non-Racist Society

By signing the Charter of European political parties for a non-Racist Society, around 80 political parties have undertaken to adopt a non-discriminatory message in their everyday political activities or in the battle for voters. The EUMC has set one of its targets to monitor the implementation of the Charter.

Working Group "Key Issues"

The regulation establishing the EUMC clearly highlights the EUMC's role in conducting research and surveys regarding the extent, the development, the causes and effects of the phenomena of racism and xenophobia, among others in the fields of information, education, society and culture.

The EUMC formed a working group of experts which identified the following topics as "Key Issues":

- Awareness of racism in society
- Integration policy - the management of diversity
- Coordination among associations of judges and schools of magistratures
- Public leadership
- Citizenship and European identity

The working group decided to concentrate on the topics of awareness of racism, and education was considered a key vehicle for raising awareness and establishing common values. To this extent, the EUMC started discussions with the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and Anne Frank Foundation to prepare a project for collecting and evaluating teaching materials.

2.3.2 Society: Inventory of European Foundations

For access to European civil society co-operation with NGOs is indispensable. Foundations have a major impact in this area. The EUMC has launched a common project with the European Foundation Centre and the Freudenberg Foundation on the subject "Combating Racism and Xenophobia: An Inventory of European Foundations". The area of good practice in combating racism and xenophobia shall receive special attention. About 120 private foundations participate in this project.

2.3.3 Education: Teaching the teachers

The EUMC discussed with various partners, among them the Anne Frank Foundation and CEDEFOP, on how to provide further professional training to teachers on the subjects of racism and xenophobia. Late in 1999, a joint meeting was held to define the structure and desired results of such a study. This meeting proposed an outline to the EUMC indicating the first steps needed to review the situation in the field of education.

2.3.4 Media: Media Conference in Cologne in May 1999

The EUMC cooperated with the Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR), the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the European Institute for the Media in the organisation of the European Media Conference: "Cultural Diversity - Against Racism". The forum addressed two related topics of interest: To what extent have the media influenced racism? What positive examples and approaches exist in the media industry to help overcome these problems?

More than 200 representatives of radio, television, and the press attended the conference as well as critical media-watchers, sociologists, and psychologists. The Conference received excellent media coverage.

In addition to the report of the Media Conference, which was distributed widely, the EUMC published the working paper "Challenging the media - for equality and diversity against racism". This publication explains the role of the media in forming public opinion and influencing awareness on the topic of racism and xenophobia.

2.4 Working in the European Context

2.4.1 Co-operation with ECRI

The EUMC's statute highlights the need for close co-operation with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe. At the end of 1998, the Council of the European Union adopted a Decision (1999/132/EC) for co-operation between the EUMC and ECRI. A co-operation agreement between the European Community and the Council of Europe was signed in December 1998. It is aimed at the exchange of information and the representation of the Council of Europe on the Management Board of the EUMC.

2.5 Information and Public Relations

2.5.1 Press activities and activities to raise awareness

The media coverage of the activities of the EUMC has been highly satisfactory from the very beginning. The EUMC held several press conferences during the year, partly linked to the meetings of the Management Board and also to major European events or anniversaries in order to raise public awareness of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. Two important press conferences covered the EUMC's 1999 Work Programme and the presentation of its 1998 Annual Report. In addition, press releases were issued during the year. The press releases dealt mainly with the need for vigilance in Europe on the issues of racism and xenophobia.

Raising Awareness

The EUMC sought to raise awareness about racism and xenophobia. One example is the appeal that was directed to the Heads of the Member States and Governments of the European Union towards the end of the year. The EUMC asked them to include in their New Year Millennium speeches an appeal against racism and xenophobia and a call for respect of diversity. Most of the Heads of State and Governments were more than willing to remind their people of the importance of these values for the common future of Europe, among them Gerhard Schröder, Federal Chancellor of Germany, Martti Ahtisaari, President of Finland, His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden, Her Majesty Princess Beatrix, Queen of the Netherlands, Jacques Chirac, President of France, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, President of Italy, and His Majesty Albert II, King of the Belgians.

Public Relations Activities

The general interest of the media in the EUMC was consistently high during the year. Overall, the EUMC featured in dozens of interviews on TV and radio stations throughout Europe. Furthermore, around 200 articles about the EUMC were published in newspapers, magazines and bulletins, mainly in the European Member States, but interest was received as well from other parts of the world, as far reaching as Australia.

2.5.2 Equal Voices

During the second half of the year, the first issue of Equal Voices, the Newsletter of the EUMC, was published. It is also available on the website (<http://eumc.eu.int>). The concept of the newsletter is based on information and feature articles in the field of racism and xenophobia throughout Europe, but allowing for input from "outside". A service section and the option for the readers to actively participate in the newsletter give added value to the newsletter.

2.5.3 Official opening of the EUMC

The official opening of the EUMC took place at the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna on 7-8 April 2000. It consisted of an Opening Ceremony, broadcast live on Austrian national television, the Vienna Forum - a conference on politics and racism -, and a press conference.

The Vienna Forum

The Opening was based upon the "Vienna Forum", an international conference that brought together politicians, academics, representatives of social partners and non-governmental organisations. It concentrated on the topic of racism and politics with speeches that outlined the vision for a future Europe and whether Europe has indeed reached a significant crossroad in its historical development.

The first session dealt with "A Europe of Equality and Diversity" and hosted speeches by Jean Kahn, the Chairman of the EUMC Management Board, Thomas Klestil, President of the Federal Republic of Austria, Nicole Fontaine, President of the European Parliament, Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, and Maria de Belém Roseira, the representative of the Portuguese Presidency of the EU.

The rest of the programme saw a line-up of renowned speakers, mainly from academia and EU institutions, delivering interesting contributions on the topics of "Setting the Vision for Europe" and "Europe at a Crossroad?" and "EUMC - Challenging Society", among them Graham Watson,

Chairman of the Committee on Citizens' Freedom and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs in the European Parliament, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Member of the European Parliament, Adam Tyson, from the European Commission's Directorate General Employment and Social Affairs, Chantal Mouffe, political theorist at the University of Westminster, Charles Taylor, McGill University, Ruth Wodak, University of Vienna, Jan Niessen, Migration Policy Group, and Christian Petry, European Foundation Centre and Freudenberg Stiftung.

The Vienna Forum was concluded by the Director's résumé encompassing the steps that have to be taken in order to achieve an action-oriented programme for change in Europe.

3 Management Board and Executive Board

The Management Board takes decisions on the activities of the EUMC and its annual budget. It is also responsible for the dissemination of the Annual Report as well as its conclusions and expert opinions.

The Management Board consists of 18 members: independent persons nominated by each of the EU Member States and one representative each from the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Each member has a deputy nominated in a similar fashion. The composition of the Management Board during 1999 was the following:

	Member	Deputy Member
Belgium:	Johan Leman	Jean Cornil
Denmark:	Ole Espersen	Morten Kjærum
Germany:	Uta Würfel	Barbara John
Finland:	Kaarina Suonio	Tom Sandlund
France:	Jean Kahn (Chairman)	Martine Valdes-Boulouque
Greece:	Petros Stangos	Perikles Pangalos
United Kingdom:	Robert Purkiss (Vice Chairman)	David Weaver
Italy:	Francesco Margiotta Broglio	Diego Ungaro
Ireland:	Mervyn Taylor	Mary Flaherty
Luxembourg:	Nic Klecker	Edouard Wolter
Netherlands:	Ed van Thijn	Paul B. Cliteur
Austria:	Anton Pelinka	Stefan Karner
Portugal:	Pedro Bacelar de Vasconcelos	Esmeraldo de Azevedo
Spain:	Juan de Dios Ramirez-Heredia	Joaquin Alvarez de Toledo
Sweden:	Stéphane Bruchfeld	Lena Berggren
European Parliament:	William Duncan	Jürgen Micksch
Council of Europe:	Joseph Voyame	Jenö Kaltenbach
European Commission:	Odile Quintin	Adam Tyson

The term of office for the members of the Management Board is three years and may be extended for a further term. The Management Board meets at least twice a year. Each member has one vote. A two-thirds majority takes decisions.

The Executive Board consists of five members: Chairman: Jean Kahn, Vice Chairman: Bob Purkiss, Member elected by the Management Board: Anton Pelinka, Member appointed by the Council of Europe: Joseph Voyame, Representative of the European Commission: Odile Quintin

4 Information resources

4.1 Publications of the EUMC

- General Information - Leaflet. (English -EN, French- FR, German- DE)
- You can do something for better mutual understanding against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, 7 December 1998. (EN, FR and DE)
- Equality and Diversity for Europe – Appeal for Common Action, 7 December 1998. (EN, FR and DE)
- Xenophobia and Racism in Europe: In the light of public opinion 1989-1997, 7 December 1998. (EN, FR and DE)
- Cultural Diversity - Against Racism: Report on the European Media Forum in Cologne in May 1999. (EN and DE)
- Challenging the Media - for Equality and Diversity against Racism, September 1999 (EN and DE)
- Equal Voices - The Newsletter of the EUMC. (EN)
- Annual Report 1998: Part 1 - Giving Europe a Soul: The activities of the EUMC. Part 2 - Looking Reality in the Face: The situation in the Member States. (EN, FR and DE)
- Annual Report 1998 Summary (DA, DE, EL, EN, ES, FI, FR, IT, NL, PT and SV)
- Vienna Forum, September 2000 (EN)

4.2 Website

The website, <http://eumc.eu.int>, has become a useful tool for delivering basic information about the EUMC and allowing access to the EUMC's information by journalists, NGOs governments and the citizens. The website proved its importance for access to information during the Opening of the Centre as journalists were able to download registration forms for the media conference and surfers were able to download speeches and photographs in a short period of time.