



FRA Press Release

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## Next few months crucial for improving key fundamental rights

The relation between security concerns and data protection, the need to agree on new common asylum rules and the implementation of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities are just a few of the many fundamental rights issues that are currently being discussed at EU level. The outcome of the actual discussions is crucial for improving fundamental rights, as highlighted in the 2011 Annual Report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) launched today in the European Parliament.

To secure and safeguard the fundamental rights of everyone in the European Union (EU), the EU and its 27 Member States pressed forward with a variety of initiatives in 2011. The EU adopted key legislative and policy measures in, for example, the areas of victim protection, human trafficking and the integration of Roma. Various EU Member States, among other steps, reformed their child protection systems and made efforts to shorten the length of court proceedings.

Challenges, however, remain. The year 2011 sent stark and tragic reminders of how far the excesses of extreme intolerance can go if left unchecked. Equality and non-discrimination will therefore remain core concerns. The EU and its Member States must also remain on guard to ensure that prevailing economic weakness does not threaten the fulfilment of the fundamental rights of everyone in the EU.

“In these difficult economic times, the EU must guarantee more than ever that there is no rollback on fundamental rights protection. There is no time for complacency,” said FRA Chairperson of the Management Board Ilze Brands Kehris to the European Parliament today.

Some notable issues from this year’s Annual report include:

- **Data protection:** Recent efforts and discussions to find a balance between fundamental rights obligations and security concerns in light of new EU data protection framework;
- **Roma:** How to use national Roma integration strategies as future strategies to better include and integrate into society disadvantaged groups.
- **Migrants in an irregular situation:** legal and practical barriers that prevent them from accessing their most basic human rights;
- **Multiple discrimination:** EU institutions, national courts and equality bodies will increasingly recognise the need to address discrimination on more than one ground, such as gender and ethnicity;

The Annual Report covers the areas of asylum and border control, data protection, rights of the child, equality and non-discrimination, racism and ethnic discrimination, the Union’s democratic functioning, access to efficient and independent justice and the rights of crime victims.



**FRA**

EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS



Notes to the editors:

- The FRA 2011 Annual Report provides concrete and comparative data on the fundamental rights situation on the ground in the 27 EU Member States and Croatia. It also provides advice to the EU institutions and Member States, based on the evidence found. The report identifies 'key developments', 'promising practices', and challenges for the immediate future, and describes the most recent work of FRA in this regard.
- The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is mandated to provide assistance and expertise to EU and national decision makers, thereby contributing to more informed, solidly framed and contextualised debates and policies on fundamental rights. It has three key functions: to collect information and data on fundamental rights; to provide evidence-based advice to the EU and its Member States; and to promote dialogue with civil society in order to raise public awareness of fundamental rights. See <http://fra.europa.eu>
- The report in [EN](#) and [FR](#)
- The report's highlights [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#)

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