



FRA press release  
Vienna, 30 September 2015

## **Hate and intolerance must be combated more strongly as social climate worsens**

**Research by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) shows that racism and xenophobia are a widespread problem in Europe today. As support for xenophobic and anti-migrant agendas grows, FRA calls in a special contribution to the European Commission's first annual colloquium on fundamental rights for targeted awareness-raising measures, better data collection, and more effective access to justice for victims. The persistent lack of data is central to the Agency's annual overview of data on antisemitism in the EU, which is also published today.**

*"The attacks we have seen this year in France, Denmark and elsewhere in the EU are part of a climate of intolerance that we must fight with all the means at our disposal,"* said FRA interim Director Constantinos Manolopoulos. *"There are many positive initiatives around the EU, but in the current situation this is not enough. The EU and its Member States need to take immediate and decisive action to combat extremist, xenophobic and antisemitic discourse and crimes."*

FRA points out in its annual overview of data on antisemitism in the EU that the reliable and comparable figures vital to help tackle the phenomenon effectively are currently missing. Not only do victims and witnesses need to be encouraged to report antisemitic incidents, but the authorities must also have systems in place to record them. The Working Party on combating hate crime set up by FRA in 2014 is cooperating with all 28 EU Member States to improve recording and encourage reporting of hate crime of all kinds, including antisemitic incidents. It also seeks to increase collaboration between government, law enforcement, prosecutors' offices and NGOs, at the same time emphasising the importance of training for the police and others who work on the front line.

Existing evidence shows that antisemitism remains an issue of serious concern in the EU, demanding decisive and targeted policy responses. The effective implementation of these responses would not only protect Jewish communities, but also give a clear signal that the fundamental rights of everyone living in the EU are taken seriously and safeguarded.

On the eve of the European Commission's first Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights, FRA is today also publishing a separate paper. This discusses the ways in which political rhetoric at local, national and European levels is currently exacerbating an aggressive tone subsequently echoed online through the press and social media, generating a sense of insecurity and fear among members of ethnic and religious minorities in the EU. FRA's conference contribution *Promoting respect and diversity - Combating intolerance and hate* calls for greater efforts to acknowledge ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious diversity in our societies and use it to bolster social cohesion and growth.

These two publications are part of FRA's ongoing work in the area of racism, xenophobia and related intolerances. Download the report and paper here:

[\*Antisemitism: Overview of data available in the European Union  
Promoting respect and diversity - Combating intolerance\*](#)

For more information, contact us at [media@fra.europa.eu](mailto:media@fra.europa.eu)  
Tel.: +43 1 580 30 655

#### Notes to editors

- The annual overview of data on antisemitism available in the EU has been compiled since 2004
- 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
- The European Commission will be holding its first annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium on 1-2 October 2015. For more information, please see the Colloquium website: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/colloquium-fundamental-rights-2015/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/colloquium-fundamental-rights-2015/index_en.htm)