



FRA Press Release

Vienna/Brussels, 25 June 2015

## **Migrant tragedies, one of many fundamental rights challenges that need tackling, finds FRA**

**Record numbers of migrants died as they tried to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe in 2014. Member States should therefore consider offering more legal possibilities for people in need of international protection to enter the EU, as viable alternatives to risky irregular entry. This is one of the conclusions from this year's Annual report of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) which looks at developments across the EU in many areas over 2014.**

*"In 2014, a number of challenges to the respect of fundamental rights persisted, as FRA's latest Annual report can testify. But there has also been progress,"* says FRA interim Director [Constantinos Manolopoulos](#). *"The report's evidence and conclusions can guide policy makers across the EU in their actions to better promote and protect fundamental rights. They can serve as a launch pad to help ensure that the policies and laws can better deliver fundamental rights in practice for everyone in the EU."*

As in past years, the FRA Annual report 2014 highlights challenges and achievements in many areas of fundamental rights from across the EU. For example:

- The plight of **migrants** continued to worsen. Record number of migrants died in the Mediterranean; there was a fourfold increase in those rescued or apprehended at sea; the processing of migrants at the borders of some Member States worsened; and public discourse surrounding migrant integration continued to be a challenge. However, in 2014 new EU funding mechanisms were established to help Member States implement EU migration and asylum law, improve solidarity between Member States and help fight cross-border crime. Overall, the current migration situation in the EU points to the need for an over-arching EU-wide policy that addresses all aspects of migration from cause to effect. The recent European Agenda on Migration is an important step in this regard.
- The persisting challenges in reporting and recording hate crime. The results of FRA's extensive survey [on violence against women](#) pointed to widespread abuse of women at home, work, in public and online throughout the EU. As with previous FRA surveys, for example on antisemitism and on discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, it also revealed general feelings of fear and high levels of under-reporting among victims. However, some Member States have made steps to better



protect **victims of crime** by reviewing their laws and policies as the November 2015 transposition deadline of the EU Victims Directive comes closer. FRA's Annual report notes that Member States should adopt further measures to establish comprehensive victim support services, enable victims access such services, and train police officers and legal practitioners on victim support.

- Child protection continues to be under-resourced in many Member States, hindering efforts to better protect **child rights** in practice. Data show that child poverty and social exclusion rates remains high. At the same time, some Member States are improving the legal protection of child victims or children without parental care. However, as the FRA Annual report shows, Member States should improve coordination mechanisms and develop quality standards, as well as effective inspection and monitoring mechanisms to ensure services comply with the obligation to respect child rights.

As in previous years, the Annual report also contains a specific focus section. This year it takes a close look at fundamental rights indicators, as a tool to enhance and gauge EU and national commitments to protecting rights.

To read the report, see: [Fundamental rights: challenges and achievements in 2014](#).

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#### **Notes to editors:**

- The new-look 2014 Annual report provides concrete and comparative data on the fundamental rights situation on the ground in the 28 EU Member States. The report identifies key developments, promising practices, and challenges in equality and non-discrimination; racism, xenophobia and related intolerance; Roma integration; asylum, borders, immigration and integration; information society, privacy and data protection; the rights of the child; access to justice including rights of crime victims. Each chapter focuses on three key issues related to the chapter topic and ends with a list of FRA conclusions. Some of the conclusions and findings are also reflected for the first time in the EU Council's conclusions on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights that were adopted on 23 June.
- The report also has a focus chapter on '*Mainstreaming fundamental rights: turning words into action*' and a chapter dedicated to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and how Member States use it.
- 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.