

## TACKLING RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

European Commission reflected on the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan and the work against racism with an online Zoom event “Tackling Racism and Racial Discrimination” held on Wednesday, 21 April 2021. The event was also shared live on the EU Infopoint Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ABBilgi/videos/216352976488707>

During his opening speech, Michael Docherty, from the EU Programme Support Office stated that “The current European Commission has recognised that it is now time not only to talk openly about institutionalised racism, but, more importantly, to take actions to change it. To this end an EU Anti-Racism Action Plan has been drawn up covering the years from 2020-2025.” The online event held on Wednesday also benefited from the valuable presentation and contribution of Thibault Balthazar, from Equality, Democracy and Rule of Law Unit in the Secretariat General of the European Commission where he emphasized the importance of acting at all levels and with all actors in combating racism and racial discrimination. Mr Balthazar stated that “The EU anti-racism action plan acknowledges that racism is not only perpetrated by individuals but is also structural. To tackle structural racism, we need the integration of racial and ethnic origin equality in all EU policy areas. We also need to harness all legal, policy and budgetary tools and mobilise all actors in a common endeavour”. During the event with the moderation of Fezile Osum, the Project Coordinator of the Refugee Rights Association, locally insufficient legal framework with regards to hate speech related to race, colour or ethnic background, profiling that amounts to discrimination in the EU and best examples to combat against it, under reporting, policies to tackle the high rate of discrimination in housing and bullying, racism and discrimination in the education system have been discussed.

As part of the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community, the European Commission has been supporting a series of activities and actions to strengthen the organisational capacities, outreach and impact on tackling racism and racial discrimination. A number of EU funded projects and research initiatives to increase awareness and offer proposals to address diversity issues have been supported. These include but are not limited to: A report on Minority Rights in the Turkish Cypriot community by the Turkish Cypriot Human Rights Foundation (2012), Human Rights for All Project by Refugee Rights Association & KISA and Turkish Cypriot Journalists Association’s Possible project on human rights-based journalism. In addition to these, various multicultural groups such as VOIS Cyprus were supported by the EU funded Civic Space project within the scope of their Grow Civic Programme and EU Infopoint has organised a variety of events, including Diversity Festivals and panel discussions to mark European Action Week Against Racism since 2015.

### **Background:**

*The European Commission announced the EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025: The Commission’s plan to step up action against racism and achieve a Union of Equality. Today, action to combat discrimination, racism, xenophobia, and other types of intolerance at European level rests on an established EU legal framework. It is based on a number of provisions of the Treaties as well as the general principles of non-discrimination and equality, also reaffirmed in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Commission will report on the implementation of the Racial Equality Directive in 2021; present, by 2022, any legislation required to address shortcomings, including to strengthen the role and independence of equality bodies; ensure a full and correct transposition and implementation of the Framework Decision on racism and xenophobia across the EU, including through infringement procedures; carry out a series of actions to address racial and ethnic stereotypes with the media, civil society and representatives of people with a minority racial or ethnic background; launch action to drive a consistent approach on equality data collection, in particular as regards data disaggregated by racial or ethnic origin. The Commission calls on Member States to adopt their national action plans by the end of 2022 and to maximise the use of all the tools at their disposal to support those affected by racism and discrimination. Working together, we will make a racism-free EU a reality.*

### **For more information:**

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-anti-racism-action-plan-2020-2025_en)

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/workingpapers/libe/102/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/workingpapers/libe/102/default_en.htm)



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