

ECRI

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
Commission européenne contre le racisme et l'intolérance

ECRI's Round Table in Denmark

Society of Danish Engineers Conference Center
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BRIEFING PAPER

ECRI's Round Table in Denmark is part of a series of national round tables in the member States of the Council of Europe, which are organised in the framework of ECRI's Programme of action on relations with civil society.

The reasoning behind this Programme of action is that racism and intolerance can only be successfully countered if civil society is actively engaged in this fight: tackling racism and intolerance requires not only action on the part of governments (to whom ECRI's recommendations are addressed), but also the full involvement of civil society. ECRI attaches great importance to ensuring that its anti-racism message filters down to the whole of civil society, and also to involving the various sectors of society in an intercultural dialogue based on mutual respect.

The main themes of this Round Table are: (1) ECRI's report on Denmark; (2) racism and xenophobia in political and public discourse; (3) the legislative and institutional framework for combating racism and racial discrimination and (4) immigration and integration policies and practices in Denmark.

In its [third report on Denmark](#), ECRI acknowledges that over recent years, Denmark has made progress in a number of the fields covered in the report. This includes that Denmark has adopted an Act on Ethnic Equal Treatment and created a Complaints Committee for Ethnic Equal Treatment, whose mandate is to examine complaints of discrimination in all areas, including employment.

At the same time ECRI observes that in Denmark the Nationality Act, the Integration Act and the Aliens' Act have been further modified in a manner which disproportionately restricts the ability of members of minority groups to acquire Danish citizenship, to benefit from spousal and family reunification and to have access to social protection on par with the rest of society. Furthermore, the general climate has continued to deteriorate in Denmark, with some politicians and parts of the media projecting a negative image of minority groups in general and Muslims in particular.

All of these issues will be discussed with representatives of the responsible governmental agencies and victims of discrimination in the light of [ECRI's General Policy Recommendation no.7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination](#) and the existing legislative and institutional framework for combating racism and racial discrimination in Denmark. A whole session will be dedicated to **policies and practices in the field of immigration and integration**, with a special emphasis on practical initiatives for the integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities at

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the local level. Finally, also the dangers of **racism and xenophobia in public discourse and in the public sphere** will be analysed in more detail by renowned experts in this field.

ECRI hopes that an open debate among all relevant actors on these important issues will help to identify together effective ways of better implementing existing initiatives and will also provide the necessary impetus for further reform in Denmark.

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