

## Anti-Discrimination

Discrimination is a serious human rights violation threatening access to these rights. Ensuring equal opportunities for all while managing the complexities of increasing diversity is a major challenge for States and societies.

The Anti-Discrimination Department supports Council of Europe's member states in combatting discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, hate speech and hate crimes, as well as fostering integration while protecting national minorities and regional or minority languages. This is achieved by actions such as legislative and policy reviews, policy advice, capacity building and campaigning implemented at various levels, including international, national, local and grassroots.

Cooperation activities are carried out by the three specialised Units of the Department.

\* Guided by the findings and recommendations of the [ECHR](#), [ECRI](#), [FCNM](#) and [ECRML](#), the No Hate Speech and Cooperation Unit co-ordinates the planning and implementation of projects in the areas of combating discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance, with a particular emphasis on tackling the use of hate speech on line and off line. It deals as well with protection and promotion of national minorities and minority languages.

\* [Intercultural Cities](#) is a capacity-building and policy development programme that supports local authorities in designing, implementing and evaluating inclusive integration strategies based on the "intercultural integration" concept. Through the programme, cities learn how to foster innovation and growth by capitalising on the skills and perspectives of people with diverse backgrounds; ensure equal rights and opportunities for all; and build community cohesion through positive interaction across cultural differences, countering prejudice and stereotypes, and broadening opportunities for political participation. [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2015\)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration](#).

\* [The SOGI \(Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity\)](#) Unit's work is focused on bringing regulatory and policy framework in line with the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)5 to member states on measures to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity](#), the [ECHR](#) case law on SOGI and the recommendations of the CoE monitoring bodies ([ECRI](#), CPT ). The Unit provides technical support and expertise, upon request, to member states through cooperation activities aiming at improving the legal and institutional frameworks, as well as capacity building, sharing of good practices and awareness raising activities.