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Poland: despite new measures, nationalism, intolerance and racism are on the rise, says the Council of Europe's anti-racism commission

Strasbourg, 09.06.2015 - The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance ([ECRI](#)) today published its [fifth report](#) on Poland, analysing recent developments and outstanding issues, and providing recommendations to the authorities.

"Despite certain advances, in particular the passing of a new anti-discrimination law and measures to make judicial procedures relating to racist crime more effective, a number of problems in Poland continue to give cause for concern, such as the rise of nationalist groups, racism at sports events and intolerance of LGBT persons," said ECRI Chair Christian Ahlund.

The report welcomes the Polish authorities' clear commitment to move towards ratification of Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights providing for a general prohibition of discrimination. The adoption of guidelines for public prosecutors on the treatment of hate speech (including online hate speech) and hate crimes, the designation of prosecutor's offices and prosecutors specialising in hate crime and the disciplinary measures taken against prosecutors who have failed in their duties in the fight against hate crime are all positive measures noted by ECRI, as too are the advances made in dealing with illegal Roma settlements and the initiatives taken to dissolve racist football supporters' associations.

Nonetheless, hate speech directed at LGBT persons, including by senior politicians, the mobilisation of extremist groups, occasionally in conjunction with racist football supporters' associations or foreign nationalist groups and manifestations of racism at sports events all help trivialise and disseminate racism and intolerance.

In its report, ECRI addresses a number of recommendations to the authorities, including

- Extending the terms of reference of the Anti-Cybercrime Division of the National Police to include monitoring of illegal activities aimed at inciting hatred;
- Enacting legislation or amending existing laws in order to enshrine in Polish law the equality and dignity of LGBT persons.

These measures require prompt implementation and will be reviewed by ECRI in two years' time.

The report was drafted following ECRI's visit to Poland in June 2014 [[press release](#)]. Except where expressly indicated, it takes account of developments up to 12 December 2014.

[Link to the Polish version of the report](#)

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ECRI is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors problems of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds such as "race", national/ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, religion and language (racial discrimination); it prepares reports and issues recommendations to member States.

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