

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

21 September 2022

English only

On this European Action Day Against Islamophobia, the Advisory Council on Youth reiterates the importance of fighting against all forms of racism and discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic/national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics), as a cornerstone of pluralistic and peaceful societies.

Throughout Europe, Muslim individuals and communities continue to be subjected to stigmatising rhetoric that aims to deny them membership and lessen their contribution to European societies. Failures to address the growing threat of extremist politics at European level, and a tendency of centrist parties to mimic extremist rhetoric during election periods contribute to a normalisation of Islamophobia in the public discourse. The atmosphere of intolerance can – and has – led to anti-Muslim hate crimes, such as physical and verbal assaults and damage to property.

The Advisory Council on Youth has already drawn attention to the worrying shrinking of the civic space for youth civil society organisations, including Muslim ones, and urges Council of Europe member states to implement Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)6 of the Committee of Ministers on protecting youth civil society and young people, and supporting their participation in democratic processes.

Living in pluralistic societies based on equality and respect requires mutual trust and shared effort. The Advisory Council on Youth acknowledges the voice of all communities, regardless of “race”, ethnic/national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics, which share the Council of Europe's values, and invites governments to see youth organisations, and in particular Muslim ones on this international day against Islamophobia, as partners in promoting and sustaining democracy and human rights.

The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the Advisory Council on Youth and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Council of Europe or its member states.