

Combating racial discrimination and intolerance in Armenia: a Round Table of the Anti-racism Commission of the Council of Europe in Yerevan

Strasbourg, 25.06.2018 - In co-operation with the Human Rights Defender and the Ministry of Justice of Armenia, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is organising a round table in Yerevan on 27 June 2018 to discuss the follow-up to the recommendations of its 2016 report on Armenia.

The round table aims to contribute to the national debate on combating racial discrimination and intolerance in Armenia, as well as to raise awareness among the general public about these issues. The event aims to bring together authorities, academics, representatives of the judiciary and the law enforcement, international organisations and NGOs, as well as members of vulnerable groups of concern to ECRI. The round table will be divided into the following three sessions:

- [ECRI's Report on Armenia](#);
- Legislative and institutional framework for combating discrimination;
- Integration policies, refugees and other migrants.

The event will be opened by Reetta Toivanen, ECRI's Vice-Chair, followed by Artyom Sedrakyan, Head of Department General for Protection of Rights in Criminal Justice and Armed Forces of the Human Rights Defender's Office, and Vigen Kocharyan, Deputy Minister of Justice. ECRI rapporteur Sergey Sokolovskiy will present ECRI report on Armenia, while Jeremy McBride, Council of Europe independent expert, will comment the draft law on "Ensuring Equality before the Law" in light of Council of Europe standards.

In its 2016 report, ECRI expressed concern about a number of issues, such as the shortcomings in the criminal, civil and administrative legislation in combating racism or racial discrimination, the powers of the Human Rights Defender to examine complaints against discrimination, the rise in hate speech, as well as the lack of a comprehensive integration policy.

ECRI recommended adopting legislative changes to tackle racism and racial discrimination, to enable the Human Rights Defender to deal with discrimination in the private sector, to establish an independent mechanism responsible for dealing with complaints against the police and to draw up a national integration strategy. ECRI also encouraged the media to adopt a code of ethics comprising provisions against racist and homo/transphobic hate speech.

The round table will start at 9 am and end at 4 pm on Wednesday 27 June 2018 at the Erebuni Plaza Business Center, 26/1 Vazgen Sargsyan Street, Yerevan.

Link to the programme: [English](#) [Armenian](#)
Link to ECRI's report: [English/Armenian](#)

ECRI is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors issues relating to 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.

For more information on ECRI: www.coe.int/ecri