



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



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ECRI CONCLUSIONS
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS
IN RESPECT OF CYPRUS
SUBJECT TO INTERIM FOLLOW-UP

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¹ Unless otherwise indicated, this analysis does not take into account any developments that occurred after 30 May 2024, the date on which the response of the authorities of Cyprus to ECRI's request for information on measures taken to implement the recommendations chosen for interim follow-up was received, additional to their initial report submitted on 29 April 2024.

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FOREWORD

As part of its sixth round of monitoring work, ECRI has renewed its process of interim follow-up with respect to two specific recommendations made in each of its country reports.

In line with the Information Document on ECRI's sixth monitoring cycle brought to the attention of the Ministers' Deputies on 9 May 2018¹, not later than two years following the publication of each report, ECRI addresses a communication to the Government concerned asking what has been done in respect of the specific recommendations for which priority follow-up was requested.

At the same time, ECRI gathers relevant information itself. On the basis of this information and the response from the Government, ECRI draws up its conclusions on the way in which its recommendations have been followed up.

It should be noted that these conclusions concern only the specific interim follow-up recommendations and do not aim at providing a comprehensive analysis of all developments in the fight against racism and intolerance in the State concerned.

¹ [CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1316/4.1](#); [CM\(2018\)62-add10](#).

1) *In its report on Cyprus, (sixth monitoring cycle) published on 7 March 2023, ECRI recommended that the Cypriot authorities prepare a national LGBTI strategy, accompanied by a national action plan, with a sufficient separate budget for its implementation and with enhanced action against intolerance against LGBTI persons among its key elements.*

The Cypriot authorities informed ECRI that a LGBTI Strategy is under preparation and is expected to be published in 2024. According to the authorities, the Strategy will contain elements related to *inter alia* education, employment, healthcare, culture and sports. Further, ECRI notes that, at the 46th Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group of the United Nation Human Rights Council (29 April – 10 May 2024), the Cypriot delegate announced the development of such a strategy.

The Cypriot authorities also informed ECRI that, within the framework of the Anti-racist Policy of the Cypriot Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, homophobia and transphobia are within the types of racist incidents that may be identified, managed and recorded, especially within a school context.

The general willingness of the Cypriot authorities to work on the preparation of a LGBTI strategy, addressing it within relevant policy areas, is a positive development and should be commended, especially as these preparations appear to have involved consultations with civil society actors defending the human rights of LGBTI people.

Nonetheless, ECRI is obliged to note that no LGBTI strategy has actually been issued and that there is no information available about any budget for the implementation of the strategy as announced.

Consequently, in the present state of affairs, ECRI considers that its recommendation has not yet been implemented.

2) *In its report on Cyprus, (sixth monitoring cycle) published on 7 March 2023, ECRI recommended that the Cypriot authorities take immediate action to support child asylum seekers and other migrant children in acquiring the Greek language skills necessary to allow them to follow ordinary primary school classes taught in Greek and that such action should be accompanied by individual skills assessments to determine the most appropriate school grade to place the child in.*

The Cypriot authorities informed ECRI that the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth has implemented various measures in order to support children with a migrant background learning Greek in primary school. These measures have been carried out as part of the action plan for the integration of children with a migrant background. Since September 2023, according to the authorities, a new textbook is being used in primary schools for teaching Greek as a second language and during the current school year, a programme co-funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) has been implemented in pre-primary schools for learning Greek as a second language. Further relevant teaching materials have been produced through the programme and made available for all pre-primary schools. As regards the assessment of children's previously existing competences in Greek as a second language, tests for initial, intermediate, and final assessment have been created and made available. Finally, translated tools that diagnose previous knowledge and skills in mathematics for all grades of primary school are in use.

ECRI welcomes the fact that prompt action has been taken in the light of its recommendation. At the same time, according to some Cypriot civil society actors, the implementation of such measures has yet to be seen on the ground. This might partly be explained by the fact that the recently produced teaching and assessment materials are available on restricted websites and can only be accessed by staff in the education sector. ECRI therefore encourages the authorities to ensure better dissemination of the relevant materials in order to ensure that they are effectively used to support children with a migrant background in learning Greek and for assessing their previously acquired skills in all relevant school subjects.

In light of the above, ECRI concludes that, overall, its recommendation has been implemented.