



Combating Racism and Discrimination in and through Education

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 10: Key Topics

” In this era when racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and Islamophobia are on the rise across Europe, it is important that all children, from all backgrounds, learn and practice non-discrimination.

Education is the best tool for tackling racism and discrimination and building inclusive societies. Children can and should be taught early about equality, respect and tolerance.

ECRI’s guidelines for tackling discrimination in and through education can help ensure all children receive the education they deserve.

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools should be safe havens, free from racism and discrimination.

— Governments, civil society and schools should work together to:

- ▶ mandate schools to incorporate the fight against racism and discrimination, as well as respect for diversity, into how they are run;
- ▶ ensure that human rights education is offered from nursery school onwards and that teaching materials are free from racist content and updated to reflect the diversity and plurality of society;
- ▶ provide incentives for responsible use of the Internet;
- ▶ ensure that schools adopt and enforce a code of conduct against racism and discrimination for pupils and staff;
- ▶ monitor racist incidents in schools and pursue policies to end them.

KEY MESSAGE

— Policymakers, teachers and families must all work together to promote equality and non-discrimination:

- ▶ policymakers must create, enforce and fund policies to eliminate discrimination;
- ▶ teachers must be trained to work with children from all backgrounds; and
- ▶ pupils’ parents should be included in their school’s decisions to promote equality and non-discrimination in education.



2. Children from all backgrounds must have equal access to education and be fully integrated into the school system.

— Governments, civil society and schools should work together to:

- ▶ monitor key statistics on minority children such as school attendance, drop-out rates and academic performance;
- ▶ tackle any segregation of minority children in schools by preventing them from being placed into separate classes and helping minority children learn the language of instruction;
- ▶ encourage recruitment of teachers from minority groups;
- ▶ actively promote equality through awareness-raising campaigns targeted at all pupils and their families.

3. Teachers must be trained for working with all children and be sensitive to the needs of pupils from different backgrounds, including on issues relating to human rights and racial discrimination.

— Governments, civil society and schools should work together to:

- ▶ ensure that teachers are trained to prevent any manifestations of racism and racial discrimination at school, and to react promptly and effectively when faced with such problems.

4. Governments must provide the appropriate financial resources for schools to be able to promote equality and non-discrimination and regularly monitor the situation.



ECRI – USEFUL LINKS

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No.10: Combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education
<http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/eng?i=REC-10-2007-006-ENG>

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 9: The fight against antisemitism
<http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/eng?i=REC-09-2004-037-ENG>

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5: Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims
<http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/eng?i=REC-05-2000-021-ENG>

FACTS AND FINDINGS

“In many cases, structural obstacles to better integration of historical ethnic minorities persist and social integration policies are needed, especially in cases where discrimination exists. Relevant areas include the field of education, where ECRI noted in several member States that better teacher training and improved textbooks are necessary.” ECRI Annual Report 2015.

“It should be noted that the need for education and awareness-raising to combat hate crime and discrimination remained high... Several countries have made efforts in this direction, but more needs to be done.” ECRI Annual Report 2014.