

ECRI

European Commission
against Racism and Intolerance



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ECRI*i*

Commission européenne
contre le racisme et l'intolérance

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

■ The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a unique human rights expert body that monitors action against racism, discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic or national background, skin colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics), and intolerance in Europe. ECRI deals with the phenomena of racism, discrimination and intolerance that are or may be of a structural or general nature. However, it is not entitled to receive individual complaints, which are handled by the European Court of Human Rights.

A pan-European commission, composed of independent members, set up by Heads of State and Government

■ ECRI was set up by the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the member states of the Council of Europe in 1993 and became operational in 1994. Current trends show that problems of racism and intolerance persist and evolve in European societies and require renewed efforts to overcome.

■ ECRI is composed of 46 members appointed on the basis of their independence, impartiality, moral authority and recognised expertise in dealing with issues of racism and intolerance. Each Council of Europe member state appoints one person to serve as a member of ECRI.

Activities

■ ECRI’s statutory activities are country monitoring, thematic work and relations with civil society.

■ ECRI co-operates with the authorities of Council of Europe member states, independent authorities responsible for action against racism and intolerance at national level (equality bodies), relevant international organisations, such as the European Union, the United Nations and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and civil society actors.

1. Country monitoring

■ In its country monitoring work ECRI analyses the situation closely in each of the member states and makes recommendations for dealing with any problems of racism and intolerance identified there. A country visit is organised before the preparation of each new report in order to obtain as comprehensive a picture as possible of the situation in the country. During the visit the ECRI delegation meets key governmental and non-governmental actors in preventing and combating racism and intolerance in the country concerned.

All countries dealt with on an equal footing

■ ECRI's country monitoring approach deals with all Council of Europe member states on an equal footing. The work is organised in cycles of about five years, covering a number of countries per year.

Areas of focus in the 6th monitoring cycle

■ In 2019 ECRI started work on the 6th cycle of its country monitoring, focusing on three main areas of focus: effective equality and access to rights, hate speech and hate-motivated violence, and integration and inclusion. The reports also deal with topics specific to each country and review any action taken in the light of the interim follow-up recommendations adopted in the 5th monitoring cycle.

Working methods of the 6th monitoring cycle

■ In the 6th cycle ECRI continues to make concrete and measurable recommendations. As in the 5th cycle, a process of interim follow-up takes place two years after publication of the reports, focusing on two recommendations requiring priority implementation.

Ongoing dialogue

■ The publication of ECRI's country reports is an important stage in the development of an ongoing dialogue between ECRI and the authorities of Council of Europe member states with a view to identifying solutions to the problems of racism and intolerance. The input of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other bodies or individuals active in this field is welcomed as a part of this process, to ensure that ECRI's contribution is as constructive and useful as possible.

2. Thematic work

General Policy Recommendations

■ ECRI issues General Policy Recommendations (GPRs) addressed to the governments of all member states. GPRs cover important areas of concern in government action against racism and intolerance across Europe and are intended to serve as guidance for policy makers.

- ▶ ECRI (2018), [General Policy Recommendation No. 2 \(revised\)](#): Equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level, CRI(2018)06.
- ▶ ECRI (1998b), [General Policy Recommendation No. 4](#): National surveys on the experience and perception of discrimination and racism from the point of view of potential victims, CRI(98)30.
- ▶ ECRI (2022), [General Policy Recommendation No. 5 \(revised\)](#) on preventing and combating anti-Muslim racism and discrimination, CRI(2022)6.

- ▶ ECRI (2001), [General Policy Recommendation No. 6: Combating the dissemination of racist, xenophobic and antisemitic material via the Internet](#), CRI(2001)1.
- ▶ ECRI (2003), [General Policy Recommendation No. 7: National legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination](#), CRI(2003)8rev, as amended in 2017.
- ▶ ECRI (2004b), [General Policy Recommendation No.8: Combating racism while fighting terrorism](#), CRI(2004)26.
- ▶ ECRI (2021), [General Policy Recommendation No. 9 \(revised\) on preventing and combating antisemitism](#), CRI(2021)28.
- ▶ ECRI (2007a), [General Policy Recommendation No.10: Combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education](#), CRI(2007)6.
- ▶ ECRI (2007b), [General Policy Recommendation No.11: Combating racism and racial discrimination in policing](#), CRI(2007)39.
- ▶ ECRI (2009b), [General Policy Recommendation No. 12: Combating racism and racial discrimination in the field of sport](#), CRI(2009)5.
- ▶ ECRI (2011), [General Policy Recommendation No.13: Combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma](#), CRI(2011)37rev, as amended in 2020.
- ▶ ECRI (2012b), [General Policy Recommendation No. 14: Combating racism and racial discrimination in employment](#), CRI(2012)48.
- ▶ ECRI (2016a), [General Policy Recommendation No. 15: Combating Hate Speech](#), CRI(2016)15.
- ▶ ECRI (2016b), [General Policy Recommendation No. 16: Safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination](#), CRI(2016)16.

Statements

■ ECRI published statements on issues of concern across Europe and provides general guidance.

- ▶ [Statement on the consequences of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine](#) (adopted at ECRI's 88th plenary meeting, 29 March-1 April 2022).
- ▶ [Statement on preventing and combating ultra-nationalistic and racist hate speech and violence in relation to confrontations and unresolved conflicts in Europe](#) (adopted at ECRI's 85th plenary meeting, 30-31 March 2021).
- ▶ [Statement on racist police abuse, including racial profiling, and systemic racism](#) (adopted at ECRI's 82nd plenary meeting, 30 June-2 July 2020).
- ▶ [Statement on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and related government responses on groups of concern to ECRI](#) (adopted by the Bureau of ECRI at its meeting of 19 May 2020).

Opinions

■ Since 2020, ECRI gave its views on relevant definitions and terminology issues pertaining to racism and intolerance.

- ▶ [Opinion on the concept of “racialisation”](#) (adopted at ECRI’s 87th plenary meeting on 8 December 2021).
- ▶ [Opinion on the Working Definition of Antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#) (adopted at ECRI’s 84th plenary meeting on 2 December 2020).

3. Relations with civil society and equality bodies

■ To be effective in preventing and combating racism and intolerance, ECRI reaches out to society at large, including through the activities of its working group for relations with civil society and equality bodies. NGOs are key partners for ECRI in its work against racism and intolerance. They are vital sources of information on the situation of the groups covered by ECRI’s mandate and on racist and LGBTI-phobic incidents. They are also major players in bringing about real change at national level.

Round tables and other similar events

■ At national level, round tables or other similar events may be held following the publication of ECRI’s country monitoring reports or conclusions. They are organised with equality bodies and aimed at representatives of civil society and the national authorities, the main objective being to encourage all parties concerned to think about ways of jointly solving the problems of racism and intolerance in the country and ensuring that ECRI’s specific recommendations are fully implemented. These events are generally organised by the Council of Europe entities in charge of co-operation activities in support of member states, in consultation with ECRI.

Annual seminars and other thematic meetings

■ At European level, ECRI organises seminars on topics of particular interest. These thematic meetings are designed to establish a link between national situations and the intergovernmental level and bring together equality bodies or other international partners. Recent events include annual seminars with national equality bodies. Annual seminars are generally organised in co-operation with the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet).

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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