



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Warning: EU member states fail to address racism

ENAR is extremely disappointed that 14 member states have failed to properly transpose European race equality laws. Yesterday, the European Commission announced that it is taking enforcement action against Spain, Sweden, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Slovakia for failure to properly transpose the Race Equality Directive banning discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin<sup>1</sup> into national law.

ENAR welcomes the action taken by the Commission. This action confirms the analysis of the ENAR network that there are significant gaps in the national laws of many Member States that lead to a lack of protection against racism and race discrimination.

ENAR Director Pascale Charhon said:

“We are appalled but not surprised that it has had to come to this. We have previously highlighted this lack of implementation by EU Member States which has led to a lack of effective protection of the fundamental right to non-discrimination in the EU. These laws should have been properly in place and protecting victims of discrimination for over 3 years in all these countries. We see this failure as stemming from a lack of political will to take effective action.”

The gaps in protection range from substantive rights, such as protection from indirect discrimination, to enabling victims to have access to essential support in seeking access to justice. The Member States now have just two months in which to act and avoid potential fines from the European Court of Justice.

The ENAR Chair Bashy Quraishy said: “As an EU wide network we again call on all EU Member States to take their duties seriously and act without delay to fill the gaps in their national laws. We call in particular on the Portuguese Presidency to demonstrate clear political leadership by being the first to amend their national legislation. The ENAR network will closely monitor the situation in each Member State, including those not yet included in the enforcement action, to ensure that changes comply with EU law and meet the needs of victims of discrimination.”

*The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of European NGOs working to combat racism in all EU member states and represents more than 600 NGOs spread around the European Union. Its establishment was a major outcome of the 1997 European Year Against Racism. ENAR aims to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local/regional/national initiatives with European initiatives.*

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<sup>1</sup> 2000/43/CE