



european network against racism

# Racist Violence in Europe

**Paul Iganski**

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## 1. Introduction: A rise of racist violence in Europe?

There seems to be a consensus that racist violence and crime is on the increase in Europe. In the last few years ENAR Shadow Reports have expressed serious concern about an apparent increase in such crime and its severity in a number of EU Member States, as well as concern about an increase in extremism — particularly by far-right groups (ENAR 2009: 18; ENAR 2008: 18; ENAR 2007: 17). Similarly, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) recently noted a general increase in recorded racist crime in most of the countries where official crime data are sufficient enough to indicate trends (FRA 2010a: 35-38). The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has also recently noted a “general rise in racist violence” (ECRI 2010: 8).

Is Europe therefore experiencing a pan-European wave: a rising tide of racist violence? When considering that EU Member States have different histories of inward and outward migration, different histories of colonialism and empire, differences in the ethnic and national origins of their minority populations, and differences in the way that the state has managed conditions associated with ethnic pluralism, we perhaps cannot expect to see a ‘Euroracism’, a singular, homogeneous, phenomenon of racist violence. Instead we must surely look to the ‘national specificity’ (Miles 1994) of racist violence and expect to find as much diversity in the problem as similarity across Member States. But is that really the case? Might there be any patterns and trends evident in racist victimisation across Europe? Who is being targeted? Which countries are most affected? These are fundamental questions for all those concerned with defending human rights and ensuring the safety and security of individuals and communities. These questions steered the analysis of accounts of the problem of racist violence provided for this study by NGOs in twenty-seven European countries.

Country authors were commissioned to provide NGO perspectives on patterns and trends in racist violence in their country, indicating:

- The groups being victimised, with an indication of which groups are victimised most relative to other groups.
- Trends in victimisation over time, with an assessment about whether the problem of racist violence is worsening overall in their country, or whether it is worsening for any particular groups.
- How NGO experience of reports of racist violence compares with the picture of racist violence presented by any published official data for their country.
- Possible explanations for any trends noted, such as the role of far right and other extreme groups, mass media reporting, police and criminal justice system, politics and government, and socio-economic conditions.
- The responsiveness of the police and criminal justice system to racist violence in their country, particularly with regard to support for victims, the investigation of offences, and the prosecution of offenders.

### 1.1 The significance of an experiential perspective from NGOs

Given that there is a considerable lack of publicly available data on racist crimes across EU Member States, NGOs can potentially fill a significant gap by providing an assessment of the

problem of racist violence. In the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) survey of 'hate crime' data collection in OSCE participating states for 2008, three EU Member States — Bulgaria, Luxembourg and Portugal — reported that they did not compile any data on racist crimes (ODIHR 2009: 14 & 83). Malta failed to return the questionnaire, Greece reported that there were no racist crimes in the country in 2008, and Hungary reported only 12 violent attacks against members of national, ethnic or religious groups (ODIHR 2009a: 33).

The 2010 Annual Report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights noted the significant variation in the collection and publication of data on racist crimes, with only Finland, Sweden and the UK regularly collecting and publishing comprehensive data (FRA 2010a: 35). Even for these countries though, the publicly available data are limited and inconsistent.

The UK provides a good example of the inadequacies of official data. Data on racist incidents and crimes recorded by the police have been published annually for England and Wales for some years (UK Ministry of Justice 2010), and also for Northern Ireland (PSNI 2010). But the data have not been disaggregated to show the numbers of racist crimes against Muslims, Jews, Roma/Gypsies/Travellers, or other minority communities. Instead, all victims are combined together into one group in the data.<sup>1</sup> There are also inconsistencies in the types of data made available between the different countries that constitute the UK. For instance, compared with the limitations of the data just noted for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Scottish Government annually publishes data on the ethnic group of victims of racist incidents recorded by the police (Scottish Government 2010). However, the data are consistent with the published police data for the rest of the UK in that no information is provided about incidents against Jews, Muslims or Roma/Gypsies/Travellers.

As the case of the UK demonstrates, even in countries where more robust monitoring systems of racist violence and crime have been established, the information is generally not disaggregated to a sufficient degree to adequately target effective policy intervention and resource allocation (Anti-Defamation League and Human Rights First 2010).

Even if official data on racist incidents and crimes were available for more than the minority of EU Member States that currently make such data publicly available, NGOs could still potentially provide a significant contribution to documenting and evaluating the problem of racist violence. This is because it is well known that official crime records capture only part of the problem of racist violence. Crime victimisation surveys have demonstrated that only a minority of racist incidents and crimes are reported to the police.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, in the UK for instance, alternative reporting arrangements — known as 'third-party' reporting — have been established by NGOs and also by public organisations outside the criminal justice system. The assumption has been that some victims are less inclined to report incidents to the police than to another agency, possibly because of a lack of trust and confidence in the police (and this would especially be the case when the police are the perpetrators of incidents as documented in a number of country reports for this study),<sup>3</sup> a belief that nothing will be done, the fear of

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of racist crimes against Jews, an NGO — the Community Security Trust — has filled the gap by publishing annual reports of incidents reported to them by victims. See, for example, Community Security Trust (2010).

<sup>2</sup> For instance, see: Brå (2009) pages 29-30.

<sup>3</sup> Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, and Sweden.

reprisals from perpetrators if police get involved, a feeling that the incident is not serious enough for police action, or simply because police stations are not nice places to go to.<sup>4</sup>

As a number of NGOs across Europe provide advice and advocacy for victims of racist violence, with many victims choosing to report their victimisation to them rather than the police, NGOs potentially serve as an important source of ‘experiential’ information about patterns and trends in racist violence. Therefore, in commissioning authors to contribute an assessment of racist violence in their country the study aimed to recruit through the ENAR network authors engaged with NGOs working directly in supporting victims of racist violence. Where this was not possible, authors were recruited who were involved in antiracist activism of some sort. In both cases, contributing authors were expected to consult as widely as possible with NGOs in their country which provide support to victims of racist violence to produce their assessment of the problem.

## 1.2 Defining racist violence

There is no one definition of ‘racist violence’ or ‘racist crime’ that is universally accepted and utilised by criminal justice agencies and NGOs across EU Member States. A definition was though given to authors commissioned to provide country reports for this study. The aim was not to be prescriptive, but to fully alert NGOs to the information being sought so that by using a very inclusive definition the picture of racist violence across Europe could be captured as fully as possible.

Contributing authors were advised that ‘racist violence’ was to be understood as any incident in which it is believed by the victim or any other person that persons or property are victimised because of:

- Some aspect of their identity — such as their ‘race’, ethnicity, national origins, skin colour, language (or religion or belief in the case of Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs) — or;
- Their perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support or membership of a group on the basis of their ‘race’, ethnicity, national origins, skin colour, language (or religion or belief in the case of Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs).

Such victimisation was to include:

- The deliberate targeting of persons or property where the incident is motivated by bias, prejudice, hate or hostility concerning the victim’s identity or assumed identity, or their perceived attachment or affiliation.
- The deliberate targeting of persons or property because of the victim’s identity or assumed identity, or their perceived attachment or affiliation, irrespective of whether the incident is motivated by bias, prejudice, hate or hostility.
- The racial aggravation of incidents that initially occur for other reasons than the victim’s identity or their perceived attachment or affiliation.

‘Violence’ against persons was to be understood as:

- Incidents which would generally be treated as a crime – such as assault and other physical attacks, wounding, murder, and threats and intimidation of individuals or groups of persons, and;

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<sup>4</sup> For a more extensive discussion of why some victims of ‘hate crime’ may not report incidents to the police see: ODIHR (2009b) pages 33-36.

- Incidents which in some jurisdictions may not be treated as a crime – such as verbal abuse, insults, harassment directed against individuals or groups of persons, and pushing and shoving.

‘Violence’ against property was to be understood as:

- Damage such as racist graffiti, daubing and the throwing of paint, and other damage such as arson, broken windows, broken doors, including acts of desecration in places of worship, believed to be inflicted because of the connection, attachment, or affiliation of the building or property with minority ethnic, ‘racial’ or religious communities, such as mosques and synagogues, and other communal buildings and property such as schools, community centres and NGO offices.

## 2. NGO monitoring of racist violence

To effectively tackle the day-to-day occurrences of racist violence, the location, frequency, patterns, and characteristics of racist victimisation need to be understood. To effectively support victims, the targets of racist victimisation need to be properly recognised, the impacts fully understood, and the wishes of victims for the resolution of their victimisation appropriately acknowledged. And to tackle and work with perpetrators, the characteristics of offenders, and the contexts of their offending, also need to be understood. Such understanding can inform preventive work. At the local level, monitoring racist violence is critical for targeting local interventions, and monitoring is fundamental at a national level for the targeting of resources and interventions by national agencies. All this can begin to be achieved when NGOs record and review information reported to them about racist attacks.

The recording and analysis of such information is critical for NGOs in targeting their own interventions against the problem of racist violence and for seeking and channelling resources to support interventions. Information about attacks can also be used by NGOs to bring the problem to the attention of official authorities and used to advocate for action by the authorities to support victims and pursue offenders. The use of monitoring data for advocacy by NGOs is especially important where criminal justice and other official agencies do not adequately record and review reported incidents of racist violence.

The least resource intensive means of monitoring racist violence are for NGOs to fully record and periodically review any incidents reported to them and also to monitor and collect information about any racist attacks reported in the press and other media. The Internet and web sites of extremists groups might also be monitored for information about their activities.

A more resource intensive method of collecting information would be to carry out an interview survey of racist violence in a locality or nationally if the appropriate means can be devised and resourced. The Internet and email provide cost efficient means of carrying out national surveys. At the local level, focus groups can also be an effective means of collecting information — and will be potentially less costly than a community survey — and on a larger scale, a public meeting, or even a public inquiry might be held. Space on social networking sites on the Internet might be used to gather information about racist attacks, and NGOs can establish pages on their own web sites to encourage reporting.

NGOs can also monitor the police and criminal justice system response to reported racist incidents to hold them publicly accountable, especially where there is inactivity by such agencies.

Given the potential significance of NGO monitoring of incidents of racist violence as just outlined, authors of the country reports for this study were asked to provide information about the record keeping activities of their own NGO with regard to reported racist violence, and the recording activities of other NGOs they consulted in preparing their country reports. Such information was also requested so that a judgement could be made about the evidence base of the information provided in their country reports. Specifically, NGOs were asked if they keep

records of incidents of racist violence reported to them, and if they do, whether they keep records of:

- Just numbers of incidents, or more comprehensively descriptions of incidents for individual cases.
- Characteristics of victims, such as their age, sex, ethnic identity, language, religion, national origins.
- Types of incidents reported, such as whether they involve physical violence, verbal abuse and threats, and damage to property, for instance.
- Locations of incidents.
- Characteristics of perpetrators of incidents, including any apparent affiliation with an extremist group.

NGOs were also asked whether they periodically review any records they keep of incidents of reported racist violence, and if so, how often, how the reviews are carried out, and whether any reports had been written based on the reviews. They were asked whether any such reviews had been used to plan NGO responses to racist violence, such as support for victims, the allocation of resources, and seeking additional resources. NGOs were also asked whether any records they keep of incidents of racist violence are used by any national or international bodies for their monitoring purposes. Finally, they were asked if they had carried out or commissioned any victim surveys of racist violence.

## **2.1 Information about NGO monitoring of racist incidents provided by country reports**

Three types of NGO activity in relation to the recording and monitoring of racist violence can be categorised from the information provided in the country reports for this study (a summary is provided in Table 1).<sup>5</sup>

- First, some NGOs in a large group of countries appear to keep records to support their work with victims of racist violence, but there is little systematic review or analysis of such records.
- Second, some NGOs that have not carried out any such reviews have nevertheless established some particularly innovative practices for the recording and monitoring of racist violence.
- Third, some NGOs in a few countries have established comprehensive monitoring systems and carry out systematic reviews of patterns and trends in racist incidents to inform their work and the targeting of their resources.

Each of these types of NGO activity will be unfolded in more detail below.

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<sup>5</sup> Some of the country reports usefully provide very detailed information on data collection and monitoring of racist violence. See, for example, the country reports for France, Germany, Ireland and Latvia.

**Table 1. Patterns in NGO monitoring of racist incidents**

Record keeping mostly to support case work	Some comprehensive monitoring practice	Some particularly innovative monitoring practice
<p><b>Belgium</b>  <b>Bulgaria</b>  <b>Czech Republic</b>  <b>Cyprus</b>  <b>Denmark</b>  <b>Finland</b>  <b>Greece</b>  <b>Hungary</b>  <b>Italy</b>  <b>Latvia</b>  <b>Lithuania</b>  <b>Luxembourg</b>  <b>Malta</b>  <b>Romania</b>  <b>Slovenia</b>  <b>Sweden</b>  <b>Turkey</b></p>	<p><b>Estonia</b><sup>6</sup>  <b>France</b><sup>7</sup>  <b>Germany</b><sup>8</sup>  <b>Ireland</b><sup>9</sup>  <b>The Netherlands</b><sup>10</sup>  <b>Romania</b><sup>11</sup>  <b>Slovakia</b><sup>12</sup>  <b>Spain</b><sup>13</sup>  <b>United Kingdom</b><sup>14</sup></p>	<p><b>Austria</b><sup>15</sup>  <b>Poland</b><sup>16</sup></p>

## 2.2 Countries where there appears to be little systematic monitoring of racist violence by NGOs

Given the potential significance of the monitoring of racist incidents it is notable that for some countries the country reports observe that very little monitoring activity is carried out by NGOs.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Inimõiguste Teabekeskus (Legal Information Centre for Human Rights) [www.lichr.ee](http://www.lichr.ee)

<sup>7</sup> NGOs contribute to an annual report produced by the Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme (CNCDH) [www.cncdh.fr](http://www.cncdh.fr)

<sup>8</sup> Grell et al. (2009), p. 176.

<sup>9</sup> ENAR Ireland, in partnership with a number of agencies, including other NGOs and a local authority, is implementing a pilot project to monitor racist violence at city wide level in Dublin, with a view to supporting the development of a standard framework for the reporting of racist incidents. See the country report for Ireland submitted for this study for further information.

<sup>10</sup> E.g., the *Monitor Racism & Extremism* by the Anne Frank Foundation in cooperation with the University of Leiden, [www.monitorracisme.nl](http://www.monitorracisme.nl)

<sup>11</sup> E.g., Romani Cris [www.romanicriss.org](http://www.romanicriss.org)

<sup>12</sup> L'udia proti rasizmu (People Against Racism) [www.rasizmus.sk](http://www.rasizmus.sk)

<sup>13</sup> E.g., Movement against Intolerance (MCI) [www.movimientocontralaintolerancia.com](http://www.movimientocontralaintolerancia.com) and SOS Racisme [www.sosracisme.org](http://www.sosracisme.org)

<sup>14</sup> Community Security Trust [www.thecst.org.uk](http://www.thecst.org.uk). See also the web site of the Institute of Race Relations [www.irr.org.uk](http://www.irr.org.uk) for some particularly innovative practice.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., Rassismus streichen <http://www.rassismusstreichen.at> and Fair Play [fairplay.vidc.org](http://fairplay.vidc.org)

<sup>16</sup> E.g., Nigdy Więcej (Never Again) [www.nigdywiecej.org](http://www.nigdywiecej.org)

The country report for Malta notes, for instance, that “Data collection on issues of racist violence appears to be critically weak” (Gauci 2010). Although NGOs in Malta may keep records for case work concerning complaints of racist violence reported to them, the country report notes that “no formal database exists, and the available information often takes the form of notes held by an organization”. It suggests that the NGOs in Malta solely deal with cases on “an individual level” and do not “seek to identify trends in such cases”. One of the suggested reasons for this might be that the NGOs do not fully appreciate the extent of racist violence, for as the country report also notes: “NGOs actively working in the field do not, at present, share a common understanding of what might constitute racist violence. A number of instances have arisen where cases were identified by some NGOs as being racially aggravated whilst other NGOs believed otherwise.” Another reason for a lack of monitoring activity concerns the capacity and resources of NGOs in tackling racist violence. As the country report points out: “Most NGOs approached in the course of this research indicated that they did not feel they have the capacity to actively engage with the issue of racist violence. Some felt that these issues fell outside their primary mandate whilst others indicated that many of their clients do not report cases of violence to them” (Gauci 2010).

The problem of NGO capacity and resources to monitor racist violence is also raised by the country report for Greece (Shashati 2010) which notes that “NGOs tend to keep only records of very brutal or violent attacks because they don't have the economic means to keep records of all the incidents.” The Greek Forum of Migrants — a network of twenty-four migrant communities and organizations, apparently kept comprehensive records of complaints from migrants and refugees from 2005 to 2008. But since then, since they “cannot afford to keep complete data”, partial information is recorded by volunteers — such as a description of the incident, and the age, sex, and ethnic origin of victims, and sometimes the location of the incident, and any information about perpetrators. The information was included in an annual review carried out up to 2008 with a report disseminated to members of the Forum and published on the Forum’s website.<sup>17</sup> However, according to a representative of the board responsible for the budget of the Forum, “By the end of 2007 we were not able to ensure appropriate funding for the operation of the office. We used the summary report from the reviews and the annual reports of the organization in order to make claims and proposals for resources. Unfortunately, we failed” (Shashati 2010).

Likewise, one of the reasons suggested for an apparent lack of monitoring of racist violence by NGOs in Denmark is that they do not have the financial or human resources to maintain recording systems. The country report (Quraishy 2010) notes that although there are over five hundred NGOs in Denmark which work for the well being of ethnic and religious minorities few of them have the capacity to keep records of reported racist violence, with the exception of the Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination (DARCoRD) and the Jewish Community in Denmark which collect as much information as possible but are solely dependent upon victims coming forward with complaints.

The problem of resources is echoed in the country report from Cyprus (Chowdhury & Kassimeris 2010) which observes that “NGOs typically work with scarce resources, therefore data collection tends to be limited.” Cyprus provides a good example where NGOs compile records of reported racist incidents for their casework purposes — in common with some NGOs in other countries

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<sup>17</sup> Greek Forum of Migrants, [www.migrant.gr](http://www.migrant.gr)

just mentioned — but they are not analysed or reviewed systematically. For example, KISA<sup>18</sup> receives reports of racist incidents mostly made directly by victims or third parties on behalf of the victims. Once a complaint is filed, KISA documents all relevant details to provide a record for follow-up on the case and to report the incident to official authorities and sometimes the media. Each record includes a detailed description of the incident — the circumstances, the persons involved, the location, date and time of the incident — the victim and their characteristics. Similar information, if available, is recorded about perpetrators, including their likely affiliation with an extreme group or movement. KISA maintains frequent contact with victims who report incidents of racist violence and mediates with the relevant authorities and organisations to report the incident with the victim’s consent and to provide support. Individual cases are reviewed to monitor progress on the basis of information KISA receives from victims and authorities and other agencies involved. Additional reports are then produced for each individual case and kept on file. But the records are only produced for individual case management, rather than being used systematically for data analysis and review across cases (Chowdhury & Kassimeris 2010).

### 2.3 Examples of comprehensive practice

There are some isolated examples of very comprehensive practice in the recording of racist incidents which serve as potential models for what might be achieved elsewhere. In Slovakia, for instance, the NGO *L’udia proti rasizmu* (People Against Racism [PAR]), which has been providing free legal aid to victims of racist violence since 2001, is the only NGO in the country to systematically monitor incidents — according to the country report submitted for this study. PAR’s monitoring activity appears to provide an instructive example as in addition to compiling detailed records about incidents, victims, and perpetrators where possible, a quarterly review of the records is undertaken. The reviews are used to plan support for victims and to seek and plan the use of resources. They have also been used to inform donors who support PAR, and information from the reviews has been disseminated through the media and on PAR’s website (Pavlik 2010).

An NGO in the UK, the *Community Security Trust* (CST) has been systematically compiling reports of anti-Jewish incidents since 1984, gathered from victims (who can even report incidents to the CST online), from press reports, and also from the police. The CST publishes a comprehensive annual report which presents anonymised details of cases of anti-Jewish incidents and analysis of patterns and trends in victimisation. The annual reports and other documents produced by the CST are also accessible online through their website. The CST also supports victims and provides defence for communal buildings such as synagogues and schools which were shown by their monitoring to be targets of attacks. The rigour and professionalism of the CST’s monitoring activity is such that their data have been used by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in reporting patterns of ‘recorded anti-Semitic’ crime (FRA 2010a: 38).

And in Romania, even though the country report submitted for this study concludes that “an overall monitoring of incidents of racist violence is not consistently or methodologically carried out and the availability of some data at NGO level is either accidental or strictly related to ongoing projects or campaigns”, it does note that the NGO *Romani Criss* is an exception. *Romani*

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<sup>18</sup> [www.kisa.org.cy](http://www.kisa.org.cy)

Criss systematically monitors racist incidents and violence against the Roma, assists victims and regularly takes cases to court, and publishes annual reviews on racist violence (Negulescu & Nicolae 2010).

**Box 1. The Community Security Trust, UK.**



**2.4 Examples of innovative practice**

In some countries, some NGO monitoring practices, although not as comprehensive as those just discussed, stand out as being particularly innovative and illustrate the potential that might be achieved elsewhere:

- In Austria (Kopanja 2010), racist graffiti in Vienna is recorded by *Rassismus streichen*, mapped on its website, and notified to official authorities, including the Ministry for Interior Affairs (see Box 2.).
- Also in Austria, *Fair Play*, which campaigns against racism and discrimination in football, contacts the relevant football club and possibly fan clubs, as soon as they receive a report of an incident to try to convince them to take action and also to provide them with campaigning materials and support. Most of the incidents involve verbal abuse and threats mainly by fans but also on the pitch between players or between players and referees. In such cases information is recorded describing the incident. *Fair Play* publishes reports and articles about racist incidents on their website (see Box 3.) or on the website of the international FARE-network (farenet.org) and they also report on the steps taken. Although *Fair Play* does not carry out any systematic monitoring of racist incidents associated with football games, incidents are cited in reports to funding institutions and stakeholders. *Fair Play* also prepared a study on racism and ethnic discrimination in sports in the European Union for the European Union Agency for

Fundamental Rights in which they counted and summarized the number of racist incidents reported to them for 2003-2008 as well as to other NGOs or official agencies (FRA 2010b).

- In Poland (Pankowski 2010), the NGO *Never Again* (Box 4), has documented in its *Brown Book* (Kornack 2009) a “few thousand” cases of ‘hate crime’ and ‘hate speech’ since the early 1990s.<sup>19</sup> Details of incidents are also regularly published on Never Again’s website and in their anti-Fascist magazine *Nigdy Więcej*. The information is collected by a network of volunteer correspondents from all over Poland, who monitor the press and the Internet, and are informed about incidents by minority organisations and groups.
- In the UK (Isal 2010), the London-based Institute of Race Relations (IRR), which describes itself as an ‘anti-racist think tank’, collates information on racist attacks (although it doesn’t work directly with victims) by monitoring daily over 300 media sources across the UK. It publishes a list of descriptions of incidents on its website and has published a report on cases of racist violence it documented in 2009 (Box 5).<sup>20</sup>

## Box 2. Rassismus streichen

**Rassismus streichen**

Rassistische Beschmierungen aufzeigen, damit die Stadt Wien das Problem endlich löst.



[www.rassismusstreichen.at](http://www.rassismusstreichen.at)

**Strike Racism**

Document racist graffiti in the streets of Vienna so that Vienna's government and authorities must react.

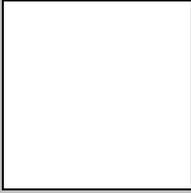
The streets of Vienna are full of racist graffiti. Vienna's government is not interested to face and solve this problem. We want to show them how many of these graffiti are existing in the streets and public transport of Vienna in order to find a satisfying solution as soon as possible. Help us to collect these graffiti by posting them as a jpeg-file by mobile phone via mms or e-mail to [rs@sosmitmensch.at](mailto:rs@sosmitmensch.at)

©Rassismus streichen – Austria

<sup>19</sup> Since 2007 the monitoring program has been run in cooperation with the Collegium Civitas, a Warsaw-based university, and has received some support from the Stefan Batory Foundation (Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego).

<sup>20</sup> See: Athwal, Bourne and Wood (2010).

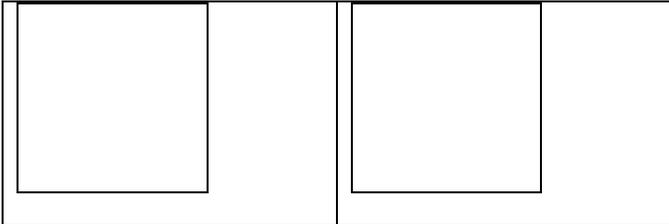
**Box 3. Fair Play Austria**



**FairPlay.**  
**Different Colours. One Game.**  
<http://fairplay.vidc.org/>

©Fair Play - Austria

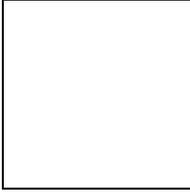
**Box 4. *Nigdy Więcej* - Poland**



 © Nigdy Więcej – Poland

© Nigdy Więcej – Poland

### **Box 5. The Institute of Race Relations – London**



© Institute of Race Relations - UK

## **2.5 The relationship between support for victims of racist violence and the reporting of incidents**

The degree of trust and confidence of victims in organisations to which they might report incidents of racist violence is arguably critical to encouraging, or alternatively inhibiting, reports. It is noted in the introduction to this report that a major reason for the underreporting of incidents to official authorities is a lack of confidence that anything will be done. The same consideration potentially affects the reporting of incidents to NGOs, which in turn impacts upon the potential for NGOs to monitor racist victimisation. Practitioner experience shows that a number of aspects of victim support are essential for securing the trust and confidence of victims:

- Those who receive reports need to be knowledgeable about the steps involved in handling reports.
- Victims' complaints need to be listened to sensitively and those receiving reports need to be trained to manage reports with sensitivity.
- Sensitive support will also help victims navigate the criminal justice system if they wish to report their victimisation to official authorities.
- Sensitivity, though, is not the only ingredient to managing reports effectively. Victims will expect something to be done.
- Sometimes, just being able to talk to somebody about the problem might be all that victims want. In many instances victims might not want the police to be involved. But whether or not the victims want to make a report to official authorities, putting the victim's wishes at the centre of managing a report of racist violence — in other words empowering victims — is fundamental to seeking a resolution.

It is notable, then, that the NGOs noted above as providing examples of the comprehensive monitoring of racist violence, are also involved in closely working with and supporting victims of such violence. There is arguably a need to illuminate the work that such NGOs do in much greater depth than has been offered here to provide practical examples for the types of recording and monitoring activity that might be carried out by other NGOs.

### 3. Trends in racist victimisation

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) reports in its 2010 Annual Report (FRA 2010a) that out of the twelve EU Member States<sup>21</sup> which publish sufficient official data on racist crime to enable an analysis of trends, all — with the exception of the Czech Republic and Poland — show an upward trend in recorded racist crime for the period 2000-2008. There is a downward trend for the Czech Republic and a constant trend for Poland (FRA 2010a: 36). The official data therefore appear to provide some foundation for the consensual view — noted in the introduction to this report — that there has been an increase in racist violence and crime across Europe in recent years.

However, drawing conclusions about trends in crime can be notoriously hazardous. It is universally accepted that recorded racist crimes represent only the ‘tip of the iceberg’ of the problem, because — as also noted in the introduction to this report — many victims do not report incidents to the police, and when some reports are made they are not recorded by the police. A rise in recorded crimes could therefore reflect a greater willingness on the part of victims to report crimes to the police, especially if they are seen to be more responsive to the problem of racist victimisation. And across the last decade there has seemingly been a growing awareness by the police and other official authorities of the problem of racist violence in many European countries — judging by the official responses to the problem. As the FRA 2010 Annual Report neatly points out: “Put simply: high racist crime figures are not only a negative indicator of an existing problem with racist crime in a Member State, but are also a positive indicator that Member States are responding seriously to the problem of racist crime” (FRA 2010a: 38).

Poland appears to provide one such positive example, as the country report provided for this study (Pankowski 2010) notes that some official statistics suggest a dramatic rise in ‘hate crime’ in the recent years, but this could be misleading as it testifies to “an improving (if still far from perfect) system of registering hate crime cases by the state rather than a real-life rise in hate violence. According to NGO estimates (such as the NEVER AGAIN Association or Campaign Against Homophobia), hate crime has remained on a stable (quite high) level for the last few years.”

Changes in data collection practices, as have occurred in Sweden and Finland, for instance, can also result in an apparent jump in the number of recorded racist crimes (FRA 2010a: 37). The country report for Austria for this study (Kopanjanja 2010) similarly notes that in 2006 the Interior Ministry issued guidelines for police officers to report possible xenophobic, racist or antisemitic motives behind crimes to Regional Offices for the Protection of the Constitution. The number of complaints reflected in the annual report has since increased.

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<sup>21</sup> Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland).

### 3.1 NGO perspectives on overall trends in racist victimisation

When it comes to trying to evaluate trends in racist violence across Europe, the country reports provided for this study offer a mixed picture:

- In some countries — Finland and France — an apparent rise in incidents of racist violence captured in official data corresponds to NGO perceptions about trends in racist crime.
- In Austria, the official data suggest that racist crimes have risen, but because NGOs in the country do not systematically collect data on racist crimes reported to them they were unable to shed light on trends.
- In two countries — Ireland and Slovakia — there have been recent declines in officially recorded racist crimes, but NGOs believe the problem of racist crime is actually worsening, and the country report for Ireland suggests also that the “severity of racist incidents is getting worse” (Lynch 2010).
- In some countries — Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Slovenia and Spain — where the official data are limited, NGOs in the countries report that racist crime has been on the rise.
- In three other countries where official data are inadequate for the analysis of trends — Bulgaria, Estonia and Poland — NGOs reported there has been no evident increase or decrease in racist crime.
- In other countries where the official data are limited — Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania and Turkey — NGOs do not systematically collect data on racist crimes and they were therefore unable to offer any indication of any apparent trends.
- In Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom, there appear to be no consistent patterns as there have either been annual fluctuations in official records of racist crime, or changes in crime recording, which limit conclusions about any apparent trends. Limitations affecting information about racist violence collected by NGOs inhibit conclusions that might be drawn about any apparent trends.

What is clear from the country reports, is that in different European countries some minority communities — Roma/Gypsies/Travellers; Muslims; Jews; and other visible minorities, such as migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers — are consistently targeted in racist attacks. The contexts and the patterns of such attacks differ, however, across the communities targeted, as will be unravelled in this report. In addition to these pan European patterns of racist violence, it is also clear from the country reports that specific patterns of racist victimisation are evident in some particular countries. This ‘national specificity’ of the problem of racist violence will also be discussed in the report.

### 3.2 Racist violence against Roma/Gypsies/Travellers

In commenting recently on racist violence against Roma in Europe, the international human rights organisation Human Rights First sounded the alarm that “To the people of Europe’s Roma communities in some countries, the newly virulent anti-gypsyism is an eerie reminder of the *Porrajmos*, the Romani Holocaust during the Second World War that killed more than half of Europe’s Roma population. When senior European political leaders publicly discuss “solutions” to the “Roma problem,” advocating the use of dynamite; electrified fences; mug shots; fingerprinting of men, women, and children; and deportations, historical parallels inadvertently come to mind” (Human Rights First 2008: 3).

Roma were listed as one of the most victimised groups in a number of the country reports provided for this study. Yet the problem of racist violence against Roma/Gypsy communities has possibly been subject to some of the least attention by European institutions concerned with racist violence. There were only a few brief mentions of Roma/Gypsies in the landmark 1985 'Evrigenis Report' for the European Parliament Committee of Inquiry into the Rise of Fascism and Racism in Europe. The only example provided of anti-Gypsy racism concerned a newspaper report of Gypsy children at the Severo Ochoa High School in Madrid asking for police protection (European Parliament 1985: para. 165, p. 58).

The victimisation of Roma/Gypsy communities received slightly more attention in the next landmark report for the European Parliament in 1991 — the Ford Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Racism and Xenophobia. It was noted that in "Spain, as in Ireland, the largest ethnic group to suffer racial discrimination and harassment is the native gypsy population."<sup>22</sup> For Ireland, the report noted that the "single most discriminated against ethnic group is the 'travelling people' who... like gypsies in other countries, are considered undesirable neighbours and are usually forced to move out of residential areas."<sup>23</sup>

The extent of contemporary racist violence against Roma/Gypsy communities was clearly illuminated by the 2008 EU-MIDIS survey in which Roma reported the highest levels of racist victimisation in European countries. Five hundred Roma respondents were interviewed in each of seven EU Member States — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — in 2008. In each of these countries the Roma were the most victimised minority group surveyed — along with Sub Saharan Africans. The rates of reported racist victimisation ranged from 32% of Roma respondents in Czechoslovakia — the highest rate for any group surveyed in any country — to 26% in Greece and Poland, to 3% in Bulgaria. In total, for the seven Member States combined almost a fifth (18%) of Roma respondents reported at least one incident of personal racist criminal victimisation — including assaults, threats and serious harassment — in the last twelve months (FRA 2009a: 65).

Crimes against Roma/Gypsies/Travellers featured in case studies provided in five of the country reports<sup>24</sup> returned for this study. In Turkey (Bilgen 2010), in January 2010, there was an outbreak of mass violence, reportedly involving a thousand people, against Romanis in the Selendi suburb of Manisa on the Aegean coast, in which houses, vehicles and tents of the Romani were destroyed or damaged — sparked initially by a fight in a tea house on New Year's Eve (Korkut 2010). Conflicting accounts of the initial incident were provided by the Turkish media. According to *Bianet*, tensions started when a customer in the tea house, a local Roma man, was told "No tea for gypsies" and was refused tea by the owner. For his part, the tea house owner provided a different account, stating that he warned the customer, "not to smoke inside because of the recent ban on indoor smoking". The Romani customer, according to the tea house owner, then "swore at me and hit me. I took a blow to my ear and my brother was also wounded in the head. His father swore at everyone, to our mothers, wives and mosques. That is why people reacted" (Hurriyet Daily News 2010).

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<sup>22</sup> See: European Parliament (1991) para. 2.11.1, page 37. See also para. 3.6.7. to 3.6.9., page 60.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. para. 3.8.4., page 65.

<sup>24</sup> Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Romania and Turkey.

In relying on news media reports of the initial incident, it cannot be known for sure whether the fight was sparked by an act of discrimination against the Romani customer in allegedly being refused tea, or sparked by the alleged warning not to smoke. It is also not clear to what extent the subsequent mass violence involved “ethnic clashes”, to use the words of one newspaper report (Hurriyet Daily News 2010), or ‘ethnic cleansing’ in racist violence targeted at the Selendi Roma community. The latter, though, was clearly the effect as Roma from Selendi fled the violence to shelter in the homes of Romani families in the nearby district of Gordes and others were resettled in another district — Salihli.

The attitudes of some of the local Turkish population towards the Roma were also clear. Attackers reportedly shouted “Selendi belongs to us and it will remain ours” and “We don’t want Romani in Selendi”. The teahouse’s patrons reportedly “all agreed Selendi’s Roma were pawn brokers, involved in petty crime, swore at people and drank lots of alcohol”. And “many Selendi locals” “said the district would be in peace without them, emphasizing the number of guns and knives allegedly found in the abandoned houses of the Roma” (Hurriyet Daily News 2010).

Roma were also subject to mass violence in Sânmartin, Harghita county, in Romania in May and June 2009 (Negulescu & Nicolae 2010). The violence was seemingly triggered on 31st May by an incident in which two ethnic-Hungarians found on their private property six Roma grazing their horses. In a clash which followed, one of the ethnic-Hungarians was hurt and the Roma ran into the woods while their horses were confiscated by the ethnic-Hungarians. The incident was followed-up by attacks on the whole Roma community. According to *Romani Criss*, an NGO which supports and advocates Roma rights in Romania,<sup>25</sup> which along with other NGOs documented the attacks and provided advocacy for the victims,<sup>26</sup> approximately 400 local ethnic-Hungarians damaged houses belonging to the Roma, setting fire to one, and breaking windows and doors and damaging property inside others. Cars belonging to Roma were also damaged and even a number of dogs owned by the Roma were killed. The Roma inhabitants fled to spend the night in the woods and other places outdoors, with a number not returning for about two months for fear of being attacked. In the weeks that followed the initial attacks, groups of ethnic-Hungarians, apparently watched by the police, threatened Roma who had returned to the village. Some of those who had returned took refuge in the woods again at night.

In Italy (Scagliotti 2010), on September 5th 2008, three families, all Italian citizens of Roma origin, parked their caravans to stop for lunch in a parking lot in Bussolengo near Verona. While they were preparing their lunch, a local police patrol stopped and ordered them to clear-up and leave in a couple of hours. They told the police officers that they would leave directly after lunch. However a Carabinieri patrol subsequently arrived, and according to one of the Roma involved: “We are told to leave immediately. My brother-in-law asks whether that was a threat. Then they begin to beat us.”<sup>27</sup> The families were allegedly brutally beaten by the Carabinieri, and one child had three teeth knocked out. They were forcibly taken and detained in a police station for five hours where they suffered further beatings and abuse, with one of the Roma having his head held in a bucket of water.

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<sup>25</sup> See: [www.romanicriss.org](http://www.romanicriss.org)

<sup>26</sup> A video documenting the damage can be viewed at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=qU3Q5X6qMT0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qU3Q5X6qMT0) (last accessed 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010).

<sup>27</sup> Gianluca Carmosino, ‘A Bolzaneto rom in Bussolengo [VR]’ [www.carta.org](http://www.carta.org) September 9, 2008.

This was by no means an isolated incident in Italy. A 2008 report by the European Roma Rights Centre noted that many of the Romani interviewed in research for the report said there was an increased level of police violence and abuse. According to the report: “Romani individuals who engaged in informal economic activities, such as washing car windshields at traffic lights or begging, reported being targeted by police for abuse and violence in recent months” (European Roma Rights Centre 2008: 23). The report noted that: “Researchers...were struck by the seemingly endless list of derogatory statements recalled by Romani interviewees during discussions about their interactions with Italian police officers. Amongst the most common phrases cited as used by the police during interactions with Roma were: “Dirty Gypsies!”, “Zingari del Cazzo!” “Zingari di Merda!(Gypsies of Shit), “Sei un pezzo di merda! (You are a piece of shit)”, “You stink!”, and “You live like rats!” (European Roma Rights Centre 2008: 25). Such abuse occurred against a background of an upsurge in racist violence against Roma in Italy in an apparent backlash to the brutal rape and murder of an Italian woman in October 2007 attributed to a Romanian immigrant of Roma origin (Human Rights First 2008: 5-9).

In Northern Ireland, in Belfast, in June 2009, Romanian Roma families fled their homes after being targeted in racist attacks for a number of nights. The *Belfast Telegraph* newspaper reported that a crowd had gathered outside their homes “Shouting racist slogans, smashing windows and kicking in doors” (Belfast Telegraph 2009). One of those targeted said that “We are not going back to our house. It is not safe. They made signs like they wanted to cut my brother's baby's throat. They said they wanted to kill us.” After spending a night in a church hall, the Roma families were moved to a leisure centre and then housed under police guard in a block of flats belonging to Queen’s University (McDonald 2009). Even though the attacks were condemned by some local residents, community leaders, politicians, and even paramilitary leaders, many of the Roma returned to Romania.

From the evidence of racist attacks against Roma/Gypsies/Travellers provided in the country reports for this study, a number of patterns can be observed:

- In common with other communities victimised by racist attacks, Roma experience racist harassment and assaults on an everyday basis while the offenders and those who are targeted are going about their everyday lives. However, Roma communities appear to be more likely the object of mass violence perpetrated by mobs, crowds and gangs of attackers, compared with other communities targeted in racist attacks.
- Destruction and damage of property features prominently in the occurrence of mass violence against Roma, and Roma communities are possibly more likely to suffer from criminal damage compared with other communities targeted in racist attacks.
- The occurrence of mob violence and the degree of property destruction and damage that has occurred perhaps betrays a particular virulence of anti-Roma sentiment — a deep-seated animus — compared with the sentiments conveyed in attacks on other victimised communities.
- The violence on occasion initially erupts as retaliation, revenge and pay back, a form of collective punishment (Human Rights First 2008: 3), for the transgression — or perceived transgression — by Roma as documented in the case studies just discussed.
- The outcome of such attacks, likely to be intended by many perpetrators, is the expulsion and subsequent exclusion of Roma/Gypsies from the localities in which they lived, and amounts to an ‘ethnic cleansing’ of the areas involved.

- Police and other state agents are involved in racist attacks against Roma/Gypsies/Travellers to an extent that is possibly not experienced by other minority ethnic communities.

### 3.3 Racist violence against Muslims

The 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001 triggered a wave of anti-Muslim incidents across Europe. The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) (now the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA]) suggested, on the basis of reports provided by its RAXEN network of National Focal Points shortly after the 9/11 attacks, that a latent Islamophobia had surfaced, as even though physical attacks against Muslims were seemingly small in number (with the exception of Denmark and the Netherlands), verbal abuse in person, and abuse by 'phone or by email to Muslim organizations, was "widely reported" in most countries (EUMC 2001). Muslim women, especially, were seemingly targeted, along with others perceived to be Muslim and of Arab descent. Mosques and Islamic cultural centres were also targeted in acts of criminal damage (Allen & Nielsen 2002: 7). A few years later, in reflecting back on events following 9/11, a report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia noted that "Thousands of British Muslims have tales to tell from the days after 9/11 – rudeness and insensitivity, or worse, from colleagues, associates and neighbours, and from total strangers in shops and buses, trains and streets" (Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia 2004: 16). Yet arguably, the object of such incidents, and other similar incidents against Muslims since 9/11, was not Islam and its teachings as a faith, but some visceral conception of Muslims.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, anti-Muslim incidents might more accurately be characterised as 'racist' rather than 'religious' victimisation.

The pervasive nature of such victimisation was revealed recently by the 2008 EU-MIDIS survey – which interviewed Muslim respondents in fourteen EU Member States (FRA 2009b).<sup>29</sup> Just over one in ten (11%) Muslim respondents, in the fourteen Member States combined, reported at least one incident of personal racist criminal victimisation – including assaults, threats and serious harassment – in the previous twelve months. Many experienced more than one incident, and the average for Muslim victims of personal racist crime was three incidents in the previous twelve months. Almost three quarters (72%) of those victimised described the perpetrators as being from the majority population. Notably, the majority of victims did not report their experience to the police – ranging from 53% of former Yugoslavian Muslim respondents in Luxembourg to 93% of Turkish Muslim respondents in Austria. The survey report noted that 38% of respondents replied that their experience of victimisation was "too trivial/not worth reporting", which FRA suggests "serves to highlight the 'normality' of victimisation for many Muslim respondents" (FRA 2009b: 12). And 43% of those who did not report incidents stated it was because they lacked confidence that the police would be able to do anything. It might also be added that many victims of anti-Muslim incidents are likely to be reticent about

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<sup>28</sup> One interviewee quoted in the Commission's report suggested that 'Islamophobia' is "just racism with a spin" (Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia 2004: 4). And a snapshot of retaliatory attacks listed by Perry (2003), for instance, shows little evidence of sentiments defaming Islam as a faith or attacking the tenets of Islamic teaching. On this point see also Iganski (2008: 31-34).

<sup>29</sup> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

reporting their experience to the police given the apparent targeting of Muslims in the “war on terror”.

In addition to the pervasive and recurrent nature of racist violence against Muslims that the EU MIDIS survey revealed, waves of anti-Muslim violence in particular countries have seemingly been triggered by further extreme events since 9/11. In 2004 in the Netherlands, for instance, in the days after the murder of the film maker Theo van Gogh, who was assassinated by a radicalized young Muslim, Muhammad Bouyeri, there was reportedly an outbreak of incidents, including assaults, arson attacks and criminal damage of mosques and Islamic schools (Veldhuis & Bakker 2009: 25).

Similarly, the country report for Denmark submitted for this study (Quraishy 2010) notes that a rise in racist incidents in 2005 can be explained by the increased victimisation of Muslims, or those perceived to be Muslims, following the July 2005 London bombings. Although there was some dispute about whether there was indeed a backlash against Muslims in the capitol itself following the bombings.<sup>30</sup> In a report published a few months after the London attacks, the EUMC concluded that the effect in terms of subsequent anti-Muslim incidents seemed to be “far less than the 11 September attacks on the United States of America”. The EUMC attributed this to “both to the swift responses by governments, politicians and opinion leaders, who made serious efforts to distinguish clearly between these criminal acts and Islam, as well as to the statements made by Muslim representatives reacting immediately and unequivocally condemning the events and asking the members of their communities to cooperate with the authorities” (EUMC 2005: 33).

Subsequent events elsewhere, however, have clearly triggered incidents against Muslims. The country report for Denmark notes that an increase in recorded racist incidents in 2006 can be explained by the so-called “cartoon crisis” in Denmark. The report notes that “Since some local Danish Imams gave copies of the cartoons to Imams in the Middle East, some members of the Danish majority population held the local Danish Muslim population responsible for the attacks on the Danish Consulate in Beirut, Damascus etc. Since ‘they’ were responsible for the attacks against Danish property it was thus justified to attack Muslims in Denmark as part of ‘revenge’ or ‘defence’ of Denmark” (Quraishy 2010).

Racist violence against Muslims was also noted in a number of other country reports provided for this study.<sup>31</sup> The country report for Finland suggests, for instance, that “if there is a single group whose situation has worsened in Finland it is the Muslims” (Mäkilä & Selkälä 2010). The country report for France notes that incidents against Muslims — violent attacks against individuals, daubings on mosques, and desecrations of graves — are on the rise (Camus 2010). In the case of Sweden the country report notes that although officially recorded racist crimes against Muslims decreased in 2009, media reports and the experience of NGOs suggest otherwise (Kawasa 2010). According to the country report, “NGOs such as the Sweden's Young Muslims have raised attention to the piles of hate mail and threats they receive on a daily basis. The organization has repeatedly complained about the way the police handle these cases by deciding to discontinue the investigations.”

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<sup>30</sup> See Iganski (2008: 133-135).

<sup>31</sup> Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom.

Incidents against Muslims also feature in some of the case studies provided by the country reports:

- In the case of Greece, the country report notes that the Muslim community has been targeted in numerous acts of vandalism. As there is apparently no official mosque in Athens for Muslims to pray in, some communities rent large buildings for communal worship. In May 2008, a dozen or more attackers reportedly broke into a building used as an unofficial mosque by the Pakistani Community in the Rendi area of Athens. Worshippers were beaten with sticks along with a Greek neighbor who protested. The beatings were reportedly accompanied by verbal abuse and demands that “Pakistanis and Muslims get out of Greece” (Shashati 2010).
- The country report for Germany (Hieronymous 2010) provides a case study of the murder in 2008 of Marwa El-Sherbini, which the report notes was the first ‘Islamophobic’ murder in Germany. The offender, a 29-year-old German citizen originating from Perm, Russia, who migrated to Germany in 2003, insulted Marwa El-Sherbini, a 32-year-old pregnant Egyptian pharmacist, who was wearing a headscarf in a public playground for children in Dresden, East Germany. After Mrs. El-Sherbini asked him to move so as to allow her child to go on the swing, he aggressively insulted her as an “Islamist” and “terrorist”. A witness called the police while the insults against the woman continued. The offender was subsequently convicted and sentenced to a fine of €780 but the prosecutor appealed for harsher punishment. At a further hearing before the Regional Court in Dresden in 2009, the offender attacked Mrs. El-Sherbini in the court with a knife he had concealed in his backpack and stabbed her numerous times. The victim’s husband was also stabbed and heavily injured while trying to protect his wife, and then shot in the leg by a police officer who mistook him for the offender. The offender was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment in November 2009.

### **3.4 Racist violence against migrants and refugees**

Many of the Roma and Muslim victims of racist violence discussed in the preceding sections of this report will be members of long established communities in European nations. Some will also be migrants or refugees. And there are numerous other migrants and refugees whose experience has not been accounted for in the analysis of the victimisation of the particular communities discussed to this point. And although migrant workers and their families, and people fleeing conflicts and persecution to seek refuge, are a heterogeneous ‘group’ (which becomes even more diffuse if transnational students and tourists are added), many unfortunately share a common experience of being targeted in acts of racist violence because of their perceived difference or perceived ‘outsider’ status. The more visible is their apparent difference — perhaps their skin colour, language, or attire — the more likely they are to be cast as the ‘other’. As the country reports submitted for this study suggest, many also share a reluctance to report racist victimisation to the police or other state agencies, and a further unfortunate commonality therefore is a wariness of such agencies on account of negative encounters with them. Hence, even though it is a very diverse ‘group’, the evident commonalities amongst migrants and refugees in relation to the experience of racist violence bears drawing out. And such experiences are noted by most of the country reports submitted for this study.

While different EU Member States have experienced differences in the origins and trajectories of migration and asylum seeking, there is a further commonality in that apparent waves of racist violence against migrants and refugees do not occur in a vacuum. They seemingly occur in countries where migrant workers, their families, and those seeking asylum are cast as a social problem in mainstream political discourse and media commentary — depicted variously as a threat to jobs for those seen to be more deserving (commonly from the majority population), a burden in terms of demands on state welfare resources, or a threat to the perceived ‘way of life’ or culture of the nation. Such depictions of those perceived to be ‘outsiders’ are not the preserve of the far-right, and when they permeate mainstream political and media discourse they provide a climate in which racist violence occurs as migrants and refugees are scapegoated for the problems with which they have been associated. These types of observations about the contexts for racist violence against migrants and refugees are made in a number of the country reports submitted for this study.<sup>32</sup> The country report for Italy, for instance, suggests that: “The combined effect of media and political discourse strengthens the racist and xenophobic attitudes widespread among the population, and this feeds the media sensationalism and the political populism. Racist and xenophobic violence becomes a natural response: ‘immigrants and ethnic minorities are menacing us’, ‘we have a right to defend ourselves with any means necessary’” (Scagliotti 2010).

Furthermore, the casting of immigration and asylum as problems also provides a context for attacks against activists and others advocating or working for the rights of migrants and refugees — as also observed by some of the country reports:<sup>33</sup>

- The country report for Greece notes that in July 2008 the Greek Migrants Forum was targeted in a home-made bomb attack (Shashati 2010). Fortunately, no-one was injured. And in the Greek island of Crete, a young woman volunteer teacher for the Cretan Migrant Forum, giving free Greek lessons to immigrant children, was attacked by two men who carved swastikas on her arm.
- The country report for Malta notes that some of the most notorious incidents of racist violence in recent years have involved arson attacks against property and cars belonging to organisations, activists and journalists who had taken a pro-migrant-rights stance (Gauci 2010).
- A serious attack on human rights activists in Sofia, as described by the country report for Bulgaria (Mikov 2010), is discussed in a later section of this report concerned with ‘patterns of racist offending’.

The negative experience of migrants and refugees with criminal justice agencies is illustrated by the country report for Ireland. It notes that migrants “report that when they report incidents to the police, they are asked their immigration status”. The consequence is that “some migrants are reluctant to engage with the police as a result of this. Some may be undocumented, but others who are legally resident (but perhaps with a short term status) do not want to bring ‘unnecessary’ attention to themselves” (Lynch 2010).

Migrants and refugees are perhaps particularly reluctant to report incidents in cases where they are discriminated against, or victimised by the police or other state agents. The country report for Ireland also notes that “anecdotal evidence suggests that some chose not to complain in

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<sup>32</sup> In particular, see the country reports for Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta

<sup>33</sup> See the country reports for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Malta, for instance.

case it might affect their future interaction with the police, conscious that they must engage with the police in order to have stamps renewed. For example, in one case, a person told ENAR Ireland that she had been discriminated against and treated poorly by an immigration officer (a member of the police force) but she would wait until her application for citizenship was secured before she would make any official complaint.” Some might also feel resigned to their experience of racist victimisation and, to borrow the words of the country report for Ireland, see it “as part of the migration experience, hoping that the next generation will have a better experience and be more accepted” (Lynch 2010).

### **3.5 Racist violence against Jews**

Anti-Jewish violence has persisted in Europe since the Second World War and it has been characterized seemingly by a number of episodes of escalation of incidents (Epstein 1993). About a decade ago numerous commentators began to argue that a ‘new antisemitism’ was sweeping Europe and such concerns prompted a number of official inquiries and reports by the international policy community. In addition to these reports, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held conferences on antisemitism in Vienna in 2003, Berlin in 2004, and Cordova 2005. The concerns were underlined by Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary General, in his opening remarks at the 2004 UN ‘Department of Public Information Seminar on anti-semitism’ in New York, where he said: “It is hard to believe that, 60 years after the tragedy of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism is once again rearing its head. But it is clear that we are witnessing an alarming resurgence of this phenomenon in new forms and manifestations. This time, the world must not, cannot be silent” (United Nations Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary General 2004).

Accordingly, an apparent rise in the number of incidents against Jews prompted the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) to investigate the phenomenon. It commissioned a study using information provided by the EUMC’s National Focal Points of its Racism and Xenophobia Network (RAXEN) — specially established consortia between academics, research organizations, and NGOs in each of the then 15 Member States — offering an overview of antisemitism for their respective countries for 2002 and 2003. In the case of incidents of racist violence against Jews, however, the report was not able to offer conclusions about any apparent trend in Europe as it noted that there were few countries where there were sufficient data available from either official or NGO sources to enable a comparative assessment of the problem (EUMC 2004: 318-319). The EUMC (and now FRA) has since produced a number of updates of its 2004 report.<sup>34</sup> However, Jews were not sampled as respondents in the 2008 EU MIDIS survey and therefore it is not possible to draw reliable conclusions about the extent of anti-Jewish victimisation across European countries.

Nevertheless, Jews are listed among the most victimised groups in a number of the country reports provided for this study<sup>35</sup> and it is clear that the numbers of recorded incidents appear to rise and fall in relation to tensions in the Israel–Palestine conflict and conflicts elsewhere. The country report for France, for instance, notes that the number of reported anti-Jewish incidents increased dramatically in December 2008 and January 2009 associated with the Israel Defence Force attack on Gaza. The country report also points out, however, that anti-Jewish incidents are

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<sup>34</sup> See, for example: FRA (2010).

<sup>35</sup> Austria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

not only associated with upsurges in the Israel-Palestine conflict as there appears to have been a rising trend in recorded incidents in France even in periods without an escalation of the conflict (Camus 2010). In the UK, reports of anti-Jewish incidents recorded by the Community Security Trust, an NGO which advises and represents the Jewish community on matters of antisemitism, terrorism and security, show an upward trend and a persistent occurrence of street level racism against Jewish people, punctuated by peaks in incidents that correspond with political crises — especially actions by the Israeli military. The highest recorded peak occurred in January and February 2009, associated with the Israeli military attack on Gaza, with previous high peaks in July and August 2006 during the war between Israel and Hizbollah in Lebanon, and earlier in October 2000 when the second Palestinian Intifada began. Incidents range from serious assaults to abusive behavior, to criminal damage and desecration of synagogues, tombstones, cemeteries, Jewish schools and buildings of Jewish organizations. From the discourse used by offenders in words they utter, or sprayed in graffiti, it is evident though that it is not the religious faith or beliefs of Jews that are generally targeted, but some visceral notion of what Jewish people represent for the offenders. As is argued in this report in the case of anti-Muslim incidents, it would be misleading to conceive of many anti-Jewish incidents as religious victimisation, because although persons or buildings are attacked because of their religious identification, the sentiments of offenders commonly manifest racist discourse.

### **3.6 The 'national specificity' of racist violence**

To conclude the analysis on trends in racist victimisation it is instructive to return to an assertion voiced in the introduction to this report. It is posited that given that EU Member States have different histories of migration, differences in the ethnic and national origins of their minority populations, and differences in the way that conditions associated with ethnic pluralism have been managed within states, we surely cannot expect to see a singular, homogeneous, phenomenon of racist violence, and instead we must surely look to the 'national specificity' of the problem and expect to find as much diversity in patterns of racist victimisation as similarity across Europe.

The evidence the country reports provide, however, when examined comparatively across EU Member States, indicates to the contrary that there are cross-national patterns in racist victimisation. While there are a number of localised, but no less serious, problems of racist victimisation as noted by some country reports: incidents of verbal and physical violence between French and Flemish speaking Belgians (Bouhlal & Akrouh 2010), ethnic conflict between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities in Cyprus (Chowdhury & Kassimeris 2010), violence between ethnic Estonian and Russian-speaking Estonians (Kovalenko 2010), victimisation of the Sami minority in Finland (Mäkilä & Selkälä 2010), and incidents against Armenians and Kurds in Turkey (Bilgen 2010), for instance, there are also some clear cross-national trends.

Essentially, while the political and social contexts of racist violence against Roma/Gypsy/Travellers, against Muslims and Jews, and against migrants and refugees, differ considerably between those targeted, there is one clear and unfortunate commonality: wherever such communities are present in Europe they suffer racist victimisation. These cross national patterns of racist victimisation do not amount to a singular 'Euracism'. But the evidence of such victimisation when viewed comparatively across EU Members states arguably suggests the existence of a variety of 'Euracisms'.

## 4. Patterns of racist offending

Most of the NGOs that provided information for this study are concerned with advocacy and support for victims of racist violence. A small number of NGOs in Europe are also involved in challenging offending behaviour through preventative work. A smaller number still work directly with offenders for their rehabilitation. Such work demonstrates that there is clearly a role for NGOs to play in relation to tackling racist offending. To inform effective interventions, whether they involve preventative work or the rehabilitation of convicted offenders, understanding the impulses and motivations behind racist violence is arguably essential. However, there is little such understanding provided in the research or policy literature. While the interventions that have been established to date have been informed by the experiential knowledge of practitioners and a few small scale research studies on offenders, such work has not been able to draw on a systematic body of evidence about racist offenders, or evidence about what works and what does not work in tackling racist offending — especially in the case of offender rehabilitation.

It was observed in the introduction to this report that the 2010 Annual Report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA 2010a) noted the significant variation in the collection and publication of data on racist crimes across the EU, with the exception of three Member States — Finland, Sweden and the UK. But even for these countries, the publicly available data on racist offenders are severely limited. Where data are available the information is confined to statistics concerning demographic characteristics of offenders. The data suggest that males account for the great majority of those suspected or accused of racist crimes — as is the case for offenders in general. Furthermore, while racist offenders are represented across all ages, they are more likely to be concentrated in the younger age range (Iganski et al. 2011).

### 4.1 The contexts of racist offending

Such known characteristics of offenders do not provide any indication about the significance of racism, prejudice, or bigotry, as motivating impulses for offending. Usefully, then, contributors of country reports for this study offered their perspectives about the perpetrators of racist violence in their respective countries and this section of the report synthesises the information provided. Given that many of the NGOs authors consulted in preparing their country reports do not systematically review or analyse information about racist incidents reported to them, the material on perpetrators offered is mostly anecdotal and in some instances drawn from media reports. However, the information provided does importantly represent perceptions about perpetrators from those with experiential knowledge of challenging and responding to racist violence, and it therefore constitutes a significant starting point to explore the problem of offending — given that there is a paucity of research on the matter. From the information provided there is arguably enough to suggest a tentative typology of racist offending. In offering such a typology in this section of the report the objective is not to categorise offenders into ‘types’, such as ‘right wing extremist’, ‘neo-Nazi’, or ‘football hooligan’, for instance, because as will be discussed further in the case of so-called ‘extremists’, offenders traverse different identities — as is the case for people in general. However, it is arguably possible to typologize

the contexts of offending which shed light on the motivating impulses of offenders in particular circumstances.

The **political** context of offending is referred to in the discussion in this report of racist violence against migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, where it is noted that the casting in mainstream political discourse and media commentary of migration and asylum as social problems provides a climate for such violence to occur. The political context of offending is further illuminated in a number of the country reports by the attribution of racist violence to far-right, right wing extremist, or ultra nationalist activists. And this is the most dominant observation made about offenders across the country reports.

- The country report for Hungary (Novak 2010) notes that rallies against ‘Gypsy crimes’ were held by the Magyar Garda in the weeks before the European Parliament elections in 2009 and the National Elections in 2010. The rallies were held in areas mostly inhabited by Roma communities with Magyar Garda members sporting black boots and uniforms bearing nationalist symbols last employed by Hungarian fascists during World War II, and carried flags associated with a World War II fascist organisation — the Hungarian Arrow Cross Party. In one incident two women were reportedly attacked and beaten up by two sympathisers of the Hungarian Guard, who openly stated that they assaulted the women because they were Roma.
- In Bulgaria, in June 2010, as the country report submitted for this study notes (Mikov 2010), neo-Nazis reportedly seriously assaulted youngsters on their way to a protest meeting against the detention of foreigners in the Busmantsi detection centre. The victims were believed to be attacked because they were civil rights activists. The four injured young men were travelling together on a tram in Sofia with about 20 others. It is thought that at one of the stops in the Iskar region, masked offenders armed with knuckledusters, knives and metal rods rushed onto the tram, committed serious assaults against their victims, and then got off at the next stop to disappear in an unknown direction. Some of the seats in the tram were stained with blood and glass from broken bottles littered the floor of the tram (Staridolska 2010).
- The country report for Greece (Shashati 2010) draws an association between an apparent rise in racist violence in the country and the activities of neo-Nazi and extreme right groups. In the central Athens neighbourhood of Aghios Panteleimonas fascist groups have reportedly been imposing a ‘reign of terror’ with protests and attacks against immigrants and refugees residing in the area.
- In the case of Cyprus, the country report notes that an ‘ultra-nationalist youth group’ ELAM (Greek popular front) organised the first ever fascist and nationalistic march in the centre of Nicosia in December 2009 (Chowdhury & Kassimeris 2010). Some of the marchers carried a banner proclaiming ‘every foreign worker equals an unemployed Greek’ (Charalambous 2009). More recently, during a demonstration by the same group in Nicosia, some Asian students were chased and a Nigerian passer-by was badly beaten and forced into the path of a moving car (Cyprus Mail 2010).
- For Poland, the country report notes that the perpetrators of racist violence frequently belong to far-right organizations and skinhead groups (Pankowski 2010). One far-right group — the NOP (National Rebirth of Poland, Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski) — has been particularly active in promoting violence. One of the group’s activists, 21-year-old Damian Mikulski, was convicted for the murder, with two other culprits, of a 25-year-old student, Piotr Wozniak, who was brutally killed in Wladyslawowo in northern Poland. The three culprits tried to drown their victim and when that was unsuccessful they took

turns stomping on his head with their heavy boots. Mikulski was also the leader of the White Legion, an NOP-infiltrated neo-Nazi skinhead gang active in the stadium of Legia Warszawa, a popular soccer club. He was sentenced to nine years in prison for his role in the murder. According to the country report for Poland, the murder was not simply random, but was a result of the culture of violence promoted by extreme-right racist organisations who target anybody who is deemed 'alien' because of their race, religion or lifestyle.

The case in Poland just discussed illuminates the overlap between far-right extremist and **subcultural** contexts for racist violence mentioned in a number of the country reports which attribute racist attacks to 'skinheads' and in some cases biker gangs.

- In a case study of a racist attack provided by the country report for Lithuania, it is reported that a Nigerian student walking with a 'white' friend was attacked outside his university residence by a group of 'skinheads' (Sabatauskaite 2010). In the attack, the perpetrators armed with knives and one wielding a metal golf club demanded money and threatened 'to kill the nigger'. After trying to defend himself the victim escaped to the student dormitory and the attack was subsequently reported to the police and university authorities. The attackers apparently returned the following day in search of the victim and banged at his door. The attack left severe psychological impacts on the victim who reportedly was advised by the police to arm himself with a gas-gun for self protection.
- In Estonia, the so-called 'Bronze night' riots occurred in April 2007 mostly in Tallinn. The riots, which reportedly involved an inter-ethnic conflict between Estonian and Russian speaking youths, was sparked by a government decision to relocate a Soviet-era World War II monument, known as the Bronze Soldier, along with the graves of Soviet soldiers from the city centre to a military cemetery. Peaceful protests apparently turned into riots in which one person was killed, many injured, and property damaged. The country report for Estonia (Kovalenko 2010) notes that according to media reports all of the suspects for the murder were bikers or skinheads and the site of the murder was not far from a bar where bikers usually gathered. However, the police failed to identify the murderer (Kovalenko 2008).
- The country report for Denmark notes that the Hells Angels biker gang and its affiliate AK 81 have been involved in violent clashes with minority youth groups. Running gun battles in the street have reportedly occurred and there have been drive by shootings and killings of innocent bystanders from minority communities. According to the country report, an official spokesperson of the Hells Angels has reportedly described his group's violent activity as defending Danish culture (Quraishy 2010).
- In the Netherlands, according to the country report submitted for this study (Witte 2010), a new subcultural group of perpetrators, the so-called 'Lonsdale-youngsters', became apparent in a wave of violence following the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004. A number of studies were carried out to investigate the phenomenon, and although no evidence of links with far-right or neo-Nazi groups was found, many were involved in racist, xenophobic and violent incidents. These youngsters were part of the so-called 'gabbers' ('mates') from the youth subculture around house music which at the time apparently was the largest youth subculture in the Netherlands. The country report for the Netherlands notes that after 2005 the 'Lonsdale phenomenon' seems to have vanished from the streets, but some of the youngsters involved apparently radicalised into more far-right and neo-Nazi movements and organisations.

A **recreational** context of some acts of racist violence is also suggested by reference in some of the country reports to racist activity at football matches. The country report for Slovakia notes that ‘football hooligans’ and ‘ultras’<sup>36</sup> are particularly active at a number of leading football clubs: Slovan Bratislava, Spartak Trnava, Nitra, Košice, Prešov, Žilina (Pavlik 2010). The country report for Poland notes that a neo-fascist infiltrated skinhead gang, the White Legion, has been active in the stadium of Legia Warszawa, a leading football club (Pankowski 2010).

Information provided in some of the country reports also suggests a **banal** context for acts of racist violence. The country report for Italy (Scagliotti 2010), for instance, cites a recent study (Grazia 2009) of reported cases of racist violence and notes that the perpetrators were mostly “ordinary” citizens. If the focus on racist offending would be confined to the political and subcultural contexts discussed above, the frequent ‘everyday’, or banal, contexts of other less dramatic offenders would be overlooked. This point is drawn out in the country report from Germany which notes that there is little assessment in the country of everyday racism which does not necessarily have a right-wing motivation — resulting in the neglect of such racism by the criminal justice system (Hieronymous 2010). According to the country report members of communities targeted by racist violence feel that only perpetrators belonging to, or sympathising with, right-wing extremist groups are likely to be identified by the criminal justice system as responsible for racist attacks. Consequently, many racist offences are not recorded as such, but as other crimes. The country report for Germany notes that the lack of robust and reliable information about the reality of racist victimisation, and the lack of official and political awareness about racist violence outside of right-wing extremism, makes it difficult to target the problem with specific measures. A similar point is made in the country report for Romania which observes that data collected by the NGO Centre for Monitoring Anti-Semitism in Romania indicates that acts of vandalism against Jews are minimised by public authorities who fail to apply sanctions because the perpetrators are labelled as harmless — children, drunks or persons with mental disorders (Negulescu & Nicolae 2010).<sup>37</sup>

Lastly, with regard to the contexts for racist violence, some of the information provided by country reports submitted for this study illuminates the **repressive** context of some acts of racist violence as they are committed by state agents in the course of their public duties. Racist violence by police officers is mentioned in the country reports for Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, and Sweden.

- In March 2010, The European Court for Human Rights, as noted by the country report for Belgium (Bouhlal & Akrouh 2010), found that Belgium had violated the European Convention on Human Rights<sup>38</sup> for inadequately investigating allegations against three police officers of racist abuse and violence of a Belgian citizen of Turkish origin in Schaerbeek, Brussels. The court awarded damages to the victim who was badly beaten and racially abused by the police.
- The country report for Austria (Kopanja 2010) provides a case study of an incident for which the police officers concerned were prosecuted, but the process took over three years resulting in considerable emotional stress for the victims. The case concerned an

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<sup>36</sup> So-called ‘Ultras’ are football team supporters renowned for their fanatical support and violence against opposing team supporters.

<sup>37</sup> On this point see: U.S. Department of State (2009).

<sup>38</sup> Cour européenne des droits de l’Homme, *Turkan ÇAKIR c. Belgique*, requête 44256/06, 10 mars 2009.

Austrian citizen of Turkish origin who in November 2006 sought protection at a police station after he and his wife were pursued by a man wielding a baseball bat while they were looking for parking. The man being pursued sounded his car horn outside the police station to gain the attention of the police inside. Two officers came out, one of them saying: “keep your mouth shut and stay in the car. You don’t have to shit your pants”. One of the policemen then turned to the attacker and asked: “why didn’t you just hit him over the head three times?” When questioned at the police station, one of the officers said to the couple: “Shit Turks, piss out of Austria”. The victims sought the support of the NGO ZARA which filed a report about the police conduct. The officers were removed from duties involving contact with the public and criminal proceedings were started against them for shouting racist insults. Three out of five officers involved were found guilty: two were sentenced to six to eight months’ conditional imprisonment and another was fined.

- For Greece, the country report (Shashati 2010) notes that during the 2010 National Day parade in Athens on 25<sup>th</sup> March divers from the Greek army reportedly chanted racist slogans against foreigners, including: “You are born Greek, you cannot become one” and “We will spill some blood you Albanian pig”. Protests were held by Albanian NGOs outside the Greek Embassy in Tirana, an official investigation was launched in Greece. The Greek Ambassador in Albania reportedly expressed his “regret” at the incident (GRRreporter 2010).

#### **4.2 Need to evaluate and disseminate NGO interventions against racist offending**

Even though it is possible to identify a number of different contexts in which racist violence occurs by using the information provided by authors of the country reports for this study, it is not possible to determine which contexts for violence might prevail more than others across EU Member States given the anecdotal nature of the information provided. What is clear, though, is that there is a role for NGOs to play in relation to tackling racist offending (see Iganski et al., 2011). While the interventions that have been established to date have been informed by the experiential knowledge of practitioners and a few small scale research studies on offenders, such work has not been able to draw on a systematic body of evidence about racist offenders, or evidence about what works and what does not work in tackling racist offending — especially in the case of offender rehabilitation. NGOs working to prevent racist violence, and those working with offenders, therefore need to be supported to evaluate and document what works and what does not about their interventions and to disseminate the learning gained to support similar work by other NGOs and official agencies.

## 5. Recommendations for tackling racist violence in Europe

Authors of country reports for this study were asked to provide some recommendations to address any limitations they perceive in their respective countries in tackling racist violence. Most of the recommendations provided by the country reports are aimed at securing the greater commitment and effectiveness of criminal justice and other official agencies in confronting racist violence — particularly with regard to the:

- Recording and monitoring of incidents,
- Training of police officers and other criminal justice agents such as prosecutors and judges to more effectively recognise, investigate and prosecute racist offences, and the;
- Strengthening of penal provisions in line with the recent (2008) Council of the European Union Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.<sup>39</sup>

Such recommendations for official action on racist violence have been offered to date in numerous reports by governmental and non-governmental agencies. Hence the focus of the recommendations offered here is upon the potential contributions to be made by NGOs in working against racist violence with regard to recording and monitoring incidents of racist violence:

- As official recording and monitoring of the problem of racist violence is seriously lacking in many EU Member States, and also as many victims for a variety of reasons prefer to report racist victimisation to non-governmental bodies rather than criminal justice agencies, there is clearly a very significant role to play for NGOs in the recording and monitoring of racist violence. Consequently, there is a need to identify and document good practice by NGOs with regard to recording and monitoring, and a need to disseminate and share examples of good practice to potentially inform initiatives by other NGOs.
- Victims of racist violence have specific needs for support that commonly cannot be catered for by criminal justice or other state agencies because they lack the expertise and often lack the appropriate resources. There is clearly an important role to play, therefore, for NGOs in providing support — emotional, social and legal — to victims of racist violence. As many who work for antiracist NGOs have themselves been victims of racist violence they also potentially offer a significant body of expertise which cannot be offered by official agencies. Consequently, there is a need to identify and document good practice by NGOs with regard to the provision of support to victims of racist violence, and a need to disseminate and share examples of good practice to potentially inform initiatives by other NGOs.
- As noted in this report, a small number of NGOs in Europe are involved in initiatives aimed at challenging offending behaviour through preventative work, and a smaller number still work directly with offenders for their rehabilitation to prevent re-offending. Such work demonstrates that there is clearly a role for NGOs to play in relation to tackling racist offending. Consequently, there is a need to identify and document good practice by NGOs in preventative work and work with racist offenders, and a need to

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<sup>39</sup> Council Framework decision 2008/913/JHA, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

disseminate and share examples of good practice to potentially inform initiatives by other NGOs.

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# Racist Violence in Europe