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**AN ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### 1. Why an action plan ?

- 1.1. 1995 Communication on Racism : laid the foundations
- 1.2. 1997 : new developments, new expectations
  - 1.2.1. European Year Against Racism : set the ball rolling
  - 1.2.2. The Treaty of Amsterdam: a non-discrimination clause
  - 1.2.3. Setting up a European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia

#### 2. An action plan against racism

- 2.1. The method : working in partnership
- 2.2. The action : paving the way for legislative initiatives
  - 2.2.1. Proposing the non-discriminatory application of Community legislation
  - 2.2.2. Proposals for new legislation
- 2.3. The action : mainstreaming the fight against racism
  - 2.3.1. Employment strategy
  - 2.3.2. Structural Funds
  - 2.3.3. Education, training and youth
  - 2.3.4. Information society
  - 2.3.5. Justice and home affairs cooperation
  - 2.3.6. Information, communication, culture, audiovisual and sport
  - 2.3.7. Public procurement
  - 2.3.8. Research activities
  - 2.3.9. External relations
  - 2.3.10. Commission staff policy
- 2.4. The action : developing and exchanging new models
- 2.5. The action : strengthening information and communication work
- 2.6. Evaluation and reporting

## **Executive Summary**

Racism continues to present a major challenge for our societies. This is borne out by continuing high levels of racist incidents and discrimination, and was confirmed by the latest Eurobarometer opinion poll published by the Commission at the end of 1997.

Racism is diametrically opposed to everything that Europe stands for in terms of human dignity, mutual respect and understanding and citizenship in the broadest sense. European societies are multicultural and multi-ethnic, and their diversity, as reflected by the range of different cultures and traditions, is a positive and enriching factor. The fight against racism goes hand in hand with the promotion of a society for all, which actively encourages integration and full participation.

While the prime responsibility for combating racism lies with Member States, the transnational dimension of the problem justifies action at European level. The right to equal treatment and freedom from discrimination is one of the core principles and common values underlying the process of European integration.

The role of the European institutions in tackling this problem is reinforced by the Treaty of Amsterdam, which includes a general non-discrimination clause. When the Treaty comes into force, this clause will enable the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission and having consulted the European Parliament, to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

In this Communication, the Commission presents its Action Plan for combating racism across the European Union in the period leading into the new millennium.

This Action Plan builds upon the achievements of the European Year Against Racism. The European Year Against Racism represented the beginning of a process towards increasing cooperation in the fight against racism. It created a momentum, injecting new life into existing initiatives and giving rise to many new ones; raising awareness about the dangers of racism, and about some of the solutions. It led to a broad range of partnerships and networks being established or strengthened.

With this Action Plan, the Commission proposes practical and procedural measures to prepare the ground for future and more ambitious action to combat racism at European level, in particular within the framework of the new Treaty provisions on non-discrimination.

### **Working in partnership**

The Action Plan will draw together all concerned – citizens, national and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, Social Partners, media and sports bodies – in the fight against racism in the European Union.

In implementing this Action Plan, the Commission will place great emphasis on the importance of partnership at all levels. This will involve not only strengthening cooperation with different partners, but also supporting cooperation between them.

The Action Plan consists of four strands :

#### **1. Paving the way for legislative initiatives**

The inclusion of a general non-discrimination clause in the text of the Treaty of Amsterdam, in the form of Article 13, will provide new scope for the fight against racism at European level when the Treaty comes into force. This Action Plan sets out a number of concrete actions designed to pave the way for the early use of Article 13 to combat racial discrimination. The Commission intends to table a proposal for legislation to combat racial discrimination before the end of 1999.

## **2. Mainstreaming the fight against racism**

Many Community policies and programmes could contribute positively to the fight against racism. As part of this Action Plan, the Commission will actively develop a mainstreaming approach to combating racism and discrimination and promoting integration across all relevant sectors, in particular in the areas of employment, the European Structural Funds, education, training and youth programmes, public procurement policy, research activities, external relations, information actions and cultural and sports initiatives. An inter-service group will be established within the Commission to push this process forward. The Commission will continue to take full account of the principles of non-discrimination in its own recruitment and promotion policies.

## **3. Developing and exchanging new models**

Within the framework of the budget appropriations allocated by the Budgetary Authority, the Commission supports a range of pilot projects and networks which show innovation in combating racism, and which actively promote an exchange of experience at European level. The details of funding provisions are set out in the Commission's call for projects, published in the Official Journal.

## **4. Strengthening information and communication action**

Raising awareness of the dangers of racism must be at the root of any coherent strategy to combat it. As part of this Action Plan, the Commission builds upon the information and communication work launched during the European Year Against Racism. It gives the fight against racism at European level a clear and recognisable identity, with a logo, media actions, an Internet site, publications and prizes. In addition, the Commission cooperates with various media partners to promote codes of good practice for journalists, editors and advertising bodies alike.

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With this Action Plan, the Commission sets out **a coherent framework** for combating racism at European level in the medium term. Emphasis is placed on the need to work in partnership at all levels, to develop new models and to multiply their use across the European Union, and to promote the value of diversity and pluralism.

In particular, the Commission commits itself to pushing forward **legislative and mainstreaming developments**. Two conferences are foreseen on these subjects in 1998 and 1999 respectively. Building inter alia upon the results of the 1998 conference on non-discrimination, the Commission intends to present a proposal for legislation to combat racial discrimination by the end of 1999, subject to ratification of the new Treaty.

The Commission will publish a **report** setting out the progress made and assessing the impact of this Action Plan by the end of 1999.

## 1. Why an action plan ?

The continuing presence of racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism across the European Union presents a major challenge to our societies. Recent surveys have shown high levels of racism in the Member States, and this is confirmed by the results of the Commission's 1997 Eurobarometer opinion poll. This challenge must be met by all concerned, at local, regional, national and European levels.

Ever since the 1986 Joint Declaration against Racism and Xenophobia of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission<sup>1</sup>, the European Commission has taken an active part in developing a European response to racism. The ten years that followed saw the fight against racism featuring increasingly highly on the agenda of the European institutions, and in particular the European Parliament.

### 1.1. The 1995 Communication on Racism: laid the foundations

In 1995, the European Commission presented a Communication on racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism<sup>2</sup>, in which it outlined its activities to that date in the fight against racism and set out key areas for developing future action. The approach comprised both incorporating the fight against racism as an integral part of existing policy instruments, and launching new initiatives specifically aiming to address racism.

The 1995 Communication served two purposes. First, it took forward the debate at European level, providing a comprehensive framework for the discussion of Community action against racism. Second, it launched the process which led to 1997 being designated European Year Against Racism.

### 1.2. 1997 : new developments, new expectations

1997 was dominated by the European Year Against Racism. It marked a major step forward in developing concrete joint action between the European institutions and Member States, and provided a new European framework for the fight against racism.

The European Year succeeded in mobilising individuals and organisations across the European Union. This mobilisation, supported by national authorities and European institutions alike, in turn created a favourable climate for progress at a political level.

**The 1997 Eurobarometer Opinion Poll** (questioned 16,241 people across the 15 Member States between March and April 1997)

- ⇒ 33% of those interviewed openly described themselves as "quite racist" or "very racist"
- ⇒ this 33% were more likely to be dissatisfied with their life circumstances, fear unemployment, feel insecure about the future and have a low confidence in the way public authorities and the political establishment worked in their country
- ⇒ the survey results show the complexity of the problem : feelings of racism coexist with a strong belief in the democratic system and respect for fundamental and social rights and freedoms
- ⇒ 77% said that designating 1997 the European Year Against Racism was "a good decision"
- ⇒ 84% called for a strengthening of actions by the European institutions to combat racism.

<sup>1</sup> Official Journal C 158 of 25 June 1986

<sup>2</sup> COM(95) 653 final of 13 December 1995

### **1.2.1. European Year Against Racism : set the ball rolling**

A full evaluation of the European Year Against Racism and its impact in the Member States will be published separately to this document. It is already clear however that, far from being a one-off campaign, the European Year Against Racism represented the beginning of a process towards increasing European-level cooperation in the fight against racism. It succeeded in :

- **Creating a new momentum**

The European Year gave new impetus to the fight against racism in Europe, sparking off a broad range of initiatives from grass-roots to European levels. These included local community projects, information campaigns and exhibitions, seminars and conferences, and high profile events in the fields of sports and the arts. Many of these received financial support from the 4,7 mio ECU available at European level, or from specific budgets adopted in the Member States for anti-racism actions during the European Year. The Commission worked closely with National Coordination Committees, whose role it was to stimulate and coordinate action at national level.

- **Establishing new networks and partnerships**

With a view to ensuring Community added value, emphasis was placed on the exchange of experience, and in this context the European Year Against Racism saw the emergence of new networks and partnerships at European level and the further development of existing ones. One key development was the move towards establishing a European platform of anti-racism non-governmental organisations. The joint work of the Social Partners was also consolidated with the publication of the 'European Compendium of Good Practice for the Prevention of Racism at the Workplace' and the adoption of a range of sectoral agreements and statements on non-discrimination. Another example of networking was the launch of a process of cooperation between political parties, one of the aims of which is the adoption of a code of good conduct on non-discrimination.

- **Raising awareness of the danger of racism and of the solutions**

The information and communication campaign launched within the framework of the European Year Against Racism sent a powerful message to citizens across the European Union of the danger that racism represents for our societies. It also highlighted some of the solutions which have proved successful in combating this phenomenon, including the promotion of positive messages about multicultural societies.

- **Confirming and consolidating the role of European institutions**

The European Year Against Racism has served to confirm the role of the European institutions in the fight against racism. This is borne out by the results of the Eurobarometer opinion poll on racist and xenophobic attitudes in the European Union carried out in Spring 1997, which indicate clear support for strengthening the role of the institutions and for longer-term action after the European Year Against Racism.

### **European Year Against Racism : some facts and figures**

- ⇒ 4,7 mio ECU of the 1997 budget was allocated to European Year Against Racism
- ⇒ 15 National Coordination Committees, representing the broad range of actors involved in the fight against racism, coordinated action in the Member States and met regularly in Brussels to ensure European-level exchange
- ⇒ 1,862 applicants submitted grant requests
- ⇒ 176 local, regional, national and European projects were funded by the Commission with a total of 3,2 mio ECU
- ⇒ 6 National Coordination Committees staged European-level conferences
- ⇒ 4 thematic seminars brought together projects to make contacts and share experience
- ⇒ 3,200 key decision-makers, 8 Prime Ministers and 1 President lent their support by signing the Declaration of Intent, as did the Presidents of the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Economic and Social Committee
- ⇒ 750,000 postcards were distributed in bars and cafés across the European Union
- ⇒ 3 celebrities acted as “ambassadors” to promote the message of the European Year : Linford Christie, Neneh Cherry and Joaquin Cortes
- ⇒ 5 young people skated 11,000 kms across 15 countries and 5 continents, spreading the anti-racism message in the One Globe-One Skate initiative, which was broadcast to 63 million homes across Europe
- ⇒ 85,000 spectators watched the Football Against Racism celebrity match in Madrid, which went out to a television audience of some 2,5 million in Spain alone.

### **1.2.2. The Treaty of Amsterdam: a non-discrimination clause**

1997 also saw great strides forward on a political level. Following the Amsterdam summit, the Treaty text now includes a general non-discrimination clause making it possible for the Council, after ratification of the Treaty, to “take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation” on the basis of proposals by the Commission.<sup>3</sup> The Treaty of Amsterdam will provide significant opportunity for strengthening the Union’s work in this field.

In addition, the Commission adopted a proposal<sup>4</sup> seeking to extend Community coordination of social security schemes, as laid down by Regulation 1408/71, to nationals of third countries legally resident in the European Union, thus ensuring equal treatment for migrant workers.

### **1.2.3. Setting up a European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia**

Following on from the work of the Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia<sup>5</sup> in this regard, the Council adopted a Regulation to create a European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia<sup>6</sup> in June 1997. The Centre is established in Vienna.

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<sup>3</sup> Official Journal C 340 of 10 November 1997

<sup>4</sup> COM(97) 561 final of 12 November 1997

<sup>5</sup> The Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia was set up by the European Council at its Corfu meeting in June 1994, to make recommendations on cooperation between governments and social bodies in encouraging tolerance and understanding and developing a European-level strategy for combating racist and xenophobic violence.

<sup>6</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 1035/97 of 2 June 1997 published in Official Journal L 151 of 10 June 1997.

The main remit of the Centre is to study the extent of and trends in racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism in the European Union and to analyse underlying causes, consequences and effects. The Centre will publish its findings in an annual report. It will also be expected to formulate conclusions and opinions, based on data gathered, for the consideration of the European institutions and the Member States. The Centre will seek to coordinate its activities with those of the Council of Europe.

The Centre will set up and coordinate a European Racism and Xenophobia Network (Raxen), which will operate in conjunction with national university research centres, non-governmental organisations and international organisations with experience in this field of work.

## **2. An action plan against racism**

This Action Plan takes forward the work launched in the 1995 Communication on racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism, and builds on the achievements of 1997. It will underpin the European Union's role in the fight against racism in the medium-term, and will develop the scope of the Commission's cooperation with Member States and with the European Parliament. It will also prepare the ground for legislative proposals before the end of 1999.

The Action Plan consists of four main strands :

- ⇒ Paving the way for legislative initiatives
- ⇒ Mainstreaming the fight against racism
- ⇒ Developing and exchanging new models
- ⇒ Strengthening information and communication work.

Each of these strands will be implemented in partnership with relevant key actors. The Commission will pay particular attention to the differences in the forms and expressions of racism experienced by women and men, across the four strands.

### **2.1. The method : working in partnership**

The European Year Against Racism clearly illustrated the importance of partnership as the basis for the fight against racism. In implementing this Action Plan, the Commission will draw from the experiences of key actors in the field, and will build upon the networks and partnerships which were reinforced or established during 1997. This involves not only strengthening cooperation with partners, but also supporting cooperation between them. These partners include:

#### **• Member States**

The fight against racism is first and foremost a responsibility for Member States. Situations differ from country to country, resulting in a wide diversity in experience and approaches to anti-racism work. There are nevertheless common challenges, and the European Year Against Racism has shown that there is benefit to be drawn and much to be learnt from cooperating and exchanging at European level. The Commission intends to strengthen the exchange of experience between Member States.

#### **• Non-governmental organisations**

Non-governmental organisations have long been instrumental in carrying forward the fight against racism. They play a crucial role in both stimulating action at a grass-roots level, and in ensuring that the problem of racism remains on the political agenda. The Commission supports the Migrants' Forum in its broad role of providing

representation at European level for immigrant and ethnic minority organisations. As a complement to this, it also supports the process of setting up a European platform of anti-racism non-governmental organisations, bringing together organisations working at local, regional, national and European levels specifically in the fight against racism.

- **Social Partners**

Racism in the workplace remains a reality for employees from immigrant and ethnic minority groups across the European Union. Insecurity about future life prospects provides fertile ground for racial tensions. This can manifest itself in day-to-day working relationships. Less visible though arguably more widespread are forms of institutionalised racism and discrimination: in recruitment, in access to training and promotion, in access to management positions, and in participation in elected bodies such as trade unions. In October 1995, the Social Partners adopted a Joint Declaration on the Prevention of Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia and the Promotion of Equal Treatment at the Workplace. Following on from this, the Commission encourages initiatives by employers' organisations and trade unions alike, with a particular focus on joint action.

- **Local authorities**

Local authorities have a key role to play in developing strategies to prevent and combat racism at the level closest to the citizen. It is at local authority level that innovative approaches have been piloted, taking account of the complex social causes which combine to increase racial tension. Such approaches have confirmed the positive outcome of comprehensive strategies which address all aspects of the social, economic and political integration of immigrant and ethnic minority groups. Among these are examples of initiatives specifically aiming to promote the participation of minority groups in local political life, including pilot actions on representation and the right to vote for third country nationals. Further to the 1995 Communication, the Commission supported a number of initiatives involving local authorities, including the Cities Against Racism Project and the LIA (Local Integration/Partnership Action) project, both of which are examples of European networks based on local policy approaches to anti-racism and integration work. The Commission is currently examining the results of projects underway, as a basis for developing future action with these partners.

#### **The Cities Against Racism and LIA projects**

The Cities Against Racism Project (1995-1997), brought together local authorities and/or non-governmental organisations from 30 European towns and cities. Its aim was to promote the development and implementation of good practice, and to combine this with European-level exchange of experience and information between grass-roots level actors. Drawing on the results of mutual learning between projects and the identification of successful strategies, the project was designed to lead to the drafting and publication of joint reports, presenting case studies and proposals on how to build broad local coalitions to combat racism and promote the role of immigrant and ethnic minority communities as part of urban development strategies.

The Local Integration/Partnership Action (1996-1998), also known as the LIA project, although focusing on the development of integration strategies, has also contributed to promoting European level cooperation to combat racism. The 23 cities participating in the project have committed themselves to developing and implementing local action plans to combat racism, and this will be further discussed during a meeting of elected politicians from these cities in the summer of 1998.

- **Media**

The media are essential partners in the fight against racism, with responsibility for both providing information that highlights the dangers of racism, and also ensuring that the information provided is free from stereotyping and prejudice. This was underlined in the Commission's 1995 Communication on racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism, which marked the start of support to media bodies in particular for initiatives developed to provide appropriate training for journalists. In this context, the Commission welcomes the Joint Declaration on Tolerance in the Media adopted in 1997 by the European Broadcasting Union, the European Federation of Journalists and the European Newspaper Publishers' Association, and supports and encourages initiatives arising from this.

- **Sports bodies**

The European Year Against Racism has brought home the role that sports bodies and sports personalities can play in the fight against racism. The existence of racism in the world of sport and in particular football, both between players and the more widespread problem among supporters, has led sports bodies to give serious consideration to their responsibility in this regard. During the European Year, the Commission cooperated for the first time with a number of international football bodies, including the International Association of Professional Football Players (AIFP) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). It has also started to explore possible partnerships in other sports, with a view to supporting the further exchange of experience and information between sports organisations and bodies active in this field.

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The Commission will apply a partnership approach to all actions implemented within the framework of the Action Plan. Racism manifests itself in a multitude of different contexts and forms. Any effective strategy to combat it must therefore draw together all those concerned in joint actions and initiatives. The Commission underpins this approach by organising regular conferences bringing together different groups of actors. These conferences provide the basis for an ongoing interactive evaluation of this method.

## **2.2. The action : paving the way for legislative initiatives**

### **2.2.1. Proposing the non-discriminatory application of Community legislation**

In its 1995 Communication, the Commission set out its intention to ensure the non-discriminatory application of Community legislation, by proposing, where appropriate, broad non-discrimination clauses both in new Community instruments, and when revising and updating existing Community legislation.

Success has been limited. While the proposals presented by the Commission for Council Directives on parental leave<sup>7</sup> and on part-time work<sup>8</sup> included specific provision with regard to non-discrimination, the final texts saw this provision dropped, though reference is made in the recitals.

The Commission will, where appropriate, continue to propose the inclusion of a non-discrimination clause in proposals for legislation.

### **2.2.2. Proposals for new legislation : launching the debate**

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<sup>7</sup> COM(96) 26 final of 31 January 1996

<sup>8</sup> COM(97) 392 final of 23 July 1997

In the 1995 Communication, the Commission set out its ambitions for a specific Treaty provision on non-discrimination. This was achieved with the inclusion of Article 13 in the Treaty of Amsterdam, which, once ratified, will provide new scope for anti-discrimination measures at European level.

A wide debate on the possible application of this non-discrimination clause will now be launched, drawing upon the experience of all key actors in the fight against racism. This will take in all areas of discrimination, but particular emphasis will be placed on racial discrimination. The debate will include a general review of national situations. As part of this, the Commission will organise and/or support a number of seminars and conferences at national and European levels, in particular in cooperation with the European Parliament and the Presidencies of the European Union.

This activity will prepare the ground for the early use of Article 13, with a view to ensuring that concrete proposals are on the table for adoption before the end of 1999.

**Objective :**

**To continue the non-discriminatory application of Community legislation while preparing the ground for non-discrimination legislation.**

**Key action :**

- ⇒ **Under the UK Presidency, high level officials from all Member States and the Commission will meet for the first time in April 1998 to examine the possibilities for future action on non-discrimination in employment.**
- ⇒ **Representatives of Member States, non-governmental organisations and Social Partners will come together at a conference in June 1998 to discuss good practice and legislation at national level.**
- ⇒ **A conference will be held in Austria in September 1998 to examine the use of affirmative action programmes. It will take into consideration existing Community experience as well extra-Community experiences, particularly from the US and Canada, in terms of anti discrimination work in general, and the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men.**
- ⇒ **In December 1998, the Commission will organise a major conference to set out its ideas on non-discrimination legislation and to ensure a broad consultation with all key actors. While addressing the wider issue of discrimination (beyond racial discrimination), the conference will also pay particular attention to discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic origin and religion, with a view to the preparation of a legislative initiative in 1999.**
- ⇒ **By the end of 1999, the Commission will present a legislative proposal to combat racial discrimination (subject to ratification of the new Treaty).**

### **2.3. The action : mainstreaming the fight against racism**

The 1995 Communication underlined that many Community policies and programmes could contribute positively to the fight against racism by either promoting positive messages about diversity, or by creating favourable conditions for tolerance and respect in multicultural society. Since then, the Commission has sought to ensure that these issues feature prominently in certain areas of its work. This Action Plan sets out areas where this mainstreaming approach can be further developed.

In addition, the Commission supports a range of local actions to promote the integration of specific groups for whom racism is an everyday reality (gypsies, refugees, migrants) under budget lines allocated specifically for this purpose by the Budgetary Authority.

#### **2.3.1. Employment strategy**

Promoting employment is fundamental to strengthening the economic and social cohesion of all societies, and as such is indispensable in tackling the social conditions in which racism and racial tension develop. Evidence shows that certain groups, and in particular immigrants and ethnic minorities, suffer disproportionately from unemployment and lack of opportunity in the workplace. Taking action to combat unemployment will, therefore, not only help in combating racial discrimination, but also more generally in alleviating circumstances in which racism thrives.

The active promotion of non-discrimination policies is increasingly not only seen as a means to guarantee equality of opportunity, but also as good business practice. Companies which adopt strategies to promote the full participation of employees from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds have found that they are more productive and more open to different markets. This positive experience was highlighted at the "Gaining from Diversity" conference organised by the European Business Network for Social Cohesion in Lyon in 1997. The Commission is looking at ways of building on this.

The Commission will also encourage actions proposed by public authorities and Social Partners, both at cross-industry and sectoral levels, which favour equality of opportunity and seek to combat discrimination, in particular those which highlight the benefits of a diverse workforce. It will draw upon the experience of these and other existing initiatives in defining future action.

The Employment Guidelines adopted by the Council for 1998 set out four pillars for action: entrepreneurship, employability, adaptability and equal opportunities. The employment situation of immigrant and ethnic minority groups is of course covered across these four pillars. The measures set out in the Employment Guidelines include areas which may be of particular relevance in this context: for example, specific initiatives to tackle long-term unemployment and youth unemployment. In preparing the Employment Guidelines for 1999, the Commission will consider ways in which non-discrimination in the labour market can be applied as a mainstreaming principle.

#### **2.3.2. The Structural Funds**

The European Structural Funds constitute the Commission's main financial tool for promoting economic and social cohesion, and as such can contribute to the fight against racism and xenophobia within our communities. Measures under Objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Structural Funds, in particular, can contribute to preventing racism

by promoting the development of deprived areas and the integration of excluded groups.

More specifically, the Integra strand of the Employment Community Initiative, and the Urban Community Initiative, contribute to the fight against racism and the promotion of inclusion by addressing the specific needs of immigrant and ethnic minority groups, through empowerment measures designed to facilitate their integration into the labour market, and measures to support community development and thus lower social tensions in inner-city neighbourhoods.

In its proposals for reforming the Structural Funds, the Commission has placed a strong emphasis on promoting a more inclusive and cohesive society through an integrated approach to human resource development in Objective 3. In this context, proposals for a new Community Initiative will give special consideration to combating discrimination in the labour market, including the fight against racism. The particular needs of deprived urban areas will be considered under the new Objective 2.

### **Employment-Integra**

The Employment Initiative is a Community Programme of the European Social Fund which targets groups facing specific difficulties in the employment market. With an ESF budget of 385 mio ECU for 1995-1999 (which represents about 55% of all Integra funding in Europe), the Integra strand of the Employment Initiative caters for people excluded or at risk of exclusion from the labour market. Integra places a specific emphasis on the integration into employment of migrants and refugees. Its approach is one of local integrated action, based on innovative models and partnerships, with a view to supporting the reintegration of the most vulnerable members of the labour force into employment. All Integra projects work closely with transnational partners, with a view to sharing and exchanging good practice.

### **2.3.3. Education, training and youth**

One important element of the fight against racism is action targeted at young people. The Commission's education, training and youth programmes have long provided a good vehicle for promoting mutual understanding and breaking down prejudice, particularly among young people.

During the European Year Against Racism, two Declarations were adopted by the Education and Youth Councils<sup>9</sup> respectively concerning the annual organisation of anti-racism activities in schools and the youth sector around 21 March (UN International Day Against Racism). To mark this, the Commission is supporting a number of European-wide actions, building upon its existing programmes and initiatives.

The Comenius strand of the Socrates Programme contains specific actions designed to improve the educational opportunities of social groups at risk of marginalisation or exclusion. Emphasis is also placed on intercultural education and through the Comenius strand, the Commission supports transnational projects which involve the exchange of experience between schools with large numbers of pupils from different cultures and linguistic or ethnic backgrounds. Support is also available for specific in-service training actions for teachers. Another schools-based approach is the Commission's recently launched initiative against violence in schools, which includes projects tackling conflict arising in a multicultural school environment.

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<sup>9</sup> Official Journal C1 of 3 January 1998 and Official Journal C268 of 5 December 1997

The objective of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme is to promote new approaches in initial and continuing training policies and practices in the Member States. As part of the third priority of the programme, "Combating exclusion", the Commission will continue to promote equality of access to initial and continuing training.

In informal education, the Youth for Europe Programme continues to provide a solid framework for intercultural learning and understanding through youth exchange, youth initiative and youth information projects. One area which the Commission intends to further develop is that of training for youth workers in anti-racism youth work. In this context, the Commission will also launch a study to determine the impact, in terms of good practice development, of youth work in the fight against racism. In its youth information work, the Commission is supporting a number of projects involving the youth media, as part of the follow-up to the European Year Against Racism.

In providing young people with an opportunity to work as volunteers in a local community context in another Member State, the European Voluntary Service Initiative also lends itself to the exchange of experience and know-how in anti-racism and multicultural work practices. By encouraging the networking of projects focusing specifically on such issues, the Commission will further build upon this exchange.

#### **Education and youth : some facts and figures for 1997**

Comenius strand of the Socrates Programme (1995-1999) :

⇒ 4,8 mio ECU for 120 projects to promote intercultural education in schools and to improve educational opportunities for children of migrant workers and travellers, thus contributing directly or indirectly to the fight against racism and xenophobia.

Youth for Europe Programme (1995-1999) :

⇒ 12 mio ECU for youth exchanges which seek to promote intercultural learning by encouraging young people to discover, respect and value cultural diversity

⇒ 2 mio ECU for projects which specifically aim to combat racism and xenophobia.

#### **2.3.4. Information society**

The information society can play an important role in promoting empowerment and integration, particularly in enhancing citizens' ability to participate fully in democratic processes. However, public expression and experimentation with information society resources can also have negative aspects, and one of these is the worrying growth in the numbers of so-called 'hate-sites' and the widespread circulation of racist material on the Internet. The Commission's recent Action Plan<sup>10</sup> on promoting safe use of the Internet includes provision to combat the use of the Internet for incitement to racial hatred or racial discrimination.

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<sup>10</sup> COM(97) 582 of 26 November 1997

### **2.3.5. Justice and home affairs cooperation**

Joint action to combat racism and xenophobia has been ongoing within the framework of Article K.3 of the European Union Treaty<sup>11</sup>. Areas covered by this action include incitement to discrimination, violence or racial hatred; condoning and denial of crimes against humanity; dissemination or distribution of racist and xenophobic materials; and participation in activities of groups or organisations which involve racial discrimination, violence or hatred. The Council will assess the fulfilment by Member States of this joint action in June 1998.

The new Article 29 of the Treaty on European Union, as amended by the Treaty of Amsterdam, includes specific reference to "preventing and combating racism and xenophobia", and provides scope for cooperation between police forces and judicial authorities to this effect. In the meantime, some of the existing cooperation programmes (namely Grotius, for judicial cooperation, Oisin, for police cooperation and Odysseus, in the area of immigration policy) do offer the possibility to support projects which aim to raise the awareness level of professionals in this area.

### **2.3.6. Information, communication, culture, audiovisual and sport**

The Commission takes account of racism and discrimination issues across its general information and communication activities. More specifically, as part of its information action for young people, the Commission has given special priority to initiatives seeking to inform about the dangers of racism and xenophobia. The fight against racism will be one of the main topics for future information activities targeted at young people. The Commission is also launching a publication for use in schools.

As stipulated in the Treaty on European Union, Community action in the field of culture is founded on the concept of respect for cultural diversity while highlighting common heritage. Equal access to culture is essential to pluri-culturalism and plurilinguism, and to the full participation of minority groups. Community programmes in the areas of cultural cooperation and creation (Kaleidoscope), reading and books (Ariane) and preserving cultural heritage (Raphaël), all aim to promote access to culture, notably for disadvantaged groups. Cultural projects linked to the fight against racism have been supported in this context. This commitment to the fight against racism, xenophobia and exclusion will be further strengthened in the framework of the development of the Union's cultural action.

The development of the audiovisual and information services sector calls for the particular attention to be paid to the protection of human dignity. The so-called "Television without frontiers" Directive already prohibits incitement to hatred on grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality. The Commission recognises the need to further develop instruments in this regard, and it has proposed to the Council a Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity in audiovisual and information services<sup>12</sup>. This proposal sets out common guidelines based on codes of conduct and seeks to enable the Community to contribute to initiatives in this area.

The European Year Against Racism provided a first opportunity for the Commission to take account of the fight against racism in its action and cooperation in the field of sport. The role that sport can play in the fight against racism will feature in the Commission's forthcoming Communication on Sport.

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<sup>11</sup> 96/443/JHA of 15 July 1996

<sup>12</sup> COM(97) 570

### **2.3.7. Public procurement**

The Commission's recent Communication on Public Procurement<sup>13</sup> stresses that contracting authorities and entities can be called upon to implement the various aspects of social policy, including the promotion of equal opportunities, in awarding contracts, given that public purchases in practice constitute a significant means of influencing the behaviour of economic operators.

There is a range of ways in which public administration can take the pursuit of social objectives into consideration in their purchasing.

First, the rules of the public procurement directives allow the exclusion of candidates who breach national social legislation, including that relevant to the promotion of equal opportunities.

Second, successful tenders can be required to comply with social obligations when performing contracts awarded to them. In this context, for example, a contracting authority or entity could require that legal obligations to protect immigrant and ethnic minority employees be enforced on sites where public works contracts are carried out, or that equal opportunity measures be adopted to promote employment of ethnic minority employees. Clearly, such contract performance conditions can only be applied where they do not result in direct or indirect discrimination against tenderers from other Member States, and where the conditions in question are clearly indicated in the contract notices and in the contract itself.

### **2.3.8. Research activities**

In the context of its Fourth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (1994-1998), and in particular the Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme, the Commission is supporting a number of research projects and networks which focus on racism issues, the integration of minority groups and socio-economic development in deprived urban areas.

In this context, the Commission supports the European branch of the Metropolis project, an initiative involving research institutes from 13 countries, which seeks to better understand the links between migration and economic restructuring and thus to identify policies to accommodate and manage social change.

Current proposals for the Fifth Framework Programme specifically include, as part of the key action on improving the socio-economic knowledge base, the analysis of the phenomena of xenophobia, racism and migration in Europe and their impact on economic development, social integration and social protection<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Communication on Public Procurement adopted on 11 March 1998

<sup>14</sup> Common Position of the Council of 12 February 1998

### **2.3.9. External relations**

In the context of the enlargement of the European Union, great importance is attached to progress in policies designed to combat racism and to protect minorities. The Commission's opinions on the membership applications of several central and East European countries published in July 1997, already drew attention to concerns over the treatment of certain minorities in the applicant countries. This will be an important element of the reinforced pre-accession strategy, and of the regular progress reports which the Commission will make in the context of the Accession Partnerships.

Policy dialogue with developing countries is also contributing to the fight against racism. Priority is given to the respect for human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and transparent and accountable governance, and the prevention and resolution of conflicts and the fight against poverty, which are major reasons for migration from these countries. In this respect, such policy dialogue with, and assistance to, developing countries complements Community-wide action to tackle the causes of racism.

The 2000 UN World Conference on Racism is expected to contribute significantly to awareness-raising and policy development. In this context, it is important that cooperation be established at Community level to ensure a coordinated and coherent approach. The Commission will contribute to this process.

### **2.3.10 Commission staff policy**

The Commission, in its own internal staff policy and practice, will continue to take full account of the principles of non-discrimination and the fight against racism and xenophobia.

It will ensure that staff policies for recruitment, training, mobility and professional advancement fully respect these principles, and that both staff members in general, and those responsible for human resources management in particular, whether individually or collectively, are fully aware of them.

#### **Objective :**

**To develop a mainstreaming approach to the fight against racism in all relevant Community programmes and policies.**

#### **Key actions :**

- ⇒ **The Commission will formally establish an internal inter-service group as a tool for promoting the fight against racism as a mainstreaming principle across its policies and actions.**
- ⇒ **The Commission will mobilise its policies to contribute to combating racism, in particular within the framework of the European Structural Funds, education, training and youth programmes, public procurement policy, research activities, external relations, information actions and cultural and sports initiatives.**
- ⇒ **In 1999, the Commission intends to assess the results of this mainstreaming process at a conference pulling together all relevant actors and experiences from other Community policies.**

## **2.4. The action : developing and exchanging new models**

The role of the Commission in the fight against racism must be one of promoting actions with an added value at European level. Through funding to transnational projects operating primarily at local, regional, national and European level within the framework of the European Year Against Racism, the Commission has stimulated the emergence of new partnerships and new approaches to anti-racism work across the European Union.

The Commission will use budget appropriations allocated by the Budgetary Authority to further develop this 'acquis', and to maximise the progress made in terms of legislative and mainstreaming developments by placing emphasis on the exchange of new models and best practice. To this end, it intends to support pilot projects and networks which show innovation in combating racism, and which actively promote an exchange of experience at European level. Such projects help to illustrate the principle of non-discrimination as a constitutive element of the European model of society.

Certain key principles will be adhered to in this context. The active involvement of immigrant and ethnic minority groups in planning, developing and implementing all aspects of project work is seen as essential in terms of defining needs and identifying appropriate action. The approach will be one of highlighting positive contribution, promoting positive messages about multicultural societies, and encouraging the participation of all groups in decision-making processes and political life.

In line with its general move towards integrated action, the Commission is encouraging initiatives which build upon broad-based partnerships at local, regional and national levels. In addition to non-governmental organisations, public authorities and Social Partners, such partnerships may be extended to include social services, local businesses, schools, youth clubs, police forces and employment agencies.

In establishing thematic priorities for this project funding coherence will be sought with the priorities established for the European Year Against Racism, and with the results of the external evaluation of the European Year. Areas for specific focus include :

- Racism in the workplace
- Racism in everyday life
- The role of the media
- Racism in sport and combating racism through sport
- Legal measures to combat racism
- Specific actions for public authorities and administrations.

The Commission will pay particular attention to the evaluation of projects and initiatives supported, with a view to both identifying models with transferability potential and developing proposals for longer term action.

**Objective :**

**To develop and exchange new models for combating racism.**

**Key actions :**

- ⇒ **The Commission will use budget appropriations allocated by the Budgetary Authority to support anti-racism projects which set out to develop innovative models and guarantee a multiplying effect through transnational exchange. Details of funding provisions are published in calls for projects in the Official Journal.**
- ⇒ **Within these budget appropriations, the Commission will support projects in their networking activities and will organise transnational thematic seminars with the aim of promoting European contacts and exchange between projects. .**

## **2.5. The action : strengthening information and communication work**

### **2.5.1. Enhancing visibility**

The Commission will build upon its information and communication work as launched within the framework of the European Year Against Racism, by giving it a clear and recognisable image. This involves the implementation of a series of actions using relevant allocated budget appropriations:

- **Using the logo**

The logo of the European Year was used extensively throughout 1997, featuring both on projects funded by the Commission and other activities in the framework of the Year. The Commission will continue to use this logo, with an adapted caption 'European Union Against Racism'.

- **Promoting a television spot**

A television spot - 'European Union Against Racism' - has been produced and will be broadcast across Europe, to raise awareness amongst the general public.

- **Developing an Internet site**

The Commission is developing the Internet site set up for the European Year Against Racism on its EUROPA server. The site provides updated information on ongoing project activities, links to other relevant sites, and a forum for discussion.

- **Launching publications and prizes**

The Commission will compile and disseminate publications on its anti-racism work. In a first instance, emphasis will be placed on publications and products resulting from the European Year Against Racism. Project directories and reports of activities carried out will also be published. With a view to giving visibility to the important work carried out in the context of anti-racism projects, the Commission plans to present a prize for innovation in 1999.

In addition to the Commission's information and communication action, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia in Vienna will set up a documentation and information centre open to the public and assist in the promotion of information activities.

### **2.5.2. Raising awareness in the media**

In all aspects of its information and communication work, the Commission will cooperate with its media partners to spread anti-racism messages and to promote positive messages about diversity.

The Commission will work closely with pan-European media bodies, in the print and audio-visual sectors. The Commission will begin cooperation with editorial decision-makers in the media, in addition to the existing work with journalists. Action in this field will also include cooperation with media bodies specialising in immigrant and ethnic minority issues.

The Commission will also encourage initiatives involving the use of new media to spread anti-racism messages, including those which counteract racist propaganda appearing on the Internet.

One area previously unexplored is the role of advertising in reinforcing cultural and racial stereotypes which encourage prejudice. The Commission will approach national and European advertising authorities to take this matter forward.

**Objective :**

**To strengthen information and communication work.**

**Key actions :**

- ⇒ **The Commission will feature its logo on all publications relating to anti-racism work, and will encourage the use of its logo by relevant projects on their information and promotional material.**
- ⇒ **The Commission will promote the television spot to television stations. Projects producing videos or television programmes will be encouraged to use the spot in their productions.**
- ⇒ **The Commission will maintain and develop the Internet site set up for the European Year Against Racism on its Europa server to include a forum for public exchange of experience and information.**
- ⇒ **The Commission will support activities involving new media and technologies.**
- ⇒ **The Commission will start a dialogue with national and European advertising authorities with a view to developing a code of good practice.**
- ⇒ **The Commission continues to support a European media prize for best practice in promoting tolerance and understanding.**
- ⇒ **The Commission intends to award a prize for innovation in anti-racism project work.**

## **2.6. Evaluation and reporting**

The Commission plans to publish a report setting out the progress made in the fight against racism at European level by the end of 1999.

This report will in particular focus on legislative and mainstreaming developments, taking account of the results of the two conferences foreseen on these subjects in 1998 and 1999 respectively, and include an evaluation of the initiatives carried out within the framework of this Action Plan.

In assessing the impact of the Action Plan, the Commission will also take account of the work of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.