

# STOP DISCRIMINATION

The fourth international meeting of the project “Minority Representation in Police Organisations” took place in Greece on the 13th and 14th of June 2003. The project is funded by the European Commission, in the framework of the second phase of the Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination.

The project’s leader is the Swedish National Institute for Working Life. The project’s partners are the Royal Swedish Police Force (Stockholm), the Royal Dutch Police Force, the scientific institute “Landelijk Expertisecentrum Diversiteit” of the Dutch Police Force and the non-governmental organisation “Antigone” (National Focal Point of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia).

The project’s main aim is to research into possible unequal and discriminatory practices during internal and external recruitment procedures in police forces in the European Union (Netherlands, Sweden and Greece) regarding sex, age, disability, race, nationality, religion, and sexual preferences. The project specific objective is to formulate recommendations for the improvement of discriminatory procedures and to produce awareness-raising and educational anti-discrimination tools for use by police organisations (Guide for non-discriminatory human resource management).

As far as national legislation is concerned, according to Community Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC, which apply to Greece also since 2003 although their transposition is still pending, all public organizations are required to implement effective anti-discrimination measures, especially in the field of employment, and internal and external recruitment. The above-mentioned Community Directives prohibit direct, indirect discrimination and harassment in the work place for reasons of sex, disability, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation; and call for the enactment of effective legislative measures to ensure equality in both civil and administrative law, and in public organisations’ internal rules.

The Directives also provide for the reversal of the burden of proof in cases of discrimination. According to this provision, a person who feels that he/she has been discriminated against may seek justice in an administrative or civil court, and it is the person accused of discriminating that must prove his/her innocence. Furthermore, the Directives stipulate that associations, organisations or other legal entities which have a legitimate interest in ensuring that the provisions of this Directive are complied with, may engage, either on behalf or in support of the complainant, with his or her approval, in any judicial and/or administrative procedure provided for the enforcement of the Directives. Moreover, the Directives call for the creation of a special body for the promotion of equal treatment to monitor implementation of the above mentioned measures, which will, among other tasks, collect and record complaints and follow their progress. Finally, associations, organisations or other legal entities which have a legitimate interest in the implementation of the Directive (i.e. trade unions, non-governmental organizations) should take part in a social dialogue aiming to ensure the successful implementation of the Directive.

**The importance of the participation of the Pan-Hellenic Federation of Police Employees (POASY)**

POASY has actively participated in all of the meeting's activities. POASY's contribution to the activities agenda was judged very important by the project transnational partners and it was decided to strive for future qualitative and quantitative cooperation. Following POASY's recommendation, it was decided that the project will put special emphasis on discrimination based on age, disability (especially in regard to those injured in service) and gender.