



European Network Against Racism  
The voice of the anti-racist movement in Europe

## ENAR CONSULTATION AMONG ENAR MEMBERS AHEAD OF NEXT EUROPEAN MIGRATION FORUM – RESPONSES

### **The network**

ENAR is the only pan-European anti-racism network that combines advocacy for racial equality and facilitating cooperation among civil society anti-racist actors in Europe. ENAR stands against racism and discrimination and advocates equality and solidarity for all in Europe. It connects local and national anti-racism NGOs throughout Europe and voices the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in European and national policy debates. The organisation was set up in 1998 by grassroots activists on a mission to achieve legal changes at European level and make decisive progress towards racial equality in all EU Member States. ENAR is currently composed of more than 110 member organisations.

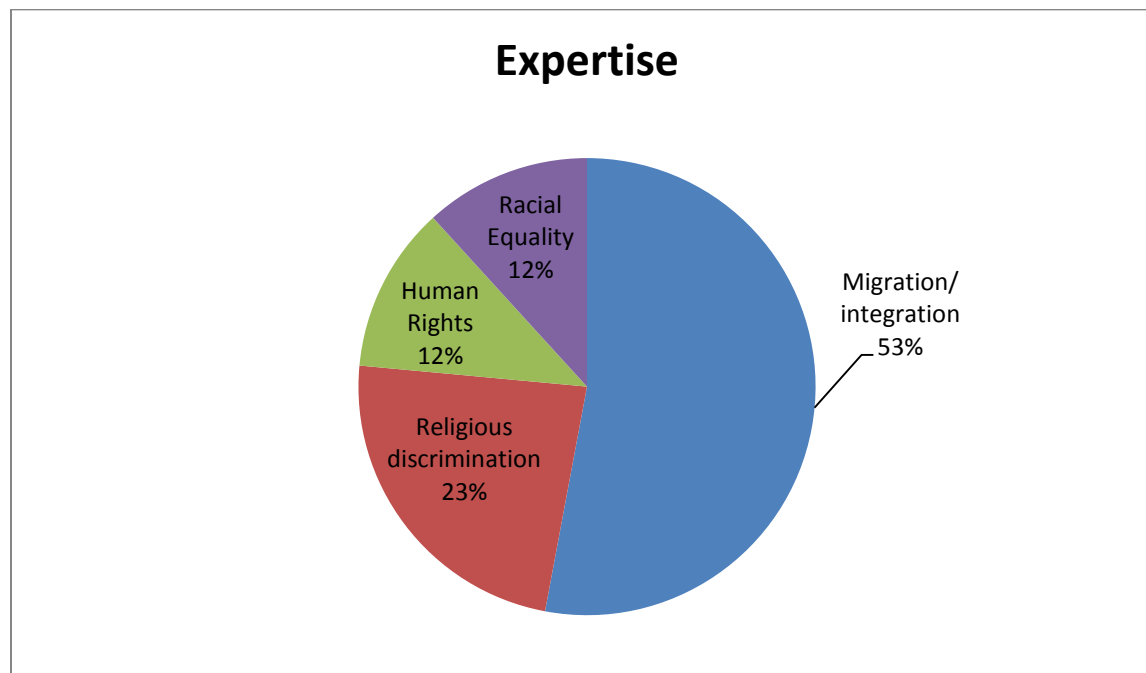
### **The survey**

ENAR considers the European Migration Forum an important institutional stakeholder. It is a unique platform for exchange that provides Member States representatives, European institutions and civil society organisations with a safe space for discussions. However, it is crucial that this annual event responds timely to the most urgent topics and that its outcomes can directly influence the most relevant issues of the policy decisions at the EU level.

For this reason, ENAR consulted its members to verify their priorities for the next Forum. Questions to the membership were presented in form of a qualitative survey and were in line with the EMF Bureau proposals for the next meeting.

### **Profile of the respondents**

Representatives from member organisations working in the field of migration and/or integration at national level were invited and encouraged to contribute to this consultation. CSOs with expertise on religious discrimination, racial equality and human rights also submitted their contribution.



Respondents are based in 12 different countries across Europe: Belgium, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Spain and United Kingdom.

### **Members' priorities in the first reception and integration phase of asylum seekers and relocated/resettled refugees**

Access to services is the top priority in the first integration phase of asylum seekers and refugees. Organisations listed as necessary that Member States should provide better support and easier access to language courses (40%), education (30%), labour market (25%), housing (20%), and health services (20%), especially mental health care and trauma counselling.

The implementation of integration courses is considered helpful by CSOs. ENAR suggests that Human rights education programmes should be mandatory for all, be part of education curricula and available in several languages. Modules on the positive contributions of Jews, Muslims and other groups to Europe should be developed, together with modules on understanding of all religions and beliefs.

Such modules should include training on unconscious bias and discrimination, as well as gender equality and women's rights.

The need of having a tailor-made capacity building for job seeking was equally raised as an important element to an easier early integration of migrants.

### **Manifestation of anti-migrant racism**

In the collected responses, member organisations reported that most cases of discrimination are encountered in the health care and housing systems. Administrative procedural failures and lack of access to legal support were also highlighted as extra challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees both in the reception and in the long-term integration process.

UK members emphasised that a report on welfare policies for refugees and asylum seekers<sup>1</sup> has already portrayed the institutional restrictions and disadvantages faced by migrants in this sector.

ENAR is also apprehensive by Member States recent measures for confiscation of valuables of newly arrived migrants: seize of cash, jewelry and other items. Recent practices in Denmark (for more migrants holding more than 10.000 DKK) and in Germany (values for confiscation vary from regions in Germany) are often combined with the hardening of other European policies, as for example, restrictions for family reunification and nationality requests recently approved in Denmark.

ENAR is concerned that this will increase once more the level of intolerance against migrants. As previously mentioned, such policies are combined with other measures that are preventing the fast and easy integration of asylum seekers and refugees in the European Union.

ENAR Shadow Report on Employment, which was published in 2014, highlights that the high unemployment among migrants and ethnic and religious minorities continues to be problematic, especially for low-skilled and non-EU migrants. The economic and financial crisis has further exacerbated the employment gap between minorities and migrants on the one hand, and the majority population on

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<sup>1</sup> [Allsopp, J., Sigona, N. and Phillimore, J., 2014. Poverty among refugees and asylum seekers in the UK: An evidence and policy review. University of Birmingham.](#)

the other. At the same time, political and public discourses on migrants and minorities are increasingly portraying them as economic, security and cultural threats.

The national Shadow Reports show clear distinctions in treatment in employment based on ethnic origin, nationality and migrant legal status differentiations. With regard to nationality, it can be said that EU citizens generally tend to experience less discrimination in the labour market than third country nationals, but this also depends on the country of origin of the third country national.

ENAR has been monitoring manifestations of discrimination against migrants since 2015. From our mapping exercise, our network has identified that border controls, especially in Eastern European countries, are being performed with an alarming level of police violence and racial profiling. Direct discrimination towards individuals are on the rise in countries where strong negative rhetoric against migrants is disseminated (i.e. under the pre and post BREXIT climate). Restrictive policies and practices against migrants can also be identified in countries where high numbers of asylum seekers arrived before the Turkey deal. For more information, please visit our [website](#).



### Non-discrimination work by members of ENAR and other Civil Society Actors

To address the needs of migrants facing discrimination, member organisations are mostly dedicated to monitor and to offer free legal support to asylum seekers and refugees. Frontline officers are increasingly more present at interviews during the asylum procedures, ensuring the quality of the interpreters during

the asylum/residence procedures. They are also constantly overlooking the conditions in the reception centers and housing facilities.

It is also mentioned that peer-to-peer exercises were good examples on how frontline workers can maximise both uptake and impact. Furthermore, highlighted as best practices were exchanges and trainings for and with other practitioners: interaction between stakeholders (authorities, public/private service providers, schools) to discuss the needs of refugees; exchange between young migrants and stakeholders; training of social workers to recognise their own biases, confront biases of newly arrived and confront discrimination that newly arrived face; and trainings to the volunteers involved in the reception of newly arrived refugees.

### **Best practices developed with host communities to challenge public perception against migrants**

In this survey, Members were invited to list good initiatives developed by host communities that helped to challenge the negative public perception against asylum seekers and refugees and contributed to a more positive narrative at local level:

- **Czech Republic:** Ongoing project lead by a collective of Civil Society organisations and financed by the Open Society Fund Prague called "It is us": to facilitate rational, evidence-based and impartial discussion not only about immigration, but about all the other issues that the so called refugee crisis in Czech society opened:
  - information services for the media and own media campaign;
  - organising discussions and public debates in the regions;
  - NGOs provide lectures and debates at schools.
- **United Kingdom:** Visits for refugee groups from inner-city areas into the surrounding countryside by the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust:
  - to promote the health and wellbeing of participants and enable them to enjoy new activities;
  - to challenge any misleading preconceptions held by rural residents.
- **Italy:** Bologna cares!: Communication project implemented by A&M and Lai-momo as part of the SPRAR (System of protection for asylum seekers and refugees) of the City of Bologna:
  - aims to provide a positive perspective on migration and asylum;

– billboards on public transportation to public events, meetings with the local population and refugees and the publication of booklets tackling the topic of asylum from innovative perspectives.

### **Suggestions for further topics from ENAR members**

Member organisations are concerned about the negative impact of the security and policing agenda, in particular counter-terrorism policies, in the migration and integration policy packages. Some of these EU strategies can lead to the marginalisation and criminalisation of refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, counter-terrorism is one suggested topic that could be potentially addressed in a workshop format.

As expressed in our mapping exercise, the topic of hate crime and hate speech could also be explored under the public perception section. Member organisations wish that Member States are held accountable and provide sanctions and remedies to combat the alarming increase of violence against migrants.

ENAR considers extremely relevant to highlight the implementation of the EU Action Plan for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the topics of interest. Stakeholders from European, national and local level should also be encouraged to support and provide feedback as deemed necessary. The responsibility of each institution and the expectation of the engagement of the Civil Society should be discussed during the Forum.

Members also wish to have the gender perspective widely covered in the topics of discussions.