CONCEPT PAPER

OPENING DEBATE AND RECEPTION OF THE MIXTUS EXHIBITION
IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, BRUSSELS
TUESDAY 15TH OCTOBER 2013
ALTIERO SPINELLI BUILDING - ROOM A1H-1 – 15:30-17:30 (FOLLOWED BY A COCKTAIL RECEPTION)

(IN)VISIBLE DIVERSITY: HOW STRUCTURAL DISCRIMINATION MANIFESTS ITSELF IN SOCIETY AND WAYS TO COUNTER IT

HOSTED BY JEAN LAMBERT, MEP, GREENS/EUROPEAN FREE ALLIANCE (UK)

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) will organise a debate in the European Parliament (EP) in Brussels on 15th October in order to launch the 4-day exhibition called “(In)visible diversity – MIXTUS in the European Parliament”, organised in cooperation with MEP Jean Lambert, Album Network and Cultureghem. Within the MIXTUS exhibition, an opening event is planned to reflect how structural discrimination affects ethnic and religious minorities in employment, how it is manifested, and what kind of solutions and remedies can be applied to counter this.

The Mixtus exhibition seeks foremost to raise attention among the EP staff and visitors about the work of ENAR and the need to counter discrimination and promote equality. This photo exhibition asks the essential question of how we can build a shared future that takes our differences and shared values into account by showing portraits of a selection of people working in the European Parliament, from civil servants to receptionist, security guard to cleaning staff. The intention is to raise awareness about the diversity existing within the European Parliament staff and to the phenomenon of cultural-mixing taking place all around. This exhibition also aims to raise awareness of the fact that the EP’s membership is far from reflecting Europe’s diversity, especially in influential and top positions.

ENAR has identified the eradication of structural discrimination in employment as a major priority in its work programme for the coming years. Structural discrimination in employment occurs when structures in place lead to treating people differently and less favourably because of certain characteristics, which are not related to their skills or the requirements for the job. This happens because the organizational systems were designed without taking into account the diverse needs of groups within the community in relation to e.g. their race, disability or gender. While equality legislation has already been transposed in all the Member States to eradicate discrimination in employment, evidence shows that many deficits in implementation remain.

The debate of the opening event will look into tools, such as existing equality legislation (the Race Equality Directive and the Employment Directive) in order to facilitate their implementation and to reiterate the need for Member States to ensure protection against discrimination, particularly in employment.
Additionally, this debate will provide a platform to raise attention to the need to monitor disaggregated equality data in employment practices, a necessary method for monitoring progress in leveraging diversity and ensuring representation of the wider population in companies, institutions and organisations. Systematically collecting and monitoring equality data in the field of employment represents a first step towards leveraging diversity and non-discrimination in hiring practices and potentially leads to targeted actions to combat structural discrimination in employment.

The European Parliament, as the largest institution of representative democracy in Europe, should reflect Europe’s diversity. It therefore needs to play a leading role and become a model at the forefront of the fight against structural discrimination. According to diversity management strategies, it is vital that organisations begin the equality process internally and emphasise on similarities rather than on differences. EU institutions need to set an important precedent and an example to Member States to follow suit.

This opening event will gather MEPs and their staff as well as media correspondents and civil society organisations. The agenda is as follows:

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<th>Time</th>
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| 15:30-15:40 | Welcome and greeting
Ms. Jean Lambert, MEP, Greens/European Free Alliance, UK                   |
| 15:40-15:55 | What is structural discrimination in employment?
Ms. Sarah Isal, ENAR Chair                                                   |
| 15:55-17:20 | Debate: How to better use tools at our disposal to eradicate structural
discrimination in employment
MODERATOR: Ms. Shannon Pfohman, ENAR Deputy Director                           |
| 17:00-17:30 | Presentation to the exhibition and link to debate
Mr. Henk Cortier, Photographer                                                  |
| 17:30-17:40 | Wrap up and Way Forward
Ms. Sarah Isal, ENAR Chair                                                     |
| 17:45-19:00 | Exhibition tour and cocktail reception                                       |

This event is supported by the Open Society Foundations, the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013) and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.