

Statement for immediate release **Brussels, Belgium – 06 December 2023**

ENAR welcomes the European Commission's decision to upgrade the three existing anti-racism coordinators, stepping up its efforts to combat hate and racism. To ensure that the updated framework is consistently applied in practice, we urge the Commission to eradicate any doubt that hierarchies of discrimination exist when combatting racism, discrimination and hatred.

The European Commission's [communication](#) comes at an opportune, yet challenging time as we witness the rising cost of hate both in Europe and elsewhere in the world. ENAR notes the Commission's intention to step up its efforts to combat hate and racism, especially when it comes to Antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism. We nevertheless deplore the unequal attention to address these forms of racism. ENAR advocates for an inclusive approach that addresses the entire spectrum of racial discrimination, rejecting selective focus that perpetuates a hierarchy of oppression. It is crucial to convey a unified message that all forms of racism deserve equal attention, action and resources.

ENAR welcomes the proposed upgrade of the Anti-racism, Anti-Muslim hatred and Antisemitism Coordinators as a promising stride forward in confronting the escalating racist hatred across Europe. Upgrading their status to Envoys sends an important political signal which we hope will also translate with equal resourcing for all three, and mandates that allow them to break down operational silos and fragmented approaches whilst implementing the principle of intersectionality. The involvement of all relevant civil society organisations in a more meaningful and transparent manner is crucial.

However, the EU's ambition can only be successful if it recognises hate as a symptom of systemic racism, acknowledging its historic and structural roots. The deployed solutions cannot overlook Member States' past and present responsibilities in rising racism and invisibilisation of racialised groups and their organisations. ENAR warns against an emphasis on security and criminalisation as a response to current challenges and questions the lack of condemnation of current restrictions of fundamental rights, including undue restrictions in cases of legitimate criticisms of public authorities' actions. While ENAR welcomes the importance of combatting hate crime and hate speech, it is necessary for such actions to be accompanied by monitoring mechanisms that ensure that marginalised communities are not further systematically affected.

Kim Smouter, Executive Director of the European Network against Racism highlights that "Now is the time for political courage, will and deeds. We expect the European Commission to deploy a more holistic approach and challenge Member States whilst removing any doubt that hierarchies of discrimination exist when combatting hate, racism, and discrimination and instead truly sets us on a path to deliver on Europe's credo: United in Diversity."

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Notes to editors:

- The European Network Against Racism (ENAR aisbl) stands against racism and discrimination and advocates equality and solidarity for all in Europe. We connect local and national anti-racist NGOs throughout Europe and voice the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in European and national policy debate