



7 Key Equality Demands for the New European Parliament



The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is the voice of the anti-racist movement in Europe. We are a network of 150 NGOs across Europe which stands up against racism and discrimination and advocates for equality in European and national policy debates.

Web: www.enar-eu.org - Twitter: @ENAREurope #IVote4Diversity - Facebook: www.facebook.com/ENAREurope and www.facebook.com/ivotefordiversity

ENAR's equality demands aim to mobilise support for anti-racism and equality among candidates for the European Parliament elections as well as among national and European political parties and groups. If you are committed to making equality a top priority in the next European Parliament, please support the following key actions needed for a racism-free Europe!
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1. Tackle all forms of racism

Political groups in the European Parliament should initiate debates and research towards the need for specific EU frameworks to promote the inclusion of People of African Descent/Black Europeans, Jews and Muslims, and to establish European Truth Commission(s) to publicly recognise past abuses against these groups in the European Union.

Why? Racism and xenophobia and specifically related forms of **anti-Gypsyism, anti-Semitism, Afrophobia and Islamophobia** are hampering the inclusion perspectives of millions in Europe. Europe must acknowledge its past of colonial abuse and repeated persecutions against minorities which feed into contemporary forms of racism. While keeping a universal and generalist approach to anti-racism, it is important to recognise that every group faces **specific discrimination** that also requires **specific actions**.

2. Measure equality in outcome

Political groups in the European Parliament should initiate debates and research on the need for Member States to **measure equality** as part of their **positive duty to combat racial discrimination**, and to promote equality and social inclusion of ethnic and religious minorities. Equality data collection and processing should be conducted in full compliance with data protection safeguards and in consultation with groups most at risk of discrimination.

Why? EU Member States must monitor the socio-economic situation of groups at risk of discrimination in order to **plan, monitor and evaluate their public policies and services**. Without equality data, it is impossible to prove whether EU equality standards have been properly implemented.

3. Step up efforts against racist violence

- a) Reinforce the EU and national legal basis to **tackle all crimes of public incitement to violence and hatred** and to ensure investigation and prosecution of racist crimes;
- b) Call on the European Commission to launch **infringement proceedings** against those Member States whose legislation and practices **breach existing EU legislation on racist crime**;
- c) Call on Member States to broaden the scope of **data collected on hate crime** through the use of victimisation surveys and to **exchange best practices** in working both with perpetrators and with victims of racist crime.

Why? Racist violence remains a reality throughout the European Union. Evidence shows that Roma, people of African descent/Black Europeans, migrants, Jews and Muslims experience **high levels of discrimination**. EU Member States often fail to provide the necessary conditions for victims of racist crime to **seek redress** and ensure their **protection from 're-victimisation'**. Only four Member States (Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK) collect disaggregated data on hate crime. Tackling racist violence should be a priority in a future EU internal fundamental rights strategy.

4. Promote diversity and equality at work

The European Parliament should call on the European Commission to undertake consultations with civil society and experts on **discrimination based on religion and belief in employment**, in order to develop guidelines and map existing **best practices to accommodate** religious and cultural diversity in the workplace.

Why? *The EU Employment Equality Directive protects individuals against discrimination on the basis of religion and belief, but the duty for employers to accommodate diversity doesn't extend beyond disability. Building on the numerous existing practices at the national level, the EU should encourage employers to **accommodate diversity at work** and take into account special needs of all discriminated groups in order for Member States to fulfil their respective **EU 2020 employment targets**. Multiple forms of discrimination, for instance combining gender and religion, should be paid particular attention to in this respect.*

5. Proactively react against racist elements in political discourse

National/European political parties and political groups in the European Parliament must ensure dissuasive and proportionate **sanctions** against any politician(s) using racist discourses in their parliamentary work. Appropriate disciplinary and self-regulatory mechanisms should be introduced based on legislative frameworks, building on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

Why? *Racist rhetoric is not just words. It has devastating effects on the groups targeted and **can very often lead to acts of violence**. Politicians have a **special duty** as opinion shapers **to fight this phenomenon**. Reactions and sanctions imposed by peers would **stop the growing feeling of impunity** and lack of democratic accountability.*

6. Include minorities and migrants in decision making processes

- a) Ensure meaningful participation of ethnic and religious minorities and migrants, including women, in decision making by increasing the **number of candidates from these groups on voting lists** and by introducing **quota systems** in political parties' decision-making structures.
- b) Advance efforts to grant **voting rights to legally residing long-term residents** in local and European elections.
- c) Ensure that male and female members of ethnic and religious minorities and Europeans with a migration background are hired as staff of Members of the European Parliament and of European political groups to achieve a more diverse permanent/contracted staff in the European Parliament.

Why? *If the European Parliament is to be truly representative, it should **reflect the make-up and cultural diversity of society** as a whole, not only among elected representatives, but also among the staff. Moreover, it is the best way to **counter the spread of far-right ideologies** throughout the EU, which seriously undermine the values on which the EU was founded.*

7. Establish an Intergroup on anti-racism and diversity

Ensure that the European Parliament's commitment to tackle racial discrimination and racist violence is high on the agenda by re-establishing the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup in the European Parliament.

Why? *Estimates show that the next European Parliament will welcome in its structures political parties which spread racist and xenophobic rhetoric. The next European Parliament (2014-2019) must therefore make sure that it foresees **a forward-looking commitment** to prevent this from happening in future. Fighting racism and social exclusion in the European Union should be a continuous goal of all political groups in the European Parliament.*