

ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY

Human Rights Directorate (HRD)

Implementation report 2022 (and first quarter 2023)

## Introduction

The [Anti-Racism Strategy](#) (ARS) was launched during events held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Later that year, the project [END-RACISM-MT](#) (CERV-2021-EQUAL — Call for proposals to promote equality and to fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination), with a duration of 32 months and a budget of close to €500K was approved by the European Commission, covering the implementation of most of the measures of the Strategy that require funding. The recruitment of the Project Coordinator and the Project Officer were delayed by the electoral campaign and the post-election period, and to make up the lost time a project extension was approved, and the end date of the project was moved forward to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The Project Officer started duties on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 joined later by the Project Coordinator on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.

This Report is one of a series of reports on the ARS. It reports on implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Developments after March 2023 will be reported in a subsequent report.

### Measure 1 Anti-racism mandate of the Human Rights Directorate

This measure is ongoing. The team is currently composed by the Head of Unit (Project Leader), a Project Officer and a Project Coordinator. During 2022 and the first quarter of 2023, the team had a Project Supervisor in place. A replacement is currently being recruited.

### Measure 2 Inter-ministerial committee (IMC)

The aim of the IMC is the creation of intra-ministerial anti-racism action plans (IMARAPs,) which are highlighted in Measure 6 of the ARS and will be developed to ensure mainstreaming of anti-racism in the internal affairs of each ministry, thereby enabling the improvement of public authorities' response to racism in Malta. The development of such action plans to prevent and combat racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in public services are key in designing and implementing a good national action plan against racism.

Upon adoption of the Strategy, work commenced with each Ministry to have representatives nominated by the respective Permanent Secretary. Two IMC meetings were held in December 2021 and February 2022. These two meetings were mostly devoted to members gaining an understanding of the topic. However, HRD engaged in bilateral meetings with each Ministry to start the work on their Ministry action plans. During the period of institutional changes brought about by the General Elections of 2022, HRD worked on the Glossary and the measures common to each Ministry, and informally continued the work wherever possible, where former members has some indication of their reappointment. IMC meetings were then held in October 2022 and January 2023; however, a very significant amount of bilateral meetings were held in the interim to support the processes. The Anti-Racism Platform started attending the IMC in October 2022, and the practice has remained in place ever since. NCPE started reviewing the first completed action plans.

### Measure 3 Anti-Racism Platform (ARP)

The objective of the ARP is to provide a civil-led society platform to monitor the implementation of the Anti-Racism Strategy and the END-RACISM-MT project. In fact, HRD set up the ARP and subsequently handed it over to Kopin (a local NGO) for the purpose of ensuring a key role for civil society in the implementation of the Strategy. This platform encourages dialogue between state actors and civil society on specific anti-racism measures pertinent to different policies, and also to launch the networking, dialogue and co-operation between state actors with members of minority groups and their representative organisations. Terms of Reference have been finalised and a committee board has also been set up by the Platform. Seven members make up the committee of the ARP and the list of the ARP members is in the process of being finalized. ARP meetings are going to be held throughout the length of the END-RACISM-MT project to discuss racism in the local context and provide reporting updates on the implementation of the Anti-Racism Strategy.

A meeting has been held with the ARP committee and a joint info-session with all of the members of the ARP has been given by HRD. This will establish the monitoring and evaluation responsibilities of ARP to ensure its long-term sustainability.

On the 13th of March 2023, an ARP meeting took place at the Valletta Design Cluster, facilitated by Kopin and with the presence of HRD representatives. The meeting opened with



the introduction of participants and the presentation of ongoing work on the different Anti-Racism Strategy measures. This was followed by a fruitful round of discussion and feedback between the members on specific points, as well as the exchange of suggestions on how to build inclusion within future activities. A call for members interested in becoming more involved in the process and being a part of the ARP Committee was also extended.

The ARP is part of the END-RACISM-MT project.

### Measure 4 Research Programme

The University of Malta, a leading research institution on the island will bring an updated and targeted evidence base regarding racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination in Malta necessary prior to developing policy. The research will focus on the situation and experience of victims or witnesses of hate speech based on race, religion and ethnicity, thus

deepening the understanding of the long-term consequences of racism on victims and society. The research will be qualitative:

- a. Internet based research (content analysis): This research will analyse hate speech in the written and spoken format on locally generated material on social media;
- b. A dedicated line will be used to verbally collect narratives of hate speech from the general public. When the line is not manned, the calls will go directly to an answering machine.

The recruitment of two Research Support Officers was finalised on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022.

The first outcomes of the research will be available by the end of 2023.

This measure is part of the END-RACISM-MT project.

## **Measure 5 Implementation reporting**

An annual report will be published in the first quarter of the following year to showcase the developments of the Strategy. This report will be presented in the Launch Conference of the project.

In addition, the European Network Against Racism (ENAR), Kopin and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) will be presenting reports at the launch, mid-term and final conference of the END-RACISM-MT project to report on the progress of the implementation of anti-racism measures as well as to provide any recommendations.

## **Measures 6-10 Intra-ministerial action**

As explained in Measure 2, the aim of these action plans is to ensure mainstreaming of anti-racism in the internal affairs of each ministry, thereby enabling the improvement of public authorities' response to racism in Malta.

As part of these IMARAPs, training on anti-racism to public officers hailing from all Ministries has started being delivered by Kopin. The aim of this training is to assist public officers in mainstreaming anti-racism across all sectors and to support them in fostering change and improving their response to (multiple and intersectional) discrimination, racism and xenophobia. It will raise awareness on the importance of anti-racism and anti-racist behaviour, while also providing an opportunity to exchange strategies and a variety of ways of combating racism and discrimination.



This initiative is being led by the Human Rights Directorate in collaboration with the project partner Kopin and the full support of the Institute for Public Services.

The first training to public officers was held in March 2023, with 500 public officers to be trained over the span of two years. A total of 10 sessions will take place throughout 2023, reaching 250 public officers within the year.

## **Measure 11 National anti-racism and intercultural pact: Social Partners**

This measure is being implemented in 2023.

## **Measure 12 Initiative by law enforcement services and immigration services**

Training for Community Police by HRD, with the support of the IPS, started on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Further training for district Police officers, again by HRD with the support of the IPS, started in February 2023. Training for Civil Protection Department by HRD is upcoming.

## **Measure 13 Media organizations' code of practice and training on intercultural standards and zero tolerance to racist language, stereotyping and coverage**

This measure is being implemented in 2023.

## **Measure 14 National anti-racism and intercultural pact: Media**

This measure is being implemented in 2023.

## Measure 15 Political parties' pact and training on zero tolerance to racist language

This measure is being implemented in 2023.

## Measure 16 Separating truth from fiction

This measure is being implemented in 2023.

## Measure 17 “Patriotism = anti-racism” project



The first event took place on the 25th of February 2023 at the Msida Local Council premises. Further meetings are set to be held in different regions around Malta within 2023.

## Measure 18 Tackling underreporting

This measure has been completed through the EU-funded project ‘Equality for All in Malta’ (a two-year project), which ended on 30 September 2022. However, the issue of reporting will continue being emphasised in all measures.

## Measure 19 Housing Discrimination

This measure is in progress according to END-RACISM-MT project timelines. Desk-based research is being carried out and discussions were held with the Ministry for Social and Affordable Accommodation and the Ministry for Social Policy and Children’s Rights. An information sheet will be published in the second quarter of 2023 detailing the rights and obligations of tenants to reduce housing discrimination currently being experienced in Malta. This will be made available in English, Maltese, Arabic, French, Serbian and Spanish.

## **Measure 20 Hate Crime and Hate Speech**

This measure is in progress according to the EU-funded 'END-RACISM-MT' project timeline, which will include five workshops throughout 2023 and 2024 with key stakeholders. The first one is scheduled to take place in May 2023.

## **Measure 21 Illegal hate speech online**

This measure is being implemented in 2023.

## **Measure 22 Addressing systemic discrimination**

NCPE is in the preliminary stages of developing a policymaking tool which will be used to ensure mainstreaming of anti-racism measures throughout different Ministries. This policymaking tool will be published in the mid-term conference of the EU-funded END-RACISM-MT project.

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