



END RACISM^{MT}

Launch Conference Report on the work of the Anti-Racism Platform (ARP) within the project

"TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY FOR MALTA"

Kopin (VO/0200)
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LAUNCH CONFERENCE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE ANTI-RACISM PLATFORM (ARP) WITHIN THE PROJECT "TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY FOR MALTA"

BACKGROUND OF THE ANTI-RACISM PLATFORM (2021 - 2022)

The Anti-Racism Platform (ARP) was originally an initiative set up by the Maltese Government's Human Rights Directorate (HRD) in 2021, funded by the Embassy of the United States in Malta. Its first meeting was held on the 22nd of July of that same year, and it was followed by another three meetings that brought together various civil society stakeholders around this relevant initiative.

The Platform is the 3rd Measure of Malta's [Anti-Racism Strategy 2021-2023](#). It is described as follows: "An Anti-Racism Platform will be convened and supported by the Human Rights Directorate. It will be composed of representatives from civil society, academia, and the social partners. It will serve to enable: shared leadership for the implementation of this Strategy across all sectors; ongoing dialogue with key partners on the content, direction, and impact of this Strategy; and Critical reflection on the ongoing implementation of this Strategy to serve its ongoing evolution as found to be required."

As part of the efforts to ensure an effective and efficient implementation of the Anti-Racism Strategy, the HRD, in collaboration with a number of Maltese and European partners, applied for EU funding in order to implement a dedicated project with these goals. The EU co-financed project "Towards the Implementation of an Anti-Racism Strategy for Malta" (END-RACISM-MT), which started in March 2022, is a 32-month project aimed at improving Maltese public authorities' responses to multiple and intersectional discrimination, racism, and xenophobia and at laying the foundations for the implementation of a future whole-of-society Strategy¹.

As partners in the END-RACISM-MT project led by HRD, following the fourth ARP meeting organised on the 8th of November 2022, Kopin was designated as facilitator of the Platform's development and implementation.

In the course of 2022, a number of ARP meetings were held. Notably, during these meetings, the Platform's Terms of References were discussed and internally agreed; the ARP Committee was first established, comprising seven members who have been taking a leadership role (whilst Kopin retained its role as facilitator to the Committee and membership); new members were recruited, including persons affected by racism; and relations were established with the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Anti-Racism (Measure 2 of the Anti-Racism Strategy).

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS IN 2022:

- 26/05/2022: 5th ARP general meeting;
- 15/06/2022: 6th ARP general meeting discussing the recruitment of new members;
- 11/07/2022: 7th ARP general meeting welcoming new ARP members;
- 11/08/2022: 8th ARP general meeting;
- 03/10/2022: 9th ARP general meeting;
- 26/10/2022: 1st ARP Committee meeting;
- 27/10/2022: 4th Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting with ARP Committee participation;
- 16/11/2022: HRD meeting with ARP Committee;
- 20/12/2022: HRD meeting on actions of Measure 17 of the Anti-Racism Strategy, with Kopin's participation on the ARP Committee's behalf.

THE ANTI-RACISM PLATFORM WITHIN THE END-RACISM-MT PROJECT (OCTOBER 2022 - MARCH 2023)

The project "Towards the Implementation of an Anti-Racism Strategy for Malta" officially started in March 2022, with the strengthening of the Anti-Racism Platform being one of its core activities. Whilst work on the Platform's set-up and internal processes took place in 2022, the first three months of 2023 saw a number of key activities being carried out.

In January 2023, representatives from the ARP Committee joined the 5th IMC meeting on Anti-Racism, which discussed updates on the intra-ministerial action plans (Measures 6-10 of the Anti-Racism Strategy) and the set-up of a curriculum and implementation plan for the training of 500 public officers within all the Ministries, to be carried out along the duration of the END-RACISM-MT project.

¹ See: <https://humanrights.gov.mt/en/Pages/Intercultural%20and%20Anti-Racism%20Unit/Towards-the-Implementation-of-an-Anti-Racism-Strategy-in-Malta.aspx>

Furthermore, at the end of that same month, HRD organized an online information session for ARP members on the Anti-Racism Strategy and the progress made on a number of its different measures, which also included specific information on the "Patriotism=Anti-Racism" event (Measure 17 of the Anti-Racism Strategy), which then took place on the 25th of February 2023.

The ARP Committee met online on the 7th of February to discuss the organisation of the first ARP meeting of the year, as well as the outreach to different individuals and communities, in an effort to build an ever inclusive and representative Platform. Thereafter, Committee members followed up with a number of stakeholders and reached out to a number of civil society groups and communities, engaging in ongoing communication via email and phone to coordinate their efforts.

On the 13th of March, a hybrid meeting of the ARP members 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.

Some relevant points and input from ARP members resulting from the meeting were:

- The need to have those affected by racism and xenophobia involved in the development and/or implementation of training offered to law enforcement members (Measure 12 of the Anti-Racism Strategy);
- The suggestion of facilitating an active participation and inclusion of ARP members in events held as part of the "Patriotism=Anti-Racism" project (Measure 17 of the Anti-Racism Strategy) and of a bilingual approach as well as the inclusion of foreigners and ethnic minorities' representatives within said events;
- The proposal to hold an online meeting between the ARP Committee and representatives of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE), the institution in charge of the revision of the intra-ministerial action plans (Measures 6-10 of the Anti-Racism Strategy), with the aim of exchanging

information on the process and provision of feedback wherever needed.

A total of 11 ARP members joined the meeting in person, while a further seven joined through an online video-conferencing platform.

Currently, the ARP comprises a total of 60 members, including NGOs representatives, members of migrant-led organisations, academics, professionals from different fields, as well as people affected by racism or with an interest in combating racism and xenophobia, who have joined the Platform in their personal capacity.

Following the call for interest among participants of the meeting to join the ARP Committee and become more active in the Platform, a total of 14 people are currently part of the Committee, whose diverse composition reflects that of the ARP.

The ARP Committee met again online and discussed the way forward, as well as the agenda to be addressed at the upcoming meeting, which will likely take place in Gozo, in order to facilitate outreach of interested and affected people and communities on Malta's sister island.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS UNTIL MARCH 2023:

- 24/01/2023: 5th Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting focusing on the Anti-Racism Action Plans development, with the participation of ARP Committee members;
- 30/01/2023: HRD info session about the Anti-Racism Strategy for ARP members, with the aim of informing participating members about progress done on a number of different measures within the Strategy;
- 07/02/2023: 2nd ARP Committee meeting, discussing the schedule of the ARP general meetings and organisation details for the March ARP meeting, as well as a wider outreach to communities in Malta to strengthen participation and representation within the ARP;
- 13/03/2023: 10th ARP general meeting, first within the END-RACISM-MT project, to monitor the work carried out thus far on different measures within the Strategy and provide feedback and input on the realisation of different activities;
- 21/03/2023: 3rd ARP Committee meeting, to discuss the outcomes of the first ARP general meeting, scheduling of the second one in May, updates on outreach to diverse communities and follow up on suggestions from the 9th ARP general meeting.



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Human Rights Directorate Intercultural & Anti-Racism Unit
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