

END RACISM^{MT}

Mid-Term 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)
November 2023



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BACKGROUND OF THE ANTI-RACISM PLATFORM

The Anti-Racism Platform (ARP) was convened by the Human Rights Directorate (HRD) in 2021, with the support of the Embassy of the United States of America in Malta. Its first meeting was held in July of that same year, and it was followed by a number of bringing 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 social partners. It will serve to enable: shared leadership for the implementation of this Strategy across all sectors; an ongoing dialogue with key partners on the content, direction, and impact of this Strategy; and a 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 funding through the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme 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 31-month project aimed at improving Maltese public authorities' responses to multiple and intersectional discrimination, racism and xenophobia as well as implementing a whole-of-society Strategy¹.

Kopin (VO/0200) is one of the END-RACISM-MT project partners, in which it acts as facilitator and supports the Platform's development and implementation, amongst other roles.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES BETWEEN APRIL AND OCTOBER 2023:

- 18/04/2023: Fourth (4th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 26/04/2023: END-RACISM-MT Project Launch Conference;
- 27/04/2023: Sixth (6th) Inter-Ministerial Anti-Racism Committee meeting with ARP Committee participation;
- 10/05/2023: Fifth (5th) ARP Committee meeting;

- 21/05/2023: Eleventh (11th) ARP general meeting, second (2nd) within the END-RACISM-MT project, held in Gozo;
- 12/06/2023: Online presentation of Anti-Rumours Strategy by project partner Diversit to ARP members;
- 04/07/2023: Seventh (7th) Inter-Ministerial Anti-Racism Committee meeting with ARP Committee participation;
- 09/08/2023: Sixth (6th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 14/08/2023: Seventh (7th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 29/08/2023: Eighth (8th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 30/08/2023: Ninth (9th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 11/09/2023: Twelfth (12th) ARP general meeting, third (3rd) within the END-RACISM-MT project, held in Valletta;
- 03/10/2023: Tenth (10th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 06/10/2023: Eighth (8th) Inter-Ministerial Anti-Racism Committee meeting with ARP Committee participation;
- 16/10/2023: Eleventh (11th) ARP Committee meeting;
- 31/10/2023: Meeting between ARP members and Ministry for Health representatives to start a dialogue on the Ministry's IMARAP.

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

The project *"Towards the Implementation of an Anti-Racism Strategy in Malta"* officially started in March 2022, with the strengthening of the Anti-Racism Platform being one of its core activities. The work started in 2022 and has continued up to today, with a number of key meetings and activities carried out.

Throughout 2023, representatives from the ARP attended *meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism (IMC-AR)*, to follow the process of finalisation and the start of the implementation of the Intra-Ministerial Anti-Racism Action Plans (IMARAPs). IMC meetings were held in April, July and October 2023. The participation of ARP members led to an *increased exchange between the ARP and some Ministries' representatives* and resulted in some Ministries sharing their IMARAPs for feedback with the ARP, as well as planned meetings in October and November with representatives of the Ministry for Health and Ministry for Gozo.

A Platform meeting was held on the 21st of May 2023 at the Queen Mary University Victoria Campus in Gozo, in hybrid form. The meeting was

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

attended to by members and activists based in Gozo as well as in Malta, with representatives of the Ministry for Gozo and the Malta Community Police also being present. During the meeting, a number of recommendations were collected from members on elements related to the Media Organisations' Code of Practice (Measure 13 of the Anti-Racism Strategy), to be presented during an upcoming meeting between media organisations and the Human Rights Directorate. Updates were also shared with regards to specific activities and initiatives within the END-RACISM-MT project, namely the research conducted by the University of Malta on Hate Speech in Malta, the Anti-Rumours Strategy and training for Anti-Rumours agents as well as the Awareness Raising Campaign. Information leaflets on racial discrimination in accessing housing in different languages were also distributed during the meeting². The meeting presented a good opportunity for activists and members of the public based in Gozo to join the ARP and contribute to its work, as well as for ARP members to exchange views and ideas with representatives of the Malta Community Police.

On the 12th of June 2023, an online event was organised for ARP members in collaboration with Diversit, during which the project partner presented the main elements of an Anti-Rumours Strategy, as well as its approach and main objectives. The participants were involved in an interactive session whereby information on rumours and myths in Malta surrounding this subject was collected through a series of guided questions. The information gathered, together with input shared by relevant stakeholders and project partners through an online questionnaire up until October 2023 amongst other methods, will form the basis upon which Malta's Anti-Rumours Strategy will be shaped. Members of the Anti-Racism Platform will also be present at the training being organised to formulate the anti-rumours approach, whereby participants will be involved in the design of the Malta Anti-Rumours Strategy.

Furthermore, during the months of May and June 2023, feedback and suggestions were collected through online collaborative tools among ARP members with regards to the Awareness Raising Campaign. These suggestions have been presented to HRD. Further suggestions were also collected through the same means on the Media

Organisations' Code of Practice Measure and will be shared with HRD during a stakeholders' meeting set up for Measure 14 of the Anti-Racism Strategy.

The ARP Committee met ahead of all general ARP meetings as well as key events to share updates, post-event debriefing and organise upcoming activities. Moreover, it held a series of ad-hoc meetings throughout August to organise its work in the months ahead, including the active participation of members during the mid-term conference, as well as activities related to outreach, among others.

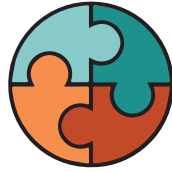
On the 11th of September 2023, another general meeting of the Platform members took place at the Valletta Design Cluster, once again in hybrid form. During this meeting, a series of updates regarding different activities and actions related to the Anti-Racism Strategy and the END-RACISM-MT project were presented, with a specific focus on the IMARAPs and the ARP participation in the IMC. ARP members were invited to come forward to participate in a kick-off dialogue meeting with representatives from the Ministry for Health on their IMARAP. Moreover, the IMARAPs of some Ministries were shared with members for feedback on their implementation phase; suggestions are being collected through online collaborative tools and during the Platform meeting in November. The plans for the Platform's active participation in the upcoming Mid-term Conference for END-RACISM-MT were illustrated by Committee members.

On the 31st of October 2023, representatives of the ARP met with professionals working within the Ministry for Health at Mater Dei Hospital, in order to start a dialogue focusing on the implementation of specific measures within the Ministry's IMARAP.

A general ARP meeting is scheduled for the 7th of November 2023 at the Valletta Design Cluster, with its main focus being the collection of specific feedback and suggestions on the implementation of the shared IMARAPs, as well as a sharing of updates on ongoing activities and the ARP participation in the mid-term conference itself.

Currently, the ARP comprises a total of 65 members, including NGOs representatives, members of migrant-led organisations, academics and other social partners, 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.


² The leaflets are available in English, Maltese, Spanish, French, Serbian and Arabic. The information leaflets in all above-mentioned languages can be accessed here: <https://humanrights.gov.mt/en/Pages/Intercultural%20and%20Anti-Racism%20Unit/Resources-and-Materials.aspx>



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 A3 Towers, Level 0
Triq l-Arkata
Paola, PLA 1211

 antiracism.hrd@gov.mt

 [End-Racism-MT](#)

 www.humanrights.gov.mt

 [endracismmt](#)

 (+356) 2226 3210

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