

Establishing a European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia

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OBJECTIVE: to set up a European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia responsible for taking stock of and analysing the causes of racism and xenophobia, and drawing up proposals to be put to the Community Institutions and the Member States. **SUBSTANCE:** The objective of the Centre is to provide the Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and comparable data at European level on the phenomena of racism, xenophobia and antisemitism in order to help them when they take measures or formulate courses of action. The Centre's tasks will consist in: - the collection, analysis and publication of information on the above phenomena, including data resulting from scientific research, - carrying out and stimulating research and exchange of information among research workers in these fields, - setting up and coordinating a European Racism and Xenophobia Information Network (RAXEN) consisting of the Centre's own central unit, which will cooperate with university research centres, NGOs and specialist centres, etc. - setting up documentation resources open to the public, - organizing round-table discussions with the social partners and representatives of competent public authorities, - publishing an annual report on the situation regarding racism in the EU, - formulating conclusions and recommendations for the Community and its Member States on the basis of relevant good practice in Member States. The fields in which the Centre will be active fall within the Community's jurisdiction: free movement of persons in the Union, employment and social exclusion, the media and other means of communication, education and vocational training, youth, free movement of goods, more especially the import and distribution of products with racist connotations, culture. The Centre will carry out its tasks in cooperation with other international organizations, more particularly under an agreement to be concluded by the Community with the Council of Europe. To avoid duplication, it must take account of activities already carried out by the Community Institutions and other competent international organizations. Provisions are also included to cover establishment of the RAXEN network as well as protection and confidentiality of personal data forwarded to the Centre (in some cases, Member States and national bodies cooperating with the Centre may decide not to provide information classified as confidential under their national law). The Centre will have legal personality and will enjoy, in each of the Member States, the most extensive legal capacity accorded to legal persons. Administrative provisions are included to cover the composition of the Management Board, the Executive Board, and the Scientific Committee charged with assisting the Centre's Management Board, as well as with regard to the staff of the Centre (who will be subject to the regulations and rules applicable to officials and other servants of the European Communities) and the Centre's budget. A progress report on the Centre's activities will be forwarded, three years after its launch, to Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. The Centre will be able to start its work only after the competent authorities have taken a decision on where its seat should be located.