



Summary of the roundtable with civil society organisations on tackling anti-Muslim hatred

29 May 2020, Virtual Meeting

Participants: Presilia Mpanu-Mpanu (Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Dalli), Tommaso Chiamparino, Commission Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred, representatives of 25 civil society organisations both Brussels based (e.g. ENAR, Open Society Foundations, FEMYSO, EFOMW) and from national level (Spain, Austria, Greece, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, UK, Croatia), representatives of FRA (Henri Nickels), Council of Europe/ECRI (Zeynep Usal-Kanzler), OSCE/ODIHR (Dermana Seta)

The roundtable was opened by **Presilia Mpanu-Mpanu, Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Dalli**. Her intervention focused on priorities and Commission actions in the area of equality and non discrimination, including on ethnic and religious grounds, and promotion of inclusion and diversity, with a specific focus on how the COVID emergency has exacerbated existing fragilities and inequalities. She referred also to the fight against hate crime and hate speech. Civil society organisations (CSOs) made a request to organise a meeting with Commissioner Dalli in the coming weeks, which was taken favourably.

The **Coordinator** took the floor to go through the set of recommendations/conclusions made by the participants from civil society organisations and national authorities in the Madrid conference of 2019, pointing to the progress made on all. The Coordinator also indicated some next steps already planned (work with cities; workshop with journalists on balanced narratives and story-telling; conference of 18th June on non-discrimination with equality bodies; dedicated call/funding).

The European Forum of Muslim Women: presented a collective position paper signed by multiple civil society organisations on the situation faced by Muslim communities during the COVID19 crisis: it points to the following issues: discriminatory access to employment, health care and housing conditions; racial profiling; Islamophobic rethoric and scapegoating, undue restrictions to freedom of religion and belief. The document contains also several recommendations for EU institutions, national authorities and other agencies such as FRA. For more information: “Addressing Islamophobia: a response to the COVID19 crisis and broader inequalities” (<http://www.fundacionalfanar.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ADDRESSING-ISLAMOPHOBIA-A-RESPONSE-TO-THE-COVID-19-CRISIS-AND-BROADER-INEQUALITIES.pdf>)

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency: presented the [FRA bulletins](#) on the impact of COVID19, as well as the [FRA database on anti-Muslim hatred](#). The following links were also shared with all participants the following resources and publications: [covid19-rights-impact-may-1](#), [equality-non discrimination-and-racism](#), [preventing-unlawful-profiling-today-and-future-guide](#), [subgroup-equality-data](#), [working-group-hate-crime-recording-data-collection-and-encouraging-reporting](#)

Council of Europe/ECRI: presented the ongoing work on updating the [ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°5 on Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims](#) and highlighted that civil society organisations will be consulted and asked for input.

Lallab (France): stressed that it is important to focus on gendered Islamophobia, including issues around domestic violence, over-crowded housing and the role of women as caregivers.

The Centre for Peace Studies, Zagreb shared the following [article](#) about the conditions of migrants at borders and alleged abuses by the police.

The coordinator of ARDI Intergroup in the European Parliament (Jelena Jovanovic) stressed the importance of finding ways in which the EP and the COM can work together to combat Islamophobia.

Tell Mama (UK): reported that there have been many deaths in the Muslim community due to COVID19 in the UK. There has been disinformation spread that mosques have not been respecting social distancing guidelines. Muslims and Asian delivery workers have reported being verbally abused and spat on.

Muslim Association of Greece: reported that there has been disinformation spread that Turkey was deliberately bringing refugees infected with COVID19 to the Greek islands. In general, there has been good cooperation between the Greek health authorities and the Muslim communities during the pandemic.

Dokumentations- und Beratungsstelle Islamfeindlichkeit & antimuslimischer Rassismus (Austria): there has been disinformation spread that Muslims were not adhering to public health guidelines, in particular that guidelines were being relaxed during Ramadan. In one case, 300 migrants were placed into quarantine without receiving an explanation. Some thought they were being deported. They were served pork and were not given food for Iftar. In general, the public health guidelines were not translated into other languages, so many Muslim communities were unaware of their rights to go for a walk etc. during the lockdown.

ENAR presented the forthcoming publication based on a research on the impact of anti-terrorism measures, including in the enforcement of the EU Directive on combating terrorism, on racialised/vulnerable communities in several Member States.



EU Roundtable - CT
Research 290520.pdf

OSCE/ODIHR: presented the OSCE's recently published guidance on "[Understanding Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes - Addressing the Security Needs of Muslim Communities: A Practical Guide](#)". A version with the graphic representation of the steps:

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/infographic-muslim-security-guide>

Regarding how civil society can support the work of ODIHR on collecting hate crime data: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/civilsociety>

ENAR: on behalf of a group of experts from NGO's and academia, presented the state of play on developing a working definition of islamophobia.



Ahead and after the roundtable, the following contributions on the impact of COVID on Muslim communities were shared by NGOs:

- On the situation in France, by CCIF



Brief report on
Islamophobia.pdf

- On the situation in Spain, by Asociacion Musulmana por los Derechos Humanos



Brief report on
Islamophobia_Covid_

- On the situation in the Netherlands by EMCEMO



Emcemo - 29 may
2020.pdf

- On the situation in Austria, by ZARA



SHDM_Information
on current developme

In May 2020, ENAR has put together a interactive map on the impact of COVID on racialised communities

<https://www.enar-eu.org/Covid19andracialisedcommunities>

https://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/key_findings_of_the_map.pdf