

EXODUS Blogpost #4

Hate Crimes: National Human Rights Institutions and the Role of the Greek National Commission for Human Rights


National human rights institutions play an active role in monitoring, preventing, and combating religious intolerance. They cooperate with European and international organizations, contribute to education and awareness-raising in society and public administration, advocate for safeguards to protect the victims of hate crimes, promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue, highlight the impact of religious intolerance on the internet, engage with communities and civil society, and advance accountability of authorities and access to justice.

The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) serves as the national institution for the promotion and protection of human rights in Greece, based on the UN Paris Principles. It is an independent advisory body to the State on issues concerning the protection and promotion of human rights. Among its responsibilities is monitoring and providing opinions to the State on maintaining a reliable and effective system for recording incidents of discrimination, racism, and intolerance (Article 12(e) of Law 4780/2021). The GNCHR's contribution to shaping public policy, by proposing regulatory and educational interventions, is decisive.

In particular, the Racist Violence Recording Network was established in mid-2011 by the GNCHR and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Greece, with the participation of civil society actors. Its aim is the systematic documentation of racially motivated acts of violence and the recording of quantitative and qualitative trends of the phenomenon. Today, the Network has 55 members, which continue to record incidents of racist violence against individuals or property that are reported to their services. The members share a common recording methodology and conduct the documentation in direct contact with the victim. In its Annual Reports, the Network has recorded incidents based on religion, as well as cases of vandalism against Holocaust monuments, while highlighting intersectional targeting and multiple vulnerabilities.

Finally, the GNCHR participates in national and European networks, such as the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI), and more broadly in public institutional dialogue on issues related to combating religious intolerance and hate crimes.

The EXODUS project is an important tool for the prevention and combatting of hate crimes with antisemitic motives. It is a fact that when antisemitism flourishes or is tolerated in society, it is very likely that other forms of hate speech, hate crimes, and discrimination against other religious communities and vulnerable groups will follow.



EXODUS

Visit us
for more information

