

FRA, Unit Communication & External Relations, A-1060 Wien;

Walter Keim  
Torshaugv. 2 C  
N-7020 Trondheim

Vienna, 29 March 2007

Dear Mr. Keim,

Thank you very much for your correspondence dated 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2007 and the supporting information provided.

The European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) undertakes a range of tasks to raise awareness, support the protection of, and improve knowledge on fundamental rights in the European Union. The fight against racism, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance is also a core element of the promotion and safeguarding of fundamental rights. To gain a better overview of the Agency's activities in this area, please refer to the attached fact sheet.

The Agency's mandate does not extend to dealing with individual complaints; however, the Agency is able to provide information on mechanisms and bodies at the international, national, regional, or local level which may be in a position to assist individuals.

These mechanisms are best placed to assess, examine and act upon complaints. They can offer advice on how to lodge an official complaint at the appropriate level. The Agency has provided a series of links to these mechanisms, together with further information related to combating discrimination, in the attached Annex.

The European Commission and/or the Council of Europe play a role in the human rights field. The European Commission is empowered to deal with breaches of Community law in relation to fundamental rights, while the Council of Europe has well established human rights mechanisms. Again, please see the attached annex for relevant links.

We truly hope that the advice and information here outlined will prove useful in addressing your concern to the appropriate body.

Yours cordially,



The FRA Information Team

European Union Agency for  
Fundamental Rights

Agence des droits fondamentaux  
de l'Union Européenne

Agentur der Europäischen Union  
für Grundrechte

FRA  
Unit Communication and  
External Relations  
Rahlgasse 3  
A – 1060 Vienna  
Austria

tel. +43 (1) 580 30 – 0  
fax +43 (1) 580 30 – 693  
info@fra.europa.eu  
http://fra.europa.eu

## **ANNEX – LINKS TO MECHANISMS AND INFORMATION ON EQUAL TREATMENT**

### **✓ Your rights under EU law**

For practical advice on how to set about pursuing your claim against discrimination, please consult the European Commission's "**What you can do if you have suffered discrimination: Guidance for victims**". It can be accessed at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/pdf/public/factsheet2\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/public/factsheet2_en.pdf)

A useful general overview of the legislation there referred to, is provided by an additional fact sheet entitled, "**What you should know about anti-discrimination legislation: Frequently asked questions**", found at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/pdf/public/factsheet5\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/public/factsheet5_en.pdf)

Relevant details can be found on the Commission's 'Action against discrimination, Civil Society' webpages, at: [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/). Any more general queries about EU matters may be directed to the Europe Direct response service by calling the toll-free number **00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11**, from anywhere in the EU, or then through their website: <http://ec.europa.eu/europedirect/>.

### **✓ National complaints mechanisms**

With regard to promoting equal treatment and combating discrimination, please refer to the National Equality Body in your country:

#### **National Equality Body**

Federal anti-discrimination office

Alexanderstrasse 3

11018 Berlin

Tel: +49-30-18/555-1865

Fax: +49-30-18/555-41865

E-mail: [ads@bmfsfj.bund.de](mailto:ads@bmfsfj.bund.de)

<http://www.bmfsfj.de/Kategorien/Ministerium/antidiskrimination>

Alternatively, you may want to approach your country's National Human Rights Institution, which seeks to ensure the protection and promotion of fundamental rights at the national level. This organ's broader scope of concern may thus extend beyond issues relating to discrimination.

The German Institute for Human Rights

Dr. Heiner Bielefeldt

Zimmerstr. 26-27

10969 Berlin

Tel: +49 30 259 359 0

Fax: +49 30 259 359 59

Email [info@institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de](mailto:info@institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de)

Website <http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de>



## The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is a body of the European Union (EU), established through Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007 of 15 February 2007. It is based in Vienna and is being built on the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). FRA carries out its tasks independently. It cooperates with other national and international bodies and organisations, in particular with the Council of Europe.

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Agency is to provide the relevant institutions and authorities of the Community and its Member States when implementing the Community law with **assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights** in order to support them when they take measures or formulate courses of action within their respective spheres of competence to fully respect fundamental rights. (Article 2 of the Regulation)

### AREAS OF ACTIVITIES

The fundamental rights referred to in Article 6(2) TEU, as reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, are the point of reference for the mandate of the Agency. The thematic areas of activity will be laid down in a Multi-annual Framework to be adopted by the Council of the European Union, upon a proposal of the European Commission and after consulting the European Parliament. The thematic areas must include the fight against racism, xenophobia and related intolerance.

### TASKS

#### Information and data collection and analysis:

- Collect, analyse and disseminate objective, reliable and comparable information on the development of fundamental rights in the EU;
- Develop methods and standards to improve the quality and comparability of data at EU level;
- Carry out and encourage scientific research and surveys.

#### Co-operation with civil society and awareness-raising:

- Raise public awareness of fundamental rights;
- Promote dialogue with civil society; establish a network through a Fundamental Rights Platform.

#### Advice to EU institutions and Member States:

- Formulate and publish conclusions and opinions to the EU institutions and the Member States when implementing Community law;
- Publish an annual report on fundamental rights in the EU, and thematic reports based on its research and surveys, also highlighting examples of good practice regarding fundamental rights.

#### The Agency is NOT empowered to:

- Examine individual complaints or have regulatory decision-making powers;
- Monitor the situation of fundamental rights in the EU countries for the purposes of Article 7 of the EU Treaty (possibility of action against a Member State in case of serious fundamental rights violation) or deal with the legality of Community acts and legal transposition by the Member States.

### GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The Agency focuses on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU and its 27 Member States. It will be open for participation of Candidate Countries as observers after a decision of the relevant Association Council. The Council may also invite countries which have concluded a stabilisation and association agreement with the EU to participate in FRA (a decision of the relevant Association Council shall follow).

### ORGANISATION

FRA comprises a:

- Management Board (one independent person with knowledge in fundamental rights and management experience from each Member State, one independent person appointed by the Council of Europe and two Commission representatives);
- Executive Board (preparing the decisions of the Management Board);
- Scientific Committee (consisting of eleven highly qualified independent persons to guarantee scientific quality of the work); and
- Director (executing the Agency's tasks and appointing its staff).