

Press Release - for immediate publication



The report is handed over by OHCHR's Elena Kountouri Tapiero to DG JUST's Tanja Florath and by EPHA's Milka Sokolovic to DG JUST's Vanessa Kabuta

EPHA and OHCHR Present Critical Health-Focused Anti-Racism Recommendations to the European Commission

Brussels, 27 August 2024

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Regional Office for Europe hand over a consultation report to representatives of the European Commission in a crucial step towards health equity and the right to health in Europe.

The new von der Leyen Commission has confirmed in its political guidelines that the upcoming Commissioner for Equality will be tasked with developing a **post-2025 anti-racism strategy**, a follow-up to the current 2020-2025 EU Anti-racism Action Plan.

Milka Sokolović, EPHA Director General and Elena Kountouri, Acting Regional Representative for Europe at OHCHR, handed over a **consultation report** with 6 recommendations, focusing on **People of African Descent** to representatives of the Directorate General for Justice and Consumers, providing the European Commission with clear guidance on health for the EU's anti-racism policy, a topic that was **barely spoken about in the previous decade**.

"President von der Leyen recognises the need for continued action on anti-racism in Europe" said Milka Sokolović. "What better moment to commemorate this than ahead of the **International Day for People of African Descent (31**

August) and the end of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**. The evidence is clear and overwhelming; **Racism and discrimination are fundamental determinants of health**. It is imperative that the next EU Anti-racism Action Plan recognises this, and includes concrete measures to address these deeply rooted issues."

To realise this, OHCHR and EPHA joined forces through the DisQo Stakeholder Network and organised a conference unique in its kind on racism, discrimination and health, focusing on People of African Descent, in June. The event was attended by key actors in the field, including the Principal Advisor for Health and Crisis Management of DG SANTE, Isabel de la Mata, as well as Dutch National Coordinator against Discrimination and Racism, Rabin S. Baldewsingh.

The findings and learnings of the event were put together in a consultation report, centred around six recommendations:

- Recognition of racism and discrimination against PAD as fundamental determinants of health.
- Meaningful involvement of affected communities, academics, experts, international organizations, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Development of respectful and inclusive language.
- Fostering the collection of disaggregated equality data.
- Breaking down silos and taking coordinated action.
- Addressing racism and discrimination in healthcare and science.

EPHA remains committed to the implementation of these recommendations in the EU's post-2025 anti-racism strategy. **Together with our members, the DisQo Stakeholder Network and our allies at OHCHR, in the member states and at the grassroots, we stand at the ready together with individuals and communities impacted by racism to advocate for and voice the needs of people with lived experience.** This is the only way to ensure a Europe in which everyone can attain their **right to health**, no matter their background.

ENDS

Note for editors:

Commission President Von der Leyen announced that the next Equality Commissioner would be tasked with developing a post-2025 anti-racism strategy in July 2024. The original EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025 was announced by von der Leyen in 2020, in the wake of the murder of George Floyd in the US and the resulting world-wide protests.

About EPHA:

The European Public Health Alliance - EPHA - is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO alliance advocating for better health: <https://epha.org/>



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