

Resolution of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 23 July 1996 concerning the European Year against Racism (1997)

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(96/C 237/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to the Joint Declaration by the European Parliament, the Council and the Representatives of the Member States, meeting within the Council, and the Commission of 11 June 1986 (1), against racism and xenophobia, and all the Resolutions subsequently approved in this area, and in particular the Resolutions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 29 May 1990 on the fight against racism and xenophobia (2), of 5 October 1995 on the fight against racism and xenophobia in the fields of employment and social affairs (3), and of 23 October 1995 on the response of educational systems to the problems of racism and xenophobia (4),

Having regard to the conclusions on racism and xenophobia adopted by the European Council at its meetings in Dublin (25 and 26 June 1990), Maastricht (9 and 10 December 1991), Edinburgh (11 and 12 December 1992), Copenhagen (21 and 22 June 1993), Corfu (24 and 25 June 1994), Essen (9 and 10 December 1994), Cannes (26 and 27 June 1995) and Madrid (15 and 16 December 1995),

(1) Whereas, in the preamble to the Single European Act, the Member States stressed the need to 'work together to promote democracy on the basis of fundamental rights recognized in the constitutions and laws of the Member States, in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Social Charter, notably freedom, equality and social justice` ;

(2) Whereas Article F (2) of the Treaty on European Union provides that the Union 'shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, as general principles of Community law` ;

(3) Whereas the promotion throughout the Community of a high level of employment and of social protection, and the raising of the standard of living and quality of life in Member States are objectives of the Community;

(4) Whereas the promotion of economic and social progress through the strengthening of economic and social cohesion is an objective of the European Union;

(5) Whereas the continued existence of racism and xenophobic attitudes prejudices economic and social cohesion in the European Union;

(6) Whereas racist and xenophobic attitudes can constitute an obstacle to the effective exercise of the rights of free movement;

(7) Whereas the increase in economic difficulties excludes many in the European Union from any economic, social and political participation and represents fertile ground for racist and xenophobic attitudes;

(8) Whereas racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance must be tackled mainly at local, regional and national level; whereas the Member States have made and are making great efforts in this area;

(9) Whereas there is nevertheless a fundamentally European dimension to the problem; whereas exchanges of information and experience as well as cooperation and consultation on measures taken against racism and xenophobia between the Commission, the Member States and representatives of bodies engaged in combating racism are important for the development of solidarity within the Community;

(10) Whereas the measures to be taken at European level should be consistent with other Community measures;

(11) Whereas a Joint Declaration by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 5 April 1977 provided that 'fundamental rights, as derived in particular from the constitutions of the Member States and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms` would be respected by the institutions (1);

(12) Whereas in June 1994 the Corfu European Council agreed to step up its efforts to develop a global strategy at Union level aimed at combating racism and xenophobia;

(13) Whereas in its report of 23 July 1990 the European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry into Racism and Xenophobia recommended that a European Year of Racial Harmony be designated;

(14) Whereas the Resolutions of the European Parliament against racism and xenophobia, particularly those of 21 April 1993, 3 December 1993, 27 October 1994, 27 April 1995 and 26 October 1995 condemned racism and xenophobia in strong terms (2);

(15) Whereas on 19 January 1995, in its Resolution in response to the Commission's White Paper on European Social Policy, the European Parliament urged the Commission to put forward proposals to safeguard people's equal employment opportunities, irrespective of their age, race, sex, disability or beliefs (3);

(16) Whereas on 25 November 1992 the Economic and Social Committee, in its Resolution on racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance, urged Member States to take urgent and effective action and called on the European Council to provide guidelines for proposing the adoption of practical measures to combat racism and xenophobia;

(17) Whereas in their Resolutions of 5 and 23 October 1995 the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, took note of the Commission's intention of presenting its future action concerning the fight against racism and xenophobia;

(18) Whereas the Barcelona Declaration, adopted at the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference on 27 and 28 November 1995, underlined the importance of waging a determined campaign against, xenophobia and intolerance;

(19) Whereas the United Nations proclaimed 1995 'International Year of Tolerance` and the Council of Europe has carried out, on the basis of the Vienna Declaration of 9 October 1993, a European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-semitism and Intolerance as part of its activities in this area;

(20) Whereas it is important to develop appropriate cooperation between the European Union and the Council of Europe so as to ensure consistency between actions undertaken at Community level and those undertaken by the Council of Europe, in order to avoid duplication and to create the conditions which will permit Community action to benefit fully from the results obtained by the Council of Europe, in particular in the context of the European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-semitism and Intolerance 'All different, all equal`, and in the framework of the European Commission against racism and intolerance as was stressed in the quadripartite meeting between the European Union and the Council of Europe held in Madrid on 6 November 1995;

(21) Whereas on 21 October 1995, at the summit of the social partners in Florence, a Joint Declaration on the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment in the work place was adopted;

(22) Whereas the Commission has sent a communication to the European Parliament and the Council setting out its action against racism;

(23) Whereas the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a Council Decision proclaiming 1997 'European Year against racism` (1);

(24) Whereas the success of the European Year against Racism (1997) presupposes careful preparation using the experience gained in the Member States;

(25) Whereas this Resolution does not constitute a basic Regulation within the meaning of the Joint Declaration by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 30 June 1982 (2) on various measures to improve the budgetary procedure for the budgetary implementation of the measures provided for in this Resolution; whereas any Community appropriations allocated by the budgetary authority to European Year against Racism (1997) will be allocated in accordance with the Community budgetary rules in force;

1. AGREE that the European Year against Racism (1997) will have the following objectives:

(a) to highlight the threat posed by racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism to respect for fundamental rights and to the economic and social cohesion of the Community;

(b) to encourage reflection and discussion on the measures required in order to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism in Europe;

(c) to promote the exchange of experience on good practice and effective strategies devised at local, national and European level to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism;

(d) to disseminate information on such good practice and effective strategies among persons working to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism to increase the effectiveness of their action in this area;

(e) to make known the benefits of integration policies, implemented at national level, in particular in the fields of employment, education, training and accommodation;

(f) to turn to good account whenever possible the experience of persons actually affected or likely to be affected by racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism, and promote their participation in society.

2. CALL ON the Member States and the Commission to implement, at Community level, the following measures, which are designed to meet the objectives of the European Year by supporting and complementing the measures implemented at national, regional and local level, including:

(a) the organizing of conferences to open and close the European Year;

(b) the organizing of a series of seminars on specific aspects of the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism;

(c) the preparation and translation of reports setting out the results of these seminars and their circulation to those concerned;

(d) the promotion of information campaigns, notably on the positive contribution to society of immigrants and their descendants;

(e) the exchange of information and experience between competent bodies to promote the identification and transfer of good practice;

(f) the publication of information at national and Community level on the European Year and the events organized during it;

(g) the design and promotion of a common logo and slogan for the European Year and their use in publicity for all the events connected with the Year.

Details of these measures are set out in the Annex.

3. NOTE the Commission's intention of securing the assistance of an ad hoc working party, composed of representatives of the Member States, for implementing the measures provided for at Community level in this Resolution.
4. CALL on the Commission to ensure that the measures undertaken are consistent with other Community measures and with the activities undertaken by the Council of Europe and that they complement them by involving the various organizations active in the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance in the European Year.
5. CALL on the Member States to set up a national coordinating committee or an equivalent administrative body that is representative of all the bodies active in the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance and, where appropriate, of local and regional authorities concerning themselves with the European Year.
6. CALL on the Commission to inform the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of the progress of the work and to submit to them a final report on the implementation of this Resolution not later than 31 December 1998.

(1) OJ No C 158, 25. 6. 1986, p. 1.

(2) OJ No C 157, 27. 6. 1990, p. 1.

(3) OJ No C 296, 10. 11. 1995, p. 13.

(4) OJ No C 312, 23. 11. 1995, p. 1.

(1) OJ No C 103, 27. 4. 1977, p. 1.

(2) OJ No C 150, 31. 5. 1993, p. 127; OJ No C 342, 20. 12. 1993, p. 19; OJ No C 323, 21. 11. 1994, p. 154; OJ No C 126, 22. 6. 1995, p. 75; OJ No C 308, 20. 11. 1995, p. 140.

(3) OJ No C 43, 20. 2. 1995, p. 63, point 24.

(1) OJ No C 89, 26. 3. 1996, p. 7.

(2) OJ No C 194, 28. 7. 1982, p. 1.

ANNEX

I. Measures at Community level

1. Organization of seminars at European level to increase transnational cooperation, including opening and closing events of the European Year against racism.
2. Information measures concerning the European Year, including:
 - (a) design and promotion of a common logo and slogan for the European Year;
 - (b) preparation and distribution of written and audiovisual material in order to stimulate public interest;
 - (c) the disseminating of information about the European Year in the media.
3. Exchange of information and experience between competent bodies to promote the identification and transfer of good practice.
4. Surveys and studies, for the purpose of raising awareness on the themes of the European Year; evaluation study concerning the impact of the European Year.
5. Awarding of prizes to the media at European level to reward tolerance and comprehension.

II. Measures at national level

1. Projects and events at regional or national level revolving around the themes of the European Year.
2. Information and publicity campaign, including cooperation with the media.
3. Organization of competitions highlighting achievements in the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism.
4. Use of the common logo and slogan of the European Year in awareness-raising campaigns and for events.