

FRA Press Release
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Preventing discriminatory ethnic profiling in the EU

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is publishing today, at a Symposium of the European Police College (CEPOL), results from the first ever EU-wide survey on police stops and minorities. The findings show that minorities who perceive they are stopped because of their minority background have a lower level of trust in the police. The results from the FRA's survey are launched together with the FRA Guide on discriminatory ethnic profiling.

FRA Director Morten Kjaerum: *"Evidence shows that in a number of EU Member States a person belonging to a minority is more likely to be stopped by the police than a person belonging to the majority population. This finding highlights the problem of potentially discriminatory ethnic profiling practices, which can be in conflict with laws relating to discrimination. At the same time, discriminatory profiling has a damaging social effect, as it may destroy minorities' trust in the police, and in fair treatment. The Agency's reports can be used as a tool to support law enforcement in the prevention of discriminatory ethnic profiling."*

CEPOL Director Dr Ferenc Bánfi: *"Protecting fundamental rights is at the core of police training. It is our task to enhance the knowledge and the skills of Europe's future police officers and help build confidence in policing with all parts of society. CEPOL and the Fundamental Rights Agency will work together to base police training on fundamental rights, and to move towards an effective and service-oriented police services across Europe for the 21st century."*

When a decision to stop an individual is motivated solely or mainly by virtue of a person's race, ethnicity or religion, this constitutes discriminatory ethnic profiling. Such practices can serve to alienate certain communities in the EU, and in turn can contribute to inefficient policing.

The FRA interviewed 23,500 people with an ethnic minority and immigrant background about their experiences of police stops, and in ten Member States the majority population was also interviewed to be able to compare findings.

- *Looking at the results as a whole, minority respondents were stopped more often by the police than majority respondents; for example on public transport or on the street.*
- *Some minority groups are particularly heavily policed. For example in Greece, Roma respondents who said they were stopped by the police experienced on average 6 police stops in a 12 month period, while majority population respondents experienced on average 2 stops in the same period.*
- *Minority respondents were more likely to be asked for their identity papers. For example, in Italy, 90% of Northern Africans who were stopped were asked for identity papers in comparison with 48% of majority respondents.*

Of the 27 EU Member States, the UK is the only one that systematically collects and publishes police data on stops, which includes information on the ethnicity of those stopped. Thanks to this data, the police and local communities are informed about

the situation on the ground and can identify policing practices that may be discriminatory.

The Fundamental Rights Agency has today published two reports relating to police stops and minorities:

EU-MIDIS Data in Focus 4: Police stops and minorities (October 2010)

This report focuses on experiences of police stops, including levels of trust in the police.

Understanding and preventing discriminatory ethnic profiling: a guide (October 2010)

The FRA 'Discriminatory ethnic profiling guide' provides a distinct definition and explanation of discriminatory ethnic profiling. The guide sets out to help the police to address and avoid discriminatory ethnic profiling, and, therefore can be used as a tool for more effective policing.

The two reports, as well as background information are available at www.fra.europa.eu

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Notes to Editors:

- The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is mandated to provide evidence-based advice to decision-makers in the EU. The Agency's evidence aims at informing EU and national policy-makers and contextualising debates on fundamental rights in the European Union.
- For the survey, the Fundamental Rights Agency interviewed 23,500 immigrants and ethnic minorities across the 27 EU Member States, and 5,000 persons belonging to the majority population living in the same areas as minorities in ten Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia). The survey used a random sampling approach to identify respondents for interviewing.
- The European Police College (CEPOL) is the European agency tasked with organising training for senior police officers in Member States of the European Union. CEPOL brings together senior police officers across Europe to encourage cross-border cooperation in the fight against crime and maintenance of public security and law and order.
- CEPOL organises between 60–100 courses, seminars and conferences per year on key topics relevant to police forces in Europe, as well as carries out specialised projects such as the CEPOL ISEC exchange programme for senior officers and trainers and the Euromed Police II project. Visit www.cepol.europa.eu for more information.