

Madrid, 25 June 2019

Workshop on Synergies and Good Practices on Tackling Anti-Muslim Racism and Discrimination

The Civil Society Position

Major Concerns

There are five main concerns that we underline:

- The absence of **recognition of structural and institutional** form of islamophobia, in particular recognition of the role of the state in discrimination and manifestation of islamophobia
- **Gendered aspect** of islamophobia: we cannot talk about islamophobia without intersectionality and role of gender equality policies
- **Counter terrorism policies**: up until today, the post- 9/11 counter terrorism measures disproportionately focus against POC, muslims and migrants.
- **Unfounded accusations against CSOs** working against Islamophobia are clear manifestations of the generalised suspicion towards Muslims in Europe. Civil society organisations in Europe are key democratic stakeholders which ensure that all communities are heard and empowered and hold governments accountable. However, CSOs working against Islamophobia are often severely delegitimised and may have their reputation, resources and integrity threatened.
- **Develop and strengthen funding programmes** enabling civil society working against Islamophobia to develop long-term projects for capacity building, advocacy for equality, strategic litigation, educational programmes, etc. This should be included in the current EU budget negotiations. Facilitating access to these funds is also crucial to allow civil society to benefit from them.

Recommendations to States

What we need is concrete plans and commitments to **tackle the structural manifestations of Islamophobia by adopting measures in key policy areas.**

- Support the **adoption or improvement of national policies against racism**, such as **National Action Plans against Racism**, with specific measures or strategies to counter Islamophobia, including measures to tackle intersectional discrimination targeting Muslim women (on the model of the [Barcelona action plan against Islamophobia](#));
- Adopt **guidelines to implement an intersectional approach to religious dress restrictions** by recognising these restrictions mostly target Muslim

women and are against full gender equality. These guidelines could promote non-discriminatory approaches to enable full inclusion of all Muslim women in all areas of life. Assessment of existing legislation should be done taking into account this approach;

- **Develop and promote harmonisation of data collection in areas of hate crime and equality**, recognising anti-Muslim bias as a category. These data should be disaggregated by multiple grounds of discrimination, including gender, race, ethnicity and religion.
- **Assess and acknowledge the discriminatory impact of counter-radicalisation and counter-terrorism measures** and ensure that counter-terrorism measures comply with fundamental rights safeguards, especially when implementing the recently adopted EU counter-terrorism Directive.
- Ensure safe space for collaboration b/w CSOs and state authorities, and refrain from unfounded accusations