

NEWS REPORT

Date:	29 December 2014
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Title:	Annual Report of the Anti-discrimination Authority for the year 2013
Country:	Cyprus
<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	The Anti-discrimination Authority, which is the body within the Equality Body dealing with discrimination in all fields beyond employment, has issued its Annual Report for 2013.
Ground of discrimination:	All grounds (including gender)
Source:	Anti-discrimination Authority, Annual Report 2013.
Field:	All fields except employment and occupation
Legislative provisions:	Equal Treatment (Race or Ethnic Origin) Law N. 59(I)/2004; the Combating of racial and other forms of discrimination (Commissioner) Law 42(I)/2004.

Content

Content of the report: The Annual Report of the Anti-discrimination authority (ADA) is introduced by a brief note from the Ombudsman giving an overview of the organisation's work, with particular reference to its mediation function in resolving issues for various vulnerable groups, citing in particular, immigrants, persons with disability, EU citizens, single parent families, religious minorities and LGBT persons. Reference is also made to the investigation of complaints and the submission of reports with recommendations, as well as to awareness raising activities and the synergies created in the process of furthering initiatives and policy development, citing in particular a new policy of the police in addressing racial violence and in encouraging victims to file complaints and combat underreporting. The Ombudsman also refers to its role in developing a mechanism in cooperation with the Ministry of Education for the recording and addressing of racial incidents at schools. The introductory note also states that, from the complaints received, it is possible to infer that the economic crisis has had a deep impact on fundamental rights and that it has widened the social gap, has intensified inequality and has further weakened the vulnerable groups.

In its main body, the report lists ADA's successful mediation initiatives which were mainly focused on the refusal of the immigration authorities to promptly provide a registration certificate to third country nationals who are spouses of EU citizens. Further mediation efforts recorded in the report concerned the rejection of an asylum application filed by the same sex partner of a Cypriot national; invoking the fact that the asylum applicant had a well-founded fear of persecution in his country of origin by reason of his sexual orientation, the ADA succeeded in securing his release from detention and in cancelling the deportation order which had been issued against him. The applicant was allowed to remain in the country as a visitor but was not granted asylum. Additional mediation efforts were made on behalf of Turkish Cypriots for failure of the authorities to issue consular papers to them and to renew the passports

of their children. The ADA also mediated with the Welfare Services on behalf of two non Cypriot mothers whose child benefit had been discontinued and succeeded in having this grant reinstated; one of the complainants was a recognised refugee and the other was a third country national married to a Cypriot.

In 2013, the ADA received 88 complaints. Over half of them (54) concerned national origin and emanated from both third country nationals and EU citizens alike. The ADA recorded 12 complaints on the ground of race/ethnic origin and 54 on the ground of national origin. The other grounds recorded significantly fewer complaints (disability 2; age 4; sexual orientation 4; gender identity 5; language 1; gender 2). By far the most common field of application is access to goods and services (41 out of 88 complaints) and in particular to public services. Immigration was the next most common field of application, with 17 out of 88 cases.

Internet link source and additional information: The report is available at [http://www.ombudsman.gov.cy/Ombudsman/Ombudsman.nsf/All/A45AC04AF19A05F2C2257D8C0030E481/\\$file/DIAKRISEON%202013%20GR%20electr%20edition.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.ombudsman.gov.cy/Ombudsman/Ombudsman.nsf/All/A45AC04AF19A05F2C2257D8C0030E481/$file/DIAKRISEON%202013%20GR%20electr%20edition.pdf?OpenElement)