



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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Excellency,

I wish to inform you that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, during its 107th session, considered the follow-up report submitted by the Government of Belgium, pursuant to article 9 (1) of the Convention and rule 65 (1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

The Committee welcomes the submission of the report, in response to its request to receive information within one year on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 6, 8, and 14 (a) and (b) of the Concluding Observations (CERD/C/BEL/CO/20-22), adopted following the consideration of the State party's combined 20th to 22nd periodic reports, at its 103rd session, held in April 2021.

The Committee appreciates the opportunity provided to continue its dialogue with the State party and would like to draw the State party's attention to the observations mentioned below. The Committee requests that comments and responses on actions taken by the State party on these issues be included in its combined 23rd to 25th periodic reports, which is due for submission in a single document on 6 September 2024.

Paragraph 6 of the Concluding Observations

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party on the activities of Unia to analyze discrimination and inequality and on the project 'Improving equality data collection in Belgium'. However, the Committee regrets the lack of information on descent or national or ethnic origin derived from social surveys and on first languages, languages commonly spoken or any other indicators of ethnic diversity. The Committee considers the response to this recommendation partially satisfactory and requests the State party to provide, in its next periodic report, information on measures taken to fully implement the recommendation.

H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen De Buytsverve
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Paragraph 8 of the Concluding Observations

The Committee notes the intention of and preparations by the State party to establish a national human rights institution with jurisdiction throughout the territory of the State party in order to fulfill its international commitments and encourages the State party to expedite its efforts towards that objective. The Committee remains concerned by the currently limited mandate of the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights. The Committee regrets that no progress has been made with respect to giving the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights a mandate to receive and handle individual complaints. The Committee is also concerned by reports that there is no entity in the State party competent to deal with discrimination based on language, and encourages the State party to designate such an entity. Furthermore, according to information received, the Flemish government has taken further steps towards creating a Flemish human rights institute. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that this step does not jeopardize the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution with a mandate that covers all human rights throughout the territory of the State party, including at the federal and regional levels, and that it ensure coordination among these institutions. The Committee considers the response of the State Party to this recommendation unsatisfactory and requests it to provide, in its next periodic report, information on measures taken to fully implement the recommendation.

Paragraph 14 (a) and (b) of the Concluding Observations

While noting the information provided by the State party, the Committee regrets the lack of information on any new measures taken in response to the Committee's concerns with respect to racially motivated police violence, including possible structural discrimination. The Committee also regrets that no specific actions have been taken by the State party to improve its system for the collection of data and the recording of complaints concerning racially motivated police violence. The Committee considers the response to this recommendation unsatisfactory and requests the State party to provide, in its next periodic report, information on measures taken to fully implement the recommendation.

Rest assured, Excellency, that the Committee looks forward to continuing its constructive dialogue with the Government of Belgium, with a view to providing it with assistance in its efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Verene Shepherd
Chair

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination