Dear Paul,

On 20 December 2013, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) will publish its third thematic situation report, taking two Member States as case studies to discuss the dangers of extremism in the EU.

Racism, discrimination and intolerance currently pose a great challenge for the European Union. FRA takes the example of Greece and Hungary to analyse the spread of extremism in the EU and the steps these countries are taking to combat it. The thematic situation report also addresses a phenomenon currently unique to Greece and Hungary: the significant parliamentary presence of political parties standing for and promoting an extremist ideology that particularly targets irregular migrants (in Greece) and the Roma and Jews (in Hungary), and which are either themselves or have links to paramilitary organisations committing racially motivated acts of violence.

The EU and its Member States already have strong legislation in place to fight racism, intolerance and extremism. However, greater efforts are needed to ensure effective implementation. The report therefore contains conclusions and proposals that are relevant for all Member States when developing strategies for combating racist discrimination and violence, as well as the emergence of extremist ideologies on the political scene.

In line with the Agency’s mandate, FRA stands ready to provide assistance and expertise to Member States in the development and implementation of measures to counter racism, xenophobia and related intolerance, and ensure respect for fundamental rights.

We hope that you will find the information and analysis contained in this report helpful. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Friso Roscam Abbing

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