

National Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) – Italy



Brief profile

Contact details

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Overview

UNAR is the Italian Office against Racial Discrimination. Operating since November 2004 with the purpose of promoting equal treatment and removing all forms of racial and ethnic discrimination, UNAR monitors the impact of discrimination on men and women as well as explores the relationship with other forms of discrimination, such as those based on culture or religion.

UNAR is also Italy's [National Contact Point for Roma Inclusion](#).

Type of equality body

UNAR is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support national equality body¹.

Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields	
	Employment	Beyond employment (education, goods & services, housing, etc.)
Gender		
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆
Age	◆	◆
Disability	◆	◆
Sexual orientation	◆	◆
Religion and belief	◆	◆

¹ According to a [European Commission study on Equality Bodies](#), predominantly promotion-type equality bodies “spend the bulk of their time and resources on a broader mix of activities that include supporting good practice in organisations, raising awareness of rights, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, and providing legal advice and assistance to individual victims of discrimination” (page 44).

Detailed profile

Brief history

UNAR was created by a Legislative Decree, number 225 on 9 July 2003, as part of the European Directive 2000/43/CE, to promote the principle of equal treatment of individuals, independently of their race or ethnic origin. UNAR has become an institutional point of reference for the acknowledgement and understanding of the rights of immigrants as well as a catalyst for those individuals, associations and local agencies who work on a daily basis to stem racial discrimination. Since 2011 UNAR is the National Contact Point for social inclusion of Roma people.

The office was founded in order to translate the new legislative ordinances and legal instruments adopted by Italy to protect the rights of immigrants and ethnic minorities through the delivery of concrete operational responses which meet the requirements of social inclusion for foreign communities to eliminate every form of harassment or discrimination, direct or indirect, based upon ethnicity, race, religion or culture.

The interventions put in place by UNAR have gone beyond providing free legal assistance to the victims of discrimination. They identify and break down, wherever possible, the structural factors of discrimination. By altering the system it promotes collaboration, bringing together local and national levels, to promote a significant cultural change.

Mandate

- **Powers:** UNAR is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body;
- **Litigation powers:**
 - Intervening before the court;
 - Amicus curiae;
 - Formally deciding on complaints (decision or recommendation) – *not legally binding*;
 - Details:

In a case where discriminatory behaviour has been confirmed, on the basis of the remit established in article 7 of the Legislative Decree No. 215/2003, letters (a) & (e), UNAR may deal with the removal of the negative effects framed in a broad range of repressive actions, where the office is given the role to: *“provide assistance in judicial and administrative procedures, undertaking for the person who has been the victim of discriminatory behaviours, also identified in article 425 of the civil procedural code”*, as well as *“carry out, in the respect of the prerogative and functions of the Judicial Authority, inquiries with the aim of confirming the existence of the discriminatory phenomena”*.

It is fundamental to provide tangible assistance to the victims of discrimination in order to achieve the principles contained in the European Directive and the national legislation. As such, in a case where information on discriminatory acts or behaviours is received by the office, it attempts to improve the situation by seeking to ensure that the discriminatory conduct stops, removing the effects that are deemed racist and ensuring the payment of compensation for damages, as outlined in article 4 of Legislative Decree No. 215/2003.

In response to the need to strengthen the protection provided to the subjects of discrimination, the institution of the Register of associations and specialist organisations working in the sector have been empowered by the inter-Ministerial decree of 16th December 2005, between the Ministry of Work and Social Policy and the Ministry of Equal Opportunities. By 2011 440 associations were authorised in law to act on behalf of, or support, the subjects of discrimination.

As an alternative to judicial instruments for the victims, the Office has carried out informal conciliations to find solutions to irradiate the discriminatory situation.

Grounds and fields of discrimination covered					
Grounds	Fields				
	Employment	Education	Housing	Social protection	Goods and Services
Gender					
Race and ethnic origin	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Age	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Disability	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Sexual orientation	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Religion and belief	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

Activities

- Promotional activities aimed at duty bearers (by way of trainings, guidance material, etc.);
- Promotional activities aimed at potential victims (trainings, awareness raising, etc.);
- Communication activities;
- Publications and research projects;
- Number of inquiries / complaints lodged and cases handled per year: **1000**

Structure

1. Management structure

- Type: single headed equality body (led by a director);
- Details:
 - 1 Director General
 - 2 Managers
 - A working group made up of 8 permanent staff members of public administrations, holding a management position and competent on specific issues (complaints, hate crimes, awareness raising) and 30 external experts working on specific issues, grounds of discrimination or projects (European Social Fund initiatives, Roma issues, territorial antennas, communication).
 - Specific desk officers in outsourcing, offering help for specific areas (Roma complaints, discrimination cases on the grounds of disability, LGBT and age).

2. Institutional structure

- Type: the equality body is part of a ministry or government body;

- Details: UNAR was set up within the Department for Equal Opportunities under the *Presidency of the Council of Ministers*, article 7 of Legislative Decree 215/2003 pursuant to European Council Directive 2000/43/EC. The *Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs* is the competent political authority for the Department of Equal Opportunities, while the *Ministry of Cooperation and Integration* is the political reference for the work of UNAR as the National Contact Point on Roma.

3. Nomination of senior staff and board:

The general manager and managers are nominated through public vacancies inside the *Presidency of the Council Ministers'* staff. In case there is not an available position on a permanent basis, the vacancies can be open on a temporary basis to external experts with adequate profiles.

4. Number of staff: 27 (including external experts and permanent staff)

Operating budget (for the parts of the organization dealing with equality issues)

2.000.000 €

Accountability (reporting to)

UNAR is reporting to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Parliament.

Contact details (address, key contact person, website)

Address:

UNAR

Department of Equal Opportunities

Presidency of the Council of Ministers

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