



NEWS REPORT

Date: 09 December 2011
Expert : Corina Demetriou
Title: Equality Authority Annual Report 2010
Country: Cyprus
Context

Issue at stake: The Equality Authority, one of the two bodies comprising the national equality body, issues its annual report for 2010

Ground of discrimination: All grounds

Source: Annual Report of the Equality Authority for the year 2010

Field: Employment

Legislative provisions: The Combating Racial and Certain Other Discriminations (Commissioner) Law of 2004, in harmonisation with Directive 2000/43/EC; the Equal Treatment in Employment and at Work Law of 2004, in harmonization with Directives 2000/78/EC and 2000/43/EC; the Persons with Disabilities Laws of 2000 to 2007, in harmonisation with Directive 2000/78/EC; the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Professional Training Laws of 2002 to 2009, in harmonisation with Directive 2002/73/EC; The Equal Pay Between Men and Women for Equal Work or for Work of Equal Value Laws of 2002 to 2009, in harmonisation with Directive 2006/54/EC; Law ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability N.8(III)/2011.

Content

Description: The annual report of the Equality Authority¹ was published in both English and Greek and records in 98 pages the activities of the Equality Authority during 2010. In the section detailing the jurisdiction of the unit, as well as throughout the report, the shift of emphasis towards gender discrimination, which started in 2008,² is very evident. That apart, the report refers to the ratification³ of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its protocol which had been signed in 2007 and to the appointment of the equality body as the independent mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Convention required under article 33.⁴ In describing its activities for the year under review (2010) the report refers to an awareness raising campaign through the media, the issue of a code of conduct on disability discrimination and of guidelines for the media to avoid racist depictions, the funding of NGOs to carry out a number of different activities including surveys, seminars, theatrical productions, website upgrading etc and the construction of the Equality Body's own website.⁵ Special mention is made of the Equality Authority's successful mediation activities where, after having established on a prima facie basis that the complaint was well founded, it intervened with the authorities concerned in order to satisfy the complainant's demands or accelerate the finalization of long outstanding issues. The statistical data section provided the following information:

¹ The Equality Authority is one of the two units comprising the Equality Body, which deals with employment issues on all grounds including gender. The other unit is the Anti-discrimination Authority which deals with non-employment issues on all grounds including gender.

² The annual report of the Equality Authority for the years 2007 and 2008 (published in 2009) notes the shift of emphasis towards gender discrimination (see flash report dated 7th January 2010) . In 2008 the mandate of the equality authority was extended by a new gender discrimination law, as a result of which the percentage of gender discrimination complaints examined by this unit rose to 55%. The same ratio applied in the following year (2009). This extension of mandate was not accompanied by an increase in the members of staff.

³ By virtue of Law N.8(III)/2011 published in the Official Gazette of the Republic on 04.03.2011.

⁴ Discussions as regards the appointment of the Equality Body as the independent mechanism have been on-going for several months now, as the Equality Body was reluctant to undertake new responsibilities without a corresponding increase in its human resources to enable it to carry out the new tasks. Finally, the equality body decided to accept this appointment without any budget increase. In fact, the Equality Body is now more understaffed than what it was in previous years and its capacity to cope with the new duties bestowed upon it is under question.

⁵ <http://www.no-discrimination.ombudsman.gov.cy/en/node>

- In 2010 the Equality Authority received 121 complaints; in 2009, 103; in 2008, 93; in 2007, 115; in 2006, 68; in 2005, 84; and in 2004, 33.
- In 2010 the complainants were 49 men (40%); 63 women (52%); 9 groups of persons (8%).
- In 2010 the complainants were 89 Greek Cypriots (73%); 14 EU citizens (11%); 2 of Cypriot origin (2%); 1 holder of Cypriot citizenship by naturalization/registration (1%); 1 Maronite (1%); 13 third country nationals (11%); 1 Turkish Cypriot (1%).
- In 2010 the grounds of discrimination complained of were: 52 complaints on the ground of gender (43%); 28 disability (23%); 22 racial origin (18%); 12 age (9%); 2 ethnic origin (2%); 1 belief (religious or political) (1%); 2 language (2%).
- In 2010 the fields of complaints were: 91 complaints in the field of employment (75%); 22 in the field of access to goods and services (18%); 8 in the field of vocational training/education (7%).
- In 2010, 101 complaints (84%) were directed against the public sector and 20 (16%) against the private sector.
- In 2010, 27 complainants were aged 40-50 (22%), 43 complainants were aged 30-40 (36%), 9 complainants were aged 50-60 (8%), 29 complainants were aged 20-30 (24%); no complainants were aged under 20; 5 complainants were aged 60+ (4%) and one complainant was a minor (1%).

In its conclusions, the report records its concern over the fact that the vast majority of complaints (84%) are directed against the public sector, given that the economic crisis has led to increasing numbers of dismissals in the private sector, suggesting that there is a need to inform the public of the body's competencies in investigating complaints against the private sector. Additionally, the report expressed concern over the fact that only 11% of the complaints were submitted by third country nationals; although this marks an increase from the percentage of complaints submitted by third country nationals in 2009 (5%), this is still a very low percentage considering the large number of migrant workers in Cyprus, confirming that this group forms the most socially excluded and unorganized group of workers.

Internet link source:

[http://www.ombudsman.gov.cy/Ombudsman/Ombudsman.nsf/All/F50DE2642EAD0CB1C225795000311395/\\$file/Book%20Isotita%20Fin%202010%20ENGL%20\(1\)%20website.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.ombudsman.gov.cy/Ombudsman/Ombudsman.nsf/All/F50DE2642EAD0CB1C225795000311395/$file/Book%20Isotita%20Fin%202010%20ENGL%20(1)%20website.pdf?OpenElement)

