



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION**

Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights

*Italy's contribution in relation to the request of the Office of the
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant
to HRC Resolution 30/15 on Human rights and preventing and
countering violent extremism*

March 2016

**ITALY'S CONTRIBUTION IN RELATION TO THE REQUEST OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PURSUANT TO HRC RESOLUTION 30/15 ON HUMAN
RIGHTS AND PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

Following the request about the implementation of HRC Resolution 30/15, Italian Authorities are in a position to provide the following information.

At the international level Italy actively supports the Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) process, launched by President Obama with the White House Summit in February 2015, as part of a wider effort to implement the comprehensive framework that the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy offers for addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Italy hosted a CVE Conference in Rome July 2015, co-chaired with the US, aimed also at finalizing an Action Agenda that US and Italy submitted together to the UN as a contribution to the development of the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

At the national level two main bodies are competent for preventing and countering violent extremism: the Observatory for the Security against Discriminatory Acts (OSCAD) at the Ministry of the Interior, and the National Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

OSCAD: composition and mandate

The Observatory for the Security against Discriminatory Acts (OSCAD) was established by a decree of the Chief of Police and Director General of Public Security dated 2 September 2010, for the purpose of helping persons belonging to *minorities* concretely enjoy the right to equality before the law and be protected against acts of discrimination and hate crimes.

Removing all obstacles to the enjoyment of this universal right recognized by the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and by different European and international Conventions is a *sign* of a country’s level of civilization; therefore, it is a goal to be pursued with determination.

OSCAD, set up within the Department of Public Security - Central Directorate of Criminal Police, is headed by the Deputy Director General of Public Security and Director General of Criminal Police, and is made up of high-ranking representatives of the National Police and of the Carabinieri Corps.

More specifically, OSCAD:

✓ Liaises with the associations defending the interests violated by different types of discrimination and with other public and private institutions dealing with the fight against discriminatory practices.

In particular, close cooperation has been established with the Italian Equality Body (that is the “UNAR”: Office for the Promotion of Equal Treatment and the Elimination of Discrimination based on one’s Race and Ethnic Origin, within the Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers) by signing a Memorandum of Understanding on 7 April 2011 that defines the cooperation between the two agencies so as to optimize their results. According to the Memorandum, UNAR shall forward to OSCAD any case of discrimination liable for prosecution reported to its *contact centre*, whereas OSCAD shall send to UNAR any report received not liable for prosecution.

✓ Receives reports from institutions, relevant associations and private citizens on discriminations/hate crimes to effectively monitor discriminatory practices based on gender, “race” – or, rather, ethnicity, – nationality, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability, via e-mail, at the following address: oscad@dcpc.interno.it.

✓ Initiates National Police and Carabinieri targeted interventions on the territory on the basis of the reports received.

✓ Monitors the progress of complaints on acts of discrimination/hate crimes filed directly with Police forces.

✓ Suggests adequate prevention and countering measures.

✓ Organises relevant training modules intended for police officers.

In any case, reporting an act of discrimination to OSCAD does not replace either filing a police report or calling the 112 (Carabinieri) or 113 (National Police) emergency numbers to request law enforcement intervention.

OSCAD: training activities

Since the OSCAD institution, training has been selected as a priority, in the belief that a deeper knowledge of the complex, multi-faceted world of discrimination is an indispensable prerequisite to raise awareness among law enforcement staff of the need to improve their effort to preventing and combating all kinds of discrimination and, in particular, hate crimes.

Following the first pilot seminars on combating discrimination held in 2012 with the collaboration of UNAR experts, remarkable progress have been made.

In 2013, OSCAD organized half a day seminars on antidiscrimination at National Police Academies (2.800 cadets). In each Academy OSCAD and UNAR experts presented their topics (OSCAD/UNAR organization and activities; theoretical definition and practical examples of stereotypes, bias and discrimination, legislation relevant to anti-discrimination issues...) to all the cadets gathered in plenary sessions (200/400 units).

In 2014, training has been given a substantial boost. OSCAD improved the cooperation with associations: Amnesty International-Italy and “Rete Lenford” (a lawyers’ association highly specialized on LGBT people rights) have also been directly involved.

For the very first time, in order to improve the effectiveness of the training and the interaction between trainers and participants, cadets (1,850 units) have been divided into small classes (30/50 units), in accordance with the most effective training strategies.

Seminars have been structured in 6 periods, focused on specific topics explained by trainers with a wide expertise on the matter, in particular:

- OSCAD: organisation and responsibilities; hate crimes, definition and impact; legal instruments against hate crimes;
- OSCAD: ethnic profiling in police activities;
- UNAR: diversity in Italian population; stereotypes, bias and discrimination definition and impact; racial/ethnic profiling;
- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: Human Rights, a legal/historical overview and practical experiences at national and international level;
- RETE LENFORD: LGBTI lexicon; LGBTI legislation (at international and national level); discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;
- NATIONAL POLICE INVESTIGATORS SPECIALIZED IN DEALING WITH VULNERABLE VICTIMS: best practices and analysis of practical cases.

OSCAD has been following this model even in 2015, training about 1,800 police officers at all the National Police Academies.

OSCAD: the PRISM Project

In October 2015, OSCAD Secretariat, as a partner of the European project “PRISM” (Preventing Redressing and Inhibiting Hate Speech in new media) in cooperation with UNICRI (United Nation Interregional Crime and Justice Research) organized a three-days training workshop for Law Enforcement Agencies finalized to increase Police awareness on preventing and combating discrimination and in particular hate crimes and hate speeches. The seminar was also attended by legal professionals and NGO’s representatives. The course covered a wide range of topics: including an overview of the concepts of racism and anti-discrimination, the legal frameworks for combating hate speech and hate crime at the international, EU and Italian levels, and information on how to investigate and report these issues, with a focus given to victims’ assistance.

OSCAD: the National LGBT Strategy

In April 2014, within the “National LGBT Strategy” (adopted by Italy for the implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity¹) in collaboration with UNAR and the LGBT service of the Turin municipality, OSCAD organized two seminars (training of trainers) on prevention/fighting of LGBT discriminations and hate crimes for about 60 National Police and Carabinieri senior officers (chosen from Academies and operational units from different Italian regions).

In the same framework, OSCAD has already planned to organize, within the end of this year, 10 half a day courses, at regional level. 8 courses have already been realized (2 in Milan, 4 in Naples and 2 in Palermo), other 2 courses still remain to be organized in Rome: 300 officers will be trained overall.

OSCAD: actions on Roma, Sinti and Travellers issues

¹ Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31 March 2010 at the 1081st meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies.

In December 2014 OSCAD realized, in collaboration with the “Inter-governmental Cooperation, Anti-Gypsyism and Roma Equality Unit” of the Council of Europe, with UNAR² and Amnesty International, a training course (training of trainers) for National Police senior officers specifically focused on Roma, Sinti and Travellers issues.

In September 2015 OSCAD organized, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, an international brainstorming meeting on antidiscrimination with a specific focus on Roma and Sinti issues that gathered experts from 17 different countries, and, of course, from the Italian National Police agencies and Carabinieri Corps.

OSCAD: International activities including training

OSCAD is member of FRA “Working Party On Improving Reporting And Recording Of Hate Crime” that was established by FRA, in November 2014, in response of the Council “Conclusions on Combating Hate Crime in the European Union” which had invited Member States to take appropriate measures to encourage the reporting of Hate Crimes by victims and witnesses. In that context, members identified three areas in which Member States need more support and inputs to combat effectively Hate Crimes:

- encouraging victims to report and improving recording of hate crime;
- enhancing multi-agency partnership;
- training for law enforcement and criminal justice personnel.

OSCAD is co-leader of the sub-group concerning training.

The final result of the working party will be a publication of a compendium of best practices.

In May 2013, OSCAD and OSCE’s ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), on the basis of the mutual conviction that hate crimes constitute a serious violation of human rights and a threat to the rule of law and democratic stability, signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the implementation of the TAHCLE (“Training Against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement”) programme.

TAHCLE is a training of trainers programme designed to improve Police skills in:

- understanding, recognizing and investigating hate crimes;
- preventing and responding to hate crimes interacting effectively with the victims communities;
- enhancing public confidence and cooperation.

In February 2014, OSCAD and ODIHR started the TAHCLE programme cooperation realizing two half a day courses for 100 National Police and 60 Carabinieri senior officers cadets, respectively.

In July 2014, OSCAD and ODIHR realized a three-day course for 30 senior officers (15 from National Police and 15 from Carabinieri) that will train their colleagues on preventing and combating hate crimes.

OSCAD: Communication campaigns

A series of initiatives to make OSCAD known to the general public have been launched. In this regard:

- in June 2012, a communication campaign against racism was launched through mass media advertisements;
- on 17 March 2013, an awareness-raising initiative intended for football fans was carried out at stadiums to eradicate racism in sports;
- OSCAD web pages have been developed on the Ministry of Interior, National Police and Carabinieri Corps web sites.

In 2015 OSCAD has organized a wide touring campaign of information and communication called: “Tutti differenti tutti unici...insieme contro le discriminazioni” (“All different all unique...together against discriminations”) that was realized with a truck reaching many different Italian cities. The truck, equipped with a multi-media room, was opened to pupils from schools, teachers, parents and all citizens. In that context, meetings and debates for public authorities and citizens were organized on race, gender, LGBTI, religion... issues.

Any events were promoted with the support of both national and local media agencies.

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² National Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) Ministry for Equal Opportunities of Italy

UNAR

Among the root-causes of violent extremism, discrimination results to be a matter of concern which warrants specific attention. In this regard, aware of the importance to enhance activities in the field of HRE and Training, mention has to be made of the activities carried out by UNAR – also together with OSCAD.

Within the Department for Equal Opportunities (DEO) of the Presidency of Ministers' Council, the National Office against Racial Discrimination (acronym hereinafter, UNAR) has been strengthened and its role expanded over the years. Since 2013, it is responsible for the protection against all forms of discrimination. It is engaged in: combating racism; promoting the integration of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti; and fighting homophobia and trans-phobia, with particular attention to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. UNAR works on, and fights against, hate speech and hate crimes whereas cases of discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic origin still remain the majority, with a total amount of 68,7% complaints (as at 2013).

According to the yearly-collected UNAR's data, mass media are the most used means to disseminate discriminatory ideas (34.2%, compared to 19.6% in 2012). In particular, hate crime cases affecting specific ethnic minorities or foreigners have been recorded on the new social media. Also the xenophobic contents of social network have increased – as facilitated by anonymous format. In this respect, UNAR launched in January 2016, its Media and Social Network Observatory on hate speech, due to increasing complaints relating to cases of hate speech, especially online.

This Observatory, to be financed with ordinary funds from the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR), officially started in January 2016, with a two-fold task: first, we need to find hate speech online and report it for removal; secondly, we need to analyze, learn and understand. The Observatory is supplied with a software which works on the basis of a set of UNAR selected search keywords and based on data from scientific literature, as well as the practical daily work experience against discriminations of the Office. Thousands of contents are analyzed on a daily basis: a substantial part of the contents is catalogued, sorted and placed in thematic reports (hate speech and politics, hate speech and Roma people, migrants, etc.) and a part, *though numerically representing a slighter proportion*, is to be considered strongly discriminatory and thus it is reported to the social networks, for removal, and/or to law enforcement, for prosecution. In 2015 only, we reported IT companies, some 1700 on-line contents. In this context, we have identified the need to inform and train the associations active in the field of non-discrimination. UNAR counts over 400 NGOs engaged in the field of non-discrimination, as recorded in the UNAR Registry. Among them, however, a very few number is actively engaged in the fight against on-line discrimination phenomena. In order to render more efficient the monitoring and the fight against the various forms of discrimination, an MoU is in the course of being agreed upon among UNAR and the Ministry of Justice, NGOs and, possibly IT Companies. It clearly envisages a collaboration, which can support the associations engaged in the fight against discrimination at national level.

Over the years, the Office supported and/or promoted various initiatives, such as the “Rome Charter”, training for media, law enforcement and law professionals. More recently, it has been involved and is developing Action 2.2.3. “Combating different forms and manifestations of Racism and Xenophobia”: this is a 18 month-project run by ARCI, in partnership with UNAR, CNR-ISGI, ANCI-Cittalia, Ministry of Interior-OSCAD, UNICRI, Romania – Romanian Federation of Journalists MediaSind, SOS Racismo Gipuzkoa, Fundatia Dezvoltarea Popoarelor, France - La Ligue de l'Enseignement, Spain – University of Barcelona, UK - Race on the Agenda.

Furthermore, to promote social inclusion and combat discrimination, DEO set up the Solidarity Fund for Protection against Discrimination, which enables victims of discrimination to access to judicial remedies by anticipating their legal fees.

More recently, by Ministerial Decree dated August 2015, it has been adopted UNAR Plan of Action Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance which considers, inter alia, the Rabat Plan of Action under this framework. UNAR has also set up an Observatory of Hate Speech and Hate Crimes, especially online. Specific attention to HRE and Training is also secured in the context of the other two National Plans managed by the Office, namely the National Roma Inclusion Strategy and the Plan of Action for LGBT people's rights, in line with relevant Council of Europe Recommendation 5(2010).