



First Comprehensive Guide to European Non-discrimination Law Launched Today

The first comprehensive guide to European non-discrimination law is being launched at the European Court of Human Rights today, 21 March, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The *Handbook on European Non-Discrimination Law*, published jointly by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the European Court of Human Rights, is the first comprehensive guide to European non-discrimination law. It is based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice. It covers: the context and background to European non-discrimination law (including the UN human rights treaties), discrimination categories and defences, the scope of the law (including who is protected) and the grounds protected, such as sex, disability, age, race and nationality.

The handbook is aimed at legal practitioners at national and European level, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, law-enforcement officials, and others involved in giving legal advice, such as national human rights institutions, equality bodies and legal advice centres, to whom it will be distributed.

It can also be consulted on-line or downloaded (see www.fra.europa.eu) and there is an accompanying CD-Rom dealing with the relevant legislation, specialist literature, case studies and case-law summaries.

It is already available in English, French and German. Versions in Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, Italian, Romanian, Spanish, Greek and Polish will follow shortly and the material will eventually be available in almost all EU languages as well as Croatian.

Launching the new handbook today at a seminar for judges and legal practitioners at the European Court of Human Rights, the Court's President Jean-Paul Costa said: "The handbook will improve access to justice for victims of discrimination across Europe. It sets out a complicated system of rules in a simple and comprehensive manner. It is fitting that this successful joint venture should be launched as we prepare for the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights."

FRA Director Morten Kjaerum said: "This handbook is a practical tool to help people in disputes at Member State level, because after all, this is where rights are actually enforced. Resolving disputes at the level closest to the victim has several advantages – it is less costly, less time-consuming and less distressing."

There are two sessions at today's Court seminar dealing with: the achievements and challenges of European non-discrimination law, and applying European non-discrimination principles at national level. The launch seminar will be video-streamed live on

www.fra.europa.eu and
<http://www.echr.coe.int/echr/fr/header/the+court/events+at+the+court/other+events>

This press release is a document produced by the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights and the FRA. It does not bind the Court.

Press contacts

echrpress@echr.coe.int | tel: +33 3 90 21 42 08

Emma Hellyer (tel: + 33 3 90 21 42 15)

Tracey Turner-Tretz (tel: + 33 3 88 41 35 30)

Kristina Pencheva-Malinowski (tel: + 33 3 88 41 35 70)

Céline Menu-Lange (tel: + 33 3 90 21 58 77)

Frédéric Dolt (tel: + 33 3 90 21 53 39)

Nina Salomon (tel: + 33 3 90 21 49 79)

media@fra.europa.eu

Waltraud Heller (tel: +43 158 030 642)

The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe Member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights. Decisions, judgments and further information about the Court can be found on its [Internet site](#). To receive the Court's press releases, please subscribe to the [Court's RSS feeds](#).

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is mandated to provide evidence-based advice to decision-makers in the EU. The Agency's evidence aims to inform EU and national policy makers and to contextualise debates on fundamental rights in the European Union. www.fra.europa.eu

The Court of Justice of the European Union is the EU's judicial body established under the EU Treaties. Its tasks include providing national courts with correct interpretations of EU law. www.curia.europa.eu