



Racist Violence
Recording Network

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Racist
Violence
Recording
Network



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Summary

This is the eleventh annual report of the Racist Violence Recording Network [hereinafter “the Network”] which includes the quantitative and qualitative analysis of racist violence incidents recorded by members of the Network in 2022. The Network was established in mid-2011 by the Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Greece (UNHCR), with the participation of 18 Non-Governmental Organizations and civil society actors. The Network was established to systematically record the acts of violence with a racist motive and to verify the relevant quantitative and qualitative trends of this phenomenon. The Network has currently 52 members¹, who continue to record incidents of racist violence against persons who sought their services². In 2022, the Network recorded through interviews with victims, 74 incidents of racist violence. In 33 incidents the victims were migrants, refugees or asylum-seekers who had been targeted because of their national origin, religion or colour. In 1 of these incidents an individual was targeted because of their national origin as well as sexual orientation and gender identity. In 1 incident, Greek citizens were targeted due to their ethnic origin, while in 2 incidents, the targets were a mosque and a Holocaust monument. In 38 incidents the victims were LGBTQI+ individuals. Based on the Network’s findings for 2022, the main trends identified are the existence of racism in everyday life, the occurrence of incidents of organized racist violence, albeit to a limited extent, as well as the targeting of human rights defenders within the Greek territory, especially those operating at the borders, At the same time, in 2022 the Network recorded incidents in which the perpetrators were identified by the victims as law enforcement officials, as well as incidents in which the perpetrators were public officials. In more detail, the Network is noting an ongoing under-reporting of incidents of racist

1. Aitima, Solidarity Now, Antigone -Information and Documentation Centre, University of Aegean Anti-Racist Observatory, Arsis, Doctors of the World (MdM), Amnesty International, Network for Children’s Rights, Network for Social Support of Refugees and Immigrants, “Pleiades - Hellenic Action for Human Rights”, Hellenic League for Human Rights, Hellenic Red Cross, Greek Council for Refugees, Greek Forum of Migrants, Greek Forum of Refugees, Human Rights Commission of the Bar Association of Rhodes, Positive Voice, Medical Intervention, Caritas Athens, Caritas Hellas, Centre for Research on Women’s Issues “Diotima”, “Babel” Day Centre, Centre for the Support of Repatriated and Migrants - Ecumenical Refugee Program, Network for the Support of Refugee and Migrant Rights (Patras), World Without War and Violence, LATHRA? - Solidarity Committee for Chios refugees, METAction, Rainbow Families, Group of Lawyers for the Rights of Refugees and Migrants, Group of Lawyers for the Support of Refugee and Migrant Rights (Thessaloniki), Homosexual and Lesbian Community of Greece, Association of Afghans United In Greece, Association of Social Workers of Greece, Greek Transgender Support Association, Faros tou kosmou, Forum of Migrants in Crete, Refugee Support Aegean, Act Up Hellas, ASANTE, Colour Youth - LGBTQ Youth Community of Athens, Generation 2.0 RED, HIAS in Greece, HumanRights360, Melissa Network, PRAKSIS, A21, Simeio for studying and fighting the far-right, Lesvos Solidarity, Steps, Legal Centre Lesvos, Aegean Migrant Solidarity | Christian Peacemaker Teams, the Panhellenic Confederation of the Greek Roma “Ellan Passe”, International Rescue Committee (IRC).

2. You may find more information on the identity, definition and methodology of the Network on pages 41-43.

violence for another year. This fact emerges both from all of the Network's recordings in the last two years, as well as from the relevant analysis of the competent Authorities³. Based on the relevant analysis of the Network's recordings for 2022, but also on the relevant trends of the previous years, a significant number of victims do not file a complaint, for fear of secondary victimization or re-victimization⁴. In order for the trust of victims and targeted communities, towards the authorities, to be widely increased, the Network stresses that there is a need for the state representatives to immediately address secondary victimization, and violence in general. In addition, the competent authorities should prioritize the creation of an effective support and protection system for the victims of racist violence. Based on the Network's recordings for 2022, but also considering the data of previous years, the Network observes a decrease in widespread incidents of extreme racist violence by organized groups acting on the streets. However, they are not extinct, as in 2022 the Network recorded incidents against migrants and refugees, with the perpetrators being members of extreme, formal and informal racist groups. In addition, a bomb attack on a mosque was recorded in the reporting period, as well as other incidents in which organized groups targeted members of the LGBTQI+ community. The Network reminds the State of the need for vigilance regarding organized racist violence, following the activity of Golden Dawn, the escalation of which led to the murder of at least two people, Shehzad Luqman and Pavlos Fyssas, in 2013. As the Network has pointed out in its previous reports, the trial and ultimately the conviction of Golden Dawn at first instance, seem to have inhibited its activities. However, the specific pattern of attacks that the Network has long recorded in the context of the targeting of refugees, migrants and human rights defenders, appears to apply in other contexts as well (in the school environment or in sports). This highlights the need for constant vigilance on the part of the competent authorities, in order to focus on policies to effectively prevent and combat any relevant trend of organized violence. In addition to organized racist violence, the Network has recorded acts of violence with a racist motive against refugees, migrants and LGBTQI+ individuals, where the perpetrators acted individually. Victims were targeted in times of everyday life, (e.g., in the neighborhood, in public services or using public transportation). These are usually low-intensity incidents where the perpetrators act alone, which nevertheless exacerbate the victims' sense of insecurity and affect their relationship of trust with their social environment. For transgender people, however, the intensity of violence in such attacks seems to be higher. The Network has recorded incidents of domestic violence with a racist motive. These incidents usually occur when the victim discloses their sexual orientation or gender identity to their family. Intra-school or in-

3. You may find more information on the Authority's data on pages 27-34.

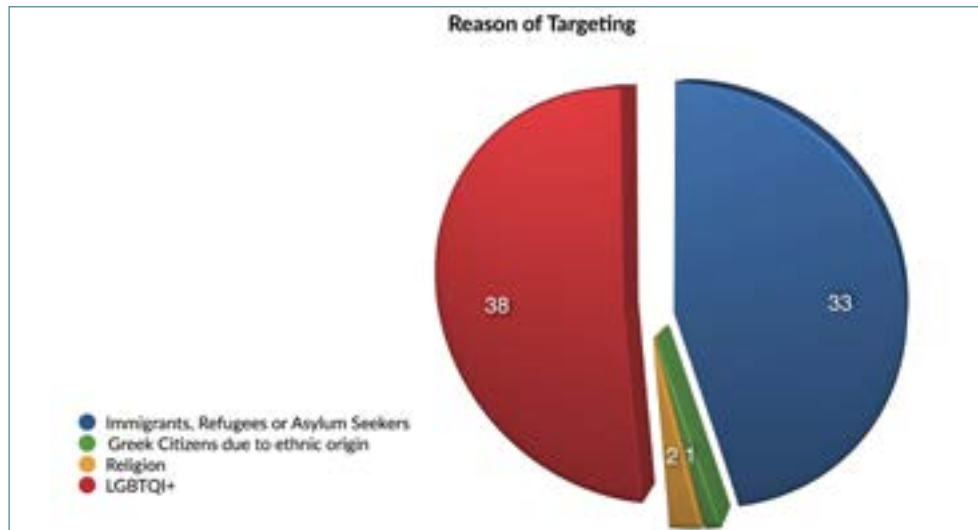
4. Secondary victimization includes, but not limited to, the treatment of the victim with disrespect, the unprofessional approach and any kind of discrimination against the victim by actors, services and individuals. Re-victimization refers to the context in which the victim experiences violence again. You may find more information on accessing the complaint on pages 28-29.

tra-university attacks by classmates/fellow students of the victims or employees of the institutions' administration are also included in the incidents of 2022. The latest findings are increasing RVRN concerns, given that families and schools are social structures within which any individual should enjoy acceptance, protection and safety. In 2022, the Network recorded incidents in which the perpetrators were identified by the victims as law enforcement officials. In those incidents refugees and migrants as well as Roma Greek citizens were targeted by law enforcement officials. It is reminded that in 2022 a minor Greek Roma citizen was killed by a law enforcement official⁵, while testimonies of refugees and migrants, for acts of racist violence by law enforcement officials, were also recorded, mainly inside reception centers and detention spaces. The Network expresses its concern about the impact that racist violence has on victims when the perpetrators are state representatives, especially when their actual role is to provide protection. This disturbs the relationship of trust between the citizens and authorities and contributes decisively to the increase of the victims' insecurity as well as of the feeling of impunity for the perpetrators. At the same time, in 2022 there has been an increase in reports and testimonies on informal forced returns, at the sea and land borders of the country. It is reminded that the Network does not record all reports of informal forced returns, but only those which, in addition to other significant violations (of fundamental human rights and of the access to asylum) committed during such practices, are combined with specific characteristics showing racist motives (i.e. indicators of prejudice, such as comments, extreme use of force, differences between perpetrator and victim in terms of nationality/ ethnic origin, religion, colour, etc.). In this context, the Network recorded an incident where, according to the victims, the attack against them would have resulted in their informal forced return, if they had not been located and supported by human rights defenders. The Network had already recorded in 2020 an increase in the incidents against human rights defenders. This increase involved harassment and even violent behaviours both against refugees and migrants, in the context of escalation of racist violence, as well as against defenders who are targeted because they support the groups in question. In recent years, and especially in the reporting period, as has been established by international and European bodies, targeting of human rights defenders has been extended to smear campaigns or criminalization of the activities of the actors in question. Lastly, in 2022, the Network recorded an incident of vandalism of a monument in Thessaloniki. The Network is reminding that in Greece, just like in other states, anti-Semitism is not limited to desecrations and vandalisms, but also appears as racist rhetoric, infiltrating in large parts of the population and the social structure.

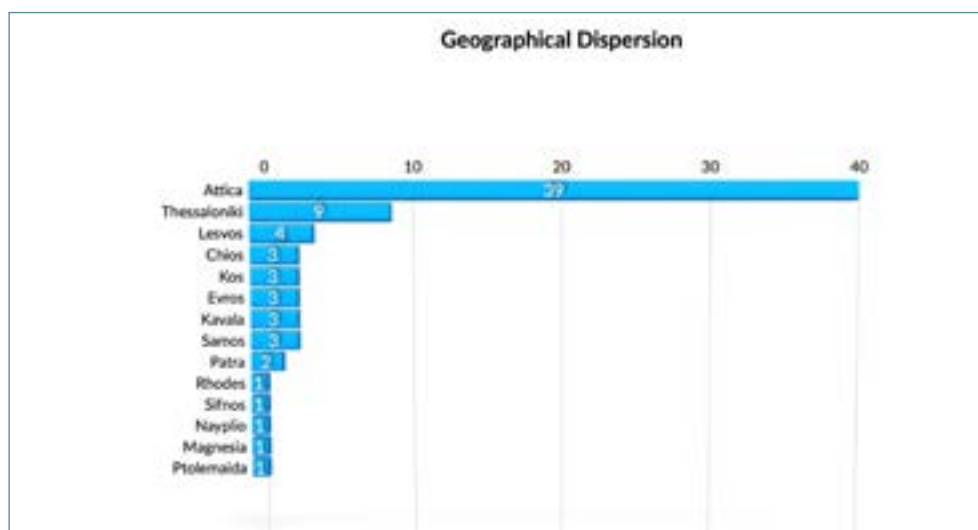
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5. The Network was informed of the relevant incidents by the victims' community and the media. The incidents in question have not been recorded, and therefore they are not included in the relevant quantitative analysis listed above.

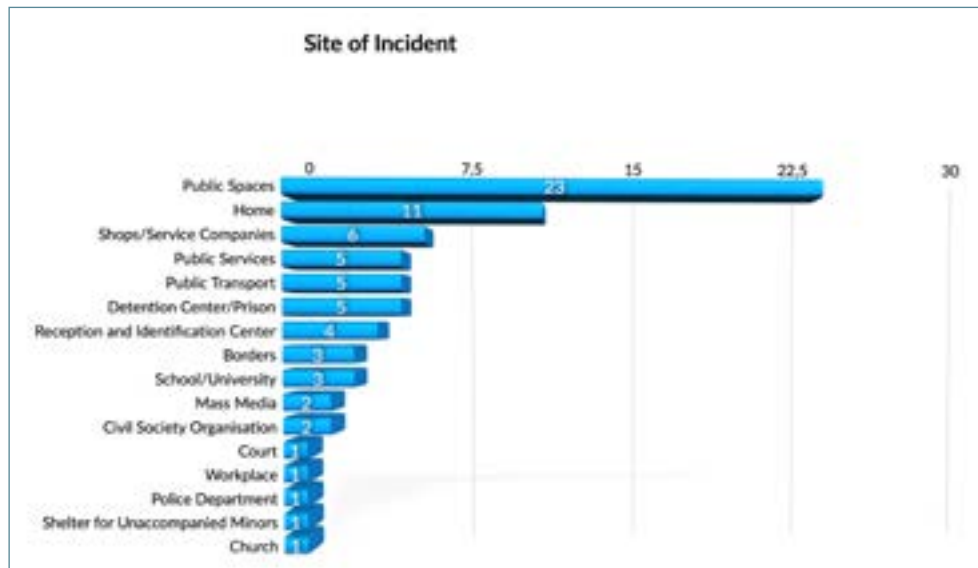
I. A. General findings of the recorded attacks



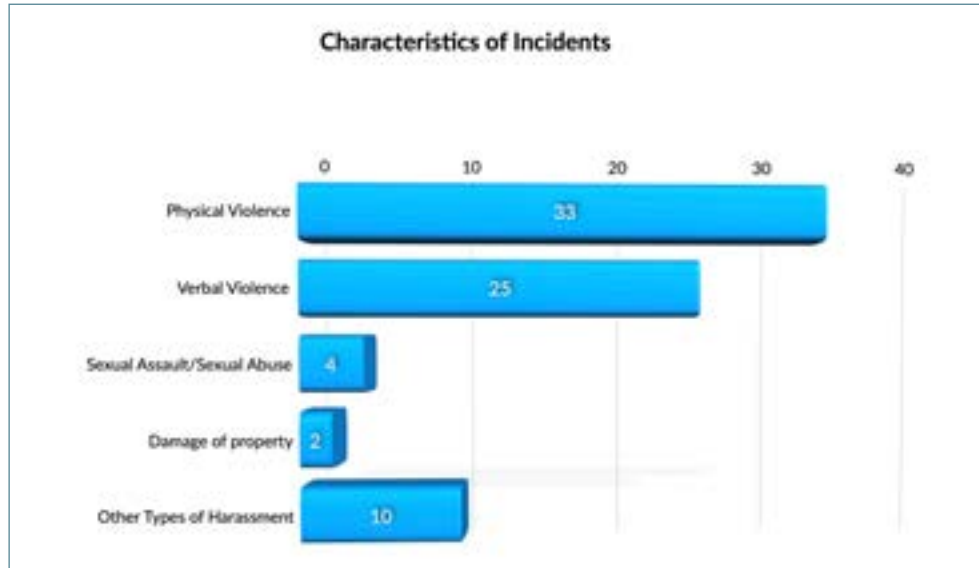
During January-December 2022, the Network recorded, through interviews with victims, 74 incidents of racist violence. In 33 incidents the victims were migrants, refugees or asylum-seekers who had been targeted because of their national origin, religion or colour. In 1 of these incidents an individual was targeted because of their national origin as well as sexual orientation and gender identity. In 1 incident, Greek citizens were targeted due to their ethnic origin, while in 2 incidents, the targets were a mosque and a Holocaust monument. In 38 incidents, the targets were LGBTQI+ individuals as well as human rights defenders, due to their connection with the LGBTQI+ community.



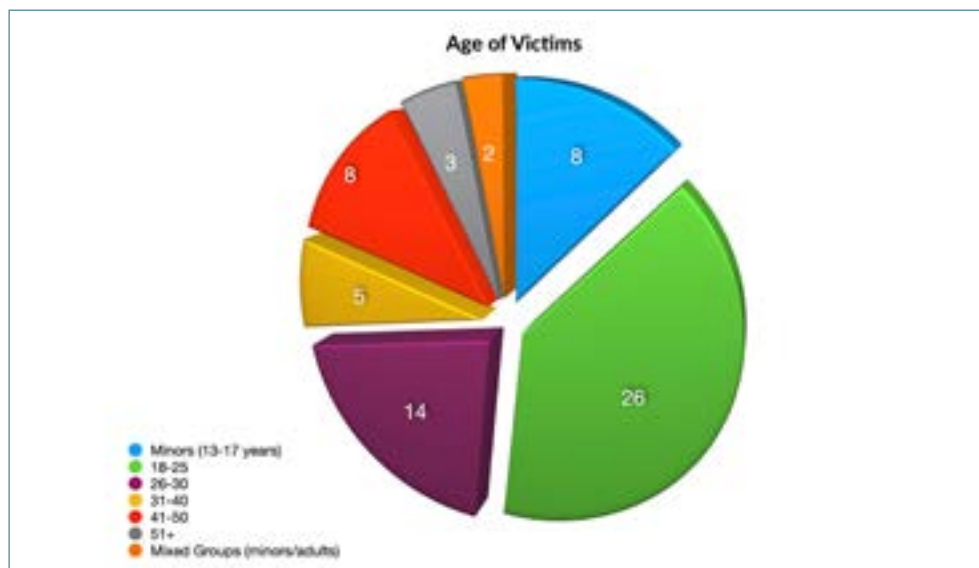
Geographical dispersion: 39 incidents took place in Athens, mainly close to the city centre, but some cases were also recorded in other areas such as in Aspropirgos. In the rest of the country, the incidents are quite widespread. Specifically, 9 incidents were recorded in Thessaloniki, 4 incidents in Lesvos, 3 incidents in Chios, Kos, Samos, Kavala, and the broader area of Evros, 2 incidents in Patras as well as 1 incident in Rhodes, Sifnos, Nafplio, in the broader area of Magnesia but also in the broader area of Ptolemaida.



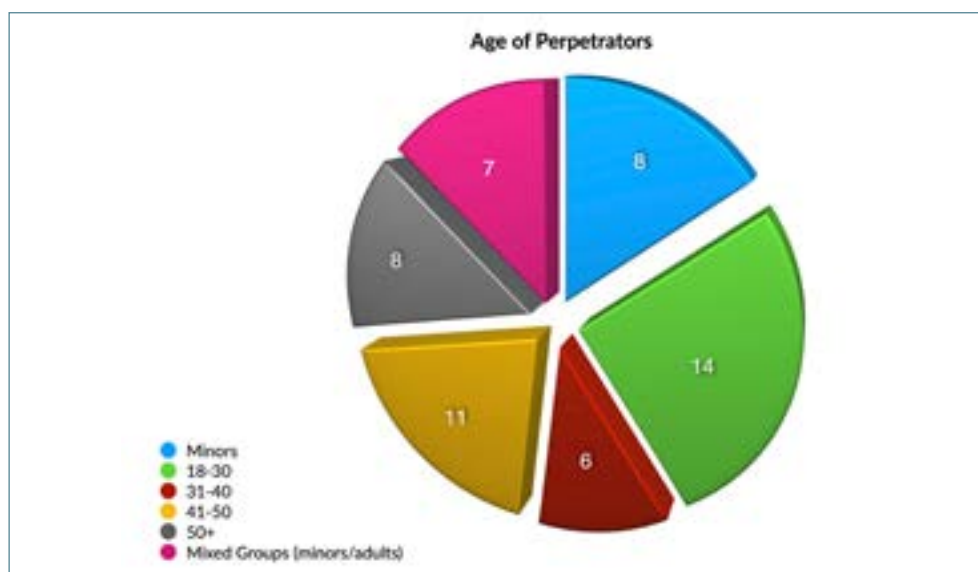
Locations: 23 incidents took place in a public place (street, park, port, etc.), 11 inside the victim's home, 6 in shops, banks and other service companies, 5 in detention centers and other detention establishments as well as in a prison. Another 5 took place in a hospital as well as in other public services, 5 incidents in public transportation, 4 in Reception and Identification Centers, 3 inside a school or university and another 3 at the country's borders. Also, 2 incidents were occurred during public dialogue in the media, while 1 incident occurred at a workplace, police station, court, church (during the distribution of food), a service provision area (by a civil society actor), and 1 in an accommodation facility for unaccompanied minors. Lastly, 1 incident that developed in different, consecutive time periods, took place at the office of a civil society actor, at a place where the said actor held an event.



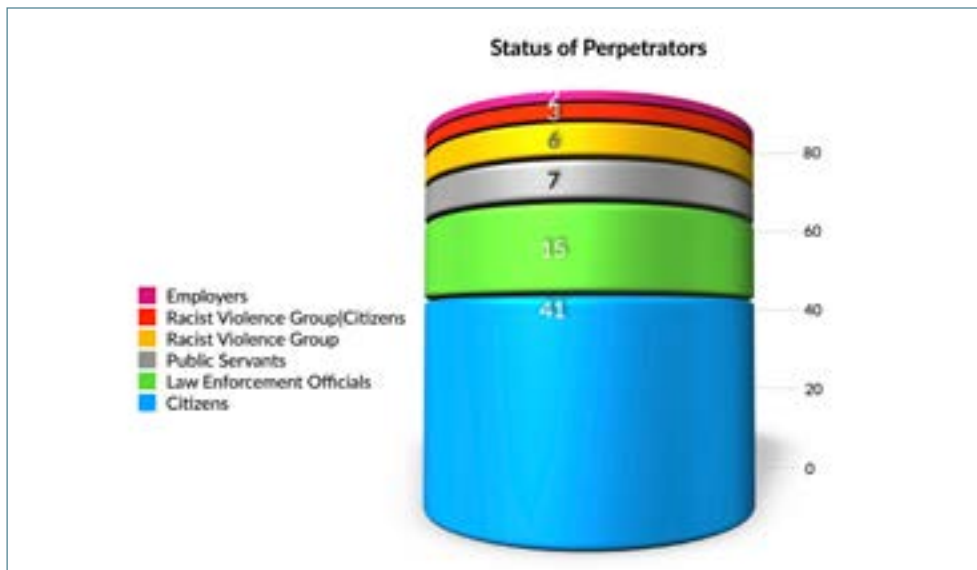
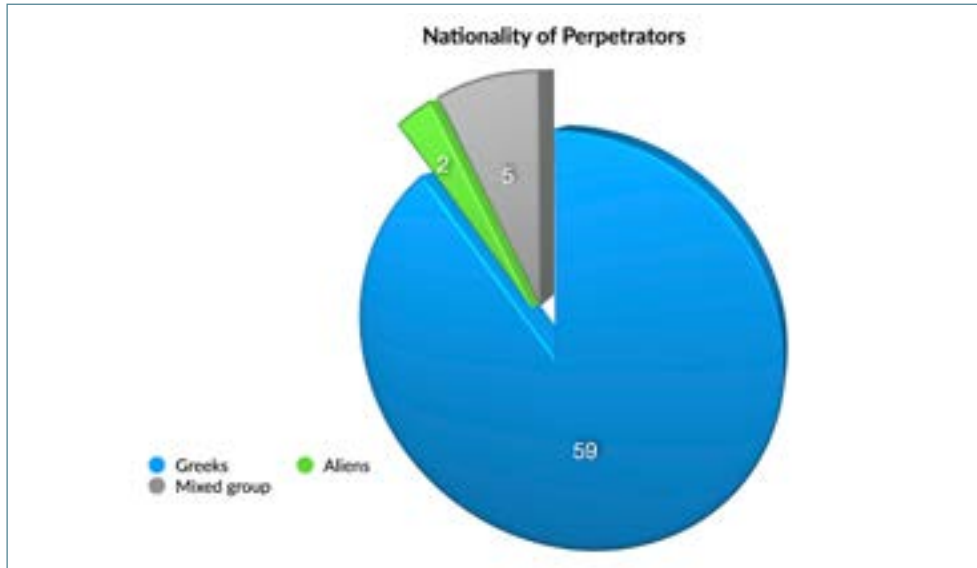
Characteristics of the attacks: A significant number of the attacks resulted in personal injuries and other serious offences. Specifically, 33 incidents were recorded which are associated with physical violence. Most of them also included injuries and/or other crimes, such as insults, threats, damage to foreign property, such as thefts and sexual abuse. Also, 4 incidents of sexual indecency-abuse and 2 incidents of damage to foreign property were recorded. Lastly, 25 incidents included verbal violence, such as threats and/or insults, while in 10 incidents other harassing racist behaviors were found, some in combination with denial of access to goods or services.



Victims: In incidents recorded by the Network targeting individuals, 43 of the victims who reached out to RVRN were men, 7 of whom were transgender, while in 22 incidents they were women, 11 of whom were transgender. In 2 incidents, the victims are self-identified as non-binary, while in 1 incident the victim is self-identified as queer. In 8 incidents the targets were minors between 13-17 years old, and were targeted due to their nationality, colour, sexual orientation or gender identity. In 26 incidents the victims were between 18-25 years old. In 14 incidents the targets were between 26-30, in 5 between 31-40 years old, in 8 between 41-50 years old and in 3 over 50 years old. In 2 incidents the victims were of various ages



Perpetrators: According to the victims' testimonies, in 62 incidents the perpetrators of the recorded attacks were men, in 6 incidents women and in 4 incidents the attack came from mixed groups of both men and women, while in 2 incidents the victims couldn't see the perpetrators. These were attacks on properties. In 8 incidents the perpetrators either were or involved minors, while in 14 incidents they were between 18-30 years old. In 6 incidents the perpetrators were between 31-40 years old, in 11 between 41-50 years old, while in 8 incidents over 50 years old. Lastly, in 7 recorded incidents the age range of the perpetrators was quite wide.



Σε 41 περιστατικά συμμετείχαν πολίτες. Σε ένα περιστατικό εξ αυτών το θύμα δήλωσε ότι στοχοποιήθηκε από πολίτες, συγκρατούμενούς του στη φυλακή. Η στοχοποίηση ήταν σε γνώση αστυνομικών και σωφρονιστικών υπαλλήλων, αλλά δεν υπήρξε σχετική παρέμβαση. Το θύμα δήλωσε ότι αντιμετώπισε εν γένει διακριτική μεταχείριση από τους αρμόδιους, αναφορικά με In

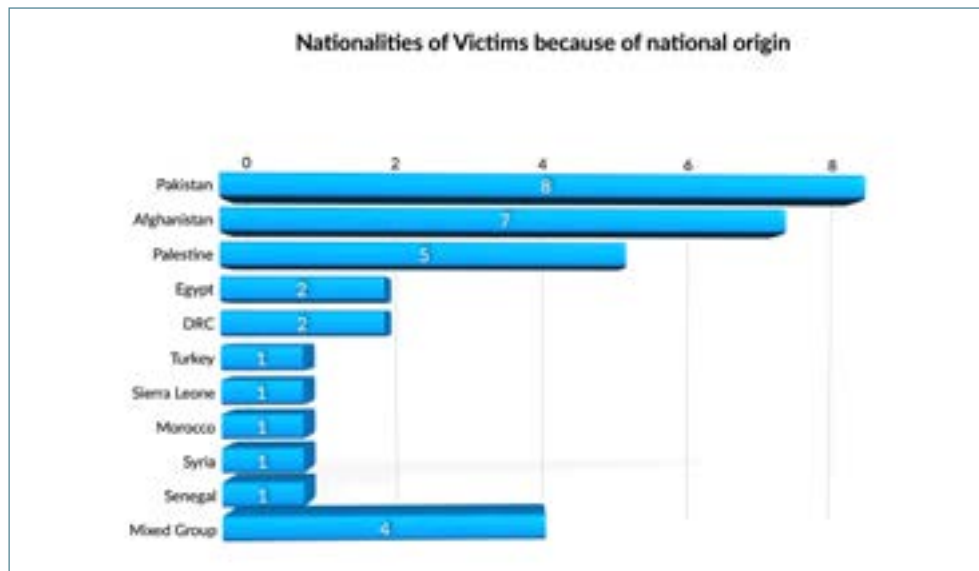
41 incidents there were civilians involved. In one of these incidents, the victim stated that he was targeted by civilians, his fellow prison inmates. Police and prison officials were aware of the incident, but there was no intervention. The victim stated that he was generally discriminated against by the competent authorities regarding his access to basic goods. In 7 incidents the perpetrators were public officials. In 2 incidents the perpetrators were employers in agricultural works. In 6 incidents the perpetrators were identified by the victims as members of groups that engage with organized racist violence, while in 3 incidents the perpetrators were identified as mixed groups of citizens and members of groups that engage with organized racist violence. In 15 incidents, according to the victims' testimony, the perpetrators were law enforcement officials. In almost half of the incidents involving, based on the victims' testimony, attacks by law enforcement officials, the attacks in question take place near the country's borders. In fact, the Network recorded an incident where, according to the victims, the attack against them would have resulted in their informal forced return, if they had not been located and supported by human rights defenders. As will be explained below, in these specific incidents, it is the context in which the perpetrators act that leads the victims to perceive them as representatives of the state, although they do not see any insignia on their uniforms. In 22 incidents, the victims stated that they had experienced violence before. In 39 attacks the reported perpetrators were many, while in 28 attacks only one.

II. Analysis of the findings

This section analyses the attacks against refugees and migrants (A), against Greeks due their ethnic origin (B), against LGBTQI+ individuals (C). As in previous reports, special reference is made to incidents where law enforcement officials and public officials are involved (D).

A. Attacks against refugees and migrants

The recorded assaults against asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants due to national origin, religion or colour, are as follows:



Victims: 27 incidents against men (aged 15-60), 5 against women (aged 20-45) and 1 incident against men and women of different ages, including minors. The victims in question were from Pakistan (8), Afghanistan (7), Palestine (5), Egypt (2), Republic of Congo (2), Turkey (1), Sierra Leone (1), Morocco (1), Syria (1), Senegal (1). In 4 incidents the nationalities were mixed. Legal status of the victims targeted because of their ethnic origin, religion and / or colour: 11 incidents against asylum-seekers, 7 against refugees, 9 against migrants including migrants without legal status, 4 against unaccompanied minors. In two incidents, the victims were from a group of people with mixed status.

Perpetrators: The perpetrators were mostly men (30 incidents). In 3 incidents the perpetrators were women. It is worth noting that minors are also identified among the perpetrators. In most of the reported incidents (20 out of 31) more than one perpetrators were involved in the attacks. According to the victims' testimony, the perpetrators were citizens, civil servants as well as the victims' employers. The Network recorded incidents where the victims stated that the perpetrators were members of groups that carry out organized racist attacks, as well as incidents where the victims identified the perpetrators as law enforcement officials.

In 15 incidents the victims stated that they suffered verbal and/or physical violence as well as sexual harassment by law enforcement officials. In 7 of these incidents the attacks took place near the country's borders, usually when the victims were crossing them. In some incidents, the victims stated that they were detained by the perpetrators and that they were subjected to violence during their detention. Also, as it appears from the relevant testimonies, the victims were attacked by groups of men at the country's borders, who were carrying weapons or batons, they were wearing either black or military-type clothing, while in one case they were holding radios and wearing (full face) masks. In the incidents in question, although the victims do not see any insignia on the perpetrators' uniforms that could refer to any of the country's law enforcement agencies, it seems that the way in which the perpetrators operate and the equipment they carry (organized attack, use of weapons and radios, detention in relevant facilities, etc.) lead the victims to perceive the perpetrators as state representatives.

This pattern (targeting of refugees and migrants/elements of organization in the attacks taking place at the country's borders) has already been highlighted in the recently published interim report of the Informal Forced Returns Recording Mechanism⁶: "...Based on the evidence that the Mechanism recorded in the reporting period, a recurring framework appears to emerge, whereby informal forced returns have an organized nature and specific operational characteristics. According to the testimonies, it appears that different alleged perpetrators cooperate with each other, for the transfer from one place to another and the detention/confinement in different buildings. In order for them to carry out the returns, manpower, building facilities, heavy vehicles or watercraft and other logistical means seem to be employed. According to the testimonies, they take place in specific geographical areas, the particularities of which also affect the means of the re-

6. The initiative known as the Informal Forced Returns Recording Mechanism, was launched by the National Commission for Human Rights, in collaboration with civil society organizations. The objective of the Recording Mechanism is to document occurrences of informal forced returns of third-country nationals from Greece to other countries, utilizing a uniform and structured scientific recording approach. Its purpose is to enhance the accuracy of recorded incidents, raise awareness about the importance of non-refoulement principles, guarantee appropriate safeguards and legal procedures, and reinforce accountability for any reported human rights violations that may arise during informal forced return incidents. The Mechanism's mission is to observe, document, record and draw attention to the implementation of these practices. This is achieved by utilizing a consistent and rigorous recording methodology, while also advocating for and upholding the principle of non-refoulement. For more information see [here](#).

turns' implementation"⁷. In relation to the identity of the perpetrators and the types of violence, the Mechanism emphasizes the following: "In 51 testimonies it is stated that acts of violence, such as physical and verbal violence or threats, sexual harassment and removal of personal belongings, were carried out during the physical removal. In 33 of the 51 testimonies, in which it is reported that violence was used during the physical removal, it is also mentioned that the perpetrators were law enforcement officials, while in 18 that they were not"⁸. The Network highlights the negative consequences of such practices, as stressed by the victims, first on the lives and safety of people seeking protection, but also more broadly on the standards and values of human rights and the rule of law that can be irreparably damaged, giving at the same time space to racist trends and behaviors. The Network ascertains, during 2022, incidents involving members of extreme, formal and informal, racist groups, both in Athens and the broader region. In some cases, the perpetrators first approach the victims, usually in groups, and ask where they are from, and then they attack. Similarly, in the same context, a group of Muslim migrants who were on their way back from celebrating a religious holiday (Eid) were shot by an unidentified taxi driver who verbally attacked them with Islamophobic language prior to the shooting. The Network reminds the State of the need for vigilance regarding organized racist violence, following the activity of Golden Dawn, the escalation of which led to the murder of at least two people, Shehzad Luqman and Pavlos Fyssas, in 2013. In recent years, due to the above-mentioned events, the need for timely and universal access of victims of racist crimes to reporting and finally to Justice has been strongly highlighted, in order to ensure accountability and social peace. The incident of an attack against an establishment for unaccompanied minors by a group of 40-50 people wearing (full face) masks and hoods, is a case in point. They threw stones and called xenophobic names. As the victim reported to the Network: "They seemed to know what they were doing. They had a hooligan style, as if they were outside the soccer field." Children and employees were the victims of this attack. It is recalled that the Network consistently records incidents of violence against employees of organizations or services that provide support to targeted groups as they are perceived human rights defenders, due to supporting the targeted communities. Already from 2020, the Network had recorded an increase in the incidents against human rights defenders. This increase involved harassment and even violent behaviours both against refugees and migrants, in the context of escalation of racist violence, as well as against human rights defenders who are targeted because they support the groups in question. In terms of time, this particular trend is typically, though not solely, recognized as having emerged at the outset of 2020, at the borders of the country. International organizations have also identified the targeting of human rights defenders in recent years, including during the reporting year of the report. The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders spoke in June 2022 about the atmosphere of

7. Informal Forced Returns Recording Mechanism, Interim Report, January 2023, p. 16

8. p. 10

fear that human rights defenders face, including the possibility of criminalization of their actions. According to the recent report by the UN Special Rapporteur, human rights defenders who advocate for the rights of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees - such as human rights lawyers, humanitarian workers, volunteers, and journalists - are subjected to severe forms of abuse. These abuses include smear campaigns, a shifting regulatory landscape, threats, physical attacks, and the misuse of criminal law against them. Earlier this year, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights released a statement regarding the challenging conditions in which civil society, human rights defenders, and journalists operate in Greece. The Commissioner noted various issues, including the smear campaigns against those who advocate for human rights, the persistent criminalization of individuals who assist refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants, and the targeting of activists who defend and advocate for human rights in Greece. During a round table event held in October 2022 and organized by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, it was highlighted:

"The act of criminally prosecuting... human rights defenders who aid migrants in danger at sea and offer legal assistance to asylum-seekers in Greece, serves as a further instance of the criminalization of human rights advocacy in the Mediterranean area..."

During the reporting period, the Network documented instances of racist behavior directed towards refugees and migrants, typically perpetrated by individuals in the course of their daily activities or when attempting to resolve an issue. In such cases, the victim may be subjected to an attack by an unknown individual while moving in a public space (e.g., street or square), or they may be targeted by someone within their broader social circle (e.g., a neighbor). These types of incidents, which typically occur in public spaces, had decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the limitations on public gatherings. However, the Network's records for 2022 indicate that such incidents have resurfaced. It is worth noting that even though these incidents are often of low intensity, they play a crucial role in normalizing racist violence in the eyes of both the victims and the perpetrators. In 2022, the Network recorded instances of violence against migrants, perpetrated by their employers. The particular circumstances of these incidents suggest that the attacks were motivated by the victim's national origin (in the case of workers with a different national origin than their employers) or migration status (in the case of one victim without legal status in the country). It can be inferred that the attacks would not have occurred if the victims did not possess these specific characteristics. It is possible that, even if the attacks had occurred, they would not have been carried out in such an overt manner.

"They were shouting while one of them held a carbine and the other a pistol:" "Pick up your stuff. Are you a Pakistani asking me for money? You will leave Greece... If you don't leave, I will slice your throat." They hung our bags around our necks and punched us relentlessly. After approximately an hour of driving, they compelled us to get into their car and abandoned us in a remote forest."

It is particularly noteworthy that employers tend to be more likely to engage in criminal behavior against undocumented or foreign workers who are dependent on their jobs. The foreign status of the worker appears to amplify this behavior, suggesting that the employer may not have acted in the same way if the worker had been of the same nationality. Instances like these illustrate the necessity of a robust system for supporting and protecting victims, to ensure that they are able to obtain justice.

B. Attacks due to ethnic origin or religion

In 2022, The Network documented two cases of sites being targeted based on religious affiliation. Specifically, the vandalism against a monument dedicated to the Holocaust in Thessaloniki and the bombing of a mosque in the center of Athens were recorded. Furthermore, within the Network's records, an incident was recorded, where Greek Roma citizens were singled out by Police representatives due to their ethnic background. Notably, a nine-year-old girl was among the victims who were subjected to verbal abuse by a police officer who used gender-specific language. This was an incident of police violence, that involved physical violence, threats, and insults with anti-Gypsy language, during the arrest of the Greek-Roma citizens. In 2021, the Network recorded an incident where anti-Roma Greek citizens were involved, which resulted in the death of one of the victims. That incident took place in October 2021 in Perama of Piraeus, during a car chase. Based on the testimony the victim's⁹ environment gave, it appears that the law enforcement officials knew from the beginning that the passengers were Roma. One of the passengers was killed by gunshots, while 36 bullets were found at the crime scene.

The Network highlights another incident where a minor Greek-Roma citizen was subjected to police violence, which resulted in his death. The incident took place in December 2022, in Thessaloniki. The victim, who was a minor, was shot by a police officer during a pursuit after he failed to pay for gas at a gas station. The victim succumbed to their injuries a few days later. The case received wide media attention during that period, while it is being investigated by the authorities. The Network is closely monitoring the case's progress with concern, as it marks the second homicide of a Greek citizen of Roma ethnicity by Greek police officers within a year, occurring in two distinct regions of Greece. The Network emphasizes the importance of examining the incident with regards to the presence of discriminatory motive. During the reporting year, another incident occurred involving the tragic death of an 8-year-old Roma girl at a factory location in Keratsini. The child got trapped in a doorway on the premises and suffered severe injuries that ultimately

⁹ Since its establishment, RVRN has been implementing a strict methodology, by recording incidents exclusively on the basis of interviews conducted with the victims. In the event of homicide, members of RVRN may receive the recording either from witnesses or from the victim's environment.

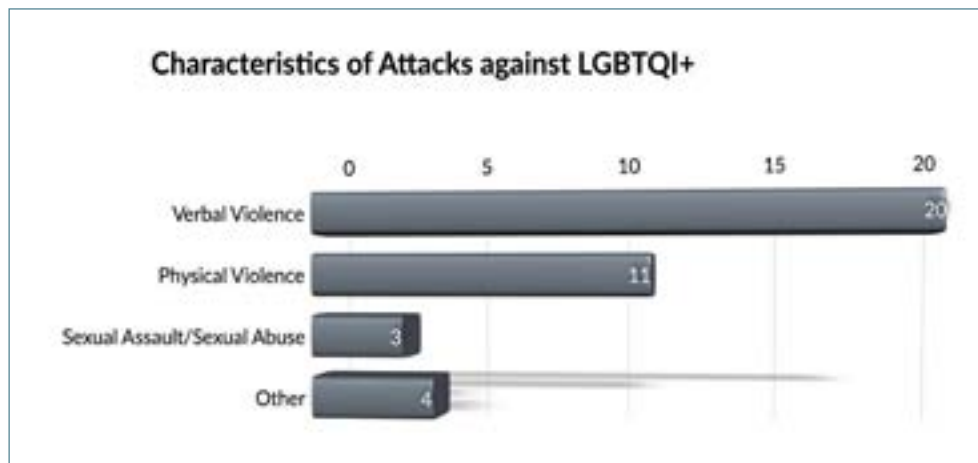
resulted in her death. Based on the available information about the incident that has been made public, it seems that individuals had noticed the injured child after getting trapped in the door yet chose to pass by without rendering aid. The Network underscores that the Roma community is subject to systemic discrimination that extends beyond isolated incidents and includes all forms of racism. This includes the marginalization of Roma people, who are being viewed as inferior to Greeks.¹⁰

In January 2022, the Network recorded an incident involving the detonation of an improvised explosive device at a mosque located in the center of Athens. The methodology of this attack causes concern and reminds of a pattern of attacks on places of worship that has been observed in other European countries as well. It is also recalled that similar attacks were recorded during the years of intense Golden Dawn activity. These incidents highlight the reprehensible nature of racist crimes, which seek to convey a message of aggression and intimidation to the entire affected community. The authorities are urged to investigate the incident with consideration of the possibility of a racist motive. It is worth noting that the impact of such attacks extends far beyond the Muslim community in the country, as the message of intimidation they convey affects any community that is targeted, ultimately threatening social cohesion and peace. Lastly, in 2022, the Network recorded an incident of vandalism of a monument in Thessaloniki. The desecrated monument, which is situated at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, is a tribute to the city's Jewish cemetery. In December 2022, the monument was once again the target of vandalism. Specifically, the tomb was defaced with the imprint of a swastika. At the same time, the marble inscription of the monument was defaced with a fascist symbol (in graffiti). The monument serves as a commemoration of the historical legacy of one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in Europe, which was completely demolished by the Nazis in 1942, and serves as a reminder of the Holocaust's devastating impact on the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. The Network acknowledges the existence of anti-Semitism in Greece, which, like in other countries, manifests not only through acts of vandalism and desecration by extremist groups but also through racist rhetoric that permeates broad sections of the population and social structure.

C. Assaults against LGBTQI+ individuals

In 2022, the Network recorded a total of 38 incidents of attacks against individuals who identify as LGBTQI+, with 19 cases being attributed to gender identity, 9 to sexual orientation, and 10 to both sexual orientation and gender identity.

10. The Network was informed of the relevant incidents by the victims' community and the media. The incidents in question have not been recorded, and therefore they are not included in the relevant quantitative analysis listed above.



Victims: The documented attacks against individuals who identify as LGBTI+ comprise verbal assaults, physical violence, and sexual assault, with some incidents also involving destruction of foreign property. According to victim testimonies, the recorded incidents include 20 cases of verbal violence, which involved threats and/or insults, and in some cases, damage to foreign property. Eleven incidents of physical violence were also reported, with some incidents also involving insults, threats, and/or damage to foreign property. Additionally, there were 3 incidents of sexual indecency, as well as 4 cases of other discriminatory behavior, which included refusal of service. With respect to the ages of the victims, in 3 incidents, either minors were found among the victims or the victims themselves were minors. For the remaining incidents, the age range of the victims spans from 18 to 60 years old. In terms of the gender of the victims, a total of 15 men were targeted, which included 7 transgender men, and 17 women, out of which 11 were transgender women. In 3 incidents the targets were non-binary people, while in 1 incident, the target was a queer person.

Perpetrators: Men were the perpetrators in 31 incidents, women were in 3 incidents, and in 4 incidents, both men and women were amongst the perpetrators. Moreover, there is a significant variation in the ages of the perpetrators, and a considerable number of cases involve minors as perpetrators. Specifically, the ages range between 13 to 71 years old.

Concerning the perpetrators' identity, most of them are citizens, but in 5 cases they were civil servants. Additionally, in 2 instances, the perpetrators are recognized as mixed groups composed of citizens and members of organizations that engage in organized racist violence. In a broader sense, the Network identifies the prevalence of assaults targeting individuals who identify as LGBTI+ across various public and private domains. Incidents of aggression have been recorded in multiple settings, including but not limited to places where public or private bodies provide services, educational institutions, and even within families.

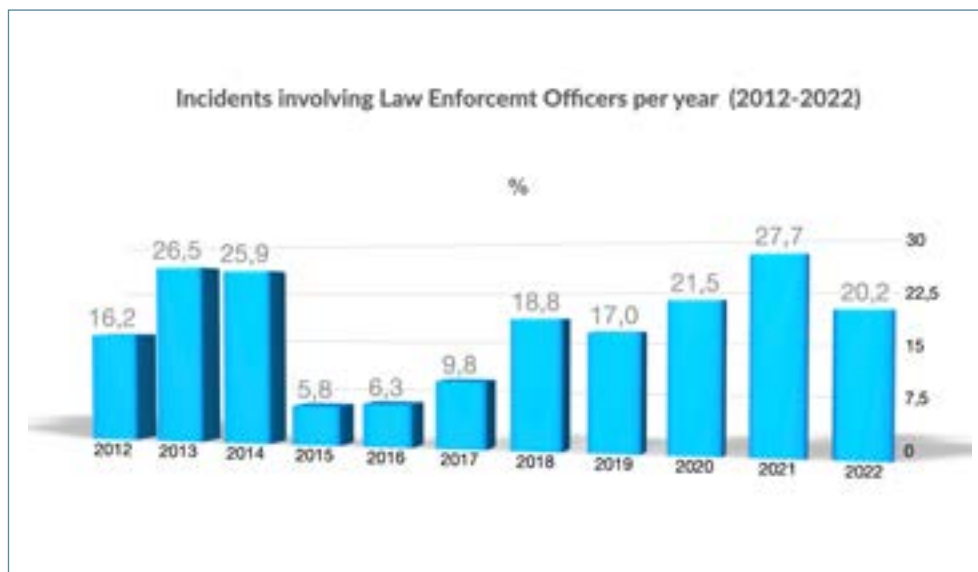
Based on the qualitative analysis of the reported incidents, the Network has identified the following contexts of violence and victimization: Individuals who identify as victims and are going about their daily activities in public spaces, either alone or with friends or partners, are subjected to unprovoked acts of violence. Typically, these incidents begin with homophobic verbal attacks, and may eventually escalate to physical violence. Furthermore, when victims are engaged in transactions for services, they are subjected to a combination of racist harassment, verbal violence, and/or denial of service. In situations involving transgender individuals, the violence appears to be particularly severe. There have been reports of victims being attacked by unknown perpetrators inside their own homes, but also a victim's testimony that an unidentified man after insulting her, threatened her with rape. Furthermore, the Network acknowledges the repeated victimization of transgender individuals while interacting with public or other service providers, particularly those who are going through their gender transition period. Of the recorded attacks, it is important to highlight the incidents that occur within families, often following the disclosure of the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity. The incidents of 2022 also included attacks within educational institutions, perpetrated by either classmates or employees of the administration against the victims. The latest findings increase RVRN concerns, given that families and schools are social structures within which any individual should enjoy acceptance, protection and safety. Considering their young age as a parameter, the fact that they are often targeted and subjected to violence intensifies the vulnerability of the already vulnerable victims. It is worth mentioning in this context that a considerable number of victims, who were targeted out due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, reported being subjected to repeated victimization in the past. Furthermore, it is worth noting that in 2022, the Network documented an incident where an individual was targeted based on their ethnic origin and gender identity/sexual orientation at the same time. This amplified the level of victimization and consequently increased the person's vulnerability.

In 2022, the Network recorded incidents that took place during events organized by organizations within the LGBTI+ community. The Network expressed concern as it noted that the incidents in question, based on the victims' testimonies, had indications of being organized. According to the victims' reports, the perpetrators carried out the attacks in a coordinated manner. One of the reported incidents involves an attack on a venue where an event for children was being held by an LGBTI+ organization. The second incident occurred during the "Pride" parade. Both cases involve attacks that took place in Thessaloniki during different time periods throughout 2022.

D. Incidents involving law enforcement officials and public officials

In the upcoming section, the Network will examine incidents that involve law enforcement and public officials, acknowledging the notably derogatory manner in which these incidents are addressed.

Police violence



The Network has recorded incidents in which police violence is linked to racist violence, namely where there are specific qualitative characteristics showing racist motives during violent incidents, where the perpetrators were law enforcement officials. According to the incidents documented in 2022, those affected were migrants and refugees, but also Greek Roma citizens. The incidents under consideration predominantly involve security force representatives targeting refugees and migrants, and they occurred at various locations such as the country's borders, reception centers, detention centers, police stations, and other places of confinement. Most of the incidents involve physical violence. In many of them the level of violence was particularly high. The victims reported being detained without clothing. Human rights defenders found other victims handcuffed in a wooded area near the borders. According to the victims, a group of men dressed in black with their faces covered, carrying weapons and wireless equipment, brutally beat them. In the incident under consideration, although the victims were unable to identify insignia on the perpetrators, which could have indicated the involvement of any of the country's security forces, the manner in

which the perpetrators carried out the attack, including the equipment they carried (organization of the attack, use of weapons and radios, among other factors), led the victims to perceive them as representatives of the state.

In a similar context, the Network documented an incident involving Greek Roma citizens who were targeted by police officers. Additionally, over the last two years, two Greek Roma citizens have lost their lives due to police brutality. At the same time, the Network recorded an incident against a migrant in Athens, where the individual was caught without a ticket by inspectors and subsequently was handed over to the police, who then took the individual to a park. While in the park, the victim reported being subjected to severe physical violence and racist insults. According to the victim's report, during the beating, the police officers laughed, and after the attack, they removed his handcuffs and released him. This is the second incident of racist violence that the victim has experienced within a year. As reported to the Network, the victim had already been attacked earlier in 2021 by his employer while working in agriculture in an area near Kalamata. Based on the victim's testimony, the employer, after refusing to pay the wages, called the police. Police officers arrived and reportedly threatened him and other workers with a gun. Continuing his account, the victim stated that during the attack, the police officers told him:

"Black people, we have no money to give you!"

Regarding working conditions, the victim reported:

"He (the employer) used to abuse us a lot and we had to work famished."

According to the victim's statement, his employer was a police officer. There was another incident in 2021, which was recorded by the Network, involving an employer who was a police officer. In this incident, when the employee asked about his earnings, the employer used violence against him with the support of other police officers. The incidents mentioned carry significant weight, especially considering that the employers who committed racist violence were law enforcement officials. The Network stresses the importance of enhancing cooperation and coordination among competent authorities in order to comprehensively and effectively intervene for the protection of the victims of racist violence, by abusive employers. This includes conducting immediate and effective investigations into incidents of violence, as well as the thorough monitoring of the working conditions in similar cases, as well as addressing incidents of violence and abuse by law enforcement officials.

In a broader sense, the Network expresses its concern regarding the effect of racist violence on victims, particularly when the perpetrators are state individuals with the responsibility to provide protection. Such a situation undermines the trust between citizens and authorities and significantly contributes to victims' feelings of insecurity, ultimately discouraging them from reporting such incidents. At the same time, this reinforces the perpetrators' sense of impunity, which further perpetuates the occurrence of such incidents.

Incidents involving public officials

The incidents recorded by RVRN, show the lack of tolerance for diversity, as well as the development of a culture of harassment for refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as for Greek citizens (Roma, LGBTQI+ individuals). In certain situations, harassment can result in individuals being denied access to public goods and services. While these incidents may strongly suggest discriminatory treatment against individuals, it is important to note that intentional violation of duties by a civil servant, with the purpose of causing harm to the state or another person, may constitute a breach of duty under Article 259 of the Penal Code.

Furthermore, the Network wishes to express its concern regarding the procedure that has been implemented for over three years by the National Centre for Immediate Social Assistance (EKAV) in one of the highly populated regions neighboring Thessaloniki. Specifically, the transportation of medical emergencies in EKAV ambulances in the aforementioned area, is solely conducted with the collaboration of the Hellenic Police. EKAV personnel are obligated to contact the Greek Police whenever they receive emergency calls regarding incidents in refugee accommodation sites or the Roma settlement “Agia Sophia,” and the broader region of Dendropotamos in Thessaloniki. This practice poses a serious risk to the health and safety of refugees residing in the accommodation facilities, members of the Roma community at the “Agia Sophia” settlement, and all residents of Dendropotamos area. This is because their access to healthcare services, particularly during emergencies, depends on the availability of a Hellenic Police patrol car and crew, which can potentially cause delays in providing medical attention.

III. Complaints and authorities' response

RVRN monitors closely the implementation of the legislation for combating racist crimes as well as the relevant practice of all actors involved. RVRN aims to identify and point out the legal and practical obstacles in the victims' access to justice. This section analyses RVRN's data on complaints (A) and on other information related to the police and judicial response to racist violence, including measures adopted by the Ministry of Justice (B).

A. Analysis of RVRN data

Out of the 74 incidents recorded in 2022, only 14 had been reported to the police at the time the recordings were made. Criminal procedure has been initiated for 5 incidents. In 4 incidents, the victims said that they had not reported the incident to the police but intended to do so. In 44 of the incidents, the victim expressed their unwillingness to take further action. Based on the relevant testimonies, the victims' fear of secondary victimization or re-victimization is once again emphasized.

B. State response to racist violence

The Network always seeks the best possible cooperation with the competent authorities for combating racist violence and supporting the victims. After all, cooperation between civil society and the competent authorities has been considered successful in combating racist crime. The competent services recorded the following incidents of racist violence in the year 2022, based on statistics shared by the Greek Police with the Network:

INCIDENTS PER CATEGORY OF PERPETRATORS	
CITIZENS	43
CITIZENS AND POLICE OFFICERS	
CITIZENS AND UNKNOWN PERPETRATORS	3
POLICE OFFICERS	32
ORGANISED GROUPS	
UNKNOWN PERPETRATORS	48
UNKNOWN PERPETRATORS AND POLICE OFFICERS	
TOTAL RECORDED INCIDENTS	126
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S ORDERS	41
POLICE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS	85
TOTAL INCIDENTS	126
TYPE OF COMPETENT	
SERVICE POLICE DEPARTMENTS COMBATING RACIST VIOLENCE	50
POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND SECURITY DEPARTMENTS	32
CYBER CRIME DIVISION	16
DIVISION OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS	23
SECURITY SUB-DIRECTORATE OF ATTICA AND GREECE	5
TOTAL INCIDENTS	126
POSSIBLE RACIST MOTIVE	
NATIONAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN	66
DESCENT	7
COLOUR	10
RACE	8
RELIGION	9
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	16
GENDER IDENTITY	7
DISABILITIES	10
UNIDENTIFIED / OTHER	74
VICTIMS PER GENDER	
MEN	92
WOMEN	37

COMPLAINTS	TOTAL
11414	239*

* Note: Of the 239 calls, 98 were related to incidents with a possible racial motive. The majority of these related to offenses prosecuted following the submission of a complaint. However, in these cases, a complaint had not been submitted.

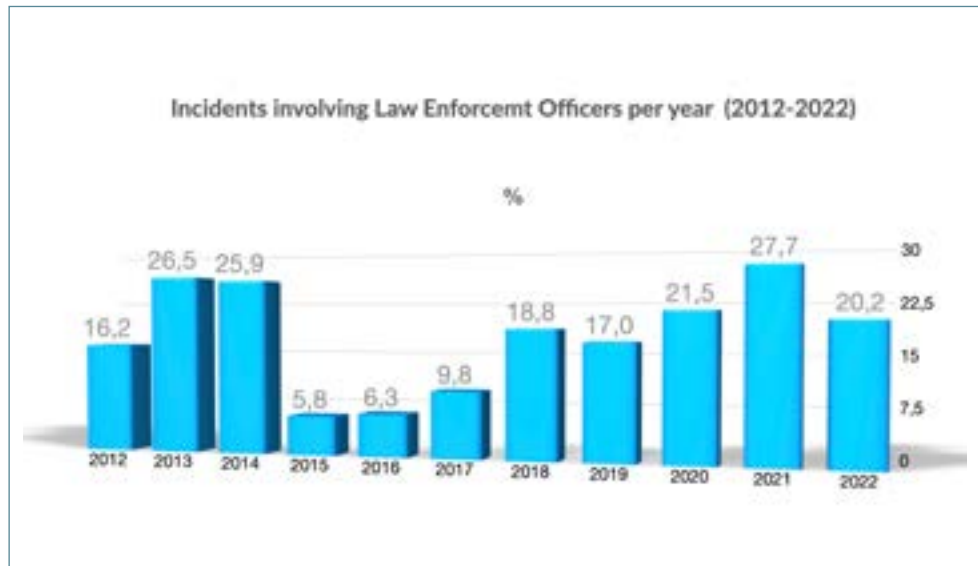
OFFENCE	
INSULT	53
THREAT	27
DEFAMATION	2
SLANDER	2
INJURIES	36
EXPOSURE (TO DANGER)	1
TORTURE	3
FALSE ACCUSATION	2
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	2
DATA PROTECTION	2
THE USE OF GUNS	3
EQUAL TREATMENT	2
UNLAWFUL VIOLENCE	5
MURDER ATTEMPT	1
THEFT	1
VIOLATION OF JUDGMENT	1
LAW ON FIREWORKS	1
INFORMAL FORCED RETURNS	3
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE	1
ROBBERY	2
BREACH OF DUTY	6
ABDUCTION	1
VIOLATIONS BASED ON LAW 2336/95	1
DAMAGE TO THIRD-PARTY PROPERTY	10
HATE SPEECH	27
TOTAL	195

VICTIMS PER CITIZENSHIP	
GREEK NATIONALS	51
NON-REGISTERED NATIONALITY	15
PAKISTAN	21
ALBANIA	14
ETHIOPIA	2
NETHERLANDS	3
UKRAINE	2
SYRIA	2
TURKEY	1
CANADA	1
GEORGIA	1
IRAN	1
CONGO	1
SOMALIA	1
ALGERIA	1
IRAK	2
BRAZIL	1
AFGHANISTAN	1
LEBANON	1
ERITREA	1
BRAZIL	1
SPAIN	1
ITALY	1
CAMEROON	1
BULGARIA	1
INDONESIA	1
TOTAL	129

The Network cites the above data in order to provide better understanding of racist crimes in Greece, through the comparative analysis of the data collected by the Hellenic Police and those collected by the civil society. It is commonly acknowledged that the process would be greatly eased if the State publicly discloses a comprehensive account of the incidents' progression and a qualitative evaluation of the data mentioned above. This disclosure would serve to elucidate the pertinent quantitative and qualitative patterns regarding racist crimes and the ability of victims to report them and access justice. The Network notes ongoing under-reporting of incidents of racist violence for another year. This fact emerges both from all of the Network's recordings in the last two years, as well as the relevant analysis of the competent Authorities. As will be explored further below, based on the Network's data from the reference year, as well as the relevant trends from previous years, it is evident that a considerable proportion of victims choose not to report their experiences due to concerns about being subjected to secondary victimization or due to a lack of confidence in the authorities to safeguard them from re-victimization.

National Council Against Racism and Intolerance (NCRI) - National Action Plan Against Racism

In 2022, the National Council against Racism and Intolerance convened four times. The Network attended the NCRI's sittings with two representatives (and two deputies). The Network welcomed the release of a Guide to the Rights of Victims of Racist Crime and endorsed its dissemination among specific communities and organizations that provide assistance to those communities, and government officials who engage with their representatives. The Network highlights that educating victims about their rights is one of the critical factors in effectively implementing the relevant institutional framework. The promotion of the Guide must be an ongoing effort, complemented by the implementation of comprehensive measures that cater to the victims' needs and shield them from re-victimization while simultaneously addressing any instances of secondary victimization. By doing so, the targeted communities and relevant agencies will be well-informed, and their confidence in the competent authorities will be bolstered. The graph below is indicative of the prevalent trend among victims, as it illustrates that a considerable percentage of victims across all of the Network's recordings during the period spanning from 2012 to 2022 opted not to report their experiences due to apprehensions about being re-victimized or subjected to secondary victimization.



Regarding the provision of information and assistance to victims of racist crimes in the context of support and protection, notwithstanding the encouraging advancements noted earlier, the Directive on the support of victims¹¹ of crimes has yet to be fully implemented, and there has been an insufficient allocation of targeted measures in the existing Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance to establish an effective system of support for victims. The Network emphasizes the necessity of reassessing the existing Action Plan, taking into account the specialization required to effectively address the aforementioned aspects in the context of targeted actions. Lastly, the Network underscores the importance of conducting continuous and cross-sector monitoring of the implementation of these measures and their impact on the targeted groups. Furthermore, the Network notes that although there have been legislative provisions in recent years allowing for the issuance of a humanitarian residence permit to victims and witnesses of racist crimes, there have been delays in the granting of this protection status in practice, leaving victims and witnesses vulnerable to risks and uncertainties. Therefore, it is deemed imperative to expedite the identification procedures of individuals lacking proper legal documentation who have been subjected to racist violence or those who are crucial witnesses, with the goal of minimizing any limitations to their freedom. It is worth noting that, according to the European Strategy for Victim Support, migrants who lack legal status and are victims of crime, often find themselves in a vulnerable position, and might be facing obstacles in accessing justice. If they report a crime to the police, they may be returned to their country of origin. In addition, the European directive on

11. The Directive was transposed into Greek law through Law 4478/2017, which was enacted in 2017.

victims' rights stresses that these rights apply to all victims indiscriminately, regardless of their residence status¹².

On the occasion of the Ministry of Justice's release of the National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance, the Network emphasized, among other things, the critical need for the authorities to implement measures aimed at improving procedures, such that victims and witnesses of racist crimes are able to access security measures seamlessly through an operational and effective referral system to protection and support services. The Network highlights the special value of the above provisions and their unwavering application, given that they introduce the victim-centered approach in the relevant institutional framework, promoting the support and protection of the victim according to their needs and regardless of whether or not the incident of violence was reported. However, the implementation of this framework requires the existence of an effective national system for the support of crime victims in general, but also for victims with special vulnerabilities such as in cases of racist or gender-based violence. The aforementioned approach, which serves as the foundation of both the Directive on the support of crime victims and the corresponding national framework (Law 4478/2017), necessitates the establishment of an efficient referral mechanism by the competent authorities to coordinate the services and entities responsible for supporting victims of racist crimes. This entails the mapping of services and entities at both the central, regional and local levels and their integration within the mechanism in question. Another area of concern pertains to the absence of a systematic monitoring process for racist crimes throughout their development, which has yet to be established. The Network has faced numerous challenges in monitoring the implementation of the institutional framework on the recognition of racist motive (e.g., monitoring the recognition of racist motivation in judicial decisions). In a wider perspective, it is recognized that if the data on racist crimes are systematized, analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, and published by the State, it could reveal trends and objective parameters that should be considered in the effective combat against manifestations of racist crime. The Network was notified about the verdict of the Three-Member Misdemeanor Appeal Court of Evia regarding the conviction of the perpetrator involved in an incident that one of the Network members had recorded in 2015. The incident pertained to the physical assault against a transgender woman. The court acknowledged the perpetrator's actions as having a racist motive (under Article 82A of the Criminal Code) and considered it an aggravating factor in the case. This was because the victim was targeted specifically because of her gender identity. At the same time, the Network expresses its satisfaction with the first-ever conviction under Law 927/1979 as amended by Law 4285/2014, which holds the perpetrator accountable for publicly inciting violence, hatred or discrimination based on the victim's gender identity. The ruling was backed by a Network member and pertains to a case of racist rhetoric

12. EU Strategy on victims' rights (2020-2025), 24 June 2020, p. 17-18, available at

that incited violence on social media. The incident occurred in October 2017, just a few days before the enactment of legislation (law 4491/2017) that recognizes legal gender identity. In this context and given the correlation between hate speech and racist offenses, the Network is keenly anticipating updates regarding the case of a former Member of Parliament and party leader who sought asylum in another country in 2020. The case relates to the individual's use of anti-Roma rhetoric. In addition, in 2022, a case recorded by the Network was eventually settled, with one of its member institutions being summoned to provide assistance during the trial. In December 2018 specifically, the victim, originally from Bangladesh, was attacked by a young man after indicating to the latter that he had parked his car in a spot designated for the disabled, at a parking lot outside a supermarket. The sentence sends a message of justification for the victim, but also of the authorities' intolerance for such incidents. It is recalled that as a result of the attack, the victim was seriously injured in the arm and had to undergo complex surgeries and treatments. Following this case, the Network emphasizes the importance of including possible racist motives as well as possible indicators of prejudice, from the early stages of the investigation procedure. The Network received news of the ultimate verdict against an individual who physically attacked a human rights defender in Chios in 2016. It has been confirmed that although the initial ruling acknowledged the racist intent behind the assault, as the victim was actively supporting refugees and migrants both before and during the attack, the subsequent decision in the second instance did not recognize the racist motive. The reason for the exclusion of the racial motive in the second instance ruling, was due to the victim's identity not being included among the protected characteristics outlined in the relevant legal framework that addresses criminal offenses involving racial discrimination, (such as national origin or skin color etc.). The Network reaffirms its unwavering stance that human rights defenders provide support to individuals and communities who possess protected characteristics and may face targeted discrimination on account of this association. The Network emphasizes the necessity of establishing a protective framework that safeguards human rights defenders.

IV. Recommendations to the State

For the fight against racist crimes, RVRN addresses the following recommendations to the Greek State. While many consistently remain there since the outset of the Network's operation, several others are added with the increasing involvement of the Network in the prevention and fight against racist crimes.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Citizen Protection

A. Combating racist crime

1. Reinforcement and proper staffing of the Hellenic Police Services against Racist Violence.
2. Continuous training, with the assistance of international and European organizations with expertise and experience in training law enforcement officials and judicial bodies, for the entire personnel of the Hellenic Police.
3. Continuous guidance to all police officers regarding their obligation to assist the victims, to intervene for their rescue and to make sure that the victims are referred to the competent services.
4. Training of a special task force per region, on how to inform victims of racist crimes of their rights and how to handle their initial contact with the victims, ensuring that the provision of information by specialized staff is not replaced by a brochure/guide in a language that the victim understands.
5. Constant communication and cooperation between police departments nationwide, government or non-governmental organizations and migrant communities, for the provision of medical, social and legal assistance, as well as interpretation services to facilitate the victims' access to the police (Law. 4478/2017).
6. Continuous evaluation of police response to ensure compliance with the circular entitled "Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Policing" (8.11.2014).
7. Proper and broad information on the obligation to prohibit the return of third country nationals who are either victims or key witnesses of racist crimes or hate speech (Law 927/1979) and have expressed their intention to file a complaint or to report an incident to the competent police authorities (Article 41 Law 3907/2011).
8. Speeding up the identification procedure of undocumented third-country nationals who are victims of racist violence or key witnesses, to minimize restrictions to their freedom.
9. To prevent secondary victimization and ensure that victims of racist crimes are treated with

dignity, the Network advocates for the issuance of a special circular that provides clear instructions to police officers.

10. Protection of human rights defenders and ensure the safety of humanitarian workers and members of civil society.
11. The Network proposes exploring the potential of conducting a collaborative assessment, involving civil society, of data on racist crime and the efficacy of its handling, while taking into account the need to protect personal data.
12. Disclosure of the qualitative analysis of the data collected and processed by the Hellenic Police with regard to racist crimes.

B. Combating racially motivated police violence

1. To expedite and enhance the examination of racially motivated abuses (including secondary victimization) within the Hellenic Police, and to promote justice for victims, the Network advocates for the establishment of a dedicated procedure within the framework of disciplinary control. Such a measure would also bolster the trust of affected communities in law the authorities.
2. Implementation of special training programmes and disclosure of relevant data, in particular about the course of complaints, in order to further enhance transparency and confidence of victims in the Hellenic Police.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Justice and the Prosecution and Judicial Authorities

1. Disclosure of the qualitative and quantitative trends regarding incidents of racist violence, based on the findings of the national mechanism for recording and addressing incidents of racist violence, as well as the progression of such incidents at the level of prosecution authorities and courts.
2. Recommencement of the Working Group's works, which was set up following the agreement with ODIHR (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), to coordinate the actions for addressing racist crimes.
3. Establishment of an operational plan and protocol for the coordination of support services for victims of racist violence according to Law 4478/2017, and especially for minors, as well as for their protection from secondary victimization or re-victimization
4. Provision of information on the actions of support services for victims of racist violence according to Law 4478/2017.

5. Strengthen and expand the appointment of Special Public Prosecutors for Racist Crime to deal with racist crimes more effectively.
6. Provision of information regarding the implementation of the Circular of the Supreme Court for data collection and racist crime management by the Prosecutors.
7. Ensure the effective implementation of Article 82 P.C. for crimes with racist characteristics as a general aggravating circumstance not only during the hearings but also at the pre-trial stage.
8. Adoption of a legislative provision for the protection of human rights defenders.
9. In cooperation with the judicial authorities, adoption of special measures to ensure the victim's safety (entry/exit from courts and prosecution offices, keeping victims at a safe distance from defendants, etc.)
10. Recommends implementing a specialized training program for individuals responsible for interviewing and examining victims who have faced intersectional targeting or have multiple vulnerabilities.
11. Appointment of a specific individual to keep the victim informed throughout the penal procedure.
Ensuring the prompt referral of juvenile victims to the Juvenile Support and Social Care Services of the Ministry of Justice in light of the serious risk involved in terms of secondary or repeated victimization.
13. Adoption of measures to protect interpreters and prevent their victimization.
14. In-depth study and discussion among scientific and professional bodies on how to adapt restorative justice to racist crimes (Article 63 of Law 4478/2017).

Recommendations to the Ministry of Health and the Medical Associations

1. Ensure equal and non-discriminatory access to the public health system.
2. Cooperation with the Ministry of Justice on the implementation of Law 4478/2017, particularly in terms of performing medical tests as per Article 66 (c) of
3. Provision of information and training of the medical staff on the cultural aspects of their interaction with victims of racist violence and on the special conditions pertaining to LGBTQI victims +.
4. Training and sensitization of mental health specialists on issues of gender identity and sexual orientation due to ongoing reports of abusive behaviour against LGBTQI persons in violation of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Statistical Classification of Illnesses

and Related Health Problems (ICD) and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association, APA.

5. Compliance with the principle that medical tests should be performed by individuals who share the same sex as the victim, while the burden of choice should be shifted to the victim only in exceptional incidents of limited capacity in medical staff, in accordance with Article 69 (1) (d) of Law 4478/2017.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Migration and Asylum

The Network urges the adoption of additional initiatives and measures to support the integration of refugees and migrants, encourage harmonious coexistence between local communities and refugee/immigrant communities, and prevent or mitigate xenophobic and racist behaviors. Such measures may include the following:

1. Promotion of actions aimed at countering discrimination, racist rhetoric, and institutional racism directed at refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers.
2. Promotion of the option for providing a humanitarian residence permit to witnesses or victims of racist violence through collaboration with law enforcement authorities and dissemination of relevant information. Publication of detailed statistics regarding the issuance of these types of residence permits.
3. Effective registration and fair management of asylum applications for all nationalities, complying with international protection guarantees.
4. There is a need for significant improvement in the reception conditions and the implementation of appropriate measures, particularly for vulnerable individuals. Additionally, it is important to create an environment of substantial security that respects human dignity in all areas designated for reception.
5. Ensure the unhindered exercise of fundamental rights for refugees and migrants, without any discrimination (education, healthcare, social protection and accommodation).
6. Acceleration of the registration and reception procedures for unaccompanied minors, under the appropriate care and protection procedures.
7. A holistic approach to issues related to migrants and refugees, with long-term planning across the country, aiming at the smooth integration of refugees and migrants into the Greek society.
8. Reassessment of the geographic restrictions on the islands.
9. Effective investigations into the complaints of informal forced returns.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs

1. Ensure equal access for children to public education, without any discrimination.
2. Strengthen the regulatory framework for preventing and combating racist, homophobic and transphobic violence in schools, with the active participation of teachers, students and parent associations.
3. Promotion of an intercultural and inter-religion dialogue to address stereotypes and prejudice.
4. Developing a comprehensible guide for the school community that covers the recognition and handling of racially motivated violence incidents, providing teachers with relevant training, and establishing connections between the school community and experienced civil society actors who run specialized programs are all crucial steps.
5. Introduction of a sexual education course in primary and secondary education, to address stereotypes and prejudices about gender identity and sexual orientation and to create an inclusive and safe school environment.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

1. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs should intensify its cooperation and coordination with the Labor Inspectorate, which functions as an independent authority, as well as with other ministries that share responsibilities in the field of employment, such as the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum. This aims to facilitate comprehensive and effective intervention to safeguard victims of racial violence perpetrated by abusive employers.
2. Inform the services involved to provide immediate assistance, support and protection to victims as well as thorough control of the working conditions in similar incidents.
3. Strengthen the actions that promote equality in areas such as education, employment, health-care and welfare. Combat gender-based violence based on the fact that gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence are often combined with racist motives.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transports

1. Development of guidelines for the staff working in public transportation (including buses), for understanding the obligations to respect all passengers regardless of race, colour, ethnic or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender traits.

2. Provision of special clauses related to the above obligations in contracts of concession.
3. Investigation of the cases involving employees.
4. Provision of proportional sanctions for non-compliance with the obligation to respect all passengers regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender traits.

Recommendations to the General Secretariat of Information and Communication

1. Training and awareness raising of the management boards and journalists, editors and newscasters in the electronic media, press and TV, regarding the coverage of racist crimes, the protection of human rights and the termination of (re)production of negative stereotypes against certain groups, by organizing special training seminars and drafting guidelines.
2. Regarding the operation of the National Council for Radio and Television (NCRTV), effective strengthening of the mechanisms that detect incidents of production or reproduction of racist discourse by the media, which may lead to the occurrence of racist incidents, as well as imposition of the relevant sanctions.

The Network emphasizes that in order to effectively address racist crimes and provide support and protection for victims of racist violence, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive examination and analysis of racism in Greece. This should include a particular focus on instances of racism within the government and policies aimed at improving the climate of safety and respect for human rights. RVRN calls on State and local government representatives, as well as media representatives, to refrain from the racist rhetoric that normalizes and encourages racist reactions and affects social peace and cohesion.

V. Identity and Working Methods of the Racist Violence Recording Network

A. ?????????????????

There follows a thorough description of RVRN working methods, with a view to promoting awareness and transparency in relation to RVRN activities and raising public awareness about the results of such activities. Institutional remarks. The initiative for the establishment of RVRN was taken in mid-2011 by the Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Greece (UNHCR) on the basis of two major findings in that period: a) the identified absence of an official and effective data collection system on racist violence and b) the need to coordinate organization which recorded, on their own initiative, incidents of racist violence against people who sought their services. There have been many improvements since in this direction, such as the creation of a state system for recording racist violence¹³, however RVRN recordings of such incidents is necessary, as the data are complementary to the official recording. It is also pointed out that RVRN's data are the "tip of the iceberg". Nevertheless, its data capture a clear picture of the quantitative and qualitative trends of racist violence in Greece.

B. Network Identity

The Network is comprised of actors offering medical, social, legal services or/and coming in direct contact with victims of racist violence or victims of other hate- or bias-motivated violent attacks as well as organizations established by the groups which are usually targeted by racist violence themselves. To join RVRN, a necessary precondition is the respect for human rights, diversity, multiculturalism, and freedom of religion as well as the action in tackling discrimination and intolerance. Apart from the coordinators, UNHCR and GNCHR, RVRN is comprised of 52 Non-Governmental Organizations and civil society bodies, as well as the Greek Ombudsman and the Migrant Integration Council of the Municipality of Athens, as observers. The participating actors acknowledge and jointly pursue combating racist violence as well as all racially motivated acts on the grounds of race, colour, religion, descent, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and disability.

13. For more information on the State's response to racist violence, see page 27.

For RVRN, “incidents of racist violence” include any criminal acts, or violent acts or behaviour against people targeted because of their national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and disabilities. RVRN also records criminal acts or violent activities or behaviours against human rights defenders, namely against people who promote and protect human rights and are targeted because of that.

In pursuit of the common goal, RVRN: i) submits recommendations to the Greek authorities in compliance with Greek and international law on the protection of human rights, ii) promotes public information and awareness raising on combating racist violence, iii) consults with the competent Authorities and other relevant actors on issues pertaining to racist violence, iv) strengthens collaboration with other actors in pursuit of combating racist violence, v) organizes and participates in training programs held by civil society and other competent institutional bodies in relation to issues that refer to the identification, recording, and combating of hate crimes. In this context, the Network responded to requests for information from researchers, journalists and students. In addition, the Network contributed to the dissemination of the legislation against racism and racist crime through participation in seminars, trainings and public debates. The Network took part in training sessions for various officials, including those working in reception services for asylum-seekers, municipal officials who interact with targeted communities and/or victims of violence, and security forces officials. The objective of these trainings was to increase understanding of the phenomenon of racist violence and the rights of victims of such violence. At the same time, in 2022, the Network having been recognized as a good practice for recording racist violence and for supporting victims, was invited by both national and European bodies to present its methodology and its findings.

C. Methodology

Since its establishment, RVRN remains a collective initiative with common operational rules and common objectives, while the individual activities of its members have a complementary and mutually empowering impact. From its outset, RVRN has been implementing a strict methodology, recording incidents exclusively on the basis of interviews conducted with the victims. Therefore, an important factor in the number of recorded incidents is the willingness of the victim to record its experience. All members of RVRN agreed on a cooperation agreement which sets out the rights and obligations of participants, and they adopted the common RVRN recording form. Each RVRN member appoints focal points

to record the incidents, i.e., social workers, lawyers, or other professionals or volunteers, who are trained by RVRN. The appointed focal points provide their full name and are responsible for the recording they perform. Recording forms are completed anonymously and used exclusively by RVRN for combating racism and hate crimes.

Racist Violence Recording Network

 www.rvrn.org

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 racistviolence@nchr.gr