

## People of African Descent in Europe

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### INTRODUCTION

A pan-European Black identity has started to emerge in recent years as the Black European population has increased in size and visibility. Black identities have historically been based upon shared experiences of exploitation and slavery under European colonial rule but this common history has continued into the present as Black people continue to unite over shared experiences of discrimination and racism.<sup>1</sup>

2011 was the United Nation's International Year for People of African Descent which planned to strengthen political commitment to stamping out racism and discrimination against people of African descent in recognition of the fact that that they are "among those most affected by racism."<sup>2</sup>

According to the UN Working Group on people of African descent, "People of African descent may be defined as descendants of the African victims of the trans-Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea slave trade" including those affected by the sub-Sahara slave trade. They recognise that although descendants of the victims of trans-Atlantic slavery live mainly in the Americas, the definition "must also include Africans and their descendants who... emigrated to or went to work in Europe, Canada and the Middle East where they also experienced racial discrimination."<sup>3</sup>

The United States Congress estimates that 7 million people of African descent were living in Europe in 2011, and continue to suffer a disproportionate amount of racial discrimination.<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Blakely, A. "Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe" in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>2</sup> UN Working Group on People of African Descent, *Identification and Definition of People of African Descent and How Racial Discrimination Against them is Manifested in Various Regions*, E/CN.4/2003/WG.20/WP.3 para. 6

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Racism in Europe - ENAR Shadow Report 2010-11 – All ENAR shadow report can be found on the ENAR Website: [http://www.enar-eu.org/Page\\_Generale.asp?DocID=15294&la=1&langue=EN](http://www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=15294&la=1&langue=EN)

latest ENAR Shadow Report drew particular attention to the vulnerability of people of African descent who are disproportionately affected by discrimination across Europe.<sup>5</sup>

As we continue to progress through 2012 this briefing paper looks to the current situation facing people of African descent in the European Union. This group are referred to as 'Black Europeans' throughout the paper. Drawing on the ENAR National Shadow Reports on racism 2010-2011, the paper presents key statistics from the Black populations of Europe and information on the extent to which Black people continue to face racial discrimination on the continent.

### The UN International Year for People of African Descent

The year 2011 represented the UN's recognition of people of African descent as "a distinct group who human rights must be promoted and protected". They also claimed that 2011 offered "a unique opportunity to redouble our efforts to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance that affect people of African descent everywhere".

The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action recognised people of African descent as a specific victim group who continue to suffer from racial discrimination several generations after the slave trade came to an end. In a Statement Ban Ki-Moon explained that 2011 was committed to "strengthen[ing] political commitment to eradicating discrimination against people of African descent" and "promot[ing] greater awareness of and respect" while remembering that they are "among those most affected by racism".

In December 2010 Ban Ki-Moon also stated,

*"The international community cannot accept that whole communities are marginalized because of the colour of their skin. As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms: "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". If we are to make those words real, then we must eradicate racism once and for all... Let us all intensify our efforts to ensure that all people of African descent can fully enjoy all their rights."*

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/sgspeeches/statments\\_full.asp?statID=1032](http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/sgspeeches/statments_full.asp?statID=1032)  
<http://www.un.org/en/events/iypad2011/>

### WHO IS BLACK IN EUROPE?

People of African descent make up less than 2% of the population of Europe and the US Congress estimates that there are around 7 million individuals of African descent currently living on the continent.<sup>6</sup> However, in this paper the term 'Black Europeans' is also used to refer to

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Racism in Europe - ENAR Shadow Report 2010-11

those who would fall within the UN classification of ‘People of African Descent’. This helps to avoid any confusion with people from North African countries and South Africa. The term ‘Black European’ also emphasises the fact that racial characteristics are fundamental to people of African descent’s experiences of racism and discrimination in Europe. Thus, in this paper both ‘Black’ and ‘people of African descent’ will be used.

Defining members of Europe’s Black communities is notoriously difficult and understandings of Blackness are inherently contextual and vary greatly between countries.<sup>7</sup> What was considered to be Black in the past is not necessarily the same as what constitutes Blackness; neither does being Black mean the same thing across the continent.

One reason for nationally specific definitions and understandings of Blackness is the different histories of Europe. There are four main categories of Black Europeans, representing different contexts of migration and settlement:

### Colonial

*The presence of Black Europeans in several Western European countries is due in large part to their colonial pasts, including the UK, France, Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Belgium and Germany. The colonial legacy often led to the direct inheritance of Black citizens. Especially in the wake of the Second World War colonial immigration was encouraged to fill labour demands. For example, colonial citizens who were given the status ‘Citizen of the United Kingdom and the Colonies’ (CUKC) in 1948 which gave them free entry and full citizenship in the United Kingdom until 1962.*

*While the UK had ‘Colonies’ France had, and continues to have, what it calls ‘départements d’Outre-mer’ or ‘Overseas Territories’ - Guadeloupe, Martinique, Reunion and French Guyana (since 1946) – where mainland laws and regulations have direct application. The fact that overseas territory are considered to be French soil means that people born there are considered de facto French citizens. While these laws have since been tightened, the effect of immigration to mainland France is still visible in the presence of non-Whites.*

*In addition, more recently, both France and the UK have seen a significant amount of immigrants coming from their former African colonies.*

### Refugees

*Political refugees, predominantly from Africa have had a marked impact on the size of Black population in countries such as Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway<sup>8</sup>. In Finland and Sweden ‘people of African descent’ are perceived to be the largest ethnic minority. These countries are popular destinations for asylum and also major countries of resettlement. Somalis are the 6<sup>th</sup> largest ethnic group in Denmark with a population of 16,943.<sup>9</sup>*

### Labour Migrants

*There is an important difference between the long-established Black communities visible in Europe’s ex-colonial leaders (Britain, France and the Netherlands) and the newly established Black*

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<sup>7</sup> Blakely, A. “Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe” in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>9</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Denmark

communities found elsewhere in the EU. Large numbers of Black migrants, particularly from the African continent have entered Europe for work. Ireland in particular has seen a significant swell in its Black population which rose from 4,000 to 40,000 in just 4 years (1997-2001).<sup>10</sup> Italy has also become an important “gateway to Europe” and receives around 100,000 immigrants every year.<sup>11</sup>

## Students

Under the power of USSR around 50,000 students were sent to study in Russia, while similar student migrations also occurred in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, East Germany and Latvia.<sup>12</sup> The Soviet Union hoped that the students would develop sympathy for socialism but since the ideological incentive for them being there has gone, Black populations and their descendents are often disregarded.<sup>13</sup> The Black populations of these countries are not large (approximately 3,000 in the Czech Republic, 500 in Slovakia) but experience high levels of discrimination and racist violence.<sup>14</sup>

The UK is a good example of how categories can change overtime. For example, the labels used to define people from the Caribbean have evolved over time from ‘Coloured’, through ‘West Indian’, ‘Black’ and ‘Afro-Caribbean’ to ‘African-Caribbean’.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile the introduction of ‘Black British’ as a category on the census reflects the long-term settlement of the Black population. In the UK ‘Blackness’ has also been used as a collective label for non-Whites, grouping those of African and Asian descent. With its long history of ethnic data collection the UK exemplifies the problems of categorisation and terminology. These problems make cross-country comparative work extremely challenging as who is Black is inherently contextual.

The different histories of Europe’s Black communities are reflected in the different ways they are labelled and researched. Thus, while the UK recognises the Black population as a settled ethnic minority, in countries with more recent histories of immigration, Black people are subsumed into the ‘foreign population’. There is a common conflation of Blackness and immigration in many countries and as such Black population estimates are often presented as a percentage of immigrants rather than as communities in their own right. For example, ENAR reports that “people of African descent” compose 11% of the *immigrant* population in Denmark (49,743).<sup>16</sup>

Europe’s Black population is very diverse and while some Black people are migrants, others, particularly those who in countries with histories of colonial migration, are members of large and established Black communities. What is clear is that the visibility of Black people in Europe

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<sup>10</sup> Blakely, A. “Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe” in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*  
Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>13</sup> BBC Radio 4 *Black Students in Red Russia* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00gllnn>

<sup>14</sup> Blakely, A. “Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe” in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*  
Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>16</sup> ENAR *Shadow Report Denmark*

and perceptions of ethnic minority status tend to supersede nationality and immigrant status.<sup>17</sup> Thus, European born Blacks and migrants alike continue to suffer as a result of their visible differences. Physical symbols of difference based on race and skin colour continue to hold force within European societies even while the insignificance of race has been scientifically proven.<sup>18</sup> Artificial constructs of race and colour are deeply-embedded in European imaginations and are reflected in Black stereotypes in the media and popular culture.<sup>19</sup>

Despite common connotation of Blackness as related to skin colour, and the UN categories defining Black people in terms of 'African descent', being Black is not by definition a question of African ancestry.<sup>20</sup> Rather than a racial phenotype or descent, many academics argue that Blackness is a sociologically constructed identity which has historically been imposed on people, even if they prefer otherwise. In this way Blackness is better understood as an identity created through racialisation and ascription than skin colour per se.<sup>21</sup> For example, Stuart Hall explains that "Black is not a question of pigmentation" but "a historical category, a political category, a cultural category".<sup>22</sup>

The lack of consensus on categories and inconsistent data collection are major concerns for statistical precision and analysis and reliable statistics on Europe's Black populations are scarce. The variety of terms employed also complicates the data. For example, some countries record Blacks as a percentage of total population, some as part of the foreign population and others as a proportion of immigrants. As well as terminological issues, several European nations – including France and Germany – refuse to collect data according to race or ethnicity. In 2007, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance conducted a study of statistic collection in 42 countries. Of those countries they found that only 29 collected statistics about country of birth, 6 collected information on parents' country of birth and 22 on nationality or ethnicity. The result of this patchy data collection is that there is no strong statistical evidence on Black communities, let alone to record the discrimination they face.<sup>23</sup>

For example, the registration of individuals according to ethnicity or religion is not permitted in Sweden but data on national origins is. In 2008 there were 82,504 people who had been born in Africa living in Sweden but only 37,910 people were African citizens.<sup>24</sup> The census report makes no mention of countries of origin or of the descendants of these African migrants.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> ENAR *Shadow Report*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>19</sup> Blakely, A. "Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe" in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>22</sup> Hall, S. (1991) "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities" in A. King (ed) *Culture, Globalization and the World System* London: MacMillan p 53

<sup>23</sup> M. Arthur Robinson Diakit  (2009) *An introduction to some basic facts about people of African descent in the African Diaspora: A briefing on the activities of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent.* pg. 5

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

## Population Estimates

**UK** – According to ECRI, the UK is the only European country to include ethnic categories in its census. At the time of the 2001 Census 1,147,602 people described themselves as ‘Black Caribbean’, ‘Black African’ or ‘Other Black’ representing 2% of the total population. 57.9% of Black Caribbeans and 33.7% of Black Africans were born in the UK

**France** – France does not collect data according to ethnicity, however, estimates put the Black population of France around 2.5 million with estimates between 1.83 and 5 million.

**Germany** – The third largest Black population is found in Germany with an estimated 168,000 sub-Saharan Africans. However, the German census does not record data on race or ethnicity and other estimates put the total population at around 500,000. Relative to Germany’s other minority groups the Black population is relatively small.

**Italy** – Black population in Italy is approaching 200,000 with 53,000 originating from Senegal and upwards of 20,000 Nigerians (Blakely).

**Spain** – ENAR reports that there are 1,084,611 people who were born in Africa now living in Spain (14% with Spanish nationality). However, this figure does not include people of African descent born in Spain. There is a lack of statistics on ethnicity and estimates very wildly between 45,000 (Blakely) and 1.6 million.

**Belgium** – Around 22,000 Blacks mostly from former colonies such as Congo and Rwanda.

**Portugal** – Out of 110,000 immigrants in Portugal the majority are Black people from Portugal’s former colonies Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Other estimates put the total population of African descent at around 150,000.

**Netherlands** – The Black population of the Netherlands originate mainly from the former Dutch colonies of Suriname and Netherlands Antilles.

**Russia** – Around 50,000 African students went to Russia for extended study during the Cold War Period and Interracial Children’s Charity METIS estimates there to be around 17,000 mixed race children living in Russia.

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ONS (2006) *FOCUS ON Ethnicity and Religion*

German Newspaper Slammed for Racist Cover,

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,557861,00.html>

Blakely, A. - Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*

ENAR *Shadow Report Spain*

ECRI (2007) “Ethnic” statistics and data protection in the Council of Europe countries: Study Report, pg. 9

[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/themes/Ethnic\\_statistics\\_and\\_data\\_protection.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/themes/Ethnic_statistics_and_data_protection.pdf)

## DISCRIMINATION

With such diverse characteristics and histories, pan-European research on discrimination against Black people is simply unavailable. However, anecdotal and country specific evidence shows that people of African descent are consistently and disproportionately discriminated against in access to jobs, housing, healthcare, education, goods and services and suffer from persistent stereotypes and prejudice. Their visibility makes them more susceptible to discrimination than many other minority groups.<sup>26</sup>

People of African descent are more likely to be unemployed or employed in jobs that they are overqualified for and that do not reflect their skills and qualifications.<sup>27</sup> The ENAR Shadow reports explain that Africans are paid less than native workers in Poland and Malta and in Latvia few Black university graduates were able to find an appropriate level of employment. Meanwhile, in the UK there are now more young Black men who are unemployed than are in employment.<sup>28</sup>

As part of a research project in Cyprus, African male students reported difficulties in entering some bars and nightclubs and believe their refusal to be racially motivated. Other students also mentioned being made to sit at the back of buses and classrooms.<sup>29</sup> Anecdotal evidence from Malta also describes people of African descent being denied entry to bars or onto buses. In some cases Blacks report being explicitly told “because you’re Black.”<sup>30</sup>

The significance of physical appearance and skin colour in discriminatory practices is evidenced in the equally offensive treatment of migrants and citizens, and the irrelevance of legal status to individuals’ treatment. In many countries there is an assumption that if a person is Black they must be a migrant. While this is not the case across all of Europe, it is a significant pattern of behaviour in many countries.<sup>31</sup> Evidence from The Inter-ministerial Delegation for the Equal Opportunities of French from Overseas (*la délégation interministérielle pour l’égalité des chances des Français d’Outre-mer*) highlights that Overseas French citizens suffer from discrimination in mainland France and are frequently grouped together with foreigners of African origin purely because of their skin colour.<sup>32</sup> The unequal treatment of mainland French citizens and citizens of the ‘départments outre-mers’ confirms that skin colour is a basis for discrimination in France.

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<sup>26</sup> Racism in Europe - ENAR Shadow Report 2010-11

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> **The Guardian (9th March 2012) Half of UK's young black males are unemployed.** <http://tinyurl.com/89sq94u>

<sup>29</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Cyprus

<sup>30</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Malta

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> ENAR Shadow Report France

## RACIST VIOLENCE AND CRIME

In an investigation of 800 people from Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, conducted in Portugal, researchers found that 48% had been threatened, insulted or harassed in public in the previous year.<sup>33</sup> Across Europe racist violence and crime against people of African origin continues to be significant.<sup>34</sup>

In January 2011 an Italian Court convicted 10 policemen of aggravating racial hatred after they beat and insulted a Ghanaian boy simply because "they thought he was a partner in crime of a pusher".<sup>35</sup> Also, in December 2011, a man shot dead two Senegalese market traders in Florence.<sup>36</sup> African traders suffer frequent racist abuse in the city.<sup>37</sup>

In Sweden a Somali woman and her daughter suffered racist abuse and violence when a group of youths shouted racist insults including "f\*\*\*ing negro" and "take off the curtain". The group then threw stones at them. The woman was hit three times and her six-year old daughter received a blow to the back of her head<sup>38</sup>.

In many European countries racism in football has proved a major issue. In Poland, where racist incidents against Black persons is common, Black are players regularly called 'niggers'.<sup>39</sup> In March 2012, a Congolese footballer had a banana thrown at him in a stadium in Russia.<sup>40</sup>

## HOUSING

Discrimination and racial prejudice in housing affects not only the spatial segregation of certain communities, including people of African descent, but also access to social housing, and the quality housing and living conditions available.<sup>41</sup> In many countries there are also ethnic restrictions on rental accommodation.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Portugal. Pg. 8

<sup>34</sup> ENAR Shadow Report 2010-2011

<sup>35</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Italy

<sup>36</sup> *BBC News* (13 December 2011) Italian man kills two Senegalese traders in Florence. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-16166243>

<sup>37</sup> *BBC News* (14 December 2011) *Florence mourns Italy killing of two Senegalese traders*. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-16175877>

<sup>38</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Sweden

<sup>39</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Poland pg. 23

<sup>40</sup> *BBC news* (19 March 2012) *Samba upset by racism happening "in view of children"*. *BBC News* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/football/17434648>

<sup>41</sup> Racism in Europe - ENAR Shadow Report 2010-11

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*



In 2002, 29% of immigrant households in France, and 38% of households from Black Africa, lived in social rented accommodation.<sup>43</sup> The distribution of French social housing, which is concentrated in the *banlieues* around major cities like Paris and Lyon, means that Black African communities are often spatially segregated.<sup>44</sup>

In December 2010, homeless shelters in Denmark refused to accept Africans and other minority groups.<sup>45</sup> This was legally permitted under a law passed in 2007 allowing shelters to refuse entry to foreigners. When criticised by the Council of Europe Social Affairs Minister Kjær stated simply: “We cannot allow an open door policy for the homeless, because it will make Denmark a magnet for homeless foreigners.”<sup>46</sup>

In Spain, a 2010 survey of landlords and real estate agencies found that 36.8% refuse to rent their properties to Sub-Saharanans.<sup>47</sup> Reports from Germany present similar evidence of Black people being told: “If you at least had a German wife you would have had a chance to get this flat” or “We do not want your complexion colour at this place.”<sup>48</sup> These experiences are common among migrants as well as Afro-Germans with legal citizenship status.

## ETHNIC PROFILING

Ethnic profiling of people of African descent is common across Europe. Black people are disproportionately targeted by law enforcement officers in several European countries where ethnic and racial stereotypes, rather than objective evidence, guide law enforcement.

Ethnic profiling is “the use by law enforcement officers of race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin rather than individual behavior as the basis for making decisions about who has been or may be involved in criminal activity”<sup>49</sup>. Ethnic profiling may be a result of intentional, conscious racism among law enforcement officers but more commonly is the result of ingrained, unconscious and unchecked ethnic and racial stereotypes. It is illegal in most European countries, although, a German court recently ruled that ethnic profiling by skin is permissible<sup>50</sup>.

Across the continent people of African descent are stopped and searched much more frequently than White Europeans. For example, Black people in Paris are on average 6 times more likely to be stopped by police than Whites, rising to 11.5 times in certain neighbourhoods.<sup>51</sup> Legally resident people of African descent and Black European citizens are

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<sup>43</sup> Scalon and Whitehead (2011) *French Social Housing in an International Context* OECD Working Papers No. 862

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Denmark pg. 17

<sup>46</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Denmark, pg.17

<sup>47</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Spain, pg. 15

<sup>48</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Germany, pg. 22

<sup>49</sup> Open Society Justice Initiative *The Problem of Ethnic Profiling in Europe* A Briefing Paper by OSJI <http://tinyurl.com/cw2taqq>

<sup>50</sup> *Huffington Post* (27 March 2012) *German Police ID Checks By Skin Color OK, Says Court* <http://tinyurl.com/d42tn7r>

<sup>51</sup> Open Society Justice Initiative (2009) *Profiling Minorities: A Study of Stop-and-Search Practices in Paris* <http://tinyurl.com/cethyvy>

also subjected to ID checks, raids and immigration checks based purely on the colour of their skin.<sup>52</sup>

Spanish law enforcement officers routinely rely on physical characteristics in stop and search procedures.<sup>53</sup> 55% of Sub-Saharan respondents to a 2010 survey had been ID checked in the street, compared to 47% of Magrebians, 29% of Latin Americans and 10% of Asians.<sup>54</sup> Witnesses of Spain's stop and searches report police use of threats and coercion and reports of physical and sexual abuse during raids are not uncommon.<sup>55</sup> A 2010 report by Amnesty International found that 90% of people subjected to identity checks believed their selection had been based on racial characteristics. The checks had taken place during daily activities like travelling to work and shopping and none of the people who took part in the report had been accused of committing an offence.<sup>56</sup>

## STEREOTYPES AND MEDIA

A tradition of colour prejudice and racism has persisted for centuries across Western Europe and the belief that Black people were inferior to Whites formed the foundations and justifications for colonialism and slavery. However, colour racism continues and is clearly visible in modern media, advertising and popular culture in many European nations.

The sale of *Negerkuss or Negerzoen* (Negro's kiss) and *Mohrenkopf* (Moor's head) teacakes in Germany, France, The Netherlands, Scandinavia and Switzerland exemplifies the everyday acceptability of fundamentally racist and derogatory terms in many European countries.<sup>57</sup> The name of these cakes was only changed in 2006 when it was thought to be not "of this time"<sup>58</sup>. Racist stereotypes of Black people as exotic, tribal and suited to servitude have often been used in product branding and advertising.<sup>59</sup> For example, in 2011, an advertisement for Swedish coffee brand Gevalia, which depicted a Black man as a coffee bean, was accused of being racist, degrading and stereotypical and was subsequently removed.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Open Society Justice Initiative *The Problem of Ethnic Profiling in Europe* A Briefing Paper by OSJI <http://tinyurl.com/cw2taqq>

<sup>53</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Spain, pg. 24

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Amnesty International (2011) *Stop Racism, Not People: Racial Profiling and Immigration Control in Spain*

<http://tinyurl.com/bspe4z5> p.16

<sup>57</sup> Blakely, A. "Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe" in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*

Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>58</sup> Hondius, D. "Blacks in Early Modern Europe" in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* Chicago:

University of Illinois

<sup>59</sup> Blakely, A. "Historical Dimensions of Blackness in Europe" in DC Hine et al (2009) *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*

Chicago: University of Illinois

<sup>60</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Sweden pg. 34

The most recent ENAR Shadow Report from Sweden found increasing 'Afrophobia' to be an emerging trend in Sweden.<sup>61</sup> As well as increasing reports of hate crime and discrimination against people of African descent, there have been a series of racist incidents involving the Swedish media and public events which have often been described as 'light hearted' by their perpetrators.

In April 2011, students at Lund University organised and participated in a highly controversial "slave auction". The 'jungle' themed evening involved student 'slaves' with blackened faces and ropes round their necks being sold by White 'slave owners' at a staged auction.<sup>62</sup> A Swedish artist then depicted the African activist who reported the auction as a slave for a poster which read "Has anyone seen our runaway slave?" The artist declared in an interview: "I want to make fun of the fact that people get upset about something like this... Certain people are always offended. They have no sense of humour".<sup>63</sup>

According to ENAR, hate speech has become a real problem in Sweden and the racist humiliation of Black people through supposedly light-hearted stereotypes is not taken seriously enough. This has led Swedish civil society organisations to demand government funded dissemination of knowledge and education about Afrophobia<sup>64</sup>.

The light-hearted use of derogatory stereotypes was also evidenced in a recent incident in the Netherlands where a Black comedian proposed having a 'Negro Day' in March. On his website he declared: "Our motto is, 'Love your Negro', on this day everyone may act as negro. Or at least the way most people think negroes behave. So for lunch, or breakfast go to KFC, get yourself a gold teeth, don't work hard, visit your mistress before you go home... Twitter your negro adventures, the best Negro tweets will win a unique Negro day T-shirt."<sup>65</sup>

## RACISM IN JUSTICE SYSTEMS

There is evidence of institutional racism against people of African descent in the criminal and justice systems of several European countries.

The trial of Duncan Deguara, who was accused of killing Sudanese migrant Suleiman Abubaker in 2009 in Malta, ended in his acquittal in March 2012. During the trial the prosecution did not call key witnesses of the attack and those who were asked to testify had links to the defendant. On top of this, throughout the proceedings Abubaker were frequently referred to as 'the black man.'<sup>66</sup> This is just one example of what is increasingly obvious institutional racism in Malta. In

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* p.9

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>63</sup> *The Local (April 2011)* Racism whistleblower faces 'negro slave' taunt <http://www.thelocal.se/33338/20110421/>

<sup>64</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Sweden p 9

<sup>65</sup> "Negro Day" in The Netherlands. But is it funny? (March 2012) <http://afroeuropa.blogspot.co.uk/2012/03/negro-day-in-netherlands-but-is-it.html?showComment=1334868590283>

<sup>66</sup> *Times of Malta (25 March 2012)* Africans share fears of racial aggression at protest. Times of Malta

another example, a Somali national, Osman Omar, spent five years in a Correctional Facility without trial.<sup>67</sup>

African migrants in Malta continue to report police failure to take incidents against migrants seriously.<sup>68</sup> Similarly among members of the sub-Saharan community in Portugal, 100% of those who had suffered discrimination from the police, did not report the crime for fear that it would affect their status.<sup>69</sup>

In Cyprus, reports of police failure are also available. When a 15 year old Cypriot girl of African descent was attacked it took three attempts before her father was able to file a complaint. The complaint led to no arrests despite there being witnesses.<sup>70</sup> In another incident, in 2011, an asylum seeker from Cameroon reported having been beaten by police and being racially insulted by prisoner officials.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, countries with a very recent presence of people of African descent often lack data on exact numbers as well as the mechanisms to monitor, investigate and adequately punish racist crimes. For example, in Estonia where the total Black population is small, racist violence is frequent in the university town of Tartu which attracts international students of African descent.<sup>72</sup> Black students fall victim of intolerance of physical violence especially in the city's pubs and clubs, however, not a single case registered with the police identifies race as a motive.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, police in Poland refused to deal with the case of a Black person who was spat at in the face as they did not accept that it was a crime.<sup>74</sup>

In countries like Estonia, where Black communities are a relatively recent phenomenon, the State does not recognise the importance of dealing with the racial aspect of crimes. It is important that States build a system of data collection to monitor racially motivated crime and amend legislation to facilitate prosecution.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *Times of Malta* (9 April 2012) *Stamp out racism or suffer the consequences.*)

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20120409/editorial/Stamp-out-racism-or-suffer-the-consequences.414654>

<sup>68</sup> *Times of Malta* (25 March 2012) *Africans share fears of racial aggression at protest*

<sup>69</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Portugal. p21

<sup>70</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Cyprus. p36

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* p37

<sup>72</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Estonia. P32

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> ENAR Shadow Report Poland p 25

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* p 51- 52

## WHAT ABOUT THE UK?

Black communities in the UK have much higher rates of unemployment than other ethnic groups and the White majority population.<sup>76</sup> Low levels of employment are particularly seen among young people of African descent and especially among young Black males. In fact, 48% of Black people between 16 and 24 were unemployed in 2009.<sup>77</sup> According to the Institute for Public Policy Research: “Black, Black British and mixed race young people see the biggest increases in unemployment” since the recession.<sup>78</sup> In the last quarter of 2011 the percentage of young Black males who were unemployed rose to 55.9%.<sup>79</sup>

In schools Black Caribbean pupils are among the lowest achievers and also have one of the highest rates of permanent exclusion.<sup>80</sup> The number of Black students in UK universities is roughly proportionate to the population size; however, students of African descent are underrepresented in the UK’s most prestigious universities (known as the Russell Group). Only 8% of Black students attend a Russell Group University compared to 24% of their White counterparts.<sup>81</sup>

Black people in the UK are seven times more likely to be stopped and searched than someone who is White.<sup>82</sup> In 1999 the Macpherson report accused the Metropolitan Police’s investigation of Stephen Lawrence’s murder to be “marred” by institutional racism.<sup>83</sup> However, 19 years on from Stephen Lawrence’s death the Metropolitan police are again accused of racism.<sup>84</sup> On top of experience of ethnic profiling in routine stop and search Black people are over-represented in both the national DNA database and prison population<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> ENAR Shadow Report UK p11

<sup>77</sup> IPPR (2010) *Youth unemployment and the recession*. IPPR Briefing Paper <http://tinyurl.com/bljz4yv>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> ***The Guardian (9 march 2012)*** *Half of UK's young black males are unemployed.*

<sup>80</sup> ENAR Shadow Report UK pg. 11

<sup>81</sup> ENAR Shadow Report UK pg. 22-23

<sup>82</sup> *StopWatch Factsheet*. <http://www.stop-watch.org/uploads/StopWatch%20factsheet.pdf>

<sup>83</sup> Home Affairs Committee (2009) *The Macpherson Report-Ten Years On* <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2009/jul/uk-hasc-macpherson.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> ***The Guardian (16 April 2012)*** *Eleven Met police cases of alleged racism*. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/apr/16/met-police-cases-alleged-racism>

<sup>85</sup> ENAR Shadow Report UK p30-31

## CONCLUSION

In 1976 the UK Race Relations Act made the collection of statistical data according to ethnicity mandatory in order to facilitate ethnic monitoring and alleviate racial inequalities and a question on “ethnic group” has been asked as part of the UK census since 1991.<sup>86</sup> However, the UK is the only country to include ethnicity in its census<sup>87</sup> and several European countries either refuse to, or choose not to collect data about ethnicity.

Despite a lack of consistent Europe-wide data on ethnicity, non-governmental reports and anecdotal evidence, as presented through this paper clearly demonstrates that there is a sizeable Black population in Europe and that this Black population suffers disproportionate levels of discrimination and violence. The hardship faced by people of African descent in Europe, although experienced differently in different countries, is common across the continent. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that Europe’s Black population should be looked at as a group in its own right rather than as a percentage of the foreign born or immigrant population, as is the case in most European countries.<sup>88</sup> This will be especially important as more recent Black communities establish themselves and give birth to new generations of Black Europeans.

The evidence presented in this paper reveals the persistence of colour racism and discrimination which affect people of African descent in all areas of life including employment, housing, education and criminal justice.<sup>89</sup> However, without a clear definition of Blackness, and without reliable and consistent data the true scale of this disadvantage cannot be fully understood. The data available for the United Kingdom exemplifies the potential of recording data according to ethnicity. Being able to statistically represent the inequalities and disadvantages that being Black in Europe entails would help advocates of racial equality to demonstrate the need for greater anti-discrimination efforts across Europe.

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<sup>86</sup> ECRI (2007) *“Ethnic” statistics and data protection in the Council of Europe countries: Study Report*, p42

<sup>87</sup> ECRI (2007) *“Ethnic” statistics and data protection in the Council of Europe countries: Study Report*, pg. 9

<sup>88</sup> M. Arthur Robinson Diakit  (2009) *An introduction to some basic facts about people of African descent in the African Diaspora: A briefing on the activities of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent*.

<http://www.thelundian.com/Basicfacts.pdf> pg. 5

<sup>89</sup> Racism in Europe - ENAR Shadow Report 2010-11