

Study finds pervasive and relentless anti-Black racism is rising in EU countries, led by Germany



People take to the streets of Paris in September to march against 'systemic racism, police violence and for public freedoms'. Photograph: Ait Adjedjou Karim/Abaca/Shutterstock

Paris, October 27 (RHC)-- Racism towards Black people has been on a rising trend in the European Union countries, with Germany in the lead, a recent poll has found.

The survey titled "Being Black in the EU" was conducted in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and published on Wednesday, showing the highest rates of discrimination and harassment against Black people in Germany, Austria, and Finland, respectively.

The survey of first- and second-generation Black immigrants in these EU countries found growing discrimination in every walk of life.

The study by the EU's rights agency found anti-Black racism is "pervasive and relentless" and on the rise in Europe, with nearly half of the Black people in member states surveyed by the EU reporting discrimination, from the verbal abuse of their children to being blocked by landlords from renting homes, evident in every aspect of society, from schools to the job market, housing, and health services.

Its findings showed that in the space of six years since the previous study, the proportion of respondents who had felt racially discriminated in the past 12 months had risen by 10 percentage points to 34 percent.

Germany and Austria showed the proportion was 64 percent - almost twice the previous level of 33 percent in Germany and a significant increase from the 42 percent recorded in Austria six years earlier. The next worst rate was for Finland with 54 percent. Far-right parties have been on the rise in these countries in past years.

"It is shocking to see no improvement since our last survey," FRA Director Michael O'Flaherty said. "Instead, people of African descent face ever more discrimination just because of the color of their skin."

The rate of respondents who reported feeling racially discriminated against over the past five years rather than 12 months rose to 45 percent across the EU countries studied -- an increase of six points from the previous study. The worst three countries in this regard were the same, with Germany's rate being the highest at 76 percent.

The poll for the FRA was carried out by Ipsos -- a sweeping survey of 16,124 immigrants and descendants of immigrants across 15 countries from which several FRA reports will be produced - on other ethnic minorities and Muslims.

The study was conducted between October 2021 and September 2022 with the focus on 6,752 people born in sub-Saharan Africa or with at least one parent born there. Sweden and Portugal were the EU countries with the lowest rates of harassment and, along with Poland, they had the lowest racial discrimination rates, according to the respondents in the survey.

Young people of African descent in the EU countries surveyed were found to be three times more likely to leave school early, compared with the general population. Twenty-six percent of respondents said they had been stopped by the police in the five years before the survey. Among those, about half characterized the most recent police stop as racial profiling.

The average proportion of Black people who believed they had been a victim of ethnic profiling by the police had increased across the countries surveyed from 41 percent in 2016 to 48 percent in 2022. The survey recommended that leaders in member states enforce anti-discrimination measures and legislation in every walk of EU society to reduce racism.

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