

Information on the implementation of certain recommendations presented by the International Convention in the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in the concluding observations on twenty-second to twenty-fourth periodic reports of Denmark

May 2023

Denmark

Part I

Introduction

The present report is submitted in accordance with the procedure on follow-up to concluding observations adopted by the Committee. The report has been compiled by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the basis of contributions from relevant ministries of the Government of Denmark.

Selected recommendations for follow-up

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination adopted its concluding observations on the twenty-second to twenty-fourth periodic reports of Denmark on the 3 December 2021. In paragraph 43 of the concluding observations the Committee requested the State party to provide, within 12 months of the adoption of the concluding observations, information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 (b) (hate crime and hate speech), 27 (situation of the COVID-19 pandemic) and 31 (discrimination against persons of African descent).

Denmark hereby provides additional information on the implementation of the recommendations as requested by the Committee Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Part II

A. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 19(b) of the concluding observations (CERD/C/DNK/CO/22-24)

Hate crime and hate speech

“19(b). The Committee recommends the State party to take measures to ensure that all racially motivated crimes, including crimes with mixed motives, are effectively investigated and prosecuted, including by adopting concrete operational measures and by examining potential gaps in investigating, prosecuting and applying the legislation on hate crimes”

Follow-up information

Measures to combat hate crime, both within the judicial system and in other parts of society, is an important priority for the Danish Government. The financial agreement (2021-2023) for the Danish police and the Danish prosecution service contains new initiatives to strengthen the efforts of the police and the prosecution service towards victims of hate crimes. The initiatives include strengthening the further education of police officers in hate crimes from 2022 with a special focus to improve police handling of victims of hate crimes and the development of new information material aimed at victims of hate crimes and key stakeholders.

As a part of further education, the police officers are offered education at the Police Academy in handling hate crimes. The purpose of this education is to ensure that police officers are ready and able to handle police tasks related to hate crimes. As part of the ambition to further focus on hate crime, the education of key personnel groups within the police has been updated and expanded from a one-day training course to a two-day training course. The Director of

Public Prosecutions was responsible for teaching parts of the course in June and in November 2022. The next planned course will be held in May 2023.

The Director of Public Prosecution hosted a conference in June 2021 in which prosecutors had an opportunity to discuss the subject of hate crimes with stakeholders dealing with the subject and to learn more about hate crimes from victims' perspective. The Director of Public Prosecution is also planning an online course on hate crime, which expectedly will be offered Danish prosecutors in late 2023.

In June 2023, the Director of Public Prosecution will publish a list of cases on hate crime where the court increased the sentence according to section 81 part 6 of the Danish criminal code. The list will contain short summaries of relevant cases and the list will be updated twice a year. The list will be published on the prosecution services website and will be accessible to all.

Furthermore, the Danish police have introduced a new digital police unit, which is patrolling on social media through visible police presence in open groups. Thereby, the police are able to combat different forms of internet related crimes more effectively – for example, online sexual harassment or racist motivated hate crimes and hate speech.

Finally, the Danish police have developed new information material aimed at victims of hate crimes, including hate speech, as well as information material aimed at key stakeholders such as the Muslim Council, the Jewish Community in Denmark, Disabled People's Organizations Denmark and the National Association of LGBTI persons in Denmark. The purpose of this information material is, among other things, to inform potential hate crime victims about what hate crime and hate speech are in a judicial sense, which hopefully will increase the reporting of these offences.

B. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 27 of the concluding observations (CERD/C/DNK/CO/22-24)

Situation of the COVID-19 pandemic

“27. The Committee recommends that the State party further enhance its targeted efforts to protect ethnic minorities from the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects, in particular by increasing vaccination uptake and testing among persons from ethnic minority communities, and taking measures to build trust within these communities in the health-care measures in place to address the pandemic, including by engaging with a diverse and broad range of representatives of these communities in the development of such trust-building measures.”

Follow-up information

Denmark has made and will continue to make targeted efforts to protect ethnic minorities from the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Danish Health Authority has collaborated with housing organizations, civil society organizations and religious organizations on infection prevention and testing as well as vaccination uptake with a special focus on persons with an ethnic minority background.

Prior to receiving the Committee's concluding observations of 3 December, Denmark made changes to its national testing and vaccination strategy.

As of March 2022, the Danish Health Authority primarily recommends elderly citizens and persons at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 to test in case of showing COVID-19

symptoms and to receive the booster vaccine against COVID-19. The booster vaccine is also recommended for pregnant women, healthcare staff and social care staff working in close proximity to persons in high-risk groups or relatives to persons in high-risk groups.

As of April 2023, the national COVID-19 test strategy has been further downscaled. Public test sites have been closed and citizens or patients are now generally referred to testing either by their general practitioner or the hospital.

Furthermore, self-tests are offered to employees and their households at larger workplaces in order to monitor the virus. Due to this monitoring, it is possible for Denmark to increase the test and vaccination capacity and activity, if necessary, including reinstating a strong emphasis on protecting ethnic minorities based on learnings from our previous experiences. This may include the following previous initiatives and will always be in accordance with the national course of action for COVID-19 testing and vaccination:

- Efforts to protect ethnic minorities from the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects were conducted in cooperation with municipalities and local resident associations within housing areas. Municipalities and the public housing sector still have an active role in providing information on vaccination.
- In the autumn/winter of 2022, the Danish Health Authority set up a coordination group for the purpose of targeting citizens from ethnic minorities within the national target group for vaccination at a local and regional level.
- The Danish Health Authority made information on COVID-19 testing and vaccination available in various formats and languages in order to accommodate differences in the population's health literacy, as well as to reach those who do not speak Danish and those who have difficulties reading long texts.
- By recommendation and support from municipalities and civil society organizations, the Danish Health Authority developed postcards and posters with brief, informative messages on COVID-19 vaccination. These were translated into English, Urdu, Turkish, Polish, Somali, Ukrainian, Greenlandic and Arabic.
- Experience gained from working with ethnic minorities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has, however, shown that trust building efforts have a greater influence on vaccination uptake than translating information material into a wide range of different languages.
- In the autumn/winter of 2022, the Danish Health Authority collaborated with "Mino Denmark" – a civil society organization that works to strengthen the opportunities, voices and community participation of ethnic minorities. Together with Mino Denmark, the Danish Health Authority held talks regarding ex-vaccinations in different cities with the team *Inequality in health among minority ethnic citizens* in order to gain access to minority groups and build trust.

C. Follow-up information relating to paragraph 31 of the concluding observations (CERD/C/DNK/CO/22-24)

Discrimination against persons of African Descent

"31. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that an independent study is carried out into the situation of and discrimination against people of African descent in the

State party, in dialogue and collaboration with the affected community, and that it devise a strategy and actions to address discrimination against persons of African descent. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to disseminate knowledge of Danish colonial history. The Committee further recommends that the State party provide an update on strengthening dissemination of knowledge of Danish colonial history and on concrete actions taken”

Follow-up information

Combating discrimination, racism, hate speech and hate crimes is very important to the Danish Government. Accordingly, a national action plan against racism is under development. The aim of the action plan is to fight and prevent racism broadly across the Danish society through a variety of concrete initiatives.

In order to develop a broad and effective action plan, the Government is including a comprehensive number of stakeholders in the work, which include both political parties, non-governmental organizations as well as other representatives from the civil society and affected communities. The action plan against racism is currently under preparation and is expected to be completed in 2023.

Regarding efforts to disseminate knowledge of Danish colonial history, a report on the dissemination of knowledge of Danish colonial history commissioned as part of the 2021 budget was delivered for political consideration in April 2022. A committee involving national cultural institutions and relevant organizations composed the report.

The report concluded that significant dissemination of knowledge of Danish colonial history takes place in both the educational system as well as through cultural institutions such as museums. The report concludes that dissemination of knowledge has increased during the last 5-10 years, as part of an international tendency. The 2017 marking of the centenary of the sale of the present US Virgin Islands to the US has also played a role in increasing the attention to the subject.

As a result, the availability of relevant educational materials has increased significantly and attention has been called to the need for broader perspectives on colonial history in museums. Major digitization of archival material related to the former Danish West Indies has also taken place at the National Archives.

The report also conducted a survey regarding the knowledge of colonial history among the general population. The report concluded that for most respondents, knowledge of Danish colonial history is present but often limited to very general terms. The report pointed to a significant potential interest in additional initiatives regarding dissemination of knowledge of colonial history.

The National Museum has a national responsibility for research regarding and dissemination of knowledge of Danish colonial history. The Museum opened a new exhibition on colonial history in 2017 with an increased focus on the voices of colonized people.