

GHM profile and main activities report for January 2019- June 2020

Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM), founded in 1993, monitors, publishes, lobbies, and litigates on human and minority rights and anti-discrimination issues in Greece. It also monitors Greek media for stereotypes and hate speech. It issues press releases and prepares (usually jointly with other NGOs) parallel reports and communications to **UN Treaty Bodies**; applications and third-party interventions to the **ECtHR**; communications on the execution of **ECtHR** judgments to the Council of **Europe Committee of Ministers**. It also publishes specialized reports on ill-treatment and on ethno-national, ethno-linguistic, religious and immigrant communities, in Greece. It operates a [website](#), a [specialized website on racist crimes in Greece](#) and a [Facebook page](#). **GHM** is a member of the [European Implementation Network \(EIN\)](#), the [World Organization Against Torture \(OMCT\) Network](#), the [Justicia European Rights Network](#), the [International Detention Coalition \(IDC\)](#), the [International Network Against Cyber Hate \(INACH\)](#), [Justice and Environment](#), the [Network Against the Extreme Right](#), the [Campaign for the access to asylum](#), and the [Greek Network for the Right to Housing](#).

Racist Crimes Watch records cases of racist crimes (racist profiling, racist speech, racist desecrations & vandalisms, racist discrimination and racist violence) [on a special public website](#) and files criminal complaint reports to the **Prosecutors for Racist Crimes** who almost always launch criminal investigations (some 700 from 2015 through June 2020). The project was launched after **ECRI**, **UN HRCtee** and **UN CERD** expressed concern that cases of racism are underreported allegedly due to lack of trust in the authorities and the absence of an effective complaints mechanism and regret that sanctions imposed are insufficient to discourage and prevent discrimination. The project helped overcome the underreporting and highlight the absence of an effective complaints mechanism that lead to very few cases reaching the trial stage and even fewer ending with irrevocable convictions. The bulk of the complaints filed in the framework of this project, after a preliminary investigation, are “under examination” by prosecutors -alongside hundreds of other unrelated cases the same prosecutors are also assigned for examination. The project surveys traditional, electronic, on line, and social media to spot potential racist crimes. In few cases racist crimes are directly reported to **GHM** and become public after complaints were failed.

- On 18 July 2019, the **ECtHR**, in the case of [T.I. and Others v. Greece](#), submitted by **GHM**, held that there had been a violation of Article 4 (prohibition of slavery and forced labor) of the ECHR Rights. In this case, three Russian nationals claimed that they had been victims of human trafficking. In particular, they alleged that they had been forced to work as prostitutes in Greece. The Court held in particular that the legal framework governing the proceedings had not been effective and sufficient either to punish the traffickers or to ensure effective prevention of human trafficking. It further held that the competent authorities had not dealt with the case with the level of diligence required by Article 4 of the Convention.
- On 5 February 2020, the **ECtHR** communicated to Greece the application [Papanikolaou v. Greece](#) submitted by **GHM** against the compulsory registration of religion in birth registration acts prescribed by law, which the applicant and **GHM** consider a violation of religious freedom (Article 9 of the **ECHR**). The **ECtHR** accepted the applicant’s request that the application should be given immediate priority and also considered the application to be potentially a leading case. Finally, for the first time in its history, the **ECtHR** invited the **Data Protection Authority** to intervene as a third party: the DPA refused to do it.
- **GHM** submitted [communications to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the execution of ECtHR judgments against Greece](#) on non-registration of ethnic minority associations; racist violence; human trafficking; asylum procedure, living conditions and detention of asylum seekers; and law enforcement officials’ violence.
- **GHM** submitted jointly with other NGOs alternative reports to the **UN Committees** [against Torture \(CAT\)](#), [on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#), and [on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#). **CAT** and **CRPD** reviewed Greece in 2019 and their concluding observations included several observations and recommendations in the **GHM** submissions. Greece’s review by **CRC** was rescheduled for 2021.