



# International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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## Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

### Reports submitted by State parties under article 9 of the Convention

#### Addendum

#### Information received from the Government of Bulgaria on the implementation of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/BGR/CO/19)\*

[29 September 2010]

#### A. Introduction

1. Pursuant to article 9, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the competent Bulgarian authorities provide the following information on some of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/BGR/CO/19).

#### B. Paragraph 13\*\*

2. In paragraph 13, the Committee recommended that Bulgaria should “...*continue measures to integrate Roma children into mixed schools, in cooperation with civil society organizations*”.

3. The Bulgarian authorities continue their efforts to encourage the integration and socialization of Roma children and students in preventing early dropouts from the educational system, increasing the quality of education and improving the educational facilities. All relevant measures undertaken by the authorities are discussed in the framework of the *National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Demographic Issues*, the main body for coordination and consultation of the government with civil society representatives on issues related to the equal integration of persons belonging to the

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\* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

\*\* Paragraph numbers mentioned in the present document refer to the Committee’s concluding observations published under symbol (CERD/C/BGR/CO/19).

minorities. There are 28 non-governmental organisations – members of the NCCEDI – among them, at least 7 identify themselves as representing the interests of the Roma. In addition, the Council on Roma Integration in Bulgarian Society, functioning with the MLSP, includes in its extended version nearly 80 NGOs expressing the interests of Roma, as well as experts on subjects like education, health care, culture, housing conditions, employment, social protection, etc. There is also a Roma Public Council on Culture at the Ministry of Culture, and so on. All these different, multilayered and interlocking types of mechanisms for coordination and consultation aim at facilitating the participation of minorities, particularly Roma representatives, in decision-making processes.

4. Furthermore, civil society representatives and media are regularly invited to participate in the events (workshops, seminars, etc.) organized within the framework of the Decade for Roma Inclusion, 2005-2015, the Framework Programme on the Equal Integration of Roma in the Bulgarian Society, the National Action Plan for Protection against Discrimination, etc. Relevant information is available on the websites of the NCCEDI ([www.nccedi.government.bg](http://www.nccedi.government.bg)), the Commission for Protection against Discrimination ([www.kzd-nondiscrimination.bg](http://www.kzd-nondiscrimination.bg)), etc.

5. In addition to the information provided in previous reports, attention should be drawn to Regulation No. 6 (2002) of the Minister of Education and Science, which explicitly forbids the enrolment of students with normal intellectual capabilities in establishments for children with disabilities. Moreover, in 2007–2009, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination and the non-governmental organization project “Human Rights” carried out 22 verification checks, and issued a decision on established discriminatory practices in the activities of some enrollment commissions in the field of education. Specific directions were enforced on the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science and the State Agency on Child Protection to strengthen prevention and undertake special measures to eradicate the negative consequences of discriminatory practices. In the same period, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination launched ten proceedings on alleged discrimination on ethnic grounds (including against Roma) in the field of education – 22 in the field of access to public buildings, goods and services, and 37 for hostile speech on ethnic grounds in the media.

6. By September 2010, the number of schools in residential areas inhabited mainly by Roma was 65, compared to 105 three years ago (the figures relate to the entire territory of the country). In 2009, 10,176 Roma children participated in intercultural education programmes; 11,318 enrolled in such programmes; 5,633 children entered general schools and kindergartens out of their area of residence (with respective free transport); and 3,066 passed through integration courses. A total of 19,414 persons were covered by programmes for the prevention of early dropout from school. The funds set aside in the 2010 state budget for such activities amounted to BGN 12 million.

7. In 2007–2009, the *Centre for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities* (presented in detail in the 19th periodic report (CERD/C/BGR/19)) funded 28 different projects encouraging the integration of children and students from the Roma community (total value of BGN 650,000, some BGN 500,000 support from the Roma Education Fund in Budapest). Another project (currently under implementation) is funded with BGN 600,000 from the Roma Education Fund and BGN 200,000 from the state budget. Also in 2007–2009, 41 projects worth BGN 790,426 were implemented to guarantee equal access to quality education, and 32 projects, worth BGN 263,813, for creating conditions for successful socialization – all entirely funded by the state budget. The main beneficiaries were municipalities, educational establishments and NGOs from small nucleated settlements, including of Roma.

8. In 2009, the State Agency for Child Protection developed a model for local-level interaction with children not covered by the educational system, including those of Roma

origin, with the objective of returning them to school. The model was submitted to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science for implementation with local authorities.

9. According to some expert estimates, in 2009, 23% of the grants provided under the Regional Development Programme for disadvantaged persons were allocated for repairs and rehabilitation of educational infrastructure in residential areas inhabited mainly by Roma (total value of projects exceeding BGN 293 million).

10. In July 2010, the Bulgarian authorities officially launched the development of the Social Inclusion Project, funded with a loan of 40 million Euros from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The project aims at the social inclusion of children up to 7 years (including those of Roma origin) through investment in early childhood development. The project will provide integrated social services related to childcare and measures will be implemented for capacity building. The specific activities are related to the provision of services for the formation and development of parenting skills for future and current parents, early intervention for children with disabilities, family counselling and support, health advice, etc. Activities will be funded for the 3-7 years age group for integration in kindergartens and improvement of school readiness by working with children in kindergarten and their parents, reducing the fees for kindergarten, providing transportation, among others.

### C. Paragraph 15

11. In paragraph 15, the Committee expressed *“concern about the specific obstacles encountered by Roma in respect of access to work, housing, health care and education”* and recommended that *“...the State party continue taking positive measures to improve the living conditions of Roma in respect of access to work, health care, housing and education within the framework of the Plan of Action for Roma Inclusion and the Decade for Roma Inclusion, in accordance with article 5 of the Convention and general recommendation XXVII (2000) on discrimination against Roma”*.

12. Improving the status of Roma in Bulgaria is among the main priorities of the government, and it consistently undertakes measures in this direction, in cooperation with and with the active participation of the Roma community (see also the information provided above).

13. As explained in previous reports, a number of strategic documents have been developed and are being applied. Among them, the Government updated and expanded *the Framework Programme for Integration of Roma in Bulgarian Society, 2010-2020* (approved by the Council of Ministers on 12 May 2010), *the National Programme for Improving the Housing Conditions of Roma* (expanded in 2009, etc.

14. The activities of the Bulgarian government are in line with the EU political framework for strict abidance by the principle of guaranteeing equal opportunities for all and non-discrimination. Relevant documents of the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, etc, are also taken into consideration. As one of the initiators of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005-2015, Bulgaria continues its work on achieving its goals through annual Action Plans (for detailed reports on their implementation see <http://www.mlsp.government.bg/decade/default.asp>).

15. The main problems for the Roma community in Bulgaria continue to be mainly in the social and economic field. Unemployment is a key problem for the equal integration of Roma in society. To a considerable degree it is conditioned on the lack of education and insufficient professional qualification. In this context the government (more specifically the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP)) is implementing complex measures aimed at overcoming the social isolation of Roma and facilitating their reintegration on the labour market by means of training, new jobs and promotion of enterprise. In 2009, the

employment services (so-called labour exchanges) covered 25,016 unemployed Roma, and provided jobs for 17,682. A total of 7,334 attended various courses for requalification, career guidance, etc. Courses in enterprise are also organized by the Roma culture and information centres (business incubators), which also provide financial support for those wishing to launch their own business. The National Employment Agency organizes specialized labour exchanges in regions with denser Roma populations (in 2006–2009, 20 such exchanges were held, and another 10 in the first six months of 2010). Roma mediators are trained and appointed to promote employment (a total of 102 mediators worked at territorial directorates as at February 2010). Meetings are also held locally with official representatives and informal leaders of the Roma community to improve awareness and promote employment (169 such meetings were organised in 2009, together with 312 meetings with NGOs, social partners, employer organizations, etc.). Up to the beginning of 2010, a total of 1,355 applications for the establishment of young farmers' farms, to the total value of BGN 33 million, had been paid under the Rural Development Programme 2007–2013, including to Roma from the regions of Haskovo and Vidin. BGN 138.7 million were awarded to 526 applications for the modernization of farms, including providing employment for Roma in the regions of Pazardjik and Plovdiv.

16. To improve housing conditions, activities continue on compiling cadastre maps and registers as a basis for developing urban development plans of nucleated settlements and subsequent investment in design and construction (in 2005–2009, over 100 nucleated settlements, including Roma settlements, were covered by these activities). Local self-government authorities are encouraged to implement urban regulation of existing Roma residential areas and to create new zones for housing development. Opportunities for legalizing, where possible, illegally built houses are also considered. Funds from the state budget are used for improving existing, and developing new, technical infrastructure in Roma residential areas.

17. The programme for improving living conditions for Roma is funded from the state budget (total value of BGN 11.647 million for 2009, including BGN 11.280 transferred to the municipalities). Construction was completed of sites related to the reconstruction of existing, and the development of new, sewerage and water supply networks, as well as for rehabilitation of road infrastructure in more than 25 nucleated settlements; work on sites in more than 10 other municipalities continues. Investment in rehabilitation and/or development of roads, water supply and sewerage are also made under the Rural Development Programme, including in nucleated settlements with compact Roma populations (a total of 216 projects worth BGN 400.3 had been implemented by 2010).

18. In the field of health care, national and regional health education programmes are developed and seminar training courses of Roma leaders are organized. The Ministry of Health funds the rehabilitation and equipment of general practitioner surgeries for GPs in Roma residential areas, as well as projects for the educational and medical integration of so-called vulnerable groups, including Roma.

19. The model of the health mediator has been applied since 2001 (as of 1 January 2010, the activities of 105 mediators are funded through the municipal budgets; the subsidy from the Ministry of Health amounts to BGN 418,300). Health care and social centres, which are managed by local organizations working with the Roma community have been developed in the Roma residential areas in Plovdiv, Sliven, Sofia, Bourgas, Varna, Vidin, Pazardjik and Stara Zagora. Health and social services are offered by specially trained Roma teams. Work is concentrated in fields such as maternity and child health care, drug prevention, inclusion of parents in their children's adaptation to the requirements of the educational system, and career guidance. Twelve mobile medical offices (6 of which were developed in 2009) deal with HIV/AIDS testing and consulting, hepatitis B and C, consulting for avoidance of risk conduct, etc. Two of the mobile offices are in charge of Roma

organizations. In 2009, a total of 73,606 individuals used health services under this model, 15,896 persons were included in preventive activities, and 179 young men successfully completed training in health education.

20. In addition to the funds from the state budget, the Ministry of Health has concluded agreements for grants from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (total value for 2004-2008: BGN 15.711 million; and BGN 17.941 are envisaged for 2009-2012).

21. Bulgarian citizens, including Roma, in a disadvantaged position, also have the benefit of the Human Resources Development Operational Programme implemented by the MLSP and co-funded by the *European Social Fund*. To date, four procedures for providing grants totalling BGN 43.574 million (targeted at changes in the Roma community) are at different stages of implementation:

(a) “Establishing a Favourable Multicultural Environment for Practical Application of Intercultural Education and Upbringing”: 64 contracts have been signed with municipalities, schools and NGOs, BGN 5.574 million have been provided, BGN 3.598 million have been absorbed, and 9,124 children and students have been covered;

(b) “Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities in the Educational System”: total budget of BGN 12 million, 414 project proposals have been submitted to date;

(c) “Literacy for Grownups”: total amount of BGN 15 million, provided through the Ministry of Education;

(d) “Take Your Life in Your Hands” (launched in the fall of 2010), with a budget of BGN 11 million, provides for the extension of grants to NGOs, educational and training institutions and others for encouraging the return of long-term unemployed on the labour market.

22. The implementation of the following projects, for which Roma are also a target group, continues under PHARE:

(a) Integration of Ethnic Minorities on the Labour Market: budget EUR 2.860 million, including EUR 660,000 national co-funding;

(b) Improving Access to Health Care for Vulnerable Groups, with a Focus on Roma: budget EUR 4.4 million, including EUR 1.1 million national co-funding;

(c) Educational Medical Integration of Vulnerable Groups with a Special Focus on Roma: budget EUR 4.853 million, including EUR 0.983 million national co-funding;

(d) Improving the Position of Disadvantaged Ethnic Minorities, with a Focus on Roma; two projects for technical assistance, deliveries, construction and construction supervision to the total value of over EUR 23 million, including over EUR 2.7 million national co-funding.

#### **D. Paragraph 16**

23. In paragraph 16, the Committee encouraged “...*the State party to continue to take measures to combat abuse of authority and ill-treatment by the police against persons from minority groups, to ensure that such acts are effectively prosecuted and punished by the judicial authorities, and furthermore to continue integrating Roma into the police*”.

24. The Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria has taken all necessary practical measures for the eradication of the root causes of alleged violations of the law by police officers and for the prevention of such violations in future. Thus, a special system for registering complaints alleging ill-treatment by police officers has been introduced, and is closely monitored. The number of complaints of ill-treatment by police officers decreased

in 2010 compared to 2005 by 70 per cent. A basic indicator for the effectiveness of each department of the Ministry of Interior is the work connected with citizens' complaints and signals against unlawful actions by the police. The leading officials responsible for ineffective actions in crime prevention and disclosure, control and work with the personnel are held accountable. Every year, the disciplinary system is subject to a most detailed analysis. Necessary steps are taken to strengthen discipline and to prevent the recurrence of unlawful actions. The Ministry of Interior's Chief Secretary, Personnel and Inspection Departments conduct control reviews and investigations to ensure that the Ministry's measures are implemented, and report their findings to the Ministry's leadership.

25. *Instruction No. IZ-1711* of 15 September 2009 of the Ministry of Interior explicitly forbids the use by police officers of physical force, auxiliary tools or armaments against detainees, except in the rare cases provided for under the Ministry of Interior Act. No action by the police authorities should include perpetration, instigation or toleration of any act of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or any act of discrimination against detained persons. Immediately upon arrest, detained persons are to be informed about the grounds for detention and the respective responsibility provided by the law as well as about their right to adequate medical assistance, legal counsel - either as a free choice or under the Legal Counsel Act, appeal their arrest before the Court, request to notify another party of the arrest, receive visitors or parcels and food, request notification of the relevant consular authorities, if the person is an alien, request the services of a translator or interpreter, etc. The same procedure applies to officers of the military, which is regulated by special guidelines.

26. Inquiries are conducted in all cases involving alleged violations of the law by police officers, and where such violations are proven, their perpetrators and, where necessary, their immediate superiors, are sanctioned. There are numerous cases of police officers having been dismissed from the police after they had been proven guilty of such violations. Moreover, when the facts of the inquiry indicate that a crime has possibly been committed, the full set of collected materials is submitted to the prosecutor's office for further action. This is a mandatory procedure which is followed without exception, regardless of the ethnic background of the victims of the alleged violations. In addition, a guarantee for conducting an independent investigation is provided for under article 194, paragraph 1.2 of the *Penal Procedural Code* which states that the investigation of cases involving alleged crimes by policemen shall be conducted by examining magistrates, and not by investigating policemen.

27. Police officers are periodically familiarized with the ethical norms of behaviour and the relevant procedure of observing human rights. The *Permanent Commission on Human Rights and Police Ethics* (PCHRPE) within the Ministry of Interior constitutes a mechanism for monitoring and controlling activities of police officers. It has regional branches at local levels. The activities of PCHRPE are aimed at active co-operation with the public organizations, approval of positive police practices and harmonization with the requirements arising from membership of the Republic of Bulgaria in the European Union, and are organized in accordance with a Working Plan which is updated annually. The Plan covers a wide range of topics, such as monitoring of compliance with the rights of detainees and persons held in the structures of the Ministry of Interior, consideration of signals on violations of human rights and freedoms of citizens by officials of the Ministry of Interior, development of legislative changes related to the use of firearms on the part of the police authorities in order to achieve full compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as documents of the Council of Europe and the United Nations, thematic training of officers in the field of human rights protection, etc. In addition, a Code of Ethics for police officers was adopted in compliance with the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the European Code of Police Ethics (Rec(2000)10). Violation of the Code has been raised to the rank of disciplinary offence.

Control over the implementation of the Code is exercised by the Commission on Human Rights and Police Ethics of the Ministry of Interior.

28. Appropriate training is being provided on issues pertaining to combating and preventing discrimination. The topic is a priority in the education and qualification programmes of the MoI Academy. The police officers are acquainted with the decisions of the European Court on Human Rights in the framework of the discipline, "Human Rights Protection". The subject of human rights is present in all full-time curricula of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) which provides initial and continuing magistrate training. They include a module on article 14 of the ECHR (prohibition of discrimination) and the related Bulgarian legislation and case law. The NIJ has published and circulated to all judicial authorities a practical guide entitled "Application of Fundamental Rights by the Courts", which is also freely accessible on the Internet site of the NIJ. In addition, the NIJ took part in the compilation of a collection of "Case Law Regarding the Application of the Act on the Protection of Discrimination", prepared at the initiative of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination for distribution, including to all magistrates.

29. It should be added that the Ministry of Interior is currently implementing a three-year "*Police near the community*" strategy, a substantial part of which is comprised of activities aimed at raising awareness of citizens belonging to ethnic minorities of the work of the police, and promoting the improvement in the skills of police officers working in areas where the population is predominant ethnic minorities.

30. With reference to allegations of the excessive use of force by the police, the Prosecutor's Office has analyzed in detail the relevant judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in cases against Bulgaria. Within its competences, the Prosecutor's Office has taken measures to address the violations, such as shortening the time frame for examining cases in the pretrial phase, strengthening the administrative capacity of the Prosecutor's Office to counter cases constituting police brutality, reporting on the cases of detained persons by administrative heads, outlining measures for their prompt and expeditious completion, training magistrates on the European Convention on Human Rights etc. Special emphasis is placed on strengthening the capacity of the Prosecutor's Office in supervising the activities of the police authorities in order to prevent the excessive use of force by the police, as well as enhanced supervision of cases concerning police brutality.

31. There is an Inspectorate Department under the Supreme Cassation Prosecutor's Office, and similar control bodies (inspectorates) also operate with appellate prosecutors' offices around the country. They perform inspections in relation to incoming reports of violation or established omissions or irregularities. The results of their monitoring, as well as of the disciplinary inspections of the performance of duties of service are summarized and analyzed, and the relevant proposals are submitted to the Prosecutor General for the adoption of disciplinary and other punitive measures.

32. According to data from the Prosecutor's Office, in 2009, there were 42 investigations of cases of alleged police violence. For the first half of 2010, the number of the investigations launched was 30. In the period January 2009–June 2010, 55 police officers were charged by the court for alleged violence: 16 of them were convicted, and 10 were acquitted. 57 cases were dismissed by the court (among them were proceedings launched before 2009). There were also 97 investigations against police officers on charges of corruption, and 30 of them proved groundless; 51 persons were brought before the court; 27 were convicted as charged; three were acquitted. (For comparison, in 2005, out of 192 convicted police officers, 35 were found guilty of using violence. In 2007, there was a total of 227 convicted police officers; 21 of them were proven guilty on charges of violence).

**E. Paragraph 18**

33. In paragraph 18, the Committee expressed “...*concern about acts of hatred and racism committed against members of minorities, in particular by neo-Nazi skinhead groups*”, and recommended that “...*the State party take effective measures to penalize organizations, press and media outlets and political parties that are guilty of such acts*”. It further recommended that “...*the State party take measures to promote tolerance among ethnic groups*”.

34. The Bulgarian authorities closely monitor all alleged manifestations of racism and intolerance against any person under their jurisdiction, and, if necessary, resolutely take steps to punish such acts. They also consistently combat stereotypes and prejudices, if and when such attitudes are manifested against persons belonging to any ethnic, religious or linguistic minority.

35. With the amendments to the Penal Code in 2009, the incitement in speech, print or other mass media, through electronic information systems, or other means of ethnic hostility or hatred was added to the article on propaganda of and incitement to racial or national hostility or hatred or to racial discrimination. The penalty was also increased to imprisonment of up to four years (from a maximum penalty of three years incarceration) and the maximum fine was increased to BGN 10 000.

36. Introduction of European Union requirements (Framework decision 2008/913/JHA) with regard to combating racism and xenophobia through penal law is also under way. This will be realized by expanding the scope of application of article 162, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Penal Code. The amendment, expected to take effect at the end of 2010, synchronizes the list of grounds of discrimination in the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria (article 6, paragraph 2), the Law on Protection against Discrimination (article 4, paragraph 2) and the Penal Code, and criminalizes any public incitement to violence or hatred. Furthermore, “racist and xenophobic motives” will be included as additional qualifying circumstances for murder and bodily injury, and a new *corpus delicti* will be introduced in Chapter XIV, “Crimes against Peace and Humanity”.

37. The court statistics on cases of alleged crimes against national and racial equality (articles 162 to 166 of the Penal Code) for the period of January 2007–June 2010 are presented in the following table:

<b>Chapter III of the Penal Code, Crimes against the Rights of Citizens</b>	New cases	Pre-trial proceedings submitted to court	Persons brought before the court	Convicted persons with enforced court decisions	Acquitted persons with enforced court decisions
1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Section I</b>					
<b>Crimes against national and racial equality</b>					
Art.162 – against national and racial equality	3	1	3	1	0
Art.163 – against national and racial equality through participation in a group	0	0	0	0	0
Art.164 - religious hatred	1	1	1	1	0
<b>Section II</b>					
<b>Crimes against religion</b>					
Art.165 - against religious freedoms	0	0	0	0	0
Art.166 - religious activities against the	0	0	0	0	0



State					
Total for 2007	4	2	4	2	0
Section I					
Crimes against national and racial equality					
Art.162	7	1	1	1	0
Art.163	0	0	0	0	0
Art.164	0	1	1	2	0
Section II					
Crimes against religion					
Art.165	0	0	0	0	0
Art.166	0	0	0	0	0
Total for 2008	7	2	2	3	0
Section I					
Crimes against national and racial equality					
Art.162	10	3	3	1	0
Art.163	0	0	0	0	0
Art.164	2	0	0	1	0
*Art.164, para.1.4 (through electronic media)	0	0	0	0	0
Section II					
Crimes against religion					
Art.165	0	0	0	0	0
Art.166	2	0	0	0	0
Total for 2009	14	3	3	2	0
Section I					
Crimes against national and racial equality					
Art. 162	1	1	1	0	0
Art. 163	0	0	0	0	0
Art.164	8	1	3	1	0
*Art.164, para.1.4	0	0	0	0	0
Section II					
Crimes against religion					
Art. 165	0	0	0	0	0
Art.166	1	0	0	0	0
Total for the first half of 2010	10	2	4	1	0

38. *The Law on Protection against Discrimination* (2003) provides victims of discrimination the option of filing a complaint with the *Commission for Protection against Discrimination* (CPD) or with the court. Since its establishment in 2005 until January 2010, the CPD received 2,797 complaints and signals, with an annual rate of increase as follows: in 2005 there were 27 complaints, in 2006 – 289, in 2007 – 645, in 2008 – 738, in 2009 – 1039, in January 2010 – 25. This trend demonstrates increased confidence in the institution for combating and preventing discrimination. Public expectation has raised with regard to its work as a public institution that provides rapid, genuine, effective and immediate settlement of disputes. The highest number of multiple discrimination complaints filed was 224.

39. In the period 2005 until 1 September 2009, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination decreed 70 decisions on cases of alleged discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity (11 per cent of all 585 decisions decreed by the CPD), ascertaining discrimination

in 36 of these cases (51 per cent of all decisions on the grounds of ethnicity). Of these, 27 decisions were appealed in court, and two decisions reached a settlement.

40. Among the most recent decisions of CPD is *Decision No. 193/8 September 2010 on case file 115/2009 of CPD Five Member Panel*. The case was initiated following a complaint lodged by A.A.B., Mayor of G. Municipality vs. Y.G.Y., in his capacity of Member of the 40th and 41st National Assembly, for alleged harassment, degrading and discriminatory statements in the media. The grounds evoked were religion, political affiliation and social status, therefore the case was considered as “multiple discrimination” and investigated by a five-member panel. Having considered the collected evidence, the CPD panel established harassment and imposed an administrative sanction on the perpetrator (a fine amounting to BGN 250). The CPD recommended to Y.G.Y., Member of Parliament, to refrain in future from statements having the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or intimidating environment. The CPD instructed Y.G.Y. to publish the decision at his own expense. It also determined a 15-day period for feedback on implemented mandatory instructions, whereby the perpetrator had to inform the CPD in writing on the implementation of the instructions.

41. In the period 2007–2010, the CPD continued to organize and implement information measures among different target groups by attracting funding from the European Union. These measures include traditional annual seminars for youth, lawyers, police officers, media, syndicates and labour organizations. The Commission issued a series of publications (brochures, manuals and other) to promote the anti-discrimination legislation and to improve its implementation in practice.

42. *The Law on Radio and Television* (2002) stipulates the “inadmissibility of broadcasts which...incite to hatred on grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality”. *The Council for Electronic Media (CEM)*, in its capacity as an independent regulator, supervises the activities of radio and television broadcasters for compliance with the Law, and has the right to sanction violations by issuing decrees ranging from fines against the broadcasters to revoking the broadcasting license. Accordingly, CEM monitors the programmes of broadcasters. It has already sanctioned broadcasters for providing a platform for voicing ethnic intolerance. The Council also initiates public and professional debates on the topic, with regard to usage of language of hatred in the media and in politics.

43. With specific regard to hate speech in the media against Roma, it should be mentioned that the Bulgarian Government co-financed the *First Public Roma Debate*, held on 19 November 2009 in the “Red house” in the town of Sofia.