



EU Anti-Discrimination Law Explained

Your Rights | Black, Irish and the EU

The Racial Equality Directive

The EU's Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) is one of the most important pieces of anti-discrimination legislation in Europe. It prohibits discrimination based on race or ethnic origin across a wide range of areas of life.

What does it cover?

The Racial Equality Directive protects you from discrimination in the following areas:

- Employment and working conditions
- Vocational training and education
- Social protection and social security
- Access to goods and services, including housing
- Membership of organisations

Types of discrimination

- Direct discrimination: being treated less favourably because of your race or ethnic origin
- Indirect discrimination: a rule or practice that appears neutral but puts people of a certain race at a disadvantage
- Harassment: unwanted conduct related to race that creates a hostile or humiliating environment
- Victimisation: being treated badly for making or supporting a discrimination complaint

How these rights apply in Ireland

In Ireland, the Racial Equality Directive is implemented through the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2018. These laws make it illegal to discriminate against someone on the



grounds of race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin in employment, education, accommodation and access to services.

What can you do if your rights are breached?

- Contact the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) for free advice and legal assistance: ihrec.ie
- Make a complaint to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) for employment-related discrimination: workplacelrelations.ie
- Make a complaint to the WRC under the Equal Status Acts for discrimination in services, education or accommodation
- Seek independent legal advice from a solicitor experienced in equality law

Key contacts

- IHREC: ihrec.ie | +353 1 858 9601
- Workplace Relations Commission: workplacelrelations.ie
- Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC): flac.ie
- Citizens Information: citizensinformation.ie